

CREATING A CULTURE OF NONVIOLENCE:

Peace Studies in Higher Education

Jerald H. Richards, PhD

These writings were selected from numerous articles and addresses by the author while he was professor of philosophy at Western Kentucky University (1969-1972) and Northern Kentucky University (1972-2004) where he initially developed and chaired the philosophy program and later chaired the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Philosophy. His areas of specialty were ethics, value theory, social and political philosophy, and peace studies. His undergraduate education was at the University of Texas at Arlington and the University of Kentucky; his graduate education was at Harvard University and Boston University. A year of post-graduate studies in world religions was also spent at Harvard.

Editing Notes

Dr. Richard's writings and the peace studies he developed reflect a pragmatic and principled commitment to non-violence that is grounded in his Christian world view. The speeches, letters and acts of civil disobedience of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. informed and shaped his conclusions that non-violent policies must be recognized and pursued as meaningful options to conflict resolution so as to diminish the persistent use of military aggression and mitigate the destructive and inhumane consequences.

The articles here reflect a range of approaches to the issues of peace and war. A special concern is the ideological sources of violence with a focus on religious intolerance. Other writing advocates for and defines a path towards reconciliation and resolution between nations where past wars inflicted gross violations of human rights. Articles that address the pre-emptive invasion of Iraq and the bombing of Hiroshima, that may appear out dated, shine an important light on national policies that led to morally questionable military actions with consequences that continue to impact the security of our world. Cross-cultural efforts to promote a more global understanding of the moral dimension of human relations are seen in "Morality: Primary Institutions and Fundamental Principles."

The addendum provides a list of writings and addresses on other subjects that reflect the wide range of the author's philosophical concerns.

Ann Richards, May 2017

CONTENTS: SELECTED WRITINGS

"Power Imbalance and Human Worth", in Kaplan, Laura, and Lawrence Bove, eds. *Philosophical Perspectives on Power and Domination: Theory and Practice* (Amsterdam/Atlanta Rodopi Press, 1997), pp. 93-104.

"Ideological Intolerance: Causes, Consequences and Alternatives", in Cur tin, Deane, and Robert Litke, eds., *Institutional Violence* (Amsterdam/Atlanta Rodopi Press. 1999), pp. 113-126.

"Common Morality and Peacemaking" in Presler, Judith and Sally J. Scholtz, eds. *Peacemaking: Lessons from the Past, Visions for the Future* (Amsterdam/Atlanta Rodopi Press, 2000), pp. 19-30.

"Creating a Culture of Nonviolence", *Out of Line*, Spring/Summer 2001 (This was the winning essay in *Out of Line's* essay contest on the topic: "Responding to violence in a democratic society."), pp. 6-32.

"A Moral Assessment of the War with Iraq", *Concerned Philosophers for Peace Newsletter*, Vol.22, Spring & Fall 2002, pp. 7-16.

"Against the Grain: Peace Studies in Higher Education," essay presented at Educating for Peace and Social Justice: Friends Association for Higher Education Annual Conference, June 20-23, 2002. conference "Proceedings", p. 33.

"Keys to Political Forgiveness in International Relations", *Putting Peace into Practice, Value Inquiry Book Series*, ed. Nancy Nyquist Potter, Rodopi Press, New York 2004, pp. 165-176.

"Hiroshima, Morality and Democracy", in Kultgen, John and Mary Lenzi, eds., *Problems in Democracy* (Amsterdam/New York, NY Rodopi Press 2006), pp. 83-99.

"Morality: Primary Institutions and Fundamental Principles" written in response to an invitation from Concerned Philosophers for Peace from the Institute of Philosophy at the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, Russia, to participate in a cross-national project to publish a book that would compare diverse definitions of morality and promote mutual understanding within a context of plurality. The article was selected to represent an American perspective and was published in *Morality: Diversity of Concepts and Meanings*. Alfa-M, 2014, pp. 409-414. Published in English and Russian.

ADDENDUM

A list of the author's writings and addresses in applied philosophy.

MORALITY

Primary Intuitions and Fundamental Principles

Jerald Richards

This view of morality, or ethics, is grounded in certain specific beliefs, intuitions, and insights about human beings and human values. One is the belief that all human beings want or desire well-being or happiness, and want to avoid unnecessary pain and suffering. Another is the intuition of the equal worth or value of human beings. To recognize the equal worth or value of human beings leads to a respect or regard for them.

Generated from these insights are the basic moral principles that we should (ought) not cause harm to others, should protect others from harm, and should promote the well-being of others. So at the heart of bad, wrong, unfair, unjust, or inappropriate behavior is causing harm to human beings (including oneself). And at the heart of good, right, fair, just, positive or appropriate behavior is protecting others from harm and/or promoting their well-being.

Also generated from these insights and principles is the sense that all human beings have a moral right to at least a minimum level of the satisfaction of those needs without which they would not be able to enjoy well-being or happiness. To respect or regard others as persons of equal worth and value is to act in ways that promote their well-being by helping them to obtain the things that satisfy their basic and uniquely human needs. Basic human needs are needs for food, clothing, shelter, medical care, nurturing, basic education, security, and a benign environment. Other uniquely human needs would include relating to others in terms of love, a sense of rootedness and

community, a sense of self-identity, creating things of value for self and others, and a sense of meaning and purpose.

Historically, these understandings, beliefs, insights, intuitions, and principles have been assumed under a more general foundational guiding ethical principle, the principle of reciprocity. This principle has been stated in various ways, among which are “do to others as you would have others do to you” and “don’t do to others what you would not want others to do to you.” This principle is present in and fundamental to several ancient cultures, traditions, and religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Jainism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Confucianism, and Zoroastrianism. Secular versions of the principle have exerted positive influence in the past several centuries. The moral philosophies of Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill are classical examples of ethical systems that give primacy to the principle of reciprocity as it evolved out of both secular and religions traditions. The principle of reciprocity and the supporting principles of not harming others, protecting others from harm, and promoting the well-being of others are essentially principles of compassion, love, and a generous concern for the well-being of others. From these principles, all other principles necessary for the guidance of the moral lives of human beings can be derived. For example, all the types of harm we can cause others can be addressed in the form of principles, such as “do not lie,” or “do not steal.”

Often overlooked, perhaps not fully grasped by our minds and imaginations, when we think and talk and write about common or universal morality, is the significance of the necessary requirement of nonviolence (in thought, word, and deed) in the successful fulfillment of the requirements of the principle of reciprocity and its associated principles. Incumbent upon persons who have been grasped by this significance is a

commitment to the creation of cultures of nonviolence around the world. The specific dynamics of this creative activity would vary from culture to culture depending upon, among other things, the social, political, economic, ethnic, and religious conditions in a given culture. This activity would be positive and constructive but would necessarily include creative critiques of the major sources of violence in the modern world, including the militarization of the nations of the world, unjust systems of distributive justice, and retributive systems of criminal justice. Other abuses of power that are most often violent in nature and which call for creative critiques are child abuse, spouse abuse, involuntary servitude, police brutality, political corruption, ethnic cleansing, ageism, sexism, racism, nationalism, and terrorism.

Key to the creation of cultures of nonviolence is a continuing nourishment of the primary intuitions of the equal worth and value of human beings, and their entitlement to the enjoyment of certain rights, especially the right to respect and dignity.

No list of activities that can help to keep these intuitions alive will be useful to all human beings in all circumstances, but there are some general activities that have proven to be helpful. Among them are the following:

1. Encouraging and nurturing a healthy self-respect.
2. Reading about and reflecting upon the lives and actions of persons who are moral exemplars.
3. Developing a sense of the uniqueness of human life and of individual human beings.
4. Reflecting upon the many capacities of human beings and their positive and constructive possibilities.

5. Developing an awareness of our shared experiences on this planet: having similar hopes, needs, and goals; the precariousness and frailty of human existence; and our mutual interdependence in living and in doing the things we want to do.

6. Developing the powers of understanding, empathy, and sympathy.

With the continuing nourishment of these primary intuitions, the commitment to the principle of reciprocity and its supporting principles will be reaffirmed and strengthened.

As more and more persons are introduced to or reminded of these intuitions and principles, and as they grow in their understanding and commitment, they will become more compassionate, loving, and generous. They will present to their friends, neighbors, and even enemies an alternative way of living which will result over time in the decrease in all forms of harm, violence, and injustice, and in the creation of cultures of nonviolence. But even then, eternal vigilance will be required and each new generation will need to be introduced anew to these primary intuitions and fundamental principles.

Dr. Jerald H. "Jerry" Richards, Ph.D.

January 22, 1933 - April 26, 2018

Dr. Jerald H. "Jerry" Richards, Ph.D., born January 22, 1933 in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania to the late Jessie and Clifford Richards, passed away at age 85, April 26, 2018 in Edgewood, Kentucky. Jerald was the beloved husband of Ann Richards, and devoted father and grandfather. He is survived by his daughters, Paula Westwood (Greg) and Robin Richards (Andrew Reed); sons, Alan Richards and Stephen Richards; brothers, Vic Richards (Sylvia) and Barry Richards (Margaret); granddaughters, Rachel Renner (Darren), Abigail Haidle (Luke), Mary Cook (Alex), and Georgia Rounder; and great-grandson, Sylvester Haidle. Jerald grew up in western Pennsylvania, and married Ann on May 7, 1955. In 1961 he graduated from the University of Kentucky with a B.A. in Philosophy. He pursued graduate work at Harvard University and Boston University as a Danforth Graduate Fellow, receiving the M.A. and Ph.D. from Boston University in 1963 and 1966 respectively. Jerald was a postdoctoral scholar at Harvard from 1967 to 1968. He taught at Western Kentucky University from 1965 to 1972. He joined the Northern Kentucky University faculty in 1972, founding the Philosophy and Religion Department, serving as chair, then as coordinator of Philosophy, Religion, Anthropology and Sociology Programs in 1999 before retiring in 2004. Jerald published articles and chapters in a variety of journals and books, with a focus on peace studies, with his hope for a more peaceful and compassionate world. He also planned and participated in related conferences. He served on the NKU Wesley Foundation Board and Executive Committee of the national Committee of Concerned Philosophers for Peace. He was a Sunday school teacher and small group leader at Highland United Methodist Church in Ft. Thomas, where he and Ann attended together and actively participated for over 40 years. Friends and family are welcome to attend the memorial service, officiated by Rev. John Bowling, on Sunday, May 6, 2018 at 11 a.m., followed by visitation, noon to 1:30 p.m. at Highland United Methodist Church, 406 N. Ft. Thomas Ave. Ft. Thomas, Kentucky, 41075.

