

Roots of Evil – A brief study of Ian Brady and Adolph Hitler

Two perspectives are presented in this paper on Brady and Hitler. They provide some insight into their personalities and motives in committing barbarous acts, regarded as evil by most people's reckoning. A starting point in attempting to unravel evil is what constitutes evil that often is not perpetrated alone. Why and how do others become inveigled, under a Svengali spell? What is the magnetic effect and why do some commit heinous acts out of character?

Does personality alone provide the answers for instigating evil, raising issues about nature and genetic make-up and nurture too? Are they connected and is there a trigger-point? The roots of evil lie deep. So does the desire to repeat such actions, leaving us to wonder where society fits into this in trying to prevent further evil deeds.

Ian Brady was a true psychopath who hinted to me that he may have killed more:
Daily Telegraph – News: Joe Schute 17 May 2017 • 8:16am

"It was March 1, 2003, when Professor Jeremy Coid travelled from London to Ashworth high security hospital for an audience with Ian Brady.

As one of the country's leading forensic psychiatrists he had been sent to assess Ian Brady ahead of a mental health tribunal which the moors murderer was appealing to be held in public.

During Professor Coid's career he had already interviewed and assessed the Yorkshire ripper Peter Sutcliffe and Charles Bronson, as well as numerous serial killers, child killers, and those who had committed the most depraved crimes imaginable, including torturing children to death.

But what he was to hear over the course of those three hours sitting alone with Brady was shocking enough to remain with him even today.

Brady boasted about the murders he had carried out and sneered at the prospect of showing any remorse. He also, Professor Coid believes, tried to hint that he may have killed more than his five young victims by stressing the word "convicted" whenever he discussed the murders he was responsible for.

"When we spoke about the murders he repeated the same carefully-chosen sentence and said "note my use of those words", Professor Coid recalls.

"I believe he was attempting to make it crystal clear to me that there were other victims. He was emphasising the word "convicted" and I had no doubt he was trying to imply he was a worse serial killer."

Brady refused exhortations to elaborate further and Professor Coid admits he never decided to make official what he suspected he heard because there was no real new evidence.

"Of course if he had admitted anything concrete it would have been my duty to inform the police," he says. "But perhaps this was just another of Brady's games?"

Professor Coid, 66, has worked in the field of forensic psychiatry since the 1980s with a particular research interest in psychopathy. He was previously the director of the Violence Prevention Research Unit at Queen Mary University of London and continues to practice privately.

Professor Coid still keeps at his London home his hand-written notes from his encounter with Brady. But he has never publicly revealed his diagnosis, in part because he is minded of rules of confidentiality and also because of Brady's litigious nature. In death there are no such restraints.

"I would describe him now as a true psychopath, and I don't make that diagnosis lightly," Professor Coid says. "I believe he was a truly malevolent force."

When he arrived at Ashwood in Merseyside back in 2003, Professor Coid was ushered through various security doors and into Brady's ward.

At the time, he recalls, it was one of the quieter wards in the high-security hospital. Brady was being kept apart from the younger patients for fear he may try and manipulate them – and also to protect him from revenge attacks for his crimes.

The man Professor Coid encountered in the patient's sitting room was wearing a brown sports jacket and flannels with a combed up shock of grey hair and a well-to-do Northern English accent that betrayed none of his Glaswegian upbringing

Coid says he appeared more like a "shabby Oxford Don" than a serial killer, were it not for the plastic tube stuck up his nose (Brady was claiming to be on hunger strike at the time).

Brady poured himself a large plastic mug of tea and lit one of the constant cigarettes he was to smoke throughout their encounter, flicking the ash straight on to the carpet.

All Brady would say about his motivation for the killings was that he had entered a state of "nihilism" as he murdered those children. He told Professor Coid that he had been surprised at the fleeting sense of satisfaction following his first killing and thought afterwards: "is that all there is to it?"

"The drive for sadistic murder is ultimately for pleasure and he was telling me that it was a bit of a letdown," Professor Coid says. "Perhaps that is why he continued to kill?"

Their meeting was only a few months after Myra Hindley had died in November 2002 at the age of 60.

Professor Coid says even though Brady made very occasional mention of the accomplice with whom he murdered five children in the 1960s and simply referred to Hindley as "the girl" - that was the only moment he noticed any flicker of fondness in Brady's demeanour.

Brady still clearly revelled in the notorious reputation they shared, boasting that the "public have spent the past 40 years drooling over the murders".

But when asked whether he felt any remorse for his crimes, Brady sneered that he did not even know the meaning of the word. "Remorse is nothing but wind," Brady said. "And if they want wind they can wait until Doomsday."

Despite the final attempt of detectives to persuade the 79-year-old Brady on his deathbed to reveal the location of the grave of 12-year-old Keith Bennett, who was killed by Brady and Hindley and whose body has never been found, Professor Coid believes that the murderer was never going to give anything away. "He was never going to relinquish that final bit of control," he says.

Brady exuded this constant need for control, refusing to answer questions and ranting to direct the conversation towards his own ends. He would offer cryptic theories and fail to answer even the most obvious questions.

At one stage Professor Coid asked him whether he had tortured the children he and Hindley abducted. "I only psychologically tortured them" was the retort from Brady.

"I found it immensely frustrating and struggling to contain my feelings of anger and revulsion," Professor Coid says. "It was like peeling layers off an onion but underneath was nothing but darkness."

Throughout his career, Professor Coid has interviewed many certifiable psychopaths in prisons and high security hospital wards. What made Brady different, he says, is that he was also a sexual sadist and intermittently suffered from a severe psychotic illness.

He had experienced delusions of persecution, primarily at the hand of the Home Office but also the hospital authorities and the police. At one stage he had believed his thoughts were somehow being controlled from outside the prison walls and he was being tormented by a gramophone record on a constant loop.

"He imagined screams and voices inside his head," Professor Coid says. "But these were only episodic. When we met he was not on any antipsychotic medication was free of those symptoms and seemed capable of making his own decisions."

In his professional opinion, he says, there is nothing Brady experienced in his early childhood which would have turned him into a killer. "My understanding was Brady himself was never abused as a child," he says.

Instead he prefers what he admits is a politically incorrect theory – that some of us are simply born bad.

"I believe that was the case with Ian Brady," he says. "Sometimes when you spend time with psychopaths you feel you are in the presence of somebody who isn't wired up properly."

Professor Coid can still recall Brady's final words to him at the end of the meeting. He looked up and told him "my future is set". This was a man who never wanted to change, one who relished the company of his demons."

**How mad was Hitler – Stephen A Diamond Ph.D. Evil Deeds
What motivated Adolph Hitler's destructive behaviour
Psychology Today – posted 20.12.14**

"Adolf Hitler and his Nazi party perpetrated one of history's most evil deeds by instigating World War II and the Holocaust, which led to tens of millions of lives lost or irreparably damaged. What drove Hitler to act in such a monumentally murderous, horrific (and ultimately self-destructive) way?

What with the recent rise of the Nazi-like ISIS movement (see my prior_post), not to mention the much less publicized proliferation of neo-Naziism in Europe and the U.S., it may be beneficial to take a closer look at what influences someone like Hitler to choose the particular destructive path he did.

What do we really know about Hitler's personality? Perhaps the most famous psychological study of Hitler was done by Henry A. Murray, former director of the Harvard Psychological Clinic, at the behest of the American OSS during the war. (See a summary of his original report here.)

Dr. Murray points out that though there is very little information available about Hitler's childhood, he is said to have been sickly and frail. His father was described as "tyrannical" and physically abusive. According to psychoanalyst Michael Stone, Hitler's father reportedly beat both Adolf and his older brother with a whip regularly, meting out daily whippings to the more rebellious Adolf, who, by the time he turned 11, "refused to give his father the satisfaction of crying, even after 32 lashes."

Here we can begin see how Hitler as a young boy was overpowered by his father and confronted with a situation he could not control, except by controlling his own emotions and actions. Stone further suggests that Hitler's hatred for his father fueled his hatred of Jews, who, after his father died when Adolf was only fourteen, served as scapegoats for his residual fury.

And, I would add, as a receptacle for the defensive projection of Hitler's *shadow* (see my prior post). According to Murray, the adult Hitler was a "counteractive type," by which he meant a person primarily motivated by resentment and revenge in response to his prior narcissistic wounding and profound feelings of inferiority.

Pathological narcissism develops as a compensatory defense against these painful wounds and inferiority feelings. There is no question that Hitler's personality exuded pathological narcissism or what I have called *psychopathic narcissism* (see my prior_post), and may have met modern diagnostic criteria for narcissistic_personality_disorder.

Much has already been written regarding power, and Hitler's ravenous hunger for it. In Hitler's case, he chose to pursue power through politics. Of course, Hitler is certainly not alone in this motivation among politicians in general.

But what differentiates the run of the mill power hungry politician from someone like Hitler craving world domination? Or from those conscientious politicians who, having attained some modicum of power, primarily use it for good rather than evil? The truth is, we all, whether consciously or unconsciously, implicitly or explicitly, directly or indirectly, seek some measure of power and control in life.

To assert our will in the world and to influence what happens to us and others? However, Adolph Hitler, like so many victims of physical or sexual abuse during childhood, may have experienced an extraordinary sense of helplessness and powerlessness as a boy, stemming mainly from his poor relationship with his exceedingly domineering and controlling father.

It is frequently this terrifying feeling of total helplessness and powerlessness in childhood that drives what Nietzsche called this exceptional "will to power" later in life. As psychologist Alfred Adler pointed out, such tragic circumstances engender "inferiority feelings" which, in the form of "increased dependency and the intensified feeling of our own littleness and weakness, lead to inhibition of aggression and thereby to the phenomenon of anxiety."

In turn, this becomes what Alfred Adler referred to as "masculine protest," consisting of a compensatory striving for superiority (to counteract feelings of inferiority), aggression, ambition, avarice and envy, coupled with constant "defiance, vengeance, and resentment."