

CHAPTER 4 – PEOPLE ARE HARD TO HATE CLOSE UP. MOVE IN

Pages 64-65, they're good examples and the split in the "message" is clear.

"it's easier to be pissed off than it is to be hurt or scared". I will address this a bit in my opening, especially her "find and replace" exercise. I would substitute a different word than "pain". I would substitute the word "work".

67, "when we deny our emotion, it owns us. When we own our emotion, we can rebuild and find our way through the pain". Strong words. Useful words.

68, anger as catalyst and life-drainer both. I do agree but want her to talk about how to effect the transmutation. Leiris' message is amazing.

70, face-to-face conflict. True. There is a stranger in each of us, even in our closest friends and family. Um, that's what makes them interesting and exciting to be around too, you know.

71, her description of the world's view of emotional safety---I come back to this---if I shout loud enough, I don't have to listen, do I?

71, bottom, dehumanizing. Alan Dershowitz, in his book "Chutzpah" (which is Yiddish for "nerve") doesn't come out and say this but he draws you to this conclusion. It is not persecution that is the problem. It is the tradition of persecution that is such a daunting obstacle to overcome---for both the persecuted and the persecutor. Is it...kismet...that I am just now rereading William Shirer's masterpiece, The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich and am just at the part of the book dealing with the darkness of the final solution and the holocaust and the persecution of everyone who was an Untermensch?

73-74, there's also a fair dollop of fear at work. You want to differentiate so that you yourself don't become one of the victims of this process, of being yourself one of those slated for dehumanization.

74, middle, shall we talk of the irony of how social media was inherently designed to better connect people and it is functioning to do exactly the opposite?

75, maybe it all comes down to that old saw "if you have nothing good to say, don't say anything"? Ahhhh, but in today's world, not saying anything....keeping quiet and listening...is really, REALLY hard.

75, bottom, "we diminish our own humanity" yup. Absolutely. This is in my opening.

76, "we're so saturated by these words and images, we're close to normalizing moral exceptions". It's a super-elegant way of putting this. Absolutely happened in Germany in the mid-to-late 30s.

76-77, so I'm going to go on a significant digression here about Black Lives Matter. The first part is a personal experience, the second part is social observation. The first part.

Some years ago, I finally got to my first Pride Parade here in Toronto. It was a special day for me as it started, to see how much *fun* people were having, to see so much colour in the floats and the performers' costumes...or lack thereof (grin). The marshal that year was the CEO of Cineplex Media, Salah Bachir, a fine and gentle man who I knew a little bit, and one who has been extremely philanthropic. I loved seeing how much fun *he* was having. And that year, Black Lives Matter was the

“honoured guest group”. They came by in their float, laughing and waving. We *all* cheered loudly, black and white alike.

Then, about 6 blocks down from where I was, the parade stopped. Stopped dead. Black Lives Matter had blocked the road. They held the parade for ransom, only allowing it to continue once they had achieved their demands—that the parade organizers get the police float out of the parade and sign a document stating the police would never again be allowed to put a float in the parade.

That sort of demand would never stand up in a court of law, on account of duress. But it was....not honourable. I was left---and am *still* left---with very ambivalent feelings about the movement. I appreciate that they felt extreme measures were needed to bring the problems to the forefront and try to effect change. This was not the way to do it.

To the movement’s credit, I think it has learned from its early mistakes (though I don’t know if they ever retracted their demand or apologized to the parade or police here). The proof-in-the-pudding came to me during the Superbowl a couple weeks ago. And specifically, watching the commercials. A significant majority of the commercials? Depicted positive, empowered scenes with black people. The movement has hit the “cool-up” factor button. It is cool to like and admire black people now.

The problem with the “cool-up” process is that it is all too often tied to the following of a fad. Will this go out of vogue? Here would be my humble suggestion for the movement. That they treat their movement as an exercise in business dynamics. We have gone through the early adoption stage and into the main market penetration stage. How do you retain market share? Where the “market” in this case is people’s attention and sympathy/empathy.

78, middle. There’s a sort of flip side of the coin to what she’s stating here, which I will express through two journal entries on fundamentalism:

*“ I want to spit this out first---the next remarks will read as being denigrating. I *don’t* intend them that way. I am typing them out of a genuine attempt to understand, a flawed attempt because I haven’t myself been in this position.*

*My understanding of fundamentalism is that it demands of its adherents a rigid observance of its codes, beliefs, visions, goals and policies. To do that and stay sane, an adherent must do what? They must surrender **free will**. I will argue that since they have *sacrificed*--there’s *that* word---their **most precious possession**, they will do anything to keep their chosen “ism” alive and well, because it is the thing that has the most of that person bound up in it now, the thing that has cost them the most. And though it’s a negative commandment, covetousness is part of human nature. A fundamentalist relates to his or her “ism” more closely because they have given up more to do so than the rest of us. I know this is an awful thing to read---because I’m skirting closely to aligning it with demonic possession. But there’s something to this I can’t let go of. Our Toronto book club, we took a look at *Conversations on Consciousness* a time ago. There were more than a few views in that book who twined free will very closely to the concept of a soul. Wait...I’m not done. Do such people subconsciously ask themselves whether they’ve ended up giving up their free will not of their own free will? And does a hardening effect stem from a latent bitterness at having made this surrender?*

Maybe there is some good that can come out of this “bad” sketch----if each of us can find a right and good set of ideas or process of belief or something....something worth making such a sacrifice...well,