

Innocence Lost - Poem by Nathan Kronschnable

To think back to those innocent times
Of living life with a rhythm and rhyme
Known only to you and your pure heart
Your young bright soul, so free from the dark

The summer breeze, cool and true
The towering trees and sky so blue
Such beauty feels so wasted today
For I never knew what I would soon pay

The spirit is tainted for no good cause
With the age-old evils of pain and loss
This goes out to my long-gone friend
Who I shall never forget 'til the very end

Can you remember the magic we shared?
No evil nor demons touched our hidden lair
A place just for us, up high in the trees
I implore you, remember, remember it please.

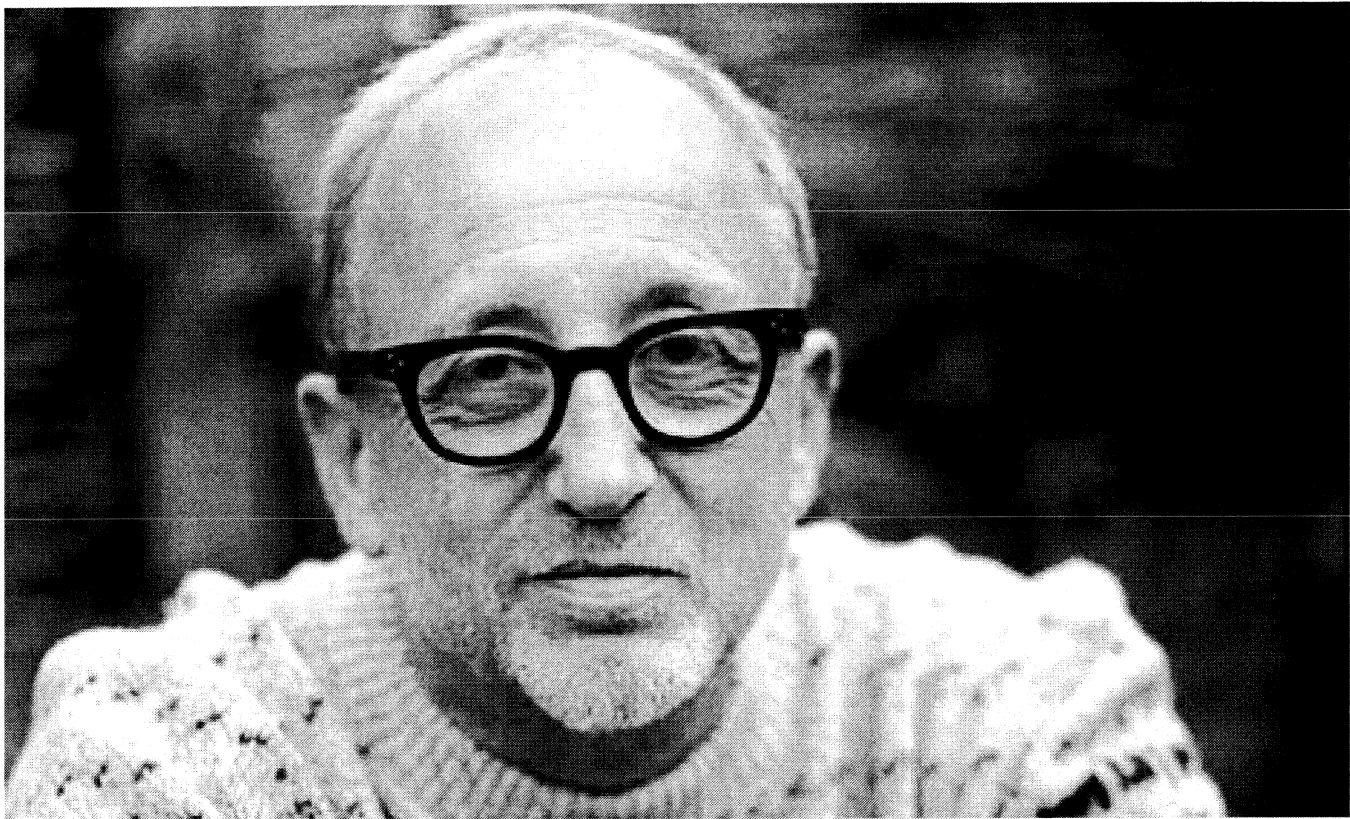
Never forget the music of youth,
The harmonious mystery of wisdom and truth
The modern life, stained so, so dark
Could never taint your loving heart.

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What exactly is the innocence of childhood?

One Christmas I picked up my longed-for Rupert the Bear annual, but I could no longer get into it. The passion had gone



Tim Lott: 'The gap between innocence and experience is endlessly explored by artists and writers.'

Tim Lott

Friday 10 May 2013 07.59 EDT

What is it that is most appealing about children? Is it simply their physical beauty? Is it their openness to loving and being loved? Their playfulness, their innate humour? Beyond these things, in my view, children are beautiful because they possess something that we have all lost - the quality of innocence.

Innocence is not merely lovely, it is heartbreaking because it represents Housman's "*blue remember'd hills*" ... the "*happy highways where I went/and cannot come again*".

The gap between innocence and experience is endlessly explored, like a gap in a tooth, by artists and writers. I have felt in exile ever since childhood - not as a result of some

traumatic experience, but the simple, slow dimmer switch of time passing and imagination coarsening.

But what is innocence? Like St Augustine on the subject of Time, 'If you do not ask me what time is, I know it; if you ask me, I do not know.'

When I watch my youngest daughter, Louise, playing for an hour with Sylvania families, singing to herself, I know I see it. When I watch my 10-year-old, Eva, dancing as if no one is watching, I know I am also seeing it. But it is ineffable.

It is, at one level, a rarefied quality of ignorance. To not grasp imaginatively that death will come. To be ignorant of sex, likewise. To believe in the irrational - Santa Claus, fairies, monsters under the bed. And, of course, the myth of the infinite power and goodness of parents.

This is perhaps the hardest part of all innocence to let go of. My eldest, Jean, nowadays seems perpetually disappointed in me and I can only ascribe this to the fact that I have let her down by proving unable to either be perfect or protect her against the world. After all, she was forced to face the separation of her parents when she was only six years old. But I feel, self-defensively perhaps, that her disappointment is more about her particular loss of what we all must lose.

Innocence goes deeper than ignorance. It is some mysterious operation of the imagination, the part that can enter into mental universes from which one is soon to be forever excluded. I have my own particular recollection of this.

Every year from when I was of reading age, I was given a Rupert the Bear annual for Christmas and every Christmas day I fell upon it with a passion, losing myself in the mysterious tales of Chinese wizards and sea-gods and wood sprites. Then one year I picked up the annual and could not "get into it". It was just a book with pictures and a story. I could no longer enter its portal and inhabit its world.

Even now I remember the sting of disappointment. My wife thought I was mad when last year I bought a large painting of Rupert from the artist Mark Manning (who has done a series depicting scenes from Nutwood). But I suppose therein lies the explanation.

Innocence is also the growth of self-consciousness, perhaps the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" referred to in the story of Adam and Eve. Perhaps you are thrown out into a world bled of colour and meaning and spend your life trying to regain it.

But can you regain it? Not in its original form, certainly. But sometimes, now I am growing older, I feel shadows of my ancient innocence in the night sky, in the song of birds, in the earth's breathing out of white and pink blossoms.

I am unlearning all the things I have been taught in life, and perhaps this, as well as the more tragic meaning, is what Shakespeare talked of when he wrote that the final age of man is: *"Last scene of all,*

That ends this strange eventful history,

Is second childishness and mere oblivion."

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Justice and Fairness

Manuel Velasquez, Claire Andre, Thomas Shanks, S.J., and Michael J. Meyer

This article appeared originally in Issues in Ethics V3 N2 (Spring 1990).

Many public policy arguments focus on fairness. Is affirmative action fair? Are congressional districts drawn to be fair? Is our tax policy fair? Is our method for funding schools fair?

Arguments about justice or fairness have a long tradition in Western civilization. In fact, no idea in Western civilization has been more consistently linked to ethics and morality than the idea of justice. From the Republic, written by the ancient Greek philosopher Plato, to A Theory of Justice, written by the late Harvard philosopher John Rawls, every major work on ethics has held that justice is part of the central core of morality.

Justice means giving each person what he or she deserves or, in more traditional terms, giving each person his or her due. Justice and fairness are closely related terms that are often today used interchangeably. There have, however, also been more distinct understandings of the two terms. While justice usually has been used with reference to a standard of rightness, fairness often has been used with regard to an ability to judge without reference to one's feelings or interests; fairness has also been used to refer to the ability to make judgments that are not overly general but that are concrete and specific to a particular case. In any case, a notion of desert is crucial to both justice and fairness. The Nortons and Ellisons of this world, for example, are asking for what they think they deserve when they are demanding that they be treated with justice and fairness. When people differ over what they believe should be given, or when decisions have to be made about how benefits and burdens should be distributed among a group of people, questions of justice or fairness inevitably arise. In fact, most ethicists today hold the view that there would be no point of talking about justice or fairness if it were not for the conflicts of interest that are created when goods and services are

scarce and people differ over who should get what. When such conflicts arise in our society, we need principles of justice that we can all accept as reasonable and fair standards for determining what people deserve.

But saying that justice is giving each person what he or she deserves does not take us very far. How do we determine what people deserve? What criteria and what principles should we use to determine what is due to this or that person?

Principles of Justice

The most fundamental principle of justice—one that has been widely accepted since it was first defined by Aristotle more than two thousand years ago—is the principle that "equals should be treated equally and unequals unequally." In its contemporary form, this principle is sometimes expressed as follows: "Individuals should be treated the same, unless they differ in ways that are relevant to the situation in which they are involved." For example, if Jack and Jill both do the same work, and there are no relevant differences between them or the work they are doing, then in justice they should be paid the same wages. And if Jack is paid more than Jill simply because he is a man, or because he is white, then we have an injustice—a form of discrimination—because race and sex are not relevant to normal work situations.

There are, however, many differences that we deem as justifiable criteria for treating people differently. For example, we think it is fair and just when a parent gives his own children more attention and care in his private affairs than he gives the children of others; we think it is fair when the person who is first in a line at a theater is given first choice of theater tickets; we think it is just when the government gives benefits to the needy that it does not provide to more affluent citizens; we think it is just when some who have done wrong are given punishments that are not meted out to others who have done nothing wrong; and we think it is fair when those who exert more efforts or who make a greater contribution to a project receive more benefits from the project than others. These criteria—need, desert, contribution, and effort—we acknowledge as justifying differential treatment, then, are numerous.

On the other hand, there are also criteria that we believe are not justifiable grounds for giving people different treatment. In the world of work, for example, we generally hold that it is unjust to give individuals special treatment on the basis of age, sex, race, or their religious preferences. If the judge's nephew receives a suspended sentence for armed robbery when another offender unrelated to the judge goes to jail for the same crime, or the brother of the Director of Public Works gets the million dollar contract to install sprinklers on the municipal golf course despite lower bids from other contractors, we say that it's unfair. We also believe it isn't fair when a person is punished for something over which he or she had no control, or isn't

compensated for a harm he or she suffered. And the people involved in the "brown lung hearings" felt that it wasn't fair that some diseases were provided with disability compensation, while other similar diseases weren't.

Different Kinds of Justice

There are different kinds of justice. Distributive justice refers to the extent to which society's institutions ensure that benefits and burdens are distributed among society's members in ways that are fair and just. When the institutions of a society distribute benefits or burdens in unjust ways, there is a strong presumption that those institutions should be changed. For example, the American institution of slavery in the pre-civil war South was condemned as unjust because it was a glaring case of treating people differently on the basis of race.

A second important kind of justice is retributive or corrective justice. Retributive justice refers to the extent to which punishments are fair and just. In general, punishments are held to be just to the extent that they take into account relevant criteria such as the seriousness of the crime and the intent of the criminal, and discount irrelevant criteria such as race. It would be barbarously unjust, for example, to chop off a person's hand for stealing a dime, or to impose the death penalty on a person who by accident and without negligence injured another party. Studies have frequently shown that when blacks murder whites, they are much more likely to receive death sentences than when whites murder whites or blacks murder blacks. These studies suggest that injustice still exists in the criminal justice system in the United States.

Yet a third important kind of justice is compensatory justice. Compensatory justice refers to the extent to which people are fairly compensated for their injuries by those who have injured them; just compensation is proportional to the loss inflicted on a person. This is precisely the kind of justice that was at stake in the brown lung hearings. Those who testified at the hearings claimed that the owners of the cotton mills where workers had been injured should compensate the workers whose health had been ruined by conditions at the mills.

The foundations of justice can be traced to the notions of social stability, interdependence, and equal dignity. As the ethicist John Rawls has pointed out, the stability of a society—or any group, for that matter—depends upon the extent to which the members of that society feel that they are being treated justly. When some of society's members come to feel that they are subject to unequal treatment, the foundations have been laid for social unrest, disturbances, and strife. The members of a community, Rawls holds, depend on each other, and they will retain their social unity only to the extent that their institutions are just.

Moreover, as the philosopher Immanuel Kant and others have pointed out, human beings are all equal in this respect: they all have the same dignity, and in virtue of this dignity they deserve to be treated as equals. Whenever individuals are treated unequally on the basis of characteristics that are arbitrary and irrelevant, their fundamental human dignity is violated.

Justice, then, is a central part of ethics and should be given due consideration in our moral lives. In evaluating any moral decision, we must ask whether our actions treat all persons equally. If not, we must determine whether the difference in treatment is justified: are the criteria we are using relevant to the situation at hand? But justice is not the only principle to consider in making ethical decisions. Sometimes principles of justice may need to be overridden in favor of other kinds of moral claims such as rights or society's welfare. Nevertheless, justice is an expression of our mutual recognition of each other's basic dignity, and an acknowledgement that if we are to live together in an interdependent community we must treat each other as equals.

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Aug 1, 2014

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Sarah Messi • a month ago

In evaluating any moral decision, we must ask whether our actions treat all persons equally.

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Kamal Heer • 6 months ago

Hi Melquiadiz. It might be easier if you ask me to explain a part of what I wrote specifically, as otherwise I could elaborate on something that is not of interest to you. Let me elaborate just a bit on my views on compensation. I am a consultant surgeon; I qualified as a doctor in 1988 and on the subject of justice, I believe there is a different form that is relevant to medicine - 'clinical justice'. Having worked within the UK's NHS for many years, I can tell you as any UK surgeon worth their salt will, that distributive justice is not only counter-productive, it is against the ideals of medical care. We do not believe in taking from one to provide for another, no matter what utilitarian calculation one might use. Hence my comment on utilitarianism

I believe there are a couple of professions in the world where individuals will/can never be compensated adequately, medicine, teaching, art being just a few. i.e. just because the 'good' or 'right' in some things can only be measured subjectively, does not mean that compensation should be subjective. It is a trivial truth of modern society that we

History of Lynchings in the South Documents Nearly 4,000 Names¹

by Campbell Robertson

DALLAS — A block from the tourist-swarmed headquarters of the former Texas School Book Depository sits the old county courthouse, now a museum. In 1910, a group of men rushed into the courthouse, threw a rope around the neck of a black man accused of sexually assaulting a 3-year-old white girl, and threw the other end of the rope out a window. A mob outside yanked the man, Allen Brooks, to the ground and strung him up at a ceremonial arch a few blocks down Main Street.

South of the city, past the Trinity River bottoms, a black man named W. R. Taylor was hanged by a mob in 1889. Farther south still is the community of Streetman, where 25-year-old George Gay was hanged from a tree and shot hundreds of times in 1922.

And just beyond that is Kirvin, where three black men, two of them almost certainly innocent, were accused of killing a white woman and, under the gaze of hundreds of soda-drinking spectators, were castrated, stabbed, beaten, tied to a plow and set afire in the spring of 1922.

The killing of Mr. Brooks is noted in the museum. The sites of the other killings, like those of nearly every lynching in the United States, are not marked. Bryan Stevenson believes this should change.

On Tuesday, the organization he founded and runs, the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Ala., released a report on the history of lynchings in the United States, the result of five years of research and 160 visits to sites around the South. The authors of the report compiled an inventory of 3,959 victims of “racial terror lynchings” in 12 Southern states from 1877 to 1950.

¹ This article was originally published on February 10th, 2015 on NYTimes.com

Next comes the process of selecting lynching sites where the organization plans to erect markers and memorials, which will involve significant fund-raising, negotiations with distrustful landowners and, almost undoubtedly, intense controversy.

The process is intended, Mr. Stevenson said, to force people to reckon with the narrative through-line of the country's vicious racial history, rather than thinking of that history in a short-range, piecemeal way.

"Lynching and the terror era shaped the geography, politics, economics and social characteristics of being black in America during the 20th century," Mr. Stevenson said, arguing that many participants in the great migration from the South should be thought of as refugees fleeing terrorism rather than people simply seeking work.

The lynching report is part of a longer project Mr. Stevenson began several years ago. One phase involved the erection of historical markers about the extensive slave markets in Montgomery. The city and state governments were not welcoming of the markers, despite the abundance of Civil War and civil rights movement memorials in Montgomery, but Mr. Stevenson is planning to do the same thing elsewhere.

Around the country, there are only a few markers noting the sites of lynchings. In several of those places, like Newnan, Ga., attempts to erect markers were met with local resistance. But in most places, no one has tried to put up a marker.

Efforts to count the number of lynchings in the country go back at least to 1882, when The Chicago Tribune began publishing each January a list of all executions and lynchings in the previous year. The Tuskegee Institute began releasing a list in 1912, and in 1919, the NAACP published what its researchers said was a comprehensive list of lynchings in the previous three decades. In 1995, the sociologists Stewart Tolnay and E. M. Beck researched the existing lists, eliminated errors and duplicates, and compiled what many consider the most accurate inventory to that time.

The report released Tuesday says that the new inventory has 700 names that are not on any of these previous lists, many of which Mr. Stevenson said were discovered during the compilation of the report.

Professor Beck, who teaches at the University of Georgia, has not reviewed the new list. But he pointed out that, with racial violence so extensive and carried out in so many different ways, compilers of lists may differ on what constitutes a lynching; the new list, as opposed to some previous ones, includes one-time massacres of large numbers of African-Americans, such as occurred in Arkansas in 1919 and in Louisiana in 1887.

“If you’re trying to make a point that the amount of racial violence is underestimated, well then, there’s no doubt about it,” Professor Beck said. “What people don’t realize here is just how many there were, and how close. Places they drive by every day.”

Among Professor Beck’s findings were that the number of lynchings did not rise or fall in proportion to the number of state-sanctioned executions, underscoring what Mr. Stevenson said was a crucial point: that these brutal deaths were not about administering popular justice, but terrorizing a community.

“Many of these lynchings were not executing people for crimes but executing people for violating the racial hierarchy,” he said, meaning offenses such as bumping up against a white woman or wearing an Army uniform.

But, he continued, even when a major crime was alleged, the refusal to grant a black man a trial — despite the justice system’s near certain outcome — and the public extravagance of a lynching were clearly intended as a message to other African-Americans.

The bloody history of Paris, Tex., about 100 miles northeast of Dallas, is well known if rarely brought up, said Thelma Dangerfield, the treasurer of the local NAACP

chapter. Thousands of people came in 1893 to see Henry Smith, a black teenager accused of murder, carried around town on a float, then tortured and burned to death on a scaffold.

Until recently, some longtime residents still remembered when the two Arthur brothers were tied to a flagpole and set on fire at the city fairgrounds in 1920.

“There were two or three blacks who were actually around during that time, but you couldn’t get them to talk about it,” Ms. Dangerfield said.

She helped set up an exhibit in the county historical museum, the only commemoration of the lynchings she knows of in a town with prominent public memorials to the Confederacy. The prospect of a permanent marker had not occurred to her.

“It would be a fight,” she said. “Someone is going to have some resistance to it. But you know, I think it wouldn’t hurt to try it.”