

Published in:
The Psychology of Terrorism, Vol 4.
Chris Stout, Ph.D., editor
Praeger Press, 2002

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Everyday Terrorism—The Long Shadow of Our Hidden Dragon: Shared Factors of Terrorism and Juvenile Violence

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“We have met the enemy and They is Us.”

—Pogo

It is Wednesday, September 12, 2001—the day after terrorists crash planes into Washington, D.C., New York City, and Pennsylvania. My co-facilitator Debbie and I¹ are sitting in a large room in a community mental health center near Cleveland, Ohio. We are conducting our regularly scheduled meeting with the “Waging Peace” group, a treatment group for adolescents who use violent behavior.² We are joined, as we are every other week, by the parent(s) of the adolescents. Today—as is typical for this group—out of seven parents, there are no fathers present.

When I went out into the lobby to pick up the group members, there was an unusual quietness in the adolescents’ demeanor—much less of the typical teasing, joking, and good-natured put-downs that typify regular American adolescent interactions.

During our group “check-in,” many people comment on the tragedy of the previous day. My co-facilitator Debbie, who has more than 20 years’ experience working with adolescents who use violent behavior, began the discussion. Standing up, Debbie asked, “What did you experience regarding the terrorist attack?” She wrote

“Effects on Myself” on a large sheet of paper taped to the wall. “I’m sick of talking about it,” sighed 16-year-old Linda,³ the newest member of our group.

“Anger!” offered Patrick, a lanky 15-year-old who rarely volunteers answers.

“I’m afraid for my children,” said Linda’s mom Lisa, a petite woman whose tired face reflects years of domestic violence. “Yesterday, as soon as I heard, I went to school to pick them up. The radio said not to, but I didn’t care.”

“I didn’t want to go to school today,” quietly offered the usually jovial 17-year-old Thomas.

“Worried?” asked Debbie.

“Maybe,” mumbled Thomas, casting side glances at his other group members. Several heads nodded in agreement.

And slowly the list grew. Other answers given by our group included “anger,” “hurt,” “pain,” “sadness,” “fear for my children,” “fear of war,” “afraid to go out,” “jumpy,” and “can’t sleep so good.”

Debbie asked another question, writing “Effects on Others” on another large sheet of paper. “And what have you heard others experiencing as a result of the attack?”

“I wouldn’t want to fly if I was a pilot,” laughed Jake nervously, his starter jacket wrapped protectively around him.

“Everyone was talking about it at work,” mused Thomas’s mother Katherine, a sad-faced single mother of four children. “Lots of people said it was like watching a disaster movie—except that it was for real.”

“Linda,” I asked, “how about you—what do you think?”

“I heard some people talking about that it was really our government that crashed those airplanes. People said that there were too many people living in the city, and the government wanted to kill them off,” said Linda.

“Think that’s true?” I asked.

“I’m not sure that it isn’t,” said Linda.

“When people are hurt by violence,” said Debbie, “they often don’t know who to trust for a long period of time after being hurt.”

And the second list grew. Answers that were given included: “pain,” “sadness,” “fear for our children,” “fear of war,” “afraid to go out,” “hurt,” “anger,” “want revenge/to get back at terrorists,” “feeling like it’s a dream,” “don’t want to go to school,” “sick of talking about it,” “want to talk about it more,” “can’t believe it’s real,” “it was like watching a movie,” “mistrust—are we hearing the truth from the media?” and “don’t want to travel—especially fly.”

Debbie then asked, “What kinds of thoughts or feelings do you think the terrorists had before they attacked?” and wrote “Terrorists” on a third large sheet of paper.

“I think they hate us Americans,” said Ann with a glare, peering through the hair pulled over her face and sitting back in her chair with her arms folded across her chest.

“They think we are evil,” said Katherine confidently. “It’s a religious difference.”

“They probably thought that what they were doing was right,” chimed in Thomas. “They were mad at America about something.”

“Yeah, *really mad*,” echoed Randy with a touch of sarcasm.

And the third list grew. Other answers that our group gave included: “America is evil,” “we are right in doing what we did,” “anger,” “rage,” “jealous,” “not feeling heard/listened to,” and “hatred.”

Debbie stood up and walked over to the third sheet of paper. She crossed out the word “Terrorist” and wrote “Aggressive Teen” in large print. Turning to the group, she asked, softly but clearly, “And how have you been a terrorist in your own family?”

There was silence as recognition dawned across the teens’ and mothers’ faces as they realized that at some levels their behaviors and thoughts were very similar to the terrorists.

And the discussion began.

THE GENESIS OF THIS CHAPTER

This chapter is written from my perspective as a clinical counselor and based on my experience of working for the past nine years with aggression in children, adolescents, and their families. Psychology is one lens through which to view aggression and this chapter is offered in the spirit of contributing toward a multidisciplinary approach to the reduction of aggression—whether by adults who engage in terrorism or adolescents who use violence.

The genesis of this chapter lies in two personal experiences that followed September 11, 2001. The first experience was the reaction of the adolescents in my group to the exercise that was described briefly above. The teens with whom I work have been through a great deal in their short lives—violence, victimization, neglect, abuse, involvements with multiple systems that are trying to help them, often with limited resources and possibilities, and the teens’ own experience that they simply don’t “need” the help. Consequently, by the time they come into my group they are quite jaded. It usually takes a great deal to crack their shells. Very few exercises that I have done in all the time that I have been a therapist have had as deep an impact as the terrorist exercise described above. I could almost see the light bulb of understanding coming on over the heads of both parents and teens as we talked about violence and terrorism in that group and in the weeks that followed.

The second experience that provided one of the seeds for this present chapter was more personal. In the days following September 11, 2001, I heard many, many people talk about how the world had become a different place for them. I noticed that many people’s conversations frequently began with “Since September 11th . . .” And while I was shocked and horrified, grieved and saddened by the terrorist attack on America, I also found myself noticing that *my* whole world had not changed a great deal. Initially, I was ashamed of these thoughts (we will discuss shame’s relationship to aggression shortly). I began to wonder if there was some-

thing wrong with me that I wasn't seeing this "whole new world" as one of my friends described how she looked at life post-September 11. However, with the support of friends, I began to understand that my relationship with and understanding of aggression was very different from others' as a direct result of the work that I do. And I became very curious about the similarities between people who engage in terrorist behavior and the adolescents who engage in violent behavior with whom I work.

ACKNOWLEDGING AGGRESSION IN DAILY LIFE

It is my intention to explore some of the psychological similarities between terrorism and juvenile aggression in this chapter. As a mental health professional specializing in violence and aggression in children and adolescents, I have an opportunity to see the impact of aggression on a daily basis. While there is an eagerness to see people who engage in aggressive actions as "evil" people, it is the premise of this chapter that the actions of terrorists are extreme actions at one end of a continuum of aggression that is occurring every day in America. To paraphrase Krishnamurti's description of war, terrorism is a spectacular expression of everyday life. Seeds of aggression are sown and harvested by individuals and families in America on a daily basis that are not much different from terrorism in kind if not in measure.

It is important to remember that aggression is an incredibly complex phenomenon and simple answers should be suspect. In order to deal with aggression, multiple perspectives from a variety of professional specializations will be required. Indeed, the very act of examining aggression is fraught with problems (Papadopoulos, 1998). As the FBI's task force on juvenile violence (O'Toole, 1999) identified,

[T]he roots of a violent act are multiple, intricate and intertwined. The mix of factors varies according to the individual and the circumstances. Understanding violence after it has occurred is difficult enough. Trying to assess a threat and keep it from being carried out is even more of a challenge. (p. 7)

Metaphors can often be useful in helping us to understand complex phenomena, so I will offer a metaphor that has given me insight into working with aggression. Managing our aggression is like owning a very ill tempered dragon. We can try to hide the dragon, ignore it, and pretend that it does not belong to us—and it will run amok, burning villages and plundering castles. This is how we in the West have dealt with our dragon of aggression—mostly by ignoring its presence. Another approach is to acknowledge the presence of our dragon and try to relate to it as best we can. Ultimately, we are responsible for what we own—whether we want to be or not. We need to bring our dragon of aggression out of hiding. We need to deal with our dragon—whether we want to or not. Ignoring our dragon of aggression has brought us to the edge of world destruction, and we can no longer afford

to ignore it. One way to manage our dragon of aggression is to begin to address the contextual factors of aggression.

When examining terrorism and/or juvenile aggression it is crucial to attend to contextual factors. Aggression is a choice, and people—whether adults living in Afghanistan or adolescents living in Ohio—do not choose aggression in a vacuum. However, our Western worldview is so extremely individualistic that it prevents us from examining, discussing, and possibly even changing the contextual factors that support people who choose to be aggressive. By examining our own role in the contextual factors that support everyday terrorism, we become able to change the world and resolve the problem of aggression.

While there are many contextual factors that contribute to aggression, I would like to focus on five psychological ones: 1) misunderstanding the difference between feeling anger and acting on it; 2) the paradigm of individualism; 3) shame; 4) negative projections; and 5) the role of power.⁴ The negative aspects of labeling/naming serve as projective functions, so labeling will be explored under the discussion of projection. Denial also provides a way of supporting negative projections, so we will examine denial as it relates to keeping our dragon of aggression hidden.

In this chapter, we will be examining each factor in a linear, ordered manner, as that is how we conceptually understand the written word. Reality is much messier, with each factor underlying, supporting, and combining with the other factors in multiply complex ways. In this present work, I will focus on briefly exploring these five psychological factors. Space does not permit a full discussion of the ways in which each factor influences and affects the other factors.⁵

The order of discussion of these factors here is arbitrary and not meant to convey more weight to any particular factor. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to identify which factor(s) precede the other(s). And to a large extent, it is not even important to determine which factor precedes which. The importance at this point in time is simply to acknowledge that the factors exist and contribute to aggression in our world.

So let us begin with an examination of anger and aggression, and some of the misunderstandings that occur around these concepts.

Misunderstanding the Difference Between Anger and Aggression

“[The Wrathful] thumped at one another in that slime with hands and feet, and they butted, and they bit as if each would tear the other limb from limb.”

—Dante’s *Inferno* (Alighieri, 1954)

Many people see anger and aggression as the same thing. They are *not* the same thing, and the confusion surrounding the difference between anger and aggression is a crucial point of consideration for the present discussion. The consistency with which I see clients holding this erroneous belief that “anger = aggression” leads me to believe that the blurred line between anger and aggression, rather than being a

case of misunderstanding at the personal level, is much more of a collective social construct around which many Americans (at least) carry a great deal of confusion.

American culture has a truly confusing relationship with anger and aggression. We decry aggression, yet Americans are ravenous consumers—to the tune of several billion dollars a year—of entertainment media that portray aggression. Christianity is held to be the founding religion of America. The Christian God says, “Thou shalt not kill” (Exodus, 20:13) yet Americans seek as many ways around this as possible—war, capital punishment, etc. Even our rhetoric is aggressive. From our “War on Poverty” in the 1960s to the “War on Terrorism” at the dawn of the twenty-first century, our language demonstrates that Americans believe the best way to solve a problem is to declare war on that problem. It speaks to the powerful pull that aggression has on us that when it comes to aggression what we *say* and what we *do* are often two very different things.

As powerful as anger and aggression are, defining these words can be quite difficult. Jungian analyst Jan Wiener (1998) states, “As analysts, it seems to me that we tend to use the word anger in an ambiguous and over-general way when it is actually a subtle, complex affect with many nuances of meaning” (p. 493). This problematic confusion is inherent in any attempt to find solutions to problems of aggression.⁶ Papadopoulos (1998) describes this difficulty well in a lengthy passage on the destructiveness of aggression that bears repeating:

Destructiveness is an equally widespread phenomenon affecting most of us, in its various shapes and forms, and yet we tend to find it difficult to get a proper grip on it. By simply condemning it, we do not get closer to the phenomenon and thus we cannot begin to understand it. We seem to get caught up in a debilitating conundrum: on the one hand, we cannot afford to “normalize” destructiveness while, on the other hand, we cannot delve more deeply into it in order to understand it more fully, unless we adopt a less judgmental stance. This impossible situation has multifarious repercussions; one of them is exemplified by our attitudes toward the out-break of new wars. *After each eruption of violent hostilities or war we believe that we shall never forget it, that we shall learn from the horrible experience and thus avoid any future repetitions. Yet, when the next outbreak occurs we react with remarkable dismay as if we did not expect it to happen.* It seems that there is a protective function in human beings which enables us to “forget” painful memories of war and react with the wrath of naive ignorance when conflict recurs. It is as if humanity needs to keep cleansing itself from the horrors of war by constantly “forgetting” them and thus renewing its virginal innocence (Papadopoulos & Hildebrand 1997, p. 208; italics added)

Understanding aggression and developing effective solutions for it requires us to walk the fine line between normalizing the destructive qualities of aggression and condemning aggression harshly. Walking this line is a very tricky task, indeed. To

support us in walking this line, I would like to take a moment to discuss the distinction between anger and aggression.

Anger is a *feeling*, an emotion that takes place in the mind, body, and spirit. Aggression is outwardly directed hurtful *behavior*.⁷ Aggression comes, at least in part, from anger, but they are not the same. It is possible to feel anger and choose not to act hurtfully on that feeling. It is possible to own the anger, learn to manage it, and find more constructive and life-affirming ways of behaving. Let us first explore aggression a little more in depth, and then turn our attention to anger.

Since the time of Freud, a great deal has been written about aggression in modern psychology. Psychological writers have used the term aggression in various ways, at times using it solely with a negative connotation while at other times using the term with both positive and negative connotations. Giving multiple meanings to aggression occurs not only in the professional literature, but in general American society.

A further complication is the multiple meanings that American culture gives to the term “aggression.” Aggression can mean “hurtful” or “violent” on one hand (for example, “his aggression cost us a broken window”), or it can mean “active,” “energetic,” and “enthusiastic” (for example, “she sold so aggressively this month that she became the top salesperson in her district”). Sometimes the line between the two meanings is not always clear in American culture. On one hand, we are told that it is not appropriate to be aggressive, in the sense of being hurtful to another. On the other hand, the American sports world praises the “aggressive player.” Many of the young men with whom I work who play football inform me that their coaches have either directly or indirectly told them to: 1) hit another player as hard as possible in order to do the most damage; and 2) try and get away with as much as possible when the referee is not looking.⁸

In this chapter, and in the clinical work that I do, I use the word aggression in the sense of being hurtful or violent. Here I will focus on the negative aspect of aggression and define aggression simply as “any type of intentionally hurtful behavior.” For purposes of working with adolescents and children, I have chosen to use the word aggression in the negative sense so as to (hopefully) avoid confusion. Furthermore, I attempt as much as possible to use language that is developmentally appropriate for a particular adolescent or child (i.e., “aggression,” “violence,” “hurtful,” “mean,” and so forth).

Anger is a feeling, an emotional state, involving mind, body, and spirit. One metaphor that I use with the families with which I work is that emotions are like the weather, in that we have little control over when emotions come to us and when they leave us. Paraphrasing Shakespeare, a feeling is neither good nor bad but thinking makes it so. We judge a rainy day to be good or bad depending upon our perspective. If I am a gardener, I may welcome a rainy day to help my roses grow. If I have a day’s vacation and I am planning to go to the beach, then a rainy day is an unwelcome event. There are certainly some emotions that we enjoy the experience of over other emotions, but emotions are not good or bad by themselves.⁹ Even in young children emotions are highly complex, and can be intensely felt. Regarding emotions, Damasio (1999) states,

Human emotion is not just about sexual pleasure or fear of snakes. It is also about the horror of witnessing suffering and about the satisfaction of seeing justice served; about our delight in the sensuous smile of Jeanne Moreau or the thick beauty of words and ideas in Shakespeare's verse; about the world-weary voice of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau singing Bach's *Ich habe genug* and the simultaneously earthly and otherworldly phrasings of Maria Joao Pires playing any Mozart, any Schubert; and about the harmony that Einstein sought in the structure of an equation. In fact, fine human emotion is even triggered by cheap music and cheap movies, the power of which should never be underestimated. (p. 36)

Anger is frequently a feeling that covers over other types of feelings. And the feelings that are covered by anger are usually those feelings that are not accepted by a person's environment (i.e., these feelings are *shameful* to feel.). For example, in American culture, it is *not* culturally acceptable for a male to feel weak, afraid, or ashamed. It *is* culturally acceptable for a male to feel anger, and at times it is practically culturally mandated for a male to act out that anger aggressively in order to "save face." In the American culture, for males (and for a growing number of females) in some situations *not* to respond aggressively to an attack is to be seen as weak and powerless. In the beginning stages of therapy, most of the adolescents with whom I work who are referred for "anger management" problems can usually only identify one feeling: anger.¹⁰ They may have multiple ways to describe it (i.e., "pissed off," "mad," "upset," "frustrated," "annoyed"), yet the root emotion of anger is the same.

Aggression, as we have said, is a behavior. I have control over my behavior because I have the ability to make choices about my behavior.¹¹ I can be angry, and I may or may not choose to be aggressive. It is generally accepted that emotions may be occurring in us that are un- or non-consciously experienced (see Damasio, 1999, p. 37). Some small to middle-range physical behaviors may also occur un- or non-consciously (i.e., a client may unknowingly clench and unclench her hand every time she talks about person X in her therapy session). However, despite the claims by many adolescents with whom I have worked, it is unusual for complicated sequential behavior (i.e., picking up a chair, screaming, and throwing it through a window) to occur without conscious thought and/or choice.

Anger and the behavior that one chooses to express feelings of anger are *always* situated in a context, and as such are subject to affect by multiple factors, including but not limited to factors of gender, race, culture, intellectual ability, prior experience, perceived level of possible consequences and many others. In fact, it is often the context of the situation that determines the "goodness" or "badness" of an action (Crum, 1987; Linden, 1988).

The Paradigm of Individualism

A paradigm is a way of looking at the world. Every culture has a paradigm from which it operates. There is nothing wrong with paradigms per se as we need paradigms to make sense of the world. Paradigms, by definition, provide us with the language to reveal certain aspects of our experience, while at the same time concealing other aspects of our experiences. Difficulties arise when we begin to hold a particular worldview as the one and only way of seeing the world. Such is the case currently with the paradigm of individualism, which is the present reigning paradigm for Western thought. This paradigm can be traced back to and “. . . grounds itself in the philosophical assumptions and attitudes of classical Greece”(Wheeler, 1996, p. 24). Wheeler further notes that the paradigm of individualism is marked by

. . . the habit of thinking that starts with the (mostly unexamined) assumption that the separateness, the isolation even, of our own awareness and consciousness is the basis and bedrock of reality and human experience, whereas connection and community, however important they may be, are somehow only instrumental and secondary to individual integration and individual satisfaction . . . (p. 24)

In short, the paradigm of individualism holds that self exists apart from and prior to relationship. As a consequence, relationships and relational aspects of life are seen as having less importance than the individual. In contrast, the Gestalt phenomenological field model (and other phenomenological constructivist models)

sees the individual as constructing sense of self and other out of a prior field of relationship and organizing perception and behavior in an ongoing subjective/constructive activity that is best understood from the point of view of *phenomenology*, the study of the subjective organization of experience . . . (Wheeler, 1996, p. 39; italics in original)

Our current paradigm has supported us to make incredible advances. Examples of these advances include placing people on the moon, creating the Internet, and developing medical cures for many devastating illnesses. However, as the paradigm of individualism holds relational aspects to be less important, it has also supported us in poisoning a good portion of our environment (relationship with nature); brought us to the brink of nuclear war (relationship with each other); and has brought about the ennui that so typifies the Western world (relationship with ourselves). And each of the above examples can be viewed as acts of aggression. We are destroying Earth and poisoning it for future generations. Money directed to military spending and war is money that is unavailable to the powerless and marginalized populations of our world. And we do violence to people when we do not support other people (or ourselves) by creating a “stimulating and fulfilling environment” (Elias, 1997, p. 125).¹²

Our adherence to the paradigm of individualism does us immense disservice when it comes to aggression because the paradigm *demand*s that we ignore the contextual issues around aggression and place all the blame on the individual perpetrator(s) of aggression.

Another metaphor comes to mind here, which is the mythological motif of walking along a bridge made by the razor-sharp edge of a sword. We walk the razor's edge here, and can easily err on one side or the other. The side we usually err on is to completely and totally place the responsibility for aggression on the individual perpetrator(s) without considering contextual issues. And to a point—this is well and good. We as humans are responsible for our behavior, and no single life events or group of life events “causes” (in a direct, linear fashion) someone to act out aggressively. We slip off one side of the sword edge by focusing solely on the individual because doing so all but eliminates our ability to address and to change the underlying factors that are contributing to and supporting the aggression.

People often become upset when contextual factors are brought up in discussions of aggression. This is because contextual factors are often used as excuses to rationalize aggression. For example, American law has the notorious “Twinkie defense” where a man attempted to blame his violent behavior on the consumption of too many yellow confectionary treats. It is important to be clear that setting up consequences or justice for a perpetrator of a *past* offense is different from seeking solutions to avoid *future* offenses . . . and future victims. If a person or group of people has chosen to be violent toward another person or group of people, then those who perpetrated the aggression should receive fair and just consequences for their behavior. By viewing that person or group of people as isolated instances, though, we do little to prevent the aggression from occurring again.

To instead turn toward those who use aggression, and to seek to understand them, is not—as some would hold—to coddle them or to excuse their behavior. To either coddle or excuse aggressive behavior is to err and to continue the cycle of aggression that occurs in our world. To turn toward aggression and to develop a relationship with it in order to understand and resolve aggression—not merely in a cognitive sense of “understand”—but to understand holistically, is to reclaim and renew our relationship with aggression, and to begin to resolve aggression in our world.

Finally, it is important to remember that the paradigm of individualism is a *Western* worldview. It holds true for American adolescents who use violent behavior. These comments are not intended to describe Middle Eastern worldviews. I will leave the potential application of the paradigm of individualism outside Western culture to those who have experience in other cultures. However, it is also important to remember that nothing occurs in a vacuum. To examine terrorism and only look at “them” is a logically flawed approach. “Them” is only half of the equation. It is inescapable that the Western paradigm of individualism has created numerous scenarios throughout the global community that support, encourage, and even provoke terrorism. We in the West have to clean our own house if aggression in the world is going to change.

Shame

The concept of shame has already surfaced several times in the present work. Recall that I felt ashamed when I noticed that my experience in the aftermath of the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, was markedly different from what I was hearing about other people's experience. Also, we saw that feelings of anger often serve to cover up feelings that are perceived as more shameful. Let us now turn our attention to shame and its relationship to aggression.

At one time or another, we have all felt shame. Lee (1996) identifies shame as a relational phenomenon and states:

Shame is the experience that what is me is not acceptable, that this is not my world. As such, shame signifies a rupture (or threat of a rupture) between the individual's needs and goals on the one hand and environmental receptivity to those needs and goals on the other. (p. 9; italics in original)

We all deal with shame in different ways at different times. We deal with shame in ways that can range from life giving and healing to destructive and hurtful.

Lee (1996) notes, "The link between shame and rage is well documented . . ." (p. 13). A common way in which people manage feelings of shame is to become angry. At first glance, the connection between anger and shame may be counterintuitive. For many, the typical reaction to shame is, as Tangney, Miller, Flicker, and Barlow (1996) note, "a desire to escape or to hide—to sink into the floor and disappear" (p. 1258). However, as Tangney, Wagner, Fletcher, and Gramzow (1992) note,

The consistent theme emerging from these and other case studies and clinical observations . . . is that, rather than curbing hostile and aggressive impulses, shame tends to *initiate* a particular type of anger episode, namely, an irrational and generally counterproductive rage reaction. (p. 672)

Shame, rage, and the ensuing aggression are certainly breaking our world apart in many ways. Shame and shaming are so fundamental to the structure of Western psychology that we must explore another vantage point in order to best understand and address shame. Wheeler (1996) notes

. . . the dynamics and experience of shame can be seen and understood *only* from the point of view of a different paradigmatic map of human nature and process altogether—one based on relationship as a coequal pole with individuality as organizing dimensions of life. (p. 25; italics in original)

One of the strongest ways that shame is supported in our current paradigm is that it is shameful to feel shame. This holds true especially for males in our Western culture (Canada, 1998; Jennings & Murphy, 2000; Wheeler, 2000; Wheeler & Jones, 1996). For the Western male, as Hollis (1994) notes,

Every man will recall times when, as a boy, as a youth, or even last week, he dared reveal himself and was shamed and isolated. He learns to stuff that shame, mask it in male bravado and cover, cover, cover. Along the way he is frequently degraded and unable to speak his pain, his protest. (p. 73)

As mentioned above, shame—given the right conditions—can lead to rage. Let us say that I am in an argument with a friend. She says something about which I am ashamed (of course, at the time of the argument, I may not even be aware that I am ashamed of this topic). In an instant, I have felt the shame, pushed it away, and gone through a dance in my head in which I have convinced myself that my friend is really the one with the problem. In my anger—and if the shame is deep enough, my rage (the feeling that serves to cover the shame), I may lash out at my friend—most likely about a topic that I (at some level) know that may be shameful to her, that is, I *countershame* her.

In a relationship where there is little trust and/or poor communication—whether that relationship is a couple, a work group, an organization, or a nation—the shame/countershame cycle can rapidly spiral into more and more verbal attacks, and even, if conditions support it, into physical attacks. In a comment relevant to the current discussion, Lee (1996) also notes,

. . . consider the many revolutionary thinkers who maintain that violent revolution is the only way to throw off the internal shackles of inferiority and shame. . . . their strategy is seen as advocating a common deshaming strategy—a shift from shame to rage. However, while this strategy, which is typically evoked in the midst of experiencing overwhelming shame, can temporarily interrupt the experience of shame, ultimately it only perpetuates and increases the accumulated shame. (p. 11–12).

Lee's words hold true not only for "revolutionary leaders" but for other leaders as well. In American culture, to be victimized is to be in a shameful position.¹³ Lee's "common deshaming strategy" of shifting from shame to rage is a strategy that is used by many Americans, including teens and political leaders. The basic sentiment of this position is, "I feel powerless when I am a victim. I feel very ashamed when I am powerless. I will feel powerful at any cost—even at the cost of serious aggression. So—if you hurt me, I will hurt you back—worse." If I were referred an adolescent who was spending only \$10 every day in order to aggressively "get back" at someone who victimized him, he would most likely be in therapy for a long period of time, if not incarcerated outright. Yet the American govern-

ment's response to the September 11 terrorist attack is to spend \$30 million *a day* on aggression,¹⁴ declaring war not only on those who attacked America, but also on *all* terrorism. By declaring the "War on Terrorism," America has figured out a way to distance itself from the shame of victimization, but in a way that only, in Lee's words, "perpetuates and increases the accumulated shame."

Negative Projections: Throwing a Long Shadow

Looking at aggression as something strange, different, or foreign is an act of making aggression "other"—existing only in *other* people, in *other* places, for *other* reasons. We readily forget the words of the Roman poet Terence: "*Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto*" ("I am a person; and nothing human is foreign to me."). Instead, we are all too ready to accept the shaky premise that somehow, in some way, the people who commit aggression are fundamentally different from ourselves.

The psychological term for attributing characteristics onto other people that we do not wish to recognize in ourselves is called *projection*. One way to understand projection is to consider a movie projector showing a movie onto a blank screen. The content of the movie has more to do with the movie projector than with the screen. So too projection—when we psychologically project onto another, it has more to do with ourselves than the other person.¹⁵

The Gestalt perspective of psychology holds that projection can be either positive or negative. Gestalt theory holds that it is important to honor the way we "do" projection, as each person has creatively adapted projection in ways that serve them in their life. That we do project is not the question. The question is: How do we project? Is projection done with consciousness and awareness or is it done with a lack of awareness?

The positive aspect of projection can be seen in the ability to empathize with another human being. In order to place myself in another person's shoes, I need some ability to be able to understand what he is going through—both affectively and cognitively. When I witness my friend Joseph being yelled at unjustly, my heart can go out to him. I know that when I am yelled at unjustly I feel hurt and misunderstood. I can imagine that Joseph is feeling similar feelings and I can act accordingly to support Joseph.

However, demons arise when I project a part of myself that I am uncomfortable with onto another. If I have difficulty expressing my anger, then I may experience those who are able to express their anger, positively or negatively, as foreign or strange to me. Then it is easy for me to become judgmental in my observations about the other person who expresses anger. This is the negative aspect of projection.

Significantly, there is a part of each of us that yearns to believe that the world of aggression—including terrorism and juvenile violence—is a world that has nothing to do with our own, and *should* have nothing to do with our own—except when the worlds collide and we, or someone we know, are victimized by terrorism, juvenile aggression or some other form of aggression. In fairy tales, this stance is that of the king/queen/mother/father/guardian character, who would keep the adventure

(and the story) from happening. This character wishes to maintain the status quo with a naively dichotomized view of the world—that “we” are the “good guys,” always just, compassionate, and fair, and that “they” are the “bad guys,” always evil, deceitful, and hurtful. This naive perspective often comes at a price—the price of liveliness (Von Franz, 1995).

Shame enters into the picture when the blame is placed on others. Tangney et al. (1992) note that in four independent studies of adults, there was “a consistent positive relationship between proneness to shame and a tendency to externalize blame . . .” (p. 672). “Externalizing blame” is another way of describing projection. Tangney et al. further note that “Such externalization of blame may ameliorate the pain of shame in the short run, but it can lead either to subsequent withdrawal from the blamed person or to an *exacerbation of the hostile, humiliated fury*. . . .” (p. 672; italics added)

All of us have violent thoughts and images—no matter how unwanted—that pass through our consciousness from time to time. Each one of us, given the “right” circumstances or conditions could and would act violently. The Swiss psychiatrist C. G. Jung called our unacceptable side the *shadow*. Jung (1966) described the shadow as “the dangerous aspect of the unrecognized dark half of the personality” (p. 96). Von Franz (1995) described the shadow simply as “all that is within you which you do not know about” (p. 4). In *Pigs Eat Wolves*, his wonderful amplification of the story of the “Three Little Pigs,” Charles Bates (1991) says the following about the wolf:

The wolf is the designated evil one. . . . He represents everyone’s dark side, the shadow . . . We could say he is the despised self. . . . Culture forms a wolf by compelling us to develop certain sides of ourselves and deny others. . . . We form our own wolf by ignoring or repressing everything we do not want to see or know. The wolf is our darkness, holding our unacceptable instincts, fears, anger, violence, insecurity, sexuality, and so on. There we hide away thoughts of revenge, jealousy, animal behaviors that are socially inappropriate, thoughts of incest, rage, greed, physical abuse. (p. 11)

We frequently manage the shadow side of ourselves, which often includes much of our aggression, by suppressing it as much as possible. While this suppressing of aggression is done for appropriate social purposes, it can also be overdone and result in disconnecting ourselves from a basic awareness of our own aggression, thus making it easier to project our anger and aggression onto others. Jung (in Campbell, 1971) also notes “certain features” of the shadow “offer the most obstinate resistance . . . and prove almost impossible to influence” (p. 146). These resistances, he notes,

are usually bound up with projections, which are not recognized as such, and their recognition is a moral achievement beyond the ordinary. While some traits peculiar to the shadow can be recognized with-

out too much difficulty as one's own personal qualities, in this case both insight and good will are unavailing because the cause of the emotion appears to lie, beyond all possibility of doubt, in the *other person*. No matter how obvious it may be to the neutral observer that it is a matter of projections, there is little hope that the subject will perceive this himself. *He must be convinced that he throws a very long shadow before he is willing to withdraw his emotionally-toned projections from their object.* (p. 146; first italics in original, second italics added)

Projection can occur at either the personal or collective level. America collectively “throws a very long shadow” regarding aggression. Through our unwillingness to wrestle with our own relationship with aggression, we project our anger and hatred onto those who do aggression in the external world. One common example of the collective level of projection can be seen in how American society views juvenile aggression. When there were a number of school shootings by teenagers several years ago, much effort was made by American culture (read: adults) to distance our responsibility from the violence caused by teens. Newspapers and magazines decried the “violent teen culture” of video games, movies, and television shows. One magazine even ran a cover page showing “The Monsters Next Door,” with the face of a teenager split in half—one half smiling and happy, one half dark and sinister. The same process is occurring currently with our treatment of the people who engage in terrorism. The projection of all of my aggression onto another person allows me to create an object rather than a living, breathing, feeling person. And it is far easier to be aggressive toward an object (a “monster”) than to a real person.

Labeling: A Form of Projection

The act of labeling has both positive and negative aspects. Space does not allow for a discussion about the positive aspects of labeling, except to offer the metaphor that cancer needs to be identified as cancer before it can be treated properly. The negative aspects of labeling, which we will focus on here, can be very destructive.

I have had the experience of working with families where one (or both) of the parents will describe their teenager as “sociopathic” or “sadistic.” I have also heard the same labels used after school shootings, such as at Columbine, and after September 11.¹⁶ It is a mistake to label groups of people, whether terrorists or adolescents, from a distance as sociopaths, sadists, or any other mental health diagnosis.

Hazelwood & Michaud (2001) describe seven behaviors that are commonly confused with sexual sadism, but which are not sexual sadism. Among these behaviors they list “pathological group behavior” and “state-sanctioned cruelty.” A similar argument can be made with regard to both terrorism and juvenile violence. Again, while either behavior is incredibly hurtful and damaging, it would be a mistake to label the individual terrorists or adolescents as sociopathic (having an anti-social personality). While sociopaths, terrorists, and violent adolescents belong to a group of people who engage in hurtful behavior, it does not logically follow that terrorists (or violent adolescents) are sociopaths.¹⁷ This is a logical fallacy of the

undistributed middle (Hurley, 1985, p. 219). The fallacious syllogism goes something like this:

All terrorists (violent juveniles) engage in hurtful behavior.
All sociopaths engage in hurtful behavior.
Therefore, all terrorists (violent juveniles) are sociopaths.

Which is similar to saying:

All Fords are cars.
All Chevys are cars.
Therefore, all Fords are Chevys.

The second syllogism, while clearly fallacious, is also fairly innocuous. No one is injured or pushed aside if someone were to confuse a Ford with a Chevy. However, the first syllogism, regarding terrorism, is not only fallacious but also dangerous, as it serves only to widen the projective canyon between those who engage in terrorism and those who are victimized by terrorism. Little if any dialogue can occur between groups of people when one group believes the other group is sociopathic. Labeling a group of people as sociopathic or sadistic only serves to objectify that group, setting the stage for more aggression.¹⁸

Denying Aggression: A Way to Support Projection

In America, throwing a long shadow allows us to deny our own aggression and thereby supports our aggressive stance in the world. In America, we live in an aggressive culture (Elias, 1997), yet we often tend to react to aggression (whether juvenile aggression or terrorism) as something strange or different.

Our denial of our own aggressive culture is another way that our aggression becomes projected onto others. And the resulting aggression that follows is hurtful not only to those who are *outside* American society who are direct recipients of American violence (i.e., those people on whom we wage war), it is also incredibly hurtful to those *inside* American society who are powerless and/or marginalized. One such powerless group is American children and adolescents. On a daily basis I see the impact of America's aggressive stance on the children and adolescents with whom I work.

Collectively speaking, America's children are growing up in an extremely dangerous environment, and are at high risk to be traumatized. It is important to remember that while no single factor *causes* aggression, there are certainly a number of factors that have been identified as *contributing to* aggression. Research has shown that a particularly troubling effect of early trauma is that it leads to a significantly higher propensity for aggression later in life (Brooks-Gunn, Klebanov, Liaw, & Duncan, 1995). Yet, when we hear of an adolescent or child who is acting out violently, we frequently engage in a great deal of projection and blaming—looking at the juvenile as an individual aberration rather than a whole person responding to

a vast number of factors, often including an inability to feel safe—either at home, school or other places.¹⁹

Again, being a child or teenager in America today is very dangerous. Let us take a moment to examine the impact of daily aggression on our children. To examine only three issues (there are many), let us look at the issues of: 1) children and guns; 2) children and poverty; and 3) children and sexual assault. Here are some disturbing statistics concerning America's children from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2000), the Children's Defense Fund (2000), and the National Center for Children in Poverty:²⁰

Guns and Children in America

- From 1979 to 1998, 84,000 children and teens have been killed by gunfire (36,000 *more* than the total number of American soldiers killed in Vietnam).
- Children are *twice* as likely as adults to be victims of violent crimes and are more likely to be killed by adults than by other children.
- Nearly three times as many children under the age of 10 died from gunfire as the number of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.
- More children and teens died from gunfire than from cancer, pneumonia, influenza, asthma, and HIV/AIDS *combined*.
- Compared with 25 other industrialized countries, American children (under 15 years of age) are:
 - *Sixteen (16) times more likely to be murdered with a gun*
 - *Eleven (11) times more likely to commit suicide with a gun*
 - *Nine (9) times more likely to die in a firearm accident*
- In the year 2000, for the first time since 1988, the number of child gun deaths per year dropped below 4,000 (the official number of child gun deaths in 2000 was 3,761).

One in Six: Children and Poverty in America. According to the National Center for Children in Poverty's (NCCP) Web site, one in six American children lives in poverty (2001). The NCCP also finds that:

- *America's children are more likely to live in poverty than Americans in any other age group.* Despite significant improvements since 1993, there are more children in poverty today than there were two decades ago.
- *More than 12 million American children live in poverty, 4.2 million under the age of six.*
- *The number of children living in poverty has increased by 1.6 million since 1979.*

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- *The United States' child poverty rate is substantially higher*—often two to three times higher—than that of most other major Western industrialized nations.
- *7 percent of America's children live in extreme poverty* (8 percent of U.S. children under age six), in families with incomes below 50 percent of the poverty line. (In 1999, the extreme poverty line was \$6,145 for a family of three.)
- Finally, *39 percent of American children live in or near poverty* (41 percent of U.S. children under age six), in families with incomes below 200 percent of the poverty line (\$26,580 for a family of three).

Sexual Assault and Children. The National Center for Juvenile Justice (2000) reports that out of all sexual assault victimizations reported to law enforcement from 1991–1996, *67 percent were less than 18 years old.* The age breakdown is as follows:

- 1 percent were 54 years old or older
- 7 percent were more than 34 years old
- 12 percent were 25 to 34 years old
- 14 percent were 18 to 24 years old
- 67 percent were under 18 years old

Of those children under 18 years old who were sexually victimized:

- 33 percent of all victims were 12 to 17 years old
- 34 percent of all victims were under 12
- 14 percent of all victims were under 6

To summarize, we can see that American children are twice as likely as adults to be a victim of a violent crime; are more likely to be killed by an adult than another child; under the age of 10 years old have a 300 percent greater chance of being killed than a police officer on active duty; are almost twelve times as likely to die from firearms than in twenty-five other industrialized nations; have a 20 percent chance of living at or below the accepted poverty line; and have a much greater chance of being sexually victimized or living in poverty than at any other point in their lives.

Consequently, it is not an extreme conclusion to draw that it is not safe to be a child in America today. While these statistics are vitally important to our understanding of the issue of juvenile aggression, they often lie silent in the background of any popular discussion about juvenile aggression. These statistics reflect the priorities of our domestic agenda. It is likely that statistics concerning our foreign agenda show similar denial around aggression. One wonders about the factors that

lie silent in the discussion of terrorism. Most likely they are equally complex in their multiplicity.

While the statistics show that America is a violent nation as far as our children are concerned, there is curiously little awareness about this problem, either in the media or in other important areas in America, such as the political arena (kids don't vote!). When American media focus on aggression, they focus exclusively on individual acts of aggression, which only serves to perpetuate the notion that personal responsibility is the sole factor that impacts aggression, thus continuing to support the paradigm of individualism. American politicians tend to use the violent actions to advance their own positions, frequently with vocal outpourings of empathy for the victims.

With denial of childhood victimization by both the American political and media systems, it is not a far reach to conclude that there is denial in the general American public. And denial of our own aggression creates a ground that is ripe for projection of our shadow of aggression onto the "Other." Consequently, Americans bear some collective responsibility in co-creating an atmosphere of aggression in our world. When our foreign and domestic policies contribute to an atmosphere that supports aggression, then we need to take responsibility for our role in the creation of these aggressive policies if we expect to resolve the problem of aggression in our world.

The Role of Power

Another commonality between terrorists and juveniles with aggression problems is their relationship to power. Both terrorists and juveniles with aggression problems are one-down relative to power. They are *not* the ones with the authority in a given situation.²¹ Let us look at the definitions for terrorism. *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary* (1996) defines *terrorism* as: 1) The use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce, esp. for political purposes. It defines *political* as: 1) exercising or seeking power in the governmental or public affairs of a state, municipality, etc. 2) having a definite policy or system of government.

People who repeatedly have the experience of being unempowered in the political system in which they live are more at risk to perform acts of terrorism. People who engage in terrorism do not have power in whatever system they are operating, and use "violence and threats" in order to gain more (or sufficient) power that will allow them to do whatever it is that they wish to do. Like so many other things, terrorism is in the eye of the beholder. As the victors write history, it is rare that actions of the victor in any particular conflict will be recorded as terrorism. For example, as an American, I have never heard the Boston Tea Party of the American Revolutionary War described as terrorism. Yet—surely that is what it must be under the definitions that we are using for this present work.

Terrorism is a response given within certain political systems. If we broaden the concept of political systems to include the family, then we can view juvenile aggression as a terrorist-like response to the familial political system. In every family,

there is a base of power, and a style of governing that family. Some families are totalitarian, some are complete anarchy—most families are somewhere in between.

In healthy, functioning families, children and adolescents do not have power in the family system equal to the parent. Being a child or adolescent is usually synonymous with having little or no power.²² For example, in America adolescents are generally told where to live and where to go to school by their parents. The adolescents are managed by tight rules in academic, work settings, and organized extracurricular activities. Consequently, an adolescent who has the experience of not having his/her voice heard and/or needs attended to is ripe to become a terrorist—hurtful and aggressive.²³

CONCLUSION

Let us revisit the group that we dropped in on at the start of this chapter and examine how the factors that we have discussed above apply to juveniles who have aggressive behavior problems. First, allow me to provide a little more background about our clinical groups. At our community mental health center, my colleague and I run two groups. The first group is for adolescent males who have used sexually aggressive behaviors. The second group is for adolescents who use verbal or physical aggression. Our clinical experience has led us to structure our groups to have a more significant level of familial involvement than typically occurs in these types of groups. We recognize that aggression is as much a family problem as an individual problem, and that targeting only the adolescent for intervention is often a recipe for failure.

On September 12, 2001, we presented to both groups the exercise described at the beginning of this chapter. That description was a brief composite of both groups. The first and second questions (“What did you experience regarding the terrorist attack?” and “What have you heard others experiencing as a result of the attack?”) were geared toward increasing awareness around victim impact both at the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels. The third question (“What kinds of thoughts or feelings do you think the terrorists had before they attacked?”) was intended to tap into the projections that our group members had around the motivation for terrorists.

The final question (“How have you been a terrorist in your own family?”) was intended to supportively challenge the families to recognize the ways in which each one of them supports and/or contributes to the aggression in their families. After discussing the final question, we taught that the thoughts and feelings that the terrorists may have had were no different from the many thoughts and feelings that each one of us in the group has had at times. We began to tie the terrorists’ thoughts/feelings list back into the various concepts that we have been teaching in both groups, including how the use of “thinking errors” supports aggression.²⁴

We wanted to continue to press home the understanding that all of us engage in thoughts, feelings, and behaviors on the same continuum of aggression, at the

extreme end of which are terrorist actions. We wanted to educate the families that people respond to being victims of aggression—both personally and collectively—in similar ways whether we are talking about a terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, a school shooting, or a screaming match between a parent and adolescent. When we witness aggression, we tend to blame one person or the other—whomever we see as being “at fault.” And we often want to lash out at that person. Frequently because we are uncomfortable with our own relationship with aggression, we turn our backs on those who hurt others—seeing them as somehow “different” than we are. And, as described in the section above on projection, by seeing aggression as something foreign to ourselves we perpetuate the continuation of aggression. Instead, by seeing that we are part of the context that supports aggression, we can understand the aggression better and act to resolve it more effectively.

From what we have discussed above, we can see that contextual factors are very important in understanding aggression. In particular, we looked at the five factors of: 1) misunderstanding the difference between feeling anger and acting on it; 2) the paradigm of individualism; 3) shame; 4) the process of negative projection; and 5) the role of power. It is tempting to put these factors in a linear order and to talk about which factor caused what other factor(s). This approach, however, does not do justice to the complexities and interrelatedness of the factors. Rather than understanding the five factors in a linear fashion, it is more helpful to understand them as five factors among others in a complex systemic relationship.

Combined together, these factors support us in believing that we can place full and complete responsibility onto those who are aggressive, while allowing ourselves to remain virginally pure—or at least to do so in our minds. We tell ourselves that we have no responsibility for the “monsters next door,” because we had nothing to do (or so we believe) with the creation of the monster. If we have nothing to do in the creation of these alien monsters, then we hold no fault in causing—and possibly hold a moral imperative to bring about—the destruction (or at least containment) of these monsters.²⁵

One of humanity’s major tasks in the twenty-first century is to find a more conscious place for anger and aggression in our society—to bring our dragon of aggression out of hiding.²⁶ Pretending that anger and aggression belong to someone else through projection simply does not work anymore. As Bridges (2001) states:

Remember the story of Sleeping Beauty? The curse that put the young woman to sleep was invoked by the “wicked” spirit that wanted to hurt her because the spirit had been left off the invitation list to her parent’s wedding. On a literal level the exclusion is understandable (“Who needs a troublemaker at a wedding?”), but what the story is saying at its deeper levels is that attempting to exclude the bad and increasing the good simply increases the destructive power of whatever was excluded. (p. 188)

Resolving aggression and destruction at any level—in our family, in our neighborhood, in our country, in our world—is extremely difficult and requires a multidisciplinary collaboration. In the words of Wilber (1997),

In other words, if you and I are going to live together, we have to inhabit, not just the same empirical and physical space, but also the same intersubjective space of mutual recognition. We are going to have to fit, not just our bodies together in the same objective space, but our subjects together in the same cultural, moral and ethical space. We are going to have to find ways to recognize and respect the rights of each other and the community, and these rights cannot be found in objective matter, nor are they simply a case of my own individual sincerity, nor are they a matter of functionally fitting together empirical events: they are rather a matter of fitting our minds together in an intersubjective space that allows each of us to recognize and respect the other. Not necessarily *agree* with each other, but *recognize* each other—the opposite of which, simply put, is war. (Wilber, 1997; original author's italics)

When we project our shadow onto the world, we do so at our own peril.
I have met the terrorist, and I am he.
Who is the terrorist in *your* world?

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- Paul Linden's articles cited above and other articles he has written are available for free download at Paul's website: www.being-in-movement.com.
- Tim Warneka is available for consultation and training. Visit Tim on the Web at: <http://www.clevelandtherapists.com/psyche-and-soma.html>.

NOTES:

1. Nothing is written in a vacuum, and I would like to thank the following people for thoughts, feedback, discussion and support on several editions of this chapter: Paul Linden, Mary E. Warneka, Bob Lee, James Johnson, Katerine Osatuke, Kirste Carlson, Phil Emminger, Gary Saltus, Diane Wakeley, Pete Smith, Barb Pagon, Janis Woodworth and Tom Warneka. Special thanks to my colleague and mentor, Debbie Gurney, who co-created the exercise that opens the chapter, and taught me most of what I know about working with adolescents. Thanks to the music of Pat Metheny. My deepest thanks go to my family for supporting my writing—Beth, Christopher, and Bridget. Of course, all mistakes and errors are my own.

2. The phrase “adolescents who use violent behavior,” although cumbersome, is an important distinction from “violent adolescents” or similar phrases that are frequently used in the American media and other venues of speech. It is important to remember that these

are adolescents—people—first and foremost, and that they do particular behaviors. Distinguishing between people and behavior is very important if we are not to objectify (and do violence toward) other people. This distinction holds equally true for people who engage in terrorism. People who engage in terrorism are as much mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters as anyone else.

3. All names, dates, and identifying information presented in this chapter have been changed to protect confidentiality.

4. The germinal ideas on the concepts of the paradigm of individualism and shame came from the work of Gestaltists Gordon Wheeler and Bob Lee (see: Lee, 1996; Lee & Wheeler, 1996; Wheeler, 1996; Wheeler, 2000; Wheeler, 2001; and Wheeler & Jones, 1996). For a related Jungian perspective, see Hillman (1975).

5. While much more needs to be explored and written in this area, I would refer the interested reader to the works of Wheeler and Lee (see above footnote) for further discussion regarding the interplay of shame and the paradigm of individualism.

6. For example, because the Western worldview does not support much exploration of the transpersonal domain, there has been little discussion of the transpersonal issues surrounding anger and aggression. Space does not permit a discussion of these issues in the present work except to echo Goodchild's (in Brooke, 2000) concern that "Until we find again appropriate religio-cultural channels for these transpersonal energies that move through our world and live in us as powerful affects seeking an individual ethical response, we will continue to destroy ourselves and dismember each other, like Pentheus, in ways, both individual and collective, that have become all too familiar today." (p. 207)

7. Paul Linden (personal communication, 2002) notes that both anger and aggression are behaviors, the former being an internal behavior and the latter an external behavior.

8. Imagine a cultural worldview in which a referee was not required in sports, and players were truly responsible for their own actions. Imagine further a sporting culture that held in highest regard the players who took full responsibility for their fouls, errors, and mistakes. Impossible? Healthy children play self-governing sports and games all the time. (And yet we adults, in our narcissism, frequently place children at the bottom of our moral and ethical models).

9. In the present discussion of emotions and thoughts, I want to be clear about the importance of recognizing that both have physiological underpinnings. One encouraging avenue of treatment (further discussion of which is beyond the scope of the present work) that I have been pursuing for a number of years is incorporating somatic education into my clinical work. As everything about human existence has a physiological component, it only makes sense to bring the body into the work in a conscious manner. The somatic work that I practice has its roots in the Japanese martial art of Aikido ("The Art of Peace") and is very much informed by the work of Paul Linden, Ph.D. (1988, 1998), creator of Being In Movement(r) somatic education.

10. There seems to be a strong correlation between the ability to be aware of affective states and the ability to be aware of somatic states. Most of the teens who enter therapy at our center have a paucity of awareness at either level.

11. Having a physiological component, we have more control over when emotions come to us and when they leave us than we ordinarily are aware of, but the predominant cultural view is that emotions come and go like the weather, over which we have no control at all. Adolescence is an emotionally stormy period of time under the best of circumstances. The experience of many (traumatized) adolescents with whom I have worked is that emotions can be very overwhelming. Consequently, I have found it clinically helpful for the population I work with to make the rather black-and-white distinction between the capri-

sciousness of emotions and the choicefulness of behavior. The reality, of course, is much more convoluted.

12. While Elias's comments concerned children, they are equally valid for adults.

13. Ask any therapist who has worked with a male who has been sexually abused. While sexual abuse is horrifically shaming for men and women, in Western culture it is so shaming for a male to have been victimized that the male's shame often becomes a barrier that prevents healing.

14. Reported by President George Bush in his State of the Union address of January 29, 2002.

15. One of the difficulties in identifying projections in others is the fact that one may be projecting oneself. This can be a serious occupational hazard for mental health professionals—in supporting our clients in understanding their projections, we have to be careful about our projections.

16. In currently accepted diagnostic language, the term used to describe sociopathy is anti-social personality disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). The only currently accepted diagnosis for sadism is sexual sadism.

17. This is not to say that neither terrorists nor adolescents *cannot* be sociopaths (although current diagnostic criteria requires a person to be 18 years old before they can be diagnosed with an anti-social personality disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). One can, in the case of adolescents, speak of characteristics of personality disorders, although there is disagreement in the field as to whether this is appropriate or not.). It is a mistake to apply the label of sociopath onto a group of people from a distance. We cannot logically and/or accurately make inferences on the psychological makeup of an individual (i.e., is this person a sociopath?) based on group behavior (i.e., engaging in terrorist activity or juvenile violence). More in-depth individual assessing would need to be done in order to determine if a particular terrorist was a sociopath, or in the case of an adolescent, showed sociopathic characteristics.

18. Again, this discussion is in no way meant to minimize the horror and/or atrocity of the attacks of September 11, 2001. The people who attacked the United States objectified the Americans they killed. I see no merit, advantage, or healing in objectifying in return the people who attacked America.

19. Nothing in this chapter should be read to absolve an individual for personal responsibility for violent behavior. I, along with many other therapists, am very clear in working with aggressive individuals that I support legal consequences (including incarceration) for behaviors that violate our laws. By considering contextual factors, I do not wish to further contribute to a victim mentality that anyone who engages in aggressive behavior may hold. Personally, after hearing the life stories of many of the adolescents who are referred to me, I often find myself being surprised—not at the aggressive behavior that they committed—but why they are not more aggressive than they are. I doubt that I could live through what some of these kids have lived through and not become very violent.

20. Space does not allow for a thorough discussion of the impact of violence in the media on violent behavior in children, other than to highlight La Cerva's (1996) observation that "by the time today's children finish high school, they will have been exposed to not only 16,000 murders but hundreds of thousands of violent acts—none of which occurred in their immediate environment." (p. 121)

21. A discussion concerning the relationship between power and aggression could take up an entire chapter of its own. Space does not allow for a fuller discussion of abuses of power, such as when adolescents have too much power in a particular family system (when the power is abdicated by the parent(s)) or when nations engage in terrorist-like activities in

order to maintain their power base. Both of these areas of study need to be explored further.

22. Again, space does not permit a fuller discussion of those unhealthy families where the teens have too much power (or too much self-esteem). See Bushman, B., & Baumeister, R. F. (1998).

23. The scenario of one (or more) parent(s) who choose(s) to govern the family with violence, although a fascinating area of study, is outside the realm of this current chapter. This scenario has some relationship to the present question, certainly, as many of the adolescents seen in so-called anger management programs come from familial environments wherein many of the members (including the parents) use violence as a primary method of solving problems. And for many of these families, violence has been a method of solving problems for generations.

24. “Thinking errors” are formally called cognitive distortions in the literature of cognitive behaviorism. A thinking error is self-talk that we use to support avoiding responsibility for our actions. Blaming, lying, denying, justifying, minimizing, and rationalizing are all examples of thinking errors.

25. Domestically imprisoning people is not the sole answer either. Wynn (2001) notes that in the 1970s, there were 200,000 people incarcerated in the United States. By the year 2000, America had 2,000,000 people behind bars—an increase of more than 1,000 percent in less than 30 years. Wynn notes that New York City spends \$175 per day (\$68,000 annually) to incarcerate someone at Rikers—which is “more than eight times what it spends to educate a child in public school, or as much as a college education” (p. 9). Further, Wynn reports that in 1985, America spent just under \$13 billion for prison operation. In 2000, America spent \$40 billion—which is more than it spent on university construction in that same year (p. 10).

26. Creating a place for understanding the role of anger and aggression in our lives requires a deeply embodied experience. And by “understanding” I do not mean simply a cognitive understanding, but I mean a fuller, deeper understanding—Brooke’s (2000) “primordial mode of engagement” (p. 4)—an understanding that holistically incorporates all of ourselves into that understanding. I have found some success when working with adolescents who use aggressive behavior in using a somatic treatment approach based on the Japanese martial art of Aikido. While a discussion of my treatment approach is beyond the scope of this chapter, I would invite any interested reader to visit my Web site or contact me for more information or to share thoughts.