




Hip Hop Culture, Self-Actualization, Democratic Education: Their Relationship to Reducing Human Aggression

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Expanding on the ideas of
Yaacov Hecht concerning
“one-size-fits-all” as the
source of problems in society



The Black & Latino Policy Institute



Thesis statement:

- What does violence *do* for the individual?
- What purposes are achieved through aggression & violence? (May, 1967)
- The issues are normalcy & indifference, not violence.
- Understanding the human need for recognition is at the heart of understanding human violence.
- Finding & promoting ways to meet this need will reduce aggression & violence.
- Self-actualization, appreciating hip hop culture, & democratic education are powerful means to this end.

Inter-relatedness

Yaacov Hecht

- Democratic Education -

- ~ -

- Reducing -

- Human -

- Aggression -

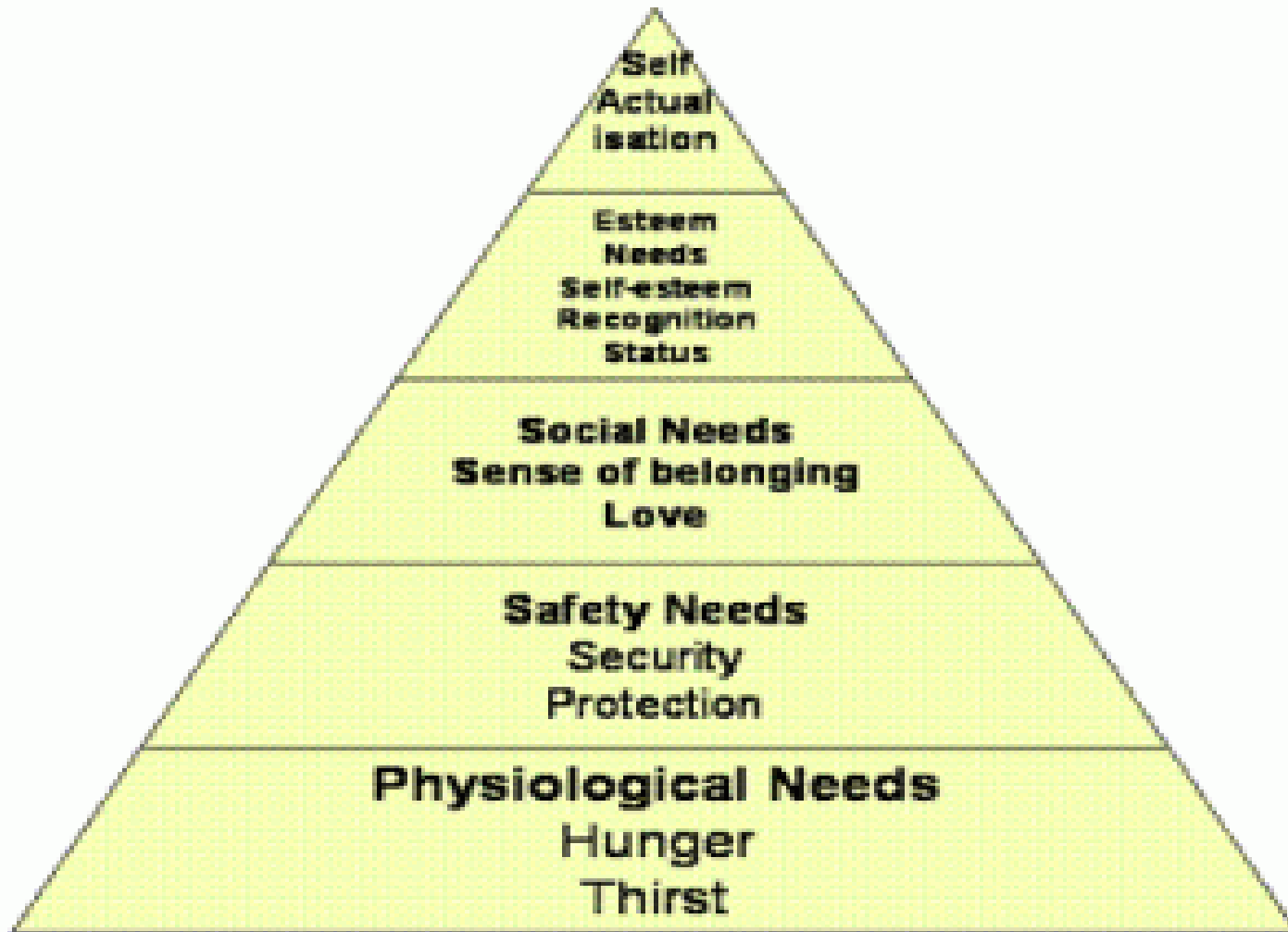
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Abraham Maslow --- Hip hop culture

Self-Actualization

“Keepin’ it real...”

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Social Needs

- belonging/acceptance
- love
- affection
- companionship

Esteem Needs

- self-respect
- achievement & confidence
- social recognition & validation
- status/reputation
- family


Self-actualization characteristics

- vitality
- creative
- self-reliant
- authentic
- self-confident
- self-aware
- concerned with personal growth and fulfilling one's potential



Self-actualization

- the intrinsic growth of what is already in the organism, or more accurately, of what the organism is
- our desire for self-fulfillment, namely, the tendency to become actualized in what we are potentially
- the desire to become more and more of what one uniquely is



“The final aim is not to know, but to be. There never was a more risky motto than: Know thyself. You've got to know yourself as far as possible. But, not for the sake of knowing. You've got to know yourself so that you can at least be yourself. ‘Be yourself’ is the last motto.”

-- John Edwards *“What We Steal from Children”* quoted from D. H. Lawrence

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Self-Actualization

“Keepin’ it real...”



Self-actualization and hip-hop culture

“Keepin’ it real...”

Hip hop

- A worldview of those born after 1965
 - Authenticity
 - Social Justice
 - Loyalty
 - Respect
- 5 Elements
 - MC-ing/rap
 - DJ-ing
 - Dance/B Boys
 - Graffiti/Tagging
 - Human beat box
- Spin offs
 - Political force: Hip-hop Summit, Hip Hop Congress, “Vote or die” movement of 2004 in US
 - Clothing/dress/”sagging”
 - Video (6th element?)
 - Urban genre’ novels
 - Poetry Slams
 - Magazines
 - Music styles: Trip-hop, Reggaeton



The clarifying potential of hip-hop culture

With no tenable link to Africa and the desire to distance themselves from their enslavers, Blacks have continued to create and recreate forms of cultural expression, and thus personal identity.

*Out of this same desire for re-creation was born the **clarifying** potential of hip-hop culture.*

~D. Miles Brady 2000

Hip-hop promotes itself as itself, rather than as something else

- Lying within a struggle for respect amongst its peers, hip-hop re-appropriates what a larger society has taken from it. Hip-hop is historically and culturally based. It is built upon a long-existent black musical tradition. It knows where it is from and continually makes reference to its predecessors by its style and structure. *It models for youth the authenticity they seek. It promotes itself as itself, rather than as something else.*

Brady, D. "Keepin' It Real, Keepin' It Right: Identity Culture, Hip-hop, and Young, Black Men in America's Schools. *Democracy In Education*

How will my own existence be clarified?

- This is a message to the oppressor, not in hope that he will listen, but with the expectation that my own existence will be clarified.

-- James Cone, *Black Theology 6-Black Power*, 1969

Commercialization turned hip-hop into “hip-pop”

- Rap is not about perpetuating stereotypes. Genuine rap is not all about “the cheese” or being top player or pimp. Yet, when white media deemed certain styles of rap as “gangsta,” soon ignorant and “wack” MCs began “fake” attempts to live up to this reputation.

-- D. Miles Brady 2000

“Keepin’ it real; Keepin’ it right

- Hip-hop is about “Keepin’ it real” vs. “busters,” “perpetrators,” “wanna be’s”
 - In the understanding of the hip-hop nation as a family, others who do not fit the true “b-boy” (hip-hop) mold, are **considered to be inauthentic** and disrespectful **imitators**
 - Verbal battles between M.C.'s (rappers) began when it was perceived that someone wasn't being **true to themselves**, or "**true to the game**" (Brady, 2000).

The original gave way to the copy

- Within this equation, skin color is usually, but not always a determinant. Those black folk who misuse the **genuine values** of hip hop culture, are identified as "**crossovers**" and "**sell-outs** who need to get the hell out"
- Those unauthentic white folks are typically considered to be "**Frankenstein creations**" outfitted in the expensive garments of young blackness

~D. Miles Brady 2000

Kool As Nerds
Where Street IQ Meets Book IQ

Kool As Nerds
CLOTHING CO.

Where Street IQ Meets Book IQ

Be Who You Really Are. Educate Your Mind!



Dorian crutcher

Kool As Nerds
CLOTHING CO.

Where Street IQ Meets Book IQ



The Promise of Hip-hop Culture

- The promise of hip-hop culture is that it will do what the 60s generation could not or did not do and that is to **advance national civil rights to global human rights.**

-- The Black & Latino Policy Institute

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Abraham Maslow --- Hip hop culture

Self-Actualization

“Keepin’ it real...”



Levels of power

There are 5 levels of power present as potentialities in every human being's life.

Rollo May, *Power and Innocence: A Search for the Source of Violence* (1967)

Levels of Power: Drives we all have

1. simply *the power to be*, to exist, to assert oneself as a living thing
2. the power of *self-affirmation*, to be recognized and to become significant
3. the power of *self-assertion*, of pushing against opposition
4. *aggression*, the application of power to overcome blocked self-assertion
5. *violence*, to which we resort when nonviolent aggression is fruitless

The 1st level is *the power to be*.

- Power is given in the act of a **seedling busting thru the soil** to receive sunlight/water and grow
- Power is given in the **act of birth**--the sheer fact the infant *lives*.
- Power is given in the newborn crying, violently waving arms as signs of discomfort, **demanding their needs be met**

The Power to be

How a plant grows from a seed





This all concerns power & what to do about it

To be alive is power,
Existing in itself
Without a further function,
Omnipotence enough.

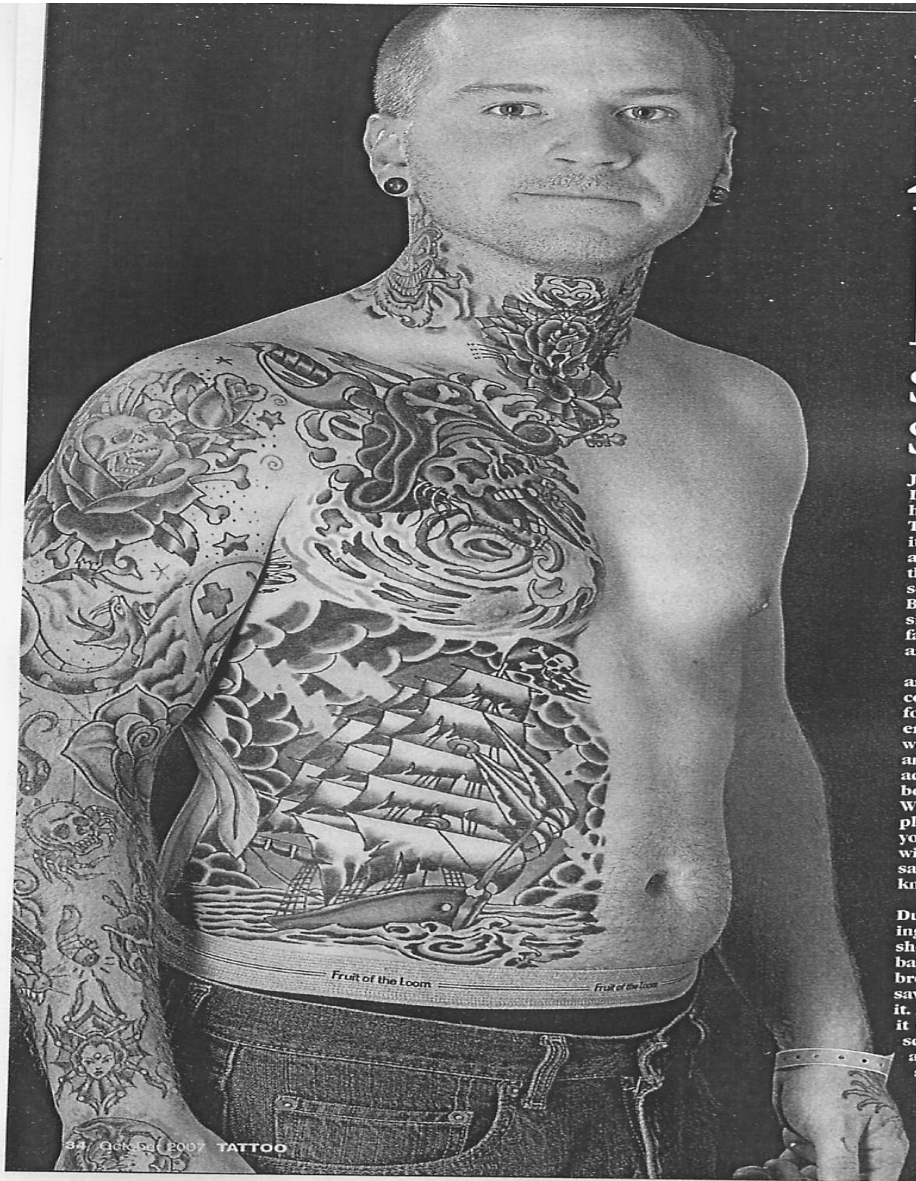
-- Emily Dickinson

Wherever I found the living,
there I found the will to power.

-- Friedrich Nietzsche *Thus Spake Zarathustra*

The 2nd level is *self-affirmation*

- With the power to be, we have to affirm our existence
- Not just living, but survival *with esteem*
 - a sense of *significance* and *fulfillment* that is:
 - innately self-satisfying
 - appreciated by others
 - attention paid** **--validated**
 - recognized** **--respected**
- *The need for recognition becomes the central issue in self-affirmation*



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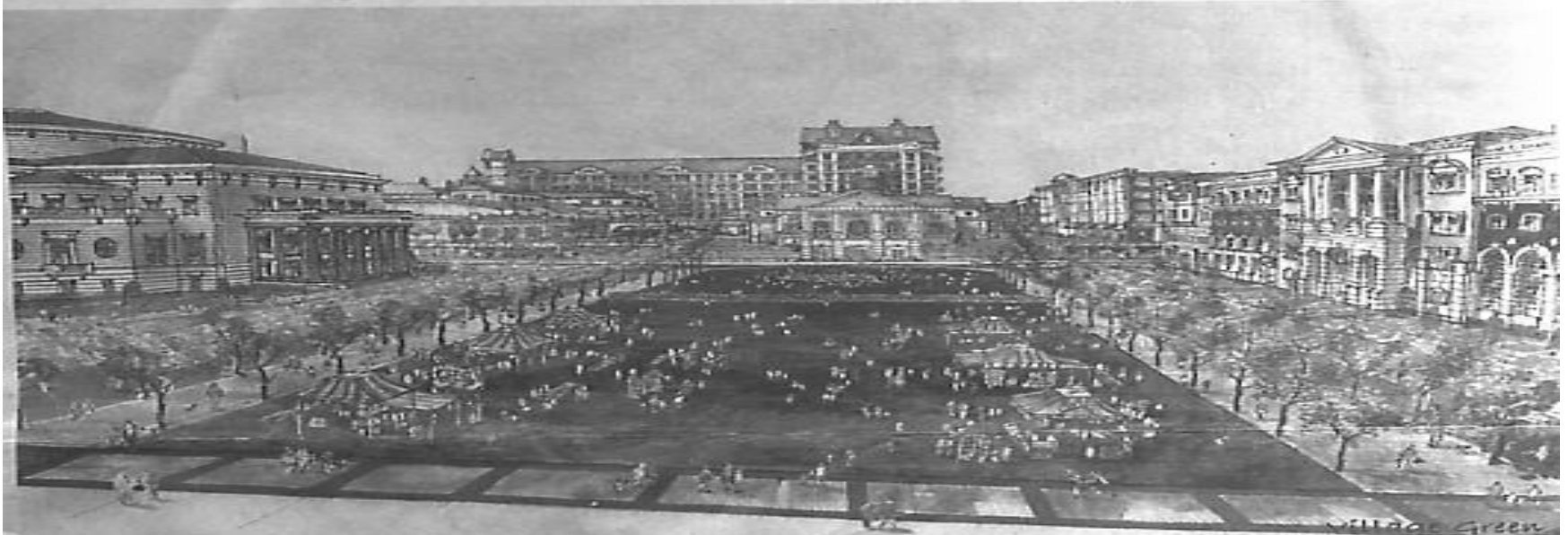


gRafiti

New Civic Center Carmel, Indiana

CENTER OF ATTENTION

Carmel hopes the European feel of its \$200M downtown will lure exclusive retailers, making City Center a destination



Artist's rendering provided by Pedcor Cos.

SEE ARTISTS' VISIONS OF CARMEL'S BIG PLAN, A5

A mix of high-end dining and shopping, homes and office space is planned for the 15-acre City Center.

Shopping and eating

220,000 square feet of finished space

Places to live

300 high-end condos and apartments, including

Entertainment

1,600-seat concert hall and 500-seat

Leaders meet on Palestinian turf

Associated Press

JERICHO, West Bank — In their first meeting on Palestinian soil, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Monday that he hoped to launch negotiations soon on establishing a Palestinian state, his clearest promise to tackle a final peace deal.

The trappings of the three-hour session were perhaps as important as the content.

Olmert became the first Israeli leader to visit a Palestinian town after seven years of bloody fighting, and Israeli and Palestinian security forces worked together to protect him.

Abbas, in turn, gained some stature by hosting Olmert, at least symbolically leveling the uneven relationship of occupier and occupied.

Despite the good will, the sides have different ideas about what should happen next.

The Palestinians said that after years of delay, it's time to start talking about the terms of Palestinian statehood, including final borders, removal of Israeli settlements and how to divide Jerusalem.

Israel wants to move more slowly, in part because talks in 2000 collapsed over the so-called core issues and because Olmert might not be strong enough politically to make far-reaching concessions.

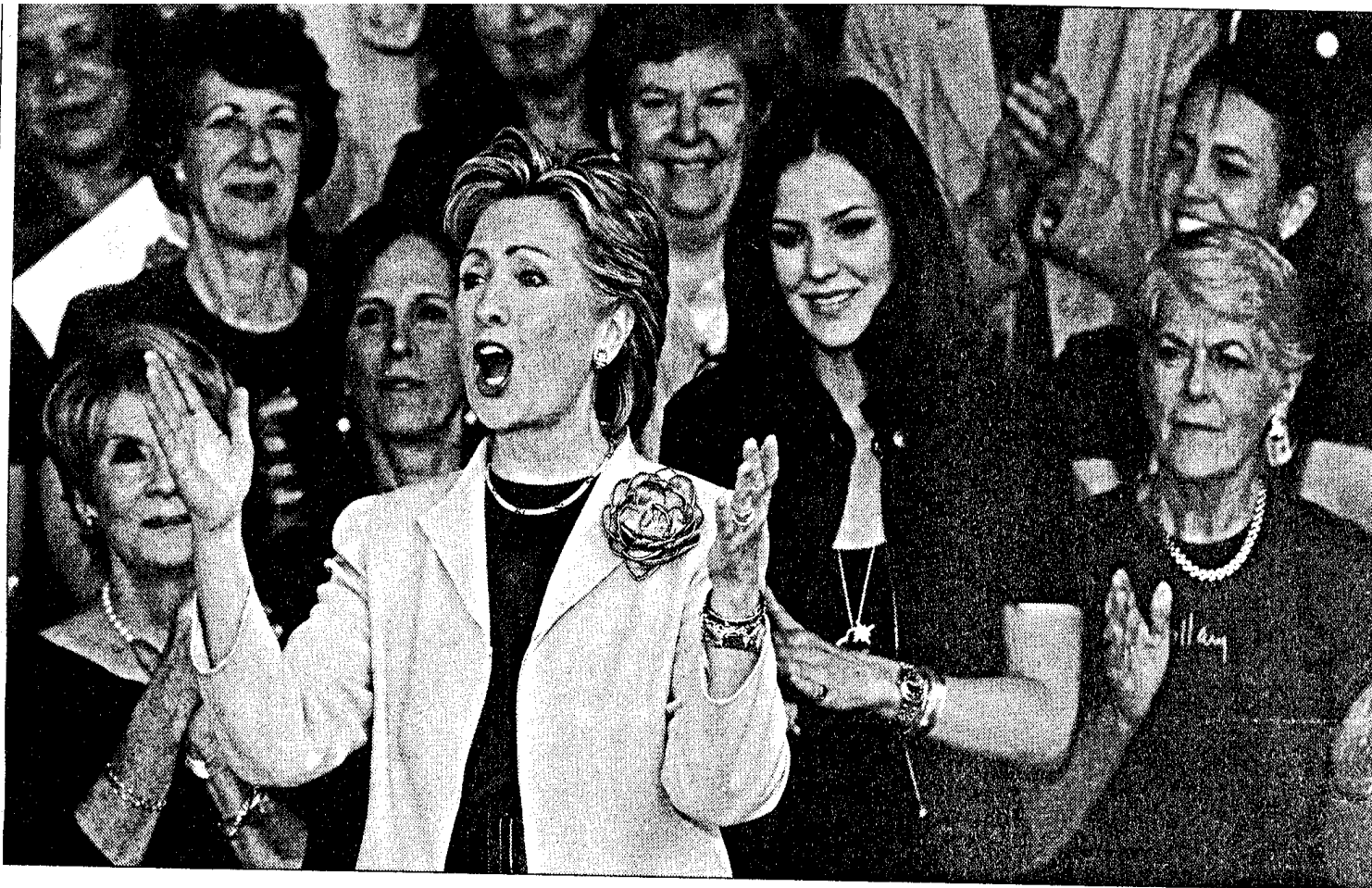
However, the U.S. has been prodding both sides to make progress, ahead of a Mideast peace conference in the U.S. in November. Olmert also appears eager to prop up the moderate Abbas, particularly after the Islamic militant Hamas seized Gaza by force in June.

The 3rd level is *self-assertion*

- When seeking validation no longer works
- When self-affirmation meets resistance we make greater effort, we give power to our stance.
 - Making clear what we are want, what we believe;
We state it now against opposition.
- *This is drawing a line in the sand.*
We make it unavoidable others see us
 - "Here I am; I demand that you notice me!"
 - No! I won't do that

You ain't no punk...are ya? Do you
let people walk all over you?





By Jonathan Ernst, Reuters

Fight is on to capture women's votes

Gender on the minds of candidates, voters

By Jill Lawrence

Clinton and a member of Club44. Cl...

that she's a mother. She's "running as a woman" but also as a tough candidate for commander in chief, Bystrom says.

Kate Michelman, who heads an abortion rights group and is a former aide to John Edwards, says he "has alv


The 4th level is *aggression*

- Exists as a potentiality in every person
- In contrast to self-assertion, *this is crossing the line*
- **Aggression: moving into the position of power or prestige or the territory of another and taking possession of some of it for one's self.**

The aggressive impulse

- A natural drive/response/tendency/action in humans as a potential
- to survival instinct

- That aggressive part of our nature which may be called to meet our needs...both
 - primary --food, shelter
 - secondary --recognition, affiliation

- 
- Aggression occurs because the opposition to affirmation and assertion is so entrenched, and apathy and inertia are so strong that greater force is necessary for stirring up effective action.

“When aggressive tendencies are blocked over a period of time, they take their toll in a zombie-like deadening of consciousness, neurosis, psychosis, or violence.”

--Rollo May, *Power & Innocence*



Destructive Aggression

Schoolyard Bullying

Intimidating police tactics

The “Blitzkrieg” Nazi invasion of Poland



Constructive aggression: Must have a complaint and goal

- *Abolitionists had a **powerful grievance**--the inhuman character of slavery. They also had **powerful aim** at stake--the possibility of correcting injustice.*
- While destructive aggression sometimes contains only the first, both of these must be present in constructive aggression.

The protester



By Mark Zaleski, AP

Woolworth's lunch counter
Greensboro, NC Feb 1960



Mar 21, 2011 ... Pentagon Papers leaker
Daniel Ellsberg arrested twice as he
rallied against the Iraq war and supported
Pvt. Bradley Manning of WikiLeaks fame.



Positive aggressiveness

Conquering cholesterol

How three Hoosiers took control of their high cholesterol levels through lifestyle and other changes.

Stories by Barb Bergg



Gina Heath, a 32-year-old mom, chose to lower her cholesterol levels without the help of medicine. Her new diet made it happen (and helped her lose 20 pounds in the process).

FRANK ESPICH / The Star

Your cholesterol level you're not. No Sir

a cholesterol-reducing diet there's no need to those fatty trench.

No Sir. You feel good and aren't taking medicine. And many don't have those typical problems.

Here's how they are conquering their problems:

<< Gina Heath
At age 32, Heath wasn't eating as well or exercising enough. But that changed fast out in January.

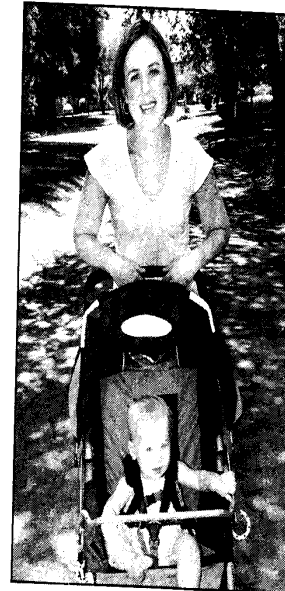
Beating cancer through exercise

I never thought in a million years I would be battling cancer at age 23. Growing up, I was a competitive swimmer. Sports had always interested me, but through college and out of college I had not been really good about sticking with an exercise program. I was diagnosed with Hodgkins' disease, a type of lymphoma, in August 1999. I had been out of college for a year and worked for an ad agency in Indianapolis.

I contacted the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society to find out about my disease. They shared with me a program called Team in Training and said they were looking for cancer survivors to be patient honorees. Toward the end of my treatment, I served as an honoree for the 500 Festival Mini-Marathon in May 2000.

I was so inspired by these individuals who were novice athletes raising thousands of dollars by participating in endurance events. I made a promise to myself — if my health continues to improve, I would do the Mini the next year. I had to rebuild my body from scratch because of all the treatment I had gone through. I joined Team in Training.

At first, it was hard to walk a mile. I trained three to four days during the



KELLY WILKINSON / The Star

SURVIVOR'S REGIMEN: Leigh Hinkle, 31, tries to walk daily, usually with her 11-month-old daughter, Emily Hinkle.

weekend. The actual event was easier than I thought. It took me 3 1/2 hours. I fell in love with being healthy and taking care of my body.

After the Mini, I ran-walked the Indianapolis Half-Marathon in Lawrence in 2001. Then in June 2002, I walked the Mayor's Midnight Sun Marathon in Anchorage, Alaska.

Then I decided I wanted to get a triathlon crown with Team in Training — marathon, triathlon and a century (100-mile) bike ride. I did the Chicago Triathlon with my boyfriend. I swam twice a week, rode a bike and ran on the weekends.

At the end of the event, he proposed. We got married and had a baby last September.

I believe I am cancer-free today because of the physical activity I have chosen to do. It's an important part of who I am.

What drove me:

>> I always remembered that I beat cancer and how hard that was. I wanted to do whatever I had to do so I didn't go through that again.

>> I also wanted to raise money for

August 20, 2007

“Distressed family members shouted and scuffled with guards after 3 days without word on 172 miners trapped...”

Outrage grows over fate of miners missing for days

Xintai, China — Distressed family members shouted and scuffled with guards after a third day without word on 172 miners trapped in a flooded mine in eastern China, where rescue crews began pumping water Sunday.

Paramilitary police and emergency crews plugged a breach in a dike that burst Friday after heavy rains, flooding the Huayuan Mining Co. mine, officials and state media said. As industrial pumps began siphoning water that stood 65 feet deep in the shaft, experts analyzed accident data to try to locate the missing miners.

Meanwhile, nine miners were stranded in a second mine in the area that also flooded after the rain-swollen Wen river burst two dikes, bringing the total number of missing to 181.

5 more boycott Iraqi Cabinet

Exodus of Sunnis from government is a blow to leader's reconciliation efforts

Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraq's political crisis worsened Monday as five more ministers announced a boycott of Cabinet meetings, leaving the embattled prime minister's unity government with no members affiliated with Sunni political factions.

The new cracks in Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's government appeared even as U.S. military officials sounded cautious notes of progress on security, citing strides against insurgents linked to al-Qaida in Iraq but also new threats from Iranian-backed Shiite militias.

The Cabinet boycott by five

ministers loyal to former Iraqi leader Ayad Allawi left the government, at least temporarily, without participants who were members of the Sunni political apparatus, a deep blow to the prime minister's attempt to craft reconciliation among the country's majority Shiites and minority Sunnis and Kurds.

The Allawi bloc, a mixture of Sunnis and Shiites, cited al-Maliki's failure to respond to its demands for political reform. The top Sunni political bloc already had pulled its six ministers from the 40-member Cabinet of al-Maliki, a Shiite, last week.

Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, who has been trying to broker the Sunni bloc's return in a bid to hold the government together, met Monday with U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker and a White House envoy.

IRAQ: NEWS IN BRIEF

Monday's developments:

5 American soldiers killed in combat

Baghdad — Four U.S. soldiers died Monday from wounds suffered in a combat explosion in restive Diyala province north of Baghdad, the American military reported. Twelve others had minor injuries and returned to duty.

The military statement announcing the deaths said identities of the victims were withheld until family could be notified.

Earlier Monday, the military said one soldier was killed during fighting in eastern Baghdad a day earlier.

At least 3,673 U.S. military members, including 93 with Indiana ties, have died since the Iraq war started in March 2003.

Other developments:

◆ **Tal Afar** — A suicide bomber slammed a dump truck filled with explosives and covered with a layer of gravel into a crowded Shiite neighborhood of this religiously mixed city, killing at least 28 people, including at least 19 children, according to Brig. Gen. Najim Abdullah.

— Star news services

The 5th level is *violence*

- When aggression is ineffective, comes the ultimate explosion: violence
- Level 5 is **largely physical**
 - Other levels which can involve reasoning or persuasion have been blocked off.
 - The **cerebrum being bypassed:**
 - The stimulus transmitted from the environment to the individual is translated directly into the violent impulse to strike

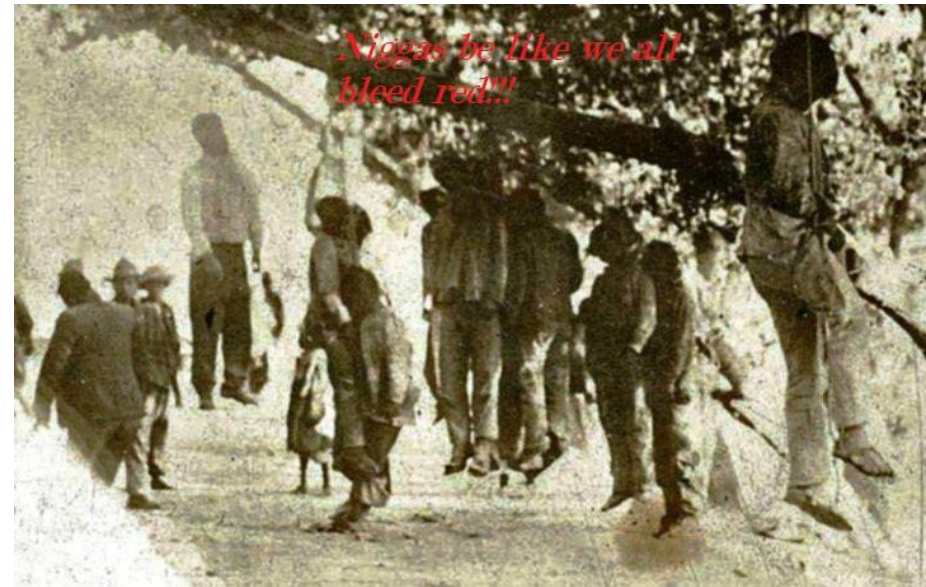
Violence: A mix of internal and external manifestations

- We often speak of the tendency toward violence as building up inside the individual, but it's also a response to outside conditions.
- The source of violence must be seen in both its internal and external manifestations:
 - *a response to a situation which is felt to block off all other ways of response.*



Destructive violence

- Mindless, faceless, numbing, horrible, devastating, shocking, gruesome, senseless, killing, killing, killing...and more killing...this love of suffering and death.



Urges nations to
“...strongly refuse
the recourse
to weapons.”

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ANTONIO CALANNI / Associated Press

PLEA FOR PEACE: Pope Benedict XVI reached out to the faithful Sunday in Lorenzago di Cadore, near Belluno, Italy, where he called for an end to all wars.

Pope calls for end to ‘useless slaughter’

Benedict XVI urges nations to ‘strongly refuse the recourse to weapons’

By Trisha Thomas
Associated Press

LORENZAGO DI CADORE, Italy — Pope Benedict XVI called Sunday for an end to all wars, describing them as “useless slaughters” that bring hell to Earth.

Benedict, speaking from this small mountain town where he has been vacationing, recalled that 90 years ago his predecessor Pope Benedict XV urged a

“From this place of peace, where one still senses how unacceptable the horrors of ‘useless slaughters’ are, I renew the appeal to pursue the path of rights, to strongly refuse the recourse to weapons and refuse to confront new situations with old systems,” he said.

He reminded the faithful that God put man on Earth to take care of his “paradise,” but that man sinned and began making war.

Benedict has been stepping up his peace appeals, issuing a major call June 17 in the hillside town of Assisi, known for St. Francis’ message of peace. A week

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July 30, 2006

War's chaos kills Congo's children by the millions

Disease and hunger
claim 1 in 4 youngsters
in the African nation
before the age of 5

By Lydia Polgreen
The New York Times

RUTSHURU, Democratic Republic of Congo — Children die here from the same ailments that kill children all across Africa — malaria, diarrhea, measles, malnutrition — but on a vast and cataclysmic scale.

The child mortality rate here in the most volatile eastern provinces is almost twice that of the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, which already has the world's highest rate, according to the International Rescue Committee, a nonprofit organization that has documented the death toll here in a series of mortality studies from 1998 to 2004.

Though Congo's civil war supposedly

“It is fair to say that the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo has been the deadliest for children in the past 60 years,” said Richard Brennan, health director of the International Rescue Committee. “No other conflict has had the same levels of excess mortality, and children have borne a disproportionate degree of this burden.”

About 30,000 children have been forced into militias, while untold thousands of girls have been raped, according to the UNICEF report. Children labor in toxic conditions at gold and diamond mines. Orphans choke the streets of Kinshasa, the capital.

At the hospital in North Kivu near the Rwandan border, where villages have been ravaged by war, the burden on children is on grim, daily display.

One 2-year-old boy, Amuri, strug-

“The conflict in the . . . Congo has been the deadliest for children in the past 60 years.”

“Violence is suppressed rage.”

-- Rollo May in *Power and Innocence* quoting Sartre in Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*

- *For as long as people feel forced to remain in semi-human conditions, there will be aggression and violence.*
- ***If the other phases of behavior are blocked, then explosion into violence may be the only way individuals or groups can get release from unbearable tension and achieve a sense of significance.***

Constructive Violence: Anti-colonialism

- Frantz Fanon, a black psychiatrist and a participant in the Algerian Rebellion, in *The Wretched of the Earth*:
- Some violence is necessary for colonized peoples to become alive psychologically and spiritually.
 - It is the way to integrity, self-esteem, and the awareness of their own powers.

The humanity of the rebel

The love of violence is, to me, the ancient and symbolic gesture of man against the constraints of society.

Vicious men can exploit the impulse, but it is a disaster to treat the impulse as vicious.

For no society is strong that does not acknowledge the protesting man; and no man is human who does not draw strength from the natural animal.

Violence is the sphinx by the fireside, and she has a human face.

-- Jacob Bronowski from *The Face of Violence*

A protester's fiery suicide

Man who had suffered with depression left note saying he wanted to atone for war in Iraq

By Ashley M. Heher
Associated Press

CHICAGO — Malachi Ritscher envisioned his death as one full of purpose.

He carefully planned the details, mailed a copy of his apartment key to a friend, created to-do lists for his family. On his Web site, the 52-year-old experimental musician who'd fought with depression even penned his obituary.

At 6:30 a.m. on Nov. 3, Ritscher, a frequent anti-war protester, stood by an off-ramp in downtown Chicago near a statue of a giant flame, set up a video camera, doused himself with gasoline and lit himself on fire.

Aglow for the crush of morning commuters, his flaming body was supposed to be a call to the nation, a symbol of his rage and discontent with the war in Iraq.

"If I am required to pay for your barbaric war, I choose not to live in your world. I refuse to finance the mass murder of in-

nocent civilians, who did nothing to threaten our country," he wrote in his suicide note. "If one death can atone for anything, in any small way, to say to the world: I apologize for what we have done to you, I am ashamed for the mayhem and turmoil caused by my country."

There was only one problem: No one was listening.

It took five days for the Cook County medical examiner to identify the charred-beyond-recognition corpse. It wasn't until a reporter for an alternative weekly, the Chicago Reader, pieced the facts together that word began to spread.

Soon, tributes — and questions — poured in.

Was this a man consumed by mental illness? Or was Ritscher a martyr driven by rage over what he saw as an unjust war?

"This man killed himself in such a painful way, specifically to get our attention on these things," said Jennifer Diaz, a 28-



JOEIF DAVIS / Associated Press 2003 file photo

A PROTESTER FROM THE START: Malachi Ritscher hoisted a sign in Chicago in April 2003. Earlier this month, the 52-year-old doused himself with gasoline and lit himself ablaze along an expressway off-ramp.

year-old graduate student who never met him but has been researching his life. Now, she is organizing protests and vigils. "I'm not going to sit by and I can't sit by and let this go unheard."

Ritscher's death brought back memories for Anita King, 48, West Philadelphia, whose friend

Kathy Change set fire to herself in 1996.

"I think both of them, they just felt like their death could be the last drop of blood shed," King said. "It was too hard for them. They had too much of a conscious connection to the struggle to go on in their lives."


Do we want to get rid of violence?

In the Utopian aim of removing all power and aggression from human behavior, we run the risk of removing self-assertion, self-affirmation, and even the power to be. If it were successful it would breed a race of docile, passive eunuchs and would lay the groundwork for an explosion in violence that would dwarf all those that have occurred so far

We can't deny the essence of ourselves: the self-affirmation and self-assertion making us persons and without which we have no reason for living.

What we have failed to see is that aggression has been, on the positive side, in the service of those values of life that would if discarded, leave us bereft indeed.

--Rollo May , 1967

- 
- Violence and suffering are critical in a democratic society, in heightening antipathy for violations of democratic values and in heightening sympathy for the victims of such violations.

-- Silvan Tomkins, "The Constructive Role of Violence and Suffering"

- “It is better to be violent, if there is violence in our hearts, than to put on the cloak of non-violence to cover impotence.”

-- Gandhi

- “Violence isn’t always evil. What’s evil is the infatuation with violence.”

-- Jim Morrison, The Doors

Indifference is the enemy, not violence

The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's indifference.

The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference.

The opposite of life is not death, it's indifference.


-- Elie Weisel

Can we add?

The opposite of non-violence is not violence, it's indifference.

The opposite of peace is not war, it's indifference.

It's apathy, nothingness, anomie, impotence, in-authenticity resulting from our unfulfilled potential--these are the opposites of peace.



We cannot avoid
Using power,
Cannot escape the compulsion
To afflict the world,
So let us, cautious in diction
And mighty in contradiction,
Love powerfully.

-- Martin Buber, "Power and Love"

Inter-relatedness

Yaacov Hecht

- Democratic Education -

- ~ -

- Reducing -

- Human -

- Aggression -

- ~ ~ -

Abraham Maslow --- Hip hop culture

Self-Actualization

“Keepin’ it real...”



Yaacov Hecht's Assertion One-Size-Fits-All: Normalcy as the Source of Problems in Society

*“If such a thing as a psycho-analysis of today’s prototypical culture were possible, such an investigation would show **the sickness proper to the time to consist precisely in normality.**”*

-- Theodore Adorno, Minima Moralia

Yaacov is founder & Director of the Institute for Democratic Education Tel Aviv, Israel See: www.democratic.co.il/en/about-us/

Yaacov Hecht on Democratic Education

“The goal of democratic education is to self-actualization.”

“Democratic education is self-managed learning.”

Democratic culture

“A democratic culture is one that guards the equal right of every individual for self-actualization.”

Pluralistic Learning

A type of learning that acknowledges uniqueness—each person is different with both weak and strong attributes, talents, and abilities.



Yaacov: Democratic Education: You Tube

www.youtube.com/watch?v=BLECircdLGs

Institute for Democratic Education: Uniqueness Manifesto & Social Justice

- Every person has a **right to know, develop, and express their uniqueness**
- Every person is capable of **recognizing** the uniqueness of every other member of society
- Every person is capable of **understanding** that difference and/or **uniqueness** do not pose a threat, but are rather an opportunity for the individual and the community as a whole.

The anti-normalcy orientation of democratic education is the essence of human equity and social justice for all.



All kinds of minds

“We propose a shift from high standards for uniformity to high standards for diversity.”

-- Lynn Stoddard

“I look forward to the day when our schools offer every student the opportunity to become an expert on a chosen topic.”

-- Mel Levine, American psychologist

Pluralistic Learning: Excellence Centers

- Places outside of school that would represent a variety of intelligences and subjects, interests, occupations/careers, etc.
- *What is your uniqueness?*
- *What do you bring?*
- *What makes you authentic?*
- Here, students can see what they are **passionate** about learning and doing
 - They could begin intense personal study and/or **meet with adults who have the skills, careers, interests, talents they wish to have**
- This would be the first of many steps to self-actualization

Inter-relatedness

Yaacov Hecht

- Democratic Education -

- ~ -

- Reducing -

- Human -


- Aggression -

- ~ ~ -

Abraham Maslow --- Hip hop culture

Self-Actualization

“Keepin’ it real...”



Democratic education with its emphasis on **self-actualization** & **diversity** (the uniqueness of each person) and human rights reflects the hip hop essence of:

“Keepin’ it **real**, keepin’ it **right**”

Hip hop culture, a democratic culture, and Maslow’s concepts have the same basic foundations:

AUTHNETICITY

Self-actualization through clarity



"I failed your class 'cause I ain't with your reasoning. You tryin' to make me you."

-- Boogie Down Productions, 1989

“Right on to the real...
Death to the fake ones...
Peace out.”

-- “Skip” Martin

Inter-relatedness

Yaacov Hecht

- Democratic Education -

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- Aggression -

- ~ ~ -

Abraham Maslow --- Hip hop culture

Self-Actualization

“Keepin’ it real...”



■ Self-actualization, hip hop culture, and democratic education share the same theme: authenticity.

■ Self-actualized persons are validated and empowered, and have less motivation to be violent.

“Writing saved me from the sin and inconvenience of violence.”
-- Alice Walker

■ Hip hop culture and democratic education enable self-actualization.

■ We must envision the non-violence outcomes of education which abandons a one-size-fits-all paradigm -- discovering and developing the uniqueness of each student.

■ Thus, the issue is normalcy and indifference, not violence.

“...to salute and be saluted”

At the heart of violence, in act or in feeling, lies the wish to show ourselves men with a will. (But) the complexity of society makes man lose heart. Nothing he does any longer seems to be a skill to be proud of in a world where someone else always hits the headlines.

This is a plausible picture, in despair of which men cheerfully join any private army which will offer them the ambivalent identity of a uniform: the right to salute and be saluted.

-- Rollo May in *Power and Innocence* quoting Jacob Bronowski from *The Face of Violence*



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