

A Meeting of Minds, Science and Human Experience – Part I



The Impact of Violence, War and Displacement on Children: Effects of Terror and Trauma on Child and Youth Development – The Human Face of Mental Health and Mental Illness –

Today, we are at a turning point in our history. We can no longer continue to accept tradition for tradition's sake. We can no longer go on playing the same old war games without eventually becoming conscious of the dimensions of the destruction involved. We have no other choice but to become fully conscious of the darker aspects of our own cultural heritage. Only then will we cease to pass them blindly on to future generations.

"Victims of a devastating trauma may never be the same (again) biologically. It does not matter if it was the incessant terror of combat, torture, repeated abuse in childhood, or a one-time experience."

Dennis S. Charney, M.D., Dean for Academic and Scientific Affairs, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Professor of Psychiatry and Neuroscience.



[continued]

"All wars, with their turmoil, maiming and killing, wantonly destroy the soul and disfigure the memory of what constitutes a people's very identity, in other words its culture. In Iraq, as a result of thirteen years of sanctions and the chaos that followed the recent armed conflict, eight thousand years of human history now hang in the balance."

Mounir Bouchenaki, Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO 2004

Our Common Responsibility

- **Based on UN statistics, the imposed sanctions and war against Iraq has caused 2.5 million avoidable deaths, including the deaths of 1 million children under the age of five since 1990.**
- **It is estimated that up to 1.5 million avoidable civilian deaths, mostly women and children, have occurred after the war against Iraq in 2003.**
- **There are now over 5 million civilian Iraqi refugees, of whom 3 million have fled Iraq.**
- **Terror and trauma, severe injuries and mutilation, widespread disease and chronic illness, are critically affecting the mental and physical health of an estimated 6 million women, children, and men.**



"The sources of conflict and war are pervasive and deep. To reach them all will require our utmost effort to enhance respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to promote sustainable economic and social development for wider prosperity, to alleviate distress and to curtail the existence and use of massively destructive weapons."

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Former United Nations Secretary-General, Agenda for Peace, 1995



"Armed conflict, more than any other force, has transformed the lives of millions of children and women. Children and their families are not just getting caught in the crossfire. Many are being targeted. Nothing is spared, held sacred or protected. It is the singular characteristic of armed conflict in our time that children suffer most."

Graça Machel. Expert of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, 1996



UN Humanitarian Coordinators for Iraq, Dennis Halliday (1997-1998) and Hans von Sponeck (1998-2000), resigned in protest of the international policy of sanctions towards Iraq. Hans von Sponeck stated, "What has been done to Iraq in the name of democracy and freedom has no parallel in history."

Excerpts from the new series of the Canadian International Youth Letter

"The terrible conflicts that herd people under falsely unifying rubrics such as "America," "the West" or "Islam" and invent collective identities for large numbers of individuals who are actually quite diverse, cannot remain as potent as they are, and must be opposed. We still have at our disposal the rational interpretive skills that are the legacy of humanistic education, not as a sentimental piety enjoining us to return to traditional values or the classics but as the active practice of worldly secular rational discourse. The secular world is the world of history as made by human beings. Critical thought does not submit to commands to join in the ranks marching against one or another approved enemy. Rather than the manufactured clash of civilisations, we need to concentrate on the slow working together of cultures that overlap, borrow from each other, and live together. But for that kind of wider perception we need time, patient and sceptical inquiry, supported by faith in communities of interpretation that are difficult to sustain in a world demanding instant action and reaction."



Humanism is centred upon the agency of human individuality and subjective intuition, rather than on received ideas and authority. Texts have to be read as texts that were produced and live on in all sorts of what I have called worldly ways. But this by no means excludes power, since on the contrary I have tried to show the insinuations, the imbrications of power into even the most recondite of studies. And lastly, most important, humanism is the only, and I would go as far as to say the final resistance we have against the inhuman practices and injustices that disfigure human history." Edward W. Said

“The vast majority of things that we hear today are prejudices and clichés, simply verbal formulas that have no thought behind them but are put up as a pretence of thinking. It is not until we realize that these things conceal meaning, rather than reveal it, that we can begin to develop our own powers of articulateness.

The teaching of humanities is, therefore, a militant job. Teachers are faced not simply with a mass of misconceptions and unexamined assumptions. They must engage in a fight to help the student confront and reject the verbal formulas and stock responses, to convert passive acceptance into active, constructive power. It is a fight against illiteracy and for the maturation of the mental processes, for the development of skills which once acquired will never become obsolete.” H. Northrop Frye



“Civilization has made great strides over the centuries in science, healthcare, the arts and most, if not all, economic well-being. But it has also given a privileged position to the development of weapons and the threat and reality of war. Mass slaughter has become the ultimate civilized achievement.

*The facts of war are inescapable - death and random cruelty, suspension of civilized values, a disordered aftermath. Thus the human condition and prospect is now supremely evident. The economic and social problems here described can, with thought and action, be addressed. So they have already been.
War remains the decisive human failure.” John Kenneth Galbraith*



“We must understand that the Other is a subject like oneself, meaning an autonomous individual who commands respect. Then you need the subjective impetus of interest and sympathy. Without that, there is no comprehension. Today we are in conditions of collective hysteria and Manichaeism that prevent sympathy and therefore understanding. We are in a period where understanding is losing ground because of the war and its consequences.” Edgar Morin



I believe that despite the enormous odds which exist, unflinching, unswerving, fierce intellectual determination, as citizens, to define the real truth of our lives and our societies is a crucial obligation which devolves upon us all. It is in fact mandatory. If such a determination is not embodied in our political vision we have no hope of restoring what is so nearly lost to us - the dignity of man. Harold Pinter



Impact of Armed Conflict on Children (1996)
Report of Graça Machel
Expert of the Secretary-General of the United Nations
<http://www.un.org/rights/introduc.htm>



Leadership and Impunity: The Politics Behind the Traumatization of Children During Armed Conflict (September 2002)
 Nigel Fisher, President & CEO, UNICEF Canada (since 2005)
www.fsu.edu/~trauma/v8/Leadership.PDF



Children and War Special Issue
Centre for Crisis Psychology
Editorial Note (September 2002)
 Atle Dyregrov, Ph.D.
www.fsu.edu/~trauma/v8/EditorialNote.PDF



Is the Culture Always Right? (September 2002)
 Atle Dyregrov, Ph.D., Leila Gupta, Ph.D., MSW,
 Rolf Gjestad, Ph.D., Magne Raundalen, Ph.D., University of Bergen, Norway
www.fsu.edu/~trauma/v8/CultureRight.PDF

Alleviating the Effects of War and Displacement on Children (September 2002)
 William Yule, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology, University of London Institute of Psychiatry
www.fsu.edu/~trauma/v8/Alleviating.PDF



**The Uninvited Guest of War Enters Childhood:
 Developmental and Personality Aspects of War and Military Violence (September 2002)**
 Raija-Leena Punamäki, Ph.D., University of Tampere, Finland
www.fsu.edu/~trauma/v8/Developmental&Personality.PDF



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 Raija-Leena Punamäki, Ph.D., University of Tampere, Finland
www.fsu.edu/~trauma/v8/Developmental&Personality.PDF



War Would be ‘Catastrophic’ for Iraqi Children (30 Jan. 2003)
 Interpress Service News
<http://ipsnews.net/interna.asp?idnews=15571>



(Link currently unavailable) **Our Common Responsibility – The Impact of a New War on Iraqi Children
 International Study Team – Executive Summary (30 January 2003)**
http://www.warchild.ca/docs/executive_summary-en.pdf



(Link currently unavailable) **Our Common Responsibility – The Impact of a New War on Iraqi Children
 International Study Team – Final Report (30 January 2003)**
http://www.warchild.ca/docs/final_report_report_january_29v1.0.pdf



Voices of Youth – Be In the Know – Fact Sheet
http://www.unicef.org/voy/explore/sowc06/explore_2463.html

Perspectives on Violence:

**Births and the Origin of Violence
 Pre & Perinatal Psychology & Health
 Early Child Development and Human Development**

Quick Facts on Violence
<http://birthpsychology.com/violence/quick.html>



Birth and Violence
 Thomas R. VERNY, M.D., D.Psych.
<http://www.birthpsychology.com/violence/verny.html>



What Babies Are Teaching Us About Violence
 David B. Chamberlain, Ph.D.
<http://www.birthpsychology.com/violence/chamberlain1.html>

**Preventing Violence or Developing the Capacity to Love:
Which Perspective? Which Investment?**

Michael Odent, M.D.

<http://www.birthpsychology.com/violence/odent1.html>



**A Tale of Two Criminals:
The Primal Roots of Violence**

David B. Chamberlain, Ph.D.

<http://birthpsychology.com/violence/criminals.html>



Exerpts from: The Origins of Human Love and Violence

James W. Prescott, Ph.D.

<http://www.birthpsychology.com/violence/prescott.html>



From The Natural Superiority of Women

Ashley Montagu, Ph.D., D.Sc., D.Litt.

<http://www.birthpsychology.com/violence/montagu.html>



**We Are All Neighbours:
Healing the Roots of Violence**

Peter Levine, Ph.D.

<http://www.birthpsychology.com/violence/levine.html>



(Link currently unavailable) **How Do People Stay Healthy? What Makes People Sick?**

J. Fraser Mustard, M.D.

<http://imaginewhatif.com/Pages/Mustard.html>



**What Do We Know About early Learning and What Are We Doing About It?
Early Child Development and Human Development - Public Policy**

J. Fraser Mustard, M.D.

www.cea-ace.ca/media/Mustard_Transcript.pdf



Early Childhood - Interview

J. Fraser Mustard, M.D.

<http://abc.net.au/rn/talks/8.30/helthrpt/stories/s209195.htm>



Stressed Moms-to-Be May Bear Kids With Behaviour Problems (16 July 2004)
<http://www.medicineonline.com/conditions/article.html?articleID=1551&catID=40>



**Foundations of Psychohistory - Preface
Psychohistory Is the Science of Historical Motivation**

<http://www.psychohistory.com/htm/preface.htm>



Psychohistory - The Science of Historical Motivation

<http://www.psychohistory.com/index.html>

Foundations of Psychohistory

<http://www.psychohistory.com/htm/contents.htm>



The History of Child Abuse: The Cause of War and Social Violence

Lloyd deMause

http://www.psychohistory.com/htm/05_history.html



The Political Consequences of Child Abuse

Alice Miller, Psychologist

http://www.psychohistory.com/htm/06_politic.html



Peace Makers

In this Canadian International Youth Letter the question is raised: "Is peace a goal which can be worked toward effectively? Or must it remain forever a hoped-for but elusive vision? Contributors, each in her or his own way, have fashioned inspiring personal responses to these questions. Their lives and writings reveal the presence of an overwhelming commitment to the end of violence, and a wealth of thought and effort borne from this dedication. They show peacemaking to be a process based on each person's individual struggle for spiritual growth; and they show us that in the end peacemaking is its own reward.

http://www.paep.ca/en/CIYL/2002/hfs_peace_makers.pdf



This Canadian International Youth Letter (CIYL) is part of a new series with an emphasis on science and human affairs.

The series incorporates cultural and youth studies as well as research-based information on the science of human behaviour, including the effects of war, destructiveness and violence on youth development, global mental health and the environment. Under the theme '**Exploring New Ways of Knowing – A Meeting of Minds, Science and Human Experience**' it is part of the new project of the **International Youth Network for the Advancement of the Sciences, Humanities and Global Bioethics (IYNet)**

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As an NGO member of Forum UNESCO and UNEP, PAEP takes initiatives, working with and for youth to promote and advance the universal values and principles of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and UNEP; to respect cultural diversity as the common heritage of humanity; to foster a new transdisciplinary educational, scientific, environmental and inter-cultural dialogue towards a universal code of ethics for the benefit of present and future generations; to build awareness and to strengthen international cooperation in the protection of the world's natural, cultural, intellectual and scientific heritage.

Contact: Hans F. Schweinsberg – Tel: 416-486-9333 – Fax: 416-483-0002 – paep.utm@utoronto.ca – <http://www.paep.ca>
