Fundamental Relations Between Nonviolence and Human Rights

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The purpose of this essay is to explore some important relations between the principles of nonviolence and the principles of human rights — relations which I believe are highly significant, theoretically and practically. Advocates of these two approaches1 to fundamental issues of human values and human relations can make valuable contributions to the understanding and support of each others' positions.

It may even be true that the two approaches overlap completely in denotation: that is, that every instance in which a particular action could be justified as a correct application of principles of human rights could equally well be justified as a correct application of principles of nonviolence. But even if one could devise a knock-down argument to collapse the two positions into one, I do not see that anything would be gained by such a "reduction." The connotations of the two views are quite different, as is indicated in Section 1. It is, I think, more productive to see the two approaches as complementary — mutually enlightening and supportive. I hope the reader will be convinced of that; I have no desire to argue further for identifying the two positions.

1. The distinction between nonviolence and human rights.

While the object of this paper is to argue for a very close relation between human rights and nonviolence, I readily admit that the two normally are seen as distinct, perhaps even in some ways opposed. Nonviolence is frequently — and correctly — associated with agape (or "agapaic") love; its focus is on concern for others, expressed largely by the willingness of the agent to suffer — patiently and, it often seems, self-effacingly. In contrast, action in accord with rights stresses claiming, even demanding; it is basically assertive, rather than compassionate or conciliatory; and it arises from a legal/ political framework, rather than from one of spirituality, morality, or religion, the usual "homes" of nonviolence.

A survey of the two positions suggests the contrast. What follows is a highly selective sketch of a few of the sources,

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events, documents, and heroes of the two movements:

Advocates of human rights commonly trace their movement to the clash between King John and the Barons of England, which culminated in Magna Carta, the first epic document of rights. In the western world, the conspicuous landmark documents which follow in the development of human rights are these: the English "Bill of Rights," 1689; the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, 1789; the United States' "Bill of Rights," 1791; the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948; and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, 1953. The last named document established the European Commission of Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights — by far the most effective international means for protecting human rights to date.

Whatever one might say about the motivations of the good barons of England, it is doubtful if one would characterize them as heroes of nonviolence. Perhaps they did sincerely wish to avoid open warfare with King John, for prudential reasons, but it is unlikely that the rationale of their action was commitment to agapic love. They made certain demands, with the evident threat of backing up their claims by violence, if necessary. Neither is it probable that King John made concessions out of his love for the barons; his statement that he acted, "...out of our own free will before the quarrel between our barons and us began," sounds like the rhetoric of any politician who has his back to the wall.

Later episodes and documents in the establishment and expansion of rights continue to emphasize demands — my demands or the demands of my group. The English Parliament received William and Mary as welcome successors to the deposed James II. But they required in no uncertain terms acknowledgment "vindicating and asserting their ancient rights and liberties," stating that they, "do claim, demand, and insist upon ... their undoubted rights and liberties." The French Declaration was asserted in a still more hostile atmosphere; it would be strange to describe either Royalists or revolutionaries of that time as acting out of love. The American development of rights — from the demands of Colonists to be granted the rights of Englishmen through the Declaration, "Bill of Rights," and subsequent Constitutional amendments — consists of a succession of fervent claims against grudging holders of power.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) does begin to make some connections between rights and nonviolence. Specifically, the eloquent "Preamble" asserts that recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

This explicit assertion of the relation of rights and peace is, I think, a conspicuous development — both perceptive and important. But the emphasis in this document is still on the assertion of rights, understood to be demands against hostile holders of power, and therefore difficult to achieve. Similarly, subsequent United Nations covenants, conventions, etc., are basically documents of claims, not of conciliation or concern for the other party.

In contrast to the egoistic and demanding factors involved in claiming rights for oneself or one's group, the advocacy of nonviolence is correctly characterized as an expression of love,
specifically, of agapaic — nonpossessive, other-directed — love.

The classic documents of nonviolence are such things as "The Sermon on the Mount," the journals of John Woolman and other Friends, the writings of Dorothy Day. The heroes include Siddhartha Gautama and Jesus, George Fox and Margaret Fell, Gandhi and King. These individuals were not shrinking violets, but much as they did firmly espouse social justice and resist evil, the defining common characteristics of their actions are sincere concern for their opponents, even tormentors; patient acceptance of suffering, even if not in the least deserved; and refusal to hate, even under flagrant provocation.

One of the classic expressions of the nonviolent position is that of "Thirteenth Corinthians":

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.5

Edwin Burtt identifies a similar passage as "the Buddhist 'Thirteenth Chapter of First Corinthians,'" pointing out that, "by love, here, Buddha meant ... an unlimited self-giving compassion flowing freely toward all creatures that live:" The beautiful passage to which he refers is the following:

May creatures all abound
in weal and peace; may all
be blessed with peace always;
all creatures weak or strong,

all creatures great and small;

... May none cajole or flout
his fellow anywhere;
let none wish others harm
in dudgeon or in hate.

Just as with her own life
a mother shields from hurt
her own, her only, child,—
let all-embracing thoughts
for all that lives be thine,

an all-embracing love
for all the universe
in all its heights and depths
and breadth, unstinted love,
unmarred by hate within,
not rousing enmity.7

Advocates of human rights would concur with many of the points in these two passages, but would definitely part from advocates of nonviolence on the points that, "Love does not insist on its own way," and that it "bears all things" and "endures all things." They would also insist much more on self-assertion, without worrying so much about the possibility of "rousing enmity."

Martin Luther King, Jr., expresses many of the basic elements of nonviolence noted above in his first book, Stride Toward Freedom. In the chapter entitled, "Pilgrimage to Nonviolence," he describes what was indeed a difficult, convoluted search, in which issues raised by such passages as "The Sermon on the Mount" and "Thirteenth Corinthians" had to be carefully evaluated in the light of opposing interpretations of Christianity. Eventually, King formulated a view which is characterized as follows:

Nonviolence ... does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent, but to win his
friendship and understanding. . . . The end is redemption and reconciliation. The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of the beloved community. . . . The nonviolent attack is directed against forces of evil rather than against persons. . . . Nonviolent resistance is a willingness to accept suffering without retaliation.8

The nonviolent resister not only refuses to shoot his opponent but he also refuses to hate him. At the center of nonviolence stands the principle of love.9

In the highly selective survey above, I have tried to establish that nonviolence and human rights apparently provide substantially different guidelines for belief and action. I can imagine readers of different types being somewhat annoyed by this overview — some because they believe that it is belaboring the obvious, others because they sense that the alleged contrast is somewhat strained. Since my thesis is to show that there are very close relations between the two positions, I incline toward the latter view. In Section 2, I shall try to bridge the contrast outlined in this section between the approaches of nonviolence and human rights.

2. Agapaic love: the need for some definite criteria

Suppose that you are thoroughly convinced that principles of nonviolence should take precedence over any others, and your conviction is so sincere and so strong that you regularly and readily act on that basis. One day when you go to the market where you usually shop, you are met by striking employees who urge you not to cross their picket line, explaining their grievances to you. When they have finished, the owner comes to present his case, urging you just as vigorously to do your shopping because the position of the employees is unwarranted.

What are you, the advocate of nonviolence to do? First, of course, you need to listen responsively to both sides. But what then? You can say to both parties, "I sincerely respect you, and will earnestly seek to support you in your just claims." But which claims are just, and how do principles of nonviolence — or agapaic love — help you to determine that? Should you make half of your normal purchases, seeking in that way not to offend either side? If you can find no good basis for choosing between the contenders, perhaps that is the appropriate course for the moment — though it may instead offend both sides. In any case, it is too simplistic to serve as a long-term solution.

There are some decisions you can make: you will not support any party insofar as it threatens or actually causes injury to the other, or if it uses fraud. But if both act openly and in good faith, how are you to choose between them?

I suggest that the way to resolve the problem is to determine the rights on each side, and work for the fulfillment of those rights. This may mean that you end up supporting the claims of one side exclusively, or that you support some claims on each side. Whatever your decision, you have a definite basis for it, and so can seek to persuade both sides that you have considered their interests conscientiously. Each side may be dissatisfied if you fail to support it completely, but you could not support both completely in any case. The best that you can do is to support firmly the justifiable
claims of each side, and try to explain patiently what you are doing. The goal is to achieve genuine consensus on a just resolution. In some cases, at least, it is ultimately possible to satisfy both sides by this procedure, as both Gandhi and King claim. A case in which this did occur was the labor dispute in Ahmedabad in 1918. Gandhi had close personal ties with both the workers and the mill-owners, and urged both sides to try to solve the dispute on its merits. When a settlement was reached, "[l]eaders from different sections of labor made speeches expressing gratitude and accepted the distribution of sweets by the employers. (This is a traditional manner of celebration and the expression of satisfaction.)"10

I do not assert that using rights as the basic criterion would enable persons to solve problems quickly or neatly. Finding just solutions requires careful assessment not only of the relevant principles — rights — but also of the relevant facts: in the example above, the qualifications and needs of the workers, the investment of the owners, the cost of living at that time and place, etc. And of course, there may be rights on both sides. That is a normal predicament. No decision-procedure should be expected to obviate the need for patient fact-finding and weighing of arguments.

3. Defining nonviolence in terms of human rights.

The purpose of this section is to establish a much more definite relation between nonviolence and human rights than the one merely alleged and sketched in Section 2. In passing, we may note that there is an etymological connection between the concepts: the Latin violare — to violate — is the root of both violence and violate.11 This point is asserted by R. M. Brown in his book, Religion and Violence. Brown observes about violence that one of the Latin roots from which we get our English word is violare, which means to violate. Whatever "violates" another, in the sense of infringing upon or disregarding or abusing or denying that other, whether physical harm is involved or not, can be understood as an act of violence. The basic overall definition of violence would then become violation of personhood.12

I think that Brown designates precisely the right focus: the person as a locus of irreplaceable value — and therefore, a being who must always be treated with respect,13 from the standpoint of human rights, or with agapic love, from the standpoint of nonviolence.

But I also think that while Brown’s point is accurate and vivid, it does not tell us enough, because person and personhood are terms just as vague as love and nonviolence. These are all largely rhetorical terms: they do have great emotional force, and should be valued and retained for that impact. But I do not see that they enable me to determine how to act when persons or groups are in conflict. To know that I should love or respect all parties is indeed a very important first stage to achieve (one which very few of us are able to achieve regularly), but the next crucial issue is to determine whom to support, to what extent, how, and why.

Principles of human rights can function here to provide some definite decision criteria14 which the concepts of love, personhood, etc., can not. I suggest the
following definition of nonviolence in terms of human rights:

I. Violence consists in abuse of any person's rights. Such violence can be in deeds or words. A substantial part of the violence which occurs in the world lies in "systemic" (institutional, structural) violence: accepting and using institutions, rules, and practices which unjustly benefit some at the expense of others.

II. Nonviolence consists in:

- **Proviso A.** Minimally, refraining from violating the rights of any persons — as far as possible.
- **Proviso B.** Actively supporting others in their efforts to learn about, understand, achieve, and enjoy their rights.

I do not think these definitions are simple or obvious; it is understandable that persons would ask both what each item means, and why it is included in the definitions. Any one of these "details" could occupy a whole essay — for example, how do persons learn about rights effectively? In the remainder of this section, I shall not attempt to treat all these implications, but shall discuss a few of what seem to me the most important elements needing elaboration:

NOTE 1. Since every human being is herself/himself a person, not to understand, develop, and exercise your own rights is a violation of your own "personhood."

This implies that while concern for others is highly admirable (and much needed to offset the degree of egoism in most persons), it is wrong to neglect your own self-development and security. To accept suffering, even martyrdom, may sometimes be the correct (and highly admirable) course, but it is often more appropriate to live humbly — and somewhat prudently — for a cause rather than to suffer conspicuously. Undergoing suffering is not necessarily productive, and not necessarily proof of nonviolence. To invite suffering by provoking assault would be a very questionable strategy. To flaunt your poverty, hardships, etc., is similarly questionable.

NOTE 2. Refraining from overt violations of the rights of others — by physical assault, robbery, etc. — is not nearly enough to make one non-violent. There is a great deal of violence which is not physical, for example, the psychological abuse of one person by another (of spouses, children, employees, et al.).

More important: none of us can wash our hands of violence completely, because we all benefit from many strands of systemic violence. For example, if the "have-not" workers in "Third World" countries were paid what they deserve to pick bananas or assemble electronic equipment, those of us who are "haves" would need to pay a good deal more for the things we possess. So we are all guilty to some degree, because it is impossible to avoid benefiting from some of these forms of exploitation. By the time you are old enough to achieve some awareness of the complex relations involved, you have almost certainly incurred a debt you could not repay. This is true even of a person like Gandhi who made heroic efforts to live with utmost simplicity. He had an English law degree before he took the first step toward nonviolence. Without it, he would never even have been in South Africa to begin his nonviolence campaigns, and it is questionable if he could have proceeded as he did without that legal preparation.

In this matter of exploitation, some persons are definitely more guilty than others, because they benefit more and are exploited less. A major goal of
nonviolence must be to right this balance of exploitation as far as possible. How we might make progress toward that goal is suggested in Notes 3 and 4.

NOTE 3. The obligation of Proviso B (on page 8) goes far beyond Proviso A. Proviso A is the moral minimum. Persons should strive to go beyond A, because almost everyone (even those most deprived) does benefit from abuses of the rights of others. Since each of us does inevitably derive benefits from some exploitation of others, we should each help to compensate others for injuries or deprivations suffered unfairly. Compensate how? In whatever way is most productive, given your circumstances: your personal talents, interests, and resources, and the social circumstances — both opportunities and needs — around you.

In many cases, it is not possible to compensate the particular individuals from whose exploitation we have benefited. That's understandable and acceptable. We still benefit from the genius of Michelangelo, Mozart, et. al, for which they received inadequate compensation (a basic violation of their rights). We also benefit immeasurably from the imagination and effort of the first persons who learned to use language, to cook, etc. We can't repay those particular individuals, but we can give to others some of what we have received: incalculable benefits from both identifiable and unidentifiable sources.17

NOTE 4. If this account is basically correct, no one can live up fully to Proviso A or B: each of us is thoroughly enmeshed in the network of organizations, institutions, relations, and rules which make some exploitation unavoidable. There is no "clean" escape from the wrongs of "the system." Persons who feel this burden acutely may be moved to suicide as the only escape, but that is not likely to be a clean one: it usually creates substantial problems for others.

If you recognize the problem, and recognize that you can't escape all these entanglements, what should you do? First, be alert and open-minded in recognizing the abuses which occur. Then, try to give to others more than you receive18 — in any of the infinite number of ways persons can help others. In general, how?

a. Minimize your exploitation of others.
b. Seek to reform some of the systems (organizations, practices, institutions) which are most abusive or exploitative.
c. When possible, help some individual victims directly.

No priority among these three points is implied. Individuals need to decide which types of violations they can best overcome or minimize in particular circumstances.

In regard to c., note that it is not wrong to give handouts — even some "luxuries" — to those in dire need. But it is better to empower persons, so that they can provide for themselves — and at best, eventually help others. "Better," as the classic principle maintains, "to teach a person to fish than to give a few fish."

Yes; but if the person — or that person's dependents — are about to starve before the first fish can be caught (or the first planting harvested, etc.), it would be cruel to insist on withholding immediate relief "out of principle." That would not be "consistency": it would be self-serving rationalization.

NOTE 5. If there were complete good will and a good deal of intelligence and perception on the part of all those occupying positions of authority or
influence (not likely in the near future), problems of securing and maintaining the rights of all persons would not disappear.19

Why is it not possible even ideally ("in theory") to secure all rights for all persons completely? For at least three reasons.

First, there are conflicts between the rights which most persons acknowledge to exist. No wonder: there are 50-75 separate rights in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights — and that's far from a complete list.

Second, new rights are continually being discovered — for example, rights of the handicapped, rights of children, rights of ethnic groups to maintain their cultures, rights of emerging nations to control their own natural resources, etc. Of course, it would be convenient — especially for those who are relatively well off — if no new rights were ever proposed.20 But the challenges which new rights pose for the status quo provides opportunities for the majority of persons to benefit in the long run.

Third, each individual needs to learn for himself/herself about rights. It is no trivial matter to learn what rights are, how they are fulfilled or denied, how to stand up (not dogmatically) for one's own rights, how to support others in claiming and enjoying their rights, how to modify systems and devise new ones which enable persons to achieve their rights more effectively.

This process of learning about rights is one of the most basic and rewarding of human cultural achievements. There would be a distinct loss to humanity if persons did not have to go through this process. We would no longer be (in Aristotle's classic phrase) "political animals:" beings who develop and exercise our human functions in communities. Whatever we might then be, we would not be persons.

4. Some applications of the definition of nonviolence.

I believe the association between human rights and nonviolence is a fertile one, which persons might explore for application to both theoretical and practical issues. In Section 2, one example was used to illustrate the advantage of using rights as a criterion for making decisions about nonviolence. In this section, I present a couple of others:

Example 1: Is a courteous denial of rights nonviolent?

Suppose that some brown children are seeking to enter a previously segregated school and they are prevented from doing so by some pink adults wielding tire irons and firearms, making derogatory racial remarks, etc. We have no difficulty judging that a violent episode is occurring. But suppose instead that the adults behave courteously: dozens of them arrive early to block the doors, making entrance impossible, but they brandish no weapons, utter no obscenities, and reply to the children's requests to enter with smiles and polite refusals. Is that a violent action? Supporters of nonviolence often feel uncomfortably compelled to say No.

I say definitely Yes, because it is a deliberate effort to deny persons' rights — and that is the crucial element in violence, not the presence or absence of physical force, or even of bodily injury.21 The fact that the action avoided overt force is definitely approvable, but that does not offset its basic violence. Persons who correctly oppose and condemn the action should go out of their way to commend and encourage the manner in which their adversaries acted, for the restraint is both good in itself and gives some promise that the problem can
be resolved in a constructive way. But persons who understand what is occurring should not allow the event to be misrepresented by the perpetrators or misunderstood by the public as nonviolent.

A more difficult version of this case is that of opponents seeking to block or keep open access to an abortion clinic. Assuming that there is no attempt to cause bodily injury, it seems to me plausible that in this case both sides could act nonviolently; that is, on both sides there can be persons who are sincere, well-informed advocates of the rights which they believe take priority.

Example 2: Which causes are peaceful ones?

Suppose you are an organizer of a mammoth "march on Washington for peace and justice." How do you determine which groups belong in this action and which are to be excluded? Decisions need to be made about who will be accepted as a sponsor; who gets a place — and which place — on the speakers' list; etc.

I suspect that both organizers and participants have problems and reservations about whom to include and exclude. For example, "mainline" pacifists focusing on cutting the military budget may feel uneasy about having with them advocates of gay and lesbian rights or conservationists working to save the rainforests in South America. They might understandably ask, What are those groups doing in a peace demonstration?

I suggest that any group belongs in such a peace action if: (a) one major purpose of the group is to establish, maintain, and support rights, and (b) they do not violate the rights of others.

It is, in fact, vital that such relations between groups be carefully considered and made explicit. A major goal of any demonstration is to send a clear message to the public and to lawmakers, usually through the media. It is imperative, therefore, that the shared goals of participants be asserted coherently. I doubt that this crucial element in communication is taken as seriously as it should be by public protest organizers.

5. What nonviolence contributes to human rights.

What do principles of nonviolence contribute to the approach of human rights? I think the nonviolent perspective "humanizes" or softens the assertive, egoistic nature of demanding fulfillment of my rights now. As stated above, one of the things to learn about rights — and not a simple matter — is when and how to claim them. There are wrong ways to claim rights, and occasions when it would be better not to claim them at that time.

If you have rights, then it is correct to say that you are entitled to have all your rights completely fulfilled now. But one should also have regard for the rights and needs of others, and even have regard for the fears and expectations of others; there are, then, occasions when it is appropriate to withhold some of your (literally!) "right-ful" demands.

Analogously, if you have a certain sum of money deposited in a bank and there are no restrictions about how much you can withdraw at one time, you are certainly entitled to get all your money from the bank right now. But if your action is likely to contribute to a bank panic, it would be much more constructive for you to limit your withdrawal, and seek to get others to do that, also.

There are some rights which almost certainly should never be delayed or "softened:" the rights to be free of assault and torture, for example. But in
many other cases where you do have justified claims, you might well temper your demands in consideration of (a) the rights and needs of others, in comparison to yours and (b) the condition of those who are in position to grant your rights, but might better be treated gently rather than confronted aggressively.

In illustration of (b): suppose that you are indeed entitled to vote (you have resided in the county long enough, etc.), but if the registrar of elections does enroll you on the voter lists, she is likely to lose her job and even be assaulted. Should you press your justified claim in those circumstances? It is not obvious to me that you should back down from claiming what is justifiably yours, but I suggest that one should consider the welfare of others, even when acting to claim your basic rights.

I believe there is another way in which principles of nonviolence support or complement principles of human rights. I sense that our natural human interdependence, which both requires and fosters fundamental concern for others (and so is closely associated with agape), provides one of the strongest bases for maintaining the existence and the importance of human rights. Frankly, I can not even articulate these relations clearly, much less substantiate them. I suspect this is material not just for another article, but for a book. If the reader has suggestions about developing this hypothesis, I would appreciate discussing them.

In conclusion: rights provide a measure of definiteness which I believe is lacking in the approach of love; nonviolence provides the wider perspective, which tempers the individual’s justified claiming of rights by concern for others. Neither the approach of justice nor that of mercy is sufficient; the two complement each other effectively.

**Appendix:**

**Three exercises concerning nonviolence**

Below are three exercises whose aim is to suggest the breadth and complexity of the concept of nonviolence:

I. Degrees of force and intimidation.
II. “Inheritance” of violence over time.
III. Which actions are violent?

I believe that consideration of these questions correctly suggests that overt physical force is a minor — and somewhat distracting — element in determining what is or is not violent. A wide variety of factors needs to be brought into the account: who is acting with whom, in what conditions, for what purpose, with what prior influences on either or both parties, etc. For example: the "same" knife cut may be the violent act of a mugger or the life-saving act of a surgeon; the forceful mallet stroke of a sculptor is nonviolent, the relatively mild scratching of the sculpture by a vandal is violent; the touch of a rapist is violent, no matter how gentle; so is painting a swastika on a synagogue; etc., etc.

I. How overt must actions be to be correctly considered violent?

A. Robber shoots victim and takes money.
B. Robber intimidates victim by flaunting a gun and takes money.
B. Large man in dark alley "asks" clearly weaker person for money.
D. Small man with known mafia connections "asks" stranger for money.
E. Policeman whose regular beat includes a small store in a high-crime area often stops in to "ask" for free coffee.
II. How long does a violent act leave violent traces?

A. Robber steals large sum of money, and puts major part of it in the bank.
B. Mrs. Robber finds out that she has been living very comfortably by spending stolen money.
C. Children of Mr. and Mrs. Robber find out their college tuitions came from money stolen 30 years ago.
D. Grandchildren of Robbers find out they have been living affluent from money stolen 60 years ago by a person who died 20 years ago.
Z. Great-great-...-children trace their "roots" and discover the land which they just sold at a huge price resulted from theft of land held by Native Americans in 1650.

III. What types of actions are violent?

Label the following actions as A (always violent), N (never violent), or D (it depends). If, D, then on what does it depend?

1. IS IT VIOLENT to shoot a person between the eyes with a .45 pistol, knowing it is loaded?
2. . . . to kill an injured horse with one well-aimed bullet?
3. . . . to cut a person with a knife?
4. . . . to tackle a cyclist, causing a painful fall to the ground?
5. . . . to render a person unconscious?
6. . . . to caress a person?
7. . . . to tickle a person?
8. . . . to disassemble a car?
9. . . . to demolish a building?
10. . . . to paint a wall?
11. . . . to break a valuable object?
12. . . . to chip a hunk of marble with mallet and chisel?
13. . . . to cut down a tree?
14. . . . to pick a flower?
15. . . . to make a true statement about (to?) a person?
16. . . . to make a false statement about (to?) a person?
17. . . . to withhold information from a person?
18. . . . to give a person a lethal drug?
19. . . . to kill yourself by use of a lethal drug?

Endnotes

1. I will refer to the two "approaches," "positions," or "views" interchangeably.
4. It should be acknowledged that persons claiming rights do often act for others — e.g., pink persons seeking to uphold the rights of brown ones, wealthy persons supporting rights of the poor, etc.
7. *Ibid.*, pp.46-47. *Cf. also pp.132-136 of this text on the Bodhisattva's resolution to work tirelessly for the salvation of all living beings before seeking his own salvation.


9. Pp.103-104. King then proceeds to elaborate the notion of agape, pp.104-106.


11. In turn, both are derived from vis, "strength" or "force." Of course, an etymological relation need not be significant.


13. I want to associate this view also with the "Categorical Imperative" of Immanuel Kant: "Act so that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of another, always as an end and never as a means only;" *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, edited by Robert Paul Wolff (Indianapolis, 1969), p.54. Kant goes on to identify the person as the bearer of dignity. This is probably the most influential ethical view in modern Western philosophy.

14. They do not provide neat answers mechanically, as is noted below (p. 11), especially in relation to the plurality of rights.

15. Somewhat redundant, since words are deeds — often among the most influential deeds anyone performs. Should we add attitudes? They are not deeds, but no doubt they underlie violent deeds and words, and they do cause violence — produce disturbance and injury — within the persons who have them, whether or not anyone else is affected.

16. On this matter of structural violence, a very good treatment is that of Brown, op. cit., particularly pp.7-12. A devastating critique of the U.S. Criminal Justice System is presented in Jeffrey Reiman's *The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison* (New York, 1984). Reiman demonstrates vividly how institutions as encompassing and fundamental as those of our criminal justice system may be used by some for the pervasive exploitation of others.
17. It is only fair to point out that we also suffer from the "contributions" of a great many persons, known and unknown: the persons who deliberately or inadvertently wove webs of exploitation, making it more difficult for any of us to develop as normal persons.

18. I would argue that this is one of the fundamental dimensions of independence — a goal most persons value highly.

19. Every right involves costs to someone — which is why the recognition and spread of rights is almost always so bitterly opposed, even by many of those who supposedly support rights in general.