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RELIGION AND POLITICS

GOD, RELIGION & POLITICS: A REVIEW—What is religion, exactly? As one scholar put it, religion is the result of an attempt by man to contact a higher being. Through prayers, ceremonies, cults, and even sacrifices, man has attempted to establish contact with God or gods. Our mortality and fear of death play a crucial role in our devotion to religious activities. The rationality of our belief in deities, for example, and the demonstrability of their existence have been subjects of countless debates throughout human history. The central question we often ask ourselves is whether there is a good reason for man to believe that a divine being exists. Most medieval writings about nature, human knowledge, and human living, for example, have both philosophical and religious roots. Between the 5th and the 15th Centuries, a large number of Western intellectuals devoted their time to pondering and discussing questions about God and divine attributes.

Religious contexts and doctrines are found in vast cultures, ranging from Jewish and Byzantine to Islamic and Hindi history. The idea of the existence of a single god or multiple deities is limited only by man’s ability to conceptualize and rationalize. Plato said that human beings know little enough of their own souls and less of the divine. Roger Bacon argues that nothing can be known of God without the prior study of languages, experiential sciences, mathematics, and moral philosophy. In *On the Nature of the Gods* Cicero discusses his view of the Epicurean doctrines and more. Theological perceptions are as complex as the men and women who conceived them. In Nietzsche’s eyes, God is dead not because a divine being has perished, but because man, who once confected God, murdered Him by acting out his unuttered disbelief.

Each religion has its own criteria for when and where to worship. The point of prayer, in the view of a philosopher, is for the individual praying to align his attitude to the world with that of the correct moral stance. On that note, defining the right moral stance becomes problematic since one man’s right is often another man’s wrong. The sum of our beliefs is not simple, as evidenced by our constant conflicts in war and territorial conquests in the name of God or gods. Why didn’t God create man pure and perfect to begin with, so that he need not fight, quarrel, or kill? Perhaps God wants to intervene in the natural order of things, or maybe He wishes to bring about good in response to human requests. But why does He want to leave man capable of improvement instead of making him perfect? Is He bored or lonely? These questions bring us back to the arguments for and against the existence of God. Throughout human history, man has waged wars not because God told him to but because man wanted to. Man uses the excuse that it is God’s will. If God is pure and good, why does He want man to slaughter other men? How do we really know what God wants when we don’t even know what we want? Do we truly believe that a single all-powerful entity exists? Humanity, in consensus, agrees that good and evil exists; but no mortal, since the beginning of time, has returned from the dead and proved to us, once and for all, that a greater and holy being exists. We can only conceptualize and believe. Faith is an inexact science. It is an idea of what could be, an idea that is subject to diverse interpretations. Whether these interpretations are valid has yet to be universally proven.

The Hindus believe in the cosmic law of karma. They believe that the effects of moral actions are carried over after death, to the next existence, and therefore influence the subsequent birth either positively or negatively. The Native Americans placed great importance on their relationship with the animals they hunted and the spirit guardians of each species. The pre-Columbian indigenous people of Central America believed that their stepped pyramid temples would bring them closer to their gods. The Buddhists encourage self-awareness, asceticism, and enlightenment. So who is right? Over more than six billion people inhabit the world today, and we can’t agree on the single most important point—the existence of our creator. More importantly, out of the estimated 106 billion people who’ve walked our planet since the dawn of civilization, not a single one has returned from the other side to tell us what, if anything, exists after death. Those who have so claimed to have returned from the dead have turned out to be frauds or liars. We can build rockets that fly to the moon. We can reengineer cells and body parts, a role once thought to belong only to the gods. We can even learn to control inanimate objects with our mind. However, with all of our intelligence and scientific advances, we cannot produce a shred of concrete evidence to shed light on what is really out there for us after death. Maybe that shrouded mystery will remain hidden from us forever, because to learn the truth would mean revealing the secret of our creator, which in turn would leave man superior to God, if He truly exists.

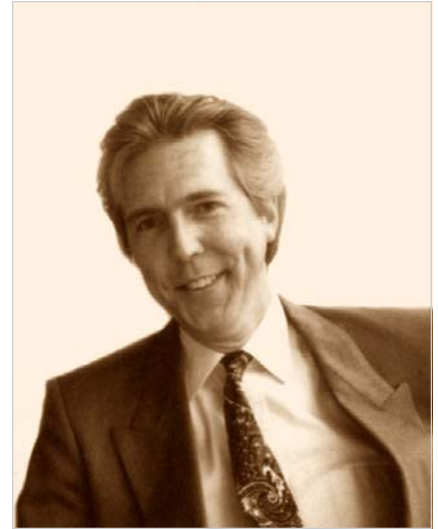
The question comes full circle. Did God create man or did man create God out of desperation and fear of the unknown? As a collective, we can believe. But as individuals, free of influence in any shape or form, do we *truly* believe? Yet in believing, can we truly be sure? When we are unsure, religion holds the potential to transform us into something more, something less pure ... something we call politics. And we know politics breeds ... war.



RICHARD QUAN

Managing Editor

FAITH, RELIGION AND POLITICS IN PUBLISHING—Not so strange bedfellows as you might think. Red Smith, one of the most widely read sports columnists in the middle of the last century, once wrote that writing is easy. Just open a vein and bleed. I've been writing for nearly twenty years. Short stories, memoirs, op-ed pieces, sports articles and novels. None of it is easy, although it's much easier today than it was at the beginning. Practice makes perfect. Except where art is concerned, where today's nuance can be improved upon tomorrow – and changed back the day after that. But it shouldn't be easy. Little of any real value comes easily.



J. Conrad Guest
Contributing Editor

Our Macho Mr. Sun: Making Solar Sexy by Aurelio O'Brien

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IN THE BLACKENED WAKE of the gulf oil spill and rig explosions, and the slow-cooking of our planet by greenhouse gasses, interest in what to do about our long-term energy needs has been renewed. We environmental do-gooders are all trying to do our bit to curb our carbon footprints, but when *Wired Magazine* points out that it takes as much fossil fuel to manufacture the battery for a Toyota Pious (pardon me) Prius as its driver would burn traveling 46,000 miles in a small non-hybrid, this means I'd only begin cutting my carbon footprint after I'd driven about 100,000 miles. So it seems that having everyone switch to a hybrid is not the best solution to our long-term energy and environmental problems.

But whatever solution we choose, it must be a macho one. Let's face it, we tree huggers have an image crisis when it comes to making our case for alternatives. Our pet solutions come off as those wimps in the back of comic books who get sand kicked in their faces when stacked up against their more macho competitors. The real tough guys simply want more drilling, come hell or high (and mucky) water. Drilling oil is manly, dig-in-the-dirt, smelly work, and it takes big burly men and machines to do it. Of course, we'll still eventually run out of the stuff, and the spills, explosions, and global warming must be ignored like a muscle guy's malodorous laundry pile on the closet floor. But Mr. Oil is our familiar BMOC, the guy that helped us win all the games in all the previous seasons. Okay, so he's gotten a little rough around the edges, has demanded a more lucrative contract, and has taken to wearing turbans more often than not; he's still our reliable hero.

Mr. Nuclear is the next best, big, truly macho energy guy. Real men love Mr. Nuclear. Yeah, sure, he's a little brainy, but he still demands more big, manly machines and he plays with deadly isotopes. Hey, risk of face-melting death and mass destruction is pure macho. Of course, it means ignoring the vast amounts of nuclear waste he produces. If you're macho though, you don't care about that. After all, it's like cleaning the damned garage: he'll get around to it... someday. Mr. Geothermal and Mr. Hydroelectric are real men too, to be sure, but they are like those poor saps who do a decent, steady job for years and years and are always overlooked for promotion. Not wimps, exactly, but they're not like the charm fellows. They're stodgy and set in their ways. Boring.

Then there's Mr. Ethanol, but he's kind of an also-ran, or perhaps the guy who made it in to the competition by bribing a judge or two? The farmers who work for him are legitimately macho, but Mr. Ethanol himself conjures images of Florence Henderson, corncobs, and Fritos. He is only a simulacrum of Mr. Oil, more like the guy wearing fake chest hair and using Grecian Formula. And the more ethanol they add to gasoline the less efficient it has become. Decreased mileage means we have to use more gallons to go the same distance. I'm not clever enough to do an accurate calculation, but my gut tells me Mr. Ethanol is a fraud. And, well... do we really want to give up our Fritos in order for him to win?

So where do all the cleaner, more environmentally safe guys

I've been rooting for stand? According to *Scientific American*, Mr. Wind is remarkably efficient and clean, but let's face it, he lands close to the bottom of the macho scale. Yes, his props are big machines, but they bear an unfortunate resemblance to circus rides, pinwheels, eggbeaters, and beanie caps. I don't know, maybe if he got really, *really* big... or meaner looking? I like Mr. Wind a lot, but he's a dark horse.

Call me crazy, but I'm putting my money on Mr. Sun, even though he's been long considered lowest on the macho scale because of his unfortunate given name, Passive Solar. Did his parents really have to name him that? I mean, why not just tape a "kick me" sign on his back? The worse part about his name is that Mr. Sun has to be the most truly macho energy source of them all. He definitely warrants the more apt and studlier title, Macho Mr. Sun. Our ancestors worshiped Mr. Sun as a god, and with good reason: he already runs our climate, weather, and supports all life on Earth. According to Wikipedia he also dumps down approximately 3850 ZJ (zettajoules) of energy per year, free for the taking. To put this in perspective, worldwide energy consumption for the year 2005 was a mere 0.487 ZJ. In other words, our Macho Mr. Sun is one super-potent son-of-a-gun. But let's face facts, Mr. Sun desperately needs a major media makeover if he's going to win this competition. Macho Mr. Sun blasts us with more energy than we could ever possibly need without demanding anything in return; he's a nice guy, and we all know what that means. It means he needs our unrelenting support.

Any kid with a magnifying glass can attest to Macho Mr. Sun's awesome potential. As we create technologies that are more adept at capturing his unfathomable energy, won't that make all of us freer agents, give us the ability to go where we want to go whenever we want to, and not be limited, not be tied to Mr. Oil's or Mr. Nuclear's apron strings? Free, limitless, decentralized solar capabilities will mean more macho stuff, not less: more power tools, more recreational vehicles, more freedom, and more independence. He will allow us to be like farmers, prospectors, homesteaders, and explorers of the past, able to glean our own power ourselves. What's more manly than that? We won't need no stinkin' limits on our consumption once we've crowned Macho Mr. Sun.

C'mon, he deserves to win. He's the real, pure, unfiltered macho man. Booyah, Mr. Sun!



AURELIO O'BRIEN is a writer and an artist. He spent over 25 years as an artist, animator, designer, and storyteller in Hollywood, working in the field of Feature Animation. He is the author of EVE, a science fiction novel.

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Faith, Religion and Politics in Publishing by J. Conrad Guest

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NOT SO STRANGE BEDFELLOWS as you might think. Red Smith, one of the most widely read sports columnists in the middle of the last century, once wrote that writing is easy. Just open a vein and bleed. I've been writing for nearly twenty years. Short stories, memoirs, op-ed pieces, sports articles and novels. None of it is easy, although it's much easier today than it was at the beginning. Practice makes perfect. Except where art is concerned, where today's nuance can be improved upon tomorrow—and changed back the day after that. But it shouldn't be easy. Little of any real value comes easily.

Enter faith. Most of us write largely on faith. We start with an idea, sometimes just a crumb of an idea, and go with it. On faith. I once wrote a short story as a birthday gift for a friend, and halfway through it I began to envision the short as a novel; the result was *January's Paradigm*, my first published novel. Contrary to public belief, most of us don't get large advances for our work. Unlike the giants in the industry, we don't submit to a publisher or an agent our idea, or an outline or synopsis for a novel and receive a six-figure advance. We must submit a query letter based on a completed manuscript that is ready to submit upon request.

It takes me a year to complete a novel—sometimes longer. I wrote *Backstop: A Baseball Love Story in Nine Innings* in eight months. I have a day job and write mostly on weekends and a couple nights during the week. I write on faith. Faith in my abilities, in my story, in my characters. I've learned to enjoy the process of creation without letting publication—fear of the rejection letter—block me, as it often did when I started writing. But make no mistake, I write with publication in mind. I don't get paid for the hundreds of hours I invest in writing a novel; not until I sell it—which is often a crapshoot, which means the writing of the novel is the easiest part. For me, it's also the most enjoyable part.

Which brings us to Religion. I don't consider myself religious. When I think of religion, I think of organizations and conspiracies; the Crusades and jihad; people who attend Sunday service, but who don't walk the talk during the week; tithing; Catholic nuns breaking rulers across knuckles; and worse. I believe in intelligent design behind the universe. After all, it didn't just will itself into existence. So I'm spiritual. To say we manifest our own destiny and can get what we want just by visualizing it, putting it out there and then reaching for it is at best, a Dr. Phil-ism; at worst, New Age BS. Being a glass seven-eighths empty type of guy, I've lived most my life not expecting much; that way I'll never be disappointed—which I've learned is in itself a sort of manifesting of destiny.

But I'm getting better at focusing on the good in my life. I have much for which to be thankful, and I appreciate what I have. I acknowledge my talents and work to improve, both my talents as well as myself as a man. I'm growing in ways I never dreamed possible. And good things are starting to happen, in my career, my avocation, and in my personal life.

Now the politics. Because, trust me, politics abounds in the publishing industry. A best seller isn't always the best literature. I

recently exchanged email with a fellow writer who put forth the notion that agents are an arrogant lot; after all, they work for the publishing industry and so they think they know what the public wants based on what the industry tells them. An industry that's been losing money for decades. A good agent (who wants a bad one?) already has a list of clients. They don't need me. They can afford to be selective. They also make the rules: content, word count and format of the query letter; that a synopsis be written in present tense. "We don't accept simultaneous submissions." However, "It may take us six months to respond to your query; if you don't hear from us by then, assume you have been turned down."

I'll be 54 next month. I can't afford to send two queries annually. Like sales, publishing is a numbers game. The more query letters one sends, the better one's chances of getting an acceptance. It's arrogant of them to think any writer abides by that rule—but then, they *are* called guidelines, aren't they? I received last month a rejection letter from an agent that went something like this: "I really liked your voice, and your opening was gripping; however, your use of back story in the first twenty pages didn't engage me."

I didn't know whether I should be encouraged by her praise or disappointed, even angry, that she so easily discounted the whole on the premise of twenty pages. I know, she wades through hundreds of queries each month looking for that one gem. But sometimes arrogance can get in your way, prevent you from seeing the forest for the trees. I know this to be true, from those times in my life when my own arrogance resulted in my missing the mark. I have faith in my writerly abilities, and I never feel closer to my higher self than during the creative process; however, it's politics, plain and simple, with which I struggle the most.



J. CONRAD GUEST is the author of *Backstop: A Baseball Love Story in Nine Innings* and *January's Paradigm*. His third novel, *One Hot January*, also from *Second Wind Publishing*, is due to be released in 2010. His fiction and essays appear in various online and print publications, including *Cezanne's Carrot*, *Saucy Vox*, *River Walk Journal*, *63 Channels*, *The Writers Post Journal*, *Redbridge Review*, and *Blood and Thunder: Musings on the Art of Medicine*. He is also the co-founder of *The Smoking Poet*. Photo courtesy of Somerville Photographie).

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Another Character In The Film, The Music by Elisa D. Bowman

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THE SIX-DISK CD CHANGER in my car houses film soundtracks on “random.” Its fantastic to be surprised by an array of music with the power to transport me to a cinematic moment in some of my favorite film like; *One Fine Day*, *Meet Joe Black*, *Dream Girls*, *City of Angels*, *Don Juan De Marco*, and my all-time favorite soundtrack – *The Bridges of Madison County*. Cinefiles can tell you this particular score was hand selected by the bonafide jazz aficionado and director, Clint Eastwood.

Acquiring the music license to use the perfect song can be a dicey proposition as I quickly learned when charged with securing the rights to the song “I Got You Babe” originally done by Sonny & Cher for the independent film – *Fashionably L.A.*

The director was dead set on the actors actually singing this particular song for a campy scene, yet the path to retaining the right to do so was a slow, bureaucratic process of locating the rights holder, submitting a detailed request, and waiting, a lot of waiting. As the shooting day approached, news of Sonny Bono’s sudden death was announced – and we felt sure any hope of securing our approval would be dashed. Surprisingly, the approval came in the 11th hour, but many nerves were frayed in the process.

In sharp contrast to that route, in producing *Dear Willie*, jazz artist, Takana Miyamoto, painstakingly customized the entire score. Her dual degree from the Berklee College of Music in Film Scoring and Jazz Composition certainly came in handy as she thoughtfully captured the essence of the project from a rough cut the director burned and in accepting the assignment, set about to drop the lyrical movements as she interpreted the scenes. The end result of this approach is magical, as her compositions not only enhance pivotal scenes; the music virtually stands alone as another character in the film. Since Takana has already incorporated *Dear Willie*’s theme into her live concerts in the States and Japan, she’s simultaneously created a little buzz for the film prior to its release, a filmmaker’s dream.

The sweeping changes in the music industry may even impact a higher volume of original material in film scores as musicians are looking for vehicles that offer more control; stymied by diminishing royalties as a result of music being pirated on the Internet. This reality may offer a win-win for film collaborators as artists explore this platform for their creative expression.

The contribution that musicians make to film is not just a song with poignant lyrics that accentuates the dynamics in the scene, but think of one of the most memorable motifs that drive emotion: the theme music from *Jaws*. A simple use of two notes {E&F} in an alternating pattern rose the tension level and heartbeats in audiences and still manages to raise hairs on the back of tourist’s neck at the Universal Theme Park’s signature attraction. While composed by a Hollywood legend, John Williams, the piece was actually performed by tuba player, Tommy Johnson (rumor has it the number wasn’t

even liked by Spielberg).

A complex sound *element* can also drive a story forward. One example that stands out for me is from *The Godfather* - the pivotal moment when Michael Corleone is on the brink of surrendering his civilian life when asked to kill the family’s rival. In a private moment prior to his life-altering act, the chaotic sound of a subway train with escalating volume seems to capture the racing thoughts vacillating in his mind between conscience and duty.

Here in Atlanta, Tunewelder Music Group, LLC is providing invaluable solutions for creative projects by spearheading custom music production from a varied stable of artists, along with music supervision and licensing to help streamline the process for its clients...ideal for busy productions. A song inspires some writers to write a film scene, while another hit makes the scene great.

Today on Facebook, you can give the thumbs up to, along with 2,384,228 other fans, “I Wish Music Played During Epic Moments of My Life and Not Just in Movies.” For now, we probably have to settle for filmed moments that truly resonate epic moments in our lives.



ELISA DIMITRIA BOWMAN is a filmmaker. She is the producer of *Dear Willie*. Ms. Bowman served as production resource executive in the production of major motion pictures and television shows such as *Will & Grace*; *Runaway Bride*; *Beverly Hills 90210*; *Striptease*; *Multiplicity*; *Nixon*; *The Getaway*; and more. She also served as production coordinator and director’s assistant in projects such as *Fashionably L.A.* and *Ringer*.

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Be.

Vestibule to vestibule, of lightness does sit still,
Emulating glistened rays, of lightness does sit still,
Strobes of life majestically, clear aura of opaque

The calming and serenity, enveloping,
The chakra twists so silently, developing,
Surroundings ensue violently, such sad a thing;

Be.

The calming and serenity, enveloping,
The chakra twists so silently, developing,
Surroundings ensue violently, such a sad thing;

Be.

Strobes of life majestically, clear aura of opaque,
Emulating glistened rays, of lightness does sit still,
Vestibule to vestibule, of lightness does sit still.

And as long as mind is here,
With lightness we'll be still.



CATHERINE MICHAELA RUSSELL is a writer and artist. Born in Hendon, London and currently living in Luton, Bedfordshire UK, Ms. Michaela specializes in metaphysical poetry writing and short children's adventure stories.

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If I knew it was going to be good-bye,
I would have strummed a little longer.

If I knew it was going to be good-bye,
I would have squeezed your hand a little tighter.

If I knew it was going to be good-bye,
I would have kissed you while you slept.

If I knew it was going to be good-bye,
I would have rested my foot on top of yours as we ate our bacon biscuits at The Grill.

If I knew it was going to be good-bye,
I would have rested my head on your chest and listened more intently, to the beating of your heart.

If I knew it was going to be good-bye,
I would have asked you to play another song.

If I knew it was going to be good-bye,
I would not have walk away without telling you how I feel.

No time, nor space, nor miracle, nor tragedy would change that.
I would walk across a frozen sea to show you how much I love you.

Your heart is still locked away from me, no matter what I say or do.
It is simply up to you.

I am discontent, disconnected, and lonely without you.
The music is more melodic, the colors are more vibrant, and the scents are more inviting when I am with you.

And that is the truth.



***KATHY T. CAMP** is a high school Spanish teacher. She was born and raised in Atlanta and is a current resident of a small western Georgia town called Bowdon. Her passion is in writing. Kathy discovered that tragedies make the best story and therefore incorporated dark chapters of her life into her collection of short stories. Kathy enjoys playing the guitar, reading, writing and painting.*

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I WISH I COULD SAY MY LIFE was as simple and profound as Forrest Gump's words of wisdom, "Life is like a box of chocolates... you never know what you're gonna get." But, it just can't be summed up in such uncomplicated terms. Uncertainty is a daily experience with me. At least with a box of chocolates, you may not know about the flavor inside, but you're still aware that you're eating chocolate.

One thing is for certain, I'm a writer. It's my passion; my heart. It's what drives me, motivates me, teaches me and most often keeps me company. While I have many relationships with a lot of flesh and blood people, I have an awesome love for the vibrant characters created in the pages of a book. I'm just as proud of the accomplishments and feats of my fictional characters, as I am of my twenty-year-old son. Just as I'd like to see Johnathan excel in life and seek after his own passions, those are the very same dreams I have for my fictional children. My greatest desire is to see them come alive into the mind of a reader and touch their heart the way they've touched mine. That doesn't happen on its own. It requires a lot of patience, perseverance and paranormal faith. It takes stepping out of the boat.

Regardless of your religious faith, I'm sure many of you have heard the story of Peter stepping out of the boat and walking on water. Well, as magnificent and wonderful that supernatural feat may have been, Peter just didn't find himself for no reason conquering the law of gravity. He first saw an opportunity, and a desire formed in his heart. He sought out the possibility, and then he lifted his leg over the side. THEN, against all natural sense, he stepped out into the unknown.

This isn't easy to do. We all think we could do it, no problem. But when we really face the choice, consider the possibilities, and then start listening to the many voices around us cite the pro's and con's – we most often end up standing still; frustrated because we're not experiencing what we dared to dream. I found myself playing the If Only Game. If only this would happen... If only this agency would sign me... If only this editor loved it... If only this publisher believed in me... If only I had the money... If only my ship would come in.

The funny thing is...I've discovered that I'm already on my ship. I may not yet be rolling in the wealth, I may not yet have the multi-book contract, I may not yet have landed on the Best Seller's list, but I get up every day and in some small way participate in the thing I love most in this world; I get to write. I get to use my imagination and create worlds, characters, and find victory in overwhelming situations. It doesn't matter where my boat finally docks, what matters is where it journeyed.

Maybe it's because I'm soon turning forty that life just seems to be getting better for me. I'm not richer, I'm not more successful, and by the world's standard I don't have anything to be envious about, except that I'm happy. In my middle class existence of high taxes, sky-rocketed insurance

rates, and market instability, I found the strength and faith to get up every day, step out of my comfort zone and walk onto the unknown waters. A few years ago, I would have called this behavior irresponsibility. Today, I call it freedom. I don't worry about what tomorrow holds. I'm enjoying the moment – even when all I see are dark clouds and rough waves churning all around me.



T.L. GRAY has held many titles throughout her life such as deck-hand (of a commercial fishing boat in the Gulf), co-captain, reporter, deaconess, director, abstractor, company president, and author. Fireside Publications published her debut novel, "The Blood of Cain." The sequel, "The Arcainians" is due for release. She is currently working on several non-fiction projects. Visit www.thebloodofcain.com for more information on Ms. Gray's book.

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WHILE SOCIAL SCIENTISTS DEBATE the definitions of *nationalism* and *patriotism*, they agree that love of nation comes in two forms. One form, often called “patriotism” or “liberal nationalism”, describes positive “feelings about one’s own country” and is a healthy and harmless attitude (Korostelina 183-184). The second form, often called “nationalism” or “intolerant nationalism”, is a love of nation based on “feelings of national superiority and a need for national power and dominance” (Korostelina 183). This second form leads to hostility and conflict behavior. While the semantics vary, one thing is clear: there *is* such a thing as a bad way to love your nation.

To avoid confusion, I use alternative terms to distinguish between peaceful love of nation and the love of nation that tempts us into wars. These terms are *Peaceful Nation-Love* and *Conflictual Nation-Love* and they go right to the point: are our attitudes likely to produce conflict behavior? In America, most agree it is “good” to be “patriotic”, but for our nation and our global community, we must examine our “patriotism” by asking: is it *Peaceful Nation-Love* or *Conflictual Nation-Love*?

Cynics claim that love for one’s own nation is inextricably linked to the denigration of other nations, but this is inaccurate. Studies have shown “one can love and identify with one’s nation without disparaging out-groups and supporting violence” and that “intense loyalty to one nation does not necessarily lead to hostility toward another” (Pettigrew 44, Korostelina 198). While positive attitudes towards one’s own group naturally lead to in-group biases, comparisons with out-groups, and mild feelings of superiority, these biases can be kept modest enough to avoid causing conflict.

The crucial difference between *Peaceful Nation-Love* and *Conflictual Nation-Love* is whether the love of nation is based on positive evaluations of one’s own nation or on the presumed inferiority of others. In the former case, nations have an *internal locus of self-esteem* and their love of nation stems from pride in ones own nation. In the latter case, nations have an *external locus of self-esteem* and their love of nation is based on feelings of superiority. Nations with internal loci of self esteem “have few conflict intentions”, however nations with external loci of self-esteem are likely to develop “conflict intentions and a readiness to fight” (Korostelina 92), making them more likely to engage in wars.

The difference, then, between *Peaceful Nation-Love* and *Conflictual Nation-Love* is the source of self-esteem. How can we in America maintain our internal locus of self-esteem and manifest *Peaceful Nation-Love* during wartime and in the age of global terrorism? We know that “out-group denigration seems more likely to emerge in situations of conflict and when a group is under threat” (Korostelina 91), so we must take extra care at times like these. Groups with internal loci of self-esteem usually have “power and supremacy” and relatively “high economic and social position”. While America has long enjoyed these benefits, global uncertainty threatens this source of self-

esteem. Now more than ever we must turn toward other internal sources of self-esteem. Nations with “unique cultures and exceptional positions in history” often enjoy an internal locus of self-esteem and therefore display *Peaceful Nation-Love* (Korostelina 91). We must empower our educators, artists, writers and intellectuals to celebrate our unique American history and culture. We must cultivate our unique qualities and strengths, so that we can be proud of who we are, not who we are better than. Inspired by this *Peaceful Nation-Love*, we’ll find it easier to avoid war.



LANE SALTER is a modern dancer and Development Associate at *Moving in the Spirit*, a youth development and dance nonprofit organization in Atlanta, Georgia. She earned her M.S. from George Mason University's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (ICAR). Prior to ICAR, Ms. Salter studied modern dance and political anthropology at the Colorado College, and peace and conflict studies in Ireland with the School for International Training.

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