

ON BLAMING THE VICTIM

I despise the smug, sanctimonious words of people who criticize the desperate acts of those who have taken their lives, or who had their lives taken from them, due to the sadistic brutality of the ignorant, often highly educated functionaries who clutter the court rooms, witness stands, and social service agencies of America.

There are those who say, "Oh, there must have been more to that situation than we knew," or "It shows he really was unstable," or "He used the word "feminist", so he probably harbored some deep hatred toward women," when his wife, who took his children, his money, his work, his home, his dignity - before he doused himself with gasoline, lit a match and set himself on fire on the steps of the New Hampshire Court House, or blew his brains out at the edge of his swimming pool in Georgia, when his children were removed.

Others "drink the Kool-Aid" and blame themselves for the bad family situations they face, as per the misdirection of the all too often negligent caseworkers of the ineptly named "child protective services", who drag victims from the Courts into their supervised spider webs, where their fates are plotted. The strong-shouldered, who are willing to take on the guilt and the responsibility handed to them, hoping to regain their children are sadly out of touch with the fact that it is *not* the system that is broken, but the inhumanity of people placed in positions of too much power, with access to too much money.

Then there is the special class of professional victims, who thrive on the attention and exchange of terrible stories and the endless conferences that parade the stories of victims and their victim hood in front of the public. These victims rarely proclaim the names of the judges, lawyers, official guardians, prosecutors, and police who are the true torturers.

The ones most often responsible for the ongoing plague of indifference and pain in society are the child protective services, not the victims of these poorly functioning services. The moans and groans of, "how terrible," are meaningless, when compared to the suffering of children who have been separated from good parents, and from good parents who are forced to endure the loss of a child they adore. The stupidity of those who blame victims who bravely speak out and are severely punished, perpetuate the brutality, immorality, and endless harm caused by malefactors in power.

Rolanda Pierre Dixon, Esq., Assistant Attorney General in Santa Clara CA, began the "Death Review Board" for that municipality, looking at how victims of domestic violence were dying. The Board identified a pattern of victims being killed by their known abusers increasing in deaths during car accidents. The Board came to the conclusion that as police did a better job of stopping violence in the home, the violence moved from home to vehicles, where the abuser could isolate the victim, gain control and kill. The victim, isolated with the abuser, was helpless in a car. One victim had her arm severed in a car accident caused by her abuser, her arm ripped off during the brutal fight in which she was trying to flee his assault. The perpetrator was heard to state, "Damn woman would have to die on me. It was her fault!" Was she to blame?

It is not the "they", but the "we". If we do not grapple with our own identification with celebrity, power, fame, empty praise, and greed in the Courts and social service agencies, then the plague on all of our houses will continue. We can stop some of this by not blaming the victims, and reporting abuses in high places...