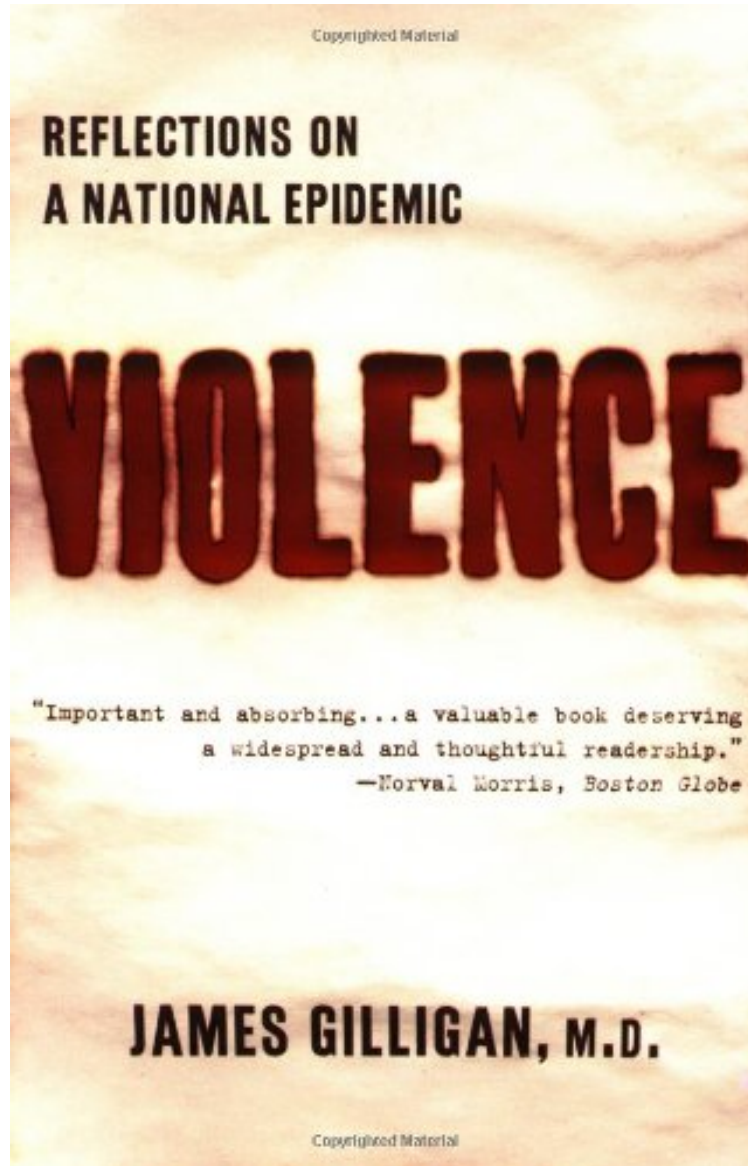


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Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic

James Gilligan

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James Gilligan : Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Violence: Reflections on a National Epidemic:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A brilliant case for Restraint over Punishment By Louis Postel So many people in the Women's Movement talk about Gilligan's wife Carol - and for good reason. Now I am finding James Gilligan equally great. A shrink who ran the treatment programs for violent offenders in prison, Gilligan makes

a case against punishment. What you say? Against punishment. Indeed, Gilligan sees violence and crime as a medical problem, a national epidemic, not a matter of inflicting more harm as punishment. Understanding its causes says Gilligan has nothing to do with dismissing the harm done to victims - but without understanding there is no hope of putting an end to it. Restraint from harming others or yourself he's all for - but the moral judgement stuff of punishment just causes more violence in the end. Judgment, leading to humiliation, leading to shame, leading to more violence. The whole sad, all-too-familiar cycle: what Gilligan calls redemptive violence - the violence we feel will attain "justice" and make us whole again. He also makes a distinction between violence you can see - behavioural violence: murder, suicide, war, and structural violence and the way caste systems work - He quotes Gandhi that poverty is the worst form of violence there is. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. I've purchased this book before but it's in my Las Vegas storage unit. I just wanted it again. By Joe This book is eye opening. It reveals with powerful and blunt force how much the events of a criminals childhood effects who he/she is when he grows up. There are things in this book that will leave you wanting to put the book down because of their graphic nature. The things the criminals/victims have endured will make you so angry and sad at the same time that you will be inspired to make a difference in the lives of those who have become the dangerous people they were taught to be by their role models and the people they trusted to give them the guidance they needed to grow into normal adults. Read this book if you are ready to take in the truth and be enlightened to a gruesome reality, violence is largely the result of the violence we are subject to. Maybe it's time for us to stop blaming violent people for being violent and create programs and environments that CHANGE it! 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Great By Mike Very interesting read, I found his theory of violence convincing. Although like others I don't think Gilligan claimed that shame was the only cause of violence and always led to violence. His explanation of structural and behavioral violence was well put in that structural violence is often the cause of behavioral violence, but because structural violence is indirect, its effects are unknown to most people. As a result most people a quick to jump the gun and see the violent offenders directly responsible and the cause of their behavior, and often using the religious notion of evil. Gilligan Does a god job of linking these issues to the route of the problem which is the structure of the system itself.

Drawing on firsthand experience as a prison psychiatrist, his own family history, and literature, Gilligan unveils the motives of men who commit horrifying crimes, men who will not only kill others but destroy themselves rather than suffer a loss of self-respect. With devastating clarity, Gilligan traces the role that shame plays in the etiology of murder and explains why our present penal system only exacerbates it. Brilliantly argued, harrowing in its portraits of the walking dead, Violence should be read by anyone concerned with this national epidemic and its widespread consequences. "Extraordinary. Gilligan's recommendations concerning what does work to prevent violence...are extremely convincing...A wise and careful, enormously instructive book." --Owen Renik, M.D., editor, Psychoanalytic Quarterly