

The past few weeks I was delighted to discover destination Radio. It reinforces, among other things, the idea that the North Coast is a wonderful place for people to come spend time with nature—a natural world we fear is rapidly vanishing. I was going to give an upbeat Community Comment about our community and all the natural wonders we can enjoy if we will just take the time. After all, there are a host of beautiful places to hike, fish, surf and camp in our region.

^{also,} But more important to our community than our natural surroundings, is the conduct of our neighbors. I find it distressing, that in recent years our community seems besieged by violent crime. We need look no further than yesterday's Times-Standard for examples. Front page and leading headline: "Shootout suspect booked into jail." This is the follow-up story about the 24 year-old murder suspect who came out firing at officers last week in Eureka; he wielded such a high powered rifle that some of his random shots went through several houses; the neighborhood was very lucky not to have anyone killed in that incident, and I'm relieved the alleged murderer is out of the hospital and locked in jail. There was an even more distressing story on page 2 of the Times-Standard that reported on two girls from Sonoma County who went missing 37 years ago. Their bodies have finally been identified. I am glad for the sake of the families that they can finally lay them to rest. Right below that article is the story of a man who allegedly shot a woman after she spurned his advances, and just below, another story on the trial of the ^{several saw} ~~man who murdered~~ ^{convicted for the} Father Eric Freed on New Year's Day 2014; Other stories abound of people brandishing knives, and guns, and the list of violent behavior goes on,

Why do people commit crimes of violence? Some would say, there are *explanations* for such behavior, such as a violent and abusive upbringing, poverty, excessive violence in movies or video games. It's the "nurture" argument. Others say, it could be a chemical imbalance in the brain; or just bad DNA: It's the "Nature" argument. Most likely I think it is usually some combination of the two... John Steinbeck, in his great novel, East of Eden, ponders the origins of violent behavior. His conclusion, if I understand him correctly, is that the individual, while perhaps boxed in by bad parents, or terrible ^{early} experiences, ultimately makes a choice to act, or not act, violently. I'm not sure if I find Steinbeck's position comforting, but I do find it satisfying. Satisfying because it helps, to affirm in the end, ^{No matter how early} ~~that evil is inexplicable.~~ ^{we can make choices.} Satisfying, because we can appeal to a person's conscience, and continue to appeal to people of all walks of life, to turn from violence, and choose better ways to express frustration. I therefore appeal to us all, to choose the better way of nonviolence. ^{so} *If you're angry, don't get a gun, get some help!*

This has been Dan Price for community Comment

~~it's a matter of fate or destiny. Is there such a thing as a person who simply, inexplicably turns toward evil? Or are~~