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Abortion and the "Evil Baby"

By Theresa Burke with David C. Reardon

Those who study childhood trauma have documented many examples of children working through a traumatic event by recreating aspects of their trauma through games, stories, and art.

Therapists will often observe children playing with puppets and dolls to get a sense of what is going on in their minds and families. It can be easier to express an emotional conflict by acting it out through a puppet figure than by putting oneself through subjective introspection.

Adults, too, can engage in symbolic reenactment of trauma under the guise of games, art, music, humor, and other amusements. This type of play can provide an outlet for abortion grief by replacing it with socially acceptable acts of "baby hatred."

Themes of abortion-related guilt, rage, and anger are pervasive in modern music, art, and films. "Evil child" movies, like *Alien* and *The Omen*, reflect the demonization of children. In the popular TV series *South Park*, the attacks on the child move into the home, where Kenny tries to kill his unborn baby brother. In the story line Kenny tries to abort his mom's baby by making her a "morning-after pill milk shake" and using a toilet plunger on her.

Many of these images in the arts and popular culture reflect how the memory of aborted children haunts our society. The natural tendency to love and esteem babies has become a painful reminder of the unresolved grief of millions of women and men. To contain and control the unspeakable truth, the natural instinct to nurture and protect children is rejected, and in its place, the "evil baby" is envisioned as an object of mockery and the target of violence.



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