

What can we do to create a peaceful revolution? Genevieve Vaughan

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Realize that we are telling ourselves what is wrong all the time, but without understanding it. (Shirley Maclain's creation story, androgyny-mind-body, emotions-reason, "Ishmael Miracle Worker")

Understand why the urge towards domination and exploitation happens. Devalue the values that motivate people to dominate, especially nations, classes, races, as well as individuals.

Look at this domination motivation and its effects. Identify the motivation and challenge and expose it at the different levels so that it will not grow back and cross-validate.

Spread a movement of people who will regularly do this.

Recognize the many defects of the system, not blinding ourselves to them, editing them out, or believing the media edit, and also not just giving up hope in the possibility for change.

Make needs visible and consider them important.

Change the paradigm in academia away from exchange and towards gift giving as an interpretative key - thus restoring mothering to the definition of the human identity — and deriving academic understandings from that premise of identity rather than from 'mankind'. Academics are caught in patriarchal institutions where competition and hierarchy are the norm. They therefore continue to validate the exchange paradigm. Graduates of academic institutions carry with them the points of view they have been taught, thus continuing the dominance of the exchange paradigm in all fields. A change of paradigm in academia would have far reaching effects.

Consider gift giving, which is based on mothering, not exchange, which is based on the male identity, as the model through which we become human. Acknowledge how exchange blinds us to gift values. There is an asymmetry here because gift giving is based on mothering, while exchange is not based on fathering but on the male identity formation.

For those who wish to improve themselves personally, and many of us in the USA have that option because we have the time to spend on self help: a psychology of gift giving vs. exchange sees two kinds of selves. One kind of self is developed through satisfying needs in mutuality while the other is ego ori-

ented, satisfying its own needs, and appropriate to the capitalist market society. That is, if it is true that we socially construct our subjectivities, and that our interpersonal economic practice is an element in this construction, it follows that we can make ourselves 'better' by doing gift giving together with others. (Especially in situations where some amount of abundance can be created or found.) The process of gift giving is more humanizing than the process of exchange. We have been misreading what makes us 'tick'.

The fact that many successful people are unhappy, lonely, unable to maintain relationships, is a symptom of the defects of the exchange process as the basis for the construction of the human subject. While they may have achieved dominance, high status, and many material possessions, such persons have self created as artificial egos outside of community. In fact the whole society, both those who have and those who have not succeeded in capitalism, has been sold a bill of goods by the exchange process and its values. By constructing themselves as egos appropriate to the economy of patriarchal capitalism, women and men lose the gift of their gift giving humanity. It therefore becomes more difficult to build long term caring relationships, and people even begin to wonder if love is possible.

The 'family' is seen as the answer to this problematic situation, however the patriarchal family as it has been lived actually fits in with capitalism quite well because it uses the gift labor of the wife to contribute to the well being of the husband, then that gift flows through his work together with its surplus value, becoming profit for those above him. (40% or more would have to be added to the GNP of most countries if women's work were counted in monetary terms)

Scarcity makes capitalism possible but it is also built into heterosexual patriarchal — male dominant — families many of which are now undergoing radical change. In capitalism in the past, and in some places still today, dominant men were the 'heads' of the household and brought home the paycheck, the family's only access to scarce, market based goods. The man's work and salary in the exchange economy thus served as a sort of monetary donation upon which the family depended for the means of survival. The family members become dependent on the patriarchal father. His judgement could potentially deprive them of the nurturance upon which their lives depended. Mothers who were trying to nurture children free, depended on fathers for the money with which to buy the means of giving. Patriarchal dominance therefore had free reign, aided by a combination of patriarchy and scarcity. (Men too were scarce, in that it was unlikely other men would take on the responsibility of 'providing' for a pre-formed family.) Women were thus trapped in their gift giving roles. Since work in the exchange economy brought with it visibility and recognition and a way of evaluating oneself with respect to others by the amount of salary one received, women's housework remained invisible, and seemingly inferior in importance, valueless. However, by free giving to children and men, women conferred value upon them. This free gift value maintains self esteem outside the judgement by money that capitalism provides. However authority is given to the system

and to men, not to the women who are or were providing the free gift value to their families, so the value given by these women seems inferior and this reflects on the women who in turn have low self esteem.

Racism

The values based on gift giving are inclusive while values based on exchange are exclusive. A gift economy would more easily overcome racism than an exchange economy.

Bourgeois Revolution

By changing the values of people who are ‘upwardly mobile’ in the system, and questioning the goals and structures of the system itself, we can make it easier for those who are being oppressed to liberate themselves.

Dismantling Patriarchy

The values of patriarchy are harmful on an individual as well as a group and national level. They are responsible for wars, for national and international military and economic violence as well as for domestic violence. These values can be (and are being) challenged on an individual level as well as on a group and national level by social movements. However the connections are not clear enough yet, because values continue to be identified with physiology. Men seem to be violent because they are men not because they hold the values of violence, or construct their egos to succeed in a violent system. Women seem to be less violent because they are physiologically female not because they are socialized towards the values of gift giving. Heterosexuality constructed around these interlocking values rewards violent male egos with free gifts given by women, thus confirming the male values. In order to change this women can stop rewarding male ego violence in all of its various guises. Men can direct themselves towards gift values and reward them in institutions, in one another and in women.

Re-vision both ‘movement’ activism and charitable activities in terms of gift giving.

Recognize that there are needs at many levels. Factor in to all gift giving — whether it be for social change or charity — the meta discourse of a change in values TOWARDS gift giving itself. Recognize that what is called the non-profit sector is in many aspects for exchange and for profit, but can be used to affirm the values of gift giving.

Promote women’s leadership according to gift values.