

An Ethical Failure?

Must we tolerate intolerance?

Philosopher Karl Popper first described the '**Paradox of Tolerance**' - "Unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance. If we extend unlimited tolerance even to those who are intolerant, if we are not prepared to defend a tolerant society against the onslaught of the intolerant, then the tolerant will be destroyed, and tolerance with them. —In this formulation, I do not imply, for instance, that we should always suppress the utterance of intolerant philosophies; as long as we can counter them by rational argument and keep them in check by public opinion, suppression would certainly be unwise. But we should claim the right to suppress them if necessary ...*(and here is where it gets dicey, hence the paradox)* ...even by force; for it may easily turn out that they are not prepared to meet us on the level of rational argument, but begin by denouncing all argument; they may forbid their followers to listen to rational argument, because it is deceptive, and teach them to answer arguments by the use of their fists or pistols."

"We should therefore claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant."

It is rather a lot to hope, that rational argument and public opinion will restrain a group of true believers, wedded to false beliefs or assumptions.

Racism clearly is never justifiable, It absurdly selects physical manifestations of a genetic code and its geographic adaptations, as inferior, dangerous, or loathsome.

But even reasonable people can buy into this simple-minded fallacy when it comes to another species- A growing call for public safety has led communities around the world to impose Breed-specific legislation (BSL)- laws that ban or restrict certain types of dogs **based on their appearance**, because they are *perceived* as "dangerous" breeds or types of dogs.

Breed-specific legislation applies only to dogs of a certain appearance. It does not take into account how the owner has raised, trained, or managed the dog. It does not take into account any individual dog's actual behavior.

Some breed specific laws don't target specific breeds, but rather, a loosely defined class of dogs. Almost all BSL also includes a "substantially similar" clause: "or any dog with an appearance or physical characteristics that are substantially similar to the aforementioned breeds." In other words, targeted dogs are often subject to BSL *not* because they are a specific breed, but because they simply *look similar* to a particular breed. The vast majority of canines are mixed breed dogs. Most mixed breed dogs are a genetically complex porporri from generations of mixed breed dogs interbreeding, any standard based on appearance is inherently an unreliable measure of a dogs temperament.



It is entirely subjective. Just like any other form of discrimination and prejudice.

Breed-specific legislation is not an effective approach for regulating dog behavior. Bans might comfort individuals who have had unpleasant experiences with particular breeds or have heard of attacks by specific dog breeds, but the bans do not effectively regulate the behavior of any breed- or of dogs and their owners collectively. The bans carry the potential for arbitrary or improper enforcement, and the potential for not identifying a genuinely "dangerous dog" as such because it doesn't fall into the specified breed categories. Unfortunately, large breeds of dogs such as Dobermans, German Shepherd Dogs, and Pit Bulls are popularly believed to be dangerous, and therefore are judged more severely than smaller, "cuddly" breeds.

The difference between 'Good' dogs and 'Bad' dogs is a question of their behavior. Good or bad, dogs learn from the behavior of the humans who control them, From the training and habits of their life experience. Respectful, positive conditions invariably make for 'good' dog behavior, just as abuse, disrespect, and irrationality, invariably make for 'bad' dog behavior.

As humans, our true nature is that which we spend our time thinking about and espousing- Actions taken.

When those actions provoke others beliefs or values, it is natural that arguments ensue. Winning any argument presupposes there is actually an argument, that another can, or must lose.

But a false dichotomy occurs when an argument presents two options and ignores, either purposefully or out of ignorance, other alternatives.

In general, a false dichotomy gives the impression that the two opposite options are mutually exclusive and that at least one of them is true.

Faced with intolerant angry prejudice, hateful bigotry, or unprovoked irrational violence, there is no argument, there can only be clear certainty of wrong- To deny this is an ethical failure. No matter what is said-

Behavior Matters. ~Joshua Golden

The War That Time Forgot

Most Americans have no idea why we are in Afghanistan; it's the longest running Fake War in American history. Some, as many as 20 percent according to a Gallup Poll, have no idea that we *are* still in Afghanistan. Osama Bin Laden and Mullah Omar are both long dead. The shattered remnants of Al Qaeda have fled to Pakistan and parts unknown. Hamid Karzai has come and gone. For the last six months, the US hasn't even troubled itself to send an ambassador to Kabul.

A kind of convenient cultural amnesia has set in, abetted by a compliant press corps that has largely decamped from the Hindu Kush and now treats Afghanistan as if it is some kind of interstellar region, where photographers are occasionally dispatched to snap eerie debris clouds from the detonation of MOAB bombs. It's no wonder that the few Americans who continue to support the war cling to the delusion that Afghanistan orchestrated the 9/11 attacks. It is the War that Time Forgot.

Nothing better illustrates the eclipse of US global power than the fact that Afghanistan refuses to be subjugated or even managed, despite 16 years of hard-core carnage. Since the first US airstrikes hit Kandahar in October 2001, more than 150,000 Afghan civilians have been killed. Still Afghanistan resists imperial dictates. Even after Obama's shameful troop surge in 2010, an escalation that went almost unopposed by the US antiwar movement, the

Taliban now retains almost as much control of the country as it did in 2001. And for that Afghanistan must be punished. Eternally, it seems.

As for Trump, in his quest to privatize as much of the federal government as possible the president is still apparently entranced with the idea of turning over much of the Afghan operation to military contractors. Trump and Company huddled with Erik Prince, founder of Blackwater Security, and billionaire financier Stephen Feinberg, owner of DynCorp, on how to continue replacing US troops with mercenaries from their training camps.

Over the course of 16 years, the cratering American operation in Afghanistan has consumed more than \$1 trillion, a huge and nearly unchallenged benefaction to military contractors. In 2016, the Pentagon spent \$3.6 million for each US soldier stationed in Afghanistan. A surge of 4,000 to 10,000 additional troops, either as "private military units" or GIs, will come as a welcome new infusion of cash to the dozens of defense corporations that invested so heavily in his administration.

And don't forget, crime fighters, since the start of Operation Enduring Freedom, opium production has swelled, now accounting for more than one-third of the wrecked Afghan economy. In the last two years alone, opium poppy yields have doubled, a narcotic blowback now hitting the streets of American cities from Amarillo to Pensacola. With every drone strike in the Helmond Province, a thousand more poppies bloom.

Much thanks to Jeffrey St. Clair- editor of the superb CounterPunch.org

THE FOURTH LETTER FROM NINEVEH
Then I thought in that shattered city
waiting too long beside the fallen road
suppose then, I never see you

all the words gathered between us
broken to their separate alphabets
& touch too only a lost sequence

neurons & dendrites, the lost trees
of desire. In the new land is there
yet a place for these, our few

careful remnants: a song made
of the thin voices of our children
starting over & over singing of gifts

Do you remember the country
of innocence? Some call it
garden or tree

Written on you open hands I called
it by your name, looking into
your eyes that rivered day

seeing my life go on
though you passed through it. Fires
blazing in all my broken rooms.

~Kathy Epling



"So often activism is based on what we are against, what we don't like, what we don't want. And yet we manifest what we focus on. And so we are manifesting yet ever more of what we don't want, what we don't like, what we want to change. So for me, activism is about a spiritual practice as a way of life. And I realized I didn't climb the tree because I was angry at the corporations and the government; I climbed the tree because when I fell in love with the redwoods, I fell in love with the world. So it is my feeling of 'connection' that drives me, instead of my anger and feelings of being disconnected."

~Julia Butterfly Hill



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