

“They Say that We are Prone to Violence, but It's Home Sweet Home”: The Praxis of Hip Hop, Self-Actualization, and Democratic Education for Addressing the Roots of Violence

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Keynote Address
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Black & Latino Policy Institute
Indianapolis, IN USA

United States/South Africa

United States

- **Grad rate males**
2010
 - Black 52% (all Blacks 62%)
 - White 78%
 - NYC 28% Black/57% White
- Native American 2010 dropout rate 50%
- **Murder rates/100,000**
2012
 - **Global 6.9**
 - **US 4.7**
 - **Flint, MI 62.0 (pop. 101,632)**
- School libraries
Very few schools lack a library
- Languages
1 official

South Africa

- **Drop out rates**
2010
 - 47% quit at grade 10
 - doubled since 1995
 - 49% of those starting in 2000 did not sit for the “matric” in 12th grade
- **Murder rates/100,000**
2012
 - **Global 6.9**
 - **SA 31.3**2011
 - **Cape Town 46.0**
- School libraries
92% of schools lack a library
- Languages
11 official languages

Inter-relatedness

~ Rollo May ~ ~ ~ Abraham Maslow ~

~ 5 Levels of Power Self-Actualization ~

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Reducing Violence

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~ Hip Hop Culture ~ ~ ~ Yaacov Hecht ~

“Keepin’ it real...” Democratic Education



Summary 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.

Levels of power

There are 5 levels of power
present as potentials 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 all other means are blocked

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

The Power to be

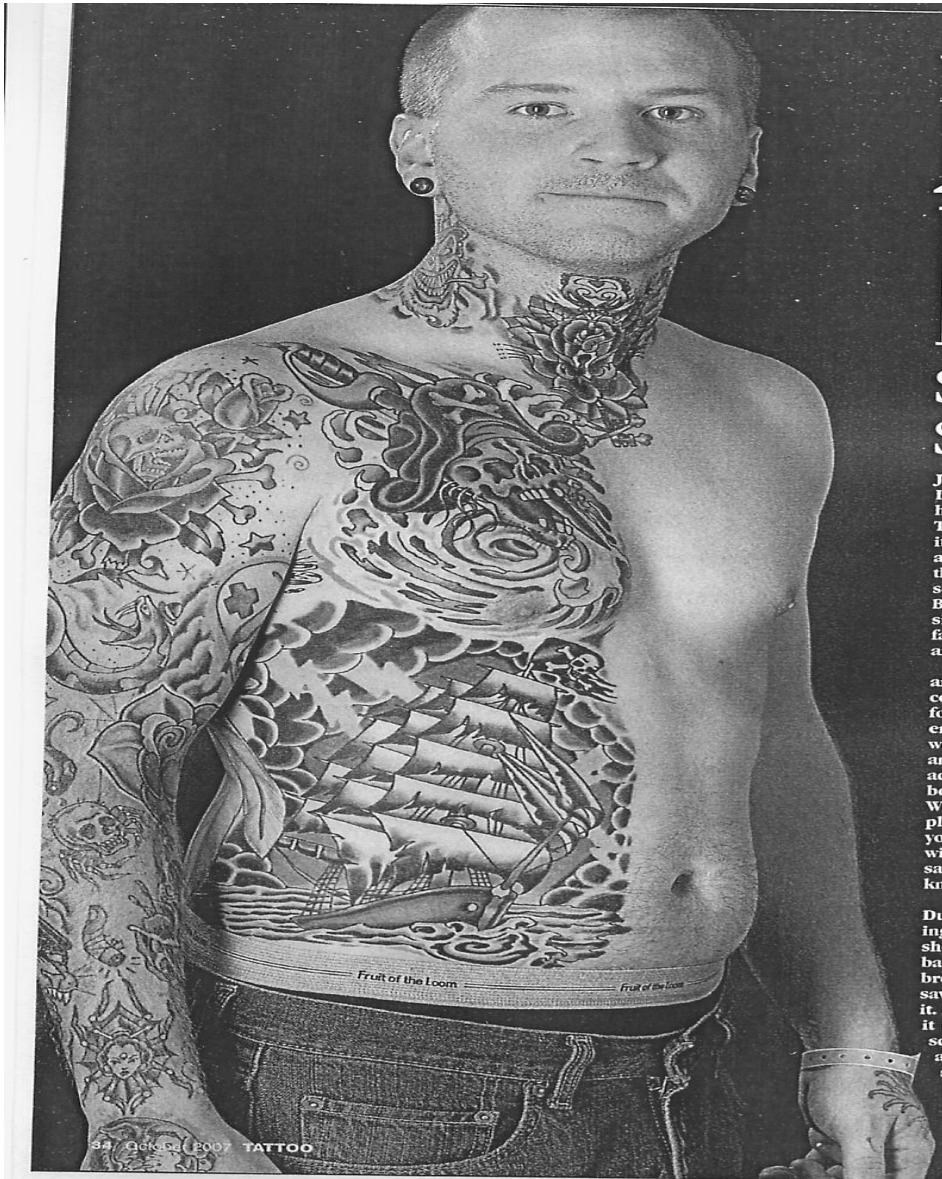
How a plant grows from a seed



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:
 - appreciated by others
 - attention paid
 - recognized
 - validated
 - respected
- ***The need for recognition becomes the central issue in self-affirmation***





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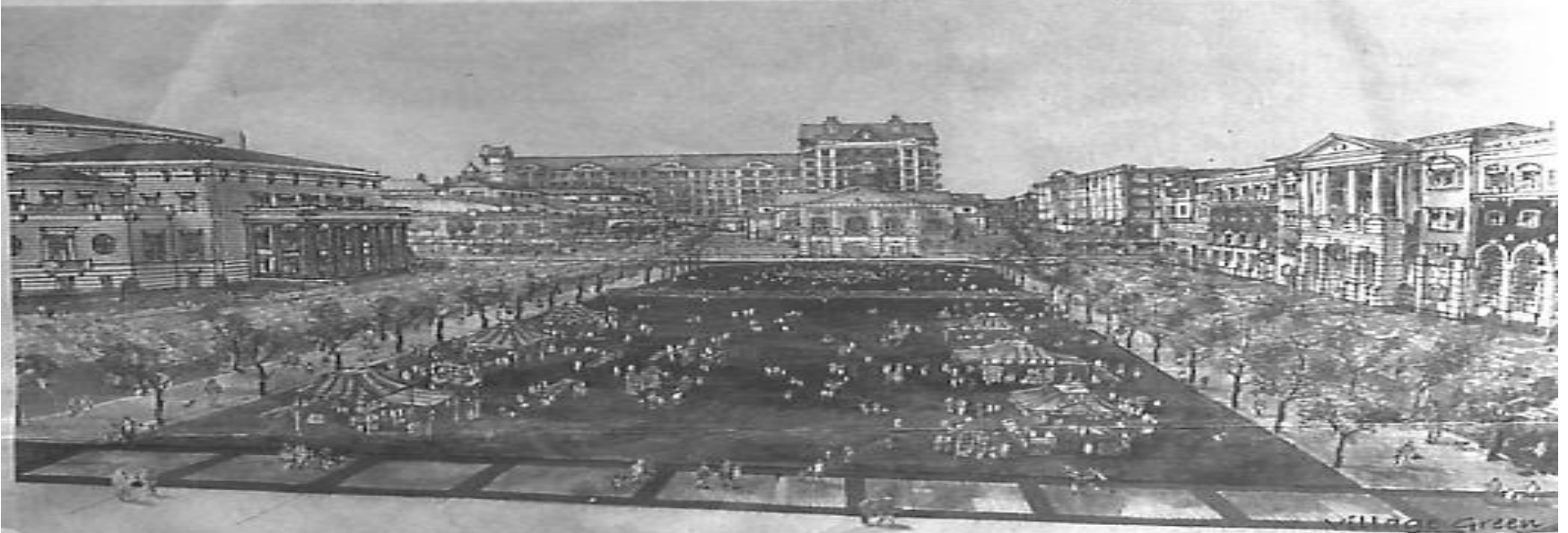
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New Civic Center Carmel, Indiana

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 Pedco 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 unique shops

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.

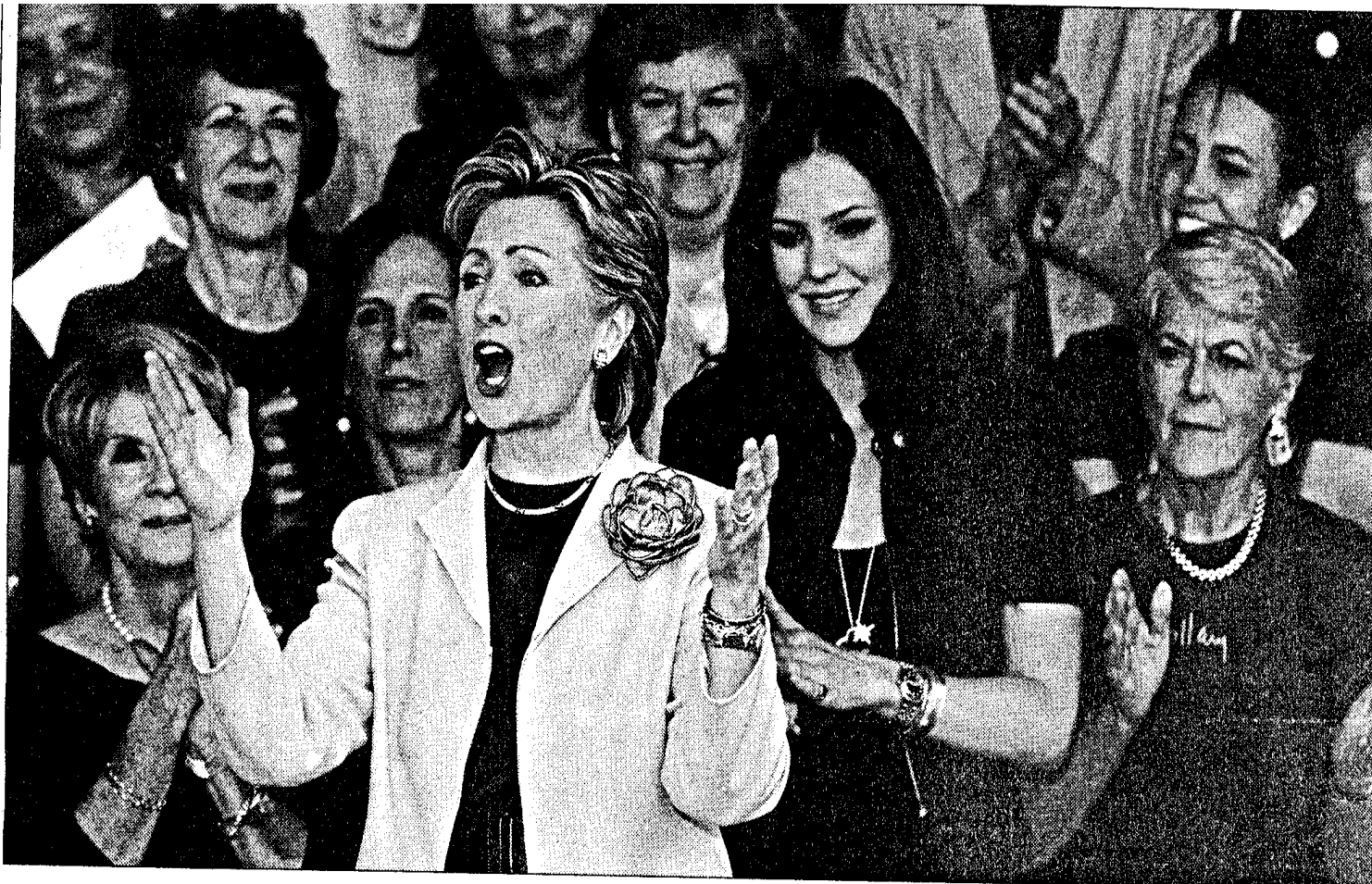
This is drawing a line in the sand.

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?





Building a b
New York Sen
ry Rodham Cl
takes the stag
singer Kathar
McPhee, secr
from right, a
mer vice pre
tial candidate
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at a Club44 e
Washington i
Club44 is Clir
women's out
program.

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. Clir

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 always been a woman's man."

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.**

- 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.

The 4th level is *aggression*

- A natural drive/response/tendency/action in humans as a potential
- The aggressive impulse
- A survival instinct
- That aggressive part of our nature which may be called to meet our needs...both
 - primary --food, shelter
 - secondary --recognition, affiliation

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 isn't what you think it is. You feel good and aren't having any problems. And many don't realize there are 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 when she found out in January

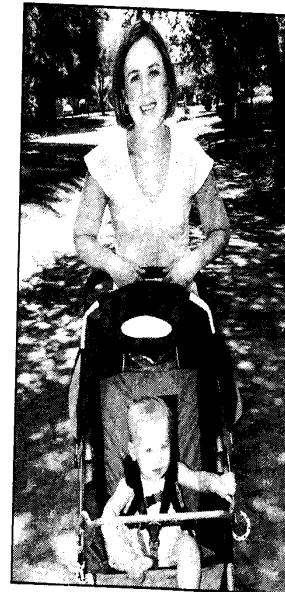
I never thought in a million years I would be battling cancer at age 23. Growing up, I was a competitive swimmer. Sports had always interested me, but through college and out of college I had not been really good about sticking with an exercise program. I was diagnosed with Hodgkins' disease, a type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

Beating cancer through exercise



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

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



The 5th level is *violence*

“Violence is suppressed rage.”

~ Sartre in Fanon’s *The Wretched if the Earth*

- *Violence is a response to situations where all other ways of responding are blocked off. Violence occurs when:*
- aggression does not gain the sense of recognition that self-affirmation and self-assertion cannot
- efforts to obtain recognition are ignored and/or aggressively resisted by others.
- reason and persuasion are ineffective—when nothing else works...

“Violence is, essentially, a confession of ultimate inarticulateness.” ~ Time Magazine

“Violence is the expression of impotence.” ~ Bronowski, *The Face of Violence*

Thus, violence is largely physical: the cerebrum being bypassed, the stimulus transmitted from the environment is translated directly into the violent impulse to strike.

"In violence we forget who we." ~ Mary McCarthy

"Hungry people can't be good at learning or producing anything, except perhaps violence." ~ Pearl Bailey

Inter-relatedness

~ Rollo May ~ ~ ~ Abraham Maslow ~

~ 5 Levels of Power ~ Self-Actualization ~

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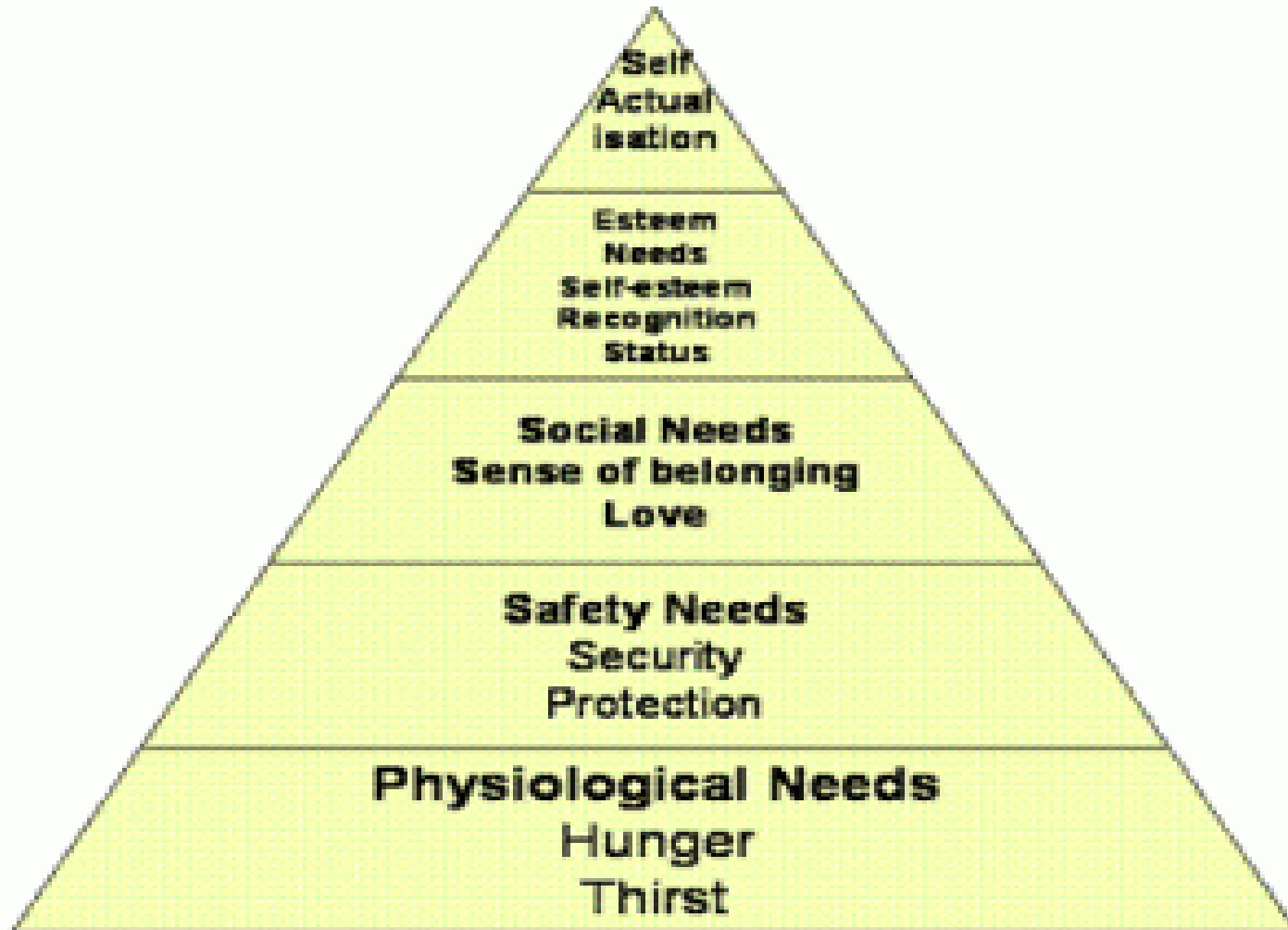
~ *Reducing Violence* ~ ~

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~ Hip Hop Culture ~ ~ Yaacov Hecht ~

“Keepin’ it real...” ~ Democratic Education

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 & 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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“Keepin’ it real...” ~ Democratic Education

Yaacov Hecht on Democratic Education

The goal of democratic education is to self-actualization.

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

A type of learning acknowledging the uniqueness of each person

- What is your uniqueness?
- What do you bring?
- What are your weak and strong talents, abilities attributes?
- What makes you authentic?

Inter-relatedness

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~ 5 Levels of Power

Self-Actualization

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“Keepin’ it real...”

Democratic Education

Hip hop culture: “Keeping it real”

- A worldview of those born after 1965
 - Authenticity - Social Justice - Loyalty - Respect
- 4 Elements
 - MC-ing/rap - DJ-ing
 - Dance/B Boys - Graffiti/Tagging

In the late 70s, hip hop arose out of the Bronx, New York as a response to urban poverty, social injustices, and alienation. It re-created forms of cultural expression, and thus personal and cultural Black identity

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

What is the clarifying potential of hip hop?

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

Hip hop models for youth the authenticity they seek. It promotes itself as itself, rather than as something else.

"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

“Keepin’ it real

- Hip-hop is about “Keepin’ it real” vs. “busters,” “perpetrators,” “wanna be’s”
 - Others who do not fit the true “b-boy” (hip-hop) mold, are considered to be inauthentic and disrespectful imitators and “posers”
 - *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 Promise of Hip-hop Culture

- The promise of hip-hop 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

Conclusions

- When basic safety and social needs are not being met, persons and groups become assertive. When this does not work, aggressive behavior seeks to obtain the recognition needed.
- Violence can occur when affirmation, assertiveness and aggression are still ignored or blocked.
- Self-actualized persons are recognized, validated and empowered, and have less motivation to be violent to meet their needs
- Democratic Education abandons a one-size-fits-all “normalcy”--discovering and developing the uniqueness of each student.

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

Thus, democratic education and hip hop culture enable self-actualization.

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

Summary

Understanding the human need for recognition is at the heart of understanding human violence.

Finding & promoting ways to meet this need will reduce violence.

Self-actualization, appreciating hip hop culture and democratic education are powerful means to this end.