

Chapter 1 : The Power of Non-violence | Teaching American History

some power in the universe that works for justice I am quite aware of the fact that there are persons who believe firmly in nonviolence who do not believe in a personal God, but I think every person who believes in nonviolent resistance believes somehow that the universe in some form is on the side of justice.

Mon, 31 Mar She is an author and environmentalist, most famous for her sixth book *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place*. I have heard her speak at the Environmental Law Conference in Eugene. She is powerful, and she is eloquent. Sunday, March 30, 1: Williams was writing to people at Dartmouth, where she was recently visiting and speaking. I just wanted to extend to you my love and gratitude. The shared days at Dartmouth were extraordinary -- and I have to tell you that the students had such an impact on me, so much so, I carried their inspiration with me when I returned home and then back to Washington, D. I wanted to share these thoughts with you, hoping that you will convey to the students in the Environmental Studies Program, along with the wonderful faculty, that in a very real way, they accompanied me. The intensity of the capital was palpable -- Sam Hamill asked if I would accompany William Merwin and him to deliver the 13, poems against the war to Congress. On March 5, we presented the poems to the Democratic Progressive Caucus. Congresswoman Marcie Kaptur from Ohio was amazing saying "What we need most right now are words. He was truly eloquent. And John Conyer moved people to tears when he spoke about the power of poetry to change society. When asked if he thought this would have any affect on President Resident Bush, Merwin said, "We are under no illusions. It is our gesture on behalf of democracy. Why would this move an illiterate and illegitimate president? People were physically stunned -- the recognition of, the truth of that gesture. We walked four miles or so to Lafayette Park directly across from The White House only to find a blockade of police dressed in black, bullet proof vests, rifles, clubs -- standing shoulder to shoulder. We were not allowed to enter the park, this park that is a public park, this park I had just sat in hours before, this park where "Pro-life demonstrators" were standing in with their hideous, brutal pictures. They were standing in front of The White House -- where we could not. We tried to negotiate with the police. It was clear they could barely uphold the law they were being asked to enforce. We made the decision that 25 of us would test the waters. Rachel Bagby, one of the most powerful, beautiful African American women, began singing with the strength of her voice her voice is legendary. She began singing, "All we are saying. We joined her, thousands of women joined in this song. Her eyes locked on the African American policeman blocking her. His eyes met hers. He quietly stepped to the side and created an opening, the opening we walked through. This is how I remember it. Once "inside" we walked toward the White House, now prohibited. Slowly, incrementally, we just kept walking backwards, singing, quietly, peacefully. The police said our arrest was imminent. The local captain of the police said he was not going to arrest us. He then asked, Nina Utne in a whisper, if he could have a Code Pink button for his wife. The atmosphere changed abruptly when the federal police arrived. I am bearing witness. I am not with these women. They then went over and arrested a second press person, took her camera. It was only then, I became frightened. We kept walking until our heels touched the White House fence. We turned and faced The White House. Can I tell you what that felt like to watch Alice Walker, Maxine Hong Kingston, Susan Griffin and the Reverend Patricia Ackerman who had just returned from Iraq handcuffed, photographed like criminals against a white sheet taped to the paddy wagon and taken away? Can I tell you what it felt like to be stripped of all possessions, notebook, pen, handcuffed, photographed, then yanked into the back of a dark vehicle and shoved into a makeshift cell and find yourself sitting next to Amy Goodman who almost died in Timor -- and then hear the door slam shut and locked. I smiled and asked her what breed she was. It felt like being inside a dog pound. In the back of the vehicle, we listened to these women tell their stories about what was it in their lives that brought them to this place. None of us had any intention of being arrested. And then we were taken to Anacostia Corrections Facility, booked, fingerprinted, and locked in a cell. Alice, Maxine, and I were in one cell with a brave student named Holly, 19 years old, and a wonderful housewife from Houston who told us her name was "Mrs. She said, "I now understand that his calm came from being a free man, he was his own sovereign, his obligation was to follow his own conscience.

As Maxine said, "It was the least we could do. Nobody has the will to uphold these newly instated laws and regulations. Our citation is for "Stationary demonstration in front of The White House restricted " A direct quote. When we were released -- we walked out of the fenced compound to the edge of the Anacostia River, a Superfund site, where as Bob Hass put it "the shit of Congress flows" and were met by other women who were there to drive us home. Two days later, hundreds of young activists, many part of the Sierra Student Coalition, arrived to lobby Congress on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. They were on fire, so idealistic and impassioned for the wild. It made me weep to hear of their hope and strength and resolve. They had organized a rally for the Arctic and Utah Wilderness on the hill, with their own student speakers and all. They had invited a congressman or two. Now, because of General Ashcroft, they have initiated a new rule that after a member of Congress speaks, the gathering must be broken up -- so of course, the kids, not knowing of this new rule by our fascist government, deferred to the Congressman and allowed him to speak first -- Then, the police ordered the rally to be shut down. Can you believe it? The kids did not get to speak, did not get to gather in the name of democracy, did not get to celebrate and defend their arguments as to why the Arctic must be saved. They began to protest, but were quickly silenced. The look on their faces, Andy -- but they did not give up. They witnessed what we are up against. Even so, good news today -- the Arctic is saved by a vote in the Senate, 52 to 47. It remains wild for now. Forgive this long letter, but my heart is full and what can we do but tell our stories and stand on our ground, even as we go to war. I read the other day in one of the poems sent to Congress that "our personal anarchy is composed of deep pain and intense joys. And please thank Ann for sending on the boxes. They arrived with all the beauty of the landscape and community you represent.

Chapter 2 : Nonviolence has returned from obscurity to become a new force | Aeon Essays

The Power of Non-Violence - Kindle edition by Richard B. Gregg. Download it once and read it on your Kindle device, PC, phones or tablets. Use features like bookmarks, note taking and highlighting while reading The Power of Non-Violence.

Full Document From the very beginning there was a philosophy undergirding the Montgomery boycott, the philosophy of nonviolent resistance. We had to use our mass meetings to explain nonviolence to a community of people who had never heard of the philosophy and in many instances were not sympathetic with it. We had meetings twice a week on Mondays and on Thursdays, and we had an institute on nonviolence and social change. We had to make it clear that nonviolent resistance is not a method of cowardice. It is not a method of stagnant passivity and deadening complacency. The nonviolent resister is just as opposed to the evil that he is standing against as the violent resister but he resists without violence. This method is nonaggressive physically but strongly aggressive spiritually. This was always a cry that we had to set before people that our aim is not to defeat the white community, not to humiliate the white community, but to win the friendship of all of the persons who had perpetrated this system in the past. The end of violence or the aftermath of violence is bitterness. The aftermath of nonviolence is reconciliation and the creation of a beloved community. A boycott is never an end within itself. It is merely a means to awaken a sense of shame within the oppressor but the end is reconciliation, the end is redemption. Then we had to make it clear also that the nonviolent resister seeks to attack the evil system rather than individuals who happen to be caught up in the system. And this is why I say from time to time that the struggle in the South is not so much the tension between white people and Negro people. The struggle is rather between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. And if there is a victory it will not be a victory merely for fifty thousand Negroes. But it will be a victory for justice, a victory for good will, a victory for democracy. Another basic thing we had to get over is that nonviolent resistance is also an internal matter. It not only avoids external violence or external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. And so at the center of our movement stood the philosophy of love. The attitude that the only way to ultimately change humanity and make for the society that we all long for is to keep love at the center of our lives. Now people used to ask me from the beginning what do you mean by love and how is it that you can tell us to love those persons who seek to defeat us and those persons who stand against us; how can you love such persons? And I had to make it clear all along that love in its highest sense is not a sentimental sort of thing, not even an affectionate sort of thing. It talks about eros. Eros is a sort of aesthetic love. It has come to us to be a sort of romantic love and it stands with all of its beauty. The Greek language talks about philia and this is a sort of reciprocal love between personal friends. This is a vital, valuable love. But when we talk of loving those who oppose you and those who seek to defeat you we are not talking about eros or philia. The Greek language comes out with another word and it is agape. Agape is understanding, creative, redemptive good will for all men. Biblical theologians would say it is the love of God working in the minds of men. It is an overflowing love which seeks nothing in return. And when you come to love on this level you begin to love men not because they are likeable, not because they do things that attract us, but because God loves them and here we love the person who does the evil deed while hating the deed that the person does. It is the type of love that stands at the center of the movement that we are trying to carry on in the Southland—agape. That there is something unfolding in the universe whether one speaks of it as an unconscious process, or whether one speaks of it as some unmoved mover, or whether someone speaks of it as a personal God. There is something in the universe that unfolds for justice and so in Montgomery we felt somehow that as we struggled we had cosmic companionship. And this was one of the things that kept the people together, the belief that the universe is on the side of justice. God grant that as men and women all over the world struggle against evil systems they will struggle with love in their hearts, with understanding good will. Agape says you must go on with wise restraint and calm reasonableness but you must keep moving. We have a great opportunity in America to build here a great nation, a nation where all men live together as brothers and respect the dignity and worth of all human personality. We must keep moving toward that goal. I

know that some people are saying we must slow up. They are saying we must adopt a policy of moderation. Now if moderation means moving on with wise restraint and calm reasonableness, then moderation is a great virtue that all men of good will must seek to achieve in this tense period of transition. But if moderation means slowing up in the move for justice and capitulating to the whims and caprices of the guardians of the deadening status quo, then moderation is a tragic vice which all men of good will must condemn. We must continue to move on. Our self-respect is at stake; the prestige of our nation is at stake. Civil rights is an eternal moral issue which may well determine the destiny of our civilization in the ideological struggle with communism. We must keep moving with wise restraint and love and with proper discipline and dignity. But there are some things within our social order to which I am proud to be maladjusted and to which I call upon you to be maladjusted. I never intend to adjust myself to segregation and discrimination. I never intend to adjust myself to mob rule. I never intend to adjust myself to the tragic effects of the methods of physical violence and to tragic militarism. I call upon you to be maladjusted to such things. I call upon you to be as maladjusted to such things. God grant that we will be so maladjusted that we will be able to go out and change our world and our civilization.

- 13 - *The Power of Nonviolence. FOREWORD FOR THE INDIAN EDITION THE MOVEMENT OF ideas and their development into action is a fascinating study. One such idea is that.*

Support Aeon Donate now No political action seems to enjoy greater moral authority than the nonviolent methods Mahatma Gandhi inaugurated more than a century ago. While this term itself never caught on, in principle or form, nonviolent models of organising protest did. For decades, pro-democracy movements in Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe have conspicuously embraced nonviolent politics to express mass dissent and topple authoritarian governments. Time and again, activists around the world have turned to mass boycotts, strikes and collective vigils, techniques Gandhi pioneered and practised on the world stage with historic results. More recently, protestors in the Occupy movements and the Arab Spring successfully put to use nonviolent tactics of disruption. Similarly, activists for issues including the environment, corruption, refugee and immigrant rights, racial exclusion and violence are taking up and adapting nonviolent protest to meet new challenges. This *Is an Uprising* by the political analysts Mark and Paul Engler promises to show how nonviolent politics can force political change on the most intractable issues of the day, from climate change to rising inequality. Over the course of the last century, the popularity and attraction of nonviolent politics has waxed and waned. Plenty of activists and observers have doubted the effectiveness of nonviolent politics. Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr, the leading figures of nonviolent politics, both faced criticism along these lines. Skeptics viewed nonviolent methods as timid and sluggish, at best, capable of winning only small reforms. The moral superiority of nonviolence is often evoked to condemn violent resistance and discredit unruly activists. States regularly conscript the language of nonviolence in this way, adding to worries that nonviolence carries risks of cooption and compromise. The wars and occupations of the past two decades seem unlikely portents of a new era of nonviolence. The enthrallment of force and violence seem as overwhelming as ever. And yet the encircling violence “from state violence and increasingly deadly military technology, to global terrorism and asymmetrical warfare” seems to be self-defeating at best, nihilistic at worst. That is, there is little prospect that all this violence has or will achieve its purported ends. This fact “and reckoning with it” holds out the promise of nonviolence. For both Gandhi and King, transformative politics was a difficult road “full of disappointments and reversals. Lasting change required patience and determination, and nonviolence was the most potent and reliable means for achieving it. Far from signalling acquiescence, nonviolence was a resolutely active politics. It required the cultivation of disciplined fearlessness and moral courage to face the demands of political action. Beginning in the late s, doubts about nonviolence peaked as radical politics around the world embraced and celebrated armed struggles for national liberation, especially the anti-colonial movements in Vietnam and Algeria. As the political scientist Sean Scalmer has shown in *Gandhi in the West: The Mahatma and the Rise of Radical Protest*, protestors in the United States were also moving away from nonviolence. But soon after, SNCC began to chafe. Black Power would not hold out a hand asking white liberals for charity. Protestors opted for more openly confrontational and defiant tactics, experimenting with tactics that grabbed media attention and shocked public conscience. They sought dramatic and spectacular confrontations with the police “like the antiwar protests at the Democratic Convention” as a way to create crises and expose state violence. The Black Panthers embraced the symbolism and tactics of guerrilla war, and the Weather Underground movement followed. The culture of protest encouraged anarchic expression and a dramatic theatre of opposition and revolt. From tactics of evading arrest and streaking to the brandishing of weapons by the Panthers, disruptive protest mocked authority and rejected prevailing social and political norms. In this moment of reassessment, a distinction between principled and strategic nonviolence took shape. Movements began to see nonviolence as a useful tactic rather than a defining creed. It could be adopted for pragmatic reasons but its use did not require moral conviction in nonviolence. It was, for them, ill-suited for instigating radical social and structural transformation. Faced with this dynamic rival, nonviolence seemed as if it might move into long-term decline. But that has not happened. Instead, in the s, nonviolence reemerged in enduring ways. These anti-authoritarian

struggles linked nonviolence to processes of democratisation. Their success infused nonviolence with a renewed vitality and legitimacy. Why did these movements return to nonviolence as a strategy for contesting power? How did nonviolence contribute to their success? Does nonviolence effect political change by demonstrating conscientious dissent, by expressing popular power, or by moral suasion? When it comes to actual protest, what is more effective – acts of heroic self-sacrifice such as the hunger strike, or public protests involving massive crowds? In short, what is it about nonviolence that gives it its power and accounts for its enduring appeal? At their core, nonviolent movements eschew armed rebellion. All of these struggles achieved transformative political change without relying on either the threat of military force or any marked coordination with armed movements. Reflecting on this global revival in *The Unconquerable World*, Jonathan Schell saw the adoption of nonviolence as more than a savvy political choice. The rise of nonviolence was tied to an equally remarkable change in the history of violence: The 20th century was the era of both extreme violence and mass democratic mobilisation. Military force became unreliable as an arbiter of political conflict. In the latter half of the century, warfare and force no longer seemed capable of delivering clear-cut political winners. The momentum seemed to be swinging in the opposite direction. Political victory could be wrestled from the jaws of military defeat. Vietnam and Algeria exemplified this reversal. The overwhelming military might of imperial powers proved futile in the face of determined, popular opposition. The application of greater force did not and could not produce submission. With the advent of nuclear weapons, the irony was complete. Military technology designed for total war had come to outstrip all political utility to the point of absurdity. To win in nuclear terms meant the annihilation of the victors and the defeated alike. As the use of force became fraught with negative, even perverse, consequences, nonviolence became the only real option for insurgent politics. Nonviolent action is a proven way to organise and display political strength and power. Through bodies and action, it reveals where political power truly lies: From its very invention, nonviolence was based upon this fundamental insight – that power resides in the people. Mere force could never, by itself, sustain a government. The implication was clear: This was the logic of non-cooperation. In short, nonviolent politics as practised today organises and displays collective power. In so doing, it demonstrates popular will and consent. It is seen to be the natural corollary of democracy. For the past generation, Gene Sharp has been the most well-known and effective disseminator of this view. His pamphlets outline nearly techniques of nonviolent resistance and they have popped up in the hands of activists the world over, from the velvet revolutionaries of Eastern Europe to the protestors of Tahrir Square and Wall Street. The championing of nonviolence as collective power, however, has a longer history. It was one of the first attempts to translate Gandhian politics for the West. It helped to circulate Gandhian methods in the US and aided the emergence of African-American nonviolence. Shridharani, like Sharp, analogised the logic of nonviolence to that of war, as a kind of social combat. Organised mass action creates an alternative form of power, one capable of matching forces with, and even defeating, state power. This was especially true for organisations and activists for whom nonviolence was a strategic or pragmatic imperative rather than a moral value. Strategic nonviolence employs an extensive array of tactics that generate and display power as such. Activists accept that, in order to work, these tactics might involve coercion. But ostensibly nonviolent actions can also consciously aim to provoke the police or intimidate the opposition, for example, when crowds jeer at or physically prevent consumers from entering boycotted stores or facilities. A collective power model – tied to a theory of democratic power and legitimacy – approximates well contemporary forms of mass nonviolence such as the occupation of public squares, from Tiananmen to Tahrir. Mass gatherings display strength through the force of numbers. The larger the crowds, the better it seems to represent the popular will. In celebrating nonviolence as a collective and democratic power, some key features of nonviolence as Gandhi and King practised it have fallen away. Gandhi and King both saw the power of suffering or discipline as essential to nonviolence. Suffering not only distinguished nonviolence from armed rebellion, it made nonviolence a unique kind of political action. Sharp sees suffering as part and parcel of principled nonviolence. Gandhi and King both held a spiritual commitment to nonviolence. Gandhi, in particular, worried that collective protest, even ostensibly nonviolent protest, can issue forms of coercion and intimidation. Suffering, however, was important politically. It has positive strategic and tactical effects in politics. It changes the tenor and dynamics of political contestation. And it has

power: Moreover, suffering is ingrained in the form that nonviolent protest takes. Nonviolence as collective power tries to match forces with and overwhelm opponents. Instead of intimidating or directly coercing the opposition, suffering aims to persuade and convert it. Persuasion involves its own strategic logic; it works by surprising, undermining, and outmaneuvering the enemy.

Chapter 4 : Power of Non-Violence by Richard B. Gregg

Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Power of Nonviolence. This lesson introduces students to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s philosophy of nonviolence and the teachings of Mohandas K. Gandhi that influenced King's views.

Martin Luther King Jr opposed a racist, unjust system but sought to love those within it. He led the fight for civil rights for African Americans from until his assassination in Under the gaze of one great emancipator, he would unfold his vision of another social revolution. Littered through the speech were allusions to Shakespeare, famous folk songs, the Declaration of Independence, and especially the Bible. Have a listen to this: Or what about this, from the prophet Amos: His whole approach to the battle for civil rights was shaped by his faith and his understanding of the profound ethic of love at its centre. Martin Luther King was able to apply the Christian notion of love and connect it to the Gandhian method of nonviolent resistance in a very powerful way. The idea that you can resist a system but still love individuals and treat them with respect and honour. The idea that evil must be resisted; it should never be normalised. And the idea that mass nonviolent action can be a force for powerful change, is a set of principles and a message that I think will endure the test of time. King began his journey into the leadership of the Civil Rights Movement here at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, where he was thrust reluctantly at first into the limelight as a key leader of the Montgomery bus boycott. This is a nonviolent protest. We are depending on moral and spiritual forces using the method of passive resistance. One night when the Montgomery bus boycott had gotten started, he received a telephone call from someone who said that he was going to be killed, his family was going to be killed, his house was going to be bombed. I will never leave you. The boycott was ultimately a success. That night an angry mob gathered at the front of the house. Imagine being part of that crowd, surrounded by men with sticks and guns and shovels, determined to exact revenge. Ready for action and watching as Martin Luther King comes out. He told them to go home. And he urged them to love their white brothers no matter what, and called on them to follow the example of Jesus and to meet hate with love. King would be arrested and imprisoned dozens of times, his life threatened, his character smeared by the FBI. But he became more and more convinced that nonviolent resistance was not only an effective political tool but a whole way of seeing the world one that emerged from his faith. For many people in the Civil Rights Movement the non-violence was a tactic, a political tactic, which they accepted as important. But for them, they did not adapt it as a way of life, as King did. For King, non-violence was not simply a tactic; it was a way of life that reflected the Creator, in whose image and likeness all of us were made. It was a costly exercise people lost their lives. But those involved were sustained by a deeply held belief that in acting this way they were playing the tune of Jesus, in harmony with the very nature of the universe. Christian faith, at its very heart, is about grace. Grace that gives without seeking in return, and grace that gives also in situation of injury which we call forgiveness. And I think if you take grace as fundamental to Christian faith, then you see how fundamentally it works against the violence. All of that is central to the Christian faith.

Chapter 5 : Power of Non-violence - [PPTX Powerpoint]

*The Power of Non-Violence (Pacifism) [Richard B. Gregg] on www.nxgvision.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. The idea of non-violence (passive-resistance) has always seemed beautiful but too good to be true.*

The Liberating Power of Non-violence Both Martin Luther King and Gandhi were people who gained tremendous inspiration from their faith traditions and were able to perform tremendous feats of courage through the implementation of non-violence. Although the two never met personally, Dr. King's first application of the non-violent campaign came in during the Montgomery bus boycott. Here he had a firsthand opportunity to witness the power of a peaceful protest. His conviction to pursue this course of action strengthened during his visit to India. He is quoted as saying "It was a marvelous thing to see the amazing results of a non-violent campaign. The aftermath of hatred and bitterness that usually follows a violent campaign was found nowhere in India. Although there may have been political and strategic reasons that Gandhi pursued a non-violent campaign, I believe the ultimate motivation came from his inherent Hindu faith. The Sanskrit term for non-violence is "ahimsa. He will be constantly growing in self-restraint and compassion. Gandhi demonstrated this not only on a grand scale in how he dealt with the British but also on a smaller and more personal level, by being a vegetarian. One teacher of the Bhagavad Gita, Swami Prabhupada, expands on the meaning of "ahimsa" by saying that "Nonviolence is generally taken to mean not killing or destroying the body, but actually nonviolence means not to put others into distress. Without the gradual development of this trait, it is impossible to achieve self-realization and union with God. It encourages us to try to see all creatures, human and animal, with an equal vision and not discriminate based on bodily differences and designations. During his India visit, Martin Luther King was very moved to learn how Gandhi dealt with those who were labeled as "untouchables" and denied entrance into temples. Gandhi would personally escort the "untouchable" class into the temples. He went so far as to rename them as "Harijans" or the "children of God. He is quoted as saying "Whenever doubts haunt me and disappointments stare me in the face, and I see not one ray of hope on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagavad Gita and find a verse to comfort me. I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. Today, as a culturally diverse society, we can imbibe their spirit and carry forward their legacy by increasing our application of the non-violent principle. We can accomplish this by becoming more compassionate in our thoughts, speech, as well as our actions in dealing with the people around us - family, friends, colleagues, and strangers.

Jonathan Schell and Taylor Branch in conversation about Mohandas K. Gandhi, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and the transformative power of nonviolence.

You can help by adding to it. October Nonviolence or Ahimsa is one of the cardinal virtues [14] and an important tenet of Jainism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. It is a multidimensional concept, [15] inspired by the premise that all living beings have the spark of the divine spiritual energy; therefore, to hurt another being is to hurt oneself. It has also been related to the notion that any violence has karmic consequences. While ancient scholars of Hinduism pioneered and over time perfected the principles of Ahimsa, the concept reached an extraordinary status in the ethical philosophy of Jainism. The forms of nonviolence draw inspiration from both religious or ethical beliefs and political analysis. Religious or ethically based nonviolence is sometimes referred to as principled, philosophical, or ethical nonviolence, while nonviolence based on political analysis is often referred to as tactical, strategic, or pragmatic nonviolent action. Commonly, both of these dimensions may be present within the thinking of particular movements or individuals. Lesser known is the role that nonviolent action has played and continues to play in undermining the power of repressive political regimes in the developing world and the former eastern bloc. Susan Ives emphasizes this point by quoting Walter Wink: If we add all the countries touched by major nonviolent actions in our century the Philippines, South Africa Movements most often associated with nonviolence are the non-cooperation campaign for Indian independence led by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, and the People Power Revolution in the Philippines. Also of primary significance is the notion that just means are the most likely to lead to just ends. When Gandhi said that "the means may be likened to the seed, the end to a tree," he expressed the philosophical kernel of what some refer to as prefigurative politics. Martin Luther King, a student of Gandhian nonviolent resistance, concurred with this tenet, concluding that "nonviolence demands that the means we use must be as pure as the ends we seek. They would argue, for instance, that it is fundamentally irrational to use violence to achieve a peaceful society. People have come to use nonviolent methods of struggle from a wide range of perspectives and traditions. A landless peasant in Brazil may nonviolently occupy a parcel of land for purely practical motivations. If they do not, the family will starve. A Buddhist monk in Thailand may "ordain" trees in a threatened forest, drawing on the teachings of Buddha to resist its destruction. A waterside worker in England may go on strike in socialist and union political traditions. All the above are using nonviolent methods but from different standpoints. Likewise, secular political movements have utilized nonviolent methods, either as a tactical tool or as a strategic program on purely pragmatic and strategic levels, relying on their political effectiveness rather than a claim to any religious, moral or ethical worthiness. Gandhi used the weapon of nonviolence against British Raj Respect or love for opponents also has a pragmatic justification, in that the technique of separating the doers from the doers allows for the possibility of the doers changing their behaviour, and perhaps their beliefs. Martin Luther King wrote, "Nonviolent resistance The nonviolent resister not only refuses to shoot his opponent, but he also refuses to hate him. Gandhi saw Truth as something that is multifaceted and unable to be grasped in its entirety by any one individual. This led him to believe in the inherent worth of dialogue with opponents, in order to understand motivations. On November 10, , the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the first decade of the 21st century and the third millennium, the years to , as the International Decade for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World. Ethical[edit] For many, practicing nonviolence goes deeper than abstaining from violent behavior or words. It means overriding the impulse to be hateful and holding love for everyone, even those with whom one strongly disagrees. In this view, because violence is learned, it is necessary to unlearn violence by practicing love and compassion at every possible opportunity. For some, the commitment to non-violence entails a belief in restorative or transformative justice, an abolition of the death penalty and other harsh punishments. This may involve the necessity of caring for those who are violent. Nonviolence, for many, involves a respect and reverence for all sentient, and perhaps even non-sentient, beings. This might include abolitionism against animals as property,

the practice of not eating animal products or by-products vegetarianism or veganism , spiritual practices of non-harm to all beings, and caring for the rights of all beings. Mohandas Gandhi , James Bevel , and other nonviolent proponents advocated vegetarianism as part of their nonviolent philosophy. Buddhists extend this respect for life to animals , plants , and even minerals , while Jainism extend this respect for life to animals , plants and even small organisms such as insects. Over time, the Hindu scripts revise ritual practices and the concept of Ahimsa is increasingly refined and emphasised, ultimately Ahimsa becomes the highest virtue by the late Vedic era about BC. For example, hymn It bars violence against "all creatures" sarvabhuta and the practitioner of Ahimsa is said to escape from the cycle of rebirths CU 8. It implies the total avoidance of harming of any kind of living creatures not only by deeds, but also by words and in thoughts. For example, Mahaprasthanika Parva has the verse: Ahimsa is the highest virtue , Ahimsa is the highest self-control, Ahimsa is the greatest gift, Ahimsa is the best suffering, Ahimsa is the highest sacrifice, Ahimsa is the finest strength, Ahimsa is the greatest friend, Ahimsa is the greatest happiness, Ahimsa is the highest truth, and Ahimsa is the greatest teaching. The Bhagavad Gita , among other things, discusses the doubts and questions about appropriate response when one faces systematic violence or war. These verses develop the concepts of lawful violence in self-defence and the theories of just war. However, there is no consensus on this interpretation. Gandhi, for example, considers this debate about non-violence and lawful violence as a mere metaphor for the internal war within each human being, when he or she faces moral questions. These discussions have led to theories of just war, theories of reasonable self-defence and theories of proportionate punishment. Force must be the last resort. If war becomes necessary, its cause must be just, its purpose virtuous, its objective to restrain the wicked, its aim peace, its method lawful. Weapons used must be proportionate to the opponent and the aim of war, not indiscriminate tools of destruction. Warriors must use judgment in the battlefield. Cruelty to the opponent during war is forbidden. Wounded, unarmed opponent warriors must not be attacked or killed, they must be brought to your realm and given medical treatment. While the war is in progress, sincere dialogue for peace must continue. Aikido , pioneered in Japan, illustrates one such principles of self-defence. Morihei Ueshiba , the founder of Aikido, described his inspiration as Ahimsa. One must presume that some people will, out of ignorance, error or fear, attack other persons or intrude into their space, physically or verbally. The aim of self-defence, suggested Ueshiba, must be to neutralise the aggression of the attacker, and avoid the conflict. The best defence is one where the victim is protected, as well as the attacker is respected and not injured if possible. Under Ahimsa and Aikido, there are no enemies, and appropriate self-defence focuses on neutralising the immaturity, assumptions and aggressive strivings of the attacker. Pacifism There is no consensus on pacifism among modern Hindu scholars. Finally, the discussion in Upanishads and Hindu Epics [68] shifts to whether a human being can ever live his or her life without harming animal and plant life in some way; which and when plants or animal meat may be eaten, whether violence against animals causes human beings to become less compassionate, and if and how one may exert least harm to non-human life consistent with ahimsa precept, given the constraints of life and human needs. Sushruta Samhita , a Hindu text written in the 3rd or 4th century, in Chapter XLVI suggests proper diet as a means of treating certain illnesses, and recommends various fishes and meats for different ailments and for pregnant women, [71] [72] and the Charaka Samhita describes meat as superior to all other kinds of food for convalescents. Even suggested exceptions " ritual slaughter and hunting " were challenged by advocates of Ahimsa. Moreover, a hunter defends his profession in a long discourse. They discourage wanton destruction of nature including of wild and cultivated plants. Hermits sannyasins were urged to live on a fruitarian diet so as to avoid the destruction of plants. The classical literature of Hinduism exists in many Indian languages.

Chapter 7 : The Power of Nonviolence | The Nation

*The championing of nonviolence as collective power, however, has a longer history. The Indian writer Krishnalal Shridharani's book *War Without Violence* () cast nonviolent action as an insurgent, countervailing form of directed mass power.*

November Power and non-violence Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Power and peacebuilding Following from the last blog post on power and violence, we can start from a shared view that peacebuilding challenges the abuse of power. We have noted that technical implementation of programmes, or the dissemination of information, awareness raising or negotiating an accommodation between two violent opponents may all contribute to peacebuilding, but if they do not address issues of power then they do not go to the source of violence. We also observed that, by contrast, the most prominent and inspiring peacebuilders of the past century have all challenged violence, and addressed the abuse of power. Few would contest that the might of the British Empire in India, or of the Apartheid regime in South Africa, were overthrown principally by the power of non-violence. In order to change power relations and challenge the powerful, peacebuilders must use means more effective than their opponents. When peacebuilders address power and seek to change power relations, they will have powerful opponents. It is quite wrong to pretend that peacebuilding is about being friendly to powerful people, or giving them information that will cause them to consider their behaviour, and thereby reform. Certainly such actions can be positive and such responses are possible, and where they occur, profoundly impressive. However, the British did not leave India because they became compassionate; nor did white rule in South Africa end because whites became aware of their treatment of the black majority. They were defeated by predominantly non-violent strategies for change. Beneficiaries of violent arrangements will in general seek to retain their power, and they will oppose non-violent peacebuilders. Non-violence itself has enemies Despite these examples, we can observe a stereotype of peacebuilders that has wide currency. This seems initially curious, given that even with minimal resources unlike their opponents, many of the greatest advances of 20th century were achieved through non-violence. It also takes place despite the failures of well resourced external military adventures in Afghanistan repeatedly, Iraq, Libya, and elsewhere. Violent military intervention is rarely caricatured as naive. I suggest that the reason for this mischaracterisation and discrepancy is in part the threat posed by non-violence itself. The enemies of non-violence control the means to profit from and use violence, but they do not control the ability of ordinary people to resist violence and respond together to challenge abuses of power non-violently. As such, it is a radical tool through which power can at least in certain circumstances be dramatically redistributed to the many, from the few. Non-violence itself is a threat to existing power relations. As a result, the tool of non-violence itself has enemies. In relation to the first, visible non-violence is most easily apparent. Just as with physical violence, examples of visible non-violence abound, and can be easily observed. They might include the thoughtful facilitation of a meeting that enables quieter members of a group to be equally heard; the accompaniment of a neighbour facing hardship to authorities to present their case; participating in peaceful demonstrations that challenge injustice; or countless other personal or professional acts of kindness or resistance. Invisible non-violence presents us with more to reflect upon. Structural non-violence might include decision-making structures that are inclusive and representative, egalitarian economic or political arrangements, and transparent or accountable mechanisms. Structures that nurture and reward compassion might go one step further. In the field of structural violence and non-violence we can see battles being waged in many spheres. Wealthy interests for example may seek to hide the means of their enrichment, to avoid transparency in their dealings or responsibility to others through taxes. They may vehemently stand up for positions that oppose egalitarian arrangements or compassionate response. Politics is often used to preserve such interests, shore up or advance structural violence, or oppose non-violent arrangements. Our position in society would only be revealed after arrangements were settled. Such a tool is a powerful test for violence or non-violence. Under such a test, we can see that that justice and non-violence are not served by thousands of children held in the migrant camps of Calais, so as to prevent their migration from war zones and impoverished states? Considering cultural or

personal non-violence requires us to look more deeply. Unlike the structural machinery of our institutions and societies, religious, social and behavioural factors and attitudes are embedded within us. These promote both violent and non-violent responses from each of us. But at this level we are ourselves responsible, and often capable of turning to non-violence, and raising up the compassionate side of our nature. Many religious or reflective practices from different traditions explicitly encourage us to do so. And, as one would expect of all human institutions, many do not. My sense is that this personal and deep level of change is both the foundation for non-violent action, and also the level at which non-violence spreads between us. In the example of non-violent personal transformation by the woman in Rwanda that I described in the previous blog, the connection was powerful for all present. We listened to her story of personal change, and across cultures, nationalities and ethnic origins we were each held, moved and inspired. Those of us who have been lucky enough to participate in non-violent demonstrations or activism will know this experience. In the room in Rwanda perhaps forty of us were affected. But the power of non-violence is not limited to small groups. Local, national and global movements have taken place founded upon that connection. I have seen it seeded successfully across East Africa, but we all appreciate its pivotal role in India at independence, South Africa at the end of apartheid, the US during the civil rights movement and the Vietnam war, Germany at the fall of the Berlin Wall, and Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe during the fall of communism, and in the UK in the fight for the creation of democracy – the fight for votes for women. These examples are limited by my personal perspective - indeed, I expect that this experience unites us all. Taking up non-violent power - reflections from others Marianne Williamson wrote: Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. Your playing small does not serve the world. We are all meant to shine as children do. And as we let our own lights shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. Acts of prominent non-violence speak to people, and power shifts again. Peacebuilding is about challenging violence, and overcoming it with strategies that are more powerful. We can see that violent strategies and structures have been swept away by powerfully harnessing the non-violent power of thousands of individuals. And we can observe that, just as when physical violence commences there are shifts in the balance of power, so too is there a shift in the balance of power when non-violence is unleashed. Indeed, it is a weapon unique in history, which cuts without wounding and ennobles the man who wields it. You will have in common either the experience or the aspiration, initially alone or with others, to act. This quote is for you: All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. Whatever you can do, or dream you can do, do it now. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. About Us Bjoern Eser Bjoern has been involved in conflict transformation and peacebuilding work for more than two decades. With work experience in several dozen countries, Bjoern is a highly experienced development worker and a passionate peacebuilding practitioner. Bjoern is also a father of three amazing children, a husband to an equally amazing wife, an outdoor enthusiast, a book lover, a photographer, a kitchen wizard and passionate chef, a thankful cancer survivor and a very active above-the-knee amputee. He recently started The Active Amputee, a resource page for amputees and their families. Bryn Higgs Bryn has a background in establishing and managing community organisations, and has worked on peacebuilding and peace research since This has been primarily with communities in East and Central Africa, ranging from programmes to address live conflicts, to initiatives tackling abuses of power that are the seed for future violence. He holds a PhD on the relationship between peace and justice, which you can download here. He has a beautiful family with two boys and lives in an intentional farming community in Herefordshire, where he has a particular interest in green energy, the natural environment, and looking after the cows. When he gets the chance he enjoys running amongst hills and along coasts, sea kayaking, and exploring wild places.

Chapter 8 : Essay on the power of Non-violence

People power is the sustained, strategic application of a variety of nonviolent tactics, including civil disobedience, boycotts, strikes and noncooperation.

Ready to fight back? Sign up for Take Action Now and get three actions in your inbox every week. You can read our Privacy Policy here. Thank you for signing up. For more from The Nation, check out our latest issue. Support Progressive Journalism The Nation is reader supported: Travel With The Nation Be the first to hear about Nation Travels destinations, and explore the world with kindred spirits. Sign up for our Wine Club today. Did you know you can support The Nation by drinking wine? Sheriff Jim Clark had them all arrested, Alternatives to Force in the 21st Century. The moderator was the writer Suzannah Lessard. What follows is an edited transcript of the discussion. At that time the Indian community in South Africa had been suffering very serious oppression, not unlike apartheid. The Indians were not allowed to vote. The Indian community called it the Black Act. It consisted of forcing everybody to be registered, fingerprinted on pain of imprisonment or expulsion. Gandhi saw the act as an attempt to destroy this community. Another interesting feature of the event was that it occurred on the spur of the moment at the Empire Theater in Durban. I had gone to a meeting with no preconceived resolution. It was born at the meeting. Gandhi was startled because he saw a world of difference between a mere vote and an actual oath by individuals, which he believed could only be taken by those people themselves and which was binding on them no matter what anyone else did. A new force, a new power, was being brought to bear in politics, a new commitment, a new will really unto death, yet without violence. King was in Birmingham leading a movement to break segregation, and after great anguish he had taken this great gamble. There had been nonviolent demonstrations for over a month, and he had written his Letter from the Birmingham Jail, which no one paid much attention to. It had not been published. He was about to withdraw. There were ferocious arguments within the movement about using small children to demonstrate. Not just year-olds or year-olds, but 6-year-olds. They only had twenty people willing to face Birmingham jails. So on May 2, , they had a thousand children march out of the church. Those two days there were a tremendous watershed for nonviolence in the United States. There was an emotional reaction against the use of violence on these children, and it triggered sympathetic demonstrations across the country, forced President Kennedy to introduce the Civil Rights Bill, which changed the face of American politics and stimulated kindred movements. Another story, a year and a month later, June 21, It was the first night of Freedom Summer in Mississippi. College students from all over the United States, who had been training in nonviolence, went to Mississippi, where black people were not permitted to vote. That night, three of them were kidnapped by the Klanâ€™Schwerner, Chaney and Goodman. A bunch of Klansmen took them on the side of the road and were preparing to kill them. And they asked people in the movement: Is this something that someone would say? The heart of nonviolence is to discipline yourself and have faith in the other guy. Mickey Schwerner epitomized it. Jonathan, could you do a quick check of the times in which nonviolence actually prevailed? It was centrally involved in the defeat of the British Raj, with Gandhi leading the way. And the Soviet Union went under the waves with hardly any violence being used. And by the way, that included nonviolence at the top. And then, of course, the civil rights movement, and a whole string of democratic nonviolent revolutions at the end of the twentieth century, starting in Southern Europe in Greece, Spain, Portugal, jumping over to Asia, Philippines, South Korea. So there really is a counter-story to the dominant narrative of the twentieth centuryâ€™the shocking and unbelievable expansion of the use of violence. But this sort of subterranean stream of nonviolence was also present. The fall of the British Empire, the fall of the Soviet Empireâ€™these are not the small change of history. These are serious events. The people suffering segregation in the South had no other weapons. They had no money. They were a tiny minority of the population, and only a tiny minority of that minority was involved in a nonviolent revolution. And yet they believed there was much power in it. It came out of the refuge of the church. They developed nonviolence at a very special moment in history. Jonathan, how do nuclear weapons fit into the history of nonviolence? With nuclear weapons you had the ultimate self-defeat of violence. They could no longer get rid of a figure like

Hitler, because if the attempt were made everybody would die. And so you needed something else. Some other arbiter, some other court of judgment—“not violence, not war—“had to be brought into play. And slowly, in Eastern Europe and in Russia itself and the other republics, people did reinvent a new version of what Gandhi had discovered back in September 11, 1942. And they found that by nonviolence they could actually bring down the great, big Soviet Union with the KGB and the Red Army and its nuclear weapons and all the rest. Taylor, what was the connection between civil rights and the American South and the anti-Vietnam War movement? The first Marine units landed literally within hours of the crossing of Pettus Bridge, March 7, 1968. So they were going on at the same time, and we make a mistake by making them separate stories. King struggled with it. He had just given his Nobel Peace Prize lecture, in which he said that the movement, the ten-year movement against segregation in the United States, showed that nonviolence was a tool that ought to be studied globally for application against the triple scourges of mankind: racism, poverty and war, which he called violence of the flesh and violence of the spirit. So he saw a country that was embracing dramatic changes in power relationships through nonviolence. And at the same time, the US government was saying we have to defend democracy with violence in South Vietnam. It was a terrible dilemma for King because for the first time the movement had access to the corridors of power, to begin to get justice done. So most of the mainstream civil rights organizations were horrified that he wanted to speak out against the Vietnam War. And that was a big struggle for him, and it changed him. I think the civil rights movement offered us a way to advance democracy in the world, but we never think of that model. One of the connections here was that the Black Power movement was rising at that time, and King was pressed to give an answer in his speech against the war at Riverside Church in New York to the people who said, What about Vietnam? The questions hit home, and I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today, my own government. We have destroyed their land and their crops. We have corrupted their women and children and killed their men. Taylor, why was it so much easier for LBJ to be courageous on civil rights than to be courageous about getting out of Vietnam? The American people will forgive you for anything but being weak. King never in any of his Vietnam speeches used the name Lyndon Johnson, never once. We just have to say this is the wrong way to do it. The prison of American political life is that no matter how crazy a particular war is—and the Iraq War beats Vietnam in the matter of pointlessness and craziness—national leaders seem unable to raise their voices against it. The issue is reduced to the visceral question: Are you going to be somebody who hits back? This syndrome has gotten worse, I think. Today the country is more militaristic than it was back in the days of Vietnam. Diane Nash, the great pioneer of nonviolence from the sit-ins to the Selma march, rejected it and took up Black Power. But I had withdrawn from this painful, creative engagement with nonviolence and democracy behind a big smokescreen of noise. You know—“Israel beat five Arab armies in six days, and muscular Judaism was born. Is spirituality essential to nonviolence, and can it be translated into practical politics? Well, it certainly can be translated into practical politics. Gandhi and King showed that. He could offer people a choice: King believed that all of our most affecting patriotic oratory had not a religious but a spiritual cast. He was calling on that, and I think it was part of his strength. Certainly the movements of the twentieth century offer a large array of examples of that. They were emphatically secular people who developed their secular approaches to nonviolence.

Chapter 9 : Richard Gregg (social philosopher) - Wikipedia

The Power of Nonviolence, a timely new public radio project from Humankind, seeks deep solutions to this vexing problem. We turn to wisdom teachings across our great spiritual traditions for guidance—and inspiration—on how the lasting wounds can be healed.