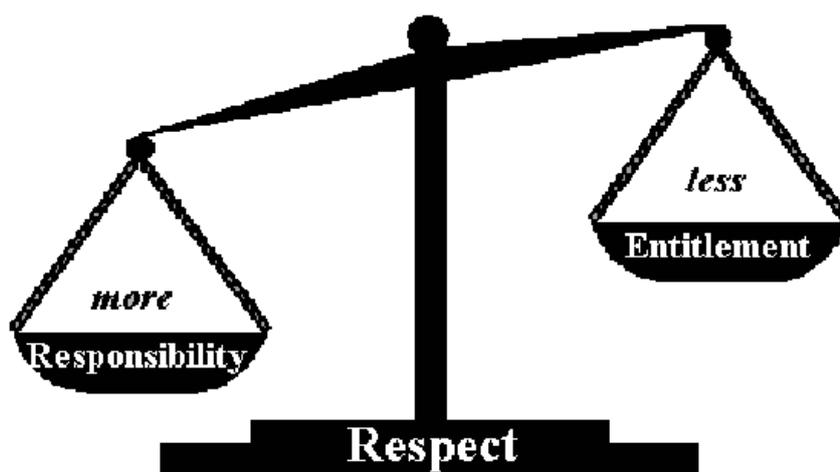


Entitlement versus Responsibility

“The context for most violent behaviour is one in which the initiator experiences a sense of entitlement which exceeds his or her sense of responsibility for the welfare of the other... The initiator experiences a sense of entitlement to the respect, deference, obedience, resources, etc. of the other person who is in turn regarded as less entitled and often required or expected to accept responsibility for the initiator’s behaviour.”ⁱ



Lack “of authority by the parent and the symmetrical feeling of physical prowess on the part of the adolescent can result in the adolescent’s manifesting a grandiose sense of self along with an enormous sense of entitlement... the violent teenager they describe in such terms as ‘bully’ ‘a little dictator’ and ‘bossy’.”ⁱⁱ



He was raised like a prince but, to his parents' grief, grew up to be a tyrant.”ⁱⁱⁱ

“We are a generation who put our energy into making teens happy and comfortable instead of responsible. We have attempted to change the role of the parent from authoritative disciplinarian to partners in a more equal relationship in which parents are ‘friends’ with their children. The result is that children develop images of parents as the people whose job it is to make them happy.”^{iv}

“If you reached middle childhood or adolescence after the mid-1960s, you probably absorbed some of the individualistic, ‘me’ focus of the contemporary era, along with a good dose of scepticism about authority of all sorts – governmental, professional and parental. Can you see how these cultural teachings, although capturing important elements of truth, can make it hard to deal with a demanding, self-oriented and entitled (as nearly all children will be some of the time) four-year-old or fifteen-year? Baby Boomer parents and those that followed live in fear of doing or saying the wrong thing.”^v

“We find ourselves slaving after children who laugh in the face of our weak attempts at discipline, demand to be amused all day, and stay up late because we’re too exhausted to put up the struggle it takes to get them to bed. These kids are fully in charge. No wonder they have piles of untouched toys – the real live playthings that are their parents are far more entertaining.”^{vi}

“On one occasion the precocious toddler grew increasingly restless when his mother kept forgetting to buy him a toy during an excessively boring shopping trip. Master Barrett’s patience finally snapped when he spotted her buying a cabbage for tea. Startled Cambridge shoppers were treated to the memorable sight of an embarrassed Mrs. Barrett being castigated by her enraged offspring screaming: ‘That’s typical! You always think of yourself!’ ... The older children had left home so Roger virtually had the run of the entire house.. He had this massive playroom with a gramophone and sometimes it seemed his mother was his servant. Once or twice he told her to piss off and she just laughed.”^{vii}



ⁱ Jenkins, A. (1991). "Interventions with violence and abuse in families." *A&NZ J of Family Therapy* **12**(4): 186-195. page 186

ⁱⁱ Harbin, H. and D. Maddin (1979). "Battered parents: a new syndrome." *American J. of Psychiatry* **136**: 1288-1291. pages 1290 & 1289

ⁱⁱⁱ Omer, H. (2000). *Parental Presence*. Phoenix, Zeig, Tucker & Co. page 63

^{iv} Cottrell, B. (2001). *Parent Abuse: The abuse of parents by their teenage children*. Ottawa, Family Violence Prevention Unit, Health Canada. Page 25

^v Doherty, W. (2003). *Confident Parenting*. NSW, Finch Publishing. Page 21

^{vi} Shaw, Robert 2003 *The Epidemic* Regan Books, N.Y. page 17

^{vii} Watkinson, M & Anderson, P, 2001 *Crazy Diamond: Syd Barrett* London: Omnibus P. page 14 & 17