



Bearing Witness: Violence and Collective Responsibility

Sandra L Bloom, Michael Reichert

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Bearing Witness: Violence and Collective Responsibility offers a unique layperson's introduction to the scope and causes of violence and trauma theory and suggests ways we can all work to attack these causes. Upon completing this work, you will have a better understanding of the social causes of the violence epidemic and concrete suggestions for its long-term control. Bearing Witness addresses the cycle of violence by discussing some of the biological, psychological, social, and moral issues that go into determining whether a person will end up as a victim, perpetrator, or bystander to violent events and what happens to us when we are in one or all three of these roles. The authors look at a number of intersecting factors that play interdependent roles in creating a culture that promotes, supports, and even encourages violence. Specifically, you'll gain invaluable insight into:

- trauma theory and traumatogenic forces--backdrops against which the chances of exposure to violence and the use of violence as a problemsolver are increased
 - normal human development in the context of attachment theory and what occurs as a result of disrupted attachment bonds
 - how rapid changes in modern society and the breakdown of the traditional family structure contribute to a level of social stress that promotes violence
 - violence in the family, in the workplace, and in the schools--all places to which people turn for security
 - social responses to violence--the ways in which certain responses decrease or increase the likelihood of violence
 - the unhealthy balance of power between the genders and how violence or the threat of violence maintains this imbalance
 - how our cultural standard of disavowing our normal emotional experience sets the stage for repeated and regular empathic failure, which leads to violence
- A framework for understanding the various aspects of the problem of violence, Bearing Witness delves into the various aspects of trauma--what trauma does to the body, the mind, the emotions, and relationships--before beginning to formulate proposals for initiating processes that lead to problemsolving. Once this knowledge base has been established, the authors give you the beginnings of an outline for reorganizing society with the aim of establishing a community that is responsive to the basic human need for safety and peace.

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