



A PRACTICE OF 'NONVIOLENCE'
MUST BE ANTI-CLASS (includes
"The Violence of 'Class'")

...presentations at Kansas State "Season of
Nonviolence" events...

Pamela Satterwhite

HUMMING WORDS



PRESS

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THIS IS A HUMMING WORDS • NEW
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“My soul is like a singing bowl – it *hums*.”

Cover: from John Boswell’s *The Kindness of Strangers:
The Abandonment of Children in Western Europe from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance*

Page 10: Francisco Goya, *The Grape Harvest*

Back: Jean-Leon Gerome, *The Slave Market* (portion)

THE VIOLENCE OF ‘CLASS’
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CONTENTS

	Page:
The Violence Of 'Class'	4
"Take Back The Night!"	13
What Is 'Nonviolence Education?'	16
Letter To The Editor	21

The Violence of 'Class'... the short step from obedience- training... to Auschwitz...

In the ancient Mediterranean world, 'violence', 'necessity', and 'coercion' was one word. By inter-weaving those ideas into a single meaning, they accurately captured the reality of our lives under 'class'.

'Necessity' means 'want', 'need', 'scarcity', or 'food-shelter-water-clothing-insecurity'.

Prior to the installation of the current 'class-based' 'solution' to the question of how we reproduce the necessities that we need in order to live – to the problem of how to reproduce food, knowledge, shelter, water-access, and clothing – our solution was to help each other, to consciously address the problem communally.

The 'class-based' 'solution' was to exploit, and then manufacture, the fear of 'scarcity', and then divide the work of reproducing our lives into 'higher' and 'lower', 'intellectual' and 'manual', 'conception' and 'execution', 'head' and 'hand'... creating simultaneously hierarchical gradations of this 'work' as a means of keeping us jumping through hoops, ever-reaching for a higher rung – as a means, therefore, of maintaining exclusive control by the few over decision-making, and of limiting alternative ideas.

If we are kept busy with the business of mere survival, the sole point of life is reduced to 'reducing insecurity.'

Another way to look at this scheme is through the lens of 'atomization' – which is the key to manufacturing 'scarcity' – i.e. shattering into a million pieces our fundamental unity, our allegiance to each other... and to the earth... to the ancestors... and the yet-to-be... in order to redirect our allegiance from the complex web of life... to those who want to replace it in our eyes (minds)... and sit atop us, pretending to be gods.

When a class-based-scarcity is made the defining quality of our lives, a 'jungle-ethics' presides. This is the underlying context of our lives that we never discuss – never acknowledge the existence of... or that it causes such (often unconscious) pain... and rage... or that... when sat on... when kept in survival-mode... souls cannot grow.

The result is captured succinctly in Marlon Riggs' words:

"Anger unvented becomes pain, unspoken becomes rage, released becomes violence, cha cha cha..."

If cooperation and communal sharing are inherent in our human nature – and I believe they are – then a systematic attempt to re-craft that nature had to be initiated and consistently

applied if the plan is to replace 'communal sharing' with 'human inter-relationships based on competition and greed'... in order to keep us from seeing... that we don't need would-be-philosopher-kings ('power'.)

I believe that is exactly what happened, and that 'power' believes that the key to a successful re-crafting of human nature, is to insure the early instilling of 'obedience' in child-rearing... an obedience then continuously reinforced by the systematic limiting of other options, of our possibilities for coming together... which would enable us to see our common experience, figure out what is being done to us... and develop an accurate judgment (analysis) of the forces shaping our lives.

All thanks and much gratitude are due to Alice Miller for providing her help with the task of developing this accurate judgment.

Parents, even if they are highly educated and have sufficient time at their disposal, are helpless when it comes to understanding their child so long as they must keep the sufferings of their own childhood at an emotional distance.... Thus, I see it as my task to sensitize the general public to the sufferings of early childhood... (Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty In Child-Rearing and The Roots of Violence*, 1980, p. xv)

In *Prisoners of Childhood* I took pains to point out that looks expressing disapproval and rejection that are directed at the infant can contribute to the development of severe disturbances... in the adult.... every small child needs an empathic and not a 'controlling' human being (whether it be father or mother) as caregiver.

An enormous amount [of abuse] can be done to a child in the first two years.... The child will overcome the serious consequences of the injustice he has suffered only if he succeeds in defending himself, i.e., if he is allowed to express his pain and anger. If he is prevented from reacting in his own way because the parents cannot tolerate his reactions (crying, sadness, rage) and forbid them by means of looks or other pedagogical methods, then the child will learn to be silent. This silence is a sign of the effectiveness of the pedagogical principles applied, but at the same time it is a danger signal pointing to future pathological development. If there is absolutely no possibility of reacting appropriately to hurt, humiliation, and coercion, then these experiences cannot be integrated into the personality; the feelings they evoke are repressed, and the need to articulate them remains unsatisfied, without any hope of being fulfilled. It is this lack of hope of ever being able to express repressed traumata by means of relevant feelings that most often causes severe psychological problems. (Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty In Child-Rearing and The Roots of Violence*, 1980, p. 6 – 7)

This perfect adaptation to society's norms – in other words, to what is called 'healthy normality' – carries with it the danger that such a person can be used for practically any purpose. It is not a loss of autonomy that occurs here, because this autonomy never existed, but a switching of values, which in themselves are of no importance anyway for the person in question as long as his whole value system is dominated by the principle of obedience. He has never gone beyond the stage of idealizing his parents with their demands for unquestioning obedience; this idealization can easily be transferred to a Führer or to an ideology. Since authoritarian parents are always right, there is no need for their children to rack their brains in each case to determine whether what is demanded of them is right or not. And how is this to be judged? Where are the standards supposed to come from if someone has always been told what was right and what was wrong and if he never had an opportunity to become familiar with his own feelings and if, beyond that, attempts at criticism were unacceptable to the parents and thus were too threatening for the child? If an adult has not developed a mind of his own, then he will find himself at the mercy of the authorities for better or worse, just as an infant finds itself at the mercy of its parents. Saying no to those more powerful will always seem too threatening to him.... Individuals who refuse to adapt to a totalitarian regime are not doing so out of a sense of duty or because of naïveté, but because they cannot help but be true to themselves. (Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good*, 1980, p. 83 – 4)

The greatest cruelty that can be inflicted on children is to refuse to let them express their anger and suffering except at the risk of losing their parents' love and affection. The anger stemming from early childhood is stored up in the unconscious, and since it basically represents a healthy, vital source of energy, an equal amount of energy must be expended in order to repress it. An upbringing that succeeds in sparing the parents at the expense of the child's vitality sometimes leads to suicide or extreme drug addiction, which is a form of suicide. (Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good*, 1980, p. 106)

The family structure could well be characterized as the prototype of a totalitarian regime. (p. 146)

It would be an easy matter to misunderstand my claim that the untold deep humiliation and mistreatment Hitler suffered at his father's hands without being allowed to respond was responsible for his insatiable hatred. Someone may object by saying that an individual human being cannot destroy an entire people on such a scale, that the economic crisis and the humiliation suffered by the Weimar Republic contributed to producing the catastrophe. There can be no doubt that this is true, but it was not "crises" and "systems" that did the killing, it was human beings – human beings whose fathers were able to point with pride to the obedience instilled in their little ones at a very early age. (p. 264)

It is easy for those who have never become aware of having been victims, since they grew up believing in the principles of being brave and self-controlled, to succumb to the danger of taking revenge on the next generation because they themselves have been unconsciously victimized. But if their anger is followed by grief over having been a victim, then they can also mourn the fact that their parents were victims too, and they will no longer have to persecute their children. The ability to grieve will bring them closer to their children. (Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good*, p. 273 – 4)

Someday we will regard our children not as creatures to manipulate or to change but rather as messengers from a world we once deeply knew, but which we have long since forgotten, who can reveal to us more about the true secrets of life, and also our own lives, than our parents were ever able to. We do not need to be told whether to be strict or permissive with our children. What we do need is to have respect for their needs, their feelings, and their individuality, as well as for our own. (p. xi)

Alice Miller's essential work, for those hoping to move beyond a society based on coercion, has been pretty much ignored on the Left, despite her important observation (among an almost innumerable number) that being taught to 'rule' ourselves, makes us 'subject' to 'rule'.

Along with coercion-based child-rearing, the other key means 'power' relies on to systematically impair our judgment – limit our thought process – is 'jobs', the wage-work system itself, which makes it structurally-impossible for us "...to have respect for [our] needs, [our] feelings, and [our] individuality...."

The belief in the need for a system of 'wage-work' is founded on the illusion, the ideology, of 'scarcity' which then feeds the (self- and societal-) justification... for putting ourselves on the auction block.

And so... enter now, 'Stage Right,' Those-Who-Hide- Behind-Scenes... the Architects... the Directors... the Invisible Hands – 'Plato's Tribe' – who took it upon themselves to re-craft human nature... pound out of us our earth-given knowledge of "the true secrets of life"... in order to design us to fit ends determined only by them. Into their hands – and theirs alone – has been placed responsibility for the design of our common world. And to reclaim responsibility into the hands of 'the all' ... we must first understand their Plan.

"All difficulties are but easy when they are known," Shakespeare told us.

And to help us know this... chiefest... difficulty, for the species, in these times... to view bare and exposed their Plan... so we can choose to undo it... let us now welcome in... the one who speaks for them... Bentham. (1748 – 1832):

When a number of persons (whom we may style *subjects*) are supposed to be in the *habit* of paying *obedience* to a person, or an assemblage of persons, of a known and certain description (whom we may call *governor* or *governors*) such persons altogether (subjects and governors) are said to be in a state of *political* SOCIETY.... (Jeremy Bentham, *A Fragment On Government*)

Government supposes the disposition to obedience: – the faculty of governing on the one part has for its sole efficient cause, and for its sole measure, the disposition to obey on the other part. (Jeremy Bentham, *Pannomial Fragments*)

The law cannot confer a benefit, without at the same time imposing a burthen somewhere; – it cannot create a right, without at the same time creating an obligation – and if that right be of any value, even a numerous train of obligations....

Rights are, then, the fruits of the law, and of the law alone. There are no rights without law – no rights contrary to the law – no rights anterior to the law.... A right without a law is an effect without a cause. (*Pannomial Fragments*)

Without rights there can be no happiness... but rights cannot be created without obligations.... The end of all these acts of authority should be to produce the greatest possible happiness to the community in question.... Still, of the operations by which it is possible to conduct men towards this end, the effect – the constant, necessary, and most extensive effect, is to produce evil as well as good; to produce evil, that good may be produced, since upon no other conditions can it be produced. (*Pannomial Fragments*)

“To produce the greatest possible happiness to the community” it is ‘necessary’ to produce evil. If this sounds like Hegel, like Machiavelli, like convoluted Plato-logic... that’s because it is.

If we all agree that the only authentic definition of ‘happiness’ is ‘self-creating’... honoring, living and fulfilling our earth-given gifts... no convoluted reasoning to justify ‘rule by the few’ is needed. But instead, we are bombarded, via its control of the media, with ‘power’s’ definitions.

Bentham instructed ‘power’ on the importance of controlling the lexicon... the key definitions that ‘justify’ ‘class.’ Let us never forget his advice to rulers:

“He who defined the language ruled the universe...” making the sovereign-legislator “the ultimate lexicographer...” The larger the scope and operational range of his abstractions, the wider his area of government, of legislative and judicial authority. To him, he said, “belongs the power of making wrong and right change nature...” (Mary Peter Mack, quoting Jeremy Bentham, *A Bentham Reader*)

His “greatest happiness principle” is actually the “greatest-happiness-to-work” principle... His purpose-in-chief: to keep us working... and, more precisely, to keep us ‘happy’ to work. This, he argued, should be the goal of the state.

“The force of the physical sanction being sufficient, the employment of the political sanction would be superfluous.” All that was needed was the “scientific and economical” treatment of the poor. Bentham believed that poverty was part of plenty... The task of the government was to increase want in order to make the physical sanction of hunger effective. (Karl Polanyi, quoting Jeremy Bentham, *The Great Transformation*, p. 117)

But for coercion to lead to ‘effective governance,’ Bentham said, i.e. lead to the instilling of obedience, it cannot stand bare and naked *as* coercion:

[Government] operates principally through the medium of education: the magistrate operating in the character of a tutor upon all the members of the state, by the direction he gives to their hopes and to their fears. Indeed, under a solicitous and attentive government, the ordinary preceptor [teacher], nay even the parent himself, is but a deputy, as it were, to the magistrate: whose controlling influence, different in this respect from that of the ordinary preceptor, dwells with a man to his life’s end. (Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*)

Bentham, unlike today’s representatives of Plato’s Tribe, was not reluctant to call this psychological manipulation. On the contrary, his ambition was to be known as the inventor of “the logic of the will”, a ‘science’ of control which, for those who possessed it, would render management of ‘the people’ effortless. Violence, he believed, was crude, and carried heavy costs. Much better, he said, to instill ‘discipline.’

In *Waking Up: Freeing Ourselves From Work*, citing Alice Miller, I wrote that we ask ourselves, when we hurt each other, “shouldn’t we be more *controlled* than that?” Well, that’s Bentham speaking through us. “Rule yourselves,” he would say, “that you may be *subject* to rule.”

Violence is both the official prerogative of the state, and its agents, as well as a key ideological means for justifying its management over us. It provides the ideological cover that allows ‘power’ itself to stay hidden. For if, as the con goes, violence is inherent in human nature, not only does the onus shift from ‘power’, that stays hidden... to those of us on which it (seemingly invisibly) sits... but we (horribly) turn to it for help in ‘controlling’ it... that is to say, ourselves.



This has been ‘power’s M.O. from the beginning. It’s a protection racket on a global scale... create the problem and then make people pay... with their souls... with their lives... for you to ‘solve’ it.

All the suffering since ‘class’ began is solely for this .0001% to pretend to be masters of the universe.

It’s not even so much that we are designed to be greedy, acquisitive, competitive and violent, although this attempt is made, but even more, the point is, that *our thoughts are designed* such that we *believe* humans to be inherently “greedy, acquisitive, competitive and violent” – a definition of ‘human nature’ crafted to reflect ‘power’s own image: violent, competitive, acquisitive and greedy. And this is not ‘greed’ for money, but greed for ‘power’ (we owe Shakespeare for showing us, in *The Rape of Lucrece*, the single abyss underlying all forms of it... of ‘greed’.)

Bentham’s constant question: “How can the few control the many?” (while always telling themselves, as Alice Miller pointed out, that it was “for our own good”), he answered by saying: by controlling what we can think, which he believed he’d created the ‘science’ of... to which he gave the name: “the logic of the will.”

The specific question that preoccupied Bentham was, “How do you control popular opinion such that people will give their obedience, and ‘governance’ can occur?” He said that ‘the people’ will believe a thing *with certainty* only if that thing is “confirmed by the reputed perceptions of all other men *without exception*” (Bentham, *Rationale of Judicial Evidence*). He went on to say that as long as there is this degree of control (that is to say, total control) of our thoughts, ‘power’ can even make us believe that which is contrary to physical reality and to our physical nature as living things – particularly, our need to be free.

But ‘power’ must stay hidden to exist. It cannot seem to be about *intentionally* impairing our judgment... though in controlling what we can think, it is quite clearly doing this. And Bentham showed them how.

‘Power’s lexicon... or you could call it, “the moral universe of ‘class’”... is premised on an intentional ‘re-crafting’ – by controlling what we can think, and thereby, essentially, impairing our judgment.

Government exists, or so the story goes, by the informed consent of the governed. But what when, as Bentham advised, consent is intentionally manipulated? is intentionally kept ill-informed... akin, perhaps, to the planned intoxication... of a rape victim?

The 'Worker' As 'Intoxicated Woman'

On a recent *Democracy Now!* There was an interview with a woman who had spoken out courageously on Fox News about being raped – and who as a result was bombarded with hateful comments because she'd dared to say that 'rapists' are not some special category of human who are innately evil, but rather our brothers and fathers and friends, and that we need to teach men not to rape – adding: "we need to teach people what 'consent' is... what 'rape' is."

Hearing the interview composed an odd coincidence for me as the night before I'd dreamed about a rape situation. I was in a house – though mine, it was unfamiliar – and a party of mostly men and at least one woman had rented a bedroom. The door was open and I saw a woman clearly drunk being positioned on the bed. Outraged, I stepped in and confronted them. They protested her willingness and I answered, "you cannot give informed consent if you're intoxicated," and went to call the police.

I awoke with these words in my head: "What is 'violence' but 'making-use-of'?"

The only thing that makes 'class' 'not-violence' is our implied consent. But if our judgment is impaired, we cannot give it. By 'power's own rules, which it will never credit against its own interests, it cannot intentionally impair our judgment. But once we've arrived at the point we can call them on it, they will have already dissolved in the sun of our awakening.

'Force' has been normalized by systematizing 'class'... making it totalitarian – and this in a global sense. The anger we feel when caught in its grip is generally misdirected. Once we step back and view from the vantage of the whole, we can direct it where it belongs, so we can move on.

“Take Back The Night!”

The right to live our lives unbent is a bigger challenge than we’re accustomed to think of it (as).

Considering the phrase “take back the night” many themes... and issues... and feelings... arose. The one these words address is “facing the dark... facing fear”... facing pain... and, ultimately... facing freedom... in reliving and incorporating the fear born in feeling helpless... at the disposal of those far stronger who (we fear) do not love us... and so, by ‘the dark’ I mean feelings we’ve pushed into the shadows of our minds... cut off from ourselves...

...but... which... if confronted...
...with the goal of owning them... consciously...
...can move us on... beyond them...
...to our future freedom.

As women, there are times when we rule the home... for instance when we parent alone... or otherwise play dominate roles... but in wider spheres of ‘power’... our fate has been sealed as ‘bait’... or we’re used to placate... or as goats to ‘scape’... we’re basically told: “play the passive role”... and *that*... we must *absolutely* reject...

...and yet...
...how twisted the path to moving beyond it...
...beyond ‘power’...

As women, do we have a unique role to play in smoothing the way to this path?

I believe only to the degree we see from the vantage of ‘the whole’... which, when babies are born... they know... and show us how to do.... they are amazing guides to worlds we once knew.... But this world of ‘class’... crafted by ‘power’... forces us to abandon them, and the lesson then abruptly ends... and “the circle of contempt” begins....

“Circle of contempt” is the way Alice Miller describes the process by which the basic divide of ‘class’... of ‘power’... the divide between ‘citizen’ (big) and ‘barbarian’ (small)... begins.... She shows us that it is here... in the unconscious dismissiveness with which we treat children... that the seeds of belief in ‘rank’... in ‘force’... and in ‘scarcity’... are planted.

In the chapter of *Prisoners of Childhood* called “The Vicious Circle of Contempt” she discusses how callousness... the absence of empathy... is normalized in a system in which ‘loving parents’ routinely humiliate their children. She describes watching a mom and dad

laughingly deny their child ice cream that *they* are both enjoying, while he cries and begs for his own. She writes that their lack of empathy for what he was feeling was a way of saying, "...we are big, and may do as we like, but for you it is 'too cold'. You may only enjoy yourself as we do when you get to be big enough." She writes:

Contempt for those who are smaller and weaker... is the best defense against a breakthrough of one's own feelings of helplessness: it is an expression of this split-off weakness. The strong person who knows that he, too, carries this weakness within himself, because he has [consciously] experienced it, does not need to demonstrate his strength through such contempt. (p. 67)

In the child's eyes [parents] encounter their own humiliating past, and they must ward it off with the power they now have achieved.

...little girls [once they become women and mothers] can pass on to their children at the most tender age the contempt from which they once had suffered. Later, the adult man will idealize his mother, since every human being needs the feeling that he was really loved; but he will despise other women, upon whom he thus revenges himself in place of his mother. And these humiliated adult women, in turn, if they have no other means of ridding themselves of their burden, will revenge themselves upon their own children....

Contempt is the weapon of the weak and a defense against one's own despised and unwanted feelings. And the fountainhead of all contempt, all discrimination, is the more or less conscious, uncontrolled, and secret exercise of power over the child by the adult, which is tolerated by society (except in the case of murder or serious bodily harm). What adults do to their child's spirit is entirely their own affair. For the child is regarded as the parents' property, in the same way as the citizens of a totalitarian state are the property of its government. Until we become sensitized to the small child's suffering, this wielding of power by adults will continue to be a normal aspect of the human condition, for no one pays attention to or takes seriously what is regarded as trivial, since the victims are "only children". But in twenty years' time these children will be adults who have to pay it all back to their own children. They may then fight vigorously against cruelty "in the world" – and yet they will carry within themselves an experience of cruelty to which they have no access and which remains hidden behind their idealized picture of a happy childhood. (p. 68 – 9) [unquote]

So... I put to you now... the key question all activists against injustice... all advocates for a global humanity who believe *every* human being deserves to live free... i.e. free of necessity... free of coercion of any kind...

"What's the goal?"

Is our goal to express our righteous anger? Or do we want to win? ...do we want violence to end? If the latter, we must consider the possibility that 'violence'... 'coercion'... and 'necessity'... are key constructs of 'class'... of 'power'... and will only end... when we begin again... by moving beyond 'power'... and that means moving beyond 'class'....

The twisted monster we're wrestling with is more insidious... more subtle... than we usually credit it as... and if we ponder deep... and allow that truth to rise into our minds, we're bound to say... "that monster's in us too"...carefully installed by loving hands.

The handout I put together for this conference, "*The Violence of Class*", concludes by saying that there's a case to be made that all of us... when we submit to 'rule,' do so in the same way that an intoxicated woman 'submits' to rape... that our judgment has been intentionally impaired.... I quote a woman being interviewed on Fox News who said, "we have to teach men what 'consent' is... what 'rape' is..."

Well... what is 'consent' when our judgment is shaped by the demand for our obedience?... when, as Alice Miller says... "[our] whole value system is dominated by the principle of obedience?"

Only when... you and I... all of us... 'we-the-people'... consciously re-design the world we're in... to allow conscious mutually-attentive cooperation... forswearing 'force'... will we be beyond the realm of unconscious obedience... and *in* the realm of conscious agreement..., conscious, cooperative, continuous society re-design... our future freedom.

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*Fire & Ice... Active Nonviolence: Approaches To Nonviolent Social Change...
What Is Nonviolence? What Is Nonviolence Education?
What Are Ways To Engage In Nonviolent Social Change?
Kansas State University Nonviolence Conference... April 4 – 6, 2013*

“Understanding the Roots of Violence” panel discussion will include:

- The normalized violence of Western child-rearing practices;
- The roots of totalitarianism and the habit of obedience;
- Seeing from the vantage of ‘the whole’: a practice of nonviolence that is anti-‘class’.

What is ‘nonviolence education’?

I would define it as an ideology of class... a magician’s trick... intentional misdirection...
...now let me explain what I mean by that.

A true practice of nonviolence must be anti-‘class’... meaning... that we accept the premise that the true problem is... coercion.

Before we begin... let’s give thanks to the ancestors... and not just Martin Luther King who died this day... and in so many ways, led the way... but others whose words must be returned to their proper place... our minds... if we’re to leave violence behind. These we need... a small elite intends to keep buried... because they challenge the official story of ‘progress’. But a new story is rising... it’s called ‘the truth’... it’s called “we don’t need anyone else to tell us what to do...” it’s called “we don’t want a world based on “making-use-of”... commodification... but rather a world based in contributing our human gifts freely... without coercion. And for that world to be... we have to start seeing the true source of the divisions between us... and embrace a global human fellowship.

Here are a few of the silenced ancestors I hope you will read: Alice Miller, particularly *For Your Own Good*, in which she writes about the roots of violence in our training in obedience. And for the roots of totalitarianism, arguably violence at its most extreme end... we need Karl Popper’s *The Open Society and Its Enemies: the Spell of Plato*... and then... consider the words of Sebastian De Grazia in *Of Time, Work, and Leisure*, who argues that we have the means for every human being to live free (i.e. free of necessity... and in ancient Greek, ‘violence,’ ‘coercion’ and ‘necessity’ were the same word)... and, lastly, despite my message being the opposite to his, without Jeremy Bentham, ‘power’s’ thought would not stand so bare and naked. Bentham, like Plato, believed in the enlightened rule of ‘philosopher-king-statesmen’... who would... whether by ‘philosophy’ or ‘science’... keep the human-cattle in line.

So in various ways I give thanks today to Martin Luther King, Alice Miller, Karl Popper, Sebastian de Grazia, and Jeremy Bentham... who each gave a critical piece to the solution of the mystery of the alleged violence... of human beings.

I am in the perhaps unique position at this conference of arguing that the problem of violence is primarily a problem of introjection... an injection from 'power'... false 'power'... the would-be-philosopher-kings... into us... we-the-people... which saps our authentic power... our earth-given gifts.

By what means do we know each other and the world? Only by what we see... either by our eyes or by our mind's eye... and generally that view is skewed pretty narrow... within lines set in place by particular nation-states...

...unless... you are one of the .0001% who rear their offspring and themselves to wear the heavy crown of 'global management'....

In the course of a mere two and a half centuries, the earth has been chopped up, price tags placed... and we humans... as a part of it... likewise... and this privatization of our common legacies has resulted in the greatest disparities of wealth... the greatest despoliation of planetary health... in the history of the species called human.

This is not due to chance... or the inevitable march of so-called 'progress'... but by the conscious actions of this .0001%... who keep themselves discreetly hidden... and if this extreme disparity is planned... and I believe it is... then those who long for rule know that a vision (in their case, of so-called 'Perfection'... the rule of Perfect Reason) can span generations...

...and for we-the-people to end this disparity and despoliation of the earth... and begin to set in place the aims and goals of life... we, too, must have a vision that concentrates, coordinates, and folds our actions together globally... and focuses them... toward the goal of freedom... freedom from necessity... and Sebastian de Grazia said the only authentic definition of 'freedom' is 'freedom from necessity' or... 'leisure'... a leisure premised on the key values of reverence, non-violence, and mutual aid.

I believe that violence is a tool of 'power' that infects... re-seeds itself, and lives continuously... till we track it back to its root of 'class'... and then... removed at last... we begin again.

Violence... and particularly the normalized violence done to the human spirit by what is euphemistically called 'childrearing' (under the regime of 'class')... may be the chief means for sapping our energy and power... 'true power'... that only earth can give.... Violence does this... hand-in-hand with an intentionally-installed atomization... keeping us separate from each other... in separate boxes... unable to develop our thought... and locked into hearing only the 'master's' voice... in every social institution... particularly the media. Both violence and atomization are key for keeping us from seeing from the vantage of 'the whole'... seeing that we are all kept busy... globally... simply surviving... intentionally kept bent, misshapen and duped... under the constant pressure of 'power's' heavy boot...

...for, yes, we hurt each other horribly... this is incontestable fact... but till we track the cause back to the hand that wields the sword of rule... with seeming dispassion... instead of attacking the eruption of this virus 'power' in us... we but strengthen those who lust for dominance...

I believe that our belief that humans are inherently violent and coercive holds us back... holds us back from uniting around our common interest... in owning the bodies we walk around in....

I'm going to challenge us to see 'violence' as the trail 'power' leaves in its wake... a result that erupts from the pressure 'power' places on our necks... by inventing and then continuously manufacturing... a struggle for existence... i.e., scarcity.

And, yes, the extreme eruptions are horrifying...

...but there are also the less visible... and more broadly devastating forms we see daily in our unhealthy longing to control everything... to exert our introjected 'power' on those we love... or on those helpless to resist it...

...this is 'power' in us... an insidious virus... that carries such a heavy weight of shame... but the blame... is misplaced.

The thoughts we are taught all sprout from a 'jungle-ethics'... the assumption of 'scarcity'... that "there isn't enough..." which comprises the moral universe of class... "There is limited stuff and we must fight over it..." is how the story goes... now, those who know the earth... the ways of life... those who *see* the dance of inter-dependency... know this is a lie... one composed to keep us under control... by 'justifying' its coercive means to limit our 'seeing'... and limit our role to doing what we're told....

“There is no law,” said Plato to rulers, “nor will there ever be one, superior to this: no one should *ever* be without a leader...”

“If you would be a ‘philosopher-king,’” says he... here is how its done... the *Republic*... a playbook handed down elite-to-elite across the generations... and so the force imposed on Life was thereby justified... by their goal of an alleged ‘Perfection’... requiring our obedience... in service to aims we never chose.

The earth did not craft us for obedience but for health and wholeness... and allegiance to Life itself... that is to say, for freedom... and honoring our gifts... and only by allying with our earth can we recover them... and our freedom.

Now what has this to do with ‘violence’? and our becoming ‘non-violent’?

By understanding the *source* of our rage... we can *choose* another way... we see the strings... the way of things... are *created* by would-be-kings...

...and seeing them means... we can find the means to get free.

“All difficulties are but easy when they are known,” said Shakespeare.

And our wrestle with ‘class’... with ‘power’... in this moment is the defining difficulty... not just of our time... but of what’s called ‘historical’ time... the dilemma of force... of class... of ‘power’... and how to end it... so as a species we can blossom into our full gifts...

Seeing this... broader context... is called “seeing from the vantage of the whole”... for it is only from the vantage of the whole... that the truth may be known....

But in the throes of that distress that comes from an intense experience... singular or chronic... of violence... from that abyss it may not be possible to see the broader context...

...so am I suggesting it’s vain to speak the pain of violence? Not at all... Marlon Riggs’ words are true:

“Anger unvented becomes pain, unspoken becomes rage, released becomes violence, cha cha cha...”

...what I am suggesting is that the pain must be placed in context... the source of the anger... by saying out loud that while down in that hole... we can't speak from the vantage of the whole... it's critical to acknowledge it exists... this larger context...

...so... it is not up to those flooded with the distress of it... the consequences of violence... of all the hideousness born... of a systematically-applied force... to see and express this larger context...

...rather it is up to we who *can* step back and see from the vantage of the whole... to form the certainty that we can move on... beyond a system based in force... and design... a new context for our lives.

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Letter to the Editor, *Kansas State Collegian*, April 5, 2013:

I thought the Kansas State University community might like to know what I actually said at the April 4th "Take Back the Night!" rally. The article describing the event [*"Take Back the Night Rally Condemns Rape"* in the April 5th, 2013 edition] misquoted me. I actually spoke about the importance of seeing the problem of violence from "the vantage of the whole" -- historically, globally -- seeing it in terms of a class-system imperative to produce 'insiders' and 'outsiders' across various false divisions. I said that 'violence' is better understood as 'coercion', and will only end when we end the system of global 'power' called 'class'.

The words attributed to me were botched quotes, the originals of which were tangential to these main points.

Thank you for printing this clarification, and thanks to the Kansas State University community for the opportunity to come and speak at the Rally and the weekend conference on nonviolence education.

Pamela Satterwhite, author, *Waking Up: Freeing Ourselves From Work*

