

OMNI NEWSLETTER #2 ON VIOLENCE

August 20, 2011, BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE

Compiled by Dick Bennett. (#1 Feb. 25, 2008.)

Here is the link to all OMNI newsletters:

<http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/>

See OMNI Newsletters on International Day to End Violence Against Women

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10 Facts About Violence Prevention

George Kent: On Aug 19, 2011, at 7:26 PM, George Kent wrote:

[Dick: On PHYSICAL AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE]

Ian, this assessment of violence, including self-inflicted violence, is important, but it should be compared with indirect or structural violence. **Physical violence** is direct while economic, political, and **cultural violence** are forms of structural violence. Structural violence is harm imposed by some people on others indirectly, through the social system, as they pursue their own preferences. For

example, if many rich people begin moving into a community, they may drive up housing costs, harming some of the people who had already lived there.

The harms may or may not be inflicted deliberately, and may occur without clear awareness by the parties involved.

Hunger and poverty are manifestations of structural violence. I think the evidence supports the proposition that **structural violence** regularly causes far more human misery than direct violence. Consider just one bit of evidence: for many decades, 8 million children or more children have died before their fifth birthdays every single year, largely because they are embedded in poverty. The document cited below says that (direct) violence causes over 1.6 million death per year. In terms of mortality rates, warfare and terrorism look relatively unimportant when compared with structural violence. Aloha, George

Professor George Kent (Emeritus) > Department of Political Science
University of Hawai'i Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822

Author of *Ending Hunger Worldwide*

<http://www.paradigmpublishers.com/books/BookDetail.aspx?productID=243378>

>>> From: Joanie Connors <jvcphd@gmail.com>

>>> Date: August 17, 2011 8:44:29 AM CDT

>>> To: PJSA Members <members_pjsa@lists.riseup.net>

>>> Subject: [members_pjsa] 10 Facts About Violence Prevention

[note: in reading this handout from the World Health Organization, I >>> was reminded of a recent conversation here about why peace studies does not focus on suicide. Here's a reason to consider it - over half of deaths by violence are due to suicide - see #2]

10 Facts About Violence Prevention

>>> World Health Organization, September 2009

<http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/violence/en/index.html>

In recent years, there has been major growth in the understanding of how violence burdens communities and contributes to a wide spectrum of health consequences and health risk behaviours in children and adults.

The **WHO's 2002 World Report on Violence and Health** and its subsequent follow-up have demonstrated that violence can be prevented and its impact reduced.

1. Violence accounts for over 1.6 million deaths per year or 4 000 people per day. It is a significant public health, human rights and human development problem.

2. Self-directed and interpersonal violence account for more than 80% of violence-related deaths. Of those killed by violence, just over half die by their own hand, over 35% because of injuries inflicted by another person, and over 11% as a direct result of war or some other

form of collective violence.

3. 90% of deaths due to violence occur in low- and middle-income countries. For each single death due to violence, there are dozens of hospitalizations, hundreds of emergency department visits, and thousands of doctors' appointments.

4. Interpersonal and self-inflicted violence are heavy contributors to global death rates among men aged 15 to 44 years. For every young person killed by violence, an estimated 20-40 receive injuries that require hospital treatment. The ratio of suicide attempts to suicides among people under age 25 may reach as high as 100:1.

5. The health impact of violence is not limited to physical injury.

>>> Long-term effects can include depression, mental disorders, suicide

>>> attempts, chronic pain, unwanted pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other

>>> sexually transmitted infections. Children who are victims of violence

>>> have a higher risk of alcohol and drug misuse, smoking, and high-risk

>>> sexual behavior.

>>> 6. Violence is preventable and its impacts can be reduced. Proven and

>>> promising prevention strategies address underlying causes for individuals, families/close relationships, community, and society.

>>> Outcome evaluation research is needed to test these strategies in low-

>>> and middle-income countries.

>>> 7. Proven individual prevention strategies include pre-school enrichment programmes during early childhood (ages 3-5 years), life

>>> skills training and social development programmes for children aged 6

>>> to 18 years and assisting high-risk adolescents and young adults to

>>> complete schooling and pursue courses of higher education and vocational training.

>>> 8. Proven family prevention strategies include providing training for

>>> parents on child development, non-violent discipline and problem-solving skills; promoting parental involvement in the lives

>>> of

>>> children and adolescents through programmes to develop home-school

>>> partnerships; and mentoring programmes to develop attachments between

>>> high risk youth and caring adults in order to build social skills and

>>> provide a sustained relationship.

>>> 9. Proven and promising community prevention strategies include
>>> increasing the availability and quality of childcare facilities
and
>>> pre-school enrichment programs, and improving school settings,
>>> especially teacher practices, school policies and security.
>>> 10. In society, strategies that are proven and promising include
>>> reducing alcohol availability and misuse through enactment and
>>> enforcement of liquor laws, taxation and pricing; reducing access
to
>>> lethal means, including firearms, sedatives and pesticides; and
>>> promoting gender equality through strategies such as supporting
the economic empowerment of women. -----
>>> You have received this message because you are a member of the
Peace and Justice Studies Association (PJSA). To
<http://www.peacejusticestudies.org> Ian Harris imh@uwm.edu

STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

George Kent kent@hawaii.edu

An article that assesses the mortality impacts of some forms of structural violence in the U.S.

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/05/health/05social.html?_r=1

They don't call it structural violence. The concept is still unfamiliar, not only in mainstream media but also in the general population, and among academics.

“U.S. ranks in lower half of Global Peace Index”

From the Associated Press

<http://www.latimes.com/news/printedition/asection/la-fg-peace21-2008may21,0,4504875.story>

From the Los Angeles Times May 21, 2008

LONDON — When it comes to being peaceful, the United States is ranked far from the top but at least not near the bottom among nations in a new Global Peace Index released Tuesday by Britain's Economist Intelligence Unit.

The index, now in its second year, ranks 140 countries according to their relative states of peace, based on factors such as military expenditure, respect for human rights and number of **homicides** per 100,000 people.

The latter statistic helps pull down the United States, which ranked 97th in the latest index, one place lower than last year.

The idea for the index came from Steve Killelea, an Australian businessman and philanthropist who wanted to identify what creates a peaceful country.

"The U.S. does so badly because it has the highest proportion of jailed people in the world. And it has high levels of homicide and high potential for terrorist attacks," said Killelea, who added that "the index is not making any moral statements by the ranking."

More information on the report and the full index can be found on the website visionofhumanity.org.

Waking Up on Cold Mountain

By Leslie Griffith, Reader Supported News 14 January 11

wakenings are hard because they involve taking responsibility.

In the powerful words of Ruby, played by Renee Zellweger in the Civil War movie *Cold Mountain*, "They call this war a cloud over the land. But they made the weather and then they stand in the rain and say, 'Shit, it's raining!'"

Well, America, It's raining.

We all contributed to this American storm of hatred. Every time we laugh at our neighbor's politics or filled our minds with a steady diet of cable vitriol. Every time a venomous, *anonymous* note is posted online it creates more hate. When we refuse to do our homework and look away at irrefutable, but inconvenient evidence, the consequences include anger and hate. When we send our beloved fathers off to fight under false pretenses we leave orphaned children behind. Generational hate spins round and round. Every time we do not defend the defenseless and call heroes - traitors, there is hatred. Whenever American arms dealers sell weapons to each side of a war, whole countries end up hating us. Every time American casualties of war are mentioned and civilian casualties are not, we create hostility. In a nation swimming in information without context, the only consequence can be more hate. People often hate what they do not understand. Here are some not so fun facts.

America is the largest maker and exporter of arms in the world. American arms manufacturers make war possible [around the globe](#). Yet, we still look like deer caught in the headlights when mass killings occur more and more frequently at home. Is there really a difference from out there and in here?

Hate is as common as dirt these days, and sometimes the common dirt is divided with uncommon adjectives like "Holy" or "Oil-rich." That's when the real fighting begins.

Look into the eyes of the little girl killed in Tucson. There is no hate. If only the mainstream media would let us look into the big brown eyes of thousands of dark-haired Iraqi and Afghani children just like her. Multiply her life by thousands of children killed by American bombs often packed with depleted uranium, which explodes with an added bonus, a little chemical-warfare-cancer-causing [kick](#).

Cold Mountain reprise: - Ada: (played by Nicole Kidman) "All this time, I've been packing ice around my heart. How do I make it melt?"

In the midst of our national grief, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called for "a credible military option against [Iran](#)." He added that the military action should be headed by the United States. "You have to ratchet up the pressure," he said.

Cold Mountain - Inman: (Jude Law) "I ain't getting shot again for some cause I don't believe in."

Much like Americans, the Iranian people are living in a country breastfed on secrecy and hate.

Cold Mountain - "See, I think there's a plan. There's a design for each and everyone one of us. Bird flies somewhere, picks up a seed, shits the seed out, plant grows. Bird's got a job, shit's got a job, seed's got a job."

Right now, our job is to give our children a chance to live in peace.

Leslie Griffith has been a television anchor, foreign correspondent and an investigative reporter in newspaper, radio and television for over 25 years. Among her many achievements are two Edward R Murrow Awards, nine Emmies, 37 Emmy Nominations, a National Emmy nomination for writing, and more than a dozen other awards for journalism. She hopes the book, her speeches, and her articles on the media will help remind the nation that journalism was once about public service ... not profit. To contact Leslie, go to lesliegriffith.org.

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A Message from VFP Board President Mike Ferner

Military Rape Awareness Week: October 12 - 16, 2009

Dear Dick,

During the VFP national convention, the Board declared October 12-16, 2009 Military Rape Awareness Week (MRAW). Rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment in the military is an epidemic but it is not being treated as one. This must change and VFP is contributing to making this change through the MRAW.

Even a Pack of Cigarettes has a Warning

VFP National will assist local chapters and other organizations in a nationwide effort to warn women, our daughters, sister, aunts, mothers and nieces of the known risk of rape in the military. A Veterans Administrative Study financed by the US Army Medical Corps reported that 1 in 3 women in the military were raped. Read the details of the study on VFP's website link (Important: Read Erratum for specific statistic) to the MRAW and the list of other resources, studies, and reports on the problem. . . .

We can help you combat Military Sexual Trauma!

Below is an introduction to the campaign. The beauty of this campaign is that VFP National is available to assist but chapters may engage in the campaign in any way they see fit. Use the knowledge of your local area and use your imagination to create ways to make the warning known. The below introduction covers Ann Wright's unique action which will be held in NYC on Tuesday, October 13, 2009. Other actions ideas under discussion by chapters include:

Members standing or walking in lines 15 yards apart holding a series of signs each with a few words of the message: Study finds 1 out of 3 women raped in the military. A good time and place to do this is along the route of students and school buses on their way to school in the morning.

Speaking at school board meetings demanding that students be warned because the recruiters won't warn them.

Making business sized cards with the warning and slipping it among products being sold at department stores and groceries.

Panel Discussions with rape victims and experts

You may find some of these strategies to be too aggressive or that they involve civil disobedience. CD is a matter of personal conscience. It is not for everybody. Nevertheless, your imaginations are the only limits on the unique ways to get the warning out.

Soliciting other peace and justice groups or woman's groups to get the warning out is highly recommended.

Sincerely -Mike Ferner, VFP National President

VIOLENCE NOT INEVITABLE: WESTERN PAKISTAN

Dick Bennett 3-23-08

“The thing I find most puzzling about the United States today is how little real debate there has been over the almost unanimous acceptance of the idea that the only way to defeat terrorism is through policies of war.” These words apply to US imperial actions, either through attack or threatened attack, in a dozen or more countries in recent years—from Panama to Serbia, to Afghanistan and Iraq.

Let’s take a hard case—western Pakistan. In referring to the clans and tribes along the Afghan border, our government leaders and pundits sometimes sound like the citizen of Gabon, who said about its 72-year-old autocrat, Omar Bongo, the longest-serving leader in the world: “God brought him to us and only God can call him away.” Western Pakistan is perceived by most US leaders and mainstream media as intractably violent and orderly only by violence. Vice-President Dick Cheney on March 20 urged Pakistan to battle extremists in its border regions, and almost on the same day apparently U.S. missiles from an unmanned drone struck a “suspected militant safehouse and killed about 20 people.” In some areas a “Talibanization” takeover of mosques and suicide bombers seems to be spreading.

But such violence has not always been the case, and the future of western Pakistan is not inevitably violent. Let’s remember three things about this in many ways benighted part of the world: the nonviolent movement of Ghaffar Badshah- Khan during the 1930s, the yearning for schools apparently all along the northern and western frontiers, and the present rise to power of the three secular parties, including the third in size Awami National Party.

The biography of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan by Eknath Easwaran, *A Man to Match His Mountains: Badshah Khan, Nonviolent Soldier of Islam*, centers on the metamorphosis Khan effected in the violence-afflicted Pathans of India's northwest frontier, especially in Waziristan, turning them into peaceful nonviolent disciples of Gandhi during India's independence movement. Easwaran focuses on the spiritual change and on Ghaffar Khan's leadership and his emergence as the frontier Gandhi. The book’s great achievement is telling an American audience about an Islamic practitioner of nonviolence at a moment when few in the West understand its effectiveness and fewer still associate it with anything Islamic.

[Note: I write this in 2008. Recently many details of Mortenson’s story have been questioned.] The story of Greg Mortenson’s long struggle to bring education to the Balti children of northern Pakistan, entitled *Three Cups of Tea*, reinforces a vision of peace parallel to that of Khan’s (who also built schools). In this area similar to the Afghan border provinces, Minnesotan Mortenson encountered bandits, precarious mountainous travel, avalanches, being kidnapped, the absence of school materials, and the shortage of food, water, and medicine. But he also became the hope of the many who wanted education (including refugees from Afghanistan after 9-11 who had been bombed by U.S. planes), and not the madrassa schools being built by Saudis. His conclusion: “If we try to resolve terrorism with military might alone, then we will be no safer than we were before

9-11. If we truly want a legacy of peace for our children, we need to understand that this is a war that will ultimately be won with books, not bombs.”

Finally, in the recent elections in Pakistan the deeply conservative northwest voters threw out the Islamist parties that ruled the ethnic Pashtun North West Frontier Province for five years, and gave their support to secular parties that promised streets, jobs, and peaceful dialog (opposing U.S. pressure to intensify attacks on suspected militants linked to al-Qaida and the Taliban). The main secular party in this Province, the Awami National Party, has been invited to join the government being formed by Bhutto’s Pakistan People’s Party and Nawaz Sharif’s Pakistan Muslim League-N (against President Musharraf’s Pakistan Muslim League-Q). The alliance of Awami with the two largest secular parties should not astonish, since Islamist parties in Pakistan have never won more than 11 percent of the vote.

Let us remember too UNESCO’s “Seville Declaration,” summarizing the scientific evidence against the view that we have an inherent tendency to make war, and Douglas Fry’s extraordinarily well-supported case in *The Human Potential for Peace* that humans possess propensities not only to behave aggressively but also to behave cooperatively with kindness for others.

References:

Amazon.com, Editorial Reviews.

Easwaran, Eknath. *A Man to Match His Mountains: Badshah Khan, Nonviolent Soldier of Islam*. Plough, 1985.

Fry, Douglas. *The Human Potential for Peace: An Anthropological Challenge to Assumptions about War and Violence*. Oxford UP, 2006.

Gannon, Kathy. “Voters Toss Religious Extremists: Northwest Conservatives Back Secular Parties.” *TMN* 2-21-08.

Guerrero, Patty. Rev. of Mortenson, Greg, and David Relin, *Three Cups of Tea, in Worldwide WAMM* (March 2008).

“Pakistan,” *ADG* (Feb. 21, 2008) p. 8A.

Pennington, Matthew. “Pakistan’s Key Opposition Agrees to Govern Together.” *TMN* (Feb. 22, 2008).

Pitman, Todd. “Bongo Now Longest-Serving Leader,” *ADG* (3-22-08).

Rubin, Trudy. “The General’s Dangerous Aim.” *ADG* (Nov. 12, 2007).

--Wood, Edward, Jr. *Worshipping the Myths of World War II: Reflections on America’s Dedication to War*. Potomac Books, 2006.

NWA NEWSPAPER REPORTS ON VIOLENCE Sample Early 2011

Violent Response to Violence

Willems, Spencer. “LR Patrol Officers Can Soon Add Rifles to Arsenal.” *ADG* (March 14, 2011. M-4 style .223 caliber carbine rifle, similar to the AR-15 recently added, both with more “stopping power” than the shotguns and Glock .40 caliber handguns presently used.

Willems, Spencer. “LR Joins Move to Boost Police Firepower Punch: 18 Officers Now Have AR-15 Assault Rifles.” *ADG* (6-7-11).

Judicial Reponse

Stojanovic, Dusan. “Serbian Wanted in 1995 War Crimes Is Captured.” *ADG* (May 27, 2011).

Nonviolent Prevention, Education

“Obama Takes Aim at Bullying.” *ADG* (March 1, 2011). Brief report of White House conference to

reduce bullying.

Willems, Spencer. "Arkansas Ranks at No. 2 in Teen Rapes, Expert Says." *ADG* (April 24, 2011).

Ark. Culture must be changed through education, communication, awareness. Cites federal Violence Against Women Act of 1994.

Fort, Caleb and Teresa Moss. "Schools Eye Cyberbullying Policy." *NAT* (6-19-11).

RESISTANCE TO VIOLENCE IN ARKANSAS

From Rep. Lindsley Smith, at the end of her legislative report on domestic violence.

For more information about the warning signs of domestic violence and for a list of shelters and hotlines in Arkansas, go to the Arkansas Coalition Against Domestic Violence website <http://www.domesticpeace.com/>. You can also go to the Peace at Home Shelter website at <http://www.peaceathomeshelter.org/> and the Northwest Arkansas Women's Shelter at <http://www.nwawomensshelter.org/>

For more information about sexual abuse and rape, go to the Northwest Arkansas Rape Crisis, Inc. webpage at <http://nwarapecrisis.com/> or Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault at <http://www.acasa.ws/statistics.html>

Date: July 9, 2011 8:07:35 PM CDT

Teaching Resources on Prejudice

A new Multimedia Center with resources for teaching about **prejudice, racism, sexism, and genocide** may be found at:

<http://understandingprejudice.org/multimedia/>

The Center includes access to over 50 streaming videos. Click on "Teacher's Corner" for teaching ideas, materials, and resources, including more than 35 college-level classroom activities and student assignments as well as materials for elementary and secondary levels.

The Center was developed by Scott Plous as a project of the Social Psychology Network (SPN). SPN has been endorsed by APA Div. 48: The Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence.

Ian Harris

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BOOKS

-- Ed by Nahla Abdo and Ronit Lentin.

Women and the Politics of Military Confrontation: Palestinian and Israeli Gendered Narratives of Dislocation.

-- *Sexed Pistols: The Gendered Impacts of Small Arms and Light Weapons.* Edited by Vanessa Farr, Henri Myrntinen and Albrecht Schnabel.

United Nations, 2009.

--Ferguson, Niall. *The War of the World: Twentieth-Century Conflict and the Descent of the West.* Penguin, 2006. Rev. *The NYT Book Review* (Nov. 12, 2006). The 20th C. military-industrial slaughter was the bloodiest century in modern history. Ferguson gives 3 reasons: "ethnic conflict, economic volatility, and empires in decline." He urges the Western powers to study the "dark forces" of the 20th century within us still if we are to prevent a repetition of ethnic conflict and imperial rivalry rising out of economic crisis.

--Junger, Sebastian. *War.* Twelve, 2010. Rev. Tom Bissell, *Columbia Journalism R* (July/August 2010): "...left me sickened, moved, terrified, awed, and angry, and which now takes its place among the best works on the subject that I have read." About a U.S. Army outpost called Restrepo in a remote, mountainous area in Afghanistan surrounded by hostile dwellers. From 2005 to April 2010 the US Army "sacrificed almost four dozen soldiers" to defend the small Korengal Valley." The book studies what happens to men in such violent circumstances. They become like "street gangs" who "want to fight and kill" with an intensity that seems psychopathic.

--*Ending Hunger Worldwide* by George Kent.

--Linfield, Susie. *The Cruel Radiance: Photography and Political Violence.* U of Chicago P, 2010. She sees behind the pictures to motives and lies.

--Philipps, David. *Lethal Warriors: When the New Band of Brothers Came Home; Uncovering the Tragic Reality of PTSD.* Palgrave, 2010.

END OF NEWSLETTER #2 ON VIOLENCE