

Roots of War and Peace: Emotions and Bonds in Moral Shock

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Emotions and social bonds play an important, if disguised role in morality and political mobilization. Moral values involve emotions and bonds that are hidden from view. The dominance of the Bush regime has come about, in large part, through manipulating emotions, especially fear and anger. However, a counter movement might be based in the emotional/relational world. Emotions brought into the open deliver a “moral shock” that can be transformative. This idea is illustrated by the experiences of visitors to an Iraq War memorial. There may be a need for individual and collective rituals that deliver moral shock. Not just grief work in mourning, but also fear and shame. This idea may be an important part of restorative justice and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission process in South Africa, as suggested by a proposed mantra for apology.

The Emotional/Relational World

We all live in the microworld of emotions and relationships every day of our lives, yet we have been trained not to notice. Our attention is riveted on the physical world, behavior, thoughts and beliefs. Yet the emotional/relational world (ER/W) is important for many reasons. For brevity I will mention only two obvious ones and one that is not obvious: First, it is important in its own right, since it constitutes the moment-by-moment texture of our lives. Secondly, it is intimately linked to the larger world; it both causes and is caused by that world.

The third reason is that moral values are not merely beliefs like other beliefs, but distinguished by their intense emotional charge. I will return to this idea below. First, however, it is necessary to ask why this idea is not obvious. It is possible that there is a subtle taboo on emotions in modern societies.

A New Yorker cartoon conveys the idea. A man lying on the analyst’s couch is saying: “Call it denial if you will, but frankly I think that my personal life is none of my own damn business.” Although humor is based on exaggeration, the idea that our personal lives are none of our own damn business cuts close. The patient in the cartoon being a man, rather than a woman, may also be significant. Men, more than women, seem to be trained to ignore the telling details that reveal emotions and relationships. Their attention is diverted elsewhere. Yet both women and men know much less about this world than the larger one.

Our obliviousness seems to be a creation of the modern urban/industrial society. In traditional societies, the E/RW was virtually the only world available. In modern societies there are so many duties, distractions, and diversions that most of us learn to ignore the E/RW, except when there is a personal crisis. The very language we use helps to hide it.

One example is the overwhelming emphasis in English on the individual, rather than on relationships. At least in this way, languages of urban/industrial societies are diametrically opposite from those of traditional societies. The latter focus on the relationship, ignoring the individual, just as much as modern societies focus on individuals and ignore relationships. The Japanese practice of referring to kin in relationship terms (“younger sister”) rather than their first name or personal pronouns is an example.

The individualistic bent of modern societies brings up a crucial issue for understanding the link between the ER/W and political consciousness. It is awkward, especially in English, to find a term for referring to the possibility of periods of cognitive/emotional unity between individuals or larger groups. It has been named in many different ways: intersubjectivity, joint, mutual, or shared awareness, connectedness, or somewhat tangentially, mind-reading. None of these terms are quite adequate, but here I will use Stern's word attunement (1977).

Stern was referring to the momentary states of unity that occur between a mother and her infant. In my usage, the word attuned or attunement alone, unqualified, will refer to a balancing of the viewpoints of self and other, neither engulfed (too close) nor isolated (too far). The idea of attunement will be necessary if we are to understand the role of emotions in changes in consciousness. It appears that most emotional states are a product of relational events, especially changes in the degree of attunement. Momentary connects and disconnects give rise to intense emotions.

The Hidden Politics of Morality and Conflict

The taboo on the emotional/relational world (Scheff 2004) is not limited to laypersons, but occurs to only a slightly lesser extent among experts. Lakoff's (2002) writing on the verbal structure of political messages implies that the public has intense moral responses to leaders, but doesn't get at the underlying emotions and relationships. Beginning steps to linking morality to the emotions that drive it have been taken in the social sciences (Etzioni 1988). There is still along way to go however, since this work treats emotion as an abstraction, and hardly mentions relationships at all.

Most studies of conflict are still mostly at this level. For example, most of the experts on the conflict in N. Ireland are of the opinion that the impediments to peace and reconciliation are deep-seated emotions:

Anyone who studies Northern Ireland must be struck by the intensity of feeling which the conflict evokes. It seems to go beyond what is required by a rational defence of the divergent interests that undoubtedly exist. *There is an emotional element here, a welling-up of deep unconscious forces.* It is worth examining what contribution psychology can make to an explanation of the conflict. (Whyte 1990; my emphasis)

Whyte doesn't indicate, however, what these emotions might be, nor do any of the other experts who hold a similar opinion. There is by now a sizeable literature that attempts to explain the success of TRC in avoiding bloodshed in South Africa¹, but I have been unable to find any mention of the emotional components. What is needed is to specify the effects of particular emotions and relationships on thought and behavior, as I do below.

If we include emotion and relationship components, it becomes easier to see how social institutions might play a part in politics. The institution of gender, insofar as it leads to

¹ See for example, Bloomfield, et al (2003).

difference between typical male and female management of emotions and relationships, provides one example. When men suppress grief, shame, fear and/or love (“the vulnerable emotions”) and exaggerate anger, either violence or silent withdrawal becomes a likely response to threat. I believe this configuration of emotions is one of the bases of what might be called hypermasculinity (Scheff 2003) This pattern is frequent and highly visible in Hispanic cultures. In my opinion, it is more hidden in English-speaking ones, but just as frequent. A large minority of men in both cultures appear to be hypermasculine.

Boys and men learn that vulnerable feelings are seen as signs of weakness, but anger, even if faked, shows strength. Hypermasculinity is created by the suppression of the vulnerable emotions, acting out anger, and a tendency toward isolation from others).

In English speaking cultures, at least, most men hide vulnerable feelings, either in silence or violence. Young boys learn first in their families, and later, in school, to suppress vulnerable emotions. They either maintain silence or explode in anger. The numbing of shame, at the root of conscience, makes men dangerous to others. The numbing of fear, an instinctive signal of danger, makes men dangerous to themselves and others. The suppression of grief similarly creates long range difficulties in thought, communication, and bonding with others.

Boys learn to keep their distance from others, standing alone. The emotional/relational world of hypermasculine men is characterized by lack of close bonds to others, the hiding of most emotions, and acting out of anger. The US response to 9/11 can be seen in this way. Hochschild (2004) has proposed an answer to the enigma of why working class men voted for Bush along these lines.

Since men usually dominate state and ethnic nationalism, this idea predicts a violent future unless something can be done about understanding the ER/W. It would seem to be necessary to study it in some detail. Are there gradations of repression, or is it all or nothing? Can numbing a single emotion, such as fear, lead to silence/violence, or does it take need to take in all emotions? Does repression of one emotion spread to other emotions? Does the hiding of emotions interfere with social bonds? None of these questions appear to have been directly addressed in the literatures on emotion and relationships.

It seems likely that the more a person suppresses one or more of these four emotions, the less they will be able to experience any of them. For example, those who are still suffering from their previous losses (perhaps a majority of adults in modern societies) will be unable to mourn, and won't tolerate mourning in others. This mechanism would create what Volkan (2004) calls the transgenerational transmission of trauma, a key feature of his explanation of continuing enmity between groups.

It seems clear that in our society the failure to mourn is not just a deficiency of individuals, but part of a society-wide pattern. I have been told by an experienced grief counselor that the mourner's network (colleagues, friends, and family) will support

mourning for only a short time (Retzinger 2004). The loss of a close relationship may require a year or more of grief work, but most networks become intolerant after a few weeks. Since, as will be discussed below, mourning requires a close relationship (attunement) in which one may confide one's thoughts and feelings at length, this limitation usually blocks the completion of mourning. The inability to mourn is institutionalized in modern societies, which effects, in turn, the politics of war and peace.

War, especially gratuitous war, is based largely on an "us-them" mentality. How does such a mentality arise? A relational component, solidarity/alienation, and the hiding of emotions may both be primary causes. "Us" relationships do not represent true attunement, but engulfment within the "us" group. That is, they are suffocatingly close within the group, and completely cut off from the "enemy." Engulfment within and alienation between groups, in the form of isolation (too much distance), is a vital cause of collective violence, along with repression of emotions. I have called this pattern "bimodal alienation" (1994).

The confounding of engulfment (us) and solidarity is common in most social science. One notable exception is Elias's work (1987) on the relationship between emotion and social structure. His classification of types of social relationships is threefold: independence (isolation: "them"), dependence (engulfment: "us"), and interdependence (true solidarity). A threefold classification is also implied in attachment and family system studies also, since they both recognize engulfment, close ties in which one sacrifices vital parts of self in order to be loyal to the relationship. For example, a wife who represses anger and her own point of view in order to support her husband. At the level of nations, this kind of relationship gives rise to the blind trust in leaders, the kind of cognitive impairment suggested by Volkan's (2004) idea of collective regression.

Moral Shock: Responses to a War Memorial

The following sections introduce aspects of the E/RW in more detail by naming specific emotions and the relational element, degree of attunement. I have been viewing (and myself feeling) varying states of moral shock regularly for more than a year in my anti-war activism in Santa Barbara. Although I had heard about a local war memorial early on, it was several months before I visited. Protesting the war in Iraq in Saturday marches, I wasn't in any hurry to see the memorial. Finally I visited one Sunday morning because my friend Bob, one of the veterans at the memorial, was pressing me.

When I got there, he was printing nametags to add to the crosses that make up the memorial, about five hundred at the time. He copies the names and other information about U.S. military deaths for the past week in Iraq from the Internet.

The monument itself, dubbed Arlington West after the US military cemetery in Washington, is only temporary, as per city ordinance. Early Sunday mornings the crosses, flags, and other materials are brought to the site and installed by members of the local chapter of the Veterans for Peace. A nametag is then attached to each cross. In the evening, we remove everything, leaving nothing behind.

Each of the crosses, now over two thousand, has the name and other facts about a US fighter who died in the current Iraq war. Over the past two years, hundreds of thousands of tourists have walked past, and many have stopped to look at this replica of a military cemetery, now larger than a football field. Some of the strollers talk to us as we stand on the beach below the pier, handing out memorial postcards. Some also write their comments in the notebooks we have made available on the railing, along with a listing of names of the dead.

The weekly installation and removal of the memorial requires an enormous amount of work, and the dedication of all or part of every Sunday to unpaid labor. Even though they get help from volunteers and passers by, most of the work is done by about a dozen regulars. Why are they working so hard? Perhaps the vividly dramatic responses by some of the strollers sustain the activists.

My own response on first visit was intense. When I arrived, Bob had me install some of the nametags he had just made. Crawling in the sand between the crosses, I read the names and ages of the fallen. It was their ages, mostly 18-26, that I couldn't shake off. I became quite upset, like something was stuck in my craw.

After finishing the stack of nametags, I returned to where Bob was working. He asked if I would do more. I said "Let me take a breather; I didn't realize how young..." I couldn't finish the sentence, silenced by convulsive sobs. Tears streamed down my face. The deep feeling of loss revealed by my fit of crying was probably the reason I had resisted visiting. I hadn't wanted to feel it. Resistance to feeling turned out to be a theme for our visitors also.

In the early weeks of the effort, the group thought of the memorial as a protest against the Iraq war. They soon realized, however, that it had much greater effect if it was not political. What effect does it have?

Responses by Visitors

From the majority driving and walking on the pier every Sunday, there is little or no response. Most of them don't look, or give only a sidelong glance. Many briefly read some of the signs, then continue on their way. A substantial number, however, stop to look. Most of those who stop are responsive to our greetings. Some of them, unsolicited, read and /or write comments in the notebooks that lay on our railing. Although only a small percentage of the passers by, those who stop are still a large number, perhaps three or four hundred each Sunday.

Of this group, there is a small minority on which there is no noticeable effect. One of the things they say is to thank us for honoring our brave dead fighting for our freedom. I have learned not to argue. More rarely, I have seen no change whatsoever in persons who come down off the pier to place a flower or photo or to write on the nametag of a relative or friend.

I recall one extreme example of those on whom the memorial has no effect. The father of a soldier who died in Iraq had come down from the pier. He asked me to help him choose a photo from a large album to put on his son's marker. I saw many pictures, beginning in infancy. When we came to a photo of his son in uniform, a handsome young teenager, just before his death, I began to cry.

Father (surprised): "What's the matter?"

Me: "I was wondering if the war in Iraq is worth the death of your son."

Father: (Again surprised). "But we had to do something."

Me: "Why is that?"

Father: "9/11."

Me: "But Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11."

Father: "Well, they're all Moslems."

I was shocked. Another vet who had overheard sought to explain, but the father seemed impervious. Like most of those who support the war, he was locked into a rigid us-them stance.

In the early days of the memorial, there were a substantial number of strollers who were suspicious of the memorial, or overtly angry about it. Lately the number has fallen to near zero. Most of those who stop for even a short time to talk to us or write in the notebooks seem transformed by the experience. Some of the excerpts hint at what has happened to them.

There are many comments that indicate strong feelings. Here a few examples:

"Very emotional and touching;" "I am profoundly touched by this thoughtful display...;" "Beautiful and touching!" "Wow, I can't even express what I feel when I see this..."; and many similar comments.

Some of the comments about feelings also imply a reason for them:

"Thank you for showing us what a tragedy the war is. These crosses really bring it home..." "Seeing this brings a face to war, not just headlines." "Thank you from my heart. We must remain conscious of our losses." "Thank you for being our conscience, for waking us up..." "Thank you for keep us in touch...;" and "Thank you for jarring me into reality—its so easy to forget..." "This makes it real..." "Thank you for being a voice for conscience. [We need] reminders that the numbers are real people..."

These comments, and many others like them, suggest strong feelings are elicited by the memorial and also the reason for them. Seeing and talking to those who stop gives a more detailed picture of their responses.

A few have immediate emotional reactions on their own, without any contact with us. I have seen many women, and one man, crying all alone by the rail. When I invited a colleague from the university, she cried for the entire two hours of her visit. Most reactions, however are somewhat delayed. Here is an example.

A young blond in a flowery dress stops to look at the crosses and the leaves of the fallen. As she surveys the memorial, the smile on her face fades. She is obviously puzzled:

Stroller: “Which war?”

Me: “Iraq.” (This was until recently a common question. Perhaps she is unsure because most the vets she sees below her are obviously too old to have fought in Iraq, even in the Gulf War. They are mostly veterans of the Vietnam war, but a few, like me, the Korean war.) She scans the memorial and the leaves of the fallen again.

Stroller: “What for?”

Me: “To honor our dead.”

Then she took a long hard look at the memorial. During this time emotion began to work in her face: first surprise and shock, then sadness. She cries intensely with tears streaming down her face. Then she said the thought that caused surprise: “I didn’t realize how many have died.” I have seen similar reactions and heard similar statements many times over. Women cry at this point, and men reach into their pocket to contribute money. Although the men don’t cry, I can see sadness in their face in varying degrees.

This effect was also caught by Santa Barbara man, Richard Anderson, who took the trouble to write to the local newspaper at length about it: This is an excerpt from his letter of 9/13/ 04:

Walking out into the memorial for the first time, I found myself overwhelmed with grief. One thousand casualties is just a number. One thousand crosses, with names and dates, will drive you to your knees like a sledgehammer...

Notice that this testimony names a specific emotion, grief, which is very unusual. Among the hundreds of comments in our notebooks for the strollers (like the examples above), I have never seen a specific emotion named. Although I have seen some of the strollers crying while they were writing, explicit reference to crying is never made. In our society, we usually don’t talk about specific emotions and their intense effects on us, and when we do, only by implication and indirection. Anderson also seems to refer to crying (“overwhelmed by grief”) but only indirectly. As already mentioned, this reticence also occurs also in the scholarly literature.

Like me before I visited the memorial, Anderson’s feelings about the war, and those of the others affected by the memorial, had been asleep. The memorial woke us up. Even if had just been one person, the effort would have been rewarding. But because of the memorial, it has struck a large number of people, perhaps thousands. It is these strong

reactions, it seems to me, that sustains the veterans' willingness to labor away their Sundays.

The role of the awakening of hidden feeling in political transformation is implied in a scene in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. Against the advice of the other conspirators, Brutus has allowed Mark Anthony, Caesar's friend, to speak at Caesar's funeral. By his artful portrayal of Caesar, he makes him live again in the minds and hearts of the listeners. Anthony is able to connect with the mob. He then rouses them to feel grief over Caesar's death, leading to revolt against the conspirators. The first step occurs when the mob follows Anthony's advice: "If you have tears, prepare to shed them now." The uncovering of hidden grief can lead to resistance against the status quo.

The responses of the strollers to the war memorial can be used to illustrate the emotional/relational structure of one type of moral shock, as I have observed it from beneath the pier. The first specific emotion that occurs in the face of the stroller is surprise. Surprise is always the emotion of transition from one mood to another. In this respect, it is like the clutch in a truck for shifting gears. If a joke is to produce laughter, it always involve surprise.

The crucial moment on the pier occurs when the stroller asks about the purpose of the memorial: "What's it for?" I say "To honor our dead." I learned that any other answer, such as "To protest an unjust war," would usually give rise to a purely verbal, rather than an emotional response. The response I give serves to unite, rather than to divide us: we both want to honor our dead. We become momentarily attuned in our respect for the dead.

So in addition to surprise, a change in attitude must also involve a relational element, attunement. I think that this is the reason that most of the intense responses I have seen are delayed: for most people, deeply hidden feelings can be accessed only when they feel attuned to at least one other person. Being attuned, rather than isolated, provides the security needed to access emotions that are anticipated as extremely painful, if not unbearable. Note that in my own first day at the memorial, described above, my own response was delayed until I spoke to Bob, my colleague.

In this moment of attunement, no matter the political stance, one is suddenly able to feel at least some of the grief that has been covered over until now. Until this moment, one knew about the loss of lives only intellectually, without feeling it. Understanding a situation in a new way involves three steps: surprise, attunement, and feeling a hidden emotion. In this case, the emotion is grief. If art involves the awakening of hidden emotions, then the Iraq war memorial, like the Vietnam memorial in Washington, is a work of art.

Cindy Sheehan, the mother of a soldier who died in Iraq, was first radicalized by her visit to AW. On Mother's Day, 2004, she had come from her home in Northern California to visit the marker of her son. She told a reporter that after crying in front of her son's cross for some time: "I'm finished crying for Casey. I'm crying for all the other mothers."

(Santa Barbara News-Press, August 15, 2005, p. A4). Her attempt to talk to Bush during his vacation in Texas has propelled her into being the most prominent activist against the war.

Exploitation vs. Uncovering of Emotions

The Bush regime has exploited the fear elicited by the 9/11 attack. Rather than helping people work through their fear, the regime has helped the public cover it under angry aggression directed at Iraq and other purported enemies. It is a common tactic of governments to help their supporters disguise vulnerable emotions through false pride and aggression.

Yet emotions can be mobilized in the opposite way, helping rather than hindering the process of working through. One example was discussed above: the uncovering of the strollers' hidden grief in response to viewing the war memorials, perhaps a crucial step away from war or passivity.

The experience of the Chinese Communists in mobilized the peasants for their revolution seems to support this idea. They used political theatre and other psychological means to awake the peasants from their passive stance toward their oppression. The following is a description by a Western reporter from the early days of revolutionary activity:

As the tragedy of this poor peasant's family unfolded, the women around me wept openly and unashamedly. On every side, as I turned to look, tears were coursing down their faces. No one sobbed, no one cried out, but all wept together in silence. The agony on the stage seemed to have unlocked a thousand painful memories, a bottomless reservoir of suffering that no one could control...As that cry carried out across the field, the women, huddled one against the other in their dark padded jackets, shuddered as if stirred by a gust of wind, and something like a sigh moved in a wave from the front to the back of the multitude...At that moment I became aware of a new quality in the reaction of the audience. Men were weeping, and I along with them. (Hinton 1997, pp. 314-15)

Mass weeping could be a necessary step toward recovery from oppression or from passivity.

One direction for resolving conflict would be to pay particular attention to emotional/relational issues, negotiating the relationship between the adversaries. One would appropriately acknowledge the suffering of the parties in such a way that might allow both sides to feel deeply heard. This approach could lead to an immediate change mood on both sides.

Perhaps the biggest block to progress in resolving conflict is that one or both parties feel that their stories have not been told, or if told, not heard. When both parties feel deeply heard, the mood may change to the point that actual negotiation can be begun. The key task, in such cases, would be to help the parties to formulate their stories in a way that

doesn't delete the emotions, and to be sure that when they are told, that they are acknowledged.

The therapeutic approach runs counter to rationalism, especially psychodynamic theories of therapy, which posit unconscious motives. This approach has had little impact on theories of conflict, because most social scientists reject therapeutic approaches as irrelevant to collective behavior, and psychodynamic psychologists have shown little concern for large-scale conflict.

But in world literature there is a much broader rejection of rationalism, implied in the quest for self-knowledge. Long before Freud, the Greek philosophers proposed that the goal of philosophical thinking was knowledge of the self, and by implication, that human folly is a result of lack of self-knowledge. This thread forms one of the central concerns in both ancient and modern literature. For at least three thousand years, stories, myths, fables, satires, and more recently, novels have explored the theme of the dire consequences of lack of self-knowledge.

This theme is epitomized in one of Goethe's (1789) dramas:

The gift of the great poet is to be able to voice his suffering, even when other men would be struck dumb in their agony.

Just as lack of knowledge of self lies at the heart of the emotional drive underlying passivity, so lack of knowledge of the other is the key to alienation. We learn about self through knowing others, and vice versa. Impairment of knowledge of the other damages knowledge of self, and vice versa. Denial of emotion and of alienation go hand in hand. Intractability arises out of lack of knowledge of the emotional/relational world, i.e., denial of alienation and emotion.

There is also a pressing need for the uncovering of two other vulnerable emotions in addition to grief: shame and fear. Freud mentioned only the grief work that is necessary to work through the loss of an important relationship. As it turns out, fear work and shame work are just as important. 9/11 probably created more unacknowledged fear and shame than unacknowledged grief.

Is there also need for anger work? Probably not. Psychotherapists have long known that anger is only a secondary emotion. That is, underlying most anger is what psychotherapists call "hurt." They mean that anger is used to cover up the hurt that clients want to avoid since they sense it might be unbearably painful. However, "hurt" usually turns out to be one or more of the vulnerable emotions, grief, fear, and shame. For most men, the fear component seems difficult to access. For both men and women, shame also seems to be well hidden. When the vulnerable emotions are worked through, however, anger materializes only as justified anger. How could steps be taken to uncover hidden vulnerable emotions in a whole society?

Rituals that Allow Grief, Fear, and/or Shame Work?

One step in this direction is suggested by approaches to the control of crime that involve restorative justice. These practices lead to public acknowledgment, not only that one was the perpetrator or victim of a crime, but also their emotions. In the community conferences that Retzinger and I witnessed in Australia, the first step was for the victim to describe their experience, and the second step, for the perpetrator to confess to his or her part in it, and to apologize (Retzinger and Scheff 1996). This process usually provided ample room for both victim and perpetrator to express strong emotions face to face. In particular, the victim usually was able to clearly voice their suffering, and the perpetrator their shame about their behavior and its consequences. By apologizing, compensating the victim for their losses, and community service, the perpetrators avoided penal sanctions.

A similar process was realized on a much vaster scale in the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. The perpetrators received amnesty by fully confessing their crimes. They were not required to apologize, compensate the victim, or serve the community. The victims were allowed to voice their suffering. Some part of the success of the TRC may have been due to the tradition of *ubuntu* in black African culture, forgiveness based on kinship of all human beings. This issue probably needs to be clarified in order to use TRC procedures in other cultures.

Finally, a proposal for another type of ritual: an adequate apology for the part we all play in mass violence, if only by our passive acceptance of it. Since a genuine apology could touch the basic hidden emotions, it might mark the beginning of the kind of mourning needed to avoid further acting out of anger. Here is an outline for one such apologetic mantra in regard to 9/11. With its emphasis on shame and guilt, this mantra might be particularly helpful for men, since their training to be protectors would make many of us feel a sense of responsibility about 9/11.

I AM TRULY SORRY THAT THE 911 ATTACK OCCURRED. SINCE I WAS NOT BEING VIGILANT WHEN IT HAPPENED, I FEEL PARTIALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALLOWING IT TO OCCUR. (Shame and Guilt)

I FEEL VIOLATED, WEAK, HELPLESS, IMPOTENT, HUMILIATED. I AM ASHAMED OF MY OWN HELPLESSNESS. I AM ASHAMED THAT I CANNOT PROTECT MY OWN PEOPLE. I AM ASHAMED THAT I LACKED THE FORESIGHT TO SEE THIS COMING. (Shame)

I AM SAD BEYOND RECKONING AT ALL THE LOSSES THAT WE HAVE SUFFERED. I NEED TO CRY BITTER TEARS FOREVER. (Grief)

I AM AFRAID. I AM AFRAID TO DIE. I FEAR FOR MY LOVED ONES AND THE CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTRY AND THE WORLD. (Fear).

In addition to uncovering our own emotions, such a statement might encourage world leaders to apologize to their people also. Not just Bush, Cheney, Powell, Rumsfeld and

Rice, but also Osama Bin Laden, Sharon, and any other leaders who are acting like gang members rather than responsible adults.

To this point, virtually all anti-war activism has been in the form of protest and argument. It now seems to me that this format is usually not effective, and except under unusual circumstances, may even be counterproductive. The thesis of this essay has been that what may be needed are rituals that uncover the vulnerable emotions and create secure social bonds.

There has been considerable work already done in establishing what work must be done in order to resolve the grief connected with loss. Colin Parks (1988; “unresolved grief”) and Vamik Volkan (1993; “re-grief therapy”) are two of the pioneers in this area. In comparison, there has been little work on the resolution of unacknowledged fear and shame. If we are to organize rituals that will resolve conflict, we need to move toward consensus on how to deal not only with grief, but also with fear and shame.

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