



“Weaponised Children: Wars, Ghosts and the adults the children will become”.

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The Adult the Child will Become



We are a social animal

- Families are an essential part of our survival.
- Family relationships are hard to replace, underpin human development and develop and exist in the moment to moment of interactions.
- We need to experience relationships to have relationships.



Lost parents are the Ghosts in our cells



Or the clothing that
never quite fits.



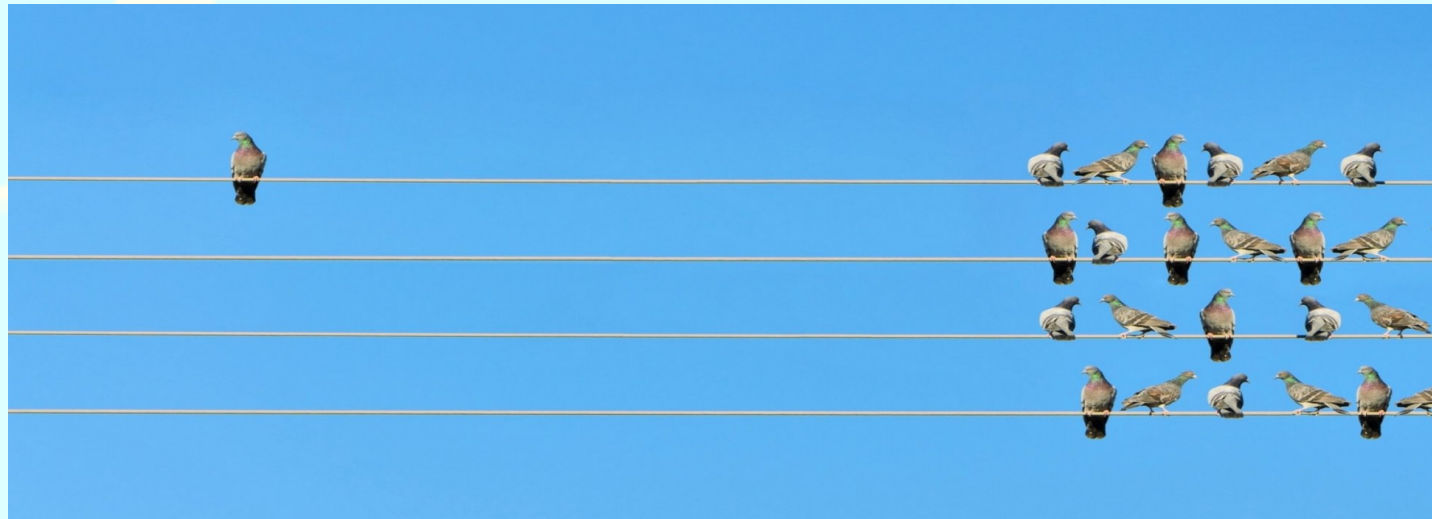
Welfare-wellbeing and risk

Should we think of these cases as 'welfare' cases, seeing high conflict as a form of abuse.

If so how do we consider 'risk' and allow Courts to hear that information?

Parental Hatred(Smyth et al) and outcome studies -Baker, Freeman, Saini, Bala and others.

The adults the children have
become



Long term Outcomes

Outcomes

Across all of these types of cases the outcomes are (long term) likely to be negative.

Also true in cases where there is no parental separation or conflict.

**IT IS LOOSING THE
RELATIONSHIP THAT IS THE
ISSUE.**

Difficulty forming close adult relationships

Inability to trust others

Disturbances to cognitive processes

Difficulty with reality testing

Poor self esteem and a lack of self efficacy.

Major mental health issues

Difficulties with aggression and impulse control

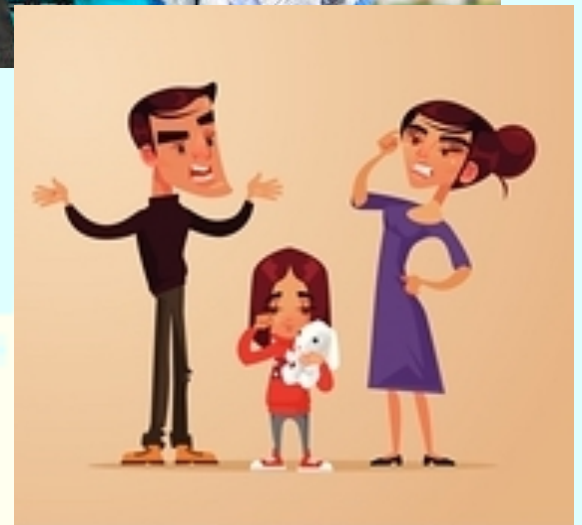
- **Difficulties becoming independent, what is termed instrumentally competent.**
- **Issues with self direction (or self agency of efficacy in life)**
 - **Depression.**
 - **Fears of abandonment.**
 - **Numbness, and blocking out.**
- **Changes in core perceptions of the world such as a difficulty believing anything can last or sustain.**
 - **Illogical cognitive operations.**
- **Simplistic and rigid information processing.**
 - **Inaccurate or distorted interpersonal perceptions.**
- **Distorted self perceptions (often very negative-self hatred).**

Saini suggests that the impact on both adults and children is so 'life threatening' that some of these clients would meet criteria for a diagnosis of PTSD.

But

Most of these parents would not ever wish to cause that degree of harm and cannot see that they are- they are just caught in their own distress (not unlike other abusive people)

Everyone is struggling





Listening to children (and thinking about the adult they will become)

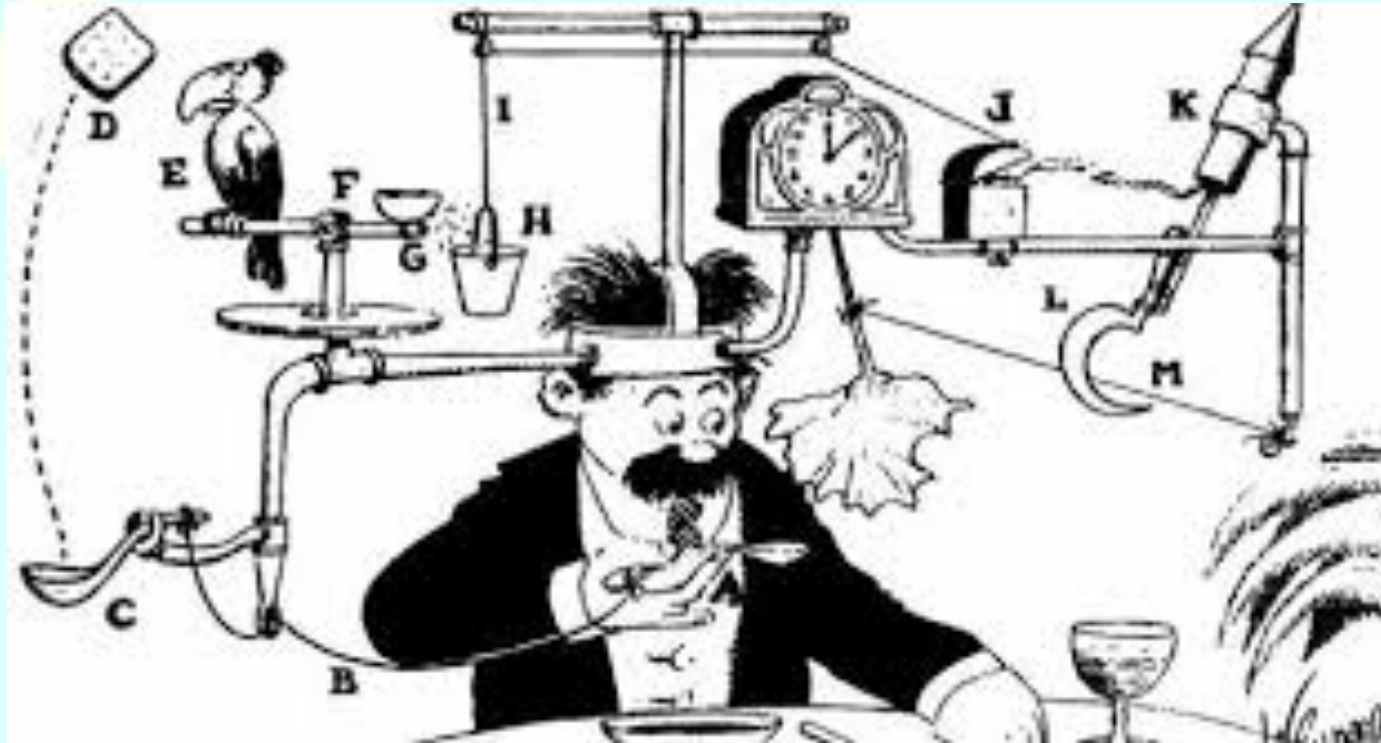
Influence and alienation

Children can be and are ‘influenced’ and supported to develop a view.

New lives can be romanticized.

Intense parental conflict (Loving Hate) impacts on children regardless of the other issues such as DV.

Systems as well as people get in the way



The focus of our work should always hold a place for the adult the child will become so that we listen to that voice and consider what it might say about how we dealt with her or him so many years earlier.



To see the human faces of this form of child abuse the following links will take you to adults speaking of their experiences.
<http://www.actionagainstabduction.org/parental-child-abduction-2/>
and on You Tube ‘Victims of Another War’.

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