

Hunting Humans *cont'd.*

kinds of societies which struggle to give primacy to economics and power over the social collectivity. Where what matters is the individual — his power and his wealth."

This categorization of individualism — typified by the 'Me' generation in the 1970s and the 'Yuppie' generation in the 1980s — as well as the social acceptance of violence as a response to frustration, has steadily become the norm in American civilization; a factor that now shows signs, particularly in light of the recent Montreal tragedy, of becoming adapted into Canadian values and morals.

Leyton feels that this "Reaganite thinking" will persist as long as the present Mulroney government continually "tampers with our social programmes at our peril — programmes that make people feel that we are a part of one another." The consequence, Leyton believes, is that "the more you weaken the social fabric and the more you turn people against one another, the more you

increase the likelihood of these kinds of insane explosions of violence."

Is there hope for preventing future tragedies?

In Leyton's opinion, a major problem is that "we do not have a balanced and integrated understanding of anything in the human being. All the disciplines break the human experience into tiny little bits and then never bother trying to reassemble those artificially disassembled bits. All we have are these different perspectives looking at a piece of the puzzle."

The resulting difficulty, Leyton confesses, is that "we will never understand serial killers and mass killers until there is a coordinated, and balanced, and integrated study with full access to these [murderers] by medical people, biologists, psychiatrists, psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists," and all other related disciplines. "Everyone has a truth to tell. The problem is that the majority of the people involved in the cur-

rent scientific enterprise don't even want others to tell their truth. It's pathetic."

Desmond Ellis, a York psychology professor, illustrated this kind of "character assassination" when offering his opinion of Leyton's *Hunting Humans*. "I would not recommend that, at all, as a guide to anything significant in understanding serial [or mass] murders," says Ellis. "If I had a son or daughter whose life was on the line, I would not be guided by that kind of information."

Ellis strictly recommends developmental psychologists as authorities on this kind of deviance because "we are not talking about many [multiple murderers]. Murder is scarce — multiple murders are even more scarce and it is always a problem to explain very, very scarce things sociologically," says Ellis. "You get better clues developmentally."

What Ellis may not recognize is that, despite its rarity, multiple murder is by no means a new phenomenon. As Leyton argues in *Hunting Humans*, "Over time,

new classes emerged and struggled for ascendancy." During the pre-industrial era the "multiple murder was an aristocrat who relied on his peasants . . . the industrial era produced a new kind of killer, most commonly a new bourgeois who preyed upon prostitutes, homeless boys, and housemaids; and . . . in the mature industrial era, he is most often a failed bourgeois who stalks university women and other middle class figures.

"Thus, some groups feel more threatened than others in different points in history," continues Leyton. "It is precisely at the point in time when a single class is most threatened (when its rights are challenged by another class, its legitimacy questioned by a discontented proletariat, or its new found status imprecisely defined) that we can begin to find some members of that class beginning to fantasize about killing members of another class."

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