

Spectacles of Organization  
Towards Ahimsa festivals of production and consumption

David M. Boje  
January 4, 1999

**PART I. WHAT IS SPECTACLE ORGANIZATION THEORY?**

**Chapter 4: Spectacle View Three**

**Ahimsa and Simplicity**

In the last chapter we looked at some of the violence and genocide between humans and humans. I want to look in this chapter at how Ahimsa and Simplicity are opposed by the spectacle of violence. Our cultures are saturated in violence in ways that makes violence and the right to violence a worldview. Before looking at Ahimsa worldview, it is necessary to look at the violence that saturates our everyday life space.

I have a story to share from Pramoda, Gurudev Chitrabhanu about the tenderness of the heart.

In Sanskrit it is "karuna" which means the tenderness of the heart, the awareness of the soul. If you're moved by the feeling of pain and suffering of all living-beings and is inspired to do something about it. The intention to do good to others and the persisting thought for other's welfare. To return good for evil, benevolence for injury, love for hate and kindness for harm are, some of the virtues of a kindhearted person. Here's an example:

"Tukaram the saintly poet of India once went all the way from Maharashtra state to Banaras to bring holy water of the river Ganges for a Grand Bath ceremony (Abhishek) of his deity. On his way with the holy water in a copper pot, he saw a donkey lying almost dead on the ground, suffering from the scorching heat of the sun. Seeing the donkey suffering without water, his tender heart was moved with compassion. He spontaneously poured the precious holy water which was meant for the deity in the mouth of the donkey. Soon after the donkey drank the water, he slowly came to life and opened his eyes. There was an expression of satisfaction on his face, the donkey was alive. Tukaram seeing the donkey revived back to life took a great sigh of relief and experienced a spiritual ecstasy. He said to himself, "My abishek is complete," and returned home.

After reading this story I'm sure you would like to do things like feeding the birds, set them free from cages, feed the poor, help the needy, anything that touches your compassionate heart. A closed hand can't receive: neither can a closed mind or a closed heart. Service gives life and selfishness freezes.

**Table One: Part 3 Ahimsa and Simplicity Spectacle Worldview**

<p><b>3. Ahimsa Non-Violence Simplify the Spectacle Worldview</b>          Western society exhibits life styles saturated in violence, including high homicide rates, habitat destruction, and cyber-violence consumption. Several authors are looking to the East for nonviolent ways of production and consumption. Spiritual teachers such as Gandhi, Chitrabhanu, and Kumar expound a worldview of living in harmony with nature, not intruding on the evolution of other species, and seeking cooperation. The spectacle of production is be transformed to be kinder to humans, animals, and planet. What I call more festive. The simplicity movement seeks to tame Affluenza (conspicuous consumption) be recognition of the interdependence of what affluent people consume that confiscates resources of the majority of people on the planet. The environmental movement sees limits to growth and also advocates more sustainable business and consumption practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leopold (1949) The Land Ethic</li> <li>✓ King, Martin Luther, Jr. (1958) Stride Toward Freedom, (1963). Strength to Love</li> <li>✓ Schumacher (1973) Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered</li> <li>✓ Chitrabhanu (1977) The Philosophy of Soul and Matter; (1978) Realize What you are: The Dynamics of Jain Meditation; (1980) Twelve Facets of Reality: the Jain Path to Freedom</li> <li>✓ Nakhre (1982) Social Psychology of nonviolent Action: A Study of Three Satyagrahas</li> <li>✓ Rifkin (1992) Beyond Beef: The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture</li> <li>✓ Chappell (1993) The Soul of a Business: Managing for profit and the Common Good</li> <li>✓ Stead and Stead (1996) Management for a Small Planet: Strategic Decision Making and the Environment</li> <li>✓ Whitmer (1997) The Violence Mythos</li> <li>✓ Lessem and Palsule (1997) Managing in Four Worlds: From Competition to Co-Creation</li> <li>✓ Herman, A. L. (1999) Community, Violence, and Peace</li> </ul>
---	---

**Ahimsa and Simplicity Defined** Ahimsa means non-violence. It is a three thousand-year-old philosophy of respect and appreciation of all life forms.

Simplicity is a movement to cut out unneeded consumption and production in the hopes that others on the planet will have the means to live.

Nakhre (1982) in his review sees Ahimsa as a way to achieve nonviolent conflict resolution. The word Ahimsa, he explains, is “derived from the combination of negative prefix ‘a’ meaning ‘non’ and ‘himsa’ meaning ‘injury,’ means ‘noninjury and is usually translated as ‘nonviolence’” (p. 15). There is a

refusal to do harm or injury to any sentient species. Nakhre (1982) emphasizes that the Ahimsa movement to end British colonial rule in India was very much a peasant revolution. The peasant ideology can be seen in the following song (1982: 66):

We are the peasants of the earth...  
For ages she fed us. The more we work with her the more we get  
from her.  
We are the peasants...  
God gave land and earth to all  
But the deceitful landlord seized it all  
All our dreams are broken  
We are the peasants...  
We will win back the land and give it back to all  
We will put up with heat, cold and rain and work hard  
To make the earth shower us with her rich bounties  
We will share those bounties with all  
So no one in Bharat (India) will have to go hungry  
We are the peasants...

There are parallels between the Ahimsa and anti-Imperial worldviews. For example, the goals of the nonviolence movement were self-rule, the betterment of economic conditions, and the end of exploitation by British colonialist and their puppet Indian administrators. An interview with one participant points to more local interests: "All I wanted was that the landlord for whom I had been working so hard for so many years would give me enough to bring up my children and feed my family" (Nakhre (1982: 68). Nakhre's study seeks to look at Ahimsa from the point of view of thousands of rank and file and subleaders, who did not fully embrace a Jain Monk's total commitment to nonviolence. He points out the better educated leaders of the movement had more commitment to nonviolent and egalitarian action than did many in the rank and file.

Nakhre also concludes that Ahimsa is not just a religico-ethical category, but is "a system of values and meanings with a specific commitment to them as a way of life" (p. 165). The leaders were living examples of living nonviolent life practices such as "vegetarianism, nondrinking, austerity, animal rights, and

above all pledging unquestioning allegiance to nonviolent behavior under all circumstances” (p. 168). Other participants did not always practice these norms.

I stress this point, because as you read what follows, there are many high standards of nonviolence presented which are alien to the spectacle of production and consumption. Having grown up as a cigarette smoking, meat eater, Vietnam veteran, who loved nothing better than to down quite a few beers while watching a good football game or fishing for trout, I knew nothing of non-violent practices. We are each on our own path to find ways to minimize the violence that is all around us. And, if like me, we grow up in a culture of violence, we do not think anything is the matter, and we resent anyone who says that something is the not a proper way of living. Of course, we say, our way is the natural and the right way of living. I have no wish to alienate someone who smokes, drinks, eats meat, wears fur coats, and attends spectacles others would contend are violent. I want to reiterate as we broach sensitive terrain, that I am seeking nonviolent options, alternatives to the spectacle that I too inhabit.

There are violent and nonviolent paths to changing the spectacle. At the core of violent culture is the spectacle of production and consumption that addicts us all to violence. The problem is structural violence, the socialization of violence as a way of life. We are all part of the system that contributes to the production and consumption of violence. It is a crazy time, when nonviolence is considered a deviant life style in the culture acclimated to violence. I want to review, briefly some of the main arenas of violence, which are all around us. I can only touch on the research that is available on each.

**Violence on the streets and media of Industrial Civilization** We are desensitized to Violence. The Society of the Spectacle desensitizes its participants to violence, in what Whitmer (1997) calls the “Violence Mythos.” The myth here is a self-sealed logic of violence legitimation. Violence is everywhere, in the streets, in schools, in the workplace, and in the home. Look at guns, movies, television, sports, and advertising violent production and consumption.

Workplace Violence The following excerpt is from Corporate Focus (April 27, 1999 email).<sup>1</sup>

There were more than 6,200 deaths on the job due to traumatic injuries in the United States in 1997. The death toll from work-related disease is nearly 10 times higher. There were more than 6 million workplace-related injuries and illnesses recorded in 1997, with more than 1.8 million of them causing time lost from the job.

Internationally, the death toll from workplace injuries and disease is mind-numbing. The International Labor Organization estimates that, every year, 1.1 million people around the globe either die on the job or from occupational disease.

Under the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Act, violations of health and safety rules that pose a substantial probability of death or serious physical harm to workers are considered "serious" violations. This is roughly the standard needed to convict for criminal manslaughter in some states.

The average penalty for a serious violation is \$709, according to "Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect," a new report by the AFL-CIO. With excruciatingly painful repetitive stress injuries skyrocketing in recent years thanks to workplace speed-ups and the introduction of computer keyboards, computer scanners and other new technologies, corporations have focused their energies on blocking OSHA ergonomics regulations.

Guns and Violence The Columbine High School Massacre.

Investigators also said that the 18-year-old girlfriend of one of the gunmen bought three of the weapons used in the April 20 attack that left 15 dead. Sheriff's spokesman Steve Davis said the young woman bought two shotguns and a semiautomatic rifle.

"Parents should take this moment to ask what else they can do to shield our children from violent images and experiences that warp young perceptions and obscure the consequences of violence," – President Clinton<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Want to kill somebody and get away with a slap on the wrist?

<sup>2</sup> CNN School shooting sparks gun control debate Colorado lawmakers scrap gun bills April 22, 1999 Web posted at: 3:43 a.m. EDT (0743 GMT)  
<http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/stories/1999/04/21/school.shooting/>

Seminars, luncheons and festive ceremonies were canceled "to show our profound sympathy and respect for the families and communities in the Denver area," the NRA said (CNN, 1999)

It is often assumed that the most technologically advanced economies are the least violent. In 1995 alone, 35,957 Americans were killed with firearms, in homicides, suicides and accidents (National Center for Health Statistics, 1997). Every day in 1994, 16 children aged 19 and under, were killed with guns (National Center for Health Statistics, 1994). Firearms kill more people between the ages of 15 and 24 than all natural causes combined (National Center for Health Statistics, 1994). The National Rifle Association (NRA) argues that guns don't kill, people kill. And, with 200 million guns in citizen hands, they argue that gun control will not work.

Mother Jones magazine reported (March/April 1996) that for every attacker shot and killed in self-defense, 130 Americans are killed by guns for other reasons. "Movies and TV consistently reinforce the idea that guns are the best defense against bad guys" (Mother Jones, 1996).

The NRA actively resists hand gun control because it is assumed that guns are needed as a form of self-defense and are part of the U.S. right to bear arms. Activists argue that self-defense is the least frequent form of gun-death.

For every American killed by a firearm in self-defense  
63 commit suicide with firearms  
60 are killed in homicides by firearms  
6 die in firearm accidents  
1 firearm death is undetermined

The United States has the highest rates of childhood homicide, suicide, and firearms-related death among all of the industrialized countries; For kids 15 years or less it is nearly 12 times higher than among children in the other 25 countries combined; Of the total homicides among children in the world, 73 percent occurred among U.S. children; The suicide rate for American children 14 and younger is twice that of the rest of the industrialized world; Guns kept in the home are 43 times more likely to kill a family member or friend than to kill in self-defense; Every day in America, 14 children aged 19 and under are killed in gun

homicides, suicides, and unintentional shootings. For every child killed by a gun, four more are wounded; According to a recent report issued by the Department of Education, over 6,000 students were expelled in 1996-1997 for bringing guns to their public schools.<sup>3</sup>

A federal jury in Brooklyn, N.Y. has found gun manufacturers liable for gun deaths, opening up the door for similar liability lawsuits, Reuters reported Feb. 12, 1999. The jury ruled that the gun makers were liable for shootings with illegally obtained handguns because of negligent marketing and distribution practices.

There is strong, vocal, and organized resistance to gun control. The AP reported that on February 17, 1999, Suzann Wilson, the mother of 11-year-old Britthney-Varner, who was killed in the shooting, was taunted and shouted down by gun-rights supporters on the steps of the state capitol. The bill she supports was created after the shooting at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, in which two boys killed four students and a teacher, age 11 and 13.<sup>4</sup>

The United States is the most violent of all industrialized nations on the planet with the least safe places to live and work. Workplace homicide accounts for 17 percent of all workplace deaths. According to a 1994 Justice Department report nearly one million violent crimes occur in the workplace each year. A 1993 survey by Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance reveals 25 percent of all workers (sixteen million) claim being harassed, threatened or attacked on their job that year. But, spectacle can turn violence into production and consumption. Security agencies are springing up to help executives deal with workplace violence. Personal security systems for executives are tax deductible if actual or threats of violence can be shown. There is even a profile of what to look for in hiring:

The violent person is often a white male, usually single in his 30's or 40's. He is a "loner" with poor interpersonal skills who has trouble dealing with authorities or with coworkers. There is usually a history of violence as well as a history of emotional or substance abuse problems. Odds are high that he has a background of

---

<sup>3</sup> For more statistics see Coordinating Committee on Nonviolence  
<http://www.abanet.org/gunviol/uscompar.html>

<sup>4</sup> See for example (<http://www1.jointogether.org>).

military service and that he owns weapons or is fascinated with weapons.<sup>5</sup>

Agencies recommend careful screening of such profile-persons. This approach and an endless recount of violent death rates misses the point. The entire Society of the Spectacle is desensitized to the violence that is all around. It is more than a problem of the postal worker gone berserk or locking our selves inside of our homes surrounded by security grates and patrolling guards.

I was socialized to accept and tolerate violence and to consume violence willingly as leisure. With the level of violence on television and in Nintendo (and Sony) games, the 200 million handguns in the U.S., and rising domestic and street violence, there is more going on that workplace violence. There is a massive desensitization to violence in our Western socialization.

Violence and Media Whitmer (1997) emphasizes the interdependence and “mutual responsibility for violence between those who commit acts of violence and the society in which we live” (p. 237). She adds “The Hollywood training manual on 999,000 ways to blow up *anything* is out of date ... we need to refocus our attention on what we need to live and sustain healthy, satisfactory lives as interdependent humans” (p. 237). In the Society of the Spectacle the masculine hero is oftentimes brutal, nasty, aggressive, and is as in Hume’s Leviathan, given complete freedom to exploit anyone defined as “other” or enemy. A Movie Violence Rating Services summarized its 1997 list of the 20 most Violent movies. Kills refers to the number of people killed by the character (either shown or here-say) [<http://magi.com/~rhdf/scms/scms.html>]:

<b>Move Title</b>	<b>Kills</b>
1. The Peacekeeper	3,002
2. Under Siege II: Dark Territory	2,259
3. Wanted Dead or Alive	2,203
4. The Peacemaker	1,506
5. Star Command	1,200
6. Interview With The Vampire	1,114
7. Plague	1,053
8. Guyana Tragedy: Jim Jones	1,013
9. Embrace of the Vampire	1,004

---

<sup>5</sup> Consult web sites devoted to security, eg. <http://www.stayout.com/violence.html>

10. Naked Gun 2.5	1,000
11. No Escape	906
12. The Cassandra Crossing	853
13. Millennium	643
14. Return Of The Jedi	387
15. Outbreak	376
16. It	362
17. Massacre In Rome	335
18. Hot Shots Part Deux	314
19. Last Stand At Saber River	300
20. Dune	248

Top 20 Total = 20,078; Top 20 Average = 1003.90

TV and Violent Spectacle I do not watch TV, too violent. I still rent a lot of videos and go frequently to the movies. I have seen many of the films in the above list, many several times. The material is addictive and the spectacle encourages our participation. Network television is considered less violent and less explicit than cable or videos. But, Rupert Murdoch's Fox Channel is not above airing 'snuff TV' such as "World's Scariest Police Shootouts," where viewers, young and old, may watch a pageant of death -- simply for the sake of the violent spectacle -- from the comfort of their homes. In the irony of spectacle, Murdoch was recently given a humanitarian award.<sup>6</sup>

Empirical research is consistent in its findings. According to the American Psychological Association's 1993 report, "Violence and Youth: Psychology's Response," there are not just one but four long term effects of viewing violence:

1. Increased aggressiveness and anti-social behavior.
2. Increased fear of being or becoming a victim.
3. Increased desensitization to violence and victims of violence.
4. Increased appetite for more and more violence in entertainment and real life.

The long-term impact of children growing up watching thousands of hours of violence, is that they role model what they see in the spectacle of violence.

There is another important issue. Violence on TV and at the movies, despite all the studies to its damaging effects, and the newest rating systems, is

---

<sup>6</sup> United Jewish Appeal-Federation has decided to present its "Humanitarian of the Year" award to Rupert Murdoch at a May 29<sup>th</sup>, 1997 banquet in New York City.  
<http://www.tao.ca/water/river/0028.html>

getting more frequent. According to the Center for Media and Public Affairs, the total number of violent scenes in entertainment programming increased by 74% in three years--from 1,002 in 1992 to 1,417 in 1994 and 1,738 in 1995--reaching an average of nearly 10 incidents of violence per channel per hour during the most recent season, even after excluding commercials and all non-fiction programming.<sup>7</sup>

We all know there is a lot of violence on TV, not only in prime time but in the Saturday morning cartoons for children. What I want to focus on here is how the participants in the spectacle blame on another in what is being called "a circle of blame:" "For 40 years, the American people have been engaged in a "circle of blame" about media violence: viewers blaming writers, writers blaming producers, producers blaming the networks, networks blaming the advertisers. And advertisers blaming the public for watching!"<sup>8</sup> Ahimsa, is not about blame, it is about finding alternatives to violence, and letting people find their own way. Ahimsa, for me recognizes that you just do not wake up one morning and turn off the television, stop going to movies, and never rent videos or read the news. Rather, it is a matter of cultivating a taste for nonviolence in a spectacle that encourages just the opposite. It is the path of nonviolent resistance, not blame and judgement.

Violence in Sports Spectacles Most people have come to accept violence as a form of sports entertainment and as a way to avoid warfare by constructively diverting aggression. The society of the spectacle celebrates human violence in sporting events ranging from kickboxing, hockey, to football. Boxing can be a dangerous sport even to spectators. When you mix a violent spectacle with beer and 11,000 spectators, the (1996) Riddick Bowe-Andrew Golata fight in Madison Square Garden became a riot. "What should we expect" said the announcer

---

<sup>7</sup> Center for Media and Public Affairs. "Study Finds Rise in TV Guns and Violence Cable Movies and Cartoons Are Culprits, Not the Networks." September 11, 1996  
<http://www.cmpa.com/archive/viol95.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Summary of testimony to Commerce Committee / United States Senate, Wednesday, July 12, 1995, Elizabeth Thoman, Center for Media Literacy <http://www.cqcm.org/kidsfirst/html/info/tvv.htm>

“when such a violent spectacle is mixed with alcohol, money, lax security and the mixing of races? Apple pie?”<sup>9</sup>

There is an increase in spectator violence at sporting events. An increase is being observed in both frequency and seriousness of acts of violence to not only players but to spectators. Super Bowl Sunday, a spectacle on many levels, is also the day in which domestic violence peaks. A network of feminist activists has orchestrated a national campaign to ask males to stop beating their wives and girlfriends after the Super Bowl. This is the logic (Orlando Sentinel Tribune, January 30, 1993):

- ✓ Football is a violent game.
- ✓ Men watching football drink beer and lose their inhibitions.
- ✓ Uninhibited men watching a violent spectacle are more likely to become violent themselves.
- ✓ Large numbers of men watch the Superbowl at home, with their families.
- ✓ Therefore, on Super Bowl Sunday, increased numbers of women are physically abused by drunken, violent men.

After the Vancouver Canucks lost the Stanley Cup, 70,000 mad fans took their violence to the streets, amid clouds of tear gas. Some 200 people were injured including two with critical head injuries,<sup>10</sup> After the Detroit Tigers won the 1984 World Series, U.S. fans in Detroit and Chicago took their violence to the street, again destroying property and one another. Seventy-three University of Wisconsin students were crushed against a fence after a 13-10 win over Big Ten rival Michigan.

We teach our children to regulate their aggression. Children in sports are expected to exercise the proper amount of violence (not too much, but not too little). “Players who don't display the desired degree of aggressiveness may receive negative reinforcement through criticism from parents and coaches, lack of playing time, harassment by teammates, opponents, or spectators.”<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Source <http://zephyr.oracle.usf.edu/archive/199607/19960715/19960715-sports2.html>

<sup>10</sup> Robert Lee “Fan sports violence also common in United States” July 7, 1994  
<http://beacon-www.asa.utk.edu/issues/v66/archives/www/v66/n11/violence.111.html>

<sup>11</sup> Ismat Abdal-Haqq 1989 “Violence in Sports”  
<http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/npin/respar/texts/teens/violence.html>

Violence and Advertising Violence is not only increasing in frequency in TV and movies, it is also increasing as a way of advertising. Violence in commercials also rose 30% since 1992. The 948 violent scenes tabulated during commercials in 1995 nearly equaled the 1002 violent scenes recorded during all entertainment programming in 1992. Ads have a few moments to show something interesting enough to attract the viewer. The easy way out is to show something violent.

**Gandhi and non-violence in Africa; In India** Gandhi developed practices of non-force.” He reasoned that if violent “body-force” means were used to confront violent resistance to violence he called Satyagraha. The closest English translation is “soul violence, then the resultant culture would still be violent. To Gandhi “not to hurt any living thing” is an important part of Ahimsa, but not the most important element.<sup>12</sup> The important elements are to avoid hatred, lying, wishing ill, and to realize that millions of microorganisms live in and around us. Ahimsa, is not just non-violence it is unconditional love combined with self-control.

To hear suggestive stories with the ears, to see suggestive sights with the eyes, to taste stimulating food with the tongue, to touch exciting things with the hands, and then at the same time expect to control the only remaining organ is like putting one’s hands in the fire, and expecting to escape being burnt.<sup>13</sup>

Gandhi’s choice was to be celibate to sustain his self-control. But, to me, the point is that by consuming violence with the eyes and ears in movies, television, and advertising, makes self-control of our own conduct an illusory objective.

Gandhi’s teachings apply to simplicity. The monk does not store possessions, has no roof over his head, some do not wear clothes, or own anything at all. He seeks simplicity in his daily life and equality with his fellow human beings. This is the opposite of imperial capitalism. In capitalism, riches are stored away, while billions starve to death for want. “The rich should take the initiative in dispossession with a view to a universal diffusion of the spirit of

---

<sup>12</sup> Gandhi’s Non-Violent Resistance, p. 41.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 45.

contentment.”<sup>14</sup> 225 billionaires have more annual income than half the planet’s population. Gandhi’s point is that few people can be monks, or billionaires who give all they own to others. It is an ideal, a model for simplicity in our own production and consumption practices. Contentment and happiness comes from simplicity, not manic accumulation. In capitalism the desire for material consumption, even violent consumption becomes a vicious circle in which the more we consume the further away from happiness we alight. The size of our homes and transport expands to accommodate more and more possessions. Each possession takes more of our time to maintain. In the end we are slaves to possessions.

Animal sacrifice for religion, entertainment (bullfights, hunting), food (pig and cattle slaughterhouses, dairy production lessens life expectancy), clothing (leather shoes and belts, animal furs, and silk) or animal testing (medicine and car testing) does not stand the test of non-violence. Merchants are encouraged not to stock products of animal sacrifice and consumers are galvanized not to consume such products.

Let no one run away with the idea that this type of merchant exists only in my imagination. Fortunately for the world, it does exist in the West as well as in the East. It is true, such merchants may be counted on one’s fingers’ ends, but the type ceases to be imaginary, as soon as even one living specimen can be found to answer to it.<sup>15</sup>

It occurs to me that non-violent resistance is an excellent way to reform spectacles of production and consumption. Some are already in effect. I would like to apply Gandhi’s rules of Satyagraha to such a project. The idea is to extend love to the capitalist producer and conspicuous consumer, but to resist any act of violence to humans, animals, or ecology. Gandhi recommended that before Satyagraha actions were initiated, the people be persuaded that there it was appropriate. He then imposed a number of rules for those joining in the non-violent resistance. I have adapted these to show that they would change the

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 46.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. p. 49.

manner in which many animal rights, tree rights, and human rights boycotts are currently conducted:

**Rules Non-Violent Resistance of Spectacle<sup>16</sup>**

1. As a resistor, do not harbor anger toward the over-producer or over-consumer of spectacles of violence. It is the act that is being protested.
2. Suffer the anger of the opponent to your resistance to spectacle.
3. Do not retaliate against assaults from the opponent and do not submit to a punishment or order given in anger.
4. Voluntarily submit to arrest without resistance, including non-resistance to any confiscation of your property by the authorities.
5. Do not surrender property you are holding in trusteeship, even if you must surrender your own life.
6. Do not retaliate by swearing or cursing at opponents.
7. Do not engage in practices contrary to the spirit of Ahimsa.
8. Do not insult the corporation, state or spectacle officials and employees.
9. In the struggle protect the opponent, official, employee, or consumer from the insult or attack of others, even if it means giving your own life.

These rules of engagement would radically change how boycotts are currently being carried out. For example, there would not be tree spiking, swearing, vandalism, and other acts that would be themselves unloving or violent actions. There would not be attempts to embarrass speakers or to shout them from their spectacle podiums. Nike protests would not shake cans of rocks outside the Footlocker store. There would still be attempts to educate, officials, employees, investors, and managers about the violence that particular corporations are doing to humans, animals, and ecology. There would be non-violent actions organized. For example, refusing to shop at a Wal-Mart, Disney, Nike or K-Mart until they purchase from contractors paying a living wage. Refusing to use textbooks that celebrate these companies. Creating consumer and investor groups that take joint non-violent actions of resistance. If we refuse to work for or purchase from corporations or any enterprise engaged in violence, then change is possible. Rallying public opinion will be the real force for bringing about capitalist reforms of its own spectacles of production and consumption. Civil disobedience is necessary for some non-violence issues. For examples, several states, including

Texas have beef disparagement laws. Even speaking out against violence in beef slaughterhouses is against the law.

The rules of non-violent resistance would also change some of my own work. For example, I have written pieces that vilified Phil Knight and did write things that embarrassed the Nike Corporation. I also been with the rules, such as when I made documented characterizations of Knight's actions and those of his corporation focusing on ways in which they continue to violate their own codes of conduct. I did post these items on the web and publish them in journals and proceedings. This I did to sway public opinion. I have not shaken cans of rocks in the faces of Footlocker shoppers, though I do not shop there at this time. I did seek to embarrass Tom Peters by turning my chair and backside to him during a public lecture. I did this in retaliation to a comment he made about being the Gandhi of India in his employment of children in his rug factory. I did not know how, at that time, to approach the situation with love and disciplined protest. I used to think it was advisable to fight spectacle fire with more spectacle fire, but now I see this does not lead to festival, only to more spectacles.

**Students of Gandhi: Chitrabhanu; Satish; King** My teacher, Gurudev Chitrabhanu is a Jain Monk, worked in Gandhi's actions, and spent twenty years walking about India with a message of non-violence. He now spends half his time in Mumbai and the other leading and inspiring the Jain communities in the United States. Both Satish, who we shall speak of shortly and Gurudev worked with Mahatma Gandhi during the protests against British colonial rule, which was achieved in 1947. Both Satish and Gurudev have founded schools. Satish founded Schumacher College, named after E. F. Schumacher, the author of *Small is Beautiful*. I visited several schools in Indian founded by Gurudev that educate children that might not otherwise receive one.

Schumacher's (1973) book, *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered* challenges the concepts of unlimited growth, predatory competition, and violent forms of production and consumption. Satish Kumar, a Jain Monk,

---

<sup>16</sup> Adapted from Gandhi's book on Non-Violent Resistance, see p. 78-81. I did not include the prisoner of protest rules or squabbles among the protesters rules.

after walking halfway around the world promoting peace and disarmament, settled in England. For 25 years he has edited *Resurgence magazine* devoted to non-violent principles of living in the modern world.

In bringing Jain teachings of non-violence to Western countries, both Satish and Gurudev have endured much criticism. Decades ago, it was considered highly inappropriate for Jain monks to use modern transportation systems and travel abroad. Both speak to the discontent people in the West experience with a crisis of identity and meaning, from spectacle life styles of over-consumption and violent production. Both spend hours each day in meditation to separate from the influences of spectacle.

King Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., for example, applied Gandhi's non-violent teachings of social change. His nonviolent Civil Rights marches, open prayers, and other forms of protest captured the imagination of millions who did not realize that there were violent racial relations all around them. Nonviolent action brings about awareness, and it is then up to people to make their own choices. "Network TV and national publications graphically showed the police dogs and bullwhips and cattle prods used against Southern blacks who sought the right to vote or to eat at a public lunch counter" (Cohen & Solomon, 1995). The televised episodes of violent action against the nonviolent protests led to the widespread support for Civil Rights reform. King advocated the nonviolent elimination of poverty, racism, violence and war. It began with the Montgomery protest:

On December 5, 1955, five days after Montgomery civil rights activist Rose Parks refused to obey the city's policy mandating segregation on buses, black residents launched a bus boycott and elected King as president of the newly-formed Montgomery Improvement Association. As the boycott continued during 1956, King gained national prominence as a result of his exceptional oratorical skills and personal courage. His house was bombed, and he and other boycott leaders were convicted on charges of conspiring to interfere with the bus company's operations. Despite these attempts to suppress the movement, Montgomery's buses were desegregated in December, 1956, after the United States

Supreme Court declared Alabama's segregation laws unconstitutional.<sup>17</sup>

In August, 1963 Reverend King's "I have a Dream" speech was delivered at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. These excerpts stress nonviolence change possibilities:

Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must ever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force...

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed - we hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal.

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; one day right down in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be

---

<sup>17</sup> For more examples consult <http://www.iuma.com/HOB/Bios/MLK.html>

made plain and the crooked places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

But, spectacle does not reform so easily. It is able to appropriate a reform movement and make it part of spectacle appeal. For example, Cohen and Solomon (1995) comment on how Martin Luther King's life story has become part of the annual media spectacle of his ritualized annual holiday television consumption.

What TV viewers see is a closed loop of familiar file footage: King battling desegregation in Birmingham (1963); reciting his dream of racial harmony at the rally in Washington (1963); marching for voting rights in Selma, Alabama (1965); and finally, lying dead on the motel balcony in Memphis (1968).

Spectacle is selective in its storytelling. What the ritualized King spectacle leaves out in its annual tributes, is how in the last years of his life, Reverend King turned his attention to the growing gap between rich and poor. King observed that a majority of Americans below the poverty line, and these were mostly white folks. The year of his assassination, he was calling for radical changes in the distribution of wealth and proposing a poor man's march on Washington D.C. On April 4, 1967 King, I believed, directly challenged the spectacle of production and consumption; he called the United States "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today." As Cohen and Solomon (1995) summarize:

From Vietnam to South Africa to Latin America, King said, the U.S. was "on the wrong side of a world revolution." King questioned "our alliance with the landed gentry of Latin America," and asked why the U.S. was suppressing revolutions "of the shirtless and barefoot people" in the Third World, instead of supporting them.

One of the main effects of the Society of the Spectacle is to revise history and appropriate it in ways that further spectacle interests. The annual King life story features scenes of violence for more violent television consumption. As the National Park Service prepares to take over the King Center and King home, critics contend the King legacy is being sold out. There are not so subtle changes in the nonviolent protest agenda. A recent cartoon produced by the King Center,

for example, “features a multiracial group of children who get transported back in time and meet Martin Luther King Jr. as a teenager. It features the voices of LeVar Burton and James Earl Jones” (Shepard, 1999).

“I stand in fear and am trembling that Martin is going to be Mickey Moused and Fat Albertized. What I've heard about it so far has been negative,” Lowery said.

Reverend Joseph Lowery is a former King associate and past president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference that King founded. There are of course just as many ways of keeping the dream alive as there are of appropriating it to spectacle.

**Non-violence and animal rights** Most people do not believe animals have rights and resist the idea that animals are sentient beings with feelings and community skills. Ahimsa does not promote violence or even subordination of animals. Various Animal Rights groups are also concerned about nonviolence to animals. There are spectacles that are focused on animal cruelty. Rodeos, something I grew up attending as a western lad, are receiving a good deal of recent criticism:

Rodeos consist of mounting supposedly wild, but in reality domesticated, horses and bulls which are forced to buck and kick by inflicting pain. Rodeos, whether they use horses, bulls or calves, are nothing more than a continuation of cruelties inflicted on animals. Also called bronco riding, bull riding, etc., rodeos, whether they use horses, bulls or calves, are nothing more than a continuation of cruelties inflicted on animals... The animal's bucks are the result of the pain caused by the girth which traps the animal's belly (and for male animals their genitals and sheath) not to mention kicking and spurring by the rider and even electric shocks. When the rider falls off, the animal continues bucking and kicking, only stopping once the strap is released (the sheepskin around this strap is only there to sometimes avoid or to hide open wounds on animals which are used and re-used causing their wounds to worsen each time... Another part of this violent spectacle sometimes consists of sending other animals, such as calves, out onto the track, catching them with a lasso and brutally throwing them to the ground despite their terror, sometimes after having dragged them on the ground or twisted their head or tail (the

latter being particularly painful as the tail is an extension of the spinal column.<sup>18</sup>

The Pro-Rodeo people do not see it as a violent sport at all.<sup>19</sup> Animals they admit, are dragged, straps are used to make the buck, but says a fan: "Having a healthy and active practice animal is essential. If you abuse them they will not perform, and as you state below, there is a lot of money tied up in these animals and the contractors need to protect their investment." Rodeo enthusiasts contend that they discipline their sport to minimize unnecessary violent practice.

Bull fighting is a national spectacle in several countries. Described by commentators as a "flawlessly performed symphony, as moving as a Verdi Opera" since Johann Sebastian Bach, many around the world have been schooled to cheer for the brave matador. In Madrid and Sevilla there are popular weeklong tourist spectacles devoted to la corrida (literally, the "running" of the bulls).

One would never guess from the festive air surrounding this activity that the event itself -- the bullfight -- is all about dominating and killing an animal. But the fate of the bull now has people -- Spanish and non-Spanish alike -- rallying against the sport. The concept that such a violent spectacle can be an emotionally moving experience, or even just an enjoyable one, is especially incomprehensible to the average American who makes a point of eating dolphin-safe tuna and buying non-animal-tested products. Some foreigners refuse to see a bullfight on principle, while others go at least once just to witness the legendary spectacle.<sup>20</sup>

Spectacle involves theatrics and a narrative that makes the violence appear appropriate and sensible. The fight between man and beast is rigidly choreographed theatrics.

[Each fight] begins as the bull enters the ring and the matador's assistant cape men run it through several preliminary "passes," using large, multicolored capes. Then the "picador" enters, riding a blindfolded horse. He provokes the bull to charge his horse, while

---

<sup>18</sup> Source [http://www.declaration-important.org/uk\\_1150\\_2000\\_a.html](http://www.declaration-important.org/uk_1150_2000_a.html).

<sup>19</sup> See <http://members.aol.com/cwbyidaho/debate.html>

<sup>20</sup> Source <http://www.aspeninteractive.com/aspenimes/dir/97/Jul/week1/coverD.html>

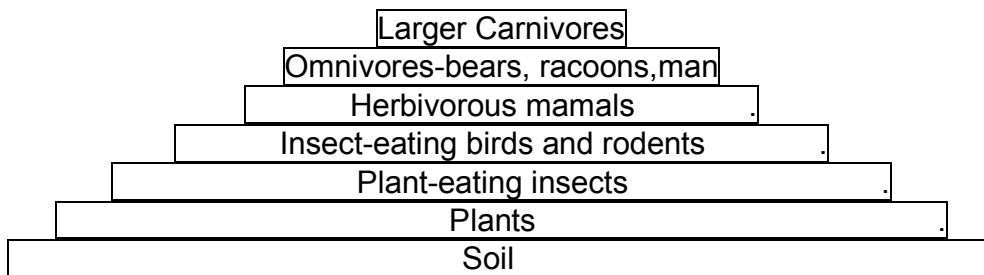
he in turn drives a sharply-pointed lance into the bull's neck to weaken its "tossing" muscles (this makes the animal lower its head)."

The next of the fight involves three men, the "banderilleros," who plant pairs of harpoons (festooned with brightly colored paper, but harpoons nonetheless) into the bull's neck as it charges them. After the six sticks are in place, the bull -- somewhat weakened, with blood streaming down its sides -- is ready for the faena, the final act of the drama.

The faena pits the bull against the matador, who carries only his sword and a small red cape. The matador performs a series of classic passes, establishing and demonstrating his mastery over both the animal and his own fears. Finally, in the most dangerous moment of the fight, the bull is killed with (if done properly) a single sword thrust through the back of its neck.

The bull's body is then dragged around the ring by a team of bell-jingling horses in what is considered a show of honor to the animal.

**Ecology and Violence** There is a close parallel between Leopold's "Land Ethic" and Ahimsa. Both see ignorant interference in the evolution of other species as a form of violence. Leopold's "biotic pyramid" defines ecology as an interdependent web of life, which includes the land.



Note: Final diagram will have feedback loops illustrated between levels.

**Land Ethic** Leopold contended that undisciplined human technology (e.g. guns, strip mining tractors, and laws allowing for mass extermination of wolves and other species resulted into violence to the biotic web of life. Leopold's (1949) Land Ethic can be stated very simply: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it

tends otherwise." The contemporary result of Land Ethics is the Bioethics movement (Koch, 1992):

Through technology, we are rapidly changing the earth. These changes have accelerated as man moved from a hunter/food gatherer to a member of an agricultural society and finally into the industrial age. Many of the present technological changes are irreversible, damaging to the land and clashing with our increasing scientific knowledge of how biotic communities function. Individuals are faced with a moral environmental responsibility.

### Spectacles of Factory Farm Production Violent Animal Production Spectacles

Upton Sinclair's (1905) *the Jungle* contains systematic observations of animal as well as human cruelty in the Chicago meat disassembly business.

There were the men in the pickle rooms, for instance, where old Antanas had gotten his death; scarce a one of these that had not some spot of horror on his person. Let a man so much as scape his finger pushing a truck in the pickle rooms, and he might have a sore that would put him out of the world; all the joints in his fingers might be eaten by the acid, one by one. Of the butchers and floorsmen, the beef-boners and trimmers, and all those who used knives, you could scarcely find a person who had the use of his thumb; time and time again the base of it had been slashed, till it was a mere lump of flesh against which the man pressed the knife to hold it. The hands of these men would be criss-crossed with cuts, until you could no longer pretend to count them or to trace them. They would have no nails, -they had worn them off pulling hides; their knuckles were swollen so that their fingers spread out like a fan... There were the wool-pluckers, whose hands went to pieces even sooner than the hands of the pickle men; for the pelts of the sheep had to be painted with acid to loosen the wool, and then the pluckers had to pull out this wool with their bare hands, till the acid had eaten their fingers off (Sinclair, 1905: 97-98).

If it was all just ancient history, who would really care. With the trend toward integrating family farms into factory farms, animal cruelty and worker safety rivals Sinclair's observations. Factory farming is an industrial process that applies the philosophy and practices of mass production to animal farming. Few consumers have ever observed animal slaughter, of over six billion animals a year, in the U.S. alone. Much of it happens to these sentient beings is done behind closed

doors in buildings without windows. Fellow-mammals are not like corn or carrots, they have several more senses to feel their handling. As animals proceed, today, on the conveyor built they can be observed to squirm and yelp, in mortal fear of their life's end. It is not always the stun gun, which oftentimes does not work anyway, due to poor training and maintenance. In Kosher slaughter an animal is hoisted and bled to death without any stunning. The idea of "painless kill" say animal rights groups is the fantasy of the spectacle, as storied to the spectator by the factory farm advertisers. Even before death there are strange spectacles. Poultry are exempt from the Humane Slaughter Act, passed after Sinclair's book resulted in popular protest. Poultry are packed tightly into metal cages, with the wire on which they stand growing ever embedded into their feet. Hens are painfully debeaked in many factory farms.

Fur Animal Production Each year millions of fur animals die violently. Below is a chart of sixteen species most commonly killed in the U.S. and the most common kill methods. The numbers killed are yearly averages for 1995 through 1998.

The terms fur farm and fur ranch are euphemisms invented by the fur industry for what really is the intensive confinement system of caged-fur facilities. At a typical facility, open-sided sheds contain several rows of small wire-mesh cages. The floors also are wire so that feces can fall to the ground... Intensive confinement makes natural activities like swimming, climbing, digging, and traveling long distances impossible. Cage-raised minks commonly suffer obsessive-compulsive stereotypic behaviors: pacing, self-mutilation, and cannibalism are induced by chronic stress, boredom, frustration, deprivation, and an inability to adapt to surroundings. Repetitive behaviors include head bobbing, head twirling, swaying, and biting the wire-mesh caging, in addition to pacing. Pelt biting and tail biting are also common behaviors prompted by confinement.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> The Humane Society of the United States Caged Fur The Inside Story  
[http://www.hsus.org/current/fur\\_inside.html](http://www.hsus.org/current/fur_inside.html)

**Table Two: Fur Animal Methods of Violence<sup>22</sup>**

Species	Killing Method	Number Killed
Beaver	Drowned in leghold or body-crushing trap	291,000
Bobcat	Clubbed, suffocated, or shot after being caught in leghold trap; hunted and shot	40,000
Chinchilla (Caged)	Electrocuted (genital or ear-to-foot); neck broken	75,000 <sup>1</sup>
Coyote	Clubbed, suffocated, or shot after being caught in leghold trap; hunted and shot; poisoned; strangled by snare	491,000
Fisher	Drowned or crushed by leghold or body-crushing trap; clubbed, suffocated, or shot after being caught in leghold trap	6,000
Fox (Caged)	Electrocuted (anal); poisoned (by injection); gassed	20,000 <sup>2</sup>
Fox (Wild)	Clubbed, suffocated, or shot after being caught in leghold trap; hunted and shot; strangled by snare	368,000
Lynx	Clubbed, suffocated, or shot after being caught in leghold trap	1,200
Marten (American Sable)	Clubbed, suffocated, or shot after being caught in leghold trap; crushed by trap	12,000
Mink (Caged)	Gassed; neck broken; poisoned (by injection)	2,600,000 <sup>3</sup>
Mink (Wild)	Drowned in leghold or body-crushing trap	115,000
Muskrat	Drowned in leghold or body-crushing trap	1,358,000
Nutria	Drowned in leghold or body-crushing trap; crushed by trap	237,000
Opossum	Clubbed, suffocated, or shot after being caught in leghold trap; hunted and shot	211,000
Otter	Drowned in leghold or body-crushing trap	20,000
Raccoon	Drowned, clubbed, suffocated, or shot after being caught in leghold trap; hunted and shot	2,575,000
Skunk	Clubbed, suffocated, or shot after being caught in leghold trap	63,000
Weasel	Crushed by leghold trap; clubbed, suffocated, or shot after being caught in leghold trap	7,000

How does animal electrocution happen?

The farmer told our investigator that humane death by an injection of barbiturate was "too expensive"--even though it costs a mere 30

<sup>22</sup> The Humane Society of the United States [http://www.hsus.org/current/death\\_chart.html](http://www.hsus.org/current/death_chart.html)

cents (20p) per animal. So he uses a metal noose pole to lift each fox from the cage by the neck, shoves an electric prod in the animal's rectum and forces a metal conductor into the mouth. A flip of a switch shoots 250 volts of electricity through the fox's body.

According to our investigator, "The fox's eyes usually shut and the body goes rigid. There is a crackling sound...and sometimes teeth break and fall out....Often the anal probe falls out. When this happens, the fox convulses, shakes and often cries."

Death doesn't come quickly. Because the electricity does not go through and stun the brain, the foxes remain awake and feel the full excruciating force of a massive heart attack. Tom Amlung, a veterinarian and administrator for St. Clair County, Ill., animal control, says, "...The animals do not lose consciousness...for one to two minutes. The time...seems like an eternity, so one can only imagine how the animal must feel experiencing this pain during this time with the electricity running from one end of his body to the other while heat builds up at the site of the electrode."<sup>23</sup>

Animal Research Each year, an estimated 100 million animals are used in research, testing, and education. The following examples are taken from R. Ryder's "Victims of Science":

- ✓ Psychologists gave electric shocks to the feet of 1042 mice. They then caused convulsions by giving more intense shocks through cup-shaped electrodes applied to the animals' eyes or through spring clips attached to their ears.
- ✓ In Japan, starved rats with electrodes in their necks and electrodes in their eyeballs were forced to run in treadmills for four hours at a time.
- ✓ A group of 64 monkeys was addicted to drugs by automatic injection in their jugular veins. When the supply of drugs was abruptly withdrawn, some of the monkeys were observed to die in convulsions. Before dying, some monkeys plucked out all their hair or bit off their own fingers and toes.<sup>24</sup>

Sentient animals are reduced to the status of disposable tools. In Ahimsa, each sentient being has its own worth and right to life. In the word of Gandhi: "Vivisection is the blackest of all the black crimes that a man is at present committing against God and his fair creation."

---

<sup>23</sup> PETA Goes Undercover Fall, 1997 <http://www.peta-online.org/library/at/fox.html>

**The Web of Life** In sum, the Ahimsa worldview encompasses the nonviolence philosophy of Gandhi, Chitrabhanu, Kumar, King Jr., and Leopold. It applies to issues such as gun violence, domestic violence, TV violence, animal violence and other aspects of a world nurtured in the spectacle of production and consumption. The topic is considered too controversial for classroom discussion in U.S. business colleges. Textbooks on the subject do not mention violence at all, as if production and consumption practices were totally nonviolent. In approaching the topic, I again stress that there are many contrary worldviews, including those that do not view animals as having rights, support gun ownership, and see image-violence consumption as an act of leisure. I seek alternatives, ways in which nonviolence in all forms is an option to the dominant mindset.

---

<sup>24</sup> Consult <http://www.animal-rights.com/arpge.htm>