

Brett Enemark / CIRCLES (*after a symposium on violence*)

A circle of speakers  
something inside the circle  
circled, *violence*  
a word, phenomenon, activity, aesthetic  
or memory  
conceptualized, explained, described  
in a way I can hardly recognize  
the world itself  
unrecognizable  
since Sept. 11.

                    The idea circles  
it is the beginning,  
of a World War

violence, a contagion

Like Freud, I am forced to revise my  
thinking to include the drive  
to death

But you can't actually drive to Bowen Island  
landscape cluttered with  
images from another life, or phase  
in my own movement  
ghostlike

Zombies  
(am I to run over them?)

this is not hell though it does  
suggest a circle:

A dozen years back  
sailing from the mainland  
heading a fleet of dumptrucks  
on a ferry

under a blue sky  
every morning  
but one

engine failure  
& from the north, news of  
the death of my father  
of a heart attack  
at the wheel of his car

it continued to roll down the street

& circles me (trauma as  
death in life

Violence  
as an academic question  
of universals  
mimetic rivalry  
scapegoat  
*polemos*  
gap  
words

the circles grow tighter  
Vertigo-like

I hadn't  
considered it this way or  
much at all beyond  
body counts  
or the failure  
of words  
& assertion of blind will  
oblivious to the other

or as a Marxist:  
a question of subjects objectified  
Hegel's master & slave . . .  
ultimate interdependence  
& a willingness to die  
for recognition

Nietzsche's *ressentiment*  
& the impotent anger of the weak  
the hatred flashing forth at the news  
of an other's misfortune

(or success)

violence  
turned backward

My father once in a rage  
pitched my mother across the room  
I tackled him around the knees  
he shook me off his leg  
and tossed me away  
like trash

a certain *lightness of being*  
experienced then & forever after

you never forget these things  
or you forget them but they don't  
forget you

Life in the provinces

growing up in a bush town  
violence sticks  
you wear it like a glove  
the body growing you can't wait  
to grow large enough  
to stand up to your father  
or kill the fucker

(but to begin with, practice on the weak)

the muscled male body instrumentalized  
by ideology and experience  
dreams of war  
desires that ancient angel  
to destroy

But the earth is solid kryptonite  
to feel its pull not as real estate, the pull of sex  
or the tug of a child's hand  
but the question of identity, the trust on which  
love is built  
or falls away  
broken  
into

endless circles