

Book One

Truthing

Philosophical Basis for the Renaissance of Liberalism

A letter to one in 10,000

By Jon J. Read

This is a working draft; feedback is appreciated

Truthing:
Philosophical Basis for The Renaissance of Liberalism
A letter to one in 10,000

Jon J. Read
jonread@earthlink.net
(520) 293-9171

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book one:
Truthing: Philosophical Basis for The Renaissance of Liberalism
A letter to one in 10,000

book two:
Rational Religion: Religious Basis for The Renaissance of Liberalism
A letter to one in 10,000

Dedicated to my parents: Frank Victor Read, whose way was duty; and Barbara Ursula (Hughes) Read, whose way was service; and to my wonderful friend of 45 years, Charles Kallander, without whom many of the insights presented in these two booklets would never have come to mind. Sadly, all three are now deceased.

On the subject of good and evil, it was Chuck Kallander's position that: "No choice is wrong unless a better alternative exists, and it usually does." Hence, our mutual commitment to truthfulness as fundamental to achieving the good.

My mother would counsel: "You don't find time, you make time." My father, from Proverbs: "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

Preface

My purpose in these two short books is to reveal firm philosophical and religious footing for the fair-minded in their struggle with the unfair.

The intention is to re-ignite the American Enlightenment by revealing the long obscured authentic basis of liberalism. *Liberalism*, that is, not in its recent meanings of unprincipled compromise and government largess, but as the fair-minded and ever emerging, rational alternative to authoritarianism.

The goal is to win the culture wars; and in so doing, to propel a worldwide transition from a truths-and-deceit-based civilization to a truthfulness-based civilization.

The following is intended specifically for those young adults who have already committed their lives to the good, but are unsure how best to proceed -- unsure how to avoid the bad that others, and especially governments and religions, have perpetrated over the centuries in apparent pursuit of the good.

It is also for seasoned activist thinkers who now realize that political and economic theory provides insufficient basis for creating an alternative to authoritarianism.

After witnessing unnecessary poverty in Latin America in 1956, and after a decade of activism in the 1960s, I know I was not alone in tiring of opposing the bad and wanting to lay hold of authentic philosophical and religious basis for creating the good. Like many other activist thinkers at the end of the sixties, I married, tried to raise children, and learned unfortunately that what was wrong with the world could exist even between those who loved each other most. Few of us have been heard from since.

It is now more than thirty years, many illuminating experiences and many working drafts since, but at last I honestly believe that what is presented here, albeit in brief outline, can serve as a reliable guide to not only saving the world, but of creating a heaven on earth.

Jon Read -- January 2002

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Today our task is to find in existence itself a new foundation for reason. That is the urgent task in the spiritual situation defined by Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, Pascal and Dostoyevsky.

Karl Jaspers

Even if there is no truth man can be truthful, and even if there is no reliable certainty man can be reliable.

Hannah Arendt

Introduction

Remember playing sports back in grade school? Remember that close play at second base and how most of the kids shouted "out" or "safe" depending on what team they were on? Remember how the most vociferous were willing to come to blows on behalf of what they claimed to be the truth?

What I remember most is how certain they were that they were right. I was probably in the fourth grade when I concluded that their brains worked backwards. Instead of starting with facts, such as gaining agreement on where the tag had been applied and then seeing if the runner's foot could have already reached the bag, they started with a conclusion and then rationalized on behalf of it.

I trust that you were one of those few, who for the love of the game, called the play as honestly as possible even if it went against your own team. If so, then you started from a different place in your brain. You had integrity, whereas the others had sold out to a gang mentality.

Wishful thinking concerning their team's interests apparently advanced to self-deception and perhaps even to delusion. They lost their center. They balked at growing up and being rational. Love of winning became more important than love of the game.

Today's culture wars are likewise a struggle between the authoritarian mentality of facts subordinate to rationalization, and the liberal mentality of truthfulness as primary. Our struggle is no longer for schoolyard fair play, but for the soul of our country. It is not an overstatement to suggest that these two basic patterns of thought, both with deep instinctual roots, are in contention for the future of our species.

Liberal thinkers at the time of the American Enlightenment embraced reason as the key to fairness, but they mistakenly assumed that its value lay in providing rational truths with which to confront and displace the largely irrational truths of monarchical and ecclesiastical authority. They failed to realize that the basis of both reason and rationality, and hence the basis of liberalism, lies in individual commitment to think, speak and listen truthfully.

A likely reason for this failure, is that deceit, as well as subjugation to the truths of authority, have for eons had such effective survival value that individual truthfulness became subordinate. Subordinate to such an extent that we don't even have a verb, *to truth*. We have *deceiving* from *deceit*, but no *truthing* from *truth*, nor *honestying* from *honest*.

Today, however, all the major problems faced by the species can only be solved truthfully and in fact. In an evolutionary wink of an eye, deception and blind belief, together with their impulse toward violence, have gone from being integral to our survival to endangering it.

The following 30 sections address this most important challenge. They outline a philosophical basis for supplanting authoritarianism, achieving liberation and adulthood, and initiating the transition from a deceptive and violence-prone world of truths-wielding nation states and feudalistic corporations, to a future where personal commitment to truthfulness becomes the fundamental act of world citizenship.

1. Truthfulness is primary

In wiping his slate as clean as possible by doubting the existence of everything, Rene Descartes in the early 1600s cleared the way for his first certain statement: His famous, "Cogito ergo sum" -- I think therefore I am.

Tell me, why didn't he say, "I think therefore I don't exist"? Because, prior to his statement lay a commitment to truthfulness over untruthfulness. What could not be wiped from his slate, and what was as one with his wiping and doubting, is our first philosophical certainty: the existence of two contexts of thought -- truthfulness and untruthfulness.

Apparently, these two options constitute our two ultimate and only contexts of thought. There is no neutral station from which to compare these two ways of being since we would compare them truthfully or untruthfully, and would have already made our choice. Nor can we dig deeper for a more fundamental starting point since we would again be limited to digging truthfully or untruthfully and would have already subordinated our new findings to one or the other.

Readers may recognize this argument as Karl Popper's from his 1950, "The Open Society and Its Enemies." Popper was contrasting rationality and irrationality, but his logic is even more to the point for the undergirding dichotomy of truthfulness and untruthfulness.

We can also say that truthfulness is primary in attempting a reflection of reality, and untruthfulness secondary in being a distortion of truthfulness. Truths properly result from truthful inquiry and are therefore also subordinate to truthfulness. Since truths are communicated with symbols, usually as words; and since symbols are always at least one step removed from reality, the odds of our conceiving and communicating perfect truth are poor to non-existent. Clearly, the human condition is one of imperfect perceptions and evolving conceptions. Newton's Laws get amended by Einstein, and so on.

However elusive the goal of perfect truth, the option to try as best we can to be as truthful as we are humanly able does exist as a firm basis within us all. Honest error is not untruthful; but refusal to consider the possibility of error, or to refuse to listen honestly to contrary positions, is untruthful.

Some will argue that love is more basic, but love without prior and sustaining commitment to truthfulness, amounts to little more than smarmy fraud and sentimental manipulation. To be *betrothed*, to pledge one's *troth* (the older English word for truth) is to acknowledge that being truthful, true, and trustworthy is fundamental to love and marriage.

Rationality, without an undergirding commitment to truthfulness, is free to degenerate into irrationality and rationalization. Likewise, virtue without steadfast commitment to truthfulness is free to degenerate into its opposites of vice and crime; witness our country's moral calamity in Vietnam where truthfulness was relegated to Cold War truths.

Those attempting the good in today's world would do well to recognize truthfulness as primary, truths as subordinate to truthfulness, and deception as at best counter-productive, if not the root of evil.

2. Deception is a self-rationalizing, closed system

Those who believe they will have to dissemble and obfuscate, if not outright lie, during some future equivalent of Nazis at their door looking for Jews hidden in their attic, miss the lesson of the 1960s. That lesson is to not sit on our thumbs, as did "the good people of Germany," until few if any honorable alternatives remain. One stands up early on, as did the activist thinkers of my generation in opposing this country's illegal and immoral war in Vietnam.

There is no need to lie, especially if you act fast while there is still time and before authoritarian repression can be fully instituted. Even then, as when opposing entrenched racism and sexism through the Civil Rights and Feminist movements, activist thinkers prevailed. However, for those who believe in the need to lie -- those who have opted for the context of untruthfulness -- no argument will prove convincing.

The belief in the need, right and utility of deception is a self-contained context of thought. Deception is a self-rationalizing, self-perpetuating, closed system. A liar can even lie that he or she is not lying and be perfectly consistent.

Commitment to truthfulness, on the other hand, is a self-correcting, self-perpetuating, open system. The two systems are internally consistent, but mutually incompatible. Yet they exist side by side within our own minds, each with millennia of proven survival value.

As long as victory could be achieved by driving the invading tribe from our valley and thus securing an adequate foraging area to support our progeny,

deception as the art of war may have made sense. It may also have made sense in the process of forming ever-larger groupings of states and empires.

However, following the imposition of disastrous demands for reparations on Germany following World War One, the vanquishing of enemies has become evolutionarily obsolete. This "victory" led only to more problems, specifically World War Two. Likewise, the West's subjugation of Middle Eastern countries, primarily for access to that region's oil, has led to a growing cult of terrorism and our present problematic "War on Terrorism."

Today, in a split second of evolutionary time, there are no longer "others," only "brothers." This is the reality of living in our new interdependent global village. Constructive coexistence, not subjugation, is now an unavoidable fact of life. The destructive conflict of war must logically give way to the creative and constructive conflict of peace. Unfortunately, those mired in the self-rationalizing context of untruthfulness are psychologically unable to face these new facts of life.

Their initial susceptibility to deception advances to self-deception where the initial lies are believed as true, and then to delusion where the initial decision to deceive is stricken from memory. Such people are locked in a closed and evolutionarily obsolete context of thought and being. They pose a critical danger to us all, and to our fragile ecosystem. Also, since their certitude in pat-answer truths can pass as leadership amongst the immature, they and their retrograde system of thought become all the more dangerous.

Our first struggle then is between these two contexts of thought as they exist within our own minds. This struggle is won by achieving a near-absolute personal commitment to truthfulness, and by forming associations with others of like mind. The second struggle is one of supporting the presently subordinate context of truthfulness and encouraging the relinquishing of the now dominant context of untruthfulness as they exist in the minds of those authoritarians hell-bent on war, the subjugation of the peoples of the world and the pillaging of the planet.

3. The Golden Rule is flawed

Some might argue that the Golden Rule is more basic than commitment to truthfulness, but the Golden Rule perpetuates destructive conformity and fails as primary ethical basis in that the dishonest, irrational and incompetent, when doing unto others as they would want done unto themselves, will not blow the whistle on others who are acting dishonestly, irrationally and incompetently; unless perhaps, they themselves are the ones directly victimized.

Even using the tighter and negative wording of Confucius ("Do not do to others what you would not desire yourself") the not-so-Golden Rule still fails as an ultimate guide to the good. For instance, if a doctor would prefer not to know if he or she is dying of cancer, and consequently withholds such information from patients who would want to know, where is the good?

If we list the times we appreciated being lied to, we soon realize that most all of us want others to level with us all the time, but this does not address the huge third party problem above of remaining silent and aligning implicitly against, rather than with, the honest whistle blower.

Jean Paul Sartre's dichotomy of "authenticity" and "bad faith" comes closer to distinguishing truthfulness and untruthfulness as ultimate basis, but Gandhi comes even closer. His brief sentence might not be perfect, and it only works if truthfulness is understood to mean being truthful with one and all. However, when asked what was the "master key," Gandhi did not suggest The Golden Rule, or even ahimsa (non-violence), but rather:

Truthfulness even in the least little things of life.

Again, truthfulness here is understood to mean listening and thinking truthfully as well as speaking truthfully. A wife batterer may be honest or sincere in his rage, but he is clearly not listening to the viewpoints of his wife and children. He is not integrating what they take to be most true and relevant into his own thought. He is not thinking jointly with the intention of arriving at mutually constructive solutions to the inevitable problems of living together.

4. Truthfulness solves problems; deceit creates problems

If you could remember back to every conflict situation in your life, I believe you would find that deceit in one form or another played a key role in each episode. Likewise, I suspect that when problems were solved and progress achieved, it was commitment to truthfulness by all concerned that led to mutually satisfactory results.

True, you may at times have been in a position of authority, and you may have used the power invested therein to impose solutions; but again, remember back and see if these "solutions" were not problematic in comparison to those achieved truthfully and with all parties contributing as equals.

Rejection of the Old Left's system of decisions imposed by party bosses led the New Left to emulate the example of Quaker meetings by grounding the movement in open process and decisions by consensus. Later in the 1960s, however, an in-house authoritarian usurpation, with its penchant for closed process and pat-answer truths, as well as its conceiving of the adversary as "the other," destroyed much of the communal spirit of what, in historical perspective, we can now recognize as true liberalism.

At this writing, President George W. Bush and his corporate supporters are bordering on further replacing the truthfulness of liberalism as our governmental basis with the truths, secrecy and deceptions of authoritarianism. There is a counter revolution to that of Jefferson, Paine, et al. They are not solving the big problems of our era. They are exploiting them for petty and immediate class interest. Our friends in other countries rightly fear for our nation's soul.

5. The selfish view truthfulness and untruthfulness as means

As stated earlier, these two books are written for those who have committed their lives to the good. This means, at a minimum, that self-interest has been replaced by group-interest. Group-interest will, of course, include self-interest, but as an equal within the group. The group today becomes all inhabitants of planet earth.

Many think of themselves as meaning well, but in not having faced this fundamental life choice, they will tend to be self-centered, albeit perhaps with a veneer of altruism. They give at the office, but not much more. Their lives are not on the line. They are not activist thinkers in the liberal tradition. They exist more in the tradition of wallflowers and freeloaders.

They will tend to use truthfulness and untruthfulness as interchangeable means toward serving their selfish ends. In most cases this choice is made by default, even unconsciously. They may think of themselves as truthful, since they give accurate directions to strangers, but their center -- their starting point in life - - is the self and not the good, and certainly not a near-absolute commitment to truthfulness as the most certain way for achieving the good.

Since it follows that their primary commitment is then to the context of untruthfulness, and since this context defends itself with an array of psychological defenses, it is unlikely they will consider what is presented here relevant to their lives, or perhaps even intelligible. I say this after decades of painful experience. Most everyone I have known in my life has defended against even considering these ideas as though they were defending a lie they had just told. Which, I guess, is what one should logically expect.

6. Closed-minded belief in truths is a form of untruthfulness

By embracing non-violence over truthfulness as their bedrock dynamic, pacifists in the civil rights and antiwar movements of the fifties and sixties, made a critical philosophical and religious error. This error may have occurred in part because those operating from a church setting were loath to place truthfulness over the truths of their various religious faiths.

Likewise, those with basis in political dogma were loath to elevate truthfulness over leftist ideology.

It is doubtful that most participants realized it, but from my perspective the internal struggle within the movement of the 1960s was most times between the mind-sets of Marxist truths and Gandhian truthfulness.

Truths, of course, are not a problem in themselves. If we never come to closure on issues we could never decide what to eat for supper. However, if, having decided as a house rule not to waste leftovers, but when opening a container we find the food spoiled, our truth at that point becomes again subordinate to truthfulness and we consequently repeat the process of truthfully deciding what to eat. (Assuming, of course, that we live in an exploiting and not an exploited nation and are therefore privileged to have the luxury of such choices.)

In contrast, Albert Camus, in an essay, quotes Saint Ignatius (the founder of the Jesuits) as illuminating the linkage between truths, delusion and authoritarianism:

We should always be prepared, so as never to err, to believe that what I see as white is black, if the hierarchic Church defines it thus.

Our firm footing is not the result of choosing truthfulness to the exclusion of truths, but of opting for a context of thought where truths are subordinate to truthfulness, rather than truthfulness subordinate to truths. In simpler terms, our life choice is between open-mindedness and closed-mindedness -- rationality and irrationality -- truthfulness and untruthfulness.

At the instant at which believers block new information, or refuse to engage openly and truthfully, they opt for a form of deceit. Maintaining a state of willful ignorance is not far removed on the spectrum of mendacity from bold-faced lies.

Relegating truthfulness to truths eventually requires deception and then self-deception. Whereas, relegating truths to truthfulness acknowledges, as mentioned earlier, our human condition of imperfect perceptions and evolving conceptions.

As with the bullies and their subordinates when contending over the close play at second base, those stuck in the context of untruthfulness will tend to conceive of "being truthful" as brandishing politically correct and socially acceptable truths, whether they know them to be true or not.

These "true believers" will also tend wrongly to conceive of authentic truthfulness in others as the hubris of irresponsible permissiveness. The truthful,

in turn, will tend to conceive of closed-minded faith as the hubris of possessing the perfect knowledge of the gods.

Commitment to truthfulness, certainly as manifested in science and art, avoids both the box of absolutism and the abyss of relativism. It is the way of integrity -- the essence of true liberalism.

7. Truthfulness and love create fairness

Gandhi at first conceived of truthfulness as primary and non-violence as secondary. Later, he understood the two to be intertwined. Certainly, it is difficult to be totally free of emotion when thinking intensely with others.

When wishing to think truthfully, especially with those who may at first appear as adversaries, the most reasonable accompanying emotions would be those which maintain the chance of furthering dialogue. One's truthful emotional desire would be that which promotes and expands truthful exchange, rather than those prompting a retreat to assaulting each other with each side's respective truths. Consequently, it may be more appropriate to conceive of non-violence as, at a minimum, deep civility.

Insofar as living the good involves engaging with others in good process for good results, and insofar as we have, in stark terms, the choice between the emotions of love and hate; and within the domain of thought, commitment to truthfulness and belief in untruthfulness, we could posit in rough terms that fairness finds its emotional basis in love and its intellectual basis in truthfulness -- unfairness in hate and deceit.

The other two possible options of attempting to combine truthfulness with hate, and untruthfulness with love define dysfunction, as in soap operas. These two combinations offer a poor guide to the good. Besides, hate will corrupt truthfulness, and untruthfulness will corrupt love, leaving only the two basic combinations of love and truthfulness as fairness, and hate and untruthfulness as unfairness. The latter promises a living hell, the former a heaven on earth. An easy choice . . . for the truthful.

8. Truth can ambiguously mean either truths or truthfulness

"The truth will make you free," is misleading. Truths can imprison the mind. Truths are what authoritarians use to maintain intellectual dominion. It is truthfulness that is key to liberty and liberation. If what we mean is: "Truths subordinate to truthfulness will make you free," then we should say so -- or simply, "Truthfulness will make you free."

Hemingway's "moment of truth" is also ambiguous. Is his celebrated moment (which can define a lifetime) a holding rigidly to pat-answer truths, or being truthful in the instant?

"Speaking truth to power," can likewise be understood as an exercise in authoritarian, intellectual bludgeoning, or as an open and candid discussion with the powers-that-be. This is the essential distinction between non-violence used as a tactic, or as a way of life. What is generally called "philosophical non-violence" is intended to further truthful exchange toward mutual solutions; tactical nonviolence as employed by the authoritarian left is about winning battles, albeit without bloodshed.

Gandhi attempted to achieve a mutual third party perspective on the problem together with the adversary much as would two scientists when holding opposing hypotheses but collegially attempting to authenticate various supporting data. If during an exchange we cannot repeat the adversaries' position back to them as well as or better than they presented it, then we are not listening truthfully, nor are we emotionally grounded in empathy and civility. We would be guilty of clinging rigidly to what we believe to be most true rather than being truthfully open to having our always less than perfect understanding improved upon.

9. The Truth of truthfulness creates the hubris of absolutism

A "near-absolute commitment to truthfulness" was mentioned earlier. Why not an absolute commitment? Why not say, as did Immanuel Kant, that a lie is never justified even to save a life? Because there is a line separating the process of truthfulness from the "Truth of truthfulness." The first belongs to the context of truthfulness, the other to the context of untruthfulness. Were we to

conceive of our commitment to truthfulness as an absolute truth, a logical next step would be Truth Police arresting those who when greeting one another said they felt fine when they didn't.

Commitment to truthfulness, conceived as a pat-answer truth, lures us into the authoritarian trap of absolutism. This is the folly Walter Lippmann warned against in his 1955, "The Public Philosophy." His warning was against fundamentalism-run-amok -- the totalitarian mentality -- those who have tasted of the fruit and presumed the knowledge of the gods -- the possession of perfect objectivity (omnipresence):

There is no arguing with the pretenders to a divine knowledge and to a divine mission. They are possessed with the sin of pride, they have yielded to the perennial temptation. This is the sovereign evil against which the traditions of civility are arrayed . . .

The delusion of men that they are gods -- the pretension that they have a commission to act as if they were gods -- is, says Aeschylus, "the blind arrogance of childish thought." It can become "the very madness of a mind diseased."

In his 1997, "Truth: A History and Guide for the Perplexed," Felipe Fernandez-Armesto writes:

In the system of logic peculiar to the Jain philosophers of India, no statement is considered true unless it contains such qualifiers as "perhaps," and "as it were."

Avoiding the box of absolutism, but still communicating the primacy of truthfulness, may in part have been why Socrates relied on questioning. The process of truthful analysis instilled in the mind of those questioned was perhaps the real message (and quite likely why, according those in power, Socrates was guilty of undermining the state, disrespecting the gods, and "corrupting" the youth of Athens).

Zen masters likewise attempt to convey, not truths but that blessed state of being open to, and as one with, all that is. Hence their, "The answer is no answer" -- and especially what Robert Pirsig in his 1974, "Zen and The Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values," termed, those wonderful "pregnant moments of stuckness" when the mind is confronted with problems for

which no pat answers are readily at hand. Moments perhaps even devoid of words and symbols. According to Lao Tzu, the reluctant founder of Taoism:

The way that can be named is not the underlying way.

When I have lied or been less than forthcoming, it was for petty and selfish reasons. This was early on when I didn't know any better. Today, I am not about to lie to anyone about anything, or so I believe. However, in not wanting to forfeit the context of truthfulness for the closed-minded Truth of truthfulness, I will admit that an occasion may arise tomorrow where I will be obliged to lie through my teeth. Therefore, to avoid the trap of absolutism, it is a *near-absolute* commitment that is posited here as basic.

Of course, liars may claim they hold the same position, but theirs is more on the order of a *far-from-near-absolute* commitment to truthfulness. It must be emphasized that the line separating truthfulness from untruthfulness might not be definable with absolute linguistic accuracy. Our face and our mouth exist without doubt, as does a line of sorts between the wet and dry skin, but where exactly to the molecule is this line?

Our distinction between truthfulness and untruthfulness is not so much between two definitions (two truths), but between two habits of thought -- two contexts of being. Our definition of truthfulness defies absolutism directly by revealing it to be a form of untruthfulness, and also by defying absolutist definition of itself.

For the rationalistic "good people of Germany," although the line between good and evil existed, that line could not be found in their world of truths. There was never a "correct" time to speak out against the irrationality of nazi authoritarianism.

The answer is Socratic questioning and the demand for on-going, public debate. The answer is truthfulness itself. The answer is a worldwide ethic of truthing.

10. Few are truthful when the risks are high

How many will be truthful when serious repercussions are likely?
Shakespeare has Hamlet say:

To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man
picked out of ten thousand.

If you think this is extreme, then compare the number of whistle blowers alerting us to corporate corruption at Enron, Global Crossing, WorldCom, Tyco, Haliburton or at their immoral accounting firms, to the number of what we used to call "company men," and I think you will agree that one in 10,000 is closer to the mark than one in 1,000. If you throw in all the pre-disclosure investors, happy in their "irrational exuberance," it probably exceeds one in 100,000.

The ratio of those who knew and spoke out early on concerning sexual misconduct within the Catholic Church as well as professional misconduct within the FBI, compared to those who went along to get along, is probably also in the one to 10,000 range.

The same holds for the first years of the Civil Rights, Anti Vietnam War, and Feminist Movements. That these movements succeeded does not mean that all those who supported them once the causes became trendy suddenly exchanged subordination to establishment truths for life-altering truthfulness. On the contrary, many were simply opportunists embracing the new reality as truths to be expropriated for personal advantage. As some early 1960s feminists put it, "All women aren't sisters!"

11. Truths, deceit and force manifest as authoritarianism

Authoritarianism is based on belief in truths and the right to use deceit in defense of truths. For example, Plato's "philosopher king," who is assumed to have the best answers possible, is allowed to employ "noble lies" for the supposed welfare of the masses. This in part is why Bertrand Russell dubbed Plato, the "first totalitarian."

Authoritarians hold their positions of authority in part by their knowledge and defense of official truths. Authoritarian panelists on TV are most times playing a

"King of the Mountain" game with each vying to state truths ever more perfectly, and with little concern for the statements of other panelists, or for the larger necessity of cooperating to discover actual solutions.

Authoritarians do not focus on solving problems, but on imposing pat answers through political power and physical force. They consequently consider truths as ends and truthfulness and deceit as interchangeable means (as do the selfish and immature). The need to subjugate truthfulness to truths manifests, for example, as yellow journalism, slanted textbooks, and the killing of honest reformers by our US trained and supported death squads in Latin America and elsewhere.

A more benign case of authoritarianism is when the parent loses it and shouts at the child, "Because I said so that's why!" Followed perhaps by a whap and a yowl. Even a supposedly well-intentioned "white lie," used to protect someone's feelings, is still an authoritarian imposition -- a distortion of the other's reality and of our shared reality.

Official truths posited as noble ends deceptively sanction expeditious means, such as the assassination of foreign leaders, or a whap upside the head. These instances reveal the authoritarian belief that "might makes right." This follows logically from the belief that the truths justifying such force constitute the ultimates of reality, as from the Gospel of John:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word
was with God, and the Word was God.

For the authoritarian, truths are the very pillars of civilization. For the true liberal, truthfulness is the bedrock of community. For the authoritarian, truths demand allegiance and subordination, resulting in conformity and hierarchy. For the liberal, truthfulness demands freedom and democracy, resulting in liberty and equality.

US corporate spirit and structure are most times closer to authoritarianism than to liberalism. Some may call it "free speech," but the buying of public officials by moneyed interests is a corrupting instance of the authoritarian belief that might, and not reason, makes right.

Authoritarians are easy to spot; they have no time to discuss issues to resolution; they take offense when possible to divert the discussion; they are keen on "upmanship"; they refuse to confirm they have even heard what you are saying; they change the subject to avoid finding common ground or agreement on facts; they make power gestures, and they use all the common psychological defense mechanisms such as denial, deflection, projection, repression, regression, hysteria, blocking (stonewalling), and so on. Or they refer you to uniformed subordinates, or threaten legal action, or blame the problem on your attitude or loyalty.

Authoritarians prosper by fostering animosities, dysfunction, war and want. Their goal is privilege and power. As long as the citizenry believes in deception, secrecy and the "other," authoritarians are secure. However, as with naked emperors, a mass conversion to truthfulness spells their doom.

12. Truthfulness and civility manifest as liberalism

A mistake made by liberal thinkers has been in trying to define liberalism with truths. The actual dichotomy is between authoritarian truths and liberal truthfulness. Commitment to truthfulness, rather than commitment to deceit and truths, constitutes the ultimate and long-obscured philosophical basis of liberalism. To choose truthfulness over untruthfulness is to choose liberalism over authoritarianism.

In the confrontation between Galileo and the Pope concerning the validity of Copernicus's theory that the sun and not the earth is the center of the solar system, it might at first appear that theirs was a clash between a truth ordained by authority and a truth arrived at by rational means. However, had the Pope been able to show Galileo a mistake in his math say, Galileo would have admitted the error and adjusted his beliefs accordingly. Galileo's basis was not in forever-less-than-perfect rational truths, but in truthful process -- a process soon to be termed "the scientific method" -- a method prudently intent on hypotheses, not Truths.

Theirs was not a clash between rational and irrational truths, but between the mind-sets of truthfulness subordinate to truths, and truths subordinate to

truthfulness. The clash was at base between two contexts of being. One was untruthfulness as revealed by the Pope's closed-minded and deceptive belief in the infallibility of truths ordained by papal authority, and the other was truthful process.

The Pope was also inclined toward physical force, in this case, with the threat of torture. Whereas, Galileo was content with reason, as befits a gentleman -- "gentleman," as in gentle, as in civility, as in liberalism.

Thomas Jefferson, when unable to construct a rational proof for the basis of liberalism, winged it by claiming:

We hold these truths to be self-evident

J. S. Mills, in his classic, "On Liberty," likewise fails to construct an irrefutable basis in truths. John Gray, in his 1948, "Liberalisms: Essays in Political Philosophy," examines the failure of Mills and others, and concludes that a

. . . justification of liberalism is a dead end and a liberal ideology an impossibility.

Since our choices in the realm of thought are limited to truths and deceit on the one hand, and truthfulness on the other -- and since authoritarianism is already as one with truths and deceit, why not simply admit that the basis of liberalism is commitment to truthfulness?

Because the idea of truthfulness as our fixed point, rather than the truths of authority, is repressed to such an extent that we do not even have a verb *to truth* -- at least, not in any language I can find.

However, watch how in the following sentence the major concepts of liberalism -- freedom, liberty, equality, democracy and justice -- all come alive within the rubric of truthing:

When *free* of authoritarian oppression, citizens are at *liberty* to converse truthfully and thus create *equality* of information and understanding so that all can participate *democratically* as *equals* toward creating *justice*, and a more perfect union.

13. Truthfulness obviates the ends-justify-the-means duplicity

In his 1986, "Living in Truth," Vaclav Havel, writing during the darkest days of Soviet repression (which he termed, "living within the lie") speaks to the danger of displacing truthfulness with truths:

Why bother with never-ending, genuinely hopeless search for truth when a truth can be had so readily, all at once, in the form of an ideology or doctrine? Suddenly it is all so simple. Think of all the difficult questions which are answered in advance! Think of all the laborious existential tasks from which our minds are freed once and for all! The essence of this short-circuit is a fatal mistake: the tacit assumption that some ingenious, universally applicable artifact -- and is a doctrine or an ideology ever anything more than a human artifact? -- can lift from our shoulders the burden of the incessant, always unique, and essentially inalienable question and utterly transform man from a questioning being into an existing answer.

Worse yet, the belief in the primacy of truths opens the door to the authoritarian con of the ends justify the means. Those in authority select appropriate truths to proclaim as noble ends for "justifying" despicable means. The actual ends desired by those in power may be quite different from the stated ends, but by promoting desirable ends through the lap-dog media, national consensus can be achieved. For example, a tax break for the wealthy can be sold on the desirable goal of a "trickle down" effect, whether or not such supposed trickling will ever reach the growing number of poor.

Actually, the specific truth proclaimed as the noble end can change in a wink. George W. Bush, during the 2000 presidential campaign touted Jesus as his "favorite philosopher," but after the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center, he switched from the truths of the gospel, such as, turning the other cheek, as you have done to the least of these (Bin Laden certainly qualifies) so have you done unto God in heaven, and the admonition from the cross to, forgive them for they don't know what they're doing.

In a total departure from Honest Abe's care in damning slavery and not the slave owners, what we heard was, "Dead or alive," "bring them to justice or bring justice to them," and of course, the incessant harping on "the evil ones." If you wonder what happened to the Christian maxim of, "Hate the sin; love the sinner,"

you are in a small minority because for the authoritarian mentality -- for those whose dominant context of thought is untruthfulness -- the switch was perfectly natural. For such types, it might even be best if the truths are in Latin so there would be less confusion caused by possibly understanding the meaning.

On the other hand, unlike truths posited as ends, the firm footing of truthfulness transcends the ends/means trap by being a process where the means of solving problems fairly and non-violently are as one with the ends of living in a world where problems are solved fairly and non-violently. Ends and means become one and the same. The fair-minded means of love and truthfulness are as one with the goal of a fair-minded world functioning on the basis of love and truthfulness.

Liberalism's process of truthfulness and civility obviates the authoritarian duplicity and violence inherent in the ends-justify-the-means scam. In fact, a reason given and embraced emphatically for our fighting World War Two was specifically to defeat the ends-justify-the-means mentality of fascist Germany.

Likewise, Lenin could rationalize metaphorically concerning the breaking of eggs when making omelets, but the resulting quagmire of truths, deception and violent repression that became the ultimate basis of governance in the Soviet Union proved a sorry legacy and a further indictment of the authoritarian scam of the ends-justify-the-means.

14. Truthfulness creates equality

"Created equal" is untrue in terms of personal attributes and family resources. However, all newborns emerge with equal information of the outside world. In this political sense we are all created equal.

Liberalism attempts to perpetuate equality of information with open government, rights of expression, a free press, and free public education. The idea is to be equally and adequately informed on the issues germane to "domestic tranquility" and "the pursuit of happiness," for example. Choosing to be ill informed, or refusing to be bound by logic, is to renounce equality. It is also a forfeiture of the essence of citizenship necessary under liberal constitutional

government -- a renunciation of citizenship in favor of being, as the junk mail would have it, an "occupant."

When citizens level with each other they create equality of information and equality of understanding (as the term *leveling* suggests). When you and I share what we believe to be most true and most germane concerning a mutual problem, we create equality in the transaction, and will probably solve our problem to mutual satisfaction as well. However, if one of us withholds or distorts information, we become guilty of running an authoritarian power number. We risk an unfair result. We risk possible estrangement, an argument and even physical violence.

Liberal constitutional government protects and facilitates truthfulness which in turn creates equality. The idea is to deal everyone in as equals. Authoritarian governments, however, favor elites who are in the know.

In simple terms, truths and deception create hierarchy, whereas truthfulness creates equality. Truthfulness is the common denominator of community -- the legal tender of the social contract.

In an early 2002 interview of New York Times columnist William Safire on the Charlie Rose PBS TV show, both chortled knowingly when Safire suggested that any US soldier who brought in Bin Laden alive should be demoted.

Their motive apparently was to prevent the citizenry from hearing the other side of the issue. I have to presume that they thought it good to deny a podium to someone who might explain the facts of this country's economic imperialism -- this country's heavy-handed exploitation of third world countries. Better to protect official truths than to live in the real world.

Never mind President Bush's betrayal of "equality under God " and "equality under law." If Safire and Rose were clear on the concept of equal access to information for the functioning of liberal democracy, they would want to assist in giving voice to those who might best understand where our country may be in error. They would want illuminating debate not cold blooded murder.

For the authoritarian mentality, "created equal" is a truth to be bandied about much as one waves a flag. Safire's and Rose's counterparts in years past preferred to "kill the messenger" to learning the facts concerning slavery and the

near extermination of our native peoples. In defense of the Truth of equality their type even denied voice to leaders of the women's suffrage movement.

Had the people of England been able to hear the colonists' just complaints concerning "taxation without representation," there would quite likely have been no revolution. Consequently, our founders deliberately created a self-correcting system to prevent similar blind spots, such as today's "exploitation without representation." Unfortunately, present-day media superstars, like Safire and Rose, appear to be unclear on this fundamental liberal concept.

15. Communism and anarchism fail without basis in truthfulness

Neither communism nor anarchism can work even in theory without truthfulness rigorously embraced as the primary philosophical starting point by all concerned.

Communism's, "From each according to ability and to each according to need" can only work if all parties are truthful about their own and others' needs and abilities. Otherwise, what is to stop everyone from claiming an inability to contribute, and a need for everything? Without a near-absolute commitment to truthfulness a retreat to authoritarianism becomes inevitable.

Anarchism is touted as an alternative to authoritarianism, but its advocates fail to realize that the alternative to authoritarian truths, is not simple-minded rejection of the truths of authority, but rather subordination of truths to truthfulness as a universal ethic.

Anarchists and communists also fail to provide basis for solving inevitable disputes, thus they become vulnerable again to reverting to the might-makes-right of authoritarianism.

With the exception of Mikhail Gorbachev advocating "glasnost" (transparency) why haven't past and present champions of communism and anarchism even touched on the subject of truthfulness as primary? Apparently, because the subject is repressed, but also (one has to suspect) because they themselves are authoritarians at heart and are thus drawn inexorably toward

defining their basis in truths, and not in a personal and group ethic of truthful and civil process.

16. Pragmatism fails without basis in truthfulness

Socialism, communism, anarchism, humanism and pragmatism all have their specific roots in generic liberalism. All share in attempting to replace authoritarian systems with more rational and fair-minded alternatives.

Pragmatism emerged in the early 1900s primarily through the efforts of its chief spokesman, Prof. William James of Harvard University. Stated simply, it amounts to: "What works is what is true." Its flaw lay in claiming, at least implicitly, that if a lie "works," it is true. Bertrand Russell rebutted James on this point by arguing that even if Santa Clause "worked" as an aspect of family life, the statement: "Santa Claus exists," is nevertheless untrue.

Without basis in truthfulness, pragmatism soon became little more than rationalization for robber barons. President John Kennedy and his circle of Harvard advisers were rightly called pragmatic. Kennedy's ordering of assassinations of foreign leaders, his womanizing and Mafia links are examples of pragmatic thinking. If the lies about such activities "worked," then one was on firm ground, supposedly.

For the truthful, pragmatism's value lies in linking truthfulness to relevancy. The most truthful statement would be that which is most germane to the subject at hand. That two and two is four may be exceedingly true, but it does not speak to the issue of who shot first.

However, for the untruthful, pragmatism becomes a green light to call the close play at second base in favor of one's team and to hell with integrity. What one wants to be true is conceived as the truth if it can be rationalized as "working."

Remember your pragmatic teammates at second base looking at you in disbelief after you called the play honestly but against your own team? Remember them asking, "Hey, whose side are you on anyway?" They were revealing a failure to even recognize their repressed alternative of truthfulness.

They had "sold out." "Selling out," of course, is simply a modern-day, secular euphemism for the ancient concept of selling one's soul. "Losing one's soul" means repressing one's integrity and then not being able to find it again. It means not even realizing it is lost. It means not even recognizing it in others.

17. Secret government is anathema to true liberalism

Secret government is contrary to liberalism and as one with authoritarianism. Why do we have separation of powers, but to help make the people's business public. Sure, there are risks with totally transparent government, but what else is meant by, "Land of the free and home of the brave"? "Free" and "brave" go together in creating equality through openness. Secret government cannot be sold on its merits, because it fails at most every turn. A cowardly citizenry is its only excuse -- the loss of equality, and the entrenchment of a secretive and self-serving ruling class, its true purpose.

It is an un-American idea that if you want to get serious about solving a problem you have to forgo open process and go authoritarian, as in a "drug czar" and a "war on drugs." Drug czars spout truths, lie about "progress," and all the while the problem gets worse. This is because authoritarians, especially in secret government such as the CIA and FBI, cannot think in problem-solving terms. They do not think truthfully, but with pat answers and power moves. More tens of billions of dollars won't change a thing. The problem is that by their nature they can't think truthfully. They can't solve problems. Government is not the problem. It is closed, secretive, self-serving, authoritarian government that is the problem.

Some suggest that each era is governed by a constellation of truths, and that in failing to supplant the truths that led to the folly of the Vietnam War with a more appropriate constellation, we sixties activists set the stage for the culture slipping back to the older verities as personified by Ronald Reagan. Not so. Where we failed (so far) was in not replacing a deceitful and secretive, truths-based civilization with an open and truthfulness-based civilization.

18. Liberal democracy resolves the "is/ought" philosophical dilemma

Philosophers claim it is impossible to reason from a description to an imperative (from an "is" to an "ought"). Here is how Peter A. Angeles puts it in his 1981 "Dictionary of Philosophy" (italics and parenthetical inclusions are his):

Is/ought dichotomy. Also fact/value dichotomy. Statements containing the verb is are related to descriptive or factual claims and are of a different order from those containing the verb ought (should), which are related to judgments, evaluations, or commands. It is impossible (logically, formally, conceptually) to derive an "ought" (or "should") statement from an "is" (factual) statement, a normative statement from a statement of facts; it is impossible to have a valid deductive argument in which the premises state descriptions and the conclusion states prescriptions or imperatives.

Philosophers may not like being kicked in the shin bone (the "is"), but they cannot say why you should stop (the "ought"). What they mean is that they cannot state as a rational Truth why you should stop. Speaking just for themselves, they most certainly can tell you why -- because it hurts.

This is a big reason why democracy works so much better than authoritarianism. Whereas, those in the CIA and FBI because of their authoritarian structure are unable to connect the dots between what is happening and what they ought to do about it, well-informed citizens can and do connect the dots. It is the sum of all of us so committed that ultimately makes for the best steering of our ship of state.

"Political Science" as an academic discipline emerged in the early 1900s, and "Planning" (first as City Planning) soon after World War Two. However, many political scientists, together with the Pentagon planners, were central to the authoritarian debacle of our war in Vietnam.

There appears to be no rational way to get from the "is" to the "ought" other than democratically, and no viable basis for democracy other than an informed and truthful citizenry.

19. Post-modernism amounts to relativism

Post-modernism is just a more recent fad at avoiding truthfulness as the basis of liberalism. In truths-obsessed philosophy departments, the pendulum is forever swinging between absolutism and relativism. When efforts at saying anything of consequence with absolute certainty prove excessively problematic, a trend toward relativism takes place, in this case under the title of post-modernism. When it becomes obvious that everything is not relative, and that certainly something can be said with some degree of certainty, the pendulum swings back.

If you want to help a post-modernist escape their relativism, borrow ten dollars and when they ask for it back simply inform them that your "narrative" that it was a gift is as valid as their "narrative" that it was a loan. You might even chide them, as do post-modernists, for "an excess of literalism," or for being mired in a "fact fetish."

In short order, the relativist will demand that you be truthful and admit that it was in fact a loan. They will be arguing by default that the basis of the good in transactions is mutual commitment to truthfulness.

It is a simple cure and need cost them little money. They might even help define the alternative context to responsible truthfulness with such illuminating phrases as, "You lying bastard!" Or, for the women, "You lying bitch!" (More on the deeper meaning of these common pejorative terms in Section 28.) Of course, once the point is made, and to avoid being taken as an authoritarian, you must return the money, and do so with civility and explanation.

20. True conservatives and true progressives create the liberal dialectic

Truthful conservatives and truthful progressives form the two halves of the creative liberal dialectic. The thesis of "what exists," in contention with an antithesis of "what might be," suggests a synthesis that stands a good chance of exhibiting the best possible alternatives latent in the facts of the situation.

Creative contention within the liberal dialectic is far different than unprincipled compromise, or camels by committee. The energetic process of

factual exchange and truthful analysis is akin to the workings of evolution. A creative encounter takes place in which the fittest facts and surest logic survive. This process preserves the best of what is while also giving flower to new and better adaptive form. This is what makes the practice of landscape architecture, at least for me, so rewarding.

On the other hand, when conservatives and progressives revert to rigid truths they subvert liberalism and become authoritarians of the left and right. When progressives slip from truthfulness to truths held as absolutes they become traitors to their radical basis of going to the root.

How do you get to the root, but by scrupulous truthfulness? How do best options emerge, but by welcoming into consciousness the perspectives of others along with one's own?

Would that conservatives had more times made the stronger case between preserving older neighborhoods versus the pie in the sky debacle of urban renewal. This is certainly one instance where the conservatives' dictum: "The existent is the rational," was true. Or rather, more true in many cases than the supposed progress.

Truthful progressives in contention with truthful conservatives create the constructive liberal dialectic. The logical result is fair-minded solutions. Authoritarians on the other hand are intent on unfair results perhaps even by definition.

21. The culture wars are between authoritarians and liberals

To see how easily well-intentioned conservatives can slip into the authoritarian camp, consider William Bennett and his 1993 best-seller: "The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of Great Moral Stories." Bennett lists "honesty" as a virtue on a par with many other virtues rather than as the generic context of thought for actually achieving each specific virtue.

To see his error, suppose I claim the virtue of courage while hiding under the rug. Obviously, I then lack the virtue of courage. If I cut the pie so that I get most and you get little, while claiming the virtue of kindness, how can I be considered

kind? By lying to myself and others, of course. In fact, each virtue, without prior and sustaining basis in truthfulness, is free to degenerate into its opposites of immorality and criminality.

Claiming to be helping the Vietnamese people, by burning their villages and killing upwards of three million in the process, ceased being virtuous the instant we stopped being truthful about what was actually happening. Robert McNamara and Henry Kissinger can say that "mistakes" were made, but they deceptively, or self-deceptively, conveniently miss the point.

The mistake, if it can be called that, was to build policy on Cold War truths rather than on truthfulness. They abandoned the authentic basis of liberalism in favor of authoritarianism -- what we protesters called "The System." By thinking in terms of truths as ultimate they and their associates slipped into a morass of authoritarian deception, self-deception and delusion.

The Vietnam War was at base a lie, not a mistake. McNamara and Kissinger were, and still are, mired in deception and dubious pat-answer truths. They are not the victims of well-intentioned mistakes. On the contrary, they are perpetrators of deceptive and conformist thought and action.

They may have intended the good, but they were vague on the primacy of truthfulness. As suggested in George Orwell's, "1984," the same "vagueness" would soon destroy the Soviet Union. Its philosophical basis was likewise a creation of truths and deception that could not hold.

Secular Humanists also list truthfulness as one of many founding values rather than as their primary philosophical starting point. In so doing they abdicate liberal basis in favor of authoritarian basis. They become inclined toward authoritarian posture, if not authoritarian procedure.

It is little wonder that today's culture wars seem like a free-for-all. Authoritarians may be firm on truths as ultimate, but today's confused liberal center, by embracing pluralism as the alternative, slips into relativism which is little more than the flip side of equally fraudulent absolutism.

In her 1995, "Telling the Truth: Why Our Culture and Our Country Have Stopped Making Sense and What We Can Do About It," Lynn Cheney, the Vice President's wife, concludes her book with the following paragraph (her, "to live in

truth" -- meaning commitment to truthfulness -- is from the writings of Vaclav Havel whom she quotes earlier):

The virtues that we have increasingly come to believe we must nurture if we are to be successful as a culture simply make no sense if we turn away from reason and reality. Thus, whether we as a society find the will to live in truth is more than a matter for idle speculation. The answer may very well determine whether we survive.

22. Truthing is repressed

Gandhi had to create the word *Satyagraha* from two Sanskrit roots: *sat* (truth) and *agraha* (striving for and holding to). With over a hundred languages in India, and access to hundreds more, he and his associates felt compelled to hold a contest to find a word that defined accurately what they were about. None of the entries sufficed, but one suggestion did spur Gandhi to create the word which was to become key to his movement for constructive, non-violent change. Even then, *satyagraha* was not a verb.

Over forty years ago, linguist Noam Chomsky pretty much proved that children cannot learn language in the relatively short period of time they do without possessing a sort of preprogrammed capacity in which specific words can lodge. Where then is our gray crease for truthing?

Thirty years ago, dictionaries gave as the first meaning of *rationalize*, "being rational," and a second or third pejorative meaning of offering a seemingly plausible, but false explanation. Today, the trend is to list the pejorative use of the verb as its first meaning. Similarly, few are even aware that *for sooth* meant "in truth," and *verily* meant "with veracity."

In her 1972 book, "Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life," Sissela Bok mentions her surprise at finding what she termed the "paucity" of material on the subject. She gives as an example:

The index to the eight-volume *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* contains not one reference to lying or to deception, much less an entire article devoted to such questions.

I checked it out and found no heading for truthfulness either. There were all manner of headings on what is truth, but nothing remotely resembling truthing.

This is mind-boggling. Ethics is a huge area of philosophy, and truthfulness is key to an ethical life, yet the critical choice between truthfulness and untruthfulness is ignored. The conclusion is inescapable: Our species has a blind spot of incredible magnitude and critical importance.

When Time/Life came out with, "Great People of the 20th Century," I scanned the section on Gandhi to see how they handled *satyagraha*. They falsely defined it as "conquering through love." They failed to mention its Sanskrit roots, or even Gandhi's "master key" of, "Truthfulness even in the least little things of life."

Sadly, my own experience in attempting to call attention to the primacy of truthfulness and the repression of the verb *to truth*, has been akin to offering crosses to Dracula. Part of the explanation, I believe, is that our specific psychological defense mechanisms (mentioned earlier) are logically undergirded by a generic belief in the right to lie -- a belief that is largely unconscious and probably instinctually rooted.

If you belong to an organization of whatever sort, suggest that the group adopt truthfulness as its first principle and see what happens. I tried it on a group of twelve or so seasoned activists in Berkeley that had formed to propose progressive changes to the city charter. I was the only vote in favor and I was kicked out of the group within days. The reason given was "my principles." When I asked if they meant truthfulness, the answer was no. However, no other principle had been discussed and no one had ever questioned my principles before.

I made the same effort at the first general meeting of the San Francisco Nuclear Freeze Campaign. There were at least a hundred seasoned progressives present. I can't remember if the motion failed to get a second, or if it was voted down practically unanimously. Anyway, at least the Girl Scouts have no compunction about listing "honesty" as their first principle.

Freud termed the entity that hides our dreams, if we don't grab them fast when awakening, the "censor." What we are up against here is similar in that the entire context of untruthfulness, in being a closed self-protecting system, works

to obstruct truthful consideration of the subject itself, or to even acknowledge that such a discussion might have value.

Bok explained the ignoring of the subject of lying as philosophers being out of touch with the day-to-day world. Still, when the 882 page, "Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy" came out in 1995 complete with a ringing endorsement by Bok, including her words, "covering a vast range of topics," it too contained not one listing for lying, deception, honesty or truthfulness. See what I mean about truthing being repressed, and why I regretfully sub-subtitled these two booklets, "A letter to one in 10,000"?

On the other hand, I was pleasantly surprised the other day to learn that *truthing* has recently been adopted as a term for on-site confirmation of satellite imaging. Consequently, it may make its way into common usage yet.

The point here, however, is that the word and this fundamental life option are apparently repressed by the alternative option of untruthfulness. Unfortunately, this is not a blind spot that gets cleared up through simple communication.

For example, I shared a brief manuscript on these ideas with Walter Truett Anderson after reading his 1983, "Rethinking Liberalism." His book presents seventeen expert writings together with his own analysis. Since none of them mentioned truthfulness, I thought I would be treating Anderson to a eureka experience. Not so. In fact, in his 1995, "The Truth About The Truth: De-confusing and Re-constructing the Postmodern World," I cannot find the word *truthfulness* in any of its 261 pages, let alone a wee nod to the concept.

His and most other responses to these ideas, including the responses of family members, have been at best similar to that of an executive in a cartoon of several years ago. While leaving an important meeting with his high level associates, he confides:

Of course I consider honesty one of the better options.

23. Deceit is obsolete

Most every major problem facing the species today can only be solved truthfully and in fact. Pretending "light at the end of the tunnel" of global warming, or resorting to "disinformation" concerning population increase, amounts to a death wish. Vanquishing enemies no longer makes sense, only constructive engagement. Wishful thinking concerning our fragile and rapidly deteriorating ecosystem is dangerously stupid.

Keeping children ignorant of the facts of life may have served earlier generations by postponing marriage and allowing more time for inculcating an ever more complex culture, but obfuscation today puts children at risk for disease, pregnancy, abuse, incest and abduction. Only candor concerning sex makes sense today.

Both deception and blind belief, even with eons of proven survival value, have in an evolutionary nanosecond become as obsolete as your appendix. The two most time honored reasons for deceit -- war and keeping children ignorant of sex -- no longer make sense.

Can we accomplish this fundamental conversion to truthfulness fast enough, or are we doomed? Well, there's the Girl Scouts. And, truthfulness is widely acknowledged as the heart of science, the soul of art and the life-blood of justice (as in, "The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth"). The present worldwide trend of rejection by women of authoritarian relationships is another hopeful sign.

Another was mentioned off-handedly by my friend, Al Haber, the first president of Students for a Democratic Society (SDS):

Of course, the workers have to think truthfully or nothing would ever get done right; it's the bosses who need truths for giving orders."

Even then, bosses do not have to be authoritarian. According to Thomas Jefferson:

The entire art of government consists in being honest.

24. The follower mentality is obsolete

The people of the world want peace and are willing to sacrifice for it, but yet they support leaders with an opposite agenda of war. They apparently do this because of a now evolutionarily obsolete propensity to abdicate personal responsibility and follow the leader.

When faced with the challenge of researching the Vietnam situation, and possibly prohibiting their young men from serving, it was no contest. Parents trusted our Truths-addled leaders, refused to think for themselves and sacrificed their children to a hateful folly. With a false sense of patriotism, they unwittingly chose untruthfulness over truthfulness.

The same follower mentality is cultivated in fundamentalist churches by fostering unfettered breeding and hatred of other faiths. Why worry about the environment when our planet is little more than an expendable halfway house on the way to heaven? Why worry about pollution when a little holy water will purify the soul?

Authoritarian religions may have made sense in centuries past as supplement to authoritarian government, but now they are obsolete. The only way they maintain themselves is by fostering willful delusion. Where once what the church claimed was true was truthfully accepted as such, today a moral lobotomy is required to keep the faith.

There is no doubt that deceit and the follower mentality are obsolete, but will they cause our extinction? Or will we accomplish in time what might just be the largest and quickest behavioral adaptation ever required of a species?

25. Truthfulness is the rudimentary act of world citizenship

As of 1945, international law mandates truthfulness as the basis of world citizenship. By finding Nazi war criminals guilty of "Crimes Against Peace," "War Crimes," and "Crimes Against Humanity" at the Nuremberg Tribunals following World War Two, the Allies with the concurrence of the international community,

established as international law the precedent that following orders is no longer an acceptable excuse.

In determining which orders are contrary to the specific acts codified at Nuremberg, all orders must logically be analyzed truthfully by each person affected. Individual truthfulness is therefore mandated as the basis of world citizenship, albeit only implicitly, and not that anyone called attention to this all-important ramification at the time.

Moreover, the Nuremberg Precedents are not unique. Over two thousand years earlier the Code of Athens (the authentic version was unearthed in 1932) also established individual reason as trumping blind obedience even in less extreme cases. Here are the five relevant lines (italics are mine):

. . . I will obey the ruling magistrates
Who rule *reasonably*,
And I will observe the established laws,
And whatever laws in the future
May be *reasonably* established

The Nuremberg Precedents and the Code of Athens provide the legal and historical basis for a transition from truths-based, authoritarian systems to a truthfulness-based new world order. Apologists for nation states may object, but the truthful citizens of the world are nevertheless instantly united by their mutual commitment to truthfulness -- what Karl Popper termed, "The rational unity of mankind."

This mandating of truthfulness concerning orders must logically include truthful analysis of paying taxes to fund war crimes and crimes against peace and humanity. Refusing to consider honestly where our tax dollars are going is an abdication of world citizenship under the precedent of international law established at Nuremberg.

The powers-that-be can claim that our Senate never ratified the Precedents, but hanging the German leaders was ratification in fact. With the irrevocable snapping of their necks, truthing became the legal basis of world citizenship.

The United Nations may claim that legitimacy for world government, and hence possible world citizenship, derives from the pleasure of participating

nations, but the cat is out of the bag. We the people won World War Two in a more significant way than the authoritarians of the world ever imagined.

The motive at the trials may have been vengeance, or even a commendable commitment to justice, but the legal precedent that resulted not only legitimizes truthfulness as the basis of world citizenship, it compels it.

A new era in freedom and responsibility is dawning. We are world citizens in truthfulness first, and citizens of nations second. There is no wiggle room here. Truthfulness has been established under international law as trumping national truths and theocratic delusions.

After eight years as president, George Washington proclaimed in his 1796 Farewell Address:

I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy.

We no longer have to suggest truthfulness as a national maxim. It is now international law. Truthfulness is henceforth the right and duty of all citizens of the world. This is our firm political and legal legitimacy when insisting that parents and schools inculcate truthfulness worldwide.

26. Authoritarianism retards the species in a juvenile mode

We move from the authority of the family to the authority of the school and to that of the work place. In the process we absorb the truths thought appropriate by these authorities. We are also responsible for knowing governmental and societal truths, and possibly military and church truths as well.

In each encounter, the authority and the specific truths are either open to question, or not -- the context is either liberal or authoritarian. If authoritarian, and if the official truth (such as, "Our leaking pipes pose no threat to the ground water,") is untrue, one can either challenge authority and risk the consequences (but retain one's integrity), or one lies that the purported truth is true.

If what we mean by adulthood is the ability to think for oneself, then the authoritarian context is as one with perpetuating a juvenile mode. Being asked to lie on behalf of the company may be rationalized as being "a team player," but

the deeper intent is to force employees out of the truthful and into the untruthful context of being -- to force them to relinquish adulthood for perpetual immaturity. This is the essence of repression and subjugation.

Immigrants to the US are generally exuberant about "being free" -- in effect, being allowed to think and act as adults rather than remaining trapped in a juvenile mode.

In her 1974 book, "Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History," Fawn Brodie tells of the resentment felt by the colonists toward the frequently applied metaphor of "children":

. . . conservative Isaac Hunt in his *Political Family* in 1775 also insisted that the colonies were children who owed obedience and deference to the mother country . . . Even the conciliatory Burke spoke of America as "in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood."

No figure of speech was better calculated to enrage the radical young men of America.

To gain an appreciation of the intensity of this sentiment, when you next visit a black ghetto, try greeting a group of young men with the phrase, "Hi Boys!" (Don't forget your running shoes.)

With the motive power of wanting to be adult available for movements aimed at transforming authoritarian entities into liberal entities, it is mind-boggling to find so-called progressives forever engaged in such self-defeating, juvenile tactics as distortion and exaggeration, let alone hooliganism.

By opting for dogma and deceit, pseudo-progressives capitulate to the mind-set of authoritarianism and destroy the movement at its philosophical and psychological roots. They mistake solidarity built on mutual integrity, with mob rule built on "mental short circuits." They miss the deeper meaning of their own imperative, "to raise the consciousness of the masses."

27. Liberation means growing up and being truthful

The Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Liberation Movement succeeded for the most part in achieving their limited goals. However, if our family members and friends are living lives where they believe they have to lie to

survive, then how can they claim to have civil rights? How can they claim to be liberated?

If we are afraid to tell the truth, we are not liberated. If we accept closed-mindedly the government's official truths and the boss's arbitrary truths, and if we cower before religious truths, then we are not free. If we are afraid to become informed of the actual reality in which we live, and if we retreat into denial and self-deception we are not liberated, but in a largely self-imposed political and psychological bondage.

Liberation and adulthood amount to one and the same. They result from fervently opting for the truthfulness context of being, and in rejecting the untruthfulness context.

As demonstrated by the myth of young George Washington preferring a licking to telling a lie concerning a damaged cherry tree, liberalism, liberty and liberation are joined at the hip by truthfulness. They are integral to the same adult context of thought.

Authoritarians exist by holding the population in an arrested state of development. When the people refuse to believe in the need to lie, they deprive authoritarians of their deceit-based authority.

President George W. Bush said, "Our rights are derived from God." Not so. We are not made free by a permission slip from God handed to our leaders, but because 200 years ago we revolted against authoritarian oppression and created a nation dedicated to the realization that all of us are created free and equal and deserve to live as such.

Our Constitution is a big help of course, but Alexis DeTocqueville in his "Democracy in America," written after an insightful nine month visit here and published in 1835, warned against a paternalistic despotism emerging from this very democratic basis:

. . . if despotism were to be established amongst the democratic nations . . . It would be like the authority of a parent, if, like that authority, its object was to prepare men for manhood; but it seeks, on the contrary, to keep them in perpetual childhood . . . it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to be nothing better than a flock of timid

and industrious animals of which the government is
the shepherd

He believes the heart of the problem is that the people:

. . . feel they have done enough for the protection
of individual freedom when they have surrendered it
to the power of the nation at large.

He is right if citizenship is conceived as choosing between the truths of competing representatives, but not if citizenship is understood as informed and courageous truthfulness. Opting for the truthful context is key to maintaining freedom and liberty. It is as one with growing up and being a responsible citizen within a liberal democracy.

The child who has not been "raised" properly -- meaning raised to adulthood -- is said to be "spoilt." A spoilt child is a miniature authoritarian. Like their older counterparts they believe it is fair to be unfair.

Such deceitful selfishness becomes the basis for a materialistic society and for unconscionable consumerism. The environmentalists' goal of "sustainability" emanates from truthfulness, just as the impulse to gluttonous indulgence follows from the lie that some are "more equal" than others.

When protesters destroy property, they do little more than kick at the slats of their crib. In years past, management even hired agent provocateurs in an attempt to thwart the growing Labor Movement. Their intent was to provoke strikers to more militant and self-defeating tactics. Their purpose was to move the focus from the just demands held truthfully, to the need to lie to protect those strikers now guilty of crimes. The purpose was to thwart openness and allow the corporate press to show the protesters' apparent immaturity as being the true problem.

Violence aids authoritarianism. It perpetuates an underling relationship to authority. As I understand it, most psychotherapists today agree that "assertiveness" is adult and "aggressiveness" is immature. It is the gaining of majority opinion through visible, non-violent, truthful engagement, not aggressive acts and rhetoric, that furthers the liberal experiment and promises the philosophical, political and psychological destruction of authoritarianism.

28. Beware the victim/aggressor syndrome

The next time someone is mean to you, the odds are good that they will claim to have been reacting to your having first victimized them. If they are right, then you can correct the matter fairly. If not, then you are witnessing what can be called the "victim/aggressor syndrome." Claiming falsely to have been victimized to then supposedly justify an aggressive response is a favorite tactic of spoiled brats and authoritarian adults when attempting to manipulate others for their selfish ends.

Settlers claiming the Indians started it by attacking their wagon trains is an example; as is Hitler's scapegoating the Jews for Germany's economic problems. The bogus Tonkin Gulf incident used by President Lyndon Johnson to "justify," as a *casus belli*, the bombing of North Vietnam is another.

If you watch, I believe you will find that this is a common pattern, most likely with instinctual roots. For millennia it was thought fair, if not natural, to respond in kind to injury. Therefore, if someone wants their treachery hidden, they shift the focus to their having been supposedly injured first.

Few were inclined to consider that US economic imperialism does exist and was a possible factor in the September 11 attacks. The media just accepted the corporate influenced, government line that we were attacked because "they hated us for our freedom." We were innocent victims supposedly. They were "the evil ones," and we were "justified" in going to war, even if "collateral damage" would soon exceed the number killed in the Twin Towers, which it has.

If *bastard* is a derogatory term for someone who lacks a father, then why isn't *orphan* twice as bad for someone who lacks both parents? And, what is it exactly about a female dog that engenders the pejorative terms of *bitch* and *son-of-a-bitch*?

I suspect that these are simply colloquial terms for the victim/aggressor syndrome. Female dogs in heat will sometimes reject unwanted suitors by yelping to feign injury and then nipping. The feigned injury "justifies" the aggressive response. Male dogs respect the maneuver and seldom nip back.

These are instinctual mate selection procedures, but to males of our species what is seen is that the bitch is running a number. Consequently, when similar scenarios get played out among humans, the person exaggerating victimhood to deceptively justify an aggressive act for ulterior purpose is termed a bitch or a son-of-a-bitch.

The term *bastard* is used for boys who have not grown up and who have remained stuck in a juvenile mode of selfishness and deceit. The idea is that without a father to model himself after, and women for centuries being treated as virtual slaves (and hence truly victims) that the fatherless son will be excessively influenced by his mother, will feel perpetually victimized and act selfishly and aggressively in authoritarian fashion.

It was long disputed whether women had souls, or if they could even be honest. Nietzsche emphasized their deceptive use of cosmetics to argue the point. Now we know better, but the sexist terms live on. We could instead call such people "authoritarians," but the specific deceitful and hateful tactic suggests the more descriptive term of "victim-aggressors."

29. Authoritarians foster dysfunction

A Lakota friend once told me that I would forever be at a disadvantage in dealing with government until I accepted the idea that the result of policy is dysfunction. It was an eye opener. He didn't know or care if it was done consciously or unconsciously, only that dysfunction was the result he had witnessed first hand all his life. (Thanks Charlie.)

For authoritarians to work their shuck they have to instill a belief in the need to lie and in the concept of "the enemy." Fostering dysfunction aids this goal. Reject the need to lie and the need for violence, and authoritarianism is stripped of its philosophical basis. Grant the authoritarians their two premises, however, and you are left without a leg to stand on. You are left having abdicated the basis and effectiveness of liberalism.

Authoritarian corporations sponsor TV programs propagandizing the need to lie and the need for violence in "solving" problems. Adulthood on TV is also equated with being violent when the situation supposedly demands it.

Soap operas during the day and violent dramas in the evening are relentless in pushing this message. It is likely that you have never seen one TV drama, even as a fantasy, portraying communism or anarchism actually working. Such ideas are too dangerous for the system. Inculcating deceit and violence, on the other hand, help perpetuate the system.

The war on drugs has as its result (if not its motive) societal dysfunction on a massive scale. Support for fundamentalist religions opposed to rational birth control has as its result (if not its motive) societal dysfunction on a massive scale. Even a surgeon general, who suggests masturbation as an effective way to avoid disease and unwanted pregnancy, is forced to resign. A suggestion, incidentally, that President Bill Clinton would have done well to have heeded.

No-fault divorce and liquor stores on every corner in the ghetto are no help. Nor, are bad schools where kids have to lie to keep from getting muscled out of their lunch money.

As long as life can be portrayed as battles to be won rather than as problems to be solved, and as long as it is thought adult to fill one's consciousness with self-interest rather than group interest, authoritarians will retain their base of support.

Tragically, when minority kids buy the shuck and join gangs, the bravest of potential reformers -- those who might actually make a difference where it matters -- are effectively skimmed off into prison, or the grave.

The goal of authoritarians is for the rich to get richer and the poor to get poorer. It appears that a central aspect of their strategy is the elimination of the middle class. It is in the entrepreneurial middle class where reason, and hence truthfulness, is most at home. This base for those attempting to live truthfully and fairly poses the biggest threat to authoritarians and must therefore be destroyed. With our government now controlled by corporate interests, the recent trillion dollar tax break for the rich, curtailment of social services and erosion of civil liberties are probably but timid precursors of what is to come.

Until those in the movements for peace and justice realize that authoritarians in government are actively, and not too covertly, deliberately fomenting dysfunction, the focus will wrongly remain on responding to assumed "mistakes" and assumed "short-sightedness." If you think President George W. Bush's use

of the word "crusade" when speaking of the war on terrorism was simply an unfortunate slip, then I have a couple of twin towers I can sell you cheap.

30. Start by raising and educating children to adulthood

Even if we are only one in 10,000, that is enough for each of us to run for the many school boards across the country. If the struggle of the fair against the unfair amounts to adult truthfulness against immature untruthfulness then a logical place to start is by raising and educating children to truthful adulthood. What may appear to be the longest way around may be the shortest way home in moving from a deceit-and-truths-based civilization to a truthfulness-based civilization.

Since most parents want their children to grow up to be good, we can expect to find natural allies in the tens of millions. These parents become the sea in which true liberals can swim with safety and support.

Curriculum might include the actual basis of liberalism, identifying and jettisoning psychological defense mechanisms, solving problems in groups rather than the individualistic parroting of "right" answers, learning why there is no verb *to truth*, why truthfulness is the elementary act of world citizenship, studying the connection between closed-minded belief and deception, the victim/aggressor syndrome, the odds against Diogenes finding one honest man, and so on. Graduation might even become a rite of passage to adulthood with public commitment to truthfulness a central feature.

To those who object that we are foisting subjective values unfairly on others, they need to be reminded that truthfulness is not a subjective value, but as one with the goal of objectivity. Truthfulness is the one value that can be taught in public schools without being arbitrary, subjective, partisan or unpatriotic. On the contrary, it is the safeguard against others foisting subjective, partisan and unpatriotic values on the young.

In believing that their truths trump truthfulness, religious fundamentalists can be expected to join in debate and provide spectacles not witnessed since the Scopes Trial.

The authoritarian left may prefer to walk in circles while chanting, "The people united will never be defeated," but they have had their chance. The future belongs to the liberal center. The action is at the apex of the liberal dialectic. The focus is shifting to those who finally have good and firm philosophical footing. One person running for the local school board on a platform of curriculum changes for actually making a better world by starting with the basics of truthfulness and civility will gain support from many quarters including fair-minded students and teachers. An "adolescent revolt" aimed at living in lock step with an anti-social peer group is not as fulfilling as achieving actual adulthood.

Debates can be taped and shared with other campaigns across the country. Being against the bad is old hat. Being for the good, and with a tangible platform, and in contention with authoritarians so that their despicable philosophical basis gets revealed, is the winning strategy for bringing the strength of the fair-minded against the weakness of the unfair.

The differences are stark and important. Liberal society needs truthful citizens in order to function, whereas authoritarians need delusional belief in truths to maintain dominion. Revealing the clash to be ultimately between the two contexts of thought -- truthfulness and untruthfulness -- maturity and immaturity -- puts the fair-minded at a winning advantage.

Summary

Truthfulness versus untruthfulness

Our two primary contexts of thought are truthfulness and untruthfulness. There is no neutral point from which to decide between the two, since we would decide truthfully or untruthfully and would therefore have already made our choice. Nor can we dig deeper for a more basic context since we would again be limited to digging truthfully or untruthfully and would have already made any new findings contingent on one or the other of these two most basic contexts of being.

Truthfulness is primary in that it more closely replicates reality, whereas untruthfulness is less realistic by being a distortion of truthfulness. Truthfulness

is good because it offers the better chance of discovering best options within our shared reality. It is an open and self-correcting system, untruthfulness a closed and self-rationalizing system. Both are internally consistent but mutually incompatible, yet they exist side by side in our brains, each boasting eons of proven survival value.

The truthful arrive at truths by truthful process, but since the human condition is one of imperfect perceptions and evolving conceptions, they hold all truths subordinate to on-going truthfulness. The untruthful on the other hand hold truthfulness subordinate to both their lies and their chosen truths. In our internal dialogues and in dialogue with others there are no other more basic modes of being than truthfulness together with truths held open-mindedly, and deception together with truths held closed-mindedly. To be in honest error is not untruthful, but to refuse to accept correction, or to willfully remain ignorant of relevant facts and logic, is untruthful. Truthfulness is deeper than words. It is a way of life.

Truthfulness and truths held open-mindedly manifest as the ethic and governmental structure of liberalism. Deception and truths held closed-mindedly manifest as the ethic and governmental structure of authoritarianism. Our two primary contexts of thought create these two modes of social and political organization. The struggle for the future of the species is between civility and rationality on the one hand, and coercive irrationality on the other.

Under liberal constitutional government citizens are free of authoritarian oppression and therefore at liberty to converse truthfully and thus create equality of information and equality of understanding so that all can participate democratically as equals. Unlike top down systems where deceitful leaders and establishment truths are protected, liberal government is designed to facilitate truthfulness and expose untruthfulness.

Liberalism versus authoritarianism

Authoritarianism may have been unavoidable in an economy of scarcity and where the survival of one group depended on the defeat of others. However, in today's interdependent global village, authoritarianism becomes evolutionarily obsolete. Waging battles and vanquishing enemies becomes counter-

productive, if not self-defeating. Solving problems to mutual advantage, and insuring our welfare by insuring that of our neighbors, becomes the way to sustainability and security.

However, to conceive of the value of truthfulness as itself a rigid truth is to abandon the context of truthfulness for the hubris of absolutism. It would assume that perfect truth is possible, even though truths cannot be contained perfectly within symbols such as words.

Firm footing versus false basis

As the generic alternative to authoritarianism, liberalism has spawned a plethora of specific isms, all of which fail without explicit commitment to truthfulness. Communism, anarchism, pragmatism and humanism fail for lack of an explicit basis for solving inevitable disputes to the mutual advantage of all parties. Without explicit basis in truthfulness even love, virtue and noble values are vulnerable to deception and thus free to degenerate into their opposites.

A reason for liberalism's present malaise is that liberal thinkers have wrongly assumed that authoritarian truths must be countered with liberal truths, when in fact the actual dichotomy is between authoritarian truthfulness-subordinate-to-truths versus liberalism's truths-subordinate-to-truthfulness.

Once free of dogma, and with basis in personal commitment to truthfulness, progressives and conservatives become two halves of the creative liberal dialectic. Without such basis, both are prone to veering into the deceptions and rigid truths of the authoritarian left and right. Both become vulnerable to the hallmarks of tyranny: might-makes-right, ends-justify-the-means, they-started-it, my-side-right-or-wrong and because-I-said-so-that's-why. Both abandon reason for force -- constructive conflict for destructive conflict -- peace for war.

Liberation versus repression

Authoritarians attempt to devise convincing basis for repressing truthfulness, but they inevitably resort to lies and rigid truths, if for no other reason that these are the only alternatives to truthfulness. Their recourse is to secrecy, curtailment of rights, control of the media, and the creation of dysfunction and want through

fear of real and concocted threats. They create an environment where citizens feel obliged to become liars themselves. They protect privilege by repressing the masses in a juvenile mode of development -- the untruthful mode of being -- a mode distinguished by belief in the need, right and utility of deception. They work in league with religions that are based on delusion and maintained by an authoritarian clergy adept at inculcating absolutist dogma.

If we are afraid to tell the truth, we are not liberated, but in bondage. The answer is to grow up by opting for the adult context of truthfulness. However, this metamorphosis may require more than intellectual understanding, perhaps even a born-again or coming-of-age experience since the juvenile mode will defend itself against growing up, and will self-deceptively maintain that it is in fact the adult self.

We can aid this transition by inculcating truthfulness in the schools since truthfulness is not a subjective value but the only guard against foisting subjective values and beliefs on the young. In our evolutionary past, despotic repression has apparently been so extreme that today we have no verb of *truthing*, nor as a people are we consciously aware of its absence.

In past eras of independent cultures, deceit may have been essential to survival, but in our rapidly integrating world all the major problems faced by the species can only be solved truthfully and to mutual advantage.

Our survival in this new world requires a deep and speedy liberation or rebirth. We can no longer afford a majority of our species retarded in a juvenile mode of development.

This means renegotiating the social contract -- no more follower mentality in exchange for supposed protection. The cost of our adulthood is too high, and the threat to the earth too great. Protection from the bad was as one with a deceit and truths based civilization, but creation of the good is now as one with a truthfulness based civilization.

In effect, deception and the follower mentality were outlawed at the Nuremberg Tribunals. By condemning Nazi war criminals for blindly following criminal and immoral orders it was established that henceforth each one of us is responsible as world citizens for truthfully questioning all orders and rejecting those fomenting crimes against peace and humanity.

In our new world of the free and the brave, fear is now insufficient reason for trading liberty and adulthood for a questionable, if not an illusory, protection. Our lying and Truths-besotted "leaders" ultimately offer less protection than a truthful world citizenry.

Protest versus process

Protesting the bad -- petitioning for redress -- is insufficient to the challenges of the era. Today, only the actual solving of problems will suffice. This means a coming of age for the movement. It means an end to jeering from the fringes. It means a seizing of the debate at the centers of power. It means a renaissance of liberalism.

Conclusion

If the preceding text rings true to you, then you might consider running an ad inviting those with commitment to truthfulness to join you in a weekly discussion group. By emphasizing truthfulness you should attract true progressives and true conservatives, and tend to deter authoritarians of both the left and the right. These two booklets can be used as pump-primers, and the possibility of running candidates for local school boards can give your group focus at the outset. However, as the talents and creative ideas of the members emerge, other more worthy strategies might surface as well.

Ultimately, and unlike the propaganda on TV where the lone hero triumphs against insurmountable odds, in the real world you win with numbers. No action is a success unless you gain new members. Neighborhood watch groups fail because they are organized around a negative dynamic, so choose a focus that is positive and life affirming and your group will grow and prove self-sustaining. (Thank you, R. D. Bond.)

Get to know each other. You want solidarity, not hierarchy. Those suggesting deception, secrecy, violence, property damage, closed meetings,

drugs, majority rule, or who make sexual advances on the partners of other members, are agents, or might as well be.

Beware of the media. Reporters may wish to be fair, but editors and publishers of conglomerate owned media have their not-so-hidden agenda and it includes discrediting any movement that threatens corporate control of the government.

If you do run a candidate for the school board, choose someone who does not have further political ambitions. In representative democracies, our representatives sacrifice personal integrity for group integrity. Even the best are like specialized individuals in an ant or insect colony. They deserve more appreciation for their sacrifice than they get, but their nature is to represent majority constituencies not their own best judgment. Personally, and I'm serious, I wouldn't trust anyone to run who is under 60. (Hi, Jack Weinberg.)

Do not poach from other worthwhile groups. There are plenty of seething and presently immobilized, well informed and energetic people just waiting to be invited to a discussion with others of vision and basis. Invest your time with those whose natural tendency is to think truthfully but who have not yet grasped how that commitment leads to a comprehensive philosophy of constructive change through creative engagement. Don't worry about the one in 10,000 odds. The ratio of those with bad hygiene before the germ theory was probably on the same order. Besides, the press of world events will increasingly demand truthfulness and fair-minded accommodation.

Be slow to spend money. If you gain a majority on the school board and start making a difference, those who work for large corporations can expect to be fired. They should have contingency plans in place, but even then, your resources will be stretched thin. Committed parents and teachers will help, as will local business owners appreciative of truthful employees -- as in, "Why can't I hire someone who can think!"

Those who have known deprivation in early life may appear most enthusiastic, and consciously they are sincere, but if that deep-seated insecurity gets stoked, the impulse to deception and delusion can become impossible to resist. This is how authoritarians maintain their privileged position, by causing want and dysfunction in every way possible, especially with wars, so that the

impulse to untruthfulness and to knuckling under to authority gets instilled through insecurity at an early age.

Gandhi, Mao, Castro and King understood the need to build a counter-community of security and fairness from which to contend by example against the exploiting powers presently in control. Be quick to reject the Leninist model of a small number causing trouble and seizing power. It is the process of contending truthfully that attracts mature members. It is how the dynamics of a resourceful infrastructure get developed. Had Gandhi given the word, two hundred million Indians could have chased two hundred thousand British into the sea, but the result would have been the triumph of an infrastructure adept at chasing people into the sea. What was wanted was a critical mass adept at principled self-governance.

Are we talking revolution? On the contrary, all aspects of truthful encounter are evolutionary in the extreme. All we are asking is that others stop lying and stop believing closed-mindedly. All we are asking is that everyone grow up and live their lives with truthful and compassionate regard for the welfare of all.

The conclusion here is that we no longer have to be intent on opposing the bad. We now have firm philosophical basis for creating the good. Saving the world by responding to one authoritarian outrage after the other can now become a thing of the past. Henceforth, we need settle for nothing less than creating the best of all possible worlds. Our discussion groups can be the beginning of a worldwide counter-community. However, the interface with the adversary need not be hostile and should serve as an opportunity for a right-of-passage of sorts where the authoritarian mentality gets jettisoned and the adversary becomes liberated and grows up.

However, we better hurry, because once the world's population reaches a point at which dealing everyone into a decent standard of living becomes impossible, the authoritarians and their goal of a two-tiered economic system of rich and poor may prove irreversible.

Segue to Book Two: Rational Religion

The collapse of our deceit-and-truths-based civilization and its rebirth as a truthfulness-based civilization may be as quiet an implosion as the fall of the Soviet Union. Then again, it could get rough.

When the possibility of having to put one's life on the line arises, the big religious questions tend to come to the fore. At least that is how it is for me. If you are of like mind, then we have to question if there isn't something that can be said concerning this mystifying realm with at least some degree of certainty.

Actually, quite a few things can be said with at least relative certainty, and a couple with absolute certainty. Most importantly, all of these certainties mandate truthfulness. Amazingly, they all stop short of trumping truthfulness with the Truth of truthfulness.

This is what book two is about -- revealing rational religious footing for fighting the good fight.

Epilogue

In attempting to mediate a dispute between Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler, Carl Jung found that the obstacle to these two brilliant men achieving a meeting of minds was that Freud conceived of the inner world as the ultimate reality, and Adler the outer world. As a result, Jung popularized the then seldom used terms of *introvert* and *extrovert* to designate these two fundamental orientations.

He later uncovered three other dichotomies in the way we think: Those who value thinking over feelings (and conversely); those who rely primarily on their senses to determine what is true, versus those who trust their reasoning more; and, those who are more comfortable when decisions are made, versus those who prefer options left open.

My friend Charles Kallander made a decades-long study of what is now known as Jungian Typology, and although he thought the dichotomy of truthfulness and untruthfulness to be more basic, he believed that the differences manifested in the four categories, and in their sixteen possible combinations,

suggested why misunderstandings can occur even when both parties are trying their best to be truthful with each other.

In our internal dialogues, and in dialogue with others (especially when under stress) we tend to mistrust our weaker functions and equate being truthful to living within the world presented by our stronger functions.

Jung believed that we rely on our stronger functions in early life, but that maturity is defined by developing the weaker functions to be equal in influence. Certainly, Gandhi and King were feelers as much as thinkers, at home in the inner world as much as the outer, adept at gaining information through their senses as well as by reasoning things out, and comfortable making decisions in a timely manner, while leaving other decisions open until a more appropriate time.

Had he lived longer, it is in this area where Chuck's contribution to the struggle of the fair-minded, and hence the need to understand the obstacles to constructive contention, would have been most helpful. I hope others with expertise in this and related areas will aid in rekindling the American Enlightenment and in igniting a worldwide renaissance of liberalism.

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Of critical importance was Joan Bondurant's 1964 book, "Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict"; and earlier, George Orwell's "1984," and Eric Hoffer's 1951, "The True Believer." Most important, however, was the 45 years of thinking and wondering together with Charles Kallander, my best friend. Chuck and I were equally intent on the big questions of life when we met in 1953 during engineering classes at what was then El Camino Jr. College, in Torrance, California.

About the author

Jon Read was raised in Inglewood, California and received his bachelor's degree in landscape architecture from the University of California at Berkeley in January 1961. He has been self-employed as a landscape architect and landscape contractor doing design/build for most of his life. When 21 he visited three countries in Latin America while on Navy Reserve duty. He hitchhiked to Alaska the next summer, and went around the world on his own when 23. He worked on a Norwegian freighter to cross the Pacific, spent three months traveling overland in four countries in South East Asia, and six weeks in India, Nepal and Sikkim. In May and June of 1962 he visited Cuba with a friend, Jim Dey, and on his return played a leading role in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee in New York during the October missile crisis. In 1963 he was investigated by the FBI and called before HUAC (House un-American Activities Committee) with which he refused to co-operate. In the summer of 1965 he was central to the Vietnam Day Committee's troop train demonstrations. He was Field Secretary for the San Francisco office of the War Resisters League, 1965-68, and the author of the Free Cities Plan (a constructive alternative to the Vietnam War) published in the 1968 Jan/Feb. issue of *The Humanist* (for the record, the listing of Paul Salstrom as co-author was an editor's error). In Berkeley, in the spring of 1969, he and Mike Delacour were the two activists considered most instrumental in initiating People's Park. He wrote "The Activist" column for the *Berkeley Gazette* and for the *Daily Cal* (the UC Berkeley student newspaper) during the anti-apartheid protests of 1983-84. In the mid 1980s he was director of an urban-forestry, community-development agency in Oakland California planting street trees with neighborhood volunteers in low-income neighborhoods. He organized 600 volunteers for the planting of 505 fifteen-gallon trees in one morning along the seven and a half mile length of Martin Luther King Jr. Way. He also worked for seven months as a substitute teacher in the Oakland School District (and loved it). He had a 14-year marriage and a 17 1/2 year common law marriage. His father was born in Dublin, his mother in Manchester. He lived in Greenwich Village in 1962, North Beach during the Beatnik era, the Haight-Ashbury during the Hippie era, and Cambridge Massachusetts in 1995-96. Jon Read presently lives and writes in Tucson, Arizona.

Troop Train Picket No. 4 - this Thursday, 8:45 a.m.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN THIS TIME ?



Copy of a Vietnam Day Committee (VDC) leaflet showing the author and Jerelle Kraus at the third anti-Vietnam War troop train demonstration at the Santa Fe tracks in Berkeley, California, August 1965.