

War is terrorism. The atrocity which took place on September 11th is nothing new. It has much broader context than even the foreign policy of the US over the past 50 years. Innocent people have always been the victims of war and violence. They are, in fact, the targets.

I would like to begin with a poem by Starhawk, my first nonviolence trainer back in 1982. This poem makes clear the link between all atrocities. It was written in 1983, so the most current atrocities are not included.

This poem, I believe, makes a very eloquent case for why it is absolutely crucial that we understand and develop the power of nonviolence.

What Is Remembered Lives

By Starhawk

Remembering

All those who ever died helpless and hungry
Children of famine, swollen bellies and stick legs
Ireland, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Africa
Those who planted and never got to harvest
Those who harvested to pay the landlord, the
overlord
Those whose bodies were ground down by work to
enrich others
Whose fruits were stolen
Those who could not find work, who lost their
homes, who died at the borders
Turned back to be starved, to be shot, to be drowned
The refugees
Vietnam, Thailand, Haiti, El Salvador, Guatemala
What is remembered lives to change

Remembering

The slave-ship dead
Those who died chained to already rotting corpses
Those torn from their people, their family
Those who died calling on their ancestors, who died
mourning the loss
Those who survived to die on the block, under the
whip
What is remembered lives to give us strength to fight

Remembering

Those who walked in beauty on the Land
The tribes destroyed or diminished
The Meewok, the Chumash, the Ohlone
The sound of the women singing in the Oak groves
of Diablo Canyon
The flight of the brave souls through the Western
Gate
The warriors of Wounded Knee
The silent spirits, the torn Lands, the chants
forgotten, the tongues no longer spoken
What is remembered lives to rise

Remembering

The prisoners
Those who died desperate
Those who died in the dark
Those who died of injuries to head and neck
Of beatings, of torture, in unbearable pain
Those who died slowly, day by day
In the Maze at Long Kesh
Who disappeared in Argentina, in El Salvador, in
Chile
Who died stubborn
Who died forgotten
What is remembered lives for freedom

Remembering

Those who have been damaged while still unborn
By pesticides, by herbicides, by contaminated water
Whose genes were damaged by radiation
The Islanders - Bikini, Annewetoc, Kwadjaleen
The children who played in the fallout of bomb tests
The soldiers who were told it was safe
The mothers of Utah, Three Mile Island
The workers
Those who died for speaking out
Karen Silkwood
Those who have cancer, leukemia
Those who were poisoned by polluted air
Who worked where they had to breath coal dust,
asbestos, cotton fibers
Whose lands and herds are poisoned by uranium
tailings
Those who had no choice
Those who were driven to do it to themselves
With alcohol and drugs and cigarettes
The suicides
Those who were called crazy
What is remembered lives to make us change, to
change our lives

Remembering.....

Those who felt the knife in the dark
The sudden shot
Harvey Milk and George Moscone, Faye Stender,
John Lennon
The children of Atlanta
Murdered on the playground on their way home from
school

Remembering

The nameless victims
Those who died on battlefields
In surprise attacks
In defoliated jungles
Behind barbed wire
Who died thirsty in the desert
Who were gunned down in the mountains of
Nicaragua, El Salvador
What is remembered lives to change

Remembering

The women who have been sold
The women who have been raped
The women who were used until they wore out and
were left alone to die
What is remembered lives to change us

Remembering

The sleepy villages of Lebanon
Olive and myrtle, sweet cedar on the air
The children in the fields, terror in the camps
What is remembered lives so that it need not be
repeated again
So that we do not shut our eyes, our ears
As the guns go off
In a massacre that has been endlessly repeated
Lives so that we remember Auschwitz and Dachau
The cyanide showers, the bodies stacked like wood
As those who went quietly and those who fought
back
And those who never had a chance to fight
Scream at us STOP

Remembering

My Lai and Jonestown
And that flash in the noon air
That peeled skin from bones
Scorched eyes, sightless and rimless
Mouths of the survivors crying for water
Hiroshima and Nagasaki
What is remembered lives, so that it never happen
again

Remembering

All those who have been burned
The women, for being strong or obstinate
Men, burned for being loving to other men
Women, burned for a small profit
Burned for being sexual
Burned for loving other women
The heretics, burned for having unpopular opinions
The scientists, burned for revealing new truths
The thinkers, burned for their visions
And the witches
We remember the witches
Who danced in the dark
Who were burned for remembering
That this life, this Earth, this world of day and night
Is the body of the true Goddess
And she is in us
And needs us to care for her

What is remembered lives to rise from ashes

Lives to be our beacon
To change, to be changed, to change us
So that there is never again
The burning
The bomb
The bullet
The spreading poison
The child's scream
What is remembered lives, so that we may live
In the endless spiral dance of life renewing itself
endlessly
Lives to serve life
Lives so that all life may THRIVE