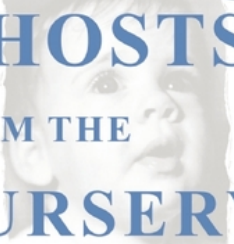


Revised and Updated
Edition

"Ominous
and
persuasive."
—New York Times
Book Review



GHOSTS FROM THE NURSERY

Tracing the Roots
of Violence

Robin Karr-Morse and
Meredith S. Wiley

WITH A NEW INTRODUCTION
BY Dr. Vincent Felitti

Ghosts from the Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence - New and Revised Edition

Robin Karr-Morse , Meredith S. Wiley , T. Berry Brazelton (Introduction)

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Ghosts from the Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence - New and Revised Edition Robin Karr-Morse , Meredith S. Wiley , T. Berry Brazelton (Introduction)

This new, revised edition incorporates significant advances in neurobiological research over the past decade, and includes a new introduction by Dr. Vincent J. Felitti, a leading researcher in the field. When *Ghosts from the Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence* was published in 1997, it was lauded for providing scientific evidence that violence can originate in the womb and become entrenched in a child's brain by preschool. The authors' groundbreaking conclusions became even more relevant following the wave of school shootings across the nation including the tragedy at Columbine High School and the shocking subsequent shootings culminating most recently in the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. Following each of these media coverage and public debate turned yet again to the usual suspects concerning the causes of violence: widespread availability of guns and lack of mental health services for late-stage treatment. Discussion of the impact of trauma on human life—especially early in life during chemical and structural formation of the brain—is missing from the equation. Karr-Morse and Wiley continue to shift the conversation among parents and policy makers toward more fundamental preventative measures against violence.

Ghosts from the Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence - New and Revised Edition Details

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From Reader Review Ghosts from the Nursery: Tracing the Roots of Violence - New and Revised Edition for online ebook

Sabrina says

This was a very good book for understanding how the violence is rooted into the basic needs being met, abuse, and neglect. Very interesting to read.

Erica Whipple says

Do you ever wonder where the roots of violence start? In "Ghosts from the Nursery" it takes a look at the different possible starting places of violence. It uses facts, research, and actual stories as supporting evidence of the early impacts of violence. As the book examines the stories of children and their backgrounds in which have led to the violence of their futures it explains how these factors cause the future violence. I wanted to read this book to help write my research paper on the psychological effects of child abuse. This book was very helpful in adding information to my paper since it gave stories and statistics instead of fictional information, it was a very reliable source. This book is aimed at psychologists, social workers, and maybe even people of law enforcement. It will help you to understand why violent people do the things they do, and what the cause behind their violence may be. If this seems like an interesting book to you I would recommend reading it, you will learn some great information.

Karla says

I learned a lot, some of which was very alarming. Essentially the seeds of who we become are laid in the first 1000 days of life, from prenatal through age two. Of course I knew that if a child suffers abuse or neglect that experience would affect them but I didn't know by how much and at such a young age. Also if a child has an addicted, depressed or indifferent primary caregiver, that child will not develop important traits such as impulse control, the ability to regulate moods and control anger, and empathy, all necessary skills that will make for a good member of society.

Great information but it was a little dry. Anyone who is a parent, is going to be a parent or work with children should read this book.

Reta Stutz says

I believe any one working with children in foster care should read this one

Diana says

This is a heavy read for the mental health professional. It can come across a little over-the-top in some cases,

but I was very moved when I read this text several years ago. I do believe it helped instill me with compassion for children I work with who were biologically set up to have difficult experiences.

Julianne Hyma says

A "must read" for every foster and adoptive parent (and all those from within the system) that support them and the children in their care!

Rachel says

An important book on the vulnerability of children especially in the first three years of life as how influences outside of their control can impact them long term.

Susan says

I am not giving this book a fair review. Rather than basing my review on the content, I am allowing myself to be influenced by the abject despair that I experienced while reading it. And that's really not fair because this book has some great information.

See, back in the good old days, the thinking was that any trauma that occurred before age 2 or so (that is, prior to verbal memory) could not be remembered and therefore, had no lasting effects on the individual. Newsflash: Not only does early abuse and neglect have lasting effects, but the effects will be more damaging and irreparable than it would be had it occurred later in life. Birth to 2 years is now the "critical period:" the time when attachment forms (and in fact, this is the period when a child either forms healthy attachments or is forever emotionally and relationally crippled.) Not only was science dead wrong to think that early experiences are lost, but in fact the opposite is true: Early trauma will actually become ingrained in the victim's memory--not in the verbal memory, but in the "cellular" memory (ie, the kind of memory that tells us water is wet and that falling down hurts).

To sum up:

Lesson No. 1: Victims of early trauma will hold the belief that the world is inherently a terrible and harmful place as though it is branded in their memory. (Try fixing that in 50 minutes.)

Lesson No. 2: Antisocial behavior is caused by this kind of trauma because the victims grow up without empathy and without the ability to experience normal emotions.

Lesson No. 3: Any failure on my part as a parent will inevitably result in my son becoming a sociopath.

Okay, maybe this was some extrapolation on my part, but honestly, I don't know what other point the author could have been trying to make. There certainly isn't any hope for treatment offered. Well, at least not in the first half of the book. Truthfully, I don't know what is in the second half because I had to stop reading. I was too busy obsessing over the time I let my son cry himself to sleep. Or the time I yelled at him once when he peed on the couch. Or how I put him in daycare when I went back to work. Then I had to plan my feeble defense for these actions when my son becomes the next John Wayne Gacy...

This book is not without merit. It offers, for example, an excellent summary of neurological research and a very digestible crash-course on neurobiology (and that stuff is usually lost on me). Read this book if you are

a criminologist or a forensic psychologist, or someone trying to make the argument that Jeffrey Dahmer was the product of inappropriate toilet training. If you are the parent of a child under the age of 5, skip this book for now. Grab some Dr. Seuss and call it a day.

Summer Lane says

This book haunted me from the time I picked it up, to when I decided I wasn't going to finish it. I didn't see any real solutions to the growing problem we have with child abuse and neglect in our country. This book contains graphic details that most people would not be comfortable with, so I wouldn't recommend it personally but it is very educational and really eye opening about how crucial a child's first year-first four years are.

Jennifer (JC-S) says

The objective of this book is to make readers aware of the importance of the first period of a child's life. The back cover refers to 'startling new evidence' that violent behaviour is fundamentally linked to abuse and neglect in the first two years of life. But who is the intended audience?

My assumption is that the audience is policy makers and relevant professionals. While the book is relatively easy to read, it is not one that I would choose to give an intending parent. Which is not to say that intending parents shouldn't read it, just simply that by the time that parenthood is on the horizon there are many other more immediate issues to address.

This book was published in 1997. By reference to the life of, 'Jeffrey' a young murderer; the authors have set out to identify the key factors typifying the profile of a violent and impulsive but not premeditated murder. They do this by examining aspects of Jeffrey's life, drawing on current knowledge in child development, identifying possible contributory factors and, most importantly, identifying areas where intervention may assist.

This book covers more than the 'nature versus nurture' debate that so many of us have participated in. It does not purport to have all of the answers, but it does do a good job of raising many of the issues. Parenting is hard work, and it is especially hard for those who have not had the benefit of good role models or practical support. If societies value their children, then we need to work together – across levels of government and professional divides – to support both the children and their parents or caregivers during this critical period. After all, not only is their future in our hands, our future is also in theirs.

Trish Lichau says

A must-read for anyone who plans (or not) to be a parent, caregiver or teacher. Do not read late at night. Do not read if you wish to remain insulated and inert.

Leah Wilby says

Given my familiarity with the works of Dr. Bruce Perry, the bulk of information in this book was not new to me and the first couple of chapters were perhaps a bit redundant....that being said, it is extremely crucial and worthwhile reading for every one. I would absolutely recommend this book.

Ernest says

Very informative book that explains the cause and affect of early childhood trauma. What I would have liked more of is a sense that we could heal the psychological wounds, and how to do it on all levels...but maybe that's another book.

Jessica says

I read this a few years ago, and unfortunately don't remember any details now. It's about how brain damage at the prenatal level and infant stage of development can lead to the capacity for violence later on. The focus is on kids who kill, and the authors pick some case studies and talk to kids on death row and their families, to build their case that things happened very early on at the neurological level that messed up these kids' development. I remember certain things about this book being absolutely riveting and persuasive, though the authors did have a specific and limited point of view to push.

I'm touchy about a lot of teratogenic-polluted-womb talk, but I found this book's efforts to explain lack of empathy and poor impulse control through neurology and theories of brain damage fascinating when I read it. The book is ten years old now, and I'm sure there's way newer, better stuff on the subject.

This isn't the full story on psychopathy, antisocial personalities, or adolescent violence, but it's part of the mix. Wish I had it around now so I could refresh my memory....!

Dasha says

This is one of the most informative books I've read this year. It looks at cases of extremely violent children (ones who kill other people's infants, are arrested for violent crimes while under the age of 10, that sort of thing) and looks at the possible causes, focusing on about 4 months into gestation and 3 years of age.

This isn't so much a book about parenting, though, as it is about raising awareness that our country does not have an effective system in helping parents and children in less than ideal environments. While it analyzes individual reasons violence can occur (parental absence, drug abuse, trauma) it is very clear that there are many complexities as to why a child is violent. Since it is complex, helping these children is difficult. But from a preventative side, it is the best book I have read on this subject. I feel that anyone working with children on any level should read this book. Not only does it talk about how different circumstances create violent children, but children with various emotional and learning disabilities.

I do think that one could question whether some studies used are used correctly or in an unbiased manner;

yet when one is discussing the prevention of harm towards children/preventing children from harming others, I don't really care.
