# Living Nonviolently

## Language for Resisting Violence

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LEXINGTON BOOKS
*Lanham • Boulder • New York • Toronto • Plymouth, UK*

Published by Lexington Books
A wholly owned subsidiary of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
4501 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 200, Lanham, Maryland 20706
http://www.lexingtonbooks.com

Estover Road, Plymouth PL6 7PY, United Kingdom

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Information Available

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**
Moran, Gabriel.
Living nonviolently : language for resisting violence / Gabriel Moran.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-7391-5043-6 (cloth : alk. paper) -- ISBN 978-0-7391-5045-0 (electronic)
1. Nonviolence--Philosophy. 2. Language and languages. 3. Thought and thinking. I. Title.
HM1281.M67 2011
303.6'1014--dc22
2010052932

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992.

Printed in the United States of America

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# Introduction: Language for Living Nonviolently

When I had almost finished writing this book, a friend asked me what I was writing about. When I told him it was about living nonviolently, he asked, "Why would anyone be interested in that?" I was stopped by the question and admitted that I had not explicitly asked myself that question. After some reflection, I said, "My working assumption is that nearly everyone would prefer to live nonviolently." Few if any people set out to lead a life of violence. Unfortunately, we all find ourselves surrounded by violence which we have to live with. Our best intentions sometimes produce violent results. Most people probably conclude that nonviolence is a concern for a few extraordinary people, a Gandhi or a Thoreau.

I am not interested in expounding an ideology of nonviolence. There exist hundreds of books on nonviolence, most of them directed at people already dedicated to the cause. Instead, I wish to explore with the reader how language is related to problems of violence in personal life, domestic policies, and international relations. My intention is to widen a conversation that is too limited because of the assumption that nonviolence is an ideology of a few people but is irrelevant for most people and for all nations. I am not so naïve as to expect that changes of language would eliminate violence, but answers are not possible if the language is not available. If violence is to be drastically reduced in the world, we need to have better ways to address the problem.

I was once speaking at a conference on the general theme of peace and war. Before my session a woman asked me what my topic was. When I said it was "Is an ethic of nonviolence possible?" she replied, "Oh, I am not interested in that. I'm a pacifist." I made no attempt to convince her to attend the session even though I was trying to engage the sort of person whose self-description is "pacifist." I intend no disparagement of the term *pacifist*, espe-

cially when used to describe people who have long worked in the cause of peace. I am skeptical, however, of someone announcing their pacifism and assuming that the term is sufficiently self-explanatory and absolves a person from delving into the roots of violence and war. I begin with the assumption that the potential for violence exists in everyone. Violence cannot be avoided simply by declaring that one is for peace.[1]

If one considers the breadth of content in this book—ranging from discussion of animals and small children to politics and international relations, while crossing academic lines from ethology and biology to political science and religion—the book may seem wildly over-ambitious. However, the book has a single thread of concern, namely, the confusion and misuse of terms as they are used in different contexts. Because I am trying to show points of misunderstanding and to propose a more consistent way of speaking that would link different disciplines, the use of wide-sweeping content is necessary.

There are many people, including politicians and business leaders, who say that they find personal inspiration from advocates of nonviolence. However, presidents or CEOs are likely to say that they have to put aside personal beliefs in dealing with violence in the "real world." As I discuss in chapter 1, President Barack Obama used such a contrast in his speech on the occasion of his receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. It is presumed that wars, while they are of course unfortunate, have always been with us. Anyone is free to be against war but such individuals should recognize that their freedom depends on the government using violence and war to protect them and their idiosyncratic opposition to violence.

This book proposes a common framework for individual people, organizations, and nation-states. The proposed grammar—a pattern of language—cuts across divisions that relegate a discussion of nonviolence to the private world of individuals. The book does not assume a radical split between private choice and public action. It is true that sometimes there can be severe tension between personal conviction and what a legislator's choices are. People who have never held political office need sympathy to understand the dilemmas that political leaders often face. Nevertheless, it is not acceptable to relegate nonviolence to a private world of individuals while complacently accepting violence as an obvious necessity in the political world of "national interest." It is in the interest of all of us to find a way to improve the range of choices so that if violence cannot be completely eliminated it can be drastically reduced.

Resisting violence should be centered on the relations between human beings, from personal encounters to structures of society. In addition, the human relationship to other living beings is integral to a concern with violence. Humans have little power to eliminate the conflict, suffering, and killing in the nonhuman world. Well-meaning interventions sometimes make

things worse by throwing off the balance in an ecological system. When humans have already intervened they have a responsibility to correct a situation of their own making. But human beings can best reduce their own contribution to animal suffering by reducing violence in human relations.

This introduction has three sections: first, a consideration of the general problem of language as the key to discussing the possibility of nonviolent living; second, a specific discussion of the language of violent action and its opposite, nonviolent action; third, the proposal that opposition to violence is the basis of ethics. There is also an addendum that uses a distinction between ethics and morality to illustrate in detail the method used throughout the book.

## HOW LANGUAGE IS CENTRAL TO THE PROBLEM

This book is about language and specifically about a language of resisting violence. Such language is not readily available because of biases built into our customary ways of speaking. Only out of a wide conversation can a more adequate language emerge, a conversation that in the past has excluded whole groups and classes of people. In recent decades the voices of women have become more prominent as language has been partly reshaped to correct a gender bias. Each chapter of this book is attentive to women and also to children, whose voices are even harder to hear. The relationship between men, women, children, and nonhuman animals is the context for positing a language for nonviolent living.

It is often said that there was a "linguistic turn" in twentieth-century thinking. A turn or return to concern with language can mean many things, some of them perhaps passing fads. But attention to language cannot be limited to one philosophical theory or one school of thought. It is a rebalancing of contrasting approaches to human understanding that go back at least as far as the ancient Greeks.

There are roughly two ways to imagine the relation between thinking and language. For many people, the relation is so obvious that there is nothing much to discuss. That is, a person thinks with ideas and uses words to express those ideas. The important thing is to have the right ideas; the words are "afterthought." There are innumerable conferences every day in which participants toss around ideas. As for communicating the ideas to the outside world, someone is given the task of "cleaning up the language" or finding clever phrases to convey the ideas.

This assumption that thought precedes words, and words precede communication with others, appears to many people as "common sense." But what is commonly assumed among people depends upon place and time. The

common sense that took hold in the seventeenth century, which was reflected in philosophical writing, is that the human being is a thinking subject. This solitary man looks out on a world of physical objects and gives each object a name.

The new sciences gave prominence and honor to the individual who carefully gathers data and then uses logic and mathematics to draw rational conclusions. In the ideal situation that can never be fully realized, the human subject would be replaced by a blank slate. The "subjective" element of emotion, prejudice, and the ambiguity of language would be excluded as far as possible.

There are, however, other uses of language than for stating facts. Myth, for example, is a story about a people, particularly about their origin; myths are needed to maintain the unity of a large group. A myth can have its own truth but it has to be distinguished from a statement of historical facts. Humans live by stories that tell something about the human condition. Novels and plays cannot be replaced by physics, sociology, or an exact recounting of historical detail. Referring to Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Northrop Frye writes: "If you wish to know the history of eleventh-century Scotland look elsewhere; if you wish to know what it means for a man to gain a kingdom and lose his soul, look here."[2]

In this alternate way of relating language and thought the words are formative of thinking rather than only an instrument of communication. The place to begin reflecting on speaking as shaping thought is before our eyes, although philosophers long overlooked the obvious. A child learns by being immersed in human conversation. The child reacts to the physical movements and the spoken words in its environment. Without any definitions of words or systems of concepts, the child almost miraculously manages to speak a language. The child's understanding holds a key to the relation between ideas and words.

In Alison Gopnik's book, *The Philosophical Baby*, the author notes that the 1967 *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* has no entries for babies, infants, families, parents, mothers, and fathers; it has only four references to children at all.[3] That is not surprising. Most philosophical treatises seem to assume a world of individual, rational, adult males.[4] That situation is now changing, especially with the increase of women scholars, but the imagery and language of several centuries are not easily and quickly dislodged. More women philosophers do not guarantee a place for children at the table of philosophy, but the chances are increased that children and their experience will be attended to.

If philosophers had been attentive to how infants learn, their accounts of knowledge might have been different. The infant reacts to the adult action of speaking long before it can speak on its own. When it does attempt to react by speaking, it uses whatever fragments of speech are available that seem to

fit the situation. While responding to the immediate environment, the child uses the language at hand with a seeming grasp of its basic structure. German infants learn German; French infants speak French. When two languages are regularly spoken in its presence, a child can usually distinguish between them with no instruction in the grammatical rules of either.

Hanna Pitkin cites an example of speech by a three-year-old. This kind of example could be duplicated by most attentive parents. The child comes into the kitchen in the morning clutching her security blanket. The mother says, "Put the blanket back on your bed." The child replies, "But mother, I simply can't function in the morning without my blanket."[5] Adults will likely laugh at the child repeating what the mother has said. That the child has repeated the mother's words is true only up to a point.

The more profound point is that the child has recognized two situations that are linked to a similar flow of speech. The child, far from blindly repeating the mother's statement, has precisely substituted "blanket" for "coffee," indicating that the child understands the statement within the context of the conversation. If you were to ask the child what the word function means, it would not even know what "word" means. A child does not learn words, let alone the definitions of words. The child encounters human situations and puts to use whatever statements or fragments of statements that have been used in similar situations.

Adults have great difficulty learning a new language because most of them self-consciously try to remember the meanings of words and the rules for putting the words together. The rules for verb forms in any language are just about impossible to apply. Adults who are adept at learning to speak (not just write) a language usually have a childlike quality. They try out a flow of speech, with mistakes to be sure, but also with the unselfconscious attempt to make a human connection.

Each child's experience has some parallel with human history and the history of language. Attention to language was kept alive in Western philosophy by Jewish thinkers who never abandoned the importance of the word.[6] The great twentieth-century thinker, Franz Rosenzweig, called his approach to philosophy "speaking thinking." Speaking, unlike ideas, needs another person besides the speaker. Speaking-thinking exists in a community of speakers and respondents. This kind of philosophy also takes the reality of time seriously.[7] Speaking-thinking is historically situated whereas concepts or ideas appear to be timeless.

Speaking-thinking derives the meaning of a word by asking when it was first used, to whom it was spoken, in what set of circumstances it was used in the past, and how the word is used now. The simplest, oldest words in the language are the most ambiguous and therefore the most fruitful for trying to get at the truth.[8] "Only that which has no history can be defined," wrote Nietzsche.[9] That principle would include all words except those just coined.

If you wish to know the meaning of a word, look to its use.[10] If you could gather the occasions of every time it was used, and what it meant in each context, you would have the meaning of the word. The Internet is an indispensable instrument for locating such information but it cannot supply the necessary context for words that have been used millions of times. The *Oxford English Dictionary* is a superb attempt to provide not *definitions* but *meanings in use*. The editors would acknowledge that even this extraordinary project can only dip into the history of the English language in use.

One might conveniently distinguish between the history and the geography of terms, the geography being the present configuration of uses. No individual can trace the full history of important words such as *freedom*, *nature*, *person*, *justice*, and *soul*. But the past uses of a term are finite and fixed.

The geography of the term is less manageable than the history. The current meaning of a term can change from one day to the next and from one place to another. Particularly in English today, a word can have different meanings in different countries; there can also be differences in meaning between Philadelphia and Baltimore or between midtown Manhattan and Harlem.

If a new meaning of a term is to survive, it has to be linked to something in the word's past. Great thinkers sometimes give a surprising new twist to a word's meaning, not by arbitrarily stipulating a novel use but by going down into the word's roots. The etymology of a word is always helpful although never conclusive. J. L. Austin wrote that "a word never—well hardly ever—shakes off its etymology and its formation."[11] A supposed meaning that has no connection to a word's etymology and formation is a corruption that will die out or else act as a burden on the intelligibility of every use of the term.

The evolution of a particular term's meaning might seem to just go its own haphazard way based on popular usage. But the human race has always been split between who could and could not exercise political control of change in a society, including what happens to some important terms. If one looks back on changes of meaning, it is often evident that a powerful group was able to stamp a direction for the meaning of a word. As the saying has it, "A language is a dialect that had an army and a navy." While there is nothing that can be done to change the history of oppressive uses of language, some knowledge of that record can be helpful in contemporary debates.

Some people misunderstand the point of changing today's language. For example, "human" is now often used where fifty years ago "man" would have been used. The reason for the change is to open possibilities for people who have been unfairly excluded, in this case by the evolution of "man" becoming equivalent to "male." But going back and replacing "man" with "human" in a seventeenth-century writer or in a sixteenth-century translation

of the Bible is a violation of history and covers up the problem rather than helps to solve it.

In summary, the aim of philosophy that begins from speaking-thinking is not to create an ideal language but to clarify the only language we have by removing particular misunderstandings. There is no way for us to see language as a whole; we can only work at small regions while not forgetting that whatever the problem at hand, it is tied to patterns of language beyond our immediate control. For working at problems created by our ordinary ways of speaking we cannot remove ourselves from the language that is the problem. "We are like sailors who must rebuild their ship on the high seas, without ever being able to take it apart in dry dock and construct it anew out of the best components."[12]

## THE LANGUAGE OF VIOLENT AND NONVIOLENT ACTION

For describing the possibility of nonviolent living, a set of related terms—*force*, *power*, *aggression*, *war*—are discussed in the first four chapters. Here it is necessary to start with some preliminary description of violent action and its opposite, nonviolent action. The key word to note is *action*. I am not describing violence and nonviolence. While almost everyone does have some grasp of "violence" as real, "nonviolence" is an abstraction. In this book, starting with the title, I am describing opposing kinds of activities. "Nonviolent" as an adjective can be used to describe a kind of action that is just as real and open to description as violent actions.

### Violent Action

Violent action, in its most central meaning, is a destructive activity performed by one or more human beings and is directed at the body or bodies of other human beings. Spreading from this core meaning, violent actions can include those directed at nonhuman animals that suffer pain and also at life processes that sustain sentient beings. Where to draw the line as to what is a violent action is often unclear because we are never entirely clear about the intricate patterns of life. A distinction, for example, between violence to a person and destruction of property is obviously relevant. But "property" starts with the human body itself and its immediate extensions. Destroying a person's only source of water comes under the aegis of violent activity. Destroying a billionaire's luxury item might be only at the edge of violence.[13]

A form of violent activity, which is not entirely new but is more common and complex today, is "structured violence."[14] That is, the violence is administered by an organization or society in a way that shields the individual from

the emotional impact of face-to-face violence. A society that is radically split between the rich and the poor might wreak violence on the lives of the poor while the rich can remain oblivious of their part in causing such violence.

In war, a soldier shooting someone at close range has a very different experience from someone pressing a button that unleashes a rain of bombs on a whole population. The organized or structured violence has a greater potential for destruction, but none of the individuals involved feels the emotional impact of performing a violent action. Although individuals and most of society can turn a blind eye to what seems to be anonymous violence, the result is no less devastating to the victims of violence.

Violent action involves an act of violating, harming, or destroying. A human being and its immediate supports are fragile, vulnerable to attack from mechanical, chemical, and biological instruments. To maintain its integrity as a living organism, a human being has to possess the space that it occupies. The human being can and does admit outsiders into that space through opening the door to one's home or, even more intimately, through accepting an outsider into one of the several orifices of the body. When done freely, this experience of acceptance can be very positive. Eating and sexual relations, considered biologically, are designed to sustain the life of the individual and the species. These activities, when looked at in their full human meaning, are among the great pleasures that human beings experience. Humans are imaginative in what and how they open themselves to other things and other people.

When invasion of the body is unwanted and there is contact that harms the body, then violence can usually be presumed. Violent activity is likely to leave marks on the outside or inside of the body. A parent who taps a child on the backside may or may not be using a wise form of correction but the parent can hardly be accused of acting violently. However, a schoolteacher who is incapable of keeping order in a classroom can rightly be charged with child abuse for slapping a child.

One measure of violent action is the extent of the physical harm done to the organism. A bullet or a knife into the heart does irreparable damage; there is no doubt about the seriousness of the violence. When a bone is broken, or one of the senses is permanently impaired, or the skin is scarred, the act can usually be classified as violent. However, the meaning of a human act depends on more than its obvious physical effect. Two adults biting each other in bed during sex may be just simulating violence but a man putting his hand under a little girl's skirt may be committing a serious violation of her person.[15]

If someone who was ignorant of medical surgery were to see a surgeon split open the patient's stomach with a scalpel, the person would think it to be a terrible act of violence. And indeed every surgery is a shock to the system. The justification of the act is that it is an extreme attempt to prevent what is

already harming the body. I shall come back later to the danger on the part of the surgeon, the police officer, or the soldier to overextend the small area in which a minimum of external force is needed to avoid worse problems.

Torture, as one of the worst forms of violent action, is explicitly forbidden in international codes because, in addition to being physical abuse, it is cruelty intended to demean the humanity of the person tortured. When torture is administered by the police or the military, it is a terrible reflection on the society or the nation that is involved. The torture is most commonly done to a defenseless prisoner. The usual reason given for the torture is a need to extract crucial information from the prisoner even though it is obvious to most people that information gathered by torturing victims is useless.

The real reason for torture is clouded in what happens to human beings under inhuman conditions. A society that has violence built into its structures finds expression in a human being's confusion and fears. The torturer channels hatred and resentment into humiliating the person who is defenseless. The Israeli scholar Avishai Margalit has a brilliant work in which he tries to establish the fundamental principle of a "decent society." Margalit argues that humiliation as part of the torture of a prisoner is a rejection of the victim from the human commonwealth. This rejection is not based on a belief that the rejected person is an object or an animal but in behaving *as if* the person were an object or an animal. Margalit's conclusion is that a "society is a decent one if it punishes its criminals—even the worst of them—without humiliating them."[16] A society that fails this test is corrupt from the ground up.

Torture reveals an important misunderstanding of violent action. Violent actions are sometimes assumed to be the result of an explosive energy that overtakes a person so that he or she does not act rationally. A violent action is often thought to be one in which a person acts like a "wild beast." But whereas wild beasts act according to controlled instincts, violent action has a built-in logic or rationality.[17] Humans alone among animals can unleash violent destruction not only on those who are close by but on people across the world. Violence is calculated. Abusive husbands or child-abusing parents usually cause the abrasions where they will not be visible to outside view. If someone abuses a wife, child, or prisoner without bothering to keep the marks hidden, it is because the abuser assumes total control of the situation and the ability to keep out prying eyes.

Rape is one of the most vicious and violent of human acts. It has typically been one of the instruments and "spoils of war," a humiliation of both the women and the men in a defeated population. Rape is not a sudden explosion of sexual energy. As feminist writers have long insisted, it is mainly an act of violence, an invasion of another person's body that causes external and internal injuries.[18] In rape, the act of love is cruelly mimicked. A child who encounters parents in the act of sexual intercourse is likely to mistake it for a

violent attack. Adults may engage in ritualized acts that appear violent to an outsider but may actually be a way of dealing with violence that was suffered earlier in life. The crucial condition is the consent of both parties.

Women are obviously the main victims of rape. Its prevalence in any society remains a key measure of whether women are recognized by men as having all the rights that are due to human beings. Writing in 1762, Jean-Jacques Rousseau noted in passing that rape is no longer common. Quite possibly rape has been on the decline since the eighteenth century or earlier.[19] What has changed in recent decades is the fact that the report of rape has been brought out to public scrutiny and rape has been clearly marked as a crime. Even today, however, the numbers are uncertain. The rape of women and the quite common rape of men within the prison system remain a terrible blight on a society.

## Nonviolent Action

The fact that nonviolence does not have a more specific name suggests that violent action is what is to be assumed; nonviolent action is thought to be the exception. It would be depressing to think that murder, torture, rape, and child abuse are taken to be the standard human practice, although it is realistic to see violence as widespread.

The noun "resistance" is regularly associated with the adjective "nonviolent"; one cannot always stop violence but one can resist it. Resistance is needed against violent attacks from either individual persons or organizations. Resistance even extends to violent tendencies within oneself. Because violence is so widespread, it is not always clear where to take a stand. The "structured violence" referred to above suggests resistance to some governmental agencies or business operations that claim to have good intentions but that spread "collateral damage" in their wake. Resistance in such cases has to aim at organizational change. That kind of change necessarily involves changes in language.

Resistance to violence *is* an action. "Nonviolent action" is negative in its verbal form, but its meaning is a double negative or a positive. That is, violence is a negation or destruction, while resistance to violence is a negation of that negation. The practice of nonviolence is a positive doing of something. That fact can be obscured by a misunderstanding of the adjective that is often attached to resistance: passive. I will comment in chapter 2 on the paradox that an action can be passive. Here I wish simply to insist that nonviolence is not equivalent to letting oneself be stepped on. Nonviolent action has to be based on strength, not weakness.

Nonviolent action is a cooperative effort to reduce violence by the use of peaceful means. Reinhold Niebuhr, one of the influential twentieth-century writers in this area, says that "non-violence is essentially non-cooperation."[20]

He cites as examples boycotts, strikes, and the refusal to pay taxes.[21] While nonviolent action can include an unwillingness to cooperate in some business practice or government function, noncooperation is not its "essence."

Using the abstractions that he does, Niebuhr can claim that nonviolence or noncooperation "results in social consequences not totally dissimilar from that of violence." Niebuhr believes that it is necessary "to emphasize the similarities and to insist that non-violence does coerce and destroy."[22] But it makes no logical sense to say that "non-violence" destroys. What he presumably means is that the person whose actions are intended to be nonviolent cannot entirely avoid effects that are coercive and may unintentionally be destructive. Saying that the results are "not totally dissimilar" is true but is a trivializing of the important differences.

Hannah Arendt, writing at the end of the 1960s, was critical of writers who not only accepted violence as a justified necessity but romanticized and glorified it. Opposing a widespread assumption that violence is simply an extension of power, Arendt argues that power and violence are opposites. Arendt always considers power and violence as political, not biological, questions. She writes sarcastically, "I am surprised and often delighted to see that some animals behave like men; I cannot see how this could either justify or condemn human behavior."[23] Of itself, knowledge from the nonhuman world cannot "justify or condemn human actions," but it might help in the understanding of human behavior.

A biological reductionism was indeed a danger at the time of Arendt's writing. The human being would be just one more animal species with its own programmed reactions. There is still a danger that biology may claim to have the last word in human affairs. Nonetheless, Arendt's isolation of the political from the biological and ethological evidence undercuts her case. Violent and nonviolent actions are political ideas, but a neglect of their biological roots can block understanding of these ideas.

The question of violence cuts across physical sciences, biological sciences, social sciences, politics, philosophy, and religion. Anyone who claims to be an expert in all those areas is foolhardy. Everyone takes a particular angle that he or she feels comfortable with. But biologists, psychologists, or political scientists may speak as if the issue of violence belongs only in their respective corners. By concentrating on language, I am offering points of mediation between, say, a biological outlook and the way that violence is discussed in international relations.

## OPPOSING VIOLENCE: THE BASIS OF ETHICS

How we speak about power, force, violence, and war involves ethics, that is, judgments about what is morally good or bad.[24] In treatises of ethics, the topic of violence is usually included as one of many specialized concerns. My argument is that opposition to violence is the very foundation of ethics.

Ethics, especially since the beginning of the twentieth century, has had difficulty in finding a sure principle on which to build a system of right and wrong. Abstract principles do not supply much guidance. Or what are supposed to be universal ethical categories carry ambiguities when situated within a variety of cultural contexts. For example, "human rights" has in the last half century become the main ethical standard internationally. No one speaks publicly against human rights but numerous questions remain: What are rights? Where do they come from? Do only humans qualify? Do organizations as well as individuals have rights? Do all rights apply in the same way in all cultures?[25]

Rather than trying to deduce ethics from a supposed universal principle, a more effective starting point might be a maxim directed at human practice. For example, Immanuel Kant is widely invoked as providing a universal maxim: "So act as to treat humanity whether in thine own person or in that of any other, in every case as an end withal, never as means only."[26] Kant's maxim provides some guidance, but it is both too narrow and too abstract. Does it apply to women, children, animals, land? Isn't end/means only one framework of thinking?

A better starting point for ethics would be resistance to violence. "Do violence to no one" is a simple maxim that can lead to practical debates about human choices. If individuals, communities and societies did not exercise control over violence, organized human life would be impossible. All other issues of goodness and justice depend upon excluding the violent destruction of the world.

Violence is an experience that is universally known. There will always be disagreement and debate on ethical or moral matters, but every human being who has been the recipient of violence can grasp why it is wrong. Samuel Gorovitz notes the frustration of many ethicists in trying to find any firm basis for declaring something to be right or wrong. Nonetheless, Gorovitz says, there are things about which we have no doubt: "We are not in moral conflict, for example, about the rightness of mugging octogenarian pensioners for sport, of boiling babies for bouillon, or of punting puppies for exercise."[27]

Gorovitz has chosen senseless and outrageous examples, but they make his point that judgments of right or wrong are not always based on arbitrary cultural codes. And his examples of what we know as wrong involve vio-

lence. It is true that as any group develops a code of conduct, it quickly moves into gray areas where some violent actions may seem desirable or at least unavoidable. Ethical judgments based on careful distinctions remain necessary and are debatable. Still, it helps to have a clear starting point.

Distinctions concerning violent activities and how to articulate an alternative are therefore important for all ethical questions, whether they pertain to the daily choices in a person's life or the world-shaking decisions of political leaders. Alternate language to address the problem of violence cannot be set out in a few paragraphs. It requires a series of distinctions backed by multiple examples. Then these distinctions have to be tried out over a long period of time before an individual can decide whether this language provides new insights and an effective way to address problems of violence in today's world.

## ADDENDUM: ETHICS OR MORALITY?

The reader may wish to skip this concluding note and proceed to the first chapter's distinction between force and violence. However, a brief excursion into the history of the words "ethical" and "moral" might be helpful in two ways. First, this analysis exemplifies the method I use throughout the book. I cannot prove the efficacy of the method except by exemplifying it. The conclusions are never logically airtight but my judgment about the meaning of words is based upon dozens, if not hundreds, of examples from the past and present use of a word. I try to avoid just arbitrarily stipulating distinctions of meaning.

Second, a distinction between ethics and morality is a helpful instrument at several points in this book, especially the third chapter. I am concerned there about one's intention to avoid all violence despite the fact that widespread violence surrounds and affects all of us. Some distinction is needed for use by persons and more so for use by nations. Even if the reader is not entirely convinced by my evidence of the difference between ethical and moral, the distinction might be provisionally accepted for discussion in this context.

Many authors use the terms "ethical" and "moral" interchangeably, either unaware or dismissive of different connotations carried by the words.[28] The Latin "moral" was coined by Cicero to translate "ethical" from Greek philosophy so that at the start the two words were equivalent. But after two thousand years of history in classical and modern languages there is likely to be divergence in their connotations. What follows is based on historical facts and some speculation on the connotations carried by the words today.

The first thing to note is that the two words share a mix-up in their origins. Hannah Arendt says the fact that we use "ethical" and "moral" to address questions of right/wrong, good/bad is indicative of our confusion in this area.[29] What she is referring to is that etymologically "ethical" and "moral" simply refer to customs or habits. "Ethical" was used in a phrase referring to excellence in habits or customs. Similarly, the Latin "moral" was the modifier of a word meaning virtue or strength. Ironically, the subordinate words, ethical and moral, were retained for articulating a code of right and wrong while the important ideas of excellence and strength were eclipsed.

A further problem is then reflected in the fact that we have lost the difference between two kinds of excellence/virtue: intellectual and moral. Aristotle notes that "intellectual virtue owes both its inception and its growth chiefly to instruction, and for this reason needs time and experience. Moral goodness, on the other hand, is the result of habit, from which it actually got its name, being a slight modification of the word *ethos*."[30] Intellectual virtue should give direction to moral virtue. Naming issues of good/bad, right/wrong as ethical or moral had the effect of practically eliminating intellectual excellence/virtue, a problem that still haunts us.

The most important influence on our contemporary meaning of "moral" was a long incubation in the Christian religion. "Moral" still touches a religious nerve for many people and carries some of the meaning that Christian theology gave to moral virtue. In contrast, the most important influence on "ethical" was modern enlightenment's attempt to find a foundation for judgments of right or wrong outside Christianity. Although the term "ethical" is closely associated with the work of Aristotle, modern ethics was more profoundly connected to Socrates. Ethics was an attempt to recover the intellectual or rational basis of action that was obscured by a Christian morality.

The word "ethical" had disappeared in Latin and Western languages until the late Middle Ages. There were no treatises on ethics in the Christian medieval period. There is some logic, therefore, in the fact that histories of ethics often jump from ancient Greece to the seventeenth century with little discussion of the centuries in between. Henry Sidgwick's 1892 *Outlines of the History of Ethics* has one chapter on "Christianity and Medieval Ethics" in which the term "ethics" hardly appears. John Dewey's history of ethics has three pages to cover the period from the Romans to the Renaissance. Alasdair McIntyre's 1966 book, *A Short History of Ethics*, has one ten-page chapter entitled "Christianity."[31] Historians looking in the Middle Ages for ethics do not find it and they may dismiss medieval morality as being a part of theology. The problem is that secular ethics in modern times cannot be well understood without grasping the influence of Christian moral teaching.

In English, "moral" remained the more prominent term up to the nineteenth century. In David Hume's 1751 book, *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals,* reason is described as the slave of passions.[32] Hume saw

passion, especially sympathy or sentiment, as a positive basis for ethics. However, much of modern ethics is an attempt to escape from the bind of reason as a "slave." Can ethical reasoning be so developed as to keep passion in a subordinate role? "Ethics" became the ascendant term in the latter half of the nineteenth century and throughout the twentieth century.

In today's language, differences by class, religion, and age are a residue of this ethical/moral history. In regard to class, every modern profession has a code of *ethics*, a body of ideals and general principles that are supposed to guide the professional. In contrast, the laboring class has codes of *moral conduct* that are much more specific about laborers showing up for work, following the rules on the job, and being paid for what they actually do.

Concerning religious differences, Jews became comfortable with "ethics" as an alternative to Christian moral theology. In the twentieth century, Protestant Christianity constructed an academic field called "Christian Ethics." Roman Catholics, at least until the Second Vatican Council, continued to have a moral code based on moral theology. Thus, Christian Ethics did not include Catholics; moral theology did not include Protestants. That sharp division has been blurred in the last few decades, but differences remain in the way Protestants and Catholics use "ethical" and "moral."

As for differences by age, "ethical" and "moral" differ in application to children and adults. Children are thought to be in need of moral rules and moral training. Explanation of the rules may or may not be available but the rules must be followed. The gradual understanding of these moral rules was named *moral development*. The psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg practically owned the term "moral development" for several decades. Kohlberg hardly ever used the term "ethics."[33] He was following a path laid out by Emil Durkheim's 1900 book, *Moral Education* and Jean Piaget's 1932 book, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*. A child develops morally; if successful in that development, he or she becomes an ethical adult.

"Ethics" today is the name of an academic subject taught in philosophy departments and professional schools of the university. Until the nineteenth century, colleges offered a course on moral philosophy; it was often the capstone of the curriculum and taught by the college's president. Today the term "moral" is likely to appear in the university only in the psychology department or in the school of education.

The adjectives "ethical" and "moral" seem close in meaning. Differences quickly emerge with other forms of the words. Most people would recognize a difference between "moralist" and "ethicist." By the twentieth century, "moralist" had connotations of someone commenting, often with disapproval, about the way things are. An ethicist, in contrast, is someone laying claim to a philosophical or scientific system of right and wrong. A contrast is even stronger with the verb "moralize." There is no parallel term "ethicize." Moralizing and moralistic are spoken of with condescension by the intellectual

class. Erik Erikson, who distinguishes between moral rules based on fear and ethical rules based on ideals, says at one point apologetically: “It does not seem easy to speak of ethical subjects without indulging in some moralizing.”[34]

The word that would seem to correspond to the noun “ethics” would be “morals.” Until the nineteenth century, morals had some academic standing and there were philosophical treatises on morals. Today, “morals” has a pinched meaning similar to “moralize” and is often restricted to a sexual connotation. A politician caught selling influence will be accused of an ethics violation. If he is caught with a prostitute, he might be brought up on a morals charge.

The subordinate position of the “moral” partially explains the frequent dismissal of moral concerns in international relations and foreign policy. Morals, it is assumed, are fixed rules for private individuals and not to be imposed from the outside on the tough decisions of government leaders. The ethical, as principles to think about, is occasionally entertained politically. George Kennan, the foremost U. S. diplomat for many decades, explicitly linked morality with religion.[35] He found himself in a bind because, while disavowing the moral in foreign policies, he was still offended by anyone saying that he was “advocating an amoral or even immoral foreign policy.”[36] A distinction between ethical and moral might have helped.

Terry Nardin, editor of *Traditions of International Ethics*, says in his introduction that “we should be particularly careful to avoid defining ethics as moral philosophy.” He writes that “for the sake of clarity I will use ‘ethics’ to refer to a wide range of considerations affecting choice and action, and ‘moral’ for the more limited realm of proper conduct.” The institution of morality, he says, is concerned with rules, the ethical with ideas and ends and “especially with the outcomes of action.”[37] Nardin’s problem seems to be with “moral philosophy” rather than “moral,” but he uses the terms as equivalent. He rightly says that international problems cannot be solved by philosophers, and he wants the conversation to include people whose judgments of right and wrong do not derive from Greek philosophy. The concern is admirable but “ethics” is derived from Greek philosophy. And concern with “outcomes of action” is linked to morality at least as closely as it is to ethics.

For describing the possibility of nonviolent living, a dialectical interplay of ethical and moral, with their slight difference in meaning, might be helpful. If one accepts the difference in meaning by age, then one can say that an adult needs to bring together the morality of childhood chastened by the emergence of ethical criticism in adolescence and beyond. Persons and institutions need to act ethically, that is, as agents trying to do their best. But they should not dismiss rules of morality as too simplistic because they derive from tradition, religion, or childhood training.

In chapter 3 I will employ this distinction of ethical and moral in relation to violence. My argument briefly stated is that the first *ethical* imperative is: Do violence to no one. This ethical imperative does not have any built-in limits. The "no one" refers to all human beings in their settlements, to nonhuman animals that can suffer, and to every other living being. The intention is to avoid directly and indirectly causing harm to any being in the world of the living. An ethical prohibition of violence ought to be absolute, that is, violence should never be the intention of an ethical person.

In contrast to this absolute ethical principle, the first *moral* imperative is: Personal actions should be nonviolent and directed toward a more peaceful world. This moral imperative has to work with degrees of success in a world of surrounding violence. Care for human settlements inevitably does harm to members of other species. And trying one's best to do good for some humans is more often than not at odds with the good of other humans. In both cases, negotiations are needed to reduce if not totally avoid violence.

An immediate corollary of this first moral imperative is the need for confession, apology, and forgiveness. These practices do not usually show up in ethics textbooks and perhaps do not belong there. But for moral actions that result in unintended harm, people need a way to deal with their sense of guilt and failure. Both natural persons and artificial persons (nations, churches, and business organizations) need rituals for asking forgiveness and receiving a response from the injured party.[38] Our main ritual is found in the court system, but it is an inadequate venue for many moral failings. The development of such rituals and the personal participation in them are part of education for nonviolent living which I discuss in the last chapter.

## NOTES

1. Judith Butler, "The Claim of Non-Violence," *Frames of War* (New York: Verso, 2010), 165–84.
2. Northrop Frye, *The Educated Imagination* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964), 64.
3. Alison Gopnik, *The Philosophical Baby: What Children's Minds Tell Us about Truth, Love and the Meaning of Life* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009).
4. Among modern philosophers, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau would be exceptions but their attention to children is usually classified as pedagogical and not philosophical. Rousseau's *Emile* (New York: Basic Books, 1979) is a brilliant work of philosophy but it is generally confined to schools of education where, at best, excerpts are read.
5. Hanna Pitkin, *Wittgenstein and Justice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 57.
6. Victor Seidler, *Jewish Philosophy and Western Culture* (New York: I. B. Tauris, 2007).
7. Nahum Glatzer, ed., *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought* (New York: Schocken Books, 1953), 198–200; Franz Rosenzweig, *Understanding the Sick and the Healthy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).
8. Martin Buber, *Knowledge of Man* (New York: Humanities Books, 1988), 114.

9. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), II.13.

10. The principle is most closely associated with Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (New York: Macmillan, 1953), par. 212.

11. Pitkin, *Wittgenstein and Justice*, 10.

12. Pitkin, *Wittgenstein and Justice*, 297.

13. Thomas Merton, one of the most passionate advocates of nonviolence in the Catholic Church, worried about his Catholic colleagues' destruction of government property as part of peace protests; see Gordon Zahn, *Thomas Merton on Peace* (New York: McCall, 1971), 75. For an attempt to distinguish kinds of property in relation to destruction in the name of peace, see John Swomley, *Liberation Ethics* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 181.

14. Johan Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996).

15. Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 79.

16. Avishai Margalit, *The Decent Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 262.

17. Erasmus pointed out that calling a human being "bestial" is unfair to animals: *The Complaint of Peace* (New York: BiblioBazaar, 2009).

18. Joanna Bourke, *Rape, Violence, History* (London: Counterpoint, 2009).

19. Rousseau, *Emile*, 360: "Rapes are hardly ever spoken of anymore, since they are so little necessary and men no longer believe in them."

20. Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, rev. ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), 240.

21. For an elaboration of these practices, see Gene Sharp, *Social Power and Political Freedom* (Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers, 1980), 181–94.

22. Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 241.

23. Hannah Arendt, "On Violence," in *Crises of the Republic* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1972), 156.

24. Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall in their invaluable collection of material on nonviolent revolutions, *A Force More Powerful* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 7, write: "Since the century's two most celebrated leaders of nonviolent movements—Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.—emerged from religious callings, nonviolent action has been stereotyped as a moral preference rather than a pragmatic choice, thereby obscuring its pragmatic value in conflicts." The authors have conflated "religious" and "moral," thereby obscuring the fact that nonviolent action is a moral choice. There is no reason why the pragmatic effectiveness of nonviolent action has to be denied or obscured in saying that nonviolent activity is morally good activity.

25. For a provocative study of the history of the term "human rights," see Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

26. Immanuel Kant, "Of the Metaphysics of Morals," in *Critique of Practical Reason and Other Works* (New York: Longmans Green, 1927), 38.

27. Samuel Gorovitz, *Doctors' Dilemmas: Moral Conflict and Medical Care* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 82.

28. Henry Sidgwick says in his classic nineteenth-century work *Outlines of the History of Ethics* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1988), 11: "I may observe that the term 'moral' is commonly used as synonym with 'ethical' (*moralis* being the Latin translation of *ethikos*) and I shall so use in the following pages."

29. Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind: Thinking* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), 5.

30. Aristotle, *Ethics* (New York: Penguin Books, 1955), 1103a14.

31. Sidgwick, *Outlines of the History of Ethics*, 109–57; Alasdair MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics* (New York: Collier Books, 1966), 110–20; John Dewey, *Ethics*, rev. ed. (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1932), 142–45.

32. David Hume, *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), sec. 134.

33. Lawrence Kohlberg, *The Psychology of Moral Development* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1984).

34. Erik Erikson, *Insight and Responsibility: Lectures on the Ethical Implications of Psychoanalytical Insight* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1964), 243.

35. George Kennan, "Morality and Foreign Policy,"*Foreign Affairs* 64 (1985/86), 217.

36. Kennan, "Morality and Foreign Policy," 205.

37. Terry Nardin and David Mapel, eds., *Traditions of International Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 2–4.

38. Nicholas Tavuchis, *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1991).

# Chapter 1: The Force of Nature and the Nature of Force

The question in this book is whether human beings can live nonviolently. A negative answer to this question is usually based on the assumption that violent activity is intrinsic to human beings, that is, violence is an element of human nature.

The answer to the question of whether humans can live nonviolently obviously involves empirical and historical considerations. For many people, it takes only a glance at the record to decide the answer. What is more obvious than the fact that violence is "natural"? In his history of war, Michael Howard concludes that "peace . . . is not an order natural to mankind; it is artificial, intricate and highly volatile."[1]

Before any conclusions are drawn about whether violence is inherent to human nature, it is necessary to examine what "nature" and "natural" mean, and especially what "human nature" means. Raymond Williams in a study of "nature" writes that "any full history of nature would be a history of a large part of human thought."[2] The whole story of nature would require a library of books but a focus on the *term* "nature" might clear up some confusion concerning the question of whether humans are *naturally* violent.

Within this context of nature, the main distinction in this chapter is between force and violence. Although this distinction is regularly neglected in discussions of international relations, the distinction itself is well grounded in history and ordinary usage. I wish to argue that force is obviously an element in human nature but that violence is not.

People who dismiss the possibility of living nonviolently usually conflate force and violence. Unfortunately, those who advocate nonviolent action often use the same language that fails to make this distinction. When force and violence are equated, then a life of nonviolent action is easily dismissed

as unrealistic. A life of nonviolent activity is taken to be a nice idea which does not have a chance in the "real world."

The equating of force and violence is part of a broader language pattern that weaves together power, force, violence, and war. Force is interchanged with violence and then force becomes a euphemism for war. What makes the slide from force to war so smooth is an underlying assumption about the meaning of power. Given a meaning of power in which force is the only expression of power, the road is open for force to become a synonym for violence and war. Unraveling this problem will take this chapter and the two following chapters. As for war, without a distinction between force and violence, which implies another meaning of power, an opponent of war is left with few linguistic tools.

## THE FORCE OF NATURE

A somewhat lengthy diversion is required to set up the relation between force and human nature in this chapter and those that follow. Before asking whether violence is "natural," which is usually taken to mean inevitable, it is necessary to explore "nature" and its important cognates "natural" and "naturally." Because violence is a question not about nature but about human nature, the possibility of living nonviolently requires examining the relation between nature and human nature. Is "human nature" simply one case of things called "natures" or are there aspects of the human that conflict with nature? If the latter is the case, perhaps we should write "human-nature"? The question has a long history with a few sharp turning points that influence us to this day.

The complicated meaning of human-nature creates a great deal of confusion in the way that natural and moral are thought to be related. There are people who say that if something is natural it is obviously good. Other people think that the natural is irrelevant in judging moral goodness. And to complete the picture, some people have said that the moral good consists in acting against the natural. Are all these people talking about the same "nature"?

In the Williams essay cited above, the author says that nature is "perhaps the most complex word in the language."[3] Whether or not "nature" wins that prize, it is indisputably one of those old, rich words that is necessarily ambiguous. The ambiguity in this case is so frustratingly complicated that one is tempted to simply avoid the idea. But according to the famous line of the Roman poet Horace, "You can expel nature with a pitchfork but she always returns."[4]

## The History of "Nature"

The history of "nature" in Western languages has three acts: its birth in ancient Greece, its transformation in the Christian Middle Ages, and its revolution in modern science. The second meaning drew upon the first meaning; the third meaning drew upon both the first and the second meanings even while rebelling against them. Today the world may have entered into a fourth era but a new meaning of "nature" can only succeed if it draws upon all three of the previous meanings. Quick reversals of a stereotype (for example, replacing "man over nature" with "nature over man") do not get the job done. A new synthesis would require a grasp of complex and sometimes seemingly contradictory material.

Why does the word "nature" exist? Who first thought it was necessary? There is no object that humans experience that is called "nature." The term is a philosophical abstraction. Ancient Greek thinkers, known mainly through fragments in Aristotle's works, originated the idea of nature (*physis*). It could be said that the birth of "nature" was simultaneous with the beginning of both philosophy and science; the birth or conception took place in the human mind.

Nature was not a sensible object but an idea abstracted from the sensual world. Every idea is an abstraction or concept; the process of abstracting ideas makes human speech possible. "Nature," however, was a higher or more generalized idea than ideas with a direct correlation to an object. To refer to "this man" was to form an idea; to refer to "humanity" required further reflection and higher abstraction.

The ancient Greeks had a special proclivity for forming such abstract ideas. The contrast is often made to the ancient Hebrews whose religious ideas still profoundly influence Western cultures. Ancient Hebrew has no word for "nature." The Jews thought in more concrete terms of water, blood, flesh, life, beasts, breath, and so forth. Writers today who confidently assert what the Hebrew Bible or Christian Old Testament says about nature are largely writing about their own invention. What does the Hebrew Bible say directly about nature? Not a word. The Bible, however, does deserve to be studied on this question. Indirectly, biblical material has had important influences on the medieval and modern ideas of nature.

The idea of nature seems to have arisen from the idea of life. It was perceived that a living thing moves not solely by external force but also from within. Nature was the "life force" manifested in the living. For many early thinkers this force of life is everywhere; everything is alive. The idea is not so crazy as some people are inclined to think. Animals and plants are obviously alive, but these living things depend on a web of life. Cannot a river or topsoil be called alive if it is a necessary part of the life cycle? Once it is

grasped that everything depends on cycles of birth, growth, decline, and death, a line between the living and the nonliving becomes difficult to draw.

From the beginning, "nature" could be used either in the singular or in the plural. Nature could refer to a life force that permeates living things. Nature could also refer to each living thing in its ability to initiate movement. Nature was the inner principle of each living thing, and by extension the principle of all things. Nature as a single creative force could be imagined as the mother of all beings, deserving of piety. That anthropomorphic or personalized meaning of nature goes back at least to the fifth century BCE.[5]

The first systematic attempt to put together the meanings of nature was made by Aristotle. His synthesis left a permanent impression on every use of the word. After listing six different meanings of "nature" used by writers who preceded him, Aristotle provides his own comprehensive meaning: "Nature in the primary and chief sense is the primary being of those things which have in them their own source of movement. . . . Nature is the source of movement in things, which are natural because this source is inherent in them potentially or completely."[6]

Aristotle here has a double meaning for "nature": an inner source of movement for living things and what a being is ("primary being"). One of Aristotle's meanings of "nature" traces its origin to the word for birth. That meaning became highlighted by the Latin translation as *natura*, meaning "what is born." The natural is what is given by birth. A natural being is one that is born, grows, declines, and dies.

The meaning of nature as a life force is prominent in Stoic philosophy which was an important influence in Roman times and a source of Christian moral language. Cicero refers to nature as "the power which permeates and preserves the whole universe."[7] The emphasis on the human individual in the philosophy of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, as well as religious developments on a similar theme, created a severe tension between the human and the natural. The humans could not step outside of an all-encompassing nature, but some of the human individual's inclinations, desires, and choices run up against the limits of nature. The humans have a nature, but their human-nature is in rebellion against nature as the mother of all natures.

From the standpoint of nature, the suffering or death of a single human being is folded inexorably into the cycles of the universe. But the human individual does not see his or her own life and death that way. The advice of great Stoic philosophers, such as Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, is to cool your emotions and accept suffering and death as what nature dictates.[8]

The advice is captured in an allegory by one of the founders of Stoicism: "If a dog is tied, as it were, to a wagon, then if the dog wishes to follow, it will both be pulled and follow, acting by its own choice together with necessity; but if it does not wish to follow, it will in any case be compelled. The same applies to human beings."[9] The humans have only one choice: either to

accept their modest place within nature or else to fight a losing battle against nature.

Stoicism has been an important strand of modern thought but with one big change. For the scientific mind, the attitude has been to conquer nature rather than submit to it. The dog has grown up and believes it can control the cart to which it is attached. Death, of course, remains the intractable enemy. There is an extensive literature today on "natural death," a throwback to the Stoics. But not everyone is prepared to accept nature with its sickness and inevitable death. Modern medical researchers are in a war with disease; some of them hope eventually to conquer death.

Humans have a sense that they somehow transcend the cycles of birth and death. They foresee their own deaths but they resist the finality of death as a simple biological fact. Death is natural for all organisms; it is a simple calculation of forces. Human beings are by nature an exception. Death for the humans is not natural; it is instead more than natural. Human death is personal, artistic, historical, and religious; these are characteristics not given by birth.

The Stoicism of the seventeenth century was dependent on the transformation of "nature" in medieval times. Christianity had absorbed the Stoic language of virtues but it could not accept nature as the ultimate force. In a Christian context, human choice consists of more than a yes or no to nature. "Free will," which was not a concept in Greek thought, became central to Christian thinking. Free will is burdened with failure from past history and one's own personal failings, but choice is nevertheless possible.

The philosophical framework of Christianity derived from a strand of Plato's philosophy, which was later developed as Neoplatonism. Neoplatonic philosophers developed an insight of Plato's that there is a "beyond being," the One from whom flows being, life, and intelligibility.[10] Nature is not ultimate; it emanates from the One and is only a single component of the world. For Christian reflection on God, Neoplatonism was found to be very compatible.

The two main doctrines of Christianity—Trinity and Incarnation—changed the meaning of nature by relating it to a new idea: person. Nature is what a thing is; person is who a human being is. Human action is performed by a person. Nature within the human sets limits to a person's choices but does not wholly determine those choices. The term "natural law" is often used to describe Thomas Aquinas's moral thinking. A more appropriate term would be "personal law." Men and women are not to submit to nature; instead, their personal choices should respect the limits of human nature. Human intelligence and imagination can shape the individual person's relation to nature.

In Christian theology, nature cannot be the mother of us all. G. K. Chesterton notes of Francis of Assisi: "He did not call nature his mother; he called

a particular donkey his brother or a particular sparrow his sister."[11] In today's concern with the environment, Francis of Assisi has been made the patron saint of nature. Ironically, the word "nature" nowhere appears in Francis' writings. He was, of course, concerned with natures but similar to the language of the Christian Old Testament and gospels, the concern was expressed not philosophically but in care for particular living beings.[12]

In making "nature" not the ultimate being but an overflow of a benevolent creator, Christianity brought a new complexity to the meaning of good. The good, according to Greek philosophers, is what all men desire. A morally good choice is one that leads to the good. But in Christian terms the ultimate basis of goodness is not human choice; rather, the good is everything that "overflows" from the source of all good. A morally good action neither obeys nature nor opposes nature but transforms the natural in ways that avoid violence to oneself and others.[13]

When Aristotle reemerged in European thought in the twelfth century, there was the possibility of a real synthesis between the Neoplatonic/Christian meaning of goodness and Aristotle's insight into human virtue. Aristotle had said that "the moral virtues are engendered in us neither *by* nor *contrary* to nature. We are constituted by nature to receive them but their full development in us is due to habit."[14] One could say that Aristotle was more interested in the adverb than the noun or adjective; that is, morally good actions are done "naturally." Moral virtues or habits are learned by practice; they have to *flow from* nature.

Aristotle's biological/physical thinking on what is humanly good could have filled out the grand cosmic design of Neoplatonic/Christian thinking on goodness. Unfortunately, the possibilities of a rich synthesis were lost amid a superficial Aristotelianism and a narrow Christian morality. After that failure in the late medieval period, the modern era tried to begin afresh with the mathematical side of Plato and the Stoic image of Mother Nature. Equipped with new learning and new tools of inquiry, seventeenth-century man *confronted* nature. In this new Stoicism modified by Christian influence, the general idea of nature included everything—except man. Nature was the object to be conquered by man: rational, controlling, individual man. "We reduce things to mere Nature *in order that* we may 'conquer' them. 'Nature' is the name for what we have, to some extent, conquered."[15]

This dichotomy of man versus nature was not a safe place for the beasts. Neither was this dichotomy a good one for women, who were clearly located on the side of nature as needing man's conquest. Francis Bacon was one of the key originators of the language of man and nature. His writing is loaded with sexual imagery in which nature needs to submit to being penetrated.[16] Even most men did not fare well in the dichotomy of abstract man and generalized nature: "Man's power over nature turns out to be a power exercised by some men over other men with nature as its instrument."[17]

At the very moment when Bacon was elaborating the theory of man's fight against nature, one-third of the European population was being slaughtered in the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648). The two things are not cause and effect, but their historical simultaneity might be more than a coincidence. Philosophy and science projected the image of man the conqueror who is out to subdue the enemy: nature. While the other meanings of nature never entirely disappeared, nature as the object to be conquered took top billing from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries.

## Today's "Nature"

In the second half of the twentieth century there began an attempt to reverse the image of man over nature. In 1947, C. S. Lewis in his prophetic book, *The Abolition of Man*, wrote: "Man's conquest of Nature turns out, in the moment of its consummation, to be Nature's conquest of man. . . . All Nature's apparent reverses have been tactical withdrawals. We thought we were beating her back when she was luring us on. What looked to us like hands held up in surrender was really the opening of arms to enfold us forever."[18] In the new environmentalism, man is inside, not outside, nature; nature dictates to man, not vice versa. Many people are confident that we now have the theory right; "man" has been restored to his proper place in nature.

Merely turning "man over nature" upside down to "nature over man" or putting man inside rather than outside nature does not rethink power relations. The gender-exclusive language that hangs on in much of environmentalism is a worrisome sign that we are still working with seventeenth-century markers. Also, the fact that Christianity and Judaism (so-called Judeo-Christian tradition) are blamed for the problem of man conquering nature indicates an absence of historical knowledge about either Jewish or Christian traditions. The language of "man opposed to nature" did not exist until the seventeenth century.

A profound rethinking of the history and meaning of nature has to recognize a basic paradox: "Nature" is a human invention, an idea about living things; nature is inside humans. But nature can also be understood as everything that is and therefore what encompasses the human.

Each thing that shares in an all-encompassing nature is said to have its own nature that constitutes what it is. Among those things within nature is the human-nature, but humans have a special kind of relation to other natures and to their own nature. Other living beings are largely programmed by their specific natures. The humans have a nature given by birth, but their human-nature not only allows for change but needs change for the human individual to survive and to develop its possibilities. The words "culture" and "education" refer to the transforming of the natural that is given by birth. A morally

good action is a listening to one's own nature in its relation to other natures and gently reshaping that relation.[19]

The language of man conquering nature was a distortion of the need for humans to confront natures, including human-nature. The humans have to resist some of the forces of natures and respond to forces that can be life-giving. Men and women have to cooperate with the natures in their environment to make a place for human habitation. They have to acknowledge that they are the sport among natures which unfortunately can lead humans to use violence as a shortcut to what they desire.

When the complex meaning of nature is not grasped, we are burdened by two competing literatures: one in which the word "natural" is a sign of moral goodness, the other in which this primitivism is an easy target for critics. A typical attack on the apotheosis of the natural reads: "When communities rely on 'natural' sources they expose themselves to disease. At the very least, they need unnatural apparatus, such as pumps to access clear water supplies. Anyone who suggests we would do better to go back to nature for our water supply is frankly nuts."[20]

The author of this passage ridicules a concern for the natural sources of water because he is sure he knows what "natural" means. But his reference to "unnatural apparatus" misses the point badly. The test of machinery is whether it is in accord with the natural contour of a particular nature and not opposed to it. We have discovered that some treatments of water are indeed unnatural and have to be avoided. However, there are other ways in which natural sources of water are treated that can be life-enhancing. In any case, humans have to be careful about their treatment of natural resources because humans never have the whole picture of the unintended consequences of their actions.

A violent intrusion on the natural constitutes an action as unnatural. This violent action is immoral. In contrast, a morally good action is "transnatural." It is a nonviolent reshaping of what is natural. Neither historically nor in their individual lives can humans "go back to nature." Nevertheless, they have to respect the presence of the natural in the human organism and in other organisms. Such respect for natures involves gathering knowledge of what previous history has done to alter natures, including human-nature. Humans can then act with awareness that they are never in complete control of their effect on natures.

## THE NATURE OF FORCE

One element in the interacting of natures is force. At the level of personal experience, "force" is simple and straightforward in meaning: it is a pressure

exerted by or upon the organism. Everyone is acquainted with force and there is little ambiguity in the common use of the term. However, in the political arena the nature of force becomes a problem. “Force” is constantly misused by being used interchangeably with “violence.” In its most disastrous misuse, “force” is a euphemism for war.

Hannah Arendt writes that “it is a rather sad reflection on the present state of political science that our terminology does not distinguish among such terms as ‘power’, ‘strength’, ‘force’, ‘authority’, and finally ‘violence’.”[21] She adds that the use of these terms is not just a question of logical grammar but of historical perspective. Things seemingly have not got any better since Arendt voiced that complaint four decades ago.

The “historical perspective” that Arendt calls for has to be broader than the history of political science. Terms such as “power,” “strength,” and “force” derive their primary meanings from prepolitical experiences but are applicable to political situations. Arendt assumes that “force” is a physical term that does not belong in political science. She says that the term “should be reserved in terminological language for the ‘force of nature’ or ‘the force of circumstance’ (*la force des choses*), that is, to indicate the energy released by physical or social movements.”[22]

Arendt’s restriction of the meaning of “force” seems arbitrary and unworkable. She objects to the “transposition of physical terms such as ‘energy’ and ‘force’ to biological and zoological data.”[23] Her excluding of “physical terms” would leave biologists, zoologists, and many other scientists almost speechless. It is quite possible to recognize that terms given a quantifiable meaning in the physical sciences can be used metaphorically or analogously in biological, social, and political sciences.

One could go even further and challenge the assumption that the physicist’s quantified meaning of force is the primary meaning rather than one of its metaphorical applications. The modern science of physics borrowed the term “force” from a fund of common human experience. The *Oxford English Dictionary* has several columns on the meanings of force starting from the fourteenth century. From its beginning, most uses of “force” refer to personal experiences of coercive pressure. In physics, force can have a mathematically defined meaning because the word is drawn from a common meaning in ordinary usage. Similarly, the “force of law” in a court proceeding is not a misplaced use of a physicist’s language; it too draws upon the commonly understood meaning of force. A “force play” at second base in a baseball game is readily understood without a knowledge of physics. And when Martin Luther King Jr. said, “We shall meet your physical force with soul force,” he had not misunderstood the word “force.”[24]

The term “force” was invented to describe what every human being, starting in infancy, discovers. The human organism is a vulnerable physical structure, struggling to survive in an environment that threatens to over-

whelm it. This external pressure is a force exerted on the human person. Thus, there is the force of things—the forces of nonhuman natures. The forces exerted by these natures is met with whatever counterforces the human-nature can mount. At the least, the force of a person's nature has to resist forces of drowning, freezing, starvation, and asphyxiation.

Because humans are smaller and more vulnerable than the forces exerted by many natures, humans have to negotiate with other natures. This power to negotiate is the wily human's great power. But as humans, both historically and individually, acquire tools to extend their power to force other natures to submit, they can be deluded into thinking that they need not negotiate. They may think they can impose their will on other natures.

On occasion, humans are reminded of their extreme vulnerability when an earthquake, hurricane, tsunami, or tornado occurs. Sometimes the humans may have contributed to these "natural disasters" by promiscuously using tools that destroyed glaciers, rain forests, topsoil, and natural sources of water. At other times, the humans are simply the recipients of the force of natures that can do terrible damage to human settlements. It is not that "Mother Nature" is being cruel; rather, nature and natures do not care.

Not all the forces that confront the humans are negative and destructive. I refer in the previous section to life force as the earliest meaning of nature. The humans share in the force of life that can be imagined as flowing through a channel that connects the amoeba to the human. A living being is one that has within itself energy, strength, power and force.

## HUMAN FORCE USED AGAINST NONHUMAN NATURES

Against natures in the nonliving world, a human being regularly uses physical force to get a thing to conform to his or her desires. An individual uses force to open a jar of pickles or move a carton of books. Organizations, including nation-states, use force against things to achieve their aims. The process of forcing human choices on the physical world appears simple, but we are learning that appearances can deceive. If humans indiscriminately use physical force against the environment, the behavior can come back to haunt the humans. If they redirect rivers, cut down forests, or dump their "waste" into the ocean, they might upset balances of natures.

If the human use of force against the physical environment needs care and restraint, the use of force on other living beings is even more problematic. The bears, wolves, or deer can be forced out of their habitats so that humans can build settlements, but the humans should not be surprised if these other animals try to force their way back to their homes.

A dog, a horse, or a cat may not have "free will," but it does have its own desires and inclinations appropriate to its species, including an aversion to suffering. Animals quite naturally resist the human use of force. If it is to be a human companion, a dog, a horse, or a cat needs a training that respects its identity and is responsive to its inclinations. Any intelligent animal trainer avoids violence in forcing the animal to act in certain ways.[25] The trainer is a teacher whose success depends on the receptivity of the student to learn. The domestication of animals can be cruel, but it can also be a good bargain for the animal. A pair of cats with a steady supply of food, warmth, and affection for fifteen to twenty years can have better lives than by survival in the wild for an average life span of two to four years.

Animals that are subjected to medical experiments deserve to be treated *humanely* and not be recklessly subjected to suffering. Even an animal grown for the purpose of providing food could be treated nonviolently during its lifetime. Unfortunately, the current suffering of animals in the meat industry is a scandal that most buyers of chicken, beef, and pork in the supermarket prefer not to think about.

Before looking at how humans use force on other humans, we should take note of a curious but clear use of force that a human being experiences within itself. We commonly refer, for example, to "force of habit." The human individual experiences a tendency and a pressure to do something outside of reflective choice. Within the person, there are impersonal forces, some apparently innate, others the result of training, choice, and repetition. When such physical tendencies become compulsions that are completely beyond control, they are addictions. However, habits are good as well as bad; they make life easier and happier.

An extension of the metaphor of force is found in "force of conscience." The dictates of conscience are the result of genetics, upbringing, reflection, and training. Conscience can seem to be an alien force urging or forbidding particular practices. A well-formed conscience is a function of the force of reason. We accept conclusions of reason because of forceful argument. But if reason is cut off from emotion, its force is undermined. A common excuse that is offered for many despicable deeds is "I could not help myself; I was moved by anger, fear, or hatred." In a conflict between the force of reason and the force of emotion, not many people would bet on reason.

David Hume's metaphor that reason is the "slave of emotions" is unfortunate. I will explore in the following chapter Plato's more complex image of reason as a kind of animal trainer. Here I just note that Hume's image gives over the word "force" to the emotions.[26] Mary Midgley takes issue with the exclusion of reason from the meaning of force. She understands reason to be what human-nature as a whole demands: "The 'force' this gives then is the force of our demand for wholeness. The sanction of resisting it [the force of reason] is not just logical confusion but disintegration."[27]

## HUMAN FORCE AGAINST OTHER HUMANS

Whenever force is used against another human being, there is a moral problem. Forcing a human being to do something against his or her will requires justification. Direct physical force against people should occur only under extreme circumstances. For example, a young child, like a nonhuman animal, needs training in accordance with its nature. Although the human infant is born with intelligence and will, time is needed for it to acquire the knowledge to make its way in the world. If a child is running into the street, someone has to use force to save it from injury or death. Gradually, the force of reason should take over from parental restraints.

Adults as well as children may occasionally need forceful restraints. Some adults, whether or not their bad behavior is their fault, have to be restrained from criminal actions. No one is likely to dispute that force should be used against a would-be rapist's action. The police in doing their job have to try to use the minimum force necessary to restrain violent criminal activity. Otherwise, indiscriminate use of force will simply add violence to violence.

Sometimes force is used when human beings are not moving fast enough for us and we are impatient to get results. Human beings in an urban environment regularly run up against each other. The daily conflicts can be a source of resentment and ill feeling unless rules of politeness ameliorate conflicts. When the subway door opens in rush hour, there is no time to say, "Would you please be kind enough to step further into the train." The practical step is to push. (Actually, the millions of people in the New York subway generally act with amazing politeness.)[28] Without rituals for dealing with forceful encounters, force is likely to slide into violence.

## FORCE AND VIOLENCE

Many authors are dismissive of any distinction between force and violence. Some authors distinguish the two terms but in an arbitrary way because their context is too narrow. Georges Sorel writes that "the term *violence* should be used solely for acts of rebellion . . . the object of force is to impose a particular system of minority rule, while violence aims at the destruction of that order."[29] The distinction suffers from starting at an advanced political level. Similarly, Alexander Passerin d'Entrèves in defending force in contrast to violence says that force according to law changes the quality of force: "Force by the very fact of being qualified ceases to be force."[30] A lawful force is still force; what it need not be is violent.

Barbara Deming is one author who is careful to acknowledge that nonviolent action must often be forceful but should never be violent: "The man who acts violently forces another to do *his* will. . . . The man who acts nonviolently insists upon acting out his *own* will, refuses to act out another's—but in this way, only, exerts force upon the other."[31] She says that there are two pressures here, "the pressure of our defiance of him and the pressure of our respect for his life."[32] The pressure of nonviolent action on oppressors "can in effect force them to consult their consciences."[33] Hannah Arendt's criticism of Deming is unfair in characterizing Deming's position as "only a right to life is respected, no other rights." Deming repeatedly says that the other person should not be injured in any way.

Barbara Deming was articulating the understanding of nonviolent action practiced by Gandhi, King, and numerous religious resisters of violence. Critics of Gandhi and King often complained that the tactics of these advocates of nonviolence were a form of coercion. Neither Gandhi nor King was unaware that he was employing various kinds of pressures designed to force a change. Gandhi even used a term translated as "truth force" to describe his method. The truth of a situation that was his aim could not emerge without the use of force. The same is true of Jesus of Nazareth, as I will show in chapter 5.

The tendency to equate force and violence is unfortunate, but one can understand how it happens. Whenever force is used against a human being, there is the *potential* for violence. Men, women, and children resist being forced to do something against their wills. If overt resistance has a chance of succeeding against force, open conflict is likely to follow. When the external force is an overwhelming power, resistance may be muted but internalized. After a long sequence of oppressive actions, the person who has been obedient may finally erupt in a violent outburst. A child who has always been docile might resist with violence when pushed far enough.

What is true about individuals also applies to nations when they try to salvage their "dignity." Force used by one nation against another is likely to cause a reaction involving counterforce, especially if the two nations are of comparable strength. If a small nation is bullied by a powerful nation, it may submit for the present while it waits for the occasion when it can strike back.

Nations are always using force against each other. Most of the time, the force of economic or political pressure leads to negotiations and compromises. Sometimes the force is deliberately provocative: a blockade of a nation's ports is likely to bring on military confrontation. The variety of forces (especially economic pressures) that can be used against a nation-state has greatly increased in recent times. So have the ways of retaliating against external controls. A small nation can strike back by espionage; these days it can be done by a single computer hacker.

## FORCE AND WAR

Force at the international level is often, but not always, a cause of violence. When the force is a serious threat to a nation's well-being and identity, it can provoke war. Although the gap between "force" and "violence" is considerable, a slide from one to the other is not surprising. But between "force" and "war" there is a chasm of difference.

Political leaders who use the word "force" when they mean "war" are either self-deluded or they are employing an obfuscation to hide the horrors and stupidity of war. One of the worst results of this misuse of language is that opponents of war often get trapped into thinking that force is their enemy instead of a necessary ally. Nonviolence requires powerful, forceful, aggressive human activity. Antiwar protests that call for the world's nations to renounce force are on a hopeless mission.

The use of "force" as a synonym for war has deep roots, going back at least to the seventeenth century. In U.S. political history, the euphemism became common with the country's development of an overseas empire. U.S. history books barely mention some of the country's "interventions with force." There is almost no recognition of a U.S. war with the Philippines in which 70,000 U.S. troops fought for four years against insurgents.[34] Just before the "Spanish-American" war began—and supposedly ended in a few weeks—President William McKinley said, "If it shall hereafter appear to be a duty imposed by our obligations to ourselves, to civilization and humanity to intervene with force, it shall be done without fault on our part and only because the necessity for such action will be so clear as to command the support and approval of the civilized world."[35]

McKinley ushered in a century in which the U.S. government would repeatedly say that its obligation to humanity required using "force," a euphemistic cover for military strikes. Woodrow Wilson perhaps went further than any other president in exalting force for a righteous cause while covering up the senseless slaughter of war. During World War I, Wilson sang a hymn to force: "Force, Force to the utmost, Force without stint or limit, the righteous and triumphant Force which shall make Right the law of the world, and cast every selfish dominion down in the dust."[36] The use of force by a nation is inevitable, but force "without stint or limit" is a prescription for disaster.

At a crucial moment before the United States' entry into World War I, John Dewey wrestled with his conscience through a series of essays in the *New Republic*. In one of those essays, "Force and Coercion," he set out to make the important distinctions between power, force, and violence. The first part of the essay is persuasive. Dewey writes: "Coercive force occupies, we may fairly say, a middle place between power as energy and power as vio-

lence."[37] He illustrates his distinction in this way: To turn right when driving is power; to run amok in the street is violence; to use energy to observe rules of the road is "coercive force." He staunchly defends the need for force in numerous human endeavors: "It is force by which we excavate subways and build bridges and travel and manufacture; it is force which is utilized in spoken argument or published book. Not to depend on and utilize force is simply to be without a foothold in the real world."[38]

Dewey's distinction between force and violence seems to be clear. But then he astoundingly says: "For the sake of brevity, I shall refer to the organization of force hereafter as efficiency."[39] From that point on, he judges the difference between force and violence as a question of "efficiency," the watchword of that era.[40] He is right that violence is stupid and inefficient but before it is inefficient, violence means bloodshed, broken bones, lacerated skin, personal humiliation, destroyed cities. As an example of the state not using force "wisely and effectively" (that is, the state acting violently) Dewey cites the prison system. True, the U.S. system did lack and still lacks efficiency, but the tragic violence is in the millions of bodies and minds that are maimed and destroyed.

Dewey's use of efficiency as his sole criterion for judging the use of force eased his conscience by allowing him to draw the conclusion that sometimes war may represent "an intelligent utilization of energy."[41] Dewey's was one of the most important voices in the country and this essay on force was a critical turn from his pacifism to support of the war. His failure to develop a consistent and defensible difference between force and violence, force and war, was a contribution that haunted the peace movement after World War I and helped to doom efforts in the 1920s and 1930s to avoid war.

Dewey's failure to speak for peace was widely criticized. I will refer in chapter 4 to Randolph Bourne's devastating attack on Dewey and the Progressive movement for supporting the war. Morton White also criticized Dewey for using as the criterion of violence "acts of force which result in waste and violence."[42] White was unfair in characterizing Dewey as holding that "every human act is an act of force." Admittedly, Dewey extends force to a considerable length, but I do not think he meant to characterize a conversation between friends or reading a book as an act of force.

More important in Morton's criticism of Dewey is his premise that "'force' and 'violence' have been traditionally equated in political language, and it seems idle to try to reject this equation."[43] Dewey can be faulted for how he distinguished force and violence, but his attempt to articulate such a distinction is at the heart of philosophy. There may be a political tradition of equating force and violence, but there is far more in linguistic tradition for distinguishing the two. What is "idle" is to fail to use language that provides politicians and diplomats with an accurate, consistent, and practical way to consider a range of forceful actions that avoid violent confrontations.

After World War I, the League of Nations took the lead in trying to limit the legitimate reasons for going to war. A more radical movement began in 1927 when French foreign minister Aristide Briand proposed to the United States a pact that would outlaw war. The United States agreed and secretary of state Frank Kellogg upped the ante by opening the pact to dozens of other signatories, including Japan and Germany. The U.S. Senate approved the treaty with only one dissenting vote.

In the 1920s there had been recognition that various kinds of force might be needed to keep rogue nations in check. However, the peace movement of the 1930s tended to trust in the force of shame alone. Shame as a force against nations, especially in today's world, should not be underestimated. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have often employed shame effectively. Even the Soviet Union showed itself vulnerable to being shamed at the time of the Helsinki Accords. Nonetheless, shame needs help from political and economic forces. The peace movement of the 1930s obviously failed. Since then, the very idea of outlawing war has often been ridiculed. Henry Kissinger's judgment on the Kellogg-Briand Pact is typical: "as irresistible as it was meaningless."[44]

The naive equation of force and war continued to infect international discussion after the failure of the 1930s. A meeting between Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt in 1940 produced a brief but heralded document called the Atlantic Charter. Its call for peace and justice is admirable and it was specific about basic human rights. But its concluding paragraph says: "All the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons, must come to the abandonment of force."[45] It would be comical if it were not so serious that the United States and Great Britain should tell the whole world to abandon force.

The United Nations Charter several times uses "force" as equivalent to military force. But in each case the Charter does use qualifying terms that provide clarification and a restriction on the meaning of force. Article 2, section 4 says that "all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state." The words that follow "force" in this statement indicate that the proscription is not against the force of ideas, the force of diplomacy, or the force of advertising. "Territorial integrity or political independence" is at risk when military might is the force at issue.

Article 41 refers to "measures not involving the use of armed force to be employed to give effect to its decisions." The inference one can draw here is that the United Nations will give effect to its decisions by employing other forces besides armed force. In a few places, "force" is used without a preceding adjective, but the meaning is immediately made clear, as in Article 44: "When the Security Council has decided to use force it shall before calling upon a member not represented on it to provide armed forces."

Both the potential strength and the inherent weakness of the United Nations are shown in the recognition that it cannot achieve its purposes exclusively or even mainly by the use of armed or military force. The United Nations can succeed only by an expert use of the forces of diplomacy, mediation, and binding treaties.

Whatever might be the idealistic hope for the United Nations, many people assume that World War II settled the issue of the use of force. War had been necessary to stop the forces of evil. "Pacifists" were dismissed by U.S. foreign policy experts who called themselves "realists." After the war, the United States began to dismantle its military force, but the conflict in Korea stopped that tendency and the thorough militarization of the country began.[46]

The possibilities of force other than military are captured in a 1946 telegram of eight thousand words by a U.S. diplomat in Moscow named George Kennan.[47] As a diplomat, Kennan was keenly aware of the difference between force and war. He uses the term "force" about a dozen times, several times referring to "political force." He never equates force and war; several times he explicitly contrasts force and war. He writes that "Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world can be contained by the adroit and vigorous application of counterforce." That force, Kennan insists, "should take the form of diplomacy and covert action, not war."

Within a few years, Kennan was chagrined that his advocacy of containment was assumed to mean military containment.[48] People who equate force and military force missed the point of his argument. Unintentionally, Kennan helped to establish the balance of fear known as mutually shared destruction. This "cold war" was not the most desirable situation. Nevertheless, it was better than the hot war that many violent-minded officials on both sides were all too willing to consider.[49]

Until his death at age 102, George Kennan continued to oppose the stupid and arrogant use of military force by the U.S. government. He was opposed to U.S. intervention in Vietnam and the subsequent disaster of that war. Similarly, he denounced the war on Iraq, but unfortunately neither the U.S. president nor the members of the U.S. Congress had the diplomatic insight and moral fiber of Kennan.

After the attack of September 11, 2001, Congress abandoned its responsibility for the decision to go to war. Congress turned over to George W. Bush and his inner circle the power to use whatever "force" was needed to bring Iraq into line. Years later, many Democratic senators protested that they had not expected Bush to take the country into war. It was too late to discover the difference between force and war. Addressing the nation on October 16, 2002, the president said: "Though Congress has now authorized the use of force, I have not ordered the use of force. I hope the use of force will not become necessary. . . . Our goal is to fully and finally remove a real

threat to world peace and to America. Hopefully that can be done peacefully."[50]

Congress could have specified which kinds of force were appropriate instead of hiding behind the ambiguity of "force." Their resolution allowed the president to start a war that he could claim Congress had authorized, and it allowed senators to claim that they had only authorized using whatever force was necessary. At the least, Congress could have said that if the president wished to go to war he should have come back to the Senate for a debate and a vote on war. Many senators no doubt preferred not to have to take a stand against war while the president was waving the flag and invoking the "sacred cause of liberty."

Despite the bickering and the accusations that followed in the wake of the war's tragedy, not much seems to have been learned about how to speak of force, violence, and war. Brent Scowcroft, for example, the national security advisor under George H. W. Bush, was appalled at the younger Bush's march to war. However, Scowcroft expressed his disagreement by saying, "I'm not a pacifist. I believe in the use of force. But there has to be a good reason for using force. And you have to know when to stop using force."[51] As long as opposition to war means not using force, the movement toward a more peaceful world will remain stymied.

When U.S. officials were keen for war in 2003, almost the whole world protested. The United States had been using force on Iraq ever since the war of 1991. Iraq, with an aging dictator and a crippled economy, was vulnerable to a great range of diplomatic and political pressures.

On February 17, 2003, the European Union addressed the U.S. president directly with this message: "War is not inevitable. Force should only be used as a last resort."[52] Their substitution of "force" for "war" in the second sentence makes no historical, logical, or practical sense. Their message should have said: "Force *is* inevitable; war is not." Instead of carelessly equating the two terms, their job was to remind George W. Bush and his cohorts that there was a range of forces that the United States had not yet used. At the least, a forceful investigation of the elusive weapons of mass destruction, the ostensible reason for the war, needed to be completed.

President Barack Obama had a great opportunity in his Nobel Peace Prize speech to clarify the meaning of force.[53] And, indeed, one could say that the latter part of the speech called for the world to use forceful nonviolent means to achieve peace. Obama did not use those words because they would have contradicted the first part of the speech where he tried to justify U.S. wars, including the two in which he is commander in chief. The simple contrast at the core of his argument was that nonviolence is a lofty ideal for an individual's life but it is irrelevant to international affairs. That attitude is the standard way of dismissing Gandhi, King, and any other "idealist" who proposes a nonviolent way of life.

In comparing the necessity of war and the personal ideal of nonviolence, Obama contrasted "force" and "moral force." The contrast makes no logical sense. If there is such a thing as "moral" force, then one must ask how to qualify other kinds of force (political, economic, cultural, military, and so on). Since Obama conflated force and war, any discussion of forceful nonviolent policies was excluded. It is true, as he said, that "a nonviolent movement couldn't have halted Hitler's armies," but one could pose a different question, that is, whether intelligent and forceful policies toward Germany after World War I would have been preferable to the slaughter of fifty million people.

The United States, with its gargantuan military force, often seems oblivious of the many revolutions since the Soviet collapse that have been forceful but nonviolent. Recent writing on revolution agrees with John Adams, who in a famous letter of 1818 referred to the real American revolution as happening between 1760 and 1774 in "the hearts and minds of the people." The war that began in 1775 was a consequence of the revolution.[54] Violence is often an unfortunate aftermath of revolutions, a counterrevolution to suppress the change.

In their comprehensive survey of nonviolent revolutions, *A Force More Powerful*, Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall write that "contrary to cynical belief, the history of nonviolent action is not a succession of desperate idealists, occasional martyrs and a few charismatic emancipators, the real story is about common citizens who are drawn into great causes, which are built from the ground up."[55] These nonviolent revolutions cannot occur without the intelligent use of force. George Lawson writes that "what is constant to revolutions over time is the concept of *forceful* change, that large-scale transformations must involve a sense of compulsion."[56] Referring to Czech, South African, and Chilean revolutions, Lawson comments: "That they did not have recourse to violence was the result of willed action within a context that enabled the relatively peaceful negotiation of power rather than prompting violent confrontation."[57]

In our day it is more important than ever that peaceful revolutions be forceful and that violent counterrevolutions be resisted.

## NOTES

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3. Williams, *Keywords*, 184.
4. Cited in Simon Blackburn, *Lust: The Seven Deadly Sins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 113: "Naturam expellas furca, tamen usque recurret."

5. Arthur Lovejoy and Franz Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (New York: Octagon, 1965), 109; R. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of Nature* (New York: Galaxy Books, 1960), 44.

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7. Cicero, *The Nature of the Gods* (New York: Oxford University Press, 208), II:26.

8. Epictetus, *Enchiridion* (New York: Dover, 2004); Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), book II, #12, book IX, #3.

9. R.W. Sharples, *Stoics*, *Epicureans and Skeptics* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 77.

10. Plato, *The Republic*, 510.

11. G. K. Chesterton, *St. Francis of Assisi* (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1957), 112.

12. Roger Sorrell, *Saint Francis of Assisi* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 8.

13. The medieval principle was "the good is diffusive of itself." For the human being, the primary meaning of good is not what is chosen but what is received.

14. Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1103a14.

15. C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2001), 82–83.

16. See Francis Bacon, *Great Instauration* (New York: Harlan Davidson, 1981), secs. 14–16; *The New Organon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), aphorism 129.

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21. Hannah Arendt, "On Violence," in *Crises of the Republic* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1972), 142.

22. Arendt, "On Violence," 143–44.

23. Arendt, "On Violence," 158.

24. From a sermon at Dexter Ave. Baptist Church in Montgomery, AL, Christmas 1957; *Strength to Love* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010).

25. Monty Roberts, *The Man Who Listens to Horses* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2008); Vicki Hearne and Donald McCaig, *Adam's Task: Calling Animals by Name* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2007).

26. Thomas Jefferson as a child of eighteenth-century enlightenment unwisely uses the same contrast in arguing "that government of reason is better than one of force." *Writings of Jefferson*, ed. Andrew Lipscomb (New York: Kessinger, 2007), XV, 284.

27. Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 271.

28. My judgment is obviously contestable but it is based on more than 25,000 trips on the subway.

29. Georges Sorel, "Reflections on Violence," in *From George Sorel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 197.

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32. Deming, "On Revolution and Equilibrium," 207.

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34. Alfred McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009).

35. Quoted in Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 2nd ed., (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), 99.

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37. John Dewey, "Force and Coercion," in *The Middle Works* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1980), 10:246.

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49. See Neil Sheehan, *A Fiery Peace in a Cold War* (New York: Random House, 2009).

50. Mark Danner, "Secret Way to War," *New York Review of Books*, June 9, 2005, 70.

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55. Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 9.

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# Chapter 2: The Possibility of Power and Power as Possibility

The previous chapter on the distinction between force and violence presupposes a more fundamental distinction between power and force. When power and force are equated, a deeper meaning of power is overlooked. The reason for the obscuring of this meaning of power is not that it is difficult to find or that its recognition requires technical training. The problem is that it is present everywhere, but the acquisition of power in the form of force tends to blind persons and nations to the deeper meaning of power and its expression in cooperation.[1]

Like many other words, "power" has two nearly opposite meanings. But among such words, power is perhaps the ultimate paradox because it grounds nearly every other concept. The root meaning of power is possibility. The possibilities of the human go in opposite directions. Power can be identified with using force against the other. Power can also be a receptiveness to the other that finds expression in cooperation.

Power as receptivity, which this chapter explores, is connected to other concepts also discussed in this chapter, including authority and personal self-governance. This set of ideas is the alternative to the sequence of power, force, violence, and war. The fatal step in that sequence is the first, namely, the assumption that the only form of power is force. From that first step, it is almost inevitable that nonviolent action is dismissed as an irrelevant sideshow and that wars are assumed to be unavoidable.

The most striking alternative to power as force is expressed in many religious practices and doctrines. At its most paradoxical and ironic, religion finds fullness in emptying life of its ordinary busyness. The Jewish Sabbath is a celebration of life by doing nothing, by letting everything be—the land, the animals, housework, making money. In Jewish terms, after God created

all things in six days, the greatest creation on the seventh day was rest. The secularization of the holy day into the holiday has tended to result only in intervals between workdays, with football, store sales, and house chores to fill the space.[2]

Another example of power's origin is the Buddhist idea of emptiness, sometimes mistakenly taken to be equivalent to Western nihilism. A sympathetic Western author, John Cobb, describes emptiness this way: "To be empty is to be perfectly open to what is there, whatever that may be. It is to be completely defenseless and with nothing to defend. One is then perfectly full; for one is constituted by the dependent origination of the whole world."[3] This sense of no-thing at the origin of all things is touched upon by mystics of all religions such as the Christian mystic, Meister Eckhart, and some philosophers such as Martin Heidegger.[4]

These esoteric sources for a power that challenges the power expressed as force are not my main concern. I am interested in basing my argument neither on a religious premise nor on the ideas of a particular philosopher. If power has opposite expressions, both of them have to be found in a careful perception of ordinary life. The most obvious place for those with eyes to see is infancy, which is not a particular set of circumstances but a universal human condition. The significance of infancy for the meaning of power is usually neglected by authors who assume that the discussion of power is a matter only for political science.

Most people think of themselves as shaking off the dependency of infancy and becoming independent, autonomous adults. A healthy, middle-aged man easily assumes that independence is the "natural" human state. In his brilliant study of basic human rights, Henry Shue writes: "For everyone, healthy adulthood is bordered on each side by helplessness, and it is vulnerable to interruption by helplessness, temporary or permanent, at any time. . . . The infant and the aged do not need to be assaulted in order to be deprived of health, life or the capacity to enjoy active rights. The classic liberal's main prescription for the good life—do not interfere with thy neighbor—is the only poison they need."[5]

More than a few people have what are delicately called "disabilities": an inability to see, hear, walk, or do other things, the lack of which make a person dependent on the help of others. The people who are described by Reynolds Price as the "temporarily able" try to avoid thinking about the disability that characterizes every life at least at its beginning and at its end. Does the lack of certain powers signify human weakness or might it awaken awareness of a specifically human power?[6]

Women are generally more in touch with this other form of power than are men. Women, often ineluctably, discover another meaning of power. Even with all the changes in recent decades, women overwhelmingly remain the caregivers of the very young, the very old, and the dying. For discovering

the paradox of power, the world needs a sharing of power in the lives of men and women. More women physicians is an advance for society, but more men in nursing would also help. The increase of women in the ranks of college professors is progress; how about more men as teachers in elementary school. More women are entering high political office, but that works only if more men are taking care of the household and the children.

The failure to understand power at the personal level carries over into international relations, where power is almost always understood as a top-down means of maintaining order. However, as George Lawson points out, "Power *enables* transnational actors—NGOs, social movements, revolutionaries, and terrorist networks—to form alliances and act together to achieve change."[7] What has to be grasped is not that power has a narrow and a wide meaning but that there are two meanings of power that are almost opposites.

## A FIRST MEANING OF POWER

The commonly assumed meaning of power expressed as force is the first meaning I will describe. It is not first, however, in etymology, logic, chronology, or importance. There is no denying that the (mostly male) writers on politics, business, and war have so controlled the meaning of power that any objection is thought to be a sign of "impotence." Modern writing on power, especially in English, has taken its lead from the writings of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). There is nothing equivocal or paradoxical about Hobbes's meaning of power. It is what drives every atomized individual: "a perpetual and restless desire of power after power ceaseth only in death."[8]

According to Hobbes, everything that an individual seeks is a form of power, whether reputation, success, nobility, eloquence, or science.[9] The power that each man seeks is a danger to every other man so that survival depends upon submitting to a sovereign power. A state of nature is "the time men live without a common power to keep them in awe; they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war as is of every man against every man."[10]

In Hobbes's peculiar vocabulary the state of nature is equivalent to the state of war. What he calls "natural laws" are the conditions necessary to pass from war to peace, that is, from nature into society. While men consent to a contract to live together, they cannot succeed without a single strong power above them.[11] Authoritarian governments would seem to be the obvious consequence of this "natural law."

Francis Bacon, writing just a few years before Hobbes, had pictured the main conflict in the world to be between man and nature. Hobbes shifts the battle to man against man. For both of them, power is dominion over the

other, the possession of the means of control. What is striking about "man" in seventeenth-century writing, illustrated by Hobbes and Bacon, is that the human race seems composed only of adult males. Men seem to have sprung full grown into the condition of war against other men.

There are two places where Hobbes acknowledges the existence of children. The context is a question of who has dominion over the child. Hobbes assigns the power to the mother in the state of nature: "The title to dominion over a child, proceedeth not from the generation, but from the preservation of it; and therefore in the estate of nature, the mother in whose power it is to save or destroy it, hath right thereto by that power."[12] In the state of nature, the woman has power because she has life-or-death control of her infant; in society, her power is diminished.

If one accepts Hobbes's view, no clear distinctions can be drawn between power and force, power and violence. Many writers have been comfortable with that conclusion: "All politics is a struggle for power; the ultimate kind of power is violence."[13] Of course, violence is power in a destructive mode, so a barrier has to be raised to resist the slide from merely coercive force to outright violence, but no resistance can entirely succeed. Max Weber (1864–1920) describes the state as "a relation of men dominating men, a relation supported by means of legitimate violence."[14] Weber was not defending authoritarianism. Democratic governments were presumed to be in need of legitimate violence. Nevertheless, dictatorial forms of government seem to be the most logical result when the ultimate form of power is violence.

No modern author has been more influential on the meaning of "power" than Max Weber. Power, according to Weber, "is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will, despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests." Weber's interest is the sociological meaning of power and he immediately adds that his concept of power is "sociologically amorphous." His solution to that problem is to move to the concept of "domination," which is "more precise and can only mean the probability that a *command* will be obeyed."[15]

For Weber, therefore, domination is simply a more precise meaning of power—from a sociological point of view. Power is imagined as a control of persons through commands. Someone might object that power as equivalent to domination by command is only one way in which power has been imagined and exercised in history. But in Weber's meaning of power, the structure of the relations is excluded and so is the possibility that power can be used to *resist* domination.[16]

Weber's meaning of power was absorbed into U.S. political writing, especially after World War II.[17] The dominant strain of the writing was called "realism" because of its assumptions about power. The nation-state was said

to be interested in only one thing: power. Hobbes's war of each man against every other man was projected onto the screen of international relations.

A nation-state, it was said, must act out of its own self-interest to survive in this chaotic world. Any other attitude would be suicidal. "An essential and universal lust for power as an end in itself knows no limits. A lust for power would be satisfied only if the last man became the object of his domination."[18] It hardly seems coincidental that this "realism" about a universal lust for power was much more popular in the United States than in Canada, Sweden, or Switzerland.

Any criticism of the "realistic" view of power was by definition unrealistic. It was acknowledged that some individuals might live in an unrealistic or idealistic way. Religion could be helpful here as a motivator of selflessness. That would help to keep the peace within the nation. But it was assumed that the more that individual lives are governed by love and compassion, the more they are in need of protection by a strong national government whose military power must be able to shelter citizens from a violent world.

In the minds of some theorists in the United States, this relation between the government and the individual found analogous expression in the relation between the United States and Europe. Robert Kagan gives the clearest statement of this view in his book *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order.*[19] Europe, according to Kagan, lives in an unrealistic paradise beyond "power politics" because it is protected by "America's power," that is, the United States' military force.

Kagan uses the word "power" several hundred times in this brief book; in all but a few cases, he means military power. Thus in his view the Europeans' paradise is one in which they do not have to worry about power because of the protection of U.S. power. His thesis, which is stated at the beginning of the book, could in another context be mistaken for one of admiration: "Europe is turning away from power; or to put it a little differently, it is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation."[20]

If Europe after 1945 were trying to turn away from power or move beyond power, it might deserve the condescension with which Kagan treats it. What Kagan's language does not allow is that Europe has tried to turn from military power and the destructive power of war to the *power* of "laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation." Robert Cooper is much more accurate than Kagan in saying, "The emergence of a postmodern community in Europe over the last fifty years allows us to imagine that war may not be inevitable. There is an alternative to the restraint of power by another power: namely, the domestication and legitimation of power."[21]

There are authors who simply denounce power as evil. They have absorbed the same images and language of power as those people who glorify power as military force. Wole Soyinka in *Climate of Fear* intends to oppose

what destroys human freedom but he does so with an unrelenting attack on power as the opposite of freedom: "Power takes away the freedom of the other and replaces it with fear."[22] For Soyinka, a true vision will "totally repudiate power, seeking to fulfill itself by that hardy, self-sacrificial route that does not lean on the crutch of power."[23] It is unclear how any organizations, including nation-states, could function if they "totally repudiate power." A better way to oppose power's opposition to freedom is to challenge the assumption that power is expressed only in coercion and that it inevitably includes violence.

The sense that power seems to have both good and bad possibilities leads some authors to distinguish between different kinds of power. One of those books is Joseph Nye's *The Paradox of American Power*, which distinguishes between soft power and hard power.[24] Nye's distinction quickly became part of political discourse. Soft and hard do have the value of possibly recognizing other powers besides military might. A "soft power" might have more chance of inviting cooperation than "hard power." But the distinction between hard and soft is of different kinds of force, not power. The logical conclusion for foreign policy would seem to be to hit the opponent softly; if that does not get their attention, hit them hard.

Many people were surprised and disappointed when Nye gave support to the war on Iraq in 2003. But his continuum of soft and hard provided no firm barrier against the slide toward war. The problem with his distinction is that power is still identified with force, which is only one expression of power. Under the guise of grappling with contrasting forms of power, Nye's notion of soft and hard obscures the need to examine the paradox of power.

Closer to the mark is Michael Crosby's *The Paradox of Power*,[25] which is a real search for contrasting meanings of power. On a map of the meanings of power, Crosby traces one meaning of power through control, fear, and injury to violence and war. Along a contrasting line, he follows power through trust, healing, and collaboration, to nonviolence and peace.[26] The contrast of categories is clear and the second line contains praiseworthy ideals. Unfortunately, the pattern has a flaw that prevents the paradox of power from emerging.

Crosby begins by defining power as "the ability to influence." With words having nearly opposite meanings it is unwise to begin with a definition. This definition describes an exercise of energy directed outward at other human beings. "Influence" is a somewhat vague term for bringing about change in the other. The word derives from medieval notions of magical or spiritual flowing. One does not try directly to cause an effect; one still hopes to bring about the change by indirect or softer means.

The clear evidence that Crosby is still operating from power as force appears in his map, in which the lines reach opposite results but the first step on each line is named "force." Along the first line, the force is to control; along the second line the force is to care for. An attitude of caring for is

certainly desirable, but it cannot be the beginning of another meaning of power. A person can only care for others after having been cared for, starting in infancy. Although Crosby does give attention to family and children, his world of power is one of autonomous adults. He says that "care or empathy is the starting point for us to use our power to make a difference in our relationships."[27] He leaves out the crucial first step of receiving care, an omission that undermines each step on the road to peace.

The deepest paradox of power is covered over by Crosby's statement that "power is never neutral. As we learn from the great creation stories, power will be expressed either as a force for good or a force for harm."[28] Actually, power at its deepest root *is* neutral; it is not a moral category at all. As Crosby's statement itself indicates, it is *expressions* of power that are good or harmful. But here as elsewhere, he describes power as a *force* for good or a *force* for harm, not the paradox that power can be almost the opposite of force.[29]

## POWER AS POSSIBILITY

The deepest meaning of power is possibility. Power at its root does not refer to a thing but to the possibility of all things. Power can be expressed as a force against others; but closer to its root meaning, power can also be expressed as a receptivity leading to cooperation with others. In Aristotle's philosophy, each thing is composed of power and the particular actualization of power. One of his favorite analogies is a statue. The stone or wood has indefinite possibilities of becoming a particular statue but the sculptor decides on a particular form drawn, as it were, from the raw material. Matter and form are one application of the relation of power and act. Various powers of the body, such as seeing or hearing, also need actualizing so that the human being can respond.

Medieval philosophy translated Aristotle's word *dynamis* with the Latin *potentia*, the origin of the English word "power." We still have many words that capture the deeper meaning of the word "power": potential, possible, passive. In practice, however, power tended to become equated with control, domination, and "brute" strength. If you are a forty-year-old male, healthy and well educated, it is easy to forget that the specifically human power is receptiveness that leads to cooperation. For such an individual, the loss is not his alone but spills over into unintended effects of forceful and independent action upon other humans and nonhumans. Instead of the world's powerful (in their self-image) carrying the weak, it is the compassion, love, and endurance of "the weak" that give the world a padded cell for the force and violence that are a constant danger to everyone's well-being.

The power of the human being begins at the most unlikely place, the seeming helplessness of the infant. While power expressed as force is within the human repertoire, what constitutes the human being as human is its openness and receptivity. This openness is not just to one thing or another but literally to the whole world. The human power or capacity is not added to an animal nature, something that could be assumed in the phrase "rational animal," as if the animal had reason added. Rationality, intelligence, and speech transform each animal power. Humans do eat to stay alive, but a human meal has always had more meaning than nutrition of the body. Human sexual relations can look to a spectator like standard animal copulation, but human sexuality is loaded with meanings that affect human actions seemingly far distant from "sex."

Maria Montessori, an expert on children's learning, used to say that at birth the infant is nothing but intelligence. That claim can be misunderstood as a denial that an infant is born with needs and impulses of its animal side. Montessori meant that infants are wide open to learning; their "absorbent mind" can take into itself an astounding amount and complexity of knowledge.[30] More recent psychological studies of infancy confirm Montessori's insight that infants are aware of everything going on around them without being focused on one thing. Alison Gopnik calls it a "lantern consciousness" in contrast to the adult's "spotlight consciousness."[31]

An infant takes in a human language, somehow grasping fundamental structures of the language which are nearly impossible to learn later in life. But once the self-reflecting consciousness takes over, a gate partially closes on the receptivity of the child. That limitation is the price that humans pay for developing rational skills of another kind, such as planning for the future. Nevertheless, throughout life humans should never lose connection to the child's original wonder at the being of it all.[32]

What appears as the weakness of the infant is indeed a fatal condition unless an adult provides care: water, food, warmth, and also human touch and sound. Among animals, the humans look puny. They are not as big as many animals, they do not fly or even run very fast (not at all as infants), and they need protection from both heat and cold. They are exceedingly vulnerable to powerful forces from other species and the physical environment. At the very beginning of life they do not have developed organs and physical tools to preserve their fragile existence. From the first moment, human life is communal, dependent on the kindness and care of others.

Vulnerability to injury and death remains throughout life even though the human individual quickly learns defensive skills. As an infant, the main strategy is to ask for help, particularly through crying. Later, the child learns to fend for itself. As an adult, an individual can be deluded into calling himself a "self-made" man dependent on no one. The first heart attack can provide a jolt to the memory and a recognizing of dependence. Some people

who have severe disabilities are less likely to forget that the humans are always dependent on one another. The disability to see, hear, or walk can become a powerful testimony to the specifically human ability of receptiveness, response, and cooperation.[33]

The "uniqueness" of the human requires an original and almost total vulnerability.[34] Other animals and birds have a degree of this uniqueness but are more programmed than the humans. Uniqueness, meaning different from all others, is never fully realized. Grammar teachers insist that there can be no qualifiers of "unique" such as "very" or "more": a thing is unique or it is not. Common usage, however, recognizes that uniqueness is *always* comparative in the way it is used. A thing is very (nearly) unique; one thing is more (nearly) unique than another.

In the world of physical objects, a high degree of uniqueness is a deficiency. A very unique thing is isolated in being different from others, lacking what others have. A very unique thing lacks many common notes and exists in its own limited space and time. Beginning in the living world and then preeminently among humans, "uniqueness" has a nearly opposite meaning. Difference is based on capacity and receptiveness. To be more unique is to be more richly inclusive. Only of the humans can it realistically be said that they are born (very) unique and their vocation is to become more unique.

Humans do retain the uniqueness of the nonhuman world insofar as they expel competitors from their space. The humans share a territorial need with other animals. The vulnerability of the physical organism makes that necessary. But humans have flexibility as to the control of their physical environment. Every human being needs "intimate relations" in which the openness of the infant has carried into adult life. Sexual relations need some childlike playfulness as a context.

"Passion" refers to being acted upon; passion is suffering before it is outward action. Suffering has a bad name because it is so often connected with pain. Nevertheless, the humans have to take the risk of suffering the world. When the suffering does involve pain, they look for meaning in the suffering. Every effort should be made to eliminate pain, but the hope to avoid all pain is quixotic. Humans from the first moment to the last suffer a world which sometimes involves pain. For an athlete, the pain can be an acceptable price for the strengthening of the body: no pain, no gain. For all of us, pain can be a warning signal to the brain: something is wrong with the way the organism is suffering the world.

Pain needs no glorification. Until dying is imminent, steps can usually be taken to lessen some pains and eliminate others. The comfort of another human being can be as important as a physical painkiller. The development of drugs named antibiotics has been a great benefit as well as a danger to human well-being. Antibiotics are an illustration of what happens in the world when violence is controlled by a counterviolence. An antibiotic—

literally a killer of life—is a hired killer sent into the body when its own antibodies are losing the battle against a killer disease. At its most precise, the antibiotic is a killer of the killer of life. As with all hired killers, there is bound to be "collateral damage," delicately referred to in television ads as side effects and which can sound worse than the disease. If the antibiotics are used indiscriminately, they can lose their intended effect and even generate more resistance by the disease.

Few people doubt the advantages of modern medicine, but intrusions into the body have to be as nonviolent as possible. Both physician and patient need to accept that the humans are vulnerable beings and medicine has its limits. Because they are unique, humans suffer and eventually die. An endless string of human miseries, especially acts of violence, flow from the human individual's refusal to accept its mortality. "You're on earth and there's no cure for that."[35]

## GIFT RELATIONS

The most fundamental relation in human life, though often overlooked in philosophy, is gift exchange.[36] It precedes any splits in the child's life and it continues throughout life as the context for market exchange. Religion at its best explicitly recognizes that one's life is a gift; no one is self-created. "The usual question," writes Paul Tillich, "'What shall we do' must be answered with the unusual question, 'Whence can we receive?' People must understand again that one cannot do much without having received much."[37] The gift relation is at the base of power as receptivity leading to cooperation.

The initial reception of life is not a conscious or deliberate act. The parents may also not have directly intended the gift; the biological process works apart from human consent, sometimes against it. At the least, however, the mother has to say yes to the process and provide nourishment of the fetus during pregnancy and care of the infant after birth.

Throughout most of history, the human race had little control over the process of birth. Although there is nothing wrong with humans now exercising some control of pregnancy, a violent intrusion to stop the life that has begun is ungracious. Even those who advocate that such interruption should be legal, safe, and available use the negative word "abortion." The recently invented phrase "abortion rights" strangely suggests that abortion is a desirable good.

The opponents of abortion start from a position of strength; everyone is "pro-life." But people opposed to abortion are often obsessed with criminalizing an activity rather than advocating educational and political policies that have been proved to lessen the number of abortions and make those that do

occur less violent. The danger of an abortive mentality infecting all human relations is real. But how an individual woman decides about a particular pregnancy (ideally with the man's cooperation) is only a partial and fallible reflection of the present world's attitude to life.

Ancient societies lacked technological control of life's necessities: how births occur, the availability of food, the protection against harsh weather, and avoidance of disease and accidents. The relation of gift giving was obviously necessary. Still, there have always been tendencies for gift giving to be swallowed up in the struggle to protect oneself and one's immediate family.

Giving to someone in need and extending gift giving are signs of humanity. In the realm of the human spirit, what is given away does not decrease; otherwise, writes Augustine, "it is not yet possessed as it ought to be, while it is held onto without being given to others."[38] Every teacher knows that the activity of teaching increases rather than decreases one's learning.

Human friendship is a gift of incomparable value. Aristotle writes that "nobody would choose to live without friends even if he had all the other good things." He adds that "friendship also seems to be the bond that holds communities together, and lawmakers seem to attach more importance to it than to justice."[39] Unfortunately, Aristotle buries his beautiful reflections on friendship in book 8 of his *Ethics* instead of perhaps beginning the study of ethics with the meaning of friendship.

Material things are limited; they are no longer in one's possession once they have been given away. Although the realm of the spirit is not limited in the same way, spiritual gifts, because they are always embodied, are limited by the time, place, and conditions surrounding the gift. The gift is the more impressive when it is a material necessity. Among all peoples, the gift of food holds a special place. Friendship is shared over a meal; a friend is called a *companion*, one who breaks bread with you. Food has the additional quality of being perishable. It cannot be just taken and stored away as a possession. It must be consumed and in the process passed on. "In the case of food, literally, and in the case of much else, metaphorically, we die into one another's lives and live one another's deaths."[40]

The gift has to move in a widening circle or else it ceases to be a gift. A friendship, including marriage, has to overflow into new life. The smaller the circle, the more a person is inclined to act as a salesperson and to reckon the price tag. "In gift exchange, the increase stays in motion and follows the object, while in commodity exchange it stays behind as profit."[41] The first colonists in North America survived because of the gift of food from the natives.[42] The native people did not understand white settlers' taking without giving. On their side, the whites called the expectation that the gift would be passed on "Indian giving." "Indian giving" would be better named "white man keeping."

Gift receiving followed by gift giving is a striking embodiment of power as openness to receive. Every human being has such power, although depending on early childhood experience and subsequent development, the door to that openness can seem closed. Without trust in other people or because of the desperate conditions for mere survival, the power to receive the world's possibilities and responding with personal freedom may be severely curtailed.

Sometimes, when people try to help, their aggressive efforts may conflict with power that is present but obscured. The word "empower" is a favorite among people committed to helping the "powerless." The use of the verb "empower" that has a person or group as a direct object is suspect. There is an authoritarian taint in the assumption that I can move a person from weakness to power. The person who assumes that he or she possesses power that can be transferred to someone lacking in power should reflect on the source of human power. The "weak" may already have a power that surrounding conditions inhibit. It may be that those conditions are what need changing.

In a small classic, *All Our Kin*, author Carol Stack describes her journey that starts from her life as a well-educated, white person who is committed to helping poor, black families in the South.[43] Her theories of how to help her target population are severely tested as she quickly realizes that she does not understand these people's lives. Stack gradually becomes trusted which makes it possible for her to discover the strengths already present. For example, the place of the grandparent, a topic absent or generally overlooked in the literature of the family, is central in the lives of poor and oppressed people. Giving and receiving between grandparent and grandchild is often more powerful than the parent-child relationship which is necessarily burdened with rules of behavior. Middle-class white people may need to rediscover what poor, black families knew because it was necessary for survival.

The gift relation is frequently the exchange of children. Stack realizes she is within the community when she is trusted enough to mind someone's children.[44] What she found in her journey of discovery has been repeated by numerous social workers, church ministers, teachers of poor children, and would-be do-gooders, namely, that they can best help by achieving a level of trust that makes possible a sharing of power. That kind of power can be part of the process to reduce the blatant injustices of the surrounding conditions. A worker in the "helping professions" presumably has knowledge and tools that the client does not have. But these things will not help unless the professional is open to learn from and to have his or her authority challenged by the hidden power present in the people to be helped.[45]

## AUTHORITY

The paradox of the double meaning of power leads to insight about one of the difficult problems in the contemporary world: the nature of authority. If one recognizes power only in the form of force, there is no solution to the problems connected with authority. Someone or something has to be used to keep people in order and the "sovereign power" inevitably moves from force to violence. The search for stable democracy in modern times implies the expression of power in the form of cooperation, but that meaning is insufficiently recognized.

"Authority" is used for how a group or institution is held together and engages in action. In the world that Thomas Hobbes describes, men are sufficiently driven by fear that they submit to a controlling power. Such a solution runs up against the modern drive toward equality of persons and the rights of individuals. Hannah Arendt writes that "one of the most serious problems of all modern politics . . . is not how to reconcile freedom and equality but how to reconcile equality and authority."[46]

For many people, authority is the opposite of equality. Because "equality" has been the chief rallying cry since the French and American revolutions, authority has had a bad name. Why not get rid of authority? On the eve of World War I, the great historian James Bury wrote: "The struggle of reason against authority has ended in what appears to be a decisive and permanent victory for liberty. In the most civilized and progressive countries, freedom of discussion is recognized as a fundamental principle."[47]

Shortly after this proclamation of reason's victory over authority, the world plunged into one of the bloodiest and most irrational wars in history. What emerged from the chaos were many governments that exercised authority in violently oppressive ways. In these totalitarian regimes, "freedom of discussion" was sometimes allowed but without effect on the form of government. Albert Camus described the cynical attitude of such governments: "This is the truth. You can discuss it as much as you want; we aren't interested. But in a few years there'll be the police who will show you we are right."[48]

It is a terrible misuse of language to refer to the people in charge of a government as "the authorities." It is impossible to examine the pattern of authority and the exercise of offices of authority if "authority" is identified with one or several people. This usage implies an acceptance of authoritarianism in which the choice is either to submit to authoritarian leaders or to engage in ineffective rebellion. The question of authority lies not in the power to issue orders but in the *power* of consent. When consent is recognized as the origin of workable authority, then those in executive and legislative positions must do more than issue orders. They have to speak in ways

that enlighten the mind, stir imagination, and convince the will. Genuine authority is based on mutuality but not necessarily on an equality of power.

## AUTHORITY IN FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

As is the case with other concepts examined in this book, the study of authority has to be traced to its prepolitical origin. Authority cannot be established for presidents, elected representatives, or party bosses unless it has appropriate forms in families, personal work, and community engagement. "Authority" has obvious roots in the word "author," which signifies a person. Most frequently, "author" signifies a person who writes a book; the assumption is that the book is created by the author. As a matter of fact, however, the book is not the creation of a single person.

The verb "to create" was coined to describe a divine action: the creation of the world ex nihilo. Despite "create" now being a favorite for describing book writing and the production of other arts, humans always make things from preestablished material and in collaboration with others. The cocreators are not only colleagues from whom one has learned one's craft but also the audience for a work of art. The author stands behind his or her work but cannot control its authority, which depends on a receptive audience. Literature does not compel assent. "What it compels is attention, and a long-incubating response which cannot be predicted or tracked."[49] The authority that arises from a reader's or a listener's response to the authoritative voice of poetry, fiction, or history can cause fear in authoritarian leaders because it reveals the illegitimacy of authoritarianism.

The authoring of books and other art is analogously conceived from the most fundamental human authorship: parenting. The act of procreating is as close as humans get to creation out of nothing, but every child enters the world with a genetic code and its own version of human nature, including the power to affirm or resist. The smallest of family units has some pattern of authority. Equality of all people is not a viable option for a one-day-old.

The most desirable pattern of family authority is a mutuality of power between parents, within which and into which the child can grow. If a parent is isolated and feels trapped by circumstances, the attitude toward the infant may be that "this baby is mine and has to conform to what I dictate." From the first moment of extrauterine life, the infant expresses a yes or no by whatever means it has available. A child repeatedly stymied in its attempt at mutuality may eventually retreat into begrudging acceptance of a superior force.

Family patterns of authority have always been diverse and changing, but the past century has been one of concerted efforts to change the relations

among mother, father, and children. Some attempted changes have constituted a flight from authority; chaos is not a friend of freedom. The over-demanding parents and the parents who provide almost no controls often achieve the same result, namely, children whose lives spin out of control in their fight with and for authority.

For most of history, the theory was that the father was the main authority figure; the mother was a kind of executive vice president who carried out orders. In practice, the authority within families was more often exercised by the mother. Women generally had a better sense than men that genuine and effective authority depends on nurturing care, respect for liberty, and appeal for agreement. Probably every parent at some point is reduced to the line "You will do it because I say so," while at the same time realizing that this form of authority is hopelessly inadequate.

The reality of the single parent has become increasingly common; about one-third of births in the United States are to single parents. Many single parents are heroic in providing for their children, but the odds are heavily against them unless there are helping hands. Grandparents, friends, and neighbors have to lend their support and occasional relief to a single parent who works outside the home. What cannot be abandoned in any family is a stability based on clear directions and appeal for consent. Rational explanations to a two-year-old may be worse than useless, but a child of any age deserves a response when asking why something has to be done at this time and in this way.[50]

The parent occupies an office of authority which has two sources, one shared by other animals and one specifically human. The parent by force of biology is protector of its young. A human mother who protects her offspring acts according to quasi-instincts that are similar to a bear protecting her cubs or a bird protecting the nest of her little ones. Authority of this kind is rooted in biological authorship: These are my creation and I am called upon to see that they survive and are nourished. I must exercise the power to direct their lives.

Human parents are not just animals, they are linguistic animals. Human animality is transformed by the complexity of human speech and the almost immediate response of human infants to human language. The authority of every human group, starting with the family, is precariously related to how speech is used. If people think that speech consists only of stating facts and issuing commands, order will rest on the demand for obedience backed by the threat of violence. Violence begins where dialogue ends.

## GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY

In a nation-state, authority cannot just be a replication of family authority. The nation-state is much too large and complex to be run on the basis of a parent-child relation. Furthermore, a citizen does not fit the role of a child who cannot understand the workings of government. A government official, who mistakenly identifies himself as a benevolent father, will most likely evolve into a corrupt dictator. Joseph Stalin was much taken with the image of being "the father of the Soviet people."[51]

In much of history, the political leader, whether called chief, king, president, or prime minister, has imagined himself possessing power and maintaining *his* authority by imposing order on the unruly masses. A family model in which mother and father are mutually related would be a move away from a monarchical or dictatorial form of government, but more distance from the family is needed.[52] A mutuality of power can be learned from the family, but that attitude to power then needs to be redesigned for large organizations.

For a humane and stable situation, a head of state or government has to work with whatever mutuality of power is possible. Mutuality implies recognition of the second form of power, based on openness and receptiveness. A government leader has to reconcile diverse and sometimes conflicting interests of groups within the nation-state; some states contain more than one national group. Most references to the self-interest of the nation-state assume that the divergent voices of the citizenry have been quieted and that the policymaker knows what is best.

The idea that government authority requires the consent of the governed evolved slowly over many centuries.[53] In Europe there were strands of Christian tradition in which the dignity and rights of each person were preeminent.[54] However, until the late Middle Ages it seemed necessary to have a few church officials, joined with kings and princes, who made claim to a divinely established power to rule.

The beginning of change in authority is reflected in the thirteenth-century controversy over whether the bishop's power is passed down from the pope or comes directly from God. The religious orders, such as the Dominicans and the Franciscans, sided with papal power but largely because they wanted freedom from the local bishop. Religious orders had an incipient democratic structure insofar as their "chapters," meetings of the whole community, were places of mutual power and consent. When the papacy became split and confusion reigned, the whole church met in a kind of chapter, the Council of Constance, in 1414.[55] The three claimants to the papacy were dismissed and the council of the whole church spoke authoritatively of how the church was to be governed.

Unfortunately, the promise of reform stagnated for a century afterward. The Reformation and Counter-Reformation split the Christian church without solving the problem of authority. Protestant Christianity provided an emphasis on the individual and the right to rebel against tyrannical forms of authority. The problem in modern revolutions is how to establish authority after the dictator has been overthrown. The American Revolution that issued in the United States had the benefit of some wise founders who recognized that liberty and the pursuit of happiness require that authority be established. The Constitution laid out an authority not so much by a "separation of powers" but by a mutuality of powers. The people were called citizens and were to have a voice in government through elected representatives.

The founders were aware that a democracy—the rule of the mass—could run roughshod over minorities. Various checks and restraints, such as the indirect election of the president and senators, tried to reconcile competing interests, diversity of opinions, and the clash of passing fashions. The written Constitution was subject to amending, but only by a drawn-out process. The emergence of an independent judiciary was the final piece of a mutuality of powers.

This kind of authority has to balance stability and change. The eighteenth-century founders would probably be surprised that most of their clumsy mechanisms are still in place. The country did not have a revolution every twenty years, as Jefferson thought was desirable.

The underlying principle is that authority rests with the people and can be exercised through offices of authority only with the consent of the governed. When the system is working, power lies in the persuasive speech of officials and the free consent of the citizenry. It is all too obvious in the United States and elsewhere that even when there is a claimed consent of the governed the system is easily corrupted. The cliché in the United States is that it is a government of obedience to laws, not men. A better formula is that the citizenry supports a system of laws that men administer with justice.[56]

Because of a conflation of force and authority, and resulting references to the enforcers as the authorities, there is constant danger of the erosion of authority. Enlightenment rationalists have often assumed that when tradition is eliminated, reason will govern. In Diderot's lively image, men will only be free when the last king is strangled with the entrails of the last priest. But from a low point in the nineteenth century, tradition as supportive of authority has gained back some of its positive meaning. Nation-states are stronger when they can draw upon tradition, what G. K. Chesterton called the "democracy of the dead." Authority cannot be based solely upon "the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who merely happen to be walking about" but on innumerable voices from the past and a concern for the future.[57] A good question at any conference trying to end a war is, what about the children?

There are people who wish to run things and have a talent for managing things. They should be given the chance, though not without monitoring. Other people may have the ability to exercise authority but not the desire. Perhaps with a change of some conditions and a provision that serving in office is only for a short period of one's life, more political talent might be found. Otherwise, the citizens should not be surprised when they find that they have a government of petty bureaucrats and power-hungry officials. Harry Truman wisely said, "If a man can accept a situation in a place of power with the thought that it is only temporary, he comes out all right. But when he thinks he is the *cause* of the power that can be ruination."[58]

## PERSONAL SELF-GOVERNANCE

The origin of power as receptivity has a profound effect on the image of the self, or what is called "personal identity." Power is the possibility of responding in a myriad of ways. The self begins in a process of negotiation with the world that comes from without and with diverse elements present within. This diversity within the self is a source of confusion that is never entirely overcome. The danger is that when the light of reason later emerges, it may declare war on the inner diversity and create the image of a self that is unified and takes orders from the superior power of reason. Like all dictators, the power of reason to control is largely illusory and can be overthrown by insurgents from within.

In philosophical and religious history, there is a strong tendency to see the self as divided and to urge victory for the superior half. The lower part is thought to be the source of fragmentation, while the higher is the great unifier. But suppose that the diversity is not in the lower (animal) side but in the whole organism's response to the otherness of the world. Then the role of reason might be not a sovereign ruler but a democratic governor who listens to every cell of the body.

The use of the term "self-interest," in reference to a person or a nation, is usually confusing and misguided. The self begins from interests, a word that means "what is in between." For an infant, the world is first of all interesting. The world consists of an overwhelming flood of impressions that require sorting out. By its receptive power which is beyond adult comprehension, the infant recognizes human touch and the human voice as among the most relevant of its interests. Of course the process can be described as "self-interest" insofar as the developing self is always involved in what is interesting to it. The self has numerous interests which become evident as the self and others negotiate their common world.

An oft-repeated claim that the child is born with both selfish and selfless interests imposes a false distinction. Leo Tolstoy, in his essay "Patriotism or Peace," writes: "Patriotism cannot be good. Why do not people say that egotism can be good, though this may be asserted more easily, because egotism is a natural sentiment, with which man is born, while patriotism is an unnatural sentiment which is artificially inoculated in him?"[59] Tolstoy's suspicion of patriotism is understandable but a genuine love of one's *patria* is neither bad nor "unnatural." More important, "egotism" is not a sentiment with which a child is born. Egotism is a moral failing that develops after infancy.

"In the beginning is relation."[60] Martin Buber's statement is true of the infant and it remains true in later life. However, awareness of our links to others can become clouded, which can result in the deficiency of selfishness or egotism. Nations, like persons, have many interests. The question for both person and nation-state is what kind of self is developing out of its interests with others. Everyone acts from "self-interest"; otherwise, we would not act. But what kinds of interests are involved when the self becomes interested are not specified by the term "self-interest."

When the self is seen as split between a good half and a bad half, there is little room for negotiating about common interests. Victory or defeat is the only choice. A mediating third party within the self opens other possibilities. Freudian theory had an ego, id, and superego (or more simply I, it, and over-I). The possible mediator, the "over-I," mostly tries to keep the "it" from overrunning the "I." Freud eventually posited a deadly conflict between two drives called Eros and Thanatos, with Thanatos the inevitable winner.[61]

Freudian theory, while concerned with all sorts of hidden desires, was still biased toward the rationalistic. There cannot be negotiating among several elements within the "I" if one of the elements is called "I." The English word ego comes to have its own not-so-good meaning but an "ego" within the "I" starts from an inheritance of superiority.

Freud's three powers have roots in a striking image that Plato uses in the *Republic*.[62] Plato describes a composite beast that has the appearance of a man made up of a hydra, a lion, and a man. The good or just man has to strengthen the man within so that the inner man can cultivate the hydra while he makes an ally of the lion, "looking after the common interests of all by reconciling them with each other and with himself." The lion has to be strong enough to tame the hydra but at the same time be a friend of the man.

This image of the self is far more subtle and realistic than the caricature of Plato's philosophy in which reason has to triumph over emotion. Plato realizes that reason or intelligence needs the help of some emotions, such as courage and honor, to provide direction for other emotions.[63] However, Plato's naming of the elements within the man has a parallel to Freud's use of an inner "I." Plato names "man" one of the inner elements of man. A rationalis-

tic bias undermines the image insofar as the rational, controlling element within man is identified as "man." The power of receptivity is not sufficiently acknowledged.

Instead of a governing force above, the self needs a governing *center* receptive to the other in relation to diverse interests within. There are strong conflicts within the self, and a lengthy, nonviolent process of gradual unification is the most realistic policy. Every cell of the body needs to be heard from. Mary Midgley, citing Aristotle and Joseph Butler, writes: "What rules us is our center. It is indeed a 'governor' but not an alien, colonial one. It is our sense of how our nature works."[64]

When a person asks, "What is the right thing to do?" he or she is drawn to a desired good. If the object were not good, it would not be desired. But what is needed is not the good that is the object of a casual impulse but a good for the whole organism. However, the partial or passing good cannot just be stamped out; it has to be brought within a larger complex of desires. Herbert McCabe notes that I can begin from laws of what I must do as a member of mankind or I can begin autobiographically, discovering what I find myself wanting to do. "Morals, on this theory, would be conducted as a dialectical discussion in which those sources of illumination reflect upon each other."[65]

The idea has recently been widespread that morality is a matter of acting "altruistically" as opposed to selfishly. "Altruism" is an unnecessary and pernicious word which need never have been invented. Writers who equate morality and altruism do not seem to notice that moral discussion proceeded for thousands of years without the word "altruism." The word was invented in the 1850s, based on the assumption that the human being is "naturally selfish." Altruism was therefore an unnatural act but one that heroic individuals seem to engage in.

Altruism was also held out as an ideal for some groups. The literature of professional ethics is filled with claims that a true professional is altruistic, an idea that is a source of guilt for many hardworking professionals. The professional ideal is not one of acting for the interests of the client without regard for the interests of the professional. It is rather that when there is a conflict, for example, between an important health interest of a client and a small amount of time or money on the side of the professional, the client's health interest takes precedence.[66]

Altruistic, meaning the other, could be a harmlessly redundant word. Moral activity of course concerns the other. The moral question is how the diverse interests of the self and the diverse interests of the other are related. A positive meaning for "selfish" is probably not recoverable, but the alternative is not "selfless." Reinhold Niebuhr is obviously right in saying that "no nation in history has ever been known to be purely unselfish in its actions."[67] Anyone claiming to act for selfless reasons would have to be deluded or robotic. Selfish and altruistic tell us nothing about what is to be done.

In recent decades, there has been some recognition of cooperative power with the clumsy phrase "reciprocal altruism."[68] The underlying claim remains that humans are selfish; "altruism" modified by "reciprocal" is an unnecessary and unhelpful term. Edward O. Wilson writes that "human beings appear to be sufficiently selfish and calculating to be capable of indefinitely greater harmony and social homoeostasis."[69] He combines selfishness with what he calls "soft-core altruism," which extends (hard-core) altruism beyond one's family or clan. But cooperation depends on mutual trust and the recognition of common long-term interests. Both partners can benefit from such cooperation, but it is misleading to call that "selfishness."

Recent theorists have come around to this morality of cooperation from an analysis of game theory when a good is at stake that is best reached by the parties cooperating.[70] Certain conditions are needed so that someone does not take the benefit while not sharing the cost of the good. Human goods ranging from unpolluted air and clean water to public goods such as transportation, museums, and schools require joint effort by citizens. The best situation is that everyone cooperates in the cost and effort to have such goods available. If a few people do not pay their taxes, they can get the benefit without the cost. But if many people do not pay their taxes, not only would revenue decline but trust in the whole system could collapse.[71]

This question has obvious importance when considered internationally. In a neighborhood or town it is relatively easy to see that cooperation with neighbors can be mutually beneficial. It nevertheless requires a stable social order and mutual trust, which take time to develop. Trust is difficult to build but easy to lose.

Air that is healthy for humans is an obvious good and ultimately will be available for anyone only if there is cooperation among everyone—or at least almost everyone. A few cheaters will not destroy the good, but a few rogue nations could. The choice for nations is not selfish or selfless; rather, it is either attempting to have isolated short-term benefits for oneself or working with other nations for long-term benefits that are shared.

The attitude that is needed could be called "disinterested," which has a very different meaning from "uninterested." An attitude of disinterestedness presupposes being interested. To be disinterested is to take a measured distance from our immediate interests without denying them. At some moments it helps to take the perspective of an engaged spectator so as to consider the perspective of others and also a perspective beyond the immediate present. Wise national leaders would bring such an attitude to negotiations between nation-states.

At the individual and communal level, the right thing does not always happen by mounting forces to "make a decision." If one has been living a morally good life, then the crucial issues do not require "hard choices." The citizens of the French town of Le Chambon, when asked why they risked

their lives to hide Jews from the Nazis, replied, "This is the kind of people we are."[72] The morally good person gradually eliminates choices that are bad. Very good people and very bad people can similarly say, "This is what I do; I can do no other."

A nonviolent life at individual or national levels ought not to be imagined as a series of heroic decisions that go counter to natural inclinations. What is natural for a human being is to discover and shape a self in response to others. Within a more complex system of interaction, the same holds true for nations. The response to the other includes aggressive action. Education has to provide rituals and cooperative activities lest aggressiveness become violence directed outward or inward.

A nonviolent life would require understanding of competing elements within the self and awareness of dangers external to the self. Nonviolent living means gentle governance from the center to align the self's interests in encountering an often violent world. The person whose habitual outlook is "be gentle with oneself" will not be interested in meeting violence with violence. The person may not know how he or she will respond to being struck or spit upon, but the self with all of its interests will react nonsymmetrically to violence.

## NOTES

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3. John Cobb, *Beyond Dialogue* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 90.
4. Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1961), 261; see also Nicolas Berdyaev, *Truth and Revelation* (New York: Collier Books, 1962), 59; Charles Hartshorne, *The Divine Relativity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 55; Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Art of Power* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008).
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9. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chap. 10.
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16. Lawson, *Negotiated Revolutions*, 44.
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21. Robert Cooper, *The Breaking of Nations: Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Atlantic Monthly, 2004), 150.
22. Wole Soyinka, *Climate of Fear* (New York: Random House, 2005), 55, 57.
23. Soyinka, *Climate of Fear*, 57.
24. Joseph Nye, *The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go It Alone* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). In a more recent book, *The Power to Lead* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), Nye combines his soft and hard power into "smart power."
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26. Crosby, *The Paradox of Power*, 3.
27. Crosby, *The Paradox of Power*, 97.
28. Crosby, *The Paradox of Power*, 41.
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57. G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (New York: Image Books, 1959), 48; also Jeffrey Stout, *Democracy and Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

58. Quoted in John Maxwell, *Ethics 101: What Every Leader Needs to Know* (New York: Center Street, 2005), 65.

59. Leo Tolstoy, *War, Patriotism, Peace* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1926), 68–69.

60. The first line of Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York: Scribner, 1970), which echoes the opening line of the Bible.

61. Sigmund Freud, "Civilization and Its Discontents," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (London: Hogarth Press, 1953), XXI, 121.

62. Plato, *The Republic*, 588c–589b.

63. Plato uses the term *thymos* for this mediator. It has no obvious translation. Words such as *courage* or *spiritedness* are associated with it.

64. Midgley, *Beast and Man*, 267.

65. Herbert McCabe, *What Is Ethics?* (Washington, DC: Corpus Books, 1960), 66.

66. William May, *The Physician's Covenant* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1983), 115.

67. Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society,* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), 75.

68. Robert Trivers, "The Evolution of Reciprocal Altruism," *Quarterly Review of Biology* 46 (1971): 35–57; Robert Wright, *Nonzero: The Logic of Human Destiny* (New York: Pantheon, 2000), 32.

69. Edward O. Wilson, *On Human Nature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 157.

70. For a summary of "non-zero-sum games," see Richard Dawkins, *The Selfish Gene* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 61–108.

71. For this and other examples, see Fred Hirsch, *Social Limits to Growth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976).

72. Philip Hallie, *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1994).

# Chapter 3: A Nonviolent Life: Aggressive and Deceptive

In a previous chapter I have distinguished between force and violence; in this chapter I introduce a more contentious distinction between aggression and violence. This chapter also introduces a parallel distinction between deception and lying. The title of the chapter is intended to be provocative. It is counterintuitive to say that a nonviolent life can be—probably must be—aggressive and deceptive. This chapter explores the two most basic principles of ethics/morality which forbid violence and lying. To explain exactly what is forbidden by these principles, the nature of both aggressive and deceptive activities need to be carefully outlined. The chapter concludes with a reflection on sports, which is a realm where the aggressive and deceptive can find positive and nonviolent expression.

## AGGRESSIVE/AGGRESSION

There is such ambiguity and equivocation surrounding "aggression" and its cognates that one might wish to avoid the term. However, "aggression" has been central to the discussion of violence and to a controversy that crosses a dozen academic disciplines. The lack of communication and understanding across disciplinary lines on this point is astounding. No one is master of all the sciences involved and no definition of aggression will ever clear up all the confusion. But a few elementary points can be made clear about connotations of aggression/aggressive and carelessness in not making needed distinctions.

There are real differences in this area that spring from empirical data. Which data to emphasize and how data are interpreted lead to legitimate disagreements. Some of the disagreements can be resolved with more and better data. However, the fundamental question of whether human beings are (naturally, innately, essentially, inevitably) aggressive cannot be intelligibly discussed without some agreement on how the word "aggressive" is being used. Anyone who says that the answer is obviously yes or obviously no is either unaware that an opponent is using a different meaning or else is unwilling to grant any legitimacy to a different meaning.

The prominent sociobiologist Edward O. Wilson writes: "Only by redefining the words 'innateness' and 'aggression' to the point of uselessness might we correctly say that human aggressiveness is not innate."[1] The issue, however, is not "redefining" the words but admitting their inherent ambiguity. Both of his words, innateness and aggression, are ambiguous. Even within this one sentence, Wilson switches from "aggression" to "aggressiveness," two words that have different connotations. Two pages later, Wilson introduces seven kinds of aggression, indicative that his opening pronouncement is not a simple and obvious truth.

In claiming that a nonviolent life needs to include being aggressive, I am choosing among possible meanings of "aggressive." I will set out this meaning before summarizing controversies of the last half century that swirl around aggressive/aggression. I do not claim that my meaning is obviously the right one and that anyone who would disagree is obviously wrong.

The certainty that one is right and that any other view can be dismissed is reflected in the exercise of "defining" a highly ambiguous term. The effect of that move is to exclude anyone who does not accept the definition. Worse, it simply blocks awareness of connotations that do not disappear in the use of the word. In contrast, examining the meaning instead of the definition of the word requires attention to how it has been used and how it is used in the present.

In asserting the meaning of a term, one has to draw support from the past and locate the use in the present within a range of consistent and practical applications. When someone uses a word with a seemingly novel meaning, he or she may simply be mistaken. But sometimes an unusual use of a word can be illuminating by drawing upon a meaning from the deep past that has been neglected. If one employs a theatrical metaphor, an argument for a particular meaning of a word is an attempt to bring it to center stage while moving some connotations to the wings. The stage-center meaning is thought to be more consistent and comprehensive than the alternatives.

The listener or reader has to be regularly reminded of which connotations are taken to be central and which are being kept in the wings. Kenneth Boulding notes that "the word aggression carries considerable overtones of illegitimacy in the English language but it is hard to think of any other word

that means the effort to produce a wanted change."[2] The last phrase suggests a meaning more restrictive than most people would assume for the term "aggression." In the same passage, Boulding writes: "Aggression may be defined as activity directed to produce change wanted by the actor." Here we have an example of a "definition" that simply tries to eliminate the "overtones of illegitimacy" that Boulding has already acknowledged.

The definition that Boulding asserts allows him to affirm the paradox that is my concern. He writes that "nonviolence is almost always aggressive in this sense, that is, it is designed to produce the change desired by its organizers."[3] Yes, "nonviolence" and "aggressive" are compatible terms, but one cannot just assume that one's definition of aggression will be persuasive when so many other people are drawing upon other connotations that the term has. Boulding's definition of "activity directed to produce change wanted by the actor" seems to leave out crucial elements, particularly resistance to that change on the part of other humans besides the actor.

As a start to filling out aggression's meaning, one can relate it to what has been said of force. Both words can mean a push against the external environment. Force can be the description of a simple physical movement without reference to a human actor. Aggression adds definite notes to force. Aggression carries connotations of human action even when it does not seem to be deliberately chosen. We refer to a hurricane as a force of nature; but describing a natural force as act of aggression would be a metaphorical stretch of the word's meaning.

Aggressive action is an assertion of selfhood. The budding self has to push against its surroundings to survive at all. At first the infant does not distinguish between pushing against inanimate matter and pushing against a human other. Very quickly it learns that some others push back. The rules of the game or the game itself may be unclear to an infant, but to be a self at all entails establishing a place in the world.

One distinction I have already suggested is between aggressive (and the noun form "aggressiveness") and aggression. There is seldom explicit acknowledgment of the differences in connotation between aggressive and aggression. However, the way that the two words are used indicates some awareness that aggression carries a more negative meaning. Especially in international discussions, the meaning of aggression is inseparable from destruction and violence. Any author who wishes to argue that aggression is a simple given in human life—a morally neutral aspect of every individual—confronts a difficult barrier to understanding.

"Aggressive," unlike aggression, is regularly used in a way that does not include or imply violence. In fact, anyone who listens closely to how "aggressive" is used will find that it practically *never* means violent. In the final part of this chapter, I note that "aggressive" is constantly used in descriptions of sports such as golf, tennis, and baseball. The word is used in many other

contexts, such as financial investment, to indicate a forceful, assertive, and determined way of acting. It is also used to describe driving a car; an aggressive driver can be a danger on the highway but a driver who lacks aggressiveness may also be dangerous.

"Aggressive" can be used to describe (external) behavior but for greater clarity I will use it only for an inner disposition, tendency, drive, or inclination. I will not use "aggression" with this meaning of interiority. It makes more sense to use "aggression" for behavior by a person or a group, that is, aggression is the result of interaction between an inner drive and an external environment. This distinction would not dissolve the controversies around aggressive/aggression but it would help to clarify where the real differences lie.

One other point that is under the surface of these controversies is the nature of relation. Controversy often revolves around contrasts between inner and outer, nature and nurture, genetics and environment. Depending upon their respective disciplines and the data they consider important, authors emphasize one side of the contrast or the other. But practically no one denies that both sides are necessary. Otherwise, as Mary Midgley writes, it would be "much like holding that the quality of food is determined *either* by what it is like when you buy it *or* by how you cook it, but not both."[4]

Although everyone seems to accept the reality of relation, there is a difference between relation as what a person has and relation as what a person is. Instead of a person's action being imagined as an inner world which is then joined to an outer world, action can be imagined as a single relation with inner and outer poles. In this latter worldview, a human being is not the result of nature *plus* culture, or genetic disposition *plus* environment. Nature-culture or genes-environment are relations that constitute the human. Instead of individuals "having relationships" and standing over against other individuals, persons as relational thrive with other persons in a community.

For purposes of scientific analysis, it is sometimes useful to split the relation and refer either to an inner drive or to external behavior. That is not a problem so long as one remembers that each—inner and outer—is one pole of a relation. "Behavior" is a modern term that was invented to describe what is external. "Action" is a word much older than "behavior"; although it is less precise than behavior, action is more comprehensive in meaning. That is, action can include inner and outer dimensions. For an action to be nonviolent, it would have to avoid violence in both inner intention and outer results.

The most obvious difference in the way that authors deal with aggressive/aggression lies in whether they assume it to be something bad or something neutral which can find good or bad expression. People who assume aggressive/aggression to be bad usually use the term as synonymous with violence. Ashley Montague, a staunch opponent of "innate aggressionists," writes: "No human being has ever been born with aggressive or hostile impulses, and no

one becomes aggressive or hostile without learning to do so."[5] "Aggressive" here is assumed to mean hostile and it has to be opposed by the "social environment."

Many anthropologists and psychologists give a more negative meaning to aggressive/aggression than does ordinary speech: "Psychologists in general describe behavior as aggressive if it leads to another party being hurt; this includes not only physical hurt (injury or destruction) but every kind of hurt, including annoyance, taunts, or insults."[6] Kaj Bjorkqvist describes aggression as "an intentional act carried out with the purpose of causing physical or mental pain to another individual or organism."[7]

For people who assume that aggression means harm, any claim that humans are born with an aggressive drive is taken to be a pessimistic view that humans are doomed to violence and war. Actually, the authors who argue that humans are "naturally aggressive" are usually intent on distinguishing between aggressive and violent, and making the case that war is not inevitable.

The advocacy of innate aggressiveness is found especially in ethology, the science of animal behavior, including human behavior. Some people distrust any comparisons between humans and (other) animals. Ethologists regularly point out distinctive differences in human aggressiveness. The fact that aggressiveness is said to be natural or innate does not mean that it is a programmed instinct. Franz de Waal writes: "We need to think of aggression as one way in which conflicts of interest are expressed and resolved and be open to the possibility that its impact on future relationships ranges all the way from the harmful to the beneficial."[8] Far from a fixed determination that violence is inevitable, inborn aggressiveness is one aspect of a healthy constellation of human drives. "Man's aggressive impulses are counterbalanced by his equally deep-rooted social tendencies."[9]

If we switch to international discussions, any fine distinctions between "aggressive" and "aggression" are usually missing. The Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court, says that it has jurisdiction in four cases: (1) the crime of genocide, (2) crimes against humanity, (3) war crimes, and (4) the crime of aggression.[10] The document then provides a very detailed description of the first three cases. Amazingly, there is not a word about "the crime of aggression." The Court said it would not prosecute crimes of aggression until the states parties agree on a definition. Several proposals have been made but none has been accepted.

The procedure here is very strange. How can the Rome Statute give the Court jurisdiction over a crime when no one has a "definition" of the crime? One could understand that a conflict of definitions might accompany a general agreement about the area in question. But to offer not a word about the meaning of the crime seems completely illogical. Perhaps the assumption is

that everyone knows that "aggression" is wrong, so the only missing piece is how to pin the crime on someone.

In summary, one can say that among the relations intrinsic to the human is one pole designated as aggressive. How that aggressive tendency finds human expression depends on genetic/environmental factors and on human choice. It would be dangerous to isolate the aggressive tendency and act only according to it; the result would be harmful. Nevertheless, it would be just as dangerous to suppress or attempt to eliminate an aggressive drive; the result would be individuals whom Erik Erikson described as those who live with one lung and half a heart.[11]

## FREUD AND LORENZ

In examining the controversy over aggressive/aggression, it is helpful to focus on two of the central figures in the story: Sigmund Freud and Konrad Lorenz. Their names are regularly paired as holding the same view. My purpose in pairing them is mainly to point out the difference between their views of aggression. Freud had enormous influence in bringing aggression to the center of the psychological discussion, and his view spread into social and political realms. Psychologists, especially psychoanalysts, generally accepted Freud's view that aggression is something bad that needs to be opposed. Lorenz was an ethologist whose view is that aggression is something neutral which gets expressed in either a negative or a positive way.[12]

Why then are the names of Freud and Lorenz regularly joined in discussions of aggression? Lorenz is partly responsible in that he thought that if one separates Freud's view of aggression from his death instinct, their views might be similar.[13] In one important and unfortunate way Lorenz is in agreement with Freud's image of aggression as a quantity that builds up and eventually overflows. This so-called hydraulic model of aggression is an easy target for critics of Lorenz. However, the endless criticism of Lorenz misses the more important point he made that aggression "is not necessarily bad." The difference between Lorenz and his critics pertains in part to the relevance and validity of his data from the animal world. Underneath that legitimate argument, however, is the simple fact that many people are unaware of or cannot accept a positive meaning for the term "aggression."

Freud has his critics, too, but his view of aggression has little ambiguity. Freud described aggression as nothing less than "the greatest impediment to civilization."[14] Freud came to this conclusion midway through his career and never relinquished the belief. Early in his writings, Freud had tried to derive human behavior from a single pleasure principle, with emphasis on sexuality. When he was writing during and shortly after World War I, Freud came to a

darker view of human motivation. Working more as a philosopher and a mythologist than a psychologist, Freud posited a conflict of two forces, one representing life (Eros) and the other death (Thanatos). Freud's word to describe these forces or drives (*Trieb*) was badly translated into English by the word "instinct."[15] Lorenz uses "instinct" for comparing animals and humans but the term misleads many people.

Freud viewed the human being as the seat of a struggle between life and death. The erotic drive is for building up civilization, but there is another drive to restore the quiet peace of death. The erotic drive, intent on self-preservation, blocks the death drive but at a cost. Unable to destroy the external world, the death drive turns inward. "Man's natural aggressive instinct, the hostility of each against all and all against each, opposes this program of civilization. This aggressive instinct is the derivative and main representative of the death instinct which we have found alongside of Eros and which shares world-dominion with it."[16]

Aggression, for Freud, is a "diversion from the death instinct" that is primarily self-destructive. Civilization has to be constantly on guard against aggression. Civilization succeeds only "by weakening it [aggression], like a garrison in a conquered city."[17] No final victory is possible for the human organism. "Every piece of aggression whose satisfaction the subject gives up is taken over by the super-ego and increases the latter's aggressiveness (against the ego)."[18] Civilization can only survive by making the individual miserable. The only alternative to outward violence is inward violence in which the death instinct allies itself with external controls on the individual.

To the extent that Freud's myth of the individual's struggle was projected onto the screen of world politics, it made a mockery of peacemaking efforts in the 1920s and 1930s. Albert Einstein wrote to Freud in 1932 trying to enlist Freud's support for the organizing of a peace forum, a group of men with reputations for intellectual excellence who would encourage world leaders in the search for peace.[19]

Freud responded with a polite letter that expressed agreement with Einstein's aim. Freud said that of course they were both pacifists. At the end of the letter, he offers the hope that "ties of sentiment between man and man must serve as war's antidote." The bulk of the letter, however, points up the utter futility of political efforts at peace. "It would seem that any effort to replace brute force by the might of an ideal is, under present circumstances, doomed to fail. Our logic is at fault if we ignore the fact that right is founded on brute force and even needs today violence to maintain it."

It is shocking that Freud could write that "we may define 'right' (i.e., law) as the might of a community. Yet, it, too, is nothing else than violence quick to attack whatever individual stands in its path." Society no doubt threatens and sometimes uses violence to enforce law. But saying that right or law is

"nothing else than violence" is either completely cynical or surprisingly obtuse. It is also the premise for the worst kinds of human government.

Given his assumptions, Freud is unpersuasive when he writes to Einstein that "as you have observed, complete suppression of man's aggressive tendencies is not in issue; what we may try is to divert it into a channel other than warfare." Channeling aggressiveness away from war makes sense only if aggressiveness is distinct from violence. I will argue that Lorenz's advocacy of aggressive sports makes sense because he does distinguish between aggressiveness and violence. Freud's channeling of aggressiveness would have to find a theater of violence comparable to war (for example, a government's violence against its own people).

Konrad Lorenz's 1963 book, which has the English title *On Aggression*, set off an explosive debate that still continues today. It is a book whose title seems to say it all so that many people cite the book without apparently having read it. The original German title would be translated as "On so-called evil," the meaning of which is not obvious but should give pause. Lorenz was suggesting that equating aggression and evil is a mistake. He was intent on describing a positive, life-enhancing function for an aggressive drive. In making a radical challenge to Freud's totally negative meaning of aggression, Lorenz must have known he was liable to be misunderstood by many people.

Some of Lorenz's supporters think he should have chosen a term other than "aggression," for example, "self-assertion." His biographer, Alec Nisbett, says Lorenz wanted the English title of the book to be *On Aggressivity*. Although Nisbett uses that word, he admits it is clumsy and is not a viable substitute.[20] I think Lorenz was making the point that what is easily condemned in superficial observations may have its roots in what is needed for a healthy, productive, wholesome life. In other areas, Freud himself followed this path. For example, Freud was perceptive in arguing that people who try to avoid or deny the sexual drive are likely to have that drive expressed in dangerously distorted ways. The tracing of a parallel process for the aggressive drive was not possible for Freud because his starting point for analyzing aggression was the death drive. Any expression of aggressiveness dealt in death and destruction.[21]

Lorenz took up this challenge of affirming necessary expressions of an aggressive drive. Critics regularly miss this point because of what Lorenz shares with Freud, the image of aggression rising up over a flood barrier. Defenders as well as critics of Lorenz agree that it is a misleading image. It should nevertheless be noted that even on this point of agreement with Freud the result is radically different. Freud's overflow of aggression is violent and destructive. Lorenz's "overflow" is in aggressive activities that can be good, bad, or neutral.

Lorenz regularly refers to aggression as innate, that is, present at birth. It would have helped to distinguish between an aggressive drive existing from the time of birth and aggression as expressive of that drive. Also, although the term "instinct" has some logical basis in that the aggressive drive of humans can be compared to that of (other) animals, "instinct" carries too strong a suggestion of unchangeableness. That is, human aggressiveness as a drive, impulse, proclivity, or inclination can be shaped and reshaped, directed and redirected. The connotations of "instinct" lead critics, such as Ashley Montague, to charge that "Konrad Lorenz and other ethologists of his persuasion hold that almost all animal behavior—and they include human behavior in this sweeping generalization—is instinctive. By that, they mean that for each act by any animal there is an arrangement already in existence within the nervous system of the animal that determines that act."[22]

What seems to be the issue for Montague and others of "his persuasion" is the legitimacy of ethology as a science that compares animals, including humans. No doubt there can be mistakes insofar as an ethologist does not have a complete view of the human. But neither do psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, or political scientists. The ethologist reminds us that while humans are distinct from other animals, they are not separate. The uniquely human includes rather than excludes animal drives.

Niko Tinbergen makes several clarifications of the controversy which show that Lorenz and some of his critics are not so far apart as might at first seem to be the case. As indicated above, much depends on whether one starts from the reality of relations or whether one assumes that relations are constructed from separable entities. Authors who emphasize environment or social conditions often assume that any talk of an innate or inherent drive diminishes the significance of external factors.

A relational world is not a zero-sum game. In a relation of *a-b*, anything said about *a* implies *b*; one pole, either *a* or *b*, has no meaning without the existence of the other. Thus, as Tinbergen points out in interpreting Lorenz, "innate" and "learned" are not separable and opposed categories. The embryo, and certainly the newborn, is already at an early stage of human development, its inner constitution interacting with the environment.[23] In a relational world it makes no sense to object that "Lorenz's implication that experiential influences on aggressiveness are of minor importance in most vertebrates."[24] "Experiential influences" are relational; they do not exclude either outer or inner factors.

Another helpful point that Tinbergen offers is that when Lorenz refers to aggressive action as "spontaneous," he is thinking in a frame of seconds, minutes or hours. No snapshot of a moment can capture the fullness of a relation.[25] What is internal at a particular moment can have external agents spread out over time. Lorenz is criticized for holding that a spontaneous urge

will make an animal fight. Nowhere does Lorenz say that an animal will fight without the influence of particular external conditions.

## SOME CONCLUSIONS ABOUT NONVIOLENT AGGRESSIVENESS

I have tried to articulate a language of aggressive/aggression that would eliminate unnecessary controversies and direct attention to what has been learned about human aggressiveness. It would be helpful, but it is not likely to happen, for "aggression" to be used only in reference to external behavior. Although the adjective "aggressive" can also be used to characterize behavior, it is most helpfully used to describe an inner drive, impulse, inclination (but not instinct). Even if one does not adopt this distinction, one should be aware that when a political writer refers to aggression, he or she is assuming very different connotations from what the ethologist studies as a drive inherent to all humans.

It would help discussion of aggression if everyone acknowledged that it is always an inner/outer interaction. While "aggressive" can best refer to the inner pole, no one thinks that an aggressive drive operates without regard to external conditions. Likewise, environment is not the complete explanation of aggression and violence. Graham Kemp rightly defends ethology against the charge that it makes violence an innate drive. However, Kemp illogically concludes that "violence is not a product of the human biology of aggression but of human culture. . . . Thus culture is the source of human violence."[26] Culture is not an alternative to biological drives but a shaping of those drives.

It is certainly possible to speak of aggressive/aggression quantitavely. Some people are *more* aggressive than other people. Some actions are judged to be *very* aggressive. However, the qualitative is more important than the quantitative. *How* the aggressive drive is expressed is the key to whether its contribution is life enhancing or destructive, nonviolent or violent. The aim should not be to reduce the quantity of aggression. Nor should there be a program to produce "unaggressive" people.

Aggressive inclinations have to be situated in relation to social tendencies that restrain or inhibit aggressiveness when that is needed, that is, when aggression can endanger another person. Aggression as behavior evolved in tandem with the means to control it. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that modern conditions are best suited to maintain this balance.[27] An accepting of aggressiveness would indicate that more attention should be given to conflict resolution. Conflicts within groups and between groups are inevitable, but conflict need not include violence. Avoiding violence usually involves rituals that harmlessly channel aggression and which signal a resolution of conflict short of violence.

The study of nonhuman animals is especially helpful here. "Instead of treating peacemaking as a victory of reason over instinct, or as a human invention, there is now a possibility to seek continuity in this area."[28] Humans need their own rituals but ones that can incorporate some of the signals used by birds, chimps, monkeys, elephants, tigers, and other animals. Human signals that have an appeasing effect and activate aid include "weeping, lowering the head, pouting, and smiling in a friendly fashion."[29]

There are fundamental differences in the way animals deal with conflict within their own group and conflict with outsiders. Lorenz restricts the term "aggression" to what is directed against members of the same species.[30] The reason for that is to distinguish between aggression and the "predatory behavior" that does occur between species. De Waal points out, from the example of rhesus monkeys, that aggression is particularly directed toward the socialization of the young. Aggression and affectionate behavior go together.[31] Love is aggressive although love is not the same as aggression.

It is often said that only humans kill their own. That is not entirely true, but the killing of "conspecifics" among animals is rare, provoked by unusual circumstances. The problem of humans is that their kind is worldwide and they tend to create ethnic, racial, religious, sexual, and other "subspecies" of the human. A person who is an outsider to a group and who is experienced as threatening is often judged to be less than human. The threat of an outsider can intensify the bonds of a group but fear is an unhealthy basis for long-term unity. For humans it is important to search for rituals and symbols that are transcultural or approach universality.

The test of a (human) community, as the Bible points out, is how the stranger is treated.[32] Modern travel and worldwide communication can break through stereotypes of the stranger. However, technology by itself does not guarantee progress in understanding. Differences based on culture remain and some of those differences are worth preserving, though which ones are not always clear.

Even within a single nation or modern city there can be a gap in understanding aggressive gestures by the stranger. A city-bred person who goes to a small town can seem impolite, rude, and pushy simply by being his or her usually aggressive self. In a Buddhist or Taoist setting, the Western tourist risks having vigorous gestures of friendship misconstrued as boorish. Within the anonymous metropolis, people from uptown and downtown, inner city and suburb, can misunderstand the other's aggressiveness. Violence does not follow from aggressiveness except when aggressiveness is not balanced within the individual or is caught in a cycle of social misunderstandings.

## HUMANS: VENUS AND MARS

Among the cultural differences in aggressive/aggression, one issue deserves special note: gender differences. Culturally there is a dizzying diversity in the ways that men and women are related. Historically, there are deeply rooted patterns along with changes during the last century or two. Any pronouncements on differences of aggressiveness in men's and women's lives have to be circumscribed by place and time.

It is surprising that the human race still does not understand very well the relation between the "sexes," but every person's view is biased. We have made some progress since Plato's dictum that the only difference between men and women appears to be that "one bears, the other begets."[33] Plato is sometimes called a protofeminist because his ideal state allowed some women into the guardian class on a (nearly) equal basis. This superior class of women would be freed from child care although Plato was vague about the nurses who would have the important task of caring for the offspring of the wise and strong leaders.

Plato's view that there is no "essential" difference between men and women did not carry the day. Through most of the time for which we have historical records, it seems to have been assumed that men are naturally (or essentially) aggressive, especially in order to protect women and children. Women were thought to be not naturally aggressive, dependent on their man: father, brother, or husband. Rousseau's comments on the subject begin with that premise: "One ought to be active and strong, the other passive and weak. One must necessarily will and be able, it suffices that the other put up little resistance. Once this principle is established it follows that woman is made specially to please man."[34]

Rousseau's portrayal of the relation between the sexes drew immediate and spirited rebuttal in Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.[35] The rejection of Rousseau's portrait of the ideal woman, Sophie, has continued to today. Something that most readers of *Emile* miss is that while at the start Emile is strong and Sophie is weak, by the end of the book Sophie is in charge of Emile.[36] Rousseau, a man who throughout his life was dependent on strong women, had a sense of the paradox of power. The apparently weak can learn to manipulate the strong and eventually overcome them. Nietzsche recognized the possibilities in this process articulated by Rousseau (who directly influenced Hegel and Marx) and was among the fiercest opponents of Rousseau.

Rousseau, like Plato did in *The Symposium*,[37] saw the need for some complementarity of the sexes. But women were assumed to be unaggressive and could succeed only by manipulation. That kind of complementarity is not healthy for either sex. The term "passive aggressive" was coined to describe

the tool of manipulation used by the ostensibly weak but controlling individual.

One linguistic help in this area is the refashioning of the word "gender" to describe social roles in contrast to biological differences of male and female sex. We now know about genetic differences between men and women that are not determinative of everything that follows. We now recognize profound differences resulting from child-rearing practices and the expectations of society. Despite our greatly increased knowledge, we still have little agreement on the proper relation of the sexes/genders. In particular, there is still confusion about how aggressiveness should be shared.

If the assumption is that aggressiveness is bad, and inevitably issues in violence, then men's natural inclinations must be stopped. Women should be innocent of aggressiveness because they have to create a balance with men and restrain men's violence. With that assumption, the ideal distribution of aggressiveness by gender would be one hundred to zero.

If in contrast, an aggressive drive is natural and essential for every human being, then we need a complementarity of women and men.[38] What is a good gender distribution of aggressiveness? Fifty/fifty, sixty/forty, seventy-five/twenty-five? There could be variations according to culture, social arrangements, and individual preferences. We have not arrived there yet. A book on aggression in recent times notes that "boys recognize bad guys by their refusal to follow the rules of fighting. Girls recognize bad women by the use of aggression at all. Good girls don't fight."[39] Of course, everyone does fight but not necessarily by throwing punches.

The well-intentioned attempts to change long-standing patterns can result in confusion about gender roles. "Neurotic men complain of their wives' dominance, neurotic women of husbands' lack of it."[40] So long as aggressiveness is equated with dominating others and in a manner that emphasizes quantity, we will lack an understanding of how men and women might have sameness where it is appropriate and differences that can be celebrated as humanly productive.

A change in the relation of the genders is most apparent in the technologized world. Women have taken the lead in asserting themselves in business, sports, and politics, as well as family life. The still-unresolved question is whether the changes will mean that some women will get what have been men's perks, or whether the result will be better relations between the genders in a less violent world.

Some victories for a woman's right to express her aggressiveness may be pyrrhic; women as prizefighters seems an obvious example. A more prominent role for women in the military may be progress of a sort, although the shocking rate of sexual assaults on women in the military is indicative that the whole problem has not been thought through. In the technologized wars of today, women can hold their own; they are not generally the equal of men

for infantry fighting, but they can match or outdo men in other respects, such as being fighter pilots. But is this what a women's movement is aiming for rather than the elimination of infantry and fighter pilots in a world where men's and women's talents would be better used.

Women as police officers, however, seems a definite plus. Human beings will always need a policing function of some kind. Much of today's police work is dealing with domestic disturbances. A few token women do not guarantee change, but the chance of the police being peace officers has improved as the gender composition of police forces has changed. Police work will always include aggressiveness and force, but police should try to avoid violence. Contrary to television shows, most police officers never shoot their guns and try to avoid such a dire necessity.

In women's push to open doors or break through ceilings, it can be overlooked that most men's lives are lacking in rituals and friendships that help men feel good about being men. Women for good historical reasons are suspicious of men's groups which have been a source of violence against women. Although that danger is real, male aggressiveness needs avenues of nonviolent expression. The behavior of men in all-male settings may tend toward the crude and vulgar, but so long as the group is not misogynistic, it deserves its time and place. Young men today have to find their way in a world where old-time machismo is condemned but appropriate expressions of male aggressiveness are unclear.

The stubborn reality is that a women's movement cannot succeed unless men also change. The aim of change in the relation between men and women is a world in which human aggressiveness is in the service of peace and justice.

## TWO ETHICAL/MORAL PRINCIPLES

What has been said about aggressiveness as an element of human life leads to a fundamental principle of ethics and morality. It also leads to a second fundamental principle, one that pertains to human deception. I will state the two principles and their underlying connection before describing deception as a necessary part of a nonviolent life.

Using a distinction between ethics and morality that was previously described, I would state the two fundamental *ethical* principles as:

1. Do no violence.
2. Do not lie.

Both of these statements are absolute imperatives. An ethical human being will try at all costs to avoid both violence and lying. Given the inner tensions of the individual and the reality of living in a world where violence

and lying are common, no human being can escape ethical failures. Anyone who claims to be innocent of complicity in violence and lying is probably not looking deeply enough.

If we turn to the actual behavior of people related to institutional structures, the two fundamental *moral* principles are:

1. No society can allow indiscriminate aggression.
2. No society can allow indiscriminate deception.

Both principles are stated negatively. People sometimes try to rewrite codes, such as the Ten Commandments, in positive language. The result is bound to be general ideas that are not very helpful as guides to the individual or society. The fundamental moral principles are not intended to tell people what to do but to set wide boundaries for the exercise of human freedom. Boundaries are there because a group, society, or institution does not exist without boundaries. The moral task is to discriminate between what is allowable in relation to these boundaries and what is not.

The boundaries change over time and vary according to culture. That fact leads some people to conclude that there is no human morality, only arbitrary rules. But more important than where the boundaries are drawn is the fact that every group draws boundary lines. There are differences between what is good, what is neutral, what is discouraged, and what is condemned. Thus we have the two moral principles that approach universality: No society could survive if indiscriminate aggression were allowed. No society could exist if anyone could deceive in any way that he or she chose.

The most available positive word for the ideal of nonviolent living is "peace." Peace is not just the absence of war. "Peace" or "peaceful" can describe the individual's life and suggests a calm and balanced outlook on life. A person can live in a fairly peaceful way in the midst of violence and war. But it is practically impossible not to be contaminated by violence if one's clan or nation is at war. Peace is a wonderful and desirable aim which, it has to be acknowledged, is never fully achieved.

The corresponding ideal opposed to lying is truth, which I explore in the following section. Truth is not just the absence of lying. Truth or truthful is a quality of personal life and of the relations that make up organized existence. Every lie undermines the truth on which human life resides. Truthful statements contribute to the search for a truth that is never fully grasped. "Let each man say what he deems truth, and let truth itself be commended unto God."[41]

The two fundamental principles of ethics/morality protect the integrity of the physical organism and the integrity of human speech. The two realms are distinct but not separable. Gandhi used the term *satyagraha*, which can be translated as "truth force." He came to prefer this term to "passive resistance," which might convey mere passivity. Nonviolent living requires a use of force that is distinct from violence. For maintaining that attitude, truth is

indispensable. “The way of peace is the way of truth. . . . Lying is the mother of violence.”[42]

Violence to the body spills over to the mind. The most outrageous forms of violence, such as rape and torture, are intended to humiliate the victim. In such vicious attacks on the body, the person’s dignity is assaulted. Similarly, every lie is an attack on the power of speech to achieve nonviolent goals. A single lie may have no obvious bodily repercussions, but a liar, as Buddhist tradition warns, is liable to do any evil. A nonviolent life cannot be sustained without words that articulate accurately and truthfully one’s stance in life.

## DECEPTION IN THE SERVICE OF TRUTH

The relation between aggressiveness and violence has an almost exact parallel in the relation between deception and lying. A failure to distinguish between deception and lying has unfortunate results similar to the conflating of aggressiveness and violence. Deception is given a blanket condemnation even though everyone has a sense that it is a widespread practice that seems sometimes necessary. The failure to identify the kind of deception that should be roundly condemned leads to a justification of lies as necessary. When, for example, lying is taken to be part of the professions that are built on trust, a society is in danger of collapse. Routine lying should not be acceptable in law, medicine, business, or government.

Similar to the use of “aggressive” and “aggression,” one should be sensitive to the difference in connotations between “deceptive” and “deception.” Here again I will make a distinction between the adjective “deceptive” and the noun “deception,” although that distinction is not consistently made in ordinary usage. “Deceptive” carries connotations that are not as negative as “deception.” For the purpose of my argument, I use “deceptive” to describe an inborn tendency of animals, including humans. “Deception” is best reserved for behavior, the outer expression of this tendency. Human deception can be involuntary as it is in other animals. The ethical/moral question arises when the human animal chooses to deceive.

At the center of the ethical/moral issue is a mysterious process called self-deception.[43] At first glance, that idea seems logically impossible. If the agent is the self, how can the same self be deceived? (A parallel though not quite so obvious quandary is the possibility of violence as self-destruction.) The mystery of self-deception reveals the complexity of the human self. “I” and “me” are not just two words for a single entity. The active side of the self can spin a cover over the receptive side. Because reality is too overwhelming for anyone to completely assimilate, the human self creates layers of protection against self-knowledge. Rousseau was probably right in thinking that hu-

mans cannot accept their own mortality and therefore they retreat behind walls of illusion.[44]

Self-deception, which falls somewhere between the voluntary and the involuntary, is the source of most moral ills, including the harmful deception of others. Medieval philosophy had an important category called "culpable ignorance." The person who pleads ignorance can be legally innocent but morally culpable of not knowing what she or he should have known. Modern ethics tended to treat human decisions as coming from reason, leaving emotions to play either a supportive or an obstructive role. The twentieth century was forced to rediscover the complexity and levels of the human mind. The individual harmfully deceives others in a never entirely successful attempt to deceive him- or herself. The deliberate use of deception in speech on occasions where it does not belong is lying, a prop to self-deception.

The value that is at stake in the tension within the self and the self's relation to others is truth. In ancient traditions that are still reflected in our language, the true is what is real, genuine, solid, what can be relied upon. A different meaning of truth is found in Greek philosophical tradition, which emphasized truth as a quality of statements. The two traditions are compatible in that the real comes to expression in human speech.

The humans are the house of being, the place where the real appears but also where truth can be hidden. Martin Heidegger made much of the double meaning of "appear."[45] We use it to say what is so; we also use it to say what is not so because appearances deceive. In human life, the real and the deceptive are inseparable. Appearances of reality and statements about reality never convey reality itself. Words both reveal and conceal.

A community has to do the best it can in living truthfully, that is, in accordance with what is real. Speech within a community can serve the real or truthful in many ways. Where there is trust between human interlocutors, there is no demand that each isolated statement be verified as a true statement. But when trust is absent, no insistence on true statements will ever be sufficient to reach the truth of the situation.

Doubt about the reality of truth itself is a crisis that affects the contemporary world; the crisis has roots that go back at least to the eighteenth century. Hannah Arendt traces the basis of the problem to a loss in the value of community and tradition, which led to an unprecedented zeal for truthful statements.[46] However, an obsession with scientifically accurate statements does not compensate for the loss of trust. Words that become separated from action are distrusted as the pawns of the powerful. In an 1873 essay, "What Is Truth?" Nietzsche heralded what was to follow in the twentieth century: "Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions, worn out metaphors now impotent to stir the senses, coins which have lost their faces and are considered now as metal rather than currency."[47]

As truth became exclusively attached to statements, lying became a more serious crime. Unfortunately, lying was often taken to be any false statement. The human context was lost for judging whether a statement that is not factually the case is an attack on truth. With strong support from the past and some support from the present, I contend that lying has three conditions: (1) a statement (2) contrary to what the person thinks to be the truth (3) to a person who has some right to know.

The common omission of the third condition has the effect of gathering all sorts of harmless statements under lying and blurs the focus of what should be condemned. The phrase "some right to know" allows that there is often a legitimate debate as to what is acceptable deception and what is lying. Sometimes it is obvious that a person has a right to true statements. Sometimes it is obvious that a person has no such right. In many cases, there is room for doubt.

If one is under oath in a courtroom, one has a duty to state the truth as far as one can (one cannot actually tell "the whole truth" because no one knows that). A false statement in that situation is a serious crime. Perjury is difficult to prove, but it is rightly considered to be an attack on the foundation of justice. However, the prosecutor has no right to know the truth in the area that the Fifth Amendment protects.

A parent usually has a right to know the truth from his or her child. Something is seriously wrong if the child regularly makes statements that she or he knows are false. When the child is very young, the line between what is true and what is a fanciful story may not yet be clear. A few tall tales are not worrisome. This relation is not symmetrical; the parent has a duty to tell the truth to the extent that the child can understand it. Lying to a child is worse than lying to an adult.[48]

As a child matures, it recognizes that a self-identity includes an inner self where no one, including the parent, has a right to enter without being invited. The *ability* to lie is a sign of maturity; and recognizing that lies are wrong is also a sign of maturity. A child has to try out different personas before a stable unity can be settled upon. "Hypocrisy" (many masks) at an early stage of development is more virtuous than is sincerity. Later, when an adult takes conflicting stances because he or she lacks any center, hypocrisy is rightly criticized.[49]

A schoolteacher, like a parent, generally has a right to true statements from a student but only within the range of the schoolteacher's work. When a child is in elementary school, the teacher or administrator has some parental functions; however, a college professor has no right to ask questions that intrude on a student's privacy. Even for young children, there are questions that no schoolteacher has a right to ask and therefore the child has no obligation to answer with true statements.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer describes a situation in which a schoolteacher asks a child in front of his classmates whether his father comes home drunk. Bonhoeffer acknowledges that "as a simple no to the teacher's question, the child's answer is certainly untrue." The untruth, however, "is more in accord with reality than would have been the case if the child had betrayed his father's weakness in front of the class. . . . An experienced man in the same position as the child would have been able to correct his questioner's error while at the same time avoiding a formal untruth in the answer."[50]

Immanuel Kant uses a similar example which has caused a lot of unnecessary debate. Kant describes someone fleeing from a potential murderer. If the criminal asks which direction the person ran, one would be duty-bound to give a truthful answer.[51] Most people think that Kant is wrong, but it is important to grasp why. Philippa Foot, after noting the absolute condemnation of lying by some philosophers, writes: "I think it is ludicrous to suggest, for instance, that those fighting with the Resistance against the Nazis should not if necessary have lied through their teeth to protect themselves or their comrades."[52]

It is not ludicrous, however, to say that Nazi predators, having no right to know, were not lied to when they were given untrue statements. The distinction may seem trivial but what is at issue is how speech is related to truth and how trust is the basis of a truthful community. It is helpful to have the term "lie" be parallel to the word "murder." Lies are usually not as serious as murder, but there are no good murders and there are no good lies. There is a spectrum of deceptive practices, including deceptive speech, that are allowable and sometimes praiseworthy. I will comment on three areas where a deceptive practice is part of life's game.

*Negotiation.* In negotiating situations, deception is understood to be inherent to the game. That is not a problem if both parties know the basic rules of the game. Anyone who does not know that deception is an essential part of poker should not be playing poker. In buying a house or an automobile, the bargaining may include not tipping one's hand. In contract negotiations, both management and labor know that "this is my last offer" might not be a factual statement but a marker subject to possible revision. Cultural differences over how negotiations proceed can be a source of serious misunderstanding. In some parts of the world, the price of most things is open to bargaining; hassling over the price is expected and enjoyed. In the United States, one is expected to bargain if buying a home but not normally if one is renting. And one does not bargain the price at Macy's or McDonald's.

An area of negotiating where deception is important is political diplomacy. If a government could lay out the whole truth and nothing but the truth, perhaps the much-praised "transparency" would be practiced. Because that is never possible, governments have to hide, feint, put out feelers, and use misleading signs. The government should not be hiding information that its

citizens have a right to know for the practice of good citizenship. Government officials should never lie. But how to convey an accurate picture of a political, economic, or international situation is not simply a matter of making true statements. Keeping some negotiations out of public view is the fine art of diplomacy.

British diplomats used to be given two instructions: never lie; and never tell the whole truth.[53] Diplomacy has become more difficult in the era of twenty-four-hour news cycles encircling the earth. Not all negotiating can be done in public or by national leaders at summit conferences. Quiet and lengthy diplomacy is necessary to build trust and to understand what the other side means by its words. Diplomacy is high-stakes poker in which both sides are aware that bluffs, secrets, and statements that are not factually accurate are part of the game. In 2002, Hans Blix, the UN weapons inspector, was interviewed on *60 minutes*. To Blix's avowal that weapons inspections should continue in Iraq, Steve Kroft said to Blix, "Iraq has lied before?" In good diplomatic language, Blix replied, "They have not given us accurate information."[54] The fact that a country under threat had not supplied accurate information was for Blix one phase of negotiation. It was not a reason to go to war.

An even more serious case, but one with better results, was the 1962 Cuban missile crisis in which the United States and the Soviet Union narrowly avoided a nuclear war. Both John Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev had advisers urging them not to back down. Fortunately for the whole world, both leaders had the sense to look for a diplomatic way out. Each had to agree to a public story in the other's country that differed from their mutual pact. The U.S. government within its own country did not acknowledge agreeing to remove missiles from Turkey, but the Soviet Union used that story for its people. (The truth is that the United States agreed to remove the missiles, something it had planned to do anyway.) The complicated negotiation saved face on both sides.[55] It is frightening to think of how the crisis might have played out with an environment of cable and Internet news and with other national leaders.

*Art.* A second area for good deception is the arts. All of the arts involve some deception but none is based on lying. Oscar Wilde famously said that "art is the telling of beautiful untrue things," but that is not the same as lying. Some arts are pure deception. A magician entertains us by the art of deceiving. We and the magician are inside the game, but the game is entertaining only if the magician's art of deception is kept secret. If the trick is revealed, the magic is no longer entertaining.

Some art, like the magician's, is merely entertaining, in the reduced meaning which that word now has. Art, as a whole, has the serious purpose of deception in the service of truth. Our ordinary experience dulls our senses and imagination to a more profound experience of reality. A painter uses

arrangements of color to make our vision come alive, and we see as if for the first time. A musician uses a combination of sounds that can make the ear, mind, and soul enter another level of reality. A novelist creates an unreal world that has a truth that "nonfiction" books cannot match. A great actor makes us forget who is on the screen or stage. Anthony Hopkins disappears and we are confronted by a maniacal killer. We do not see Meryl Streep but instead one of a dozen memorable characters she has become.

Authoritarian governments fear the arts because they can awaken a citizenry to the possibility that things could be different. For the artist there is a danger of becoming obsessed with the art to the detriment of a personal life. The community grants a certain "license" to those who contribute their talents in this way. Theater was banned in Plato's ideal republic, ostensibly because it causes confusion and could be corrupting.[56] The danger is real but so are the benefits.

Ironic humor, for example, involves saying one thing but meaning the opposite. Why not just say what one means? In a culture where a flood of words is used as an instrument to hide what is happening, irony has the best chance of awakening an audience in a serious but nonviolent way. Irony can slide into sarcasm and cynicism if the playful deception disappears. Instead of denunciations, the skilled ironist scarcely has to raise an eyebrow or use a word out of place to indicate the absurdity of a pronouncement by an official spokesperson.

Some people, especially among the young, have come to trust Comedy Central as their best source of news.[57] If a self-described "fake news program" is more trusted than straight reporting, the society is in a bad way but the fault is not ironic humor. After September 11, 2001, there was a strange attack on irony. "The age of irony is over" was solemnly pronounced in many quarters.[58] Having been attacked by mad bombers, the country was supposed to respond by being as humorless as its enemies. The return of ironic humor on television was a sign that the country was regaining its balance. Unfortunately, the government leaders tried to keep up the fear level with unjustified deception and outright lies that led directly to war. Artistic expressions often portray the violence in the world. But violence and war are antithetical to every form of art.

*Manners*. A third area where deception has a positive role is that of polite rituals that show a care not to offend someone or cause harm. Everyone uses such rituals to partially deflect harsh statements of fact. Etiquette and ethics are related terms; humans have manners to protect humanity. In modern times, especially in the United States, rules of etiquette do not receive much praise. The "unvarnished truth" is thought to be preferable.

Miss Manners (Judith Martin) offers a needed defense of etiquette. She thinks "it is no sin to avoid hurting people pointlessly. And it is no virtue to tell others that you abhor their taste, find their company boring and think they

look horrid." She complains that "merely refraining from voicing all opinions and feelings came to be classified as lying, so that those in the habit of telling people 'you're too fat' or 'I'm looking for someone richer' gave themselves medals for truth telling."[59]

An obsessive concern with true statements blocks out awareness that speech has more than one purpose. Speech is to serve the good of the community; sometimes the purpose of speech is not truthful statements but human celebration. The Talmud asks what to say when dancing before the bride. The first opinion: Describe the bride as she really looks. The preferable opinion: Say the bride is beautiful and graceful. A further question is then posed: Even if she is lame or blind? The final word: Say she is beautiful.[60]

Jewish religion is filled with such ironic humor, starting with "chosen people" as biting humor to explain persecution. Religions may seem surprisingly lax on the matter of truth telling because they recognize purposes of speech other than making true statements. Religion is primarily story and ritual. Statements of doctrine have their meaning only as embedded in a world-encompassing narrative. In Buddhism, the precept of "right speech" is the second most important concern on the eightfold path. Lying is condemned but language is a pedagogical tool. To help a person, one is allowed to use speech in the same way that a father might try to coax small children from a house which is on fire.[61]

A similar attitude to speech is found in Roman Catholicism with its legal distinctions. Jesuit moralists, at the beginning of modern times, worked out rules of speech to distinguish acceptable deception from lying. For some people, "jesuitical" came to mean dishonest. The danger is undeniable that a distinction between deception and lying can be exploited for evil purposes. Nevertheless, the total conflation of deception and lying takes away one of the most important defenses that is possessed by the downtrodden. Slaves develop ways of speaking that deceive and often mock their owners.

Protestant Christianity has a more difficult time with ironic humor as a valuable deception. Closely allied with modern reforms, Protestant distrust of ritual and traditional stories can be vulnerable to rationalistic reduction. Søren Kierkegaard, the best-known ironist in the Lutheran tradition, thought that getting through the shell of self-deception requires indirect forms of communication, including biting humor.[62] However, twentieth-century "fundamentalism" that defends biblical statements with little regard for context is a humorless response to modernity.

The deeply ingrained Puritanism of the United States prided itself on "the art of plain speech." Cotton Mather says that his father, Increase, "put aside every art in order to convey the truth."[63] The possibility that an artistic use of language might convey a deeper truth was beyond consideration. The United States has mostly shed the Puritan attitude to sexual pleasure, but the ideal of

straight-shooting speech continues to shape U.S. culture, which can be a problem in international dealings.

Most U.S. citizens think that candor and avoidance of fancy speech are the way to stand up for the simple truth. People from other cultures find this U.S. attitude sometimes refreshing, but it can also be a cause of confusion and frustration. In a 1991 book on Iraq, a man in Baghdad says of his visit to the United States: "It is a strange country. When people say yes, they mean yes. When they say no, they mean no. I found that very rude."[64] The U.S. citizen may think that the rest of the world should shape up and drop all the subterfuges of language. The rest of the world is not likely to agree that dropping roundabout ways of speaking would reveal the truth.

The cultural difference can endanger world stability when two countries, such as the United States and Iran, confront each other. A U.S. reporter who has spent much time in Iran writes that "Americans are pragmatists and word choice is often based on the shortest route from here to there. Iranians are poets and tend to use language as though it were paint, to be spread out, blended, swirled. Words can be presented as pieces in a puzzle, pieces that may or may not fit together neatly."[65] In the United States there is no higher virtue than sincerity. In Iran there is a principle of *taarof*, as the social psychologist Muhammad Sanati explains: "In Iran you praise people but you don't mean it. You invite people for all sorts of things, and you don't mean it. You promise things and you don't mean it. People who live here understand that."[66]

Sometimes sparing a person's feelings may be necessary for his or her health. Over the last four decades there has been a major change in how physicians handle what is seriously bad news for the patient. In earlier times the physician played the all-knowing father who kept secret such information. In a much-needed reform, physicians are now urged to tell the truth to seriously ill patients. In surveys, up to 80 percent of people say that they want to know if they have a terminal illness.[67] Most physicians will say that people do not want to know. No one is lying here. But slowly letting the truth emerge is different from bluntly telling people that they are dying.

The medical practitioner's first guideline is "Do no harm." While physicians should not be paternalistic, they still have to judge how much of the truth a patient can absorb at a particular moment. Lying is unacceptable, but reticence and deception can be employed on the way to a more complete truth about the diagnosis.[68] "You have lung cancer and will be dead within the year" could be true, although such judgments are fallible, especially regarding length of time. "You have a very serious illness, so you and I have to work together for the best results" may be deceptive, but it supports the patient in the present and it leaves open the future. Speech has to serve trust in the relation between physician and patient while not harming the patient's outlook.

## CONCLUSIONS ON LIVING A DECEPTIVELY NONVIOLENT LIFE

The seriousness of lying should never be underestimated. Anyone can conceivably tell a lie under the pressure of trying to avoid a worse situation. Unfortunately, one lie very often requires a web of lies to hide the first one. Calling a person a "liar" is a serious charge; it ranks not far behind calling someone a murderer or rapist. Journalists and politicians are usually careful not to use "liar" when a person seems to have lied. Journalist William Safire once shocked Washington when he called Hillary Clinton "a congenital liar."[69] Safire later regretted his statement. The British Commons even forbids accusing a member of lying, though it does have an offense of "misleading the House." Winston Churchill once accused a member of "terminological inexactitude."[70]

Deception, in contrast to lying, is a useful and sometimes indispensable way to play the human game. It is legitimate when both parties know, or should know, that deception is part of the game. Our polite greetings are filled with statements not necessarily factual. "How are you?" "I am fine," "You are looking good," "You haven't changed a bit," and so it goes. At the end of a first date each party may regret the evening and have no intention of trying a second date. Polite phrases ("I'll see you" or "I'll call you some time") are a better way to end the evening than expressing exactly how each of them feels. Each party knows what the other party's polite phrases mean.

One study of lying made headlines with its conclusion that lying increases with education. The researcher Bella DePaulo said: "Education gives some people the vocabulary and confidence to deceive. The lies may not be important—so-called white lies—but they are more sophisticated and plausible than you find elsewhere in society."[71] There seems to be a failure here to distinguish between deception and lies. The researcher's conclusion is hardly surprising that "there was a higher incidence of deception among people who either had been or were still in college." A college education should provide a greater ability to make "sophistical and plausible" distinctions that can have either good or bad purposes. As I have noted above, diplomats, physicians, actors, labor mediators, and any one of us on occasion need to use manners that are deceptive as a way to truth. That is not a license to lie or to use deception for avoiding personal responsibility.

Finally, lying is the enemy of nonviolence. It follows that the greatest act of violence is the greatest enemy of truth. The saying is accurate that the first casualty of war is truth. The "disinformation" put out to an enemy nation is not lying. Both sides know that the game is to deceive. Sun Tzu's *Art of War* says simply, "Warfare is a way of deception."[72] The reason that truth is corrupted in wartime is because a government lies to its own people. Nations

are incited to war by lies, and a steady diet of lies is what sustains the horrors of war.

## OF PLAY, GAMES, AND PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

An area where aggressiveness and deception join is competitive sports. An extended comment may clarify Lorenz's use of this example and the widespread claim that his view has been scientifically refuted. Lorenz argues that sports, as a way of expressing aggression, are an alternative to war. The most widely cited study on the matter by Richard Sipes supposedly proved the opposite, namely, that combative sports and warlike cultures go together.[73] Actually, the Sipes study proved very little, and the main point that Lorenz made about the educational value of sports for a nonviolent life is more important than ever. The problem lies not in the statistics but in the formulation of the problem.

Critics of Lorenz seldom distinguish between aggression and violence. By concentrating on the hydraulic model of aggression, they assume that Lorenz was referring to an overflow of violence into sports instead of war. Sipes takes one of his main conclusions to be disproving the "drive discharge model."[74]

If one starts, however, with a clear distinction between aggressive tendencies and violent expressions, then sports are not an alternative form of violence. When uncorrupted, sports are an expression of the healthy aggressiveness which everyone needs. Sipes's study was skewed from the beginning. The first part of the study tries to measure the relation between "warlike societies" and "combative sports"; neither category is clear. The second part of the study, which is on the relationship between sports and war in the United States across a span of time, was vague and inconclusive.

Sipes distinguishes warlike and "relatively peaceful societies," which were not easy to find: "I had to investigate 130 societies to find eleven, of which five were rejected because of insufficient information."[75] He defines "combative sports as having real or simulated bodily contact with the aim of immobilizing or subjugating an opponent." His obvious example is wrestling; beyond that the application of the category is fuzzy—most sports can be said to "simulate" bodily contact. He correlates warlike societies and combative sports, judging that a society does not have combative sports if any ethnographer speaks of amusement, recreation, and games in a culture and does not mention combative sports.[76] He found only two of the ten peaceful societies had combative sports; nine out of ten warlike societies had combative sports. War and sports, it is concluded, are directly, not inversely, related.[77]

For exploring the relation between sports and war, one would have to step back to simpler categories. Then one would have to follow a narrative of how particular sports have been related to a culture or nation throughout its history. An important piece of the story is that when a sport becomes corrupted, for example, by big money, the sport disintegrates into violent eruptions within its games or among its spectators. Sport itself is not violent; as Lorenz correctly saw, it is an alternative to violence.

The starting point for such a study is not "combative sports" but play as a universal characteristic of animal life.[78] Peter Kropotkin in his 1902 book, *Mutual Aid*, wrote that "all animals . . . are fond of plays, wrestling, running after each other, trying to capture each other, teasing each other." Kropotkin interpreted this phenomenon as a manifestation of the "joy of life, a desire to communicate with individuals of the same or other species."[79] The random running, wrestling, and teasing quickly find expression in games, that is, rule-governed interaction among players. "Game" is widely used as a prism through which to view human life and all its institutions. When the game of life is well played, the rules establish fair competition and ward off violence. Those who appreciate the significance of a game sometimes experience it as a matter of life and death. True, as it is often said of a game, "it's only a game," but so is life.

As competitive skills are sharpened, there is a natural tendency toward "professionalizing" in the original sense of that term: an unusual talent or grace is put at the service of a community (without direct concern for payment). Many professional athletes retain some of this ideal; they love playing the game with skill and dedication. Unfortunately, "professional" is commonly understood today to mean big money. An athlete who trains for years and displays skills for an appreciative audience does deserve income. But money tends to corrupt sports; billions of dollars corrupts sports absolutely. The Olympics tried to maintain an unrealistic meaning of amateur as the opposite of professional, while at the same time it sank into a morass of big business.

The key word for sport as an alternative to violence and war is "competitive," not "combative." Genuinely competitive sports have the aim of measuring oneself against an opponent; none has the aim of physically harming one's opponent. Sipes used "wrestling" as his obvious example of a combative sport. Many people have never seen the actual sport of wrestling that can be found in some high schools and colleges. The sport of wrestling is obviously aggressive, but its rules preclude violence. In contrast, what is called "professional wrestling" is not a sport but violent entertainment. Most of the terrible blows in this spectacle are staged, but the human body still takes a beating. The relation between the actors ("wrestlers") and the audience is a complicity in violence, real and pretended.

As Lorenz argued, play, games, or sports are an alternative to both a lack of aggressiveness and aggressiveness expressed as violence. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, which provided opportunities for women to engage more seriously in competitive sports, was a great educational advance. Women, as much as men, need a healthy outlet for aggressiveness. It is not yet clear whether women's sports can avoid the corruption that affects many men's sports.

Audience attraction to a sport can encourage excellence by the players. It is also why sports can be tragically misused by unscrupulous leaders, including television advertisers, baseball owners, college presidents, and national lawmakers. While being exploited, some college athletes do gain fame and the hope of fortune. Big-time football in the United States is used by colleges to attract attention and make money. The players, the great majority of whom never graduate from college, are doubly exploited. These colleges function as minor leagues for the National Football League. The players should share in the wealth but that would be to give away what the game is.

U.S. football, which has little relation to world football (soccer), has a peculiar and frightening relation to the nation's culture. Sipes's study included football as a combative sport whose attendance increased during World War II and the Korean War.[80] Back then, football was mainly a college sport; professional football was of minor significance. As the United States has become more militaristic since World War II, professional football has acquired a central place in the culture. Sunday, once set aside for the leisure of prayer and family gatherings, now unites the nation across time zones with "football in America."

A key factor in how sport can be put at the service of violence is the role of television. The audience for the sport can increase almost exponentially through television. For sports with a small audience, attention is paid to the skills of the players. In opening the sport to a wider audience, television can expose the game to viewers attracted by cruder aspects of the play. Three decades ago, Christopher Lasch pointed out that the corruption of professional hockey into bouts of planned violence began when television brought the sport to places unfamiliar with ice hockey. As a real sport on a field in Alberta or in the Montreal Forum, hockey was aggressive but not violent. Audiences in Atlanta or Dallas that secured their own professional franchises had little feel for the real sport. Spectators at home or in some arenas have to be attracted by something other than hockey skill.[81] Violence now seems to be an acceptable part of professional hockey.

Unlike in hockey, officials in U.S. football still prevent interruptions of violent fighting, but the whole game has become violent. The elaborate equipment, particularly the helmet which supposedly protects the player, is often used as a weapon. The human body cannot be protected against the beating that professional football players take. The number of concussions

suffered in football is a national scandal; only recently has there been any interest in discovering the relation between football concussions and dementia. The whole sport has acquired the appearance of a technologized war. As has often been pointed out, its figures of speech are warlike (the long bomb, the blitz, the sack). It is not surprising that the sentiments generated by today's professional football can be manipulated into support of a war. That is far from saying that sport and war go together.

A few words should be said about baseball because of its importance in modern U.S. history and its potential for misplaced patriotism. ("God Bless America" instead of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" in the seventh-inning stretch is an ominous development). Baseball is hardly "the national pastime" and probably never was, but its long and winding history throws light on the changes in the culture. Sipes used baseball as an example of a "noncombative sport." He measured attendance figures at major league parks, which declined during World War II and the Korean War. Sipes admitted there were many possible reasons for that (such as a decline in the quality of the play), and he would not draw any firm conclusions.

To study baseball's relation to violence, one would have to start at the beginning with immigrants, a field, a stick, and a ball. Professional baseball was at first constituted by a disreputable bunch of men who preferred playing a game to working in a factory. It evolved into a game of lost innocence, consisting mainly of two people playing catch and a batter who usually fails to get a hit. It became a national sport not through television but through radio: it was a game of imagination.

Baseball had become big business before television brought in a huge increase in power and money for the owners of teams. Until a 1972 Supreme Court case, the players were at the disposal of their owners; they had no rights as players. Baseball owners still often play upon the nostalgia of legislators to get exemption from some laws and receive financial support for new stadiums that cater to the rich. Baseball in recent times has mirrored the national malaise, reflected in strikes, illegal and dangerous drug use, and unrealistic salaries. It has also outsourced the work so that the United States is not the best in world competitions of baseball. Especially in Caribbean nations, a poor boy with a ball and a glove still hopes for a place in the big show.

Baseball, despite the corrupting influences, still has elements of innocent play. Violence is unusual; even when dugouts empty and players pile on one another, injury seldom occurs. Baseball is a very aggressive game but contact is incidental; a manager kicking dirt on the umpire's shoes is considered shocking. Unlike both hockey, where officials are at risk of bodily harm, and football, where officials take no back talk, baseball includes complaining to the umpire as part of the game. All the talk does not change the last call, but it lets off steam and might influence future calls.

Baseball, like most competitive sports, includes deception as part of the game. Scoring in almost every sport involves deceiving the defenders. What is distinctive about baseball is its elaborate code to regulate deception. Learning all the rules of baseball takes a near lifetime of study. Even then, many rules are unwritten (for example, the batter should not peek at the catcher's signs). There is endless room for bending rules, getting around rules, and finding loopholes. One team tries to mislead the other team as to what is coming next. The coaches go through a continuous circus of gestures to communicate with their own players and deceive the opposing players. The catcher may run through a dozen movements of his fingers for specifying the next pitch, even if the pitcher has only two pitches at his command.

The most confusing call in baseball is the balk by the pitcher. Even after viewing a slow-motion replay, a keen student of the game may still be confused as to what the umpire saw. The rule says simply that the pitcher cannot deceive the runner. As stated, the rule is absurd because the pitcher and runner are engaged in constant deception of each other. The rule can be enforced only because unwritten rules developed over time as to what deceptions are fair and which are not. In baseball as in other sports, rules are designed to keep the game a fair competition. Unlike war, sports control deception in the name of fairness.

The deception and aggressiveness in baseball make it a good example for a nonviolent life. However, with the influx of staggering amounts of money and the failure of cultural leaders to protect the sport, professional baseball's fans can lose the perspective of people who appreciate skill and dedication even on the opposing team. When a sport has been corrupted, being number one is the only success: if you are not a Super Bowl winner, you are a loser. In baseball, a first division finish used to be a successful season; the pennant was big success; the World Series was an extra bonus when even nonfans paid attention. Now, in baseball like in football, it is World Series winner or nothing.

The sport of golf has many similarities to baseball. Violence is excluded but commentators regularly use the word "aggressive" when describing a particular golfer's approach to the game. Golf is amazingly civil in the way players participate; rules of fairness are maintained by the players themselves. Professional golf was a rich man's game until recently. Now it attracts men and women from a wide slice of social classes across the world. Big money from television arrived late; the money makes the game attractive to players but may move the sport toward Super Bowl mentality. A top-ten finish in a tournament no longer counts for much if you can't win a major. And will a "FedEx Cup" worth ten million dollars eventually obscure even winning a major? The sport, however, will likely survive so long as two people enjoy competing at driving a little ball and putting it into a hole.

The chant of "We're number one" is terribly dangerous in a country with military might. Playing at games is inimical to war, but the corruption of sports fits neatly into a warlike mentality. Kaj Bjorkqvist writes that Lorenz's hypothesis that viewing aggressive sports as a vicarious outlet for violence is refuted by "soccer hooliganism." In citing this "real-life refutation," Bjorkqvist proves nothing except that soccer, like other sports, can be corrupted.[82] Children around the world who can find an open field and a ball play soccer in an aggressive and nonviolent way. But international soccer, like U.S. football or baseball, is vulnerable to exploitation by cynical governments and greedy corporations. Spectators who are frustrated in their personal lives have little perspective on the game as a game. The only thing that counts is winning, which is an attitude that breeds violence. The mixing of professional sport and pseudopatriotism is a volatile mixture.

There is a role for the intelligent spectator who appreciates skillful performance. But the "fan" (short for "fanatic") needs other outlets for aggressiveness and deception. That includes appreciating other skillful performances besides professional sports, such as music or theater. Also, there are still amateur and "semi-pro" leagues where a game is played seriously by players who are not out for money. There are still kids playing touch football on a patch of grass or playing basketball with a netless hoop in a playground. Unfortunately, the simple joy of playing baseball barely survives its excessive organization by Little Leagues.

It is doubtful one can be a good sports fan unless one also participates as a player in some games. Most people do not have the skills to compete in highly organized sports such as hockey, baseball, lacrosse, basketball, or tennis. But practically all boys and girls can have some fun at running, jumping, throwing a ball, arm wrestling, and otherwise competing in aggressive and nonviolent ways. A nonviolent life has to include a variety of aggressive and deceptive practices in the game of life. The playful activities that start in infancy should never disappear.

## NOTES

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7. Kaj Bjorkqvist, "The Inevitability of Conflict but Not of Violence,"*Cultural Variations in Conflict Resolution*, ed. Douglas Fry and Kaj Bjorkqvist (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1997), 27; see also Niko Tinbergen, "On War and Peace in Animals and Man," *Science* 160 (June 28, 1968): 1412.

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# Chapter 4: War as Metaphor and War's Own Metaphor

The difficulty in speaking about war is that war is unspeakable. Those who have direct experience of war usually cannot or will not speak of war. Those who are innocent of that experience may be all too willing to speak of war but do not know what they are talking about. How then to write a chapter on war? My task is a modest one, namely, to protest against the abuses of language relative to war. That concern has an abundance of targets.

This chapter begins with a reflection on some of the metaphorical uses of "war." I then examine war's own metaphor: game. The game of war is the source of a misuse of the aggressive and deceptive tendencies in everyday life. I finish with a criticism of the language that too quickly categorizes objections to war.

Throughout history war has entailed groups of men engaged in deadly conflicts. But it was not always clear, for example, who could start a war and what the rules of war were. In 1648, the system of European nation-states was established by the somewhat ironically named Peace of Westphalia. There was peace of a sort in comparison to the thirty years of slaughter that had immediately preceded it.[1] The system of nation-states eliminated many confusions about war. Who fights wars, and why and how they are fought, were henceforth clear. But war as a logical part of state policy became acceptable and all but inevitable. Charles Tilley succinctly states the case: "Wars made the state, and the state made war."[2]

A line often quoted from Carl von Clausewitz's classic *On War* is that war is "simply the continuation of policy by other means."[3] The statement is thought to be a horrifying justification of war. However, there is another way to interpret the statement which would be closer to Clausewitz's intention. For him, war in its "perfect form" would go on until both sides were com-

pletely destroyed. Clausewitz says that, fortunately, war as an extension of the politics of a nation-state is always undertaken, fought, and concluded within realistic limits of attainable goals and available resources.

As I explore in this chapter, it is unclear that today's bloody conflicts should be called wars. Conflict has evolved from tribal battles with primitive weapons to defined combat by professional armies to today's endless attacks against ill-defined enemies.[4] The "insurgents" in eighteenth-century Massachusetts were said to have fired the shot heard round the world. Today's bomb on a bus in London or a train in Madrid can have immediate, devastating, and worldwide repercussions. The only sure thing about the reaction is that it will involve violence in already volatile situations.

The *American Heritage Dictionary* has a somewhat amusing note on the etymology of war: "A piece of liverwurst may perhaps help us to gain some insight into the nature of war." The authors suggest that a chief characteristic of war is confusion: "*War*—and the *wurst* part of liverwurst can be traced back to the same Indo-European root, *wers*—to confuse, mix up." Most people would not want to look closely at what goes into the making of either sausage or war.

The confusing mess that is called "war" has continued throughout the centuries to be a mixture of broken human bodies and a scorched physical environment. One of the most knowledgeable historians of war writes: "Most wars begin for reasons which have nothing to do with justice, have results quite different from those proclaimed as their objects, if indeed they have any clear cut result at all, and visit during their course a great deal of casual suffering on the innocent."[5] In short, war is human life put through a meat grinder.

## APPLICATIONS OF THE METAPHOR OF WAR

War is an insane institution that continues to be discussed as if it were one rational option among others. Joseph Rotblat, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, has said that "war must cease to be an admissible human institution."[6] One step toward making war inadmissible to human thought is to stop using it as a handy metaphor.

Using war language to describe ordinary human problems is not helpful either for the likelihood of war or for the solution of any problem. War is normalized by its metaphorical use; we have "whitewashed the word and brainwashed us, so that we forget its terrible images."[7] Conversely, war as a metaphor to organize our thinking, writes Thomas Peters, "forces people to entertain a very limited set of solutions to solve any problem and a very

limited set of images to organize themselves."[8] Peters suggests alternate metaphors such as sailing, playfulness, seesaws, or space stations.

Most of the time, the metaphor of war is simply unhelpful to solving a problem. At times it is completely inappropriate. An extreme example of the latter case is found in the opening sentence of William James's "The Moral Equivalent of War." James writes: "The war against war is going to be no holiday excursion or camping party."[9] If one is going to oppose war, the worst way to describe the opposition is with the word "war." Perhaps James is aware of that fact and is using ironic humor. However, the contents of the essay do not clearly support that idea. James's positive portrayal of the militarist mind and his call to engage youth in a war against nature give no indication of the inappropriateness of the metaphor of war in describing a moral equivalent of war.

William James was not unusual in employing "war" as a way to talk about organized projects or human struggles. When serious effort and determined struggle are involved, it is common to call for a war. One might trace the tendency to ancient philosophies and religious myths that described great cosmic wars. Humans have often imagined their lives to be foot soldiers in the battle between good and evil. Every experience is then viewed as a skirmish in the battle between the Lord's anointed and the forces of Satan.

The experiences of inner conflict and of struggle with external forces are a permanent feature of human life. Nevertheless, the casual use of "war" as an organizing image for almost any concerted action in the modern world is both unnecessary and dangerous. In the following pages I examine war as a metaphor in the struggle against nature, drugs, and poverty. One might argue that the most prominent metaphor of war is the war against terrorism. However, I would argue that the use of "war" in a war against terrorism is simply a fraudulent use of the term. The abstraction of terrorism hides the bloody conflict of wars that are very real.

## "WAR" IN AND ON NATURE

In his treatise *Human Nature*, Thomas Hobbes writes: "*War* is nothing else but that time wherein the will and intention of contending by force is either by word or action sufficiently declared; and the time which is not war is peace."[10] Curiously, Hobbes applies the word "war" to time, not to the conflict itself. *Whenever* there is contending by force sufficiently declared, there is war. On that basis, "peace" is a momentary lull in the fighting. By declaring war to be "nothing else but . . . every contending by force," Hobbes established the linguistic framework for the metaphor of war to run wild.

One of the most fateful misuses of the metaphor of war was Darwin's description of evolution at the end of *The Origin of Species* as a "war of nature."[11] Throughout the book Darwin had referred to a "struggle for existence," noting that it could also be described as the "dependence of one being on another."[12] War was not Darwin's main metaphor and he is not responsible for later portrayals of evolution in which the struggle to survive is cast into a Hobbesian struggle of every man for himself in the war of each against all. Those who survive in this war were said to be the strongest. Darwin's use of the metaphor of war is not surprising, but it did skew discussion of evolution for a century afterward. Despite insistence in recent decades that human evolution involves cooperation, there remains a widespread assumption that a connection to the animal world means acceptance of the human being as naturally violent.

Related to Darwin's warfare within nature was the language of warfare *against* nature. Like Darwin's unwitting introduction of war to describe rivalries within the natural world, Francis Bacon unintentionally introduced a war *against* nature. "Nature" has a different meaning in these two contexts: Darwin's "nature" embraces within itself the emergence of the human; Bacon's "nature" is what confronts the human as external object that needs to be subdued.

Bacon did not envision the relation between "man" and "nature" as war, but his total opposition of the two parties lent itself to the political metaphor of war. Bacon's own metaphor for the relation was the marriage bed. He cautioned that "man" must show respect for nature even as "he" conquers "her." Man must not shy away from getting on top and penetrating her. Bacon was critical of his predecessors for failing to engage in aggressive courtship. The Christian mission, as Bacon saw it, was to bring about a new paradise where man and nature would not be opponents but would exist in a true marriage.[13]

Bacon's "conquest of nature" was restrained by his Christian assumptions of man as a creature engaged in reconciliation with a divinely given nature. As that religious context disappeared, the battle between man and nature became a no-holds-barred fight in which nature was the enemy and man was the conquering hero. Today, the younger generation is amazed that such language was casually and widely used until the middle of the twentieth century. The change has certainly been dramatic during the last half century. Such a rapid change, however, almost guarantees that the language and attitude of the past are still deeply embedded in discussing nature. The practical effects of considering nature as the enemy are all too obvious today.

One of the clearest examples of this not-so-distant war on nature is the chemical industry's role within real wars and its link to a metaphorical war on nature. Chemistry as a well-defined field barely existed at the beginning of World War I. James Conant offered his services to the government's war

effort and got the reply that the government already had a chemist; eventually Conant did become an advisor on the use of poison gas.[14] Chemical warfare in the form of mustard gas became a major weapon in the "Great War." The effects were frightening but also uncontrollable. The movement to ban chemical warfare was sparked by the unpredictability in its use as well as by humane considerations.

U.S. forces did not suffer a wide exposure to the poison gas and the United States refused to join the international treaty banning chemical weapons. The Geneva Protocol of 1925 remained in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for two decades until President Harry Truman removed it. President Richard Nixon stated that the United States would not use chemical or biological weapons on a first-strike basis. President Gerald Ford finally signed the agreement.[15]

Within the United States there had been advocates of the use of chemical instruments of war: "Chemical weapons offered the most civilized way to wage it. Gas belonged in a settled peaceful way to fend off natural enemies. Control of nature was a civilian affair, and because civilian affairs were peaceful, gas enabled Americans to wage 'peaceful wars.'"[16]

The chemists in that era viewed the war against nature as the literal meaning of war. The wars between nations became a subset of the larger war which provided the model for fighting a "peaceful war." In a 1921 speech, L. O. Howard, head of the U.S. Bureau of Entomology, spoke about "the war of humanity against the class *Insecta*." Speaking to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Howard declared, "There is a war, not among human beings, but between all humanity and certain forces that are arrayed against it."[17]

A poignant and revealing moment in the history of wars is found in the *Time* magazine of August 27, 1945. On the same page are photos of the first explosion of the atomic bomb and an article announcing the release of DDT for civilian use. The headline reads: "The war against winged pests is under way."[18] The editors probably did not reflect on the connection between the one war ending with unimaginable fury and the beginning of another kind of war which was less violent in appearance but in some ways more devastating and long lasting in its effects.

The war against "winged pests" was halted after twenty years; the change was signaled by the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. Despite objections to her book, the war metaphor for the human relation to the rest of the living world finally began to face serious questioning.[19] The United States at the time was engaged in the widespread use of chemical weapons in Vietnam. Agent Orange had devastating effects on human and nonhuman alike. Similar to the poison gas of World War I, it did "collateral damage" on the soldiers of the country using the chemical.

The use of war as a metaphor for "man's conquest of nature" was in some ways unfortunately accurate for describing a chemical assault on insects, the leveling of rain forests, the pollution of water, and the slaughter of wild animals. What is curious is the spread of the war metaphor into so many areas.

Diseases of the human body are part of the natural world but destructive of human nature. Cancer is a case of nature running wild and upsetting the balance of the human body. The metaphor of a "war on cancer" encourages violent intrusions ("let's cut that sucker out") with scalpel, chemicals, or radiation. The medical world has had to learn that breast, prostate, and some other cancers are not best imagined as an enemy to be destroyed by violent means. Treatments that draw on the strengths and natural rhythms of the human body are to be preferred.

## "WAR" ON DRUGS

A well-known use of the metaphor of war is "the war on drugs." Imagining and speaking of a "drug war" does have some logic to it. International organizations are involved in a deadly business that is attractive to criminal elements. The production, transportation, and distribution of drugs which are classified as illegal involve big money, risky partnerships, and constant violence. Drugs do pose a danger to every society. But like other wars, a war on drugs only adds a level of violence and offers no solution to a real problem.

When Richard Nixon launched a war on drugs, there were twenty million users in the United States. Four decades and one trillion dollars later, 138 million people had experimented with illegal drugs. The United States had become the leader in the percentage of its population in jail. The "war on drugs" had added to the violence both within the United States and among its chief suppliers of drugs.[20]

Drugs have always been used by human beings and no doubt will continue to be used. The term "drugs" refers to substances taken into the human body which can have a healing effect when there is sickness. In addition, drugs provide a nonordinary experience that anyone might find attractive. Because drugs are desirable and effective, they are a danger to people who lack understanding, maturity, and self-control.

Legal restrictions of some kind are unavoidable, but laws should address the real dangers, especially to the young, and not be political contrivances based on myth. Police forces are often called upon to enforce laws that are a sham. Politicians, television commentators, ministers, and judges project a drug problem on the underclass. The history of how drugs have become classified as legal or illegal is a story not widely disseminated.[21]

The most destructive drug in the country, alcohol, is not only legal but a mainstay of upper-class life. Alcohol in moderate amounts can be healthful, but used in excess it becomes addictive; it ravages the body and does incalculable damage to work and family life. The "noble experiment" of banning alcohol was a hopeless demand for unconditional surrender in a temperance war. What could have been foreseen was that the war against alcohol would produce more crime, addiction, and social chaos. A recent and more modest prohibition of alcohol until the "drinking age" of twenty-one is almost as irrational. It is a continuance of war on a smaller scale.

Since alcohol is omnipresent in the culture, the only solution to an alcohol problem is to educate young people in the use of the drug so that by age twenty-one they have learned a responsible usage. Binge drinking on college campuses is a terrible indictment of current attempts to keep young people away from alcohol. As for the big picture on alcohol, as well as other legal and illegal drugs, the metaphor of war is a diversion from the political and economic policies needed to change the culture that breeds addiction among both rich and poor.

## "WAR" ON POVERTY

A war on drugs is sometimes associated with another metaphorical war, namely, a "war on poverty." The metaphor of war is even more inappropriate in this case. A war on an abstract noun never makes much sense. In such cases, the need is to find a group who embody the abstraction (terrorists are people who embody terrorism). That seems logical enough; even a war on drugs finds an enemy in drug dealers who cause havoc in society. But who is the enemy in a war on poverty? Can it be said that poor people are the embodiment of poverty? That would make the poor the enemy in this war. No politician or social worker would subscribe to that logic, but the idea of poverty as a crime is never far out of sight in this country.[22]

Undoubtedly, people who proclaimed a war on poverty did so with good intentions and with sympathy for poor people. The question is whether the metaphor of war helps or hurts their cause. Even more than is the case with drugs, a violent attack on poverty is not a helpful way to think about curing poverty. Why people suffer poverty and how anyone, including the government, can relieve the plight of the poor, are complex problems that require understanding and long-term commitment.

The New Testament says that "the poor you will always have with you" which is intended to stir compassion but can engender complacency. Modern economic systems do guarantee a steady supply of poor people. Govern-

ments can at least mitigate the harsh results of poverty. Declaring war is a melodramatic call to a battle that cannot issue in unconditional surrender.

The best-known call for a war on poverty was made by President Lyndon Johnson. He already had his hands full with a war in Vietnam. One might have thought that the disaster of that war would warn a president from declaring a war on the home front. However, people take their metaphors from what is at hand. Transferring the billions of dollars from a quixotic venture in Southeast Asia to the urgent needs of people at home would have been a great accomplishment. But Johnson never found a way to extricate the country from the real war.

Many people assume that Lyndon Johnson or his aides invented the language of a war on poverty. Actually, it goes back at least as far as the beginning of the twentieth century. Writing in 1913, the historian Charles Beard described recent changes in social work: "Charity workers, whose function had hitherto been to gather up the wrecks of civilization and smooth their dying days, began to talk of "a war to the prevention of poverty.'"[23] That earlier war on poverty—or war to the prevention of poverty—got swallowed up by World War I, which Progressives naively thought would lead to greater government services.

If the point of metaphorical war is not violence but the mobilization of national resources, the call to war has never brought forth sustained dedication to helping the poor. There are legitimate debates about long-term solutions for poverty, or at least policies for achieving genuine shrinkage of poverty. Some combination of government aid and business opportunities exists in almost every country. The United States has always tilted toward the business side—the so-called private sector. The country has attracted people who are seeking economic rewards. The many people who succeed are resistant to a government war on poverty, but they might be persuaded that some well-thought-out help to the poor would be a good thing for the country as a whole.

## WAR'S OWN METAPHOR: GAME

If we turn the tables on the use of war as a metaphor and ask what metaphor war itself draws upon, the answer is—or at least used to be—clear. Throughout military history, and especially in the classical period of 1648 to 1914, war was seen through the prism of a game.

A game is an organized human activity that is played according to written and unwritten rules. It is an alternate reality within ordinary reality in which participants strive to attain some goal. There are endless examples of the games people play in school, work, religion, sports, therapy, courts, wed-

dings, funerals, and so forth. Ludwig Wittgenstein made famous the idea that language itself is best viewed as a game, that is, various games are played with language according to different "forms of life."[24] From the time of our earliest histories, war had most of the elements of a game.

Perhaps the earliest rule of the game of war was a principle of fair play, a rule that underlies other rules. In war, injury requires restitution of some kind. The conviction runs deep even among people today that justice requires a balancing of debts. A criminal has to be punished to reestablish harmony in the universe. The retaliation of a tribe for bloodshed may appear to the outsider as vengeance, but the responding party sees it as keeping faith with one's people both past and present.[25] The *lex talionis* (an eye for an eye) was a rule to keep violence within bounds. Avoid escalation by taking no more than an eye, or its equivalent, for an eye.

The first great treatise on the game of war was *The Art of War*, attributed to Sun Zi (or Sun Zu) in the fourth century BCE. Writing within a Taoist context, the author views war paradoxically; it is a game that is best if not played at all. The difference between *The Art of War* and the other great classic, Clausewitz's *On War*, can be dramatically illustrated by the fact that the term "force" (*li*) is used only nine times in the thirteen chapters of *The Art of War*. Clausewitz's *On War* uses "force" (*gewalt*) eight times in its first two paragraphs that define war.

*The Art of War* is closely related to a more famous work of the same era, *Tao Te Ching*, which describes how to rule a state by nonaction (*wu wei*). Sun Zu's *The Art of War* applies those principles to war. A superior general would subdue an enemy without fighting.[26] The book does not glorify winning battles or killing the enemy.

If actual battles cannot be avoided, cleverness is what should rule so that there is the least loss of life. "War is not a matter of the more troops the better. So long as one does not advance rashly, concentrates his strength, and understands his enemy, that will suffice to take the foe."[27] War should be quick. "There has never been a case of prolonged war from which a kingdom benefited."[28] Much of *The Art of War* may be out of date, but a world in which the rules were still being formed may speak to a world where the rules of the game have broken down.[29]

At about the time when *The Art of War* was composed, Plato described his ideal state in which a military class would rule. In book 5 of *The Republic*, Plato lays down some rules of war. The section is attached to his discussion of women and children. That location of the text may seem strange, but Plato says that "men and women will serve together, and take the children to war with them when they are old enough, to let them see, as they do in other trades, the jobs they will have to do when they grow up."[30] Plato says to put children on horseback as young as possible and have them ride out to watch the fighting.[31]

The Greeks by the time of Plato's *Republic* had suffered through some very bloody conflicts; new techniques of war threatened to increase the bloodshed. The long struggle between Athens and Sparta was documented by Thucydides in the *Peloponnesian Wars*. Thucydides' history has one of the most quoted passages in the history of politics and war. An Athenian diplomat is trying to convince a representative of the people of Melos to side with Athens. When the Melian resists, the Athenian says: "You know that right belongs only to equals. As for the rest, the strong do what they wish, the weak suffer what they must."[32] The Melians are not persuaded by this rule of war and as a result they are overcome; the men, women, and children are slaughtered.

Plato was most concerned with what he calls "civil strife" between two Greek city-states. Plato lays down rules for these domestic conflicts. "They will not, as Greeks, devastate Greek lands or burn Greek dwellings; nor will they admit that the whole people of a state—men, women and children—are their enemies but only the hostile minority who are responsible for the quarrel."[33] It is reasonable to take the opponents' crops, but the war is not going to last forever, so ravaging the land is forbidden.

The Greeks were mainly concerned with "civil strife" not wars against other nations. The Romans provided the first systematic thinking on war as an inevitable and justifiable human activity. The historian Livy wrote that "the war that is necessary is just, and hallowed are the arms where no hope exists but in them."[34] Augustine of Hippo was an heir to Greek and Roman thinking on war. Writing as the Roman Empire was collapsing, Augustine tried to work out a compromise between the Christian conscience and an increasingly violent world. He thought that a Christian should die rather than kill in his own defense. But if a vulnerable individual or group was attacked, the Christian had a duty to defend the defenseless. That logic allowed for many mischievous reasons for fighting wars.[35]

Augustine's rules for just reasons to begin wars and just ways to fight wars have echoed down through the centuries. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century took over Augustine's rules of war, and they are still cited by national leaders when they attempt to justify war. President George H. W. Bush during the Gulf War of 1991 was fond of invoking Thomas Aquinas in support of the way the war was being fought. But it was somewhat disconcerting that Bush did not know how to pronounce the name Aquinas.

The crusading spirit of the Middle Ages led to chaotic violence that culminated in the religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In reaction to horrendous violence, the rules of war became much more detailed and explicit. A war had a formal declaration of its beginning, stating that two nations were at war. At the end, a few months or years hence, the conclusion to the war was staged with greater formality. The provisions of

surrender were put in writing, the generals shook hands, and the game was over. One side won, the other lost; the loser lived to play again.

At the Nuremberg trials, Hermann Goering gave an autographed photo to the U.S. general Carl Spaatz. On it was an inscription: "War is like a football game; whoever loses gives his opponent the hand, and everything is forgotten."[36] In light of the Nazi atrocities and tens of millions dead, the statement seems bizarre. Goering did not grasp that by 1945, war according to clear rules of the game had collapsed. As a pilot in World War I, Goering would dip his wings to a disabled opponent and fly on rather than administer the coup de grâce.[37] In that war, many of the rules of war were being broken, but the generals could still imagine war as a game in which players knew the rules.

"An appropriate metaphor for interstate wars of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was a duel or lethal minuet."[38] **[AU: centuries not spelled out here?]** The game was played by actors in proper uniform and an audience of appreciative onlookers. It was a contest of wiles, tactics, and maneuvering. A breakthrough would symbolize victory. The soldier was professionally trained to act without letting loose any passions; hatred of the enemy could get in the way of efficient warfare. Some actions were out of bounds. You did not fire at generals, messengers, or flag bearers. Sometimes the game halted while each side was allowed to recover its dead and wounded from the field of play.

A main motive for Clausewitz's *On War* was that the Napoleonic wars had violated many of the rules of war as a legitimate extension of state policy. Clausewitz feared that "since the time of Bonaparte, war . . . has assumed quite a new nature, or rather it has approached much nearer to its real nature, to its absolute perfection."[39] Napoleon's army had suffered horrendous losses in its Russian expedition.[40] In the nineteenth century, by means of a series of conference treaties at Geneva, The Hague, and St. Petersburg, Europe pulled back from war in its "absolute perfection."

*On War* stands out as the most insightful, detailed, and consistent study of war as a game, "of all branches of human activity the most like a gambling game."[41] For Clausewitz, "combat is the real warlike activity, everything else is only its auxiliary."[42] This combat can be understood as a duel on an extensive scale. The point is "to compel our opponent to fulfill our will."[43] The military leader has to find the opponent's center of gravity and attack it. The center could be the enemy's army, the enemy's capital, or the army of a stronger ally.[44] The soldiers in an army must be committed to the "honor of its arms" if it is to be a formidable fighting force.[45]

In contrast to Sun Zu's *Art of War*, Clausewitz distrusts generals who win victories without bloodshed. He thinks that "benevolence" is the worst error in war. Although there are rules for restricting killing, Clausewitz wants a recognition that war is a game of bloodshed. "The fact that slaughter is a

horrifying spectacle must make us take war more seriously, but not provide an excuse for gradually blunting our swords in the name of humanity. Sooner or later someone will come along with a sharp sword and hack off our arms."[46]

Clausewitz's cold-blooded description of the game of war may be horrifying, but it has the virtue of being candid about the bloody nature of war rather than allowing national leaders to talk in abstractions and euphemisms. Clausewitz believed that wars are inevitable and must be taken seriously. He thought that if the professionally played game between nations were to break down, the violence and bloodshed would spill from the battlefield to every city and village, every man, woman, and child. Looking at today's battlefields, one might conclude he was right.

For the most part, wars in the nineteenth century kept within the rules of the game. But there were harbingers of the future. The U.S. Civil War (1861–1865) killed 600,000 young men, a number comparable to the Rwandan butchery of 1994. In the Boer War (1899–1902), ten British troops died of disease for each one in battle; there was widespread murder on both sides.[47]

At the beginning of World War I, war still connoted two nations sending their teams onto the field to determine which would be victorious. As more nations were dragged into the contest and the position of each army became frozen, the whole economy of each nation was mobilized for a war of attrition. The technology of war had drastically changed in the decades leading up to the war. Human bodies were still needed to fill the trenches, but they were more vulnerable to sophisticated weaponry.

Before World War I disintegrated into irrational slaughter, rules of war were observed by the troops in unofficial pacts. War was still a game to be played fairly; the other team was not to be attacked during time-outs.[48] An especially poignant moment was when British and German troops agreed to a cease-fire on Christmas Day in 1914. The soldiers threw snowballs instead of shooting their weapons. The high commanders of both sides must have been horrified at the soldiers playing another game in which the enemy was just ordinary guys playing for the other team. It is difficult to imagine the feelings on December 26 when the war game resumed and the aim again became killing members of the opposing team.[49]

## ENDGAME

Paul Fussell, in his "literary history" of the Great War, locates modern war's descent into absurdity on July 1, 1916. The Battle of the Somme was "the largest engagement fought since the beginning of civilization."[50] The British

leader, Lord Kitchener, was frustrated at the stalemate on the Western front and determined to break through the German line with one massive assault. Kitchener had gathered fresh recruits from Liverpool and other depressed areas of Britain to go on an exciting expedition to the war front. Some of them brought soccer balls with them. The British assembled 110,000 men at the Somme. Aerial bombing was supposed to have weakened the German position but in fact it had had little effect.

At 7:30 on the morning of July 1, the whistle blew and waves of young men came up out of the trenches (it was assumed they were too simple for any other kind of fighting). The machine guns cut them down as fast as they rose; the few that survived no-man's-land ended on barbed wire. By the afternoon, 60,000 men lay dead and wounded on the few hundred yards between the two trenches. The machine gunners stopped from the sheer exhaustion of killing and to allow the British to recover their wounded.[51] The twentieth century would provide technological slaughters on a larger scale, but for human tragedy in which war had lost all sense of a controlled game with clever tactics and decisive breakthroughs, the Battle of the Somme can still evoke amazement.

The eventual entrance of the United States helped to stop the fighting. Its troops were badly trained but they were fresh bodies backed by money and war material. President Woodrow Wilson became a supporter of the war and a prominent spokesperson for how to design the peace. Similar to 1648 and 1815, the horror of a war which had spun out of control brought calls for a new international system. The League of Nations would henceforth regulate "legitimate" wars based on self-defense or enforcement of League-sponsored sanctions. The emerging great powers would run the world with their acquired wisdom. Germany was severely punished and it was isolated until it could seek to redress its grievances in part two of the Great War.

The lull between parts one and two of the World War ended in the indiscriminate bombing of cities and the assault of armies on a scale that could not previously have been imagined. For supplying planes, ships, bombs, artillery, and support services, the militarization of each country was necessary. The United States, with an underperforming economy, discovered that it was an efficient producer of weapons. Its bombers were a main part of the Allied effort. It drafted sixteen million men into the conflicts with Japan and Germany, but the Soviet Union supplied the bulk of the manpower and suffered more than twenty million casualties. Of the five million Soviet prisoners in Nazi war camps, three million died.[52] The rules of war that were supposed to protect the rights of prisoners were clearly not working.

The six million Jews killed by the Nazis is one of the best-known statistics of the war. Although tens of millions of other people died, the slaughter of the Jews in a culture where they had been main contributors to the philosophical, artistic, political, and economic life stands out as a shocking revela-

tion of the irrationality of war.[53] It would be two decades before Jews could even find a name to describe the near annihilation of their people; the biblical word "Holocaust" would be reserved for this horrendous event.

Although World War II seems to be remembered with affection by some people as a "good war," the reaction at its conclusion was stupefaction and a resolve—once again—not to repeat the fiasco. The Nuremberg trials meted out punishment to Nazi leaders on a legal basis that was questionable but at least with a judicial process better than the usual "victor's justice." Justice Robert Jackson in his brilliant opening statement said that "the wrongs which we seek to condemn and punish have been so calculated, so malignant, and so devastating, that civilization cannot tolerate their being ignored, because it cannot survive their being repeated. That four great nations, flushed with victory and stung with injury stay the hand of vengeance and voluntarily submit their captive enemies to the judgment of the law is one of the most significant tributes that Power has ever paid to Reason."[54]

In the United States the dropping of two atomic bombs on defenseless populations was greeted more by cheers than moral qualms. At the time, atomic bombs did not seem to be a big jump from the firebombing of sixty-seven Japanese cities earlier that year.[55] From the start of the battle in Europe and the indiscriminate killing of whole populations by the Nazis, Allied bombing was thought to be justified as retaliatory. The bombing of Dresden in February 1945 prepared the mentality for the bombing of Hiroshima in August of that year.

The use of nuclear weapons did bring a halt to the slaughter. Except for the United States, which suffered no bombing of its homeland, much of the world was in ruins. There were at least some world leaders who recognized that the world could not sustain a war with nuclear weapons. Albert Einstein stated the case in dramatic language: "I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought but I do know that World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones." Clausewitz's war to perfection had become an imminent reality.

For forty years the world managed to avoid ultimate catastrophe as two empires checked each other with the threat of annihilation. Other nations saw joining the exclusive atomic club as a mark of prestige, and rightly concluded that the possession of atomic weapons was an incomparable tool for threatening other nations. The unstable nature of nuclear weapons follows from the fact that to be effective the threat of their use has to be credible while the actual use would be unimaginably destructive for everyone. This balance of terror somehow survived until one of the empires disintegrated. The problem of nuclear weapons shifted from a conflict between two empires to the possibility of a small group, which believes it has nothing to lose, unleashing a bomb in one of the cities of its hated enemy.

War that has spread to the whole population of a nation-state contradicted a key provision of the classic model of restricting the killing to professional armies and excluding noncombatants. An even more confusing change is the fact that war no longer has to be between nation-states. The state system had been established in the seventeenth century as an attempt to avoid wars. In practice, the fear engendered in one state by a neighbor's arming itself led to numerous wars. An end to the nation-state as the ultimate organization of human life might be desirable. But the human race has no agreement or even workable design for replacing the nation-state.

The United Nations is an organization of states, not nations. It should logically have been called the "United States" but that name was too closely identified with the United States of America. Much of the UN's concern over the years has been with nations or national groups within states. Minority groups within states do not usually have a way to get their voices heard in international dealings.

These minorities often use armed conflict either to reform the state or establish their own states. The problem is most severe in Africa and parts of Asia, where colonial powers drew state borders while ignorant or dismissive of ethnic, tribal, and religious arrangements. A diplomat at the Versailles conference after World War I wrote in a letter to his wife: "It is appalling that those three (Woodrow Wilson, Lloyd George, George Clemenceau) ignorant and irresponsible men are cutting Asia Minor to bits as if they were dividing a cake."[56]

There is often sympathy for groups desiring "national liberation." The principle that a nation deserves to have statehood has been regularly voiced since 1918. However, any serious move in that direction by a minority within an existing state causes shock waves within that state and its neighbors. The result has been that the great majority of wars have been within rather than between states, although often the term "war" is not used for liberations, insurgencies, rebellions, and so forth.

In the change of war from a well-defined clash of professional armies to irrational and seemingly endless violence between contending parties along ethnic, religious, and tribal lines, nothing better captures the change than the emergence of something truly novel: the child soldier. War has never been kind to children, but until recent decades no one could have imagined a real children's crusade.

P. W. Singer lists three causes for the estimated three hundred thousand boy and girl soldiers today: (1) an available pool of more than forty million orphans in Africa, (2) child-friendly weapons—the AK-47 is light, its use can be easily learned, and the weapon is almost indestructible; (3) a context of broken states and entrepreneurial wars. Millions of vulnerable children awaited ruthless dictators to press them into action. Charles Taylor's army was thought to be 60 percent children.[57]

## AGGRESSIVE AND DECEPTIVE BEYOND BOUNDS

War, although stupid and destructive, has persisted throughout the centuries; it or its violent successor continues. Why? It must be appealing at some level to something in the human psyche or at least to some individuals. For some people, war is profitable; for other people, war is exciting. Hardly anyone would admit to liking war, but for many people war provides a meaning to life.[58]

For a nation-state, war unifies the population into having a single vision trained on victory. "Leaders often favor war because war favors leaders."[59] The pacifist who recounts the horrors of war makes no inroads on the militarist mind. Yes, war involves horrors, but that is the means to greatness for the nation and courage for its youth. "Thirty years of warfare, terror and bloodshed in medieval Italy produced the Renaissance. Five hundred years of peace in Switzerland brought forth the cuckoo clock."[60]

War has been mainly an affair of old men sending young men out to battle to become real men. The old men may have been soldiers themselves who know the risks but whose own lives, they think, prove that the risk is worth taking. Other old men (starting at age forty) delight in imagining themselves as strategists, commanders, and leaders. They can be more dangerous than the generals. Erasmus stated the case succinctly: *Dulce bellum inexpertis* (War is sweet to those who have not experienced it).[61]

With the change in war, the military man might no longer encourage his eighteen-year-old son to pursue a military career in service to the country. One of his successors is a religious leader strapping a bomb onto a fifteen-year-old boy or girl to spread havoc on a city bus. The more overtly religious character of this new form of terror/war brings out the religious character of war. William James noted that "reflective apologists for war at the present day all take it religiously. It is a sort of sacrament."[62] War is difficult to dislodge because people religiously believe in its power, grace, and inevitability; it is good for the soul. As Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. said, "In this snug and over-safe corner of the world we need it [war] that we may realize that our comfortable routine is no eternal necessity of things, but merely a little space of calm in the midst of the tempestuous untamed streaming of the world."[63]

In the previous chapter I described a nonviolent life as aggressive and deceptive, two qualities that are necessary for the full emergence of human personality. Both qualities can obviously go astray if there is no communal context to maintain a healthy tension between the self and the other. A violent life is a parody of human development. The aggressive assertiveness of the person is replaced by destruction. Likewise, deceptive playfulness is

subsumed by lies, and as a result community is falsely attributed to the religious fervor of pseudopatriotism.

## AGGRESSIVENESS AND WAR

Opponents of war need to examine the virtues of war such as loyalty, courage, bravery, and heroism. The first thing to note about virtue is that the word is derived from *vir*, meaning "man," and *virtus*, meaning "strength." Despite the fact that by the nineteenth century virtue was assigned to women, at the deepest level "manly virtues" still take precedence. That is especially true in the United States, where as Walt Whitman said, "The best culture will always be that of the manly and courageous instincts, and loving perceptions, and of self-respect."[64]

War undeniably develops certain virtues. The strong and virtuous man is loyal to his buddies; undaunted by physical threats, he is ready to defend his family and his country. Anyone who dares to question martial virtues is dismissed as feminine, if a woman, or ridiculed as effeminate, if a man. How women soldiers fit into the mystique of military virtues is not yet clear. Their choice would seem to be either to outdo the guys at their own game or try to change what it means to serve one's country.

The promise of strength, loyalty, and bravery is achieved by some people in war, but at a terrible price. Unless individuals can draw upon independent judgment and other virtues, martial virtues end with a reversal of their promise, that is, the comradeship of the squad can lead to violation of the rights of others; the discipline of one's abilities can be directed at destruction; and bravery can lead to a foolish flirting with death. Theodore Roosevelt, a champion of the manly virtues, said that the citizen's duty is "to serve through the high gallantry of entire indifference to life, if war comes on the land."[65] Is there not something bizarre in defending the lives of citizens with the "high gallantry of entire indifference to life"?

The paradox of war's false promise is found in the two words, heroism and self-sacrifice. War is celebrated for demonstrating heroism and self-sacrifice in their ultimate realization. The two ideas are closely related. "Sacrifice" is often modified by the adjective "heroic," and a "hero" is someone ready for self-sacrifice. Neither idea receives much criticism. Indeed, heroes are celebrated as great men, and self-sacrifice is thought to be the ultimate form of morality. War is virtuous because it is undeniably the setting for the praise of heroism and self-sacrifice.

J. Glenn Gray's *The Warriors* is one of the best books ever written on war. It describes the author's experience in World War II and provides philosophical reflection on the nature of war. The book is a powerful indictment of

war. Yet Gray can still say, “Are we not right in honoring the fighter’s impulse to sacrifice himself for a comrade, even though it be done, as it so frequently is, in an evil cause? I think so.”[66] A country does have an obligation to respect and care for the young people it has sent to fight in its name. Nevertheless, the country’s celebration of heroism and self-sacrifice is misdirected in both war and peace.

## HEROES

“Pity the country that has no heroes,” says a character in Bertolt Brecht’s *Galileo*. “No,” is the reply, “pity the country that needs heroes.” The idea of the hero comes down to us from history’s oldest legends. The hero is a man of superhuman strength and courage who protects his people, usually with violent means. The fact that heroes have almost always been men is significant; “heroine” carries little weight.

To this day, “hero” connotes the military flavor of its origin. The soldier who performs feats of courage in the face of deadly danger—the war hero—remains the main model of the hero. Perhaps in primitive war when physical strength and individual daring were likely to carry off victory, the hero’s place made some sense. In modern wars, the hero is often dangerous. A military historian notes that “one consequence of mankind’s exaggerated regard for courage is that some remarkably stupid men, their only virtue a willingness to expose their own person to risk, have been granted positions of responsibility on the battlefield.”[67]

Hero is a title imposed by others. Anyone claiming to be a hero would be suspected of self-delusion. There is a predictable sequence of events after a great achievement in extreme circumstances. Someone is hailed as a hero. That person says, “Aw shucks, I was only doing my job.” The response to that comment is, “See how modest he is; that’s the mark of a true hero.” The appointed hero then becomes more embarrassed and has difficulty adjusting to what he feels is a status that he has not earned.

There is nothing wrong with honoring great work. We need more, not less, of such praise. In the movie *Topsy Turvy*, Gilbert says to Sullivan, “Wouldn’t it be great if quite ordinary people got a round of applause at the end of the day.” The idea of the hero is a distortion of and a narrowing of qualities that deserve praise. When the person who is hailed as a hero says, “I was just doing my job,” society ought to listen. The good work is what deserves praise, not some idea of heroism.

A striking example of the distortion of fine work with the title of hero occurred after the World Trade Center attack in 2001. Firemen in New York City, who do dangerous but necessary work every day, had been underappre-

ciated workers. The firemen were sometimes criticized for being insular, that they were a closed club of guys who stick together. On September 11, when the firemen reached the twin towers, they reacted as they usually do: they rushed up the stairs to save the lives of their fellow citizens. Three hundred forty-three of the firemen died in the effort. The dangerous daily work of these men was dramatized on a large screen for the entire world to see. Those who died were rightly honored by the city; those who survived were seen with new appreciation.

For several months afterward, every fireman was met with the word "hero." They found it embarrassing. Their usual response was, I am just doing my job as well as I can. The appointment of heroes idolizes one set of values and blocks out important concerns. For example, it does no dishonor to the memory of the firemen who died to inquire why the fire department's communication system was so poor. The city's administration failed to provide these men with the tools needed to do their job and protect their own lives. Assigning the title of hero is an easy way out for generals, mayors, and administrators who have sent men to their deaths in dangerous, unnecessary, and sometimes stupid ventures.

## SELF-SACRIFICE

The firemen who died on September 11, like firemen who die on other days, were not engaged in self-sacrifice. They were focused on saving lives, their own lives included. The idea of self-sacrifice is one of the most pernicious ideas that confuses moral thinking and glorifies war. "Sacrifice," like "hero," comes down to us from ancient religious myths. Its literal meaning is "to make holy." Ancient people apparently thought that the gods would be honored by humans' giving up prized possessions. If the first fruits of the harvest or the prized calf were destroyed, the humans would thereby signify that God owns everything and that the humans are thankful for whatever gifts they have been given.

Some people went so far as to offer their first-born child to the gods. The child was made holy by being killed. Looking back at these practices of sacrifice, we express horror but we may not be as different as we think we are. It is amazing that the word "sacrifice" is constantly used in today's secular literature and is assumed to be the height of morality. "Just as the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church, so the blood of the soldiers is the seed of the state."[68]

We use "sacrifice" in many contexts in which death is not the immediate issue, but there is always implied a negation or destruction. The idea of "self-sacrifice" is inconsistent to the point of absurdity. The first-born child who

was sacrificed to the gods did not choose self-sacrifice. The father or priest did the sacrificing; the child had no say. Anyone who would choose self-sacrifice would be deluded or suicidal.

The Christian movement did with "sacrifice" what it did with numerous other religious terms: the church tried baptizing it. That is, the term was adopted and placed into a new context. "Sacrifice" became more central to the Christian story than did most other adopted terms. The life and mission of Jesus were conceptualized as a sacrifice to his heavenly father. However, the whole history of Christianity has been a struggle against reverting to the most primitive idea of sacrifice.

In one reading of Christianity, God demanded an infinite sacrifice for an original human sin. The crucifixion of the Son of God was the only acceptable sacrifice. Jesus laid down his life willingly, even enthusiastically. His suffering is what saves us from the fires of hell. The Protestant Reformation was in part an attempt to correct the idea of sacrifice. Still, such things as the reception of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* suggest the continuing embrace of the idea of sacrificial suffering. Despite the secularization of the West, the self-sacrifice of the Christ still hovers over the heroic morality held up as the ideal.[69]

In an alternate reading of the Christian story, the triumph of Jesus over death is the sign that God is the creator of life and that all creation is revealing of the divine. All life is "made sacred" by a nonviolent resistance both to destructive tendencies within the human being and to political violence that puts innocent people to death. The biological facts of suffering and dying have not disappeared, but their meaning can be transformed by the example of Jesus and the hope for a fulfilled humanity. God was not a sadist exacting retribution; Jesus was not a masochist who gloried in suffering and self-sacrifice.

The latter reading of the Christian story was there from the beginning and still inspires many lives. Unfortunately, the primitive idea of sacrifice affects not only Christianity but our secular ideas of morality. Most of all, the confused idea of self-sacrifice is at the center of thinking about war. "Sacrifice itself creates a sense of legitimacy, simply because if we have made great sacrifices for something we cannot admit to ourselves that they have been in vain, for this would be a deep threat to our identity."[70]

There are numerous accounts of men on the battlefield who acted to save the lives of their comrades and died as a result. Their intention was not self-sacrifice; it was to save lives. The politicians back home who praise self-sacrifice are not honoring the dead but justifying their own decisions. Praise of self-sacrifice is often the attempt to cover up the incompetence and arrogance of old men who send young men out to die. If secular politicians would cease to use the word "sacrifice," we might be able to start demythologizing

war. The desirable moral ideal is aggressive assertion of the self in communal contexts rather than a confused idea of selflessness and self-sacrifice.

## DECEPTION AND LIES IN WAR

The previous chapter developed the idea that a deceptive attitude and deceptive practices are intrinsic and worthy elements of human life. Especially in the arts, etiquette, and negotiations, deception is built into the game of life. In the classical form of war between opposing armies, deception was a valued tactic, a way of avoiding bloodshed. *The Art of War* says quite simply that war is a way of deception. By a series of tactical movements, the opponent might be so deceived that surrender would follow. Deceptiveness could be a way of reducing violence within an intrinsically violent context. [71]

Legitimate deceptiveness, with language as its ally, is opposed to violence. In contrast, the destruction of genuine linguistic communication is intrinsic to violence. Speech in support of war is inevitably filled with lies. The saying is accurate that the first casualty of war is truth. Once war begins, nothing that is said by government officials can be trusted. The government officials may not intend to lie, but war creates such a haze over language that simple statements of truth are almost impossible. In his press conference of October 19, 2001, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld said, "I'm sixty-nine years old and I have never lied to the press." One could almost believe him, that is, believe that he believed he was telling the truth. But as eventually became evident, everything he was saying was premised on a lack of openness and truth in the government's preparation for war.

Winston Churchill put the matter cynically: "In wartime truth is so precious she must be surrounded by a bodyguard of lies." How else could one possibly deal with an enemy in wartime? But the information or disinformation put out for the enemy's benefit is not lying. That material is deception, which both sides know is part of the game of war. Any intelligent government official knows not to take at face value anything that is said by the enemy.

The lying that Churchill refers to is unfortunately closer to home. The reason why truth is so corrupted in war is that lies are directed at one's own people. Governments that claim to be democratic cannot trust their own citizens to be 100 percent behind the war effort. Government information is burdened with propaganda, half-truths, and outright lies. News reports are censored so that what does get through may distort the truth because of a lack of context.

The government does not have to rely only on overt censorship of news media. Reporting the news is economically tied to the political and economic

interests of the people who do the reporting as well as the people reported upon. Even for good and brave reporters, it is nearly impossible to find and state the truth. If a reporter can only get access to a war zone by being "embedded" with the troops, an "objective" reporting on war is unlikely.

Twentieth-century assaults on the very meaning of truth unwittingly made war's job easier. Journalist Arthur Bullard, on the eve of World War I, wrote, "Truth and falsehood are arbitrary terms. There is nothing in experience to tell us that one is preferable to the other. . . . There are lifeless truths and vital lies. . . . The force of an idea lies in its inspirational value."[72] This sentiment, common among youthful rebels, is a lazy way out of a search for truth. Any respectable historian knows that there is more than one version of an event. Nonetheless, it is the job of journalists and historians to identify and resist lies.

The U.S. entry into World War I is a case study in government officials and intellectual leaders deluding themselves into believing that the war was "progressive."[73] President Woodrow Wilson had run on a platform of staying out of war, but in a brief period of time he became the chief enthusiast for the war. He informed Congress on April 2, 1917, that "we must accept war" because the German government "has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and of right and is running amuck."[74] Unlike previous wars, this one was to be fought under the quixotic motto of a war to end all wars. Wilson justified the war with the false ideal of selflessness. "There is not a single selfish element, so far as I can see, in the cause we are fighting for. . . . We look for no profit. We look for no advantage."[75] Presumably, Wilson was not lying, but the statements have little connection to the realities of politics and war.

Wilson was abetted in his unreal expectations by intellectual leaders such as John Dewey who found support for the war in his pragmatic and Progressive philosophy. The war would lead to an expansion of government services that could later be harnessed to Progressive causes. The war itself was a sign of social triumph. A social gospel organization on the eve of the war proclaimed: "We believe that the age of sheer individualism is past and the age of social responsibility has arrived."[76]

What should have been worrisome to writers who hailed the war as a democratic step toward social responsibility was the blackout of criticism. Two professors at Columbia University, James Cattell and Henry Dana, were fired for writing a letter to Congress critical of the war. The president of the university, Nicholas Butler, said that Columbia had no place for those "who are not with whole heart and mind and strength committed to fight with us to make the world safe for democracy."[77]

The government came down hard on anyone, such as the Socialist leader Eugene Debs, who spoke openly against the war. The Espionage Act in 1917 forbade criticism of war politics. The Sedition Act in the following year

extended the penalties to anyone who spoke, wrote, or printed anything "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive about the government and armed services." One hundred forty-two people were sentenced to life imprisonment; seventeen were sentenced to death (none were executed) for opposition to the war.[78]

After the war, the suppression of open debate continued. A series of Supreme Court decisions eventually provided redress for Debs and others who had refused to be silent. The decisions rendered by Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. did not amount to a ringing endorsement of free speech. The government was supported in censoring words that "create a clear and present danger." The well-known example, used to embody that principle, is found in the same Court decision: "The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing panic."[79] The example is clear but its relevance to protesting war is doubtful. Instead of irresponsibly causing panic in a burning theater, the opponents of the war were more like firemen putting water on the fire.

One of the severe critics of Dewey and the Progressivists was Randolph Bourne. His biting criticism lost him his job but he saw clearly that the war would be the end of the Progressive movement. The heart of the movement was improved education, but there was nothing remotely educational about the war. The assumption that Progressives could direct the postwar government was proved hollow by the level of discussion within the war. Bourne recognized that Progressivism was on the road to ruin. "The support of the war by realists, radicals, pragmatists is due—or so they say—to the fact that the war is not only saving the cause of democracy, but is immensely accelerating its progress."[80] Directly addressing John Dewey, Bourne went to the heart of the issue: "If the war is too strong for you to prevent, how is it going to be weak enough for you to control and mold to your liberal purposes."[81]

For most war activity in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, presidents have easily manipulated public support. Even the Vietnam War, while opposed by many young people who were directly affected, was supported during three presidencies. Congress, which constitutionally has the power to start and to fund war, gave President Lyndon Johnson a blank check after an incident in the Tonkin Gulf. Later presidents found this strategy to be an effective way to be "commander in chief." In 2002 Congress abandoned its role in war by granting President George W. Bush the power to do anything he deemed necessary in dealing with Iraq.

One recent war that did involve Senate debate was the Gulf War of 1991. The Senate passed a war resolution by a four-vote majority. The vote was affected by what proved to be a calculated lie.[82] On October 10, 1990, a tearful fifteen-year-old girl named Nayirah testified before the Human Rights Caucus of Congress. She described how, as a volunteer in a Kuwaiti maternity ward, she had seen Iraqi troops storm the hospital, steal the incubators,

and "leave 312 babies on the cold floor to die." Seven senators referred to this story as supporting evidence for going to war.

In January 1991, just before U.S. bombing began, press reports questioned the truth of the story. It was learned that Nayirah was the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to Washington and had no connection to the Kuwaiti hospital. She had been coached by senior executives of Hill and Knowlton, the biggest public relations firm at the time, which had a contract with Kuwait to make the case for war. Brent Scowcroft, the national security advisor, said in a 1995 interview with the London *Guardian*: "We didn't know it wasn't true at the time." He acknowledged that "it was useful in mobilizing public opinion."[83]

If one believes Scowcroft that government officials were not lying, one can only conclude that their willingness to be taken in by a shaggy-dog story is breathtaking. Why would they not check out who this fifteen-year-old girl was and whether there was any basis for her story? The story itself stands in a long line of tall tales repeatedly told of an enemy's inhumanity. What would be the point of killing 312 babies (by her count?) except to prove that you are evil incarnate? The government in this case may not have been lying; it outsourced the job to a public relations firm.

## CATEGORIZING ATTITUDES TO WAR

It is often assumed that there are three main attitudes to war: realism, just war theory, and pacifism. Realism contends that war is justified when national self-interest dictates it. Just war theory can be taken as a chastened form of realism: a war is moral when it fits within a rule-based system of international order. Pacifism is an ideological stand against all wars. It gets practically no hearing in the world of politics and does not do much better among the general public.

*Realism*. Those people who accept war and therefore the preparation for war are called realistic. Their opponents are called idealists. "Realism" and "idealism" acquired well-defined political meanings in the early twentieth century. The terms came into vogue in the wake of World War I. The twenty years between parts one and two of the world war were described by E. H. Carr in his influential book, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, as a debate between reality and utopia.[84] The utopians were idealists in that they wanted to get rid of war. The onslaught of Hitler is taken to be definitive proof that idealism is not only simple-minded but dangerous. It almost seems that the movement to outlaw war is taken to be the cause of World War II.

The peace movement of the 1930s was perhaps naive, but it was nonetheless an attempt to go in the right direction. War should be outlawed but that

step would have to include international laws that can be enforced. The United Nations narrowed the League of Nations' legitimate reasons for war. It is time past to say that war is inadmissible. If assassination and torture are illegal, war ought to be. Outlawing war would not of itself stop war, any more than the outlawing of murder stops all murder. But the organized murder of war deserves a clear judgment of condemnation and organized resistance.

The failure of the peace movement to hold off World War II led to a hardening of the categories of realism and idealism after the war. Realists declared themselves the winner of the prewar debate; realism was the only position deserving serious consideration. There were splits within realism but the favorite phrase that unified most realists was "national self-interest." The phrase is often assumed to be obvious in meaning; instead, it is an ambiguous and confusing mantra.

As I noted in chapter 2, "self-interest" when used of a person is a questionable idea. When it is used of a nation-state it is of even more doubtful validity. Nations have a great many interests; people within a nation have competing interests. The idea of the nation having a "self interest" is derived from Rousseau's "general will." To the obvious question of how a whole people acts with one will or one interest, Rousseau says that conflict within the body politic is resolved by the presence of an external enemy.[85] Thus, instead of war being necessary to protect "the national interest," it is more accurate to say that war, or the threat of war, is what creates "the national interest."

If the only choice is between the literal meanings of "selfish" (pertaining to a self) and "selfless" (pertaining to no self), every act has to be selfish. But the real choice is between versions of the self. There is a self imagined to be a timeless and isolated entity acting for that self. There can also be a self that is related to other selves, including its own selves of past and future. This latter version of the self has many interests which need to be constantly sorted out.

The self as agent changes over time, according to which of its interests are chosen. It is relatively easy to trace how an individual person's self changes, say, between ages six and sixty. The nature of that change depends on the choice of interests within the person's social context. It is much more difficult to follow, for example, how Germany's self changed between 1870 and 1970 according to its choice of interests within the international context. What is clear is that the self of Germany did change, as did the character of other nation-states that shared in those interests.[86]

Hans Morgenthau, perhaps the most influential of the realist writers, took on morality directly: "A foreign policy derived from the national interest is in fact morally superior to a foreign policy inspired by universal principles."[87] Morgenthau cleverly posits what he claims the choice to be: morality based

on his version of what is real as opposed to universal principles which only exist in someone's theory of how the world should be. He is right in saying morality ought to be based on what is real, but he does not actually derive his version of morality that way except by saying that the nation should act from its self-interest.

Another realist, Reinhold Niebuhr, differed with Morgenthau on morality and national self-interest. Niebuhr's contribution was to emphasize that a person, and more so a nation, is often blind to its own best interests. A nation-state needs internal and external criticism to penetrate its hypocrisy and self-delusions. The Christian understanding of humans as constantly self-deceived could be a genuine contribution to political discussion. In the Niebuhrian version of realism, the nation-state needs interactions and rules to discover what its own best interests are.

The Vietnam War brought out the differences among "realists" on their meaning of self-interest. It was possible to see national self-interest as served by defeating the spread of communism in Vietnam. But those who had a chastened view of self-interest were against the war from the start. As the war dragged on it became increasingly clear that the United States did not understand the cultural and political situation it was involved in. However, some realists insisted that defeat in the war was clearly opposed to the national interest.

Among the critics of the war was the great diplomat George Kennan. He is usually classified as a realist; he noted his own indebtedness to Reinhold Niebuhr. He thought that the Vietnam War was based on "cynicism, audacity and brutality." The U.S. leaders had shown "a boundless contempt for the countries against which these efforts were directed." Escapades in foreign lands, where U.S. leaders are ignorant and arrogant, are anything but realistic. Kennan's assessment was: "We are not their keepers. We never will be."[88]

*Just War Theory.* What can be considered a variation on "realism" is the theory of just wars. The theory was developed not to justify wars but to place some restraints on injustice in the wars that were thought to be inevitable. The name is too positive; it might better be called a theory of "the less unjust war." While one can appreciate the efforts of theorists and their political allies to control the violence of war, the question today is whether war's "progress" and its breaking all boundaries make the conditions for going to war and fighting wars no longer an adequate response.

For restraining wars, a series of rules was drawn up for what would be "justice in going to war"; other rules were for "justice in the conduct of war." There are some variations in the rules for going to war, but most of the principles became standard: Is there a just cause for going to war? Is war a last resort? Is the war fought with a good intention? Is there a reasonable chance of success?

One need not be a cynic to think that nations can always find a way to give positive answers to these questions. Sometimes the just cause or good intention is transparently fraudulent, as was Hitler's claim for the invasion of Poland in 1939. At other times, a nation thinks it has exhausted all other means of redress short of war while it is simply blind to what could still be done. George H. W. Bush advised his son about going to war with Iraq: "If the man won't comply, you don't have any other choice."[89]

The rules for "justice in war" were fewer in number, focusing on the proportionality of the means used and the discrimination between combatant and noncombatant. Perhaps war planners try to observe these rules, but the observance of any rules in the chaos of battle was always strained and now any rules are almost impossible to observe. Since World War I, technology has transformed the level of violence which is available even to nonstate actors. The land mine, the IED of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, costs a few dollars and does incalculable damage to soldiers and civilians. Bombs dropped from unmanned aircraft are bound to cause "collateral damage" beyond the target. Any soldier on the front lines would admit that in trying to stay alive while people are trying to kill you blocks out considerations of how to fight a just war.

Writing under the rubric of just wars began with Augustine of Hippo and has continued to the present.[90] Various conferences and conventions in the last two centuries have attempted to update medieval rules of war. But the time seems ripe for a fifth Geneva Convention that would simply say: "War is illegal, immoral, and unacceptable in the civilized world." International laws that have attempted to restrain violence would still be in place.

*Voices of Peace.* A declaration that war is wrong, like all moral rules, is a start, not the end of the issue. The human race has never lacked for protests in the name of peace, but a philosophy of peace has to be more than a protest against war. Interactions within families, communities, and nations need to be nonviolent. Whatever generates violence feeds the mistrust and the lack of understanding that are the conditioning for war. In contrast, practices that help communication and mediate conflicts lessen violence and the likelihood of nations stumbling into war.

When Desiderius Erasmus in the sixteenth century wrote his essay "Peace Protests," it was difficult for advocates of peace to get their voices heard. The situation has not changed much. "Obviously, everyone is in favor of peace," it is said, "but everyone except a few simple souls recognizes that war is part of the real world." Not to prepare for war is thought to be irresponsible. Erasmus directly opposed Machiavelli's claim that "princes should make the art of war their only study and their only occupation."[91] On the contrary, wrote Erasmus, "by studying the 'art of peace' the prince would learn that the art of *avoiding* war is more noble than the art of *making* it."[92] Erasmus argued against the supremacy of the nation-state. If men fight wars in defend-

ing their homeland, "why do not men resolve that the universe should become the country of all?"[93]

Erasmus was realistic enough to realize the need for international institutions to deal with conflict. After five hundred more years of war, the world has begun to develop the organizations he recognized as necessary. Erasmus's arts of peace included establishing and preserving just laws, improving the public health, ensuring an adequate food supply, beautifying cities and their surroundings, and mastering the diplomatic alternatives to war.[94] This brilliant advocate of peace was hated by his opponents and judged weak by his own church, which to this day pays him little attention.[95]

Immanuel Kant, writing at the end of the eighteenth century, took up and forwarded Erasmus's vision of international institutions to a "pacific union of liberal republics."[96] His three foundations of peace are (1) republican constitutions, (2) free trade between interdependent nations, and (3) international organizations.[97] In that Kant remains one of the most prominent European thinkers, it is reasonable to see his hand in the European Union, which got started with policies encouraging trade.

"Pacifism" was coined to embrace the voices in favor of peace, but the term has great limitations. The term was introduced in 1901 at the Universal Peace Conference in Glasgow.[98] Pacifism has never enjoyed wide support. Even as war became more irrational and destructive, pacifism remained the description of a small minority. To the majority of the population, pacifism is a luxury of those who can opt out of the hard political realities. Most people would probably agree with Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s statement that "saints can be pure, but statesmen must be responsible. . . . In politics, practical and prudential judgment must have priority over moral verdicts."[99] (One might note that "responsible" is a moral term and "prudential judgment" was once the center of morality.) A pacifist politician is difficult to imagine.

Even philosophers, who one might expect to praise pacifism, do not have much to offer. A key moment in the shaping of the term was the debate over whether the United States should enter World War I. John Dewey had praise for his friend, Jane Addams, a fierce opponent of the war. But he dismissed "professional pacifists" as "victims of a moral innocency and inexpertness." There had been a peace movement in the decade leading up to the war. Dewey had identified himself with the movement but that was not where he finally landed. He complained that "the pacifist literature of the months preceding our entrance into war was opportunistic—breathlessly, frantically so."[100]

If the choice is among realism, just war, and pacifism, an opponent of war will get classified as the third. But opponents of war do not necessarily identify themselves this way. Whether or not one chooses to accept the term "pacifism," those who oppose war have to engage in a communal effort to reduce violence and to support political movements that build international

cooperation. Acting in pacific and nonviolent ways entails the risk that one's purity of intention does not guarantee an avoidance of violence. Aggressive action against violence is unavoidably in danger of being contaminated by violence.

Pacifism, unfortunately, is usually identified with a denial of aggressive activities. A widely circulated document in 1986, the *Seville Statement on Violence*, was drawn up by a group of scientists opposed to war.[101] It received a chilly response from many other scientists because, in Franz de Waal's words, "it depicts aggressive behavior as an ugly trait that needs to be obliterated."[102] Actually, that is not a fair criticism of the document. It does not say anything about obliterating aggressive behavior. It is a brief document in which each paragraph begins, "It is scientifically incorrect to say that . . . " The result is a somewhat bland set of statements; to disagree one would have to claim to know what *is* scientifically correct.

The only direct reference to aggressive behavior is its third paragraph: "It is scientifically incorrect to say that in the course of human evolution there has been a selection for aggressive behavior more than other kinds of behavior." That is not a denial of aggressive behavior, but the paragraph is suspect in that it ends with "violence is neither in our evolutionary legacy nor in our genes." The paragraph can be read to suggest that it is equating aggressive behavior and violence. If that is not the intention of the authors, a distinction should have been made clear.

The trouble with documents of this kind is not that they advocate peace but that they do so in such an indirect and innocuous way. The Seville Statement hardly deserved either the lavish praise or the harsh criticism that it received. Its final paragraph says, "We conclude that biology does not condemn humanity to war." The statement may have some value in assuring the public that biologists are not advocates of war. It does not contribute much to the conversation needed between political scientists, biologists, ethicists, and people from other and diverse backgrounds. The urgent questions remain: How does one challenge the supposed virtues of war? How do people resist violence in the daily life of their neighborhood and nation? How can citizens support a politics of international cooperation?

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# Chapter 5: Is Religion Violent? Are Religions Violent?

Each of the distinctions in the previous four chapters is important for understanding the influence of religion in the contemporary world. Religions have been both a source of violence and of inspiration for nonviolent activity in the service of peace. These two aspects of a religion are not easily separated. The passion and commitment of its members, which are the strength of a religion, are always a danger to tolerance and peace.[1] The paradoxical language of religion has to be understood even by critics if they wish to effectively oppose religion. Likewise, advocates of a particular religion need a critical understanding of their own religion and a sympathetic outlook toward other religions. This understanding of religion both from inside and outside a particular religion is sorely lacking in most discussions today.

After some exploring of violence and religion(s), this chapter focuses on the central teaching of one religious founder, Jesus of Nazareth, particularly as found in the Sermon on the Mount, and the movement that followed from his teaching and example. The chapter also includes the fundamental misunderstanding of that teaching in an essay by Max Weber which fails to employ the distinctions between force and power, force and aggressiveness, and force, violence and war. Weber's view unfortunately still underlies the assumption that a religious teaching on nonviolent living is irrelevant for national and international politics.

It seems certain that Jesus did not intend to start a new religion. Like most teachers who are identified as founders of a religion (Moses, Gautama, Muhammad), Jesus addressed his particular teaching to the tradition of his own people. As happens with many religions, what were seen as the universal implications of the particular doctrines and practices spurred the followers of Jesus to spread what the Christian Church called "the good news." This

missionary impulse is strongest in Christian and Muslim traditions, which today confront each other at numerous hot spots around the globe. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the future peace of the world largely depends upon Christians and Muslims achieving a critical understanding of their respective religions and a mutual tolerance based upon that understanding.

Before one can investigate the relation between religion and violence, it is necessary to point out an ambiguity in the meaning of "religion." For most of its history, the word "religion" referred to practices (worship of god/gods). There was a right way and a wrong way to do it. In the late sixteenth century, the meaning of the term took a dramatic turn. "Religion" came to mean a plurality of institutions with names such as Judaism and Christianity. The earlier meaning did not disappear, so the two meanings today are mixed together, which is a frequent source of confusion. One could paradoxically say that "religions" is not the plural of "religion"; it is the plural of "a religion."

Religion in its older meaning was singular; there was (true) religion as opposed to false practices. Religion referred mainly to external action, the performance of a ritual by a community or a member of a community. In contrast, religion in its modern meaning is plural; even when only one religion is the topic of discussion, the existence of many religions is presupposed. Religion in this newer meaning mainly refers to an institution that houses the interiority of its individual members.

The question "Is religion violent?" is related to but distinguishable from "Are religions violent?" The first question tends to fall to psychologists and researchers in human development. The second question is more the interest of historians and social scientists. When the question is asked, "Is a particular religion violent?" the answer involves social, cultural, and political material in addition to "religion" in its earlier meaning.

A common claim today is that religion causes violence and even is the chief cause of violence in history.[2] One cannot begin to respond to this claim without first sorting out the confusion in the use of "religion." The link between religion and violence often assumes that there is a transhistorical essence of religion that is found everywhere. The particular arrangement of religious institutions, especially in modern Europe and North America, tends to be conceptually imposed everywhere. The answer that I propose to the double question in the title of this chapter is: Religion as a particular set of practices is seldom violent. Religions as social institutions do not have a good historical record regarding violence, but they are not fated to always be sources of violence.

The original meaning of "religion" was a set of practices directed mainly though not exclusively toward God. Augustine of Hippo in the fourth century was aware of an ambiguity in the meaning of the term "religion," which the Christian Church had imported from the classical world: "We have no right

to affirm with confidence that "religion" is confined to the worship of God, since it seems that this word has been detached from its normal meaning in which it refers to an attitude of respect in relations between a man and his neighbor."[3] Augustine's awareness of the ambiguity in the meaning of "religion" did not prevent his writing the treatise *De Vera Religione*, the title of which refers not to Christianity as the true religion but to the fact that genuine worship has always existed.[4]

There is nothing intrinsically violent about worship, respect, devotion, praise, or honor directed toward God. The aim in religious practice is to make sacred all of life, but religion is vulnerable to distortions because it touches the deepest roots of life. The most egregious misunderstanding of religion was the practice of human sacrifice as an attempt to acknowledge the Lord of life. Religious practices commonly involve rituals concerning food and sex. The rituals place some restrictions on these forces of life; the restrictions are not intended to be a negation of life. Such rituals create and express a community bond; religion is not a weekly affair—it is part of the fabric of daily life.

The modern meaning of religion emerged after bloody conflict between Catholics and Protestants. A tolerance of religious differences was signaled by the fact that "Catholic" and "Protestant" were now recognized as names of different religions. That usage in the late sixteenth century quickly faded as Catholic and Protestant became widely accepted as parts of the Christian religion. By the early seventeenth century, Judaism and Islam were seen to fit within the idea of "a religion" and thereby were tolerated as religions in addition to Christianity.[5] What other names belong on a list of religions is debatable. It is unclear if Buddhism fits the category of "a religion." Hinduism as a religion is even more problematic. Some people have proposed simply getting rid of the term "religion," but that development is unlikely.[6] However, the ambiguity built into the term should never be forgotten in any discussion of religion(s) and violence.

The peculiar logic of religion is often lost sight of. Religious language is mostly poetry, story, and instructions for performance. In the modern world, poetry is frequently thought to be an acquired taste, storytelling is understood as entertainment mainly for children, and instruction about behavior is generally considered to be an unwelcome intrusion in the life of the individual. The result of these contemporary attitudes toward the characteristics of religion is that religious literature and practices have difficulty getting understood.

A surface acquaintance, for example, with the Jewish and Christian Bibles as well as the Qur'an, suggests a claim that God delivered to his people the final and absolute truth. These truths would take precedence over anything that has happened since then. A deeper acquaintance with this literature, however, makes apparent that things are not that simple. Religious

texts are not collections of truths; they are narratives written in the intimate language of one people. There are regular warnings against possessive adjectives. "Our" God is actually the God of the universe who is not our or anyone's possession. This God deals with humans in the particularities of their existence, that is, with this group of people, at this particular moment, in this particular place. Philosophers speculate in language that becomes more abstract as it becomes more comprehensive. Religion never abstracts from concrete language.

At their best, the three Abrahamic traditions—Jewish, Christian, Muslim—do not choose between the universal and the particular. Each of the religions uses a logic in which the particular and universal are always together. A particular place or time is particular insofar as it embodies the (nearly) universal. To the degree that any universality of doctrine can be said to exist, it is found embodied in particular people, events and places. Without the particular, the claim to universality fails to be more than a general and abstract pronouncement which is oppressive when it is not banal.

Great works of art manifest this logic by which they touch upon a human universality in their concreteness. What is true of a painting is also true of a great work of music or sculpture. Anyone who looks deeply enough into a single work may discover truth and value that are not confined to the time and place of the work's origin. The art embodies a nearly universal truth.

No work of art or religion is completely and finally universal; no human language can leave behind its concreteness. The future is obviously missing from any claimed universality. Each religion has to be careful not to fill in the gap between the truly universal and the intended universality of a particular religion. A particular religion should not speak as if it owned all the good words. Room has to be left so that the particulars of two or more traditions can point to a universality that goes beyond each and all of them. If a religion lays claim to already being universal, violence is almost inevitable. All competitors are judged to be false, dangerous, and in need of being suppressed.

Each of the Abrahamic religions has had difficulty maintaining the tension between the particular, which partially embodies the universal, and a universal reality. Dialogue with their two siblings is a big help to keeping open the space between an intended universality and the reality of the particular time, place and people. It is a presumptuous but not an absurd claim of the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religions that the history of the world is reflected in one series of events, and that the life of one people is representative of the human community. The test of the claim's validity is whether the small community turns inward to protect what it thinks it possesses or whether its concerns are to share what has been given to it and to work at reducing violent conflicts that blind humans to their kinship.

Members of a religion tend to view their own religion as an advocate of peace. Christians claim that they are peace loving, despite the shocking

record of violence that has accompanied the church. W. Cantwell Smith made the insightful comment that in religious controversies each side argues from the ideal condition of one's own religion and the real condition of one's opponent.[7] Thus, when Christians say that "Christians love one another," they speak truthfully of the Christian ideal. When Muslims say that Christianity is a source of violence, they speak truthfully about much of Christian history.

One way to explain the differences of perception between Muslims and Christians is that when Christians say "Islam" they do not usually refer to the religious practice called Islam but to the social, cultural institution that is also called Islam. For their part Muslims have to be careful not to collapse the difference between Islam (the practice) and Islam (the institution). When Muslims talk about Christianity, they are not usually imagining a Christian practice, such as eucharistic liturgy, but a Christian institution. And the institution is probably not the local church community but, for example, the Vatican or the U.S. government. Some Christians who insist on calling the United States a Christian country add to the misperception and confusion. For the peace of the world it is important for both Muslims and Christians to return to their respective sources and get an accurate perception of their religion in contrast to the contemporary institutionalizations of Islam and of Christian practice.

This chapter asks the question whether the Jesus movement was a missed opportunity in the emergence of the Christian religion. The working premise is that Jesus of Nazareth in his life and teaching gave impetus to a nonviolent way of living. Those who were his followers provided an embodiment of that attitude for some decades or centuries. Perhaps it was inevitable that the movement became a settled institution that had to make compromises with its violent surroundings. Still, the "institutionalizing" could have taken various forms, and in fact there has been a nearly continuous attempt to make the form of the church be more congruent with the life and teaching of Jesus. There was a medieval saying that "the church is always in need of being reformed."

To outsiders, the attempt to get it right after almost two thousand years may seem quixotic. But it is of concern to the non-Christian world that today's followers of Jesus recover what they can of the early Jesus movement because the alternative is to leave "Christianity" to people who wield the supposed teaching of Jesus Christ as an ideology strongly prone to violence. Jesus' actions and words are badly distorted by many people who use the New Testament for an answer book or for placards at football games.

It has to be admitted that there is no consensus about the historical record. Practically everything we know about Jesus is in the New Testament, composed by his followers. Lacking the journalist's or the historian's objectivity, the record is suspect. Furthermore, what is astounding about the gospel is

that four different versions of the story exist. It did not seem to bother the early followers that they did not get their story straight with a single version. The result is some confusion and endless debate about the accuracy of everything in the gospels.

On the plus side of this diversity, the several versions of the gospel provide checks on the validity and meaning of particular passages. People who pull a sentence from one of the gospel versions with no attention to context are likely to misunderstand the text. The gospels are not collections of epigrams or abstract truths; they are narratives in witness to a particular life. Understandably, few people wish to devote endless hours and many years to linguistic, historical, archeological, and literary studies to become experts on the New Testament. Nonetheless, Christians who claim to know the mind of Jesus, as well as those who criticize his teaching, have an obligation to base what they say on more than a few isolated sayings.

A first and large problem is the name of the person we are discussing. "Christ" is a title that the followers of Jesus ("Christians") ascribed to him. For Christians to call him "the Christ" is their prerogative, even though it remains the central friction in Jewish-Christian relations. For Christians in their own doctrinal and liturgical settings, "Jesus-Christ" is appropriate as a language of prayer and religious belief. "Christ" was the Greek translation of the Aramaic for "Messiah," a word expressive of the hope of the Jewish people. The Messiah as the anointed of God was to initiate a messianic age of peace. The term "Christ" includes some of the meaning of "Messiah" but it quickly took on political and cosmic meaning not found in the term "Messiah."

During the presidential election campaign in 2000, George W. Bush was asked who his favorite philosopher was. He answered "Jesus Christ," a response that drew much criticism and some ridicule. If one asks what was wrong with Bush's answer, it is that "Christ" removes his answer from reference to a philosopher. If Bush had answered "Jesus," he would have put himself into the company of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. Bush's answer did not refer to a philosopher but to a figure and a doctrine of Christian belief. This linguistic point is significant in that Bush's policies of the succeeding eight years showed little to no awareness of the philosophy of Jesus but much influence from one narrow version of Christian belief.

The popular images of Jesus employ contrasting meanings of power. On one side is the picture of a sentimental and passive Jesus whose mission is to suffer all manner of violent attack and offer no reaction. On the other side is a forceful but nonviolent Jesus who combines force and aggressiveness with other forms of power that in resisting violence can change persons and political reality.[8]

Was Jesus political? Jesus was not a politician in our customary sense of the word. But neither are his teachings apolitical nor was the movement he

inspired irrelevant to politics. "He did not say (as some sectarian pacifists might) 'you can have your politics and I shall do something else more important'; he said 'your definition of *polis*, of the social, of the wholeness of being human socially is perverted.'"[9]

The Jesus movement, like so many reform movements, did not fulfill its hopes. The culprit is usually identified as the "Constantinian" moment in the fourth century when the Christian Church became cozily ensconced with the power politics of the day. The more radical hope for a transformed world did not cease to be, but it did disappear from the public world and the world of politics. "Piety" became associated with a private world of devotions and rulekeeping.

The root of the church's problem, which continues today, lies not in the fourth but in the first century. That may not sound like encouraging news. Christianity, it may seem, failed in a matter of decades. However, a surprising development of the last half century makes possible a new approach. Thanks to Christian and Jewish scholarship, the twenty-first century has a chance to appreciate the Jesus movement of the first century better than could any century in between then and now. The Christian churches are in urgent need of this understanding for their own mission, and the whole world would also reap some benefit.

The following section places Jesus in his proper milieu as a Jewish teacher in first-century Galilee and Judea. I then take the most often cited example of his teaching, the Sermon on the Mount and, with the help of Jewish as well as Christian commentators, I place this section of Matthew's gospel into its Jewish context and in relation to the rest of the New Testament. After that, I examine an essay by Max Weber that continues to influence the modern misunderstanding of the Sermon on the Mount and the Christian ethics summarized by that sermon.

## JESUA BAR-JOSEPH

A thoughtful commentator, Norman Cousins, once said: "Jews and Christians have at least one thing in common; both have been unwilling to live with the idea that Jesus was a Jew." Both communities have suffered from this stark denial of an historical reality. The Christian loss has been greater and the consequences for the rest of the world have been devastating. The first great Christian schism was the separation of the Jesus movement and the synagogue.

The effect on the nascent church was almost inevitable: a dichotomized church of institutional power hidden behind claims of universal ideals, combined with subservient members relegated to a private world. The positive

development of today is that the Jewish-Christian split of two millennia has begun to be healed. No one expects a reunion of Jews and Christians, but the lessening of enmity and the beginnings of mutual understanding are giant steps forward. Without some knowledge of the language, culture and tradition of the Jews, Christians are cut off from a deeper understanding of Jesus' life and teaching. Lifting selected passages from the Greek translation of the Christian Old Testament is no substitute for receiving help in understanding from the people most familiar with the language of the text.

Christians have to resituate Jesus in the context of his people and his tradition. The historical scholarship of the last half century has not penetrated very far into most of Christian piety and much of Christian theology. A Jewish scholar of the New Testament, in placing Jesus in the line of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, notes that "this historical anchoring need not and should not in Christian teaching preclude or overshadow Jesus' role in the divine plan. He must, in the Christian tradition, be more than just a really fine Jewish teacher. But he must be that Jewish teacher as well."[10] The same author points out that Jesus taught like a Jew, argued like a Jew, risked persecution and died like thousands of other Jews on a Roman cross.[11]

Jesus lived within a swirl of reform movements in first-century Israel. The Pharisees were the most complex group whose origin is not clear.[12] Although the New Testament writers succeeded in making "pharisee" and "pharisaical" negative terms, Jesus' teaching was close to at least part of the pharisaical school. When the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 CE, the Sadducees were dispossessed; the Pharisees were ready to assume leadership in meeting places called synagogues. Jesus' blistering condemnation of the Pharisees, especially in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew's gospel, reflects the conflict between synagogue leaders and Jesus' followers during the decade of the 70s and later.

Within the first three (synoptic) gospels, Jesus is portrayed as having arguments with the Pharisees. Strong words of criticism within the group would not have been unusual. The Jesus in Matthew, Mark, and Luke is a Jew arguing with other Jews about Jewish tradition and practice. The fourth gospel, attributed to John, and written considerably later than the synoptic gospels, is a profound poetic work that moves away from confirmed historical facts. It is also the main source for the anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic ideologues of later centuries.[13]

Jesus' teaching was not a radical break from the prophetic tradition and other reforms of his time. Under the strong criticism of the prophets, the Jews had moved from seeing God as a warrior who would smite their enemies to a demanding but loving father. In early parts of the Bible, God is imagined or interpreted as leading the Israelites in wars and massacres. "Alongside the image of the divine warrior and hopes for Israel's victories in battle, the Hebrew Bible also presents the hope for a world in which the wolf shall live

with the lamb, nations will live in peace, and the poor and the oppressed will find justice."[14]

The Jesus movement could conceivably have been an organic development from within the peace tradition of Israel. Probably a separation from the mother religion would eventually have happened but Rabbinic and Christian traditions could have functioned as siblings, not without conflict but certainly without the bloody trail of two thousand years.[15] With the premature and total split from Jewish tradition, both communities suffered loss. The church became twisted back against its origin. As Martin Buber often pointed out, every Christian reform movement has to go back to the Jewish roots of Christianity.[16] A critical reading of the New Testament needs to include Jewish scholarship as well as Christian.

The stain of anti-Semitism is the worst scandal in Christian history, its most intimate failure. Christian teaching on love, suffering, violence, and war has been badly distorted by losing sight of the Jewish Jesus and the tradition within which his teaching is intelligible. For one of the primary examples of that teaching and its misunderstanding by both friend and foe, I turn to what is called the Sermon on the Mount.

## SERMON ON THE MOUNT, TEACHING ON THE PLAIN

"Sermon on the Mount" refers to a long instruction in the Gospel of Matthew, chapters 5–7. Like much in the gospels, the sayings in these chapters have a cut-and-paste quality to their assembly as a single sermon. The meaning of the teaching requires the context of the New Testament (and its context), starting with a set of texts in Luke's gospel that draws upon the same body of material as Matthew's Sermon on the Mount. I refer to Luke's version as the Teaching on the Plain. Before commenting on several of the points in the sermon, some general comments are needed to set the context.

The existing sermon in Matthew's gospel is the product of several translations. Obviously, an English, French, or German version has been translated from first-century spoken Greek. More important, the Greek is a translation from the Aramaic that Jesus spoke. In every translation, there are losses of meaning, not just because a word in one language is not the exact equivalent in another language. Jesus as a Jew stands in a long tradition so that much of what he says echoes previous teaching in the tradition. He gives new meaning or new emphasis to previous teachings, but one cannot make sense of what he is saying without some knowledge of what he is modifying by imaginative reconstruction and syntheses.

In a few cases, there may simply be mistakes. For example, Jesus says in Matthew, "Be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48).

The parallel text in Luke reads, "Be merciful just as your heavenly father is merciful" (Luke 6:36). Almost certainly Luke has it right. The command to be as perfect as God is logically impossible. And the immediate context is one of showing mercy and compassion. This relation to sharing God's mercy and forgiveness is central to Jesus' teaching here and elsewhere.

In a series of well-known contrasts, Jesus describes "what you have heard said" as opposed to what he says. For interpreting these contrasts it is indispensable to notice the passage in Matthew that just precedes them: "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." Admittedly, the word "fulfill" can have several meanings but the term has to be consistent with the next verse: "For truly, I say to you not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished" (Matthew 5:17–18). These two verses and the following two that lead into the contrasts make it impossible to read Jesus' teaching as a rejection of "the law and the prophets" in favor of what would be their opposites.

The series of so-called antitheses ("You have heard that it was said to the men of old . . . but I say to you . . .") should be called "super-theses," an intensifying of previous teaching. The meaning of the Greek word translated as "but" in the middle of each contrast is carried in English by "but also." For example, when Jesus contrasts committing adultery and looking lustfully on a woman, he is not replacing the first with the second; he is trying to deepen a law against adultery rather than abolish it. A Christian who reads Jesus' teaching as consisting of the second half of each statement to the exclusion of the first half seriously distorts both Jewish and Christian traditions.

It is true that Jesus as a Jewish prophet uses startling metaphors to heighten the contrasts he makes. Presumably no one took literally his suggestion to pluck out your right eye if that is the only way to control your body. However, one of the most often quoted verses in the New Testament is Matthew 5:38: "You have heard that it was said 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'" The peculiar thing about this quotation from Exodus 21:24 is that the verb is omitted. The most likely assumption that is made by Christian readers is that the omitted verb is *take*, an approval of vengeance. The actual text is, "If any harm follows, then you shall *give* life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth." The concern is not vengeance from the side of the person harmed but restitution by the offender.

True, there are parallel texts—Leviticus 24:20, Deuteronomy 19:21—where the viewpoint is different. The one who has been offended is told not to take more than an eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth. The law was a restraint upon, not an approval of, violent retaliation. An equality between wrongs that had been committed and compensation for those wrongs had represented an ethical advance. Jesus believed that the human race could do still better than trying simply to balance debts according to a rough equality.

The way that the sharp contrasts in the text are highlighted easily led to the conclusion that Jesus was inventing a Christian ethic as a contradiction of Jewish tradition. If one does not lift the contrasts out of context, it makes far more sense to say, as a Jewish commentator does, "In each case, Jesus is taking the Law, the Torah, so seriously that he extends prohibitions regarding action to prohibition regarding thought . . . Jesus does not oppose the law; he extends it. Moreover, his attitude toward it is not liberal, but highly conservative."[17] Many nineteenth- and early twentieth-century writers imagined a liberal Jesus in their own image. But like all genuine reformers, Jesus was deeply conservative as opposed to superficially conservative.

The Sermon on the Mount as a whole and as a summary of Jesus' teaching has been misunderstood in two ways: by damning with faint praise or by just plain damning. The first of these misunderstandings is the more common. The Sermon on the Mount is praised as a beautiful poetic ideal that an individual should try to live by. Of course, it is also assumed to be highly impractical so that few people, except saints, seriously try to conform their life to this ideal. Wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone lived according to this code of selflessness, forgiveness, and "turning the other cheek"? Nations, it is said, should not try to observe this individualistic ideal. It would be suicidal for a nation and its leaders to follow the Sermon on the Mount.

The second misunderstanding, which I have called "just plain damning," denounces the Sermon on the Mount as slave morality. It is not only impractical, it holds out a glorification of poverty, suffering, and subservience. This reaction is actually more respectful of Jesus' teaching than the pious rhetoric that reduces the words to an individual and impractical ideal. A frontal attack on the teaching as dangerous admits or implies that the sermon has important social, economic and political implications. Jesus' life and teaching were to challenge the powers of religious and secular empires at the risk of his own life. The Sermon on the Mount is not a series of nice thoughts about love.

Many German leaders, starting with Otto von Bismarck, expressed admiration for the Sermon on the Mount—before dismissing its relevance to politics. Herbert Marcuse took the Sermon on the Mount more seriously in a 1968 speech to students in Berlin: "With the Sermon on the Mount one cannot revolt. . . . Nothing is more abominable than the preaching of love: 'Do not hate your enemy'—this in a world in which hate is everywhere institutionalized."[18]

Marcuse was no doubt right that hate is everywhere institutionalized. But does not hating one's opponent only add to the problem? Marcuse was contemptuous of the preaching of love. Certainly, preaching is worse than useless unless it is an advocacy of action within a particular community that already professes belief in these actions. Preaching love in general is likely to be a sentimental cover-up of particular situations that require intelligence,

dedication, and risky action. The Sermon on the Mount is far from being sentimental preaching.

## Some Textual Misunderstandings

To counter the general misunderstanding of the Sermon on the Mount, it is necessary to examine particular passages, verses, and words. For example, Jesus says "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:43–44). Jesus cites here a verse from Leviticus 19:18: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Several things should be noted about the cited text. First, the word "neighbor" is in the dative rather than accusative case. That is, a more accurate translation into English would be "love to your neighbor."[19] The love he urges is not a pious feeling but concrete actions. Second, there is nothing in Leviticus about hating your enemy. Jesus or the Evangelist is quoting what may have been a popular inference from a restricted meaning of "neighbor." Third, the verb is in the future, not the imperative: "You will love your neighbor," rather than "Love your neighbor." Critics often complain that telling people that they should love does not work. Jesus does not tell people to feel love instead of hatred. Jesus' teaching of love to your enemies is a practical, long-range program of reducing personal and institutional hatred. Faced with hostility, a person can perform actions that show we are not doomed always to be enemies.

One's actions can "de-hostilize" the situation so that over time we may find a way to live on the same planet or even in the same neighborhood. If you act in kindness it will lead to an affirming of both your neighbor and yourself. There is no restriction of "neighbor" to a friend or someone who lives next door; neighbor is anyone who is close by and in need. This principle is not restricted to personal encounters; nations can also practice the same "de-hostilizing."

The assumption that the Sermon on the Mount is a platform of spineless passivity is particularly based on Matthew 5:39: "But I say to you, do not resist one who is evil." From comparison to at least five similar passages in the New Testament, the apparent meaning of this text would make no sense. Paul's teaching in Romans 12:21 expresses what most likely is Jesus' meaning: "Overcome evil with good." Jesus probably said something close to "Do not compete in doing injustice" or "Resist evil with kindness." The Greek word for resist that is used in the text was often used in a military context. Thus the sense of the text might be not to violently resist an evildoer.[20]

There are other counsels in the text that are puzzling and paradoxical. The second half of 5:39 reads: "But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." The detail of the *right* cheek is significant. An attack

of an opponent would usually come from the left. Being struck on the right cheek would be a back-of-the-hand slap, as in challenging a person to a duel. The strange gesture of turning to present the other cheek is a refusal to be drawn into violent conflict.

There were several events in Jewish history that used this tactic of "passive resistance." The most famous is a story recounted by Josephus in his history of the Jews.[21] A group of Jews confronted by violent actions on the part of Roman soldiers threw themselves on the ground and offered their necks rather than break the law. The Romans were taken aback by the gesture, which was not suicidal in intent but a challenge to the humanity of their oppressors. It is not wildly speculative to connect this gesture to what is commonly done by other animals that are smart enough to substitute a gesture of nonresistance for a fight to the death.

Similar acts of "nonresistance" (actually, nonviolent resistance) are suggested by going two miles if forced to go one, or to give away one's cloak along with a stolen coat. A quite understandable reaction to such acts of nonviolent resistance is to call them foolish or crazy. Jesus' own family said, "He is out of his mind" (Mark 3:21). But these actions are not an absence of response. What Jesus calls for is action that at times is paradoxical but always with an appeal to the humanity of both parties.

When someone is violently attacked, there may be a variety of legitimate responses. What is excluded is a symmetrical response of violence for violence. Only the situation can supply the exact way to respond to corruption, evil and violent oppression. In all cases, Jesus says, his followers must be gentle as doves and wise as serpents (Matthew 10:16).

Jesus' attitude to violence and war is prominent in the first section of the Sermon on the Mount, called the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3–10). This teaching consists of eight poetic statements, each beginning with the word "blessed" or "happy." Unlike the super-theses in the chapter, the contrasts in the Beatitudes are left implicit, at least in Matthew's version. If the meek shall inherit the earth, we are likely to conclude that the nonmeek will lack that inheritance. In Luke's version of the Beatitudes (6:20–26) there is a series of "woes" directed at the oppressors of the blessed.

The problem with the Beatitudes lies in how to understand the praised categories, for example, the poor in spirit, the pure in heart, or those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Luke's lesser-known version of the Beatitudes presents a sharper political image in contrasting the rich and the poor, the hungry and "you that are full."[22]

The Beatitudes in Matthew's version can be misunderstood as advocating powerlessness, suffering, and submission in this world because in heaven the tables will be turned. "Pie in the sky" was Marx's pithy criticism, which does in fact describe some religion. The teaching of the Galilean prophet taken in full does not consist in "otherworldly" promises. He began his mission in

Nazareth by saying that he had been sent "to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed (Luke 4:18). The hometown crowd responded to his saying that "no prophet is acceptable in his own country" (4:24) by trying to throw him off a cliff (4:29).

Several times in the Beatitudes Jesus refers to the kingdom of heaven. This image, or its variation "the kingdom of God," is central to his teaching but a problem for readers today. Kingdoms are not much in vogue these days. Attempts to translate "kingdom" with more up-to-date language fall flat and lose the connotations that come from the biblical tradition. [23] Jesus himself played with the image of kingdom, coloring the picture with elements from his Galilean background: fields, vineyards, seeds, fishnets, children, poor workers. [24] Some political meaning of kingdom was obvious.

One of the strangest developments in Christian history was the attempt to completely spiritualize the meaning of "kingdom." In a defensive move of the nineteenth century, Christian writers gave central place to the saying in Luke 17:21 misleadingly translated as "the kingdom of God is within you." That image is lacking in logic, collapsing the obvious political meaning of kingdom into the interior of a human individual.[25] A more accurate translation of the text as "the kingdom of God is in the midst of you" restores some logic. The text is a call to challenge all the secular kingdoms by seeking the kingdom of God which has its own key, entrance gate, and places to sit.[26]

The use of the kingdom of *heaven* in Matthew's Beatitudes suggests spiritualizing of another kind. In Jesus' teaching, heaven takes its primary meaning from association with his father who is father of all on earth. The heavenly father is not located in a place called heaven; his reign extends everywhere; his dominion is the earth. The contrasts that Jesus uses are more temporal than local. The favored Jewish phrase "world-to-come" does not refer to a place above but to a transformation of the only world that there is.

This element of first-century Jewish thinking should not be foreign to twenty-first-century thinking about social and political change. The kingdom of heaven is not a different world from the one that exists but emerges as the hoped-for era of peace and justice. In looking towards this kingdom of heaven, Jesus echoes the vision of peace found in such books as Isaiah and Micah.

Jesus states five beatitudes that are needed as preparation before stating the sixth: "Blessed are peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God" (5:9). Peace is not something found; neither is it a mere absence of war. Human effort is required to *make* peace.[27] The political implications of this calling are unmistakable. The word for peacemaker was on the emperor's coins. The followers of Jesus were to build a true peace in place of or up against the *Pax Romana*.

Imperial Rome claimed to be a pacifier, invoking the gods for support of its empire. But peace imposed by an outside force cannot be genuine and

long-lasting. A longer and more radical transformation of the heart and the community is needed for the peace of the world-to-come. Jesus dissociates his cause from the group known as Zealots who hoped to overcome Rome by armed rebellion. Those efforts led to disastrous bloodshed in 70 CE and a more definitive defeat in 135 CE.

The one incident that is most often cited to support a "zealous" approach to armed conflict is Jesus' "cleansing of the temple." Luke describes the event simply as "he entered the temple to drive out those who sold." The term for "drive out" is one that is often used for sending or taking out; it indicates an authoritative dismissal. Jesus' reason for this symbolic action is given in the next verse: "It is written 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you have made it a den of robbers" (Luke 19:45–46). Matthew adds that "he overturned the tables of the money changers" (Matthew 21:12). Only the fourth gospel includes the imaginative detail that he made a "whip of cords" to drive out the money changers and their animals (John 2:15).

Was this an act of violence? It was certainly an aggressive act inspired by holy wrath. For people who equate force and violence, any action not meekly subservient can be classified as violent. But, as R. H. Bainton points out, a whip of cords is not a hand grenade.[28] There is no suggestion that bones were broken or blood was shed. The gesture was a symbolic protest that made appeal to ancient tradition against business interests taking over the temple. Jesus' words refer to Jeremiah's warning not to put all one's trust in the temple. Has this house, asks Jeremiah "become a den of robbers?" (Jeremiah. 7:11). The phrase could be translated as a "den of violent ones" which would specify better that the problem was not thievery but mistrusting the temple as a protection against Rome's power.[29]

For critics of Jesus' teaching of nonviolence, much is made of a strange passage in Mark's Gospel placed immediately after the temple incident. Jesus was hungry and looked for fruit on a fig tree. Finding no figs, he cursed the tree, saying, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again" (Mark 11:12–14). The symbolic point of the story is puzzling; it seems to be a continuation of the attitude reflected in the temple cleansing. Some people think that it shows petulance; one could also find it comical. In any case, cursing a tree can hardly be called an act of violence.

The more serious challenge on the issue of violence consists of a few texts that speak of "the sword," most notably Matthew 10:34: "Do not think I have come to bring peace on earth. I have not come to bring peace but a sword." Jesus is not making a casual remark here but describing his mission in life. This isolated text, however, needs the context of all the other places where he describes what his life's work is.

Once again, it is helpful to look at the parallel text in Luke's gospel. There Jesus says: "Do you think I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division" (Luke 12:51). There is no way to say definitive-

ly whether he used the word “sword” or “division.” However, he does go on immediately to describe the division that will be caused between members of the same family (Mark 13:12). Jesus is not referring to a war with swords.

An explanation of this text needs to relate it to the prophetic tradition out of which Jesus spoke. When prophets spoke they were heard by part of the community. But prophets—today they might be whistle-blowers—did not find acceptance during their lifetimes. The common fate of prophets is to be recognized after they are dead. Prophets give rise to a hope for unity, but their immediate effect is to sharpen existing divisions even among families and friends.

Jesus’ explicit reference here is to the book of Micah, which has the passage, “They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (Micah 4:3). But Jesus is most directly referring to another passage in Micah that describes son rising up against his father, daughter against her mother, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law (7:1). The swords will be beat into plowshares, but only at the risk of division within families.

In paraphrasing this passage on family division, Jesus warns his followers what they have to be ready for. The passage is troubling for anyone who endorses what in recent years has been called “family values.” From everything he says, Jesus obviously values the love between spouses and the love between parent and child, but an outgoing love can be a challenge to the most intimate relations. Does a man really love his own family if he is unmoved by the plight of a suffering neighbor? Does a man love his nation if he hates the people of another nation?

There is another surprising passage in which Jesus refers to the sword. He advises his disciples, “Let him who has no sword sell his mantle and buy one” (Luke 22:36). Clearly, he is warning his disciples that conflict is imminent. When one of them replies, “Look, Lord, here are two swords,” his enigmatic reply is, “It is enough” (Luke 22:38).

What illuminates the passage is the actual violence that immediately follows. When the crowd comes to seize Jesus, one of his disciples asks, “Lord shall we strike with the sword?” Before the disciple gets an answer, “one of them struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear.” Jesus responds by saying, “No more of this,” and touches the slave’s ear to heal the wound (Luke 22:49–51). He complains that the crowd has come for him with clubs and swords, as if he were a robber rather than a teacher. Whatever the meaning of his advice to buy a sword, he refuses to return violence for violence or let others use violence in his defense.

This passage leads into the culminating event in the gospel where Jesus’ teaching becomes too much to take for the guardians of political order. “That the threat was not one of *armed* violent revolt, and that it bothered them to

the point of their resorting to irregular procedures to counter it, is a proof of the political relevance of nonviolent tactics, not a proof that Pilate and Caiaphas were exceptionally dull or dishonest men."[30]

Jesus "died on a cross." The phrase has been repeated endless times throughout the centuries. The cross has been the chief symbol of Christians. Millions of Christians wear a cross around their necks. The significance of death on a cross should be obvious: an execution of an enemy of the state.

There is general revulsion today against the symbolic use of the cross during the "Crusades," a word for cross. The alternative, however, need not be a depoliticized cross. "The cross of Calvary was not a difficult family situation, not a frustration of visions of personal fulfillment, a crushing debt, or a nagging in-law; it was the political, legally-to-be-expected result of a moral clash with the powers ruling his society."[31]

In the early centuries of the church, Jesus was portrayed on the cross in glory. The Orthodox Church's liturgy refers to "the holy and life-giving cross." The point was that his suffering and death were transformed into new life. Perhaps that was an obscuring of the harsh reality of the death he had suffered. Starting in the twelfth century, emphasis on the quantity of suffering overshadowed other considerations. The focus on the tortured figure on the cross was one of Francis of Assisi's less-helpful contributions to Christian piety.

A reminder to Christians that following Jesus (or "imitating Christ") can be a dangerous and painful journey was a warning. Jesus repeatedly invites his followers to "take up your cross" and follow him (Matthew 16:24). The warning loses its realistic bite if "cross" is reduced to a metaphor for any personal problem. We still have state executions of prisoners, euphemistically called "capital punishment," a practice that Christians should presumably oppose with special passion.

Modern forms of execution (needles, electric chairs) do not offer a symbol comparable to the cross. The prisoner who was crucified carried his own instrument of execution before being nailed to it. The cross carried a specially humiliating and torturous meaning, perhaps matched in our day by the torture of suspected terrorists. "Taking up the cross" was not an invitation to enter the monastery; rather, it was an invitation to take unpopular stands against state execution of prisoners, torture of detainees, vicious policies against the poor, and stirring up hatred of other nations.

Each of Jesus' followers has his or her own way of responding. The rich, well-positioned members of society have the greater responsibility. Jesus' admonition to "sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor" (Luke 18:22) can be followed literally by some people.[32] Not everyone can or should attempt to help the poor in that way; providing jobs for the poor might be more helpful. However, a church with a few monks and nuns having a vow of poverty alongside comfortably rich and politically compla-

cent congregations of Christians is not likely to be what Jesus or his early followers envisioned.

It has to be admitted that there is a tension in the New Testament between the potential rebelliousness of the Sermon on the Mount and the sentiments expressed by Paul in chapters 12 and 13 of the Letter to the Romans. Paul's endorsement of civil authority as established by God was the basis for modern Christianity's readiness to obey unjust government policies.

Similar to Jesus saying "give to Caesar what is Caesar's" (Luke 20:25), Paul respects the historical process in which civil authority is necessary. However, saying that all authority is from God was not a blank check of approval for every political policy. When to obey and when to refuse obedience depend on the situation and on the wisdom of the tradition that guides the community. Paul's list of "things due to authority" (13:6–7) does not include participation in armed service.

In the post-Enlightenment period, the churches were inclined to pass on decisions of war and peace to civil rulers so long as a safe place was provided for churches. In recent decades, the churches that have been speaking out publicly may be unduly "politicized." It is possible, however, that they are rediscovering the initial thrust of the Jesus movement.

## THE STANDARD FOR MISINTERPRETING THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

During political discussions in the twentieth century the regular way to refer to idealism or utopianism was to invoke the Sermon on the Mount. Sometimes the reference was accompanied by a phrase to clinch the case (favorites include "turn the other check," "don't resist evil," and "love your enemy"). More often it was not deemed necessary to establish the case. Everyone, it was assumed, knows that the Sermon on the Mount is a string of poetic but unrealistic sayings that only a mystic or a saint, far removed from political life, would try to follow. Most secular writers on ethics, politics, and international relations seem not to have expended even minimal effort to understand what the text of the New Testament actually says.

The puzzling fact is that many Christian theologians basically accepted this secular assessment. It was said that the Sermon on the Mount has little to offer regarding political and economic institutions. After all, Jesus spoke in an entirely different setting and probably with the assumption that the end of the world was near. One dissenter from this view, the Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, criticized liberal Protestant theology for the view that the Gospel is "a purely religious power which encompasses the individual

man in his outlook but is at the same time indifferent and unconcerned with regard to worldly institutions and conditions."[33]

One essay stands out in providing the standard misinterpretation of the Sermon on the Mount: Max Weber's "Politics as a Vocation."[34] Weber was a prolific and brilliant scholar, but this particular essay has badly distorted an understanding of the Sermon on the Mount. The essay obviously has antecedents in both Christian theology and secular political writing that Weber drew upon. It is nonetheless remarkable that so many writers after Weber assumed his claim that the Sermon on the Mount advocates passivity and an ethic that is the opposite of "responsibility." After World War II, Protestant writers endorsed "responsible society" with far more debt to Max Weber than to the New Testament.[35] A close look at Weber's celebrated essay reveals that it contains confusing and inconsistent elements due in part to its particular context.

"Politics as a Vocation" was developed from a lecture to students in Berlin during 1919, shortly before Weber's death. The conclusion of the lecture indicates that Weber was skeptical that the students, who were enthusiasts for peace in postwar Germany, understood how complex the problem was. Weber challenged the students to come back in ten years and still have the same naive view of peace.

By 1929, Weber was no longer alive, but many of the students in his audience had probably discovered the accuracy of his warning. Peace did not come to Germany or its neighbors simply from antiwar sentiment and saying that we should all get along together. Peace had to be worked at by people with a "vocation" of staying with the problems of political conflicts and sustainable compromises. But Weber's realistic concern for the difficulty of achieving a stable peace was not matched by the ethical framework he provided.

The essay begins with an announcement of that framework: "We must be clear that all activity which is governed by ethical standards can be subsumed under one of two maxims, which are fundamentally different from, and irreconcilably opposed to each other. Ethical activity may be based on a standard either of *intention* or *responsibility*" (217). One might criticize Weber by saying that these two standards (or maxims) are not a logical pair and it is not obvious that ethics must fit under one or the other. And in fact at the end of the essay, the vocation of a politician is described as one that brings together these "irreconcilably opposed" maxims.

"Responsibility" is a word with a long and complex history. It has become an ever more popular term in politics even though its meaning as used by politicians is usually vague. Politicians discovered that saying "I take responsibility" usually frees them from actually doing anything to correct a messy situation. Weber cannot be blamed for this evacuation of the meaning

of responsibility, but he is responsible for a lack of logic and history in how he uses the word.

In the sentences that immediately follow his contrast of the two maxims, Weber says: “Not that an ethic of intention is the same as irresponsibility or an ethic of responsibility the same as indifference to intentions. Naturally, there is no question of these two things” (217). There may be no question of these two things for him, but his “fundamentally different and irreconcilably opposed” standards logically lead to such a conclusion. An ethic of responsibility as he defines it does exclude intention. And his contrast is worse for an ethic of intention: Defined as the very opposite of responsible, it is precisely “irresponsible” and Weber implies such a meaning.

For concretizing an ethic of intention, Weber invokes the Sermon on the Mount. Citing the phrase “turn the other cheek,” he concludes that “it is an ethic which denies all self-respect—except for a saint. That is the point: one must be a saint in everything, at least in intention” (216). This sufficiency of intention for sainthood is peculiar, given the well-known saying from Christian history that “the road to hell is paved with good intentions.” Jesus of Nazareth’s standard of holiness was: “By your fruits you shall know them” (Matthew 7:16). The final judgment that Jesus described was based on whether someone fed the hungry, clothed the naked, housed the homeless, and visited the imprisoned (Matthew 25:31–46).[36]

According to Weber, “The Christian acts rightly and leaves the outcome to God” (218). As soon as Weber tries to spell out what the Christian acting rightly might entail, his fundamental opposition between intention and responsibility breaks down. “The man who bases his ethics on intentions feels that he is ‘responsible’ only for seeing that the flame of pure intention, the flame of protest against the injustice of the social order, is not extinguished. The aim of his action, which considered from the point of view of its possible consequences is totally irrational, is to keep fanning this flame; the action can and should have only the value of an example” (219).

The fact that Weber puts “responsible” in quotation marks does not hide the fact that intention and responsible are shown to be connected. The person acting from an ethic of intention *is* in fact being responsible to “the injustice of the social order.” The aim of the action, Weber says, is to spread the example of protest against injustice. No doubt more has to be said about the effectiveness of different kinds of protest, but Weber provides no basis for his sweeping generalization that the “possible consequences” are “totally irrational.”

In Weber’s view, the real problem with practitioners of his ethic of intention is that they use ineffective means for their goal. That is so because “the only *logical* course for the ethics of intention is to repudiate all activity which involves the use of morally dangerous means” (219).

Weber has in mind a very specific means that has to be repudiated: the use of "force." The crux of his argument is that the "ethic of the gospel" cannot include the use of force.[37] He is contemptuous of those "who have been preaching 'Love against Force'" and who suddenly turn to the use of force "for the *last* time, so as to bring about a situation in which *all* violence will be abolished" (219).

His disdain is understandable for so-called pacifists who supported the war to end all wars, and for postwar advocates of love as a replacement for force. Nevertheless, Weber's own language that draws no clear distinction between force and violence assumes a choice between intentions that lack any forceful means and a politics of violence. He assumes that "anyone who wants to act according to the ethics of the gospel should not go on strike, since strikes are a form of coercion" (217). In Weber's "ethic of intention," the force of coercion is excluded. As described earlier, the ethics of the gospel excludes violence, but it embraces a range of forceful actions that are integral to human existence.

Weber assumes that he knows the ethic of Jesus and his most dedicated followers. "The great virtuosi of other-worldly love of mankind and saintliness, whether from Nazareth or Assisi or the castles of Indian kings, have not employed the instruments of politics, force. . . . Politics have quite different goals, which can only be achieved by force" (222–23). Of course, in a choice between "other-worldly love" and the force of responsible action, politicians have nowhere to go except to Weber's version of responsibility. "If the consequence to be drawn from the other-worldly ethics of love is 'resist not evil with force' the contrary proposition is true for the politician: Thou *shalt* resist evil with force (otherwise you are *responsible* for the victory of evil)" (217).

An interesting twist in Weber's citation of this passage is that he does not quote Jesus as saying, "Do not resist evil." He adds the phrase "with force," which is closer to Jesus' meaning but still distorts it. As I indicated earlier, the line can be variously rendered as "do not compete in doing evil," "do not violently resist an evildoer," or "resist evil with kindness." The only way to justify Weber's version, "do not resist evil with force," is to assume that force is evil. That is a belief that Weber ascribes to Jesus and his followers, a belief that would strip Christian religion of any force for good.

If Weber's meaning of "intention" lacks effectiveness, his "responsibility" lacks both a firm anchor in intention and a standard of restraint in its results. Weber removes the word "responsible" from its Jewish and Christian history. It is ironic that he defines a Christian ethic to exclude responsibility whereas it was mainly out of Jewish and Christian traditions that there arose the idea of an individual being judged or held responsible for his or her actions.

Weber's ethic of intention is sometimes called an "ethic of ultimate ends," which would be closer to a description of the Sermon on the Mount. Then the choice would be between responsibility to ultimate ends versus responsibility to immediate ends. Weber's description of responsibility is dangerously lacking an answer to the question, to what or to whom is a politician ultimately responsible?

Weber implies an answer to that question when after saying a politician needs passion for the job, he says, "that alone does not make a politician, unless it is used to further some real cause and so makes a *sense of responsibility* toward this cause the ultimate guide of his behavior" (212). The last phrase is frightening; Weber makes the ultimate guide of behavior to be responsibility toward "this cause." The twentieth century was sprinkled with maniacal characters whose ultimate guide of behavior was devotion to their cause, whether communism, fascism, nationalism, or free-market capitalism.

The "ultimate end" as articulated by Jesus may not be the right one for everybody. But at least Jesus insisted that immediate gains have to be measured by a standard that goes beyond political expediency. Weber, with seeming disregard for long-range consequences, can blithely say, "For politics, the essential means is violence" (218). Saying that "the essential means" of politics is violence puts no restraint on a nation's violence other than counterviolence.

Toward the end of the essay, Weber comes down hard on the ethics of intention as an obstacle to achieving international peace. He says that the goal of peace is desirable, "but when the goal is pursued with the pure ethics of intention in a war of faith, it can be damaged and discredited for generations to come, since no one takes responsibility for the consequences" (223). Weber assumes that this "war of faith" excludes the use of force. In contrast, his meaning of responsibility includes political force which is indistinguishable from violence. Thus, in Weber's contrast violence is the way to peace; nonviolence becomes the cause of war.

Near the end of the essay Weber describes the vocation of politics. Surprisingly, it includes the two elements he has repeatedly said are in fundamental opposition. His final judgment on those who talk about an ethic of intention is that nine-tenths of them are "windbags." On the other hand, he says that "it is enormously impressive if a *more mature* man (whether old or young in years) who feels his responsibility for the consequences genuinely and with all his heart, and acts according to the ethics of responsibility, says at whatever point it may be: 'Here I stand: I can no other'" (223).

The reference here seems to be to Martin Luther, who is offered as an example of the mature man, even though he separated the kingdoms of God and Caesar. Weber allows that the mature man may be old or young in years, but it is surely significant that he is speaking at the end of his career to

students who he says (on the issue of a peace movement) "share in the frenzy which this revolution amounts to" (224).

Weber concludes his description of the mature man by saying, "To that extent, the ethics of intention and the ethics of responsibility are not diametrically opposed but complementary: together they make the true man, the man who can have the 'vocation of politics'" (224). His original premise of a conceptual chasm between intention and responsibility is stripped away; the two opposed ideas are parts of a synthesis.

Weber's claim, however, that intention and responsibility are ultimately complementary does not hold up within his description of them. For Weber, the man of responsibility discovers intention and resolve. However, Weber does not allow for the man of intention to discover that he is responsible. The Sermon on the Mount or "ethic of the gospel" is left to other-worldly love and a lack of force in achieving any useful results.

## CONCLUSION

Did the Jesus movement succeed or fail? One answer would be that it is too early too tell. In church histories, the narrative line often was that the church was constantly persecuted by the Roman Empire but that the blood of the martyrs only strengthened Christians in their resolve and they finally triumphed. In secular histories, the Jesus movement was inevitably absorbed into one more institution that wielded political power. The church was and is a dangerous institution because its politics is hidden behind a rhetoric of selfless love.

In the last half century of scholarship, a clearer picture of the early church has emerged. The story is about a movement that tried to carry on the example and teaching of Jesus. As a movement with universal aspirations, it took on the trappings of a large organization. The first "churches" were household assemblies, but the word was also used for the larger pattern of communities.[38]

The New Testament paints an idyllic portrait of the earliest community: "Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they held everything in common. . . . There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold, and laid it at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made to each as any had need" (Acts 4:32–35). A worldwide organization with this economic system did not become established at that time or since. Nonetheless, the example of the early followers of Jesus did not get

obliterated by the bad economic and political compromises of the later church.

The New Testament is more like the Declaration of Independence than the U.S. Constitution. That is, Jesus did not lay out a program for institutionalizing his message. He provided teaching in the form of parables and sayings which are richly meaningful but ambiguous in application to other times and places.

One theory maintains that Jesus' teaching is irrelevant to today's politics because it was premised on the belief that the world was about to end. Therefore, the teaching is not for ordinary people in their ordinary lives. Apparently some of his earliest followers did expect his imminent return as the judge of the world. The last book of the New Testament, Revelation, describes an all-out cosmic battle and the final triumph of the Christ. Although the book of Revelation (or Apocalypse) is a favorite of fundamentalist Christians, it reflects a time of persecution and does not provide a complete Christian outlook.[39]

Jesus uses no military metaphors (Paul does).[40] He looked toward the world-to-come which would happen through personal and social transformation of this world. Jesus taught his followers to pray "thy kingdom come," which has a political edge; it is neither an "other-worldly" kingdom nor one kingdom among existing kingdoms. He predicted the impending end of "this age." "For those who came to believe in him, under God he brought it about."[41]

The early church was sporadically persecuted by Roman authorities. The fact that its three leaders, Paul, Peter, and James, were all executed in the decade of the 60s suggests that state officials grasped the political implications of the movement. But the early church probably could not have survived a comprehensive effort by the state to root it out.[42] Instead, the church tried to be a cross-section of society that would give testimony to a more peaceful and just world.

There were a few disparaging comments by ancient authors that the early church was made up of "only slaves, women, and little children."[43] But another author who was equally opposed to the movement says that it attracted "persons of every age, social rank, and both sexes."[44] Contemporary scholars side with the second view (though the number of women was probably disproportionately large).[45] The belief that the early church was composed almost exclusively of slaves and poor people was supported by Marxist ideology but not by historians and social scientists.

The church from earliest times engaged in a quiet revolution of accepting existing governments while refusing to cooperate in their overtly violent activities. A key issue was whether Christians could serve as soldiers. The record on military service is not entirely clear. At least by the end of the second century there were Christian soldiers.[46] Before then, there were prob-

ably a few soldiers who were exceptions.[47] Although Jesus did not condemn the soldiers he met, church fathers, such as Justin and Tertullian, were against all military service.

The prohibition against Christians being soldiers was effective enough to draw criticism of the Christians as disloyal. As would later Christians who are opposed to war, Origen made the case that Christians were loyal citizens: "There is no one who fights better for the king than we. It is true that we do not go with him to battle, but we fight for him by forming an army of our own, an army of piety, through our prayers to the Godhead. Once all men have become Christians even the barbarians will be inclined to peace."[48]

Origen's pointing to an "army of piety" was unlikely to convince most defenders of the political order. Justin and Tertullian made a stronger case for the church contributing to the social order by creating peace internal to the empire.[49] A social scientist writes that "Christianity greatly mitigated relations among social classes at the very time when the gap between rich and poor was growing. The church did not preach that everyone could be or should become equal in terms of wealth and power in this life. But it did preach that all were equal in the eyes of God and that the more fortunate had a God-given responsibility to help those in need."[50] Max Weber's "intention" as opposed to "responsibility" simply does not hold.

The early church, therefore, was not a hotbed of revolutionary action by proletarians. Neither did it simply conform to the profile of a "society" in the Roman Empire. It gave comfort in the present and hope for a better future. E. R. Dodds traced the spread of Christianity to the fact that "the Church provided the essentials of social security," which Dodds explained meant more than material benefits; it was a way of community marked by care.[51]

To the extent that the Jesus movement issued in communities of kindness and resistance to violence, it provided a permanent example to future generations. When Constantine adopted Christianity at the beginning of the fourth century, it may have seemed like a Christian triumph. Eusebius, the historian of the early church, presents it as the virtual triumph of the "kingdom of Christ." By the time of the emperor Theodosius at end of the fourth century, Christianity was the official religion of the empire.

Not all Christians of the time were convinced that the change was progress. The great biblical scholar, Jerome, said: "When the church came to the princes of the world, she grew in power and wealth but diminished in virtue."[52] Looking back today, it would seem that moving away from a community which exemplified a nonviolent way of life was too high a price to pay for the church's gains in number and direct political influence.

Violence remains a danger for Christianity as it does for other religions in the contemporary world. Religion, however, can be a source of comfort in tragedy, inspiration for protests against violence, and the basis for meaning in life. Those who do not belong to any religion and want no part of religious

beliefs have to distinguish between the qualities of religion that are not violent and the institutions encompassing religion that are prone to violence but can be reformed. Neither religion nor religions are likely to disappear. Indiscriminate attacks on religion do not accomplish reform. Both religious and secular people have a stake in seeing that a politics of violence and war is not supported by any of the religions and that each of the religions learns to distance itself from its record of violence by affirming a more genuine strand of its own history.

## NOTES

1. Ulrich Beck, *A God of One's Own: Religion's Capacity for Peace and Potential for Violence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010).
2. For refutation of this belief, William Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), does a thorough job.
3. Augustine, *City of God* (London: Penguin Books, 1972), XI.1.
4. Augustine, *Of True Religion* (Chicago: Regnery Publications, 1991).
5. Peter Harrison, *'Religion' and the Religions in the English Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
6. W. Cantwell Smith in his important book, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (New York: New American Library, 1964), suggests that the terms "faith" and "tradition" could replace "religion."
7. Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion*, 67.
8. Jim Forest, *The Ladder of the Beatitudes* (New York: Orbis Books, 1999), 48.
9. John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus,* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 107.
10. Amy-Jill Levine, *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 2006), 20.
11. Levine, *Misunderstood Jew*, 51.
12. Ellis Rivkin, *Shaping of Jewish History: Radical New Interpretation* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1971), 77.
13. Martin Hengel, *The Four Gospels and the One Gospel of* Jesus (London: SCM Press, 2000); John Koenig, *Jews and Christians in Dialogue: New Testament Foundations* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1979).
14. Leo Lefebure, *Revelation, the Religions and Violence* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 64.
15. John Bowden, *Jesus: The Unanswered Questions* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1989), 77.
16. Martin Buber, *The Eclipse of God* (New York: Humanity Books, 1988).
17. Levine, *Misunderstood Jew*, 47.
18. Quoted in Pinchas Lapide, *The Sermon on the Mount* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1986), 96; Christopher Hitchens, commenting on the text to love your enemies, says: "I think the enemies of civilization should be beaten and killed and defeated. And I think it is sickly and stupid and suicidal to say that we should love those who hate us." Quoted in Chris Hedges, *I Don't Believe in Atheists* (New York: Free Press, 2008), 23.
19. Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith* (New York: Harper Torch, 1961), 69.
20. Walter Wink, *Jesus and Nonviolence* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2003), 10–11.
21. Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, rev. ed. (New York: Penguin Classics, 1984), II, 92.
22. R. H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes to War and Peace* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1960), 64.

23. George Albert Coe, *A Social Theory of Religious Education* (New York: Scribner, 1917).

24. Geza Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984), 36.

25. Adolph Von Harnack, *What Is Christianity?* (New York: Forgotten Books, 2009), 84: "Ultimately the kingdom is nothing but the treasure which the soul possesses in the eternal and merciful God."

26. Albert Nolan, *Jesus before Christianity* (New York: Orbis Books, 2001), 46–47.

27. Lapide, *Sermon on the Mount*, 35, cites a rabbinic teaching: "All commandments are to be fulfilled when the right opportunity arrives. But not peace! Peace you must seek out and pursue."

28. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes,* 56.

29. Marcus Borg, *Jesus* (New York: Harper, 2001), 175.

30. Yoder, *Politics of Jesus,* 49.

31. Yoder, *Politics of Jesus*, 129.

32. Yoder, *Politics of Jesus,* 70: Yoder argues that the prescriptions of Jesus were in the context of the Jubilee year when debts were to be forgiven. Jesus opposed the weakening of the law whereby the forgiving was avoided.

33. Dietrich Bonheoffer, *Ethics* (New York: Collier Books, 1955), 321.

34. Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in *Max Weber: Selections in Translation*, ed. W. G. Runciman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

35. Yoder, *Politics of Jesus*, 150.

36. Weber elsewhere agrees with this point; he says in *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 633, that Jesus' message is "that the true religious mood is to be judged by its fruits, by its faithful demonstration."

37. Weber, *Economy and Society,* 592: "This recognition [that violence begets violence] continued to evoke the most radical demands for the ethic of brotherly love, i.e., that evil should not be resisted by force, an injunction common to Buddhism and the preaching of Jesus."

38. Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1983), 75–79, for *ekklesia* as a household assembly; 108, for *ekklesia* as a province of Christ or of God.

39. There is a vast literature on the last book of the New Testament. See *The Encyclical of Apocalypticism*, 3 vols., ed. John Collins, Stephen Stein, and Bernard McGinn (New York: Continuum, 2000).

40. 1 Thessalonians 5:8; 1 Corinthians 9:6–7; 1 Corinthians 6:4–7; Philippians 2:25; Ephesians 6:10–18; 1 Timothy 1:18.

41. Gerard Sloyan, *Jesus in Focus: A Life in Its Setting* (W. Mystic: Twenty-Third Publications, 1983), 65.

42. Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity: A Sociologist Reconsiders History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 46.

43. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 3.44.

44. Pliny, "Letter to Trajan," in *The Letters of the Younger Pliny* (New York: Kessinger, 2004), 10.96.

45. Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, 95–128.

46. John Helgeland, Robert Daly, and J. Patout Burns, *Christians and the Military: The Early Experience* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985); Tertullian, "Apology," in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), 37; Eusebius, *The Church History* (New York: Kregel, 2007), 55.3.4.

47. C. John Cadoux, *The Early Christian Attitude to War* (New York: Seabury Press, 1982), 245.

48. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, 132.

49. Justin, *The First Apology of Justin* (New York: Kessinger, 2004), 12; Tertullian, "Apology," 37.

50. Stark, *The Rise of Christianity*, 188.

51. E. R. Dodds, *Christians and Pagans in an Age of Anxiety* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 136–37.

52. Quoted in Forest, *Ladder of the Beatitudes,* 141.

# Chapter 6: Education toward Nonviolent Living

As a way of concluding this study, a few comments on education will serve as a review and offer some hints as to the steps necessary for moving toward nonviolent living. The literature on peace and nonviolence usually recommends education. However, there is a problem with "education" before one gets to peace education. A school course on "peace studies" may be very helpful to the students who participate in it. But education understood as school instruction of children is inadequate for addressing the potential for personal violence and the reality of violence in the structures of today's world.

Before the classroom can address the questions of violence, nonviolence, and peace, a major part of education has already occurred. A theme that runs throughout the preceding chapters of this book is that the language of nonviolent living begins in infancy. The main concepts of force, power, and aggressiveness, as well as related concepts such as responsibility, authority, and uniqueness, are rooted in the earliest experiences of the human being. When seeking the meaning of any word, it is important to ask when we first came to use the word.[1] That principle applies in two ways. There is the human race's first use of a term. For example, in the first chapter I asked why the term "nature" exists and who first thought that there was a need for that word. The principle also applies to each person's life. Within moments of being born, an infant's experience includes what later are called force, power, and aggressiveness.

In adult life, language still carries connotations from childhood, although much of the meaning has been blocked out or forgotten. I noted that philosophers such as Hobbes or Bacon, and writers today in politics and international relations, often seem to be describing a world of adult men. That underly-

ing assumption narrows the framework for discussing force, power, aggressiveness, responsibility, and authority, and the realistic possibility of nonviolent living. Only from a wide-ranging conversation can language reacquire the vitality and inclusiveness of our earliest experiences.

This book has been a search for an inclusive language, not just gender inclusiveness, although that is one important dimension. The language needed has to do justice to men, women, children, nonhuman animals, and the physical environment. In the search for such a language it must be admitted that men and women exist in all varieties of age, culture, and health. Similarly, "children" includes two-year-olds and sixteen-year-olds, so issues such as human rights and moral responsibility vary greatly within the category of childhood.[2] And obviously, "nonhuman animals" sometimes needs further sorting out into dogs, cats, horses, elephants, and so forth.

The point is that a truly "inclusive language" could only exist by eliminating all differences which would create a language of abstractions and generalities. The alternative of trying to name every being is a practical impossibility that would create a mess out of language. Attempts to increase inclusiveness often create awkward phrases. Nevertheless, despite the insuperable obstacles to creating a fully inclusive language, there is no excuse for a language that leaves out women or children or nonhuman animals from the discussion of violence and nonviolence.

Children have a special place in the formation of ideas and language for nonviolent living. The most formative part of a person's life is between birth and age five or six. "What children know best when they come to school are love, hate, joy, fear, good, and bad. That is, they know best the most profound human emotions and the bases of morality."[3] The educational problem is not just that this period of life is neglected. Modern educational theories and most discussions of education simply exclude the earliest stages of childhood from the meaning of education.

The aim of this chapter is to describe a "peaceful education" which is lifelong and lifewide. Before I can address how education should deal with nonviolent living, an excursion is necessary into how education came to have the meaning it has had in modern times and what an alternative meaning of education would look like. Our modern system of education tends to overlook or marginalize the issue of nonviolence. I think that fact suggests that the question of nonviolent living is central to any attempt to reform education.

There is widespread recognition that education needs reform, but analysis of the problem does not usually go deeply enough. The assumption that everyone knows what "education" means is seldom challenged. The major changes that were made in education in the nineteenth century represented progress in providing academic instruction to greater numbers of children.

But the progress was offset by a disastrous narrowing of the meaning of education, a problem that is still with us.

John Dewey was the foremost theorist of education at the beginning of the twentieth century. Dewey's theories may not have had much direct influence on schools. However, his language was ambiguous enough to be invoked in support of whatever school policies people wished to support. Today, even people who have never read Dewey speak his language.[4]

By the 1930s, Dewey had become disillusioned with "progressive schools" as the way to social reform, but he could not get free of his own language.[5] Dewey joined many advocates of peace, including Leo Tolstoy and Bertrand Russell, who tried their hand at school reform but soon concluded that the way to peace is through political rather than educational reform.[6] That may seem like a realistic step, but it is actually a tragic mistake. Opposing politics and education occurs when "education" is equated with elementary and secondary schools. The real solution is to reject this nineteenth-century language and reclaim a wider and deeper meaning of education. Political life is central to education, and the meaning of education cannot be regained without rethinking political, social, community, and religious structures.

Before the nineteenth century, education mainly referred to what a person learned in life from a variety of human and nonhuman teachers. School was a part of education for a minority of people. The *Oxford English Dictionary*'s first meaning of "education" is "the process of nourishing or rearing a child, a young person or animal." Like other living beings, humans need nourishment, direction, and occasional correction. The use of "education" for nonhuman animals was common in early English; "education" was even used of trees.

Until the nineteenth century, school was not considered possible for all children. Changes in the economic system in the nineteenth century created a need for more schools and a longer period of schooling. Children were no longer useful as laborers; they were better off in school preparing for the jobs that a newly industrialized world required. School as a public institution available to all children opened up seemingly limitless possibilities. Poor children would have a chance to compete with rich children.

With the new psychology mapping the development of the child's mind, it was believed that education could be delivered with scientific accuracy.[7] "Education" was no longer a process that begins in infancy, continues through apprenticeship and working at a trade, and culminates in life as a parent and then a grandparent for teaching the next generation. Instead, education was now spoken of as a product which is available to children at an institution called "school"; even more commonly, education was identified with the institution of school itself.

John Dewey, looking back nostalgically on his own childhood, thought that the other "agents" of education were no longer relevant and effective.[8] These agents—family, church, and apprenticeship—could no longer do the job in the world of emerging technology. The school is well suited to teach reading and writing, but now as a result of Dewey's progressive reforms it was expected to be family, social club, job trainer, church, and political reform party.

In his "Pedagogic Creed" of 1891, Dewey proclaimed: "I believe that education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform."[9] The belief might be a mere truism if education had its earlier meaning. But Dewey's statement is the first principle of his article entitled "The School and Social Progress." He finishes the document by saying, "I believe that in this way the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God." He is not referring to teachers such as Moses, Socrates, or the Buddha. Instead, he is laying an impossible burden on the underpaid young women who staffed the public school classrooms.

Dewey's dismissal of family, church, and apprenticeship as effective "agents" of education was a disastrous misjudgment that contemporary education still suffers from. The basic problem was in assuming that those were agents for the delivery of a product called "education." Of course, the kind of education that the school offers is not available through family, church, or apprenticeship. That is because they are not agents of a product called "education"; rather, they are forms of education itself, the ways that education exists.

Dewey was a key figure in inventing the distinction between "formal education" (synonymous with school) and "informal education," meaning anything else that someone may claim is educational.[10] Since education is unthinkable without some form (of time, place, materials), the distinction between formal and informal is a way of dismissing from education everything else besides the school.

School, through its classroom instruction, is a marvelous and indispensable form of education. But when school is claimed to be "formal education," it collapses under its own weight of impossible expectations. Education is spoken about in idealistic language and with near-religious reverence. At the same time, schools are underfunded and schoolteachers do not rank high in social status. The (school) teachers are subjected to biting criticism for not producing educated young people.

In the nineteenth century, young unmarried women were thought to be the most docile deliverers of education.[11] In the twenty-first century, the "educators" are more diverse and better prepared. But their work today is more difficult. Most of the public cannot imagine the difficulty of being a schoolteacher, which involves a great deal more than teaching. The most frustrating problem of schoolteachers is that they have to work against the language,

imagery, and organization of the nineteenth century, in which education is spoken of as something that can be delivered to children in schools.

## FORMS OF EDUCATION

A good start on the meaning of education would be: *the reshaping of life's forms with end and without end.* What constitutes the main forms of life is itself debatable; examples might include family, community, work, art, sport, religion, and politics. "Forms of life" does not indicate any restriction of education according to age. And *life* does not restrict education to humans. Education has to provide humans with an understanding of both their kinship with and their difference from other animals.

Education has no termination point, which is one meaning of "end." Education does connote a sense of purpose, which is a second meaning of "end." The purpose of education does not require an intention to educate on the part of an individual teacher. Institutional practices can embody an educational purpose. The difficult task of education is to maintain a tension between the two meanings of the "end of education." Working for a school diploma is a legitimate end of education, but diplomas are not a conclusion to education. Education is directly or indirectly an improvement in life, but perfection is never achieved.

The language of education began to break down badly in the 1960s. Almost everyone is aware that there is a problem with education. There is a constant hope in a new reform package that will solve the problem. Some schools do improve when they buy into a new theory of how a school should be run. But so long as "education" and "school" are not properly distinguished, the underlying problem remains untouched. A reform of the meaning of education would have to recover some of what education meant before the nineteenth century. People who claim to be conservative often just want to go back to the nineteenth century. Educational reform would require people who are *deeply* conservative.

The hope for education is based on the fact that the other forms of education besides classroom instruction have never disappeared. For example, although the family is usually invisible in today's educational discussions, the family's educational effect is as great as it has ever been. The same can be said of learning on the work site and learning through leisure activities, including political engagement, religious practices, and care for a community. The task is not to invent new forms of education but to recognize that traditional forms of education still exist and to adapt these forms to present experience.

Anything that reshapes the forms of life is itself educational, for example, the reform of family life in the direction of the mutuality of its members. As for classrooms, physically reforming them so as to make them more suitable for academic dialogue is already educational. Something similar can be said of jobs as a form of work that educates; the temporal and physical dimensions of a job can be either educative or miseducative. Nearly all jobs can be improved in their educative possibilities. The same can be said of leisure activities; they can be a "waste of time," empty of all meaning, or they can be an experience of the wholeness of life. The interaction among the main forms of life is the educational process that results in the educating of a person.

The most comprehensive form of education is community. The family provides an early community experience; school continues that experience in a different embodying of community. Every child needs these two experiences: The first is the experience of being treated as the most important person in the world by parents who provide rituals of care designed especially for that child.[12] The second needed experience is that of being treated as one person among many, each of whom has to learn to be a community member. Going to school usually offers that challenge to a child. Only with both experiences does one come to appreciate the meaning of community as learning to respect other people, learning to cooperate in work, and learning to feel responsible to a group of intimates.[13]

When "universal education"—school for all youngsters—was proclaimed as an ideal in the late nineteenth century, there was immediate criticism from an "adult education" movement. It tried to keep alive the ideal of education as a community affair.[14] But in the twentieth century, the movement found a comfortable niche for itself in an entrepreneurial society of individuals. Adult education courses became a profitable business. A newer language of "lifelong education" covered up the fact that education is still usually conceived of as equivalent to schoolwork.

Lifelong and lifewide education is what is needed and what is missing today. The complaint of adult education theorists is that education has been too concerned with children. Actually, one of the worst parts of educational theories since the nineteenth century has been the exclusion of early childhood. A realistic lifelong education begins in infancy, a period of life which seldom shows up in discussions of lifelong education.

Education in old age has also been neglected by adult education. The assumption seems to be that the old are either incapable of or uninterested in learning. People who are incapacitated by sickness may not be good candidates for most forms of learning. But there is a large pool of older and retired people who are hungry for learning and are not served by what society offers as education. Rabbi Abraham Heschel, in a White House conference on aging in 1961, advocated universities in nursing homes "where men should

teach the potentially wise, where the purpose of learning is not a career but where the purpose of learning is learning itself."[15]

If educational theory neglects young children and old people, it obviously pays little or no attention to the relationship between the young and the old. The grandparent-grandchild relationship is one of the most potent elements of education. Throughout the centuries, grandparents have played a key role in education. For example, in seventeenth-century Plymouth, the three-generation household was not the norm, but the grandparent was regularly present.[16] I noted in chapter two the importance of the grandparent in black families. It can be said of white families, too, that the grandparent-grandchild relationship still remains crucial.

The conflating of education with school usually implies that education is for children at an age when they have the capacity to reason but are not trusted to be fully reasonable. When school is restricted to this group, the purpose of school tends to be the warehousing of the young, keeping them off the streets and out of the labor market. Many young people experience school not as a privilege but as an authoritarian institution where they lack basic human rights. The Supreme Court on a number of occasions has failed to defend a student's freedom of speech, protection against cruel and unusual punishment, and a right to privacy.

When the Supreme Court's majority sided with a Florida law allowing paddling of students, the Court's minority opinion caustically noted that "if it's illegal to cut off the ear of a criminal for committing murder, it surely is illegal to cut off a student's ear for being late for class."[17] While courts today would be more hesitant to approve corporal punishment, they have shown an increasing tendency to violate students' privacy by approving drug searches without any justifying cause. Justice Antonin Scalia, writing for the majority in one case, said that "the 'reasonableness' inquiry cannot disregard the schools' custodial and tutelary responsibility for children."[18] The school's "responsibility for children" should not mean treating sixteen-year-olds as if they were six years old.

Schools are forced to offer a plethora of services to placate and control the young. The modern suburban school resembles a shopping mall with special emphasis on electronic gadgetry. The supposed focus of the classroom on dialogue, intellectual inquiry, and grappling with ideas can be overwhelmed. It is useless to complain that schools have taken on diverse functions, many of which serve to entertain rather than to instruct. If young people are required to spend much of their day in a school, they can hardly be expected to do nothing but read books, listen to classroom instructors, and think great thoughts. In any case, the school, in addition to engaging in academic instruction, can be a place supportive of community, work, and leisure.

One can get a good initial read on whether a school is a form of community by watching how a teacher or administrator physically interacts with a student. The ease with which staff and students engage in casual encounters is an indication of whether the school is simply trying to be a barrier against normal emotions or whether it is a humane place for expressing oneself in responsible ways. "Just by bringing them together, schools give kids a chance to develop their thinking, to practice handling their emotions, to deal with conflict, and to learn the values of our society—if the schools are organized correctly."[19]

## THE TEST OF EDUCATION: TEACHING

Most theories of education have little to say about the meaning of teaching.[20] It is simply assumed that teaching consists of an adult explaining something to a child. A classroom is the obvious place for such teaching to take place. A person who is called "the teacher" has the job of conveying knowledge to students whether or not the students are interested in learning. The assumption in most educational literature of the last half century is that teaching and learning are two separate things. Learning is effusively praised but teaching is suspect. Educational reforms usually seek to reduce the teacher's part and allow students to learn whatever interests them.

Here as elsewhere the adult education movement of the twentieth century accepted and reinforced this conventional assumption. Teaching, it was claimed, is something done to children.[21] Adult education sought to get away from teachers and teaching; adults need to have their learning "facilitated." It was said that adults are not interested in being taught history, math, or psychology; they are interested in solving personal problems. The result was a lack of substance in most adult education courses and acceptance of an authoritarian form of teaching for children.

The irony is that teaching-learning is best understood by starting with a relation between adults. Peter Elbow writes that "when the sexuality of teaching is more generally felt and admitted, we may finally draw the obvious moral: it is a practice that should only be performed between consenting adults."[22] I doubt that Elbow wished to completely exclude children from teaching-learning. If teaching-learning is primarily understood as a mutual relation between consenting adults, children starting in infancy can gradually be brought into experiencing this adult exchange on which the human race depends for survival and progress. But so long as teaching is assumed to be an action directed exclusively at children in a classroom, it will continue to be consciously or subconsciously equated with preaching, indoctrination, and authoritarian control.

The assumption that only children need teaching and that teachers are individuals who work in classrooms flies in the face of millennia of human experience. Teaching throughout the past and continuing in the present is primarily done by communities. Most teaching occurs through nonverbal rituals in a community. An individual who is called a teacher is someone who has been appointed to teach by the community or someone who simply stands out as representative of the community's way of life. The most powerful of teachers is example, whether the example is good or bad.

Religion provides an example of "leisure activity" as a form of education and one of the most fertile sources for understanding teaching. Unfortunately, most writers in modern education are so intent on rejecting "indoctrination," which they equate with religion, that they fail to see the important ways that religions actually teach. They may also fail to see that indoctrination is widespread in secular society, including in state schools.

Most religions call their founder "the teacher," a title carrying the greatest respect. Most of the great teachers in history have never worked in a classroom. The teacher works with a small group of disciples or learners who in turn try to exemplify a life to others. The main teaching takes place through rituals and example.

Religious history does not offer a complete or a balanced picture of teaching. In fact, all of the major religions today are in dire need of an appeal to rational thinking and intellectual inquiry. Religious history embodies a rich variety of forms of teaching that provide a continuity of wisdom across the ages. However, that kind of learning needs the help of the tools of modern scholarship which can critically assess the tradition and put it in touch with other traditions.

We have a dichotomy of religious and secular forms of teaching and education. A 1940s study of religion in education said that education has to do two things: pass *on* the tradition and *pass* on the tradition.[23] Religions are still trying to pass *on* the tradition without exposing it to critical inquiry. Secular education keeps using rational tools to criticize (*pass* on) the traditions of society that are barely alive to begin with. Only if a tradition has been passed *on* can school teaching reshape the attitudes and beliefs that shape the life of the child, youth or adult. Teaching in school will be ineffective unless other forms of education are effective outside the classroom.

A wider and deeper meaning of education, therefore, does not diminish the importance of rigorous intellectual inquiry in the classroom. On the contrary, when all of education is thrown upon school and classroom, the narrow but indispensable task of the classroom can disappear in a haze of well-intentioned efforts to manage all of life's problems. The classroom is a wonderful place for questioning the students' questions, for criticizing information that students have already acquired in the library or from the Internet, and for teaching them how to speak and write better. It is a place for civil

conversation about important subjects. Most classroom instructors know the power of thoughtful inquiry and sustained conversation, but the conditions under which they do their work can present enormous obstacles to achieving what is possible from their work.

## EDUCATION FOR NONVIOLENT LIVING

The need to reform the language of education is especially crucial for what is called "peace education." School teaching on war and peace is an indispensable part of education, but education for peace neither starts nor ends there. Kenneth Boulding contrasts two kinds of peace education, one that aims at peace instead of war and one that attends to all the structures of violence in today's world.[24] This latter kind of education is not a school subject, although an academic analysis of structures of violence is material for the classroom part of education.

A parallel to "peace education" is "sex education." Both are concerns that do not fit neatly into the classroom. When the relationship between classroom instruction and other forms of education is unclear, the word "education" is attached to topics that are not considered serious academic subjects, for example, driver education, drug education, moral education, environmental education, music education, and so forth. Each of these topics is important to education but is often mishandled in the school curriculum.

The classroom could make a valuable contribution to a "peaceful education" or a "sexual education." But a school subject badly named "sex education" has for more than a century been a source of constant contention.[25] The proponents insist that because neither the parent nor anyone else is providing children with adequate information about sex and the formation of healthy attitudes toward sexual practice, the school has to take on the task. Opponents consider "sex education" to be indoctrination into liberal views of sex that often run counter to the parents' values. No progress in understanding is possible without a framework in which sexual education begins at birth and continues into old age. For that to happen, academic instruction in sexual matters has to get itself a name (sexology?).

Within that same lifelong framework, educating toward a nonviolent life begins at birth and continues as long as a person lives. The curriculum for lifelong and lifewide education in peaceful living requires contributions from a variety of academic disciplines. But it also has to include the contributions of diverse institutions and people who are parents, religious ministers, athletic coaches, politicians, postal workers, physicians, restaurant waiters, supermarket workers—in short, it is a community effort. The classroom contribu-

tion to education in peaceful living needs a better name than "peace education."

## PEACEFUL EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

The third chapter of this book pointed out the distinction between aggressiveness and violence. The study of (nonhuman) animals can be a great help in understanding the behavior of the human child. The infant is born with aggressive tendencies that are necessary for survival. This aggressiveness can find expression in a variety of ways, most of which contribute to the personal identity and the development of the child. If the aggressive tendency is frustrated or distorted in its expression, it can produce violent behavior that is dangerous to anyone in the vicinity and counterproductive to the child's own freedom and happiness.

The crucial education that every young child needs is to find effective nonviolent outlets for its aggressiveness through language and rituals. It is one of the parents' main tasks to resist violent behavior but not by trying to suppress aggressiveness. A tragic misunderstanding of this process seems to have infected modern methods of child care. "The idea that aggressiveness is *only* a response to frustration has given rise to faulty methods of rearing children; for it has been assumed by kindly and liberal persons that, if only children were given enough love and frustrated as little as possible, they would not show any aggression at all."[26] Attempts to eliminate the aggressive impulse result in the incapacity to deal with aggressiveness and violence later in life.

The normal disposal of aggressiveness involves opposition, a running up against the otherness of the world. The mother is usually the primary other. She is the source of food, warmth, and safety, but she is also a powerful opposing force of otherness. The child finds an image of humanity in the image of the mother. "This knowledge is supported by the nature of the body but this nature is from the start a human nature in two ways. First, the child *discovers* his own body as situation *and* object. Second, he *discovers* the other person, in the first instance his mother, as the complement of himself, that is, as an 'alter ego.'"[27]

The infant has to assert itself against other bodies. Other skin establishes the equilibrium so that within its own skin it can develop an identity. Aggressive behavior is, initially, a person taking his or her place in the physical and social environment. "They need all the aggressive potential they can muster to protect and assert their developing individuality."[28] What Erik Erikson calls "basic trust" is needed for all future development; it is the conviction that one can push against the world without being destroyed by it. "All

moral, ideological and ethical propensities depend on this early experience of mutuality."[29]

The child's focus on the parents is soon supplemented by experiencing the otherness of children and animals. Small children recognize their kinship with other small mammals. Care for animals should be a significant part of a young child's education. The care might be for a domestic animal that needs to be fed, taken for a walk, petted, and allowed its own space. Some children are horrified when they learn where meat comes from; perhaps they just have to get over their squeamishness, or maybe adults could learn something from the child's attitude.

A high percentage of children first learn to cope with death when a pet dies.[30] Adults may dismiss the child's grief at such moments, a reaction that can have later repercussions. Some kind of ritual to acknowledge the pet's death is often helpful. At the least, children should be taught to respect an animal's life and not do it harm. John Locke's seventeenth-century treatise on education admonished that "children should from the beginning be bred up in an abhorrence of killing or tormenting any living creature."[31]

A main part of a child's education is running up against other children. As with the parents, a degree of mutuality is desirable. Unlike the parent-child relationship, relationships between children start closer to an equality of power. The meaning of power as a receptivity leading to cooperation can find embodiment in children's play. Rituals in the form of play supply the means for children to learn how to be aggressively nonviolent. Mutual sharing of power requires the investment of time and the overcoming of conflict.

The rituals of children's play are learned quickly. Some of them even seem to be preprogrammed as they are in other animals. Whatever their origin, rituals help children to avoid hurting each other in roughhouse play. Plato had already stated the principle that the child's education is play.[32] Modern study of play and games confirms how important play is for the child's education. Jean Piaget's studies of children's development centered on games of marbles. Piaget claimed that children teach each other democratic processes through play, without adult intervention.[33]

Piaget and later researchers found differences between boys and girls in how they play. Parents who have been careful about keeping a small boy away from toys that glorify violence and from stereotypes of gender differences are often shocked that the boy reaches an age when he starts playacting with imaginary guns, playing rough with other boys, and avoiding or teasing girls. It is probably ineffective to try to keep toy guns and other semblances of violence away from a boy; sooner or later he will discover them.

Some people insist that such a change in behavior is culturally induced and that the culture simply needs more change. There is probably some truth in that contention, although no one knows for certain. In any case, this stage in the boy's development is not a cause for panic. The formative influences

of early childhood have not been lost. The attitude of the parents remains crucial to developmental outcomes.

In general, young boys seem to engage in more aggressive play than girls do. Piaget found that boys would argue about the rules of a game. However, the arguments usually led boys to work out new rules. Girls, in contrast, tended to abandon the game when conflict arose. Aggressive arguing was avoided. There is much dispute over whether these differences transcend culture. An answer to that question will not be available until young girls have more opportunity to engage in aggressive play. We also have a relatively new phenomenon of games in which boys and girls participate in an equal or near-equal basis.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 requires "non-discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance." This law was a giant step forward in education. One of its most important effects was on high school and collegiate sports. Girls as well as boys have to learn a discipline of the body and how to have contact and competition within rituals that are nonviolent.[34]

The verb "to compete" originally meant "to strive together," which is the athletic ideal. Not accidentally, "compete" came to mean striving against a competitor. This development of competition need not be destructive of striving together so long as rules of fair play are observed and the desire to win does not override every other consideration.

## YOUNG PEOPLE AND VIOLENCE

Some boys and girls are subjected to occasions of violent behavior. All children today are surrounded by cultural artifacts of violence in books, films, television, and the Internet. The amount of violence is less important than whether the violence is crudely presented or is shaped artistically. Great works of literature quite often contain violent conflict. People who only count acts of violence in fiction are inclined to ban *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* from the school curriculum. This outlook neglects the key role of the context that is provided by the child's closest adults.

"If we study the contents of fairy tales or myths, we shall discover all kind of horrors from castration to boiling oil."[35] That includes Humpty Dumpty, Hansel and Gretel, Rumpelstiltskin, the Three Little Pigs, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Cinderella. Yet these stories delight little children. The stories are a secret language of children by which they externalize the fears that every small child is subject to. Attempts to replace these stories of violence have always failed. The horrifying story of "Little Red Riding Hood" has with minor variations been around for several millennia.[36]

In a study of children and movie violence, Robert Coles found that "if a moral life has strength and coherence, the movies aren't likely (at their worst) to topple things. At their best they can prompt . . . ethically charged reveries."[37] Of course, not all children have a chance to develop a moral life with strength and coherence. In Ishmael Beah's memoir of life as a boy soldier, the author describes watching *Rambo* movies as his favorite entertainment between his killing sprees with the army.[38] Hollywood movies are internationally famous for the violence they portray. There is not much U.S. attention to the effect these movies have on the lives of children throughout the world.

Violence in computer games is a new phenomenon which is difficult for most adults to get a handle on because the child is likely to be more adept at computer technology than the adult is. It has been pointed out that in several school shootings the deranged shooter was surprisingly accurate, even when he had little or no experience with shooting the weapon. Video games can be a training ground for psychotic killers.

It is tempting to condemn all video games, but that serves little purpose. In 2001, the Seventh Circuit Court invalidated an Indianapolis ordinance that tried to control video games of violence. Judge Richard Posner, noting that it would be hard to top *The Odyssey* and *The Divine Comedy* for depictions of torture and mayhem, said that "shielding children from violent imagery would leave them unequipped to cope with the world as we know it."[39] Parents, politicians, and moralists of all kinds have to educate themselves as to the specific character of these "toys" which are in a process of evolution. Some of the games can be educational, although their use should be within agreed-upon limits.[40]

Adults can understandably react with horror when they catch a glimpse of violent tendencies in teenagers' lives. Drawings or stories expressive of violent attitudes can be a symptom of sickness but more often they are cathartic outlets for the violent possibilities that lie within every human being. Today it would be surprising if teenagers did not have an interior world of violent fantasies. There is no simple rule for deciding which expressions of that inner life are acceptable and which are signs of danger. Remaining calm and attempting to have a conversation on the matter of violence is surely preferable to an attempt to squelch pictures and narratives of violence. A story of violence is not violent.

One area that needs special attention by adults is violence related to early sexual experience. Boys and girls who are just reaching this stage of life can find it difficult to sort out sexual feelings from inclinations toward violence. The sexual abuse of women is nothing new in history, but provocation by today's media gives a distinctive twist to the age-old problem. Society is hypocritical in preaching sexual restraint to youngsters while at the same time bombarding them with images of sex and violence. Young people often

just need one adult they can trust enough to ask for help, especially when they are caught up in an abusive relationship and do not know how to extricate themselves.

As Aristotle recognized, the moral education of the young occurs mainly through developing habits. In modern times, habit has often been attacked as mindless. However, ancient philosophies and "traditional education" rightly saw the need for our good tendencies to be fixed in the body, where their exercise does not require reflection. It would be impossible to get through an hour of the day if we had to think about each movement and decide how to do it. Nonviolent action is not a matter of heroic choice awaiting a dramatic conflict. It is mainly the daily development of habits that channel potentially violent tendencies into ritualized actions of art and play.

The person with well-formed habits will be ready when a clear-cut choice does become necessary. Martin Luther King Jr. described faith as a "nonsymmetric response to violence." The person who is trained in habits of nonviolent action may not know how he or she will react to a violent attack. The person is only certain that the response will not be symmetrical, that is, tit for tat, violence met with equal or greater violence.

Jean Piaget's study of moral development describes a movement toward equality in the child's thinking. However, toward the end of his study Piaget senses that there may be another language of morality beyond where he leaves his two stages, that the motto "'do as you would be done by' comes to replace the conception of crude equality." He interviews a ten-year-old boy who refuses to strike back when he has been hit. The precocious child's explanation of his action is that "there is no end to vengeance."[41] Carol Gilligan and many feminist writers after her have extended this insight to say that morality can be described with a language of care, compassion, and responsibility.[42]

A lack of violent reaction, especially in some cultural settings, might be interpreted as weakness and a failure of courage. A weak and fearful individual might be submissive to violence. But what nonviolent action is concerned with is action that breaks the cycle of violence/revenge. That stance requires a strength that can be mistaken for weakness by those who equate strength with the power to dominate.

## THE SCHOOL AND ITS CLASSROOMS

Nearly all of the terrible school massacres have occurred in quiet, upscale places that on the surface are models of good order. The inevitable response to an outburst of violence is: We never expected this kind of thing in our quiet suburb and its well-ordered school. However, if the school cannot

engage the students with meaningful learning and offer community experience, then its apathy, isolation, and aimlessness will be a breeding ground for violence.

The blame for incidents of violence should not fall entirely on the school. The origin of the problem is the life surrounding the school, including fractured families and nonschool entertainments. Still, the school can either add to the repressiveness or can be a safe outlet for potentially dangerous feelings. Schools can provide for constructive expressions of anger rather than pretending that anger should not exist.[43]

Schools can and should provide times and places of quiet. Young people are bombarded with noise. While good schools have plenty of chatter and physical movement, busy activity needs the balance of quiet solitude. David Elkind writes that "the child who sits quietly doing nothing is learning how to withdraw from the world without antagonizing it."[44] Budget restrictions cannot be an excuse for a school's failure to provide a place and a time for quiet.

Unfortunately, budget constraint is the usual reason for school cuts in the arts. Performance arts such as music, dance, and drama are "extracurricular" to the classroom curriculum but are central to the curriculum of the school and the curriculum of education. Art is a way of engaging the body, mind, and emotions in their unity, which is the long-term antidote to violence.

Classroom instruction necessarily restricts physical movement and emotional expressions. The classroom can do wonderful things but it badly needs the complement of another kind of learning in the theater, music room, or gymnasium. Sports, when kept under administrative control, can contribute a form of learning and an experience of teamwork that are difficult to match elsewhere. As noted above, sports are just as important for girls as for boys, a fact still not reflected in the practice of many schools. Many of those schools are in violation of the letter or spirit of the law in not providing for women's sports.

## ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

If other kinds of teaching-learning in the local community and within the school provide a context, the academic teaching-learning in the classroom can concentrate on its peculiar but important kind of learning. The student in a classroom needs to join a conversation that the human race has been having for millennia. Studying history makes a person aware that other people have wrestled with the life-and-death issues of today. Advocates of "peace education" sometimes turn the classroom into a place of political advocacy. The result can be more exciting than those school courses that are empty of

intellectual challenge. However, the potential for the classroom's distinctive kind of learning should not be neglected.

Should there be a course in the school's curriculum called "Peace Studies"? Some wonderful things are no doubt done under that label. But such a course title may drive away innumerable students who could and should be intellectually challenged by the study of the causes of violence in personal life, by memoirs of the experience of war, and by the history of efforts to curb war. Political advocacy has its place within the curriculum of education. The *school* can provide a natural base for the organization of youthful protests against violence and war. However, the *classroom* has a different purpose.

There is no readily available name for a course focused on the causes of violence and the possibility of living nonviolently. A course on ethics could have that orientation, but the term "ethics" does not generally convey that meaning to people. A course called "Peace and War" or "Violence and Nonviolence" could describe a multidisciplinary approach to understanding the causes of violence and its remedies. The course would not restrict the scope of study to people who advocate peace. The curricula of courses on peace often concentrate so determinedly on peace that they fail to provide the comparisons that are necessary for critical understanding.

Coleman McCarthy, in his admirable book *I'd Rather Teach Peace*, describes the courses on peace he has taught and the wonderful results in the lives of young people.[45] In the book's preface, McCarthy writes that critics complain that his approach lacks "balance" and does not give "the other side." He responds: "I'm never sure exactly what that means. After assigning students to read Gandhi should I have them also read Clausewitz?"[46] I think the answer to his question is that reading Clausewitz's *On War* would be very helpful in a course on peace. But I am afraid that McCarthy has not asked the question seriously. He draws a parallel to his question on Clausewitz by asking: "After a woman's account of using a nonviolent defense against a rapist, [do we seek] the thwarted rapist's side?" It is not a question of balancing advocacy of nonviolence with advocacy of violence. Academic inquiry is not a matter of advocating one of two sides; it is a question of trying to understand the human condition through the careful study of language.

Carl von Clausewitz was not an advocate for the "other side." He was in fact trying to limit war by providing an understanding of war. Anyone reading his nineteenth-century book can appreciate his experience and reflections while concluding that we have to do better in the twenty-first century. His view needs complementing with the views of others who have written on war. Academic study does not have two sides; it has multiple perspectives. I noted in chapter 4 that Sun Zu's ancient text, *The Art of War,* may be more

helpful today than Clausewitz's *On War* in our understanding of war and how to avoid war.

War can be understood only when viewed from many perspectives, including the experiences of ordinary soldiers and the suffering of bystanders on both sides of a war. John Keegan's *The Face of Battle* advocates that students in a military college study all perspectives on war—including that of the pacifist.[47] Kenneth Boulding goes further in proposing that the study of nonviolence should be part of the curriculum of every military academy.[48] In the opposite direction, pacifists and others opposed to war would do well to consider studying war as described by a military expert of today.

I think a course on peace might also include essays by Theodore Roosevelt or Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. on the value of war for developing the "manly virtues."[49] Unfortunately, their attitude to war is still relevant today and therefore has to be understood. If war is the enemy of peace, then one has to study war to understand the obstacles to peace. The classroom is the main place that exists for engaging in the difficult but important work of understanding war, peace, and the relation between them.

It may seem that war has already been given too much attention in school curricula. And indeed much of what is called "American history" has been centered on the glorious victories in the wars that the country has fought. History textbooks still have a tendency to deal in myth, which they will do as long as "America," a quasi-religious ideal, is confused with the United States, the name of a nation-state. The conflating of the country and an idea about the country is a large factor in the violent history of the United States.

Patriotism is a virtue when it is a genuine love of one's country and one's people. What passes for patriotism in the United States is often a love of a myth about the country that encourages ignorance about the violent history of the United States and a lack of interest in learning about other countries. A more accurate and penetrating look at history without ideological blinders does not eliminate violence and war, but some appreciation of history is indispensable for living nonviolently in today's world.

In chapter 4 I pointed out that war memorials are not a help to peace unless they recognize the suffering on both sides of the war. It is difficult to find a war memorial in Washington, D.C., the city of monuments, that exemplifies this attitude. The Vietnam Memorial is far better than most, but it is still a war memorial; it remembers the 58,261 U.S. soldiers who died but not the estimated 2 million Vietnamese. In contrast, there is a Japanese peace memorial on Okinawa that remembers the 200,000 Japanese, U.S., and British people who were slaughtered during the World War II battle there. The memorial includes the names of the 12,000 U.S. marines who died in the battle. It is a true peace monument and a peace educator.

That principle of war memorials applies to historical writing on war. For example, Elizabeth Norman and Michael Norman's *Tears in the Darkness:*

*The Story of the Bataan Death March and Its Aftermath* is extraordinary history told from the direct testimony of Japanese as well as U.S. soldiers.[50] The project took the authors many years to find the individuals and to gather the material through interviews. Many of the Japanese and U.S. men had never previously spoken about their experience of a half-century earlier.

As for films that tell both sides of war, Clint Eastwood's pairing of *Flags of Our Fathers* and *Letters from Iwo Jima* is a brilliant example. The latter movie shows the battle from the Japanese side. The dialogue in the movie is drawn directly from letters that the 21,000 Japanese soldiers wrote when they knew that they would all be killed in the defense of Iwo Jima. Given Hollywood's past glorification of war, one could argue that *Letters from Iwo Jima* is one of the most important movies that Hollywood has ever made.

Good literature is a significant way to reach sympathetic understanding of others. Young people have to be allowed some choice in what they read and study. Before they develop a cultured taste in literature, they are likely to prefer what adults consider to be trash. Compromise is needed in the choice of literature. Well-educated adults sometimes read what does not pass for great literature. Young people should be allowed a mixture that exposes them to a higher caliber of literature than they would choose on their own but everything read for school need not be solemn and antiseptic. Many textbooks used in schools have the effect of killing any interest in reading books.

A mark of good literature is that it does not try to force a change of mind on the reader. Its work is simpler but requires time and a patient attention to detail. Richard Rorty writes that "the generosity of Dickens', (H. B.) Stowe's and (M. L.) King's anger comes out in their assumption that people merely need to turn their eyes toward the people who are getting hurt, notice the *details* of the pain being suffered, rather than needing to have their entire cognitive apparatus restructured."[51] Good literature is what deserves to be read slowly and be read several times.

Some of the best writing on war and peace is found in novels. It seems that imaginative writers of fiction are necessary to convey much of the horror of war. Great novels about war are not likely to inspire a love of war. Their implicit advocacy of peace arises from recounting the experience of the confusion, stupidity, and suffering of war. Michael Shaara's *The Killer Angels* on the Battle of Gettysburg or Sebastian Faulks's *Birdsong* on the Battle of the Somme or Karl Marlantes's *Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War* cannot be replaced by "objective" historical reporting.

High school literature courses often do include war novels; *The Red Badge of Courage* was long a staple. But if a novel on war is read too early or without preparation, it may be just one more assignment to get through. The novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* about World War I gives young people a view of the war from young soldiers on "the other side." It continues to be a work that is eminently readable and potentially powerful for young people

today. It needs some context and a teacher who treats the work as engaging literature.

The movie industry is never going to be an advocate of peace. However, documentaries can sometimes penetrate the "fog of war"—also the title of an excellent 2003 documentary on the career of Robert McNamara from World War II through Vietnam. The 2004 documentary *Control Room*, showing AlJazeera's coverage of the invasion of Iraq, is a fascinating study of the struggle for journalistic objectivity; it did not get much play in the United States. Other documentaries on a variety of topics can contribute to changing attitudes toward violence and war. The widely circulated *An Inconvenient Truth* in 2006 managed to get attention for resisting the "war on nature."

What Hollywood occasionally does well is to show the insanity of war by means of satirical, ironic, and absurdist humor. To make jokes about such a deadly subject as war can seem horribly inappropriate, but in skillful hands it is a way to get at the insanity of war. *Oh! What a Lovely War, Catch-22*, *Slaughterhouse-Five, Dr. Strangelove,* or *Wag the Dog* are more effective voices for peace than novels and movies that try advocating an antiwar attitude by directly showing the horrors of war.

Movies such as *Saving Private Ryan, Full Metal Jacket,* or *The Hurt Locker* that are especially graphic on the violence of war are praised by some people as antiwar statements. That may be the intention of the directors of these movies. However, I do not think that such films can break out of the circle of typical war movies that have been made in this country since World War II. The message is: Look how horrible and violent war is; it is terrible, revolting, and a source of endless suffering. Contrast that with the bravery, heroism, and moral fiber of our boys who become men through this terrible ordeal.

*The Hurt Locker* won Hollywood's highest awards for movies in 2009. It was a technically brilliant movie; the directing, acting, and cinematography were superb. The viewer looks on with awe, marveling at how such a movie could have been made. The movie opens with a quotation from a book by Chris Hedges saying that war is an addiction.[52] Perhaps that is what the movie wishes to convey. Hedges's book is unambiguous in unveiling the addiction that kills. The movie, however, invites the viewer to identify with the courage and heroism of the main character. He performs daring stunts that endanger the lives of his men while daring death to take him. Any intended irony about war is overwhelmed by the audience's close-up view of the tension, suddenness, and horrors of violence that the U.S. soldiers are subjected to.

The age of students has to be carefully considered in the use of irony. Young children are not ironic. By the time they are in high school, most young people can get the joke of absurdist humor, but they may not have sufficient experience of life to appreciate the profound attack it represents. In

a lifelong education, some of the books and movies about the experience of war can be reserved for education beyond high school and college.

Most memoirs of the experience of war are best appreciated by adult readers. A few books written by children or written as reconstructions of childhood can engage youthful readers. *The Diary of Anne Frank* is the best known of these books in recent times. Its fame is such that it is now difficult to view it as a diary within its own historical and literary context. Recent memoirs of the experience of child soldiers could be read by young people in the United States as a help to their international understanding. Ishmael Beah's horrifying tale, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*, would be appropriate reading for anyone as old as the author (fifteen).[53] Middle-class youth in the United States need not go as far as Africa or the Holocaust to read about growing up surrounded by violence. The immigrant experience of the United States or the grinding poverty of many black families are needed reminders of why violence remains so prominent in this country.

The place of math and science in today's classroom curriculum needs little defense, but science and art are often played against one another in budget discussions. Both of them are needed for intelligently living nonviolently. The United States produces too few teachers of math and science, with the result that the country trails badly in international surveys of mathematical and scientific knowledge, but that situation is not due to an overemphasis on the arts. Youngsters should leave school with tools for learning and a desire to learn more. Living nonviolently is not just a matter of abstention from intending violence. It requires understanding of today's world that has been shaped by the revolution in science and technology.

## CONCLUSION

In chapter 4 I cited William James' essay "The Moral Equivalent of War" for misusing war as a metaphor. The essay is often recommended for educating young people toward a peaceful world. Writing in 1910, the author was prescient about international conflicts, such as between Japan and the United States. He offers brilliant insights into the "militarist mind" and the inadequacy of the pacifist strategy of describing war's horror. He writes that "showing war's irrationality and horror has no effect on him [the militarist]. The horrors make the fascination. War is the strong life; it is life *in extremis*."[54] While James calls himself a pacifist, he seems to have an unusual admiration for the militarist mind because of the need to fight the weaker, more cowardly self.[55]

When it comes to an alternative to war, James's sole proposal represents a shocking failure to break out of the circle of violence. He advocates "instead

of military conscription, a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of years a part of the army enlisted against Nature." If they were drafted into this army, James writes, "they would have paid their blood-tax, done their own part in the immemorial war against nature, they would tread the earth more proudly, the women would value them more highly, they would be better fathers and teachers of the following generation."[56]

Although the language of "man conquering nature" was common until the 1960s, James was still remarkably obtuse in proposing a draft of young men for "the immemorial war against nature" as a moral equivalent of war (among humans). The language of man conquering nature that goes back to the seventeenth century became entwined with war among the nations. Conversely, a different attitude to the nonhuman natural world has been a hopeful sign during the last half century. Wars are destructive of humans and nonhumans alike. Peace among men and women across national boundaries cannot be stable if humans still think of themselves as at war with something called Nature.

There is now widespread interest in the environment, but the language for addressing the difficult issues of human interaction with the nonhuman world is still not clear. An environmental education would have to be an education for nonviolent action with a full awareness that humans are a dangerous species capable of widespread destruction. Human beings need a wide and deep education if they are to avoid wars and preserve the physical environment.

Like "sex education" or "peace education," "environmental education" has no name for the classroom part of the education that would concentrate on understanding the problems that the human race has created in its relationship with the physical environment. Courses on "environmental education" are always in danger of turning into sermons on the dire condition of the human race. Like a concern for peace, and ultimately converging with it, a concern for the human environment should be a quality of all education. Environmental education begins at birth; it occurs wherever there is a lessening of violence in the community of men, women, children, and nonhuman animals. Classroom inquiry into the nature of ecological problems has to be joined to an attitude of respect for all forms of life, appreciation of physical beauty, and restriction of the consumerist attitude that asks for the price of everything.

Peaceful education is one that continues throughout adulthood in one's work, in one's leisure activities, and as a responsible member of a community. Parenting and grandparenting can be major contributions to the hope for peace in the next generation. Care for the sick and dying is a good test of whether a community embodies peacefulness at its core. Resistance to violence in one's immediate community and opposition to bellicose political

policies of the nation-state remain a necessary part of one's education in living nonviolently.

A peaceful education would be one that leads toward peace by traveling on a path that resists violence at every step of the way. Peace is both a personal quality and a condition of political life. The individual person can get discouraged because the world is a violent place. The temptation is to try to withdraw into a private sphere where peace seems possible. However, the violence of the world intrudes on every life unless one develops a language of nonviolence, skills of conflict resolution, and an interior life of quiet moments in the midst of passionate activity.

Violence cannot just be avoided; it has to be aggressively confronted as an ever-present possibility in one's own life and the immediate community of one's life. The basic political act is speech. At the least, one has to be able to articulate for oneself a nonviolent approach to life. The language might not seem to have any effect on current violence but the demonstration of a language of nonviolence that is accompanied by the outstretched hand of kindness has political reverberations beyond measure.

## NOTES

1. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (New York: Macmillan, 1953), no. 208.
2. The failure to discriminate among the ages of childhood is a serious flaw in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was approved by 190 countries. The United States was one of two countries that abstained.
3. Kieran Egan, *Educational Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 10.
4. The most comprehensive statement by John Dewey of his educational theory is *Democracy and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1966); the best summary of Dewey's thought is Robert Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).
5. John Dewey, "Educational and Social Change," in *John Dewey: Later Works* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1981), XI:414.
6. Leo Tolstoy, *Tolstoy as Teacher: Leo Tolstoy's Writings on Education* (New York: Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 2000); Bertrand Russell, *Education and the Good Life* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger, 2004).
7. William Heard Kilpatrick, introduction to *An Experiment with a Project Curriculum* by Ellsworth Collings (New York: Macmillan, 1923).
8. John Dewey, "School and Society," in *Dewey on Education*, ed. Martin Dworkin (New York: Teachers College Press, 1959), 36.
9. John Dewey, "My Pedagogic Creed," in *Dewey on Education*, 30, 32.
10. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, 6–9.
11. Sheila Rothman, *Woman's Place: A History of Changing Ideals and Practices* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 57.
12. John Newson and Elizabeth Newson, *Patterns of Infant Care in an Urban Community*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1971).
13. This principle was central to the work of Urie Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

14. C. Hartley Grattan, *American Ideas about Adult Education 1760–-1951* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1959).

15. Abraham Heschel, *The Family in Jewish Tradition* (Washington, DC: White House Conference on Aging, 1961).

16. John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

17. Ingraham v. Wright, 439 U.S. S. Ct. 651 (1977).

18. Veronia School District 475 v. Acton, 115 U.S. S. Ct. 2386 (June 26, 1995).

19. Linda Lantieri and Janet Patti, *Waging Peace in Our Schools* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 6.

20. For a comprehensive meaning of teaching, see Gabriel Moran, *Showing How: The Act of Teaching* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997).

21. Malcolm Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy* (New York: Follett Publishing, 1980).

22. Peter Elbow, *Embracing Contraries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 70.

23. Committee on Religion and Education, *The Relation of Religion to Public Education* (Washington, DC: American Council on Education, 1947).

24. Kenneth Boulding, *Stable Peace* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978),135.

25. Jeffrey Moran, *Teaching Sex: The Shaping of Adolescence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

26. Anthony Storr, *Aggression* (New York: Pelican Books, 1968), 68.

27. F. J. J. Buytenddijk as cited in Marjorie Greene, *The Knower and the Known* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 177.

28. Storr, *Aggression*, 73.

29. Erik Erikson, *Insight and Responsibility* (New York: Norton, 1964), 231.

30. There is an extensive literature on children learning to cope with a pet's death. Many of the books are just sentimental schlock, but the topic deserves serious attention; see Herbert Nieburg, *Pet Loss: A Thoughtful Guide for Adults and Children* (New York: Harper, 1996).

31. John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1996), par. 116.

32. Plato, *The Republic* 424d: Plato points out the common Greek root for the words "play" (*paidia*), "education" (*paideia*), and "children" (*paides*).

33. Jean Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child* (New York: Free Press, 1965), 323.

34. Welsh Suggs, *A Place on the Team* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

35. Storr, *Aggression*, 72. At a Broadway play, *Story Theory*, a dramatization of fairy tales, I was struck by the delight of very young children at the violent doings onstage.

36. David Bakan, *Slaughter of the Innocents: A Study of the Battered Child Phenomenon* (New York: CBS Learning Systems, 1971), 57–78; Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage, 2010).

37. Robert Coles, *Moral Life of Children* (New York: Atlantic Monthly, 2000), 82.

38. Ishmael Beah, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 121.

39. AAMA et al. v. Kendrick et al., 244 F.3rd 572. In November 2010, the Supreme Court agreed to hear a similar case concerning California's attempt to restrict minors' access to video games.

40. Douglas Gentile, *Media Violence and Children: A Complete Guide for Parents and Professionals* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008); Kevin Haninger and Kimberly Thompson, "Content and Ratings of Teen-Rated Video Games," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 291 (February 18, 2004): 856–65.

41. Piaget, *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, 323.

42. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982); Fiona Robinson, *Globalizing Care: Ethics, Feminist Theory and International Relations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999); Annette Baier, *Moral Prejudices: Essays on Ethics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995).

43. Lantieri and Patti, *Waging Peace in Our Schools,* 36.

44. David Elkind, *Children and Adolescents* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 99.

45. Coleman McCarthy, *I'd Rather Teach Peace* (New York: Orbis Books, 19). The book is admirable in describing a sustained commitment to work with young people for the cause of peace. My disagreement here is about how to describe classroom instruction.

46. McCarthy, *I'd Rather Teach Peace*, xv.

47. John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: Viking Books, 1976), 23–24.

48. Boulding, *Stable Peace,* 115.

49. Theodore Roosevelt, *The Strenuous Life* (New York: Forgotten Books, 2010); Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., *Holmes' Speeches* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1913).

50. Elizabeth Norman and Michael Norman, *Tears in the Darkness: The Story of the Bataan Death March and Its Aftermath*(New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009).

51. Richard Rorty, *Essays on Heidegger and Others* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 80.

52. Chris Hedges, *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning* (New York: Public Affairs, 2002).

53. Beah, *A Long Way Gone*.

54. William James, "The Moral Equivalent of War," in *William James: Writings 1902–1910* (New York: Library of America, 1987), 1281.

55. James, "The Moral Equivalent of War," 1288.

56. James, "The Moral Equivalent of War," 1291.

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