

Anger and Violence

“There is a growing attitude in this country that if somebody does something to you, that entitles you to take revenge.”

— David Morse,
Livingston County Prosecutor

It almost seems common to see news reports about employees “going postal” against their employer and fellow employees, motorists fighting it out on the highways because of rude driving, or unpopular school kids seeking revenge on the entire school with weapons of mass destruction. Or, in the case that David Morse prosecuted in Livingston County, four teenage boys nearly killed a man when they went to his home with intent to damage his property, in revenge for having been chewed-out earlier. While the boys were charged as juveniles and will be able to go forward with their lives without criminal records, their attitudes still worry Morse. The boys and their families seem to be blaming the victim’s injuries on the victim’s decision to fight back. Says Morse: “If they continue to think [the victim] is to blame, they will be heading in the wrong direction for life.”

Managing in a Cauldron: Today’s Angry Workplace

Anger is increasing in society. “Just turn on the TV to see anger and violence presented as regular entertainment,” say R. Brayton Bowen, a consultant with Harvard Management Update. Bowen says the trend is obvious: there were 856 homicides reported in the workplace in 1998, more than twice the number a decade earlier. “Work-rage” in the form of sabotaged equipment and property is also increasing. And litigation, for many, seems to

be the first step in problem solving.

When it comes to work-rage, says Bowen, “anger is often triggered by the threatened loss of something greatly valued...I’d rank these three factors as the biggest causes of anger: downsizing, or the threat of job loss; the pressure to do more with less, or the loss of existing resources; and disempowerment, or the loss of control over the work to be done.”

Magnifying the growing pressures in the workplace is the decreasing number of systems for teaching emotional control and for processing anger (for instance, self-discipline was once a skill that many young men developed after they were drafted into the military). And even though organizations give rhetoric to “people being our most important asset,” practices and policies seem to be getting tighter and less forgiving, “robbing employees of their voice and sense of dignity,” humiliating employees by treating them as a disposable commodity, leaving them out of decision-making, and “no excuse” delegation that demands results, no matter what!

Raising Cain: Angry Boys

The homicide offense rate of 14-17 year-old males “exploded” after 1985, surpassing 25-34 and 35-49 year-olds.

— U.S. Department of Justice, 2000

In the book, *Raising Cain*, Daniel Kindlon and Michael Thompson ex-



“You’re tearing me apart!”
James Dean—*Rebel Without a Cause*.

plain that the explosion in “male” juvenile violence can be related to the biblical story of Cain: “A boy who has been disappointed or feels disrespected, who has been shamed or frustrated, grows angry and lashes out.” Glorification of violence in popular culture, easy access to guns, and economic hardship all do their damage. But tangled through all the other problems is a “culture of cruelty” among boys, “where evil is cool,” as Roger Shattuck explains in *The Atlantic Monthly*. A culture where boys often dehumanize each other, physically and emotionally, creating a “hole in their souls.” It all stems from a lack of strong, healthy male role models, starting with their fathers, and including their peer group. Consider a recent 60 Minutes II broadcast that exemplifies male juvenile disorder: a band of male juvenile elephants, hav-

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ing been separated from adult males, went on a haphazard killing spree throughout an African game reserve—until the adult males were brought back to restore order.

The mechanics of male juvenile violence can be understood by realizing three things about the way boys interpret incoming signals:

1. In boys, the motivation for aggression is more “defensive” than predatory, usually in a response to a perceived threat, humiliation, frustration or disappointment.
2. Boys are primed to see the world as a threatening place and to respond to that threat with aggression, always trying to protect a confused masculine self-image, often reading emotional cues in social situations as threatening.
3. Boys often don’t know or won’t admit what it is that makes them angry. As a result, they are prone to engage in explosive outbursts or direct their violence toward a “neutral” target—usually a person who is not the real source of the anger.

Humiliation: The Emotion That Never Disappears

Whether you are dealing with aggression in adults or juveniles, Matthew Brellis of the Boston Globe writes, humiliation is the feeling that seems the most prevalent. It is the agony of every second-grader who did not get a valentine, to every youngster chosen last in a pick-up game, to every employee ostracized by the in-crowd. Humiliation—whether imagined or real—is an emotion that often does not erode with time. In fact, once planted, it can fester.

June Tangney, a professor of psychology at George Mason University, explains that many emotions can easily be released through some physical or psychological mechanism, but feelings of humiliation usually go deep and are more difficult to cope with, so preventing humiliations from happening is the key. There is great weight placed on how others perceive you, in the regard you are afforded. Insults, name-calling, taunts, physical abuse, degradation and ostracism attack one’s very identity, causing you to close-in, then strike back. In fact, Ethicist Sissela Bok, a distinguished fellow at Harvard University and



author of, *Mayhem: Violence As Public Entertainment*, cautions that humiliation is a significant motive in many murders. Many a confessed murderer will acknowledge the reason they killed someone was because of an altercation where they were being “disrespected.”

Can anything good ever come of feeling humiliated? For the exceptional few, humiliation can inspire one to undo that which is the source of the humiliation. Nelson Mandela was inspired by the humiliation of Apartheid and, without malice, devoted his life to human rights and creating a democracy in South Africa. Unfortunately, many who have experienced humiliation incorporate their emotions of anger and resentment into all parts of their life, and will often seek revenge for the way they were treated.

What Can Be Done?

The advice given for managers, teachers, police officers, parents, school kids, and social workers is remarkably similar. Here are some suggestions:

Be a Strong Role Model—Practice the Golden Rule & Lead by Example

Some managers and parents (and boot camp drill sergeants) support humiliation as a way of “fixing” someone. However, there is no data to indicate that such attempts at manipulative humiliation do anything more than satisfy sadistic pleasures. If you must discipline, be fair. It’s the Golden Rule again, the age-old key to good leadership.

Use Your Words—Encourage and Practice Open Communication

Confront situations immediately and constructively, before they get out of hand. Create a “protected space,” a time and place for feelings to be expressed. Don’t hesitate to call in trained counselors to mediate conflicts.

Train for Emotional Maturity

Invest in training that includes sound conflict management skills, supervisory training, leadership training, coaching, communication skills, human relations, etc., for all levels. Emphasize the following:

- > Life isn’t always fair. Learn to deal with it.
- > Your anger, even if warranted, does not justify hurting others.
- > You need to consider how your actions affect others.
- > Don’t see threats where they don’t exist.
- > Controlling your anger means you are strong, not weak.

Practice Zero Tolerance Regarding Violence or Threat of Violence

Have a policy or plan that establishes a protocol regarding violence or threat of violence, brief all employees on it, and enforce it aggressively.

Practice Zero Tolerance Regarding Humiliation

When you discover that someone has been humiliated, make it clear to all that abusive conduct will not be tolerated. Help victims of humiliation to overcome the damage and pain by treating them with dignity and respect. Give the advice to “turn the other cheek,” which does not mean to be a resigned victim; rather, it means not to return evil for evil—feel sorry for those who hurt you, and be glad you are not ignorant like them. 🍌

The Michigan State Police Office of Behavioral Science offers its services for conflict management and anger control. For more information, call Dr. Gary Kaufmann, 517-334-7745, Dr. Richard Smith, 517-334-7747, or Dr. Robert Wolford, 517-334-7028; the toll-free number is 888-677-2999.

Help Kids: Aggressively File the FIA-3200!

Learned Helplessness

Police often struggle to intervene on behalf of children that live in abusive, neglectful, or criminal environments. Too often, police shake their heads and walk away because they cannot find tangible evidence that shows the child has been "directly" victimized, such as signs of physical injury. In the past, without such evidence, police have had little success in removing children from bad parents. Somberly, in an attempt to joke away their feelings of hopelessness, police will say, "I guess we'll arrest that kid when he gets a little older... Because the apple doesn't fall too far from the tree...It's job security."

Overwhelming Statistics Show the Truth

Fortunately, accumulated statistics are now proving what police have always known:

- The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse found that children of substance abusing parents were almost three times likelier to be abused and more than four times likelier to be neglected than children of parents who are not substance abusers. (FAQS about Child Abuse, 1999.)
- An estimated 50% to 80% of all child abuse cases substantiated by Child Protective Services involve some degree of substance abuse by the child's parents. (FAQS about Child Abuse, 1999.)
- As violence becomes more severe and frequent in the home, children experience a dramatic increase (300%) in physical abuse and neglect. (Strauss and Gelles, *Physical Violence in American Families*, 1990.)
- Batterers inadvertently injured children while throwing about furniture or other household objects. Babies may be injured if they are being held when the batterer strikes out. Older children may be hurt trying to protect their mother. The youngest children sustain the most serious injuries. (Maria Roy, *Children in the Crossfire*, 1998.)

- In general, 70% of men who abuse their female partners also abuse their children, either physically and/or sexually. (Bowker, Arbitell and McFerron, *On the Relationship Between Wife Beating and Child Abuse*, 1998.)
- More than 50% of child abductions result from domestic violence. (Geoffrey Greif and Rebecca Hagar, *Abduction of children by their parents*, 1991.)
- Keeping a child after a visitation period for a short time may serve as a way of "testing the waters" before an abduction. (Hatcher et al., 1992.)
- Mothers tended to abduct their children after a court order is made, while fathers tend to abduct their child before a court order. (RCMP, *Parental Abduction of Children*, 1994.)

Of course, statistics also show that if children grow up in an abusive atmosphere, chances are they themselves will continue the cycle, either as a victim or offender. Job security that police don't want, or need.

FIA-3200 REPORT FORM: Bureaucracy That Can Help!

Now that statistics, and other government agencies, are aligned with police to help kids, officers need to do their part by documenting all the supplementary evidence of child abuse and neglect that they often witness when they investigate other complaints. First and foremost, all police should be carrying the FIA-3200 report form in their clipboards and aggressively filing it. The FIA-3200 is a form developed by the Michigan Family Independence Agency for "Report of Actual or Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect" (available on the net at www.mfia.state.mi.us/PubsandForms/index.html). While use of the form was encouraged in a report issued by The Governor's Task Force on Batterer Intervention Standards in 1998, police are still not fully utilizing it.

Here are some of the circumstances that should be documented by police on the FIA-3200. **When children are in an environment that include:**

- Threats of homicide
- Threats of suicide
- Threat of or use of weapons
- Rage
- History of past abuse
- Fantasy of homicide or suicide
- Acute mental health problems
- Someone with an obsessive-compulsive preoccupation with the child, or other family members
- History of stalking
- Centrality of victim to batterer
- History of holding someone captive
- History of pet abuse
- Victim making plans to leave or has already left (which could initiate a reaction)
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse
- Frequent visits by police to the house (how many times?)
- Level of risk-taking by the batterer
- History of depression
- History of anti-social behavior
- Criminal activity within the house or by residents
- History of violence in the family of origin

Police should not expect that filing the FIA-3200 will result in immediate action in every case. However, the FIA-3200 offers an excellent way to start the process working. It creates a case history that is useful for tracking, and can strengthen the hand of police, protective services, and courts when they move to help children stuck in bad homes. The point for police is not to give up! 🍀

For more information on the FIA-3200, and other ways to protect kids, call the Michigan State Police Prevention Services Section at 517-333-4006. *Remember: Protecting kids is every cop's business!*

Crime and “The First Measured Century”

As Americans reflect on the official end of the twentieth century, we ask, “What happened?” The answers are called “history.” In the three-hour PBS program, “The First Measured Century,” Ben J. Wattenberg interviews James Q. Wilson (co-author of the “broken windows” theory of crime prevention), and Francis Fukuyama (author of the “Great Disruption”), for their interpretation of crime statistics. (Learn more about “The First Measured Century” at [http://www.pbs.org/fmc/.](http://www.pbs.org/fmc/))



QUESTION: Tell me about the Moynihan Report.

JAMES Q. WILSON: Pat Moynihan is a remarkable man. His combination of political and academic interests is remarkable. It is like keeping in balance liberty and order.

The particular focus of the Moynihan Report was on the high level of out-of-wedlock births leading to single-parent families. The problem was raising a child under the care of a mother alone with no father present. It was his view, having grown up in a mother-only family, [that] the presence of a father was extremely important. And in the process, he began to wonder how the welfare system might contribute to this problem. And the answer has to be something happened in our culture [a change in] how people feel about obligations.

QUESTION: What trends in the crime rate were you seeing during that period?

JAMES Q. WILSON: Between 1963 and the early 1970s, the rate of violent crime more or less tripled in the United States, at a time when the country was by and large prosperous; and this change occurred in part because the population was getting younger, but that wasn't the whole story.

The rest of it was explained by two other factors: one that is easy to describe—namely, we had stopped sending people to prison, even though the crime rate was going up. The other is harder to describe and impossible to measure. And that is the ethos, the culture of the country, had changed. The notion of “do your own thing,” “strike out on your own,” “turn on, tune out, drop out.” These slogans, this attitude of radical self-indulgence, had affected a significant fraction of the population, and this weakened the ordinary social constraints that were operating on people.

QUESTION: Tell me about the “Broken Windows” theory.

JAMES Q. WILSON: It is the level of disorder that counts as much as crime. Signs of disorder make people



QUESTION: Tell me about the Moynihan Report.

FRANCIS FUKUYAMA: The model from the 1930s [was] people were thrown out of work involuntarily, and you had a lot of bad social consequences flow from that. What Moynihan did [in the 1960s] was to notice that perhaps the causality [also] was the other way around. That it may have been the absence of stable families that was, in fact, the cause of poverty and the failure to transmit certain kinds of habits and social values across generations.

Which of course set off a firestorm at the time, because he was accused of blaming the victim. [People argued] that not everybody had to live up to this ideal of a white, middle-class, two-parent family. And it immediately got caught up with feminism, which had its own scores to settle with the [negatives of] patriarchy and the like.

[But] I think that one of the most remarkable intellectual changes that has taken place over this period was, in a sense, the shifting of the center of gravity of the whole social science community from denouncing Moynihan in the early '70s to largely supporting him, I think, by the early 1990s.

QUESTION: Social scientists are often accused of pushing an agenda rather than staying in the realm of (allegedly) pure, objective science. How common has this been throughout the century?

FRANCIS FUKUYAMA: I think that the tendency of social scientists to use data to support ideologically preconceived notions, in fact, has been prevalent. Because you can always find an equal number of experts arguing polar opposite positions, looking pretty much at the same data. So I think that it's made people very pessimistic and cynical about data in general.

(Wilson Continued)

apprehensive. And when people get apprehensive they tend to stay indoors. If they stay indoors it means that the streets are free for real crime to takeover.

And so we made the argument that if you allow the one broken window to go unfixed, soon all of the windows will be broken. And therefore, we urged the police to pay as much attention to public order—[or, rather,] the elimination of public disorder—by getting rid of prostitutes and gangs on street corners, by painting out the graffiti...[so] good people will feel comfortable on the streets and bad people [will] find it hard to take advantage of them.

QUESTION: What do you think is exceptional about America?

JAMES Q. WILSON: It is extraordinary that there is such a thing as the American character, but there is, and it can't be denied. And what is this country? Why does it produce this character? It's not something that is found in our soil—there is no aristocracy here to pass it on, no established church to indoctrinate it. It is something about the political and social system that was created here. And I think the answer is to be found in the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence. 🍷

(Fukuyama Continued)

But on the other hand—and maybe this is excessively optimistic—[you have some positive things happening]. Over time, in some cases, the weight of evidence simply becomes so overwhelming that it is pretty hard to maintain certain points of view. Or at least the social science allows you to reject certain points of view.

QUESTION: Your point in “The Great Disruption,” as I sense it, is that just as liberty may encourage disruption, liberty itself has within it the seeds of its own renewal.

FRANCIS FUKUYAMA: I believe that moral order is something that is built into the human psyche or into human nature, that people have great cognitive and instinctual drives to create rules for themselves. And in a sense, if they are left to their own devices, they will do precisely that.

So the question is always how you balance the fundamental need for liberty, and [the] lack of constraint over innovation, with the need for people to live by established rules, to relate to one another. 🍷

“From the wild Irish slums of the 19th Century Eastern seaboard, to the riot-torn suburbs of Los Angeles, there is one unmistakable lesson in American history. A community that allows a large number of young men to grow up in broken families, never acquiring any stable relationship to stable authority, never acquiring any rational expectations about the future—that community asks for and gets chaos.”

—Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (Ret.), D-New York



This Isn't the First Time

“We have fled from the political Sodom; let us not look back, lest we perish and become a monument of infamy and derision to the world.”

— Samuel Adams

From An Oration Delivered at the State House in Philadelphia, Thursday the 1st of August, 1776.

This isn't the first time that social thinkers like Moynihan, Wilson, and Fukuyama have made analysis and tried to warn people. In 1774, Englishman James Burgh published a remarkable book called “Political Disquisitions.” Burgh recognized that England was experiencing a Great Disruption or social decay as a result of the excesses of its prosperity. Breakdown of the family, caused by adultery, drinking, gambling, and child neglect had become all too common in England; “these,” said Burgh sarcastically, “are what we of this elegant eighteenth century call gallantry.”

The American colonists, on the other hand, most having fled to America so they could freely practice their more conservative Christian beliefs, detested what England was becoming and tried to keep their distance. Benjamin Franklin, who after years of calling for even tighter connections

between Britain and America, reversed himself: “...to unite us intimately will only be to corrupt and poison us also.” Burgh's book was widely read in America, including by such men as George Washington, John Adams, John Hancock, and Thomas Jefferson. Burgh warned British politicians to address this problem or the social decay would eventually tear apart the fabric holding society together. But instead of helping, Burgh noted that the politicians “have themselves been the grand corruptors and debauchers of the people.”

U.S. history teaches that taxation without representation inspired the American Revolution, but that is only part of the story. It was actually the imposition of high taxes combined with the excessive spending by corrupt English officials in America that alienated the colonists into rebellion—arrogant English officials who openly spent tax dollars to support their own opulent lifestyles of gambling, drinking, and womanizing. Patrick Henry became one of the greatest speakers to raise the colonist's ire by tying together the issues of official immoralities and taxation. And what the American colonists did to show their disapproval is now, of course, history. *Recommended Reading: Fighting for Liberty and Virtue—Political and Cultural Wars in Eighteenth-Century America, by Marvin Olasky.*

Hazardous Material Identification

In the vast majority of Hazardous Materials incidents, the police are the first to arrive at the scene. Many times, police approach too closely because they have not anticipated that a hazardous substance could be involved. Before approaching an accident, police should try to identify the HazMat and communicate that information to a dispatcher.

On most occasions, the HazMat is identified by placards, or maybe the driver of the vehicle will be waiting to give you the DOT numbers, manifests, and shipping papers. When this happens, it makes your job relatively easy. But there are times when this may not be the case. When you lack the benefit of one of the common methods of identification, look for the following.

Container shapes

Truck trailers with elliptical shapes and flat ends mean the trailer is non-pressurized. Gasoline is a common example of possible cargo. A round container, with rounded ends, indicates the trailer is under pressure and may be a liquefied gas. Propane is a common example of such a cargo.

Train Rail Tank Cars

Train rail tank cars with dome fittings, totally enclosed with a large cap, may contain liquid under very high pressure; for example, liquefied petroleum gas. Note: Some retrofitting of rail tank cars may give the appearance of rounded ends, but are not high-pressure containers, but assume the worse until you know different.

Markings and Colors

There are unique markings and colors used to indicate the presence of hazardous materials. Look for the shipping name on the side of the container, which is a legal requirement for transporting many hazardous substances. Company names, logos, and addresses of shippers and consignees may provide clues to the presence and identification of hazardous materials.

Smell, Sound, Touch and Sight

Your own senses of smell, sound,



touch or sight can also help you detect the presence of hazardous materials. Even the color of smoke and flame can help identify the type of hazardous material.

- Remember: If you can smell a hazardous material, you're already too close and it's time to leave.

Odors such as rotten fruit or eggs, freshly cut grass, almonds, etc. are common characteristics of certain hazardous materials. And beware, some chemicals may rapidly desensitize your sense of smell.

- You may not be able to smell the chemical on you second or third sniff, but it is still there.
- If you begin to get sticky on your exposed skin, leave immediately and seek a place to wash properly.
- Irritation to the eyes or skin is also a signal that you are being ex-

posed, that you are too close, and need to seek immediate treatment.

If there is a decontamination station already set up, go through decontamination and advise medical personnel what you experienced. If you are the first responder and still waiting for assistance, your dispatcher has 24-hour hotlines they can call to obtain procedural and medical advice for you.

Knowing what to look for and what to expect can help you in a hazardous materials incident, in both the identification of the HazMat, and keeping you alive. Remember that your dispatcher may be the most vital link to your safety, so tell them everything. 🚒

For information or training on how to deal with HazMat situations, contact the Michigan State Police Hazardous Materials Training Center at 517-322-1190.

