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POLITICS • SPIRITUALITY • CULTURE

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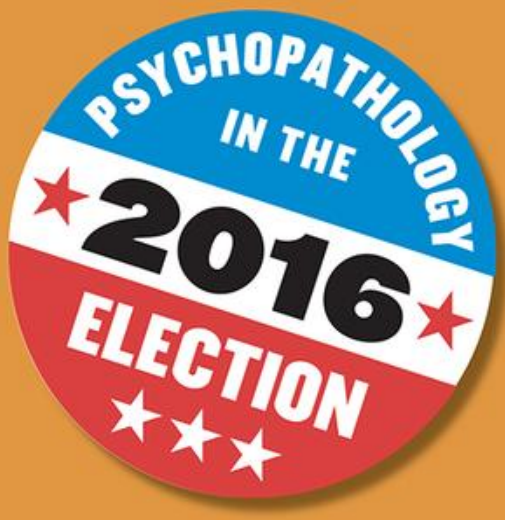
FALL 2016



TRANSFORM EDUCATION

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Readers Respond

A NOTE ON LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We welcome your responses to our articles. Send letters to the editor to letters@tikkun.org. Please remember, however, not to attribute to *Tikkun* views other than those expressed in our editorials. We email, post, and print many articles with which we have strong disagreements because that is what makes *Tikkun* a location for a true diversity of ideas. *Tikkun* reserves the right to edit your letters to fit available space in the magazine.

AMERICAN FOOD

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the article by John Brueggemann, "Two Stories about American Food." It was a thoughtful engagement of the decisions I make on a daily basis, encouraging me to be more mindful of my participation in perpetuating a consumption culture of abuse and neglect. Soon after reading this article I was having a conversation with a colleague from Hawaii and another from Ottawa. They were discussing the foods that are not available to them given their geographic locations. It was in that moment that I connected my position of privilege and how dependent I am on an unjust food system that spoils the few while neglecting the masses who truly hunger. 'The Beautiful Story' is that we are indeed becoming more aware of our decisions and how they impact, sustain, or challenge the systems of food consumption. The alternative narrative in this beautiful story consists of moral aspirations, explained by John. I feel compelled to connect my religious values and faith as it relates to creation and humanity. This alternative narrative offers a more holistic view of decision-making and change building.

—Rev. Heather Williams

(Heather Williams is the lead pastor of Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church in Saratoga Springs, NY.)

YOUNG PEOPLE IN VERMONT

Alexis Lathem's article "Food as Medicine: Vermont Youth Grow Food for the Hungry" in the Spring 2016 issue of *Tikkun* is a thoughtful description of the challenges our current food system faces. Because we do not pay farmers well and because our economic system does not pay people a living wage, too many people are hungry and do not have access to sustainably raised food. This model is a real benefit to those families and offers young people the opportunity to learn farming skills and sustainable agricultural practices. When we can address three problems with one program, we are being efficient with our resources and multiplying their effect. We need to support this kind of system, but we also need to transform our food system so that farmers are paid what they deserve and workers are paid what they deserve and healthy food is available to everyone.

As an organic farmer and a Vermont State Senator, I see the connections between social and environmental problems and solutions every day. Alexis Lathem has captured this principle when she says "the future of food lies not in industrial, chemically intensive agriculture but in ecologically based practices, like those taught at the VYCC and practiced by many of Vermont's diversified farms."

I also enjoyed "Mustard Seeds and Mountains" by Teresa Marbut, where she describes indigenous activists and their struggle with the corporate biotech industry. Grassroots activism, such as that practiced by Demanda Colectiva Maiz in Mexico is the only power that people have to counter the wealth and political power that Corporate Giants like Monsanto wield.

I was the lead Senate sponsor of the GMO Labeling bill that became Vermont law a year ago. We have recently seen many of the largest food companies across the country announce their decision to label all their products in all 50 states to comply with Vermont's law. It took a dozen years of grassroots activism by Vermonters to convince my colleagues in the Vermont Legislature to find the courage to pass this law. We can take back control of our food and our environment if we work together and engage in the political process.

Thank you for your thoughtful and comprehensive exploration of these important issues.

—David Zuckerman

(Senator David Zuckerman has served seven terms in the Vermont House and two terms in the Vermont Senate. He is a candidate for Lieutenant Governor of Vermont. Zuckerman and his wife, Rachel Nevitt, own and manage Full Moon Farm, an organic farm in Hinesburg, VT.)

DESPONDENCY DOES NO SERVICE TO JEWS OR ISRAEL

David Gordis ("Major American Jewish Leader Changes His Mind About Israel," *Tikkun* website Feb. 22, 2016) has the right to his own despondency but he does no service to Jews, Israel, and those who seek to strengthen Israeli democracy, social justice, and human rights by conflating his personal hopelessness about Israeli society, politics, and culture with the reality of Israel now and in the future. Negativity does not unleash creativity, solidarity, energy, generosity, compassion, and inspiration—it stifles them.

Fatalism creates a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure and it is radically at odds with the Jewish prophetic tradition which faced extreme moral and spiritual failures but which always maintained the possibility of moral autonomy individually and collectively, transformation, healing, improvement, and greater realization of *chesed* and *tzedek* as fundamental Jewish values and aspirations.

Israel is more complex, diverse, dynamic, and indeed hopeful than Gordis describes. Yes, it has its profound failures of ethics and empathy, politics, and policy—as do all countries and all liberal democracies—including the United States. But it simultaneously is a

democratic country and society where freedom of expression and assembly thrive and a respected and formidable independent judiciary safeguards the rule of law and democratic rights and freedoms. Israel respects and fulfills social and economic rights in the form of healthcare provision, labor unions, and social services for the economically and socially disadvantaged.
—Noam Schimmel, *Oxford, England*

EDITOR RESPONDS:
Israel cannot reasonably be called a democracy when for over 49 years it denies the right to participate in its elections the 1.8 million Palestinian people in the West Bank over whom it rules and from whom it collects taxes.

ISRAEL CAN ACTUALLY HAVE IT BOTH WAYS

Unfortunately, it appears that Israel *can* actually have it both ways ("Israel Can't Have It Both Ways"), especially with the unwavering support of the U.S. The status quo—in which Israel occasionally feigns calls for a two-state solution—is perfectly fine with Israel. While 'negotiating' with the relatively powerless Palestinians, Israel continues inch by inch to gobble up Palestinian land, to the point now where, if one is sincere, there is no possibility of a Palestinian state without disbanding settlements beyond the 1967 borders. The goal has always been to push the Palestinians out of Palestine, and one can see that this goal is being realized.

The U.S. exposes its hypocrisy when it says it supports human rights and international law, and then ignores it all in the case of Israel. Israel has violated all 30 Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Ironically, laws such as this and the Geneva Conventions were put into place at the end of WWII in order to prevent such atrocities which the Nazis practiced in WWII.

It is obvious that Israel is not a democracy when it practices discrimination against so many of its citizens. You cannot have a state which is Jewish and democratic any more than you can have state which is Islamic and democratic, or Christian and democratic. These are contradictory terms.
—Doris Rausch, Columbia, Maryland

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NETWORK OF SPIRITUAL PROGRESSIVES
Cat J. Zavis

PUBLISHER Duke University Press

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Psychopathology in the 2016 Election

In present-day America we are witnessing the way the ethos of global capitalism and its impact on daily life shapes and nurtures a growing societal-based psychopathology. No matter who wins in November 2016, anger and hate-oriented political movements will be with us until the economic system and its core assumptions fundamentally change. Understanding how this happens is a first step toward healing.

It's no secret that the past several decades have witnessed growing economic inequality and deepening economic insecurity for a very large section of working people both in the U.S. and other capitalist countries around the world. Yet what most analysts miss are the hidden injuries of class that become dramatically intensified when the underlying psychological and spiritual dysfunction of global capitalism interacts with economic insecurity. Right-wing, ultra-nationalist, fundamentalist, and/or racist movements gain support as more people begin to lose faith in the efficacy of democratic governments and turn to authoritarian leaders in the hope that their own fears and pain can be alleviated. This has been happening around the world, not just in the U.S. As a nonprofit we are prohibited from endorsing any political candidate or party, so the reflections here are not meant to influence your voting in 2016, but to shape an agenda for how to build a healthier and more just society in the coming decades.

In his presidential campaign, Senator Bernie Sanders addressed some of these economic inequalities by advocating for New Deal-type reforms, but he shied away from any systematic critique of the capitalist order itself. Unfortunately for his supporters, in his televised debates at least, Sanders failed to address the psycho-spiritual pain in people's lives caused by the hidden psychic injuries of class and globalized capitalist ideologies.

This pain operates on two levels. On a psychological level people are suffering because they have absorbed the capitalist message: "You live in a meritocracy, so you get what you deserve, and if you haven't achieved the level of success you want, it's your fault. Moreover, everyone is out for him or herself so you have to maximize your own self-interest, regardless of the impact on others."

On the spiritual level, tens of millions of people are suffering because they desperately want meaningful and purposeful lives and instead are trapped in jobs that do not produce anything of lasting value, and feel that they are wasting their lives yet believe that there is no alternative and no way out. What's worse is that many find their work is not really respected (in fact they have a hard time respecting it themselves because they can't see how it connects to anything with a higher purpose than a paycheck for themselves and massive profits for the super rich).

The liberal and progressive forces have a limited understanding of why the very impressive list of economic changes and important populist benefits Sanders offered the American people did not win him a majority of the votes cast by Democrats in the 2016 presidential primaries. Given his powerful fundraising from millions of Americans, they can't blame it on the candidate not having enough money to finance a competitive campaign. Sanders rarely addressed the hidden injuries of class and capitalist ideology and how they are absorbed, even by working people whose economic lot is very insecure and who objectively might have been expected therefore to be more responsive to Sanders's platforms. Sanders stayed on a primarily economistic discourse, talking about the pain caused by economic insecurity but not about the deeper distortions in our own self-perceptions and the way we relate to each other—distortions and behaviors that are endemic to the way we've been socialized since we were children with the values and judgements of the competitive marketplace.

To address that deeper level, Sanders would have had to go beyond New Deal entitlements and challenge the essentials of the capitalist worldview and the institutions that daily reinforce them. Most Democrats, social change activists, and environmentalists don't want to look at the need to transform the larger economic system. Some don't want to look because they are benefitting from that system even as they mourn some of its consequences for those they describe as less fortunate. Others avoid looking because they believe any larger systemic change is unrealistic and a waste of their time and money. So instead they focus on more narrow and local struggles, or national single-issue campaigns that seek to make narrowly constructed changes without challenging the deeper, systemic problems.

Some activists maintain that we can save the life-support system of the planet without replacing the capitalist system and its intrinsic need to expand consumption. Some imagine that global peace can be obtained without ending nationalist and religious extremist bravado such as the claim that the U.S. is a special nation that has a right or responsibility to lead the world and be 'number one'—economically, culturally, and politically. Some believe that a just world can be obtained without a radical redistribution of wealth—hence the efforts for a higher minimum wage instead of a living wage and confiscatory taxes on those whose wealth exceeds $10 million. Illusion after illusion after illusion—most held in the name of 'being realistic' where what is realistic is defined by the one percent and their allies in the media, at universities, and their large array of hired mouthpieces who speak about the impossibility of creating fundamental equality. Given this fear that they would be too far ahead of people by talking about a vision of a very different kind of world, liberals and progressives often end up sounding like a bunch of complainers—they know what they are against, but rarely do they publicly articulate what they are for, and so it's hard to know if those in one movement, say environmentalists, really want the same world as the people rallying for Sanders's economic agenda or the people opposing the use of torture, drones, and other forms of violence.

When reactionary movements gain public support, liberals and progressives simply dismiss them as products of racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, or stupidity rather than trying to understand what is missing in the Left's message. It is so much easier to demean those with whom we disagree than try to understand their legitimate grievances even if the ways they articulate those grievances are irrational and scary. Yet until we do that, these forces will grow, even if Donald Trump loses by a landslide in the November 2016 election. This is because if he loses, his loss can be attributed in part to the peculiarities of his personality and style of presentation, which have alienated fellow Republicans. These are often the same Republicans who themselves have been advocating policy directions and ideas that are just as militarist, racist, sexist, in favor of the one percent, homophobic, xenophobic, and Islamophobic as those championed by Trump.

So let's look deeper.

The Economic Dimension

The facts of economic inequality were dramatized and popularized by the courageous energies of those who participated in the Occupy Movement. Due to their efforts, it is now well known that the upper one percent of income earners controls a vastly disproportionate amount of the wealth of this society. As *The Guardian* newspaper reported in May 2016, white working-class Americans "have seen their wages stagnate or even decline in real terms" and that "median net worth fell for every group in the U.S. between 1998 and 2013 except for one: the wealthiest 10 percent. Working-class Americans saw their net worth decline in that period by a staggering 53 percent. Meanwhile, the richest tenth got 75 percent richer." The wealthiest 10 percent of U.S. households own 76 percent of *all* the wealth in America.

Income and wealth inequality translates into deep feelings of insecurity in the lives of most working people. Over 60 percent of Americans report that they don't know what they would do if faced with an unexpected bill of $400 or more. Many have to rely on growing credit card debt, and then find themselves paying off the interest on that debt with money they need for basic necessities.

While other advanced industrial countries around the world have significant differences in wealth, many of their populations don't find themselves in as much distress. In the decades after World War II, powerful labor and social democratic movements struggled against their own capitalist elites and created basic protections including universal health care, free (or mostly free) educational institutions, guaranteed incomes or generous benefits for the unemployed, health and safety regulations at the workplace, four-to-six week paid vacations each year, free (or generous) child care for parents, and retirement benefits for the elderly. Not only did these provide economic security for their citizens, they also created a culture and society in which people are gradually absorbing the value of caring for one another. They understand that to have a thriving, healthy society, everyone's well-being and needs matter. The U.S., in contrast, has one of the least generous packages of social welfare for the non-wealthy. In the past few decades the wealthy have successfully dismantled or significantly reduced their tax burden and, in turn, the amount of money available for basic social services and repair of crumbling public facilities, and they are not honoring pension agreements for teachers, firefighters, and other public service employees. And as unions lose their bargaining power in the face of corporations willing to take advantage of global trade agreements negotiated by the Clinton and Obama administrations (agreements that make it economically attractive to move their operations abroad to avoid taxes, environmental restrictions, and minimum wages), middle-income working people find their employment terminated and/or their promised retirement funds no longer available. They are then left desperately seeking employment even in what used to be the expected 'retirement years' in their seventies and eighties, often finding that the only jobs they can get are in low-paying fast food or grocery store jobs previously targeted to teenagers. All this intensifies their capitalism-generated belief that everyone is alone, so you have no choice but to focus on taking care of yourself because no one else will be there for you.

Bernie Sanders supporters at a rally for the U.S. Senator from Vermont.

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Bringing Home the Values of the Marketplace

Most people between 20 and 65 spend the majority of their waking hours in the world of work, and in transit to and from work. In the workplace, people quickly learn that their value is judged by how much they contribute to ensuring that the owners and managers of the corporations or other economic entities for which they work obtain the greatest amount of money and power (the Old Bottom Line). College economics courses teach that the productivity, efficiency, and rationality of businesses are measured by how much money or power they accumulate. Thus, it doesn't take long for employees to recognize that (1) their employers are primarily interested in maximizing their own self-interest; (2) the goods or services they provide are first and foremost designed for the purpose of maximizing the Old Bottom Line without regard to serving the common good; and (3) that they themselves will be judged poorly if they try to put some larger communal, ethical, or environmental concern above the Old Bottom Line. And they are surrounded by others who have also internalized these lessons, have adapted to the value structure of the world of work, and are also in the work world to advance their own economic well-being.

The union, socialist, and communist movements of the first half of the twentieth century provided a counter-force to this singular focus on maximizing money and power by articulating a worldview of service to humanity and solidarity with fellow workers. But in the post-World War II period those movements were essentially repressed by society-wide efforts that (1) purged people from the workplace and labor movement who held these ideals; (2) portrayed socialist and communist ideas as fundamentally evil (made easier by the pseudo-communist dictatorial and repressive regimes of the Soviet Union, in Eastern Europe, and China); and (3) celebrated the accumulation of wealth and power as the highest goal. For many decades now, the media, which is mostly owned by the one percent, took a reverential approach to the rich and famous. They continually advance the notion that the rich deserve respect and honor for having accumulated their wealth and for being 'job creators.'

In such a society, working people increasingly came to believe that the fundamental reality of the world and the only way to succeed was to look out for number one. In this worldview, anyone who thought that people could care about others was seen either as subversive, terribly naïve, or delusional. To be a winner in this society requires one to maximize one's own self-interest, which is often achieved by perfecting the

techniques of manipulating others. This is evidenced in 'reality' television shows such as *The Apprentice*, *The Bachelor/ The Bachelorette*, and *Survivor* that represent a societal assault on generosity and a glorification of selfishness. These shows send a clear message: "this is the real world, so either develop the skills to dominate others or be prepared to be dominated yourself."

The media and education system massively reinforce these values of materialism and selfishness. For example, popular television shows such as *Game of Thrones* and *House of Cards* focus on who has power over whom. Most of the characters in shows such as *Girls* and *Transparent* lack any moral fiber and manipulate others to meet their own needs. From these shows, viewers learn that people are more successful when they know how to use other people to achieve their own ends (whether that be power, money, sexual conquest, or fame). Even children's cartoon shows often reflect this same struggle for power or show people humiliating or making fun of others. These shows portray it as humor or good clean fun, but, in fact, it sends a powerful message of how to survive and be successful in society.

By permeating our whole society, these messages have the consequence of making people feel unsure of whom they can trust and increasingly fearful that even those closest to them may prioritize advancing their own interests over genuine love and solidarity. People increasingly look at each other through the framework of "what can you do for me; in what way can you take care of my needs?" People learn to suspect each other's motives and fear that they cannot rely on others. Many emotionally distance themselves from others, even those they are closest to. As people start to look at their spouse or partner in these terms, seeing them as vehicles for satisfying one's own needs, marriages become increasingly fragile, the divorce rate escalates, and people in marriages no longer feel that they can be sure their partners will stick with them in the future.

The triumph of selfishness as common sense creates a huge psycho-spiritual crisis and a society filled with deeply scared and lonely people. The resulting psychological distress can lead to addiction and depression, and in some cases suicide. And it generates a spiritual crisis in two ways. First, people want to live meaningful and purposeful lives but find themselves trapped in unfulfilling jobs that provide few opportunities to exercise their intelligence, creativity, desire to cooperate with rather than compete against others, desire to feel that they have done something of value with their time on this planet, and their desire to contribute to the larger society. Second, they unwittingly integrate the values of the capitalist marketplace into their personal lives. These values stand in stark contrast to the spiritual values that teach people to see each other as fundamentally valuable sacred beings who are created in the image of God and who deserve to be treated as valuable in and of themselves, rather than merely as means to satisfy other people's wants and needs.

All this, rarely discussed in the public arena (and never taught in high schools or colleges), creates a huge sense of fear, despair, anger, and/or depression amongst large swaths of Americans. No wonder people get attracted to fantasies of 'small town America' where people supposedly cared about each other, not realizing that the capitalist ethos of 'looking out for number one' has been part of Western culture for hundreds of years, and its early articulations can be found in every imperialist regime from the ancient Romans and Greeks to Elizabethan England to the early American founders who shaped the direction of American society in part by mass murdering indigenous peoples and enslaving Africans. It is true that an ethos of community and solidarity has never been quite as low as in the past fifty years of American life as the individualism fostered by the competitive marketplace even seeps down into the consciousness of young children, but the romanticization of earlier periods of imagined solidarity among people has to be tempered by the way that actual scarcity plus the emerging ethos of individualism has been part of American society since at least the late eighteenth century.

The only places where people can experience a different set of values is either when participating as a fan or team member in professional sports where both momentarily unite, regardless of economic disparities, in support of a larger, overarching goal (i.e. to win), or the religious or spiritual world which, at least in theory, preaches that one cannot serve both God and money. Millions of people flock to right-wing churches, synagogues, and mosques precisely because they often find there a caring community—one that truly meets their needs for recognition, respect, genuine care, and support. Because the community fulfills these needs, people are willing to buy into the otherwise outlandish belief systems presented by the leaders of those communities, beliefs that demonize those outside their particular community. Unfortunately, while these communities often provide donations for the needy, feed some hungry people, or collect clothes and blankets for some homeless, they often support political and economic programs that seek to defund government programs that might have more effectively stopped those "market forces" that are the cause of much of this poverty, hunger, and homelessness.

Meritocracy and Self-Blaming

Not only do the values of selfishness and materialism that permeate the capitalist marketplace infiltrate people's personal lives, undermining family stability and causing great distress, but the capitalist society justifies the huge wealth inequalities by convincing people that where they have ended up in the economic struggle of all against all is a function of their own merit—how smart they are, how hard they've worked, to what extent they have the personality traits that will ensure their

Donald Trump supporters at a rally in Orange County, California.

Ken Shin | Flickr Creative Commons

success, etc. It is a huge pretense—intelligence tests show that differences in intelligence are distributed equally among economic classes, and you need only hear the stories of working and poor people to know that they often work as hard if not harder than anyone in the upper 20 percent of wealth holders in this society.

In the past several decades the fantasy of living in a world in which merit determines who has more and who has less has been massively reinforced by mandatory testing of students beginning in elementary school and continuing throughout the remainder of their schooling. Those who perform best on these tests are rewarded with better opportunities to go to elite colleges and then on to graduate or professional schools. The tests themselves, supposedly objective but actually heavily class, gender, and culture-biased, focus on a narrow range of skills in the use of English and math, totally ignoring other factors that might be rewarded in a more spiritually and psychologically aware society (e.g. empathy, compassion, environmental sensitivity and sustainable behavior, caring for others, generosity, creativity, awe in response to the beauty and preciousness of the universe, understanding of what social and economic justice requires, familiarity with the classic works of both Western and Eastern societies, or any form of ethical or spiritual wisdom). What they do measure, along with grades, is the willingness of the most ambitious teens to twist themselves and their lives and jump through the hoops being presented to them by learning the skills necessary to do well on the tests, because those are likely to be a good predictor of who will be good and loyal aides to the one percent and who can't be trusted to close their eyes to the ethical distortion of accepting the unfair aspects of this society and its environmental destructiveness and militaristic approach to the problems of the world. Yet these tests are mistakenly thought to measure your worthiness to succeed, hence deepening self-blame. I know this from personal experience—when I got to Columbia and hence 'made it' into the Ivy League, I found there (and in the other Ivy schools I visited when I was on Columbia's debate team) a large group of those so hungry to 'make it' that they were willing to do almost anything to find the angles to advance themselves without regard to others.

Through this process of internalized self-blame, the capitalist class structure both creates pain and isolates people from others, creating a vicious cycle of deepening agony, loneliness, emotional depression, and sadness. And with capitalist consciousness now pervading much of the world, there

is a kind of collective, unconscious depression that permeates and impacts all of us, even those who have managed, to a certain extent, to consciously avoid self-blaming tendencies. That pain is then compounded by the suffering of the earth itself as its life-support system collapses under the weight of capitalist accumulation and production, reflecting and contributing to global depression.

We are left with a world filled with people who know there is something deeply wrong but have no overarching framework to help them understand the depth of their internal suffering. If provided with a worldview that could help them rise above their self-blaming stories, they would see that the fault is not 'in their stars,' nor in themselves, but in the totality of oppressive, life-destroying dynamics that confront them daily in every corner of their lives, from overcrowded highways, to the bombardment of ads and television shows urging them to buy more goods than they can afford, to the disappointment some parents feel if their children begin to reflect the ethos of materialism and selfishness of society.

What I have learned as the Executive Director of the Institute for Labor and Mental Health for the past 38 years, and in my years as principle investigator of a National Institute of Mental Health-funded study of the psychodynamics of stress at work and in family life in American society, is that most people hate the materialism, selfishness, and competitiveness of this society and desperately yearn for a higher meaning and purpose in their lives, but believe that there is no way that the system can be changed. They hide this yearning even from themselves because tapping into the gap between their lived lives and potential lives, if their needs were met, is unbearably painful unless the context in which they allow themselves to feel these feelings is one in which they are learning from others how much each person's individual pain is a manifestation of a more collective reality and not their own fault.

Yet this hunger for a life of meaning and transcendent purpose, and for a world in which people are caring and generous, cannot be extinguished. This is precisely because it is always present, even if most people do their best to hide it from others and from themselves. No contemporary social order based on oppression and the fostering of selfishness, materialism, and self-blame can ever be sustainable for long periods of time. A longing for meaning, purpose, connection, and mutual recognition, if directed in a positive fashion, can provide a foundation for a revolutionary consciousness. If, however, these needs are effectively manipulated by reactionary leaders and movements, they can be used to lead people in a more reactionary direction. And when right-wing

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Hillary Clinton supporters cheering at a campaign rally for the former U.S. Secretary of State.

programs and policies fail to deliver a more fulfilling life for people at work and for people in family life, this failure will be blamed on the demeaned others of the society who are portrayed as taking from the white majority the economic security, community solidarity, and safety that supposedly existed at some earlier historical moment.

How the Right Reduces Self-Blame by Blaming Others and the Left Misses the Boat

The right-wing in the U.S. became popular in the 1970s and 1980s by telling people that there was a spiritual crisis in American society that arose from the selfishness and materialism that had permeated our society. They argued that this spiritual crisis is at the root of increasing divorce rates and instability in family life. They then presented themselves as the 'pro-family force' with a powerful message: "You are not to blame for the instability in family life that you are experiencing—this is a social problem based on the insidious role of selfishness and materialism in our society." And the terrible truth is that the Right, in at least one way, was correct—there was and still is a spiritual crisis and it was at the root of much of the pain people feel in their lives.

Particularly in the post-Civil Rights Movement period of the late '60s and from then on, the Right has addressed American's underlying psychological pain of alienation and sense that everyone is out for him or herself, and spiritual longing for meaningful lives, by blaming the most vulnerable in our society, those who were seeking to rectify long histories of oppression—African Americans and other peoples of color, then feminists, gays and lesbians, young people, and more recently undocumented workers and refugees. The Right claimed that these groups were responsible for introducing the selfishness and materialism that was corroding societal values and destroying families. The legitimate attempts by liberal and progressive movements to provide well-being and equal rights for oppressed groups were instead described as quests for unfair economic and social advantage, won at the expense of white working-class people whose economic, psychological, and spiritual suffering were the products of these allegedly narrowly focused self-interested groups who didn't care about the welfare of others.

So please understand what is happening here. People have very legitimate pain in their lives and tend to blame themselves for it. The Right comes forward and helps them reduce the self-blaming by teaching them to externalize their anger at these 'others.' That anger is also directed at the government, which is portrayed as the enabler of these selfish special interest groups, and at liberals who tax people to achieve support for some minimal economic reforms. The Right encourages people to assert themselves and their needs by advocating for lower taxes and defunding government. (Not coincidentally, this goal of defunding government is championed by major sections of the one percent who want to reduce their own taxes and decrease the government's capacity to increase the minimum wage, enforce environmental, health and safety regulations, and place other restrictions on a corporation's ability to maximize profits.)

People who embrace the Right's message, and externalize what would otherwise be a self-blaming anger, do in fact experience a reduction of self-blame, and a deep sense of relief that leaves them feeling cared for by the Right. And that feeling is so emotionally nurturing that many people who will actually suffer more than benefit from the Right's programs nevertheless join the march toward downsizing the very government set up to protect their interests. But since government itself provides 'objective caring' in the form of material benefits, but rarely provides 'subjective caring' in the form of treating the recipients of government services with a deep sense of respect and appreciation, it's all the easier for the Right to foster this resentment at government. And it doesn't help when liberals in government like Bill Clinton and Barack Obama become advocates for trade policies which are more in the interest of the one percent than the interest of the rest of us—who can blame people for feeling betrayed by 'big' government?

Meanwhile, the Right, which presents itself as the champion for the needs of people wounded by the dynamics of selfishness and materialism in this society, is simultaneously championing the very dynamics of the capitalist marketplace and its ideology that are the source of much of this suffering.

And this creates the perfect opportunity for the liberals and progressives to enter the discussion and point out that much of people's suffering is rooted in the hidden injuries of class and capitalist values—not only in the economic inequalities, but also in the psycho-spiritual crisis that the capitalist marketplace generates.

But liberals and progressives have been stuck in a narrow economistic worldview best summarized by the saying that permeated Bill Clinton's administration: "It's the economy, stupid." Completely ignoring people's inner pain and fear, they mistakenly believed that the strategies advanced by the Right (i.e., racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia) are the primary motivations leading people to embrace the Right's demeaning of the powerless. The Left attributes these hateful attitudes and policies to a supposed inherent malice and hatred in the majority of Americans rather than see it as we do—as a failed and misguided attempt to alleviate their pain and suffering. Deeply enmeshed in their own religiophobia, people on the Left rarely open themselves to the possibility that there could be a spiritual crisis in American society. And it is this intellectual/emotional block that makes it almost impossible for many liberals and progressives to even begin to understand these dynamics, let alone address them in a compassionate way that could offer supporters of the Right

an alternative way to understand and integrate their own suffering, a way which might draw people to the Left.

A Compound Fracture: The Legacy of Humiliation from Childhood

In research we conducted at the Institute for Labor and Mental Health (the parent body of *Tikkun* magazine) with middle-income people who were moving to the political Right, we discovered that many of those attracted to right-wing authoritarianism had been shamed as children by a punishing parent. Let me explain how this happens.

An infant child enters the world helpless and vulnerable, yet full of love and trust and generosity of spirit. She seeks parental love, acceptance, and ultimately approval. Yet many parents are unable to fully reciprocate, having themselves been emotionally damaged, in part by their having absorbed the consciousness of the capitalist marketplace. A child's depth of human vulnerability and neediness overwhelms many parents who feel inadequate to the pure love that their children need and simultaneously are offering them. This triggers parents' own feelings of inadequacy from having experienced as children their parents' inability to be fully present and loving to them, an experience which many children make sense of by mistakenly feeling that they themselves are the problem, that their parents' emotional distancing or inability to fully love and recognize them is a function of their own inadequacy in ways that they don't really understand but which nevertheless make them feel fundamentally lacking and 'not ok.' This feeling was subsequently reinforced in their adult life when they blamed themselves for not having 'made it' in the economic marketplace or securing satisfactory love relationships as an adult.

The frustration and anger from this internalized sense of failure is compounded by the messages they receive in the workplace and through television shows that suggest everyone else (except people portrayed as 'losers') feels successful and satisfied. This angst is then taken out on their own children (sometimes violently, and other times in a pattern of discounting or being emotionally blind to their children's needs in ways remarkably similar to the ways that their own parents had been emotionally blind to their needs). So the child quickly learns that to receive love and approval, she has to hide her neediness and block off her own desire to be loved or fully recognized for who she is. That requires 'toughing it out.'

Once the child reaches adulthood, she faces a world where she is surrounded by people who have been similarly wounded. Fearful of being seen as a failure or even as mentally disturbed should she reveal her pain, she feels that she must present herself in a false way as completely 'fine' and 'doing great.' And so does mostly everyone else in her life. But then, covering her own vulnerability and pain, she feels all the more lonely and disconnected even if on a superficial level she has developed a large circle of friends (who are also hiding emotionally). At a deep level she feels unrecognized, her hunger for a deeper level of love and mutual recognition at times hidden even from herself. Sadly, the frustration engenders either escape into drugs, alcohol, television/internet addiction, emotional depression, or excessive anger at one's own children or at others. And the cycle repeats generation after generation.

> **"The hidden psycho-spiritual injuries of global capitalism shape 2016 American politics."**

Many of us are deeply wounded from this process and carry a sense of inadequacy and deep hurt that we are not recognized or loved for who we really are. For some people, these childhood wounds made them particularly sensitive to the various ways that they perceived themselves as failing in the capitalist marketplace. Yet they chose not to share their internal struggles with their friends out of fear that doing so would lead to others seeing them as the 'losers' that they feel themselves to be, and they fear that such a perception by others would lead them to end their friendship. But once they participated in the consciousness-raising groups we ran at the Institute for Labor and Mental Health and allowed themselves to acknowledge self-blame and recognize the self-punishing attitudes they carried with them from childhood, their views shifted, depression eased, and genuine loving connections became more easily attained.

This kind of intervention can break the cycle described above by both bringing it to light and providing healing through connection, mutual recognition, and acknowledgment of their frustrated needs for a life of transcendent meaning and love. Through our groups, many middle-income working people eventually came to recognize that while their anger at liberal politicians for failing to stand up and fight for the changes they promised in their campaigns was entirely legitimate, it was also intensified by the repetition of personal humiliation they experienced as children and in the competitive marketplace that shapes adult lives. So it was liberating for many to become aware of the ways they had unconsciously blamed themselves for not having gotten the quality of unconditional love and recognition that they needed as children from parents who themselves did not have the skills or training to overcome the ways that these parents had lived a life of self-blame.

These unexpressed and partially unconscious feelings of abandonment and despair were triggered yet again when

liberal leaders and the Clinton and Obama administrations revealed themselves to be more about serving the interests of the powerful than about love, justice, and peace. People throughout our society, including people who, for example, hadn't voted for Obama but secretly hoped his promise of fundamental change might actually happen, experienced unbearable disappointment and a sense of humiliation that they had allowed themselves to hope again and then were forced to face the reality that the liberal heroes in whom they had invested this hope lacked the confidence to stand up and fight against a ruthless and immensely powerful one percent. No wonder, then, that the early days of hopefulness of the Obama administration yielded to disillusionment, anger, and a ruling-class funded and manipulated Tea Party response of unmitigated anger and pseudo-populist demand to defund government.

Our groups helped participants untangle their present-day disappointment in, and anger at, politicians from their historical sense of emotional abandonment and the humiliation that arose from it, which had been subsequently reinforced by their experience of 'losers' in the capitalist marketplace. This allowed those in our groups to recognize the manipulation of their feelings by right-wing movements and thus they did not turn to them to alleviate their pain and suffering. Unfortunately, however, many of their friends, facing similar dynamics but lacking the awareness our groups provided, were attracted to right-wing movements. These movements allowed them to reduce self-blaming by releasing their anger at marginalized others. A momentary release of self-blame, however, does not create a world with less selfishness, so their friends who joined the Right were primed with new hatreds at new groups to be blamed and demeaned (most recently Muslims and undocumented workers).

What we also discovered was that some of the racism, sexism, and homophobia that abounds in America today arises from resentment based on the mistaken belief that the needs of white working people have been ignored as 'the special interests' (those facing discrimination) have won the support of the elites of American society. This perception is not entirely irrational. Political elites, who are the centrists in both the Democratic and Republican parties, cannot deliver much for the majority of American working people without stepping on the toes of the economic elites whose interests they share. So what they do instead is integrate a small section of women, people of color, gays and lesbians, and other demeaned groups into positions of influence or power while the majority of those groups remain in subordinate and powerless positions in the class structure.

Meanwhile, the one percent and their coterie and the media they own and control celebrate the advances made by people in demeaned groups (women, African Americans, gays and lesbians, etc.), without changing the basic class structure of society. By allowing a small percentage of people in discriminated groups to make it into the upper earners of the society, the one percent generates the hope that we, all the rest of us, can too 'make it' when in fact these small advances by a few do not trickle down to the masses.

So, for example, Hillary Clinton upon winning the votes to become the Democratic nominee proudly told an adoring crowd that her nomination had broken the glass ceiling for women, when in fact most women are still getting paid less than men, are still the objects of sexist treatment and vicious rapes, and are still either put on a pedestal for praise or demeaned behind their backs. Similarly, the economic conditions of Blacks improved only slightly under the Obama presidency, neither has Justice Clarence Thomas's role on the Supreme Court done much to break the glass ceiling for African Americans. Individuals from oppressed groups who succeed in the economic or political sphere do not necessarily change the fundamental racism, sexism, or classism of society.

Because these advances in money and power do not appear to benefit them, many middle-aged white men feel that their needs have been completely ignored. But instead of directing their rage at the capitalist system, the Right steers them to direct it against the demeaned others and against the Left, who are championing these oppressed groups. This gets intensified when the Left fails to expose these dynamics to working-class people, instead dismissing white working-class men as inherently racist, sexist, etc. This only increases the rage of those men (and sometimes working-class women as well) and makes them re-experience the humiliation, disrespect, and sense of being misunderstood. They are then attracted to politicians who promise a return to an America which never really existed for most working class people in the past. But the fantasy of it—small towns where people were known and cared for, now being stolen from them by all these 'others,'—is a powerful lure to reactionary politics based on a real and legitimate need for human connection that is systematically undermined by the very economic order that right-wing politicians blindly support.

Given this false analysis of where their pain comes from, it is no wonder that some of these white men want to strike back at those whom they perceive as disrespecting and humiliating them. They cheer for candidates like Senator Ted Cruz or Trump because they give voice to their anger and frustration. They have a sense that some 'other' is to blame for their lot in life and mistakenly believe that the Right's call to reduce taxes and downsize government will somehow 'stick it to' those others who have, according to the right-wing story, benefited unfairly from taxes and 'big' government. The middle-income white people who fall for this line are unaware that these policies are promoted by capitalist elites who want to downsize government precisely to eliminate government regulations that, in fact, protect the needs of the working class (such as the right to organize, minimum wage

Jill Stein of the Green Party

laws, food safety laws, safety of drugs, protections against dishonest bank lending policies, etc).

Many of these people feel that no one has ever stood up for them or genuinely recognized them as deserving of care and kindness. So when ultra-nationalist movements arise and promise to "Make America Great Again," people believe that things will magically return to how they were before African Americans, women, and gays and lesbians made gains for equality, mistakenly directing their blame at them rather than at the ruling class for its massive onslaught of attacks on the rights of the working class. People in the U.S. and in other countries around the world participate in racist or even quasi-fascist movements which give them a sense of hope and a momentary feeling of being part of a community, thus placating and redirecting their deeper rage. Their sense of relief is intensified when these movements also promise to stop the so-called special interests from further undermining their rights and entitlements. When these same people then join anti-abortion movements and identify with the powerlessness of the unborn fetus, they also experience a temporary sense of empowerment from being able to protect and care for another in a way that they never experienced for themselves. This compounded sense of empowerment is healing for them, though the relief is very temporary like the impact of some of the addictive illegal drugs.

Another draw of dogmatic nationalist movements and their leaders is that they actually stand for what they believe in, regardless of how offensive or outrageous. Many people are sick and tired of the empty promises of centrist politicians on the Left and Right. For fifty years or more, Democratic and Republican Party politicians have promised changes and equal opportunity—but the advantages the upper 20 percent of the population have by virtue of being able to afford better schools, tutors, after school sports and music and art for their children, not to mention personal connections and financial backing when entering the world of work, belies the promise of equal opportunity and thus implicitly perpetuates self-blame. What most people need is not equal opportunity to beat out someone else in the competitive marketplace, but rather a society where everyone's fundamental needs (both material and psychological) can be met without in the process denying others the fulfillment of their fundamental needs!

People know they are being conned by the politicians of the moderate middle, the ones who always end up being loyal lapdogs for the interests of the one percent, so when a Trump-like politician or movement comes forward and breaks all the conventions of normalcy, many people feel elated and validated in their view and experience of politics and the world. "Finally," they tell each other, "someone is puncturing the façade, even if in outrageous ways." Indeed, people from all corners of the political spectrum have admitted to me that they responded to that aspect of Trump's campaign (even while many explicitly disagreed with his most racist and sexist statements, particularly after the Orlando massacre in June 2016).

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> **Psychopathology: a society repressing our need for love and meaning to our lives.**

Others responded to the hopes generated by Sanders, though they couldn't get the satisfaction of watching Trump smash all the 'political correctness' idols. The joy and relief that someone was breaking through to the other side of the mind-numbing conventions of normalcy for people whose lives are experienced internally as anything but 'normal,' felt momentarily better than a life of being 'realistic' and fitting into a society whose norms might seem laudable but whose felt reality was terrible. So, many people felt elated when the emotional deadness and phoniness of centrist politicians was momentarily exposed in the presidential primaries of 2016, their promises distrusted, their well-controlled presentation of self punctured and seen as fake. As long as these outsiders are yelling that "the emperor has no clothes," many of the victims of the hidden injuries of class may give them a pass on whatever else they say, no matter how outrageous, self-contradictory, or even fascist.

Unveiling the falsity and oppressiveness of daily life in class society should be a central focus of progressive politics. Once the Left really understands these dynamics, and is willing to address them, it can and will emerge with a more empathic and wise set of solutions.

Our task through the Network of Spiritual Progressives is to challenge the racism, sexism, homophobia, etc., but to do it in a way that helps everyone understand that working people (including people of color, women, and gays, among others) are being victimized not only economically but also psychologically and spiritually. So when some white working-class men, responding to Black Lives Matter, say "all lives matter," we need to hear this as a cry for recognition and respect even as we insist on challenging and exposing the double oppression that Blacks, women, gays, and other marginalized peoples experience by the assaults and oppression they face as the demeaned others of our society.

Holding both of these truths is the precondition for a successful transformative movement

Outrage at the racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia is important and must not be muted in order to appeal to white people. But neither should we allow our outrage at these obnoxious forms of oppression distract us from acknowledging the pain that working people in this society suffer by virtue of their class position and their internalizing the hidden psycho-spiritual injuries of capitalism. Forcing us to choose between these two positions is a strategy that ruling elites in our society have exploited to their advantage. The only chance of success liberation movements will have in advanced industrial and post-industrial societies is to embrace a both/and, rather than either/or, approach. We must validate each group's experience of oppression and help people in each class position and each identity group develop a sensitivity toward and desire for solidarity with those who experience different forms of oppression than their own.

Empathy and Compassion for Those With Whom We Disagree

Here is the key to helping people transform their consciousness and stay away from the hate, anger, and fear-dominated movements of ultra-nationalists, fundamentalists, racists, and/or sexists: instead of assuming that these people are fundamentally evil or intrinsically distorted, look for the kernel of genuine needs (love, connection, recognition, respect, safety, and caring) that have been systematically thwarted by society, the economy, the media, school, families, religions, and/or other people, groups, and institutions. Understand these unmet needs as underlying their harmful beliefs or hatred. Find ways to validate these needs as legitimate and deserving of respect. Once they have a sense of being 'gotten,' you can help them explore strategies other than their current hateful and oppressive ones to meet those needs.

I don't mean to suggest that doing this is easy. It is going to take a whole lot of psychological sophistication on the part of people on the Left to move from demeaning those with whom we disagree to speaking to them in empathic and compassionate ways.

We will need political, spiritual, and movement leaders and activists who articulate and embody this empathy and compassion to help lead us.

We will need a domestic Empathy Tribe—people who have learned the skills of empathic communication and who are willing to go door-to-door in the old-fashioned style of community organizing, but with a very different message than community organizers conveyed in the past. It is going to require that we insist that our schools, colleges, and media reflect this empathic approach as they simultaneously challenge the materialism, selfishness, and meritocratic ideologies of capitalist society.

Empathy is the necessary precondition for a transformative movement. But a potentially successful movement needs something else: the ability to get people to envision the world they really want, to allow themselves to dream, and then to join with others to struggle for their highest vision of the good. That movement must move beyond a list of complaints

to articulate a vision of the world we are for, not just what we are against. It should advocate for, what we at our Network of Spiritual Progressives call, a New Bottom Line. A New Bottom Line is one that judges the success of our social institutions, government, and corporations based not on the Old Bottom Line of whether they maximize money and power, but instead assessing them on the extent that they maximize love and caring, kindness and generosity, empathy and compassion, social and economic justice, peace and nonviolence, and environmental sustainability, as well as encourage us to transcend a narrow utilitarian approach to nature and other human beings. In short, the Caring Society: caring for each other (everyone on the planet) and for the earth. To see what such a society and its institutions might look like, please go to www.tikkun.org/covenant and read through our preliminary vision.

Building this movement would be far easier if Bernie Sanders were to call for a national convention immediately after the 2016 election and put forward a platform that included the consciousness articulated here as well as proposals such as the New Bottom Line, advocacy for homeland security to be won through a strategy of generosity (our Global Marshall Plan), and our proposed ESRA—Environmental and Social Responsibility Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. But I'm not holding my breath—the absence in the Sanders campaign of the psycho-spiritual perspective articulated in this editorial and through the past three decades in *Tikkun,* and in the past decade in the work of the Network of Spiritual Progressives, was, in our opinion, one of the critical flaws that made it impossible for Sanders to reach more of those who have suffered from the hidden psycho-spiritual injuries of the ethos of global capitalism.

Sanders, and much of the Left, has not yet been willing to grasp the psycho-spiritual crisis facing most Americans—they see the economic deprivation but they do not speak to the more complex feelings of pain and self-blame, and they react to any talk of a spiritual yearning for a world of love with incredulity and dismiss these thoughts as 'psychobable' or worse, a slippery slope toward the religious world they have long rejected.

For Sanders's movement to still be successful, the Left needs to draw on the model and wisdom of the women's movement that created small consciousness-raising groups that both helped women see the ways in which their personal struggles were in fact a product of the patriarchal society in which they lived and empowered them to challenge the systems and structures that undermined their freedom and power. Our Network of Spiritual Progressives' consciousness-raising groups would likewise help people understand both how their personal struggles are often largely (not totally and always) a result of the capitalist system in which they live and not due to their own shortcomings and failures (think of a 12-step program to overcome capitalism) and also help them explore what a world (both their work worlds and their personal lives) would look like if they were governed by the New Bottom Line, as well as teach the empathy skills so desperately needed to reach across the political and cultural divide.

This endeavor may well be dismissed by many activists as a distraction from winning the next mini-battle. Even the larger goal of seeking to build a political party of love and justice may seem both fanciful and impossible. Yet the consciousness raising now, and the building of a love-and-justice oriented political party in the future, are exactly what is needed. I fear that the supposed radicals and revolutionaries are stuck in their own variant of subservience to that which is—the realities of the world as presently constituted—and hence are not really visionary, radical, or revolutionary enough.

Without a movement that combines the New Bottom Line and resistance to racism and xenophobia with a compassionate and empathic approach to those with whom we disagree, and without an explicit embrace of the ideal of a world governed by love and generosity, caring for each other and the earth, and awe and wonder at the grandeur of this incredible universe we are unlikely to stop the growth of hate-filled movements which are likely to play an important role regardless of who wins the 2016, 2018 mid-term, or 2020 presidential elections. Resisting hate-oriented movements and the racism/xenophobia they promote is absolutely necessary, and yet a huge distraction from the fundamental challenge facing the human race: to stop the systematic destruction of the life-support system of the planet. That is why it is so very important for the message of spiritual progressives to permeate the Left so that it can effectively counter these destructive movements and simultaneously shift the focus to overcoming the competitive marketplace whose ethos of endless growth and expansion of consumption is at the heart of the assault on the environment. And that is why the task of building and rapidly expanding a Network of Spiritual Progressives, www.spiritualprogressives.org, Tikkun's movement aiming at consciousness change of the sort described in this editorial, is the most important thing we can accomplish in the next ten years. Please join—let's build this together! ■

Come to the Tikkun Conference & 30th Anniversary Celebration Nov. 12-13 (the Veteran's Day holiday weekend immediately after the election). We will focus on developing strategies by and for progressives in the coming years—badly needed no matter which of the candidates wins. We'll also be presenting the Tikkun Award in person to Holly Near, Aaron Davidman (author and star of *Wrestling Jerusalem*), and several others. More information and registration at: www.tikkun.org/nextgen/whatnow. It's worth the trip to Berkeley, California!

Sarah and Hagar

How Reimagining the Torah Story That Jews Around the World Read on the First Day of Rosh Hashanah Can Empower All of Us to Action

CAT J. ZAVIS

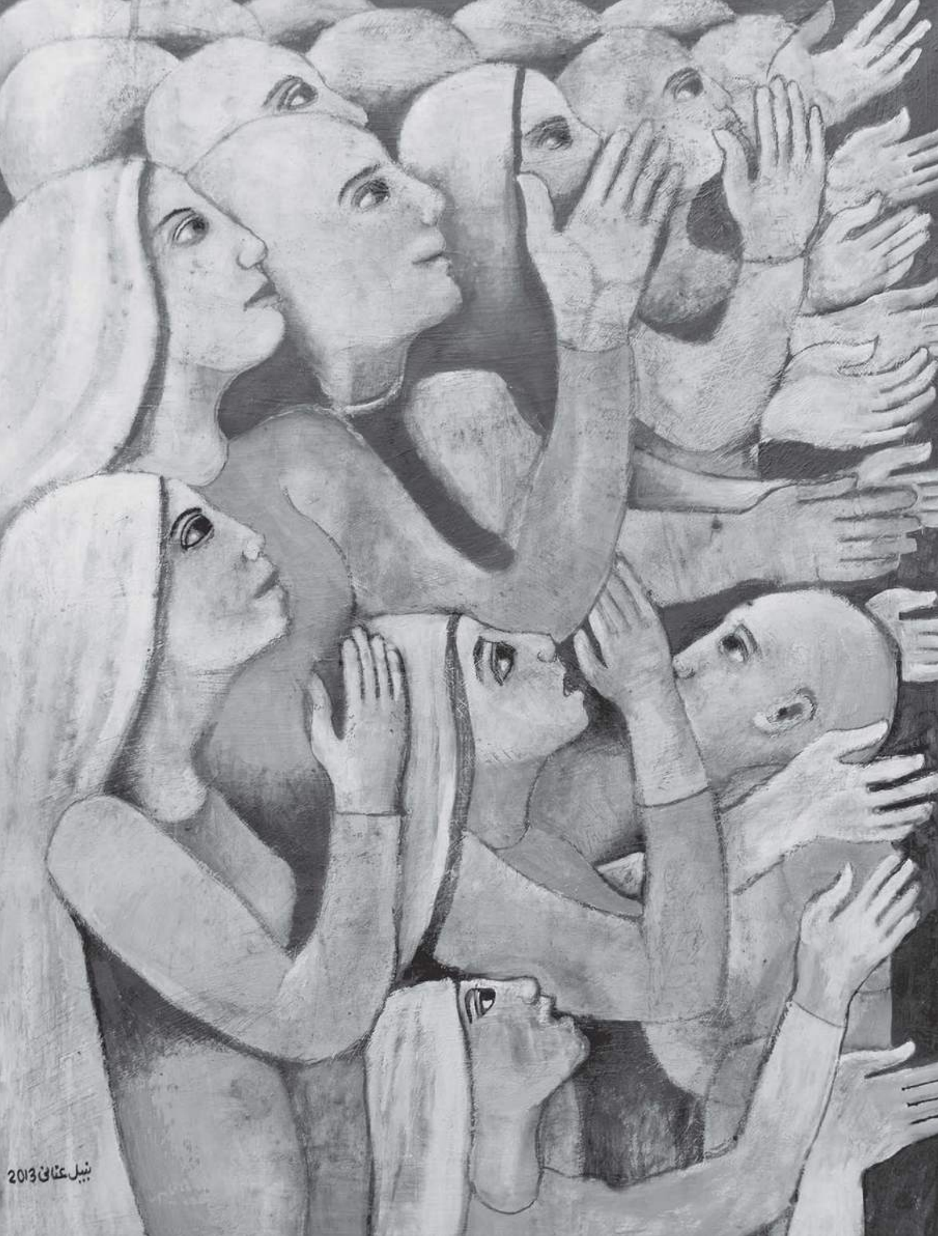
There are so many ways to read and interpret Torah and then to share that with others. We can read it literally and stop there. We can see what Torah commentators wrote about these texts over the past two thousand years of conversation among the generations of Jews who treasured these texts even as they re-read them in light of their own developing understanding. And we can look at it from the perspective of what lessons we can take from it—what we can extract from its meaning for how to live and understand life today—undoubtedly placing our own spin on it. It is in this latter way that I am engaging with the story of Sarah and Hagar.

I see the Torah as a visionary document that provides us a way to critique and challenge the society and culture of the time—in the tradition of the prophets. At the time of its writing, the Torah pushed the boundaries and limits on women's rights, on how to treat slaves and strangers in one's land, and how to care for the land. While it did not go far enough for most of us who wrestle with its stories and laws, for its time it was a radical vision. It is a critique of empire, of power, of the destruction of the environment, of treating the stranger/the other unjustly, of not caring for your neighbor, the needy, the vulnerable, of the status quo, and of being realistic. It puts forth a vision for how to live differently. So when I read this story of Sarah and Hagar, I read it based on that tradition and through my lenses as a feminist, a social critic, and an activist.

The struggles of the past remain relevant because so many of them touch on issues that fuel the struggles of the present. And yet, until we grieve, mourn, repent, learn, and transform, we will repeat the struggles—the only difference being the times, the clothes, the degree—but the issues don't change very much. And that is the tradition and purpose of the High Holy Days—to do *t'shuvah* (returning to our highest self) so we can learn, grow, and transform as individuals and as a society.

Othering, scarcity, fear, domination, hierarchy, patriarchy, racism—these are the underlying issues reflected in many of the struggles that are written about in Torah and they remain the struggles today. The Torah shows us the efforts our spiritual ancestors made to grapple with these issues, to try to push the boundaries, to stand up to the Empire and cultural norms of the time—how we succeeded, how we failed—and and stimulates us to ask what we might do differently in the future.

CAT J. ZAVIS, J.D., is the Executive Director of the Network of Spiritual Progressives, a mediator, teacher of compassionate communication, and co-leader of services at Beyt Tikkun with Rabbi Michael Lerner.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It is hard to open a newspaper and not collapse in horror, disgust, sorrow, and shock. Children are washing up on the shores in Europe; Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump uses racist and misogynist tropes to mobilize hatred that could turn into voter support; Black men, women, and transgender people are being openly murdered with only a transparently vacuous gesture at accountability; people are living on lesser wages while the cost of living rises; the separation between the haves and have-nots widens and it seems that a sense of care, generosity, love, and kindness is lost.

Yet Rosh Hashanah is a time to imagine the world as it could be—in its perfect state, both on an individual and a societal level. So returning to the story of Sarah and Hagar, let me imagine, in a perfect world, what that story might have been about and what it might teach us today. What might have been the perfect world that those who composed the story (probably based on a wide variety of stories passed on by word of mouth for many generations) were trying to create, what might they have been critiquing, how and why did they miss the mark, and what might the story inspire in us today?

The Torah and the commentaries on this story tell us that Sarah gave Hagar ("The Stranger") to Abraham as his wife, not as a concubine. Although we have no historical evidence to prove this claim (or whether they even lived), Judith S. Antonelli, feminist commentator on Torah, makes a plausible case for the contention that Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham as a wife and not as a concubine out of Sarah's desire to show respect for Hagar. Nachmanides states that Abraham took Hagar for his wife, and not just as a concubine, out of respect for Hagar as well. Building on this foundation, I attempt to provide one possible vision for what that relationship might and could have been.

Antonelli explains that Sarah had a personal experience as a sex object herself and did not want Hagar to be subject to the whims of Abraham or the sexist social hierarchy in which they lived. This was an act of caring, love, and sisterhood—the creation of a bond between these two women and the creation of an alternative model of family—that promotes the notion of loving generously, challenging the patriarchal and cultural norms of the time, and pushing the boundaries. And one that provides the foundation for a different vision of how to live, both then and now.

When Sarah and Hagar put forth this vision and then began to live it, the Transformative Power of the Universe (YHVH) was so deeply moved that S/he promised them that both Isaac and Ishmael would be founders of great nations. S/he even spoke to each of them independently—demonstrating the equality with which S/he saw them to one another and to Abraham.

Like most family structures, theirs included loving care amongst all family members, a desire for the well-being of all as well as jealously, fear, and distrust.

And some of these issues become more pronounced and pressing when we create alternatives to the dominant norms of the culture in which we live. We often find ourselves bumping up against the mores of that culture that are inculcated within us and that surround us. So maintaining our highest ideals becomes incredibly challenging. We see that in this ancient story as well.

Abraham impregnates Hagar to bring a child into this family of three. This is again an act of love. Unfortunately, jealousy began to arise between Sarah and Hagar. Hagar became arrogant, belittling Sarah for her inability to conceive. Sarah, relying on the patriarchal power structure, turned to Abraham for support. But when he failed to intervene, she responded with the power she had by oppressing Hagar. Feeling unsafe, Hagar leaves the family—she runs away. Yet the Transformative Power of the Universe tells Hagar to return—to not remain a stranger. The Torah is silent as to why YHVH sent Hagar back. Many commentaries explain this by suggesting that YHVH sent her back to accept the abuse. I read it differently: YHVH sent Hagar back to talk with Sarah, to try to live the ideal that they hoped to create, to push the societal boundaries, and to give strength and fortitude to Hagar because S/he knew the challenges Hagar and Sarah both faced. Just as YHVH hardened Pharoah's heart, YHVH hardened Hagar's heart, not to make her more stubborn, but to give her the strength she needed to remember that staying engaged in the transformative process and living an alternative model is hard work that requires a strong and resilient heart, persistence, and a willingness and ability to stand in the fire.

Think of the civil rights and women rights activists, of Gandhi and his followers at the Salt Marches, of Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto and survivors who sought to rebuild their lives in the U.S. and Israel after the war, of Vietnam war protesters struggling for over a decade as the U.S. war makers kept on escalating the genocidal assault, of Black Lives Matter and other African American movements still fighting to overcome the legacy of slavery and the persistence of U.S. racism, of over 60 million refugees around the world risking all to find safety and peace, of the families in Gaza after the war in the summer of 2014 seeking to rebuild while the surviving children play on the rubble of destroyed homes and schools—Shechinah strengthened and continues to strengthen the will and heart of all of them by giving them the courage to stand in the fire to fight for love, kindness, justice, caring, compassion, and for bringing about the messianic era because YHVH knows that we will not reach that time without the fortitude of ordinary people like you and me. All of us need a nudge by Spirit to stand in and walk through the fire—no one can do it alone.

So Hagar returns, as did the line of protestors at the Salt Marches, the line of activists at the counters in the South, the Black Lives Matter activists who return to the streets again and again in spite of the contempt of so many, the refugees

Facing: Nidaa by Nabil Anani | Courtesy of Zawyeh Gallery, Palestine

> **Yet Rosh Hashanah is a time to imagine the world as it could be—in its perfect state, both on an individual and a societal level.**

who return to the boats to find a safe home. The Source of Life strengthens their fortitude just as S/he did Hagar's by saying—go back, stand up, speak your truth, help people see the errors of their ways.

Hagar returns, yet the troubled waters do not abate. Creating an alternative social arrangement is not so easy and requires persistence. Hagar and Sarah, while trying to live an alternative lifestyle of trusting in the abundance, of caring, kindness, and generosity, bump up against the realities and limitations of the society, the empire, the culture, the hierarchy and patriarchy of the times and continue to fight with each other—this time about Isaac and Ishmael's inheritances. Unable to trust in the abundance that YHVH promises, they end up distrusting one another and pitting themselves and their sons against one another (an offense for which both peoples' descendents, Arabs and Jews, are still paying dearly for to this day). Instead of re-grouping, of seeing that they are trying to create an alternative model for how to live and recognizing how hard it is to challenge the norms and strength of the dominant culture in which they live, they succumb to despair. This is understandable and tells us a lot about what we need to do to strengthen our resolve to offer an alternative model for how to live in the face of a society that does everything to undermine that possibility.

Sarah did not ultimately have the fortitude and strength needed to overcome her fears and resentment—there was no movement, no support for their alternative lifestyle—and so drawing on the hierarchical power afforded her as Abraham's first wife and the cultural mores of the time, Sarah tells Abraham to send Hagar and Ishmael out into the desert—into a dry morass.

Out in that land, there seems to be no care, just a bleak, hot, unfriendly landscape where death seems inevitable. This desert, the sense that nothing will change, is a common reality in social change struggles. Think of Nelson Mandela in prison for 25 years, think of people in movements who are ostracized for their prophetic vision being imprisoned, tortured, murdered. I think of Chelsea Manning, Edward Snowden, Mumia Abu-Jamal, and so many others. Or people who are simply trying to live lives of dignity and respect in a society that refuses to see them as equal—some speaking truth to power, others never having had the chance. I think of Michael Brown, Trayvon Martin, Sandra Bland. I think of Alan Kurdi, his brother Galip, and mother Rehan fleeing war-torn Syria only to wash up on the shores of Turkey. I think of the girls kidnapped by Boko Haram and those in brothels and sex slavery. I think of the victims of ISIS and U.S. drone attacks.

There are so many in the desert, lost and hopeless like Hagar. In her desperation and hopelessness, she places her son under a tree in the desert, unable to watch her son die in her arms. You can imagine her wails, like the sounds of the shofar we blow on Rosh Hashanah shortly after reading this story—the screeching and agony. Reminiscent of the sounds of parents the world over whose children, whose lovers, whose friends, whose parents are destined to become another statistic, unknown and unnamed, just another dying soul in the vast landscape without anyone to witness or hear their wails.

Yet, Shechinah hears their cries and when S/he does, S/he answers. S/he tells Hagar that she needs to go to Ishmael—not to worry, S/he will make a great nation of Ishmael as well. And the wells of water pour open and they survive.

They were the lucky ones. YHVH was there for them—S/he heard their cries in time. But YHVH is not there every time and certainly not as often as the world needs. And that is why the Source of Life strengthens our hearts—YHVH/Shechinah needs *us* to wake up, to show up, to be there for those dying on the seas, in the deserts, in their homes, and on the streets. They need us. It is we who must answer their cries—each and every one of us. When we show up, when we wail and cry together, when we stand up and say "Enough," the Spiritual Energy of the Universe will hear our cries, bolster our efforts, and significant change will transpire.

What we learn from this story is that we cannot do it alone. Simply creating isolated communities, while valiant, is not enough. What is needed now (and what was needed then) is a movement, a collection of people uniting together under a big umbrella that embraces our differences and allows us to see that we are all part of the unity of all being, a manifestation of Shechinah's love on earth.

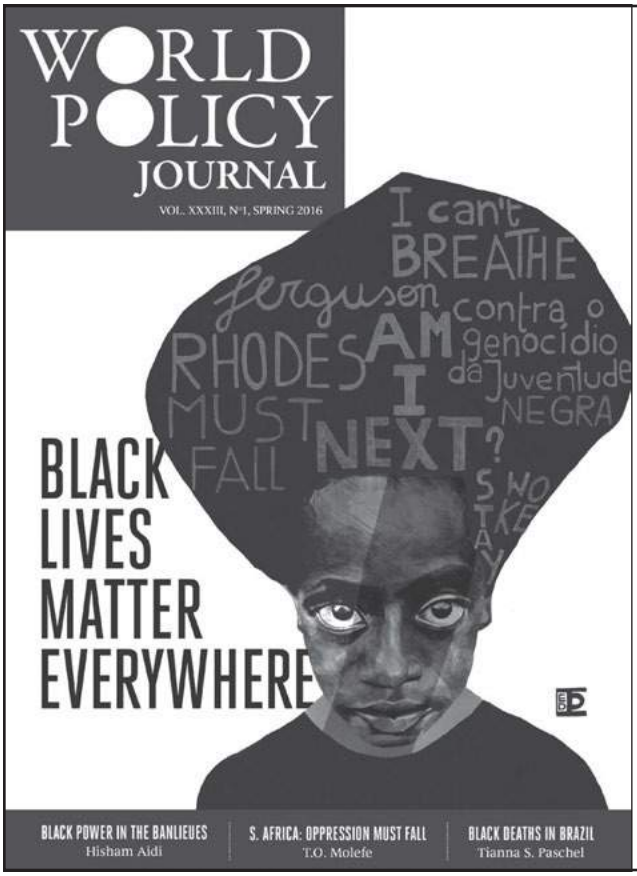
Part of our work is to help us bring this into greater reality for ourselves, for our communities, and for the larger society as a whole. As part of this effort we need to recognize that each of us is uniquely situated as an embodied manifestation of YHVH and thus are an interconnected part of the whole, even while we experience ourselves as separate entities, we also acknowledge that society creates and shapes us through the social constructs of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, class, and religion/faith/spirituality. So as we work to see that each of us is a manifestation of YHVH's love on earth, we also need to be able to recognize that as embodied beings we also experience the world differently because of these social constructs. Through working together across our

differences and seeing the God/Goddess energy within each of us, we can learn to honor and respect the fullness of who we are, to listen to each other respectfully, to disagree compassionately and to practice empathy along the way. We must remember that we are perfectly imperfect beings and as such welcome feedback as to how our actions, words, and behaviors impact others, and agree to hold each other and ourselves accountable with compassion along the way. Because we do not want to be divided, we need to be committed to curiosity and respect in our engagements with one another working to lift each other up just as Sarah and Hagar tried valiantly to do.

None of us will transform this world alone and none of us will destroy it alone either (well, maybe a narcissistic and super chauvinistic president with his finger on the nuclear launch mechanisms could, but we pray that will never happen). It takes the action and inaction of many people. Even if a madman were to give the order to launch nuclear war, those who receive it could refuse to follow his orders. To transform society we need to join together and unite our efforts and build a world based on love, kindness, generosity, care, compassion, empathy, seeing the sacred in each other, and the awe of the universe. When we reach that place, the Transformative Power of the Universe will hear us and sing, dance, and rejoice with us—being grateful that we have joined in the bringing of the messianic era.

I close with a prayer to help us on this journey.

Hear our Wails YHVH;
Help us, Shechinah, find our paths to our own and each other's souls;
Help us overcome our differences and see the beauty in one other;
Help us stand up, be brave, strong, and compassionate on our journey;
Give us the strength to forgive ourselves and others and to do what is called for to bring justice into the world;
Help us to maintain the strength and fortitude we need in this desert and to wash away all the conditioning of our present-day encumbrances that pour through our bodies and impede our capacity to see the light in each other and ourselves;
Help us strengthen our connection and love, learning new ways of being, of relating, and opening our hearts till the waters flow forth giving birth to new life, to new possibilities.
And please YHVH answer our cries—guide us because we are lost and lonely and scared in the desert, often unable to see the waters of life that redeem and save.
Bruchah at Ya Shechinah rofeah kol basar v'kol neshamot v'osah tikkun olam. Blessed are you Shechinah that heals all flesh and souls and makes transformation possible. ■



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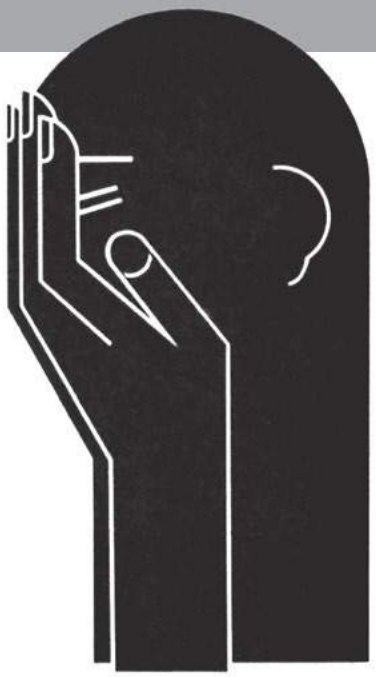

Yom Kippur's Call for Environmental Repentance

Overcoming Social Sin

CYNTHIA MOE-LOBEDA

Comments delivered at Yom Kippur service on Sept 23, 2015 at Beyt Tikkun Synagogue Without Walls in Berkeley, CA

FIRST I MUST THANK YOU, the people of the Beyt Tikkun community, for the invitation to be with you during these High Holy Days and also for the splendid spirit and warmth with which you have welcomed me to your community and to the Bay Area. I am grateful to you for making me feel at home!

I cannot talk with you in this context without also naming the deep tension that I experience in doing so as a follower of that extraordinary first-century Jewish teacher, Jesus of Nazareth. I am painfully aware that my faith forbearers, throughout history and still today, have brutalized and murdered yours. I am particularly aware because I am situated in the Lutheran heritage, and Martin Luther's violent writings against Jewish people are some of the most vitriolic anti-Semitic writings the world has known. They added fuel to the Holocaust.

Learning of that some years ago is one of the reasons that I believe one cannot be faithful to a religious tradition without being highly critical of where it has betrayed itself and the good it seeks to express. So I am situated very critically within Lutheran traditions. Rabbi Lerner once wrote that the Scripture contains both the word of God and the word of human brokenness. Reading that—long before I knew him or *Tikkun*—was very helpful to me in understanding that religious traditions, including my own, both pass on and betray the good that they seek to know and embody.

Human brokenness and betrayal of the good to which we are called gives rise to the profound need for and power of repentance. This need and power bring us to today, Yom Kippur.

Let me ask you a question: how many of you have experienced some moments of anguish or grief or anger or hunger to repent when your heart faces the realities of climate change or of economic injustice in our world today?

Take a step back in time, if you will, some millions of years. Imagine a world of splendor and abundance beyond belief—a dawn every 24 hours. Sun called forth from indigo sky. Birdsong fills the air. Fragrance wafts from living blossoms in glorious shapes and colors. Drops of glistening water powder the land at the birth of each day. Air shimmers with fluttering leaves. Light rays dance. Luscious fruits hang from trees. Everywhere is breath. Life is birthing.

In this fertile circle of life, the weave of interdependence is breathtaking: a radiant ball of energy from eons past issues energy to meet the needs of all. All that dies nurtures life for others. A decaying log nurses her young. Death brings life. Days and planets, creatures and colors are born and die and bring new life. Complexity and simplicity unite.

It is a wild, raucous, fire-spewing, earth-quaking, communion of life, joined in the hymn of all creation, praising the Source of all that is. Only one thing surpasses the splendor of this world. It is the radiant love of its Creator embracing Her creation and coursing through it. This world is beloved.

In the world's most recent moments appear creatures of particular consciousness. As all other creatures and elements, these human ones are crafted from the dust of long-past stars, fashioned *as* community, *by* community, and *for* community. They *depend* for life itself on a web of interrelated beings and elements. Take a moment now to close your eyes and give profound thanks for all of the beings who enable you to breathe this day—hundreds of unseen organisms living in their eyes, hair, and guts, thousands of life forms in a foot of soil, trees of the Amazon Forest.

CYNTHIA MOE-LOBEDA has a joint appointment as Professor of Theological and Social Ethics at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, Ca. She is the author of *Resisting Structural Evil: Love as Ecological-Economic Vocation*, *Healing a Broken World: Globalization and God*, and *Public Church: For the Life of the World*, and is co-author of *St. Francis and the Foolishness of God* and *Say to This Mountain: Mark's Story of Discipleship*. She is a contributing editor of *Tikkun*.

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The Source of all, the Holy One, reveals to the human ones their lifework. They are called not only to praise God but to love. Forever beloved by God, they are to receive God's gift of liberating, healing love, allowing it to work through them to transform whatever thwarts God's gift of abundant life for all. They are created to be lovers—offering to God, self, others, and the entire creation the marvelous and mysterious love that they are fed by the Great Mystery who gives them life. For by so doing, they are given, in the image of that Mystery, hearts of infinite compassion. And—as you well know—they are given ten guides or principles or rules for living. All are grounded in one firm foundation: You shall love your god (Deut. 6:5) and "love your neighbor" (Lev. 19:18). This norm of love is a gift to the world from the Torah and the prophets of ancient Israel. It is a particular kind of love centered in liberating justice. According to this norm of love, Earth's bounty is sufficient to provide for all, but *only if no one accumulates too much*.

However, rejecting God's guides for living, some of the human creatures crafted contrary rules. The new rules enable a few—largely descendants of Europe—to use most of Earth's bounty, and to use it up at deadly cost to countless others around the globe. The species created for justice-making love now lives the opposite. They—or rather, we—live in strata. For those on the bottom, "poverty means death."[1] The pathos of *our* situation stuns. We, the few who consume far more than our fair share of Earth's bounty, are complicit in ecocide and brutal economic injustice—not by intent or will, but by virtue of the economic and political structures that shape our lives.

Humankind now hovers on a precipice. One side of the precipice—continuing unchecked and unaccountable corporate and finance power to maximize consumption and the use of fossil fuels—does not look good. The other side, however, is the potential before us: the vision that we all hold—in varied forms—of a world in which 1) all people have the necessities for life with dignity and 2) Earth's life-systems flourish.

In the words of the Torah: The Holy One "set before [the human ones] life and death, blessings and curses," and commanded them to "choose life so that you and your descendants may live" (Deut. 30). They have chosen death. Unknowingly, unintentionally, blindingly, they have chosen for the living world, death. They alone now threaten Earth's capacity to sustain life.

This great choice is before us now—ways of life or ways of death. The choice of life requires radical change on all levels of being. Where something great is required of humankind, something great is required of religion. The task of religion in the early twenty-first century (the end of the petroleum era) is to plumb the depths of our religions traditions for the moral-spiritual wisdom and power to answer this calling.

We must bring the gifts of varied religious traditions into conversation with each other and with other bodies of human knowledge in the quest for a just and sustainable way of being human. Judaism, it seems to me, offers myriad gifts to the world for this great work of our day. We look briefly at two.

The first is the call to repentance—the gift of Yom Kippur. As taught by your rabbi, Michael Lerner, this is *not* a call to guilt or self-flagellation. Rather it is a call to turn the other direction, to turn back to God from the idols of accumulation, consumption, addiction to fossil fuels and such.

What would it mean to turn away from ways of life that are killing people the world over? What would enable us to embody repentance as radical resistance to systems of economic and ecological violence, and as lived commitment to build more just and sustainable alternatives?

One potent tool for such repentance is what I call "critical mystical vision." By this I mean a mode of vision that sees three things at once.

The first is seeing "what is," especially social structural sin where it parades as good or where we are seduced into ignoring or denying it. That is, we are called to see and understand more fully the forms of ecological devastation and social exploitation that pervade what may look like a good life.

Before we go any further, please note two things carefully:

1. We are talking about the **impact** of our lives, not our **intentions**.
2. We are talking about the impact—and therefore the moral weight—of our **collective** lives, not just our **individual** lives. By collective lives, I mean, among other things, our public policies and the corporate practices that concentrate wealth and power in few hands.

Daring to see the impact of our collective lives draws us into a stark landscape—a terrain from which we would far rather flee. But please have the courage to go with me into the region of social sin or structural sin. I do promise that this is not where we will end up in my comments today. The great truth shaping all that I say is the surmounting power of God's liberating healing presence, at-one-ment. Repentance is one step toward it.

So we step with courage to see the unprecedented two-fold moral crisis now facing us as a result of the practices and public policies that shape our daily lives. The first fold is ecological. The Torah teaches that God created a fruitful, fecund Earth—a planet that spawns and supports life with a complexity and generosity beyond human knowledge. Fundamental to Jewish faith is the claim that it is "good" (Genesis 1). According to Genesis' first creation story, "God saw that it was *tov.*" The Hebrew *tov*, while often translated as "good," also implies "life-furthering." And God said time and again that this creation was *tov*—a good that is life-furthering.

Here we arrive at a haunting theological problem. The primal act of God—creation—is not merely to create a magnificent world. This God creates a magnificently *life-furthering* world. The scandalous point is this: we are *undoing* that very

"*tov*," Earth's life-generating capacity. We—or, rather, some of us—are "uncreating." Indeed, one young and dangerous species has become a threat to Earth's life-generating capacity. The credible scientific community is of one accord about this basic reality.

Less widely accepted, however, is a corollary point of soul-searing moral importance. It is this: the horrific consequences of climate change and other forms of ecological degradation are not suffered equally by Earth's people. Nor are the world's people equally responsible. Those least responsible for the Earth crisis are suffering and dying first and foremost from it.

Here we have moved into that ominous link between ecological degradation and social injustice and the second fold of the moral crisis shaping our world today: the social justice impacts of ecological degradation. Eco-justice is the term used to designate this nexus of social and ecological.

It was in India that I realized more fully the extent that race-based and class-based climate injustice permeates our lives. Climate change may be the most far-reaching manifestation of white privilege and class privilege yet to face humankind. What do I mean? Climate change is caused overwhelmingly by the world's high-consuming people who are disproportionately descendants of Europe. Yet, it is wreaking death and destruction first and foremost on impoverished people who also are disproportionately people of color. The now nearly 25 million climate refugees are primarily Asian and African. That number will increase dramatically and will represent overwhelmingly people of Asia, Africa, and low-lying Pacific Islands. The Maldives, for example, a nation of islands no more than a mile wide, is threatened with loss of its entire landmass due to rising seas. Martin Parry, chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) Working Group II, declares: "The people most affected by climate change are and will be those living in developing countries . . . and within those regions it will be the poor that will be most affected."[2] Even a slight degree of warming decreases the yield of the world's food staples—wheat, corn, barley, rice—in seasonally dry areas.[3] Subsistence farmers and people with little money will go hungry. We will not. Coastal peoples without resources to protect against and recover from the fury of climate-related weather disasters are not the people largely responsible for gas emissions. Nor are they, for the most part, white.

Many voices of the Global South recognize this as climate debt (or climate colonialism). In theological terms, these are manifestations of "social sin." The prayer of Al Cheyt in which we have named were we have "missed the mark," is calling us to confess such social sin.

Enough—danger lurks.

Facing realities such as these breeds despair and powerlessness. To acknowledge the widespread suffering that may be linked to my material abundance would be tormenting. How could I live with the knowledge if I truly took it in? And if I dare to see, then I view also the power and complexity of structural injustice and the relative insignificance of individual efforts at change. Where would I find the moral-spiritual power to transgress tidal waves of cultural, political, and economic force pushing to maintain the way things are? A sense of inevitability may suck away at hope.

I speak straight from the heart here. As a young person, when I first learned about social sin or social injustice—especially U.S. economic imperialism—I fell into profound despair that lasted for a long time. In making my way out of that despair I learned that seeing "what is" is dangerous and unwise unless that form of vision is accompanied by a second and a third.

The second is seeing "what could be"—more just and sustainable alternatives. This means attuning ourselves to the movements, groups, and people—both distant and near—who are working in multiple ways toward more just and sustainable societies. These efforts remain largely unknown to much of the American public because they are not highlighted in the public discourse. They include the work of *Tikkun* magazine and the Network of Spiritual Progressives to promote a "New Bottom Line" and a constitutional amendment that will—among other things—rescind the rights of personhood granted to corporations and take big money out of elections. Work toward alternatives also includes fair trade channels, vital and growing networks of small local business, grassroots resistance to unfettered fossil fuel extraction, eco-theology, greening synagogues, mosques, and churches, boycotts, demonstrations and civil disobedience, alternative energy sources, urban gardening, carbon neutral towns and cities, local agriculture, socially and environmentally conscious investing, and a host of other examples. You of Beyt Tikkun Synagogue are part of that vast movement. Seeing the outpouring of creative alternatives—its power as a global movement—is vital to critical vision. A Chinese proverb cautions, "unless we change direction, we will get where we are going." Changing direction begs first recognizing, even dimly, alternative viable destinations. This is the second form of seeing in critical mystical vision.

The third mode of vision is recognizing the transformative and repairing presence of the Holy One, coursing throughout all of creation, and working within it to repair and transform this world. That is, acknowledging sacred powers at work in the cosmos enabling life and love ultimately to reign over death and destruction. I call this "mystical vision."

"Critical mystical vision," then, is a phrase to signify the union of vision in these three forms:

1. Seeing "what is going on," and especially unmasking systemic evil that masquerades as good.
2. Seeing "what could be," that is, alternatives.

3. Seeing ever more fully the sacred transforming and healing Spirit of life coursing throughout creation and leading it—despite all evidence to the contrary—into abundant life for all.

My point is that this three-fold vision is crucial for repentance. That is because we cannot repent of cruelty and injustice unless we admit that it exists and that we are part of it. Acquiescing to the way things are in this climate-violent and economically violent society, rather than repenting, resisting, and building alternatives, is so very easy precisely because—failing to see clearly the full reality of the horror—we fail to repent. Said differently, the seductive lure of the way things are is so fierce, so mesmerizing, so seemingly impenetrable because we do not fully see the depth of the crisis and, in particular, the extent to which those who "suffer most acutely [from climate change] are also those who are least responsible for the crisis to date."

Judaism brings to our perilous situation of climate change and gross economic violence the call to repent—to repent collectively for our collective wrongdoing. Judaism issues this call straight from the heart of its High Holy Days—*and* offers powerful rituals to guide people in this repentance. It may be a necessary step toward freedom from social sin—and climate sin in particular. We can repent only if we honestly see: 1) What is going on, 2) More just and sustainable alternatives already in the making, and 3) The transformative power of the universe at play, including in our communities of repentance and resistance. Judaism has at its heart the crucial task of holding these three in one lens. Vision of this sort is subversive because it reveals a future in the making and breeds hope for moving into it.

Jewish traditions offer a second gift to the great work of our day. That gift is the great norm of love, understood not only as an interpersonal virtue but as an ecological–economic calling. We began these comments with God's call to the human creature—heard in Torah—to love God, neighbor, self, and the created world. Two millennia of people in the heritage of Sarah and Abraham have sought to understand and heed this calling "to love the Lord your God" (Deut. 6:5), and "to love your neighbor as yourself" (Lev. 19:18). Our responsibility as people of faith, Martin Luther King, Jr., declared, "is to discover the meaning of this command and seek passionately to live it out in our daily lives."[4] What love is and requires is a great moral question permeating Jewish as well as Christian history.

The question for us takes new form: what does love mean for the world's high consumers if we are, through climate change, killing people and threatening Earth's God-given capacity to generate life? Never before in this three—or four millennia-old faith tradition have the stakes in heeding our calling been so high.

If sin is structural—not only individual—then so, too, is the force that counters sin: love. Love in our day takes structural form, as it did in the texts of Torah and the Prophets. More specifically, today love in its structural form becomes ecological as well as economic and political. This means that love is lived out not only in how we treat one another but in how we shape our business practices and the corporate world, our institutions, our public policy. To illustrate, love itself may beckon us to seek a constitutional amendment to limit corporate powers, or demand water justice in California, or stand up against racism in the criminal injustice system, or work for climate reparations, or counter free trade treaties that really bring freedom to exploit.

In closing, it is an astounding moment in history to be people who serve the God revealed in the Hebrew Prophets, the Torah, and the Wisdom writings, and in the life-transforming, world-mending Spirit of *tikkun olam* that is present with and within us, and that speaks in winds and waters calling mountains to bear witness and skyscapes to sing.

Today U.S. citizens of relative economic privilege bear a sacred calling. It is to reverse a fiercely compelling trajectory of climate violence linked to economic injustice. That is, we are called to resist ways of life and power structures that generate climate change and its disproportionate impact on the world's already impoverished people, and to rebuild Earth-serving, justice-seeking ways of being human in the twenty-first century. Will the people of this synagogue step up to the plate? Will we heed the calling?

My purpose in these comments is to nurture among us all, myself included, moral-spiritual power to repent of what we are doing to the Earth and its vulnerable people by the way that we live, and then—with joy and courage born of faith in the transformative power of the universe, the power known by some as God, Yud Hey Vav Hey, or Allah—to change direction and, in the words of Torah, to "choose life" so that we and our descendants might live. ■

Notes

1. Salvadoran Jesuit priest, Jon Sobrino, in conversation.

2. In an interview with the International Institute for Environment and Development, "IIED Interviews : Martin Parry on Climate Change" at http://www.iied.org/climate-change/key-issues/climate-negotiations-capacity-building/iied-interviews-martin-parry-climate-change. Parry is chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Task Group on Scenarios for Climate Impact Assessment and member of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the United Nations Environment Programme's Climate Impacts and Responses Programme.

3. Parry et.al., *Contributions of Working Group II.* (Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York: Cambridge University Press).

4. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Strength to Love," *A Testament of Hope: the Essential Writings and Speeches of M. L. King, Jr.* (San Francisco: Harper, 1991), 48. Here King is speaking specifically of the commandment to love enemies.

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An elephant before a circus performance in Canada. (Jo-Anne McArthur | WeAnimals.org)

The Sixth Day of Creation

Dominion and the Factory Settings

ANA LEVY-LYONS

Over the past year, I preached a sermon series on the Torah's seven days of creation at First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn, NY. In this series I lifted up the images of natural beauty and ecological abundance in this passionate text—a text that is too often claimed by (and ceded to) hard-line creationists and climate change deniers. Far from the conservative politics that such voices promote, I see the Genesis text as a call for human humility and environmental stewardship. It highlights the gorgeous and fragile gift we have been given in our planet Earth, celebrates its diversity, and casts humans as merely one thread in its living web. My interpretations in this series are partly my own midrash and partly the insights of traditional commentators. The following article is adapted from a sermon I delivered on the sixth day of creation, the creation of land animals and humans.

Creation stories, religious and scientific, invite us into a headspace of humility. They call us to zoom our camera out and see ourselves in the context of literally everything; to see time and space as realities that didn't have to be and may some day no longer be; to see ourselves as tiny dots in the vast universe—dots that didn't have to be and will someday no longer be. They call us to ask ourselves, "What is the relationship we ought to have to the rest of this mysterious and vast and wondrous creation?"

In the Biblical creation story, we humans don't get our own special day of creation. We're thrown in with the other land animals. (We are animals, after all: we share 96 percent of our genes with chimpanzees and 92 percent with mice.) On the sixth day, before getting to the humans, God makes all

ANA LEVY-LYONS is senior minister at First Unitarian Congregational Society in Brooklyn, New York. She is writing book on the Ten Commandments as a radical spiritual and political vision. Visit facebook.com/Ana.LevyLyons.author. Twitter: @Ana_LevyLyons. Email: analevylyons@hotmail.com

the other land-dwelling *nefshot chayot* (living souls or living selves)—the wild beasts and the cattle and the creeping things. And God declares them "good." All by themselves. Full stop. Good.

Then, and only then, do humans get created, without a special day of our own, and without a separate pronouncement as "good."

But humans do get something that no other creature has received: we get power. The text says, "Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." Dominion. *Ouch*. That word is pretty problematic for religious liberals. Especially because this vision of humans having dominion over animals is clearly the reality we live in. We *do* have dominion over animals. We use them for food and we harness their reproductive systems for more food. We make clothing out of them. We keep animals as pets, put them in zoos, and hunt them for sport. We destroy their habitats for money. We deplete their oceans. We drive 150 species to extinction every day. So there is no question that we have dominion over animals. The question is, is this what dominion was meant to look like?

The same passage lays out in greater detail the relationship between humans, other animals, and plants by establishing the food chain. The first thing God says to the first humans after giving them dominion over animals is, "Here, I have placed all the vegetation that produces seed that is on the face of all the Earth for you and every tree, which has in it the fruit of a tree producing seed. It will be food for you and for all the wild animals of the earth and for all the birds of the skies and for all the creeping things on the earth, everything in which there is a living being: every plant of vegetation for food." Note that animals are conspicuously absent from the menu here. In this story, the first humans were supposed to be vegan. It wasn't just that they weren't supposed to eat animals; it was that animals were not food.

Before humans had done anything good or bad, before humans had done anything at all, this was the understanding. We were like an operating system with no software and no data. The initial factory settings were vegan. (And for that matter, organic, local, and seasonal.) To be clear, this is not about what early humans actually ate. This is about a mythic tradition that's been passed down through the generations. This was the depiction of the pure, literally Edenic start to the world. It's a poignant depiction, especially because the man who wrote down this story (and it was probably a man) was most likely a meat eater. Already at the time of the writing of Genesis there was a sense of a painful gap between the world as it was and the world as it was meant to be.

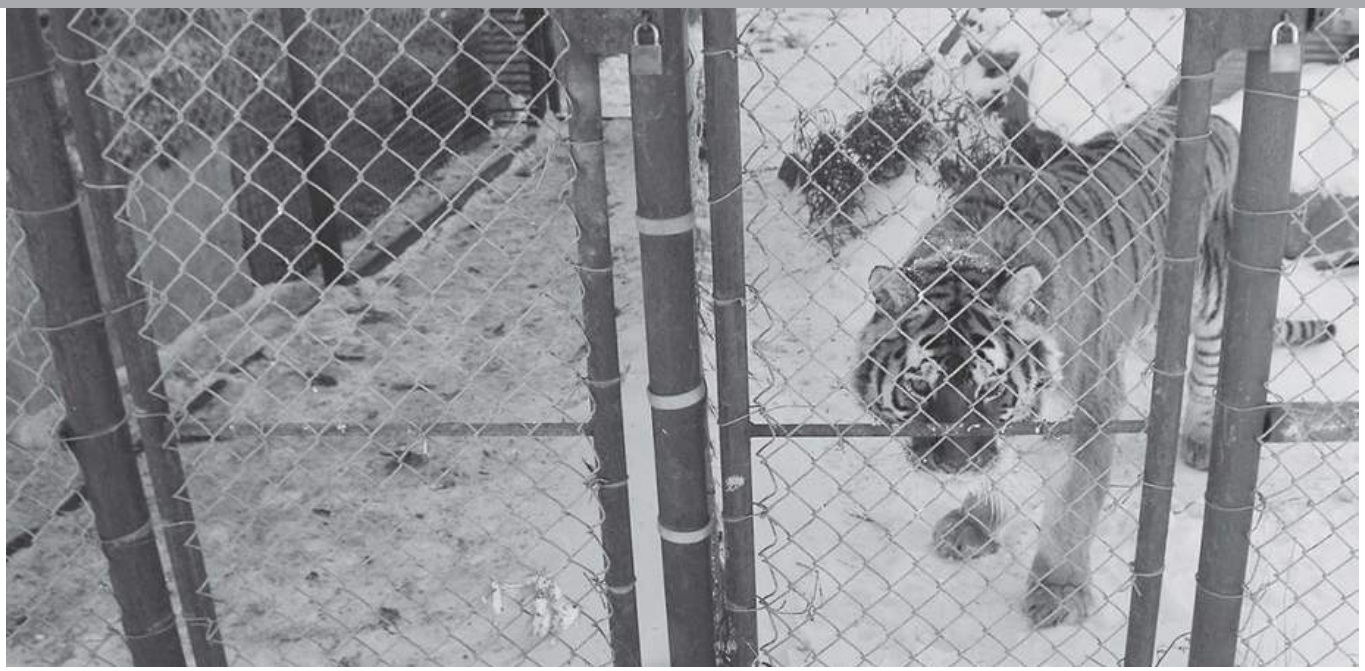
Fast forward to the flood story, which comes about because of humanity's violence. The text actually says God regrets having made humans. And when you look at the totality of our impact on this planet in our brief tenancy here, maybe the author was prescient. When finally the rain stops, God relents and brings the goal posts in a little closer. God essentially says to Noah, "Okay, fine. You guys can't handle the factory settings. So from now on you can kill animals for food, but don't eat their blood and don't kill other humans. And by the way, I promise I will never bring another flood and destroy all of you ever again." It's sweet in a way, because God is now seeing human nature and accepting the humans as they are. But it's also sad because it is clearly a fallen state. There's still a sense that everything would have been better if humans had accepted the boundaries God had placed on our power.

What eating animals has become today, the way it has impacted this planet, the author of Genesis could not have envisioned in his wildest dreams. Think climate change. Animal agriculture as an industry is responsible for at least a quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions and massive deforestation, which makes it one of the biggest contributors to global warming. It uses huge amounts of water: 2,500 gallons of water to produce one pound of beef. Animal agriculture is the leading cause of species extinction, ocean dead zones, and water pollution. The whole spectacular creation described in Genesis, the skies and the seas, the grasses and trees, the delicate interwoven systems of life are being damaged by humans violating that very first boundary on our power.

And then there's the animals themselves—the living souls. The meat and dairy that we get as a matter of course in grocery stores and restaurants, the normal meat and dairy that most of us eat, come from animals that have generally led lives of nightmarish suffering. The slice of pizza at the corner pizzeria. The chick in that salad. The eggs in that quiche. The life of an animal on a factory farm is too horrific and heartbreaking even to be believed by the majority of Americans.

Slaughterhouse workers are also victims in this economy. Slaughterhouse jobs are very low-wage, dangerous jobs where humans are made to do violence to other living souls. Small studies are starting to show there's a great emotional (and, I would add, spiritual) toll—these workers have higher rates of depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. There is more domestic violence in towns with a slaughterhouse. As a matter of survival, these workers have to shut down their natural compassion.

The question of dominion raised by day six of the creation story is a broad one—even broader than how we treat animals and the earth. It's the question of how do we use power when we have it? How *should* we use power when we have it? Every one of us has power of some kind. Power in personal relationships, power in a family, power in institutions like a workplace or a classroom. Some of us have employees who report to us, some of us have children, some of us have power through physical strength. Some of us have held power as



A circus tiger in captivity in Canada in 2008.

Jo-Anne McArthur | WeAnimals.org

members of the police or military. Some of us have power by virtue of our social position—privileges of race or gender or class. That kind of power tends to be invisible to the person who has it, but it's very real. And collectively we humans have Godlike power. That, too, is invisible. It turns out that our atmosphere—our *rakiya*—is so thin we can actually change its chemical composition by what we do here on earth.

We all have power of some kind, some a lot more than others. And when people abuse or misuse whatever power they have, it produces all the various evils in this world. Everything from the police killings of unarmed people of color to schoolyard bullying to the suffering of factory farm animals to the starvation of children in Madaya by Assad's regime all come about from the abuse or misuse of power. When the slaughterhouse worker beats his wife, he is abusing the power of his greater physical strength. But he in turn is a casualty of abuse of power by the corporations that employ him. Their greater financial power has forced him to take the job available: poverty-wage work that wrecks his health and shuts down his heart. Take an even wider view and those corporate executives themselves are mired in the massive systems of abuse of our human power—the power to do violence to animals, humans, and the earth itself in the name of money. Surely this is not what "dominion" was supposed to mean.

But what was it supposed to mean? What on earth did the first tellers of the creation story think God was thinking in giving humans "dominion?" One way to try to understand the intent of words in the Bible is to look at how those same words are used in other context. The Hebrew verb *lirdot*, to have dominion, aside from appearing in the creation story, also appears in one of the psalms. This particular psalm is Psalm 72, composed for the coronation of King Solomon, the Biblical great and wise king of Israel. The psalm uses that same word:

> May he have dominion from sea to sea,
> and from the river to the ends of the earth . . .
> For he delivers the needy when they call,
> the poor and those who have no helper.
> He . . . saves the lives of the needy.
> From oppression and violence he redeems their life;
> and precious are they in his sight.

Dominion is power and as such it's neutral. But I believe that the message encoded in the sixth day of creation is that we humans are entrusted with power. We are meant to use it for good. Like Solomon, we are meant to use our power to serve the poor and those who have no helper; to redeem the creatures of the earth from oppression and violence, not to cause it; to hold every living soul precious in our sight. The creation story attests to the inherent goodness of a natural world animated with living souls. We are not empowered to destroy it; we are called to be faithful stewards of it.

We know that we're not going to do it perfectly. We think back to the story of the flood and even ancient people knew that we are prone to misuse of power and even violence. Our power is so potent, so complicated, so marbled and hard to handle. We humans have Godlike dominion, and yet we're only human. We don't even approach perfection; we miss the mark in every area despite all our most noble efforts. So my hope, my blessing for all of us, is twofold. First, like God in the flood story seeing that we are who we are, may we be accepting of one another and ourselves. And second, may we not be too accepting. May we not accept willful ignorance. May we not accept preference or convenience as justifications for participating in systems of cruelty. And may we not accept a pace of change that's too glacial lest we—literally—invoke the floodwaters once again. ■

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From Occupy to the Occupation

Indeterminate Temporariness

ADI OPHIR

A Common Experience

The temporal finitude of everything human is produced and distributed unequally by social forces. A work contract, time spent at school or in prison, vacation time, longevity—these are all politically determined goods and evils whose production and distribution should be studied as elements in the general economy of any society. The economy of time presupposes finite, more or less fixed and measurable time cells, which have use and exchange value related to duration, parts of the day, periods of the year, the activity assigned to the time cell, the ability to use it for its purpose, among others. But the concept of temporariness captures not only the way social time is organized in more or less fixed slots; it also reflects the way in which **the end** of any such time slot is part of its **experience**, and the fact that this experience cannot be reduced to the use or exchange value of a certain unit of time. In this piece I will look at temporariness as a certain form of temporalization in which finitude is experienced as a duration whose end is promised, proclaimed, calculated, awaited, and in any case expected, with fear or with joy, yet whose end nevertheless fails to arrive.

Temporariness is not simply a temporal limitedness but the way this limitedness is brought into play—experienced, articulated, problematized—in the very duration of the finite. The termination of a finite state of affairs is certain, but how and when exactly things will come to an end is not. This mixture of certainty and indetermination is sensed, more or less acutely, and it gives rise to a variety of tactics in relation to the terminating point itself as well as to the way time flows toward it. Temporary is the mode of experiencing an end that is sure to arrive but is not arriving, it is the experience of the end as not yet, and of the not yet as unending. It is an experience of a future whose coming in the form of the "not yet" plagues the present and cuts through its flow, from one moment to the next.

The experience of the not yet may be episodic and benign: an occupied lavatory, a tenant who fails to leave his apartment after the termination of a contract, a pregnancy that lasts long after the due date. It may also be systemic and structured: delays in flight schedules, returning a debt, ending a military occupation. In all these cases, when a temporary occupation of a time cell fails to come to an end, a timetable designed to regulate the use of, or presence in, a spatial cell or a social position has failed to function, and the occupation of a time cell has become indefinite. This extension is also temporary, of course, but it is experienced as non-finite, an end that presents itself as not coming. The expected but indefinitely suspended moment of termination can no longer belong to an organized timetable, coordinated with other moments of transition. Everything may hinge on this moment in time, but it cannot be trusted, calculated, or calibrated. This is a moment of time that literally went out of joint.

Two Examples

Consider two types of temporary occupation: the Occupy Movement and a military occupation. Activists of occupy movements usually avoided setting terms for the evacuation of the public spaces they were occupying, but they also did not claim permanent possession of these spaces. Because they refused to set the terms that should be met in order to terminate their occupation, they were not partners for negotiation; they could have been defeated only by use of overt violence, which most western governments tend to avoid or postpone. This was one source of the movement's strength, but also of its weakness, part of the reason why it was tolerated for a while, but ultimately dispersed. Most of those involved in the Occupy Movement, political authorities and activists alike, shared a tacit understanding of the situation as temporary. The question soon became that of *Kairos*, the right time to call an end to the protest or force the evacuation of the occupiers, and the whole event soon came to be governed by the expectation of that moment of ending.

A similar logic, only with inverted relations between a ruling power and those who dare to resist, is at play in a military occupation. Belligerent occupation is an effective control over a territory conquered by force and without the volition of the sovereign or inhabitants of that territory.[1] International law recognizes de facto this type of rule and grants it a legal status, but only under the assumption that it is temporary. The

ADI OPHIR is Professor Emeritus, Tel Aviv University and Mellon Visiting Professor, The Cogut Center for the Humanities and the program for Middle East Studies, Brown University. His most recent book (in Hebrew) is *Divine Violence: Two Essays on God and Disaster* (Van Leer 2013).

modern law of belligerent occupation presupposes its clear distinction from conquest precisely because the former "is conceived to be temporary and the latter seems permanent."[2] The Israeli Occupation of Palestinian Territories, however, has already lasted almost half a century (forty-nine years), but has never been officially declared as a permanent conquest. It is older today than the apartheid regime was when it came to an end in South Africa, almost as old as the French Fifth Republic or as the Soviet regime was in 1965, and there is no end in sight. And yet, all Israeli governments since 1967 repeatedly expressed their commitment to end the occupation when certain conditions are met. Israeli Justice Meir Shamgar drew the logical conclusion: "Pending an alternative political or military solution this system of government could, from a legal point of view continue indefinitely."[3] In an excellent paper on the subject, Ben Naftali and others interpret this to mean that Israeli rule over Palestine has changed from a state of affairs which has a definite end to a state of affairs that has no clear end in sight. They call the first situation "temporary" and the second "indefinite." The latter, they argue, is still a military occupation, not a conquest (for which formal annexation is a condition), albeit an illegal one. Comparing the difference between legal and illegal occupation to the difference between indefinite detention and fixed "temporary" imprisonment they argue that indefinite detention is illegal, for imprisonment would be legitimate and legal only if its time would be fixed and known; otherwise, had "administrative detention were permitted indefinitely, liberty would have lost it meaning."[4]

The Ideological and Structural Functions of Temporariness

Like most Israeli jurists, Justice Shamgar thought otherwise. He wrote the above statement in 1982 when "the Occupation was young," as the Hebrew expression goes, and a political solution was still imaginable. The conception of indefinite temporariness he helped formulate had at that time a clear advantage and a clear function. Israel, and all its allies, could speak about the Occupation as external to the Israeli system of government, irrelevant for the democratic nature of the Israeli regime, while ignoring the fact that Israel was already transforming the Territories. As is well-known, this transformation has been far reaching. It includes the landscape and infrastructure, demography, and economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). The last traces of the Green Line have been erased, large parts of the OPT have been integrated within the territorial space of Israel proper while other parts have been enclaved, segregated, and imagined as extra-territorial. And yet the temporariness of all these changes was, for a long time, the form of its exceptionalism which legitimized, in Israeli eyes at least, both the status of Palestinians as non-citizens and the expropriation of their land. Temporariness was the way both the Territories and their non-Jewish inhabitants were—and perhaps still are—included in the Israeli political system; they are actively excluded because they can only be temporarily included and indefinitely included through their repeated exclusion.

The more substantial these changes have become, the more important the temporariness of the Occupation has become for the image of Israel as a liberal-democratic state. In the last decade, however, and especially since Benjamin Netanyahu became, once again, Israel's prime minister in 2009, the function of this indefinite temporariness for the Israeli regime has changed dramatically. On the one hand, for most Israelis and for many of Israel's allies, liberal democracy has lost much of its value and appeal as an ideological currency. The permanence of Israel's rule over more and more space and aspects of life in the OPT is openly admitted, proclaimed and promised at all levels of public, official and legal discourse in Israel. At the same time, temporariness has become a constitutive moment in the structure of the Israeli regime. The purpose of the rest of this text is to describe and try to understand this seemingly paradoxical shift. I will address the structural shift first, and then come back to the ideological role of temporariness.

In order to understand the structural shift we should first note the obvious: it is wrong to understand the indefinite temporariness of Israel's rule in the OPT as a result of the failure to reach a political agreement with the Palestinians. It is rather the other way around: the failure to achieve a political agreement stems from the immense power of the system of government in the OPT and its ability to reproduce itself. This system can reproduce itself only as long as it rejects the two opposing options: bringing the Occupation to an end by withdrawing from the Territories or by formally annexing them. Realizing either option means a thorough and structural transformation of the Israeli regime as a whole. In the first case it means partition, uprooting of settlements, ethnic cleansing (with the dislocation of half a million Jews) that might lead to a civil war and further ethnic cleansing (of Palestinian citizens of Israel); in the second case, it means either formal apartheid or a bi-national state. The indeterminacy of the Occupation is not a result of a political impasse and the failure to decide between the two options but rather of the power of the system to postpone the decision. And it is only through this postponement that the Occupation can become indefinite. The occupiers insist on the indefinite temporariness of its rule, and this sense of temporariness is precisely what they share with the occupied. The indeterminate, problematized termination-to-come becomes a perspective from which both sides organize their present, remember and reassemble their past, and await their future, collaborating as it were in the effort to undermine all plans to bring the Occupation to an end.

Huwara checkpoint, near Nablus, 2006.

And yet the distinction between indefinite and fixed temporariness that I have assumed here, together with the jurists quoted above, is far from being obvious. It can be maintained only by means of a powerful enforcement of the rule of law, and one may wonder whether it has ever been fully enforced. Many things may cause an (temporary?) extension of a fixed time cell, the exercise of sovereign power not least among them. When temporariness becomes indeterminate, the not yet is made present and time becomes the question for everything ordinary. The coming to an end of a given state of affairs is present in the form of a suspended "*a-venir*" and a temporal indeterminacy plagues the experience of every occupied site, seat, position, rule, or territory. This temporariness is actively produced by forcing or revealing the indeterminacy of ending and is an integral aspect of the art of ruling by decrees, generating multiple spatial partitions and social distinctions, which the ruling power may always suspend or prolong by other decrees. This form of rule is not exclusively Israeli, of course, but in the OPT it has been brought to perfection.

Ordinary space-time cells are relatively clear-cut and well ordered, and when exceptions occur they are experienced as deviations from relatively clear rules. Living by such rules requires an ongoing effort to eliminate the indefinite aspect of the temporal. Points of termination may be desired or feared, tempting or threatening, but at least their terms are established and made known. Fixing such terms takes place by means of rules and edicts, vows and contracts, and trust that the promises implied in all these will be respected. In a multi-ethnic, multi-national, multi-class, and multi-gender city, where the flow of people, goods, money, images, information, and ideas is incessant, landscapes are constantly transformed, and property and jobs are fast changing hands. The lower one's socioeconomic and civic status is, the more vulnerable one is to the incertitude and anxieties of indeterminate temporariness. A map that could record the distribution of fixed and indeterminate time cells (in the form of housing, jobs, detention, personal relations, etc.) would be a good indicator of social stratification and a guide for observing different modes of coexistence among people from different strata. The difference between a cosmopolitan metropolis in a liberal democracy and a zone under military occupation or colonial rule may be described in terms of the patterns of distribution of indeterminate time cells among different ethnic groups and across the relevant space. In a liberal city they would be more equally distributed, less frequently, and for relatively shorter duration; under colonial or military power they would be concentrated in particular areas and allocated frequently and for longer duration to particular groups only. (A liberal democracy, however, should be sharply distinguished from a neoliberal polity, where the temporal regime resembles the type that prevails in some colonial situations more than that of a liberal city.)

Israel's rule in the OPT (and to a lesser extent to the Bedouin's areas in the Negev) clearly exemplifies the latter case. In the OPT, Palestinians have been denied (to various degrees of intensity, at different periods and regions) a clear sense of termination of what has been pronounced and proclaimed as temporary and a clear sense of continuity of what has been proclaimed as permanent. Indeterminate temporariness affects relations of power, ownership, possession, access, and forms of engagement and association. At any moment existing timetables might be scrapped and new ones imposed. Suspension, in this case, is not a passive state of

Michael Loadenthal | gmu.academia.edu/MichaelLoadenthal

Occupy Wall Street in Zuccotti Park.

affairs, and not merely an effect of power relations, but a productive generator of such relations as well as the condition for, and the form of their reproduction. The authority and capacity to introduce indeterminate temporariness into the minute details of every sphere of life, and into every aspect of the social fabric of the occupied population, is a mark of the occupier's sovereignty and a distinct form of its rule, made possible by and hinges on the great principle of indeterminacy that runs through the unending military occupation.

Sovereignty

By calling this principle "a state of exception" or resorting to a rhetoric of "the camp," one easily misses the acuteness of the temporal dimension for this particular form of power, the ordinariness of its impact, and the many aspects of ordinary Palestinian life that remain (temporarily, of course) undisturbed by it. The point is not that "the logic of sovereignty" described by Carl Schmitt, Giorgio Agamben, and others, does not apply here, but rather that the Israeli rule in the OPT demonstrates that and how it should be reformulated.

The ultimate principle of sovereignty is not the power to decide on the exception but the power—both authority and capacity—to decide on the end of the temporary and on the temporariness of ends. Sovereignty is the right of the last word and the potentiality of bringing (or not) things to their end. Declaring the exception, suspending the law, even "the constitution in its entirety" (Schmitt) is but one way to bring things to their end, temporarily as it may be (an end to the rule of law, in this case). This potentiality need not be realized; it is enough to bring it into presence, to sow indeterminacy in everything temporary. The power to decide on terminations and extensions of any time slot is always also the power—the capacity and the right—not to decide. Withholding a decision is sovereignty at its height. Decisions are always also about termination, and hence, ultimately, sovereignty is the power to decide on the decision, or more precisely on the moment of decision, which may be far more important than the decision itself.

In order to have such an effect, the sovereign's potentiality must be performed, made present, understood for what it stands for, and taken seriously by those whom it is supposed to affect. When this happens, the very presence of a sovereign—be it God, the prince, the people, or any of their authorized substitutes and representatives—suffices to render temporary everything permanent. Sovereignty means potential termination whose realm of application is indefinite and whose ultimate effect lies not in the decision to terminate but rather in its suspension. One becomes fully subjected to sovereign power when one is at grips with waiting for the sovereign decision.

This may be the spell of the Messiah, but in the modern state the waiting is generated by the terror of minute indeterminate temporization, administrative detentions, appeals for pardon, requests for travel or work permit, and more generally, by any form of rule by decrees, so common in colonial regimes, of which the military occupation of the OPT is but one version. Kafka understood better than anyone the intimate link between the Messiah and the outcast generated by the terror of indefinite waiting and expectation. But he also understood that this type of power does not emanate from any single point in space but rather consists in a whole apparatus that stretches throughout the social space and makes present the potentiality of rendering temporary time cell (in) definite.

David Shankbone | blog.shankbone.org

Israeli rule in the OPT cannot be described as pure potentiality, of course. Its brute violence erupts more or less randomly, but incessantly. Still, indefinite waiting and the surprises of unexpected decisions that produce new forms of waiting characterize this rule better than its lethal effects. Even with a new round of violence in Gaza every two to three years, the number of victims killed and injured annually, awful as it is, falls short of the average number of people killed and injured each month in some of the neighboring countries. And even in Gaza, or rather around it, the main form of rule between the rounds of wholesale destruction and death is indefinite temporariness—of the opening or closure of the terminals, of the permits to move in and out, to import or export, etc. It may be more accurate to characterize this rule by the intricate system of separations—territorial, national, and civic—it enforces and the destructive, long-term effects of these separations, and yet the ultimate principle that determines these effects is indeterminate temporariness. The system of separation is so powerful precisely because existing rules of separation are so often suspended and new, temporary ones are constantly generated.[5]

Resistance and Terror

This system of rule faces the resistance it deserves. At least some forms of this resistance—especially of the kind practiced by suicide bombers, and more recently individual stabbers and the like—consist in a perfect inversion of the logic of sovereignty I've described here, and seek to intensify the latter up to the point of its own implosion. This inversion is terrorism. The terrorists decide on the moment of death, theirs and others', and force anxious, ongoing, permanent vigilance on the authorities and everyone living under their threat. No one is waiting for their decision, everyone capable tries to avert and preempt it. Under their threat, space becomes indefinite, its closure impossible, and its policing thorough and permanent. These terrorists are tacticians with little interest in strategy, often operating outside a means-end logic, in the realm of the spectacle. Their time is the time of the discrete moment, the time of volcanoes and earthquakes where what counts is the moment of eruption; their violence is pure actuality, shattering differences between indefinite and fixed time cells. In all these respects these terrorists present sovereign power with its perfect mirror.

Israel/Palestine is by no means the only place where the logic of sovereignty is embodied in an apparatus of indeterminate temporality, or where the terror of pure actuality and discrete temporality is exercised. But it is rare to find the two inverted forms of power in more intimate proximity and conceptual clarity. This rare proximity may help us understand the new ideological role of indeterminate temporariness in Israeli political discourse. The Israeli regime no longer needs the temporariness of the Occupation as a means to guarantee a semblance of democracy. Facing—or pretending to face, it makes no difference—the spectacular terrorism of the moment, indeterminate temporariness now appears not only as the basic principle of sovereignty but as the form of rationality of the entire security apparatus. Or better yet, sovereignty resides in each and every element of this apparatus and its temporal logic pervades it. In Israeli eyes today, all it takes to justify the indefinite temporary inclusion of Palestinians as non-citizens is to equate them with terrorism. The McCarthyist, fascist, and racist waves that are currently sweeping the Israeli political sphere and public space are all part of this equation. These waves cannot be seen as a response to Palestinian resistance and violence but as part of a consistent effort to portray all Palestinians as potential terrorists. They thus play a role in the reproduction of Israeli rule in the OPT, and of the Israeli regime as a whole, in perfect collaboration with the occasional eruption of actual terrorist attacks.

Many observers outside Israel might be frightened by this development and refuse to accept the equation of Palestinians with terrorism. But no one can deny the presence of this new form of power in the region. Recently it has even assumed a state of its own—the Islamic State, or *Daesh*. Looking at the region from a distance, one cannot fail to observe that Israel has indeed become "a castle in the jungle," a bastion of security rationality and a stronghold of "sanity" in the midst of irrational chaos, genocidal operations, and mass destruction. The rationality of security that Israel incarnates has a new ally now, and this ally (either *Daesh* itself, or one of its mimetic offspring, or the chaos from which these have emerged, and which they help propagate) will probably guarantee the oppression and dispossession of the Palestinians for years to come. ■

Notes

1. Eyal Benvenisti, *The International Law of Occupation* (Oxford 2012), p. 3.
2. Doris Graber, *The Development of the Law of Belligerent Occupation 1863-1914: A Historical Survey* (1949), p. 37.
3. Quoted in Ben Naftali, Orna, et al., "The Illegality of the Occupation Regime," in Givoni, Michal, et al. (eds.), The *Power of Inclusive Exclusion: Anatomy of Israeli Rule in the Occupied Palestinian Territories* (New York: Zone Books 2009: 31-80), p. 56.
4. Ibid, ibid.
5. For a reconstruction of the economy of violence and the system of separations in the OPT see Ariella Azoulay and Adi Ophir, *The One State Condition: Occupation and Democracy in Israel/Palestine* (Stanford 2013), chapters 3-4.

ALPHABET POEM

ANITA BARROWS

A The difference between my life and yours
is this: When I was pulled over once by a cop
for running a stop sign, and before
he got to my car I'd taken my phone
out of my purse to let my kid know
I'd be late coming home, what the cop did
was warn me not to be digging my hand
in my purse with a cop's face
in the driver's window. The difference
between my life and yours
is that I put the phone
back and sat looking out at the traffic
while the cop wrote the ticket, and in the end
I got home only twenty minutes
later than when I had promised.

B Do you think I'm at peace with this?
A woman I know and her dog
saw a man shot in the back
by a cop at the end of the block
they live on, and for no reason.
They were walking and suddenly their block
became a warfield. Before that,
she had thought of the day as simple.
Before that, she had been planning
just to go home, take the leash
off the dog, make coffee,
put on her yellow sweater.

C Then the police were everywhere.
Then it became a question
of what she had seen
and how many times she could tell it.
Then it was clear that her life
had become this man, who was dead.

D There were cameras and people cleaning the street
of his blood, which was everywhere.
It didn't seem possible that so much blood
could have come from a single body.
Even when the ambulance took him away
it seemed the blood kept flowing.
It flowed from the stores, the doorways.
It flowed from the hydrants that should have been filled
with water.
Even by afternoon, everyone
who set foot on that block had begun to bleed.

E The difference between my life and yours
is that our bleeding is exactly the same.

F All day the dog lay in the corner of the kitchen.
Anything that passed with a loud noise,
the dog, who had been a confident, placid dog,
startled. Stood up and walked in circles. Growled.
Went searching from room to room
for his person, who was no longer
there, who had become
that other person.

G My kid didn't really care that I came home late.
She was watching her favorite program.
She was sitting in front of the TV
eating cold macaroni and cheese
with a spoon, and I yelled at her
because if I had been you I might have
been killed by the cop
for trying to make that call
on a phone the cop
might have said
was a weapon. And there she was,
not even bothering to look up when I walked in the door,
sitting in the armchair, legs folded under her,
mac and cheese in a blue plastic cereal bowl,
laughing at something one character said to another.

H She didn't know his name at first.
He was just one more person shot in the back.
The cops rifled through his pockets.
It looked like they were even touching his dick
but he couldn't feel it.
She heard his name spoken later on the radio,
found out that he had two kids and a mother.

I She did what she could about the bleeding,
used every bit of gauze and adhesive in the apartment,
wondered whether she should go
to the ER when it didn't stop by late
afternoon, but how
could she go when they had him
already listed as DOA
and they wouldn't understand
that she was him now, and in need of help?

J It wasn't just her. It was everyone on the block.
At night, when people began to turn on their lamps
and she could see through their windows, she realized
that everyone was bandaging themselves
or bandaging others they lived with.
And those already swaddled in bandages were mopping up
blood.

K The difference between my life and yours
is that, even though I reached for my phone,
I still went to bed that night in my pajamas
and woke up in the morning. You, if you
had reached for your phone in the same
situation, would have been lying there
in the road by that stop sign, and no one
would have known if you had a kid at home
eating mac and cheese straight out of the fridge
and waiting, waiting.

Arif Qazi | Cargocollective.com/arifqazi

L The police came to her door and asked her again.
She told them what she had told them before.
They said that everyone on the block had told them
the same story and still they didn't believe it.
They were waiting for one person to say something different.
It had grown cold outside. Rivulets of frozen blood
stuck to the carpet in the hallway of the building.
The police thought they were threads of polyester
and when they looked at them that was what they became.
Afterward they thawed. The smell of blood was unmistakable.

M It's important to consider the dog.
He was not a watchdog. Some of his ancestors
had been herding dogs, and because of that
it was in his nature to want everyone
in the same place.

N It bothered me that my kid was being so lazy.
I mean, who taught her it was ok to eat mac
and cheese
without heating it up? In the microwave
it takes no time at all. And the fact
that she didn't even
look up, not until the next commercial.
I mean, if I were you I might have been dead.

O To give her the benefit of the doubt,
she had no idea.
And why would she? If I said I was coming home,
I was coming home.
That's the difference. The kid could count on it.

P Am I saying this to you? Am I saying it to myself?
The kid could count on her mother
coming home

Q Nothing else looked the same either.
All the faces on the block had become his face.
Everyone, even the next morning,
when everything had already been cleaned up
and the newspaper was already reporting
that someone new had been shot by police,
even then you could see the place on everyone's back,
where their shirt was torn, where the flesh
under their shirt was torn.

R He had two kids and a mother.
The mother was a woman who went to church
and that was where she went that day and the next day
while a neighbor babysat.
The kids? They went back
to school after a few days
of sitting watching
people cry on the phone
and had to tell their friends
that their dad was dead. Some
of their friends had dead
dads too.

S At the funeral his kids wore blue dresses
and sat with their grandma
in the front row. It was a little
like regular church and a little like a school assembly,
and afterward when they went back
to where they lived there was no dad again.
Meanwhile, in the apartment building, rivulets of blood kept
flowing.

T She began to think she could hear the crying of his
kids at night.
She had learned they were girls. She had learned
a few other things, too: they were seven and five
and their names rhymed. At night she lay in her bed
thinking of names that would rhyme with theirs.
Still, every morning, because of the blood,
she had to throw out the sheets.

U She noticed that others who lived on the block
were doing the same.
The dumpsters were filled with bloody sheets.
There seemed to be no way to wash the blood out.

V *Do you know how lucky you are to have a mother*
I wanted to yell at her, but I kept my mouth shut
about everything besides the cold mac and cheese.
After all she's only a kid. All her life
she's had everything she needed. Her name
doesn't rhyme with *death* or *blood* or *gunshot wound* or *police*.

W So I sat down next to her in the armchair and
watched the rest of the program.

X Within weeks the city had passed an ordinance
against bloody sheets in the dumpsters.
There was no room anymore for normal garbage.

Y She looked around at all the torn flesh.
It was all still bleeding and maybe it would bleed
forever.
It occurred to her that they could wind all the sheets
together, make a rope of them, or an altar.

Z The dog too had begun to bleed.
He was less nervous now, but a small hole had
bloomed in his back
under his tawny-colored fur. When she walked him
now in the mornings, others walked with them or followed.
No one spoke. A wake of blood streamed behind them.
It seemed like a kind of procession.

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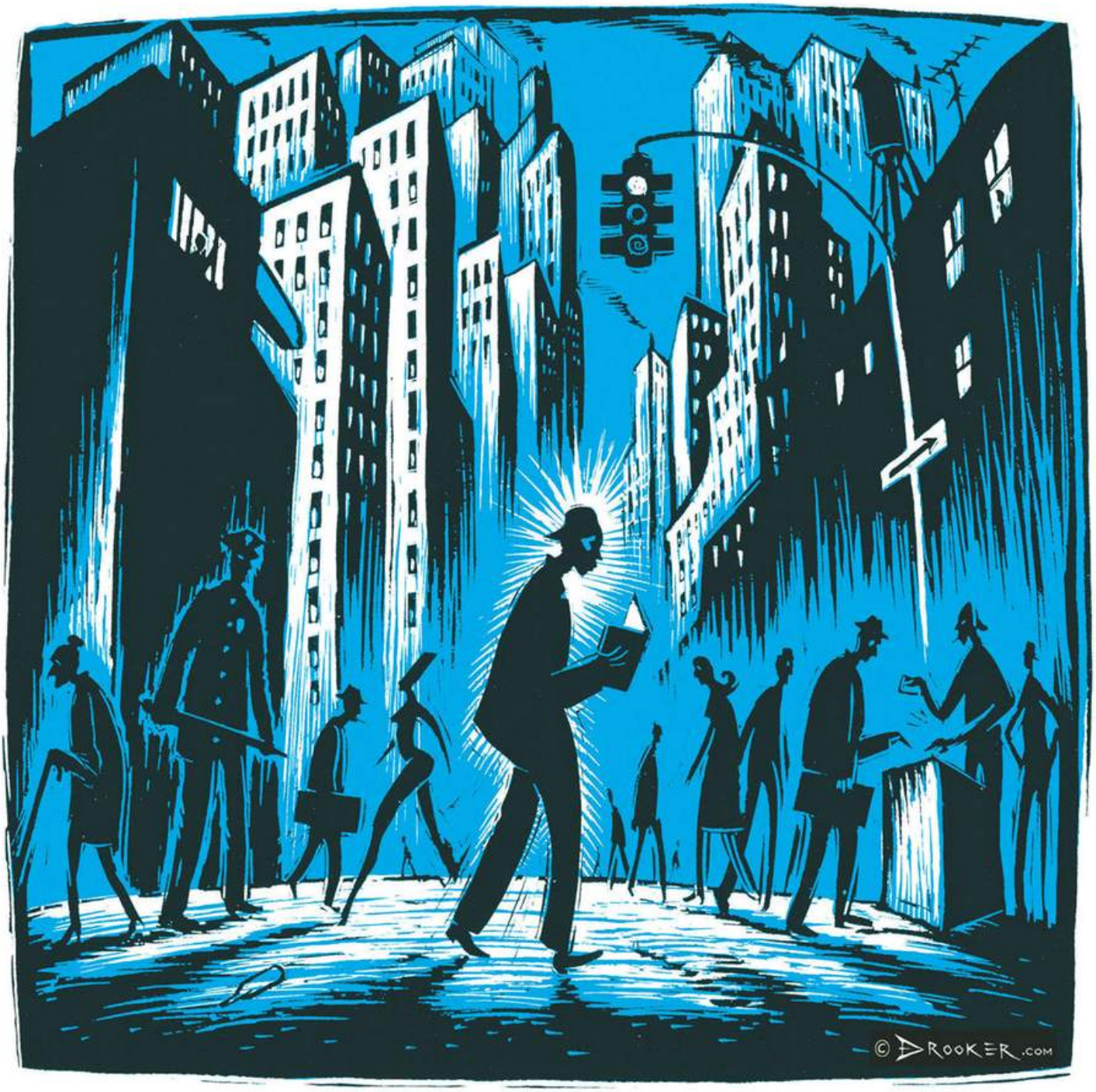
TRANSFORMING



Street Reading by Eric Drooker | drooker.com

EDUCATION

For the past thirty years we've frequently run articles about the relationship between our education system and the distortions in consciousness of Americans as reflected in our politics, economy, wars, poverty, and hatreds of various 'demeaned others' of society. In this special section we continue that discussion and give special thanks to Erik Gleibermann who helped us find some of those writers in this section who have not previously appeared in *Tikkun* magazine. Please note that you will also find other articles for this section that appear only on the homepage of our website www.tikkun.org. Those online-only writers include educator Robert Nash, among many others!

Educating for Hope and Possibility in Troubled Times

SVI SHAPIRO

There is much talk today in the United States about a crisis of education. Yet what is pointed to as the cause of this crisis is confusing at best, and misleading at worst. There is, for example, the argument made by some commentators that our economy is in trouble because of poor education. Of course this seems preposterous when compared to the role of the banks in our most recent economic crisis. Despite talk of demands for sophisticated skills and more educated workers, predictions are for an economy that will continue to employ high numbers of low and semi-skilled workers; jobs that used to be done by high school graduates are now increasingly filled by those with college degrees. Elsewhere there are the questionable assertions by media pundits about an educational crisis that is the result of kids performing poorly in comparison with students from other countries. This has resulted in the calamity of an education system more and more enthralled with a culture of testing which has sapped imagination, creativity, curiosity, and critical intelligence from our classrooms. This so-called crisis of accountability has become the springboard for rigid and mechanical forms of control over the teaching process in our schools.

Yet in all of this talk of crisis there is little that speaks to the profound moral and spiritual responsibility that is carried—or should be carried—by education. Beyond the usual focus of schooling (grades, test results, graduation rates, etc.) is surely something of far greater significance. Education has the capability and the obligation, I believe, of speaking to the very issue of what it means to be human; of how we as human beings live and relate to one another; and how we relate to, and care for, the natural world that we share with all life forms. Today these issues rise to the very top of what is important to our very survival as a species. For us, and even more for our children, what surely needs to concern us is the very quality of human life on our planet. And central to this is the continuing problem of violent conflict and violent behavior among human beings.

In a letter of invitation written to the contributors of a recent book, I noted that its purpose was to help articulate a new vision and purpose—and begin to set an alternative direction—for our children's education at a time when, as I believe, there is an increasing delegitimation of the prevailing assumptions and orthodoxies that have shaped our public life over the past few years and which has included a growing threat to the very idea of a *public* education as the neoliberal fetish of the marketplace displaces notions of our common responsibilities and obligations. Paradoxically there is, at the same time, a deep hunger for the articulation of what Michael

SVI SHAPIRO is Professor of Education and Cultural Studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Lerner has called a New Bottom Line for education—one that focuses on our children's lives as human beings who will assume the ethical, political, and social responsibilities of our shared national and global communities.

All signs point to our being in a transitional period in which the assumptions that have governed political life in recent years are in grave crisis. At the core of these assumptions has been the belief that the United States had a free and unopposed hand to make and reorganize the world according to the interests and inclinations of our governing elites. We can now see quite clearly that this arrogance of power has hit a resistant wall. The world cannot be re-made through our military muscle and economic power quite as easily as some may have wished. The lies and deceit that have brought us to this catastrophic moment have been laid bare. The view that this country could act unilaterally on the world stage without much broader international support has produced unparalleled anger and distrust towards the U.S. and a crisis of belief within the United States itself. Many now see that terrorism is only one of a number of serious threats that confront us: global warming and its catastrophic effects, lethal epidemics, poverty, violence and war, nuclear proliferation, racism, gender oppression, ethnic and religious hatred. All are part of the increasingly pressing agenda for action in the world. And the severity and complexity of human problems will demand from us, and especially our children, inclinations, dispositions, and knowledge quite different from those which have shaped, and continue to shape, our social identities and ideological outlooks, moral preferences, and attitudinal priorities. This is a time of crisis, but also of renewed possibility—one that offers us the opportunity to radically reconsider what the meaning of education is for a generation that will bear the brunt of grappling with these extraordinary challenges and dangers. What will it mean to be an educated human being in the twenty-first century, compelled to confront and address so much that threatens the very basis of a decent and hopeful human existence?

The unraveling of this consensus on American economic and political power is likely to bring on its train many questions about our public policy priorities. Already there is a growing populist resentment towards the increasing concentration of wealth in the U.S. There is increasing disillusionment with the effects of free trade agreements on the lives and economic security of working and middle-class Americans and the hostility felt by many towards the influx of migrants from these free trade areas as well as those fleeing the war-torn areas of our world. For many Americans there is an inability to meet the basics of a decent existence through an adequate living income, the absence of affordable health care, or dependable retirement income. At the same time a demagogic populism fuels the path of intolerance, racism, discrimination, and nationalistic chauvinism. Such a politics with its constricted moral rage is unable to meaningfully talk to questions of social injustice, community, peace and environmental degradation. Meanwhile there is an increasingly pervasive sense that there is a crisis of meaning and values in America—one that leads to a debasement of human relationships, accelerating materialism and greed, and misplaced fixation on celebrity and glamour. In this context there is a compelling need to articulate a New Bottom Line for education—one that offers a different vision for educating our children that directly and cogently speaks to human purpose and meaning in the world that they will inherit.

The No Child Left Behind/Race to the Top Debacle

Of course, any such attempt will need to start with the failures of recent national education reforms with their deleterious effect on schools in the United States. These have been documented by researchers and include the failure to significantly reduce the racial achievement gap; the penalizing of immigrant children and special needs students; increased drop-out rates; the narrowing of the curriculum and the shallow reductionist form of learning; the increased stress and anxiety among students resulting from the obsessive focus on standardized tests; the diversion of public funds to private tutoring sources and unaccountable for-profit schools; the deskilling of teachers' work; and the delegitimation of the teaching profession. All of this points to a bankruptcy of public policy in education—something which reflects the overall direction of both the Bush and Obama administrations. And as the failures and unpopularity of these reforms gather steam, there are increasing calls to tether education even more closely to the human capital demands of big business, as well as to intensify the measurements of accountability in public schools (and in higher education). Little is heard in the public discourse about education's responsibility for nurturing the knowledge, attitudes, and dispositions of a democratic polity. Short shrift is given to the value of developing the imagination and creative aptitudes of the young. There is little attention afforded to the capacity of education to enhance the ability of young people to critically interrogate popular media or the sources of public information. Intellectual and creative activity as a joyful human act, not simply a vehicle for instrumental advantage, comes to be regarded as frivolous waste. And it is taken as axiomatic that the moral context of the classroom and school is one that emphasizes individual achievement, competitive advantage, and willingness to subordinate authentic interests and passions to the compulsive quest for college and career success. It is understandable that parents are concerned about the capacity of their children to achieve basic literacy and numeracy. Such numeracy, it has been noted, could generally be obtained by a ninth grade competency in algebra and a very few elements of geometry. These skills are certainly

fundamental to the ability to negotiate the modern world. However, further study of math is of no particular value except to those preparing for expertise in this or related fields. Similarly with physics and chemistry—subjects that are, in general, far less important to know, for example, than developing skills in nonviolent communication and conflict resolution, psychological understanding of the dynamics of family and other social relationships, civic and community engagement, the ability to critically interpret our media-saturated culture, or an understanding of ethics and how they ought to apply to our political and economic world. The emphasis on the so-called basic skills to the exclusion of all else produces a sadly limited form of education devoid of any larger human vision—one that speaks to the quest for lives of meaning and purpose. Separated from the latter and focusing only on the transmission of skills and technical competencies the classroom quickly becomes a site of boredom, stifled curiosity, and joyless learning.

Yet, as I have suggested above, the growing political, social, and environmental crisis holds out the possibility of change and hope. This is a moment of uncertainty but also opportunity to reshape the public language of education. There is the opportunity to participate in the articulation of a shared vision of what it should mean to educate a new generation who will have to contend with our increasingly perilous social circumstances, but also extraordinary possibilities for transforming our world into one that is socially just, compassionate, peaceful, and environmentally responsible. In many ways, as my colleague and collaborator David Purpel argued, there are no educational problems, only social issues that get played out on the terrain of education. The magnitude of the human and ecological crisis we confront demands more than the often arcane and ego-inflating exegesis of academic discourse. Can we really doubt that our situation today calls for a language and vision that is bold, courageous, and resonant to the fears, concerns, and hopes of the broad majority of human beings?

Education and the Crisis of Democracy

In my own writings, I have tried to describe the contours of such a vision and the educational agenda that can be drawn from it. There is surely little doubt that we face a deep crisis of meaningful citizenship in this country. And in this regard education has abdicated its responsibilities. Indeed schooling contributes in important ways to the evisceration of civic culture and the erosion of identities that are capable of seriously enacting democratic citizenship. Meaningful citizenship—what Stuart Ewan referred to as a "democracy of expression"

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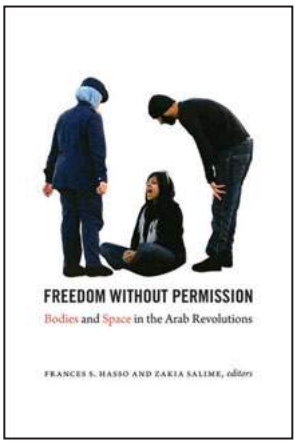

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is more and more replaced by what he called a "democracy of consumption." For many people—the young especially—choice, power, and freedom are increasingly reduced to one's capacity to buy. The marketplace defines democratic action more than the polling booth or public engagement and advocacy. The credit card defines one's eligibility as a citizen. That critical aspect of democracy—the capacity to exert power over one's circumstances—is reduced to the ability to shop from the ever-expanding, dizzying array of available products. Advertisers have appropriated the language of democratic life so that change, innovation, renewal, and the energy of public life are concentrated and distilled into the excitement of fashion, automobile ownership, the latest upgrade in the technology of communication, or the promise of optimal experiences offered through travel, drink, or sex. There is here the pressing question of how much fulfillment or meaning is ultimately available from this culture of consumption and its preoccupation with glamour, fame, and money. If democracy is about a shared search for a better society then consuming is all about what *I have acquired or experienced*. If democracy is about improving our common well-being then consumption relentlessly offers the prospect of 'getting an edge' and being one-up on our neighbor in looks, acquisitions, opportunities, and style. A possessive and competitive individualism is at its motivational core. In sharp contrast to this, a democracy of expression concerns the capacity to name and articulate the circumstances that enable or limit a full and satisfying human existence, not just for oneself but for all of us who are members of our shared polity.

Yet it is a rarity when schooling offers students the opportunity to develop that capacity for expression that enhances democratic life and citizenship. School for most students is primarily about the process of domestication and conformity as they learn the grammar and syntax of test-taking and become adept at the search for the single correct answer on the test sheet. Creative thought, critical questioning, the articulation of ideas, and insights about students' lives and concerns have little place in the classrooms of most young people. The suffocating regimes of educational reforms squeeze out any possibility of educating young people so that they develop genuine curiosity about their world, a passion to pursue and understand life's purpose, and the will to challenge accepted truths and conventions. Most schools now develop accountants of test scores and grade point averages, and adept manipulators of college resumes through the accumulation of curricular and extra-curricular experiences. Little here can contribute to a mind that is alert and awake to the challenges we face as a human community, and is imbued with the desire to question deeply and boldly those social, moral, and epistemological assumptions and categories that shape our dangerously divisive, wasteful, and materialistic world. After Abu Ghraib and the abuses of Guantanamo, the proliferation of a largely unquestioned drone warfare, the degeneration and manipulation of our political culture, we must be concerned again with the propensity towards an unthinking conformity—a readiness to do or say whatever is deemed necessary in order to oblige those in authority. As we know so well the path towards what Hannah Arendt called so aptly the "banality of evil" starts in school with the message about doing what one is told to do without question or reflection. When success in school comes to mean rote memorization, the search for the single right answer, and intellectual conformity or timidity, then we have created the conditions in which human beings learn that it is right to abdicate their capacity for moral autonomy and 'wide-awake' thoughtfulness and decision-making.

The shrinking ability to see knowledge as having any transformative power other than as the crass instrument of individual advantage is also the consequence of the world of manipulation that engulfs political, cultural, and corporate life in the United States. Our culture is one that more and more induces a cynical, disbelieving attitude towards any claims about truth or judgment. People are taught, first and foremost, to see themselves as consumers who choose sides as a matter of temporary and shifting taste or convenience. Intellectual conviction and ethical commitment are replaced by cant, spin, and short-term interests. And this is reflected in our classrooms, which increasingly replace a critical and ethically sensitive thoughtfulness with a detached and instrumental concern to get an answer that satisfies the demands of the test. These difficulties however, should, of course, only strengthen our conviction as to the need to understand education's crucial role in revitalizing a democratic culture. In the face of the extraordinary and intensifying power of elites—corporate, political, military—to structure the language and set the limits of public debate in this country, any significant new educational vision must be one that includes the prospect of a critically reflective, boldly questioning, morally-sensitive, and imaginatively creative citizenry.

Education and the Struggle for Community

The crisis of democratic citizenship is also the crisis of community. The withering of what Cornel West refers to as *parrhesia*—the capacity for bold and courageous thinking—is also the erosion of social cohesion and communal interdependence. And in each case schools are an important (though certainly not the sole) factor in this decline. School is, after all, that place where children first learn what Elizabeth Dodson Gray referred to as the "culture of separated desks." It is the place where they are first formally introduced to a worldview in which life's rewards, material and symbolic, are seen as the product of an endless struggle with one's neighbors. The mentality of the bell-curve instructs them that scarcity

of affirmation, recognition, and reward is part of the very DNA of human existence. It is a social imperative, they learn, to acquire those skills, manners, dispositions, and knowledge that give them an advantage over the next individual. Whatever is said about friendship, sharing, and caring in our schools and classrooms, the real effect of the curriculum is to teach the centrality of competition and individualism in our social relations. This holds true even where we see now in some schools greater opportunities for project work that involves a degree of cooperation and group tasks (something more likely in elementary or middle schools) and facilitated by the use of computer technology in the classroom. It is still the case that in this world, children learn, not everyone can be someone; some of us are inevitably destined for failure and invisibility. This is the underlying moral axis of academic life. To be somebody rests on the capacity to classify another as being nobody. It is a lesson relentlessly emphasized through schools' constant attention to the markers of success and failure, validation and rejection. It is a message that deeply penetrates students' understanding of human existence. The world is a predatory place. The fear of failure hangs over all of us and with it a distrust and suspicion towards those who appear to have acquired something more than we have. It is a world in which envy, dissatisfaction, and an incessant drive towards invidious comparison permeate our lives. From the gold stars of kindergarten to the status hierarchy of college selection, schooling is an insistent socialization into the world of hierarchy, status, and human separation. We are, through this process, driven apart, not together; led to see ourselves as working against one another rather than acting cooperatively; and primed for an aggressive egoism rather than an open-hearted generosity.

Those who would argue that the root emotion of our competitively-driven, aggressively self-oriented culture is fear make a convincing argument. There is the anxiety that what we have must constantly be protected from those who jealously desire to take it from us, resent our hard-won gains, or wish to diminish our success in some way. Such pervasive resentment produced what Barbara Ehrenreich referred to as the constant "fear of falling:" the sense that in a ferociously competitive world someone is always just behind you on the ladder waiting (hoping) you will slip. The encircling arms of young children as they protect their assignment from the eyes of other children so aptly embodies the worldview of a fearful and suspicious individualism. Their answers dare not be shared with other children for that would diminish their special claim to success and recognition. For those whose arms and hands are used to hide what they know is an inadequate response. Their body language manifests the shame and vulnerability of failure in that painful world in which worth is always contingent on success and achievement.

In this landscape of painful human fragmentation and separation, the hunger for connection, genuine friendship, closeness, and camaraderie find expression—but often in ways that still bear the marks of a hostile and fearful environment. Our preoccupation with the flag and the military speaks to a desperate desire for some unifying focus of a shared community. Sadly such a focus invariably becomes a fetish that carries the insistence on patriotic conformity. It comes quickly to stand for that nationalistic sense of togetherness which leaves little room for dissent. It is a community in which the price of membership is an unquestioning allegiance to our nation's exceptional 'greatness.'

Not surprisingly, such patriotic belonging is underpinned by a triumphalism and an uncritical celebration of always being on the right side of history. This sense of connection with others is marked too by a Manichean view of the world in which the ties that bind us to some situate others as our inveterate enemies. We are locked into a constant struggle between ourselves—the forces of light—and others who represent the side of evil. It is hardly surprising that this kind of patriotism seems always to find, or construct, a threatening force in the world which we are required to oppose with a uniformity of ideological and political support. The construction of community here is rooted in a zero-sum world of enemies; connection among us is predicated by our hostility towards, and fear of, those who appear to threaten our way of life (Muslims, immigrants, and members of non-conforming gender groups today provide easy targets).

It is easy to see how young people are socialized into this kind of worldview. The school pep rally and varsity athletics rivalry inculcate a frenzied support for one's own team. Pride and loyalty towards one's 'own' side come together with a demonizing of the opposition. The celebration of our shared identity is always one side of a coin whose other face is fierce competition and the will to superiority or dominance. Our typically triumphal history texts ensure that the poison of a community constructed through invidious comparison with others viewed as inferior, immoral, or bent on our destruction has very deep roots in our culture (as I write in my own state of North Carolina the governor and legislative leaders, with cynical political calculation, have recently passed legislation that poses the supposed threat of transgender individuals to the rest of 'us' who inhabit the normal, safe, and hygienic world of heterosexuality). Our world is riven by religious claims as to who speaks with the one and only true voice of God and those who are heretical pretenders. Migrants from other countries seeking a better life for themselves and their families are made to appear as a dangerous threat to the national culture and language.

Modernity with its drive towards unceasing change, dislocation, and uncertainty produces a world of extraordinary alienation and anxiety. Unprecedented movements of people across borders, disruption of settled ways of life through the cultural 'invasion' of TV, movies, and the internet, and economic upheavals caused by rapid technological innovation

and global movements of capital and finance all add to the unsettling flux of everyday life. It can hardly be surprising that such conditions are a catalyst for attempts to forge stable identities around what Zygmunt Bauman calls "neo-tribalism." Such identities are often ones that are turned in on themselves—absolutist in their thinking, resistant to any outside influences, rigidly hierarchical, and aggressively patriarchal. These communities of resistance to the destabilizing effects of modernity and globalized capitalism provide a sense of connection and meaning in an atomized and disrupted world.

Fierce assertion of communal identity reflects also a spiritual and physical resistance by those whose ethnicity, gender, religious traditions, and national identity have been degraded, repressed, and submerged. These allegiances are formed from the pain and humiliation dealt to oppressed groups. Such communities are both political and therapeutic, attempting to assuage the wounds of humiliation, invisibility, and marginality while demanding redress to the social injustices they have had to constantly endure. Such communities frequently demand schools of their own where the pride of heritage and identity can be transmitted to a younger generation. We see this in schools that emphasize an Afrocentric curriculum, Jewish day schools, schools for Indian and other indigenous groups, in Muslim schools, the gender-specific education of women, and in some kinds of Christian schools. There is an understandable wish among communities whose history has been one of exclusion and oppression to provide for their young an education that reverses the pattern of marginality, humiliation, and invisibility. Such educational goals are integral to a vision of a culturally diverse and pluralistic democracy.

Yet there is a tension here that should not be ignored between democracy's promise of the affirmation of plural cultural, ethnic, and religious communities, and the need to ensure a *universal* human ethic and a global civic culture. The enormous challenge in the twenty-first century is to allow and facilitate the genuine recognition and flourishing of all those communities that have hitherto been made invisible by the exercise of hegemonic cultures and, at the same time, to ensure that fierce allegiance within these communities does not preclude a sense of wider human connection and interdependence. It is, I believe, the task of education to both facilitate the former while also encouraging the latter.

This means that education has a double role around the issue of community. Schools need to provide the space in which particularistic identities can be nurtured. They need also to build and encourage communities of a much wider span in which a universal human ethic and consciousness flourishes. It is surely necessary to assert as never before the connectedness of the human species (and of course the interdependence on earth of all life). We face as a human community threats to our very existence as a species from pollution, climate change, water shortages, nuclear armaments, the spread of disease across national borders, and violence that makes no distinction between combatants and innocent civilians.

Education will have to be a part of a process that asserts and supports identities that are a complex weave of the particular and the universal, the local and the global, the partial and the whole. We know enough now about the meaning of identity to understand the importance of rootedness and place to human well-being. But we also are increasingly aware of the malignant and dangerous consequences to others when such identity refuses to acknowledge the bonds that connect all of our species as social, ethical, and spiritual beings. Similarly when conservative forces seek to use parochial or sectional interests to further their goal of defunding and eviscerating public education they reinforce constricted ideas about community and undermine a broader sense of human identity. Citizenship education today must be one that is concerned with our plural identities *and* the social cohesion stemming from our common concerns and needs as human beings. Education must nurture identities that are capacious enough to support both those particularities rooted in our diverse life-worlds and experience while nourishing our shared and interdependent ties to all life on this planet.

Education, Community and Global Justice

Of course it is impossible to address the pressing question of community in our lives if we do not acknowledge its inseparability from issues of social justice. Community is, after all, that mode of being in which each of us is visible and recognized within the circle of human presence. Each of us takes our place within this circle as a presence of inestimable value, equally empowered and responsible for what is collectively undertaken, and fully supported and secure in the care of ones neighbors. The evidence points to a deep hunger for community among human beings yet the practices and reality of our daily lives constantly contradicts its possibility. We are, in school and elsewhere, constantly subjected to a process that creates a world of winners and losers—a hierarchy of worth and recognition in which, as the educator John Holt once noted, a few learn to get what they like, and many learn to like what they get. School is, in the words of educational historian Joel Spring, first and foremost a "sorting machine" that socializes the young into a world of inequality. The primary and most insidious lesson of education is the legitimacy of unequal treatment and differential human value. School is nothing if not a vehicle for the transmission of hierarchical distinctions of respect, worth, ability, and economic expectations. It is the seeding ground for a society in which we accept astonishing inequalities in the circumstances of

our lives—access to health care, decent housing, availability of food, opportunities for rest and recreation, security of employment, and dignity and respect in the community and on the job. Of course such hierarchical ordering stands in sharp contrast to our vision and desire for a community that is something more than the sentimental clichés of a Hallmark card. The classroom itself, as we have already noted, is a place in which the ethic of mutual caring and support is undone by the relentless process of competitive individualism in which students learn and are urged 'to get ahead' of one another. And talk of a national family is mocked by the extraordinary differences in children's lives consequent upon differences of race, class, and gender and the increasingly glaring inequalities that bear down upon our children. Talk of 'no child left behind' is pure obfuscation in a society where social and economic inequalities powerfully shape our children's lives, hopelessly blighting the possibilities for success or achievement among so many. And the more recent educational panacea of 'Race to the Top' simply re-inscribes this predatory view of our educational and social world.

In the wider world the new global economic order has been a prescription for increasing inequalities in the shape of people's lives. Nearly three billion people on the planet live on less than two dollars a day; 850 million people go hungry and, according to UN estimates, twenty to thirty thousand children die every day of starvation or preventable diseases related to malnutrition. A recent study by *Forbes* showed that the world's richest 85 individuals now own the same wealth as 3.5 billion people. More and more power accrues to gigantic transnational businesses that undermine any notion of a democratic polity where ordinary people have a real say about the kind of world in which they live.

Talk of community when such extraordinary disparities exist in the distribution of wealth and in the exercise of power becomes emptied of any real meaning. In a world in which elites have such a disproportionate capacity to influence our culture, economic well-being, social policy around matters like education and health care, and how we deal with our environment, the general interest of the many is supplanted by the greed and self-aggrandizement of the few. When community is understood as one of shared social and economic concerns, mutual human respect, and the pursuit of our common well-being then the present course of national and international development belies any such vision. Our nation and our world are suffused with the images of environmental toxicity and degradation that fall hardest on the poorest among us. The security of working people is undercut by the callous and indiscriminate search for more profits. The underdeveloped places of our planet are ruthlessly plundered and exploited by those with political and military power. Millions die from the lack of medicines withheld because of the greed of the drug industry. And thousands of young women are the exploited commodities of sexual 'tourism.'

An education that is to nurture the sense of human connectedness within both our nation and within the larger global human family is an imperative of our time. It is the only alternative to a world of increasing and unnecessary suffering, more cataclysmic war and violence, and lives not blighted by a dehumanized existence in which people are treated as throwaway and expendable items of little enduring value.

To educate towards the now pressing vision of human community cannot be separated from the need to move human consciousness away from the impulse to sort, select, and rank, and to find and legitimize winners and losers. In our schools this will be no easy task since education is almost unimaginable today when not about such a process. Yet we need to be reminded that, despite the power and influence of such ideas, other ethical, political, and spiritual visions persist. These visions speak to the continuing possibility of a world in which all are affirmed in their worth, respect, and autonomy; in which all deserve to live with decency and security; and in which meaning is found through the sharing of our earthly resources. Such a vision must surely infuse what Raymond Williams once referred to as the "long revolution" that we are called upon to make both in our schools and throughout our social institutions.

Towards a Pedagogy of Peace

All of this rests on the belief in a universal human ethic. It is an ethic rooted in the concept of the infinite value and preciousness of each and every human life. Its first imperative is to refuse violence against others. We cannot separate a vision of education centered on the quest for democracy, community, and social justice from the need for an education that negates the violence that pervades our culture. Another great responsibility of education today is to cultivate a culture of peace. But in the end this goal cannot be separated from the need to cultivate the bonds of universal human community and a culture of democracy.

The first challenge of educating for peace is overcoming the dualistic and Manichean thinking that shapes so much of human consciousness in our world. At every turn we learn to understand our world as one constructed from rigid and binary categories: black vs. white, male vs. female, gay vs. straight, disabled vs. able, native vs. alien, Europe vs. Africa, our country vs. theirs, and so on. We learn to view all things through a prism that separates and opposes one side from another. And to this separation we add the qualities that give 'our' side its supposed superiority. This is a way of constructing reality that ensures not just a world of immoveable divisions but one in which we come to see our attributes, allegiances, and preferences as the stuff that makes us better than, more deserving, more enlightened, or even genetically superior to all others. This polarized, us/them world, is the recipe of inevitable and certain prejudice and hatred. Fear

and anger corrode all relationships. Resentment of mistreatment and the ache of dehumanization fill the lives of those distinguished by their supposed failings and pathologies. And fear of the encroachment of the 'other' shapes the psychology and politics of those who hold themselves as superior. If we don't act with force to restrain and contain the other, it is held, we might succumb to their influence. In this view security comes through the domination and suppression of others.

Educating for peace works within what appears to be a paradoxical worldview. It asserts on the one hand the ancient spiritual wisdom that all human life is of inestimable value. In this view all people have unconditional or infinite worth. It asserts that all our distinctions and separations obfuscate the fundamental oneness of existence and the endless recycling and regeneration of our common origins within the elemental stardust of the universe. From this perspective education means to emphasize the precious value and meaning of all life. It shifts our focus from the qualities that separate us, and polarize us, to those that connect us and speak to our similarities. Security in this view depends not on our capacity to dominate or exclude, but on our willingness to show generosity and open-heartedness towards others. Our own well-being depends on the well-being of everyone on our planet.

While educating for peace requires that we see the essential humanity of all people it also requires that we fully recognize the way in which our lives have been conditioned and shaped through the particularity of our language, history, gender, culture, and class. What has the experience of living meant for this person and those who share that particular experience? It has been said that one's enemy is someone whose story you have not heard. Peace education certainly demands the possibility of dialogue in which one's life can be shared with others. It means cultivating a hermeneutical approach to 'truth' in which the emphasis is less on whose view is right than on simply hearing what it means to grow up and deal with a particular set of circumstances. It is a process that emphasizes sympathetic listening rather than the impulse to quick judgment. It means struggling with one's own immediate assumptions and prejudices in order to truly hear the challenges and obstacles in the life of the other. Such dialogue breaks down or deconstructs the simplistic and damaging binary view of identities. In its place emerges a more complex and fluid understanding of one's neighbor. Someone who is different in some respects from oneself yet so similar in others; a person whose being is not solely defined through a single characteristic of religion, race, nationality, disability, etc. And a person who is not fully formed and complete but someone whose life is evolving and changing.

Flower Child by Hanna Barczyk | hannabarczyk.com

Of course the sharing and naming of experience can only be a part of what it means to educate for peace. There must also be exploration of the culture of violence—the social conditions that predispose us towards the harming of others on the macro scale we now witness. We have to look at what Zygmunt Bauman has termed *adiaphorization*—the tendency, so pronounced in our world, to become desensitized to the pain and humiliation of others. We have to look here at the way violence becomes entertainment; the way wars are depicted through the mass media as video games; and the overall consequence of the barrage of violent images and themes on our sensibilities as human beings. We have to consider how poverty and unemployment sap human beings of hope for a better future and open the door to a nihilistic rage. Or the way domination—cultural, economic, and political—humiliates and dehumanizes people and can become a catalyst for suicidal revenge. And we must recognize the way that so much of the violence in the world is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men. Here we have to consider the way masculinity is constructed around the axis of power and dominance. Vulnerability, dependence, and the desire for nurturance are regarded as signs of human weakness (read: femininity) that evoke hostility and disgust and are an incitement to violent suppression whether in oneself or in others.

Without this kind of critical social reflection we run the risk of approaching the issue of violence as simply a manifestation of individual or even collective pathology. The mass murders in our schools are approached only as a matter of psychopathology requiring more efficient mental health systems. Suicidal bombings by Muslims are disconnected from the history of colonialism, the trauma of Palestine, or current

Western domination of much of the Arab world. Rape and brutality directed against women, or homophobic violence, are not seen within the context of aggressive and authoritarian forms of male identity. Given our current political juncture it is worth noting, I believe, that a hyper-masculinity has always formed an important element of fascist attitudes and movements. And, finally, war is somehow disconnected from the multibillion dollar economic interests that enthusiastically encourage militaristic resolutions of social conflicts.

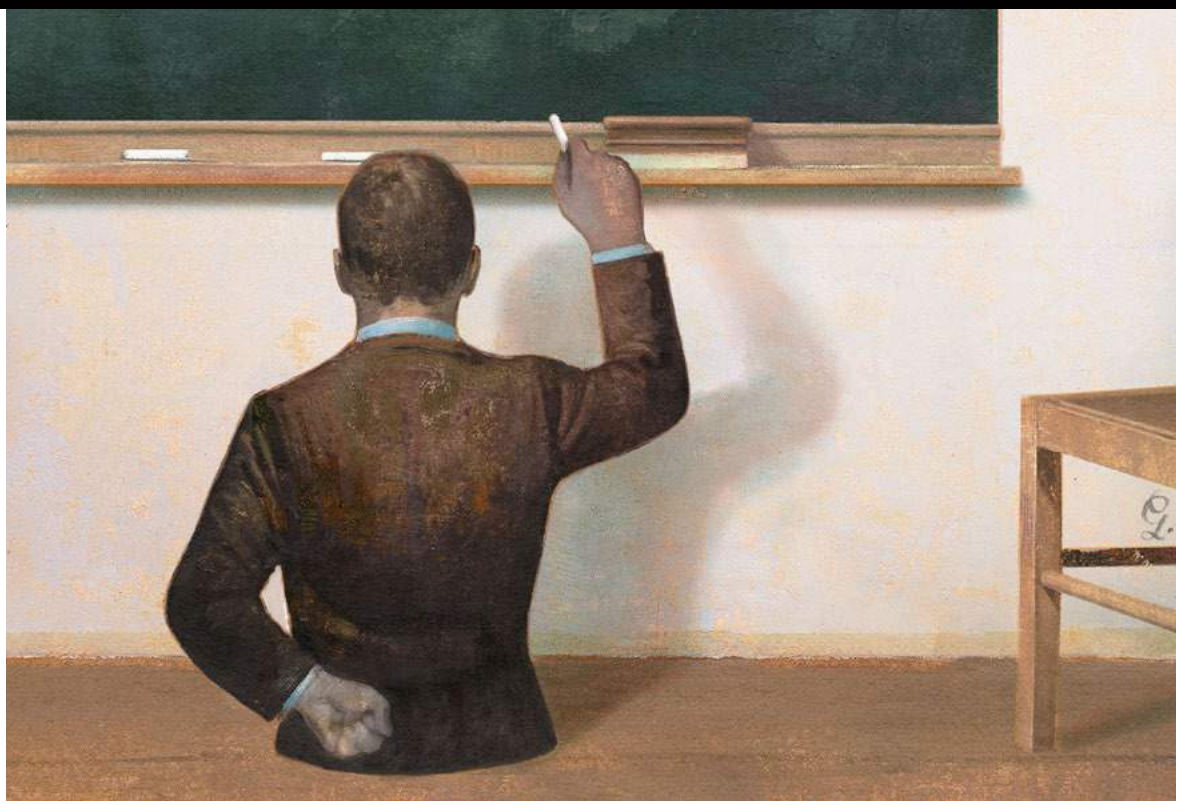
Choosing a Future of Hope for Our Children

A fuller and more radical expression of democracy, a culture of peace that teaches us to practice non-violent means of resolving human conflicts, and relationships between people that celebrate and affirm the bonds of community and interdependence among us are some of the great challenges before us in this century. Their failure to be seriously addressed confronts us with threats to the very possibility of a desirable human future. And all these challenges will require efforts and interventions in a multiplicity of ways within both our individual lives and across the landscapes of our public institutions. There can be no doubt of the extraordinary importance of education to making these changes. Education is after all that sphere where reason, morality, reflection, imagination, and the capacity to act with thoughtfulness and creativity is stirred and nurtured. Yet it is clear that this is far from where the present discourse of education has taken us. Schools have become instruments of conformity and passivity. They are enthralled by the language of management and controlled outcomes, measured by their usefulness to the state as the means to supply trained workers, and for parents schools mirror all of the fears and uncertainties of an unsafe and rapidly changing world. For the latter, education can, perhaps, provide their kids with an edge, or at least the minimum set of skills and aptitudes that will enable them to survive in an increasingly competitive society. Yet even within a culture so dominated by fear there is still hope. Out of the frozen ground we see shoots of possibility. There are moments of recognition by parents and citizens that our children's education should be a joyful, creative, and thought-provoking experience, not the dull grind of endless tests. Teachers are becoming more vocal about their frustrations as to the lack of opportunities for dialogue, critical reflection, and meaningful learning in the classroom. Members of the community are voicing their concerns that schooling seems to provide little that prepares young people for active and thoughtful participation as citizens of a democracy. Among students there is increasing criticism of the drill and test variety of education with its resulting boredom and alienation. More students are demanding a curriculum that is relevant to their lives and to what is happening in the world.

I know from my own experience as a teacher just how much students crave an education that offers opportunities to consider what it means to live meaningful and purposeful lives—what used to be described as wisdom—as they confront the spiritual emptiness of our materialistic and consumer-driven culture.

It might be that in the end the awesome and terrifying events that now confront us as a species will provide the powerful catalyst for change in how we view the task of education. More and more we see that the fate of the earth itself is now in the balance. We will have to confront the fundamental challenges to the way we have constructed our social world or face the dangerous consequences of inaction. We will need to teach our children to think deeply and critically about the costs of a consumer culture and how human wants are manipulated into an endless desire for more with all of its devastating consequences for our resources and the flow of pollutants into our environment. We will need to teach our children to think in ways that are holistic—understanding that human life and nature do not stand opposed to each other but are seamlessly connected in an interdependent web. We must be stewards, not violators, of our natural world. We will need to teach so that our children see themselves not as isolated and self-contained beings, but members of an interdependent community with common needs and shared responsibilities. And we will need to emphasize that a sense of social justice must be present in all of our human actions so that the privileged lives of some do not depend on a callous disregard for the lives or fate of others.

In this time of great danger and also extraordinary possibility, educators are called towards a prophetic role. They must insist that in the conditions that now confront us the present educational agenda only reinforces and even compounds our problems. To educate today must instead be an act that helps transform human consciousness and conscience. The vision that animates our work as educators must be rooted in the ancient quest for *tikkun olam*—the effort to repair and heal our world as a place of generous and loving community in which there is a just sharing of rewards and obligations, where human differences are mediated by respect and recognition, a world of ecological sanity and responsibility, and where there is the widest diffusion of opportunities for human beings to participate in shaping the world they live in. No matter how far-fetched or unrealistic such a vision may appear to be in relation to the present concerns of schooling, this is no time for timidity. The immense dangers and the extraordinary suffering within which we are now engulfed demands from us a bold, daring, and imaginative kind of thinking. Anything less is an irresponsible negation of our obligations to the education of coming generations. ■



Defending Educators in an Age of Neoliberal Tyranny

HENRY A. GIROUX

In an age of intellectual and spiritual debasement, thinking is vilified as an act of subversion and ignorance translates into a political and cultural virtue. Traces of critical thought appear only at the margins of the culture as ignorance becomes the primary organizing principle of American society. For instance, two-thirds of the American public believes that creationism should be taught in schools and a majority of Republicans in Congress do not believe that climate change is caused by human activity, making the U.S. the laughingstock of the world.[1] Politicians endlessly lie knowing that the public is addicted to exhortation, emotional outbursts, and sensationalism, all of which mimics celebrity culture. Image selling now entails lying on principle, making it all the easier for politics to dissolve into entertainment, pathology, and a unique brand of criminality. Paul Krugman claims that not only is the presumptive head of the Republican Party ignorant, but such ignorance is the defining feature of most of the members of the party. He writes:

> Truly, Donald Trump knows nothing. He is more ignorant about policy than you can possibly imagine, even when you take into account the fact that he is more ignorant than you can possibly imagine. But his ignorance isn't as unique as it may seem: In many ways, he's just doing a clumsy job of channeling nonsense widely popular in his party, and to some extent in the chattering classes more generally.[2]

Ignorance breeds corruption and endears us to falsehoods, venality, and carnival barking. The corruption of both the truth and politics is made all the easier since the American public have become habituated to overstimulation and live

HENRY A. GIROUX currently holds the McMaster University Chair for Scholarship in the Public Interest in the English and Cultural Studies Department and a Distinguished Visiting Professorship at Ryerson University. His most recent books are *America's Education Deficit and the War on Youth* (Monthly Review Press, 2013) and *Neoliberalism's War on Higher Education* (Haymarket Press, 2014). His website is www.henryagiroux.com.

Gerard DuBois | gdubois.com

in an ever-accelerating overflow of information and images. Experience no longer has time to crystallize into mature and informed thought. As Leon Wieseltier points out, "words cannot wait for thoughts and patience [becomes] a liability."[3] Opinion outdoes reasoned—and evidence-based arguments and the power of expression degenerates into a spectacle. News has become entertainment and echoes reality rather than interrogating it. Popular culture revels in the spectacles of shock and violence.[4] Universities have become McDonalized and knowledge is now subject to the practice of a fast education and the resulting curricula that resemble a fast-food menu.[5]

Unsurprisingly, education in the larger culture has become a disimagination machine, a tool for legitimating ignorance, and it is central to the formation of an authoritarian politics that is gutting any vestige of democracy from the ideology, policies, and institutions that now shape American society. Education has lost its moral, political, and spiritual bearings just as teachers across the country are being belittled and institutions of higher education are under attack by economic and religious fundamentalists. One consequence is that higher education has become corporatized and is also reduced to a disimagination machine, which confuses training with education, employs a top-down authoritarian style of power, mimics a business culture, infantilizes students by treating them as consumers, and depoliticizes faculty by removing them from all forms of governance. Clearly all of these defining relations produced by the neoliberal university have to be challenged and changed.

The slow death of public and higher education does not augur well for democracy. Americans live in a historical moment that annihilates thought. Ignorance now provides a sense of community; the brain has migrated to the dark pit of the spectacle; the only discourse that matters is about business; poverty is now viewed as a technical problem or a matter of character and personal lifestyle; thought chases after an emotion that can obliterate it. Some of my students tell me they don't like to talk on the phone because it is too demanding; speed dating and hookup culture provide the last word on the scourge of intimacy and commitment. Donald Trump, the Republican Party nominee for President of the United States, declares he likes "the uneducated"—implying that it is better that they stay ignorant than be critically engaged agents—and boasts that he doesn't read books. Fox News offers no apologies for suggesting that thinking is an act of stupidity. A culture of cruelty and a survival-of-the-fittest ethos in the United States is the new norm and one consequence is that democracy in the United States is on the verge of disappearing or has already disappeared! Where are the agents of democracy and the public spaces that offer hope in such dark times? Many are in public schools—all the more reason to praise public school teachers and to defend public and higher education as a public good.

For the most part, public school teachers and higher education faculty are a national treasure and may be one of the last defenses available to undermine a growing authoritarianism, pervasive racism, permanent war culture, widening inequality, and debased notion of citizenship in American society. They can't solve these problems but they can educate a generation of students to address them. What is crucial to understand is that public and higher education are not simply about educating young people to be smart, socially responsible, and adequately prepared for whatever notions of the future they can imagine, but that education is central to democracy itself. Without the formative culture that makes democracy possible, there will be no critical agents, no foundation for enabling people to hold power accountable, and no wider groundwork for challenging neoliberalism as a mode of governance and political and ideological rationality. The struggle over education and its democratic misuse cannot be separated from the struggle to undo the reign of markets, neoliberalism, and the ideologies informing this savage market fundamentalism. Neoliberal policies, values, and practices reinforce the worst dimensions of education: specialisms, a cult of distorted professionalism, a narrow empiricism, the unwillingness to work with others, an indentured labor force, deskilled teachers, a culture of punishment, and a mode of pedagogy steeped in forms of disciplining repression. All of this must change for teachers and faculty or they will continue to lose power to the corporate and managerial elite. What this suggests is that it is all the more necessary to defend educators as public intellectuals and socially concerned citizens who are crucial to the process of defending education as a public good and democratic public sphere.

Yet, public school teachers, in particular, are underpaid and overworked, and lack adequate resources. In the end they are unjustly blamed by right-wing billionaires and politicians for the plight of public schools. In order to ensure their failure, schools in many cities such as Detroit and Philadelphia have been defunded by right-wing legislators. These schools are dilapidated—filled with vermin and broken floors—and they often lack heat and the most basic resources. They represent the mirror image of the culture of cruelty and dispossession produced by the violence of neoliberalism.

Under the counterfeit appeal to reform, national legislation imposes drill-and-test modes of pedagogy on teachers that kill the imagination of students. Young people suffer under the tyranny of methods that are forms of disciplinary repression. Teachers remain powerless as administrators model their schools after prisons and turn students over to the police. And in the midst of such egregious assaults, teachers are disparaged as public servants. The insecure, overworked adjunct lecturers employed en masse at most institutions of higher education fare no better. They have been reduced to an army of indentured wage slaves, with little or no power, benefits, or time to do their research. Some states, such as

Texas, appear to regard higher education as a potential war zone and have passed legislation allowing students to carry concealed weapons on campus.[6] That is certainly one way to convince faculty not to engage in controversial subjects with their students. With the exception of the elite schools, which have their own criminogenic environments to deal with, higher education is in free fall, undermined as a democratic public sphere and increasingly modeled after corporations and run by armies of administrators who long to be called CEOs.

All the while the federal government spends billions of dollars to fuel one of the largest defense and intelligence budgets in the world. The permanent war-death machine is overflowing with money while the public sector, social provisions, and public goods are disappearing. At the same time, many states allocate more funds for prisons than for higher education. Young children all over the country are drinking water poisoned with lead, while corporations rake in enormous profits, receive huge tax benefits, buy off politicians, and utterly corrupt the political system. Trust and compassion are considered a weakness if not a liability in an age of massive inequities in wealth and power. In the midst of what can only be viewed as a blow against democracy, right-wing Republicans produce slash-and-burn policies that translate into poisonous austerity measures for the public schools and higher education. As Jane Mayer observes in *Dark Money*, the Koch brothers and their billionaire allies want to abolish the minimum wage, privatize schools, eliminate the welfare state, pollute the planet at will, break unions, and promote policies that result in the needless deaths of millions who lack adequate health care, jobs, and other essentials.[7] Public goods such as schools for these politicians and corporate lobbyists are financial investments, viewed as business opportunities. For the billionaires who are the anti-reformers, teachers, students, and unions simply get in the way and must be disciplined.

Public schools and higher education are dangerous because they hold the potential to serve as laboratories for democracy where students learn to think critically. Teachers are threatening because they refuse to view critical thinking as a burden or treat schools as if they were car dealerships. Many educators have made it clear that they regard teaching for the test and defining accountability only in numerical terms as a practice that dulls the mind and kills the spirit of students. It also kills the spirit of public school teachers. One recent survey published in 2015 found that "only 15 percent of teachers feel enthusiastic about the profession, and about three in four 'often feel' stressed by their jobs."[8] This is not surprising since teaching in the age of neoliberal tyranny has become more instrumental, feudal-like in its governing structures, and militarized in its approach to student behavior. Public schools appear in urban areas to be primarily containment centers more willing to criminalize student behavior than educate students by fulfilling the intellectual and civic purpose of critical education.[9] Such repressive requirements undermine the ability of teachers to be creative, engage with the communities in which they work, and teach in order to make knowledge critical and transformative. The claim that we have too many bad teachers is too often a ruse to hide bad policies and unleash assaults on public schools by corporate-driven ideologues and hedge fund managers who view schools strictly as investment opportunities for big profits.

We need to praise teachers, hold them to high standards, pay them the salaries they deserve, give them control over their classrooms, reduce class sizes, and invest as much if not more in education as we do in the military-industrial complex. This is all the more reason to call attention to and join with those teachers in Chicago, Detroit, and Seattle who are collectively fighting against such attacks on public schools. We need to praise them, learn from them, and organize with them because they refuse to treat education as a commodity and they recognize that the crisis of schooling is about the crises of democracy, economic equality, and justice. This is not a minor struggle because no democracy can survive without informed citizens.

Neoliberal education is increasingly expressed in terms of austerity measures and market-driven ideologies that undermine any notion of the imagination, reduce faculty to an army of indentured labor, and burden students with either a mind-numbing education or enormous crippling debt or both. If faculty and students do not resist this assault, they will no longer have any control over the conditions of their labor, and the institutions of pubic and higher education will further degenerate into a crude adjunct of the corporation and financial elite.

Clearly, it is time to revisit Mario Savio's famous speech at Berkeley in 1964 when he called for shutting down an educational system that had become odious. In his own words:

> There comes a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part, you can't even passively take part; and you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop. And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, the people who own it, that unless you're free the machine will be prevented from working at all.[10]

Savio's call to resistance is more relevant today than it was then. Public schools not only mimic the injustices of an oppressive economic system, but also funnel poor youth of color into the criminal justice system. The good news is that there is an echo of outrage and resistance now emerging in the United States, especially among young people such as those in the Black Lives Matter movement.

If the major index of any democracy is measured by how a society treats its children, the United States is failing.

Fortunately, more and more people are waking up and realizing that the fight for public schooling is not just about higher salaries for teachers, it is about investing in our children and in democracy itself. At the same time, we live in what Carl Boggs and others have called a permanent warfare state, one in which every space appears to be a battlefield, and the most vulnerable are viewed not only as an imminent threat, but also as the object of potential violence.[11] This suggests that the battle of education must become part of a wider political struggle. This is a struggle that connects assaults on education with the broader war on youth, police violence with the militarization of society, and specific instances of racist brutality with the unchecked exercise of the systemic power of finance capital. But the struggle will not be easy. Beneath all of the current brutality, racism, and economic predation, there is some hope inspired by the generation of young people who are protesting police violence and the attack on public and higher education, and working hard to invent a politics that gets to the root of issues. There is also a glimmer of possibility in those young people who have supported Bernie Sanders but are really demanding a new and more radical definition of politics: Their vision far surpasses that of the left-centrists and liberals of the Democratic Party. Elections are the ruse of capitalism, and that has never been clearer than at the present moment. On the one side we have Hillary Clinton, a warmonger, a strong supporter of the financial elite, and a representative of a neoliberalism that is as brutal is it is cruel. On the other side we have Trump, a circus barker inviting Americans into a den of horrors. And these are the choices that constitute democracy? I don't think so.

Collective self-delusion will only go so far in the absence of an education system that offers a space for critical learning, dissent, and functions as a laboratory for democracy. There is a tendency to forget in an age dominated by the neoliberal celebration of self-interest and unchecked individualism that public goods matter, that critical thinking is essential to a collective civic consciousness, and that education at the very least should provide students with unsettling ruptures that display the fierce energy of outrage and the hope for a better world. But a critical education has the capacity to do more. It also has the power not only to prevent justice from going dead in ourselves and the larger society but also, in George Yancy's poetic terms, to teach us how to "love with courage."[12] Hopefully, while education cannot solve such problems, it can produce the formative cultures necessary to enable a generation of young people to create a robust third party—a party fueled by social movements demanding the economic and political justice that could allow a radical democracy to come to life.

Hannah Arendt was right in stating that "the aim of totalitarian education has never been to instill convictions but to destroy the capacity to form any," suggesting that totalitarianism was as much about the production of thoughtlessness as it was about the imposition of brute force, gaping inequality, corporatism, and the spectacle of violence.[13] Totalitarianism destroys everything that democracy makes possible and in doing so thrives by stoking mass insecurity, fear, and rage; all of which are marshalled to demonize the Other—the immigrant, the Black, the Muslim, the intellectual, and young protesters. We live in an age in which the crucial notion that democracies need informed citizens who can think critically and act with a sense of civic responsibility is being forgotten, at great peril to democracy. Yet power, however tyrannical, is never without resistance. The dark clouds of authoritarianism are not ahead, they are upon us—but that does not mean that they are here to stay. ■

Notes

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Towards an Education That (Re)members

Centering Identity, Race, and Spirituality in Education

CYNTHIA B. DILLARD
(NANA MANSA II OF MPEASEM, GHANA)

Why we (re)member

Jacqueline is a twenty-one-year-old Black female. She is introspective and soft-spoken, reflecting her modest, humble Christian upbringing where one speaks only when spoken to and lowers one's eyes in the presence of elders. Her curly brown hair is often straightened or pulled back in a bun and dark-rimmed glasses frame her skin, the color of butterscotch. Often dressed in university apparel, she came to the university from a community college. When we first met, she was a junior studying early childhood education and minoring in sociology. Through much hard work on both of our parts, she received a scholarship that enabled her to study abroad in Ghana. That was the beginning of her transformative experience.

When Jacqueline shared with me the reasons she wanted to travel to Ghana, she raised her eyes and looked deeply into mine: She knew that the stories she'd heard about Black people—from continent to diaspora—did not accurately describe what she knew experientially in her bones. She had a spiritual longing to understand the deeper meaning of blackness and to understand herself as a Black person. "I have to go to Ghana. It's a spiritual calling," she said. "When you came into my . . . class discussing the Ghana study abroad trip, something told me that I needed to be on that trip to Ghana. As the only African American girl in that class, I knew that I would have a deep connection to Africa."

When applying to study abroad, she spoke of the importance of being around other Black women as mentors and guides. In her view, this was critical to understanding herself as a Black woman teacher. But there was sadness on her face as we talked further. "I have never had a Black teacher," she whispered. "But this trip would guarantee that I'd finally have an African American teacher (professor), a role model to look up to that looks like me, since there are so few."

As might be imagined, experiences in Ghana were life-changing for Jacqueline, as demonstrated by this excerpt from her final paper:

> Ghana was so essential because I learned and found my identity through culture and history of my race. From exiting 'The Door of No Return' and coming back and entering through 'The Door of Return' I had proven that a descendant, at least one, could just briefly return to Africa, and that despite the cruel betrayals, bitter ocean voyages, and hurtful centuries, we were still recognizable. Despite the horrid, inhumane dungeons, I received the word, the connection of my people, healing my wounds of self-doubt and low esteem and feeling proud, having a sense of empowerment, and loving my blackness as a woman.

Why race, identity, and spirit in education

Jacqueline's narrative raises a number of troubling issues in the education of Black girls and women and the ways our minds, bodies, and spirits continue to be harmed by educational experiences that: 1) fail to acknowledge the visibility and centrality of our culture, race, and gender historically or contemporarily; 2) render invisible or totally disregards

CYNTHIA B. DILLARD, PH.D., (Nana Mansa II of Mpeasem, Ghana, West Africa) is the Mary Frances Early Professor in Teacher Education and Department Chair in the Department of Educational Theory and Practice at the University of Georgia. Beyond numerous published articles and book chapters, two of her books, *On Spiritual Strivings: Transforming an African American Woman's Academic Life* (SUNY Press, 2006) and *Learning to (Re)member the Things We've Learned to Forget: Endarkened Feminisms, Spirituality, & the Sacred Nature of Research & Teaching* (Peter Lang, 2012) have been selected as Critics' Choice Book Award winners by the American Educational Studies Association (AESA). Dillard is currently working on a biography of the namesake of her endowed position, Dr. Mary Frances Early, the first Black person to graduate from the University of Georgia.

Past Tense Present

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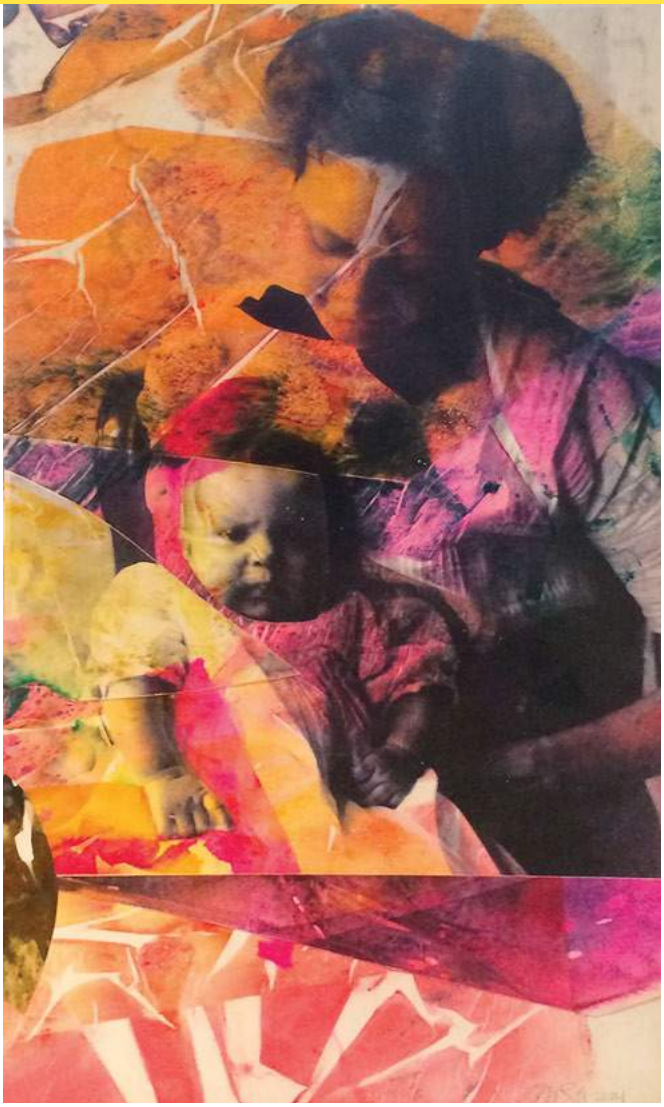
spirit and spirituality as animating forces in our lives; 3) do little to honor the creativity and contributions of Black people from the African continent including African Americans and others in the African diaspora. Patricia Williams argues that this disregard murders the spirit of Blacks in school and society. With racism as a foundational fact of the U.S., education too often continues to alienate Blacks from our culture and teaches us in ways that causes injury to our spirits. Many argue that such assaults on Black children's lives are grounded in a deliberate and collective national amnesia about who we are, the events that have happened in the various (and often troubled) histories of this nation and the world, who has benefited from telling particular stories of those histories, and the absent dialogues that our collective society has been unwilling to have. Still others argue racism is a permanent part of the landscape of this nation and is a continued barrier to creating the beloved communities across differences, that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called for decades ago. Still other marginalized peoples, including Native Americans and Latinos, also face similar spirit-murder and destruction of memory in the education system.

What is the education that can help us heal these deep wounds and help us to see each other across our differences more clearly? In my book, *Learning to (Re)member the Things We've Learned to Forget,* I examined the ways that centering spirituality in education transforms the very foundations of education, creating sites for spiritual healing and service to the world. While such a stance is particularly important in the education of Blacks and other people of color, I am suggesting that centering culture, race, identity, and spirituality is work that has the potential to heal and serve us all. Looking back, a central thread in Jacqueline's story is that identities matter: social identities (i.e. racial, gender, sexual, ability, etc.), identities embedded in roles (i.e. teacher, mother, mentor, etc.), and spiritual identities or identities that may be based in religion, but may also be "the evidence of things unseen," matter. I am also suggesting here that the work of constructing identities is deeply embedded in acts of memory and of (re) membering. Memory can be thought of as a thing, person, or event that brings to mind and heart a past experience. But (re)membering is both the ability to recall that experience (or think of again) and the ability to put it back together again (to re-"member"). From my view, as spiritual beings having a human experience, we already know in spirit who we are and our work in the world. Thus our human experience provides us space and time to act like we know that.

For many students of color, embracing an ethic that opens to spirit is fundamental to the nature of learning and education. But educational spaces like schools are always and in all ways also political, cultural, situated, embodied, and spiritual. Too often, Black students like Jacqueline are encouraged or forced to forget who they are (or have chosen to do so), given the weight and power of memories in their present lives. This is where study abroad programs like the one Jacqueline experienced in Ghana can be so important. But they are not enough. Teaching those most marginalized by society must begin with an alternative orientation to traditional education: it must embrace a new sense of the world. Thus, education that addresses inequality begins within local lived experiences of Black students, with local communities serving as bridges to understanding one's place in the world. Such understandings arise through critically examining the knowledge and cultural productions of Black people's historical, economic, and cultural stories and struggles. This



Nurture

expansive examination can cultivate learning and teaching based in new ways of seeing, feeling, hearing, understanding, and links to global understandings of education, contributions, and engagements of Black peoples. Assume that the knowledge, wisdom, and ways of our ancestors are a central and present part of everything that has existed, is existing, and will exist in what we call the future. If so, then education that addresses the harm and injury of exclusions and oppressions must also undertake an often unnamed and oft-forgotten task that is important for individuals like Jacqueline who want to understand ways of being and knowing that have been marginalized in the world and in formal education. Simply put, we must learn to (re)member the things that we've learned to forget.

When learning to (re)member is the process of education

Ghanaian writer Ayi Kwei Armah, in his book *KMT in the house of life: An epistemic novel,* says that Black people are and have always been thinkers and sharers. But we think, he says, in order to share. This is a crucial first step in creating and sharing counter-stories of the brilliance and beauty of Black life. (Re)membering our identities is like weaving kente, the magnificently beautiful cloth of Ghana. Kente is a useful metaphor for (re)membering and weaving identity together again. The processes of (re)membering identity are like the warp of kente cloth: they literally hold the cloth (and our personhood) together. Like kente, the work of constructing one's identity also creates unique designs and 'colors' given a person's upbringing, education, and experiences. Like the weft of woven cloth, this process of (re)membering identities (particularly racial and ethnic identities) also creates unique designs and individual ways of being as we engage the processes of education.

Jacqueline's process of (re)membering Black identity, like so many Black youth and adults in schools and universities today, shows us several powerful transformations of body, mind, and spirit. She shows us that both recalling who we are and putting ourselves back together is our education. Each person enacts processes of (re)membering differently based on who they are. Enacting a sacred and spiritual process of (re) membering who we are in relation to diverse knowledges, cultures, places, and people is work we do from the inside out and from one soul to another. This is not necessarily a linear process, as engagements and enactments are shaped by the life experiences of each person. However, in learning to (re)member, we are acknowledging that there are important spiritual lessons we may have once known as people, but that we have learned or been forced to forget. As we learn to (re)member through uncovering and discovering our diverse identities, we initially engage in the process of (re) searching, seeking, looking, and searching again. In Jacqueline's case, she was searching for Black heritage to teach her something new about herself—and about others. But I am suggesting here that, as we engage with one another across our diverse identities, everyone is engaged in (re)search, in trying to understand and be aware of another. And what we are searching for is what Thich Nhat Hanh calls our true identity, with the goal to see ourselves as spiritual beings engaging in a human experience, on purpose for a purpose.

This process of learning to (re)member also involves (re) visioning, expanding our vision and worldview beyond just what we can see towards what womanist scholar Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí calls a world sense. This involves an awakening to what we hear, touch, feel, and intuit and acknowledging the spiritual "evidence of things unseen." We read this as Jacqueline articulated her new visions of Africa and herself. Another part of the processes of learning to (re)member is (re)cognizing, the process of changing our thinking and our minds about who we are in relation to one another. In Jacqueline's case, she quite literally changed her mind about who Black people were, what Black people have accomplished, and the sociocultural brilliance of Black people from

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Africa to the diaspora and back again. While (re)cognizing is often manifest as a change in mind, it also includes shifts in our heart: it involves thinking about our very selves again in light of our encounters. In this process of learning, we also begin (re)presenting ourselves differently in the world, literally putting our understandings of our own and other's identities and culture in the world in new and fuller ways. There is an African proverb that says, "Until the lion tells his own story, the story will always glorify the hunter." These acts of (re)presention are where the lion begins to speak his or her own story, a kind of truth-telling that disrupts what has passed as universal narratives of humanity towards more specific stories as they have been lived by very diverse peoples. Finally, there is a (re)claiming, where we (re)member in order to claim and embrace the multiple legacies we are a part of (in Jacqueline's case, of African people and history) and to take our place within these legacies. The Akan people of Ghana describe this process of (re)membering as *sankofa*: where we learn from our gatherings of the past in order to build for the future.

When the child is Black: A note for teachers

In an interview with Bernice Johnson Reagan, of acapella group Sweet Honey in the Rock, J.M. Latta spoke of an important consideration in creating spaces for an education that (re)members: "History is sacred because it is the only chance that you have of knowing who you are outside of what's been rained down upon you from a hostile environment. And when you go to the documents created inside the culture, you get another story. You get another history. The history is sacred and the highest, most hallowed songs in tones are pulled into service to deliver that story."

We heard through Jacqueline's encounters with African knowledge and culture in Ghana that those encounters mattered deeply to her sense of being as a Black woman teacher. We heard in her voice (re)claimations of connection, kinship, and healed identities. Learning to (re)member in Ghana allowed her to resist the oppressive narratives of Black women's lives that have been constructed worldwide and to create new identities that empowered and changed her view of Black life. Through her processes of (re)membering, she created an identity drawing on the past. We witnessed in Jacqueline's voice what it meant to take up the sacred operationally, to wrestle and (re)member as deeply situated and healing processes which implied several engagements that are instructive for teachers of Black children.

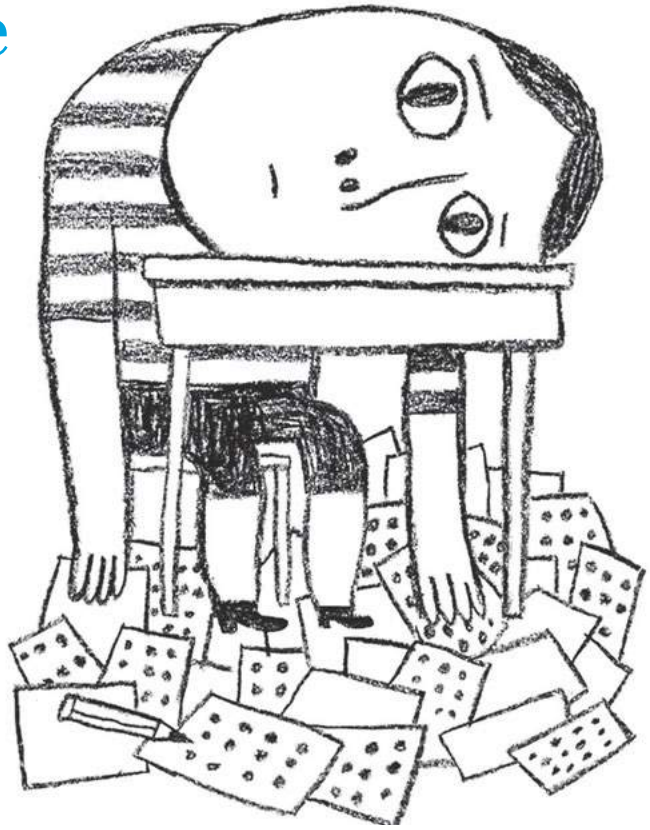
The first lesson was that she was drawn into and present in a spiritual heritage homeland, in this case, Ghana, West Africa. It is critical that we provide opportunities for Black students to very explicitly experience their heritage and culture, not simply as an important engagement, but as a human right. Whether through experiential global engagements with African and other Black heritage sites such as monuments and museums or bringing the world into our classrooms in other exciting ways, children should have the opportunity to learn and to be in spaces that affirm their heritage, their culture, and their spirits. In Jacqueline's story, we also learned that these engagements are not just important for our students, they are critical for Black teachers and those who care about Black teachers and students. As teachers, one question we might ask of our practice is this: in what ways do I provide learning spaces for my students (assignments, experiences, resources, materials) that affirm the heritage, culture, and spirit of all of my students?

Second, Jacqueline was engaged with the rituals, people, and places (of Ghana) in intimate and authentic ways. As we examine our teaching practices, we might ask in what ways our students engage curriculum and lessons in authentic and intimate ways, especially in relation to Black heritage, culture, and spiritualities. For many Black children, post-integration schooling has done little to affirm the contributions, knowledges, and spiritual perspectives of African and African diasporic heritage, leaving our children without the recognition of themselves as builders of civilizations and producers of knowledge and culture from a long line of Black brilliance and legacy. A question for teachers is this: how might I engage and learn about the rituals, people, and culture of Africa (and by extension, African Americans and others in the African diaspora) in ways that are authentic, intimate, and life-affirming? This is not a question of "adding on" to the common core or other curricular mandates. As we saw in Jacqueline's (re)membering processes, it is a matter of (re)visioning the entire curricular process to meet the educational, social, and spiritual needs of Black students and other students whose cultures and heritages are not readily found in curriculum and educational practices today.

Finally, Jacqueline's story helps us see that, as a future Black woman teacher, she was open to being transformed by her education in Ghana and recognized those encounters as purposeful and expansive, as acts of healing. For Jacqueline, the catalyst and context to (re)member was Ghana, West Africa. However, within our schools, universities, and broader society, we have the responsibility to (re)member Black identities and the rich heritage of Black peoples from Africa and her diaspora, and to place our students' learning against a transnational Black backdrop, wherever we might be. I am suggesting that we shift our engagements as Jacqueline did, to embrace more sacred (re)membering that is, at its core, about healing and social justice. As Jacqueline's (re)membering showed us: we must not only engage our teaching differently, we must learn to be differently. ■

A Curriculum of Love

ERIK GLEIBERMANN



PAUSE FOR A MOMENT and consider a curriculum that extends beyond merely practical schooling, past our standard materially-oriented instruction that fixates almost exclusively on the academic skills that promote professional success. Consider instead a curriculum centered in deep connectedness, a curriculum of love.

Where in their unfolding growth do our children learn about what might be the core human experience, from primal bonding within the womb to the final demise when a child weeps at her dying parent's bedside? Love in multifarious forms pervades experience: love of self, family, romantic partner, friend, pet, community, humankind, the earth, and even the stranger and the enemy that Judeo-Christian tradition exhorts us to embrace. Where is the schoolhouse door that opens to the divine realm of dreams, the contours of grief, the light of intuition, the sense of connection to the rivers? Perhaps love and the inner life do not seem like subjects students could possibly explore at a desk, on a computer, or in a lab. But there is a pedagogy that might make it accessible.

While considering such teaching we should not assume that teaching about love necessitates its practice. But an academic curriculum that delves deeply into the nature of love in several adventurous teachers' classrooms can be a springboard into an explicit school-wide practice of the compassion, empathy and generosity that *Tikkun's* Spiritual Covenant With America calls for. A syllabus of the highest regard for life's intimacy in our despiritualized education system is a radical beginning.

The introduction of such a curriculum can produce visceral push back in a society that fears exploration of our spiritual nature. Love is supposed to be private and school a place of public inquiry. A parent once reported me to the San Francisco Bay Area high school district where I taught when she read her daughter's journal entry on the topic I suggested "What is the color of love?" My student apologized for her parent's aggressiveness. The parent wasn't very loving, and my student told me she had actually felt an unexpected freedom writing that journal. What a loss it would be to deprive her of that opening.

Others might argue love doesn't belong in the curriculum because it is a soft non-academic subject and that by teaching it you risk turning your classroom into a New Age bubble. But I'm not talking about lessons encased in some kind of soft, airy sharing sessions. Love is a compelling and deeply challenging subject to undertake: layered, rich, transformative, demanding, and painful. It is a deep existential concern that can be investigated from multi-disciplinary perspectives, through philosophy, psychology, biology, history, literature, and theology. It has all the gravitas of any topic the academy can offer.

Young people from kindergarten through high school can be enabled to explore the subject at their respective developmental levels. A thoughtful teacher might help them begin as any rigorous academic thinker begins, by defining terms. What do we actually mean when we use the word love? This can be a lesson not only in love, but in learning precision of language. We may regard love as some singular nameable thing but a single word belies the depth and variety of its forms. The intimate breathing rhythms of a baby nestling in her mother's bosom is not the companionship of Huck and Jim rafting down the Mississippi, nor the longing of

JooHee Yoon | jooheeyoon.com

ERIK GLEIBERMANN is a San Francisco writer and a writing mentor in the Principal Leadership Institute at the UC Berkeley School of Education.

Odysseus for Penelope, or the outstretched arms of the Virgen de Guadalupe.

Even a second grade teacher can teach love in a sophisticated way, as long as the approach is developmentally appropriate. Rather than provide information, the teacher could take a constructive approach. For example, students could list all the examples of love they know about in life and in a teacher-guided discussion, classify the examples into categories. It doesn't matter what configuration they ultimately derive. What matters is that students engage with the complexity of the subject. High school students, on the other hand, might work with a challenging text, perhaps Plato's famous dialogue on love, *The Symposium*. Here they would encounter the Greek definitions of the three basic love types: *eros*, relating largely to desire and the urge for fusion, *philia*, that connotes fraternal companionship, and *agape*, a wider love of compassion and generous desire for the betterment of others espoused by most of the world's spiritual traditions.

My own improvisational entry into an instructional discourse on love came at the beginning of a unit I tried out in my San Francisco high school psychology class. Twenty-two students and I sat in a circle for a Socratic seminar on the question "What is intimacy?" The week before I had proposed we deviate from the traditional and somewhat clinical textbook unit on emotion and instead do a unit specifically on love. Certain girls got demonstrably excited (maybe a chance to share publicly what was spoken of only in hushed conversations and leather-bound journals) while others, especially the boys, seemed impassive or slightly unsteadied. This is good, I thought. Successful education should subvert the status quo. I made it clear at the outset it would be serious, no spending our time sitting around reading Mariah Carey lyrics or strategizing how to get a date.

The seminar on our outré question proved to be a profound opening to the curricular unit. Over many years of teaching I have found that when posing the right well-timed question that touches a personal chord and combining it with skillful facilitation, a discussion with everyday high school kids can magically ascend at moments to the level of an Ivy League seminar. These kids deftly wove in proto-literary references to U2 and *Twilight* and offered questions that gradually expanded the philosophical depth.

In one particularly illuminating exchange we got onto the sub-question, "Can you be intimate with a stranger?" My students were initially thinking about this in a sexual light, but I asked them if there might be another way to come at it. I was conscious of the pronouncement in Leviticus to honor (and thereby to love) the stranger. Somebody then asked whether it would be intimacy if your car breaks down on a long stretch of highway in Nevada where no one else is around and a guy stops to help you and you both get your hands dirty and then he stays with you while you wait for the tow truck and while waiting you both somehow get to talking about the joy you share with your dogs. It seemed almost everyone had something to say about this story. We also talked about self-intimacy (which provoked scattered laughter), how maybe curling up alone in a ball with a doll after a fight with a friend or standing in the rain in July under an open sky tasting the drops were something like love. The next day one of those enthusiastic girls came up to me and confided she felt freer. She always thought intimacy meant sex. Now she knew it could be so much more. I wondered to myself, when did I finally learn that? Some people never do. We were going in the right direction.

A study of love doesn't have to be this freewheeling. In fact, there already exists a curriculum on love that is hardly avant-garde. It's the psychology and pastoral counseling programs at universities and some religious training institutions. While they may not often invoke the actual word love, they do analyze theories of love relationships. Clinical classes teach students to help others in navigating love relationships, usually romantic and familial. Seminaries and other clerical training centers for pastoral work explore similar territory while usually adding a spiritual dimension.

"Love clearly doesn't have to be a soft, amorphous topic of study."

Students in K—12 generally aren't exposed to psychology, but I think even young children are ready for authentic psychological study. For example, they could learn about the parts of the brain that light up (on a PET scan) when someone gets a hug. They could learn about the seminal research study showing baby monkeys developed greater attachment to a wire mesh mother figure covered by terry cloth than an equivalent wire mother holding a bottle of milk. These students could explore the implications of an experiment that suggests physical affection is more important than nourishment in inducing bonding. I don't think it's unreasonable to suggest that fifth graders can do cross-cultural anthropology, which is what they would be doing if they compared patterns of how mothers sleep with their babies across cultures worldwide.

Love clearly doesn't have to be a soft, amorphous topic of study. It can be explored under the lens of science. I had my students study empirical data and theory as well as do field research. I had them, for example, collect data through a survey asking groups of different ages to define love and then analyze the results developmentally. How do middle-age adults define love compared to middle school children and what are the resulting implications? This was a study in

research methods and data analysis as much as it was a query on love. Students can look at love through the biological lens as well. What is the chemical composition of oxytocin and where is it secreted? What happens if you compare the brain activity of a person kissing to one of that same person only fantasizing about the act?

We may not realize it, but students are already studying love all the time through literature, from Homer to Toni Morrison. We can challenge students to look deeply. Instead of relying on the emotionally stereotypical *Romeo and Juliet* in high school as the Shakespearian prototype of love, explore *Othello*. Can a man that frenzied by jealousy be said to love? The question is echoed by a contemporary Raymond Carver short story "What Do We Talk About When We Talk About Love," (portrayed recently in the film *Birdman*) in which a man kills himself over a lost love. Goethe wrote about suicide over love a few centuries earlier in *The Sorrows of Young Werther*. In recent years, Toni Morrison depicts a more extreme moment when, in *Beloved,* Sethe murders her own daughter to save her from the slave catchers. Is love compatible with annihilation? Such a question provides another sobering angle into the topic.

Students at any age could use literature to return to the root question "What is love?" Second graders might read stories such as fairy tales through the lens of that question. Everybody in education talks these days about critical thinking. I can't think of a more critical question for second graders to engage than "Did the prince really love Cinderella?" They teach that in undergraduate literature classes, how to read against the text.

Upper elementary and middle school students could also read stories at their respective levels which have themes of love. So many books contain these themes, but teachers rarely bring them into the open. A classic story, readable by middle school kids as well as soft-hearted adults is *The Little Prince*, in which the young prince falls in love with a narcissistic rose. In considering her self-involved and mendacious behavior, the question again appears, is this really love?

History offers a different lens, a chance to understand how the experience and practices of love have evolved over time. In those hefty high school courses on Western civilization, within the traditional broad-scoped material on political power, geography and the arts, there could be a honing in to a study of something like courtship practices through the centuries. Or standard topics like feudalism could be reframed. How is the relationship between a knight and his vassal a form of filial love? If a teacher doesn't want to deviate into such material, students might have the opportunity to do so through their research papers. The topics are hardly trivial. They are microcosms of human experience that illuminate larger historical patterns.

These kinds of academic studies through psychology, biology, literature, and history might seem misguided to some parents and educators, but probably not controversial. What might provoke resistance, however, is if we began to consider a curriculum that actually aims to help students examine love in a personal way. What if we asked that sophomore reading *Othello* to go beyond evaluating Othello's feelings, turn the lens in on himself and reflect, perhaps in a private journal, whether jealousy ever impinges on his close relationships? This is a potentially explosive proposal. It involves opening the realm of the private. Concerned parents might call it unwarranted intrusion. In this country we do not constitutionally mandate a separation of emotion and state, but many people would say that to ask students to inwardly explore love and other emotions, is akin to asking them to explore their religious beliefs. A large philosophical question emerges about what aspects of the human experience should school learning touch and where boundaries should be drawn between public and private.

"Perhaps the ultimate love challenge is to extend toward the one who naturally provokes feelings antithetical to love, anxiety, and alienation."

There is precedent for exploring emotions in a school context going back to the 1970s with the introduction of affective curriculum. This has been a step in the right direction, though limited because it tends to work within the traditional self-improvement paradigm where learning to listen empathically is treated dispassionately as a skill we might include in the Common Core, like understanding fractions or writing topic sentences.

Nonetheless many schools, particularly at the elementary level, have helped their students learn to cope with emotions such as anger, sadness, and love. The average parent would probably not raise an eyebrow hearing that her second grade son read Dr. Seuss's *My Many Colored Days* and then was asked to free draw one color mood. Often, discussion of emotion is framed in the context of relationships. If you are in a fight with your sister and getting angry, what can you do to work with your anger? Sadly, we tend to see such curriculum fade by high school. We teach little kids to be kind, develop empathy skills, and raise their self-esteem. It's okay in a discussion on global warming to say you love Mother Earth or draw a picture of Mommy and Daddy holding hands. But in our culture there is a belief that somehow by the time you reach about age 15, education should be an exclusively intellectual experience. I have always thought

that high schools have a lot to learn or relearn from elementary schools.

Perhaps a natural concluding step for a thorough inquiry into the complex nature of love is to extend from the interpersonal to the collective. How does love manifest in connection beyond our immediate sphere, even to humanity or the universe itself? If love involves the desire for the well-being of others then discussions of love on the collective level inevitably lead to the political because in the real world we can only achieve social well-being within a political system that supports us. Or, as Cornel West asserts "justice is what love looks like in public." To frame love in a political context is for most students to rethink their understanding of what the word means. To personalize this political understanding of love students might study the biographies of leaders who have embodied it, such as Gandhi, Mandela, or the Dalai Lama, or perhaps more low-key examples when they can be made accessible.

One particularly powerful example of love on the political level I encourage students on any grade level to study is the South African truth and reconciliation process. While the reality of what has actually transpired there falls short of the ideals, in South Africa perpetrators of torture and their victims have made themselves vulnerable enough to speak the open truth of their experience in each other's presence. This act itself is hardly love on the interpersonal level, but it is perhaps the greatest attempt by any nation in history to collectively love itself.

Perhaps the ultimate love challenge is to extend toward the one who naturally provokes feelings antithetical to love, anxiety, and alienation. Can we reach out to the stranger? To do so is an act of great empathy and empathy is the seed of love. It does not take a sophisticated curriculum for a school age student to investigate empathy across a line of unfamiliarity. A fourth grade girl can sit across from a boy and share about what it is like to be a girl while he listens in silence. Then they can trade places. Or students might write monologues in the voice of a character that repels them, maybe a comic book or literary villain. To listen deeply to the stranger is to study love well. We can then even turn toward the stranger in ourselves, our disowned or shadowed sides that can be reclaimed. In this way the study of love comes full circle, from the broadest scope of global collective healing back to one person's own inner quest for compassion.

Suffusing the study of love into our curriculum can help heal in an engaging way the traditional educational split between inner and outer, academic and personal. As we position ourselves along the deep boundary of the human experience, we must move into the larger enterprise of transforming what we have learned in an inspiring seminar into the daily practice of our schools and out into the vibrations of the larger world. On a concrete level we must begin the long term project of training loving teachers and administrators, designing expressive school physical spaces, reconfiguring our currently rigid schedules governed by hourly bells, and learning to engage in more generative ways with the ubiquitous technologies and media inside the schoolhouse walls. Realizing that goal means redirecting education beyond beautiful course outlines toward a collective caring whose presence can be felt everywhere within a school. So anytime one of our children, with a backpack of books and a curious mind walks to school in the morning, she knows she's coming home. ■

A Gloss on *Genesis* I:26

And it came to pass
we multiplied until there was
no room for more of us,

despite the thoughtfulness
of other, lower species
who provided space

as, one by one, and then
en masse, they left
Planet Earth to us alone,

to whom, in the Beginning,
God gave dominion
over every living thing.

—Jon Swan

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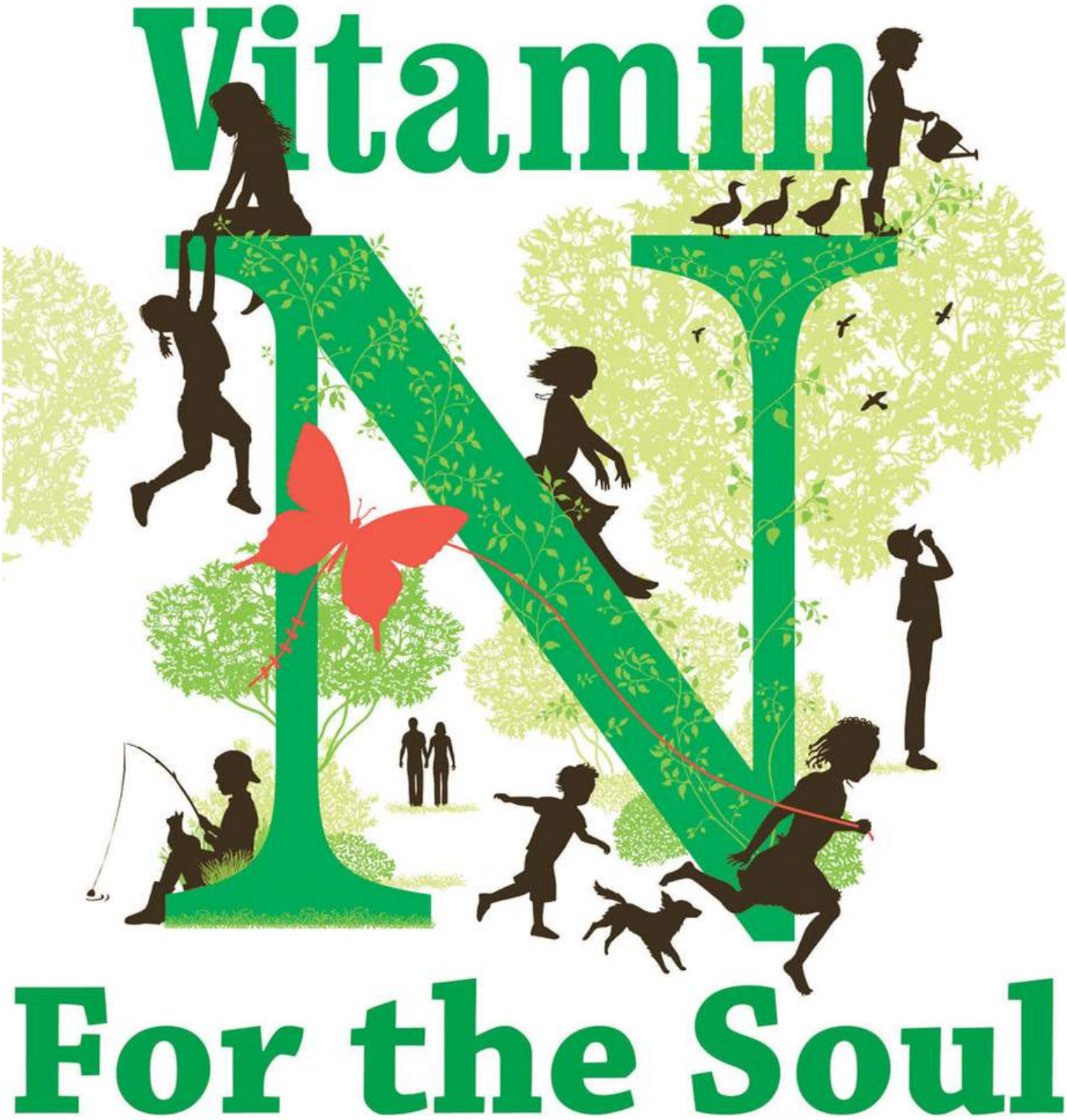

RICHARD LOUV

"If one steps out on a starry night and observes one's inner state, one asks if one could hate or be overwhelmed by envy or resentment. . . . Is it not true that no man or woman has ever committed a crime while in a state of wonder?"
—Jacob Needleman from A Sense of the Cosmos

"All actual life is encounter." —Martin Buber

Cover of *Vitamin N For the Soul* by Richard Louv | Algonquin Books

Matthew, my youngest son, once asked me if a connection to a higher power is, in fact, an underutilized sense—one that some people find activated in nature. This is the same son who, when he was five, asked, "Are God and Mother Nature married, or just good friends?" Great questions. Most religious traditions, especially in indigenous cultures, intimately or actively offer ways to discover the divine in the natural world. Some people worship nature. Others consider such worship blasphemous, or detect nothing. Most of us are less direct. Just beyond the veil of rain, we sense a presence for which we have no name.

Since the publication of *Last Child in the Woods* a decade ago, I've been surprised and impressed by the support that many religious leaders of all faiths, and nonbelievers as well—and from very different political persuasions—have offered to the growing movement to connect people, especially children, to the natural world. One of the first and unexpected champions of the book was the Rev. Albert Mohler, Jr., a conservative radio host and president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, who wrote: "Christians should take the lead in reconnecting with nature and disconnecting from machines." When I was asked to be on *The 700 Club*, Pat Robertson's show on the Christian Broadcasting Network, a friend (who worked for a large environmental organization) said, "Don't go, it's a trap." The segment, including footage of children outdoors, turned out to be very good. Other religious voices chimed in—Presbyterians, Buddhists, Muslims, Unitarians, Jews.

In a provocative piece for the Torah Aura Productions Bulletin Board, titled "It is not Jewish to Stay Inside," Idie Benjamin and Dale Cooperman wrote, "At the Seder, we eat green vegetables to remind us of spring. We celebrate the holiday of Sukkot by sitting outside in our sukkot for eight days, surrounded by the fruits of the harvest. Is it any wonder that the holiday is called *zman simhatainu*, the time of our happiness?" They pointed out that, "Tu B'Shvat has become a Jewish Earth Day, a time to focus on the earth that God gave us and how better to care for our world . . . . But in many classrooms, that caring and learning is too often happening inside with paper trees and pink tissue paper blossoms. We even know of schools where there is no interaction with a real tree while the children 'learn' about Tu B'Shvat." Benjamin and Cooperman challenged their readers to do more to connect children, and themselves, to nature: "Tu B'Shvat as our annual reminder that we need to be outside and not just outside on our playgrounds. We need to be bringing children to nature and nature to children."

Perhaps I should not have been surprised by the reaction. Smart spiritual people intuitively understand that all spiritual life begins with a sense of wonder, and that sense is usually formed early in childhood, often in natural settings. There is, in fact, something about this issue that brings people together. I believe this caring comes partly because so many of us recall our special places in nature, where we were so often alone with our thoughts, so tuned to our senses. Our affiliation with the natural world is, as the Harvard entomologist, E. O. Wilson tells us, in our genes. It's part of who we are, and it never quite goes away. While Wilson's biophilia hypothesis is based on our biology as a species, I believe that the hunger is also spiritual. Many others do, too. Including people who would not describe themselves as religious.

In 1995, the MIT Press published the results of one of the most extensive surveys of how Americans really think about environmental issues. The researchers were stunned by what they discovered. They noted an increased environmental consciousness observed in language (for example, a patch of land once referred to as a swamp was more likely to be called wetlands); and a core set of environmental values. "For those who have children, the anchoring of environmental ethics in responsibility to descendants gives environmental values a concrete and emotional grounding stronger than that of abstract principles," according to the MIT report. That environmental values are already intertwined with core values

Richard Louv's newest book is titled *Vitamin N: The Essential Guide to a Nature-Rich Life*. In it, he offers 500 ways to connect our families, our communities and ourselves to the natural world. His other books include *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* and *The Nature Principle: Reconnecting with Life in a Virtual Age*, from which parts of this essay are adapted. He is co-founder and chairman emeritus of the Children & Nature Network, a nonprofit organization working to build an international movement to connect people to nature. He speaks often around the world, including keynotes at the national conference of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the first White House Summit on Environmental Education, and the Congress for the New Urbanism. He is the recipient of the Audubon Medal; prior recipients include Rachel Carson, E.O. Wilson and President Jimmy Carter. You may follow him on Facebook and @RichLouv on Twitter.

of parental responsibility, was, the researchers asserted, "a major finding." A substantial majority of people surveyed justified environmental protection by explicitly invoking God as the creator, with striking uniformity across subgroups. "What is going on here? Why should so many nonbelievers argue on the basis of God's creation?" the researchers asked. "It seems that divine creation is the closest concept American culture provides to express the sacredness of nature. Regardless of whether one actually believes in biblical Creation, it is the best vehicle we have to express this value." In other words, for environmentalists, arguing for the protection of a particular toad is, while important, less potent than calling for the protection of God's creation (which includes the toad).

The issue here is not the worship of nature, but the nourishing of the spirit. In an interview with the Catholic News Service, John Lionberger, author of *Renewal in the Wilderness: A Spiritual Guide to Connecting With God in the Natural World,* said he was once an agnostic but experienced a spiritual awakening on a dogsled trip. Children and young people, he said, experience a "sense of spirituality" in wilderness, especially through challenges "that being at home in a contained environment doesn't give them." The same can be true for adults.

Our connection to the natural world, best seeded when we are children, can be ignited at any age. Jonathan Stahl, a wilderness educator, feels spiritually connected when experiencing the natural world; that is, as author David Abram puts it, the more-than-human world. "I was brought up Jewish but never really identified with the religion (or any other for that matter)," says Stahl. "I did, however, find my own way of incorporating some of the principles of the holiday Yom Kippur into my life." Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is a time to pray for forgiveness for sins committed during the year, and to make a clean start for the new year. On Yom Kipper, Stahl heads for a local trail, preferably one that leads to a high viewpoint. "I find a rock and carry it in my hand, constantly meditating on anything I've done in the past year that I am not proud of or would like to improve upon in the following year," he says. "If ever my thoughts begin to drift, the rock in my hand brings my attention back to the reason for this special hike. I think through various aspects of my life: career, family, friends, relationships, personal wellness, etc., and carry the weight to the top of the mountain. There, I leave the rock and all it represents, and look to the new horizon to start the year fresh. It's symbolic and not at all traditional to Judaism, but it works for me." He's practiced this ritual for several years and has shared his tradition. "It's a way of bringing nature into religion and at least some aspect of Judaism into my life," he says.

Thomas Berry would have loved that story. I first met Berry in 2005. He was ninety-one and living in Greensboro, North Carolina. Carolyn Toben, the founder of the nonprofit Center for Education, Imagination, and the Natural World, invited me to lunch with Berry, who founded the History of Religions Program at Fordham University and the Riverdale Center of Religious Research. His books, including *The Dream of the Earth*, remain influential throughout the world.

Berry argued, eloquently and elegantly, that our environmental problems are primarily issues of the spirit. He often spoke and wrote about the transcendent childhood experience that served as a touchstone for his future life and work. "It was an early afternoon in May when I first looked down over the scene and saw the meadow," he wrote. "A magic moment, this experience gave to my life something, I know not what, that seems to explain my life at a more profound level than almost any other experience I can remember." That moment never ended.

The great work of the twenty-first century will be to reconnect to the natural world as a source of meaning. Berry articulated a view seldom witnessed in popular media; that we must move beyond the conflict between worlds. In one corner is science, steeped in the "Darwinian principle of natural selection, which involves no psychic or conscious purpose, but is instead a struggle for earthly survival." This view of reality "represents the universe as a random sequence of physical and biological interactions with no inherent meaning." In the other corner is the dominant Western religious tradition, which, he said, has moved too far from an older creation story, and toward a redemption mystique, in which passage to the next world is paramount and the natural world is of little concern. Most of the time, these two worlds—science and religion—communicate politely, but the antagonisms are deep. And yet, Berry wrote in *The Great Work*, we are moving into an extraordinary time: "As we enter the twenty-first century, we are experiencing a moment of grace. Such moments are privileged moments." In Berry's twenty-first century, we return to Earth.

In 1999, an interviewer for the journal *Parabola* asked Berry if our relation to nature connected with our inner human development. "The outer world is necessary for the inner world; they are not two worlds but a single world with two aspects: The outer and the inner," he answered. "If we don't have certain outer experiences, we don't have certain inner experiences, or at least, we don't have them in a profound way. We need the sun, the moon, the stars, the rivers and the mountains and birds, the fish in the sea, to evoke a world of mystery, to evoke the sacred. It gives us a sense of awe. This is a response to the cosmic liturgy, since the universe itself is a sacred liturgy." You can see the possibility of an expanding movement among faith-oriented environmentalists who are eager to move beyond the old divide between Bible-based interpretations of dominion and stewardship. You can see the possibility in the young people who now dedicate their lives to sustainability, to the climate change movement, to biophilic design. You can see it in the growing recognition that exposure to nature enhances health, improves

cognitive functioning, and nurtures the spirit. You can see it among the religious and nonreligious alike.

The last time I visited Berry was in 2009, in his room at an assisted-living home, not long before he died. He told me he felt an urgency to "go out into the natural world every day, no matter what the conditions are." Then he said, "In our later years, we feel a return. To be gifted with delight as a child, the giftedness should continue. The aging process is full of excitement that comes along with the pain of going through the changes. The giftedness continues."

So does the potential for wonder. We yearn for our *other* kin. We are not alone on this earth. Many of our pathologies, as a species, come from or are aggravated by our arrogant belief that we can go it alone. In wilderness or in cities, we need nature, and, of course, most of us need other human beings to help us discover nature. For children and adults, a relatively new and rapidly growing body of scientific evidence suggests just how vital our contact with the natural world is for our cognitive development, and for our physical, psychological health. And, though science cannot quantify the soul, our spiritual health is also part of this equation. Perhaps the most important part. In his book *God in Search of Man,* Abraham Joshua Heschel, a great Jewish theologian, wrote, "Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement." Heschel would encourage his students to get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted: "Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to be amazed." For many people, organized religion offers the necessary structure, a weekly reminder that there is more to life and afterlife than budgeting and blackness. Others find a different or overlapping source, as indigenous peoples have for millennia.

A movement is growing, one based on the simple idea that the health of our children, and ourselves, and the health of the Earth itself, are intertwined. Now comes the time to move quickly, beyond cultural awareness toward individual and institutional action. Those of us who grew up freer in nature have a special responsibility to pass our love of it to our children and grandchildren. We can do that by taking them outdoors with us, and encouraging schools, neighborhoods, and whole cities to become nature-rich. In sermons and in practice, religious leaders can explore the spiritual value of our connection to nature. Religious organizations can increase the availability of nature-based preschools and childcare centers, especially for less affluent children in inner cities. Synagogues, churches, and mosques can organize outdoor activities for families, and not only those of their own congregation. They can work to conserve wilderness, but they can also encourage the seeding of native plants and greater biodiversity on their own properties, in schoolyards, and in surrounding neighborhoods. Religious groups can be powerful advocates for the human right of children to connect to nature—not only the children of parents who already value nature, or of the privileged, or of a specific religion, race, or set of abilities, but *all* children.

No one wants to belong to the last generation to be touched deeply by the natural world. Each of us can tell our stories, our own and those of our ancestors. And we can listen closely to the children who still sense something larger in the natural world. David J. Wolfe, in "Teaching Your Children About God," recounts a Hasidic story: "The child of a certain rabbi used to wander in the woods. At first his father let him wander, but over time he became concerned." One day, he said to his son, "'You know, I have noticed that each day you walk into the woods. I wonder why you go there?' The boy answered, 'I go there to find God.' 'That is a very good thing,' the father replied gently. 'I am glad you are searching for God. But, my child, don't you know that God is the same everywhere?' 'Yes,' the boy answered, 'but I'm not.'" ■

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Culture

BOOKS

Terra Nova, Tamera, and the Healing of Love: Viable Pathway for a Planetary Tikkun?

Terra Nova: Global Revolution and the Healing of Love
by Dieter Duhm, Verlag Meiga, 2015

REVIEW BY MARTIN WINIECKI

In his new book *Terra Nova: Global Revolution and the Healing of Love*, Dieter Duhm refers to "Terra Nova" as the dream of a new Earth free of violence and fear; "a latent reality within the universe as the butterfly is a reality latent within the caterpillar."[1] Daring in its ambition, the book is a guide for seekers and activists who no longer only want to fight against the injustice and cruelties of this world, but work towards a credible alternative. *Terra Nova* paints both a vision of and a pathway towards this new world, offering insight into what could be the 'fulcrum points' to free the world from war. A fascinating perspective that has emerged from more than four decades of radical research on building community, healing our collective trauma, freeing love from fear, and establishing models for regenerative autonomy.

The Global Dead-End and Our Own Failure

It isn't easy to seriously talk about global revolution and changing the world in such times where the unchallenged triumph of capitalist globalization has not only managed to intrude into the last corners of the planet, but also shattered much of the ideological certainty of those trying to resist this global insanity.

The unprecedented, virtually unlimited ability of the dominating systems to wage new wars, drill for more fossil fuels, destroy more pristine forests, drive more species into extinction, and destabilize entire cultural regions has left a deep resignation in humanity's collective soul. The dimension of global violence reveals not only the ruthlessness of the current elites, it also shows the inadequacy of the Left and the many other alternative movements, spiritual groups, and therapeutic attempts to respond to this destructive evolution. What, then, could measure up to the force of imperialistic violence to prevent world-spanning 'free trade' zones, solve climate change, and end war?

If one thing is certain, it is that the future of our planet will depend on courageous souls strong enough to remain with this quest while withstanding the tension between reality and longing. Thoroughly reviewing our own assumptions about life, love, the world, the future, the nature of fulfillment and success, of what is meaningful, of who or what is God, seems to be an inescapable demand of this transformation.

Reflecting on the powerful 'love for nations' that prompts people to the most insane acts and makes them turn a blind eye to the genocidal and imperial shadow side of all 'great nations,' Arundhati Roy wrote:

> What about our failure? Writers, artists, radicals, anti-nationals, mavericks, malcontents—what of the failure of our imaginations? What of our failure to replace the idea of flags and countries with a less lethal Object of Love? Human beings seem unable to live without war, but they are also unable to live without love. So the question is, what shall we love?[2]

What shall we love and how shall we love? This question unsettled Dieter Duhm and sent him on an adventurous research journey starting at the time of the students' movement almost fifty years ago.

Fear in Capitalism

A popular speaker, leading thinker, and activist of the Marxist Left in Germany in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Duhm had gained certain fame for initiating the so-called emancipation debate. Duhm holds a PhD in sociology, a degree in psychology,

In Tamera's auditorium during International Summer University, 2011

Tamera.org

and was a working psychoanalyst. He entered the students' movement after being existentially shaken. His politicization actually began at age 14, when he first heard about Auschwitz. He asked his parents why they did not do anything against the terror of the Third Reich; they replied that they had "not known anything." His worldview was broken. How could people commit such atrocities? He tried to tell himself that perhaps this was only the past, but this hope eventually collapsed. Ten years later he saw the photos from the massacres the Americans committed in Vietnam—images of Napalm-burned children, of women with their breasts cut off, entire villages burned to the ground.[3]

Duhm knew that in addition to the necessary anti-imperialistic fight on the outside, this inner structure of humanity needed to be addressed. "Revolution without emancipation is counterrevolution," was a slogan he coined in a popular flyer in 1968. Duhm asked himself how it could be that billions of people follow and comply with the exact same notions of life and structures of society without being forced to do so? Where does people's need to secure private possessions for themselves originate, and why is there such a drive for privatization, commercialization, commodification, and conquest in this world?

The system apparently sustained itself in two ways—the 'relations of production' would introduce competition, selfishness, and greed into people's hearts and minds; at the same time, however, capitalism is perpetuated by the mindsets of the people running the system, both at the top and the bottom. Capitalism originates in human consciousness. "What else could have created it?" Duhm humorously asks.[4] It thus became his mission to shed light onto the inner root of this system in order to be able to dissolve it from there and initiate a revolution from inside out.

His debut work in 1972 *Angst im Kapitalismus* (*Fear in Capitalism*) became a bestseller that shook the New Left in Germany. In it he writes:

> Our lives are dominated by fear. It surfaces in the most different of forms; in a "sane" person as the fear of what others could think of him, as speech anxiety, as fear of authorities and institutions, as fear before and after intercourse, as fear of the future, or of getting sick and so on. This is inconspicuous, because socially omnipresent and "normal" fear is neurotic. It constitutes an essential component not only of our individual existence, but also our society. It belongs to capitalism, not only as its product, but as part of its foundation, as an element without which this entire system would collapse. . . . Marx's insight that it is the social conditions which form consciousness is well known. However, Marx could not yet say much about the ways and the mechanisms of how society's "basis" affects its "superstructure." What seems to be the missing link is the human psyche.[5]

He argued that from the cradle to the top of the state, the entire societal structure relies on this image of authority characterized by the mutual embrace of love and fear. Duhm saw that people carried this structure inside themselves independent of their ideological orientation. He saw the

same neurosis more or less strongly developed in everyone, no matter whether they were left-leaning or right-wing conservatives, socialists, or nationalists. Dissolving this inner basis of capitalism would require a larger social fabric in which nuclear families could be embedded, and they could thereby overcome their narrowness and neurotic tendencies, without losing the intimacy and sense of home they clearly also provide.

Rise and Fall of the Students' Movement and a New Decision

Not least from the inspiration people drew from the circulating writings of Marcuse, Reich, and Duhm, over a hundred communes emerged in Germany in attempt to live the utopian ideal, which the dogmatic Left had only written on their banners. The political tide became increasingly personal and psychological, enthusiastically engaging in what people believed was sexual revolution; freeing themselves from the narrow moralistic restrictions imposed by the parents, teachers, and priests. In most cases, however, they were soon hopelessly lost in the swamp of unresolved interpersonal conflicts around money, sex, and power, filled with distrust, competition, fear, jealousy, subliminal aggression, anger, and hatred.

In the mid-70s, after almost all such communes had collapsed and most comrades had retreated, the tiny remainder of the political movement went underground to fight the Federal Republic of Germany in an 'urban guerrilla war' (the Red Army Fraction) and so Duhm faced a new decision. The 1973 military coup in Chile gave the final blow to the last idealist socialists. Duhm knew he needed to step out of his professional careers to free up space in his life, to find a solution for the issue of fear.

The structural distrust and latent violence people carried inside themselves was too strong to create a substantial basis on which the dream of a new world free of oppression and dominance could come true. The revolutionaries, Duhm writes, "were able to handle the problem of a police chain, but not the challenge of communal dishwashing."[6] The communes mostly collapsed as quickly as they had come into being. After a few years, nearly nothing of the initial enthusiasm to change the world remained. The students' revolution was driven by the common 'no.' It united people in what they were fighting against, but it was not yet able to unite the revolutionaries in a common aspiration for what they were for. Apparently, a big vision was needed to foster functioning communities and sustain transformative movements.

Dissolving the Collective Trauma

In 1976, Duhm went into retreat for six months to develop the basic concepts for a revolution that could actually succeed. Witnessing the ubiquity of this deeply ingrained structure of fear, he started to think that it must originate not only in peoples' individual biographies, but also in a much more transpersonal, historic, and global dimension. It became evident that a collective structure cannot (only) be healed by individual therapy. It would take building a new society, which would support open, authentic, and truthful communication and trust, a society in which lying and deceit would no longer have any evolutionary advantage.

After intensively studying many philosophical and spiritual sources, Duhm decided to form an experimental research community in which the traumatic fear could be dissolved—a community with following characteristics: "solidarity with all living beings, research of the Living, free sexuality, nonviolence without suppressing aggression, grassroots democracy through transparency (especially in the emotional and sexual realms), permanent social feedback loops in interpersonal contact."[7]

A Social Experiment in the Black Forest

In 1978 he met the physicist Charly Rainer Ehrenpreis and the theologian Sabine Lichtenfels, who were dreaming about building a village as a way to implement a new culture. Together they decided to found the "Bauhuette" project, German for "builders' lodge." They began with just eight people, but gradually expanded to around forty. In the early 1980s, these forty made a special vow, a kind of group marriage for three years. They committed to stay together no matter what, to explore and study in themselves and with each other how to build functioning community. Their objective came to be living in such a way that "nothing of that which is human is alien to me."[8]

The community required all members' readiness to reveal what was happening inside and among them. They met every night for hours of "SD Forum," allowing them to reveal conflicts in a protected space without being judged, and in a way that would let people turn their mistrust, fear, and competition into theatrical art pieces rather then endlessly circling around them in an all-too-serious a manner. SD is an abbreviation for the German word *Selbstdarstellung*, meaning something like self-expression. In this ritual, which the community has held on a daily basis from the very beginning until today, the community's participants are able address issues they would hardly be able to raise in normal conversations—be it because they would immediately make a "psychological minefield" explode, because they are embarrassing, or because they are too beautiful and moving to be told over dinner. "SD Forum" developed from the insight of the revolutionary character of truth in the interpersonal relationships, that

truth in most cases does not fit into the accustomed forms of human co-existence and communication. In the forum, one participant at a time steps into the center of the circle, supported by a facilitator who is trusted by the group, to dare to reveal themselves. Beyond the purely therapeutic level of establishing truthful communication, the person in the center is an artist who goes into "creative distance" to his or her problem by performing it in a way that the identification is dissolved and consciousness is able to develop. The performers in the middle shift their "inner assemblage point." They are no longer stuck in the problem, but find a place of observation outside of it. Through gaining consciousness, people are able to take responsibility for behaviors they have carried out without giving them a second thought. Whenever people dare lift their masks and reveal themselves, they change and the circle is able to see them. "To be seen is to be loved," is a basic experience, fundamental to building lasting solidarity among people.

Transparency has been an indispensable basis for enabling grassroots democracy. Only to the degree that people would emotionally emancipate themselves, take responsibility for what they say and do, and commit for a common vision, could grassroots democracy actually work in reality. Otherwise the functioning of a community would always depend on strong charismatic leaders and would collapse if they were gone. The people participating in this social experiment realized that this kind of community was not simply there; it needed to be consciously established.

They developed all kinds of creative ways to break the limits of conventional existence in order to reach something more existential and truthful. They played "master and slave" to experience taking on another identity; they competed with each other to see who could stay the longest in ice-cold lakes in the wintertime, and went way beyond the limits of what they and doctors believed was possible; they painted in the desert sun of the Canary Islands to grasp the meaning of the Taoist motto, "When not-doing is accomplished, nothing remains undone."[9]

Healing Love: The Deepest Revolution

In the relation of the genders, Duhm found the deepest, most crucial point that determines whether there will be war or peace on Earth. The community was founded in large part to find a new approach to solve this issue. They realized that the traumatic cycle of violence devastating this Earth could not be broken without healing love.

After thousands of years marked by patriarchal violence, after unspeakably atrocious holy wars against women, lust and flesh, after witch-hunts and the Inquisition, the area of sexuality, love, and partnership paradoxically holds both the deepest promise for redemption, bliss, and paradise and the greatest fear of separation, mistrust, and (latent) war. Duhm reminds us:

> The collective trauma, and erroneous thought patterns have generated the same structures of manifest or latent fear of loss, jealousy, anger and disappointment everywhere. We see everywhere how initially loving relationships transform, in a world hostile to love, into fields of problem and distress. It is not individuals' mistakes, but a system error that makes it so difficult to find fulfillment in love.[10]

In order to approach a possible way out, the community needed to "de-privatize" the issue of love, because the burden of unresolved relationship conflicts are too heavy for (almost) any couple to handle on their own. Here, too, social transparency allowing people to reveal themselves openly and truthfully seemed to be crucial—even in such delicate areas as the realm of sexual desire.

Over centuries of indoctrination, the major religions have planted a collective schizophrenia into people's minds when it comes to sexuality, on one hand demanding that we do not lie though on the other hand telling us that we are not supposed to desire our fellow's wife, not even in our thoughts. Who on Earth has ever been able to comply with these two commandments at the same time? Duhm writes:

> We know the agony in the soul of a partner who needs to conceal their sexual relationship to another lover. This misery often has fatal consequences. We are not dealing with a private conflict here, but with a societal issue. How many tragedies arise from hypocritical sexual morals! . . . You can only be faithful if you are allowed to love others too.[11]

In the project, women in particular have been the ones taking leadership in creating truth and trust in sexual issues. Duhm's life partner, Sabine Lichtenfels, has made significant contributions to the community's peace vision from a profound feminine perspective, wherein recovering women's independent erotic source also became a matter of regaining a spiritual connection with the Earth and all creatures. Lichtenfels writes:

> Perception and contact are forces of life that are as elementary as breathing. If these are possible, then I love being a woman, because I can then be a woman to my full extent. . . . And as I am a woman, I am a sexual being. And I love being a sexual being. A woman who makes this statement today in the 21st century needs revolutionary courage.[12]

Ultimately, healing love is seen not only as a question of social revolution, but as a matter of healing the primal wound of humanity's separation from life, from nature—of recovering our universal, cosmic existence and of arriving to the source where Eros and religion become once again identical.

The Global Healing Biotopes Plan

Healing means regaining our lost unity, embracing wholeness. To get there, Duhm argues, we need not only individual prayer or spiritual exercises, but the fundamental "reintegration of our human existence into the basic laws of life, community, love and the Earth. . . . The laws of societal life and the laws of creation need to unite in order for global healing to occur."[13]

The more the community gained a stable basis, the more this imperative took shape in a vision—building "Healing Biotopes," holistic model centers, as a way to introduce this planetary shift. Facing the interconnectedness of the global crises, it became clear that a credible answer can only be found if alternatives for all the different basic areas of human life are explored and combined into a functioning overall system, into a coherent blueprint for a new culture. Once there would be a few such places on Earth, models of a society no longer involving any violence, it would set a precedent for a new direction in human evolution.

Throughout the 1980s and early '90s, this vision became more and more solid and comprehensive. To find adequate and financially feasible space for the growing community, they moved their venture to an undeveloped property of 330 acres of barren land in a rural area of Portugal, and there began to build the Healing Biotope 1—"Tamera."

Inauguration of the SolarVillage TestField in Tamera, 2009

Maria João Soares

A Sacred Alliance of All Beings

Healing Biotopes are 'greenhouses of trust,' i.e. they are meant to organize the coexistence of people with each other as well as between people, animals, and nature in a way that trust and cooperation are able to develop. The idea of community is taken beyond the human sphere alone; embracing the community of all living beings in a way that restores the original unity and balance of nature which humanity has so blatantly violated throughout the last millennia. In ways similar to the Andean concept of "*buen vivir*," Joanna Macy's "deep ecology," or what Vandana Shiva calls "Earth democracy," Duhm speaks of restoring the "sacred alliance of all living beings"[14] by establishing a new society that again honors each creature's fundamental right to exist and the fact that each being has a soul with which we can communicate.

As they came to the land of Tamera to start the Healing Biotope, they came with the awareness that the property is already inhabited by a host of living beings who they would need to include if they did not want to be new colonizers who impose their utopia onto life, but rather allow the new culture to emerge in a process of true interaction and collaboration. That is why they did not begin by implementing a prefabricated master plan, but by conducting "prayer research," dreaming nights out in nature, spiritual seminars, and art courses in which the pioneers of the Healing Biotope reached out to communicate with the spirits of nature and perceive the slumbering "dream of the land." Wild animals responded by approaching them in the most unusual and magical forms. Animals lost their usual fear of people as the people lost their fears of them. A whole new world opened up, an unexpected love affair. The community started to spiritually communicate with rats and so-called 'vermin' and saw themselves confirmed by the synchronicity they experienced. The messages they received from the 'invisible world' and the spirits of nature offered them orientation in building the Healing Biotope. Lichtenfels has continued and deepened this research with her team in what she named "Terra Deva," a special research department for spiritual ecology and communication with natural spirits inside of Tamera.

The community invited experts in ecology, water management, solar technology, and architecture to contribute their specific knowledge into establishing a model for regenerative autonomy. With support from the Austrian rebel farmer Sepp Holzer, they established a "Water Retention Landscape," a form of decentralized natural water management introduced to revitalize damaged landscapes. Being located in a region affected by progressive desertification, Tamera now convincingly demonstrates not only how to restore nature, but also how to generate abundance in water,

biodiversity, and vegetation—to turn desert into paradise.

Together with Juergen Kleinwaechter, a German inventor and physicist who has been working on decentralized solar technologies since the 1970s, they created a "Test Field" to combine all kinds of cutting-edge technologies into a showcase for a zero-carbon, self-sufficient settlement model, the "Solar Village." These principles could be applied in self-sufficient communities worldwide, thus making "water, energy, and food freely available for all."[15]

Currently, around 170 coworkers and students from various countries live and work in Tamera. There is the "Place of the Children" and an emerging international free school, ecological and technological departments, an animal project, "Terra Deva," a guest and education center for people from around the world, a Love School, an art center, an international communication networking office (the Institute for Global Peace Work), the Institute for Feminine Peace Knowledge, and the "Political Ashram."

Over the years, Tamera has grown a network of friendship and mutual support in the rural Alentejo region it is located in. Facing the grave social and economic crisis in Portugal, which has forced half a million predominantly well-educated young people to leave the country, Tamera and their regional and national partners are preparing the establishment of a regional model for autonomy, possibly able to create an attractor for people to return to and inhabit the country in a self-determined and self-sufficient way.

Discovering the Sacred Matrix

As it began to manifest the vision of a Healing Biotope, the Tamera community encountered the healing powers contained in life itself. In the restoration of nature, their spiritual communication with wildlife, their experiences with children growing up in the community, experiences of physical and psychological healing in a community of trust—in all these different areas, the concrete utopia of a different human existence shone through. Duhm underpinned these experiences theoretically, saying that there is a fundamental pattern of life underneath or beyond the reality of violence, always directed towards self-healing and self-organization: the Sacred Matrix. Each living being carries it as its own original matrix, which contains the blueprint of its intact state within it—or as Aristotle said, its "entelechy," its inherent goal pattern. The Sacred Matrix can be activated by consciously addressing it, by shifting from "old patterns of isolation" to "the consciousness of unity and compassion." Duhm is convinced that there is no disease that cannot be healed. Thus the task of Healing Biotopes became increasingly evident—establishing ecological and social structures able to activate the inherent healing powers of its participants, and the healing powers inherent to humanity as a whole.[16]

Readers may think, "It sounds all quite beautiful, but is there any reason to believe that even a thousand centers like Tamera could have any impact on corporations continuing to destroy the life-support-system of planet Earth?" Combining their experiences with the insights of the emerging holistic and holographic worldviews of chaos theory, cybernetics, systems theory, and the works of Bohm, Sheldrake, Teilhard de Chardin, and other outstanding thinkers, Duhm gained a new hopeful perspective, which he formulated in his "Political Theory." How can a handful of small-scale centers measure up to the force and pace of destruction? Duhm answers by saying that it is through their coherence with the powers of the Sacred Matrix.

Healing Biotopes would work like acupuncture needles in the body of the Earth, replacing the information field of fear and violence with a new information field of cooperation and trust. In doing so, they step into resonance with the underlying informational pattern all living beings carry inside themselves. Defeating the system of war would thus not be a matter of fighting, but of establishing resonance for the possibility of the new world, which all of humanity—consciously or subconsciously—yearns for. We have to take time to review these thoughts carefully in order not to dismiss them too early. Isn't the power of banks, corporations, governments, and militaries also based on resonance? In this case, it is their resonance with the collective psychological substratum of fear. Why should it thus be impossible to overcome this system if that resonance were taken away, because something much more profound and authentic within humanity would be awakened?

Building a Planetary Community

This hope prompted the Tamera community to build a planetary network over the past fifteen years. Lichtenfels, together with Benjamin von Mendelssohn (one of Tamera's next-generation leaders and director of "The Grace Foundation for Humanizing Money"), guided international peace pilgrimages "in the name of Grace" through the Middle East and Colombia to foster reconciliation and peace-building. Profound friendships and solidarity developed with the peace community San José de Apartadó, a farmers' community of nonviolent resistance in northern Colombia; a network of Israeli and Palestinian peace workers; OTEPIC, a permaculture project in Kenya; "Favela da Paz," a project for urban sustainability in the slums of São Paulo, Brazil; and other projects in the U.S., Mexico, Bolivia, Togo, India, etc. Tamera was moved to found the "Global Campus," an education network to support the creation of peace villages and Healing Biotopes worldwide. Around these models in development, the Terra Nova Movement has arisen from activists in cities and on the Internet, inspired to spread and study this vision.

This experience gave rise to a new sense of identity, of participating in a new planetary community, transcending national and cultural borders as it strives towards a world free of borders, unified by compassion, solidarity, and care for the Earth. The book *Terra Nova: Global Revolution and the Healing of Love* reads like an invocation for this new planetary community. Duhm encourages us by saying:

> The new planetary community will spread rapidly as soon as the first functioning models exist. The creation of Healing Biotopes . . . functioning model villages with Water Retention Landscapes, ecological neighborhoods, futuristic desert cities, global communication systems and networks of new kinds—it is probable that these are the things we will already see around the world within the next two or three decades. The world is pregnant with the great plan of Terra Nova.[17]

In order to make this happen, the concept of transforming the world through models—the Healing Biotopes Plan—requires public support. A planetary alliance between mass movements, inventors, opinion-makers, donors, and decision-makers is needed to bring forth global system change—and Healing Biotopes could be the missing link to make it happen. While mass movements slow down the pace of destruction, Healing Biotopes could provide all those wanting to step out of the current system with a viable alternative to step into. Inventors could contribute new technologies to an ever-increasing number of new self-sufficient model centers, donors could support them financially, journalists could provide the necessary public attention to protect their radical research, and decision-makers could create 'free zones' for them operate in. Guided by a new global vision, an ever-increasing number of people would help birth a new era. The shift of power would not be reached by violence. Once an alternative became realistic for a greater number of people, the current system would literally implode.

It is a revolution that "comes on doves' feet," as Nietzsche said.[18] Could it be so that a new future for humanity will emerge from such "small and inconspicuous" models? ■

For more information about Tamera and The Grace Foundation, visit: www.tamera.org and www.the-grace-foundation.org

MARTIN WINIECKI, born in Dresden, Germany in 1990, is a writer, speaker, and coordinator of the Institute for Global Peace Work at Tamera, Portugal.

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EXTENT AND NATURE OF CIRCULATION

Average number of copies of each issue published during the preceding twelve months; (A) total number of copies printed, 6574; (B.1) paid/requested mail subscriptions, 3168; (B.3) sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales, 837; (C) total paid/requested circulation, 4005; (D.1) samples, complimentary, and other nonrequested copies, 783; (D.4) nonrequested copies distributed outside the mail, 11; (E) total nonrequested distribution (sum of D.1 & D.4), 794; (F) total distribution (sum of C & E), 4798; (G) copies not distributed (office use, leftover, unaccounted, spoiled after printing, returns from news agents), 1776; (H) total (sum of F & G), 6574.

Actual number of copies of a single issue published nearest to filing date: (A) total number of copies printed, 7341; (B.1) paid/requested mail subscriptions, 3181; (B.3) sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors, and counter sales, 837; (C) total paid/requested circulation, 4018; (D.1) samples, complimentary, and other nonrequested copies, 1500; (D.3) nonrequested copies distributed through the USPS by other classes of mail, 12; (E) total nonrequested distribution (sum of D.1 & D.4), 1512; (F) total distribution (sum of C & E), 5530; (G) copies not distributed (office use, leftover, unaccounted, spoiled after printing, returns from news agents), 2660; (H) total (sum of F & G), 8190.

Sister Poem

My sister was a Unitarian,
she loved life, the God-given gift of the world.
She did not need Paradise to make her a Christian,
thought all religions that promised Paradise
offered a business relationship with a jealous God.
She made a funny face at the mention of early martyrs
who preferred to be fresh meat for lions
to living in the world, likely as slaves,
rather than praying for show to the Gods
Trajan or Emperor Augustus.
Her Lord preferred His followers deny Him
rather than sacrifice their lives,
He wanted the living to live, love strangers,
their neighbors, the Beatitudes.
She certainly thought it wise to hide your Judaism
from the public fires of the Inquisition;
she damned the excommunicators of Spinoza,
believed in doing what you could honorably do
to stay out of cattle cars.

When I was a small child
I thought my sister Lilly
was mysteriously related to waterlilies,
daylilies, lilies of the valley.

Imitating her handwriting, I made my first *e* and *l*.

I am ashamed, when I was seven, she was four years older,
I wrestled her to the ground to show I was stronger,
proof the state is stronger than language.
Our dog took her side, barked "get off her."
It was a rare day I did not ask, "Lilly read me a story."
When I stood one foot three inches taller,
she gave me her violin. When all I could play was "Long, Long Ago,"
she taught me Mozart and Bach,
that all things in the universe showed the hand of God.

Years passed. I thought prosody survives history.
She read Rimbaud to me in French and English,
and Lorca, whose photo I hung next to my bed.
My sister wrote to me, "please speak at my funeral."
Not long after, I said, "To death there is no consolation . . . ."
I read most of the lines I just wrote.
I insisted the chapel doors and windows were open
to a congregation of birds and insects. Loners
swooped in and out from noon to sunset.
Not a drop of excrement on the mosaic floor.
A hawk dropped a live mouse that prayed to live
on her coffin. She would have liked that.

Elegy for Lillian

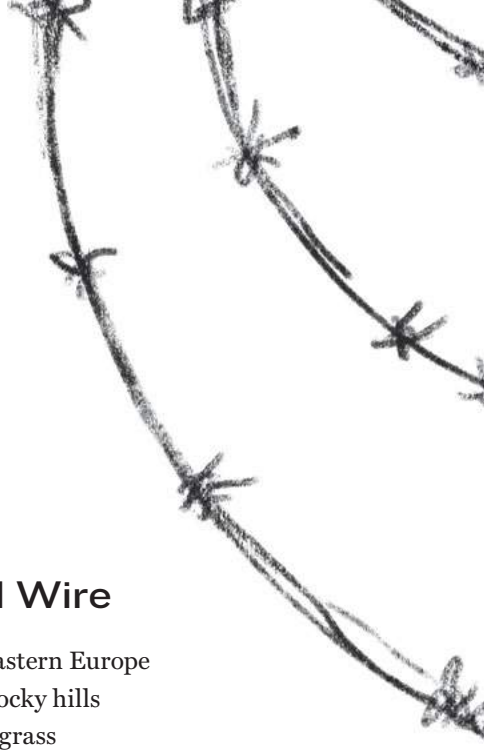
STANLEY MOSS

Arif Qazi | cargocollective.com/arifqazi

Coda

My sister Lillian was a Unitarian.
She insisted I not speak at her funeral.
She made necklaces, pressed butterflies.
Her husband invented our famous intercontinental
space rockets, miniaturized atom bombs
so they could be used as tactical weapons.
Her closest friend, who married a Haitian, and Black Americans
were not allowed in his house. She did not protest,
hold her breath, turn blue and faint,
as she did as a child to get what she wanted.
Lillian taught poetry, had four great grandchildren,
she wanted our mother to have a Unitarian funeral.
Our mother was not a Unitarian.
My sister mailed me my mother's ashes
first class. Later, I collected my dad's, buried both
side-by-side, Montauk daisies between—
their unmarked rocks not too close.

For a wedding present two years after our wedding,
my sister gave us a folded check, $25 to "buy a tree"
and a rope ladder to keep on the top floor
in case our house caught fire.
I am grateful to the poet who taught me
how to get closer to something like the truth,
that is my understanding,
an unenumerated right, protected
by the 9th amendment to the Constitution.



Song of Barbed Wire

I've heard the red deer of Eastern Europe
climb with their fawns up rocky hills
to graze on poor patches of grass
rather than go down to green valleys
that once were cut off by barbed wire,
'round national borders and death camps.
They respect, fear, remember
the razor wire no longer there.

I graze on fables:
thou-shalt-nots passed on by deer-talk,
that has the sound of our long wet kisses—
buck to doe to fawn, nose to nose. I hear
commandments sent by antlers scraping trees,
received like the color of eyes.

Nazi and Stalinist barbed wire words
send me up a hill to graze.
I know my red deer-like progenitors
passed on to me a need to suck,
to be afraid of fire.
When I try to kiss my way into green valleys
I am afraid to move beyond the human,
I am not naked, wrapped in barbed razor wire.
There is an original blessing.

Reflections on Destin's Backwards-Brain Bicycle

JON SWAN

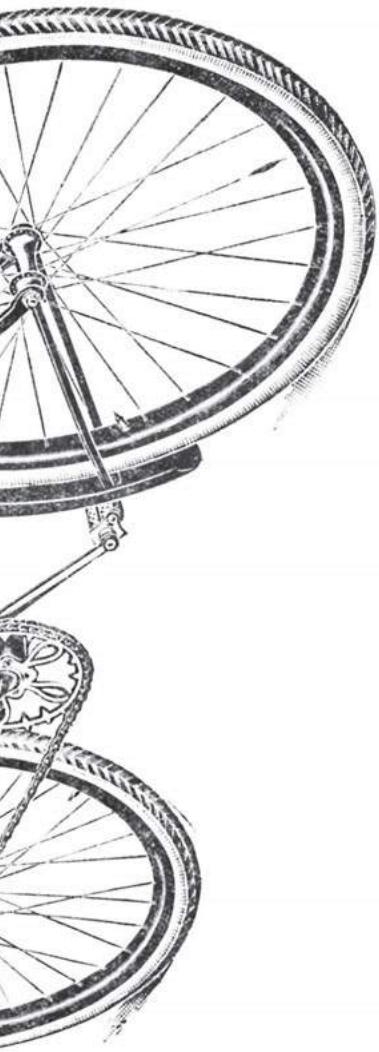
1

The backwards-brain bicycle, created for Destin Sandlin, the host of a Facebook show called Smarter Every Day, is a regular bike that has been modified so that if the rider turns the handlebars to the right, the bike goes left. And vice versa. The short Facebook film shows the host and several others, in various countries, attempting to ride

the backwards-brain bike and failing. They can't go four feet without putting a foot on the ground or falling. The point of the film is that the how-to-ride-a-bike algorithm is so strongly fixed in the adult brain that it takes months to retrain the mind to accept the new algorithm. It took Destin Sandlin eight months of daily practice to accept it; it

took his six-year-old son three weeks. Can an ingrained algorithm that compels citizens to purchase and consume more than they need, to accumulate rather than share, to accept shopping as a patriotic form of entertainment, be unlearned? The destructive effects of the algorithm are everywhere evident—from our polluted atmosphere to our polluted

oceans, from shrinking glaciers to depleted aquifers, from the rapid deforestation of the Amazon rainforest to the rapid extinction of species—and yet how many of us could adapt to living with even a little less? Our bicycle would have to be modified to go backward. Can this be done? Can it be done within our lifetime? Or our children's?



2

One could argue that our notional national bike, though not geared to go backward, is geared to go up—ever upward. Social mobility means getting up there, climbing higher. Aspirationally, we are mountain climbers, eager to be above others, in one way or another. Call it the penthouse complex: this need to live above it all, above all others.

Which perhaps helps to explain why our new squire-billionaires situate their second, third, or fourth country homes atop a hill, allowing them to boss the view of the valley below, with its ribbon of a river sparkling like a necklace displayed on a velvet pad. Within the democratic American landscape, their palatial homes "crown" the hills.

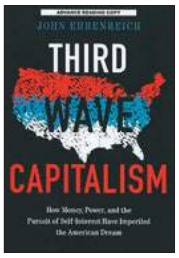
Members of the new serf class, the service sector, dwell invisibly in the floodplains and flatlands below. They know their place. They have found their level. Daily or seasonally, they wind their way up the hillside to plant the flower beds, fill the swimming pools, groom the lawns, clean the nine bathrooms of the main house, and then at dusk descend.

3

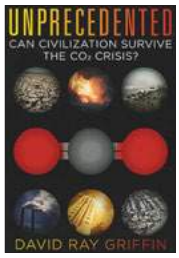
Meanwhile, under wraps perhaps, in an abandoned airplane hangar, welders are at work on a bike whose every pedal push will take the rider incrementally underground, at least in places not yet covered by macadam, asphalt, or concrete, where earth still can breathe, thanks to the remnant population of ventilating worms. The urge to tunnel under grows.

It increases in direct correspondence to danger from above, as embodied in drones and missiles, ever-fiercer cyclones and typhoons. The vault of heaven is no longer the abode of gods, but a hostile welkin that harbors whatever terror may befall. We pedal to get deeper, seeking refuge from our doing, a world undone, to curl and den up in darkness.

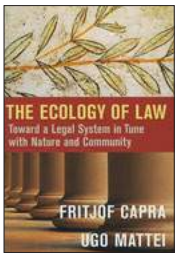
Tikkun RECOMMENDS



Third Wave Capitalism: How Money, Power, and the Pursuit of Self-Interest Have Imperiled the American Dream
John Ehrenreich
Cornell University Press, 2016



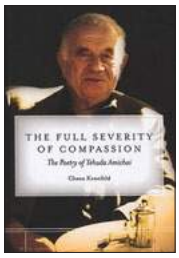
Unprecedented: Can Civilization Survive the CO2 Crisis?
David Ray Griffin
Clarity Press, 2015



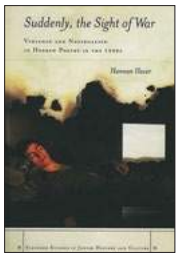
The Ecology of Law: Toward a Legal System in Tune with Nature and Community
Fritjof Capra and Ugo Mattei
Berrett-Koehler, 2015

People Get Ready: The Fight Against a Jobless Economy and a Citizenless Democracy
Robert W. McChesney and John Nichols
Nation Books, 2016

A Harvey Cox Reader
Ed. Robert Ellsberg,
Orbis Books, 2016



The Full Serverity of Compassion: The Poetry of Yehuda Amichai
Chana Kronfeld
Stanford University Press, 2015



Suddenly, the Sight of War: Violence and Nationalism in Hebrew Poetry in the 1940s
Hannan Hever
Stanford University Press, 2016

GET YOUR FRIENDS TO READ these five books and they will not only see the emergency facing the human race, but also the urgency of creating a national movement that can provide the kind of radical articulation of the problems and national and international solutions that local organizers defining local problems can never fully reach.

John Ehrenreich tells us "how money, power, and the pursuit of self-interest have imperiled the American dream." Moving beyond the economistic rhetoric that was both the strength and limitation of Bernie Sanders's campaign, Ehrenreich challenges the worldview of liberal capitalists and details some of the psychological crisis it generates.

David Ray Griffin not only provides a full description of the challenge human life faces with the climate crisis and why it has not been adequately addressed, but also the processes by which global warming could still be halted if the politicians, scientists, world leaders including China, youth, and the media were to coordinate their efforts and make saving the environment their number one priority.

Capra and Mattei lay out a vision of "a legal system in tune with nature and community" that posits the possibility of ownership designs that create and maintain conditions for human and ecological communities to flourish. The authors are clear that business as usual is not possible anymore, and they insist on major legal changes that would enable government to challenge some of the worst aspects of capitalist society. Sadly, they don't yet understand the need for the kind of democratic control of corporations provided by Tikkun's ESRA—Environmental and Social Responsibility Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, itself only a smaller step toward a new environmentally sustainable society. McChesney and Nichols extol the "fight against a jobless economy and a citizenless democracy." They lay out some of the issues that those seeking economic democracy must address—and provide a variety of important steps toward a democratic transformation.

It might seem strange to have a theologian in this list, but religion plays a central role in the politics and consciousness of Americans, and Harvard professor of theology Harvey Cox has been one of the most insightful and important commentators on that reality in the past fifty plus years. Reading this collection of some of his writings reveals once again his deep insight into the psycho-spiritual crises that continue to shape our lives and the social consciousness of the American people, thereby empowering the readers of this anthology to provide deeper responses to the seeming irrationality of contemporary American politics. Harvey Cox is one of our great social commentators!

POETRY IS OFTEN THE LAST REFUGE for those whose critical perspective on the dominant culture or politics of a society rarely make it into that society's mass media. The Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai became a hero of Israeli intellectuals in part because of his insistence that Israelis should overcome the ideological frameworks of Zionism and Judaism in order to experience daily life in Israel as an ordinary human reality, not one tinged with the history of past suffering or past glory. Kronfeld describes him as "reducing God and the sacred muse to life-size dimensions" and hence able to "reach people in their workaday world." But he also embraces "much of the poetics of Anglo-American modernism" as well, and in his later work he abandons traditional poetic forms in favor of plain speech and challenges "the distinction between ordinary forms of language—ordinary, prosaic, scientific, poetic—and between linguistic action in the world." Amichai joyously participated in and read poetry at the Tikkun Conference in Jerusalem in 1991 and inspired those of us seeking peace and reconciliation with the Palestinian people.

Hanan Hever, whose powerful exposition of Israeli protest poetry appeared in *Tikkun*, takes us back in his new book, subtitled Violence and Nationalism in Hebrew Poetry in the 1940s. It might sound esoteric, but Hever is a brilliant expositor of the political dynamics of how Zionism moved from a relatively powerless aspiration of the Jewish minority in Palestine and elsewhere to the dominant force shaping the State of Israel. He traces the various changes in literature and especially poetry as the dominant Jewish labor movement seeks to maintain its hegemony by helping Israelis see themselves as the "living dead," survivors of the Holocaust and the wars with Palestinians, as the new society comes to grips with the violence that made it possible to become a powerful state. Hever's critical eye uncovers the way literature and poetry can provide a way to cover up and assuage central contradictions in the way Israelis provided self-justification for their new reality.

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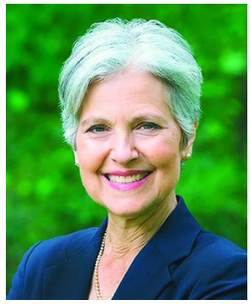
You know someone who ought to be reading *Tikkun*! Please buy them a gift subscription. Call us at 510-644-1200 or order it online at tikkun.org/gift.

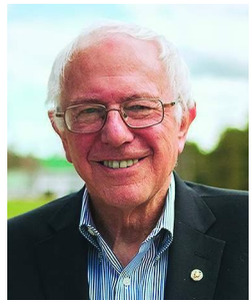
The 2016 Election Season

HAS BEEN WILD AND UNPREDICTABLE

GARY JOHNSON



JILL STEIN



BERNIE SANDERS

HILLARY CLINTON

DONALD TRUMP

It wasn't perfectly democratic!

The media, in true fashion of slavish subordination to whoever can get the biggest possible viewing or reading audience, gave Donald Trump several billion dollars worth of free air time and he predictably used it to make statements that establishment figures in all parties, including his own, dismissed as provocative or clownish and outside the boundaries of normal political discourse. (Why that found an audience is analyzed by Editor Rabbi Lerner in his editorial in this issue). Hillary Clinton, longtime favorite of the political establishment who early on crowned her as the Democratic Party nominee, still found a powerful challenge in the form of Bernie Sanders, the populist U.S. Senator from Vermont. Clinton's allies in the hierarchy of the party scheduled far fewer debates than Sanders supporters wanted, and scheduled them at times when Sanders supporters believed it would be hardest to attract a large audience. But the Sanders campaign rejected large PACs and received small donations from over 8 million people, making it possible for him to use democratic mechanisms that worked to get his candidacy attention (though *The New York Times* led the way in barely mentioning his many primary victories, much less covered why so many people were attending what turned out to be huge rallies). Many Sanders supporters point to the role of superdelegates in undermining the democratic process, but Clinton won the popular vote as well, so democracy was a factor in her winning the nomination. Jill Stein, the Green Party nominee, and Gary Johnson, the Libertarian candidate, were excluded from the media, which as usual decided to give alternative parties pathetically little coverage. Yet the popular discourse went far beyond what the establishment would have wanted, and it remains (as we go to press) in the hands of the electorate.

PLEASE VOTE!

IN THE 2017 COMING ISSUES OF *TIKKUN*

AFTER THE ELECTION ★ WHAT'S NEXT?

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In an interview in *The Atlantic*, President Obama sounded confused and upset that so many people have been disappointed in him. We'll help him understand why, but also point out the good parts of these past eight years.

50 YEARS OF THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION—WILL IT EVER END?

It started in June of 1967 with Israel's preemptive strike against Egypt and Syria, and it was supposed to be "temporary." What can we in the West do to end the Occupation, and help Palestinians achieve national self-determination and security while assuring Israel's security? What will it take for the organized Jewish community to stop demonizing those who critique the Occupation? What is the role of BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) and what other strategies are there for progressives who are both pro-Palestine **and** pro-Israel?

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תיקון

***Tikkun* . . . the voice of Jewish liberals, progressives, and our interfaith and secular humanist allies—to build The Caring Society: Caring for Each Other and Caring for the Earth.**