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## Where Do We Go From Here?

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## Where Do We Go From Here?

### Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"It seems that today violence consumes our youth and the public eye. Much of the violence is over publicized and emphasized in the media. Over the last few centuries we have strived to gain independence, nonviolence and civil rights, but have we cast away all the hard work have done for us, just to fulfill a thirst for power and materialism? This overbearing sense of egocentrism has taken over our society, but has been glorified by the media. Though our lawmakers and guardians can reprimand violence, it remains in our freewill to make the right choices in regards to the public and us. However, we are not often consumed by the wondrous things the world has to offer, but the hatred and greed that consumes the world."

“When we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, we will be able to join hands and sing... We are free at last!”

Martin Luther King, Jr. “I have a dream” August, 28, 1963



Juliet Janicik

## Where Do We Go from Here?

*“Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars... Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.” – Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community (1967), Martin Luther King, Jr.*

It seems that today violence consumes our youth and the public eye. Much of the violence is over publicized and emphasized in the media. Over the last few centuries we have strived to gain independence, nonviolence and civil rights, but have we cast away all the hard work we have done for us, just to fulfill a thirst for power and materialism? This overbearing sense of egocentrism has taken over our society, but has been glorified by the media. Though our lawmakers and guardians can reprimand violence, it remains in our freewill to make the right

choices in regards to the public and us. However, we are not often consumed by the wondrous things the world has to offer, but the hatred and greed that consumes the world.

When faced with all of this violence, where does religion fit in? Many people who are consumed by violence are also religious people, but are unable to overcome sin. Those who are plagued by violence also rely on their faith to overcome the wrongdoing that has taken place. Because of an inexplicable hurt, there is an unexplainable truth and solace that faith offers in a time of sorrow. Faith is a very important component to families and friends of those affected by violence, especially when the violence is severe. Faith can often help them come to terms with what has happened and help them to grow as a community.

As violence continues to occur, it might also be hard to connect with a higher being. Because of the over portrayal in the media and the overwhelming question, why, there may be no real answer to the problem of multiplicity of violence. When people are return violence with violence, as Dr. King states, they are only causing more problems, which diminish faith. Many people may ask the question why God lets violence occur in their lives, but do not realize that violence is an act free will and God is still walking with them in this time of pain. This time of trial is a time to grow with God and not fall away from Him. Dealing with abuse or death may be trying, but faith is never ending.

Why are people turning to their faith simply when corruption occurs? Faith should arise in the beautiful and ugly. Despite violence's "triumph" over good, faith must arise from the ashes and return love when hatred is brought forth. When hatred is given to hatred, the cyclic nature only continues. It takes one person to break that chain – do a good deed, return an insult with kind words, or smile at someone who is in need. Though the media portrays violence in gunshots and knife wounds, violence comes in all shapes and sizes. If we are willing to use our

faith to stand up to bullies and ignorance, we too can change how violence is being spread throughout the world. We can spread *love* instead of hatred. Most of all, we can remain faithful.

If we can forget grudges, hatred and myths passed on from previous generations, and then our pathways to God can be forever stronger. The pathway to God is not a one way street, for our relationships with our brothers, whether they are black men or white men, Jews or Gentiles, Protestants or Catholics, is also the way to Him. As we love one another as we love ourselves, we no longer have to worry about unnecessary violence or insecurities. An equal love from a “different” party is more satisfying than an impartial acquaintance. Yes, peace seems impossible in the politically driven world we live in, but if we live with love and friendship at our foundation, and harmony in our hearts, violence should not be an option.

Though violence is an inexplicable truth, it is our time to come together as a people of faith – whatever faith we share – to grow as a community of believers and share this hurt and grow as believers. We are not only the people of the world, but a people of God. We must break our chains and set ourselves free from this violence that plagues our cities and our hearts. As we come together as a people, our faith will grow stronger and the fight against violence bolder.





*String Quartet*  
(Photo by Michael Costanzo)



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<sup>i</sup> The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. “U.S. Religious Landscape Survey.” <http://religions.pewforum.org/>

<sup>ii</sup> James Bennett, “We’re Not Going to Let Our Campaign be Dictated by Fact-checkers,” *The Atlantic Monthly*, August, 28, 2012, accessed January 5, 2013,

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/08/were-not-going-to-let-our-campaign-be-dictated-by-fact-checkers/261674/>.

<sup>iii</sup> Felicia Sonmez, “Santorum: Obama is ‘a snob’ because he wants ‘everybody in America to go to college,’” *The Washington Post*, February 25, 2012, accessed January 5, 2013, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post->

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<sup>iv</sup> Southern Poverty Law Center Report, “Teaching the Movement: The State of Civil Rights Education in the United States 2011,” 7.

<sup>v</sup> Center for the Study of the American Dream Report, “U.S. Naturalization Civics Test: National Survey of Native-born of U.S. Citizens, March 2012,” 2.

<sup>vi</sup> Charles H. Towne, “The Convergence of Science and Religion,” THINK, March-April 1966, Vol. 32 No. 2, 7.

<sup>vii</sup> Ian Barbour, “When Science Meets Religion: Enemies, Strangers, or Partners?” (New York: HarperCollins, 2000).

<sup>viii</sup> Richard Dawkins, “The God Delusion” (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008), Daniel C. Dennett, “Darwin’s Dangerous Idea” (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), Christopher Hitchens, “God is Not Great” (New York: Twelve, 2007).

<sup>ix</sup> Michael J. Behe, “Darwin’s Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution” (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996). William A. Dembski, “Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology” (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1999). Numerous articles by Paul Nelson can be found on the Discovery Institute website database:

<http://www.discovery.org/scripts/viewDB/index.php?command=submitSearchQuery&orderBy=date&orderDir=DESC&query=Paul%20Nelson&searchBy=author&searchType=all&includeBlogPosts=true> Intelligent

<sup>x</sup> Barth’s letter posted on Ben Meyer’s Faith and Theology Blog, January 2, 2006, <http://www.faith-theology.com/2006/01/creation-and-evolution-letter-from.html>

<sup>xi</sup> Letter of His Holiness John Paul II to Reverend George V. Coyne, S.J., Director of the Vatican Observatory (1 Jun 1988).

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/letters/1988/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_let\\_19880601\\_padre-coyne\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/letters/1988/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_19880601_padre-coyne_en.html).

<sup>xii</sup> Robert John Russell, Introduction to Quantum Mechanics: Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action, Volume 5 (Vatican City State: Vatican Observatory Publications, 2001), i.

<sup>xiii</sup> Gordon Gauchat, “Politicization of Science in the Public Sphere: A Study of Public Trust in the United States, 1974-2010.” American Sociological Review 77 (2), 167-187.

<sup>xiv</sup> Gauchat, 182

<sup>xv</sup> The Science and Environmental Policy Project, “The Week That Was: 2011-02-12”

<http://www.sepp.org/twtwfiles/2011/TWTW%202011-2-12.pdf>

<sup>xvi</sup> Nick Coltrain, “U.S. Congressman : Evolution, Big Bang Theory are ‘Lies Straight From The Pit of Hell’” World News Daily: Information Clearing House, accessed January 8, 2013,

<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article32690.htm>.

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<sup>xvii</sup> The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, “‘Nones’ on the Rise: One-in-Five Adults Have No Religious Affiliation,” 9.

<sup>xviii</sup> Ibid., 9-10.

<sup>xix</sup> Ibid., 10.