

(te•kūn) To mend, repair and transform the world.

TIKKUN

**POST-TRAUMATIC
LOVE SYNDROME**

MICHAEL J. BADER

A BIMONTHLY JEWISH CRITIQUE OF POLITICS, CULTURE & SOCIETY

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2002

The Post-Taliban World



ZYGMUNT BAUMAN

PHILIP J. BENTLEY

**SIDRA DEKOVEN
EZRAHI**

JEFF GATES

BARRY JOSEPH

JOEL KOVEL

**THANE
ROSENBAUM**

RACE

Howard Winant

**EDUCATING AGAINST
VIOLENCE**

Svi Shapiro

DE-COLONIZATION

Chellis Glendinning

WAGNER

Kim Chernin

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Kairol Rosenthal • Danielle Ofri on Abortion • Paul Buhle on
TIKKUN's 15 Years • Susan Dermond on Raising Your Child With
Spirit • Jonathan Schorsch on Israel's Ecology • and more!**

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A Leap

Not always, but
sometimes, sometimes—
I, unmoving,
they, unmoving—
I watch for a
while the sixteen
squared columns of
wood—smooth, polished,
dark, in a dark
room—standing all
together, and
I imagine
others—of type,
of marble, of
red granite, that
like these refuse
to hold any-
thing up—nothing
atop them (no
capitals, no
architraves, no
pediments, no
rafters, no roofs;
no temples, no
courts, no markets,
no banks, spires, or
legislatures,
no slaves, no lost
cause, crops, cannons,
accords, foreign
debts, recessions,
no mandates, no
systems, newscasts,
or calendars):
I begin at
their feet and move
my gaze upward
along them, then
at the tops I
feel the next look
as a leap of
my body off
free columns toward
anything or
anyone freed.

—Reginald Gibbons

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 Courtesy of Patinae Gallery.



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Sikkum: TIKKUN RECOMMENDS ...

Be My Knife

David Grossman
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001

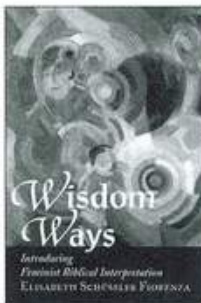
There is no joy comparable to reading a David Grossman novel. His brilliance shines on each page, and in a way that is not meant to show off but to deepen your own understanding of the world. In this latest gem from Israel's gifted writer of *See Under: Love* (arguably one of the most important novels of the 20th century), Grossman takes us into a correspondence between a man and woman who have never actually met, and yet who develop a peak of intimacy that challenges us to see what human relationships could be in their purest and most honest moments. This is a novel which pushes us to grow, and challenges us to expand our sense of possibility in love. At times demanding, at other times intriguing, this is a book that will resurrect parts of your consciousness you didn't know were dead.



Wisdom Ways Introducing Feminist Biblical Interpretation

Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza
Orbis Books, 2001

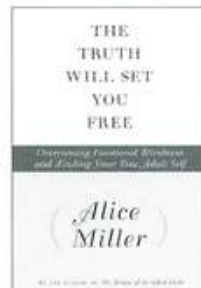
Elisabeth Fiorenza's *In Memory of Her* was one of the first powerful voices of a new theological feminism that emerged in the Protestant world. In this new work she reasserts her central contention that the best interpretations of the Bible emerge in the context of struggle against all forms of domination. The struggles for social justice and the use of the Bible as a way to deepen one's own understanding of one's moral responsibilities opens to a different approach to learning.



The Truth Will Set You Free

Alice Miller
Basic Books, 2001

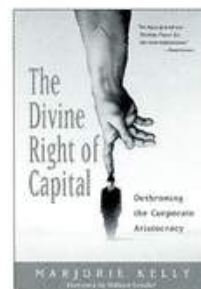
TIKKUN author Alice Miller is a tireless crusader for the rights of children, and her provocative insistence on ending all forms of physical punishment (including what used to be thought of as "innocuous" spanking) may seem like second nature to our readers, and yet still has a revolutionary tinge.



The Divine Right of Capital

Marjorie Kelly
Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2001

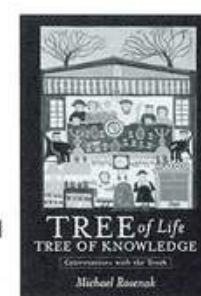
Kelly is editor of *Business Ethics*, a national publication on responsible business practices. If you ever wondered what exactly is so destructive about the Old Bottom Line, read this book. Kelly seeks to dethrone the corporate aristocracy, and she presents ideas for how to advance a transformation in corporate society. Read this with David Korten's book *When Corporations Rule the World* and you get a solid foundation for thinking about our economic system.



Tree of Life, Tree of Knowledge Conversations with the Torah

Michael Rosenak
Westview Press, 2001

Michael Rosenak is one of the great philosophers of Jewish education and his newest book is a sophisticated and important tool for anyone who wants to teach the tradition. This book is chock-filled with interesting insights into Torah and connections to the problems of modernity.



The Places That Scare You A Guide to Fearlessness in Difficult Times

Pema Chödrön
Shambhala Publications, 2001

Pema Chödrön is an American Buddhist nun, so it's no surprise that she has powerful lessons in this book about non-attachment, and a path of open-heartedness particularly suitable to the TIKKUN Community. She sums up the essential teaching by citing what an old woman taught her when she was six years old: "Little girl, don't you go letting life harden your heart." This book is a compendium of useful teachings for living with equanimity, spiritual discipline, and much love and compassion.



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Letters to the Editor

The Afghan War

To the Editor:

I was brought up as a reform Jew, but by the age of fourteen (mid 1970s) rejected this path in favor of meditation practice and direct experience of God/Goddess/Atman/Pure Consciousness—whatever we wish to call it. My concerns about Judaism, the Old Testament, the Hagaddah, rested in the continuing and historical emphasis on war, hatred, and disconnection from other peoples. I just could not resonate with this attitude. You are the first rabbi I have ever heard who has decried violence in all forms no matter who is the perpetrator. You have opened a door for me that has been closed for a long time. I received the email about the conference you are planning in New York City in January and hope to attend.

LISA DALE MILLER
Los Gatos, CA

To the Editor:

For the most part, America's response, led by President Bush, to the September 11 terrorist attacks leaves me appalled and infuriated. I hear people speaking of wanting to "kill 'em all," and "nuke 'em," a statement that I suppose means that we should be indiscriminately killing civilians in any and all Middle East lands. I hear of the administration bombing Afghanistan, a country unrecovered from war, with a malnourished population at the mercy of a dictatorship. It strikes me as callous and cowardly for the administration and people here to so badly want the fear to stop that they're willing to inflict the sort of fear and pain done to us.

But will this policy even succeed? Where's the logic in going around the world to wipe-out terrorist training camps, when we're proving inept at finding them at home? Perhaps it's a cynical ploy on the part of Bush to appease the



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populace with a show of fireworks. The "humanitarian" food drops are said to land in mine fields and feed 37,000 compared to the 3.8 million that relief workers fed before our bombing started. Where are the food drops in Iraq, where we repeatedly hear of bombings and sanctions that deprive children of food and medicine? And suppose countries with potentially huge military capabilities, including nuclear bombs, decide to harbor terrorists—say China, North Korea, even Iran—is Bush ready to pursue his line of action at the risk of starting World War III?

Meanwhile, on the home front, Att. Gen. Ashcroft finds yesterday not fast enough for Congress to declare the Constitution null and void. Why does the Bush Administration call for ever increasing police powers when the FBI had the info and ability to capture at least one of the very terrorists who purportedly committed this crime?

Let's just hope that if the aim of the bombing campaign is to wipe out terrorist strongholds, Bush won't deem it necessary to start bombing here at home.

BRIAN BECKER
Tampa, FL

War in Israel?

To the Editor:

I have a passion for both the Jewish and Palestinian people. I have been for years disturbed by the lack of Jewishness in Israel's foreign policy, especially regarding the Palestine question. I did become miffed by the breakdown of the talks last summer. As presented, it was an imperfect but indeed generous "offer" from Israel. I thought the Palestinians were arrogant and flat out stupid in their refusal. Thank you for the clarity in your news of what, indeed, really happened. Once somewhat of a hero to me, Barak appears to be nearly as arrogant as the current government. I am so disappointed, but much less confused. Also, thank you for supporting my Jewishness, while it might differ hugely with the government of Israel.

STAN ZUCKERMAN PSYA
Idaho

To the Editor:

I am an American Muslim who deeply sympathizes with and supports the Palestinian struggle. I think many Israelis want peace and many Arabs want peace

but the voice of reason is lacking because fanatics and right-wingers on both sides have hijacked the lines of communication. Sometimes I feel like giving up hope that our two peoples will get along, but then I am rescued from that despair by the voice of reason. I think your publication is that voice and I wish you the best of luck. Peace for the Palestinians and Israelis will only come when there is a Palestinian state and the end of the Occupation. With that will come the much needed security for Israel and prosperity for the region.

A. IDRIS
Berkeley, CA

To the Editor:

I am not Jewish (although in the Prague ghetto I found my family name) but have always been apprehensive about voicing my thoughts about Israel because I would be accused of anti-Semitism.

I truly believe in Israel's right to exist. I also truly believe that the Palestinian people have a right to have a homeland, to have some prospect of hope in their lives. A friend of mine traveled to both Israel and the Palestinian territories. She said the living conditions for the Palestinians are deplorable. Yet right next door, Israel has settlements with swimming pools and the best facilities. How awful to see that every morning and know you are stuck with no hope.

ROSEMARIE WILLIMANN
Half Moon Bay, CA

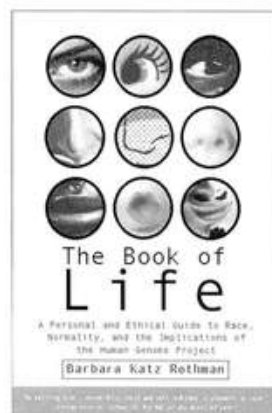
To the Editor

When I came across your statement: "I oppose the resorting to violence as a strategy to solve problems no matter how terrible," I couldn't help, but to remember one memorable conversation.

I am a Russian Jew, who has lived in the United States for more than twenty years now. Once I talked to an old man who claimed to have survived the Warsaw Ghetto.

According to him, some Jews in the ghetto were very much against violence and against any form of uprising. For them, "if we only do what Germans tell us to do, or if we only follow the orders, etc., they will not kill us." History knows about the heroes of Warsaw Uprising, but not much about this other group. Those who planned the uprising had to hide more from the "peaceniks" than from the Germans (out of fear that the

What Your Genes Won't Tell You



The Book of Life

A Personal and Ethical Guide to Race, Normality, and the Implications of the Human Genome Project
Barbara Katz Rothman

An impassioned defense for the theory that humans are not "ready-made from the factory," as one recent popular book on genetics put it, but social beings who grow, mature, and learn who they are

"An entertaining and highly personal overview of the potentially devastating social consequences of the new genetics."

—Gail Vines, *The New Scientist*

"Once again Barbara Katz Rothman asks all the right questions, and helps us through them with erudition, humanity, and wisdom."

—Katha Pollitt, author of *Reasonable Creatures*

Recipient of an Award for the Promotion of Human Welfare from the Southern Sociological Association



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LETTERS

peaceniks would betray them to the Germans). Sadly, after the uprising, all of them were murdered. But the fact that even in these extreme life-and-death conditions in the Warsaw Ghetto, there still was a sort of a *nonviolent* movement, was a big revelation to me.

Our history knows (and glorifies) many famous uprisings. But we forget that each uprising had its own "peaceniks." To prevent the "triumph of evil," sometimes you have no choice but to fight. When it is the right time to fight, is another matter. To me, the murder of 5,000 civilians (in the name of any cause) is the right time to fight back.

ROMAN YANOVSKY
via the Internet



Editor responds:

Nonviolence should not be equated with inaction. I call for Palestinian non-violence today, but I don't oppose them engaging in massive nonviolent civil disobedience to challenge the evils of the Occupation, and I would have supported Jews to engage in massive nonviolent civil disobedience to disrupt the Olympic games in Berlin in the 1930s. I believe that the nonviolence of the Gandhi movement in India and of Martin Luther King Jr. in the United States were far more successful than were the violent activities of the Zionists in the 1940s that succeeded in creating a state but did not win real security for the Jewish people in our ancient homeland. Martin Buber was right.

Jewish Renewal

To the Editor:

Remember the Weavers' introduction to "When the Saints Go Marching In"? *We are standing in the footsteps Of those who came before...*

Consider the following fable:

In the "bardo" where souls hang out between lifetimes, an angel, a messenger, has arrived to recruit an elite corps for an excruciatingly difficult mission.

The world, says the angel, is in such a severe state of inequity, injustice, cruelty, and deterioration that a large group of volunteers is needed to go down to Earth for the express purpose of *tikkun olam*, repair of the world, to set the human

race back on course, lest it all be destroyed.

Potential volunteers are told:

"This is a terribly difficult task. Only those with the greatest love and compassion should even contemplate it. You will be given all the tools you need to accomplish your goals: intelligence, talent, skills, creativity, and the fellowship of each other. You will be born into poverty, persecution and injustice, immigrations, expulsions and deprivations, and the sight of tragedies all around you. Loss and suffering will be your constant companions to keep the memory of your purpose clear.

"The only thing we cannot send with you is access to your Source in the world of Spirit, because when things seem hopeless and your task impossible, the temptation to take refuge here may be too strong. This solace must be withheld from you. Your resolve can only be sustained by the sharpness of your pain.

"Know that if you accept this assignment, you will not see G-d, except faintly and indirectly, throughout your whole lifetime. The face of the Beloved will be hidden from you. Only the intensity of your longing could fuel a life of so much struggle on behalf of others.

"You may not see many victories. Your children may not even follow in your footsteps. But your grandchildren and great-grandchildren will transpose your values and carry them on, farther up the spiral.

"Knowing how very painful this will be, but that you *may* save the world: who will go?"

And oh, look how many came, knowing that they were entering such an exile for the sake of us all. So many *tzaddikim*, with all the idiosyncrasies that enabled them to survive, which we saw as their flaws and limitations.

We all know who they were—the parents and grandparents of those who call themselves "red diaper babies:" the parents of Kim Chernin, in her book *In My Mother's House*; the couple Tillie Olsen describes in her story "Tell Me a Riddle"; all the old Wobblies and Socialists, members of the Workman's Circle and the

Bund, union organizers and protesters. People who put their lives and their bodies on the line two and three generations ago, who gave us the base from which we cared and dared to protest Jim Crow and Vietnam; the ones on whose shoulders we stand in order to do what we do now. These stalwart people rejected the Judaism of their fathers, would not allow *shabbos* candles, prayerbooks or the name of G-d in their houses—and their passionate dedication to social justice came straight out of the Judaism of the Prophets.

These *tzaddikim* entered the world, of course, in all the religious and non-religious traditions. But *we* know best the fellow-Jews who come to us with their pain. Wherever in the world we have gone to teach—here in the States, in Brazil, England, Israel—we encounter these "red diaper babies," who now grieve that they cannot share the Judaism they have rediscovered, nor any of the language of Spirit, with their parents. In their parents' day, the language of Judaism was the language of those resigned to the status quo. For them, a new and unpolluted language had to be found in which to accomplish *tikkun olam*.

It is thanks to the legacy of these *tzaddikim* that we no longer worry about our own starvation, and that we have not forgotten all the others who still struggle. So we can come when you rally us now to do the double task of: 1. insisting on *tikkun olam* across the wider spectrum, from how we treat each other to how we treat the planet and *all* its inhabitants (the four-leggeds, the swimmers, the crawlers, the fliers) and 2. simultaneously reclaiming and redeeming our spiritual heritage, integrating it back into its central place as the source of our ideals.

Here we finally are, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of those earlier heroes, taking our places and doing our best on the next turn of the spiral.

EVE ILSSEN
Boulder, Colorado

CORRECTIONS

In the November/December 2001 issue, we attributed the wrong title to Yona Zeldis McDonough's new novel. The correct title is *The Four Temperaments*. It will be released by Doubleday in 2002.

Publisher's Notes

George Vradenburg

The date: March 4, 1933. The occasion: Franklin D. Roosevelt's first Inaugural Address. The context: American financial markets in free fall, farmers unable to sell their goods, banks on the verge of insolvency, unemployment at record levels, long lines at soup kitchens. In short, a nation in crisis.

And Roosevelt's message:

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance."

What the nation demanded, in Roosevelt's view, was forward-looking pragmatic leadership that held "social values more noble than mere monetary profit," that found a way to confront its challenges by using its "social values" as a motivating power.

What Roosevelt saw clearly was that our resource-rich nation could not, in the long term, be defeated by economic challenges, but that we could be brought to our knees by a paralysis created by fear or by abandonment of our commitment to what makes our country exceptional, its fundamental and historic commitment to a particular value system.

And Roosevelt was right. Our nation pulled through the Depression, and through a subsequent World War, with leadership that was pragmatic in character, yet fully committed to the "social values" of democracy, personal responsibility, and social justice.

Roosevelt's admonition that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself" continues to ring true in our current national crisis—another time of potentially paralyzing terror.

Should we not resist our own fear-driven impulse to support a weakening of our commitment to personal liberty in the name of public safety? No doubt one can (and should) have great sympathy for the challenge confronting Attorney General John Ashcroft, charged as he is with defending our nation against terrorists who may be within our borders, terrorists that, if given the opportunity, would not think twice about mass murder of American civilians without according us "due process of law." But the new, so-called PATRIOT law, authorizing increased surveillance, arrest, and detention powers in the name of pursuing terrorists, is not limited to crimes of terror, provides virtually no check on executive discretion, and sunsets only in limited circumstances. We should fear, and resist, this unchecked assertion

of broad government power, and we should support judicious steps to confine this needed new government authority to narrow circumstances, limited in time, subject to continuing judicial and Congressional oversight.

Should we not also question why our own fear is leading us to support autocratic Arab governments in the name of democracy? There is, no doubt, a justifiable concern that those governments may cut off supplies of oil to the Western world, raising oil prices to levels that would seriously damage our economy and our people, particularly low income segments of the population. But we cannot win a war on terrorism based on our commitment to the values of freedom and democracy when we are supporting oppressive and autocratic Arab governments. We must not be paralyzed by our fears of Arab oil power; rather, we should support a sensible energy policy focused on energy conservation and renewable energy sources that, once and for all, achieves the long-promised reduction in our dependency on Middle East oil.

Should we not confront the fear that is paralyzing our ability to prepare the public to defend themselves from additional terrorist attacks? No doubt our political leaders are justifiably concerned about creating panic by urging mass purchases of vaccines and medicines that may not yet be available in quantity. But how long can we ask the public to return to "normalcy," to "go out and shop"—but with a "high sense of alert"? That isn't a workable strategy for individuals who want to take steps to protect their own families. And that message does not respect Americans' need to take personal responsibility for their personal safety. We should confront the ugly fact that the world is more hostile than we thought it was prior to September 11; and we should support more realistic efforts to empower Americans to include emergency preparedness in their personal lives.

As Roosevelt warned, we should not let fear paralyze us from honestly confronting the hard issues created by crisis. And, as Roosevelt pointed out, we should use our fundamental social values as a strength, not an obstacle, in "convert[ing] retreat into advance." Through pragmatic leadership, based on our values of liberty, democracy, and personal responsibility, we can defeat terrorism and strengthen our nation.

That is perhaps the most fitting tribute to the memory of the innocent victims of September 11. □

George Vradenburg is husband to publisher Trish Vradenburg.

A Spiritual Politics for the Post-Taliban World

Michael Lerner

Who wouldn't rejoice when the women of Afghanistan were given a few moments of freedom just before the Northern Alliance—well known for having committed a rampage of rapes and murders the last time it ruled—took power through the assistance of America's bombing campaign against terror? Just as the Kurds of Iraq were abandoned after we supposedly liberated them from Saddam Hussein, the women of Afghanistan are in danger of being abandoned to yet another reactionary regime once the United States achieves its goals.

Those goals are to stabilize the world and make it safe for "modernity" and American power. We at TIKKUN champion part of that vision—we support a world based on democracy (which we'd like to see extended to the economic realm as well), human rights (including the liberation of women, respect for children, and the rights of workers to organize), and the protection of individual freedoms from public coercion (political, religious, or communal).

But America's modernity is closely tied to a program for globalized capital and the imposition of marketplace values. For over a hundred years, Western intellectuals have analyzed how those values foster a culture of narcissism, an immersion into materialism and "looking out for number one," and a set of beliefs about the nature of reality based on a religion of empiricism. President Bush's "crusade" is less about democracy than about the imposition of a whole worldview—a worldview which has some very positive elements, but which also undermines traditional communities and validates instead an ultra-individualism and a bottom line that teaches people to value everything primarily in terms of how it can "be of use" to achieve material or self-interested goals.

We don't accept the fundamentalist alternative to globalized capitalist forms of modernity, but neither will we join the Tom Friedmans of the world who preach that "there is no alternative." We seek to create an alternative—through Emancipatory Spirituality. First and foremost, we are building a movement committed to A New Bottom Line—one that calls for institutions and social practices to be judged productive, efficient, and rational not only to the extent that they maximize money and power, but also to the extent that they maximize people's capacities to be loving and caring, ethically/spiritually/ecologically sensitive, and to transcend

a narrow utilitarian framework so that they can respond to other human beings and the universe with awe, wonder, and radical amazement.

The task of the TIKKUN Community is to educate our society about what it would really be like to have this New Bottom Line, and to find ways to assist us as we try to move from a narrow, selfish, or merely national vision, to a new planetary consciousness deep enough to recognize our mutual interdependence and our obligation to protect the earth from ecological destruction.

Our Founding Conference will be a moment for liberals and progressives to develop strategies to face the post-Taliban world. It is all the more important that you be there now that Attorney General Ashcroft has sought to eliminate civil liberties and to restore the FBI to its Nixon-era role as a covert presence in the meetings of religious and political organizations (I still remember those days when there would be more covert agents than students at some of our demonstrations, agents who were frequently trying to provoke violence, internal hatred, and dissension). And being at this conference will give visibility to those who still seek an end to the Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

If you can't come to the Founding Conference of the TIKKUN Community, January 19–21 in New York City, but share its vision, you can still join the organization (see details on our website: www.tikkun.org or call 415-575-1200 to receive more info), and be active in its projects (see pages 53–57 for our plan of action for the first two years—and tell us which project you want to be part of, or even help coordinate). But if you can come, you won't be disappointed. The movement we are trying to build will differ from past movements in a few ways. First, we not only seek to change the outer world, but to foster inner, spiritual development. Second, we want to cultivate a community of people who will be allies on both of these fronts and will care for each other throughout the course of their lives. Third, though the Community is rooted in the liberal Jewish tradition, it will be made up of people from all backgrounds who agree with our founding principles and wish to promote planetary consciousness. Will you help us make it happen?

We hope to see you there. To register, call 415-575-1200 or register online at www.tikkun.org. If money is a factor, let us know—we will try to work something out for our TIKKUN

readers who need help. If you have friends who live in New York who could offer space for someone to stay during the conference, please let us know (email community@tikkun.org) or contact Liat at 415-575-1200.

Among the speakers confirmed by early December are: Robert Pinsky (former U.S. Poet Laureate), Grace Paley (one of the greatest Jewish writers of the twentieth century), Susannah Heschel (a pioneer in Jewish feminism), C.K. Williams (poet), Josh Weiner (poet), Robert Thurman (a powerful Buddhist spiritual teacher), Arthur Green (Jewish theologian), Yossi Sarid (Member of Knesset), Thane Rosenbaum (novelist), Arthur Waskow (director, The Shalom Center), Matthew Fox (Christian theologian),

Michael Lerner (editor, *TIKKUN*), Michael Bader (psychoanalyst), Richard Landes (Director, Center for Millennial Studies at Boston University), Mordecai Liebling (Shefa Fund), Peter Gabel (professor of Law, New College School of Law), Naomi Wolf (author), Kim Chernin (author), Svi Shapiro (professor of education), Cherie Brown (Director, National Coalition Building Institute), Andrew Samuels (psychoanalyst), Tsvi Blanchard (CLAL), Marcelo Bronstein and Rolando Matalon (rabbis of B'nai Jeshurun in New York City), and many more (including leading figures in the Christian and Islamic world, and many significant American intellectuals and social activists). It promises to be an event of historic significance.

Can Colin Powell Rescue Us?

The disgusting acts of terror against Israeli civilians in Jerusalem and Haifa in early December 2001, preceded by Israeli assassinations of Hamas activists immediately after the United States had sent its representative to the Middle East to convene negotiations, demonstrate once again the close symbiosis between Islamic fundamentalists in Hamas and Israeli right-wingers who now shape decisions in Ariel Sharon's government. The endless cycle of violence and retributions will never bring Israel security or Palestinians their liberation from Israeli occupation. Hamas and Sharon share three strategic goals: to end the peace process which both have always denounced as a misguided project of the Israeli Labor party and the PLO, to destroy Arafat, and to eliminate the Palestinian Authority—thus leaving Hamas as the only coherent force in Palestine. Sharon and the Israeli Right would then be able to convince the world that Israel has no alternative but to reoccupy the West Bank and build more settlements—which has always been the Israeli Right's alternative to the peace process desired by the United States. Hamas wants that outcome so that it can become the sole legitimate voice of the Palestinian people—Hamas is perfectly prepared to spend the next fifty years in suicidal violence until other fundamentalist states have weapons of destruction sufficient to destroy Israel. So, Sharon rewards Hamas' suicide attacks by striking at Arafat, which provides a positive incentive for Hamas to engage in more acts of terror, which are then used by Israel as an excuse to attack and eventually eliminate the PLO, leaving Hamas in control.

Given this scenario, we can better understand why Sharon has refused to negotiate with the PLO, using the thin excuse that he will not negotiate until there is a week-long cessation of all violence. Sharon knows that Hamas wishes to derail the process, so he counts on their acts of violence, plus spontaneous acts of resistance to Israeli violence in enforcing

the Occupation, to ensure that he is prevented from the embarrassment of negotiating with people whom he despises. If the United States had insisted that the Vietnamese stop their war for seven days before we would consider negotiations, or had we used attacks against our soldiers or against South Vietnamese civilians as an excuse to suspend negotiations, America would still be fighting the war in Vietnam.

All the more reason, then, to welcome Colin Powell's powerful statement of November 19, 2001, on the need to end the struggle between Israel and Palestinians. It was in many respects a balanced and rational speech.

First, Powell reaffirmed the commitment of the United States to the defense of Israel. Those who seek to destroy Israel need to be reminded over and over again that there is no path to peace that does not provide Israel with security. As a strong supporter of Israel, *TIKKUN* deplores those forces in the world who still dream of destroying it.

Yet Powell also recognizes that Israel can never really enjoy the fruits of its economic and political power until it grants to the Palestinians the same rights to national self-determination that Jews rightly demand for ourselves.

Second, Powell articulated the terrible truth that the Occupation involves horrendous pain imposed on the Palestinian people and that a solution to the struggle must involve an end to the Occupation and a return to the pre-1967 borders. The United States now joins the rest of the world in refusing to recognize as legitimate Israel's expansion into lands conquered by war.

Powell's speech was the first time in decades that a leader of the U.S. government talked in a caring way about the fate of the Palestinian people, even while simultaneously giving Israel reassurances. For that reason it was an important first step in breaking through the dominant discourse in the United States which tends to highlight Palestinian attacks on Israeli civilians (which we deplore), but to down-

play or ignore the systematic torture of Palestinians by Israelis, the outrageous denial of human rights in the daily operations of the Occupation, and the ongoing horrendous level of killings and woundings of Palestinian civilians by the occupying army.

Yet there is a more cynical reading of Powell's current initiative. During the Gulf War, the United States had to use its power to push Israel into the Madrid negotiations in order to placate the Arab forces it had assembled to fight against Saddam Hussein, but then let the Madrid negotiations drift into irrelevance. Similarly, we may soon be greeted with another specter of empty negotiations that cannot possibly lead to a solution.

Perhaps you recall that former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, reflecting back on the Madrid process after he left office, boasted that his intended strategy was to keep those Madrid negotiations going for ten years without ever accomplishing anything. Ariel Sharon may soon follow a similar path.

The leaders of the Arab states don't really care about the Palestinian people, but they have many citizens who do. In fact, in order to deflect attention from the harsh conditions and poverty that face many of their citizens, Arab elites try to channel anger that might more reasonably be directed at the class structure of their own countries into anger at Israel and the fate of Palestinians. This strategy has worked well for them for decades, and they are in no hurry to change these dynamics by actually ending the struggle. So what they need to do is to create the impression that their support for the United States in the war on Afghanistan has produced results (the resumption of negotiations between Israel and Palestine) without actually ending the Israeli/Palestinian struggle which works so conveniently for Arab elites. Under this reading of events, the United States will use all its pressure to get Israel into negotiations, but will spend very little of its energy to create a viable settlement.

We would not be surprised, however, if negotiations were to lead to the offer of a non-viable state, such as that proposed by Ehud Barak to Arafat at Camp David. If Sharon is smart, he might offer a deal that could once again be perceived as Israeli reasonableness in form, but which in substance would be unacceptable to the Palestinian people.

Here are the elements to look for that would make a deal reasonable or unreasonable:

1 REASONABLE: Offer a Palestinian state in all of the land conquered in 1967, with only the slightest border changes to allow Israel to incorporate Gush Etzion, Ariel, and the sections of Jerusalem with a clear Jewish majority plus the Jewish section of the Old City and the Wall.

UNREASONABLE: Having already obtained 78 percent of pre-1948 Palestine, Israel tries to take more of the West Bank or Gaza in order to protect settlements illegally constructed for the primary purpose of thwarting the creation of a Palestinian state. So watch for deals being offered

around swapping of land (because these deals give Israel prime Palestinian agricultural land in "exchange" for unusable parts of the Negev desert).

2 REASONABLE: Israel asks for a ban of heavy weapons (tanks and armed airplanes) and for the arrest of terrorists. To be policed by an international force created by the UN and given powers to ensure that terrorists are stopped.

UNREASONABLE: Israel maintains a military presence inside the Palestinian state, insists on military roads that would criss-cross that state, and continues to intervene inside the Palestinian state on the grounds of "preventing terrorism."

3 REASONABLE: Israel shares Jerusalem, allowing the Palestinians full control over Palestinian sections of the city and unimpeded access to the Temple Mount. Without abandoning its claim to sovereignty over the Temple Mount, it gives Palestinians interim sovereignty until the Messiah comes and Jews are once again allowed to use the Temple Mount (functional definition: "When nations beat their swords into ploughshares, make war no more, and the lion lies down with the lamb," as predicted in Isaiah).

UNREASONABLE: Israel insists on control over sections of Jerusalem which the Arab majority wishes to be part of the Palestinian state.

4 REASONABLE: Israel offers compensation to any West Bank settlers who wish to resettle inside the pre-1967 borders of Israel, and tells those who wish to remain outside the borders that they must live as peaceable citizens of the Palestinian state according to the laws of a Palestinian state, and that Israel will not intervene if these settlers are charged with violation of Palestinian laws (including theft of Palestinian land).

UNREASONABLE: Israel leaves settlers and then refuses to allow Palestinians to require that the settlers live by the laws of the new Palestinian state; or Israel attempts to annex existing settlements to Israel.

5 REASONABLE: Israel agrees to spearhead, with the U.S. and UN, a massive fund for reparations to Palestinian refugees, acknowledges partial (not total) responsibility for having caused the Palestinian refugee problem in 1948, and sets a yearly quota for return of refugees (probably some number between 15–25,000 a year for thirty years—a number big enough to be significant but small enough to not endanger the Jewish character of the State of Israel). Palestinians would have to agree to live in peace inside Israel, and Israel would have to end all discriminatory policies against Arabs (*de facto* as well as *de jure*).

UNREASONABLE: Israel is unwilling to acknowledge partial responsibility for the refugees, or continues to block even partial return. Equally unreasonable: the Palestinians insist on immediate return of 3 million refugees or continue to use them as a weapon in continued struggle.

6 REASONABLE: Both sides agree to end all propaganda demeaning Arabs, Jews, Islam, and Judaism and to

have their media and schools monitored and controlled on these issues by an international human rights organization.

UNREASONABLE: Both sides talk peace but continue to demean each other, and then hide behind their inability to control what is being taught to their people by the media and schools.

So, please be alert to these details. Any U.S.-sponsored negotiation will be little more than a PR game to strengthen the credibility of Arab elites unless the United States uses its economic and political power to push Israel toward the reasonable positions described above. Because Israel is occupying Palestine and there is no even-handedness to the status quo, any actions which perpetuate the status quo through endless negotiations are really in substance no different than allowing Israel to continue the Occupation. Even the status quo, however, is better than allowing Sharon to reoccupy parts of what the Oslo agreement promised to the Palestinians.

If severely pressed by the United States, Ariel Sharon might grant a Palestinian state within 60–70 percent of the West Bank, a state that is criss-crossed by Israeli military roads and checkpoints. If Arafat or his successors were to accept that, the Palestinian people would rightly be outraged, and that outrage will guarantee that this conflict will continue in future generations. So don't rejoice if Sharon says he would accept a Palestinian state—the question is: what kind of a state in relation to the issues discussed above? A non-viable Palestinian state is more dangerous than no state. Better to postpone the settlement of the conflict for a while until Israel is ready to be more open-hearted and generous. In these situations, it is always the superior military power that must make the generous gestures (e.g. when the Allies sought no land from Germany after World War II).

Powell and Bush, however, will be unlikely to move forward as long as the majority of Americans have such little understanding of the complexities of the situation and the media automatically portrays Palestinians as just one more element in an irrational Islamic world.

Religious leaders could take on the responsibility for teaching people about these complexities. But first, Christians would need to overcome their fear of being labelled anti-Semitic for articulating moral critiques of Israeli behavior. The guilt about anti-Semitism is legitimate—we call on Christians to vigorously combat this legacy of anti-Semitism in their communities and religious teachings—but at the same time we ask that you don't let this legacy silence you on what is happening today in Israel.

Until Americans are willing to apply significant economic and political pressure to Israel in support of the reasonable positions articulated above, little will change. Frankly, we don't believe the U.S. government is close to the point of applying such pressure, so the rest of the process is likely to have the character of empty posturing,

despite Colin Powell's good intentions. Changing this policy will take a major grassroots effort and that will only be accomplished by a major campaign to change the nature of political discourse in the United States. That's why one of the major foci of the Tikkun Community conference in New York City this January 19–21 will be to develop a mass education campaign on these issues from a progressive multi-issued Jewish (and non-Jewish) perspective which unequivocally supports a two-state solution.

Building a democratic bottom-up consensus in the United States for what we consider to be a reasonable settlement may take decades. We see no reason to believe that America's elites feel it in their interest to impose such a settlement, either. That is why we want to emphasize to our Palestinian friends and allies that they still have in their hands a potentially far faster track: build mass support in Palestine for a totally nonviolent liberation movement based on Mahatma Ghandi's model. That would require arresting the terrorists, and consistently responding to the hateful acts of settlers and the repressive acts of the Israeli army with massive nonviolent, non-rock-throwing demonstrations. After five years of total nonviolence and a discourse that will affirm the humanity of the Jewish people and their right to a Jewish state within the pre-1967 borders, you will find a whole new political situation facing you—one in which a majority of Jews both in Israel and around the world are wanting to give peace a chance.

Of course, in a just world it would not be fair to ask the Palestinians to have to engage in nonviolence when they are facing the violence of the Occupation every day. The same argument could have been made by African Americans facing the violence of segregationist states in the South. But the issue for Martin Luther King Jr. was not "Is it fair?" but "What will actually break through to the consciousness of American whites so that they feel less threatened, more affirmed in their own humanity, and thus more able to see that civil rights for us is in accord with their own highest sense of who they are as a people?" It is this kind of effort that is needed by the Palestinians. Winning will never come from violence, and it is unlikely to come from the good will of American elites prodded by Arab elites. But it could come if the Palestinian people themselves convey to the Jewish people that the Jews have little to fear from Palestinian national self-determination.

Well, we won't hold our breath for that either. We have a long educational process to engage in, and we need to start now. At the center of our education is a vision: of both people learning how to tell the other's story with compassion, and both peoples learning to deal with each other in a generous and open-hearted way. We believe that the majorities on both sides are frozen in fear today. But that can change. We can be part of the process by reminding people on both sides of their highest spiritual insights and capacities. We have our work cut out for us. □

Post-Traumatic Love Syndrome

Michael J. Bader

In the aftermath of the World Trade Center attack, we saw and experienced an outpouring of generosity, altruism, and heroism. And not only at Ground Zero. Many people found themselves talking to strangers on the street, on buses, sitting in a bar watching TV, or at a sports event. Many of us contacted friends we hadn't seen in years, reached out to family and acquaintances whom we hadn't had time for in the past.

Although more dramatic than most, this catastrophe wasn't unusual in the way it generated feelings of community. Catastrophes bring people together. They seem to bring out the best in people, breaking down barriers and walls that make us invisible to each other in daily life. Journalists have even described something that they call "terror sex" in which people lift their customary inhibitions and report intensified sexual experiences with spouses or even strangers. Since the goal of the TIKKUN Community is to create exactly the type of society in which connections like this are the norm, we need to understand the essential psychological mechanisms at work at this moment and consider how we might promote them in everyday social and political life.

Why It's So Hard To Reach Out

The central mechanism at work, I believe, is safety. Catastrophes momentarily create the conditions of safety in which people can overcome their alienation from one another. In order to understand this paradoxical dynamic more fully, we have to look to its origins in childhood. From its beginnings, the human psyche is wired in such a way that it seeks psychological safety at all cost. This developmental fact has important implications, because it is under the sway of this need for a safe sense of relatedness that parents teach children about reality and morality. In the context of our dependence on our families, we all unconsciously learn how we're supposed to be and what we're supposed to want.

As children, safety depends entirely on the security and quality of our relationship with our caretakers. This is why

we all grow up exquisitely sensitive to the nuances of our parents' moods and behavior. We will sacrifice any longing, need, desire, or pleasure, if we sense that it might endanger our connectedness to our parents.

For example, children will regularly inhibit the pleasures of independence if they believe that such autonomy will threaten their tie to a caretaker who cannot tolerate it. If a

parent appears to be provoked by dependency, however, those same children will become stoic and overly self-reliant. Because our society privileges stoicism and self-reliance, experiences of loving tenderness and dependency seem to be especially threatening to developing children.

Let us consider our desires to lean on others and to nurture others who are leaning on us. These are perfectly normal and healthy needs, but their expression can also often threaten our psychological safety. For example, we can be—and often

are—rejected for such longings in our families. And when we feel rejected in this way, we feel ashamed because we automatically assume that the rejection is deserved. Self-blame of this sort is universal. Deep down, children take responsibility for their own rejection.

A patient of mine grew up in a family in which his alcoholic father was a cynical intellectual who repeatedly mocked displays of familial love as well as any displays of neediness. This patient grew up ashamed of wanting to be taken care of and identified with his father's disdain for emotional vulnerability. Whenever he felt dependent he blamed himself for being weak. Whenever his children were too needy, he found himself becoming impatient and critical. My patient's perfectly normal and healthy longings for interdependence and love had been rejected as a child and, as an adult, he rejected them in himself and others.

At the same time, our normal and healthy need to be nurturing and altruistic often becomes co-opted and exploited, wittingly or unwittingly, by others, beginning with our parents—co-opted in the sense that we come to feel as if we're giving more than we're getting, that we're responsible for the welfare of others for whom we should not be responsible. In the language of popular psychology, we often become parentified, functioning as caretakers to our own parents. We then feel guilty about our need to be selfish, to separate, to have

Catastrophes seem to bring out the best in people, breaking down barriers and walls that make us invisible to each other in daily life.

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ambitions, and to experience successes and pleasures that our parents never did. Relationships often come to feel like obligations, burdens, rife with the possibility of self-sacrifice. Our underlying desire for relatedness has produced a paradigm of relatedness which is oppressive.

Connection becomes dangerous in this way as well.

A good example of this could be seen in a patient of mine who grew up in a household in which her mother was depressed, bitter about the burdens of taking care of four children, and disappointed in her weak and passive husband. My patient grew up trying to cheer her mother up. She tried to be "good" and was always exquisitely attuned to her mother's moods. She didn't date through high school because she didn't want her mother to feel inferior and left out. As an adult, she got involved in a series of bad relationships with depressed and self-preoccupied men whom she unsuccessfully tried to fix. In the course of her treatment with me, she realized that she was identifying with her mother because she felt so guilty about having a happier life than her. She experienced relationships as one-way streets, just like she had with her mother, and felt disloyal and uncomfortable when she became more independent and happy. Relationships, she unconsciously believed, were supposed to be self-sacrificial and disappointing.

These twin dangers of connectedness—rejection and compulsory responsibility—result in behavior and attitudes that are reinforced by our society. They become "adaptive" but are still ultimately pathological, as is the society that mirrors them. For example, people who are conflicted about their own dependency needs, and those of others, experience the American emphasis on meritocracy—the ideology which says that one's position in life is entirely one's own responsibility and reflects one's intrinsic value—as perfectly normal. According to this logic, people shouldn't go around asking for and getting help but should rise and fall on their own internal merits. People who are dependent are subtly scorned because of the unspoken rationale that "if I have to go it alone and on the basis of my own hard work, why should they get a handout?" We develop a hard shell of cynicism because we assume that to expose or express longings for caretaking or even love from others would be to invite either rejection or a one-way road to self-sacrifice and exploitation.

In this kind of world, too much social responsibility or relatedness is a dangerous thing. Instead, we cherish the values of rugged individualism, individual freedom, market competition, and self-interest. In this way, the personal meets the political in an unholy alliance that produces personal isolation and an aversion to social community.

Why WTC Changed Things

Enter: an external catastrophe. Suddenly, the psychological calculus changes. Suddenly, it becomes safe to connect with one another, to help one another, to acknowledge

one's vulnerability and look upon that of others without disdain. What happened?

First, vulnerability and neediness are now socially sanctioned. After all, who can now say that their—our—need for help is illegitimate, weak, or shameful? The world is coming apart. People are supposed to be scared. Most important, negating the self-blame that flows from the edicts of our meritocracy, it is now nobody's fault that we're needy. Our consciences allow us to safely express our humanity without shame because external conditions seem to mandate it.

Second, not only is it permissible to be scared and dependent, but disasters dramatically provoke such feelings. Loss—or the potential for it—is all around us. Our innate longings for connectedness and attachment are stimulated to a tremendous degree. They overwhelm our normal inhibitions and we reach out to each other to beat back the darkness and danger that loss and helplessness creates.

Third, massive external catastrophes such as the WTC attack and the anthrax scare affect all of us equally. The sense arises that "we're now all in this together." A natural disaster momentarily collapses racial and social distinctions. It's safe to recognize the other guy as similar to us because we've all been made into victims in a similar way. A common threat creates common interests.

Finally, following a disaster, we tend to feel: What do we have to lose? The world is crashing down around us. We're in the proverbial foxhole together. The perception arises that the rules no longer apply. We feel that normal social intercourse has come to a temporary halt as the social fabric lies in ruins around us. The lowering of external prohibitions promotes the lowering of internal ones, internal injunctions against being too vulnerable or about being too altruistic. When the external trappings of regulation, order, and control are lowered, one's forbidden longings and impulses can more safely flourish.

This model explains the surprising finding that people seem more sexual after a disaster. My own research suggests that so-called "terror sex" results, in part, from the sense that the old rules don't count any more. The characterological prohibitions based on shame and guilt that have inhibited sexual arousal are weakened in a post-apocalyptic landscape because people feel that they have less to lose. Normally, we all inhibit our sexual desires because we fear that we'll be rejected or that we'll overwhelm or otherwise hurt the other person. In the aftermath of a huge disaster, however, we can sometimes momentarily shed the trappings of our old worries, our old identities, and safely connect with each other more directly, more lovingly, and more sexually. As Humphrey Bogart says at the end of *Casablanca*, "The problems of three little people don't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world." Although Bogart and Ingrid Bergman couldn't shed their inhibitions enough to sexually reconnect in *Casablanca*, in other such crazy worlds, the outcome is more sexually satisfying.

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POST-TRAUMATIC LOVE SYNDROME (from page 11)

Thus external ruin can be psychologically liberating precisely because it creates temporary conditions of safety in which people can experience and express the part of themselves that hungers for community but which is normally kept under wraps because of the potential dangers of rejection or guilty compliance.

What We Can Do

How can a social movement, then, committed to creating a new bottom line of caring and community, make use of these insights? First and foremost, we have to understand that even the language of our movement—"caring," "community," "love," "mutual recognition," and "spirituality"—will stir up resistance in people because such language puts into words longings that they have suppressed or cynically dismissed in themselves or in others because of the dangers of rejection and exploitation. By understanding how catastrophes bring people together, we can see how powerfully entrenched the fears of such connectedness must be. The world has to practically collapse around us before we can feel safe enough to come together. This understanding should help us feel compassion toward people who are dismissive or contemptuous of our ideas, as well as toward ourselves for not being able to sufficiently live them out.

This leads us to the centrality of addressing the issue of cynicism itself as part of our political work. In their heart

of hearts, most people don't want to be cynical. They want to feel like they're part of something bigger than themselves while maintaining their freedom to realize their private ambitions. Their cynicism is a defense against the dangers of rejection and exploitation. Therefore, we should find ways to talk to people—in our literature, our conferences, our political proposals, and in the various social movements in which we participate—about the dynamics of cynicism. In particular, we should talk to people about how our political leaders continuously promote a cynical attitude toward idealism of any kind, how the mass media insidiously reflects the notion that everyone has dark and ulterior motives, and how our religions and communities often recreate the same sense of spiritual emptiness. We should find ways to remind people of movements like the civil rights and women's movements which were genuinely idealistic and rejected the cynical belief that the way things were was the way they were destined to be.

All the while, it's crucial to call people to their true longings for connectedness and to systematically confront the psychological dangers that keep people from hearing that call. We need to try, in words and deeds, to make it safe for people to experience more of the interdependence that they secretly desire and to rebel against the institutions that tell them that such mutuality is shameful. We shouldn't need a catastrophe to open our hearts to each other and to feelings that are aching to be expressed. □

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY (from page 14)

War on terrorism, to bring any lasting and secure effects, cannot be reduced to the war on terrorists; it needs to cut at the roots of the sinister meeting of desperation with the most modern and murderous weapons. That approach would require much more than sending bombers and launching missiles against terrorists already discovered and recorded.

Yes—ours is a divided, quarrelsome world of "gated communities," a world in which petrified stereotypes, ossified prejudices, and seething animosities bar clarity of thinking, a world in which barriers tend to be erected and frontlines drawn in every corner of the globe and with accelerating speed. You may say that this is not a good point to start, if dialogue and mutual comprehension is the destination. So let me remind you of a wise Irish joke. To a driver's question "How to get from here to Dublin?", a passerby answers: "If I wished to go to Dublin, I would not start from here." I can sympathize with all those who would prefer to start on the way to the "Unity of All Being" from a world different from the one we inherited and helped to shape. But there is no other world except this sphere on whose surface we all jostle, rubbing each other's shoulders. For once, the all-too-often abused *ein breira*—"there is no alternative"—argument sounds all too credible. We can ignore it solely at our own, and everybody else's, peril. □

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Founding Conference

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at Stephen Wise Free Synagogue
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Global Solidarity

Zygmunt Bauman

The real need of the moment," says Michael Lerner, "is for a fundamental rethinking of the way we are running our world. In this battle of fear against hope," he says, we need to "focus our energies on building trust, love, and goodness in the world.... We need to think hard about what it is in the way we are living, organizing our societies, and treating each other that makes violence seem plausible to so many people." A central step in this process, Lerner suggests, "is to reorganize ourselves as part of the Unity of All Being." One could hardly say it better.

After September 11, one can no longer go on pretending that the truth of our world has not been displayed for all to see. Although it has been unnoticed, ignored, or played down by most of us, the truth is that the world is full. The great dream of the West, the dream that there is always a new place to discover, a new land to colonize, has dissolved. The great hope that a nation could wall itself off from the others is likewise over. The era that started with the building of the Chinese or Hadrian Walls, proceeded through the Maginot Line, and ended with the Berlin Wall, is at an end. There is no empty place, if there ever was one. There is no society that can subsist apart from the rest of us. There is no sector off the grid.

The French have a good way of putting this—"il n'y a pas hors du monde"—there is no "outside" to the world, no escape route or place to shelter, no alternative space to isolate and hide. And this phenomenon is not just geographic but social and psychological. When I say the world is full I mean that there is nowhere that one can say with any degree of certainty to be "*chez soi*." There is no place for oneself where one is free to follow one's own ways, pursue one's own goals and be oblivious to all the rest as irrelevant. Nowhere (however tightly sealed and heavily fortified that spot may be) where one can shut oneself up in one's own affairs, oblivious to their effects on those left outside. The world is full.

You know that fullness from the inside. That fullness is not just another item of information. You feel that fullness,

*The world is full.
There is no place
to hide.*

you live it daily, and whatever you do or may yet do, that experience of fullness won't go away. Woe to those who try to forget it or feel conceited enough to trust their power to opt out. The awakening may be devastatingly cruel, just like that morning of September 11 was for those New Yorkers who might have believed that things that happened "out there," on the other side of the well-protected border, did not and would not affect their well-being, that all the pencils needed to draw the boundary between good and bad fortune could be found on this side of the border, and that soon the state-of-the-art anti-missile shield would make the sealing of that border complete

and foolproof.

"Globalization" is the term commonly used to account for this uncanny experience of the "world filling up." With the velocity of transmission approaching its limit—the speed of light—the near-instantaneity of the cause-and-effect succession transforms even the largest of distances into proximity—and in the end for all practical purposes dissolves the cause-effect distinction itself ... we are all now in the close, indeed intimate, vicinity of each other.

Because it involves drawing speed to its limits and reducing distance to an ever more negligible factor in the calculation of action, globalization is unlike any other territorial expansion of the past. As Paul Virilio put it, "we live in a world no longer based on geographic expanse but on a temporal distance constantly being decreased by our transportation, transmission and tele-action capacities." "The new space is speed-space; it is no longer a time-space." Virilio suggests that speed is no more a means, but a milieu; one may say that speed is a sort of ethereal substance that saturates the world and into which more and more of action (and particularly of actions that truly count) is transferred, acquiring in the process new qualities that only such substance makes possible—and inescapable. The new speed renders the action momentary and thus virtually unpreventable, but also potentially unpunishable. And the mirror reflection of the action's impunity is the potentially unbound and incurable vulnerability of its objects.

One of the most consequential effects of that new situation is the endemic porosity and frailty of all boundaries and the in-built futility, or at least the provisional nature and revocability, of all boundary drawing. All boundaries

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have become tenuous, frail and porous. Boundaries share in the new facility of disappearance; they are effaced as they are drawn, leaving behind—as the Cheshire cat its smile—only the (similarly volatile) memory of drawing. Geographical discontinuity matters no more, as speed-space, that envelops the totality of the globe's surface, brings each place into nearly the same speed-distance from each other and makes all places mutually contiguous.

More than two centuries ago, in 1784, Immanuel Kant, in his *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, recorded a prophetic vision of the world to come: “die vollkommene bürgerliche Vereinigung in der Menschengattung”—a “perfect unification of human species through common citizenship.” That would be, Kant noted, the fulfillment of “*was die Natur zur höchsten Absicht hat*”—of “the supreme Nature's design.” Unification must have been Nature's design from the start, thought Kant, since the globe we inhabit is a sphere. Because, on such a sphere, you cannot increase your distance without ultimately cancelling it, the surface of the globe on which we live bars “infinite dispersion.” In the end, we must all be neighbors simply because we have nowhere else to go. The surface of the Earth is our shared property; none of us has more “right” to occupy it than any other member of the human species.

Such a time must have finally arrived. Let's return to the time of Kant (and to the time of little provincial towns like Kant's Königsberg), to catch a glimpse of how this happened. Kant's near contemporary, Alexis de Tocqueville, wrote about the Ancien Regime that ruled France before the Revolution. This regime was a collection of localities—villages, townships, parishes. The ruling dynasty zealously creamed off of their surplus product, but otherwise expressed little interest in, and refrained from the running of, their daily affairs and seldom interfered with their self-propagating routines.

That regime was replaced after the French Revolution with a new kind of power that introduced a law uniform for all, replacing the variegated collection of burdens and privileges. This power intended to level up the differences between regional usages and standards of life, but above all interfered in the way the production and distribution of (now seen as national) wealth was conducted. We may say that the French Revolution initiated integration of society on a new supra-local level of the state, wielding or struggling to obtain a power that reached the parts which former powers could not and did not wish to reach. That process took Europe at least a century to accomplish, and other continents a century more.

The effort started by the French Revolutionary governments was in response to the inability of municipalities, guilds, and other forms of local government to contain and control powerful economic forces that rose above the local level and moved beyond local control—the only control then in operation. Entrepreneurs of the time complained

and fulminated against “silly local constraints” that cramped economic initiative and arrested progress—just as today's multinationals complain against “economically absurd” national attempts to keep watch on, monitor, and correct economic activity on their territory and to put brakes on some of the wilder side-effects of the unbridled pursuit of gain. To express their dissatisfaction these entrepreneurs of the eighteenth century used a vocabulary strikingly similar to that known to us, both from the writings and speeches of the prophets and from today's advocates of the emancipation of global economic forces “of progress” from the “retrograde parochiality” of nation-states.

Just like then, our current institutions of democratic, political, and ethical control, territorially confined and tied to the ground as they are, are no match for the increasingly extraterritorial and free-flowing forces of finance, capital, and trade. Just like then, our task now is to create such institutions of effective political action as could match the size and the power of the already global economic forces and bring them under political scrutiny and ethical supervision. The alternative is the continuing—and deepening—of the disastrous effects of venture capital: the growing inequality and polarization of the globe, massive destruction of livelihoods, impoverishment of entire lands and populations, and revival of tribal sentiments and animosities with all their murderous, often genocidal, consequences.

The first step in creating a political sphere sufficient to regulate these economic forces is to realize that, in this globalized world of ours, we all live closer to each other than ever before. We share more aspects of our daily life than ever before. We have the opportunity to know more about each other's customs and preferences than ever before. And

At the Festival of Booths

Every house on earth a broken house.

Every city a ruined city.

Ploughed under by that slow disaster, time.

If ever redeemed to us, then by the same.

Your walls will fall, are falling, have fallen.

Your roof is open to the countless stars.

—Nan Cohen

since our weapons have become ever more murderous and have reached already the power to destroy the planet—there is more than ever before reason, for all of us, to put talking to each other above fighting each other. Let us take up this unique chance that globalization itself offers.

But to engage in such a dialogue, we need all feel secure, have our dignity recognized and our ways of life respected—looked upon seriously, with the attention they deserve. Above all, we need to feel that we are all given an equal chance in life and the equal possibility to enjoy the fruits of our shared achievements. Most of those conditions are either missing or suspected to be missing in that “new world disorder” that is emerging out of the “deregulated,” one-sided process of globalization. And so there is a temptation to resort to violence rather than negotiation; to wage endless “reconnaissance wars” in order to find out how far the “adversaries” can be pushed back, how much they can be forced to give away.

Sooner or later, served daily with the evidence of our interdependence, we will have to realize that no one can claim the Earth, or any part of the Earth, as one’s own indivisible property. In view of our interdependence, “solidarity of fate” is not a matter of choice. What does depend on our choice is whether that shared fate will end up in mutual destruction, or generate solidarity of feelings, purposes, and action. Regardless of our diverse, often sharply distinct and sometimes hotly antagonistic political or religious creeds, we all wish to live in dignity, to not be humiliated, to be free from fear, and to be allowed to pursue happiness. This is a wide and solid enough common ground on which to start building solidarity of thought and action.

Reforging solidarity of fate into solidarity of purpose and action is one case in which the verdict “there is no alternative,” so often abused in the case of other choices, can be legitimately pronounced. Either we draw the proper conclusions from our global interdependence and turn it to the benefit of all, or it will turn itself, with our overt or tacit support, into a catastrophe after which few if any people will be around to count the merits and demerits of any one of the conflicting ways of life. The choice is, as Hannah Arendt warned already forty years ago, between solidarity of common humanity and solidarity of mutual destruction. No rhetoric and labeling exercise will chase that choice away.

On this planet, we are all dependent on each other, and nothing that we do or refrain from doing is indifferent to the fate of everyone else. From the ethical point of view, this makes us all responsible for each other. Responsibility “is there,” put firmly in place by the global network of interdependency—whether we recognize its presence or not and whether we take it up or not. Whenever we deny its presence we assume the attitude of “bystanders”—people who see evil and hear evil (as we all, courtesy of the world wide

web and worldwide television network, do now—and do in real time), sometimes speak of evil, but do nothing at all or not enough to arrest it, to thwart, and to frustrate it. But in the new frontier-land of the full planet, evil—any instance of evil, wherever it is gestated and whoever may be its intended or “collateral” victim—affects us all.

A global world is a place where, for once, the desideratum of moral responsibility and survival coincide and blend. Globalization is, among other things (perhaps above all) an ethical challenge. It is now up to us—all of us—to take

this challenge up; to take, one may say, responsibility for our responsibility. And the greater power we have, the mightier our weapons and our resources, the fuller our warehouses and the more efficient our factories—the greater the responsibility we need to carry. For once, the ethical duty of care for the other and the survival instinct point in the same direction and suggest the same action. To quote Michael Lerner once

more: “If we really want to protect ourselves, we need to create a world which no longer dehumanizes others, no longer tolerates oppression, no longer imagines that we can live our own private lives and find our own private solutions while closing our ears to the suffering of others.”

It is not just a question of insuring ourselves against the vengeance of the disinherited and humiliated others. It is also a question of defending ourselves against the endemic frailty of our own civilization, of keeping alive and re-asserting the values which that civilization which we cherish and are proud of is meant to embody. George Monbiot of *The Guardian* (Nov. 15, 2001) warns that in the popular reaction to the rout of Taliban, “the bugles sounding victory for civilized values are also sounding a retreat. [I]t seems that in trying to shut the terrorists out, we have merely imprisoned ourselves.” Monbiot refers to the amazing—and horrifying—facility with which the American Congress, and soon afterwards the British Secretary for Interior Affairs, pushed aside our countries’ hard-won liberties and allowed the suspension of basic human rights (including the right to be seen as innocent until proved guilty). Referring to Colin Powell’s efforts to have Al-Jazeera, the only truly free and independent major broadcasting company in the Arab world, banned, Monbiot concludes that “free speech and dissent have now joined terrorism as the business of ‘evil-doers.’ If this is a victory for civilization, I would hate to see what defeat looks like.”

If peaceful coexistence on Earth is our objective, this is a false start, as is the tendency to re-cast the cause of justice as the task of winning a war. We must not confuse “justice being done” with the replacement of one set of barbaric tribal chiefs offering shelter to terrorists by another set as yet having no shelter to offer but trying hard to obtain one.

(continued on page 62)

*Globalization is,
among other things
(perhaps above all)
an ethical challenge.*

Pacifism: Now More than Ever

Philip J. Bentley

In the face of such an obvious evil as terrorism how could anyone oppose war? Given what happened on September 11, how can the American anti-war movement opposing the bombing of Afghanistan and advocating pacifism be justified?

Pacifism is the most misunderstood word in the entire political lexicon. Often confused with the word "passive," "pacifism" is too often taken to mean an amoral refusal to confront and oppose evil in the world. But the words have very different roots. While "passive" comes from the Greek word for "suffering," "pacifism" comes from the Latin word for "peace." Pacifism does not mean being passive in the face of evil. On the contrary, pacifism is all about confronting and defeating evil. Ever since Shifra and Puah refused to obey Pharaoh's evil command to kill all male children of Israelite women during childbirth, people of conscience have fought evil without resorting to violence. Moreover they have often succeeded.

Too often, pacifism's successes, such as Gandhi's independence movement and Martin Luther King Jr.'s civil rights movement, are dismissed because the pacifists are said to have been working within civilized democratic societies instead of facing "true evil." At the same time, pacifism's critics accuse it of terrible failures, including the rise of Hitler—criticisms that are absurd given the actual history of these events.

For example, pacifism is often blamed for Neville Chamberlain's shameful performance at Munich. It's true that a potent pacifist movement arose after World War I as a reaction to the ghastly carnage of that conflict. However, while the rhetoric of that movement was sometimes cynically adopted by national governments, it did not actually impose

its will on any of them. In the case of Chamberlain, despite his infamous assertion that he had brought "peace in our time," peace was hardly his mission. England had a long history of attempting to influence events by creating a "balance of power" through its diplomatic and military policies and actions. Chamberlain, the Conservative prime minister, followed a policy of appeasement because he saw fascism as a force to balance the Communism of Stalin's Soviet Union. Doubtless he also believed that if England and France were supportive of Hitler they would not be attacked by the Third Reich. This was a foolish policy, and it was not pacifism.

The failure of the United States to stand up against Hitler likewise had nothing to do with pacifism. Our nation had refused to be part of the League of Nations because we refused to take part in any international effort we did not control and that was seen as a violation of our national sovereignty. We also took no part in opposing anything Germany, Italy, or Japan did during the 1930s—at least nothing of any significance or effect. Those Americans who did try to do something, notably in the Spanish Civil War, were later condemned as Communist sympathizers, if not Soviet agents. In addition to an isolation of self-interest, America was also influenced by a racism and bigotry that were pervasive not only among the Archie Bunkers of the time, but among the political and cultural elite of our society. None of this was due to pacifism.



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The same kind of self-interested political folly is part of American foreign policy down to the present day. Saddam Hussein is still in power because George Bush Sr. wanted Iraq to remain as a bulwark against Iran. In fact, it had been United States foreign policy to support Hussein's regime for several years before the invasion of Kuwait. The peace movement had been calling for an end to this support because of Hussein's record of oppression and violence against his own people for years before our president suddenly realized what a villain he is. Indeed, as late as a few weeks before the invasion, Bush opposed a bill in Congress calling for an arms embargo against Iraq. Likewise it was American policies that gave power to any number of international evil-doers, including the Taliban, in pursuit of American interests.

The attitude of these political "peace-makers" can be summed up by a quote from Franklin Delano Roosevelt. When some complained about the tyranny of Somoza, who we had put in power in Nicaragua, FDR responded, "He may be a son of a bitch, but he's *our* son of a bitch." This sentiment is typical of political thinking from Chamberlain on Hitler to Bush Jr. on the Taliban before September 11. Whatever this is, it is not pacifism.

Pacifists are often attacked by people who seem to think the only effective response to evil is military power. In fact military power alone is not effective against anything except, sometimes, another military force. Let's go back again to World War II for some examples. The French ignored Hitler's rise believing that they had the means to stop him with the Maginot Line. When Germany reoccupied the Rhineland, France did nothing, yet historians note that Hitler's orders were for his soldiers to retreat if the French made any opposition to the move. As it turned out, of course, the Maginot Line turned out to be as relevant to World War II as the Polish Calvary. It was nothing more than a fortified, concrete trench with no relevance to the *Wehrmacht* of the Third Reich. The parallels with today's missile defense program are obvious: a grossly expensive, technically unworkable, and entirely irrelevant defense against an enemy that no longer exists. France went along with Chamberlain's policy because of a belief that she had an adequate defense against Germany. This too was not pacifism.

Since World War II we have bombed over twenty countries and not once have we ended a dictatorship by doing so. We threw everything we had, except nuclear weapons, against the North Vietnamese for a decade and, in the end, we had to retreat. We destroyed the economy and infrastructure of Iraq, but Saddam Hussein is still in power. We devastated Belgrade, but we will be playing whack-a-mole with Balkan ethnic groups far into the foreseeable future. Israel and the Palestinians have both failed to get rights or security

through violence. Sari Nusseibeh, a notable Palestinian leader, recently said that his people's greatest mistake has been the idea that Israel would succumb to violence.

The bombing and invasion of Afghanistan should be opposed because it will not work and is very likely to make matters much worse. Every American bullet and missile fired is a gift to Osama bin Laden. We can talk all we want about respect for Islam and Muslims, but those words will not be believed. Al Qaeda and its allies and supporters claim that America has declared war on Islam. The Islamic

press and clergy in much of the world speak of the Taliban as the ideal of Islamic national life. For people who do not watch CNN, let alone Fox, an attack on the Taliban is an attack on Islam. Our war on terrorism is likely to become the World War III that will employ weapons of mass destruction,

unless we find another way. Our own government has acknowledged this danger, at least indirectly. Nonetheless they are pursuing a military strategy that ignores the danger.

What is the alternative? First, while it seems pointless at this juncture to argue about what we should have been doing since the attacks on September 11, we can all agree that those outrages were criminal acts and those who carried them out are criminals. We must do all that can be done, within the constraints set by a democratic society, to break the support for Al Qaeda and its allies around the world. Our aim should be to render them virtually powerless without making martyrs of them.

Second, we must begin to think about how we can influence foreign policy in non-military ways. The United States has become the least generous of economic powers in the area of foreign aid. Most of the money we do allot is for the purchase of military hardware. We need to think back to the success of the Marshall Plan, which aimed to help our former enemies rebuild their economies (a lesson learned from the aftermath of World War I, when the Allies' attempt to keep their enemies weak, led to the rise of fascism and Nazism). Today, the United States should vigorously pursue a program of economic justice throughout the Islamic world. In order to destroy the credibility of those who paint us as evil, we must do good.

Our government, our press, and our society seem to pay attention only to people with guns. The time has come to recognize that nonviolent methods are powerful and effective. Pacifism works. This has been demonstrated over and over in such places as the Philippines, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Chile, and even the Soviet Union. There are pacifist organizations and movements everywhere including in Muslim countries. These should be supported and strengthened.

Military force defeats evil in comic books and at the movies. It usually fails in real life. There is a better way: pacifism—now more than ever. □

*Nonviolent methods are
powerful and effective.
Pacifism works.*

Ground Work

Joel Kovel

How do I respond when I see that in some Islamic countries there is vitriolic hatred for America? I'll tell you how I respond: I'm amazed. I'm amazed that there's such misunderstanding of what our country is about that people would hate us. I am—like most Americans, I just can't believe it because I know how good we are.

*George W. Bush, October 11, 2001
Press Conference*

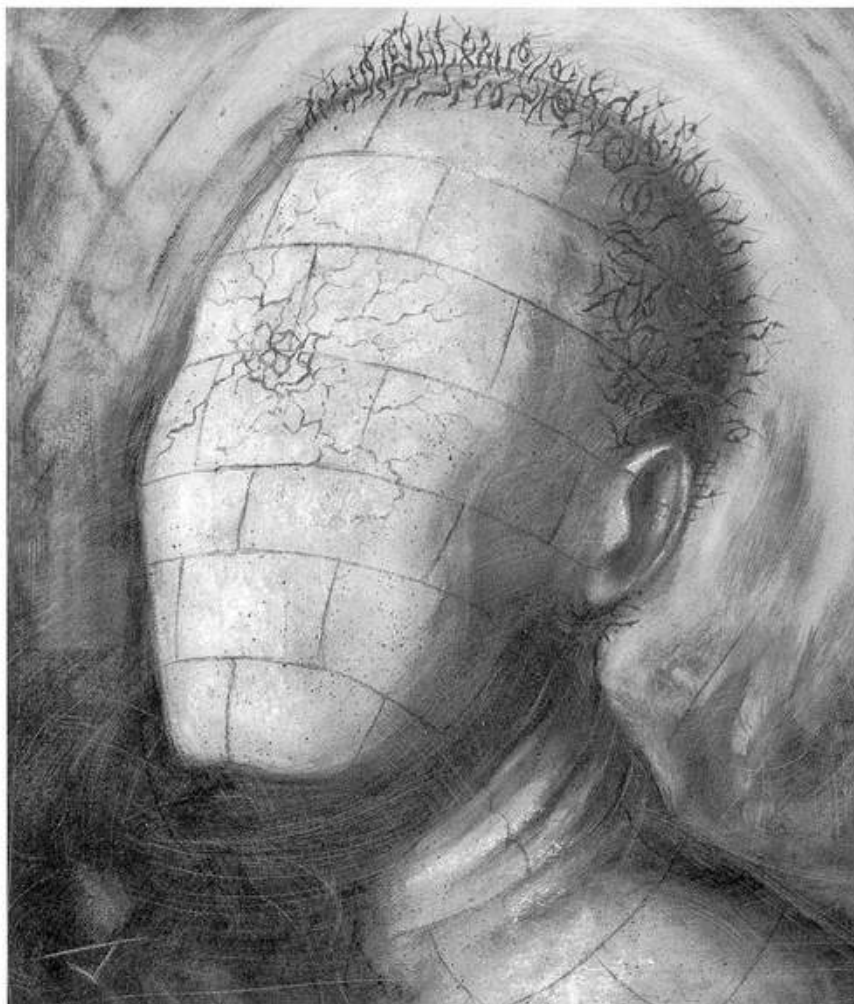
As America deals with the crisis posed by fundamentalism, it is well to recall that we, too, were founded as a fundamentalist society. Religious war raged in colonial New England, where Quakers were hung in the seventeenth century and witch trials continued well after they died down in Europe. This was associated with the idea that the new society was on a special mission from God, to redeem the world and bring light to the heathen. We were to be "as a city upon the hill," in the famous phrase of John Winthrop. Thus America was to be a carrying forward of the Covenant between Israel and the Lord whereby the Jews became anointed as the Chosen People.

Centuries of enlightenment and capitalist materialism have pretty well eroded the divine wrappings of this belief, leaving behind the core conviction, expressed by Bush and widely resonant in our national culture, that we are an inherently good nation. This is a curious notion altogether. From a purely logical standpoint, the idea that any particular people would be special, or good, or chosen by a higher power, is a pathetically childish illusion, with no greater claim on the truth than a four year-old's belief that his mommy prefers him over all others. Yet one can make this interpretation until the end of time, and nothing will change. This is because the idea has too much practical importance. From the standpoint of the oppressed or outcast, the idea of a special destiny helps to forge a vigorous identity and gives meaning and purpose to an otherwise harsh life. For powerful and dominant nations, the notion serves as a justification and a shield. It enables a people not only to avoid taking responsibility for what they are doing, but to experience

their violence as a benediction. In all cases, the notion of specialness reduces others to moral ciphers, blinding the perpetrator and costing us that mutual reciprocity and recognition which is the only real ground of virtue.

Terror, by whichever side, is the logical outcome of this estrangement. It is the logic of revenge when all dialogue and recognition have been erased. For the oppressed, terror is the restitution of identity through violence against the oppressor; while for the latter, it becomes a "collateral damage." In this respect the suicide bomber striking on behalf of a ravaged people has a certain moral advantage over the powerful nation who impersonally bombs a helpless population. The former may falsely deny that he is doing evil, but at least he knows he is being violent, and that he is willing to take violence to the limit of giving his own life. This terrorism from below is undoubtedly evil, because it strikes at innocents to get back at an oppressor; but its evil is refracted through the objective reality of that oppressor. The terror from above, on the other hand, is nakedly of the oppressor himself, hurled down from the great heights of the Command and Control Center while its perpetrator looks forward to an evening at the mall, or thinks, if he is the President and has to give a press conference, of how good we are.

Fundamentalists and the imperial superpower are locked into a deadly dance, the righteousness of each cueing from the perceived evil of the other—a dance, moreover, (continued on page 20)



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Those who piloted the planes that took down the towers presumably brought to their mission the same religious fervor as that with which the Taliban demolished the Buddhist statues in Afghanistan. By this logic, razing the twin towers meant destroying the icons of American civilization, as if for us, as for them, god is manifest, confined to a block of stone, a building, a shrine, a holy rock. Whether they and their sponsors believed that Americans worship Mammon and therefore an attack on the place of trade and exchange is an attack on the locus of that faith, or that Mammon must be destroyed as the demonic threat to their own faith, those who rubbed out the World Trade Center acted in the name of a god who dwells in exclusive places with exclusive architecture and the agency of chosen people with exclusive habits of mind and body.

A version of this struggle is being enacted in the Jewish world. Although the Temple Mount was (and remains) the most contested shrine and candidate for the most heinous acts in the religious wars of our time, we can find evidence for a growing iconicism that reaches beyond Jerusalem and competes with deeply-ingrained diasporic sensibilities. The little town of Drohobycz, Poland, "ground zero" of a large pre-war Jewish community, was the scene of a subtle heist last year, when representatives of Yad Vashem chiseled five fragments of a mural painted by Bruno Schulz and transported them to Jerusalem. Schulz, a Polish Jewish writer and artist who was the "ward" of SS officer Felix Landau, had been recruited to paint the nursery of Landau's house in the ghetto. A few months later, in 1942, Schulz was murdered in the streets of his hometown by another SS officer. Schulz's stories and drawings were discovered in the West some twenty years after his death, and by the mid-1980s had already become a site of pilgrimage for writers like Cynthia Ozick and David Grossman who, in their own fiction, have revisited his life to give it a more suitable end and "reclaimed" his lost manuscript to give it a suitable afterlife. But the authorities from Yad Vashem who organized the "repatriation" of the mural seem to have acted on the assumption that authentic place becomes hallowed space and an invitation for acts of possession; for such self-appointed custodians of authenticity, Schulz's work, reproduced in tens of thousands of copies, lacks the aura of an original act of creation in plaster and paint.

Like the fragmented wall of a building that is the only remnant of the Warsaw ghetto, where young Israeli pilgrims to Poland come to caress and weep, such ruins can become relics of the sacred. Where there is no grave for grieving or petitioning, and where the material culture has become so compelling to a people intoxicated, after so many centuries of wandering, with the sanctity of place and soil, every such site beckons to Jews as a shrine to some ultimate, nonnegotiable and nonreplicable notion of authenticity. The Israeli claim to custodial rights conflicts with the Diaspora privilege of mutability, mobility, and duplicability.

As conflicts of interest in the aftermath of September 11 threaten also to create a gulf between Jews in Israel and in America—for many of us it is a gulf within our very souls—I want to suggest that diasporic accommodations may provide a hard-won wisdom: namely, that our shrines are always interior and portable, that every place of worship, whether of sand or concrete, is a *mikdash me'at*, and that we dare not invest any place with absolute meaning or treat others' idols as targets for obliteration. Turning our iconoclastic hammers toward our own idols, as legend represents Abraham doing in his father's shop, may be the beginning of religious reformation; turning it towards the gods of others is the beginning of genocide. □

GROUND WORK (continued from page 17)

that can neither be undertaken alone nor in an ensemble but is strictly a *pas de deux*. This is choreographed in relation to the idea of modernity. Fundamentalism, we know, is driven by hatred of modernity, with its movement toward gender equality and orientation towards progress. In the metropolitan society, by contrast, modernity and progress are core values. When one frames this contrast in terms, say, of the respect accorded to women, or of the ideals of democratic governance, then the ways of the metropolis appear to have a distinct advantage over those of fundamentalism. But there is more to modernity than that. The total package is defined by increasing technological mastery over nature. The helicopter gunships, therefore, are part of modernity, as are the "Daisy-cutter" bombs now employed by Uncle Sam in Afghanistan, bombs more powerful than the least of nuclear weapons, each capable of leveling a square kilometer of the earth, with all the creatures upon it.

And then there is the question of what lies beneath the earth. As organized by the capitalist-industrial economy, progress and modernity require the limitless exploitation of energy resources: in a word, oil; and in another word, imperialist control over the oil-soaked parts of the earth, the chief parts of which happen to be inhabited by Islamic peoples. Thus the fundamentalists do not hate us because of our free life-style. They hate us because of the ruin brought upon their societies in order to fuel that life-style.

Nor does the ruin end with the direct effects of imperialism on the peoples of one region. The whole of terrestrial nature is afflicted with the by-products of capitalist expansion. The same process that brings corrupt dictatorships and violence from the skies also gives us global warming, indeed, the entire ecological crisis, that destabilization of the natural ground of society which puts the very idea of a future at risk.

The planes that slammed into the World Trade Center brought down more than great buildings and thousands of lives. They brought us up against the unfaced contradictions of our civilization. It is time—it is past time—to take responsibility for our history. □

Art After Tragedy

Thane Rosenbaum

Americans aren't particularly well-suited to be mourners. True grief demands silence, the quiet that comes from listening, the modesty and humility of loss.

But in so many ways we are a nation compulsively afraid to sit with our sadness. Instead, we generate noise—the acute, reflexive, American phenomenon of trash-talking, immoderate speech, and speaking out of turn—all for the purpose of avoiding the more painful experience of having to think, and feel first, before saying a word.

In the aftermath of the September 11 tragedy, there was undeniably insufficient silence. Everyone had something to say, yet everyone claimed to be in shock. But those who are truly shocked would ordinarily find themselves too numb to speak, or to do much of anything else. The horror of what happened on September 11 should have resonated in a giant expression of collective numbness, a nation awestruck by the awfulness of it all, rendered totally mute.

Yet, alas, we live in a shock-proof society. The fall of the World Trade Center might have been the occasion to finally shatter this emotional armor, proving that we are not hopelessly desensitized, that we know an atrocity when we see one. Instead, we act as though we have seen it all before—a sensation reinforced by CNN's recycled imagery of the towers being struck over and over again, which imprints the image in our minds and leaves us emotionally inured.

Perhaps this failure to feel comes because we are unaccustomed to waiting. This is a nation of quick-fixes, instant remedies and gratification, while history, especially tragic history, requires that we sit back and ponder before making judgments.

The silence required by tragedy is not the silence of everyday speech. Given the gravity of the attack and the Pearl-Harbor manner in which it was inflicted, the impulse to spread the word is entirely human and understandable. Conversation carries the survivor forward. Yet the speech of the survivor is his prerogative, and also his burden. This

is not true of mere witnesses, or of the incessant chattering of the media. Indeed, what was especially distressing in this moment was the way the media sometimes chose to treat the tragedy as if it presented not so much moral challenges, as aesthetic opportunities.

The New Yorker and *The New York Times Magazine*, for

instance, soon after the catastrophe, assembled an A-list of literary writers who they asked to somehow make sense of the unimaginable, to describe what they had either witnessed or were feeling on that day, to illuminate the loss. The immediacy of these nearly simultaneous recollections and essays raises the question of whether they could have ever succeeded as either art or aesthetics. Doesn't art require some measure of physical and emotional distance, a cooling-off period, quiet time to take it all

in? But aside from whether these essays amounted to literary achievements, one wonders also whether the attempt to create art itself under these circumstances was a wholly premature, if not morally impious and transgressive, act.

This moment recalls the German philosopher Theodor Adorno's warning that it would be barbaric to make poetry in the aftermath of Auschwitz. He meant that, though the impulse to render beautiful what is otherwise grotesque may be a genuine expression of human longing, the quest itself is ultimately an immoral one. When faced with atrocity on such a grand scale, like the attack on the World Trade Center, aesthetic writing can seem smug, overly self-conscious, morally distracting, historically trivializing, and artistically vulgar—all at the same time.

Primo Levi wrote that language has a tendency to fail when words of common usage can't be expected to describe events so out of the ordinary, such as his survival of Auschwitz. But when words must be used because memory requires it, those words should be delicately and judiciously chosen, they should be accurate without being too ornate, and sufficient time must pass so that the artist can gain from the wisdom of hindsight and humility. Indeed, it took decades before survivors and other artists were able to set down in some literary form what they had witnessed, or had reimagined, in the Holocaust.

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What is ultimately objectionable is not writing that records and preserves memory, but the making of art out of such a murderous act.

Thane Rosenbaum is the literary editor of *TIKKUN* and the author of the forthcoming *The Golems of Gotham*.

why did I have such an extreme reaction? The next day, September 11, we stood outside our office and stared down Broadway as the towers burned and fell.

I was ashamed by my gut response: "I told you so." We did not yet know what motivated the attack, but we knew it was done by terrorists and, if they were Muslim, I knew hatred against Israel must have played a role. To fan the flames of such hatred, and allow it to burn unquenched, was a mistake those attending the World Conference must take responsibility for. I was so angry, and my anger was directed not at the terrorists laying dead just blocks below, but at my fellow anti-racist activists in Durban who had allowed the rightful cause of the Palestinians to be advocated for in such an unrighteous manner. I felt I had misled myself, that I hadn't escaped Durban unscathed. Instead, the threat had followed me home and, through this attack, planted a seed to restimulate my fears, turning my safe haven into a place as threatening as Israel.

After my office reopened four days following the attack, my coworker revisited my piece. This time, it struck a different note. My fears no longer seemed so irrational. My visions of death didn't seem so remote.

This attack on America has engendered a palpable expectation about some future attack, coming when we least expect it, and is shared across this country by Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike. Now that the darkside of the Jewish experience has been spread around the nation, I can't tell if that is cause for comfort or tears.

ART AFTER TRAGEDY (from page 18)

But that's not what has happened in the short weeks following September 11. In this instance, everyone had an aesthetic opinion, as if aesthetics had anything to do with the sacrificial slaughter of 6,000 innocents.

Newsstands and TV ratings have a way of feeding off of tragedy, and magazines and newspapers have no economic incentive to make moral statements by keeping their editorial pages blank. Instead of offering their readers such a gesture of wordlessness, a reminder of the limits of the printed page, editors deployed their poets to supply answers, to describe evil, to domesticate horror. After all, Americans are obsessed with the need "to know," even in situations where true knowledge may be impossible.

But could artists even qualify, or function, as suitable journalists in the extreme case of the attack on the World Trade Center? Surely the newspapers and magazines who sought out these artists were making a statement of how they wanted this story presented. Otherwise they would have left the job of pure reportage to their own staff reporters. But they weren't looking for literal truth, which couldn't be captured under these extreme circumstances anyway, no matter how faithful the witnessing. Instead they opted for artful, imagined, emotional truth, which is appealing in some instances to assist in the description of ordinary events, but

But I do know we must pass through this fear, and we must do so together, for fear only begets fear, not security. As long as our actions are driven by terror, we will be letting the trauma of the past prevent us from noticing the safety of the present.

For it is safe in the present. Even though images of anthrax may pass through my mind when I open my mail, and I've hesitated before commuting through Grand Central Station, I do still open my mail and do still ride the trains. This isn't naivete, it's simply realistic. The challenge before us as a country is the one Jews have faced for centuries—to prepare for the present-day threats without letting previous threats cloud our view. While the smell drifting north makes me think about crematoriums, September 11 was not the Holocaust revisited. And while I have been afraid of more attacks, no one has crashed into my building nor filled my synagogue with anthrax.

People do still hate Americans and Jews, but if we respond politically as victims, confused about our own sense of power while denying any culpability, we will never build the relations or develop the policies necessary for a more secure world. And on the personal front, I have had to learn that as long as I am alive I always have the power to live in the world as I want it to be, no matter how loud my fears protest. Sure, Durban was scary, but I would never let it silence my voice against oppression. Nor will I let terrorists or a gullible policeman turn my backyard against me. The choice is still mine. □

has no place here, where the event itself is so out of the ordinary, and a much higher burden must be placed on faithful description.

What is ultimately objectionable is not writing that records and preserves memory, but the making of art out of such a murderous act. There is no beauty in those buildings falling down, no matter how powerfully and eloquently evoked—at least not now. For now, it's probably best to simply show the pictures, and even then, moderately and modestly so, spared from exploitation and entertainment. Ground zero is a collective grave. It is hallowed ground, not an exhibit, but a monument of death.

The media may not realize it, but its most poignant contribution to reportage and memory are those daily obituaries of those who died. Such seemingly endless snapshots of the life that was emptied out of the World Trade Center does more to convey horror and humanize loss than anything else.

At some point the survivors of September 11 may choose to write memoirs, and let us hope that they will take their time in composing them. And others will no doubt be inspired to one day create art, as well. And when that happens, hopefully they too will show the true measure of a grief-stricken nation by having the humility to wait until the silence is over. □

Sacred Space

Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi

The images from before and after signal the fault line of our changed world. *The New Yorker* cover for August 6, 2001 ("Young Architects," by Benoît van Innis) was a naive beach scene of vacationing New Yorkers building sand sculptures of their city. Of course the twin towers are there: two grainy, stodgy rectangles topped by a wet twig.

The irony then was obvious: human place is a portable privilege. Even our wish castles, built in sand or air, are often but projections of the familiar skyline. We refashion our cities in miniature—in art or in memory—when on vacation, or in exile.

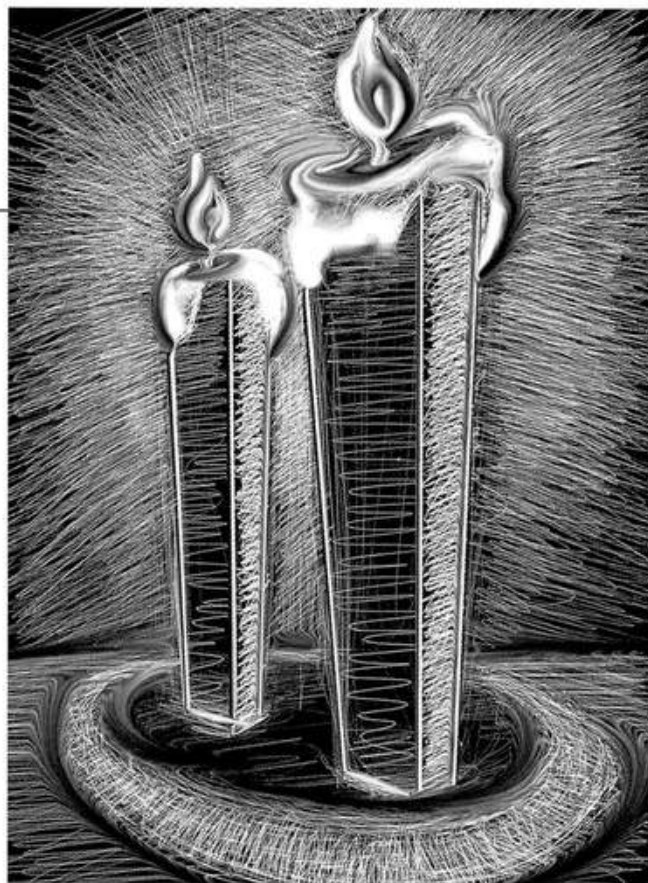
The irony today is the very naiveté of that scene: *what were we thinking* on September 10, before we "discovered" Evil? *The New Yorker* cover for September 24 was black on black, an orphaned skyline signified by the barely-perceptible silhouettes of the two phantom towers and one ebony spire cutting through the white masthead ("9/11/01," by Art Spiegelman). Overnight, our palette had been reduced to two colors.

Yet what struck me in looking back on the pitifully quaint and anachronistic sand sculptures of August 6 was that they were made to human scale; the "young architects" could easily reach up to the 110th floor and repair some engineering flaw—not because we were as gods but because such towers must, ultimately, conform to the contours of our souls. Even when they are monumental in size, gawdy and glittering, they are also duplicable and, most importantly, they are mutable. We will, surely, rebuild to a scale that reflects who we are today.

If we ever feared that American civic religion located its sense of divinity in immovable shrines, we need look no further than the place that has been labeled "ground zero"—as symbolically American in its ruin as it was in its towering majesty. It is not the ground that hallowed the lives within its realm, but the lives that hallow the site.

The debate over forms of reconstruction and commemoration on the site of the World Trade Center has already engaged some of this country's most sensitive artists, curators, anthropologists, cultural critics, and politicians, as well

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as countless young architects moving from sand to plaster of paris. We can find antecedents of that debate in the alternately fruitful and frustrating exchanges in Washington, Berlin, and elsewhere over Holocaust memorials, and in the ongoing deliberations that have taken place in Oklahoma City. Religion professor Edward Linenthal reports that those who proposed rebuilding the federal building in Oklahoma realized that this was "if not sacred ground, at least charged ground. It has been transformed, just as a battlefield is, by the loss that took place there."

The key here is the qualifier, "if not sacred ground" and the implied distinction between a battlefield and a shrine. The sense of sacred space as locus of the divine spirit, which in so many cultures invests ruins with a kind of non-negotiable claim, is replaced in American culture by the sense that the scorched earth is "charged ... with loss," the loss of human life.

Although a few pieces of twisted scaffolding have been salvaged for the memorial site, much of the steel is already being recycled for the sake of the living. Cultural critic Herbert Muschamp appealed in the *New York Times* to the architects who are designing the structures and spaces that will both replace and commemorate the twin towers to consider what urban mythology they will embody: "For too long," he argues, "this city of beginnings has miscast itself in an architectural drama about the End of Things.... It is time to rescue the idea of 'progressive architecture,' ... to make buildings that promote ... humanist virtues."

Returning to Safe

Barry Joseph

Few can tell my wife is a Jew. Irish, most think. At least Christian. Last September, a policeman sat beside her at our corner diner, and as she ate a sandwich he struck up a conversation. He described a six-hour commute from Long Island to work his twelve-hour shift at ground zero of the World Trade Center disaster. Then, as if sharing a secret, he said, "There's a rumor going around the clean-up site."

"What's that?" my wife asked.

"They say Israel was behind the attack, to frame bin Laden. Did you know thousands of Jews never showed up to work? They were warned in advance, by the Mossad." This rumor was spread widely through the Arab world, and in the United States as well through email. But at the time, this latest bit of scapegoating was fresh to my wife, and the last place she expected to hear it was in her home in New York City, from a public servant committed to protecting her safety.

At times of crisis, Jews reflectively ask a question we have been forced to consider throughout the ages: "Is this good for the Jews?" It is a characteristically Jewish question since it implies its own answer: "Of course not!" After getting a handle on the shock from this attack, after grieving for the loss of life, Jews are left wondering how this tragedy will affect our position in America and how it might be used to scapegoat us once again. The emerging picture is far from clear. On one hand we have these bizarre accusations against Israel and New York Jews that only make sense through the distorted prism of anti-Semitism. On the other hand, when Jerry Falwell blamed the attack on everyone from pagans and "abortionists," to gays and the ACLU, he didn't mention the Jews. I have to admit, I felt a little left out.

As opposed to my wife, everyone knows I am a Jew. People walk up to me all the time and say, "Hey. You're a Jew." Well, not in those words, exactly. The exact words are often, "You look like Woody Allen." Or Ben Stiller, or Jerry Seinfeld, or some other Jewish actor or comedian. I guess, to some, we all look alike. As a result, I get left out of the

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*The policeman grew defensive.
"Hey, I know that Jews died.
Don't beat me up, okay."*

Jewish-conspiracy-of-the-week loop. I don't even get the emails. Luckily, I have my wife to fill me in.

"That's ridiculous," she responded. "Why would Israel attack America, their best ally, and in the city with the second largest Jewish population in the world?!!" She was dumbfounded. "And anyway," she continued, "I know that many Jews died in the towers."

The policeman grew defensive. "Hey, I know that Jews died. Don't beat me up, okay." The suggestion that he felt she might actually "beat him up" unsettled her so that she quickly paid and left the diner, leaving the exhausted officer and his out-of-line prejudice behind.

My wife isn't the only Jew I know to be scared, as a Jew, after the attack. I have a friend who is a lifelong Zionist, who has spent years building partnerships, both as friends and through business, with Arabs. But during this terrible period in which neighboring Muslims and Arabs (or those who appear as similar to them as I to Jerry Seinfeld) are being attacked, my friend's first response to this tragedy was to tell me, "Things will get worse for the Jews." I'm used to people blaming Jews, but why should things get worse? If

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Out of Darkness, a Strange Hope

Michael N. Nagler

Just before September 11 I went to a beautiful wedding. My former student Ori, the groom, is a sabra whose family emigrated to America, and this created the unforgettable experience of a highly traditional Jewish wedding under the redwoods of the Sonoma Coast. The spell it cast was what I can only call a kind of nostalgia for a life that I, of course, have never known, that disappeared thousands of years ago. Something about the beauty of it—the *klesmorim* who seemed to play emotion right out of your heart, the great beauty of the liturgical Hebrew (however little of it I understand)—gave me a sudden feeling for the essential insight of the Jewish tradition, the awareness that breathes through every psalm, for example: that life is a miracle. Sacred, an incredible, undeserved gift of the Creator.

It is precisely this insight that cannot survive the beating of children, the daily humiliations, the rockets fired from American-made helicopters into homes in Beit Jala and Bethlehem. You cannot destroy what you venerate; you cannot venerate what you destroy.

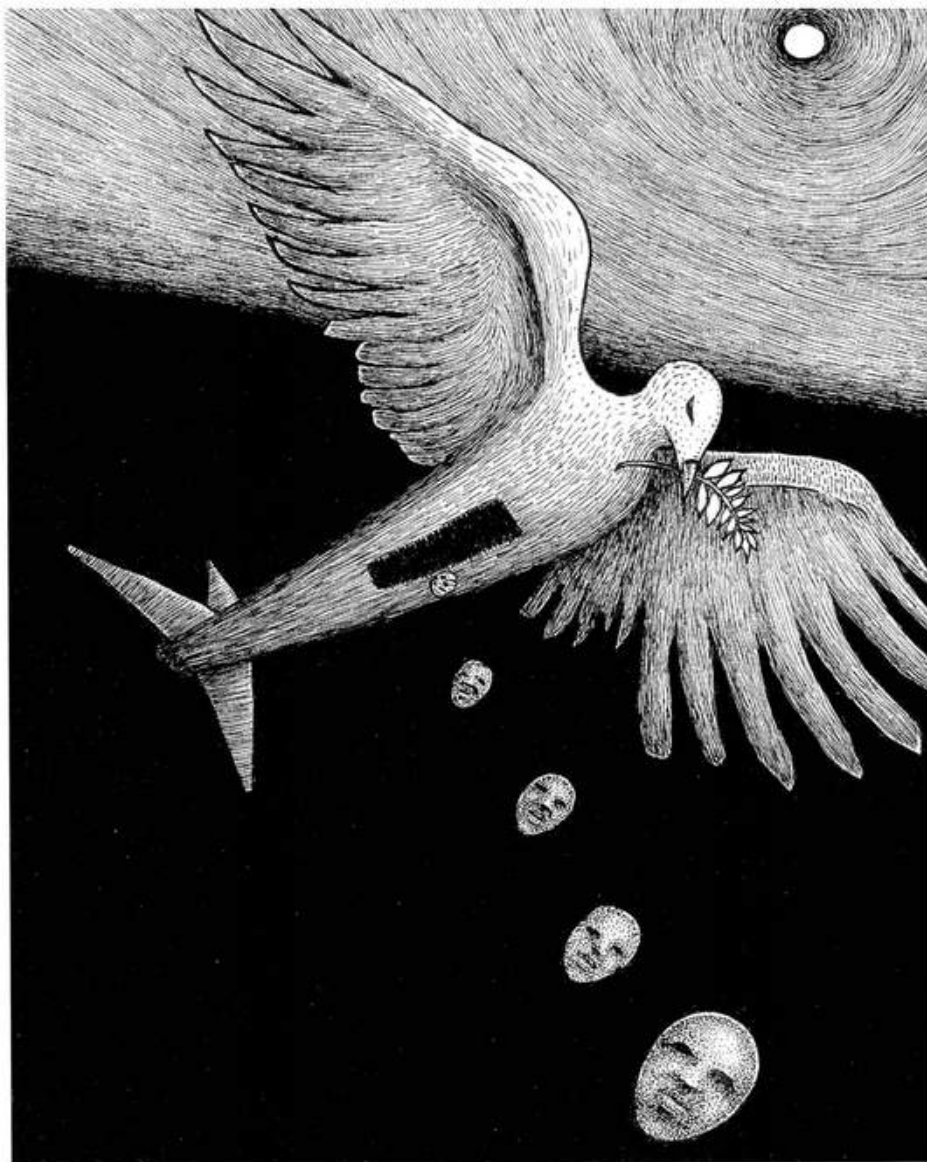
Maurice Frydman, a Polish refugee who lived with Mahatma Gandhi for some time in the latter's ashram, once commented that Gandhi was one of the few human beings in whom he had never detected a trace of prejudice. Nonetheless, the Mahatma made this blunt reply to a Western journalist in 1942:

Q: What do you feel is the most acceptable solution to the Palestine problem?

MKG: The abandonment wholly by the Jews of terrorism and other forms of violence.

The violence that see-saws today between Israelis and Palestinians, threatening to jerk the world deeper into bloodshed with every wrenching new development, is bearing him

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out. Terrorism properly so called has ruined everything for the Palestinians; terrorism under the aegis of the state is ruining everything for Israel. It is time to look for another way.

And there is only one other way. I make bold to imagine what it would look like if any or all of the parties to the conflict were to adopt nonviolence where they now rely, one way or another, on violence to secure their interests. This is a vision, to be sure, not a prediction. But bear in mind that virtually everything I'm about to suggest is already happening. It remains mostly under the radar of public attention, which is the fate of nonviolence in this age of anger, but it is there. All that I'll be doing is holding it up to the light and asking, what if it happened more?

A nonviolent vision will seem an unrealistic scenario to many, especially after September 11. Can I still believe in nonviolence after that heinous attack? I believe in it more. The principles of nonviolence are precisely a plan to remove the foundations of terrorism. Terrorism arises when three conditions coincide: 1) a population is destitute of hope, 2) their oppressors are blind to their suffering—they cannot be heard, or think they cannot be heard, in any other way, and 3) the cultural threshold of inhibition against

violence is low. When these three tragic conditions concur, the extremist elements of the population will react with terrorism properly so called, and the oppressing society will often be fool enough to mount counter-terrorism against it. Needless to say, all three conditions are met conspicuously in the Middle East, and all three—particularly the third, the inhibition against violence in the global culture—would be directly addressed by nonviolent action.

The minute you step out of the violent box and into the world of nonviolent possibilities, two things happen to your vision: first, you no longer care “who started it.” The point is, who can make it stop (it turns out that any or all of us can). Second, you’re no longer limited to electing the right officials or convincing the ones you’re stuck with to change their spots: nonviolence has traditionally been, though it need not only be, the power of the people; indeed, the power of the ordinary person. Let the vision begin!

Inside Israel

Bat Shalom, the Gush Shalom of the indomitable Uri Avnery, Rabbis for Human Rights, the Women in Black, Peace Now—these are only some of the groups using other-than-violent means of one kind or another to bring about change in Israel’s policy and outlook. If you’re on the right listserves, you can read about it every day.

For example, Women in Black helped to organize the demonstrations outside Orient House, the Palestinian headquarters seized by Israel in September. They established the physical and political space in which Palestinians could protest nonviolently. Arrested and beaten up with the local people, the women witnessed the torture of Palestinian prisoners in the police station, which would otherwise have gone unrecorded.

In the fateful month of September, sixty-two Israeli high school students sent a formal letter to prime minister Ariel Sharon stating their intention to refuse induction into the IDF in protest of the human rights abuses and brutalities being committed daily now in the occupied territories. They created a stir, and it could grow. Nonviolence, we know from history, has the potential to make the country ungovernable if it does not change course and begin treating Arab citizens and neighbors with humane respect.

Which is not to say it will be easy. Jewish anger now directed against Arabs will be turned against nonviolent resisters—just as we here in America are vilified as “unpatriotic” when we speak against violent retaliation for the attacks of September 11. Jewish resisters will of course be accused of being anti-Israeli, even anti-Semitic: but of course they are exactly the opposite, and the point will come when many realize the absurdity of destroying Jewish values to save a Jewish state. Then the vilified pioneers will be recognized as a prophetic force, especially if—as is likely—their courageous nonviolence evokes a similar response from the Palestinian side.

In the Occupied Territories.

I deliberately started with the Israelis not because they’re to blame—as mentioned, that’s pretty much irrelevant in nonviolence—but to counteract the common belief that nonviolence is only for the underdog. Nonviolence is for everybody. With enough pressure from below, the Israeli state itself could adopt nonviolent policies towards Arab Israelis and Palestinians. That said, we can move on to the scenario we more traditionally associate with nonviolence, of resistance from below against an entrenched authority.

It is not hard to see how the Palestinians should adopt nonviolence in their struggle, because they have the example of the first intifada of 1987–1993. The nonviolence of the first intifada was not perfect—stones are stones, however brave you have to be to throw them at heavily armed IDF soldiers—but it had a dimension rarely met with since the days of Gandhi’s freedom struggle: what he called “constructive programme.” Not only did Palestinians obstruct oppressive measures forced on them by the Israeli regime, they set to work, of necessity, to create support systems of their own. With no one particularly in charge, people mustered out to do everything from delivering milk to teaching kids to getting the news out to taking care of young people whose parents were dead or in prison or exiled. As Mubarak Awad explained to me, “Every woman became every child’s mother.”

This last response in particular illustrates one of the most important things we’ve learned about nonviolence in recent years: the importance of indigenous mechanisms for dealing with violence that every people is heir to. This resource is particularly important for the Palestinians, since it appears from the shortcomings of the Authority that if Palestine were to become free tomorrow it would have no way to govern itself. Yes, but if Palestine were to become *nonviolent* tomorrow, it would eventually have such a way—at least if that nonviolence included, as it did before, a constructive program.

It is difficult for someone far from the scene, as I am, to propose exactly what Palestinians should do: there are strikes, boycotts, sit-downs and other obstructions, refusal to speak or write Hebrew—the several hundred techniques listed in Gene Sharp’s *Politics of Nonviolent Action* (which is available in the Middle East, I think even in Arabic) should be gleaned. But with some care: for people like myself dedicated to what is called today “principled nonviolence,” people who believe that it and it alone will bring lasting results and ultimately reshape the world’s paradigm of conflict, Sharp was not sensitive enough to the crucial role played by *respect* in nonviolence, and some of his techniques involve humiliating your opponent—a complete nono. The people of Intifada I, thanks in part to Mubarak Awad and that very book, were marvelously inventive.

For the same reason, you will notice, I recuse myself from proposing the content of the arrangements the Palestinians

should settle for, or for that matter the precise issues over which they should struggle, I can only indicate the principle: that if a different kind of struggle—and nonviolence is very good at this—can reduce the panic and increase the respect of the Israelis for people of Arab descent, that firm foundation will lead to arrangements to which both sides can eventually agree. Study Gandhi. His ability to shear off inessentials and cling to essentials (of which respect was foremost), to compromise so deeply that his associates screamed that he was giving away the store and then emerge with victory in his hands, was unparalleled, and today it's crucial.

None of this should be taken to mean that nonviolence is a vague notion without specific policies or tactics, only that once the principles are grasped, those policies and tactics can be chosen most accurately by those "on the ground."

When the Oslo process surfaced in 1993, Palestinians relaxed the intifada. Now we know that a real peace process will require what Latin American activists call *firmeza permanente*, "relentless persistence." After all, to renegotiate a formerly dependent relationship into a relationship between equals took Gandhi fifty years—and he was Gandhi. On the smaller scale, nonviolent actions need more persistence than most activists can imagine, or can afford the time to carry out (after all, doesn't Satyagraha mean 'clinging to truth'?). Six weeks after the attacks on New York, when the Sharon government was waging what can only be called a campaign of terror in Bethlehem and Beit Jala (the hospital in Bethlehem was hit four times in forty-five minutes on October 22), thousands of religious leaders, ordinary Palestinians, and internationals staged a peace march from Jerusalem to Bethlehem that was brilliantly successful—for that day. David Grant, a veteran of the "peace army" movement (see below), made this astute comment on what it would have taken to be an enduring, policy-changing success: "Numbers matter; high-profile participants matter; staying-power matters. It is this third item which is lacking. If all these people had been able to remain in Bethlehem, then we would see what a Nonviolent Peaceforce could really do. (And, by the way, they need to be paid...)"

This depth, and by implication this duration of the commitment we need, was well expressed by one of the Bethlehem marchers, Fr. Raed Abusahlia of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem:

I am now more convinced than before nonviolence is a powerful strength, and unfortunately our people didn't use enough. I say always: "The Palestinian people is strong with stones more than weapons, and is stronger

with Olive Branches than stones." Therefore, I repeat again and again that we have to throw away our stones and weapons and hold only the arm of the Olive Branch which is NONVIOLENCE.

The present intifada illustrates with great clarity something that the anti-globalism movement has been experiencing from Seattle to Genoa: that even a little violence

vitiates a lot of nonviolence. Voices are being raised now with exactly the concern that launched Intifada I: this isn't getting us anywhere. The present violence is not stopping the Israelis—far from it—and it's not bringing Palestinians any support from the international community. The new intifada will need not only *firmeza*, then, but what Gandhi would call "purity": Palestinians must be prepared to resist to the death, but not resist by inflicting death. The suicide bombers are long on courage, of a certain kind: they will have to be shown that it is much more courageous, and much much more effective, to live for a cause than to die for one. They will

need to convert their minds from hate to determination—their strategy from the violence that goes nowhere to the creative nonviolent resistance that's unstoppable.

America: Policy and Public

As Gandhi often said, quoting from a Hindi devotional classic, "a dependent cannot know happiness, even in his dreams." Israel's reliance on the United States has bought physical survival (which could have been purchased by the pursuit of peace) at the expense of moral destitution. To end that reliance now would not have to mean jeopardizing that physical survival. Israelis are a resourceful people who would find a way to make peace very soon if they had to—if they were no longer shielded from the consequences of their own actions by the ill-conceived and increasingly costly protection of the remaining superpower. The thrust of policy pressure from any American, and particularly Jewish Americans, should be to demand that the United States put Israel on notice that it will initiate a rapid scale-down of its military aid (currently around 10 million per day), and cease shielding Israel from its mistakes. Anyone who wants Israel to survive in any meaningful sense must demand this. Of course, a lot of work on the mass media must go along with this project, for until and unless Americans can understand, can feel the desperation of the Palestinians, no such policy change will be possible. (Outside the United States, in the meantime, a strategy of disinvestment in the Israeli state like the one that weighed heavily in the struggle to end apartheid in South Africa would be a valuable support. No one, least of all my fellow Americans, likes to be told what to do; but



this is something other countries can do which sends an unmistakable message.)

Such a campaign of persuasion—petitioning, educating, letter-writing, voting—is the first stage of nonviolent action, and that is the appropriate stage here in the United States because communication is still open between us—the general public—and the administration. Should such a campaign not make its point, however, the time will come for civil disobedience and the sacrifices that go with it; in other words for what Gandhi called the “law of suffering.” In a conflict of such intensity and such duration suffering cannot be avoided; indeed, the situation has brought intense suffering already. But nonviolent action would bring into play an entirely different kind of suffering, suffering voluntarily endured, which as Martin Luther King said is “redemptive.” In other words, it gets results. It’s true that the post-September 11 climate is extremely unfavorable to nonviolent resistance in America (President Bush has even begun a sinister comparison of the anti-globalism movement with the anti-trade motives he imputes to the terrorists), but was it favorable for Blacks in the South in the 1950s?

There is another way that individual Americans, along with other nationals, can use nonviolent action to bring peace to the Mideast, and that is to go there. The last twenty years or so have seen a remarkable development of Gandhi’s dream of a *shanti sena* or “peace army” (see the July/August 2000 issue of *TIKKUN* for the article on this topic by David Hartsough and Mel Duncan)—the sending of trained, international nonviolent volunteers into conflict areas to give moral support, dampen rumors (and hatreds), and *in extremis* go ahead and interpose themselves between conflicting parties. All over the world some twenty organizations are sending unarmed volunteers into zones of conflict to protect the helpless by their presence and their witness, to broker understanding and provide various good offices, and finally to interpose themselves as a stopgap against open violence. In doing so, they have been administering a healthy shock of rehumanization to polarized conflicts.

One of the most dramatic arenas has been precisely the Territories, where volunteers with Christian Peacemaker Teams have stopped bulldozers, recorded outrages, and been of immense moral support to terrorized families and otherwise abandoned Palestinians. As of this writing, members of CPT are staying in Palestinian homes that are liable to be attacked, making a tremendous difference in moral support, and often (though this is hard to document) offering physical protection. They are seeking to do, as a recent internet report says, “precisely what foreign governments have promised but failed to do: to monitor and contest abuses of human rights, to defuse violence, and to challenge Israel’s ethnic cleansing programme.” As well as seeking to enforce peace, they are trying, hard as it is in the current atmosphere, to broker it.

All this on practically no resources and no public

awareness. What could they not do with more volunteers, training, money, and encouragement?

The kinds of nonviolence I’ve described here could create a space for peace in the Middle East. To enter that space and build that peace will require a long and deep work of rehumanization; but this work, too, is already going on. We need only build on it—for instance, by creating thousands of schools like Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Sala’am, like the Hope Flowers School in Bethlehem, the higher education experiments of Elias Chacour, and the school being run, at least until last I heard, in his own home by another Arab Israeli, Elias Jabbour.

Of course, many think that once people have been goaded into terrorism nothing will reach them, that Baruch Goldsteins will kill anyone who tries nonviolent disruptions in Israel and Hamas extremists (or individuals acting out their rage independently) will kill any Palestinians who try nonviolent methods against the IDF. They are wrong. This is the cloud of self-perpetuating misperception that violence always generates, which is why more and more nonviolence advocates view the commercial mass media as the most delusory force in modern civilization.

In fact, strange as it may seem (that is, if you don’t know nonviolent logic), nonviolence is a pretty safe thing to do. Not one activist practicing protective accompaniment in dangerous regions—Columbia, Sri Lanka, Hebron—has been killed between 1983 (the discovery of protective accompaniment) and today; thousands of guerillas, terrorists, soldiers, and civilians have died in that same period. No one does nonviolence because it’s safe, that would certainly be folly, but those who have done nonviolence because it’s the right thing to do have looked back in awe at the protection they somehow experienced, the mind-changing power they somehow generated around them. The courage of terrorists—and anyone willing to blow himself up has a kind of perverted courage—is ripe for nonviolent conversion; at the least, terrorists, like anyone else, recognize courage when they see it, and at least grudgingly respect it.

The staying power of hate is greatly exaggerated. Last year there was an unexpected snowfall in Hebron. A CPT volunteer was amazed at the results:

The wonder of the evening for me was seeing the cooperation: Israeli soldiers helping Palestinians, Palestinians pushing Israelis who were stuck, Israeli police giving stranded Palestinians rides in their vehicles usually used to cart them off to jail. Settlers offering us [CPT] rides instead of death threats ... One of us jokingly called the snow God’s checkpoint for everyone.

Nonviolence is God’s inner checkpoint, for everyone. The nonviolent have, wittingly or not, always called upon Him (or Her, or It) as the eternal guarantor that sacrifice in the cause of peace will work:

For the soul of all the living is in Thy hand; Thou hast given breath to all flesh. □

Israel, a Land of Asphalt and Cement?

A Conversation with Israeli Environmentalism Yoav Sagi

Jonathan Schorsch

While Palestinians and Israelis struggle for political control of the lands between the Jordan and Mediterranean waters, the health of this physical territory deteriorates with every passing year. The population grows rapidly, yet confronts severely limited land resources. Urban sprawl, increased road building, more malls, and more skyscrapers have utterly remade the Israeli topography, leaving fewer and fewer open, undeveloped areas. By 2020, warns leading Israeli environmentalist Yoav Sagi, Israel north of Be'er Sheva "will reach the hair-raising density of over 800 people per square kilometer, while Holland, considered the most populated country in the West (and not given to our high immigration rate) is 400 people per square kilometer."

Sagi (pronounced Sah-GEE) intimately knows the dangers of unbridled and insensitive development. Born and bred on a small cooperative settlement in the lower Galilee, he began working for the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI) in 1963, when the organization claimed all of ten workers. Fourteen years later, in 1977, he was appointed SPNI chairperson, a position he held until 1986. He now coordinates an interdisciplinary think tank within the SPNI, the Open Land Institute, which aims to better integrate development with the preservation of open spaces. Last year I had a chance to sit and talk with Sagi, whose front-line assessment of the war on environmental degradation remains sanguine: "It has become painfully clear," he said, "that the landscape of Israel is fast vanishing before our very eyes."

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Sagi's bearing carries all the hallmarks of the stereotypical Israeli *balutznik* (pioneer): he is serious, hardy, and frugal. His Zionism is a back-to-the-land localism, which, despite its dry, scientific terminology, descends more from spiritual farmer-pioneers like A.D. Gordon than from the technological utopianism of Theodore Herzl's programmatic novel, *Old-New Land*. Sagi has seen the technophilic Zionist future and become increasingly worried. Sagi never mentions the word globalization, yet his rhetoric contains a strong critique of the financial and social trends that are associated with this term. Sagi recently penned an article in Israel's glossy *National Geographic* equivalent, *Eretz*, in which he voiced a fascinating lament:

And so, after a short-lived Zionist effort to return to working the land as a national curative, the people of Israel has reverted to the occupation that dominated its stereotype in the Diaspora—urban commerce.

Sagi's language here coalesces uncomfortably with an internalized anti-Jewish stereotype from Europe: Jews produced nothing on their own, they only exchanged goods, profiting from a self-imposed ability to inflate their value. Sagi, seeking to promote environmental concern as the

authentic form of Zionism, critiques the Israeli version of privatization, development, and cosmopolitan urbanism as reflective of the fallen state of diaspora Jewry and therefore as un-Israeli. Since according to this rhetoric Israel constituted the remedy for precisely these ills of the shtetl and ghetto diaspora—the Jew as “unproductive” urban middleman—the reappearance of these ills in Israel shows Sagi how far the Zionist mission has veered off course. Sagi’s analysis shares much with progressive American Jewish critiques, such as TIKKUN’s, and deserves wide support. The unfortunate associations of some of his language with dangerous historical anti-Jewish sentiments reflect more than anything else the degree to which Sagi’s vision carries on a hundred-and-fifty-year-old polemic within Zionist thought over the tactics to be deployed by the Jewish State in achieving productivity.

Around him Sagi sees an Israel that may be productive, but also woefully unhealthy. Fully one-fifth of Israel—up to 80 percent in the center of the country (between Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa)—has been covered with construction produced by a Zionism that aimed to build up the land. The aim of that Zionism Sagi captured for me by reciting a pioneering song from the Thirties that included the line “We’ll adorn you [the land] in a dress of asphalt and cement.” In those days, Sagi explains, “a thinly populated country was trying to establish a maximum geographical presence, literally creating facts on the ground.” But in time, “the principle of ‘conquering’ the land—expanding and building anywhere and everywhere possible, took on the significance of a sacred task.” The result is that “much of the country’s open space—so vital for leisure and recreation, the preservation of a varied landscape, and assuring the quality-of-life and well-being—has been ceded to dwellings, roads, power lines, and other trappings of development.... If land-intensive building and development trends continue at today’s pace, all open lands in areas where the demand for housing is high will be eliminated.” Unique landscapes, including sites described in the Bible, continue to face the threat of destruction, making the living connection between our past and present even more tenuous.

While Sagi critiques a pro-development policy that he sees rooted in Zionism, he is not anti-Zionist by any means. On the question of the Law of Return, for example, Sagi may grumble about the environmental costs of absorbing so many immigrants, but he told me he believes that “the matter of the Law of Return and the right of Jews to come here is well within the national consensus. We [at the Open Land Institute] don’t contest it. First of all, we are also within this consensus. Furthermore, if we were to attack this subject today, it would be counterproductive. We would alienate many people who would otherwise support us.” Sagi instead

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thinks planning and construction to house these immigrants needs to be done the right way. The “land-use culture in Israel is one of the most wasteful in the world,” according to Sagi. Long after it was necessary, policy dictated the establishment of new settlements in Israel in scattered rather than clustered development. As a result new developments waste resources and consume open space.

Consequently, the current national vista is not pretty. Tel Aviv’s pollution levels are approaching those of Los Angeles, yet the city has no rail transit system; of Tel Aviv’s nearly 14 kilometers of coastline, only 2.5 are available for public bathing. Haifa’s 18-kilometer coast contains 12 kilometers of army, industry, and power station facilities, all closed to the public. The city is now weighing three projects which will make the rest of the coast inaccessible to the public: the Haifa Marina (occupying 2 km), the Carmel Coast Towers (1 km), and a hotel and resort development scheme (2 km). Jerusalem’s city planning

committee has approved the construction of twelve new skyscrapers in the downtown area, while physical expansion of the city eats up the surrounding Jerusalem forest. “Agricultural land, supposedly protected by the first amendment to the planning and construction law, has lost its special status and is being unfrozen in large quantities for development,” says Sagi. The country’s rivers, “due to unforgivable neglect, have become foul, reeking sewers.” Meanwhile work continues on “the multi-junctioned, land-gobbling, megalomaniacal” Cross-Israel Highway, which will “exacerbate, rather than solve, the country’s traffic problems.”

Real estate profit potentials have compounded the Israeli fetish for development. Indeed, Israeli politics have become increasingly driven by private industry and its interests. For example, in response to the financial crisis in the kibbutz sector the government turned kibbutz agricultural lands into economic resources by changing the status of the land to enable its development, mostly for housing. Under Ariel Sharon, who served as Minister of Housing in the 1990s, farmers were offered 30 percent of the profits for converting farmland to housing. With such enticement, farmers eagerly transferred fields to developers. The decision, Sagi declaims, “turned farmers overnight from protectors of the land into profit-seekers at its expense.” True, the policy came in response to pressures from an enormous wave of immigration, but the hidden costs continue to be felt.

The tremendous profits to be made in developing land lead to huge pressures on the political process. “Real estate developers equipped with the enormous power of multi million dollars [sic] try their best to overcome sustainable land use plans. Government ministers and authorities exposed to such pressure frequently take deliberate action

against open space preservation plans and decisions," complains Sagi. Under Israeli law, he explains, developers must apply to the Land Authority for land for their construction projects. The Lands Authority, if it approves the project, then legally leases that land to the developers. But the Lands Authority is not responsible for zoning. What happens if the desired land is not zoned for construction? The Lands Authority allows the lease, disingenuously inserting a codicil into its agreement with the developer that all necessary rezoning permits must be obtained from local authorities. The local authorities, tempted by the money these construction projects infuse into their domains, see to it that the land is rezoned for construction.

Clearly, it is not coincidental that the country's largest construction contractors also involve themselves in gathering votes ("buying voters") for politicians. The Israeli political system essentially allows the stealing of public lands for the sake of private profits.

Sagi and the Open Land Institute argue that "the time has come to update this antiquated attitude." "I began to work at the Society for the Protection of Nature," Sagi tells me, "so I could walk in the country and see flowers and birds. Today our spearhead is fighting corruption." What is needed is an entirely rethought culture of planning.

First, agriculture must be preserved. The country's recent rush to a high-tech growth strategy has produced an increasingly commercialized rural industry obsessed with export-oriented production. It is nearly impossible for the small-scale farmer or back-to-the-land family to afford a plot of land—of which fewer than 4,000 exist on communal settlements in the entire country—and bureaucracy foils many potentially creative projects. The original Zionist dream, ironically, can no longer be attempted by anyone without significant means and is effectively discouraged by policymakers.

Second, improved public transportation, especially rail, is a must. The newly-approved light-rail line between Rishon le-Tzion and Tel Aviv needs to be followed by many more similar decisions and, more importantly, their implementation.

Third, says Sagi, "building density in settlements must be increased, while of course protecting the environment ... Building upwards should be considered, and enlargement of the built-up areas in existing and planned settlements." Such a strategy can work because even populous Tel Aviv and Jerusalem remain six times less crowded than Paris and London. "One doesn't need skyscrapers," insists Sagi. "The construction always needs to be appropriate to the character of the place, of course. But one can achieve a higher density of people with far shorter buildings, eight or twelve stories, instead of the usual two or three." Sagi concedes,

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however, that only a complete transformation in outlook and spending habits will give the two largest Israeli cities the same proportion of parks-per-capita that Paris and London can boast.

Against great odds, the Institute claims many victories, small and large, in its battle. Among them are a heightened awareness among planners and decision-makers in the last decade; a slow awakening to environmental concerns in the judicial arena; the prevention of many unsound projects; the preservation of several wadis through active community participation; and the establishment of several parks, including the transformation of the Ashdod sand dunes, which had been designated for development, into a landscape reserve area. One common environmentalist strategy that won't work in Israel is relying mainly on the protection of the country's remaining open spaces. "Because the country is so small," Sagi states, "protected areas alone cannot possibly be large enough to support nat-

ural ecosystems, let alone retain unique landscape features and the historical heritage embedded in them. If nature and landscape are only safeguarded in protected areas, they will be no more than sterile specimens in museum exhibits, by no means sustaining and preserving the rich biodiversity and landscape heritage of the country." So, while SPNI does produce detailed topographic, natural, and cultural surveys of valuable open space sites, its main focus is on a consciousness-raising campaign. Though this constitutes a David vs. Goliath struggle, it is a sign of the Society's growth in stature that developers often bring in plans for review and discussion before publicly proposing them, knowing that SPNI will challenge any shortcomings and preferring to work with them as allies rather than as adversaries.

"In the last Israeli elections a revolution began," Sagi tells me optimistically. "For the first time, people with pro-environmental positions—Greens—were elected to municipal councils." Sagi hopes the trend will continue on the national level. But any tally of tasks yet to be accomplished remains daunting. Though Sagi declines to connect environment and population issues to the Israeli-Palestinian question, ultimately only truly open borders, mutual respect, and restraint, will allow an easing of the burden on the land in carrying so many human beings: the possibility of Jewish communities in Jordan, Syria, Egypt, and the Palestinian Authority, the possibility of Palestinian communities in Haifa, Tel Aviv, and Beit Shemesh. If the Middle East could look like the European Union, at least in this one way, without the globalization of tastelessness and the high technology of consumer lure and hook, then we would be getting closer to maintaining our lands in a healthful and proper manner, and closer to bringing in a mature, that is, a messianic age. □

Modern Fashion or Global Fascism?

Jeff Gates

Post-September 11, much remains the same. The recession that officially began in March of 2001 got a bit deeper. Globalization remains the defining trend. As before, the key operating principle that underlies the Washington/Wall Street consensus comes to this: “maximize financial returns and—trust us—everything will work out fine.” We’ve now got \$17 trillion in the hands of U.S. money managers, invested with faith in that neoliberal premise.

As before, the impact of America’s mechanistic economic model (“Do A, get B”) poses a clear and present danger to peace and stability worldwide. Its unbridled operations are a key reason wealth is being radically redistributed worldwide: from the poor to the rich, from developing countries to developed countries, from the future to the present. All with the unflinching support of rule-making crafted by the neoliberal-inspired World Trade Organization (WTO).

The culprit is *not* the transnational corporation, as some critics claim. Nor is globalization a problem *per se*. The malady lies in today’s perilous combination of a narrow bandwidth of values (i.e., financial values) to which the corporate entity gears its global operations, together with the current state of corporate ownership worldwide—abstract, remote and concentrated.

The solution does not lie in abolishing the transnational corporation. That’s a prescription WTO protestors lamely proclaim as the cure. Instead, we need to advocate for corporate entities that are more peopled, localized, and human-sized—in short, more mature. In a private property system, ownership is the means through which private enterprise adjusts its operations to the concerns of those its operations impact. The key to rectifying today’s neoliberal policies is to change ownership patterns. Such “up-close capitalism” would offer the community-attuned antidote required to counter today’s money-myopic brand of globalization. Absent that property-empowered personal relationship, globalization will continue to seem disconnected, speeded-up, and dumbed-down.

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Today’s Radical Redistribution of Wealth

Globalization could become a positive force for modernity. Instead, neoliberals insist that globalization operate as a capital market-led, WTO-backed process that radically redistributes well-being worldwide. Here are some examples, with references because these numbers are so unbelievable you might want to look them up for yourself:

- The wealth of the *Forbes* 400 richest Americans grew an average \$1.44 billion each from 1997–2000, for an average daily increase in wealth of \$1,920,000 per person (\$240,000 per hour or 46,602 times the U.S. minimum wage). [See www.forbes.com.]
- Funds in the hands of U.S. money managers grew from \$1.9 trillion in 1980 to \$17 trillion in 2000. While those funds were under the control of fiduciaries (half the funds are there due to tax incentives), the pay gap between top executives and production workers in the 362 largest U.S. companies soared from 42:1 in 1980 to 475:1 in 1999. [“Executive Pay Special Report,” *Business Week*, April 7, 2000, p. 100.]
- Prior to the dot-com collapse, *Wired* magazine projected Microsoft’s Bill Gates would become a trillionaire by March 2005 and, by March 2020, a quadrillionaire (a million billionaire). [Evan L. Marcus, *Wired*, September 1999, p. 163.] With the Bush II Administration reneging on the Justice Department’s pledge to bust-up this acknowledged monopoly, baby-boomers can look forward to a future where a single person may have more financial wealth than their entire generation, all 76 million strong. Far-fetched? From 1983–1997, only the top five percent of U.S. households saw an increase in net worth, while wealth declined for everyone else. [*Federal Reserve Bulletin*, January 2000, p. 10.]
- The financial wealth of the top one percent of U.S. households now exceeds the combined household financial wealth of the bottom 95 percent. [Edward N. Wolff, “Recent Trends in Wealth Ownership,” a paper for the conference on “Benefits and Mechanisms for Spreading Asset Ownership in the United States,” New York University, December 10–12, 1998.]
- Bush II’s proposals to privatize Social Security would redirect \$100 billion per year of payroll taxes (the largest levy paid by 80 percent of Americans) into financial

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markets where, from 1983 to 1998, 53 percent of market gains flowed to the top one percent of households. [Edward N. Wolff, "Where has all the Money Gone?," *The Milken Institute Review*, Third Quarter 2001, p. 34.]

- The share of the nation's after-tax income received by the top one percent nearly doubled from 1979–1997. By 1998, the top-earning one percent had as much combined income as the 100 million Americans with the lowest earnings. [Congressional Budget Office Memorandum, *Estimates of Federal Tax Liabilities for Individuals and Families by Income Category and Family Type for 1995 and 1999*, May 1998.]
- The top fifth of U.S. households claim 49.2 percent of national income while the bottom fifth gets by on 3.6 percent. [See www.census.gov (Table H-2).] Between 1979 and 1997, the average income of the richest fifth jumped from nine times the income of the poorest fifth to fifteen times. [*The Economist*, June 16–22, 2001.]
- The long-term fiscal cost of the Bush II tax cut enacted in 2001 is more than double the long-term Social Security shortfall. [Washington, D.C. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, August 3, 2001. See www.cbpp.org/8-3-01tax.htm.] The top one percent will receive three-eighths of the benefits once that law is fully phased in. Bush's economic stimulus package follows that same pattern.
- The predictable result: excess physical capacity alongside unmet physical needs.
- As of November, industrial production had declined for thirteen consecutive months, the longest period of falling output since July 1932. Operating capacity sank to 74.8 percent in October, the lowest level since June 1983. ["Industrial Production Tumbles," *The New York Times*, November 1, 2001.]
- The inevitable "overcapacity" recession began well before September 11.

Unjust, Insensible and Unsustainable

Even a cursory glance at what now passes for economic science in the United States should have convinced the global community that our economic model is unworkable and unstable. Instead, at our insistence, globalizers endorsed our neoliberal "Chicago" model and spread it worldwide. The predictable results, courtesy of the United Nations Human Development Program Report (1999):

- Eighty countries have per capita incomes lower than a decade ago. Sixty countries have grown steadily poorer since 1980.
- In 1960, the income gap between the fifth of the world's people living in the richest countries and the fifth in the poorest countries was 30 to 1. By 1990, the gap had widened to 60 to 1. By 1998, it had surged to 74 to 1.

- From 1995 to 1999 the world's 200 wealthiest people doubled their net worth, to \$1,000 billion.
- Three billion people presently live on \$2 or less per day while 1.3 billion of those get by on \$1 or less per day. With global population expanding 80 million each year, World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn cautions that, unless we address the "challenge of inclusion," thirty years hence we may have 5 billion people living on \$2 or less per day.
- Two billion people suffer from malnutrition, including 55 million in industrial countries. Thus, in three decades, neoliberal-style globalization could create a world where 3.7 billion people suffer from malnutrition.
- UNDP's assessment: "Development that perpetuates today's inequalities in neither sustainable *nor* worth sustaining."

The maladies that accompany today's fashionable neoliberal model not only persist, they are poised to grow steadily more perilous. Consider:

- In Indonesia, 61.7 percent of the stock market's value is held by that nation's fifteen richest families. The comparable figure for the Philippines is 55.1 percent and 53.3 percent for Thailand. [Stijn Claessens, Simeon Djankov and Larry H.P. Lang, "Who Controls East Asian Corporations?" (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 1999).] Worldwide, there's now roughly \$60 trillion in securitized assets (stocks, bonds, etc.), with an estimated \$90 trillion in additional assets that will become securitizable with the global reach of today's "emerging markets" development model. With help from their global regulatory agent, the WTO, neoliberalism is evoking a future where a handful of the world's most well-to-do families may pocket more than 50 percent of that \$90 trillion in financial wealth.
- The way capital markets are currently structured routinely and richly rewards those who internalize gains and externalize costs (that is, they avoid such costs as paying a living wage or cleaning up environmental toxins). The neoliberals' one-dimensional means for measuring progress encourages managers to embrace manufacturing practices that have proved detrimental to our environment worldwide. As of 1996, the biologically productive area needed to produce the natural resources we consume and to absorb the carbon dioxide we emit was 30 percent larger than the area available. [See *Living Planet Report 2000* by United Nations Development Program and World Wildlife Fund.]
- In its July 2001 report, the International Panel on Climate Change reports that relentlessly rising global temperatures—due primarily to hydrocarbon use in industrial economies—are poised to create catastrophic conditions worldwide. Agriculture, health, human settlements, water,

animals—all will feel the impact on a planet that's warming faster than at any time in the past millennium. Throughout the 1,000 pages of predictions in the panel's 2,600 pages of analysis, one theme remains constant: the poor of the world will be hardest hit.

What Dare We Call Neoliberalism?

The neoliberal/WTO model conflicts with the principles that guide free enterprise, private property economies. Consider just these eight inconsistencies:

1. Free enterprise is based on the notion that free markets provide an opportunity for people to freely express their choices and thereby enjoy the dignity of self-determination. To equate globally integrated markets with the expression of personal will is misleading, even deceptive. Markets don't respond to people, but to people *with money*. When we embrace a policy mix, like today's, that concentrates income, that stance is destined to undermine both self-determination and markets.
2. Private enterprise is based on the sanctity of private property. Yet private property depends for its legitimacy on its lack of exclusivity. When we embrace a paradigm, like today's, that radically concentrates ownership, that model poses a clear and present danger to private enterprise.
3. Free enterprise democracies are based on the sensible idea that people should have an influence on forces that have an influence on them. Today's remote-control, globally-attuned paradigm would strike Adam Smith, the father of free enterprise, as a freak of free enterprise. He assumed that capital would remain in the country where it originated. He envisioned not remote financial markets but an engaged and community-attuned humanity (what he called "human sympathies") as the animating force that converts personal gain to the public good.
4. Nothing in the neoliberal paradigm suggests that capital ownership patterns bear any relationship to fiscal foresight, a key operating principle of prudent free enterprise.
5. Nor does anything in the neoliberal model suggest that property patterns are relevant: exclusive vs. inclusive; concentrated vs. dispersed; foreign vs. domestic; individual vs. institutional; remote and abstract vs. up-close and personal. Policy-making becomes nonsensical when it suggests that private property is essential but its patterns irrelevant.
6. Neoliberals revere Austrian Friedrich von Hayek, particularly his call for "local knowledge" as the means for ensuring "decentralized decision-making"—a key reason cited for the downfall of state-directed economies. Yet neoliberals insist on a model that grants dominance

to signals provided by remote, abstract, and "depeopled" capital markets.

7. Natural capital provides the foundation on which all standards of living are inescapably based. Yet neoliberals insist that dominance be granted a financial model that regards all of nature as essentially cost-free—and treats it accordingly. That naïve stance is inconsistent with a political system meant to endure "for the ages."
8. The neoliberal model has failed to shrink the need for government. As the concentration of wealth and income accelerated—relying on neoliberal policies—the ratio of public to private spending grew worldwide, on average, from 30 percent of GDP in 1960 to 46 percent in 1997. ["The visible hand," *The Economist*, September 20, 1998, p. 17.] Neoliberals (and libertarians) misconstrue the political lesson: a lightly governed future requires policies crafted to ensure that people need government less. Instead, neoliberal policy-making ensures a fiscal nightmare by fostering retirement populations worldwide who possess votes but precious few assets.

In short, neoliberal practices and policies bear no resemblance to economic principles that are either sensible or sustainable. Whatever the neoliberals may be, "conservatives" they certifiably are not. At every turn, their proposals contradict the tenets they espouse.

Rather than integrating the world economy, the neoliberal model divides people, both within and between nations. It also plunders natural resources, imperils posterity, and jeopardizes self-determination. Instead of fostering free enterprise democracies, today's finance-obsessive paradigm attunes globalization to such a cramped range of values that the financially fit are seen as sufficient unto themselves while the rest are not worth the bother.

This mechanistic, formulistic approach to globalization guarantees results that are socially unjust, economically unworkable, politically destabilizing, culturally intrusive, and ecologically unsustainable. If left unreformed, the rule-making arm of neoliberalism (the WTO) is certain to evoke widespread hostility, its operations routinely associated with oppression, exploitation, domination, corruption and, most destabilizing of all, disrespect. Now their fashionable model has evoked a global overcapacity recession, historically the most difficult contraction to undo.

For the United States to retain (or regain) respect in the global community, it is essential that our neoliberal ideologies—of both parties—be replaced with legislators who display some semblance of common sense. The policy choice is not an issue of left versus right, Demopub or Republicrat. It's about scale—big versus small, global versus local. And about which values are granted priority. A policy mix that grants deference to the forces of finance is fine. But for policy-makers to grant those forces global dominance may be how fascism finds its foothold in a globalizing world. □

Race in the Twenty-First Century

Howard Winant

As the world lurches forward into the twenty-first century, there is widespread confusion and anxiety about the political significance, and even the meaning, of race. The future of democracy itself depends on the outcomes of racial politics and policies, as they develop both in various national societies and in the world at large. This means that the future of democracy also depends on the concept of race, the meaning that is attached to race. Contemporary threats to human rights and social well-being—including the resurgent dangers of fascism, increasing impoverishment, and massive social polarization—cannot be managed or even understood without paying new and better attention to issues of race. We need a set of conceptual tools that can facilitate this task.

The present moment is unique in the history of race. Starting during World War II and culminating in the 1960s, there was a global shift, a “break,” in the worldwide racial system that had endured for centuries. The shift occurred because many challenges to the old forms of racial hierarchy converged after the war: anti-colonialism, anti-apartheid, worldwide revulsion at fascism, and perhaps most important, the U.S. civil rights movement and U.S.–USSR competition in the world’s South. All called white supremacy into question to an extent unparalleled in modern history. These events and conflicts linked anti-racism to democratic political development more strongly than ever before. As a result, for the first time in modern history, there is widespread, indeed worldwide, support for what had until recently been a “dream,” Dr. King’s dream let us say, of racial equality.

Yet white supremacy is hardly dead. It has proven itself capable of absorbing and adapting much of the “dream,” repackaging itself as “colorblind,” nonracialist, and meritocratic. In our post-imperial, post-Cold War world, a new



racial politics is developing, one which has tried to reinvent itself along overtly nonracist lines. In fact, its capacity to present itself as “beyond race” is in many ways the crucial index of its stability. Paradoxically, however, in this reformed version racial inequality can live on, still battering on all sorts of stereotypes and fears, still resorting to exclusionism and scapegoating when politically necessary, still invoking the supposed superiority of “mainstream” (a.k.a. white) values, and cheerfully maintaining that equality has

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been largely achieved. Despite all the political reforms, despite the real amelioration of the most degrading features of the old-world racial system, the centuries-old and deeply entrenched system of racial inequality and injustice has hardly been eliminated. Rather, this new “colorblind” racial system may be more effective in containing the challenges posed over the past few decades by movements for racial justice than any intransigent, overtly racist “backlash” could possibly have been.

Although the reformed and officially nonracial version of white supremacy has succeeded in curtailing progress toward the “dream” in many dubious battles—over immigration and citizenship, income redistribution and poverty, and above all in respect to the compensatory programs commonly called “affirmative action”—the new racial politics has hardly won the day. It has certainly not eliminated the movement for racial justice that spawned it. Rather, the racial politics that results from this synthesis of challenge and incorporation, racial conflict and racial reform, has proved neither stable nor certain. It is a strange brew, often appearing more inclusive, more pluralistic than ever before, yet also filled with threats: of “ethnic cleansing,” resurgent neofascism, and perhaps equally insidious, a renewed racial complacency.

No longer unabashedly white supremacist, the new racial politics is, so to speak, abashedly white supremacist.

The Modern World Racial System

Popular culture tends to represent racism as an archaic phenomenon, an outgrowth of pre-modern slave-based societies. But modernity has to be acknowledged as a racial phenomenon in its own right. The Enlightenment’s recognition of a unified, intelligible world, the construction of an international economy, the rise of democracy and popular sovereignty, and the emergence of a global culture were all deeply racialized processes. To understand how race was fundamental to the construction of modernity is of more than historical interest: it also explains much about the present. Notably, it demolishes the commonly-held belief that racism is largely a thing of the past, the idea that after the bad old days of white supremacy and colonial rule, there has occurred in our own time a belated resolution to the “race problem.”

The tension between slavery on the one hand, and nascent democracy on the other, structured the lengthy transition to the modern world. Resistance against slavery contributed crucially to the broader redefinition of political rights for which early advocates of democracy yearned and fought. Indeed, the violence and genocide of earlier racial phenomena prefigured contemporary atrocities like the Holocaust, “ethnic cleansing,” and totalitarianism.

The abolition of African slavery was the great rehearsal for the “break” with white supremacy that took place in our own time. Abolition was not completed with the triumph of the Union in the American Civil War and the passage of the Reconstruction amendments to the Constitution. Only when Brazil, the last country to free its slaves, did so in 1888, did the first crucial battle in the centuries-long war against white supremacy draw to a close. Abolition, that is, was not the result of one war in one country, but was made possible by three momentous social changes: the triumph of

industrial capitalism, the upsurge of democratic movements, and the mobilization of slaves themselves in search of freedom.

But abolition left many emancipatory tasks unfinished. New forms of racial inequality succeeded slavery. Even after slavery had been ended, democracy was still partial. Racialization—for example the U.S. laws and social practices known as “Jim Crow”—continued to define the

mechanisms of authoritarian rule and to distribute resources, not only in the U.S. but on a global scale. Racial thought and practices continued to associate subordinated status almost irrevocably with distinct types of human bodies, thus enabling and justifying world systemic rule. Generalized processes of racial stratification continued to support enormous and oppressive systems of commercial agriculture and mining. Through the mid-twentieth century, the unfulfilled dreams of human rights and equality were still tied up with the logic of race.

Although there was always resistance to racist rule, it was only in the period after World War II that opposition to racial stratification and racial exclusion once again turned into major political conflicts. Civil rights and anti-racist movements, as well as nationalist and indigenous ones, fiercely contested the racial limitations on democracy. These movements challenged the conditions under which racialized labor was available for exploitation in the former colonies as well as the metropolises. Picking up the anti-fascist legacy of World War II, they also took advantage of the geopolitical conflicts of the Cold War. They rendered old forms of political exclusion problematic, and revealed the inherent racist bias in a many mainstream cultural icons—artistic, linguistic, scientific, and of course political—that had long been considered unproblematic. To cite some U.S. examples: many of the “founding fathers,” for example, were newly recognized as committed slaveholders; corporate complicity with slavery and imperialism was rediscovered. Familiar writers such as Hemingway were reread with racial issues in mind. And popular culture, the “material culture” with its Aunt Jemima pancakes and Cream of Wheat cereal boxes, suddenly appeared surprising (to whites at least).

No longer unabashedly white supremacist, the new racial politics is, so to speak, abashedly white supremacist.

Drawing on the experience of millions who had undergone military mobilization followed by an embittering return to a segregated or colonized homeland, the anti-racist movements were able to recognize anew their international character, as massive postwar labor demand sparked international migration from the world's South to its North, from areas of peasant agriculture to industrial areas. These enormous transformations manifested themselves in a vast demand to complete the work begun a century before with slavery's abolition. They sparked the worldwide "break" with the tradition of white supremacy.

As the tumultuous 1960s drew to a close, the descendants of slaves and ex-colonials had forced at least the partial dismantling of most official forms of discrimination and empire. But with these developments—the enactment of a new series of civil rights laws, decolonization, and the adoption of cultural policies of a universalistic character—the global racial system entered a new period of instability and tension. The immediate result of the "break" was an uneven series of racial reforms that had the general effect of ameliorating racial injustice and inequality, but also worked to contain social protest. Thus the widespread demands of the racially subordinated and their supporters were at best answered in a limited fashion; in this way a new period of racial instability and uncertainty was inaugurated.

Some National Cases

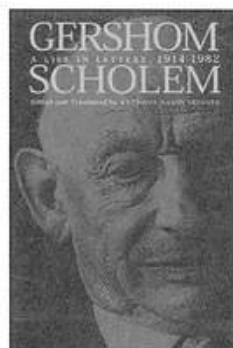
The "break" was a worldwide phenomenon, but it obviously took very different forms in particular national settings. Racial conditions are generally understood to vary dramatically in distinct political, economic, and cultural contexts. Here I'd like to focus, however briefly, on four national case studies: the United States, South Africa, Brazil, and the European Union (considered as a whole). I chose these four cases (which I examine in greater detail in *The World is a Ghetto*), because they are crucial variants, important laboratories in which new racial dynamics are being developed.

These comparative case studies demonstrate that the post-World War II "break" is a global backdrop, an economic, political, and cultural context in which national racial conflicts are being worked out. They give us a context for understanding the developing nature of the new racial politics.

The United States

How permanent is the "color line"? The activities of the civil rights movement and related anti-racist initiatives achieved substantial, if partial, democratic reforms in earlier postwar decades. These innovations continue to coexist, however, with a weighty legacy of white supremacy whose origins lie in the colonial and slavery era. How do these two currents combine and conflict today?

Massive migration, both internal and international, has reshaped the U.S. population, both numerically and



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geographically. A multipolar racial pattern has largely supplanted the old racial system, which was often (and somewhat erroneously) viewed as a bipolar white-black hierarchy. In the contemporary United States, new varieties of inter-minority competition, as well as new awareness of the international "embeddedness" of racial identity, have greater prominence. Racial stratification varies substantially by class, region, and indeed among groups, although comprehensive racial inequality certainly endures. Racial reform policies are under attack in many spheres of social policy and law, where the claim is forcefully made that the demands of the civil rights movement have largely been met, and that the United States has entered a "post-racial" stage of its history.

The racial "break" in the United States was a partial democratization, produced by the moderate coalition that dominated the political landscape in the post-World War II years. The partial victory of the civil rights movement was achieved by a synthesis of mass mobilization on the one hand, and a tactical alliance with U.S. national interests on the other. This alliance was brokered by racial "moderates": political centrists largely affiliated with the Democratic Party, who perceived the need to ameliorate racial conflict and end outright racial dictatorship, but who also understood and feared the radical potential of the black movement.

There was a price to be paid for civil rights reform. It could take place only in a suitably deradicalized fashion, only if its key provisions were articulated (legislatively, juridically) in terms compatible with the core values of U.S. politics and culture: individualism, equality, competition, opportunity, and the accessibility of "the American dream," etc. This price was to be paid by the movement's radicals: revolutionaries, socialists, and political nationalists—black, brown, red, yellow, and white—who were required to forego their vision of major social transformation or to face marginalization, repression, or death if they would not.

The radical vision was an alternative "dream," Dr. King's dream let us call it, a dream in which racial justice played the central part. To be "free at last" meant something deeper than symbolic reforms and palliation of the worst excesses of white supremacy. It meant substantive social reorganization that would be manifested in egalitarian economic and democratizing political consequences. It meant something like social democracy, human rights, and social citizenship for blacks and other "minorities."

But it was precisely here that the "moderate" custodians of racial reform drew their boundary line, both in practical terms and in theoretical ones. (For arguments on this topic see Stephen Steinberg 1995 and Singh 1998.) To strike down officially sanctioned racial inequality was permissible;

to create racial equality through positive state action was not. The danger of redistribution—of acceding to demands to make substantive redress for the unjustified expropriation and restriction of black economic and political resources, both historically and in the present—was to be avoided at all costs.

Civil rights reform thus became the agenda of the political center, which moved "from domination to hegemony." The key component of modern political rule, of "hegemony" as theorized by Gramsci most profoundly, is the capacity to incorporate opposition. By adopting many of the movement's demands, by developing a comprehensive and coherent program of "racial democracy" that hewed to a centrist political logic and reinforced key dimensions of U.S. nationalist ideology, racial "moderates" were able to define a new racial "common sense." Thus they divided the movement, reasserted a certain stability, and defused a great deal of political opposition. This was accomplished

not all at once, but over a prolonged period from about the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s.

This partial reconfiguration of the U.S. racial order was based on real concessions but left major issues unresolved, notably the endurance of significant patterns of inequality and discrimination. Still, the reform that did occur was sufficient to reduce the political challenge posed by anti-racist movements. Certainly it has been more successful than the intransigent strategy of diehard segregationists—based in the slogan of "massive resistance" to even minimal integration—would have been.

Yet the fundamental problems of racial injustice and inequality, of white supremacy, of course remain: moderated perhaps, but hardly resolved.

So in the U.S. context, race not only retains its significance as a social structural phenomenon, but also continues to define North American identities and life chances, well after the supposed triumph of the "civil rights revolution." Indeed "the American dilemma" may be more problematic than ever as the twenty-first century commences. For achieving a "moderate" race policy agenda has required that the civil rights vision be drawn and quartered, beginning in the late 1960s and with ever-greater success in the following two decades.

The tugging and hauling, the escalating contestation over the meaning of race, has resulted in ever more disrupted and contradictory notions of racial identity. The significance of race ("declining" or increasing?), the interpretation of racial equality ("colorblind" or color-conscious?), the institutionalization of racial justice ("reverse discrimination" or affirmative action?), and the very categories—black, white,

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but also continues to define
North American identities
and life chances.*

Latino/Hispanic, Asian American, and Native American—employed to classify racial groups... all these were called into question as they emerged from the civil rights “victory” of the mid-1960s.

Despite this continuous degradation of the dream of equality, the view that racial injustice has largely been surpassed in a post-civil rights era has become the new national “common sense.” This view has acquired not only elite and academic spokespeople, but also widespread mass adherence, especially among whites. As a result, the already limited racial reform policies (“affirmative action”) and the relatively powerless state agencies charged with enforcing civil rights laws (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) developed in the 1960s are undergoing new and severe attack.

The argument is now made that the demands of the civil rights movement have largely been met, and that the United States has entered a “post-racial” stage of its history. Advocates of such positions—usually classified as “neoconservative” (but sometimes also found on the left)—ceaselessly instruct racially-defined minorities to “pull themselves up by their own bootstraps,” and, in callous distortion of Martin Luther King Jr.’s message, exhort them to accept the “content of their character” (rather than “the color of their skin”) as the basic social value of the country (see, for example, Steele 1990 or Stephan and Abigail Thernstrom 1997).

In an egregious recent example, the Supreme Court has moved in the *Sandoval* Case to repeal even the inadequate civil rights reforms of the 1960s. Here as elsewhere, by adding a purpose or “intent to discriminate” requirement to anti-discrimination law, the Court makes it almost impossible to get relief from discrimination. As critical legal theorist David Kairys has argued, this amounts to creating different equality rules for whites and nonwhites, because where whites get harmed the Court doesn’t care about intent or purpose.

After the dust had settled from the titanic confrontation between the movement’s radical propensities and the “establishment’s” tremendous capacity for incorporative “moderate” reform, a great deal remained unresolved. The ambiguous and contradictory racial conditions in the United States today result from decades-long attempts to simultaneously ameliorate racial opposition and to placate the *ancien regime raciale*. The unending reiteration of these opposite gestures, these contradictory practices, itself testifies to the limitations of democracy and the continuing significance of race in the United States.

South Africa

In the mid-1990s, South Africa—the most explicitly racialized society in the late twentieth century—entered a difficult but promising transition. The apartheid state had of

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course been committed to a racialized framework of citizenship, civic inclusion, and law in general; the post-apartheid constitution incorporates the principles of nonracialism originally articulated in the ANC-based Freedom Charter of 1955. Yet the country still bears the terrible burden of apartheid's sequelae: persistent racial inequality across every level of society. The legacies of segregated residential areas, combined with a highly racialized distribution of resources of every sort, combine to urge moderation on political leadership. White fears must be placated in order to sustain the country's economic base and to minimize capital flight. Whites continue to hold controlling positions throughout the economy; the handful of blacks who have made their way into the corporate and state elites understand very well the price the country would pay for a radical turn in policy.

Yet this is a state committed to racial equality, and to promoting black advancement, individually and collectively. Can the post-apartheid state stabilize the process of political, social, and economic integration of the black majority? Can it maintain an official nonracialism in the face of such comprehensive racial inequality? How can the vast majority of citizens—excluded until so recently from access to land, education, clean water, and decent shelter; debarred from Africa's wealthiest economy; and denied the most elementary civic and political rights—garner the economic access they so desperately need, without reinforcing white paranoia and fear? How can the post-apartheid state facilitate the reform of racial attitudes and practices, challenging inequality, white supremacism, and the legacy of racial separatism, without engendering white flight and subversion?

Both the anti-apartheid movement and the new government's policies were shaped by global concerns as well as by local ones. Internal political debates reflect changing global discussions around race and politics. Just as the South African Black Consciousness Movement drew on the speeches of Malcolm X and Aimé Césaire in its understanding of racial oppression, just as the anti-apartheid movement used international anti-racist sentiment to build momentum for sanctions on the old regime, so too the current government is both guided and constrained by international pressures and issues.

Moreover, internal politics bring international resources to bear: through the post-war era, the anti-apartheid movement drew much of its resources and ideas from an international anti-racist movement, largely linked to an international trend to support decolonization. Since the 1994 election, however, international constraints have limited the sphere of

action of the new democratic government. Critics of affirmative action policies, for example, emphasize the danger of undermining efficiency in the name of redistribution, much as critics of redistributive policies deploy neoliberal economic arguments to reject nationalization. In each case, they invoke international discourses that are nonracial in form, yet have racial implications in practice. The South African state continues to face considerable challenges from both left and right: will it be possible to reconstruct South Africa by building not only a democracy but a greater degree of consensus,

of citizenship and belonging? To what degree can a policy of "class compromise" forestall the dangers of social upheaval and capital flight?

Understanding these processes requires viewing South African racial debates in global perspective, and exploring the ways in which local actors seek to change the rules of engagement as they restructure national politics. The 1994 elections changed the racial character of the state, although many white civil servants remain in place; affirmative action policies, to which the ANC-led government is committed,

could reorganize racial distribution of incomes, if not wealth. Yet in the context of a global debate over affirmative action, and in the face of the threat of the flight of white capital and skills, the process of reform has been far slower than many South Africans, white and black, expected. This dilemma remains unresolved: how can democratic nonracial institutions be constructed in a society where most attributes of socioeconomic position and identity remain highly racialized?

Brazil

Brazil presents significant parallels, both historical and contemporary, to other American nations, including the United States. These similarities include Brazil's history of slavery and black inequality, its displacement and neglect of a large indigenous population, its intermittent and ambiguous commitment to immigration, its incomplete democracy, and its vast, increasingly urban, and disproportionately black underclass. Brazilian racial dynamics have traditionally received little attention, either from scholars or policy makers, despite the fact that the country has the second largest black population in the world (after Nigeria). Its post-emancipation adoption of a policy of "whitening," which was to be achieved by concerted recruitment of European immigrants, owed much to the U.S. example, and also drew on nineteenth century French racial theorizing (as pointed out by Thomas Skidmore 1993 [1964]).

Amazingly, the "myth of racial democracy" still flourishes in Brazil, even though it has been amply demonstrated

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belonging?*

to be little more than a fig leaf covering widespread racial inequality, injustice, and prejudice. (For more on Brazilian race politics see Carlos Hasenbalg and Nelson do Valle Silva 1992, Michael Hanchard 1994, and George Reid Andrews 1991.) The Brazilian racial system, with its "color continuum" (as opposed to the more familiar "color line" of North America), tends to dilute democratic demands. Indeed, Brazilian racial dynamics have made it difficult to promote policies that might address racial inequality. Public discourse resolutely discourages any attempt to define inequality along racial lines; the current President, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, is the first even to broach the subject seriously, although vociferous denials both official and informal persist. If politicians do point out racial inequalities, they challenge the myth of racial democracy, and are subject to charges that they are themselves provoking racial discrimination by stressing difference.

Reliable research on racial stratification and racial attitudes in Brazil remains scarce. (For a few good examples see Edward Telles 1992, 1994; France Winddance Twine 1997; and the Brazilian Datafolha research service 1995.) A whole range of political questions thus remains mysterious. Consider the example of voting rights: illiterates could not vote until 1985, but there is no reliable data on the proportion of illiterates who were black—and thus the extent to which black Brazilians have been disenfranchised through this century remains uncertain, though it is undoubtedly large.

The emergence of the *Movimento Negro Unificado* as a force to be reckoned with—though by no means as strong as the 1960s U.S. civil rights movement—represents a new development. The MNU used the 1988 centennial of the abolition of Brazilian slavery, as well as the 1990-91 census, to dramatize persistent racial inequalities. As in South Africa, this phase of the black movement takes its reference points partly from international anti-racist struggles, often drawing on examples, symbols, and images from the civil rights and anti-apartheid movements.

In the 1990s, a range of racial reforms were proposed in Brazil—largely in response to the increasingly visible *Movimento Negro*. To enact these reforms, to prompt the state to adopt anti-racist policies, however, will require far greater support for change than presently exists. The political dilemma is familiar. Blacks need organized allies: in the

party system, among other impoverished and disenfranchised groups, and on the international scene. Yet in order to mobilize, they must also begin to assert a racialized political identity, or there will be little collective support for racial reforms. How can blacks address this dualistic, if not contradictory, situation? How can Afro-Brazilians assert claims on the basis of group solidarity, without simultaneously undermining the fragile democratic consensus that has begun to emerge across many constituencies? How can democratic institutions be built alongside policies designed to address racial inequalities, without undermining a vision of common citizenship and equality?

The European Union

The last few decades have established that, indeed, "the empire strikes back." Racially plural societies are in place throughout Europe, especially in former imperial powers like the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, France, and Spain, but also in Germany, Italy, the Scandinavian countries, and to some extent in the East. The influx of substantial numbers of nonwhites during the post-colonial period has deeply altered a dynamic in which the racial system and the imperial order had been one, and in which the "other" was by and large kept outside the walls of the "mother country." As a stroll around London, Frankfurt, Paris, or Madrid quickly reveals, those days are now gone forever. Yet the response to the new situation too often takes repressive and anti-democratic forms, focusing attention on the "immigrant problem" (or the "Islamic problem"), seeking not only to shut the gates to Maghrebines or sub-Saharan Africans, Turks, or Slavs (including Balkan refugees), but often also to define those "others" who are already present as enemies of the national culture and threats to the "ordinary German" (or English, or French, etc.) way of life. This rationale for racial exclusion and restriction in Europe has been analyzed as "differentialist": its distinction from the meritocratic logic of discrimination in the United States has been linked to a generally lower European interest in issues of individual equality, and a relatively greater concern with the integrity of national cultures. (For an explanation of these differences see Pierre-Andre Taguieff 1983 [1999] and Michel Wieviorka 1995.)

Thus the particular racial issue that must be confronted in Europe is the newly heterogeneous situation, the multiplication of group identities. Currently, anti-democratic



tendencies are widely visible: new right-wing and neofascist groups are widespread. At both the state and regional levels the agenda of restriction is gaining adherence, jeopardizing mobility of employment or residence, and sometimes stigmatizing religious or other cultural practices. Conflicts over immigration and citizenship have taken on new intensity, with crucial implications for the character of democracy.

The dynamics of integration raise a wide range of questions about future European racial logics. Conflicting principles of citizenship should it be based on principles of descent or on those of territory, *jus sanguinis* or *jus soli*?—are deeply imbedded in the distinct European national makeups, and their resolution in a common cultural/political framework will not come easily (Rogers Brubaker 1992). Relations with ex-colonies vary, raising serious questions not only of immigrant access and economic ties between the old empires and the new Europe, but also giving rise to serious anxieties about “security” and “terrorism.” Popular anti-racist sentiments stimulated the formation of many multiculturalist and pluralist organizations, particularly in the early 1980s. But over the past decade they have largely ceased to function as mass mobilization initiatives in support of democracy. So, while the slogan “*Touche pas mon pôte*” (“Hands off my buddy”) no longer summons tens of thousands into the street in defense of the democratic rights of racially-defined minorities, the transition to racial pluralism is still very much underway.

Toward New Racial Dynamics

To understand the changing significance of race in the aftermath of the twentieth century—the century whose central malady was diagnosed by W. E. B. Du Bois as “the problem of the color-line”—we must reconsider where the racialized world came from, and where it is going. In the settings I’ve discussed, the “break” that began with movement activity after World War II, and that was contained from the late 1960s onward by political reforms, has not been consolidated. At the end of the century the world as a whole, and our national cases as well, are far from overcoming the tenacious legacies of colonial rule, apartheid, and segregation. All still experience continuing confusion, anxiety, and contention about race. Yet the legacies of epochal struggles for freedom, democracy, and human rights persist as well. To evaluate the transition to a new world racial system in comparative and historical perspective requires keeping in view the continuing tension that characterizes the present.

It is impossible to address worldwide dilemmas of race and racism by ignoring or “transcending” this situation, for

example by adopting so-called “colorblind” policies. In the past, the centrality of race deeply determined the economic, political, and cultural configuration of the modern world; although recent decades have seen a tremendous efflorescence of movements for racial equality and justice, the legacies of centuries of racial oppression have not been overcome. Nor is a vision of racial justice fully worked out. Certainly the idea that such justice has already been largely achieved—as seen in the “colorblind” paradigm in the United States, the “nonracialist” rhetoric of the South African

Freedom Charter, the Brazilian rhetoric of “racial democracy,” the emerging “racial differentialism” of the European Union—remains problematic.

What would a more credible vision entail? The pressing task today is not to jettison the concept of race, but instead to come to terms with it as a form of flexible human variety.

What does this mean in respect to racism? Racism has been a crucial component of modernity, a key pillar of the global capitalist system, for 500 years. So it remains today. Yet it has been changed, damaged, and forced to reorganize by the massive social movements which have taken place in recent

decades. In the past these movements were international in scope and influence. They were deeply linked to democratizing and egalitarian trends, such as labor politics and feminism. They were able both to mobilize around the injustices and exclusion experienced by racially subordinated groups, and simultaneously to sustain alliances across racial lines. This is background; such experiences cannot simply recur.

Still, the massive mobilizations which created the global “break” that followed World War II have certainly reshaped our world. Were these movements fated to be the last popular upsurges, the last egalitarian challenges to elite supremacy, to racial hierarchy? Surely not. In the countries I have discussed, and in transnational anti-racist networks as well, these earlier precedents still wield their influence. They still spark new attempts to challenge racism.

Will race ever be “transcended”? Will the world ever “get beyond” race? Probably not. But the entire world still has a chance of overcoming the stratification, the hierarchy, the taken-for-granted injustice and inhumanity that so often accompanies the “race concept.” Like religion or language, race can be accepted as part of the spectrum of the human condition, while it is simultaneously and categorically resisted as a means of stratifying national or global societies. Nothing is more essential in the effort to reinforce democratic commitments, not to mention global survival and prosperity, as we enter a new millennium. □

The entire world still has a chance of overcoming the stratification, the hierarchy, the taken-for-granted injustice and inhumanity that so often accompanies the “race concept.”

Re-membering Decolonization

Chellis Glendinning

... they were spoken by men and women whose hearts
beat to a brave music.

—Basil Davidson
Africa in Modern History

et il est place pour tous au rendez-vous de la conquête
—Aimé Césaire
"Cahier d'un retour"

Afghanistan never was an official member of the colonized world owned by American and European nation-states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This oversight is not for want of effort. The British surely tried to conquer the tribes of the Hindu Kush Mountains, but Afghanistan's forbidding terrain, its cult of ferocious warriors, and the invention of technologies expediting water transport from the East spared the tribal kingdom from conquest.

Yet, still, the Afghanistan of today fits the profile of a post-World War II decolonized nation. Cold War conflict has decimated its economies and cultures. A fundamentalist dictatorship has rocked its stability. Its once-sustainable farmers and shepherds now grow illicit narcotics for survival, and the harboring of foreign terrorists makes its population vulnerable to further assault. The Afghanistan of today—with its ready opium fields, potential bottom-of-the-barrel labor costs, sites for toxic industry, and passageway for a Turkmenistan-to-Arabian-Sea pipeline—is a worthy target for further exploitation and conquest by transnational corporations, First World militaries, and laws of the World Trade Organization.

This sinister predicament prompts me to think about the decolonization movements that followed World War II and over the course of some fifty years, from 1940 to 1990, offered some renewal to a long-suffering world. To be sure, since the Vietnam War ended in the mid-1970s, few of us, save an impassioned crew of cultural-studies academics, has focused on classical empires and the decolonization movements that challenged them. And yet, truly, everything about



our lives today is engraved with the legacy of imperialism. At their apex in 1914, European nations and the United States commandeered 85 percent of the landmass of the planet, and the political, economic, cultural, and psychological paradigms fueling this feat survive around the globe to this day. But something else, perhaps more sinister, also spurs us to remember decolonization: everything about our lives today is becoming engraved by an imperialism of globalization.

Throughout the history of empire, resistance has always existed, but, as Arab-American social critic Edward Said observes, "Stunningly, by and large the entire world was decolonized after World War II." Emboldened by the post-war frailty of the perpetrators of expansionism, educated into the use of modern military weaponry by reluctant participation in two world wars, imprisoned on their own lands for generations, the peoples of Europe and America's colonies rose up. One after another they exploded like firecrackers—the Philippines, India, Ceylon, Indonesia, Vietnam, Cuba, Madagascar, Algeria—going off separately at first and then building into one unprecedented global display. In the process, England, France, Germany, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, and the United States lost the bulk of what had given them a leg-up in the wealth-accumulation game for some five centuries, and over 100 formerly colonized nations burst upon an independence they believed would lead to a liberation and self-determination.

Chellis Glendinning's latest book is *Off the Map: An Expedition Deep into Imperialism, the Global Economy, and Other Earthly Whereabouts* (Shambhala, 1999), which won the National Federation of Press Women 2000 Book Award.

We are now, of course, sadly aware that the polarization of oppressor-oppressed is not so easily ejected and self-determination not so cleanly won. Before his untimely death in 1961, Martinique-born psychiatrist Frantz Fanon documented the internal pitfalls of the attempt to throw off colonial dominance in a spate of landmark books, including *The Wretched of the Earth* and *A Dying Colonialism*. The organic spontaneity of the initial rebellion phase, he pointed out, does not easily transmute into the political organization necessary to continue on after colonialism is defeated. Those who, through ambition, luck, and compromise, reach the upper echelons of colonized society ooze into the organizational void and, in so doing, reproduce a self-indulgent facsimile of the colonizer's class society; in Pakistani Eqbal Ahmad's words, "a new pathology of power." Those who are tapped for socialization into dominant-culture literacy, the intellectuals, may be isolated from the people's intelligence and, so alienated, may lend their skills to the new ruling authority. Internal factions arise, and the tragic result is a triumph of nationalism, fundamentalism, dictatorship, inter-ethnic conflict, assassination, terrorism—and co-optation by more powerful outside forces.

Indeed, outside forces stirred rough waters that could not have been predicted. The Western nations constituting the Allied Forces had an inkling of the coming insurrections. Fearful that they would lose their grip on the very thing that had provided their wealth—the colonies—they gathered to strategize. In 1944, with World War II still raging, a group of Allied bankers, corporate leaders, and government officials met secretly at the Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, to design a new system for maintaining *carte blanche* over lands beyond their own immediate boundaries. By creating the forerunners of today's World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organization, they laid the groundwork for a dollar-based, Pax-Americana economy by which they could control the world's resources without the direct ownership (and costly overhead) of the old colonial system.

The world that new post-colonial nations like India and Indonesia sprung full-blown upon was a world whose means of survival was increasingly determined by a global commodity trade borne of classical imperialism and now refurbished for the emerging global economy. Returning to in-place sustainability seemed an impossible reach. Former tribal and regional practices like small-scale hunting and fishing, local farming, and lateral trade relations had long since been demolished. Now, the terrain used in precolonial days for these activities was mutated for mass production of coffee, tea, opium, cotton, cattle, coca, copper, gold, and uranium. In this new world, survival against the voracious appetite of capitalism often meant siding, however reluctantly, with the only opposition with the potential to help: state-run communism.

In such a world, participation in both the market of corporate commodities and the drama of military hegemony

seemed necessary. Emerging decolonized peoples found themselves hog-tied by new renditions of the very political forces, economic constraints, and social vagaries that had constrained them under colonialism.

Even though decolonization could not succeed at breaking completely free of imperial power, to me, this vital endeavor remains the miracle of the twentieth century.

Imagine.

Against all odds, the people rose up. They risked their lives. In Cuba, bands of insurgents fanned across the countryside, picking up volunteers along the way, to take back the land. In India, millions of protestors underwent nonviolent civil-disobedience training and en masse confronted British control. In Algeria, women who had never before engaged in public activities passed through police surveillance carrying supplies in the folds of their dresses. All over the world, aspiring liberators communicated with each other about developments and strategy via dangerous means: traveling in disguise, by coded letter, over the radio.

A contemporary insurgent, Subcomandante Marcos of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, describes the heart of the work: "Here we are, forever dead, dying once again, but now in order to live." His words reiterate the sentiments of his revolutionary predecessor, Che Guevara: "We shall fight to the very last drop of our rebel blood, to make this land a sovereign republic, with the real attributes of a nation that is happy, democratic, and a true brother to the other peoples of America."

The attributes of radical social change are all present in these movements: a passion to contribute to community and destiny; a vision of regional relations defined by mutual respect and interchange; a willingness to risk one's own breath to achieve these goals. Decolonization did not occur without stunning courage. It was about human-scale participation. It was about rebalancing unjust power relations and renewing the sacredness of all existence. To quote Che Guevara, decolonization was a way of being based on the best of human motivation: "The true revolutionary," he said, "is moved by enormous feelings of love."

What we learn by re-membering these rarely-mentioned events of recent history as we carry out our own work to repair a world wrenched by more than five decades of post-colonial corporate-national-military license is this: *we are not alone in history*. While the economic means rationalized by such legal constructions as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the World Trade Organization, and the Free Trade Area of the Americas may appear uniquely outrageous, particularly in their use of spectacular technologies, they are in fact reformulations of the age-old contrivance called imperialism. "New wine in an old bottle," as it were. Our work then is not new, and history is hardly dead. To oppose the machinations of globalization and build a just, diverse, and sustainable world in its stead is a continuation of the decolonization effort, and it is

resting solidly on a foundation of daring, creativity, and love that is so real and so profound that we will never lack for inspiration.

But there are also difficult lessons to be learned from the past, namely that for colonized peoples the imposition of imperial structures over generations and at every level of society solidified seemingly irresolvable contradictions. Some are psychological. Colonized people often experience an urge to violent reaction to counter the brute force of oppression. The many-layered and, by definition, ongoing symptoms of post-traumatic stress arise—grief, fear, and rage; flashbacks of turbulence and terror; irrational outbursts; re-enactment of the dominator-victim dynamic; phobic reactions to manage the overwhelm of feeling. And colonized people suffer the cognitive dissonance produced by the tension between ways of being taught in traditional culture and those required for survival within imperial society.

There are also external conflicts. For instance, have-versus-have-not hierarchies which were inconceivable before colonization become normalized in post-colonial society. Revolutionary social cohesion can fracture into factions based on geography, class, job identity, or ethnicity, often antagonizing would-be coalitions—intellectual and farmer, environmentalist and fisherman, soldier and civilian, urban and rural, secular and religious. In the new nation-states, citizens face the untenable meshing of ethnic groupings that have never before had to govern in unison and, simultaneously, the shattering of coherent ethnic groups by politically-defined boundaries. And there are the inevitable comings and goings, dislocations, migrations, and settlements of vast numbers of people uprooted by colonization, and afterward, by post-colonial poverty, inter-ethnic warfare, terrorism, and environmental devastation.

For the citizens of conquering states, conflicts inherent to the perpetration of aggression come into relief. Again, some are psychological. A sense of shock springs from the encounter with the previously-suppressed realities of imperialism. Grief accompanies the loss of former ideologies of superiority, centrality, destiny, and progress. People residing within imperial societies stand face-to-face with their own racism, and as old systems of denial crumble, they also become aware of the many traumatizations perpetrated *within* empires, from child rape to racial violence. And there emerges a singular challenge: to formulate a renewed, but honest, sense of identity.

Public conflicts complicate these inner struggles. Within former imperialist societies, corporate and government institutions attempt to perpetuate aggressive policies and maintain economic standards originally built on colonial relations. An influx of displaced decolonized peoples brings

disturbing challenges to known community, economics, and cultural assumption. Divisions between opponents and supporters of recolonization policies arise.

Such tensions came to the surface in the world at the time of decolonization and, having endured ever since, give us maps for understanding today's predicament. Whether you and I hail from decolonized regions or from dominant societies, none of us finds today's world a place of simple economics, simple geographies, simple sovereignties, simple identities, or simple truths. Surely those places dubbed the "Third" and "Fourth" worlds after 1945 remain a favored target of exploitation, and yet we find that we have *all* become colonized by the reconstruction of power launched at Bretton Woods.

Since the laws of the World Trade Organization now define how things are done, transnational corporations are unabashed about commodifying and profiting from every manifestation of earthly existence, from the electromagnetic spectrum, to our bodies-on-production-lines, to the genes-in-our-bodies. Formerly clear-cut boundaries based on race, geography, and government are disintegrating, and we have all become inhabitants of what may be touted as one-united-globalized planet. But it is in fact a unity built upon a complex, albeit blatant, architecture of exploitation. Encased in this construction, we find ourselves colonized not by the nation-state empires of the past but by transnational corporations and global institutions.

This new reality alters the texture of our everyday lives. Like the bio-tech food we unwittingly consume, we exist in what Said calls "overlapping territories." Hemmed in by the contradictions of a post-colonial, present-globalized world, we are displaced and lost to our homelands; we are struggling to make meaning amid a near-universal suffering that is stifled by the din of glamour and profit; we are pressed into livelihoods that feed the very machine that is ravaging life toward extinction; and we are hostage to both the barbarian techno-social agendas of corporate development and the barbarian exercises of terrorists who are, in part, reacting to these agendas.

At this point, the work of deglobalization is as necessary as it was before September 11. Liberation is still the goal. But, in a world ravaged by both corporate and terrorist thugery, the work demands more than the resolve and bravery displayed by our political antecedents. Unlike the relatively black-and-white world Fanon depicts in his phenomenology of the Algerian revolt, our environs are ever shifting, often inconsistent, unspeakably violent, and seemingly producing a loop of perpetual frustration. The work to cleanse this world of itself and start anew demands shrewd discrimination, tolerance for paradox, and wells of empathy—along with the grit and valor required in the past. □

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Educating Against Violence

Svi Shapiro

The recent school shootings in California remind us yet again of the pervasive horrors of violence in our world. Savage interethnic murder, gang violence, religious and tribal wars, racist and nationalist terror, and sexual aggression scar the social landscape of our planet. The unsuspecting and the seemingly innocent are once again caught up in a maelstrom of terror.

In the past, we have reacted strongly to such violence when it hit home. Remember the mass response to the Columbine murders? This time, however, or so it seems, the public reaction is more muted than to previous school murders; the demands for action have been tempered by an increasing sense of inevitability and even paralysis. School violence is being assimilated into the broader sense of fatalism and passivity about the perpetration of violence in our nation and in our world. The deeper questions about why such things happen are giving way to the pragmatics of detecting early warning signs, setting in place emergency response procedures, and grief counseling the survivors.

Instead of being understood as a symptom of a fundamental pathology of our culture, killing is seen as the outburst of the psychologically abnormal, a matter of individual disturbance, not an expression of a toxic social environment. Yet as we enter the twenty-first century, it is surely time to question the inevitability of violence in our world. Can it really be true that human brutality, war, indiscriminate terrorism, and torture are the inevitable fate of humankind—the irreducible products of human anger and conflict? Must we regard violence as an unalterable dimension of male behavior (since such violence is, after all, almost always perpetrated by men)? Whatever kinds of progress we have made as a species, the world continues to be awash in violence and bloodshed. And the new millennium that began with so much hope now begins to look very much like the era preceding it.

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The author is a professor in the Social Foundations of Education at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is presently collaborating on a joint project with the University of Haifa Center for Peace Education Research.

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The answer can, and must be, no. Violence does not name us. And there is an emerging consciousness that points to the possibility of transcending such behavior: international tribunals that hold torturers and war criminals accountable; global treaties that renounce genocide, or the use of inhuman means of combat; and an increasing cognizance of the terrible consequences, both emotional and

physical, on children of adult wars, all suggest a growing counterconsciousness. There is good reason to believe that there is increasing public revulsion to the use of violence in dealing with human difference and conflict. Still, the growth of this counterconsciousness should not be left to chance. It can and needs to be the result of deliberate human

efforts to develop the understanding and sensitivity that nonviolent behavior demands.

In the broadest sense our greatest human challenge—to end the violent nature of our existence—is an educational one. Peace education must be placed at the center of our educational vision. Of course, this educational challenge is quite unlike the ones that our politicians and their bureaucratic henchmen now insist are central to the current agenda. Peace education is certainly very far removed from the compulsive quest for higher test scores which has so emptied educational experience of meaningful intellectual, emotional, or spiritual purpose. Rather than increasing competition and stressing individual differences as our current test-based education does, peace education aims to transform culture and consciousness. Peace educators make the point that ending violence is ultimately not a pragmatic matter of containing violence or enacting laws against violence, but a matter of creating a culture of peace, one rooted in respect for life, social justice, humility towards one's own truth, empathy for the other, and a commitment to addressing differences and conflict among us through democratic processes of dialogue and reciprocity.

Despite the current abyss of thinking about education in this country, now is a time of extraordinary possibility for understanding what educating against violence might mean. We can open the way to a pedagogy of peace by drawing on postmodern views of truth and knowledge, critical and



democratic forms of teaching, and progressive visions of spiritual life that refuse to be sundered from our existence as embodied beings.

Let me suggest here seven principles that can guide a pedagogy of peace:

1. Affirming the Value of Each Human Life

Our starting point must be an affirmation of the infinite and unconditional value of each human life. Peace education insists that violence against the human body negates the sacred worth of each life. It is a faith that finds its expression in Emanuel Levinas' assertion that we see in the face of every person a dimension of God. To see this is to recognize how each life places on us ethical demands to treat that life with infinite care and devotion. Each countenance must be seen in its incommensurable particularity—in other words, as a unique beauty which cannot be replaced, substituted, or reduced to another. When the dimension of God in each of us is denied—when this face is turned into the Other—the violation,

exploitation, or murder of human beings is made possible.

The infinite preciousness of human life is certainly intimated in all the great religious traditions, though there is no denying religion's role in the murderous history of human-kind. It is also clearly implicit in the language of human rights. Whatever influences we acknowledge, there can be no peace education that does not assert that human life is of incalculable worth. Further, our reverence for life can never be separated from our concern for how the body is cared for, treated, and protected. For teachers this means working to bring to awareness the ways in which our culture objectifies and dehumanizes those who are in some way unlike ourselves. It means helping students become aware of how racism, nationalism, sexism, homophobia, ethnocentrism, and the like reduce others to a set of despised attitudes that deny the mysterious fullness—the ineffable particularity—of each human life. To teach for a culture of peace means, in the first place, encouraging others to see this sacred preciousness of life and our own moral responsibility to nurture and preserve it.

2. Connecting Social Injustice to Violence

Social injustice means the systematic devaluing of human worth. The absence of social justice inevitably brings frustration, resentment, and anger. Violent conflict, war, and brutality are almost always, in some way, related to the imposition of injustice on individuals or collectivities. To teach peace as something more than sentimental kitsch is to help students see how inseparable is the dream of peace from constructing a more just world.

In teaching about the effects of injustice one often does not have to look far from where many students now sit. Schools themselves are potent sites of unequal treatment and oppressive hierarchies of privilege, mirroring the larger inequities of race, gender, social class, and sexuality in our culture. Consider these widespread aspects of our school system: the contrast between dilapidated inner city schools and comfortable well-resourced suburban schools; the tracking of students into more or less advantageous academic classes; or the process of standardized tests which reinforce the disadvantages of poverty and race in our society. The violent explosions of rage among boys in our schools is almost always connected to the hierarchies of recognition and exclusion in those institutions.

Fortunately, there is available to teachers a powerful tradition of critical teaching which can enable students to recognize and understand the taken-for-granted presence of inequality and injustice in their lives and its links to anger and violence. Sadly, however, this is rarely addressed in the preparation programs for teachers. Peace education makes clear that a culture of peace requires addressing the obscene levels of poverty in our world, the growing polarization of income and wealth, and the economic deprivation and hopelessness of so many. Racial injustice, the marginalization of indigenous peoples, and the exploitation of workers both within the metropolitan countries and on the economic periphery all but ensures increasing manifestations of anger and violence in the coming decades. Among the better off, peace education means looking at the benefits that accrue as a result of global systems of exploitation, and having to ask what we are willing to give up in order to produce a peace that comes from the harmony among people rather than the insulation of gated communities.

3. Understanding Our Real Differences

A culture of peace does not mean a world without differences. On the contrary, to educate for peace means

to take very seriously the way that our different social positions produce very different understandings of reality. It is an extraordinary consequence of post-positivist philosophy that we can now recognize to an unprecedented degree the way that reality is about how people perceive things rather than about ascertaining what is objectively there. The truth of our situation cannot easily be separated from the way that we make sense of it, especially when we have important emotional, ideological, or material interests at stake. With

this in mind it becomes very difficult to talk about eliciting just the facts, as if the facts can be extricated from the passionate investments that we have in seeing and making sense of our experience in a particular way.

The difficulty of acknowledging and working through different perspectives has been brought home to me recently in talks I have given on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, trying to explain the intractability of this conflict in terms of the extraordinarily different understanding of the struggle from each side. One example here makes this difficulty clear: Jews generally see the apparent willingness of former Israeli Prime Minister Barak to return 95 percent of the West Bank as an act of extraordinary—even irresponsible—generosity. Palestinians, however, see Barak's offer in the con-

text of having already had to concede 80 percent of their land (that 80 percent is now the state of Israel); in other words, for Palestinians it is not 95 percent of the land that may be returned but less than 20 percent! Not surprisingly, Jewish audiences have a pained, sometimes angry response to this presentation. Having to see the world from the perspective of the other is difficult and disturbing. As has often been noted, one person's terrorist is another's freedom fighter.

For the most part, peace education teaches that we have to start with accepting that, in most disputes, each party sees their position as rational and morally justifiable. However absurd or even heinous the other side's position appears to be, peace education requires us to listen to it with an attitude of humility—there is something important to be learned here about the anguish and frustration, hopes and dreams of other human beings who inhabit a world and a history quite different from our own. We must start by acknowledging that our own perspective is a story that might occlude, distort, or silence the experience of the other. Peace education means that we must learn what it means to listen to the other's story even when it contradicts our most cherished beliefs.



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4. *Developing the Capacity for Compassionate Attentiveness*

Even the willingness to listen to the other's story is insufficient. To really hear their frustration and suffering requires us not merely to take to mind what is being said, but to take it to heart. We must develop the capacity for compassionate attentiveness to the words of the other. Such a process means developing those human characteristics of empathy, sensitivity, and care for the well-being and dignity of the other.

Among boys, in particular, a great deal of recent research has shown just how contrary these characteristics are to so much that currently shapes masculine identity. A virulent masculinity has insinuated itself into some of the most influential areas of popular culture—professional wrestling, rap music, video games, some TV and radio shows, and Hollywood horror and action movies. The cumulative effect is a profoundly disturbing emphasis on a cool insensitivity to the feelings of others that reinforces both misogynist and aggressively homophobic attitudes. Sadism, brutality, guns, invulnerability, and macho individualism produce what Zygmunt Bauman refers to as *adiaphorization*, the growing desensitization towards others' pain or suffering. Indeed, as if in reaction to the gains of feminist-centered values of recent years—concern with relationships, nurturance, care, and connection—this hyper-masculinity is contrary to the kind of emotional sensitivity and compassion that anti-violence education surely demands. Such education requires that there be space and support for developing identities in which emotional expression and awareness are neither suppressed or reviled.

In our schools, developing these feminist-inspired identities would require some fundamental shifts in the culture of the educational institution. These would include less emphasis on the competitive dimensions of schooling whether in academics or in athletics. Schools need to place a greater emphasis on cooperative and helping relationships. The classroom needs to accentuate relational and expressive experiences, such as dialogue between students, and provide much more opportunity for reflection and disclosure about students' life-worlds. The curriculum would also need to provide much more time for self-expressive and therapeutic activities like arts and movement, activities which promote personal synthesis and meaning making. The curriculum also needs to provide for serious exploration of the meaning and impact of current cultural images and the way they promote aggressive, stereotypically masculine behavior. Finally, schools can ensure that all students

engage in service activities that include assistance to those in our society who are vulnerable and in need. Of course schools alone cannot negate the damaging effects of a culture which celebrates brutality, insensitivity, and callousness. Still, a willingness to clearly affirm an alternative vision of human relationships would be a significant start.

5. *Learning to Live with Our Differences*

The quest for more compassionate or empathic relationships should not be confused with believing that one can know everything there is to know about another. Differences among human beings cannot be smoothed away. We live in a paradoxical world which is at once smaller and more connected, and at the same time filled with greater and more complex social, cultural, sexual, religious, and political differences. To learn to live in a less violent world we will need to confront the deep fears and anxieties that differences among us stir.

In his brilliant essays on difference, Zygmunt Bauman has described some of the contradictions

inherent in our approach to this phenomenon. On the one hand, at least for the more economically privileged, cultural differences lend spice and variety to life, from the exotic lands to visit, to the interesting culinary experiences to sample, to the strange spiritual traditions to try out, and so on. But for the more hard-pressed, difference can lead to the feeling of being invaded by others who threaten our language, our jobs, the value of our houses, and the quality of our schools. While the rich are tourists who can easily and safely return home from their visit, the poorer classes cannot leave behind changing neighborhoods or workplaces.

There is more to our anxieties about differences than those that stem from our economic insecurity. Other differences infringe on our psychological security. The example of homophobia comes quickly to mind, with all of the questions it raises for some about what it means to assume a normal human identity.

Education today, in its broadest sense, has the difficult task of ensuring the formation of a self in which identity is securely grounded and reasonably stable. At the same time our postmodern world opens the door to identities that are fluid and flexible. It is a world in which we have the unprecedented possibility of choosing and transforming who we are and how we live. As Anthony Giddens has argued, this reflexivity about the self is one of the extraordinarily liberating possibilities of contemporary life, even though, at the same time, it can lead to the fears that precipitate violence. In educating our children, we must help

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them develop what it means to be human in ways that are neither emotionally rigid nor dogmatic. Surely when we learn to see that our own identities are something we both choose and make, we are better able to see others without the fear that these others threaten some eternal and fixed human order. At its best (i.e. when not reduced to the triviality of ethnic festivals and the like) a multicultural curriculum offers students the possibility of gaining insight into who we are, how identity is always about our relationships to others, and how that dynamic is always changing.

6. *Being Willing to Engage in Meaningful Dialogue*

We cannot hope to resolve conflicts that arise from difference without dialogue. Such dialogue is about more than simply exchanging viewpoints. Naming and articulating our anger is a critical tool for coming to some deeper understanding of our own life situations. Dialogue is also about the struggle to see the Other as more than a screen upon which we project our most hateful stereotypes.

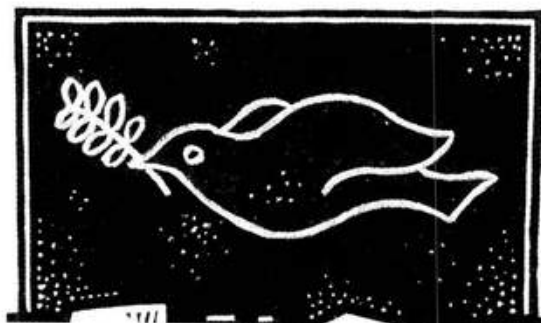
While the importance of dialogue is well understood in relation to the process of critical reflection and mediation, it is sadly still largely avoided or suppressed in our schools. Schooling continues to operate with a banking approach to pedagogy in which students learn through the passive memorization of information. Little space is afforded to creating an active dialogic culture in the classroom where students together consider and confront the pain, frustration, and tensions of living in relationship. That's too bad, because a more caring culture depends on nurturing the ability to both give voice to our own experience—enormously important for those many individuals who repress their feelings out of shame or the learned sense of their own marginality—as well as the capacity to really listen to those who see and experience the world in ways quite different from ourselves. Of course the obstacles to this kind of learning are many given our current constricted notions of educational achievement. Certainly one cannot discount the fact that such open dialogic classrooms inspire fear about the passions and emotions that would certainly be unleashed as students openly and honestly confronted their racism, sexism, homophobia, religious and ethnic prejudices, animus towards foreigners, as well as the hierarchies of class and status in the school itself. Yet given the current alternatives

of bullying, harassment, physical assault, and killing, these fears can no longer justify the deafness of our current pedagogic practices.

7. *Formulating a Language of Possibility*

Finally, educating against violence requires what Henry Giroux has called a language of possibility. As educators we must certainly help students face the realities that surround us honestly and critically, but we must also encourage creative and imaginative images of a transformed world. Years ago, Herbert Marcuse taught us to see how a culture makes itself seemingly unchangeable by shutting down our capacity to imagine alternatives to what presently exists. Social change requires that human beings be able to envisage other ways to live than the ones that presently constitute our world.

In my experience as a teacher I have found that there is often serious resistance to the kind of thinking that attempts to reimagine our world and our lives. It is often dismissed as utopian, the stuff of pointless fantasies. Behind these accusations is the deep-seated despair of individuals who have been educated to reject anything which is not about navigating or surviving the present reality. I am also no longer surprised that few teachers, asked to list the primary values of their educational vision, include imagination or creativity. It is a telling comment on the hyper-rationalism of our present educational world. It is certainly no surprise that in most schools



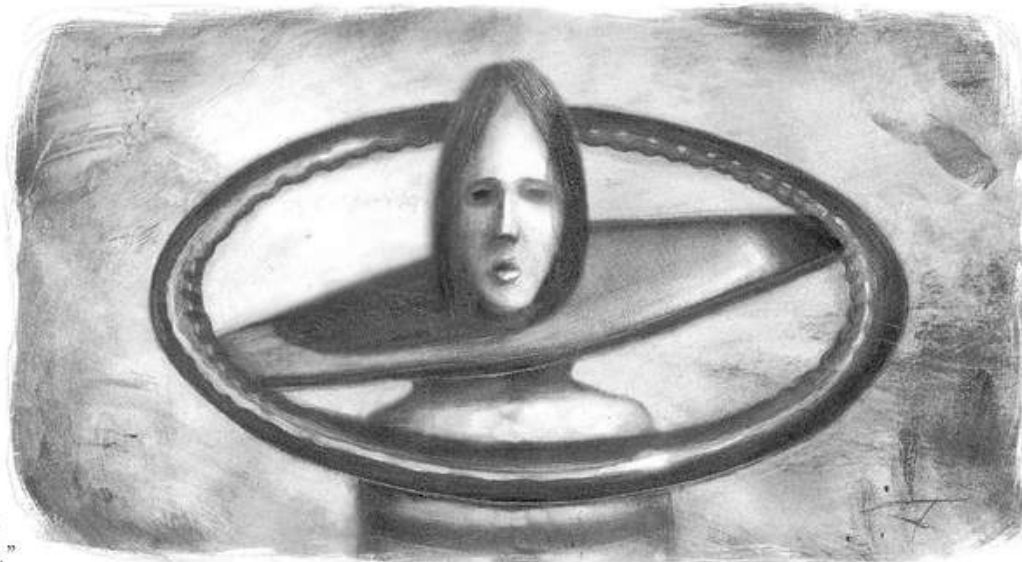
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the arts and aesthetic experience are at the bottom of the priority list for students. Such experiences, with their propensity to encourage students to reimagine and recreate the narratives and metaphors that structure our lives, are not part of the current corporately dominated agenda for schools. Yet it is not hard to understand that to educate against violence requires that we get beyond the present violence-saturated culture to imagine that alternative ways of living are possible for human beings.

The present culture with all of its brutality, callousness, competition, and aggressiveness does not exhaust the possibilities of human existence. Without the capacity to reenvisage our identities and lives as centered on gentleness, compassion, and loving connections, the violence in this world will be not a catalyst for our transformative dreams and efforts, but simply one more dimension of a cruel world which evokes only resignation and a despairing cynicism. □

Common Ground

Danielle Ofri



We are a Catholic medical center, Dr. Ofri." The medical director leaned back in his chair across from my desk. "Do you have any issues with that?"

His gray hair was severely parted on the right and I could trace the individual strands that were tethered down on the side by hair grease. A stethoscope peeked out of the pocket of his tailored blue suit. He had just finished his long introductory speech with me, enumerating the vast array of services and the selling points of his medical group. He was clearly trying to impress me with his institution. After all, the reason I was doing a temp assignment here was because they were short-handed and looking to hire.

I was caught off balance by the question. What could he be driving at? Was my Jewish background an issue here? Was my last name too 'ethnic?' I paused and then slowly asked back, "Should I have issues?"

"Well," he replied, in his careful New England lilt, "we do not promote birth control. If a patient requests it, we will provide it. But we do not offer it, promote it, or condone it."

Before my super-ego could grab control, my New York sassiness spilled out. "So, I don't suppose you perform abortions, do you?"

I could not believe I had just said that.

The older physician did not appear fazed. "No, we do not terminate pregnancies. Nor do we permit referrals to physicians who do. If a patient requests that service, we have them call their own insurance company. Their insurance companies make the referral."

He stood up and put out his hand. "We are glad to have you aboard, Dr. Ofri. We hope you enjoy your six weeks with us. And," he paused with a smile, "we hope you consider staying longer."

I remained in my office after he left, a little confused about what I had just heard and very embarrassed about the sauciness of my retort. I finally brushed it off, attributing it to high-level politics that I was not a part of.

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I had never spent much time in New England before. The town looked just as I had imagined. Regal Victorian mansions with wrap-around wooden porches lined the main street. Well-tended rose bushes graced the picket fences. Manicured shrubbery lined the driveways. A river meandered though the town and I often saw kayakers as I drove over the small bridges each morning in my beige rental car. This was a different planet from my native New York City.

I had been assigned to a small private practice that was short-handed after two doctors had moved away. The staff members welcomed me warmly. They gave me a large office with three exam rooms in a separate wing of the suite, and a nurse, Karen, to work exclusively with me. At the beginning of each appointment Karen would take a brief history from the patient, check their vital signs and jot down their medications. When I entered into the room afterward to see the patient, I would find all the supplies that I might need for that particular patient neatly laid out. I learned that the walls of the examining rooms were fairly thin because when I was finished with the patient, Karen would be waiting outside with whatever vaccines or medications I had discussed with the patient.

This was nothing like Bellevue Hospital—the city hospital where I did my residency. Practicing medicine had never been so easy! I noticed that the medicine cabinet was stocked with free samples of birth control pills along with the anti-hypertensives and cholesterol medications. Apparently, no one took the contraception rule too seriously.

Nobody ever bothered Karen and I in our little corner. It was as though we had our own practice. Between patients we would share stories of her life in New England and my experiences at Bellevue. And I loved that she kept a picture of her golden retriever, Sam, on her desk.

Three weeks into my assignment I met Diana Makower, a young computer programmer at a local financial firm. She was wearing a gray suit with a purple silk blouse. A single strand of pearls hung around her neck. Her carefully applied make-up had started to smudge from the tears slipping down her cheeks. "I think I'm pregnant," she spilled out, almost before I could introduce myself. "I did one of

those home pregnancy tests and it was positive. All I need from you is a blood test."

I put down my stethoscope and pulled up a chair.

"It's a complicated situation," she wept. "I am ending a relationship with my boyfriend, but it wasn't him. I have an old friend, it's never been more than that, but I think he and I might be developing a romantic relationship. We slept together just once, three weeks ago. I really think we could have a serious relationship, but it is not ready for this. I can't believe this is happening."

"If you do turn out to be pregnant," I asked, "what do you think you would do?"

"I need to have an abortion. I can't have a kid now; I'm single, I don't have a stable relationship yet. I'm not ready for it now."

"Are you sure that's what you want to do? Have you considered other options, like adoption?"

"Absolutely," she said. "I have made my decision. I just need to know where to go."

I suddenly thought of the medical director with his slicked-down gray hair. According to the rules I was supposed to tell Diana to call her insurance company. Her insurance company? I had visions of a bored bureaucrat slurping on his coffee while dispensing advice on a delicate matter to my distraught patient. How could I send Diana into a situation like that? I excused myself and went to consult Karen.

Karen did not know which local doctors performed abortions. "I stay out of that mess," she said. The Catholic hospital that the practice was affiliated with certainly did not. She sympathized with my predicament but warned me not to let the office manager know what I was doing. "Someone else gave out a phone number once," she said, "just a phone number. It wasn't even documented in the chart, but somehow it got out and they got into trouble."

I stared out the window and could see my rental car parked in front of a clapboard house across the street. The house was painted bright yellow with pale blue trim. A wooden porch surrounded three sides of the house. It was overflowing with hanging spider plants and overripe ferns. Wicker furniture with floral cushions was arranged around a wrought-iron table. An American flag dangled from a second-story window. This Catholic medical institution might choose not to perform abortions, but what about *my* ethical duty to provide the care my patient needed? Sending a distressed patient to an 800 telephone number would not hold water under the Hippocratic oath.

It seemed clear to me that my duty was first to my patient, and only secondarily to some faceless institution. Unfortunately, as a stranger to this small town, I did not know the local resources. I didn't know the names of the nearby physicians to even make the referral if I had wanted to break the rules. I suddenly pined for Bellevue, where I knew all the doctors and I knew the system. If I needed help, all I had to do was dial the operator and have the

appropriate doctor paged. I looked back at the yellow and blue house across the road. It seemed hostile and antagonistic. The small town civility made me feel claustrophobic.

Grinding my teeth, I re-entered the exam room. "As you may know, this medical practice is Catholic," I told Diana, "so we cannot provide referrals for abortion. The truth is, I wouldn't know where to send you even if I could. The rule is that you are supposed to call your insurance company and get the referral yourself. I would do it for you, but I can't. However, if you get the list of possible referrals, I will call around to find out which is the best."

Diana nodded, and then asked if she could be alone. I left her with a box of tissues and told her she could stay as long as she liked.

I called Diana the next day to let her know that the repeat pregnancy test was positive. When I called, I got her voice mail at work. She had told me that it was a private line, but suddenly I felt paranoid. I did not indicate that I was a physician and I left a cryptic message about results being "confirmatory of our original data."

Diana returned my call a few hours later. Her insurance company had given her two phone numbers, without names, in the next state over. Her health plan had no gynecologists in this state who performed abortions. Nobody in the state? My patient couldn't get the care that she needed in her home state? I was horrified. How could I send her off into the unknown like that? How could I abandon her to a couple of random, blank telephone numbers in another state? I felt like we were back in the 1950s, sneaking around with code words, no names mentioned, having to go out of state for an abortion.

I plowed through my roster of patients for the day, but I couldn't focus on the coughs, rashes, and shoulder pains. All I could think about was Diana. I imagined her driving over the state line, tears pressing at her lid margins. The lonesomeness in the car, the bitter highway, the directions scribbled on the back of a used envelope. I imagined her squinting at the scrawled directions, the car slipping ever so slightly out of the lane as her mind diffused focus from the highway median to the second left after the traffic light to the enormity of what lay ahead. Then she would tighten her grip and the car would even out. She'd admonish herself to watch the highway. And so she would watch the highway, look at the highway, stare at the highway, until the yellow lines would begin to quiver, then shudder, then melt into the saltiness dribbling down her face.

Between patients I paced around my office, too irritated to sit still. What kind of place was this where some administrative rule could interfere with patient care? Wasn't patient care more important than a bunch of rules? I wondered when was the last time any of those bureaucrats had actually seen a patient. When was the last time they'd sat face-to-face with a patient, watching the tension lines around the mouth tremble, smelling the moist desperation, accepting the

burden and the honor of tender secrets? I fumed all afternoon, cursing the insurance companies and the politicians whose ideologies and business concerns were elbowing into my office, into the sacred space that my patient and I shared.

Then Karen told me that the wife of one of the doctors used to work at a teen clinic. Grateful for this information, I called immediately. She knew of those two out-of-state facilities and told me they had reputations for treating patients like cattle. There was, however, a private women's clinic two hours north that was professional and reliable. But most insurance companies would not cover the cost of the procedure.

I called Diana at home that evening. She had already made an appointment at one of the out-of-state clinics and was very appreciative of my 'insider information.' I gave her the number of the private women's clinic.

"Have you told him?" I asked.

"No. No, I can't tell him. Not yet, at least. Maybe afterward."

"Is there anyone that you'd feel comfortable talking to, a friend, a family member? Is there someone who could come with you?"

"No, not really," she replied. "I mean I have good friends, but I couldn't tell them about this. They wouldn't understand."

I winced at the thought of her going alone. There was a sense of something shameful, something to hide. "Bring your own bathrobe," I added, before we hung up. "It's more comfortable than a hospital gown."

I called her again the following day. Just to make sure she was okay. We chatted a bit and it turned out that she had grown up in New York.

"Really?" I asked, excited to uncover a fellow New York native here in the wilds of New England. "Where were you born?"

"Queens," she said, "but then we moved out to Long Island, which is where I really grew up."

"My family did something similar. I was born in Manhattan but then we moved out of the city to Rockland. I hated the suburbs, though. I never forgave my parents for leaving the city."

"Me too," Diana said. "I spent all of my high school years hanging out in the city, trying to make up for my parent's foolish flight to the 'burbs. My friends and I would take the train in on weekends and hang out in Greenwich Village."

"So did I," I said excitedly. "We used to tramp up and down Bleeker Street then go hear music at Kenny's Castaways."

"I know Kenny's Castaways. The club that never checked ID."

"That's the one. Kenny's Castaways. And you went to Le Figaro Cafe, didn't you?"

"Absolutely—southwest corner of Bleeker and MacDougal. That's where I had my first cappuccino. I couldn't bear

to drink my parents' instant coffee after that."

I left work that evening and drove to my hotel. The very act of driving, of commuting by car, made me feel odd. It had been more than fifteen years since I'd relied on a car for transportation. In New York I was a regular denizen of the subway, and an avid bicyclist. I particularly relished gridlock traffic in Manhattan. I adored watching the irate drivers fume inside their cars, locked in the daily midtown mess, while I whizzed past on my ratty old ten-speed, needling my way in and out of unloading trucks, yellow cabs, and wayward pedestrians.

And now as I sat in my rental car, idling at a traffic light, I felt confined. I pined for the freedom of my bike. I yearned for the foot-based culture of New York, in which everything I needed was in walking or biking distance.

Some people feel nervous in big cities; I feel nervous in small towns. No pedestrians on the streets. No one to make eye contact with. No one to negotiate personal space on a sidewalk with. No mass of actual human beings on the street to remind you that you are alive and part of a species. Only cars.

And so I sat in my car, cut off from humanity, isolated in a metal box that rumbled with diesel heat under my feet as the traffic light languished on red. Sure, the old houses were beautiful to look at and the landscaping impressive, but there were no people. I craved people. Stuck in my car, I could think only about Diana. She was also cut off. There was no one she could confide in, no one she could bring with her. I realized that I was probably the only person in this world she had spoken to about this. In the small enclosed space of my car, with that bland smell of whatever they use to make seat stuffing, the heaviness of that burden weighed onto the cramped muscles of my shoulders. There were hundreds of people tucked into similar steel automobiles who were riding along the same street as me—hundreds of cars shuttling human beings within their tiny isolated orbits—but there was only one that contained Diana Makower's confidence. As a woman, I felt an almost sisterly duty to be there for her during this uniquely feminine quandary. As her doctor I felt that I had the responsibility to make sure she got the medical care she needed and felt guilty that I couldn't help her more directly. And as a human being, as the driver of the steel box that held her confidence, I felt the moral obligation to hold that dear, to treat that confidence with the utmost respect. I couldn't abandon her during this difficult and lonely period.

When I arrived back at my hotel, I called her again. Just to see how she was doing. Two days later I called Diana again. I somehow found a pretext to call her almost every day until her abortion date the following week.

I felt a bit more like a therapist than a physician and I understood why therapists are to keep their personal lives out of the therapy. Therapy is about the patient, not about the therapist.

I ached to share my own experience, but professionalism, and I suppose some lingering shame, prevented me. I'd been only seventeen at the time and just returning home from my first year in college. I had passed my calculus final exam and was pretty sure about physics. I had turned in my last organic chemistry lab report. I was about to go off to be a counselor at summer camp when I discovered that I was pregnant.

I'd had a steady boyfriend the entire year. Before we got involved I had gone to Planned Parenthood because I didn't want to be irresponsible. I remembered the long talk with the counselor in the windowless room with the overly cheery posters. We'd decided together on the diaphragm for birth control. The package insert listed a 95% effectiveness rate. No one ever spoke about the other 5%.

I lived in New York, the most liberal city in the most liberal state. My friends and parents were all liberal, pro-choice people. But I was too scared to tell anyone. It just didn't seem possible that it was happening and it didn't seem possible to tell anyone.

After the pregnancy test I sat in a park and cried alone. It was a park where my family used to have picnics when I was little. My parents would buy a pre-cooked chicken from the nearby kosher deli. We'd bring paper plates and the vegetable salad. And of course, our dog Kushi. This was her chance to run off the leash. Sitting in that park now I longed for the smell of her soft black fur. I craved her warm, all-accepting dogness to snuggle up to. Someone to whom I wouldn't have to explain all the complicated human confusions. But she'd died the previous year, just before I'd left for college.

I arranged an appointment at a local women's clinic. That night I made a long-distance call to my boyfriend. The geographical and personal gaps were apparently too vast to bridge—he couldn't quite accept what I was telling him over the phone. And he didn't offer to help me pay for it.

The next day I lied to my parents about having a party to go to so I could borrow the car. The clinic had said to bring a comfortable bathrobe. I snuck my mother's out of her closet.

The drive was eerily dissociated. The yellow lines in the road didn't seem parallel to the outer curbs. They listed and buckled, slighting the rules of Cartesian geometry. They drifted to other planes, to the odd dimensions of irrational numbers. Then they'd swing back with a jolt, clobbering into my focus. As the car shuffled closer and closer to the clinic, I felt my body shrinking. It dwindled within itself until there was nothing left but a little girl who desperately wanted her dog.

I lugged myself, or what little was left of myself, up the steps. I registered a name—I think it was mine—and followed the nurse into the back. She instructed me to change into my bathrobe and wait in the main room until I was called. The room was filled with eight or so women in dif-

ferent colored bathrobes. We could have been at a slumber party, except that no one was smiling. Some magazines were scattered on the table, but the articles were about beef casseroles and electricity-saving tips. I pulled my mother's flannel robe around me and concentrated on the orange industrial carpeting. It really was orange, although if you looked carefully, there were lonely bits of red and yellow scattered within.

They gave me a choice of general or local anaesthesia. The budding college-educated scientist wanted local, wanted to know everything that was going on, wanted to control the whole biology experiment. But the little girl who yearned for her dog immediately chose general. I didn't want to know. I didn't want to remember.

I awoke crying in another room. It was overly bright and the sheets were stiff. My stomach pulsed with an alien ache. The nurse said to stop acting like a baby, it didn't really hurt that much. I checked out and went back to the same park to cry some more.

A week later, a letter arrived from my boyfriend. He told me that he felt terribly guilty. As "penance" for himself, he said he could never be with me again. That summer was long and lonely.

• • •

In the years that have gone by I have told almost no one. Part of me feels that I should be contributing to the destigmatization of abortion by being open about my own experience. Yet another part of me feels it is something personal. Worse yet, something to hide. I feel guilty and hypocritical.

Sometimes I think about the child that might have been. At seventeen, I had precious few resources to raise a child. I would never have finished college, much less gone to medical school. I might have faced a lifetime of minimum wage jobs and food stamps. What would my child's life have been like?

I called Diana after her abortion. She told me that the staff members at the clinic were extremely kind and supportive, and that it didn't hurt too much. I breathed a sigh of relief. We spoke a few more times after that. Each time I felt the urge to share my story, but I couldn't.

I am not a politically active person. So much of what transpires in the government seems to have no bearing on my life; I just want to take care of my patients and my family. The decision about abortion is a difficult one, not one that I would wish anyone to face. But when I see teenage mothers in my clinic with minimal education, no job skills, barely mature enough to take care of themselves let alone the two or three babies on their laps, I am viscerally aware that my life was at the mercy of laws that permitted access to safe abortion. A different time or a different place and the outcome could have been vastly different.

Doctors often unconsciously separate themselves from patients—they are the sick ones and *we*, in our white coats, are different from them. It is humbling, and also relieving, to know that we are all made of the same stuff. □

How Will the TIKKUN Community Work?

Michael Lerner

We've received an overwhelmingly positive response to our TIKKUN Community Founding Statement, which was printed in the November/December 2001 issue and can be found on our website at www.tikkun.org. People want to know how and when they can take part in this exciting new movement just beginning to take its form from the enthusiasm, good will, and thoughtful intention of its new members. We've developed the following "action plan" for the next few years. However, it is not a summary of or substitute for the Founding Statement, which describes in detail the ideological foundations of our movement and our expectations for its members.

We'd like to remind you that our broadest goal, the ideal that serves as a backdrop to our daily activities, is to create a world based on love and caring, ethical, spiritual, and ecological sensitivity, generosity, open-heartedness, humility, joyful celebration of all that is, and a recognition that there is enough, that we are enough. We want to foster an environment where people are as committed to internal, spiritual work as they are to their work in the external world, and to support people's efforts to overcome the crippling voices of self-criticism and negation that keep us from recognizing our value to the world, and our place within the Unity of All Being. We seek a sort of planetary consciousness—one that transcends our tendencies toward narcissistic individualism and narrow nationalist and sectarian identities, but at the same time affirms our particular identities within the framework of the many cultures that make up the human race. We are, therefore, an organization of progressive Jews, and many of our ideas flow from our tradition, but we seek to expand our community to include progressive Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, spiritually-oriented atheists, and anyone else who agrees with our Founding Statement. And finally, we seek to foster in all of us the capacity to respond to the world with awe, wonder, and radical amazement at the grandeur of creation. Now, to the question of how.

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I. The Network of Support

The first major focus of the TIKKUN Community is to create a way for people who are committing themselves to the principles of an Emancipatory Spirituality (as described in The Founding Statement) to be able to learn from and support each other.

The ideal vision here is something like what "Skull and Bones" at Yale does for the ruling class, or what the Jesuits or the Franciscans do for a group of Catholic priests who are part of their religious order, or what people in some fraternal groups do for each other: to be a group of people who are committed to each other for the rest of our lives who will support each other in any way that we can to be the most successful possible individuals pursuing the goals of healing and transforming our world.

Imagine if you knew that whenever you went to a given city you could find people there who were already committed to advancing your interests, because they were part of the same community of people committed to the Founding Principles of the TIKKUN Community. Imagine if you knew that there were a group of people who really were committed to being there for you for the rest of your life, and who really wanted to know what you were doing in your TIKKUN related work, how it was going, and wanted to both learn from your successes and, if appropriate, help brainstorm with you about aspects of your work that might need some support or new ideas. Imagine if they cared not only about your external success in making the vision of the TIKKUN Community work in the world, but also cared about your own individual spiritual development, your inner life, and the health of your loving relationships.

Well, this is do-able. And the TIKKUN Community can do that for you if you are willing to do all that for others. Truth is, however, that that kind of commitment only grows out of a longer period of involvement with each other—so don't expect it to be fully actualized in the first years of the TIKKUN Community. Many of us who have been in organizations for years know that this kind of commitment does-

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n't just develop "organically"—it needs to be consciously fostered as a central goal of the organization. This is a central focus of the TIKKUN Community and here is what we will do to foster it:

In the short term:

1. We will create a yearly gathering for at least one week each summer so that we can be together as a community and get to know each other on a deeper level than usually happens in meetings or conferences. Over the years, our ties to each other will deepen through this annual event.
2. We will create a place on our website for each of us to report in on what we have been doing or trying to accomplish in some aspect of our lives in which we are living out some aspect of the TIKKUN Community vision. And we will then commit to reading and commenting on at least five of these reports from other people each month. For example, imagine that you are a union activist, a small business person, a computer specialist, or a college professor—and in some way you've decided to try to introduce the TIKKUN notion of A New Bottom Line to some of the people you work with. On our website you might report what you tried, what you said, what other people said, what seemed to work or didn't, and what you might need help thinking through. You might then receive some useful (and probably also some useless) suggestions from other members of the Community. Where necessary, confidentiality would be protected by use of pseudonyms.
3. To create a place on our website for people to share spiritual processes which have been useful in deepening their own inner lives, and psychological/spiritual insights or techniques which have helped them become more loving and caring, generous, open-hearted and spiritually alive.

In the longer term these are our hopes:

4. To create programs for children and teenagers, so that you can find a support system for passing on TIKKUN values to the next generation. Eventually we hope to create youth groups and summer camps to sustain a spiritual-political orientation.
5. To develop retirement facilities so that elders with shared interests can find a way to be with each other in their senior years.
6. To create a network for singles to meet each other while actively combating the false ideology that there is something wrong with being single. We understand that it's difficult in today's world to meet new people and wish to foster an environment where people can connect authentically around meaningful life issues. (Translation: Tikkun Community Matchmaker Service). At the same time, we realize that there is little support in this society for loving relationships, and we will do our best to support those that exist.

To make this happen, we will need many volunteers. Our most pressing need right now is for at least two web design people who can volunteer their time to create a website that will work to facilitate these projects, and a staff of coordinators who can volunteer to work at the TIKKUN office in San Francisco.

II. Peace for Israel and Palestine Project

We are firmly committed to the survival of the State of Israel and to the best interests of the Jewish people, as well as to the best interests of the Palestinian people. That is one of the important reasons we want to end the Occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, create a Palestinian state living in peace with Israel, and develop reparations and a limited right of return for Palestinian refugees ("limited" means large enough to be significant, small enough to not threaten the well-being of a Jewish state that gives democratic rights to its religious and ethnic minorities).

But we know that the way to achieve peace and reconciliation cannot be solely or even primarily through political steps, unless they are conjoined with a powerful movement to change the hearts and minds of people in the area, and their support communities around the world. For that reason, our primary goal is to develop an ethos of open-heartedness and generosity in Israeli and Palestinian communities, and in Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities as well. Here are the first steps:

1. We are currently developing a document that illustrates the legitimacy of both Israeli and Palestinian narratives about what has led to the current situation. Our goal is to both dispel some of the myths surrounding the issue and generate compassionate understanding so that both sides can learn how to tell the other side's story with generosity of spirit.
2. Using this document, we will develop a national campaign of education about the situation in the Middle East aimed at ending the Occupation and developing a compassionate recognition of the legitimacy of both sides and both stories. The education campaign will occur on two fronts:
 - a. We will create a network of campus activists and religious community activists to do education around the TIKKUN Community perspective.
 - b. We will seek to educate U.S. and foreign policy makers about ways to use their full economic, political, and ideological resources to end the Occupation and to support a full reconciliation between both peoples.
3. We will encourage the development of Palestinian leaders, intellectuals, and public-opinion shapers in the Arab world who are committed to support a strategy of non-violent civil disobedience against the Occupation, following the examples of Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi, and to abandon fantasies of armed struggle against Israel.

4. We will work to give promoters of non-violence in the Arab world a voice, particularly in the American media. In addition, we will assist in coordinating efforts of Israeli and Palestinian non-violent leadership, making sure that, even in the worst of circumstances, the two sides are not cut off from one another.

III. The Planetary Consciousness Project

Our goal is to foster a new awareness of the fundamental Unity of All Being, our mutual interconnectedness and interdependency—and through that education to foster a new sense of planetary consciousness in which we all come to understand and personally feel that our own well-being is directly dependent on the well-being and self-fulfillment of every other person on the planet, and the well-being of the planet itself. There are three primary arenas in which we will seek to challenge narrower consciousness:

- a. Security. We should have learned from 9/11 that our own security depends on the well-being of others on the planet, and that imagining that we can find security through massive defense spending and economic agreements for “free trade” which actually benefit multinational corporations is delusional. Our security will best be achieved by recasting our role in the world as the primary force for economic and social justice for all peoples on the planet. As a first step, we advocate using the proposed \$1.4 trillion tax cut to finance the rebuilding of third world countries’ infrastructure.
- b. Global Scorching. We need to take immediate steps to alert people of the personal dangers they face from U.S. policies which undermine global agreements to slow “global warming.”
- c. Nationalist Triumphalism. The legitimate anger at terrorists after September 11 has been used as cover to allow a new nationalist energy to shape domestic and foreign policies and to ignore the hard-learned lessons of the need to restrain American imperial ambitions and to strengthen global cooperation among peoples. While acknowledging the good in America, we also need to remember that much of that good was won and remains powerful only to the extent that popular social movements struggled for and continue to struggle for democratic rights and protections.

To achieve these goals we will:

1. Create a Media Education Committee aimed at fostering awareness of the complexity of these issues and encouraging new attitudes. This committee will open dialogue with individuals working in the media, with schools of journal-

ism and communication, and with others who may influence the information and worldviews being fostered through the media. The Media Education Committee will also seek to mobilize members of the TIKKUN Community to monitor and educate local media about ways that they may help to promote planetary consciousness.

2. Create a Religious Education Committee aimed at developing these ideas within existing spiritual and religious communities—and challenging various forms of religious fundamentalism, chauvinism, triumphalism, etc.
3. Seek to reach candidates for public office in all parties with information about how they could foster planetary consciousness in their public discourse.
4. Create a Campaign for A New Bottom Line, in which the Social Responsibility Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is used as a vehicle to help raise issues of planetary responsibility. This Campaign will seek to enroll people in the labor movement, the religious community, and in social change communities to endorse and support the SRA.

*This is a hands-on
activity for people in our
organization who want to
do something concrete.*

IV. Progressive Polling of Public Opinion

One reason many people give up on their highest ideals is because they are certain that no one else shares those ideals, or at least not enough people to make their cause plausible. Yet this belief is often founded on narrowly shaped questions asked in public opinion polls shaped by the dominant media. Those who wish to build a world based on love and generosity and a connection to the Spirit are rarely asked the relevant questions, and so we never really know what people are thinking.

We will create an alternative: a progressive polling of public opinion. To do this we will ask members of the TIKKUN Community in cities around the world to spend one evening a month making ten to twenty phone calls to names selected at random from their local telephone book, and to ask a set of questions which we will email or fax to you each month. We will then compile the responses, analyze them, and put a report on the TIKKUN website.

This is a hands-on activity for people in our organization who want to do something useful and concrete to advance the ideals of the TIKKUN Community.

To make it happen we need:

- a. One hundred people to volunteer to do the phone calls in their community once a month.
- b. Five volunteers to be national coordinators of this activity—willing to work with the 100 volunteers to help provide support for them, counsel them when they face difficulties, compile the information that has been

received, and ensure that everyone does in fact make the phone calls and deliver the information back to us.

- c. Three volunteers to work with the data to analyze it.

V. Network Of Spiritually-Oriented Professionals And Business People Who Support A New Bottom Line In The World Of Work

There are other people in your line of work who actually want the same thing you want: The New Bottom Line articulated by the TIKKUN Community. So the task is to find them and let them know that you are also there. To do this, we need a group of people who are willing to become visible in their own professional or business communities and take the first steps toward articulating what this "New Bottom Line" might be for their particular line of work. Here are the steps we will seek to take:

- a. Create on our website a place for people in a given line of work to connect with others in that same line of work, and to share with them your thinking about what it might look like if your profession or business was actually being governed by the New Bottom Line.
- b. Form a monthly phone conversation among people who share the TIKKUN Community sensibility in your line of work. As these people get to know each other some, they will then:
- c. Create a caucus meeting for spiritually-oriented people in your line of work at the next national or regional professional meeting, union convention, or other similarly appropriate venues. You may start off with only one or two people in the first two or three years, but eventually this will grow into a powerful voice in your field of work.
- d. Create a national conference for people in your line of work and build it around applying the TIKKUN Community perspective.

To make this happen, we need two volunteers for each possible professional or business arena to be the coordinators for that area and at least one volunteer at the national office in San Francisco.

VI. The National Office

The National Office will issue public statements and seek to achieve national recognition for the ideas of the TIKKUN Community in the following ways:

- a. Outreach to let others know of our existence and our perspective, though direct mail, media, public speaking, and wider distribution of TIKKUN Magazine.
- b. Developing links, sharing information, and participating in joint projects with other communities who share our values and orientations in at least one of the above areas. Our goal is to introduce to these other communities the particular perspective and ideas that we develop in the

TIKKUN Community, not to replace or compete with them. Cooperation, sharing, and mutual support is meant to be the center of our actual practice, not just our theory.

- c. Providing leadership, direction and coordinating the five project areas described above and ensuring that they function within the worldview and guidelines as articulated in the Founding Statement and further defined in *Spirit Matters: Global Healing and the Wisdom of the Soul*.
- d. Taking public stands in the name of the organization consistent with the general perspective of the organization, and when possible in consultation with the National Advisory Board.
- e. Coordinating fund-raising for various projects of the TIKKUN Community.
- f. Planning and organizing national conferences and educational retreats of the TIKKUN Community.
- g. Distribution of regular material, outside of TIKKUN magazine, which details the accomplishments of the organization and discusses future plans.

To make this happen we need at least three full-time volunteers plus many part-time volunteers who can donate time to the national office in San Francisco.

We also need fundraisers who can help raise money to support the organization through fundraisers, appeals to wealthy individuals, grant requests to foundations, as well as the ability to convince community members to give more than the minimum required by the sliding fee scale.

We need a volunteer or two with professional fundraising experience. A couple of TIKKUN Community members with professional fundraising experience could either volunteer to fundraise or train someone in the national office to be more efficient and effective in fundraising and grant-writing.

Please write to us and tell us which of these activities most interests you, the skills and time you have to do them, where you would want to do them, what level of responsibility you would be willing to take to start the project rolling, what you can bring in the way of financial support, what most turned you on at the Founding Conference (Jan. 19–21 in New York City) and what are the best ways to contact you. Send this information to us: The TIKKUN Community, 2107 Van Ness Ave, Suite 302, San Francisco, California 94109. Or: tikkun_olam@hotmail.com.

We can create an amazing community of spiritually alive, progressive, loving people—but only with your help. For more information about the TIKKUN Community, please read the founding statement at www.tikkun.org and come to the Founding Conference Jan. 19–21. For more info on the Founding Conference: www.tikkun.org or call Liat at 415-575-1200. □

TIKKUN—Shadows of Empire, Hopes of Redemption

Paul Buble

We live in the land of the perpetual present, where historic forgetfulness is a near-automatic trait and the omnipresence of meaningless "news" merely reinforces the familiar impulse. Ideological claims upon the American Revolution as a single, epochal development in modern society are no help. On the contrary, the assumption of political (and moral) superiority externalizes the world-distorting calamities of colonialism, slavery, and the Holocaust—calamities in which the West has played a central role—into species of cruelty absolutely unknown to ourselves. Witness, for example, the ability of liberal savant Arthur Schlesinger Jr. to recast slavery as, assuredly, a tragedy—but not for the descendents of slaves, who are (according to the Schlesinger perspective) actually fortunate for their ancestors' captivity; and not for the growing nation, either, which needed bonded black labor as much as it needed the removal of Indians to empower the expansion of America's civilization-saving democracy! Happy endings can be found anywhere—with enough of this kind of forgetfulness.

TIKKUN's fifteen years, seen against this background, represent a movement against the forgetfulness of history, including the

recognition of all the potential range of human cruelty as well as the capacity for beauty, for love, and for cooperation still potentially right here in front of us. TIKKUN, always on the alert against the thuggish Right and the all-too-accommodating Center, has particularized this antforgetfulness in one task central to its purpose: the stripping of colonialism, with all its frightfully destructive baggage, from the Israeli project and more generally from the socialist/spiritual wing of Zionism. Very often—to many of us at any rate—the task seems insuperable, the remedy more likely to be found in a future, genuinely multicultural Israeli democracy in economic confederation with its Palestinian neighbors, something still attainable with a permanent withdrawal from the Occupied Territories. But there can be no doubt of TIKKUN's sincerity in struggling to make Zionism democratic, or of the value of the magazine's assorted efforts against the most brutal forces ever known in Jewish history. As venerable peace and socialist Zionist publications and movements dwindle or disappear, TIKKUN remains a beacon.

To appreciate TIKKUN's quest, its successes, and its limitations more fully, we need to go back through more than a century of modern Jewish experience. But first, let's make a stop-off in recent times. The most important of global



Paul Buble's latest (Jewish) books are *A Very Dangerous Citizen: Abraham Lincoln Polonsky* and *The Hollywood Left* (University of California) and *Insurgent Images: the Labor Murals of Mike Alewitz* (Monthly Review).

movements suffering from a near-instant loss of memory is Liberation Theology. The amazing thing is how strenuously this religious movement was attacked in its heroic early phase. Despised in the State Department and military-intelligence offices across the Americas, pinpointed for extermination by the Vatican's right-wing (notably fanatic Opus Dei) faction, its high-ranked supporters were displaced and replaced by clerical conservatives equally warm to corporations and hostile to feminism; its followers from Chile and Brazil to El Salvador and Nicaragua were brutally repressed, deported from villages, and slaughtered by the tens—and perhaps hundreds—of thousands with the help of U.S.-trained mercenary armies, American tax dollars, and endless pro-business propaganda.

More amazing, in retrospect, was the reception of Liberation Theology in the New World haunts of what used to be called Social Democracy. Favorite center-leaning politicians and intellectuals, even some esteemed old friends of the Left like Octavio Paz, cursed its influence and welcomed its demise. After Liberation Theology's main forces had been crushed, its remnants were attacked as annoying obstacles to NAFTA, and are still viewed as unwanted supporters of the Zapatistas and allied, indigenous "anti-development" radicals mysteriously linked with anti-globalist anarchists. In short, Liberation Theology in all forms was condemned as being against Enlightenment, that is, the modern enlightenment of the world market.

Within the Jewish institutional world, "Jewish Liberation Theology"—the phrase has never seemed quite right—naturally came to be viewed as a threat of a different kind. Sometimes, in a more-or-less sneering tone, it was depicted as yet another New Age spin-off, a version of California-Dumb. More ominously (and this applies especially to the personages and writings of Marc Ellis and Michael Lerner) it was tagged as successor to the "anti-anti-Communist" tendencies so often assaulted in *Commentary*, *The New Leader*, and *Partisan Review*, and more recently in *The New Republic*. This time, however, the (Jewish) false prophets could not really be demonized as Arafatoids (following that unique New Yorky moniker—"Stalinoids"—given by the 1950s-80s cold warriors to the peaceniks) but could still be condemned as perverse Jews—flagrantly, unacceptably disloyal to Israeli prerogatives and the U.S. State Department to boot.

Why, today's reader might understandably ask, was Liberation Theology so awful, so unbearable to these worthies? The answer is really quite simple: it was (and in my view doubtless will be again) a dangerously popular post-Communist, post-secular vision of redemption of the world from the grasp of the rich, the powerful, in a word: the

greedy. Despite the success of the repression, Liberation Theology in theory and practice still finds loyalists among millions of Catholics in Latin America, with Protestant as well as Catholic enthusiasts in large parts of the Caribbean, the Philippines, Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, within gatherings of Jews, Buddhists, and Muslims—in short, among all those who place themselves upon the side of the poor as the true people of God. Liberation Theology remains, most intolerably to the faithful servants of the rich and the powerful, a symbol of hope for the undoing of

Empire. It is the spark of life and true enlightenment that is TIKKUN's origin and its destiny.

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The whole saga of radical religion and its children—utopianism, anarchism, socialism, and communism, including Socialist Zionism and Anarcho-Zionism—can be traced to the failure of organized religion to meet the crises at hand during the emergence of modern society. Radical redemption also drew, inevitably, on

deeper roots. Back at the end of the eighteenth century, a German pietist and utopian poet, Gottfried Arnold, published three large volumes titled *Die Ketzerhistorie*, making one large argument: that the true religionists had always been the *ketzer*, the so-called heretics, while the officials in charge of religion (he meant Christianity, though he could have extended it to virtually every other institutional quarter) were power-wielding religious frauds and corruptors.

During the late nineteenth century, the understandable but flagrant over-reaction of socialists against the tyranny of the state churches and the small-mindedness of the rabbinat closed off the contemporary Left from the overtly spiritual qualities of its growing mass support. In a piquant memoir of the original German-American socialist milieu, German-Jewish immigrant daughter Meta Stern Lilienthal wrote that she could imagine a cooperative world without a god but would much prefer a new spirituality, free of the old class-bias and the priest (or minister, or rabbi) privilege.

This was a common thought among socialism's deep thinkers, if rarely articulated as such, but perfectly evident in the martyrology of Yiddish socialist choral songs performed from the 1890s onward. The symbolism of Spring and Mayday, or perhaps of the world spirit, had displaced the outright religious faith of the socialists' fathers and mothers, and the rituals had definitely changed. But much of the latent content remained as before, including the evocation of faith in justice ultimately winning out in a cooperative, collective future. As the anarchist critic B. Rivkin famously observed, Yiddishkayt itself was the geographical location of an imagined socialism. Or as the ever-popular Yiddish holiday-greeting phrase unmistakably suggested, a *shayner, bessere velt* (a more beautiful, better world).

Jewish congregations by the dozens—or hundreds—within the European Pale had prepared the way for such developments, back in the 1870s and 80s, when they met the growing economic crisis and anti-Semitic persecution by breaking with their backward religious leaders and establishing their own, independent congregations. It was not secularism that they sought, although secularization rapidly increased with urbanization, proletarianization, and immigration. Nonreligion was, for most, a likely second choice after simultaneous bitter disappointment in the practice of existing Judaism and the imbibing of “modern” knowledge. Meanwhile, as is well known, Yiddishkayt flowed out of a refusal to accept the high culture bias that proponents of the “Jewish Enlightenment” Haskalah, especially German-Jewish elites, urged upon the East European Jewish masses. If the emerging Yiddishkayt was predominantly secular, it was also a means of reviving ties to a folk-culture with deeply spiritual roots.

Catholic conservatism, right-wing Protestantism, and the leading forces of American Judaism reinforced the Jewish leftist impulse toward absolute atheism. Defenders of economic privilege were also the predictable defenders of Empire and of the wars necessary to maintain the imperial grasp—including the promise to “Christianize” the planet. Here and there, occasional racists (including AFL leader Samuel Gompers, during the Spanish-American War) might actually oppose U.S. global policies because they sometimes threatened to add to the number of nonwhites under the American flag. But the same critics acutely viewed the First World War as the gleaming opportunity to finish off the Left, readily grasping the value of the federal government (under ostensible reformer Woodrow Wilson, with his new lieutenant, J. Edgar Hoover) to accomplish this aim. A new class of political liberals around the New Republic were just as eager as conservatives to make the expanding American Empire their own.

No wonder that disillusionment with government and war alike in the “Jazz Age” turned from earlier hopes for transformation/redemption to sexual revolution, vernacular modernism, and booze escape. No wonder tens of thousands of Jewish immigrants looked suspiciously at America west of the Hudson and looked hopefully in the other

direction toward a revolution in the distant East that at first promised a new beginning with (some) Jews at the center of the picture.

During the decade after 1935, notwithstanding twists and turns in the political line of those blindly loyal to the Soviet Union, Jewish artists, from union (and avant-garde) theater to radio drama to film, from wall mural to folk music, expressed (and the urban Jewish audience seemed to understand best)

the changing promise of American democracy. No longer the property of the imperial heritage, no longer hostage to the power of business, the democratic impulse might be set free and made part of a vast global movement. Left-wing Jews more than anyone else seemed to grasp in African-American religion and religious culture the liberatory promise that they could not comfortably identify in

their own. The great promise for a better, not just a richer society, remained vivid until Franklin Roosevelt—the most beloved of Americans for Jewish immigrants and their children—died and the businessmen took firm charge again. Self-sacrificing Jewish unionists and political activists, beloved artists, musicians, and filmmakers, soon found themselves driven into silence. Social criticism seemed to disappear with these proscribed Jews for a generation.

Always behind the hopeful moments, if hidden out of sight, despair had lingered—and not only because of the hostage-fate of Jews in Europe. The inability of European socialists to halt the First World War back in 1914 had prompted the collapse of the once-confident vision of socialism-by-election into a chauvinism and support of military conflict that could do Jews no good anywhere. The corrupting influence of empire, so obvious retrospectively in socialist leaders’ unwillingness to oppose the European colonization of the planet, could only pave the way for some worse calamity. It did, through Hitler, and through Stalin’s perversion and manipulation of the powerful anti-imperial impulses set loose by the Russian Revolution and later, again, by the defeat of fascism. Meanwhile, the grand scheme to make desperate Jews the personal agents of the West in Palestine—resisted, but not successfully, by otherwise socialistic Zionist settlers—reinforced the awful



guiding principle of turning victims and potential opponents of empire against each other rather than against the deepest source of their woes.

Now fast forward past the Cold War, the Rosenberg Case, the avid support of leading Catholics for the accelerated proliferation of weaponry, the defection of former socialistic Protestant anti-Imperial bulwarks like Reinhold Niebuhr to political conservatism and nostalgia for colonialism, and even past the successful emergence of Israel. We come to the Great Refusal of the 1960s social movements, movements never (if we listen closely to the music) anywhere nearly as secular as its participants claimed to be, but also distant from those earlier generations of Jews and non-Jews who had simply exchanged their old faith for socialism.

The Movement participants and followers were someplace else, ready to cast off empire but unable to explore or even articulate their notion of alternatives during the short years before the political explosions quieted. From Women's Liberation to Gay Liberation, these groups pressed an unvanquished claim to a share of the good life. Yet the idea of actually ending empire, redistributing economic and political power drastically from the top to the bottom, slipped away or came to be seen as an inherently slow process of individual enlightenment, perhaps futile amidst a vast, accelerating ecological degradation.

This is too simple a description by far, but it helps provide context for the particular world that saw the birth of TIKKUN. TIKKUN is, to be sure, the outgrowth of the strong and stubborn personality of Michael Lerner, but TIKKUN has also, less subjectively, marked the expression of the need to grab hold of something more deeply rooted than the beautiful but rootless utopias that the Movement in even its best days had to offer. The new magazine's pages (and the books of its founder) overflowed, from the first day, with ideas of spiritual, cultural, political, and social revival. Did we avid readers agree with all of them? Not really. Sometimes we violently disagreed with the message and even more, with the messengers, especially the conservative ones who seemed downright repelled by the very rebellious qualities of the 1960s and 70s that we remembered both fondly and proudly. But we knew that the magazine, whatever its flaws, was actively struggling with the world before it, trying to make new connections and refashion old ones.

I've argued that TIKKUN took flight upon the wings of Liberation Theology. It's true in a large sense, but the successful repression of Liberation Theology both carved and in my estimation narrowed, at least so far, the distinct path of the magazine and the potential movement that it seeks to

represent. The sad truth about Liberation Theology, as a mainly Christian force, is that its strongest centers of influence could be found in life-and-death situations lacking comfort or ambiguity. Its influence elsewhere was due mainly to ripple effects, capturing the imagination of conscience-stricken priests and (especially) nuns, rendering the heretofore fanatically anti-communist Maryknoll Fathers into a militantly anti-imperialist body, and attracting both community activists and assorted radical intellectuals like myself. Liberation Theology could be found, for a time, in dozens of 1980s poor American neighborhoods, but more often in the theological seminaries where the next generation of pilgrims trained to grasp and act upon the calamity of the world's poor.

Liberation Theology raced ahead in part because it faced no serious competition in the continuing struggle against empire. The swift collapse of New Left Marxism-Leninism, now almost forgotten, practically marked the end of Maoist, secular visions of a nonwhite "encirclement" of the West. Simultaneously, the fading of the Counter

Culture as a credible alternative way of life reemphasized the importance of something like Liberation Theology as the communitarian post-Communist faith and as the anti-materialist successor to the 1960s.

Many of the best mini-movements of the 1980s had their source and expression in the vicinity of Liberation Theology. We opponents of U.S. actions in Latin America often found ourselves meeting as comrades with rebel priests and nuns in the parishes where hunted victims of brutal military suppression were seeking refuge. The very investigations coming out of the White House leading to the Iran-Contra affair and nearly bringing down the behemoth of Reaganism and its criminal element (symbolized by Oliver North and Elliott Abrams) had begun with the efforts of the Liberation Theology-inspired Christic Institute.

The Empire recovered and the great change never happened. If things had worked out differently, if Pope John XXIII had been succeeded leftward rather than distinctly rightward, if Reagan and his allies had not drowned opposition in an ocean of blood (and a vast fortune of corporate-sponsored think-tanks), if the fate of Eastern Europe had been left to its own economically hard-pressed citizens rather than shaped and enforced from the outside (the same goes for the Philippines after the fall of America's favorite dictator, Ferdinand Marcos)—if this alternative history had taken place, Liberation Theology would or could have made the critical difference, in effect or at least in large part succeeding secular socialism.

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That said, Liberation Theology was also denied the self-correction that historical events never allowed. If its strong point was an almost Rastafarian opposition to the essence of Empire ("Enough in the World for everyone's need/Not enough in the world for anyone's greed," in the vivid phrase of Reggae musician Jimmy Cliff, who also returned a visionary "Zion" to the political vernacular), its weak point was a very particular Christology. Living out a sort of extension or renewal of Gospel times, it foresaw the end of evil in an overly grand sweep. The cerebral and biblical-based version, elaborated in dozens of erudite texts published by the Maryknolls' Orbis Press, never got much beyond this point.

This oversimplification, so reminiscent of nineteenth-century socialist movements, needed as cure not a dose of Enlightenment and property-conscious liberalism, but radical and spiritual discussion, debate, and recomplication. Here, if related in different terms, has been TIKKUN's mission, frequently sidetracked by debates over a regressive neoliberalism and still more regressive Israeli anti-Palestinianism, but for all that thoughtful, determined, and in those ways unequalled.

Nothing is finalized. The large tasks remain unchanged, all the more in a world where rainforests fall and species disappear by the day, where radiation-tainted bombing and toxic spraying are accepted as entirely natural and legitimate means of warfare, and, in Washington, leaders seem to become more shamelessly militaristic and more mean-spirited, with each passing administration. We need to understand and to live a faith as deep as that which emboldened medieval peasants against the heartless masters, that which created the modern socialist movement (and the global communist movement as well—at least its ideals), and that which made the lives of generations of Jewish workers and intellectuals rich and meaningful, despite all the disappointments. We need a revival of the Left—but a Left in a different key or many different keys, more open to spirituality but also more open to the oddball expressions, vernacular perceptions and sentiments of young generations, and also more consistent in our efforts to oppose empire and to make something different happen.

Has TIKKUN failed the visions of the possible Left, or has the real-life, staggering Left failed TIKKUN? This is, in my mind, a pretty meaningless question in itself but one nevertheless suited to the final considerations of my little essay. Jewish radicals, to be as generous as possible, had not been prepared by anything in their experience to understand, let alone accept, the revival of spiritual sentiment. Or, better: their personal experiences with institutional Jewishness, more and more confined to establishment religion and reflex defenses of Israeli policies and American wealth, had cordoned off a Jewish spiritual vision of liberation from the counter-cultural impulses of the 1960s and after. TIKKUN took both Jewish radicals and non-Jewish observers like myself by surprise.

The stress and strain of making the effort inevitably shows, no doubt because all the odds have seemed to weigh against the courage and the simple decency required to continue. The institutionalized competition doesn't have to strain: consider the millions in hand for the publisher of *The New Republic*, and (to take recent examples) that magazine's zestful enthusiasm for drilling in the Arctic Refuge and avenging, at whatever human or ecological cost, America's terrorism-wounded honor. It figures. Consider the corporate advertising for *Commentary*, the high-powered literary connections available to contributors of such magazines, the comfortable quarters for staff and visitors, and most of all the ability to lose large amounts of money and make up the difference. Consider the grand suburban (and urban) temples, with comfortably close seating for the wealthy to complain at their victimization as Jews and simultaneously to celebrate their status. Practically all that TIKKUN has, by comparison, is its righteous mission. It's such a familiar situation that old Gottfried Arnold would have recognized it easily: "Rome" (the symbolic center of all power) still in the firm control of the evil doers and their corrupted entourage, while the homeless heretics preach the true gospel.

One thing, in any case, is sure: Liberation Theology cannot be murdered for all time. Ongoing inevitable crises, manifested today in global recession, panic at terrorism, and the steady dispossession and even extermination of "Fourth World" populations, intensify and accelerate the need for a rebirth of a communitarian ethos with political-economic solutions that are also spiritual solutions. Speaking only for a very particular but also highly interesting U.S. constituency, thousands of former residents of the destroyed base communities of Liberation Theology, and tens of thousands of like-minded immigrants from Haiti to Brazil, have arrived in recent years and, according to what we can gather, have begun to resume activities under the banner of "Faith-Based Organizing."

It has not exactly shaken the mighty. It may only be a first straw in the wind. But there's no doubt that the expanding immigrant populations, forced from their lands by the mechanisms of the world market as much as drawn by the vaunted American prosperity, constitute the beating-heart future of American labor and the working class followings of progressive social movements. This magazine's readers and devotees, like the Sojourners, like the true followers of Dr. King in the African American churches, like the persecuted but undaunted progressive Catholics, and undefeated survivors of the 1960s, have been waiting for these refugees and for people like them, while struggling to redefine our ground, struggling to make new sense of the antithesis of empire in the cooperative vision—and to pass it on. TIKKUN has often been in the forefront of this dialogue and promises to be even more so in the years to come. Yes, let's have another rousing fifteen years of TIKKUN. □

RETURNING TO SAFE (from page 22)

anything, I thought our neighbors might now better understand our fears.

As a Jew, New York always feels like the safest place in the world, a place where I can escape the nagging doubt that strangers are against me. During my first visit last year, I found Israel to be the opposite. From the moment I landed until the moment I left, I braced myself for the unexpected bomb or terrorist knifing. I had never felt such fear as a Jew, and hadn't since, until two weeks before the World Trade Center attack in Durban, South Africa, participating in the United Nations World Conference Against Racism. It was a privilege being part of such an event, meeting people from around the world committed to fighting racism and watching as their local perspective became globalized. But, of course, the conference was marred by a strong anti-Zionist theme running through the event. And against all reason, I often found myself scared for my life.

It was not as if I was in danger at any point. But it was the idea, as when I was in Israel, that even moments of the most pristine calm could erupt into a hail of fiery nails. It was an old fear, one passed down from my parents, whose parents passed it down to them. At Chanukah, when we feel left out of the Christmas hysteria, we retell the story of how the Jews were almost killed by King Antiochus. During Passover we experience through the seder meal how the Jews were persecuted by the Egyptians. And during the rest of the year we talk about the Holocaust as if it didn't so much end as get put on hold for an indeterminate period. Of course, Jews have good historical reason to be concerned. But what is the impact on a young child who learns that the world is always against them, that even during periods of great acceptance, the scapegoating and prejudice will inevitably return?

In a sense then, Jews are a traumatized people. We don't know how terrified we actually are because, frankly, who could stand to face it? We operate on top of it. We have no choice, if we want to get on with our days. But when Jews are criticized, the fear bubbles up and makes the world feel too intense.

In Durban, my fears were up at a low boil as each day I encountered ignorance about and hatred towards Israel. In my experience, both sides in the Middle East conflict harbor ideological extremists who view the other as little more than brutal racists who terrorize their innocent people. As a New York Jew, the side I am used to are the defensive Zionists, who carry a shield emblazoned with the argument that any criticism of Israel is an attack on all Jews.

Of course, anti-Semitism still exists, and until it is eliminated the existence of a Jewish state will play a key role in Jewish liberation. But the more Israel continues its unjust Occupation of Palestinian territories, the less Israel can

effectively serve as a force for making the world safe for Jews. I fight for the space to make this distinction back home, but in Durban I felt my world turn upside down.

Instead of arguing for a more just Israel, I was forced into the very position I was used to fighting, criticizing any critique of Israel, as the Conference failed to distinguish between the most tacit support for Palestinians and radical anti-Zionism. The presumed consent of the silent majority in the face of a handful of extremist offenses created an environment in which one couldn't support Israel without being

viewed as a racist, a fascist, and a colonial imperialist. The crowd frequently shouted down the main presenters with chants of "Free Palestine" combined with banners stating such insults as "Nazism/Zionism—Flipside of Same Coin," and "Israel: Apartheid State."

The anti-Semitic tract *Protocol of the Elders of Zion* was on sale while Arabs distributed pamphlets with disturbing caricatures of Jewish stereotypes. The

press conference of the Jewish caucus was undermined by pro-Palestinians who stormed the room to shut it down. The examples are endless. And in such a polarized environment, what room was there for a progressive Jew? Support for Israel would mean denying the immorality of the Occupation, while support for Palestinians would imply the illegitimacy of a Jewish state. While a Christian friend struck a balance by tearing up a yellow flyer into a Star of David to affix to her lapel before joining the "Free Palestine" chant, I felt effectively silenced.

Palestinians have a right to advocate for their cause by holding Israel accountable for their policies, but that doesn't justify using anti-Semitism in the process. Similarly, Jews have a right to defend Israel, but that doesn't justify our anti-Arab racism either. Furthermore, while we get to debate with each other about who is right and what solution is best, this tension doesn't justify world governments polarizing the issue to avoid dealing with their own racism. While the Bush administration seized on and heightened the tension by using pro-Zionist rhetoric to avoid addressing the important question of reparations, the Arab nations turned up their anti-Zionist rhetoric to avoid looking at such things as racism against the Kurdish people and charges of slavery in countries like Sudan. As a result, neither Israeli nor Palestinian interests were served while racists and anti-Semites won the day. As enlightening and hopeful as I found the rest of the conference, as I returned to good old NYC, I was shaken by the experience.

I wrote a piece about Durban and forwarded it to a Christian coworker. In part I spoke of the fears that ran through my mind in Durban, scenarios detailing attacks by all sorts of terrorists. My response struck him as odd. Clearly, no harm came to anyone during the conference, so

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Your Tuesdays

Those were the days before kids got stolen from parking lot cars. Days when she'd leave me sitting with the windows rolled down for what seemed like hours at a time, the backs of my July knees sticking to the seat beneath me. I'd flip the sun visor down and gaze up at myself in the mirror. I'd look into my eyes till I didn't recognize them as my eyes anymore. Stare till my whole face turned unrecognizable. I'd

I tried so hard to destroy his brassy cuff link that summer. Pelted it against the brick walls of my house. Smashed it



with rocks, but only made scuffs. Considered the garbage disposal or tossing it in the toilet. I wanted to see it broken to pieces. I wanted to see it mangled just because. Just because it was so unfair that Gerald was so blind and so fat and so needy in the first place. Cause he was so there one day and gone the next. Cause I never really got a chance to stare at him. I never knew if his eyes rolled back white in his head or if they fluttered lid to lid and now I'd never find out.

If a blind man can't see what you are doing when he's on earth, how can he see what you are doing when he's in heaven? He can't. Probably nobody can. And I decided heaven was a big scam and people probably just rot in the ground. I took his cuff link, which I had carried around all summer, like the plague in my back pocket, and tossed it into a mailbox. Let the mailman figure out what to do with a dead blind man's cuff link.

Your Ho

I record nasty thoughts. I write down the names I want to call you when you piss me off, Nanna. You tell me in the car that my red fingernail polish is unbecoming. It is not what nice ladies wear. It is inappropriate for ten-year-old girls. You have a whole menu of inappropriate types of females: women who buy on credit, ladies who don't cross their legs, girls who speak with heated tongues, women who walk with married men, receptionists who wink at doctors, whores, shiksas, sluts, and the girl who wears red nail polish. My mind is racing around like a mangy dog let out of its cage, zigzagging through the neighborhood not so sure where home is. I am chasing in circles the tail of my own small body, winding myself up in a tangle of slut and whore and ho. You and me, gliding into a parking space in front of Trazini's restaurant. You my grandma, me your ho. Your fingers twinkle out the window to your lady friends who are waiting at the curb.

I kiss Aunt Goldie hello, then excuse myself to the powder room. You hand me your pocketbook so I can freshen up with your comb and mirror. The powder room is pink and I sit in the stall and cry. I rummage through the crevices of your pocketbook, fishing out an eyebrow liner and torn scraps of Dentyne gum wrappers. I write the word "bitch" five times on the foiled scraps and then flush them down the toilet. I order spaghetti. A one-handed, single-utensil meal. I curl my fist tight around the fork. I dig my red nails into the flesh of my palm while you love-pat my knee under the table.

Your Heaven

You take me up on your lap and make clippity clop noises and sing "This is the way the ladies ride, gallop-a-trot, gallop-a-trot." You take me to the corner store where they have wallpapered red-white-and-blue for the bicentennial and you give me a nickel and I give it to Adele and she

hands me a pretzel. You take me to Kentucky Fried Chicken just because my mom won't. You like the coleslaw and I like the biscuits and I spin around on the chairs till your head swirls dizzy. You take me to the ballet for my birthday four years in a row. Seven, eight, nine, and ten. And all I want to be is a ballerina. You feed me Tic Tacs and Dentyne gum during intermission and twirl your fingers through my hair. You take me on errands to the bank, the cleaners, the pharmacy, and everyone on the street knows you. You are the neighbor, the friend, the business lady, the

cousin, the member of the congregation. They tell me that they love you and that you are kind and generous and caring and smart. You take me to the cemetery and we put stones on Pop-Pop's grave. You take me to a tree and I close my eyes and you paint me a mind picture of your heaven. Pop-Pop is in the special place where all the good souls go and when you arrive you'll wave to him from afar cause you'll

be with the nobodies in peanut heaven.

You take me to the car wash and we sit inside the Buick as soap and sponges slosh along the windshield and you tell me stories about corsages and all of the boys you dated. You take me to Rosen's department store to buy new clothes for college. You eye my hairy legs and swear to me if I don't shave then I'll never find a boy to take me to the theater. You take me to a last minute hotel in San Francisco after I have called you all thin and crying from the other side of the country. You supply a quiet, orderly demand to put an end to this bulimia business. You order room service mangoes and two one-way tickets home. You take me to the art museum and we stare at Monet's water lilies and you say isn't that magnificent? You take me to the art museum and we stare at Jackson Pollock's paint mess and you say isn't that fascinating? You take me to a sidewalk cafe, and your skin is milk and creamy next to the hot pink carnation on our table. You tell me to always serve warm rolls wrapped in a fresh napkin and to never let a man manage all of my money. You take me on a hike in the woods and it is the year of the seventeen-year locust plague and the locusts cover us head to toe. We shriek and dart from tree to tree trying to brush them off but the locusts still cover us head to toe.

Your Palm

Morning at Nanna's. I wake up first, and you are lying in bed next to me with soft warm sheets draped between your legs. Should I cup my palm under the soft curve of your neck? Should I wipe the crusty sleep from the corners of your eye? Should I ask you everything I never ask you when you are awake cause I don't want to hear the answer? Should I look into your drooping, closed eyelids and tell you you're not the way I want you to be?

Should I mention that you are racist even though you are Jewish? Should I tell you it's a lie to preach about Thomas Jefferson without ever mentioning the cotton picking black hands in his back field? Should I tell you that when you talk about slavery you never mention the word "rape"? Should I tell you that black thighs were pried open in plantation pantries, amongst shelves of canned peaches and cherries, and that's why white women's crotches were running dry? Should I whisper in your ear that there were ashes and calcium bones piled high on Hiroshima street corners like a game of pick-up sticks? Should I whisper that Hiroshima smelled the same as when Jewish bones baked in brick ovens? Should I tell you I can't eat all of your words about the American way, like a dinner, or a breakfast with toast and butter and honey?

You will swing your legs out of bed in ten minutes, snap open the shades, and tell me that it is a glorious day. And you really use words like that. Like glorious and marvelous and gorgeous. You will spend a long time in the bathroom while I read a book at the kitchen table. I will finish many chapters while you are still on the john.

Six weeks later we are tucked away in a private booth, eating cashew chicken at our usual Chinese restaurant where the waiters know us by name and we have standing Friday night reservations. You tell me that you have colon cancer. You gulp your tears down. Your throat is loud in my ears. I cannot eat anymore. You pay the bill and we walk to the car and I put my forehead on the parking meter and I am crying and I can't even feel my throat. You cup your palm under the soft curve of my neck and tell me that you love me. And you do. And you tell me that everything is going to be fine. And it isn't.

Your Water

A dresser with rows of perfume bottles, sleek and orderly, on a china tray. A bed pan. An emery board. A call bell. Striped wallpaper, blonde wood floors, a jade ring. A lamp with a dimmer switch. The mirror. Maybe they all looked like blurs of color when her eyes rolled half back in her head, and vessels popped out of her neck, and blueberry stained sores appeared on her thighs and the big balls of her feet. Maybe she was all dreamy on the inside, like peering through a stained glass window, as her body filled up and up and up with water.

Maybe she was dreamy on the inside while we saw jaggedness and suffering from the outside. Moms, aunts, uncles, cousins. A nurse. We all watched from this side of her skin as seventy-nine years of swallowed-back tears slowly trickled out.

We saw her swimming in herself. Yellow water collecting under her skin. Water filling up her legs, stretching her svelte calves into rolling pins. Tides rising in her lungs, turning her into a fish, a gilled breather like in the womb. We heard her breath like blowing bubbles in a milkshake. We

smelled her decomposing from the inside out, like rotting crabs in the ocean. We saw the deconstruction of a body. We saw in real life what is reserved for horror movies.

We saw her suffering, and the water rising, and we tried to hold the water back like a family of sandbags choking up the Hoover Dam. We gawked and cried and held tight to the metal rails of her bed, to each other's flesh. We held our breath when she held hers, like synchronized swimmers, for dead seconds at a time. Endless fluid-filled breaths. A breathing game that shook the walls of her house for hours and hours. The longest drowning in history.

It was Shabbat. We left her bedside in shifts to go to synagogue. To ask, like good Jews, what we had done to deserve this. To curse the government. To pray for the appearance of Jack Kevorkian. To pray for the medicine cabinet to fall down her throat. We wailed and prayed for the blessing of fluffy pillows, feathers clogging sinus passages, mopping up the froth flowing from her mouth. We dreamed of guns and ropes and ourselves behind bars and we came back to praying and praying.

She didn't want anybody to see her water. Ever. And there we were just wading in it while she lay in bed and let us. We splashed with the terror and commotion of toddlers dropped in the deep end of a pool. We forgot to even wonder what she was seeing in the midst of all this. We forgot to look at the world from the glassy inside of her eyes. As if perched inside her head for a porch swing family photo, moms, cousins, aunts, uncles, all lined up in rows inside her skull, the young ones dangling from the butterflied bone of her jaw, we could have peered out and seen the world disappearing through her eyes. If we had sat inside her head we would have seen ourselves as if looking through stained glass. Butter and plum and peach colors. Soft and blurry. Glassy and ripe. No rabbi, book, or friend had ever taught us how to do this, so instead we writhed in as much pain as we presumed she was feeling. We writhed and clutched tight until we fell asleep in each other's laps. On each other's heels. Little piles of our family sprinkled on the blonde wood floor.

5:30 in the morning. We peel our eyelids awake. Your hair is combed. You are wearing a fresh white night gown. Your skin is smooth and creamy. Your hands are resting on your stomach, as if to say nothing at all. Had the nurse not witnessed you hours before, we would have thought we were crazy, inventing a nightmare: the biggest cry of your life. You look so peaceful in the end that I still wonder if I've dreamed up our entire trip to hell and back.

Your Eyes

In this photograph your eyes are flashing up, your chin is tilted to your chest, your tongue is licking tiny flowers on your smocked dress. I call you a smock lick. Tiny stitches in gingham gathered up around your concave ribs. No breasts. Small nipples. My four-year-old grandma. October

17, 1922. In this picture your eyes are like a broken bar glass leaking scotch and whisky and gin shining in the light. I can touch this photograph with thumb prints, stick pins in the eyes, scribble on your titties with green marker. Go to extremes to touch the untouchable. I want something hard and graspable. Bones. Your elbow. Your hand. This is all I have of you now: A photograph and your salt shakers. Your salt shakers and your peach silk nightie. Your peach silk nightie and your stained hospital gown. Your stained hospital gown and your silver candy dish. Your silver candy dish and your mah-jong case.

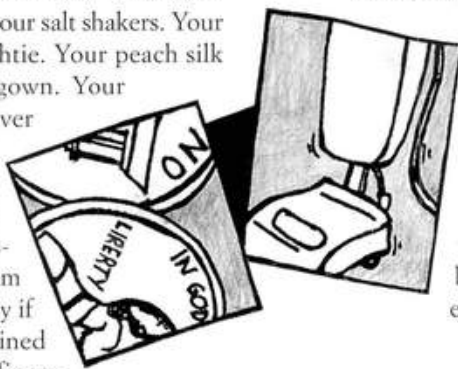
I hide your stained hospital gown in a box in my closet. It is not as displayable as a silver candy dish and I am afraid that people will think I'm crazy if they know that I've kept your stained gown and hold it up to my face and finger the flossy tie strings. I smell the inside of your silver candy dish with the turquoise glass lining. I let the cool bowl cover my whole face. I close my eyes and remember how a chocolate collapses in the cavey roof of my mouth as my tongue nudges it and air escapes and caramel or champagne liquid or pink fluff seeps out. I flick the locks open and closed and open and closed on your mah-jong case. I count the loose change rolling around in the bottom. I can hear you and Aunt Goldie and the ladies playing for pocket change, pennies, on a Wednesday afternoon. Listening to snicker gossip fly around the mahj table. You always refrained, leaving their questions and the curiosities of who went where with whom unanswered. You were the true lady, never hanging your ear on the grapevine.

When I was sick and home from school, laying on the floor in the other room, refusing okra soup, I'd drift into sleep to the white clack noise of your playing tiles. There is nothing like sound. Like your silver bowl. Like your chocolate. Like your silk. Like your eyelashes, so blond they were only noticeable when you blinked and the top row met the bottom in a layer of double thickness. It isn't much wonder I'd fake sick to stay home from school and lay on the floor, catching your winks through the doorway, and lounging in the museum of your velvety voice and coffee tables.

Old dead four-year-old in the photograph whose eyes I want to poke through with safety pins. This is the most I have of you now. A Saturday night, a homely macaroni and cheese evening on the phone with my mom ten states away. She tells me we buried you without any shoes. You in a classy crisp white sailor suit get up with gold buttons and earrings to match. And your watermelon lipstick that the nurse dabbed on at 5:30 in the morning to erase our memory of your lips turned blue and of the crusty stains from inside fluids that had slowly leaked out of the corners of your mouth. And no shoes because it was February, and the moms and uncles and cousins scoured the house but could

not find your summer shoes by the time the mortician's wheeley stretcher rolled in the front door. And it would be more sinful to slip on black shoes with white post-memorial day attire than to rock you into the ground barefoot and all.

So there you are. Callused bare feet in the ground. And it is relaxing because I can pretend you have come home from a long day's work of balancing books. You are lounging, shoes off, arranged side by side next to the sofa. Feet up for a rest before your six o'clock drink. And me. I am sitting on the floor next to you. Your eyes are closed. And you start each new thought by saying, "I want to tell you this, and I want you to remember it." And then you tell me all of the everythings I need to know.



Your Ears

You are in two places at once. Rotting, wormy headed, in the ground at Mayfield cemetery in Cleveland and yet sitting at my kitchen table in San Francisco. You hardly ever come to visit me now that you are dead. I ask where you've been, and you tell me that you live in Montana now, neglecting the fact that you are also molding in the ground in Ohio. I think that, by now, Montana must be a lovely place for a Jew but I don't tell you that.

My kitchen table is wooden and covered with your old blue checkered cloth, and you look like you feel at home. I want you to stay here and live with me; you always liked buying Ferragamo shoes in San Francisco. But I don't ask you to stay. I figure if you wanted to, you would.

You consume me differently than ever before. You soak me up as though I'm your appetizer, entrée, and dessert all in one. You are passive and dignified as you drink me in. You let me lead. You just sit in a chair. Dead at my kitchen table. And talk to me through your tranquil eyes. And listen with one hundred ears. You want to know what I want. And I tell you:

Roll me in the crisp brown leaves of your yard. Spoon feed me sugar cookie dough. Brush narcissus petals on my lips. Laugh when I sneeze. Cry when I write. Bring me chocolate-covered pretzels, even though I won't eat them. Devour me like a chocolate-covered pretzel. Eat a steak while it's still mooing. Vacuum the rug twice a day. Tango with me to cha-cha and tangle me up in the cord. Buy a kitchen table the color of burnt mud. Eat baked Alaska. Rip on the Eskimos. Put them to shame in your own polite way. Buy their pottery. Four dollars for a case of toilet paper. Quite a bargain. Don't rip it on the Sabbath. Rip it on the Sabbath. Let it rip on the Sabbath. Please make a plate of deviled eggs. Cover them with waxed paper. Put them in the Frigidaire. Dip a napkin in a tall glass of ice water and shove it into the crevices of my mouth. Wipe your lipstick off my teeth. Sing. □

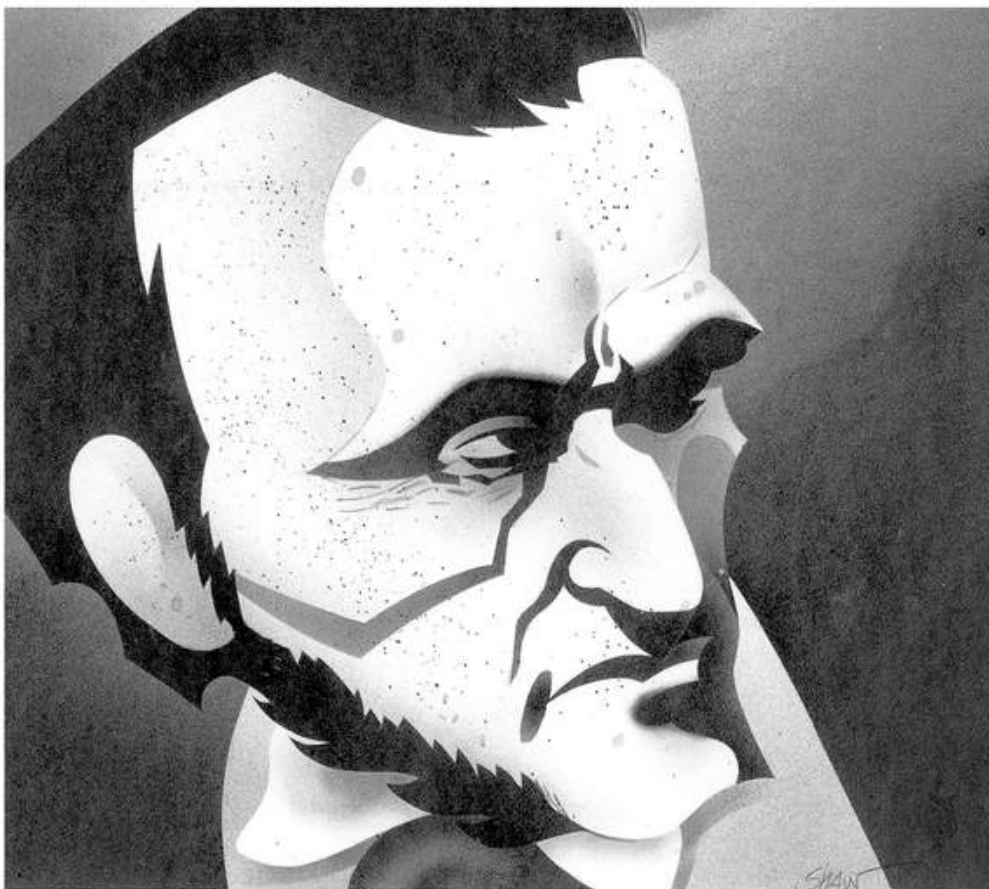
Is Wagner Good for The Jews?

Kim Chernin

NEITHER the Israel Philharmonic nor the New Israeli Opera has ever performed Wagner. Many Holocaust survivors protest the performance of Wagner's music on the grounds that he was Hitler's favorite musician and that his work was frequently heard at Nazi rallies and in the death camps, where Jewish musicians were compelled to perform him. When, in 1981, Zubin Mehta introduced the prelude to *Tristan and Isolde*, as an encore to his performance with the Philharmonic, members of the audience shouted "Shame, Shame!" An usher rushed up to the stage and pulled up his shirt to show scars of wounds inflicted by the Nazis.

Recently, a new chapter in this debate was opened when Daniel Barenboim led the visiting Berlin Staatskapelle orchestra in a piece by Wagner at the Israel Festival in June. Barenboim, who had originally planned to perform a piece from Wagner as part of his program, reluctantly changed the program to exclude Wagner. But at the end of the concert he addressed the audience, asking whether they wished to hear something by Wagner as an encore. Some members of the audience called him a fascist, shouting that his intention to perform Wagner was a "disgrace and deception." Barenboim invited those who were offended to leave the hall. The majority, however, remained and warmly applauded the overture to *Tristan and Isolde*. "Not playing [Wagner] in Israel, Barenboim said, "is like giving the Nazis one last victory."

Certainly, there is every urgent reason to respect the sensibilities of survivors who have been forced to know Wagner through the Nazi's propagandistic use of him. It is understandable that many people (but by no means all) who heard him played in the death camps, or may have



Why have so many Jews consistently admired Wagner's work, from his day to our own?

been forced to play him there, would not want to listen to his music. That he cannot be performed in concert halls in Israel, where people are free to go or not, raises a different set of questions: Can Wagner the artist be separated from Wagner the anti-Semite and favorite of Hitler? Can a man who hated Jews have written operas in which this hatred is not represented? Finally, given that it is Jews who want to play Wagner in Israel, can we come to understand why so many Jews (myself included) have consistently admired Wagner's work, from his day to our own?

Wagner was known during his lifetime as a liar, a cheat, a man who ran up debts he had no intention to repay, a revolutionary who hated capitalism but was himself addicted to luxury, a composer who curried favor with the rich and famous (Meyerbeer) whom he later viciously attacked. He betrayed his first wife, (Mina) and seduced his second (Cosima) away from his closest friend and colleague (von Bülow). Wagner was also a very great anti-Semite. If anyone doubts the extent of that anti-Semitism, a few quotes from his infamous tract, "The Jews in Music," should be sufficient. On Jews' response to German culture he writes:

"Our whole European art and civilization, however, have remained to the Jew a foreign tongue; for, just as he has taken no part in the evolution of the one, so has he taken none in that of the other; but at most the homeless wight has

been a cold, nay more, a hostile looker-on. In this speech, this art, the Jew can only after-speak and after-patch, not truly make a poem of his words, an artwork of his doings."

On Jewish culture itself he is, if possible, even more vicious. "Who has not had occasion to convince himself of the travesty of a divine service of song, presented in a real folk synagogue? Who has not been seized with a feeling of the greatest revulsion, of horror mingled with the absurd, at hearing that sense-and-sound-confounding gurgle, yodel, and cackle (*"zischend, schrillend, summsend, mucksend"*), which no intentional caricature can make more repugnant than as offered here in full, in naive seriousness?"

Wagner's Jew is a creature without passion, incapable of artistic or cultural production, whose "attempts at making art must necessarily bear the attributes of coldness and indifference." In other places Wagner claimed that the Jew's outstanding and exclusive genius lay in his ability to make money, a conviction that allowed him to blame the Jewish bourgeoisie first for the rise, then for the evils of capitalism. In some of his remarks to Cosima, which she noted in her diary, he referred to the Jews as: "Rats and parasites living off the bodies of other people." He compared them to cockroaches and nasty flies.

Clearly, this man is no lover of the Jews. Yet, knowing what I know about him, I nevertheless have been a defender of his work against the charge that the operas themselves are anti-Semitic.

I remember a time when I knew only the name of Wagner, and shuddered at it. I imagine a gradual, although not conscious process, as bits of the music heard on the radio, in the background to films, as theme music at weddings, began chipping away at the barrier I had erected against the music because of what I knew about the man. I recall suddenly knowing, once when I caught a passage from *Tristan and Isolde* on the radio, that I was hearing passion itself, the silent, secret life of the soul formed into sound, and that this was a miracle and could not be slighted no matter what I knew or thought I knew about the man who had participated in making it.

It will help here to invoke the idea of something larger than the individual passing through the individual, who has to be open to serving as its vehicle. The Romantics thought of it as inspiration, the Greeks as enthusiasm, by which they meant possession by a god. By whatever name, it is useful in accounting for the possibility that music, or an idea, or a vision, or a message of compassion, can come through a troubled or conflicted or damaged human being without being contaminated by this passage.

Is this so strange? It happens, in fact, all the time, as any of us knows who has ever had the opportunity to meet our favorite authors, or to form an intimate connection with the teachers who had inspired us or our former analysts or advisors, when the idealization in which we have held them is cracked, or eroded, and we come face to face with a human

being in all her/his limitations, making it almost incomprehensible that the teaching, vision, wisdom they imparted, remains pure, meaningful, transformative, in spite of the fact that it came from a person we now know to be infinitely less pure than we had once imagined. There is, obviously, a considerable distinction between the individual fussing and fuming through his life, causing discord, arousing acrimony, and the creative being who opens himself to the odd stuff of the universe that comes flowing through.

This distinction was particularly marked in the case of Wagner who was, indeed, a liar and a cheat, an anti-Semite, and a scoundrel, yet who managed, somehow, to capture in sound the music of the inner life—who managed, in spite of these failings, to make audible the soul's haunted silence. We resent this idea. It seems above all unfair; Wagner certainly wasn't worthy of this gift, and yet he had it. We would prefer that gifted musicians be saintly individuals. None of us should be fragmented, incomplete, divided into so many unintegrated pieces, so good in some aspects of life, so flawed and difficult in other roles and occupations. And cultures should be consistent too, wholly admirable, or wholly not, places where we find exclusively enemies or exclusively kin.

I used to think, for instance, that Jewish men didn't beat their wives, never, ever, under any circumstance, because I wanted to hold a view of Jewish culture in which such violence was just not possible. This, in spite of the fact that my own mother had told me, on many different occasions, that her mother had been savagely beaten by her father. I wanted a better, purer, perfect world for Jewish culture, and so I made one up rather than attempt to tolerate the mixed, imperfect, blemished, infinitely precious culture that was my birthright.

Which shows the greater wisdom, or loyalty for that matter? The insistence on admiring only what we can idealize? Or the capacity to accept ourselves, our culture, a nation we call our own, in all its tarnished complexity? If we achieve this tolerance of complexity for ourselves, we can also extend it to nations and cultures that are not our own, and even to a man like Wagner, for what his music manages to know and express, although the man himself, in perhaps all aspects of himself in which he was not a composer, was simply deplorable.

A great deal has been written about Wagner, more than ten thousand books and pamphlets during his lifetime, thousands since then, many of them concerned with his anti-Semitism. Briefly summarized, the explanations for it fall into four distinct categories:

- a) The uneasiness created in him by his possible Jewish origins (hinted at first by Nietzsche) through his step-father, Ludwig Geyer, whom he long thought might have been his biological father.
- b) His rivalry with the famous Jewish musicians of his time, specifically Mendelssohn, Meyerbeer, and Halevy.

- c) The influence of Cosima, (who may herself have had Jewish origins), and who was certainly even more of an anti-Semite than Wagner himself.
- d) The influence of the *Zeitgeist*, an argument that situates Wagner's anti-Semitism in the prevailing anti-Semitism of European culture in his time—itsself a response to the then recent emancipation of the Jews.

There may, however, be a fifth reason for Wagner's anti-Semitism, an insight that gives some entry to the power of his music. In Wagner's world the Jews were a threat from within, vermin infesting the young nation they have entered too soon before it had a chance to establish its own essential nature: "The only problem is that they entered too early, we Germans weren't yet sure enough of our own identity, to take this element into ourselves." Jews were not the only threat the Volk faced, however. The French were a threat from without, with a culture so powerful that even German rulers, like Frederick the Great, "looked down upon everything German with downright passionate contempt." What the Jews were for Wagner, the Germans were when compared to the French. How tempting then, for Wagner, so passionately obsessed with the unearthing, rebirthing, forming, and shaping of the German Geist, to shuffle off onto the Jews the humiliating lack of identity and culture attributed to Germans. In this equation the Jews and Germans share the same cultural theme and humiliation, a point that will take on considerable meaning before we are done.

Wagner saw his inspiration as lying deep in the uncorrupted Volk spirit, to which true art, truly Germanic art, had access. That is why he assigned to German art, "so great and grave a meaning." Wagner was intent upon supporting and creating the new German nation that was, in his day, nothing more than a collection of Prussian hand-workers, Bavarian masters and Saxon provincials with no coherent organizing center. Wagner's stage was the sacred, ritual ground on which the new nation would be symbolically born, deeply attached to its native folkish roots, kept safe from endangering influences through the illusion of art. Why would any anti-Semite let Jews into this world of "noble illusion," this "cure for life," this nation reborn whole and complete?

Well, he might let them in to show how corrupt they were, or to conquer them symbolically, or dramatically drive them out of the new culture he was creating by staging a rebirth and regeneration through violence. To do so, however, given his own ideal concept of art, would have been an admission of creative failure, an artistic confession that he had not managed to achieve the pure Germanic art and Geist he was seeking—from which the new Germany was to be born. To let them in here, into this world over which the composer was the absolute master, where nothing need happen that was not according to his creative will, would have been, it seems to me, absurd. Symbolically, it would have been like letting them into the young German nation fifty or a hundred years too soon. It would have been an

opening of the door to the Jewish rats and parasites that "feed off the bodies of other people." Wagner's work rises up in protest against those who would see Jewish characters in it. It is because of his anti-Semitism that his work imperatively must be kept free of Jews. It is because of his anti-Semitism that his work cannot be anti-Semitic.

Meistersinger, which most closely resembles this forecast of an idealized German nation, has a figure often interpreted as a parody of a Viennese Jewish critic, Eduard Hanslick, one of Wagner's most bitter enemies. Indeed, in a secondary draft for the drama, this much mocked and ridiculous figure was to be called Veit Hanslich. Wagner, however, quickly threw out this idea in favor of the character's original name, Sixtus Beckmesser. He was still, to be sure, a man whose pedantry and lack of originality can be mocked, but a character restored to his pure Germanic roots. Wagner told Cosima, about Beckmesser: "With that venerable pedantry I imagined the German in his true essence, in the best light." He found him a man to whom everything, even elegance, was affected, "and yet he also has the highest pathos." Many people would see in this Beckmesser/Hanslick naming competition, proof of a hidden anti-Semitic caricature. But we can with equal consistency imagine that Wagner's temptation to personify and mock his Jewish rival was, almost immediately, overcome through the stronger, more urgent wish, in keeping with his high artistic purpose, to bring the German Nation, in its own essential character, onto the stage, without contamination.

Frankly, when it comes to interpreting Wagner, too many people ignore Wagner's obsessive Aryanism and instead give interpretive dominance to Hitler. Yet Hitler was a cultural ignoramus, almost to the point of idiocy. When he attended a production of Wagner's first opera, *Rienzi*, in Linz in 1906,

A thirteen-year-old Brooklyn boy is kidnapped and hidden for years in Europe and Canada. Incredibly, the abductors are a Hasidic rabbi and his zealous followers backed by top-dollar lawyers. Against these forces the boy's immigrant Israeli mother stands alone. What are the motives of this ultra-orthodox underground? To her urgent queries the mother receives only a bizarre, cryptic response: The rabbi has detected in the boy "a special light" that has predestined the child to become a Zaddik, a man so righteous he will be privy to the will of God and be an inspirational leader to the Jewish people. This true story invites us to ask ourselves, Where does religious devotion end and evil begin?



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the adolescent Hitler took the central character as his role model. But who is Rienzi? In Wagner's drama he is a man so eager for power, so blinded in his political understanding, so desperate for the love and admiration of the masses that he brings about his own downfall. Here it is clearly not Wagner glorifying power, but Hitler misunderstanding his warnings about the corrupting power of power. Hitler as the definitive interpreter of Wagner? I don't think so.

Neither, certainly, did those German Jews who had emigrated to London before the war and continued to admire Wagner's *Ring*. At the beginning of the Nazi regime, when Jews were still permitted to attend the theatre in Germany, they went with particular glee to *Götterdämmerung* so that they could, at least on the stage, experience the downfall of the Third Reich. They clearly saw in it a study of power and the quest for absolute power, never missing the rather blatant fact that the gods of *The Ring* and particularly Wotan, the chief God, were as deceitful, criminal, and corrupt as any fascist. It was probably easier for them than for most Germans to understand *The Ring* because they already had as part of their biblical heritage the theme of twilight, the fall of great cities, the destruction of temples. Reading *The Ring* in a similar way, the BBC regularly broadcast the *Twilight of the Gods* into Germany. Eventually, it is true, the Nazis caught on to the idea that *The Ring* was not a celebration of power, but a story of the greed and corruption that inevitably doomed it. Therefore, in 1942, they forbade the production of *The Ring*, finally having noticed that the downfall of Wagner's gods mirrored their own impending twilight.

It can't hurt to eliminate the Nazis as interpreters of culture. Getting them out of the way will allow us to look at Wagner in a post post-war way and perhaps also in a distinctively Jewish way. Wagner's characters wander through their own sea-driven stormy Diaspora, never resting, ever driven on, longing for a home they cannot find. I am thinking here of the Dutchman. Or an opera that begins with the theme of exile. I am thinking of Isolde, her outcry of rage and humiliation on board the ship taking her from her home in Ireland to alien Cornwall. Elsa of Lohengrin stands, again at the opening of an opera, falsely accused of the murder of a young boy.

I have always heard in her plight a distant echo of the false accusations historically brought against Jews for ritual murder. It makes no difference whether or not Wagner intended these parallels; obviously he did not. Once we manage, however, to get Hitler out of the way, and get rid of the false presumption that there has to be a direct link between Wagner's writing and his music, a Jewish listener may be free to experience Wagner with an immediate responsiveness to his music and its themes, without bringing them in through an imposed interpretive filter. Then,

very likely, a Jewish listener would be sensitive to those dramatic moments in which Wagner's characters are trying to assimilate, often without success. Here, I am thinking of Tannhäuser when he returns from the Venusberg and cannot make his way back into Christian society because of his wrenching loyalty to the world from which he has come. If my identification with him ends here, and I cannot follow him on his pilgrimage to Rome, I can nevertheless understand his desperate longing for purification and forgiveness.

Most haunting of all perhaps, from a Jewish point of view, is Siegmund from *The Ring*. He belongs to the God Wotan's chosen race, is therefore set apart, always alien, always disliked, a hunted man who cannot find common ground with the people he comes across, by whom he is always suspected and reviled. Kinship, understanding, likeness can only be found among his own race, with his sister Sieglinde, who has been living in an abusive and humiliating captivity.

Of course these characters are not Jews. They are themselves, nothing but themselves, Elsa and Isolde and Siegmund and Sieglinde and Tannhäuser and Tristan, an orphan boy, far from home, far from his own people. They wander through their own Wagnerian world, a true Diaspora. They are not Jews, they are not waiting or working for the coming of the Messiah but in their characteristic Wagnerian way they too are longing for the redeemer and the renewed creation he will bring once the old, the corrupt world has been destroyed. There are so few left at the end of *The Ring* to begin this new world. The Gods have fallen, the Giants and dwarfs and the humans are gone. Apart from Alberich, there are a few nature spirits left to serve perhaps as the "saving remnant."

Wagner's themes are exile, alienation, perpetual wandering, false accusation, a race chosen of the gods, despised by everyone else, racial kinship, profound suffering, the longing for homeland, the need for redemption. These themes are as much Jewish as they are anything else and many of them had been set out in song thousands of years before Wagner, by Isaiah, Old Testament prophet of corruption, materialism, the worship of false gods, the punishing destruction of a race, the hope for a saving remnant.

I don't think Wagner was a Jew. I am quite sure he had no conscious intention to tell the story of the Jewish people. But for Wagner creative intuition and inspiration have nothing much to do with conscious intention. Tucked tightly in behind his anti-Semitism, there was, as we have seen, Wagner's unconscious identifying of Germans with Jews. Therefore, it is entirely possible that, singing the song of the German Geist, he was simultaneously setting Jewish themes to music. And why not? The muses who chose him have always had a wry sense of humor. □



War of Contraries

Janet Burstein

■ *Properties of Light: A Novel of Love, Betrayal, and Quantum Physics*, by Rebecca Goldstein. Houghton Mifflin, 2000.

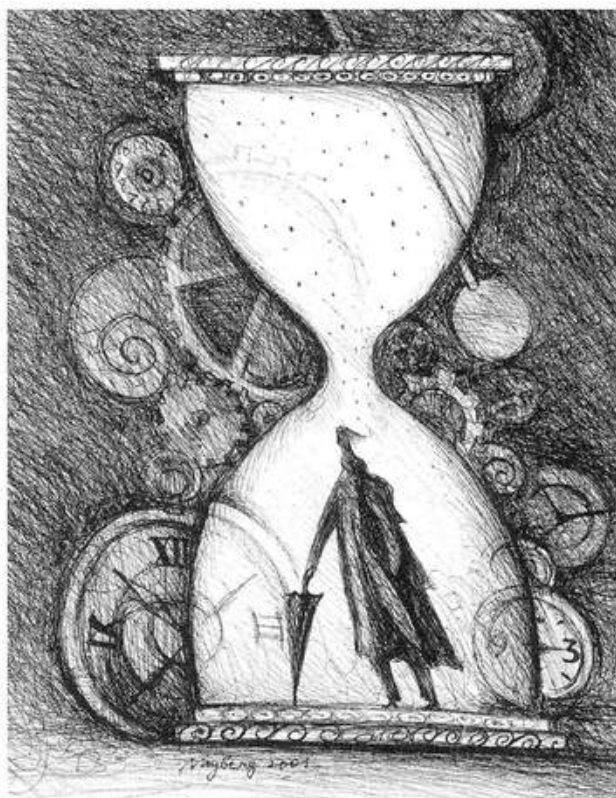
From kindergarten through graduate school we measure ourselves by the smart answers we contrive. But the trajectory of Rebecca Goldstein's work suggests that deeper understandings may come instead from the questions we're willing to live with and from our readiness to reconfigure them. Like the rest of us, her protagonists know what it means to live among irreconcilable differences: conflicting loyalties and appetites, incompatible intellectual, ethnic, and gender commitments. Goldstein—who won a MacArthur grant in 1996 and whose stories have won numerous prizes—often returns in her work to a core of persistent questions that rise from such conflicts. Her most recent novel, *Properties of Light: A Novel of Love, Betrayal, and Quantum Physics*, reconfigures those questions within a context of romantic and family love among physicists who know the best of all worlds because they care as much for poetry and religious literature as for scientific abstractions.

In this novel Goldstein tells the story of three gifted physicists: father (Samuel Mallach), daughter (Dana), and daughter's lover (Justin Childs), revisiting from a male narrator's perspective not only what the author once called "the plight of women of genius," but also the persistent conflicts that her first, widely read novel explored. The

earlier novel, *The Mind-Body Problem* (1983), allowed its female narrator-protagonist to ricochet between mind and body, work and sex, traditional Judaism and secularism. *Properties of Light*, however, demonstrates through its characters, its plot, its structure and texture that difference is real, but conflict is what we make of it.

The novel envisions character in a new way, accepting the influences that drive people toward different ends but showing that one can move easily, gracefully, among them. The energy of Dana Mallach's passion, for example, flows as readily into equations as into filial and erotic love. Her father can translate physics into dance. He feels "the physics within himself, within the muscles of his own body," and on a "darkening afternoon" he dances for Justin "the motions of light in the two slit experiment, his arms held limply over his gangly body as he moved." In him, sexual and emotional energy flow into intellectual passion. The Tantric discipline of erotic love that Dana and Justin study, believing it the prelude to scientific inspiration, makes the same point: that energy can move between body, mind, and spirit, allowing process to link what had always seemed to be incompatible forms of human experience. Thus the mind/body division that disfigured experience for Goldstein's earlier protagonists is not resolved but rather "reconfigured" here, as her characters translate feelings into ideas, and both into movements which literally embody them—and vice versa.

Janet Burstein, professor of English at Drew University, has published *Writing Mothers, Writing Daughters*, about American Jewish women writers. Her new book, *Telling the Little Secrets*, is about American Jewish writers of the last two decades.



In Justin the novel develops further insight into what seems to be its central precept: that "All things linked are. Thou canst not stir a flower, without troubling of a star." He contains within himself what Blake (like Yeats and other poets, a presence in this novel) would have called a war of contraries. He defines himself primarily as a creature of the mind: as he works on Samuel's discredited hypothesis about the nature of reality, he notes "the deep cold excitement I feel when I am coming into some new knowledge, a sort of icy bliss, it carries me away beyond myself, for I am always, always a thing that would know." A mathematician, Justin loves best the cold of winter and the dark night sky.

But he is also powerfully drawn to Dana, a creature of "furious light." He watches her at night through glass doors that

break her house open to transparency, so that there is a dazzling eruption of unloosed light ... summoning from out of the nearby woods the hosts of fragile creatures, beating furious wings in light-fed frenzy, while others, immobilized by love, are flattened on the glass as if painted there, wings outspread, a breathless attending upon the blaze from within.

Though given to the formal reverse of mathematical calculations, he identifies with these creatures, unable to disentangle himself from their self-destructive passion. He sees himself in them, a being "so sent by desire that it dies against the glass, with the sound of something fragile breaking ... the soft sound of some too soft creature dying softly for the light."

Dana's nature also embraces—without reconciling—emotional polarities between which Goldstein's earlier protagonists wavered. She rises from her lover's bed to talk physics at breakfast with her father. Inheriting her father's brilliance, she is mind proud as other women are house or husband proud, but she is also her mother's daughter, treasuring in herself the spiritual hunger and credulity that distinguished her mother. Together she and Justin embody this novel's insistence that "reality" is not divisible, that—in the words of one Romantic poet—"we murder to dissect."

In the "world" of this novel, however, as in our own, division and conflict are everywhere. Justin enters into the dyad of Samuel Mallach and his daughter, making a triangle which first rescues but then destroys both men. Mallach is caught between his frustrated ambition and his guilty exploitation of women's love to fuel his work. Justin is caught between his loyalty to the Mallachs and his dependence upon the favor of his chairman, Mallach's enemy. Dana is torn between these men as she ministers to the killing, paranoid despair of her academically discredited father and the ambition of her neophyte lover. The academic world they live in is itself saturated with conflict. Like Goldstein's first novel, this one treats the political animus that lives within academic communities as a given of intellectual life, which elevates critical debate above the courtesies and compassion required by human relationships.

But the work reconfigures these and other apparent conflicts as it brings differences together without reconciling

them. Goldstein has imagined in this novel a world enriched—not torn—by differing influences which touch one another not only within characters but also within the linguistic texture and the temporal structure of the work. She draws here as freely from the abstractions of science as from the imagery and verbal echoes of religious and romantic literature. If Dana's name recalls the Greek myth of Danae—violated by Zeus in a shower of gold, if "Mallach" means "angel" in Hebrew, if ancient Indian figures, voluptuously twisted into inimitable erotic positions, coexist in the world of this novel with Einsteinian insights into "quantum entanglements" and "hidden variables," it's because this vision of a world is grounded in the possibility of inclusiveness. Goldstein reinvents here our sense of what Mallach calls "the world as it really is." In this reconfiguration, ancient stories and insights from various cultures remain vital long after the people who conceived them have passed from the earth. Their value persists, neither dimmed nor replaced by the work of later cultures. They speak, still, to those who can hear them.

Narrative structure in this work reflects the same understanding. We are used to arranging our perceptions of the experiential world on a time line—which emphasizes the distance between present and past. But this narrative moves through time as though it were curled upon itself like a spiral—or a snake. Real time is "static, the flow unreal," the novel insists, quoting Einstein again and again to this effect. Thus the story slips from one curve of the spiral to another, revealing in flickers—like lights in a night sky—the "hidden variables" that leave scars or move characters in puzzling ways. Places repeat themselves: the site of Dana's end overlaps the place of Justin's beginning. Characters also recur: Justin's mother, removed from the plot by a car accident during Justin's early manhood, reappears in the novel's last scenes—her significant attributes recapitulated in another lov-

ing woman whose "coarse, dark hair" is also "striped wide with white," and who also wears heavy, black-rimmed glasses that fly off her nose when she is unexpectedly embraced.

Conceiving time in this way, the novel refuses to privilege the present over the past. Goldstein's earlier novels psychologized time, foregrounding the present and explaining it by the past. But here Goldstein moves among the moments of a character's life as though all were equally important, equally valuable parts of a process that doesn't end with "death" but simply curves from one phase and mode of being to another. The young Dana who nurtures father and lover matters to us for her own sake, not just as preparation for the scarred and lonely woman we meet first, whose passion has moved into her teaching and writing. And the father driven mad by betrayal is no less sympathetic to us because we have seen him feeding on the creative energies of his wife and daughter. If we are disoriented by the shifts in narrative time, we are also consoled for the loss of linearity by realizing that on this spiraling continuum nothing that has lived is ever lost. Justin "dies" by fire but lives to narrate this story, held in being by the unexpended energy of his passion for Dana.

Thus the narrative structure—like Proust's *Madeleine*—suggests that the past is present: coiled in layers that hold our "hidden variables," our spiritual and scientific "truths," our poems, our old entanglements and promises. Like light, which Einstein believed was both particle and wave, experience in this work is "both/and" rather than "either/or." As Goldstein abandons the bifurcated worlds of her previous fictions, she offers here a generous, inclusive vision of what our lives may be. One is mysteriously moved by this vision: partly because the losses and conflicts her characters experience are so familiar; but partly also because of the possibility she conceives: that what we have loved, or known, or needed, never entirely disappears. □

Gay Orthodox Jews in the Movies

Harriette Yahr

■ *Trembling Before G-d*, directed by Sandi Simcha DuBowski. Produced by Sandi Simcha DuBowski and Marc Smolowitz. A New Yorker Films release, 2001.

For five years, filmmaker Sandi Simcha DuBowski traveled with his camera to places of pain in the Orthodox Jewish world. He emerged with *Trembling Before G-d*, an award-winning documentary film which reveals the struggles and dilemmas of gay and lesbian Jews as they attempt to live traditional Orthodox and Hasidic lives. Structured around interviews with Jews in Brooklyn, Jerusalem, Los Angeles, London, Miami, and San Francisco, *Trembling Before G-d* has received numerous awards and has garnered attention in media outlets from the BBC to the *New York Times*. The film broke a box-office record when it premiered in New York City last October, and it opens nationally January 30th in Los Angeles, with other cities to follow.

A gay Orthodox community has been strengthening over the past seven years. Witness the revival of the "Orthodykes" and HOD, the gay Orthodox organization, in Israel. Note the formation of the "Orthodykes" and the Gay and Lesbian Yeshiva Day School Alumni Association in New York City. Orthodox Rabbi Steve Greenberg, who wrote as a closeted gay man in *TIKKUN* under the pseudonym Rabbi Jaakov

Levado in 1993, is now openly gay.

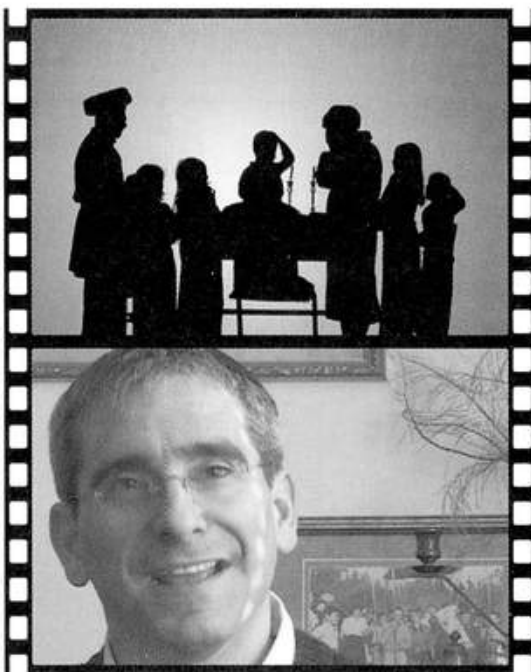
Clearly, being gay and Orthodox no longer appears to be an oxymoron on a "private club" level in a few major cities. Still there's anonymity associated with the organizations that exist. Most Orthodox gays are closeted to their communities, at worse to themselves. The real dilemma is not about joining a private club anyway. It's about how Orthodox gays and lesbians can fully express their lives within a spiritual tradition that largely denounces their sexuality, and how they can thrive publicly within their communities. DuBowski's contribution to the consciousness of this cause is unprecedented: he bears witness to testimonies of these Jews in paradox. He etches into celluloid (and history) the collective voice and individual images of their struggle. His film provides a forum for ideas and feelings to be dialoged and experienced in community. The Jews up on the screen are hurting. For the most part, they are damaged, troubled, even self-hating, and it shows. The gay Orthodox reality is now public. It's hard to dismiss.

DuBowski's film is about Orthodox gays and lesbians who long to remain in their world, not leave. Likewise, DuBowski stays within the Orthodox world with his story. *Trembling Before G-d*, also like its subjects, does not investigate alternative movements in Judaism open to homosexuality. The film's focus works perfectly to elucidate what it means to be gay and

Jewish and Orthodox. However, as an historical document which educates the public about Jews, DuBowski's film is dangerously absent of any contextualizing of the Orthodoxy within the larger framework of Judaism.

There are no frivolous graphics or self-conscious editing moves in *Trembling Before G-d*. The form of the film serves the content and, as such, the cinematic strategies employed all do their job: the story is paced well, the audio is clean, and there is enough variance in locations to satisfy visual needs. The techniques utilized to shoot and record subjects is of note as they inform greater meanings. The degrees by which gays and lesbians are actually seen/heard in the film mark the comfort levels of the individuals in their own skin and reflect the gray scale of acceptance located in the outside world of Orthodoxy at this moment in history.

At one end of the spectrum there is darkness. Hundreds feared being filmed—and not one parent of any gay or lesbian would agree to participate. There's "Devorah"—filmed in silhouette with her voice altered. There's "Malka" and "Leah," yeshiva day-school sweethearts filmed with faces obscured—though a chin peeks out once in while. And then, first names and full faces emerge from the shadows. David, after years of failed attempts at "conversion therapy," does not get the acceptance he seeks from his Rabbi, and travels to the



Harriette Yahr is a writer, filmmaker, and a film professor. Her latest film, *Baker's Men*, is playing in film festivals around the country. It is the first in a series of short films which deconstruct nursery rhymes.

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FILM REVIEW

Kotel to seek guidance from G-d to live completely as he is. Out of the shadows is Rabbi Steve Greenberg, fully voiced and full of hope.

The strength of *Trembling Before G-d* is that it focuses on human experiences and not on wrestling with Halachah (Jewish Law). DuBowski puts a face on what a community knows primarily as an abstract concept and, when permitted, names names. By documenting the suffering of very real people—sons, daughters, fathers, mothers—and unfolding their conflict in a straightforward way, he provides an opportunity for a heartfelt response. With the exception of Rabbi Greenberg's presence, the film is painful—or frustrating—to watch.

The power of DuBowski's documentary is its courage and the opportunity it allows for *hesed* (loving-kindness) to emerge, both towards others and for oneself. When *Trembling Before G-d* screened at a conference of interdenominational rabbis last year, a Conservative rabbi "came out" as a lesbian. Also an Orthodox rabbi broke down into tears and decided to bring the film to his shul. "I felt great pain upon seeing the film," says Rabbi Shmuel Herzfeld of Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, in New York City. "I didn't understand the great emotional and spiritual pain this segment of the Jewish community is going through. We need to help them."

Like any provocative work of art, *Trembling Before G-d* raises more questions than it answers. Issues outside the focus of the film barrel to the surface after viewing. I am curious about approval-seeking patterns as they relate to the desire to remain within a tradition that rejects. I think of the crucial distinction that needs to be teased out between pity and *hesed* as a response to suffering, and how the quality of that response affects *Tikkun-Olam*. I recognize that internalized homophobia and self-loathing can extend to gays and lesbians in any context; I notice the self-loathing particular to gays and lesbians within the Jewish context may be amplified by the residue of internalized anti-Semitism.

I honor the value of working within tradition. I am drawn to the limits of that attempt via a concern that "tolerance" of gays and lesbians will obscure core issues of power, sexuality, and traditional interpretations of Torah that create barriers to real thriving. This latter concern is so far removed from the focus of the film as to be another film all together—as removed as the reality of an Orthodox Lesbian Rabbi dialoguing with Rabbi Steve Greenberg about the disparate challenges facing lesbians and gays within their world. The challenges to living fully as a gay Orthodox man are distinct from the challenges to living fully as a gay Orthodox woman. These details require significant attention.

Sandi Simcha DuBowski's work is vital. Although some gays and lesbians only peek out, a secret closet in the Orthodox and Hasidic world has been opened. Now a reality that has been largely ignored by the Orthodox community is more difficult to ignore. What the Halachic response will be, if there could ever be one, is unknown and besides the point, at this moment in history. For its courage, and the loving-kindness and dialogue it invites, *Trembling Before G-d* is essential. □

Resources

www.tremblingbeforeg-d.com
(click on resources)

Orthodykes—www.orthodykes.org

Orthodykes of NYC—
www.orthodykesny.org

Frum Gays Home Page—
www.frumgays.com

Twice Blessed: The Jewish GLBT Archives—www.usc.edu/isd/archives/oneigla/tb/ (mostly non-Orthodox)

The Gay and Lesbian Yeshiva Day School Alumni Association—
www.glydsa.org

HOD—email sppr@netvision.net.il

Tzvi Aryeh AIDS Foundation—
TzviAryeh@aol.com

World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Jews—www.wcgljo.org

My Life as an Old Man

Ronald Bush

■ *The Dying Animal*, by Philip Roth. Houghton Mifflin, 2001.

Philip Roth must have known he would be pummeled for this brief, ambiguous, and disturbing sequel to his acclaimed three-volume social history of post-war America—*American Pastoral* (1997), *I Married a Communist* (1998), and *The Human Stain* (2000). *The Dying Animal*'s reversion to private, male sexual preoccupations goes out of its way to reinforce public stereotypes about Roth's previous work. That the novel continues his treatment of post-war culture in its principal subplot (the story of a first generation Cuban immigrant, Consuela Castillo), and that it signals a high level of narrative irony by resurrecting as its protagonist David Kepesh, the hapless hero of Roth's Kafkaesque 1970 parable *The Breast*, is easily overlooked.

Essentially, *The Dying Animal* rewrites *The Human Stain*'s old man/young woman story in a more provocative way. Roth's need to provoke, in fact, was strong enough to make him alter his previous account of Kepesh's life. Not only does he here omit Kepesh's midlife metamorphosis into a breast—admittedly a hard act to follow—he also changes Kepesh's marital history. In *The Breast* and its prequel, *The Professor of Desire* (1977),



Kepesh sired no children. *The Dying Animal* gives Kepesh a grown son, Kenny, long since left behind as a child of divorce. It also gives, by way of Kenny's tirades against his father, a voice to those readers who would take Roth to task for his apparent selfish hedonism.

Alas, the family-oriented Kenny himself develops marital problems, making it easier for Kepesh to mount a defense. What a defense, though. Consider: Kepesh vehemently maintains (the whole book is a long mono-

logue to an unidentified listener) that "only when you fuck is everything that you dislike in life and everything by which you are defeated in life purely, if momentarily, revenged. Only then are you most cleanly alive and most cleanly yourself."

Kepesh insists that American cultural history culminated in the uninhibited Sixties—"The clash between Plymouth and Merry Mount, between Bradford and Morton, between rule and misrule—the colonial harbinger of the national upheaval three hundred and thirty odd years later when Morton's American was born at last, miscegenation and all." The Sixties, in fact, have dictated the course of

Ronald Bush is Drue Heinz professor of American literature at Oxford University and author or editor of books about T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, primitivism and modernist culture, and cultural property and the negotiation of group identity (forthcoming).

Kepesh's mature life: "I took seriously the disorder of those relatively few years, and I took the world of the moment, liberation, in its fullest meaning. That's when I left my wife ... I was determined, once I saw the disorder for what it was to seize from the moment a rationale for myself ... to follow the logic of this revolution to its conclusion, and without having become its casualty."

In the Sixties, then, Kepesh became a committed libertine, divesting himself of permanent attachment to be free to sleep with an ever-increasing series of consenting students. (His one nod to conventional morality was that after the sexual harassment reforms of the last decade, he prudently limited himself to students no longer under his care, whom he courts in annual after-term parties.) Hence he concludes: "Pleasure is our subject. How to be serious over a lifetime about one's modest, private pleasures."

It is this seriousness which at the age of sixty-two leads to Kepesh's affair with Consuela, a twenty-four-year-old ex-secretary with relatively old-fashioned views about love and marriage and a strong affection for her traditional Cuban father. Kepesh becomes obsessed with her, and most particularly with "the most gorgeous breasts I have ever seen—and I was born, remember, in 1930: I have seen quite a few breasts by now. These were round, full, perfect."

The reader be warned, however. Anytime an author decides to let his protagonist tell his own story one must expect a curveball or two. Good novelists (as in Henry James's "The Aspern Papers" or Hemingway's stories) hardly ever dispense with a narrator unless they want their readers to infer what their prolix protagonists do not. This means we have to weigh the truth of Kepesh's monologue one morally ambiguous statement at a time. And although there is admittedly nothing in the book to suggest that Roth does or does not share Kepesh's view of things, Roth's previous Kepesh books (care-

fully distinguished in a frontispiece from Roth's "Zuckerman Books," his "Roth Books," and his "Other Books") provide a reasonably strong hint.

The adorer of Consuela's breasts in a former incarnation had found himself transformed into a female breast, as if to show us how much and how little a life devoted to passive sexual pleasure is worth. It is impossible therefore to read

The reader be warned, however. Anytime an author decides to let his protagonist tell his own story one must expect a curveball or two.

Kepesh's rhapsodies without irony and comedy—"The type with the nipple like a saucer. Not the nipple like an udder but the big pale rosy-brown nipple that is so very stirring." And when Kepesh describes his yearly seductions, Roth depicts them (as in Coetzee's recent *Disgrace*) as, well, chilling.

I suspect that Roth modeled the presentation of *The Dying Animal* in part after Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground*, another cri-de-coeur of an unstable libertine which is by turns charming and off-putting. Dostoevsky's perhaps madman opens our eyes to every hypocrisy of bourgeois life, forcing us to agree with him even when he is most repulsive. So in Roth we find mixed with the obvious selfishness of Kepesh's attitudes subversive sallies about the nature of human sexuality that are as thought-provoking as they are uncomfortable: "[Seduction is the] comedy of creating a connection that is not the connection—that cannot begin to compete with the connection—created unartificially by lust. This is the instant conventionalizing, the giving us something in common on the spot, the trying to transform lust into something socially appropriate. Yet it's the radical

inappropriateness that makes lust lust."

With this kind of book, in other words, you never know which way to jump. But *The Dying Animal* demands, urgently, that we do jump, that we declare our fundamental values. For as Roth's title reminds us, the poignance of human mortality leaves no alternative. Over the eight years rehearsed in Kepesh's monologue, we see him approach the frightening age of seventy and discover that his by-now former lover Consuela has developed cancer in those breasts with which he is still so obsessed. Confronting her diseased body at first disgusts him. As disturbing, he becomes appalled that death has threatened the woman he associates with the life force itself and whose image has comforted him about his own advancing mortality. Even if he should soon die, he has told himself, Consuela would carry on the erotic connection they had established and an order in nature would be fulfilled. This thought provides him just enough of a sense of a rational system to soften the terrors of his own aging.

Deprived of this comfort, Kepesh is thrown back on Yeats's near-despair in "Sailing to Byzantium": "Consume my heart away; sick with desire / And fastened to a dying animal / It knows not what it is." Kepesh had earlier insisted that "Sex is ... the revenge on death ... Yes, sex too is limited in its power. I know very well how limited. But tell me, what power is greater?" Now, he and Roth's readers are forced to consider that statement in extremis. And if Roth's irony allows that there may be in fact other answers, including friendship and human solidarity, the book's skeptical demolition of all the false comforts provided by "what Hawthorne called 'the limit-loving class'" make us also reconsider the seriousness of Kepesh's instincts, even as we continue to regard them as outrageous.

Kepesh's observations on contemporary America fashion the book's corrosive effect. Consuela's immigrant traditionalism, for example (the stand-in for an immigrant Jewishness Roth

has treated so often before) is contrasted throughout the book with Kepesh's libertine modernity, then ultimately exploded as hollow. Though she builds a self around stories of her family's "extraordinary pride," their steadiness, their religiousness, their aristocratic connection with an "Old World view," their work ethic, it all proves superficial. When she discovers she has breast cancer, there is no one in her family left to turn to, and she calls upon Kepesh. Cuba, her "traditionalism," amounts to nothing more than a social fairy tale, of no more power to console in the face of death than the identities of the "pure" Americans in *American Pastoral*.

Consuela's vulnerability finally sends us back to Kepesh's hedonism, for it reinforces his case against "the upholders of the norms" who create empty social forms to increase their power and control. Kepesh, like the Sixties' sexual revolutionaries he reveres, tries to remain "too playful to be indoctrinated with animus and resentment and grievance from above. They were educated in the instinctive system. They weren't interested in replacing the old inhibitions and prohibitions and moral instruction with new forms of surveillance and new systems of control and a new set of orthodox beliefs."

The Dying Animal's contemporary edge has to do with the way it uses the terror of death to question the late twentieth century's reassuring pretenses of social identity, and with the way it tries to subvert "the limit-loving class" with the anarchic energies of a sexuality that if not a be-all and end-all at least has the promise of developing into something genuinely human. In this it shares affinities with a very different kind of book, Salman Rushdie's *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* (1999). Roth, like Rushdie, harks back to the promise of the Sixties, even with its perversions and corruptions. More important, like Rushdie he aims to register how the uncertainties of modernity have produced both the death-like repressions of late twentieth-century

Puritanism (the Talibans and the Pat Robertsons) and the identity politics on which they feed.

To quote Rushdie, amid "the uncertainty of the modern" of the last fifty years, "the ground itself seemed uncertain, the land, the physical land, seemed to cry out for reconstruction, and before you took a step you had to test the earth to see if it would bear your weight. A great transformation was afoot." In this situation, all but the exceptional few "have erected a powerful system of stigmas and taboos against rootlessness, that disruptive, anti-social force, so that we mostly conform, we pretend to be motivated by loyalties and solidarities we do not really feel, we hide our secret identities beneath the false skins of those identities which bear the belongers' seal of approval." But these cultural "solidarities" are, to our "least-fulfilled needs" inconsequential. The truth, we read in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, "leaks out in our dreams."

As *The Dying Animal* ends, we hear

Kepesh's interlocutor, who shares the values on which Kepesh has built his life of pleasure, pleading for him not to go to Consuela in her need. To do so would be to violate the system of his life and destroy the person he was by opening himself up to the realms of pain and suffering. In this kind of novel, we cannot be shown what Kepesh decides. Roth leaves the choice agonizingly open. But it is clear that Kepesh chooses between one kind of humanity and another. The implication is that Kepesh is about to opt for radical change, though it is a change that has nothing to do with the "false skins of those identities" that "we do not really feel":

Don't.

What?

Don't go.

But I must. Someone has to be with her.

She'll find someone.

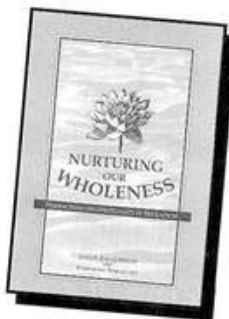
She's in terror. I'm going.

Think about it. Think. Because if you go, you're finished. □

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Rabbi Michael Lerner, Editor, *TIKKUN*

Author of *Spirit Matters: Global Healing and the Wisdom of the Soul*

Raising Your Child with Spirit

Eloquence in Silence

Susan Dermond

Parents love their children and want to give them everything they need to become happy, fulfilled adults. In my sixteen years of working with parents, I have known many who go to extraordinary lengths to nurture their children.

Perhaps you are one of them. You drive them to lessons, enroll them in camps, and get them to all the practices and games for sports teams. I know parents who do all of this plus take their children camping, to science museums, to Scouts, and to temple, synagogue, or Sunday schools. Many of these children are full of confidence, competence, and joy, but many more of them are *stressed out*. The least disappointment or unfulfilled desire sends them in a tailspin and they pout, cry, or whine. They get bored easily. Their voices are often high-pitched and anxious, rather than relaxed.

These children need the one thing their loving parents have not given them. They need SILENCE.

In order to have any time at all for her own thoughts, to get in touch with her own feelings, to imagine, to create, a child needs to have quiet times. The inner self needs silence and solitude to develop.

Most religions teach us the necessity of being alone in silence as part of their mystical tradition. In Judaism, this tradition is called *hitbodedut*, a form of prayer in solitude which leads to self-transcendence. In yoga it is called *pratyahara*, the interiorization of the mind. Saint Teresa of Avila calls it the Prayer of Quiet, a state in which the soul experiences "a quiet, deep and peaceful happiness of the will,

without being able to decide precisely what it is, although it can clearly see how it differs from the happiness of the world."

At the end of a week-long class on Education for Life™ I asked the parents to come to the last class with one idea of how they would put these ideas about nurturing the whole child into practice.

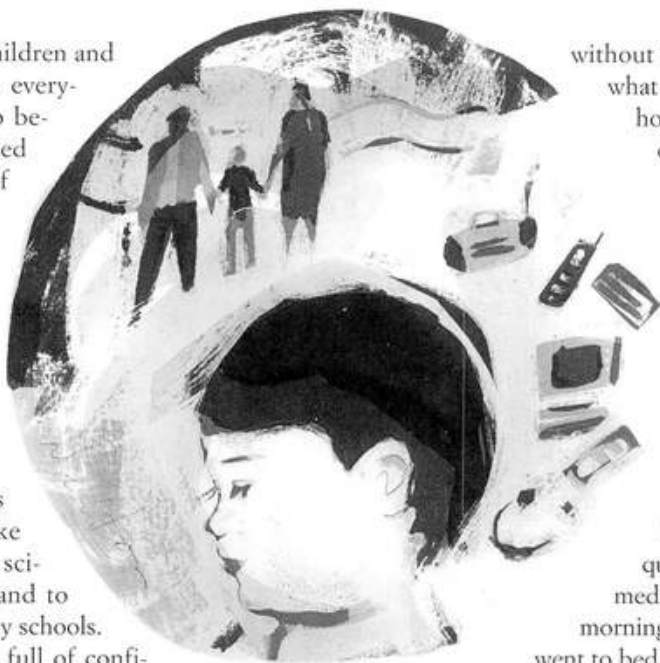
One couple had an over-active little daughter. The dad stood up and shared that they realized their child had no quiet time in her life. The parents meditated—before she got up in the morning. They had quiet time after she went to bed. But they now were seeing that their daughter had little peace in *her* life. All of her waking hours she was either at nursery school or at home with TV or radios on and her parents busily cooking, cleaning, and talking on the phone.

They decided to have silence (or relative silence) on Saturday mornings. They would leave off the music, the news, the entertainment. They would turn the phone OFF, and they would not even talk with each other any more than absolutely necessary. Their interactions with their daughter would include quiet play, concentration games, and conversation. They would give her creative materials and let her draw, cut out, glue, and color.

What a wonderful change in this little girl's life. If she had this sort of environment every night of the week, she would be a calmer, more relaxed child. For these parents, withdrawing from their busyness even once a week *with* their daughter would open a door for this child.

It takes a tremendous amount of energy and effort on the part of parents to provide their children with a quiet, peaceful environment in which to develop. It goes against the predominant trend of mainstream society. Yet, not to do so runs the risk of children becoming teenagers who don't know themselves or what brings them real happiness. □

Susan Dermond is director of Living Wisdom School in Portland, Oregon, and the editor of I Came From Joy, a spiritual activity book. She writes and speaks about spiritual education and teaches yoga.



*Tikkun (te-kün) ... to heal, repair and
transform the world.
All the rest is commentary*

תיקון

YOU ARE INVITED TO
THE FOUNDING CONFERENCE OF
**The TIKKUN
Community**
JANUARY 19-21

(Martin Luther King holiday weekend, Saturday-Monday)
at Stephen Wise Free Synagogue and B'nai Jeshurun, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

A gathering that is both a National Conference of Liberal and Progressive Jews aimed
at reclaiming a voice for Middle East peace and an end to the Occupation of the
West Bank and Gaza, and the founding gathering of the first explicitly
spiritual politics organization—the TIKKUN Community.

We will be trying something
never done before: to
create a new national
organization that is both a multi-issue
progressive Jewish organization with
a spiritual dimension as well as to
make that same organization a
home for people of every spiritual,
religious, and ethnic background.
If the Founding Statement (at
www.tikkun.org or in the Nov/Dec
2001 issue of TIKKUN) turns you on,
help us make this happen.

The TIKKUN Community will be a
network of people committed to assist-
ing each other as we each work for a

world based on love, generosity,
open-heartedness, ecological and
ethical responsibility, peace, and
economic justice. We will challenge
the globalization of selfishness (also
known as global capital) with a global-
ization of Spirit. We will challenge
George Bush's version of modernity on
the one hand and the distorted and
hateful fundamentalist response to
modernity on the other. We shall cham-
pion an Emancipatory Spirituality; a
campaign for A New Bottom Line; an
end to global scorching; a Social
Responsibility Amendment to the
U.S. Constitution which will require

corporations to prove a history of
social responsibility if they are to retain
their right to function in the U.S.; and
we will support efforts for peace in the
Middle East by trying to encourage
nonviolence on both sides.

Inner change and social change go
hand in hand. A politics of meaning
requires a new spiritual openness to
awe and wonder at the grandeur of
creation.

If you want to attend, go to
www.tikkun.org or call 415-575-
1200. If you cannot attend, join the
TIKKUN Community (described inside,
pages 53-56).

SPEAKERS, MUSIC AND POETRY:

**Grace Paley, Robert Pinsky, Michael Lerner, Susannah Heschel,
Kim Chernin, Michael Bader, Peter Gabel, Robert Thurman, c.k. williams,
Arthur Waskow, Josh Weiner and many more.**