The violent mind

John Bryant

Abstract

This article will discuss the complex interaction of experience and biology in the formation of the violent mind. The practice of psychotherapy reflects the philosophical emphasis of hermeneutic phenomenology upon sensitivity and relationship to lived experience. Phenomenology searches for pre conscious experience. Hermeneutics shapes meaning and gives significance to such phenomena. This commentary emphasises themes of shame, fathering and remorse as they arise from a series of insightful interviews with men about individual experiences of violence. The influences of neurobiology and attachment theory are used to understand the dynamic forces behind these themes and the role that neurobiology and attachment theory play in understanding violence.

For four thousand years of Western history since the time of Plato and Aristotle, Cicero and Justinian, Hammurabi and Moses, lawmakers and philosophers have pondered how to diminish violence. Legislation has been created according to the moral and legal prescriptions at which they arrive. Whilst a few societies have virtually eradicated violence[1], most have failed. The 20th century proved to be the bloodiest century in human history, with more humans killing other humans than in all previous centuries combined. We now have the technological capability to extinguish our species and are indeed destroying many others (Gilligan, 2001).

On a national level the phenomenon of violence and how to legislate for it is one of the biggest and most emotionally polarising issues currently facing New Zealand society. Its importance is highlighted by the high profile of violent crime in the media. Statistics suggest alarming levels of domestic violence including spousal abuse and child abuse, otherwise known as violence against intimates. For example, Binning and Oliver (2006) report: 'Acting Assistant Police Commissioner Roger Carson is looking at police issuing on-the-spot protection orders when they attend domestic violence incidents. It is hoped this could help to deal with a problem, which, says Mr Carson, has claimed 29 lives, and affected 62,000 children in the past year.'

Human beings are complex and puzzling creatures. We can create, nurture, protect, educate and enrich. Yet we can also degrade, humiliate, enslave, hate, destroy and kill. A man dressed as Santa can lovingly set his stepdaughter on his knee one day, and brutally murder her a few days later (Alley, 2003)[2]. Of all types of violence that I have encountered both personally and professionally, domestic violence is the most difficult to comprehend because it is most likely carried out in and around the sanctuary of home, and it involves people we would normally expect to nurture and

protect. Violence in this arena is even more tragic because female violence, although not as extreme as male, dramatically increases (Fletcher, 2002).

Nurture via nature

Evolutionary explanations for the phenomenon of male aggression have traditionally emphasized a survival instinct encompassing territoriality, competition for food, procreation, the establishment of paternity and the protection of offspring (Wilson & Daly, 1993). Such understandings provide the impetus for a continuing debate that hinges upon beliefs and theories about whether human behaviour is a product of either nature or nurture.

'I'm depraved, on account I'm deprived,' says Riff, a gang member, from the film *West Side Story* (1961), echoing another viewpoint of commentators on violence who assert that it is an underprivileged background that leads to the development of violence in adults. Many studies stress that violence is part of a historical process and not only born of biological determinism (Kalmuss, 1984; Revitch & Schlesinger, 1981; van der Kolk & Fisler, 1994).

Exploration into the causes of violence indicates that individual reasons for violent behaviour can only be seen as one constituent part of a complex psychological, biological and sociocultural matrix. These include factors in the internal state of an individual such as an evolutionary proprietal tendency and related sexual possessiveness, attachment issues, shame, drives, genes, hormones, and neural factors. Social influences such as psychosocial disadvantage, unstable and violent parenting, male identity conditioning, relative poverty, alcohol, drugs, patriarchal culture, and media violence are also implicated in violent outcomes. Two of the most compelling ways to understand violence come from an integration of the science of neurobiology and the discipline of attachment theory.

Neurobiology and attachment perspectives

> A child forsaken, waking suddenly,
> Whose gaze afeared on all things round doth rove,
> And seeth only that it cannot see,
> The meeting eyes of love.
>
> -----George Eliot

'Human infants are born to bond' (Fletcher, 2002, p. 149). This statement is predicated upon an understanding that from birth babies can recognise and tune into familiar faces, voices and smells. In a process of mutual attunement known as attachment, the whole relationship of self-other is incorporated into the child's developing psychic structure[3]. The originator of attachment theory was childhood development

researcher John Bowlby (1906-1990) who concentrated upon the influence of the emotional environment of the home as a major influence on the future development of infants (Karen, 1998). In the last two decades or so, researchers of neurobiology have gathered strong evidence to support clinical experience that the way in which infants and their caregivers relate has a significant effect on neurobiological development and, as a consequence, upon the child's future functioning (Siegel, 1999; Fonagy, 1999; Perry, 2001).

Brain researchers generally see the first three years of infant development as of primary importance because 'of critical and sensitive periods of brain development' (Perry 1993, p. 16) during which more than 85% of neurobiological development takes place. It is a time of prime importance when gene activation signals vital parts of the brain to develop neural pathways that determine the future function and structure of the brain. 'The activation of neural pathways directly influences the way connections are made within the brain' (Siegel, 1999, p. 13).

When a child is in a persistent state of fear and alarm that results from exposure to violence, the primary areas of the brain that are processing information are different to those in a child from a safer environment. The child who is in this state is less efficient at processing and storing information and is more prone to cognitive and emotional distortions. Perceptions that others present some kind of imminent threat or slight may have been accurate where these children came from but are now, in the adult world, often out of context. Fonagy, Moran & Target (1993, p. 74) give a developmental explanation[4] for violence connected to the child's need for parental contingency:

> The angry outburst of the toddler is not mainly a call for protection, it is also a self-protective response to insensitivity on the part of the caregiver, felt at the moment to have undermined the child's nascent self-image...The normal anger response, however, turns to aggression when insensitivity is pervasive. The defensive shield of anger is called for so frequently that the oppositional response becomes integrated with the child's self structure. Self-assertion immediately yields aggression.

This passage conveys the pattern of building aggression that likely develops into a feature of the person's life as he ages. Anger can have an important function within the attachment relationship for limit setting but an elevated level of aggression threatens to break the attachment bond. In Bowlby's (1973) formulation this type of aggression—known as dysfunctional anger—lies at the heart of insecure attachment.

However, many children become anxiously attached but do not become violent[5]. Fonagy, Moran, & Target (1993) argue that in order for aggression to turn into physical violence another crucial component must predispose such individuals to act on bodies rather than minds alone.

> It is this inadequacy of their capacity to think about aggression in relation to attachment that pushes them into violent acts in intimate relationships (Fonagy 1999, p. 3).

The ability to reflect upon and interpret the mental states underpinning the behaviour of others, known as reflective function or mentalising (Fonagy 1999), is developed in the presence of and through caregivers. According to Fonagy & Target (1997), the capacity for reflective function is responsible for whether or not we are securely attached and whether, if we are insecure, we develop the propensity for violence.

Shame and violence

> There is an empty place
> in my metaphysical shape
> that no one can reach:
> a cloister of silence
> that spoke with the fire of its voice muffled.
> On the day that I was born,
> God was sick.
> -----Cesar Vallejo (1990, p. 171)

Sydney E. Pulver (1999, p. 287), in debating the question of shame as the central affect of disorders of the self, suggests that

> two central activators of shame affect are, first, a sense of contempt or disgust by a significant other and, second, an experience of some defect within the self.

Shame can attack the very heart of our being and the power of shame to bring about the most violent of reactions. For example, the biblical story of Delilah's accusation leads her to the very violent act of blinding Samson, because it is in his eyes that she feels shamed: ' thou hast mocked me' (Judges 16:10, KJV).

The philosopher Hegel (1770-1831) identified the desire for recognition as a major motivating force behind all human history. In his view, the self is socially constructed, created in interpersonal interaction, and what people need is 'not only security and material necessities but mutual recognition' (Solomon & Higgins, 1997, p. 96). 'Recognition' which means literally to be 'looked back at' (re-cognise) is a synonym for respect, pride, honour and attention. Inattention or disrespect is to be 'dissed' in the vernacular of many 'staunch' men. 'Dis' is the old Roman word for the underworld. This prefix occurs often in psychological literature in the word dys-function and certainly creates hell in those who experience of feeling unworthy,

unloved and misunderstood (Gilligan, 2001). Viktor Frankl (1985), in *Man's search for meaning*, states: 'Indignation is not about cruelty or pain, but about the insult connected with it' (p. 44).

The need via relationship to be believed or 'seen' is echoed time and again in participants of this study's words. For example, in one man's ominous threat just before he brutally assaulted his wife, 'if you don't hear me then you'll feel me'. The fact that much mythical violence seems to focus on the eyes through which we see and are seen by others may be linked to strong evidence from developmental psychology (Holmes, 2002), that early baby/parent eye contact provides emotional resonance which is essential for building a secure, healthy sense of self.

Vince's relationship with his mother illustrates how insults to the self may be experienced:

> *There were lots of incidents where my mother hit me if she said I had a big mouth because she started unloading as I called it she started saying what I'd done wrong... Not only what I'd done wrong but how I was wrong and how I was not worthy and I was not a good son to have and um usually as she was loading herself up and getting rid of her anger. ... I was not heard and I think that was the biggest abuse that my mother did, not necessarily the whacking, not necessarily calling me a dork or saying I wish I never had you but just the fact that she showed no interest in me at all.*

For Vince, a childhood memory of not feeling heard is more potent than painful physical and verbal abuse. Frazier (1974) discusses the debilitating effects upon those who had not experienced extremes of physical abuse or neglect but had experienced a degree of emotional abuse in which parents projected their own shame onto their children, which was just as damaging. The 1995 Domestic Violence Act in New Zealand changed, upon evidence of damage to the developing brains of children, to include verbal as well as physical abuse as grounds for legal protection.

The consequences of childhood shame are evident in Vince's later life.

> *I felt that she was...doing something not right on the farm...and I kicked her in the face in the paddock. I can't remember but it had to do with the fact that she wasn't listening to me...I felt unheard or not listened to...*

Vince is unable to create a space between the painful feelings that growing up with his mother has engendered and the feelings of rejection he experiences from his wife. He is overwhelmed as the horizons of past and present meet and his words echo, through the years, his feelings of being 'unheard'. What he takes as a personal insult turns to rage and then violence in an attempt to stave off shame producing rejection. As these feelings are evoked, it is as if time has frozen; at this moment

childhood and adulthood are undifferentiated. The once protesting and powerless little boy is now a man—a lethal destructive force.

Brain researcher Daniel Siegel (2002) informs us about the feelings behind such violence by explaining that pervasive insensitivity or lack of contingency on the part of the caregiver often leads to a gradual embodiment of toxic shame in the child. Aggression is an attempt to fend off painful feelings of injury to the self. These feelings are often so acute and unavailable to conscious rational thinking that the sufferer feels others are treating him with contempt and disdain, even if they are not. For some men, violence is not necessarily sporadic or carried out in a fit of rage. It is a way of life, an event waiting to happen. For those who continually use violence as a means of countering shame, even a minor sign of disrespect or perceived disrespect can trigger a brutal reaction.

Colin dramatically reinforces the viewpoint that respect from others is vital to his sense of self-respect. In fact, in prison his survival depends upon it:

> *I had to get round with a black eye for two weeks and that's ugly mate not in jail it's no good you know because people think, oh yeah. That's why you gotta back up in a scenario like that because otherwise it reflects on your credibility it reflects on your reputation you know, it reflects on your mana you know especially in that environment you know you've got to fix it straight away. Otherwise um you're not looked at with the respect maybe you deserve or you feel you deserve. You're just a heap of shit you're a heap of shit like you're nothing; in Mäori terms he tangata kore take is a person that has no substance, you're worthless, you're a slave right...You intimidate people ... Oh yeah you have to do it what comes out of your mouth you must do. Especially in there cos you are judged by what you do and what you say.*

In the inhumane environment of a maximum-security prison with rigid rules, sterility, and other violent men, lived space is a continual reminder of the need for vigilance and the imperative to gain respect. For Colin, the macho code of masculinity in jail gets confused with mana or genuine self-other respect. The type of mana that Colin is describing is founded upon fear. It is knowing that others fear you, or fearing that they do not, that motivates the drive for power and self respect. In that world no one is immune and just about all self worth, according to Colin, is predicated upon notions of power over others, fear and revenge. The reality of 'what you do and what you say,' is omnipresent and nothing is forgotten in a bid to avoid the humiliation of being seen as subservient, of becoming *he tangata kore take* [a person of no substance]. Everything in the paranoid confines of prison involves maintaining and promoting proof of masculinity.

Fathering and violence

Colin's values were inculcated long before he went to prison:

> *I was the closest and whup hit me on the nose right up against the wall BANG fuuuuuck. One thing with dad he was very strong he was short and stocky a very powerful man he could lift me up with one hand you know he could grab you round the throat and he could lift you up he was very strong and very intimidating ... He was a man's man and he was respected by a shit load of people.*

In this excerpt Colin is reflecting upon intergenerational violence and what it was like returning to live with his birth father. There is a mixture of his fear of his father's violence and an admiration for it. This respect/fear ambivalence is linked to Colin's perception of his father's masculinity.

Bruce Perry (1993, p. 18) offers a psychobiological explanation for the phenomenon of violence being handed down.

> If the child is raised in an unpredictable, chaotic, violent environment it is highly adaptive to have a hyper-vigilant, hyper-reactive arousal system; if primary relationships are characterized by violence, neglect and unreliability, intimacy becomes maladaptive; if a young child is frequently assaulted, it becomes adaptive to over interpret non-verbal cues, to quickly act on impulses, and to strike out before being struck. The symptoms of hyper-vigilance, cognitive distortion, physiological and behavioural reactivity, intimacy avoidance and dissociation commonly seen in traumatized children were all, at some time in the lives of these children, necessary, adaptive and appropriate responses to traumatic stress.

If the way in which we embody influential people at a young age gives us a blueprint for future thoughts, feelings and actions, then, at least in our culture, it is self-evident that parents and caregivers would have a significant impact upon a child's development.

Van Manen (1990) discusses the etymology of the word 'parenting' as having connotations of origin or source. To parent (*parere*) means to originate, to be the source, the origin from which something springs. He speaks of the pride of bringing a child into the world but recognizes it as a gift emanating from something 'larger' than oneself that made it possible to have this child in the first place. Marcel (1978) expresses the gift as a call to make a response. Van Manen (1990, p. 60) describes this call:

> They teach their children that the world can be experienced as a home, a place for safe dwelling, a habitat in which human beings can 'be,' where

> we can be ourselves, where we can have habits; ways of being and doing things. So to bear children is, in a broad sense, to provide place and space for them to live, to be. The child is carried, borne inside the womb at first, then it is borne into the world where it remains, for a while at least, most helpless dependent, in need of nurture, warmth, caresses, holding fast and safe outside the womb.

Van Manen (1990, p. 84) concludes his talk on the nature of parenting with,

> A child who feels abandoned *or abused* [my italics] by the parent may never receive the meaning of inner rest, of being guarded by the existence of a center, a safe haven.

What does this mean for Colin as a son and as a father?

> *I've hit every one of them every single one of them ...//...I thought about saying sorry but I just ain't got the balls. Oh you know I'm letting myself down. I'm being submissive, you know, fathers don't apologise to their kids and anyway I'm sure they deserved it and they've forgotten about it and moving on so that's my attitude...But I'm not real proud of what I've done and you know... It's just sometimes I don't know what to do, how to make things right how to fix things up so I just don't do nothing...*

Colin illustrates the tension he holds between being 'a man's man', and having remorse for his violence towards his own children. Ironically the desire to not be seen as submissive leads him to feeling emasculated—'I just ain't got the balls'—rather than as a much needed confirmation of his manhood. Colin feels guilty for his former actions but his inability to show remorse to his children leaves him feeling ashamed. He is caught between the way his past has shaped him and how he wants to be.

Perry (2003, pp. 3-4) informs us that childhood is a precarious time in which the taken for granted sanctuary of home and protection of adults can easily be upset:

> The home is the most violent place...Persisting fear and the neuropsychological adaptations to this fear can alter the development of the child's brain, resulting in changes to physiological, emotional, behavioural, cognitive and social functioning.... Any factors that increase the activity or reactivity of the brainstem (e.g., chronic traumatic stress) or decrease the moderating capacity of the limbic or cortical areas (e.g. neglect, alcohol intoxication or brain injury) will increase an individual's aggression, impulsivity and capacity to be violent.

Based upon this analysis the following excerpt may give us an insight into Bill's extreme violence in adulthood:

> *I must have been about 4 when my dad left, he was an alcoholic...and um yeah my stepfather was the one I remember being violent. I was scared of him up until my early teens and I slept with a knife under my pillow from about for about six years, I've even said to people if I ever met him I'll kill him... She was having a bath and you know they'd had an argument and D. my stepfather um I remember him yelling at her ... I must have been about 13 then ... and I got up from my bed and he grabbed her by the hair cos I heard the pshh of the water and he pulled her out of the bath and she was menstruating. So while he's dragging her along the linoleum floor and he's punching her in the head and she's just bleeding out of the mouth and nose but I can remember...(crying)...sorry mate...her bleeding out of the head, and the vagina at the same time...you know all these punches on her, 17 stone big man, big hands...just raining..raining down on her .....it's like he was painting the floor or something yeah was yeah I came in ...A counsellor once asked me how long have you been angry mate and with such a candid question it took me aback and I thought about it and I said probably for most of my life ...*

An environment such as this must have been very toxic for Bill as a young boy. A stepfather capable of such terrible violence dramatically compounds the loss of his real father. The young boy's environment is pervaded by the sense of a terrifying giant of a man who is out of control. How would he know when the next outbreak of terror would occur? Through the reactivity of his brainstem and the reduced moderating capacity of the limbic and cortical areas of his brain, his concentration is narrowed down. Lived time, which includes a future perspective of vision, hope and expectation for most of us, is telescoped into dealing with the constant threat of danger of the immediate present.

In Bill's childhood there would be little time for peaceful, reflective play and stimulation, for a creative imagination that is so vital to a child's development. Instead a perilous cocktail of pervasive caregiver insensitivity, a defective sense of self, and macho social values permeate his future behaviour:

> *If it hadn't all happened so fast they started to push and shove and then the screwdrivers came out and we laughed at them and out came the knives...*

Bill's life experiences have conditioned him into being triggered into a mode of functioning much like a reptile would behave under threat. His here-and-now experience is reduced to the very limited survival strategy of fight or flight. Although Bill is responsible for what he does at such times his ability to choose is compromised because the part of the brain responsible for a range of solutions is no longer in control. This primitive response is reinforced by his need to fight in order to promote and maintain his self-esteem and his sense of masculinity. In adulthood Bill often seeks situations that trigger his already highly aroused condition into extreme levels

of emotional shutdown and violence. Male role models for optimal adult maturity, including safety, security, dependability, and stimulation, were missing and instead actually encouraged a state of chronic alarm.

At the beginning of Homer's Odyssey, Odysseus is sitting on the seashore in the midst of his unplanned travels following a long, difficult war, wishing to be home with his son, his father and his wife. In his longing and melancholy he asks the question: 'Does any person know who his father is?' Where do I get those feelings of protection, authority, confidence, know-how and wisdom I need in order to live my life? How can I evoke a father in a way that will give my life the governance it needs? (Moore, 1992). Too often in my work I come across men who struggle to find a vision for their manhood.

Self-Knowledge and remorse: the road to freedom

> If we could read the secret history of our enemies, we would find sorrow and suffering enough to dispel all hostility.
>
> -----Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (McClutchy, 2000)

Until now I have demonstrated only the destructive aspect of shame that arises from the data. Alan Schore (1994) proposes that not connecting with a child's active bid for attunement leads to toxic shame. Siegel (1999, p. 280) proposes a different type of shaming interaction: 'These types of transactions are necessary for a child to learn self-control and then to modulate both behaviour and internal emotional states in prosocial ways.' Shame, in this very specific sense, is not considered damaging; it is our moral gyroscope.

Just as a lack of knowledge of self lies at the heart of the emotional drive toward intractability, so lack of knowledge of the other is the key to alienation. We learn about self through knowing others, and vice versa. Impairment of knowledge of the other damages knowledge of self, and vice versa. For the repair that needs to occur when a rupture has taken place is highly difficult, if not impossible, when ones self-reflective capacities are diminished. Repair is a key aspect of successful relationships and is a vital component of healthy parent to child and *therapist to client* (my italics) transactions (Karen, 1998). Vince expresses the double bind of this inability,

> *S and I were together for 20 years by that time...and at that time I did not have any knowledge of the depth of the damage that I had done to her.*

This statement reveals that Vince's experience of ignorance and alienation started long before his wife's departure. Bill reports an episode in which he is finally arrested for assaulting his wife and experiences that time has a sense of the surreal as he goes into a state of disbelief, shutting down, and depression. In reporting these events he

has not yet spoken of sorrow but only of his own suffering. The following excerpt demonstrates a deeper sense of responsibility for what he has created in another:

> *Now when I see him, it bothers me because all I just see is fear on him now and I go up to him; ' hi how ya going mate, give me a call' and he doesn't, he goes 'yeah, yeah' at the time and I feel bad he feels like that now.*

It is promising that Bill has embodied being bothered and feeling 'bad' as a response to his violence, that he has no sense of macho satisfaction in the other man's fear. This remorse is a sign of recovery, as is protecting and helping others:

> *...I've also seen a lot of domestic violence with my mates...and their partners. I remember S chasing J with an axe, if I hadn't of stood in his way he would have killed her...He's never done anything about it... We talk about it and I say to him 'you're losing the battle mate, every time you touch her you're losing the battle with yourself' and sometimes I think it's clicking with him but it doesn't last, it doesn't last ... I look at it the way that I think of it it's like my real father's alcoholism you've gotta be aware of it all the time. But because I am aware of it has served me so much better ... I've still got a lot to learn...*

Bill's expanded horizon offers him the capability of also being able to influence other people's lives by helping to generate a consciousness of the 'battle within', knowing that ' you have to be aware of it all the time'. 'It' is the underlying emotions like grief, fear, guilt and shame that lead to violence. Bill is committed to gaining wisdom and compassion to help his friends whilst retaining a sense of realness and humility in knowing his limitations.

What is the catalyst for self-awareness and the development of higher human qualities such as empathy, compassion, wisdom and sensitivity to others? It seems that for perpetrators of violence, the mechanisms for such transformation are connected to feelings of extreme suffering such as shame, guilt, grief, or the loss of important others. As one gains a growing sense of his history and an ability to think about the self and the self of others, a person discovers the meaning behind his thoughts, feelings and actions. A person's invisible, unformulated sense of worthlessness and fear is given a shape and a form. Colin responds in an entirely new way as he gets in touch with feelings about his own father:

I enjoyed his company but I never had that father-son relationship that I wanted and I told him that as he was dying: ' it's a real pity dad that you and me couldn't have been what I wanted'. Ahh I just wanted him to say things like ...well you know ...yeah (crying) ... yeah.....I think ah...I think all the boys were like that they wanted ..... more .....Yeah if I had my time over again I'd do things differently you know with him I probably tell that him that I loved

him...that might have...see we didn't talk .....no we didn't talk ...

Sharing feelings on this level is unheard of for Colin. His experience has been permeated by the male code of masculinity, which shames men for feeling vulnerable. This way of being encourages the suppression of feelings such as remorse and grief. Colin, until recently, has been condemned to a life of silence and suffering—'we didn't talk'—that he has managed and contained with alcohol and violence.

Shame and grief are not only precursors to but also an integral part of developing a conscience. Remorse is a painful reminder of wrongdoing. Lewis (1971) promotes the idea that shame is inherently a social emotion. She asserts that human beings are social by biological inheritance and that, just as the instinctual emotion of fear signals danger to life and limb, shame also signals a potential threat to survival, especially for an infant, as a threat to a social bond. The therapist's careful and sensitive handling of shame dynamics cultivates the interpersonal bridge that connects individuals who could otherwise lead alienated and perhaps violent existences. The men's telling of his-stories encourages vulnerability and facilitates the self-knowledge and remorse that attenuates violence.

References

Alley, O. (2003, September14). Coral Ellen's Mum Speaks Out. *The Sunday Star Times*, 1.

Baldwin, M.W. (1992). *Relational schemas and the processing of social information. Psychological Bulletin, 112*, 461-484.

Binning, E, and Oliver, P. (2006, June 17). Call for instant protection orders. *The New Zealand Herald*, A3.

Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and Loss, Vol. 2: Separation Anxiety and Anger.* London: Hogarth Press and Institute of Psycho-Analysis.

Bowlby, J. (1982). *Attachment and loss. Vol.1: Attachment (2nd ed.).* New York: Basic Books.

Broussard, E. R. (1995). Infant attachment is a sample of adolescent mother. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development, 25*, 211-219.

Eliot, G. (1871). *Middlemarch.* London: Penguin.

Fletcher, G. (2002). *The new science of intimate relationships.* London: Blackwell Publishers.

Fonagy, P. (1999). Male Perpetrators of Violence Against Women: An Attachment Theory Perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychoanalytic Studies, 1*, 7-27.

Fonagy, P., & Target, M. (1997). Attachment and reflective function. Their role in self-organization. *Development and Psychopathology, 9*, 679-700.

Fonagy, P., Moran, G. S., & Target, M. (1993). Aggression and the psychological self. [Electronic Version]. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, 74*, 471-485.

Frankl, V. (1985). *Man's search for meaning.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Frazier, H. (Ed.) (1974). Aggression. *Proceedings of the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease (p. 52).* Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins.

Gilligan, J. (2001). *Preventing violence: Prospects for tomorrow.* London: Thames and Hudson.

Holmes, J. (2002) *The search for a secure base: Attachment theory and psychotherapy.* East Sussex: Brunner-Routledge.

Kalmuss, P. (1984). The intergenerational transmission of marital aggression. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 46,* 31-39.

Karen, R. (1998). *Becoming attached: First relationships and how they shape our capacity for love.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lewis, H. B. (1971). *Shame and guilt in neurosis.* New York: International Universities Press.

Marcel, G. (1978). *Mystery of Being: Volumes 1 and 2.* South Bend, IN: Gateway.

McClutchy, J.D. (2000). (Ed.). *Longfellow: Poems and Other Writings.* New York: Literary Classics of the USA.

Moore, T. (1992). *Care of the soul.* New York: Harper Collins.

Perry, B. D. (1993, August). American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children. *The Advisor, 6*(2), 1-20.

Perry, B. D. (2001). Violence and Childhood. How Persisting Fear can Alter the Developing Child's Brain. In D. Schetky & E. Benedek (Eds.), *Textbook of Child and Adolescent Forensic Psychiatry* (pp. 221-238). Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Press. Retrieved November 15, 2003 from http://childtrauma.org/html.

Pulver, S. E. (1999). Is Shame the Central Affect of Disorders of the Personality. In E. Carr (Ed.), *Psychoanalytic Inquiry* (pp. 281-287). Mahwah, NJ: The Analytic Press.

Revitch, E., & Schlesinger, L. B. (1981). *Psychopathology of homicide.* Springfield, IL: Charles Thomas.

Robbins, J., & Wise, R. (Directors). (1961). *West Side Story.* [Film]. Distributor, United Artists.

Schore, A. N. (1994). *Affect regulation and the origin of the self: The neurobiology of emotional development.* Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Siegel, D. J. (2002). *The developing mind: How relationships and the brain interact to shape who we are.* New York. The Guilford Press.

Solomon, R. C., & Higgins, K. M. (1997). *A passion for wisdom: A very brief history of philosophy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Vallejo, C. (1919). *The black heralds.* Miller, Y.E. (Ed.) (1990). Pittsburg: Latin American Literary Review Press.

Van der Kolk, B., & Fisler, R. (1994). *Childhood abuse and neglect and loss of self-regulation.* Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic, 58, 145-168.

Van Manen, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Wilson, M., & Daly, M. (1993). *An evolutionary psychological perspective on male sexual proprietariness and violence against wives.* Violence and Victims, 18, 271-94.

Endnotes

[1] For example, Anabaptist sects, the Hutterites, Mennonites and the Amish have almost non-existent levels of violence in their communities (Gilligan, 1996, p. 226).

[2] Related to the murder of Coral Ellen Burrows. Reported in the Sunday Star Times, December, 14, 2003, p. 1.

[3] Some theorists refer to intrinsic self-other perceptions as 'internal working models' (Bowlby, 1982) or 'core relational schemas' (Baldwin, 1992).

[4] Object Relations theory describes the child's mental representation of the mother (object) child relationship. The originators of this theory include Klein, Fairburn, Winnicott and Balint (as cited in Karen, 1998).

[5] Broussard (1995) researched working class samples of children who are anxiously attached but who did not subsequently become violent.