A Note from the National Leadership Team

Thank you all for your willingness to ‘try something new’ in relationship to Gumbo during this transitional period. We also thank you for expressing your concerns about sending Gumbo electronically. Please know that we take your feedback seriously. Before Easter, the NLT sent postcards to the approximately 80 people without email alerting them to this transition and listing some options for keeping them in the Grail news loop. The phone tree that Marie Sutter and Alice Dougan created was then activated to follow-up with everyone who received a postcard. As a result, we now have new email addresses for 9 members; 21 have buddied up with someone who is in the e-loop, and many others will continue to receive Gumbo by snail mail. Along the way we also found a few women who wish to withdraw their Grail membership. Please keep the feedback coming!

National Grail Retreat
Donna Ambrogi, Eva Fleischner, Elise Gorges,
Joann Lamb, Audrey Sorrento, Barbara Troxell

We hope you are planning to come to the national Grail retreat, “A Multitude of Radiant Colors”, July 5-11 at Grailville. The time together will provide opportunity for meditation, prayer and silence, for reflection on aspects of the international Grail faith statement, the enjoyment of peaceful, green surroundings, experiences of creativity with Grail artists, occasion for practical work for Grailville, movement activities of Chi Gong with Fran Martin and a Yoga class on Wednesday with Lilias Folan! There will be the possibility for “healing touch” by local practitioners.

Tuesday will be a sharing/talking day which includes two workshops appropriate to the week. Teresa Wilson will lead us in a workshop addressing the critical issue of “demilitarization” of our culture and nation. A valuable resource on this issue is Jonathan Schell’s The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence and the Will of the People. Joyce Minkler will lead a panel discussion on Spirituality in the International Grail.

If you have not yet sent in your registration form, please send it now to Mary Gindhart:
1352 Pennwood Road, Philadelphia, PA 19151.

Remember that prior to June 1 the program fee is $35; after June 1 it is $50.

Spirituality in the Grail
Mary Gene Devlin

The Spirituality Team hoped that the questions we sent in February 2004 would evoke some soul reflections from Grail members. Answers to the questionnaires we have received so far have shown that this has happened. While working with them, it has occurred to us that some of you might prefer expressing yourselves in a way other than answering those questions. (A letter, a paragraph, a piece of art work, a poem...etc. might be more suitable for you.) We are very interested in your thoughts and feelings about the spiritual diversity of the Grail and about the source of the life and growth of your spirit at this point in time.

Every piece of the mosaic is needed for us all to get the complete picture. We think of the Grail as a unity of individuals. We hope you will feel free to tell us your thoughts. Some of the members of the team will be meeting at the end of May to work on a report.

Please send your material to:
Fran McLaughlin
6907 Grace Ave.
Cincinnati. OH 45227
or email to Kathy Greenlief:
kathygreenlief@juno.com
Who is living in the woods at Grailville?

EARTH-SPIRITS!

Of course we all know that, but now they have faces! Grailville welcomes Barbara Yates, world-traveling artist, to the Grailville community. Barbara moved in to Oriens Easter weekend, and when she isn't rehabbing the house she is wandering the woodlands, chisel and mallet in hand, subtly bringing the wonder of life in 'dead' wood alive. Barbara's Earth Spirits are protective beings. She, and they, are a delightful addition to Grailville! Keep an eye out, next time you walk the Grailville woods . . .

MEMBER LIST UPDATES

Flo Marquez: is moving back to San Jose at the end of May! Her address will be:
3252 Janelle Drive, San Jose, CA 95148; phone is pending.
Elaine Huber: please change the phone to: (978) 374-8938
Marjorie Toups: #237 (got lost between pages 7 & 8):
1910 E End St, Abbeville, LA 70510 (337) 893-8638
Sharon Wood: work # (408) 793-2016; no fax number
Ana Flora Anderson (pg 9): correct zip (CEP): 05020-000
Theresa Garuba (page 10) correct zip: 07040

Pam Cole: pcole@fuse.net
Barbara Coleman: bbroklyngurl282@aol.com
Jeanne Costanzo: jeannecos@msn.com
Monica Erler: mcerler@visi.com
Kate Henskens: zingagirl1961@yahoo.com
Renée Keels Jackson:
pastorjackson@comcast.net
Mary Ann McCarthy: seannagail@juno.com
Priscilla Mechana: rivera@ris.net
Mary Shea: sheattle@juno.com
Carol Stringer: camglo@cox.net

(back page) Grail Development Office: grail@fuse.net

“Age Wise”

Age Wise is a collection of letters and articles from women around the world who have been active in the Grail. It is published three times a year for an audience of 200ish.

TO RECEIVE Age Wise, CONTACT:
Margaret Schimanski
716 Pennsylvania Street
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235-2635
(920) 743-7746

Thank you, Constance, for all the work you have done to make Gumbo happen these last few years! We are grateful for you!
MARY KANE
A Song of Love
1918 - 2004

Our dear Grail sister, Mary Kane, slipped over into new life during the night of the first of May.

When the Kanes and the Sheas were first married they were neighbors in the Grailville community. Catherine Shea and Mary Kane were apartment neighbors at the retirement center. Another long time neighbor and friend, Miriam Hill, was with Mary just after she was moved to Assisted Living April 28th.

Valiant, quick-witted Mary may be singing now - can you hear her wonderful voice? "In that great gettin' up mornin', fare thee well, fare thee well, In that great gettin' up mornin' fare thee well, fare thee well."

The Mass of Resurrection was celebrated on May 5th at the Grailville Oratory.

She and Dan were wonderful role models...I will never forget them....also I loved to hear her sing about the great gettin-up mornin! Hope she calls me with that song.

Priscilla Rivera Mechana

May her sweet soul rest in peace.
She was a warm, loving and sincere person always deeply interested in everyone and always ready to share.

Gert Morris

page 3
Mary was a mentor to me for many, many years— an example, a teacher, a gentle guide, a loyal friend. She taught me about patience and persistence, about radical honesty, about humility, about raisin’ hell when it’s absolutely necessary. She taught me about courage in the face of inexplicable suffering, and in the desperate loneliness of losing her Dan. In other words, she taught me about love, love lived out in the grit and unglamorous sweat of daily life.

I haven’t seen her since 1989, and our correspondence was only sporadic. But I have kept all her letters. There will be an absence in my life, now that I know no more letters will be arriving. Farewell, my sister. Bless you on your way. I will never forget you, Mary, or stop being grateful to you.

Carol White
It has been a while since you have heard from me, therefore I want to update you on a few things that are happening which hopefully will energize you and at the same time allow you to forgive me for not writing sooner!

Due to my job, I have traveled twice to Florida and once to California since January, which allowed me to talk to Grail members face to face! In Florida I saw Judy Alves, Anne Ward and Monica and we had a great time talking and eating! Anne continues to work as a social worker/therapist with youth involved in the Judicial/Penal systems in central/western Florida; Monica works as a personal trainer at a hotel and is taking a water Shiatsu trainer course as we speak! Judy is as involved as ever with her church and the dioceses in her area, becoming more and more concerned about the migrant workers in the area.

At the end of March I traveled to California and visited the amazing group of Grail women living at Pilgrim Place, which in itself is a marvelous, lively community. Those of you there are also very fortunate to count amongst you the husbands of Joann, Donna and Nancy! What a treat it was for me to see you all and to have the opportunity to share some time together! I visited many of the members in their homes -comfortable and cozy wood frame houses-, talked to them at lunch in the dining room, or in the evening at a gathering at Donna and Tom’s place, and learned about the rich contribution of the Grail to the life of Pilgrim Place and beyond.

Joann and Jim Lamb are very involved in peace-building initiatives inside and out of Pilgrim Place, and together with a contingent of Grail members (Eva, Audrey, Elise, Maclovia, and Donna, among others) are the motor behind a marvelous peace vigil that has been happening for over a year! They are doing amazing work inside a coalition called the Pomona Valley Peace Network that is active in campuses and communities far beyond Pilgrim Place.

Joann’s health took a turn for the worst, although not for long, but only after a 5 week long period of health!

Eva Fleischner is flourishing, but what else can one expect from her? One of the evenings I was there she had been invited to see a film about Jewish children hidden by gentiles during the war! Also, a book has been published about her, which I hope all of us can read!!! In Search of the Sacred: Dr. Eva Fleischner, a Pioneer Catholic Theologian Whose Search Led Her to Leadership in the Ongoing Process of Ending Catholic-Christian Anti-Judaism by Herbert S. Heavenrich

Audrey Sorrento is as busy as she can be with commitments at Pilgrim Place, as well as development and fund-raising for the National Grail and Grailville. She is exited about the upcoming Grail retreat! Audrey shared a series of documents she has developed to introduce the Grail to audiences unfamiliar with us that are going to be the basis of future membership publications. Thanks Audrey!!

Elise Gorges has her hands into several patches of the community garden!! Many of the vegetables from a memorable meal were the fruit of Elise’s labor! She volunteers with the administration of Pilgrim Place and was getting ready for a short but intense period as administrator of their guest house!

Audrey Schomer was always busy and on the run so we didn’t talk much, but she looks wonderful!

Maclovia is hoping to get all her still photographs into digital format, to preserve them and use them more; however, this project has proven more time consuming that she originally thought it would be.

Nancy Cooney and her husband Chuck still miss their Milwaukee friends, but they were getting ready to go there to pick up their granddaughter and take her to Grailville for Holy Week.

continued next page
Donna is also busy with everything from peace to women-led theologies. She and Tom were graceful hosts to the whole group that came one night for a meeting at their home. That evening it became clear to me how present the group is, and how rich the contributions of the Grail husbands are!! Tom Ambrogi, in fact, developed a wonderful study guide (*find it in this issue of Gumbo*) for a group of over 60 strong that met at Pilgrim Place for four weeks to discuss collectively the book by Jonathan Schell *The Unconquerable World*. In a later discussion Tom agreed to let the US Grail use his study guide to give the membership -that overwhelmingly is working for peace - and thirsty for Grail activities - what I hope is a blood transfusion.

I am proposing that in the month of June Grail groups (however you want to define that: Grail members, friends, interested women, activists, etc.) all over the country start to read Schell’s book armed with the guide, which is a wonderful addition, to start promoting a culture of peace and to help this country and this world stand for truth!

Please let Carol Siemering or I know if you are starting a group, how many people participate in it and what is the outcome of the activity!

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**REGIONS RETREAT!**


**Jean Wilson** shares reflections from the Michigan retreat, held in Canada

18 Grail members, women in process, and friends of the Grail were fortunate to spend a weekend in April on the northern shore of Lake Erie in Canada. Joining together in meaningful rituals, we gained new insights into our emotional reactions to anger - our own and others' whose differing opinions challenge us to defend ourselves.

Lynn Malley guided us through exercises that helped us discover how our values affect our anger. We found that sometimes those with whom we disagree may actually have similar values to ours but are approaching the problem from a different position. Recognizing this can help diffuse the anger between us.

As the theme for the weekend was *Spirituality and Practice of Nonviolence*, we were fortunate to have participants whose views on ‘war’ differed. What we discovered, through a fish bowl dialogue, was that it IS possible to share deeply with someone with diametrically opposed views. This led to a discussion on “truth” – *what is it and how do we know we have it?*, and gave everyone a sense of hope. Ending the weekend with a ritual that included the washing of each other's feet allowed us to honor each other, no matter what "position" we each express.

We left the retreat truly refreshed by the beauty of the place, the comfort of the inn, good food, the companionship of the women and the new ideas that might actually influence our behavior in difficult, real life situations.

Thank you, Lynn and the Michigan Grail, for all the planning you did so we could share this time together.
Joyce Minkler

The International Quad (IQ) has had a busy few months. Hopefully you remember reading about our various actions and activities in Gumbo and the National Grail News. But, in the interest of catching everyone up into the current work of the Quad, let me recapitulate!

IN MARCH:
- Many of the Grail members in the New York area who have been a consistent Grail presence at the UN were joined by others of us for the Commission on the Status of Women meetings. Mary Kay Louchart, Mary Gindhart, Dorothy Rasenberger, Theresa Garuba, Carol Barton, elmira nazombe, Sharon Joslyn, Ceci Figueroa, Ann Burke, Reina Estrada, Peg Linehan, Teresa Wilson and Joyce Minkler attended all or part of the two weeks of rich dialogue with women from around the world. Teresa Wilson wrote a summary of that meeting for the National Grail News in March.
- Sharon Joslyn and Mary Lu Lageman traveled to Mexico to participate in the "Overcoming Poverty Program". See Sharon’s article on the next page.

IN APRIL:
- The UN team in New York had a substantive meeting to review its work as representatives of the International Grail at the UN and as a largely US team and arm of the International Quad and to strategize regarding Grail International Networks, international linkages with other groups that share Grail concerns. Among many others areas of discussion was Grail involvement in the next World Social Forum in Brazil. Mary Gindhart has been the "scribe" for this group which plans to meet again in May.
- Alice Dougan, who has taken on responsibility for creating a database for the IQ, produced a questionnaire regarding the interests and international experience of US Grail members. YOU HAVE A COPY IN YOUR LAST GUMBO. Please fill out the questionnaire ASAP and return it to Alice. This data will give us information we need for planning the work of the IQ, preparing those who might want more international experience, and sharing the work we already do in the US with our involvements in many different cultural groupings.
- Vivian Corres left for South Africa to help staff the Grail center at Kleinmond while the regular staff has vacation time. She writes: I arrived a couple of weeks early in order to orient myself, as well as to help organize the books in the library. Currently at the Centre, the Grail is hosting a Training for Transformation course for almost 40 women from ten southern and eastern hemisphere countries. Vivian is excited about getting to know Grail women in South Africa and will travel in the country for three weeks in June. Then, she is on to Europe!

IN MAY and JUNE:
- The IQ will be collecting feedback from all of you about your experience of the International Networks in order to add our US experience to the thinking at the International Network Forum Meeting in South Africa in July. Watch the National Grail News for more on this.

IN JULY:
- Teresa Wilson, Ria de Groot and others involved in issues related to peace and the delegitimization of militarism will present a workshop on the first morning of the Grail National Retreat. This will be a most important conversation for us as US Grail members at this moment in our history. Later that day we will talk about spirituality in the international Grail, in preparation for prayerful consideration of the International Grail message during the retreat days.

The IQ welcomes new members! Let Joyce Minkler or Teresa Wilson know of your interest area and we will help you to get hooked in to what is developing among us.
Women of the Americas (WOA) Network
Sharon Joslyn

In 2000, the WOA Network took on the responsibility for the Program known as ‘Women Confronting Globalization - Overcoming Poverty and Economic Illiteracy’ (OPP). In the International Grail this network is known as Overcoming Poverty/Global Justice Network. Women of the Americas Network began in 1990 with our first program in Mexico and subsequently at Grailville. Rather than plan another program, we adopted the OPP as a project.

The plan was to complete three Phases in Brasil (Phase I), Mexico (Phase II), Honduras (Phase III) in one and one half years. Due to funding problems, lack of staffing, location and travel we took three years with Phase I in Brasil, Phase II in our own countries with International resource persons and now have successfully completed Phase III in Mexico! (February 23 – March 3, 2004)

There were three countries represented: nine Brasilians, thirteen Mexicans, two USA (Mary Lu Lageman and Sharon Joslyn) and one Canadian. Samia Saad from Toronto has been working with the Grail in Canada for 8 years. She is originally from Colombia. Mexican participants were Grail and non-Grail women from three communities where the Grail has projects, two Indigenous women from Chiapas and several University students who work with Rosaurora in Guanajuato. Debra Lambo participated in Phase I but was unable to be present at Phase II due to a change in her work focus. The Hondurans were unfortunately unable to obtain visas.

The major theme of the 10 days was Globalization with its impact on the Americas. We looked at this impact in different areas: Spirituality, Environment and Sustainable Development, Popular Economic Solidarity, Leadership and Power. Presenters came from contacts in Mexico. The afternoons were spent building strategies to implement change in our own countries. Results were shared creatively for purposes of better (and more enjoyable) communication. Our three languages were Spanish, Portuguese, English -- and actually a fourth, since the Indigenous women have their own language with Spanish as a second. So sometimes we had to translate "Spanish to Spanish".

Some of the results of the program are:
- a restructuring of the Women of Americas Network for increased productivity and inclusion of new members;
- a plan for a youth conference in Mexico;
- preparations for the Grail Social Networks meeting in July 2004 in South Africa;
- a publication in three languages of the Women of the Americas Network with a resume of the Overcoming Poverty Program.

It has been a long and difficult road. We are grateful for the help given to us in many ways through individuals and the International Presidency Team. We are confident that the outcome will be a positive step for us as Grail. We are in a celebratory mood, having "kept the faith and finished the course". Now we look to the future.
Nature pulled out all stops to greet the participants of the Spanish language Training for Community Transformation (TFCT) that took place at Cornwall, April 21-26. Forsythia, daffodils, dogwood, cherry trees and tulips contributed to the energy and beauty of this gathering of 14 incredible women from around the country. The training was facilitated by the dynamic duo, Grail member Bethann Witcher-Cottrell and Angelica Otero, a participant of the very first TFCT and who served as facilitator-in-training for this first ever Spanish language U.S. Grail training.

The participants were an incredible group of women involved in a variety of work for change: organizing the Coalition of Immokalee Workers’ strike against Taco Bell and its parent company for poor labor standards and treatment of immigrants among Florida’s tomato workers; Victims of Violence, a domestic abuse program; the South Bronx Grail Clothes for Community Project; Parent Action Committee of the Bronx New Settlement housing community; Catholic Social Services in a Florida migrant community; community-based early childhood education in the San Jose Mayfair Improvement Initiative; Family Resource Coordinator of a local community center in Wisconsin; Women Together project of the Neighborhood Network Center in Massachusetts; Women’s Action to Gain Economic Security, a women’s worker cooperative in California; Misión Guadalupana of Newburgh, NY.

Although the evaluations are not yet translated, verbal feedback in the course of the week indicated that the training was well received by the participants. It was noted, with appreciation, by one participant that the training was the first program that she had ever attended in her own language. Many expressed the realization that they are not alone, and felt much supported meeting other women concerned about similar issues. Some Grail members in and around the training noted that it felt like a pivotal moment for the U.S. Grail, both in offering such a training and in regard to its implications for more meaningful participation in projects such as Women of the Americas. (see Sharon’s article, page 8)

It was a welcome reversal of roles as our language-challenged, English-speaking back-up team provided logistical and meal support for the week. Philadelphia sent the back up team that made it possible for the Cornwall center to host such an ambitious program. Patricia Mellette, also a participant of the first TFCT from Philadelphia, served as head chef extraordinaire. Mary Gindhart and I were on kitchen, laundry and transport duty. Lenie Schaareman not only made a delicious meal, but brought it and served it and worked as back-up for a few days. Philadelphia Grail members Alexa Kane, Theresa Czerwinski, Mary DiVito and Helen Adler sent along desserts to carry us through, as well as funds for meals and scholarship. Sharon Joslyn brought the van-load of participants from the South and North Bronx, and also worked with the back-up team. Mpanda Kalala, who was not able to join us on the back-up team, provided invaluable help with recruitment and registration leading up to the Training. And of course the Cornwall Grail community extended their wonderful hospitality and provided much needed back-up for the back-up team!

Everyone is looking forward to returning for the October Follow-up training and we will be working to sure up funding support to make it possible for all to return. The Training not only energized the women who attended but all of the Grail members who made the training possible. It was a team effort all the way and a wonderful expression of the Grail doing what it does best - building community, providing personally transforming experiences for women, who transform the world around them.
News from the Grail Women Task Force

Kathleen Walzer

The Grail Women Task Force (GWTF) has two on-going groups and one activity-in-development; after a lengthy period of quiet and reflection, we have made a decision to do more extensive outreach in order to get in touch with a greater diversity of women. In this issue of Gumbo, we share about one of the on-going groups, Bookworms. You will hear more about our other activities in future Gumbos.

Bookworms was formed in January, 2000; we made the commitment at that time to read and discuss only books written by women on topics relevant to our roles in society, in the United States, and about our spiritual journeys. Following the tragedies of September 11, we have focused some reading on the plight of Muslim women in their own countries as well as in this country, and on powerful Muslim women who have had political influence.

In addition, we have given ourselves the flexibility to read some books that are outside our usual theological framework. Phyllis Chesler’s compelling volume, “Woman’s Inhumanity to Woman” provided such an intense discussion that we did not want to leave it; we continued it the following month until we felt finished. Yet another experience was a film and reading of Emily Dickinson’s life and poetry, which put a brilliant writer into her culture and showed a foremother of contemporary woman poets.

During the early years, 5-6 women of the Grail Women Task Force regularly attended the group, which takes place approximately every 6 weeks, but recently we have made a concerted effort to choose books of wider appear and do personal outreach. In February, 2004, 10 women, only 5 of whom belonged to the GWTF, attended an overnight at Grailville in which Bookworms was one activity held during the weekend. The GWTF Leadership team believes that Bookworms holds promise for recruitment.
The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People
Jonathan Schell

AN OUTLINE, WITH SOME REFLECTIONS
THOMAS E. AMBROGI

As we begin our discussion of Jonathan Schell’ s new book The Unconquerable World, I must tell you that I find it the most persuasively provocative book that I've read in twenty years. That just in case you might not otherwise recognize my enthusiasms!

Jonathan Schell has been for years one of the most thoughtfully passionate voices against nuclear war in the world, certainly in the U.S. His 1981 monumental bestseller Fate of the Earth (which Harrison Salisbury called "the most important book of the decade") set the terms of public discussion on nuclear weapons, and framed the national movement for a Nuclear Freeze in this country. Among other things, he is the Harold Willens Peace Fellow at the Nation Institute, and a regular columnist in the NATION. He was a close friend of Harold Willens, as was I, until Harold' s death this year, and that bond to Harold binds him also to the history of the Interfaith Center to Reverse the Arms Race at All Saints Church, which Harold helped to found along with Rabbi Leonard Beerman and George Regas.

After nuclear tests were carried out by India and Pakistan in 1998, Schell published The Gift of Time: Tue Case for Abolishing Nuclear Weapons Now, and spearheaded a broad-based grassroots movement calling for the U.S. to take the lead by being the first nation to abolish nuclear weapons. On May31, 1998, he spoke at All Saints, along with George Regas, and laid out a call to specific, practical, low-to-the-ground organizing of the people' s voice to end the nuclear threat to the survival of our planet. That gave a strong impulse for a still-continuing Nuclear Weapons Abolition Ministry at All Saints Church.

When one looks at the world around us today, and at the radical reversal of traditional U.S. foreign policy in the unilateralist new American Empire of the Bush administration, one would think that all of this consciousness-raising of the past several decades had never happened, or has simply been ignored.

Behind the reflections of The Unconquerable World lie a host of fresh new nuclear dangers, all very real but hardly recognized in the public consciousness for the serious threats that they are.

1. The trigger-tight nuclear standoff which currently exists between India and Pakistan.
2. The nuclear buildup in North Korea and in Iran, both of whom obviously feel called to defend themselves against George Bush's aggressive willingness to attack them preemptively, even with nuclear weapons, whenever he pleases and for whatever reason he chooses.
3. Israel's nuclear arsenal, supported so aggressively and deceptively by the U.S., which gives impetus to other Middle East countries to build their own nuclear self-defense systems.

4. And most serious of all, the Bush administration's decision to develop smaller, "more usable" nuclear weapons.
   a. In 2002, the Pentagon issued a "Nuclear Posture Review," directing war planners to prepare options for nuclear weapons use against seven potential enemy nations: Iran, Iraq and North Korea, (the original Axis of Evil), plus Russia, China, Libya and Syria. This, of course, follows in detail the prescriptions of the National Security Strategy of the USA of September 17, 2002. Neither of these two major events has received much comment at all in the media of this country.
   b. I have spoken widely about the new Empire, and people frequently want to talk especially about this radically new nuclear posture. They ask me: "Are the American people really in agreement with all this?" My response is it depends on how much they really know about it--or rather how little they are being told about it. For instance: On Nov. 7, the House approved a $401 billion defense budget--and the LAT story did mention that the House bill lifts a decade-old ban on research for "low yield" nuclear weapons--"bunker busters" of less than 5 kilotons, The Senate passed the same Defense bill five days later, on Nov. 12. The next day, on Nov. 13, LAT carried a small story on the Senate vote, with no mention at all of nuclear weapons. The NYT carried an advance story on Nov. 12 that the Senate vote was to come on that day, making no mention of the controversial nuclear element. As far as I can tell, the NYT has never mentioned the fact of the actual passage of the $401 billion defense budget with its radical opening to nuclear weapons.

With these as background pieces, we come to Jonathan Schell's latest reflection on war and the possibilities of peace, The Unconquerable World.

I. His thesis has three major points, and he develops each of them at great length:

1. The "War System" has become dysfunctional.

   **READ p. 6-7**

2. History proves that forms of non-violent action have worked in dispute resolution.

   **READ p. 8-9**

3. There is another way beyond violence; changes are under way; chances for peace are greater than ever before. But the chances are fragile, let us be clear.

   **READ p.10**
II. The book is divided into four parts:

A. PART ONE: ON VIOLENCE

The rise and fall of what he calls the "War System." Schell recounts how the development of nuclear arms and what he calls "people's wars" have largely reduced war's political payback, so that by the end of the 20th century the "war system" had been damaged beyond repair.

Mutual Assured Destruction by nuclear arms was unable to coerce opponents into political compromise, as could conventional war. The global war system did not collapse, he says, it became unusable. And People's Wars also spoiled the military game by simply refusing to acknowledge defeat. Mao's Chinese peasant army was a mass political mobilization of civilians, giving support to guerillas and making them practically undefeatable. This same strategy later in Vietnam and in Afghanistan let technologically backward nations with relatively few poorly armed warriors drive off giants like the U.S. and France and the Soviet Union.

The larger conclusion which Schell draws from all this is that, as we've heard him say above, "violence, always a mark of human failure and a bringer of sorrow, has now also become dysfunctional as a political instrument."

B. PART TWO: ON NONVIOLENCE

The subtitle of the book is: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People. In Part Two, Schell says that he wants "to trace, alongside the awful history of modern violence, a less-noticed, parallel history of non-violent power." (305) This fresh and, for me, startling historical analysis is where I feel Schell makes his most original contribution, and it's where I want to spend some good time with you today.

C. PART THREE AND PART FOUR

I can only sketch an outline of the final third of the book here, presuming that we will address much of that material in our final meeting. Parts 3 and 4 describe the kinship between nonviolence and democracy which he sees in the astonishing parade of democratic revolutions of the last quarter of the 20th century. The list is truly remarkable when you see it all drawn out as non-violent popular victories over oppression within current history--within your memory and my memory. With no time here to develop his scenarios of each, he sketches powerful events in: Greece, Portugal, Spain, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, Nigeria, Iran, Mexico, Serbia, Northern Ireland, the MLK civil rights struggle in the U.S. and, of course, South Africa--on which he spends considerable time.

He argues that these developments (in the U.S. and some 20 nations!) "have provided the world with the strongest new foundations for the creation of a durable
peace that have ever existed,” a world where power is cooperative rather than coercive. The new Bush doctrine of aggressive preemptive war stands as a direct challenge to the energy and possibility of those marvelous developments, and that doctrine simply throws “into distressing relief the policies of the one democracy in the world that today threatens to make the fearful transition from republic to empire, the United States.”

III. So let us look at what Schell does with the notion and the reality of nonviolence.

Part Two begins by affirming that modern Western political theory has generally agreed, with Max Weber, that “politics operates with very special means, namely power backed up by violence.” This, of course, is the meaning of Carl von Clausewitz’ famous dictum: “War is simply a continuation of political intercourse.” Schell then looks closely at Gandhi and the remarkable power of his vision of Satyagraha. The term is Sanskrit for “truth force” or “soul force.” Concretely, Satyagraha means “direct action without violence in support of the actor's beliefs.” Schell vividly describes Gandhi’s shaping of the concept through his leadership of the Indian community in 1906 in Transvaal, South Africa, where Satyagraha meant deliberate refusal to cooperate with racist registration laws of the British which Indians found offensive to their consciences, accompanied by a willingness to fill the local jails as a consequence.

In 1915, Gandhi brought his now battle-tested instrument of non-violent non-cooperation from South Africa to the struggle for self-determination against the British Raj in India, which Schell describes in some detail in Chapter 4. But I want to move over that more familiar story to his analysis of nonviolence as key to four other revolutions: 1) the Glorious Revolution in 1689 in Britain, when the English switched their allegiance en masse from one prince to another, from James II to William of Orange, with hardly a shot fired on Salisbury Field; 2) the American Revolution; 3) the French Revolution; and 4) the Russian Revolution. Of all this, for purposes of time (and my own enthusiasms!), I’d like to focus only on the American Revolution, and then turn our attention to several facets of the recent collapse of the Soviet Union. Schell’ s lifting up of the power of nonviolence in these historical events is simply mind-boggling to me.

IV. First, the American Revolution.

Schell maintains that the American Revolution had already occurred in the forging of the unconquerable will of the American people to be free of English rule, long before the English fired their first shot. He confirms this in quoting George Washington, en route to his victory over the English at Yorktown in 1781, when Washington reported to Congress, "I have been your faithful servant so far as it lay within me to be. I have endured." Schell comments:

**READ: p.157, 2 pieces**
The American Revolution was won before ever a drop of blood was shed at Bunker Hill. The real American Revolution lay in the acts of non-cooperation that were fostered and planned in the Committees of Correspondence beginning in the 1760s. To my own astonishment, I find that this was the understanding, not only of George Washington, but also of John Adams, first vice-president and second president of the United States. This comes clear in some eloquent reflections late in his life that form a perfect complement to the mind of Washington that we've just noted.

**READ: 160; 161; 162; 163.**

V. Then, Eastern Europe and Václav Havel.

Let me turn now to Schell's fresh recounting of the recent history of Central and Eastern Europe, which has also been the source of some remarkable new insights for me. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990--the end of the regime founded by the Bolsheviks more than seventy earlier, in 1917--presents for Schell "the most sweeping demonstration so far of the power of 'politics' without violence," and he analyzes the whole complex landscape through the lens of Gandian Satyagraha. Two global developments which we have already noted here were, of course, powerfully at work in the background. One was the nuclear paralysis of the war between the great powers; the other was the global movement for self-determination in the post-Cold War years. But, within that background, Schell uses three writer-activists as guides in describing how the Eastern European nations brought down the Soviet Empire: Adam Michnik, of Poland; Václav Havel, of Czechoslovakia; and Georgy Konrád of Hungary.

Of the three, Václav Havel, the former President of the Czech Republic, is the most intriguing to me. He published a powerful essay in 1978, called "Living in Truth." Living in truth stands in opposition to "living in the lie," and Havel's thought bore fruit in the rise of the Czech resistance movement called Charter 77 and in the "velvet revolution" that put an end to Communist power in Czechoslovakia. It also had a powerful effect on the parallel revolutionary force rising in Poland, called Solidarity.

But let us listen to Schell's reflection on Havel:

**READ: p. 196**

VI. Implications for us right now.

I find this all a very provocative reflection on a question that is central to me and my Christian consciousness. Driven as I am by the call for justice, and the urgency to do justice, I keep asking: Where is the valuable place to be? In this uniquely difficult time of political isolation in the cold and the dark, where can I really make a difference? Where is the place to which I am called to "break my body" and to "pour out my blood" for the sisters and the brothers, in order to make myself one with the redeeming Christ, to "commune" with the dying and rising Christ each time I
celebrate the Eucharist? Tell me, O Lord, tell me. I keep reaching for what all this means concretely to me, but I’d love to go off on a serious prayerful retreat with anyone so moved, to discern what the Spirit might be saying to us amid such provocation as Havel and Schell’s book.

The call to action was explicit in Gandhi’s "truth force--satyagraha" which was never meant to be a non-violence of "passive resistance," but one of constructive alternatives to violence. This was also very clear to the thinkers and doers behind the East European revolutions. Listen to Schell on all this:

**READ:** p. 200 and 201

**VII.** As a theologian, I'm intrigued by another issue which Schell raises: Should non-violence be chosen for moral and spiritual reasons, or for practical ones?

For Gandhi, nonviolence was a moral and spiritual requirement. As Schell says: "Non-violence was for him a creed, not a policy." Havel, however, a secular man, wrote in different terms, which Schell sets off in what amounts to a theological exchange between Gandhi and Havel and Jesus, which I find fascinating:

**READ:** p.206-207

**VIII.** And now, to finally prepare us to listen to Schell himself more closely in the coming weeks, let me permit him to bring this wonderful book to its own crescendo conclusion:

**READ:** p. 386, 387, 388.

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