

The Choice is Voice or Violence

It's so incredibly bizarre to me to see college students chanting or yelling in order to prevent someone they disagree with from speaking. What in the world is going on at the university these days?! Isn't college where you are *supposed to* have your preconceived and prejudiced ideas challenged?

As much as capitalistic tendencies have done for humanity over the last two hundred years, children in large measure are raised in socialism. They only get bits and pieces of capitalism as it falls from the adults' table.

Children are regularly silenced, coerced, and traumatized, so is it any wonder that some might not internalize the importance of allowing everybody a chance to voice their opinions? Not really.

If there's a constant in human nature over the millenia that we have existed, it's this: you will allow voice, or you will get violence. Free speech is arguably the greatest liberty we have in terms of its capabilities to speak truth to power and topple status quos. Hence its the first liberty to be forcefully removed by the powers that be who profit so richly from certain ideas remaining en vogue.

And the result of silencing voice? Sooner or later, silenced people refuse to tolerate their censorship, and pick up a stick. You see it in antisocial, violent behavior that emerges in silenced, coerced, and traumatized children. You see it in revolutionary young people. You see it in oppressed minorities and repressed majorities who clamor for freedom.

The bigger issue here, although, is what that voice means. Does it result in desired outcomes? Or does it result in one-size-fits-all central authoritarian policy? Even the perception of having a voice quells much violence, methinks, but not forever.

Expression, I believe, is a basic human need, like food, water, shelter, and social connection. When that need is individually or institutionally violated, nasty effects may, nay, *will* be realized.

Are you silencing or censoring your children? Are you silencing or censoring your partner? Are you silencing or censoring your peers? Are you silencing or censoring your enemies? Think twice, please.