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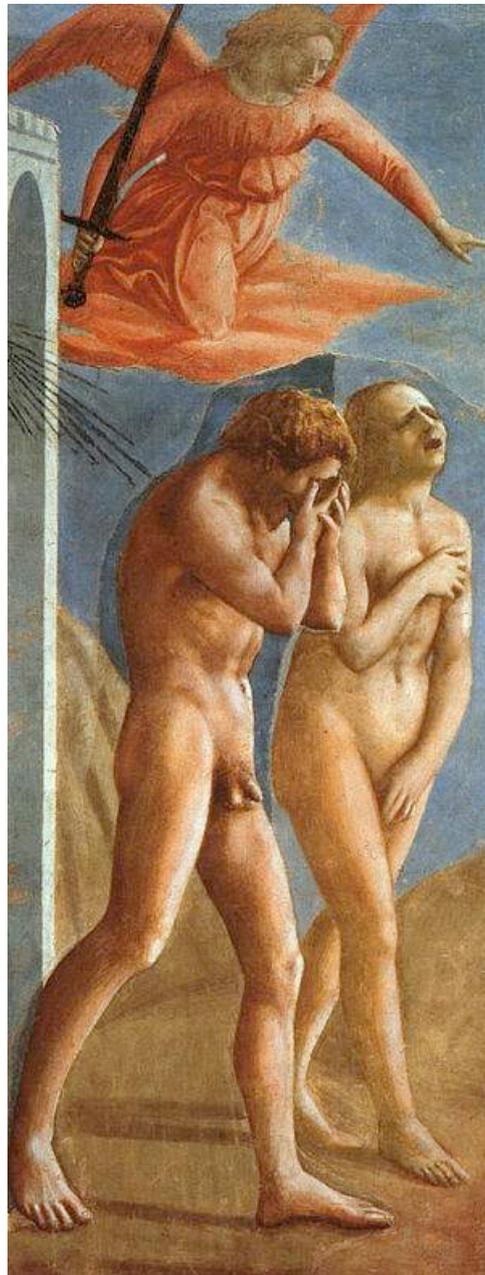


Image:

The Expulsion from The Garden of Eden by Masaccio (1425)

Brancacci Chapel at Sta Maria del Carmine, Florence, Italy

Source:

http://www.artble.com/artists/tommaso_cassai_masaccio/paintings/expulsion_from_the_garden_of_edan

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TJHP

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Editor's note

Universal Shame And Guilt

Shame and guilt are two universal emotions that affect all humans. Whereas shame often refers to the painful emotion that comes from the knowledge of wrongdoing, guilt implies the remorse that comes with the sense of responsibility about it. While a shame emotion can lead to externalization of the anxiety with aggression and violence, a guilt feeling usually leads to more adaptive behavioral responses.

Renowned psychoanalyst Otto Kernberg explains that individuals with personality disorders, especial those with narcissistic and borderline personality disorders, are generally driven by a shame culture rather than a guilt culture. People with narcissistic defenses are thought to lack a cohesive self. When their ego is threatened, they experience feelings of shame and humiliation, something that they have difficulty adapting to. As a result, an aggressive response can often become habitual and those with narcissitic defenses often have difficulties establishing



Otto Kernberg giving Grand Rounds at New York Presbyterian Hospital.

Photo: Fernando Espi Forcen

good quality relationships. Alternatively, individuals with mature defenses and a more cohesive self, tend to be primarily driven by guilt feelings, assuming responsibility for wrongdoing. This creates a scenario for more adaptive responses to stress and a setting for mature high quality relationships with the external world.

Psychiatrist William Breitbart takes the question to an existential level. For him, neurotic guilt refers to our daily worries and anxieties. In contrast, existential guilt refers to a loss of meaning, a feeling like they have not accomplished enough with the life we were given, or failed to live up to their full potential. Existential guilt is closely connected to what philosopher Martin Heidegger called the *dasein*. For Heidegger, *dasein* refers to the unique human experience of being in the



William Breitbart gives a speech at Memorial Sloan Kettering

Photo: Fernando Espi Forcen

world and confronting personhood, mortality and relationships. *Angst* is a type of anxiety derived from the true understanding of the finitude of one's life and existence. This type of anxiety is needed for the authentic experience of *dasein* or being.

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D.

Contact: fespiforcen@gmail.com

Icons of Psychiatry

The Expulsion From The Garden Of Eden

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, Rush University, Chicago, IL

“The Expulsion from the Garden of Eden” is a fresco painted by Italian artist Masaccio in 1425 for the Brancacci Chapel at the church of Santa Maria del Carmine in Florence. It depicts the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden after disobeying God's instructions. According to the book of Genesis in the Bible, God



created Adam -the first man- and Eve -the first woman- using one of Adam's ribs. Both were living happily naked in the Garden of Eden with the only limitation that they were forbidden to eat fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden, otherwise they would die. One day, a serpent approached Eve and told her that if she ate from the tree she would not die and instead she would become wiser, being able to differentiate good from evil. Eve then decided to eat the fruit that was pleasing to the eye, representing an opportunity to gain wisdom. She later offered a piece to Adam who also ate. After eating the fruit, both Adam and Eve realized that they were naked and sewed fig leaves together to cover their genitals and hide their shame. When God realized of what they had done he condemned the serpent to crawl on her belly, the woman to bear the pain of having children and the man to eat and obtain food through painful toil. After

clothing both of them God stated: “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”

According to psychoanalyst Gudrun Bodin the story of the Expulsion of the Garden of Eden represents a metaphor of the beginning of the developmental phase that Melanie Klein called the “depressive position”. In this stage, integration, development and maturation takes place, and the confluence of hatred and love towards the object (the mother or God in this case) gives rise to sadness and guilt feelings. Developmentally speaking, Adam and Eve take an important step by eating fruit from the tree of knowledge, learning to distinguish between good and evil, but were banished from the Garden. The myth shows how painful such maturation can be. (1)

The story can also be approached from the views of Margaret Mahler’s separation-individuation theory of child development. According to this theory, after a normal autistic and symbiotic phase, the child begins to differentiate between him and the mother, and to crawl or walk freely. Finally, during the rapprochement sub phase, the toddler resolves the conflict between staying with his mother or exploring the world, something that allows him to develop a sense of individual stability. In the book of Genesis, Eve and Adam disobey God’s instructions representing separation and individuation. Resultingly, the differentiation between them and God had narrowed and subsequently they were deemed appropriate to confront the challenges and the sufferings of the real world.

The Expulsion of the Garden of Eden is one of the first narratives in human literature on the theme of shame and guilt. Both Adam and Eve, after eating from the forbidden tree of wisdom have to suffer the shame of being naked without being aware of it (Being publicly ashamed by classmates due to the fact of being naked in school without one’s awareness is a pretty frequent childhood nightmare). Following the expulsion, they both have to deal with guilt feelings resulting from disobeying their creator’s rule.

After the expansion of Christianity in the Roman Empire, Augustine of Hippo 354-430 AD developed the concept of the original sin, which soon gained many adepts. According to the original sin theory, Adam’s sin in the book of Genesis is transmitted to the future generations. Followers of the Christian religion have since then practiced baptism as an undoing ritual to alleviate the collective guilt derived from the so-called original sin. While most religions have historically redounded on themes that reinforce shame and guilt, these two are basic emotions that humans have probably faced since the beginning of our existence. Probably even other human species like Neanderthals, Heidelbergensis, Habilis or Erectus dealt with shame and guilt feelings.

In Masaccio's depiction of "The Expulsion of the Garden of Eden", we can appreciate Adam covering his face in shame and Eve lamenting with sadness and guilt feelings. Above are the Cherubim with the flaming sword guarding the way to the tree of life. In this fresco, Masaccio slightly deforms Eve's facial features to emphasize her sadness and frustration, and anticipating elements of artistic expressionism.

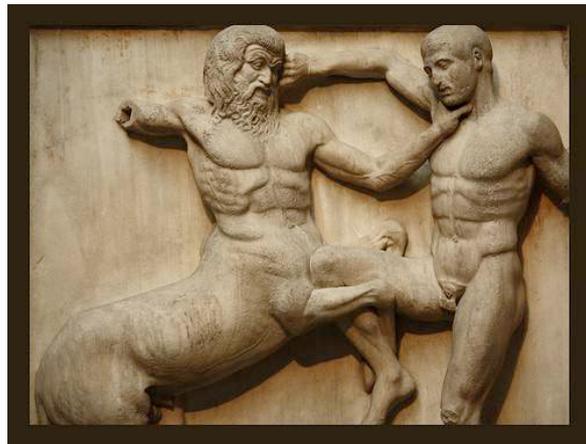
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1. Bodin, Gudrun, "The Expulsion from The Garden of Eden", *Scandinavian Psychoanalytic Review*, Vol 33, Issue 2, 2010 (99-105)

The Battle Of Centaurs And Lapiths

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, Rush University, Chicago, IL

The Metopes are rectangular spaces between triglyphs in Doric friezes of Greek temples. These spaces were usually decorated with sculptures for decoration. A repeated theme in these metopes is "The Battle of Centaurs and Lapiths". In the city of Athens, the Haphaisteion in the Greek Forum and the South Metopes of the Parthenon portray this mythological battle. The Centaurs are mythological figures with the upper body of a human and the lower body of a horse. The Lapiths instead are just regular humans. Psychiatrically, the Centaurs could be viewed as a representation of the id, our instinctual and more animalistic part of our mind. According to the myth, the Centaurs got drunk with wine and interrupted the feast of the king of the Lapiths to abduct their women. In contrast, the Lapiths represent the superego attempting to repress the sexual desire. The battles between the Centaurs and the Lapiths portray the conflict of the ego to keep a good balance between our sexual instincts and our efforts to abide the social norm.



Centaur and Lapith, Metopes of South Parthenon, British Museum, London, UK

Source: flickr.com

Essays

Failure Is (Not) An Option

Aviram Mizrachi, M.D., Department of Surgery, Memorial Sloan Kettering, New York, NY

Only so often we need to look at our selves in the mirror and ask: did I do everything I could have done? Was it a personal or a collective failure? Or perhaps it was inevitable?

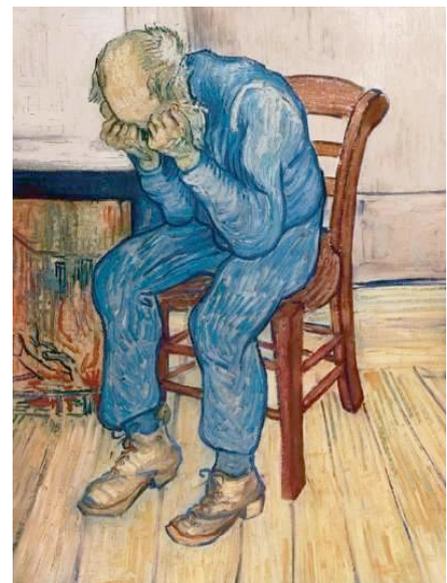
Being a physician is a glamorous job, no doubt about it. Of course, it comes with a lot of responsibility and also with a fair amount of stress. And we can also add the competitive dimension to the equation. Eventually we get a lot of credit for being professional and thorough and we are being measured by our outcomes.

But what does it mean to be a “good doctor”? To succeed professionally, financially or perhaps personally? I guess it’s very individual. However the shame and guilt that one may experience as a physician entails a complex relations between patients and providers, expectations and reality, facts (that some might call science...) and hope. There are many ways of dealing or avoiding this feeling of helplessness, knowing that you could have done more or that things got out of hand and it all boils down to what people are going to think or say. Suppression is one way, rationalization is another and some would even adopt narcissist behaviors and I exclude the true narcissists that lack any ability of feeling compassion.

Eventually we all need to feel needed and essential, whether we possess special powers (to cure in this case) or not. But the trust that patients put in us is stronger than anything else and the potential to disappoint that physicians have is unfortunately underestimated and under recognized.

We should always keep in mind that we exist thanks to our patients and not the other way around. We also need to realize that sometimes we will fail in doing our job and we will disappoint people we have inspired and had given hope to. Nevertheless this is part of our being and only by accepting that we can become better doctors and more important better humans.

Contact: aviramguy@hotmail.com



Old Man in Sorrow (On the Threshold of Eternity) - Vincent van Gogh, 1890

Source: Wikiart.org

Articles

Shame And Guilt For The First Murder: The Mark Of Cain

Carlos Espi Forcen, Ph.D., Department of Art History, University of Murcia, Spain

The origin of humankind according to the Hebrew tradition starts with our forefathers Adam and Eve and his first offspring: Cain and Abel. The story of the first brothers in history also contains the case of the first murder, a fratricide caused by the envy of Cain towards Abel due to God's preference for the younger brother. Since the fall of Adam and Eve, men had been punished to work and gain his food by the sweat of his brow; whereas Cain chose to work the soil, his younger brother Abel preferred to make a living by keeping the flock. It is no coincidence that the first occupations chosen by the children of the first couple were the most common at the time: agriculture and livestock farming. Both brothers worked hard to obtain the best results of their labor and after a big effort both made an offering to God:

In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast (Genesis, 4: 3-5).

God's predilection for Abel's offering seems to be related to the nomadic roots of Jews. As the Genesis and Exodus show, Jews moved frequently around the different lands of Eastern Mediterranean. Keeping flock seems to have been a more successful way of survival than cultivating land and it could explain why God chose Abel's offering over that of his brother¹. Cain was so frustrated and jealous that he could not help taking revenge of his disgrace by following his most basic instincts and killing Abel. The fratricide was the first murder in the history of the world and Cain felt ashamed. Cain's ignominy made him try to hide the corpse from God's sight. However, Cain was guilty and God interrogated him for the disappearance of his brother:

¹ Louis Réau, *Iconografía del arte cristiano. Iconografía de la Biblia. Antiguo Testamento*, vol. 1, Barcelona: Del Serbal, 1995, p. 119.

The Lord said: “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth.” Cain said to the Lord: “My punishment is more than I can bear. Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.” But the Lord said to him: “Not so; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over.” Then the Lord put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. So Cain went out from the Lord’s presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden (Genesis 4: 10-16).

The story of Cain and Abel has been represented in Christian art since the times of the Roman Empire. However, we will focus on some aspects related to the subject of “shame” and “guilt” and its depiction in some Christian works of art of the Middle Ages. A late 11th century sculpted frieze on the façade of the



Fig. 1. Frieze of Cain and Abel. Wiligelmo. Cathedral of Modena. 1099 (ca.)

cathedral of Modena made by artist Wiligelmo illustrates chapter fourth of Genesis in three basic episodes: the offerings to God, the fratricide, and the curse of Cain (fig. 1). On the left, Abel is offering a tender calf while Cain hands a bunch of wheat to a God sustained by a classical Atlas; the following scene shows Cain killing Abel with a club²; and a third moment represents God cursing and marking Cain.

Even if Cain had buried his brother, God warns him that his guilt cannot be silenced because the blood of his brother is claiming justice. The fact has been graphically illustrated on

² A club was usually depicted as the instrument used to kill Abel. However, English and Irish early medieval art and literature presented Cain killing Abel with a jaw-bone similar to the one used by Samson to kill the philistines. The motif became more and more popular in the later history of art. See Meyer Schapiro, “Cain’s Jaw-Bone that Did the First Murder”. *The Art Bulletin* 24 (1942): 205-212; George Henderson, “Cain’s Jaw-Bone”. *The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 24 (1961): 108-114.

the 12th century Greek mosaics of the nave of the Norman cathedral of Monreale, Sicily (fig. 2). Cain is still holding the club on his left hand, but he seems to be turning from God's incriminating attitude out of shame and denying the murder with his right hand. Nevertheless, a small red figure between them, the blood of Abel, demands divine intervention for the crime not to remain unpunished³.

The original text of Genesis is to some extent ambiguous and originated a debate around the redemption or eternal damnation of Cain. Early Aramaic interpretations of the Bible from the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D. -the so-called *Targum*- tend to show a repentant Cain that can be



Fig. 2. The blood of Abel claiming justice. Mosaics of Monreale. 12th century.

forgiven by God for the fratricide. Nonetheless, God does not hesitate to punish Cain and condemns him to be a restless wanderer on earth. For some reason Cain feels threatened by this new errant life and fears that whoever who finds him may want to kill him. In theory the only inhabitants of the earth were his parents Adam and Eve, so Cain's fear has been largely uncomprehended. Saint Ambrose

speculated in the fourth century in his *De Cain et Abel* that he may have been scared of his own parents or the wild beasts that populated the world. Nevertheless, the inner logic of Genesis permits Cain to get married and have children, so presumably the conception that the earth was populated coexisted with the legendary story of Adam and Eve⁴.

Genesis 4 shows that for some reason God feels compassion for Cain and did not want him to die. To protect Cain he put a mark on him for everyone to be able to identify him and threatens that if anyone may dare to kill him will suffer a brutal vengeance. The mark of Cain



Fig. 3. God cursing and marking Cain. Detail of fig. 1.

³ Réau, *Iconografía*, p. 122.

⁴ Ruth Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain*, Wipf and Stock: Eugene, OR, 1982, pp. 5-15.

has been a source of debate and interpretation all over history. The mark had to be obvious enough so that Cain was recognizable, but there is no specification towards the nature of this mark. As we have previously stated on the last scene of the frieze on the façade of the cathedral of Modena God is cursing and marking Cain (fig. 3), but what was the mark? In the last quarter of the 4th century, Saint Basil explained in a letter to bishop Optimus that the mark of Cain was “shame”, the worst punishment he could have had, since everyone would know that his terrible crime had not been redeemed. Basil also stated Cain will suffer from a constant trembling in his eternal wandering. Even if shame was the mark of Cain in Saint Basil’s thought, trembling became a popular and recognizable interpretation of the mark. Through this trembling the shame for his crime would be acknowledged at any encounter with the rest of the world⁵.

Nevertheless, not everyone seemed to agree over nature of the mark. A popular medieval tradition

maintained that Cain had horns like a wild animal, which would purportedly confirm Cain’s bestial nature. The identity of Cain as a wild creature is strongly related to the legend of the death of Cain. There is no information in the Bible about his death, but the primitive law of retaliation (eye for an eye) demanded that if Cain had killed his brother, he



Fig. 4. Lamech killing Cain. Capital of La Madeleine of Vézelay, 12th century.

deserved to be murdered by a close relative. Rabbinic interpretation of the Bible developed the story of Cain and maintained that his descendent Lamech had killed him. The legend was inherited in Western Christian culture and can be found in the Carolingian *Glossa Ordinaria*⁶. The story sets Lamech as a blind man hunting in the forest in company of his son Tubal-cain. The youth sees a couple of horns in the bushes, believes that there is a deer or wild goat and

⁵ Ibid., pp. 17-18.

⁶ Réau, *Iconografía*, p. 125.

tells his father to shoot in that direction. Lamech does not miss the chance and accidentally kills his ancestor Cain. The scene was represented in medieval art: Cain was sometimes depicted hornless, but there are at least two Romanesque capitals in France –one in La Madeleine of Vézelay and another in Saint-Lazare of Autun- that contain a horned Cain. Horns are quite prominent in the capital of Vézelay (fig. 4): a bearded Cain about to be shot is hiding in the bushes with two antlers that convert him into a human-stag hybrid⁷.

Early exegesis established a typological comparison between the death of Abel and the death of Jesus. Cain had killed his brother Abel out of envy just like Jews had killed his brother Jesus because they allegedly knew that he was the Messiah⁸. This conception led to believe that the mark of Cain had to necessarily be a Jewish feature. Isidore of Seville interpreted that the mark of Cain could be the circumcision, a practice that Christians had abandoned since the times of Saint Paul in the Council of Jerusalem⁹. In the 11th century Bruno of Montecassino compared the eternal wandering of Cain and the diaspora of Jews after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and Vespasian¹⁰.

Late medieval Christian mentality could not admit that Jesus could come from Cain's kin. Genesis 4 continues the story of our forefathers with the progeny of Cain that takes us ultimately to Lamech and Tubal-cain, but also reports that Adam and Eve had another son called Seth. It was generally interpreted that Seth may have been a divine gift to Adam and Eve after the personal loss of Abel and the spiritual loss of Cain. Christians generally considered that Jesus came from Seth's bloodline and fantasized around the progeny that Cain's offspring may have produced. Cain's guilt may explain the possible monstrous features of his descendants¹¹. Some theologians argued that the mark of Cain was black skin, what consequently also made his descendants black. The representation of Ethiopians (as black people were called in the Middle Ages) usually takes place in a negative context in European Christian art. From a Eurocentric medieval point of view, blacks were considered savage and evil and they were

⁷ Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain*, pp. 59-63.

⁸ Saint Augustine of Hippo believed that Jews had not been aware of the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, see Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law. Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999, pp. 23-28. Nonetheless, by the Late Middle Ages most Christian theologians maintained that Jews recognized Jesus as the Messiah and killed him out of envy, see mainly Jeremy Cohen, *Christ Killers. The Jews and the Passion. From the Bible to the Big Screen*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

⁹ Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain*, pp. 92-94.

¹⁰ Irvn M. Resnick, *Marks of Distinction Christian Perception of Jews in the High Middle Ages*, Washington D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012, pp. 206-208.

¹¹ John Block Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2000, pp. 87-98.

frequently depicted torturing Christ during the Passion¹². It was argued that Cain was punished to lose a harmonious complexion and had become black and terrible. A 13th century English psalter now preserved in Saint John's College, Cambridge, perfectly illustrates that it was believed that Cain's mark was blackness (fig. 5). A God-Christ is cursing and marking Cain, who instantaneously becomes black, assumes negroid features – curly hair and thick lips-, and two black horns sprout from his forehead. Cain as a black man has had a long history that went far beyond the Middle Ages. Joseph Smith –the founder of Mormons- stated in the early 19th century that blacks were Cain's offspring after being marked by God, this denigrating idea was unfortunately used to justify slavery in America until the 20th century¹³.

From a biblical point of view the history of the first murder was used to stress alterity from a theological and racial perspective. The shameful murder of Cain and the mark he received from God was successfully employed to discriminate minorities in medieval Christian Europe, either because they practiced a different religion or because they just looked different.



Fig. 5. God cursing and marking Cain. English Psalter. Saint John's College, Cambridge. 13th century.

Contact: espforce@gmail.com

¹² Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval*

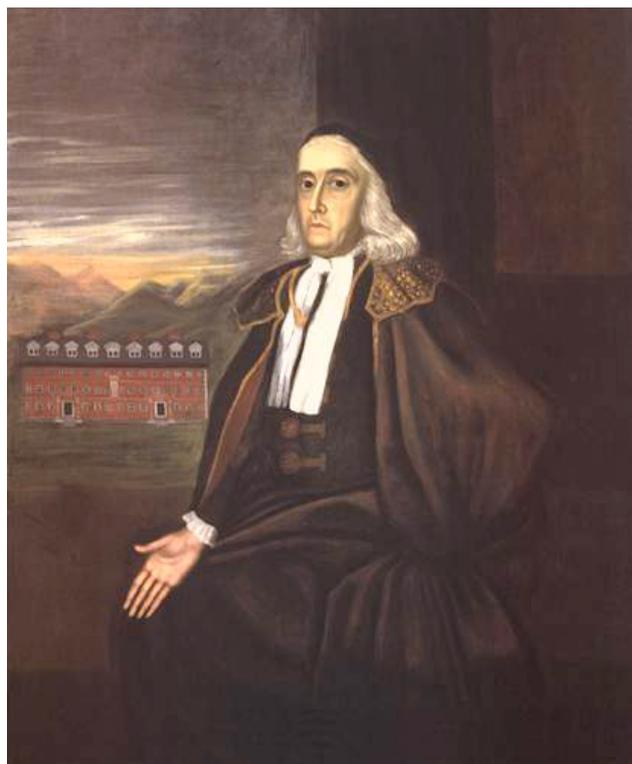
Art, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003, pp., pp. 79-93; Ruth Mellinkoff, *Outcasts: Signs of Otherness in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages*, vol. 1, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1993, pp. 126-127.

¹³ Friedman, *The Monstrous Races*, pp. 100-102; Mellinkoff, *The Mark of Cain*, pp. 76-80.

William Stoughton's Shame Avoidance At The Salem Witch Trials

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, Rush University, Chicago, IL

William Stoughton (1631-1701) was the Chief of Justice during the Salem Witch Trials in Massachusetts in 1692-1693. Stoughton was born in England but soon moved with his parents Israel and Elisabeth Stoughton to Dorchester, Massachusetts. At the age of 19 he graduated in theology at Harvard College and then returned to England to continue his religious studies at the New College in Oxford. Despite no formal legal education he was appointed Chief of Justice for the Oyer and Terminer court that handled the witch accusations in Salem by Governor of Massachusetts Sir William Phips. (1,2)



William Stoughton by unknown artist, c. 1700, Harvard University Art Museum

Source: harvardartmuseum.org

Stoughton and the Puritanism

Stoughton was an adept of the Puritan Church. Puritans believed the English Church had been only partially reformed since the separation from the Catholic Church. Because of that opinion, they were trying to “purify” the Church from all Catholic practices. Puritans believed that Jesus Christ was above all other figures (like Virgin Mary or the Saints). They also believed in education so that anyone could read the Bible for himself or herself and gave special importance to the role of the family in order to facilitate the devotion for God. Puritans publicly punished drunkenness and sexual relations outside of marriage. Puritanism became very popular in the colonial New England. Since then, Puritan values have been deeply rooted in American values and culture too. Like most Christian religions, Puritans believed in demonic forces,

possessions and witchcrafts. Furthermore, Stoughton was a close friend of the two influential Bostonian Puritan ministers, Increase Mather and his son Cotton Mather, author of “The Invisible Wonders of The World.”

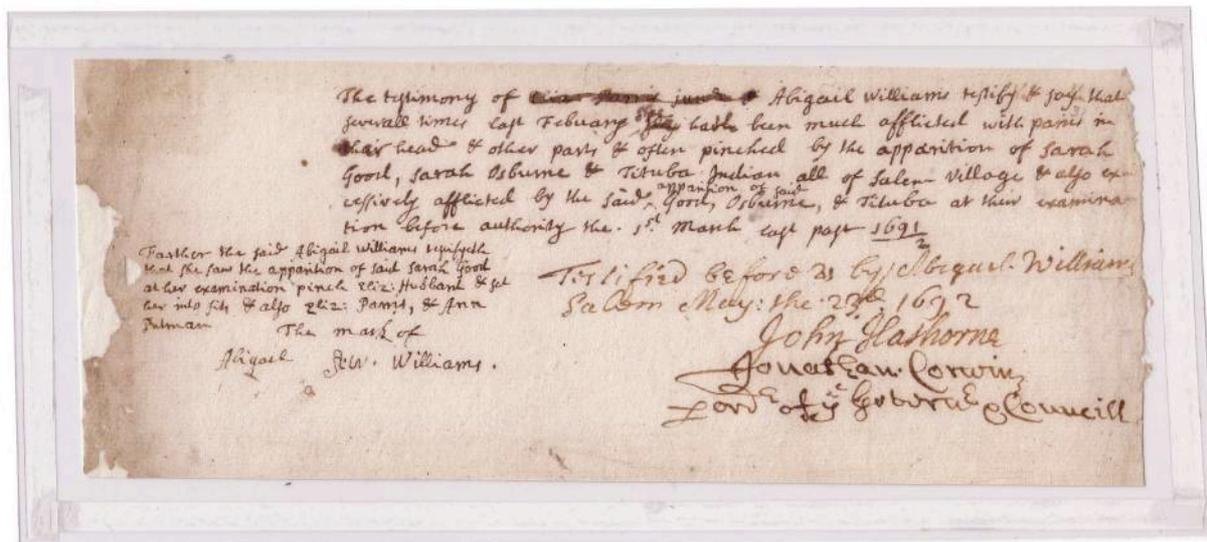
Salem Witchcraft Hysteria Outbreak

In contrast to the thousands of executions due to allegations of witchcraft practice in continental Europe during the Renaissance (especially in Germany), in the United States, witchcraft accusations were rare. The famous witchcraft outbreak of Salem started innocently after two children; 12-year-old Abigail Williams and 10-year-old Betty Parris were playing fortune telling about their future husbands with the then famous game the “venus glass.” The game consisted of interpreting the shapes of an egg after dropping it in a glass to predict the future, something known in history as oomancy or divination of the egg. Soon after, the two girls began to show symptoms of agitation, flailing of their arms, and unusual postures. Betty’s uncle, Reverend Parris took the girls to physician William Griggs who did not find a medical explanation and suggested they could be victims of witchcraft practice. Parris then suggested his slave Indian woman Tituba to bake a witchcake with rye and the girls’ urine and feed it to a dog. If the animal showed similar signs, that would be evidence of witchcraft practice. Shortly other girls in the village like 12-year-old Ann Puntman Jr. and 17-year-old Elisabeth Hubbard began to show similar signs of witchcraft victimization. This led to the first three accusations of witchcraft practice: Tituba, Sara Good and Sarah Osborne. (2-3)

These three were classical victims of these type of accusations, Tituba was an Indian slave, Good was a beggar living in poverty and Osborne had remarried an Irish man after becoming a widow, did not go to church and had legal issues with the Puntman family. While Good and Osborne denied the accusations, Tituba admitted to being the "Devil's servant." She stated that a tall man dressed all in black came to them, demanding they sign their names in a great book. She said there were other names in that book and also said that Good had ordered her cat to attack Elizabeth Hubbard, causing the scratches and bite marks on the girl's body. The young accusers agreed. By pleading guilty and collaborating, Tituba was put in jail but released after the trials ended. However Good and Osborne, who claimed innocence, were imprisoned and sentenced to death. (2-4)

The Witch Trials

The act of pleading guilty while accusing others could save the indicted from execution. As a result, up to 40 people were expediently accused of witchcraft and sorcery. To deal with the increasing number of accusations, Governor Phips created a special court of Oyer and Terminer (hear and determine) naming William Stoughton as chief of justice. Some of the



Accusation of Sarah Good, Sarah Osborne and Tituba by Abigail Williams. Document signed by judges John Hathorne and Jonathan Corwin

Source: Salem Witch Trials Documentary Archives
<http://salem.lib.virginia.edu/home.html>

judges were John Hathorn, Jonathan Corwin, and Samuel Sewall among others. Whereas those initially accused were from lower social classes, over time, respected community members were also accused and sentenced to death. When Rebecca Nurse, an elderly woman and highly regarded in the community, was ruled innocent by the jury, Stoughton ordered them to reconsider their position. After that, Nurse was declared guilty and sentenced to death. An extraordinary case was the accusation of Giles Corey who knew the law and denied to enter a plea by not stating either guilt or innocence. The judges attempted to make him plea by a process called “peine forte et dure”. In this process the prisoner laid naked under a table and was pressed with rocks until he pleaded. Legend says that prior to his death two days later, his last words were “more weight.” (3,4)

The evidence of witchcraft practice was based on the testimonies of the accusers and alleged witnesses. Stoughton and the judges decided to accept accusations based on spectral evidence, that is to say, based on the deeds committed by the spirits of the accused. While Stoughton had been advised by Increase Mather not to use spectral evidence alone, since the Devil could well trick them by taking the form of an innocent person, Stoughton believed that God would not allow the Devil to do such a thing, therefore, for him; spectral evidence was enough for building an argument of witchcraft practice. Other forms of accusation could be based on finding special ointments, remedies, books or horoscopes in the witch's possession as

well as examination of the skin containing lesions characteristic of what were termed "devil's marks" or "witch's marks." It was believed that the Devil would confirm his pact with a witch by giving her or him a mark of identification. Devil's marks included a variety of skin lesions described as flat or raised, red, blue, or brown lesions, sometimes with unusual outlines. (5,6)

At some point nearly half of the people in town had been accused and the court's methods were put into question. For instance, John Hathorne usually started by assuming that the accused was guilty. The situation was spiraling out of control and led to growing criticism among the locals. Finally, even the Governor's wife, Lady Mary Phips had been accused. Soon afterwards, the Governor forbid the use of spectral evidence and decided to dissolve the court of Oyer and Terminer entirely. Stoughton responded to this decision with rage, and ordered the execution of all suspected witches who were exempted by their pregnancy. Governor Phips denied enforcement of the order causing Stoughton to leave the bench. Shortly afterwards, all the people imprisoned based on spectral evidence were released. (2,3,4))

Psychiatric Discussion

The circumstances leading to the Salem accusations might be better explained by a case of witchcraft hysteria. In Europe there had been multiple cases over the centuries. While classically in Europe, alleged witches were executed by being burnt alive at a stake, the witches of Salem were executed by hanging. This likely reflects the relatively rarity of witch hunts in New England at the time. Whereas intoxication with ergots from



The still standing house of Jonathan Corwin, judge at the Salem Witch Trials, 1645. (also known as the Witch House)

Source: ghost-lounge.blogspot.com

rye bread has been proposed as a possible explanation for the demonic visions in the accusations based on spectral evidence, this is less likely the case here with such a high number of accusations. Instead, hysteria, group paranoia or in more specific DSM terms, shared psychotic disorder seems more likely. The little girls that began the accusations, showed

psuedoneurological signs and seizure like activity. According to Dr. Griggs, these were not compatible with a medical or organic disease. As a result, based on this data, these girls most likely had some type of conversion disorder. (4-6)

The Salem trials were not exempt from contemporary criticism. For instance, judge Nathaniel Saltonstall refused to participate in the trials after being assigned by Governor Phips as one of the judges. Thomas Brattle, a Bostonian merchant witnessed one of the trials and wrote a letter to an English clergyman presenting an argument against the legal premises and procedures involved in the afflictions, accusations, and executions, with a particular focus on the validity of spectral evidence in proceedings. A few years after the executions, judge Samuel Sewall and accuser Ann Puntman Jr. publicly apologized for their involvement in the trials. That was not the case of William Stoughton, who never apologized for his deeds. (2,4,7,8,9)

Stoughton headed the court and was most zealous in attaining convictions. Against the opinion of many others, he admitted spectral evidence. When Governor Phips dissolved the court of Oyer and Terminer, Stoughton was enraged and ordered the execution of the imprisoned women whose execution was postponed due to their pregnancy status. For Stoughton, the dissolution of the court probably meant a narcissistic injury, an attack against his judgment and leadership. If proved wrong, he would have to face public shame, something unacceptable for a narcissistic person with an uncohesive ego. His decision to continue with the executions was the result of an overcompensating and self-preserving narcissistic rage. That way he would strengthen his position and he would continue to build his case in an attempt to avoid potential shame. He was never able to demonstrate empathetic acknowledgement of his role in the execution of many innocent lives.

Contact: fespiforcen@gmail.com

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Shame And Guilt – For Better Or For Worse

Simon Wein, M.D., Pain and Palliative Care Service, Davidoff Cancer Center, Petach Tikva, Israel

'Shame and guilt are noble emotions essential in the maintenance of civilized society, and vital for the development of some of the most refined and elegant qualities of human potential'.

Willard Gaylin (1)

For better and for worse, shame and guilt enmesh the individual with society.

Let us start with the individual.

The individual

Guilt

Freud said the super-ego is a symbolic internalization of the father figure. The super-ego internalizes cultural rules taught by parents and those who might take the place of parents — educators, clerics, and mentors. The super-ego acts as our conscience (a guiding and reprimanding father), defining right and wrong and establishing taboos. (2) This internal set of rules lays the foundation for guilt.

When a person judges that she has compromised her own set of rules of right and wrong, she feels guilty. Guilt is initially focused on the wrong action, and not the person — although subsequently the person feels rotten.

Shame

Shame starts as a failure to live up to society's obligations and opinions and ends up with humiliation and loss of honor. A shame culture posits that a person's self-worth is determined by society's expectation, not by the individual's conscience (in contradistinction to guilt) (3). When ashamed we are acutely aware of how we appear to others. We are shame-faced.

Shame is subject to complex psychological factors. Many factors determine why some people are more constrained by public opinion than others – self-respect, self-confidence, maturity, life-experience, rebelliousness, leadership, courageousness.

In addition there are people who lack shame and/or guilt. They are held back by neither the cultural map nor an internal gyroscope. These people are variously labeled anti-social, sociopaths, psychopaths and narcissists.

Society

Next we should touch on the relationship between guilt, shame and society.

Cultural anthropologist Ruth Benedict coined the distinction between cultures of shame and cultures of guilt. She described both shame and guilt as means of enforcing obedience and conformity, and constraining the social behaviour of individuals – lest the rot set in. (4)

Punishment and ostracism is a feature of shaming in all societies and is used to modify behavior in relationships, the workplace and politics. In shame cultures, people are acutely aware of society's rules – written and unwritten (5). Society judges that the individual broke laws and taboos and must pay. The individual may or may not agree. If the individual disagrees she may not have the strength to ignore the society (including parents and family) and to tell them - be damned. I am not ashamed of being homosexual. I am not ashamed of supporting abortion.

On 26 June 2015 the US Supreme Court declared that gay marriage was a constitutional right. This historic milestone gives pause to contemplate how homosexuality became mainstream against the forces of shame and guilt.

When coming of age in the 1970s I had a friend – also Jewish and from a traditional background. We confided about things and he confessed to being homosexual. He knew it was 'wrong' according to the Good Book but he explained that this was the way God made him. He said feeling guilty did not make sense to him given how strongly he felt his biological urge, as

he put it. But what did cause him much grief was the hurt and shame it would bring to his family in a tight-knit community. He was acutely aware of the judging eyes and stayed in the cupboard for a long time. This was in the late 1970s, remember. My recollection is that shame was more powerful than guilt in determining when society would openly accept homosexuality. And this is presumably why the words 'gay' and 'pride' were chosen, in order to overcome shame and its attendant humiliation. Today my friend has lived in an openly gay relationship for over 20 years but feels no need to marry – just as, he reminds me, many heterosexual couples do not marry and no longer feel guilt nor shame about 'living in sin'.

It is mighty difficult to remove shame once you have been tarred and feathered. It is like an indelible stain. In shame cultures wrongdoers want to disappear off the face of the earth – by anonymity of exile or even suicide.

Honor killing and suicide

The family unit, not the individual, is often viewed as the main source of honor in shame cultures. Behavior judged as inappropriate is seen as bringing shame to the family through the eyes of the community. In a shame culture the humiliation can be erased through a killing - an honor killing.

Honor suicide aims to escape the shame of infidelity (or even suspicion of), financial disaster, or defeat in battle.

Traditional Japanese, Korean and Chinese culture are sometimes said to be 'shame-based' rather than 'guilt-based'. Honor killings are also found in the Middle East, the Indian sub-continent and in the past Greece, Turkey and Cyprus. (6)

Final thoughts

However I think this dichotomy between shame and guilt cultures is too simplistic. Most societies have elements and gradations of both, and most individuals respond to both shame and guilt. A person may be simultaneously racked by guilt and be shame-faced.

Guilt is driven by the individual and begets self-analysis and responsibility, via an internal locus of control.

On the other hand, shame, an external locus of control, is shaped by society, demands less self-reflection, and downplays the role of individual conscience. This is described as having a greater focus on etiquette than on ethics.

In other words guilt attaches to the act and its consequences, whereas shame attaches to the person. 'Hate not the sinner but the sin', is the basic axiom of a guilt culture' (3).

The Jewish and Christian traditions emphasize guilt. Much humor has been got at their expense but the restraint and brakes these traditions place on society – in providing an absolute set of values and not moral relativity *ad absurdum* - has, I think social virtue and benefit.

What happens to a society in which religion fades and individuals lose their sense of guilt, and when the society no longer enforces shame in favor of the godhead of autonomy? Is this the story of the modern (Wild) West?

It seems to this author that it is a problem if my self-esteem, indeed if my survival, were to be dependent on someone else's sense of honor or shame. My view is that a primarily guilt culture tends to be more mature, creative and flexible than a mainly shame one. It allows the individual to repent and repair whilst safeguarding the individual as the ultimate bearer of consciousness.

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Contact: simonwe@clalit.org.il

Effects Of Cinema On Psychological Wellbeing: Time For An Unhappy Ending?

Stephanie Yarnell, M.D., Ph.D.¹⁻³, Brian Mac Grory, M.D.⁴

¹Department of Psychiatry, Yale Medical School, New Haven, CT, U.S.A.

²Neuroscience Research Training Program, Yale Medical School, New Haven, CT, U.S.A.

³John B. Pierce Laboratory, 290 Congress Avenue, New Haven, CT, U.S.A.

⁴Department of Neurology, Yale Medical School, New Haven, CT, U.S.A.

Introduction

Considered amongst the most famous and standardized themes within narrative filmmaking, the Hollywood ‘happy ending’ has become almost ubiquitous in American cinematography (MacDowell 2013). The ‘obvious intelligibility’ of the term happy ending is demonstrated through the immediate recognition and understanding by the public without need for clarification; some have pointed to this as proof of the near omnipresence of happy endings in Hollywood cinema (Bordwell and Thompson, 1990). Often described in such ways as standard, standardized, predetermined, predictable, typical, necessary, inevitable, required, requisite, statutory, mandatory, expected, usual, customary, formulaic, and even cliché, it is perhaps unsurprising that happy endings have not been viewed kindly by film studies. Indeed, it has routinely been argued to be the exemplar of Hollywood’s worst conventions (MacDowell 2013).

Happy endings often follow a recognizable pattern. The happy ending is said to be ‘the story of good against evil, with no possible doubt as to the outcome. Boy will get girl, the villain will get his just deserts, dreams will come true as though at the touch of a wand’ (Lang 1948). American cinema then is argued to be enacting the most classical of Freudian psychoanalytic paradigms on the subject of Westernized culture in that one sees ‘the movement from the adventurer, lawless and faithless..., to the husband, the future father, and good citizen’ (Bellour 1979). It does so through creating scenarios in ‘which all loose ends are usually neatly tied up and the values of the status quo confirmed – the couple, family, society and the law’ (Creed 1995). Indeed to not do this has likened to practical resistance ‘with aspirations toward radical politics’ (Russell 1995).

Social Effects

Happy endings promote complacency with the societal status quo. Happy endings have been said to be ideologically conservative (MacDowell 2013). The term alone is frequently all that is needed to elicit suggestions of an 'ideological straightjacket' (Wood 1998) whose sole purpose is to 'reaffirm the status quo of American society' (Benshoff and Griffin, 2004), as well as the culture of Hollywood itself (Maltby 2003). Routinely, this convention is regarded as not only an 'extrinsic norm' (Bordwell 1986), but also fundamentally ideologically pernicious (MacDowell 2013). Through film, cultural stereotypes regarding appropriateness of reactions and means of coping with perceived troubles are reaffirmed (Wedding and Niemiec, 2003). Happy ending then have the ability to, in part, distinguish between malfunctioning ideological systems of belief as compared to working systems with occasional difficulty. This effect is accomplished when the viewer leaves with the impression that, whilst things might be hard at any given time, ultimately, the system will right itself negating the need to become involved in such matters. Unhappy endings, on the other hand are often used to call people to action (Milburn 2012). In this way, unhappy endings are needed to help motivate people to reanalyze their situation, government, society, culture, religion, and even the world as a whole. Happy endings then are necessary for the re-establishment of order and rendering any experimentation with expressive behavior to be a matter of 'no consequence, contained within the safe, unexplored, unconsidered, and trivialized space of entertainment' (Maltby 2003).

Perhaps the answer is a return to realism in film. In boxing in ideology, happy endings have become a 'prison' for both artists and characters, as they are unable to be free to experience real life (Wood 1998). Life does not work like a plot line; real life does not have a clearly defined beginning, middle, and neatly tied up end. Life is not about happy endings. Happy endings are not truthful. When faced with this reality, the filmmaker, Charlie Kaufman, questioned the utility of reflexively thinking 'life sucks' compared to the ones depicted on screen, suggesting that life was more of a 'muddle' wherein 'these movies are just dangerous garbage' (Ortner 2012). A.O. Scott went on to say that 'to counter the tyranny of fantasy entrenched on Wall Street and Washington, as well as Hollywood,' one might want to reengage with the world, 'as it might reassert itself as an aesthetic strategy. Perhaps it would be worth considering that what we need from movies, in the face of a dismaying and confusing world, is realism' (Scott 2009).

Foreign films have a long-standing tradition of so called realism. The arguments so far have been based primarily on American cinema to the exclusion of foreign films (Gregerson 2010). The dissimilarities in standardization of film endings between various cultures, only acts to exemplify the differences in philosophy between these societies in both mode of problem

solving and cultural experience (Wuss 2009). It follows then that films from other cultures may not have this same inherent bias. Indeed, films from other parts of the world have long been noted to more commonly have sad or tragic endings. As early as 1914, the difference in happy and unhappy endings was well known in Russian cinema. Reportedly, films imported into Russia at that time, routinely had happy endings exchanged with unhappy ones and exported films with originally unhappy endings had new happy endings inserted for foreign audiences (Withall 2009). Russians were not alone in this; Scandinavian, French, German, etc all not only allowed for, but expected, the presence of unhappy endings in their market. But what makes these cultures different from America in this regard?

A brief review of cinematic history may begin to shed light on the cultural differences found in film. In the 1920s, it was discovered that through editing, film makers could construct politically motivating works (Withall 2009). Examples of this abound including such films as *Ten Days that Shook the World* (1928), *The Old and the New* (1929), and *Navy Vavilon* (1929) (Withall 2009). Film, in this era, was used to excite audiences and call them to action. Based on the political climate of the world at that time, it made sense to do so. However, around this same time in America the Hays Code went into effect ensuring that, amongst other things, no film would lower the moral standards or create sympathy for the violation of law, natural or human. The end result was a profound difference in the ways in which events, people, and social norms were portrayed on film. By the time of its repeal in 1968, a film trope and expectation amongst American audiences towards the happy ending had been created. Ironically, it was, in part, repealed as a result of increasing competition from foreign films which were more willing to push the proverbial envelope.

Effect on mental health

There is minimal evidence for the use of happy endings to enhance mental health. Up until now, the discussion on happy endings has centered on societal effects to the exclusion of the individual. Some clinicians have asserted therapeutic value in assigning patients viewings of certain scenarios played out with happy endings (Gregerson 2010), as this was believed to be a gentler mode of representation when compared with the harsh realities of the modern world (Bettleheim 1976). However, there is a general paucity of research indicating effectiveness of cinema as a strategy in psychotherapy (Berg-Cross et al., 1990; Hesley and Hesley 1998; Sharp et al., 2002; Schlenberg 2003; Wedding and Niemiec 2003; Gregerson 2010). Further, while previous studies demonstrated film can often bring about reflection, arouse emotion, produce empathy, and introduce ethical dilemmas (Raingruber 2003), these results were found to be temporary and overall empathy has been shown to return to baseline shortly after viewing (Wilt

et al., 1995). Taken in totality, it is not clear that viewing films with happy endings contributes to any lasting positive mental health effects.

Happy endings may have negative psychological effects. Happy endings created by movies far too often end with the punctuating fairy-tale phrase “happily ever after” (Gregerson 2010). Post-modern critics of positive psychology have long called for the addition of “or not” to these overly romanticized endings (Gregerson 2010), as modern day life is full of struggles, difficulties, and may not be entirely pleasant at times. The apparent crossroads of overly positive cinematic endings and real life causes ‘reality problems’; viewers become further removed from reality rather than exploring more deeply their own personal realities (Held 2004). Furthermore, the reverberations of these staged unmitigated pleasantries become entangled in the viewer’s life creating the never-ending sense of a shifting ‘ever after’ that many times manifests with crisis (Gregerson 2010). Therapists and mental health workers are then called upon to restore mental health often by pushing aside these notions of ‘happily ever after’ and working through the actual grime of modern life (Gregerson 2010). Luckily, at least for now, patients tend to trust mental health guidance from a therapist more than from the media itself (MacHaffie 2002).

Child development

The effects of romanticized cinema on children is not fully known at this time. The idea of a happy ending requires a dichotomous view of the world; things necessarily are either good or bad, black or white. Children grow up in a world divided into good and bad with artificially created happy endings. Childhood for them is packed full of clear-cut villains and happy endings wherein the hero will always win (Craig and Muchamore 2014). Only, the world is not so black and white and villain/hero not so clearly defined. Also, movies are laden with propaganda conditioning children to believe in fighting for justice and ‘what is right’ (Craig and Muchamore 2014), but ideals and actions of real life are almost always far more complicated than those espoused in film. Is it any wonder that many young adults, especially those returning from war, are increasingly disillusioned with society? Adolescence, as depicted in modern film, is devoid of the rite of passage in American culture (Gregerson 2010). Adulthood then is a thrust into the reality that the fairy tale life has been corrupted, which is ironic in that the original fairy tales, as written, often had horrific endings for one or more of the characters. Within our society, even the fairy tales have been eviscerated and, in the process, have lost much of the original meaning and moral lessons. Muchmore perhaps synthesized it best in his reflection:

“My mum read me Geoffrey Morgan's *Soldier Bear* when I was six. Based on the true story of Voytek, a bear cub befriended by a Polish regiment during the second world war, I howled with laughter as it rampaged through camp, stealing bras and getting drunk. But the book ends with all Voytek's comrades going home to their families, and the lonely bear caged in a zoo. I still remember sobbing desperately at my mum's side. But wasn't this a more valuable insight into the world than some Disneyfied version, where the bear trots happily into the sunset? And would my first taste of adolescent angst have been better served if Adrian Mole's parents got back together, and a session in the sack with Pandora cleared up his acne?” (Craig and Muchamore 2014).

Cultural reactions

Independent film has arisen as a response to Hollywood and the larger cultural discontent. Often darker and more willing to accept the harsh realisms of contemporary life, independent films both challenge and critique the ‘dominant culture’ inclusive of ‘neoliberal capitalism’, typically personified by the United States (Ortner 2012). Violent films, dark films, films of absent parents, misery at work, expatriation of jobs, failed local economies, etc all tell the story of the ‘fraying social fabric of American society’ (Ortner 2012). In this way, critics have called independent film a form of cultural anthropology (Ortner 2012). Not beholden to the Hollywood values or expectation to please the American public, independent films are open to explore difficult topics with the goal of ‘showing it how it really is’ and disturbing the complacent or passive audience to become aware of these realities (Ortner 2012). Independent films then allow audiences to play with ideas and alternatives to the social and societal norms of the dominant culture, often calling for radical transformations and change (Ortner 2012). Ironically, many independent films achieve this self-evaluation of society through the use of ‘unhappy’ endings, and their popularity is growing with an increasing number of independent films winning major awards at internationally acclaimed film competitions, including the Academy Awards. This growing popularity needs to be understood as a response, perhaps even a challenge, to American society and culture as it has evolved into today (Ortner 2012). America, and much of the westernized world, is increasingly less content with the status quo.

Conclusions

Both happy and sad endings have a place in the cinema and our culture at large. If all movies had happy endings there would be no sense of realism, spontaneity, or suspense. Even happy endings rely on the idea that things might not work out in order to introduce suspense.

Movies with unhappy endings are what keeps the cinema from seeming formulaic (Milburn 2012). Why then are happy endings called ubiquitous amongst Hollywood film? As with any universality, there are exceptions to this rule, but the mere fact that statements such as this exist and go unquestioned, shows the general acceptance of this norm within society. The question then becomes, is this a social norm that society wants perpetuated and is it time to evaluate the effects of cinematic endings and tropes on our society? From inducing complacency with the status quo to stunting the emotional development of children, near omnipresent happy endings have effects, and as these are not benign outcomes, perhaps a real dialogue is long overdue.

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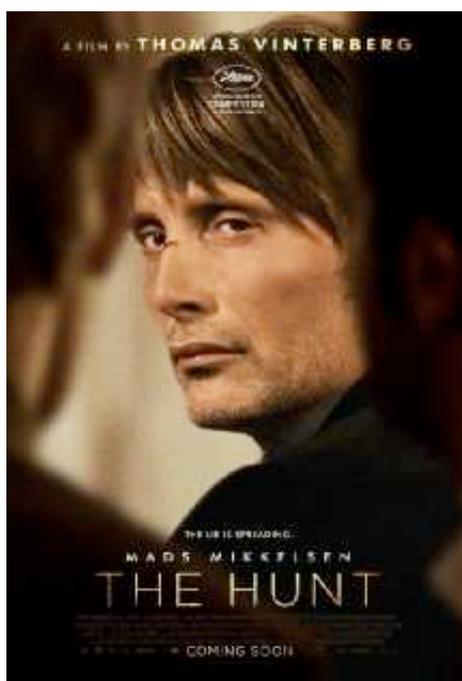
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Cinema and Psychiatry

Mass Hysteria in *The Hunt* By Thomas Vinterberg

Fernando Espi Forcen, M.D., Department of Psychiatry, Rush University, Chicago, IL



It was a child psychiatrist that knocked on the door of Thomas Vinterberg in 2000. Two years after the success of his film *Festen* (The Celebration), a film in which a man publicly accuses his father of sexually having abused him and his sister at his 60th birthday, according to this child psychiatrist, it was now the time to make the counterpart of *Festen*. He then dropped a stack of papers with false allegations of child abuse and asked the director to make a movie about it. Vinterberg initially ignored the psychiatrist's request but a few years later he ran across the papers again and more than a decade later he took the lead on *The Hunt* (2012)

The movie tells the story of Lucas (Mads Mikkelsen), a highly regarded man in a small town who becomes the victim of mass hysteria after being wrongfully accused by Klara, a child in the school where he worked. After he is probed innocent by the authorities and released back to his home. People in town are hesitant to accept his innocence and he becomes the subject of continuous persecution to the extent of having his life at risk.

In the film, Klara seems to be a little girl whose parents are in constant conflict. Klara's father is Lucas' best friend and he often takes her to school and walks the dog with her. Klara sees in Lucas an idealized father and starts to feel romantic about him. She makes a heart for him and kisses him in the mouth while he is playing with the other children in the kindergarten. Lucas redirects Klara and tells her to kiss only her parents. After that, frustrated with the rejection and in anger, Klara makes up an innocent story that she saw Lucas penis pointing up. The teacher in the school Grethe believes her and organizes a meeting telling all the parents about the signs and symptoms of sexual abuse. Immediately, Lucas becomes the target of

multiple child sexual abuse accusations. All of them are probed wrongfully, however people in the town, not willing to deal with the shame of their misjudgment, continue to harass him.

For centuries people have been target of mass hysteria and wrongful accusations about unacceptable behaviors according to the societal and historical context. Witch-hunts in Europe and New England, McCarthyism during the communist paranoia are some examples of this kind of massive wrongful accusations. Nowadays, there is an increasing concern in society about sexual offenders. While efforts must be made to identify and judge sexual offenders, society must be aware of the damage that false accusations can cause upon their victims and take the appropriate measures to prevent false accusations.

Together with Lars Von Trier, Thomas Vintenberghad created the Dogme 95 manifesto in Denmark. The authors proposed a new way of making cinema. Shooting in one location, not producing the sound apart, filming in color without optical filters or effects, and handholding the camera were among the rules suggested.

When I saw *The Hunt* at the Music Box Theater in Chicago. I left the theater thrilled by feeling that I had seen a masterpiece but frustrated about the injustice portrayed in the film. Today, on a second thought I realize that in cases of mass hysteria persecution, the majority either participates in the accusations or look to the other side. Only a minority takes the side of the falsely accused person. After thinking about that, a guilt feeling invaded me when I saw the film for second time yesterday on Netflix. To avoid injustice in this world we all must pay close attention to our own behavior, only in that way, we will create a world in which the majority would not jump to quick ill-thought conclusions and spare victims of mass hysteria.

Source of movie poster: IMD

Music And Psychiatry

Kurt Cobain's Shame And Guilt

Free Text

A Psychiatrist's Odyssey To The Oracle In Delphi

It was a warm July 1st and I was at the airport leaving New York City. After one of the best years in my life, I was going back to Murcia, my hometown in Spain, to spend time with my family and friends while sponsoring my new visa. After six years in the US, I had realized I was really craving for archeology and I had convinced my father to take a family trip to Greece and explore the roots of Western civilization.

Before flying to Athens, I spent a night with my cousins and friends having tapas, wine and vermouth in the legendary hood of Tribunal in Madrid. Once in Athens, we enjoyed the picturesque views of the shops and restaurants with views to the Acropolis in the famous area of Plaka. In one of its popular restaurants “Taverna Platanos” we enjoyed a wide variety of traditional Greek food, including Greek salad (feta, tomato, onion, oil and oregano), tzatzika (yoghurt and cucumber), moussaka (oven cooked eggplant layered with meat and tomato), roast lamb, grilled octopus and bream and of course a good bottle of wine with honey and Greek yoghurt as dessert.

The following day we visited the ancient temples of the Acropolis from the Pericles' Golden Era who defeated the Persians in the Battle of Marathon. In the afternoon, we visited the Greek forum. One of forum buildings, the Stoa, a covered walkway for public use, had been reconstructed during the 1950s. In the Stoa, Greek philosopher Zeno of Citium used to teach. Due that, the adherents of Zeno's philosophical thoughts were called “stoics.” According to stoic philosophers, the mind is constantly bombarded through our senses with impressions of the world called phantasias. These impressions may be true or false. Stoicism preached that one could have destructive emotions and behaviors as a result of errors in judgment. Through katalepsis or comprehension, one could therefore understand which of these phantasias were in fact true. Important Roman philosophers such as Seneca or Marcus Aurelius later embraced stoicism. Stoic philosophy sets the base of what we call today cognitive behavioral therapy in psychiatry.

In the Northern side of the city, Plato's Academy (Honoring ancient Greek hero Akademos) and Aristotle's Lyceum (Honoring Apollo as a wolf) are still under excavation. After leaving Athens, we had an opportunity to visit other Ancient Greek cities such as Mycenae, where we walked through the Lions Gate and imagined the times of the Troy war; Epidauros, which theater witnessed the inauguration of so many Greek tragedies; Olympia,

where we run the 200 meters in the stadium and visited Phidias workshop where he sculptured the Venus of Cnidus and the ivory and gold statue of Zeus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Our last stop in continental Greece was in Delphi. The city is located in the valley of Phocis on the slopes of Mount Parnassus. For ancient Greeks, Delphi was the center of the world. According to the mythology, Zeus sent two eagles from the west and the east side of the Earth. The eagles crossed over Delphi where the omphalos (center of the Earth) was found.

The city of Delphi was dedicated to the god Apollo, the god of the sun who sees everything but also the god of music, poetry and plagues. The temple of Apollo in the city hosted the famous Oracle or Pythia, a priestess that spoke prophecies through the spirit of Apollo. For centuries, Greek citizens travelled in pilgrimage from all over to Delphi in order to ask the Oracle about their future. Already at that time, at the entrance of the city, there were multiple shops where visitors could buy Delphi gifts or souvenirs for their relatives and animals for sacrifice. After entering the city, the visitor encountered the different buildings containing the treasuries offered by the different Greek cities to Apollo. The treasury of Athens, to commemorate the victory at the Battle of Marathon, has today been reconstructed. In the walls of the temple of Apollo, there are multiple inscriptions with the names of freed slaves who paid the priests to write their names as proof of their free status. Pilgrims could wait for days before having a chance to talk to the Oracle. Before asking their question, they had to offer an animal for sacrifice and pay a fee to the priests that guarded the temple. The Oracle (also called Pythia) was the priestess at the temple that after consuming some hallucinogenic substances mumbled in a state of trance some unintelligible words that were translated by the priests. This translation was later given to the pilgrim. Many oracle statements influenced the outcome of historical events such as the battle of Thermopylae, the Peloponnesian Wars or the decisions taken by Philip II of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great.

Since making the decision of visiting Greece when I was in New York, I had been thinking what I was going to ask the Oracle once I arrived in Delphi. That day I walked up the path to the temple of Apollo while listening to the explanations of our tourist guide and my brother Carlos. Once I arrived to the upper part of the temple I contemplated it together with the beautiful valley and asked: "Oracle, what's my fate?" I did not get an answer. It was an open-ended question or perhaps a self-reflection. After that, I appreciated for a few minutes the beautiful view of the temple of Apollo with the valley of Phocis and I left to re-join my group of travelers. After sharing with my co-travellers my experiences with the Oracle, they told me that my fate was to meet Mr. Yanni, the bus driver at 11 am. I had arrived late to the bus the day before distracted, in the ruins of Olympia and my travel fellows were probably worried that I was going to make them wait again.

To this date, the more I think about my experience with the Oracle in Delphi, the more profound I believe it was. Not getting an answer from the Oracle was the most logical response. What's our fate? It depends on ourselves, we are the drivers of our life and our fate built day by day with our choices and the circumstances that surround us.

Fernando Espi Forcen



is

A psychiatrist asks the Oracle about his fate.

Photo: Pepe Espi Forcen

¡Adiós Mamá Nueva York!

After a year of my life I was leaving New York City,
The city of rats and squirrels,
The city where I barely slept,
A year of hypomanic productivity and satisfaction,
The year of Christ's age, the 33rd year of my life,
A year living in Manhattan, the island of the wealthy,
The Upper East Side and my tiny studio with the multiple visitors,
The rich people walking with the rescue dogs and the retired people passing the time in Starbucks,
Citarella's fishery and the organic groceries,
Running in the mornings at the Edge of the River while getting light therapy,
The soccer games at the Recovery Room,

The cold press juices, a little healthier than a beer for the same price,
The blizzards and the Chinese “migas” at Xian Famous Foods for the rainy days,
The spaghetti with salmon, olive oil, garlic, parsley and white wine for the days of friend therapy,
The “authentic” pizza of Numero 28 and New York slices of Italian Village,
Singing with Chicken Delicious at Mimi’s Piano Bar,
The unpredictable happy hours with my coworkers,
The philosophical conversations with the patients,
The day that I will run across Woody Allen, still to arrive,
The myth busters or the ghostbusters at the haunted Bellevue hospital,
Sunday nights with the drummers and the skate dancers in Central Park,
The statue of the witch outside the summer stage and the princessless castle,
Walking through the park and the Bethesda Fountain to the Upper West,
The raccoons and the rats that show up unexpectedly from nowhere,
The dinosaurs and the reflections on human evolution,
The Strawberry Fields and the Dakota, where Rosemary had the baby,
Walking up the existential stairs of life at the Alice Tully Hall,
Listening to Jazz at Bill’s Place in 133rd Harlem,
The bier international, the soul food and the fancy restaurants,
The Lincoln Plaza, Beekman, Zeidlig, Angelika and Sunshine Cinemas,
The extasis at Totto Ramen, with the noodles, the buns and the Sapporo,
The famous buildings, the Lipstick, Bottle opener, Iron, Radio, King Kong, and the Gargoyles buildings,
The van Der Rohe, Calatrava, and Libeskind,
The little dark brick at the hall of Central Station,
The Statue of Saint George killing the dragon at the United Nations and the hidden Katherine Hepburn gardens,
The overwhelming collection of the Metropolitan and the Fridays at Moma,
Playing golf at the Chelsea Piers, and the beautiful sunsets on the boat at the Frying pan,
The art galleries on Thursdays that don’t offer food any longer,
The Soho, the Noho and the Ho,
The memorable cruise with the psychiatry department,

The MDs, the PhDs and the BLTs,
The pride run, the LGBT and the Stone Wall Inn,
Pacing like a zombie at the High Line,
The rooftop bars and their expensive drinks,
Reflecting on capitalism at Times Square,
The chess store near the Comedy Cellar, the ancient espresso machine at Caffè Reggìo with the paintings, and the Big Lewoski store,
The open air live music at Washington Square, the Hopper home and the views through the Arch of Triumph,
The TriBeCa and the lost director at the film festival,
The madness in the Lower East Side,
The punk bathroom art at the Cake Shop and The Library, vestiges of the CBGB,
The amazing concerts at the Mercury Lounge,
The pastramis, corned beef and tongue sandwiches of Katz's, a perfect place for late night hungry ebriety,
The books that I've bought and haven't read at Strand,
The turtles and the frogs in Chinatown,
The dim sum brunches (breakfast, lunch and dinner) at the Golden Unicorn and Noah Tea Pallor and the dumplings of Green Bo,
Singing the Gizmo song from the Gremlins,
Walking through Doyers Street and the 17th century Spanish Sephardic cemetery,
Doing and undoing at the Brooklyn Bridge,
The Sundays in Wall Street and Battery Park and the reminders looking at Ellis Island and the famous Statue,
The grapefruit beer in the historic Stone Street,
The octopus, quails and sardines at Kyclades,
The wild concert of John Spencer Blues Explosion in Astoria,
The Napoleon at Brighton Beach,
The Voodoo performance and trance dances and the Hatian Lambi at La Caye,
The unforgettable week in Nova Scotia in the search of seafood and one more week of winter,
The paellas in Williamsburg and the tricks to handle the big pan in small stoves,
The night with Kermit Ruffins and the BBQ swingers of New Orleans,
Waking up at 5 AM to watch horror movies,

A year of insane walking,
A year of kale, spinach, organic yogurt and omega 3,
A year of meaning and transformation,
A year of encounters with one's self and improvement of relationships,
A year of momentary living and appreciation of what I have and what I witness,
On my Iberia flight to Spain, the land of rabbits...
¡Adiós Mamá Nueva York!

Fernando Espi Forcen

Future Issues

- Fall Issue 2015: Dreams and Consciousness
- Winter Issue 2016: Friendship

For further information contact the editor Fernando Espi Forcen at
fespiforcen@gmail.com