

– Thank you Lauren. Good evening everybody. Can I suggest that those of you who might watch, and listen to this presentation this evening, I'm sure would like to think of yourselves as good people, thoughtful, caring, concerned about others, decent. And in the wider world, whatever their beliefs or religions, there are millions who hold similar values. Would you also consider that you're capable of an evil act? Can you imagine committing such an act? Is evil something only other people do? Well, torture, cruelty, and murder, stalk human history. No epoch it seems, is free of the massacre of the innocence. Evil is perpetuated by individuals and nation states. Evil can emanate in the home and the government office. It can stem from the brute simplicities of hatred and vengeance. As well as economic and social disarray in society. Brutality by father upon son, can be replicated a million fold in the hands of the tyrant. The complexity that can surround the subject has meant that television series are evil, I suspect are quite rare.

Now, one such series was made by two producers, Subniv Babuta and Jean Claude Bragard, a decade earlier than my own. Here's an excerpt from the book that accompanied their series, which much interested me. The question of evil, both natural and moral, has fascinated mankind since the birth of civilization, and each culture and each age has formulated an answer. It's an issue that man and woman must confront. It be impossible to overstate the central importance of a concept of evil in any attempt to construct a philosophy of existence. Any view of life that goes beyond the purely pragmatic must accept the potentialities of good and evil, right and wrong, creation and destruction. Yet all attempts at a definition converge on the same central question, what causes death, pain, suffering, the apparently want and destruction of life? These are among the first questions asked by man, observing the material facts of his existence on earth. Inevitably in his earliest struggles to preserve life against dangerous forces, man came to associate evil with those threatening powers. Life was and still is, the most precious possession. Evil therefore became associated with night and darkness, full of unknown dangers, earthquakes, volcanoes, physical disasters, erupting from the ground and the sky. Even today, these primaeval associations retain their power, and their hold over our imagination. We might describe this as natural evil, when confronted by the awesome man, often hostile power of nature. A fundamental question of evil insofar it affects man in his daily life, is why do human beings who appalling things to each other. The intellectual apparatus used by man to explain wickedness has ranged across the whole spectrum of human knowledge and achievement. Religion, philosophy, literature, psychology, and biology have all attempted to wrestle with the problem. Here today, evil exerts the same awesome and perplexing power that it always has. It is after all one of the more elusive concepts,

testimony to the limitations of language in trying to crack the conundrum. I want to ask, can we attain more effective knowledge of how massive evil happens? Should we think about evil differently as in this quote by Primo Levi "Monsters exist, but they're too few in number to be truly dangerous. More dangerous are the common man. The function is ready to believe and to act without asking questions." Nevertheless, we should surely study the journeys that led the Hitlers, Stalins, Putins of this world, to help us understand their actions that lead to such destruction. The 20th Century was the most violent in human history, resulting in what can only be described as extraordinary evil, and ending the lives of over a hundred million people. What is striking is the realisation that this has been largely perpetrated by ordinary people like you and me. This is the essence of the approach I chose to look at, the subject of evil, in the first programme of the series I made for Channel 4, some 25 years ago. My belief is that these programmes are still relevant today and I hope you'll agree.

The idea for this series came about when I happened to be in Washington, DC, on a filming trip and wandered into, excuse me one second, into a bookshop, when the title of a book caught my eye. The author was a professor of psychology called Ervin Staub and the title of his book was "The Roots of Evil." It struck a powerful chord with me, because it was in a sense the underlying theme of so many of the subjects I had already explored on film. The Holocaust, Human Rights, Crime and Punishment. And in that moment, in that instance, a series of programmes laid before me. Ervin Staub's book covers a wide terrain in exploring the origins of genocide and other group violence. He says, and I quote, that "Evil is not a scientific concept within green meaning, but the idea of evil is part of a broadly shared human cultural heritage." The essence of evil is the destruction of human beings. This includes not only killing, but the creation of conditions that materially or psychologically destroy, or diminish people's dignity, happiness, and capacity to fulfil basic material needs, actions that have such consequences. Channel 4 accepted my proposal for a three-part series. My aim was an examination of the psychological indeed, pathological, and social nature of this devastating impulse. And to ask, can we possibly, can we possibly achieve a greater understanding of why such acts of cruelty and destruction appear endemic in the human condition? The first part I called "Ordinary People", the second "Torturous", and the third "Tyrants." So tonight and tomorrow night, I shall concentrate on the first programme in the series, "Ordinary People".

Let me outline the excerpts that I'll be showing and commenting on. Our first sequence begins with Detective Norbert Zenon, reflecting on how evil lurks in the darkness, as he drives through the crime filled night streets of New Orleans. Helping to set the context for programme one. In our next sequence in broad terms, we ask how the great religions Judaism, Christianity, and Islam interpret, and come to

terms with the existence of evil. I then reflects on another embodiment of evil, the serial killer, and we interview two of them, both Americans in prison, Donald Harvey, who confesses to the murder of over 80 hospital patients, and Henry Lee Lucas filmed on death row, who talks about how hate motivated his killings. We switch after that to the UK, to examine one of the most disturbing cases of modern times. The murder of the toddler, James, 10 years old at the time. His detective Inspector Albert Kirby Wright, when he asserts that they were born evil. These sequences are interwoven, and contextualised by various experts who particularly studied and explored evil, and include professors Robert J. Lifton, Ervin Staub and Fred Alford. And let me also say, that I've been uncompromising in revealing these examples of cruelty and atrocity, and whilst we often seek graphic scenes of violence, and the results of violence on our news channels, nevertheless much of the material that I'll show tonight, it's disturbing, and it's only right that I tell you that. So let us begin with the opening sequence of the film. Lauren, thank you.

- [Woman in Radio] Eight 11 Five.

- There's one thing that I think we really agree on right now that there is dark in this area for reasons, and that reason that I would have to simply say is cuz evil lurks and darkness and the evil, evil is something that that lurks within the hearts of an individual. And there are a lot of cold hearts in this area.

- [Rex] The struggle between good and evil takes place in every city, in every town, in every community.

- [Woman in Radio] 006 16, 006

- [Rex] The struggle is at the very core of the human condition. Is evil a malignant force outside human control? Or is it an integral part of every human being? Why can one person become a saviour and another a torturer?

- So then we had to give him, we had to give him each 10 dust beats on his feets on the back. What can lead to amputation of the feets? And I saw from the feet from that old man from 60 years was one of the first victims when we, when I beat them, I saw meat going away from his feet, so.

- [Rex] Ours is a world where ideas can kill, where ideologies can lead to the deaths of thousands, even millions. This film examines the view that most evil acts are committed by ordinary people.

- Ervin Staub has also written "Evil is commonly seen in religious moral, and philosophical terms as violating higher commandments as breaking valued constraints that bind people together, or as making us depart from a benign God in favour of a, of following a malignant

deity, a Satan. Is evil, a commodity something you buy into? What then of the defining events of consciousness of evil? There are so many examples of the darker side of man's nature, fitzer, rage, jealousy, lazard kill, evil word spoken. But what is the process by which this potential for evil becomes a reality?" The Swiss psychologist Carl Jung, maintain that we will all born with a soul, and a shadow with good and bad impulses. It's the bad side that makes us into three dimensional personalities. The healthy personality is that which is able to acknowledge the existence of the shadow along with the good side. Rejection of the shadow only suppresses it, and condemns it to lead and unconscious, and far more threatening existence. In his book, "Modern Man in Search of a Soul", he writes, "How can I be substantial if I fail to find a shadow? I must have a dark side also if I'm to be whole, and in as much as I can become conscious of my shadow. I also remember that I'm a human being like any other." In another of his books, "Answer to Job and Elsewhere". Jung depicted evil as the dark side of God. Here are some other quotations. "We need more understanding of human nature because the only real danger that exists is man himself. We know nothing about far too little. His psyche should be studied because we are the origin of all coming evil. Good does not become better by being exaggerated but worse. And a small evil becomes a big one through being disregarded and repressed." And the last quote, "Whatever the metaphysical definition of the devil may be, in psychological reality, evil isn't effective not to say menacing, limitation of goodness. So it's not an exaggeration to assume the good and evil more or less balance each other like day and night. And that's the reason why the victory of the good is almost a special act of grace." Let me paraphrase the moral philosopher Mary Midgley who's also written on evil. She says, "If you do not confront neurotic, and dark impulses in the first place, plus a developed blindness for moral principles, this could become a path to destruction." The next section of the film I'd like to show you deals exclusively with how different religions perceive evil as a phenomenon. It is, of course no more than a glimpse when you consider the vast amounts of scholarship, and interpretation that exists, thank you Lauren.

- [Rex] Religion all over the world has traditionally shaped our understanding of what is good and what is bad, of what is right and what is wrong. How do faiths like Christianity, Judaism and Islam respond to the paradox of evil existing in a universe created by an all powerful or loving God?

- If God is omniscient, he knows everything. If God is omnipotent, he can control everything, and if he is infinitely good, then he wants to control everything for the wellbeing of his creatures. And the problem has its roots right here. Why should a benevolent God allow so much evil in the world? Why should he allow that quality of evil in the world? And why is it distributed in the way it is?

- When we look at evil, often we've not understood it because the Bible in my tradition describes at least the devil not has some kind of dark or some place. He says, "The devil appears like an angel of light." He disguises himself as goodness, but actually at the heart, it is not to give goodness, but mame to destroy and to kill.

- [Rex] The devil disguised as a serpent tempted Adam and Eve to disobey the will of God, which resulted in their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Figures of devils have come to embody evil for Christians, Muslims and Jews alike. These Christian images of demons as horned beasts have haunted and terrified the human imagination for centuries.

- God gives Satan the permission to do what he has to do. And the reasons for this are so that he can test his faithful followers. The overall aim of allowing Satan to get up to his tricks is to deepen and develop faith in God. In the Abrahamic traditions that is Christianity, Judaism and Islam, the bottom line is that evil still remains a mystery. Evil is a reality of brute fact of existence, and you accept it. The solution is how do you accept it? You accept it in all three traditions as the will of God resigned to it, working towards the elimination of evil. All three traditions insist on this, but nevertheless as something that is part of the fabric of existence.

- [Rex] In the major eastern faiths of Buddhism and Hinduism, evil is not starkly edged in black and white, but grey. God is not blamed. It is man who is flawed, ignorant, culpable, but his fate is in his own hands. In the eastern religious traditions, evil is not rooted outside us, but in human ignorance and selfishness. In Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Satan embodies evil and God is the source of all good. But for many in the modern world, there is no God. Evil is created only by human beings.

- This profound debate continues in the Judea of Christian view. The world is composed of two competing powers, as you've heard, such as God, Satan, God accounts for all that is good in the world. Satan for all the bad. History is the eternal struggle between them. The Hindu and Buddhist world, evil is as necessary and important as good. Evil is as much part of nature as good. One of the people featuring in our next sequence is Professor Fred Katz, whose book "Ordinary People, and Extraordinary Evil". I found particularly intriguing and relevant. His view is that evil means behaviour that deliberately deprives innocent people of their humanity from small scale assaults on a person's dignity to outright murder. Such a definition of evil focuses on how people specifically behave toward one another, where the behaviour of one person, or an aggregate of persons is destructive to others. It's also important to recognise the role symbolism plays in this. Fred Katz's work led me to explore what evil meant in different, and means in different cultures. And I travelled to several countries to get at least some sense of what these differences were. Was there a common

experience or was it varied? Thank you, Lauren, next sequence.

- The way to understand it is not through mysticism, and notions that it is beyond comprehension that there's a devil at work that their secret drives at work. Know the way to understand evil is to getting a hard look at ordinary human behaviour.

- Evil is what most of the go the governments do to the people. Even is people starving on people tortured or people, but again, there are so many degrees even is to be sad, even is to be jealous, to be, to feel and why even is to hate someone like you

- Evil can come along through one's daily encounters with life just as good things can come through one's daily encounters so evil can come along. It doesn't come along with big signposts that's saying turn right evil, you better turn left. You have to be creating your own signpost.

- Another expert on evil I found in the making of the series is Professor Fred Alford from the University of Maryland who believes that evil is not a fundamentally religious concept, and as we've seen not just a Judeo-Christian one. he also says it's not very useful to define evil in terms of the magnitude of the act. Though the term evil presumes for most a certain threshold of horror, evil is as much about the corruption of the heart. As the deed, evil must first be transformed into good, the evil doer must lie to himself. Even Satan, "In Milton's Paradise Law" says, "Evil, be thou my good." Professor Alford believes that much can be understood about evil by stories about his origins, such as goodness brings order to chaos. Evil is the chaos that remains unmastered. A view he says held by the ancient Greeks. He, he quotes also from the Buddhish, Buddhist tradition that evil is as necessary and important is good. Without evil, the world would be impossible. I was also very interested in Professor Alford's work with prisoners, men convicted of serious crimes, and their response in retrospect to being evil doers. So here are some of his insights, and observations to featured in this next sequence. Thank you Lauren.

- [Rex] People, different societies hold different ideas about what evil is, where evil comes from, how evil is experienced. An academic who has studied the subject of evil is Professor Fred Alford.

- When I ask people to give me examples of evil, the most common example is this guy who said, "I went down to the basement as a kid and I felt evil." And so I said to him, "Well, what do you mean you felt evil? I mean, did you, you feel that you were evil, or that evil was about somewhere in the dark, lurking behind the furnace?" And he couldn't make any sense of the question. And I decided that that's really the point that the primordial experience of evil that we have is an experience of dread, where the sense of threat and doom is

unlocated. It's everywhere, it's nowhere. It's inside, it's outside. And I think the, the problem of evil as a moral problem is best represented by one of the people I interviewed. He liberated, he was one of the liberators of Dachau, and he remembers corpses stretching as far as he could see, you know, horrible stuff, but it's leading experience of evil. It's about drowning some kittens as a child.

- But when I finally came into the house, when home, I saw the cat crawling around for her kittens, and I saw that and she was, she had crying and I and I, and I couldn't understand, I says I did something evil. I felt that I didn't say evil, but I thought it was wrong and I never do it again, and I wish I didn't do it.

- Another thing we have to understand about evil is its attractiveness. I mean, it's no accident that evil's been around a long time that most, I'd say in some ways, most literature's about it. There's something terribly attractive about evil, then, at least in the short run, it's vitalize it. Most of the inmates I've worked with want to be known as evil. As one put it "Man, if I weren't evil, I'd be shit." That is to say that evil is a source of power, a source of strength that's becoming the monster rather than being the victim.

- Still find it extraordinary that someone in Professor Alford view would want to be the monster. But as I will show later, I think, I think I found something of what he means in the sequence that's to follow. But before we view this next sequence, I'd, they were made in the wake of a school shooting that happened here in Britain. It took place in Dunblane Primary School in Scotland where a man shot and killed 18 people, many of them children. Of course, this is now tragically commonplace, particularly in the US where so many school shootings by seemingly deranged men who plan and commit to kill children in an effort to purge their anger and bitterness, and who cross a terrifying threshold. It seems almost implicit that what took hold of that school was a terrible extraneous force, and the only word we have for it was evil. But other commentators suggest it's against every liberal's instinct to acknowledge evil as a dynamic in human affairs. If liberals admit evil in this way, then we lose hope of explanation, and throw from the orbit of human responsibility things we believe may be improved, and controlled to create a better society. If we accept the shooter's actions were a manifestation of the utmost evil, and not the result of extreme psychological disturbance, then we renounce the idea that a society may determine its own enlightenment. The writer of further suggests that the religious answer to the killings in Dunplane was to be found in Dostoyevski's "The Brothers Karamozov." I quote, "Even the suffering of children is necessary for men to know the difference between good and evil." This is impossible for the non-believer to accept. He goes on to quote Voltaire "Among the absurdities with which this world overflows, and which could be counted among our evils. It is not a trivial one to have imagined two, or powerful beings fighting each other to see which of them would put

more of himself into the world. Gita Sorani, the biographer, the Nazi War Criminals, Franz Stangl and Albert Speer who when asked if she would use the term evil to describe the killer responsible for the Dunblane School Massacre says, "That would worry me, perhaps I'm too rational for that. I think the man was obviously mad. I don't think it's a matter of evil in the religious or mythological sense. Equally, I don't think it could have been prevented or predicted." But how are we to describe the mind of the Dunblane killer? He was rational and controlled, enough to conceive plan, carry out such a murderous attack, as well as the evidence in his letters, the do tell of madness and obsession. Or let's take another quote from a book called "Warriors" where the author says, "Anyone who's watched men on the battlefield work with artillery, or looked into the eyes of veteran killers fresh from the slaughter, or started the description of the bombardiers feelings while smashing targets find it hard to escape the conclusion that there is a delight in destruction. Walk on the battlefield and sense the radical evil there. It surpasses mere human madness. So perhaps it's right to describe that Dunblane was visited by evil. Some feel it has an entirely appropriate modern application which expresses the gravest moral outrage, but doesn't necessarily threaten liberal values. So here's the sequence where we actually confront men who committed heinous crimes and offences, and more of the interesting work of Professor Alford has reflected in this rather intriguing, intriguing quote again from Carl Jung. "The reason for evil in the world is that people are not able to tell their stories." Lauren, next section please.

- [Rex] One type of criminal embodies evil in the public mind more than any other. He is the serial killer. One such man, a former hospital worker who took upon himself to decide which patient should live, and which patient should die, is Donald Harvey.

- I was convicted for 24 patients at Drake, and in four people that wasn't related to Drake. And then seven attempted aggravated murders. before those patients died like within two or three days after I had poisoned them.

- [Interviewer] And you poisoned these people with arsenic?

- Cyanide, adhesive cleaner, but the adhesive cleaner was used on patients that was in a coma, semi coma.

- [Interviewer] Right. How many people have you killed in total?

- Total of 87?

- [Interviewer] How many people did you say at one time you'd killed?

- Up to 600, the last count was 600. I gave over 3000, I think 3,608 confessions. I think's what it was of cleared homicides that people

went out and cleared. But when they found out that I'd gave the wrong confessions to 'em, why they changed their mind went back, and start re-examined the situation. And now I think still, I think you got about 29 still on me.

- It seems to me that we all have psychopathic moments. Psychopathy is defined these one definition as total identification with the predator. There was this, this one inmate who was discussing his short career in mortuary science. And apparently when you do things to the bodies, the the bodies can move and stuff. And one day he was working on this body, and its arm moved and said to him, you know, well the, the person who was talking to him said to him, well, well, well, gee, I mean, "Weren't you scared?" And the inmate said, "No, if there are any monsters around here, it's going to be me."

- I hate builds up inside of a person. It takes away his reality. If you lose your real to things you, that's not worth living, you know? And I got that way for six and a half years, you know, and it wasn't worth living, you know, 'cause reality, all reality left me, you know, things that I would go around or be around just was a blank to me, you know, and, to me that's, that's evil, you know when you lose all of it.

- I talked to a number of prisoners about evil. We talked for, I talked with a group of them for over a year and about most questions their, their answers are about the same as everybody else. But about the question, "Is it evil as evil to think evil as do it?" Almost every prisoner said "Yes." Almost everybody else said "No." And I think it's because these inmates, most of whom were convicted of violent crimes, really couldn't, I'll just, I'll use a terrible word for a moment. Sublimate, sublimate their evil impulses, and use symbols, stories, imagination, fantasy, you know, to to contain it, to form it, to express it. Rather, they had to act it out in the bodies of others. And I've, you know, I've thought about this, and it seems to me that what the job of culture is to provide these containing narratives, these stories, and cult, when culture fails, people are going to communicate their dread in more physically awful and awesome ways. I think that's part of the story.

- A lot of times guys come up to me and say, "Well, I tell 'em I'm in here with you. I mean, you know, in the pod where I live." And they say, "Oh he's evil, he's, he's a monster." 'cause they immediately think once you leave the street in cuffs, they think you become something else.

- [Interviewer] But very few people kill 80 people. What you did was monstrous.

- That we know of, there's others out there. I'm not the only one by a long shot.

- I experienced something that I am not proud of, you know, my mom was a prostitute, you know, and she sold herself and I was made to watch her. And I mean, it was just a life that I don't want, you know, and,

- [Interviewer] But you're supposed to have killed your mother.

- I was supposed to, yeah.

- [Interviewer] Did your mother brutalise you? What sort of childhood did you have?

- [Henry] Brutalised when the name of it I was beaten with sticks, whatever she'd get in her hand. It was a piece of stove wood, she hit me with it. It was a rock, she hit me with it, you know, she'd take poles and just pounded devil out of me. I've got scars all over my body from.

- My uncle had started messing around with me when I was four years old, and he was 13 and I was almost four. And what he would do with me would be in a sexual sense, and I thought all the other little boys would do the same thing. And since act like a mother, act like a little girl. So he started messing around with me.

- [Interviewer] How long did this go on for this sexual molestation of you?

- [Donald] Well, my uncle and I went on to, I was almost 21 and the neighbour man, I was 15 or 16 years old.

- [Interviewer] Do you think people are born evil, or do they become evil?

- I think every, unless they're born with some mental problem, I don't think anyone's born evil. I think it's manmade.

- [Interviewer] You weren't, you weren't born evil.

- No, I wasn't born evil.

- [Interviewer] But you committed evil.

- I committed evil. I don't like to think of myself as evil, no.

- [Interviewer] But people think you are crazy, you're mad.

- [Donald] Some do, some don't.

- [Interviewer] You're not mad.

- [Donal] No.

- [Interviewer] You chose to do what you do.

- [Donald] I chose to do what I did. And I can't blame, I can't blame my mother. I can't blame my uncle.

- [Interviewer] Why can't you blame him?

- [Donald] He contributed, but he didn't tell me to keep going on and on and on doing what I was doing.

- [Prof Alford] A number of the inmates refer to the prison as concrete mama, it's cold, it's hard, but it's always there.

- Well, very disturbing interviews. And of course they, I mean, how do you get at those realities that we've just seen? Another notorious and depraved killer here in the UK was Fred West, a recent biographer of West who studied his interviews with the police before he committed suicide in his cell says "There is, there is an identifiable sense of evil about West. I simply don't agree with those experts who say that only we've got to Fred earlier we could have treated him. In this case evil was an extra dimension operating above the usual influences of nature, nurture, and free will. Rationality is not enough." That's the end of quote, which brings me to one of the most haunting stories in modern criminal history here in the UK, and it concerns a child killed by other children. And with it came an intense, and sometimes ferocious debate about evil. I found these words written by an anthropologist who was a witness that the trial. He writes, "The case produced a kind of moral panic. One that puts us all at risk that marks every childish prank, each tiny act of social rebellion seemed like the thin edge of a terrifying wedge that leads inexorably to the worst and darkest deeds that anyone can do." He goes on to say, "We don't believe that the Veneer, we don't want to believe that the Veneer of Civilization can be so thin. The loss of innocence is the theme that's preoccupied us since our mythical expulsion from the Garden of Eden. The violent child is the most potent image of violated innocence we have. If humanity is capable of this, and perhaps we are beyond redemption." The children who killed James Bulger were the products poverty, broken homes and abusive parents. They were persistent truance, allies in underachievement at odds with their own society even before the murder. But the same is true of hundreds of thousands of disadvantaged kids who don't hang around shopping malls looking for someone to kill. The minds of Jon Venables and Robert Thompson seem already beyond our reach. Well, were their minds beyond reach? Killing in cold blood appears unnatural and dreadful, and beg serious questions as to what prevented the development of a moral sense in these children of their ability to tell right from wrong. So here is our final sequence for this evening. Thank you Lauren.

- [Rex] Nothing confronts us with evil in a more shocking form than the murder of children by children. Does this crime reflect a loss of innocence in young killers or are they born evil? One such murder was that of James Bulger in 1993. He was age three, his two killers were 10.

- You could actually feel with them, an unrealness as to what they'd done. And one boy in particular you where you could actually feel that evilness and you could say, "Yeah, that boy's done that, I believe that" because there was an actual aura, a presence where you could actually see with the whole issues that had taken place and you could quite understand how it could have come from those boys.

- [Rex] The boys, Jon Venables and Robert Thompson had transitted from school and were loitering in the Strand Shopping Centre in Butil, a suburb of Liverpool. They darted in and out of shops and stores, stole, threw things away and taunted people. Video surveillance cameras captured their victim James Belger, who is seen here outside of butcher's shop, having momentarily escaped from his mother. As he played, the two boys enticed him to follow them. Within minutes they would leave the store to meander two and a half miles through Butil. Within hours they would murder little James.

- The boys have told many lies about what happened on that date. And I don't believe that either of them has yet told the truth. I think the thing that struck me most forcefully about the journey that the two boys took with James was the fact that they deviated from the direct route from the shopping centre to the railway line. They took him to this venue, which was a matter of two, 300 yards from Robert Thompson's house that didn't seem to fit in somehow with the, you know, the idea of some diabolical plan to abduct this child. But it seems to me almost that they didn't know what to do with him. They had got away with it. They had taken a child, separated him from his mother, they had inflicted some pain on him on the route. They had hit him, they had appears, dropped him on his head by the canal shortly after they'd abducted him. They had walked with him a long way. They were seeing opposite the police station, trying to push James into the road. People interpreted that as they were trying to get him run over. He may well have been simply pushing him into the road to try and get him to run across to the police station.

- The evidence was so strong, they had a plan. The plan went wrong was when they couldn't push James into the canal, and then they took him to an area where they knew where they played. And that's where the horrendous mutilation of James then took place.

- Why did they do it? I feel that they must have needed to inflict that pain. They were acting out something that they had experienced in some way. I see it as an act of taking power, abusing power themselves. I believe that they had, as children suffered great abuse

of their own power. Adults had treated them harshly, unkindly, unfairly. They were the products of I suspect, dysfunctional families.

- And when you look and you go through the mental anguish, you're trying to say, was it unemployment? Was it domestic circumstances, the breakup of the family, the influence of videos, all these other things. I've been all through those process. And at the end of the day, I've got to say, it doesn't fit that. It just fits the fact that here you were faced with two boys who probably separately would never have done it, but conjoined together. They actually had that capacity to display an evilness that none of us have ever seen before.

- I think it's very sad that we should think of them in terms of evil, demonic monsters, demons. To me, these words belong in a different age, in an age of bigotry and an intolerance. I like to feel that, you know, we're at the latter end of the 20th century by now. We've learned something, we've learned that people will behave in many different ways. People will do things that we don't like, that we find it hard to understand, but they are people, and they're all part of human experience. And it is, I believe, the mark of civilising society to, to understand and show tolerance. I certainly believe that these boys should be punished for what they did. Of course that must be a part of what happens to them. But to throw away the key, to hang them core to them, which I know that many people would've been happy to see at the time. I know that many relatives have James Bulge would feel even now that hanging was too good for them.

- We have to accept in life that there are people who are born, and brought up in this world who are just evil per se. They don't need anything but there's an evilness within them that something will trigger it and something will come out. And despite any, you know, perhaps religious views that I may have, I feel that it's there, and I don't think you could ever wish in that particular case to actually evidence anything better to show that there is an evil which is there, and in so young.

- An easy answer to the problem of evil is to say that some people are born evil. No child is born evil. But a child can have certain hereditary characteristics that lead parents and other people to react to the child in such a way that they make it likely that this child becomes a violent person. Children who experienced intense violence are much more likely to be violent against their own children. They are much more likely later on to engage in what we may call expressive violence. Violence that is not committed to fulfil some goal like a robbery, but violence that comes out of an intense emotional reaction against other people, so we know that this is the case, and that can help us understand in the experience of these children and others, what may lead to violence by them.

- Well, let me finish with something that Ervin Staub has also

written. To say evil is incomprehensible is to romanticise it. Satan and unseen forces of nature are not the answer to why, or what we can do about evil. We must look at the psychological, social, and human processes. One of the ways to combat evil is to become aware of the forces within ourselves, and to act upon this awareness. I should be exploring these thoughts in more detail tomorrow evening when I'll be showing the rest of programme one of "The Roots of Evil." And I hope you join me. Thank you Lauren. If there are any questions?

- [Lauren] Yes, there are some questions.

Q & A and Comments

Q: Our first is, could some evil people be changed if diagnosed early and treated?

A: Yes. I think diagnosis is, is a, is hugely important. And I'm sure if we had that awareness that those tools of that where we, where we can detect violence in children. I mean there's much done on this, then I think if, if, you know, we can begin to do something about that. And you know, prevention I think is is is very much a a, a key element of what, what we must do when dealing with violent acts by people, and I think it comes and stems from as I try to say in programme from an awareness of what we are capable of. So yes, prevention is important, and I think it can change people very much.

Q: Thank you. Someone else is asking, if we could not choose to behave evilly, we would not have free will. Were we created with the ability to choose?

a: Well, were we created at all? Well, that's a very interesting one, isn't it? Choice is crucial to the human condition, and I'm, and I think whatever the reasons why people commit terrible acts of violence, and so on, or get swept up as we should be looking at tomorrow. People do have a choice. And I should be examining this. And I think that's a very important question. What is the nature of our choice? And sometimes, I mean, do we diminish that possibility of choice by other forces? And I'll look at that tomorrow, and I hope the questioner will as well.

Q: Thank you. Another question, someone in your film mentioned that evil was needed in society, how it is needed?

A: Well, I think it, it's to do with evil being a reality. Our capacity for cruel and vicious acts, our capacity to join in mass movements that produce evil. Our capacity to obey orders, which again, I should be looking at tomorrow. So we have to combat this, and I think it's to do with our awareness of it, but we have to realise surely that we're capable of such things, that it's ordinary human

beings in the end who do this and can do this. You know, the monsters may be out there, but they're also within us. And I think that's the unsettling and disturbing realities that we have to come to terms with as human beings. And that's to do them with the education, and discussing and analysing why acts of destruction happen, and look at our world now. How much do we need to know why we're doing so many of the things that we are, why people are subject to forces that can prove to be so destructive. So choice, education, all these things are very important factors, but evil's there.

Q: Speaking of ordinary people, there's a question on why did so many ordinary people humiliate, torture and kill others in the Holocaust?

A: Oh, well, such a huge and important question that isn't it? I don't examine that in this one because I've looked at, you know, I've explored Holocaust in a number of other films. And the the reasons are complex. They're to do with societal factors, ideology, they're to do with psychology, they're to do with people's belief in a system. Their ability to ignore the worst aspects of it. They're to do with the forces of repression to stop people thinking and make them frightened to think. They're the fragility of democracy. And we can see that in our world today, the fragility of those democratic forces, which are under a foot I, I must say. So all these factors, you know, are part of, you know, the reasoning as to the German people. It's an endless question, but discussed millions of times, and will go on being discussed. Why the Germans, were they particularly obedient? Were they particularly tuned into the Hitlerian worldview allowed the horror of Nazism to develop, and in the way that it did? So the answers are many and you know, the Hitler regime was able to call upon fear of the other, of racism of the Jew as the, as as the horrifying entity within our poisoning our society. So propaganda played a role, so many things played a role, and it's part of our study of this to try, and understand all these factors that, that that came to past, no, very interesting question.

Q: Someone's asking if empathy be measured, and used of the predictor bad behaviour?

– I didn't hear that Lauren, I'm sorry.

Q: Can empathy be measured, and used as a predictor of bad behaviour?

A: Yeah, it's interesting empathy. There's quite a lot of work studies done on empathy. It's vital isn't it, to, to be able to empathise. I don't know how you measure this. There may will be, you know, that psychologists and others are really delving into our ability to empathise. I think it's crucial because our alternative ability to dehumanise is terrifyingly destructive. And I think one of the key elements in genocidal actions when you can dehumanise a group of people, the Jews could dehumanised as evil. So empathy is vital to our

ability to, to, you know, live decent lives. And as soon as you begin or soon as a regime targets a group or a minority, and as as it were, undermines empathic feelings, then there is real danger there. As we're predicting it, I dunno, it'd be interesting to see what social science is doing about that, very important.

- [Lauren] And I believe we have time for one more question.

- Yes.

Q: Has anyone done research on evil people who have never had distressing or abusive backgrounds?

- I'm sure that's come up, it's, it is again, a very interesting question, isn't it? That there've been a number of plays, and films and other things about that. What is it that makes people who've no obvious abusive background, a a reasonably loving family turn to, to an evil act? And I think, I mean that's part of the, I'm afraid the mystery of human beings. I dunno how far we can ever know each other, and what we're capable of. I'm constantly surprised by that. It's very difficult to, to, to pin that down, isn't it? And I'm sure there are many cases of a loving family producing someone who's done something terrible, but it's much rarer, I suspect, than abusive and destructive family life. Child which are so damaged, attachments, which so impaired. But it's undoubtedly true that there is, there's no abyss to which man hasn't descended. And it may be that certain people, even with a loving background, can do such things, who knows. Thank you so much, thank you for watching.