

Daily Meditation 11-03-22

bell hooks and Thomas Aquinas on truth and justice

Good morning.

Today's essay is on bell hooks and Thomas Aquinas and their consensus about the role of truth and justice. bell hooks opens the essay with her beautiful teaching that "the heart of justice is truth telling."

... the heart of justice is truth telling.

So justice and truth go together. Indeed, truth is embedded. It's the heart of justice. So when we're living in a time of lies, promulgated in the media, mainstream as well as social media, promulgated by big political figures like ex presidents, it's a time to be alert.

The heart of justice is truth telling. Now, that sentence is from her wonderful book *All About Love: New Visions...all about love*.

Now, it's wonderful to be talking about love, and justice, and truth. And we did this in our last meditation yesterday, because they do go together. There can be no justice without truth. And a lot of injustice is built on lies. And there could be no love, because the injustice built on lies results in violence. Violence is not love. Violence is the misuse of our energy. It's the expression of hatred, power-over.

And bell hooks talks exactly about that in her new book *All About Love*, beginning on page 40. She says,

It is no accident that greater cultural acceptance of lying in this society coincided with women getting greater social equality.

And she says,

Patriarchy itself is based on the idea that it's essential to maintain dominance over women by any means necessary.

...by any means necessary. She says on page 41,

While much cultural attention is given to domestic violence and practically everyone agrees that it is wrong for men to hit women as a way of subordinating us, most men use psychological terrorism as a way to subordinate women. This is a socially acceptable form of coercion, and lying is one of the most powerful weapons in this arsenal.

...Lying is one of the most powerful weapons in this arsenal.

When men lie to women, presenting a false self, the terrible price they pay to maintain power over us is a loss of their capacity to give and receive love.

So lying drives out love...lying drives out truth.

Trust is the foundation of intimacy. When lies erode trust, genuine connection cannot take place. While men who dominate others can and do experience ongoing care, they place a barrier between themselves and the experience of love.

She quotes Stoltenberg in his book *The End of Manhood*:

We emphasize that men can honor their own selfhood only through loving justice. Justice between people is perhaps the most important connection people can have. And this alone breaks the chokehold of patriarchal masculinity.

Here, I think bell hooks lays out, again, the price we pay for lies, even in our relationships on a one-to-one scale, as well as in our relationships on a social scale.

Truth, justice, love, compassion, non-violence, versus lies, violence, power-over control, violence.

I think these issues are at stake in today's election season.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.