

# C H A P T E R 1



## Everyday Peacemaking: Nonviolent Communication and Rhetoric

### INTRODUCTION

In the horrific wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, on the thousands of defenseless people inside the World Trade Towers, the Pentagon, and the airplane that went down in Pennsylvania, the overriding story that the media has repeatedly told, in myriad permutations, has been one of retribution, revenge, and war, be it in Afghanistan or in Iraq. It is easy to be led down this seductive trail of pessimism and violence in the name of “justice.” It is easy to forget that the overwhelming, pre-media-induced response was *not* a preconditioned violent response: it was of spontaneous prayer and candlelight vigils; it was of reconnection with family members and friends to reaffirm our love for one another.

Somehow, this overwhelming love and need for connection and understanding has become hidden under the military and media drive to act and report on the less universal need for, but seemingly symbolic incidents of, hatred, reprisal, and violence. The incredible, untold story of American and international nonviolence and peace activism is amazing when it is placed in the context of a remarkable and increasingly ubiquitous global phenomenon. In New York City, in protest of police brutality and racist violations of civil and human rights, Oscar-winning actor Susan Sarandon joins other famous and anonymous people in civil disobedience and protests. They and hundreds of other people nonviolently march and submit to arrest without contest.<sup>1</sup> Out West in Billings, Montana, up to 10,000 pictures of menorahs appeared in the windows of homes, churches, businesses, and schools to protest neonazi hatred and intimidation of Jews, African Americans, and Native Americans there. The well-organized protests in Seattle, Washington, and in Washington, D.C., against human rights and environmental impacts of the World Trade Organization’s (WTO’s) global

trade actions have also made headlines for the vast majority of the protestors' respectful use of nonviolent civil disobedience. The *New York Times* gets chastised for underreporting the thousands upon thousands of peaceful people who come to Washington, D.C., to quietly, respectfully disagree with the Bush administration's alleged need to go to war with Iraq in 2002–03.

The peaceful protest phenomenon is occurring overseas as well. In Ireland, the dismantling of Irish Republican Army weapons units is being discussed, if cantankerously. In Myanmar (Burma), a woman leader of a suppressed democratic political party stubbornly sits in her car day after day, refusing to cooperate with soldiers who threaten to shoot her. Years earlier in her fight, she had fasted to the point of starvation and potential blindness while trying to press for getting fellow democratic workers who were political prisoners out of a ghastly prison. Meanwhile, in Israel and Palestine, the Peace Process creaks along, albeit sputtering at times to a full stop, as new crises arise. In South Africa, the publication of findings of Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Truth and Reconciliation Commission has brought bittersweet relief. Internationally, hundreds of countries (except the U.S.) sign a ban on the use of land mines. There is a common denominator in all of these peace-oriented developments on the forefront of international politics. There are tough negotiations, extended inquiries, complex, multiparty agreements, media pronouncements, and often, the plain, stubborn refusal of one person, here and there, to participate with injustice.

It is easiest to think about these events in terms of average people, the Erin Brockovitches among us, performing extraordinary feats of persistence, willpower, and fearlessness in the face of injustice and even mortal danger. What drives human beings to spontaneously behave in selfless, courageous ways? How are we to explain the fearlessness of the firemen running to the top floors of the burning World Trade Towers, with their main concern not being their own lives, but rather the lives of thousands of people they ushered down to safety before the towers fell? As a scholar of communication and the ways that human beings persuade one another, I believe that in all of these events and stories of human drama we find nonviolent communication patterns and rhetoric. In just plain English, it is *peaceful persuasion* that is changing the world.

Nonviolence and rhetoric—as concepts and theories of human existence and communication—are not often discussed together. Rather, these concepts and theories are understood in terms of people. In the early 20th century, it was Gandhi who exemplified nonviolence by using rhetoric, that is, exquisite powers of persuasive communication and civil-disobedient direct action, to achieve a peaceful goal. By midcentury, it was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who led America's civil rights movement and, years later, we see he led all of Amer-

ica in many ways, toward a more peaceful future. As we enter the first years of the new millennium, America's pop culture has embraced Tibet's exiled Dalai Lama, a Nobel Peace Prize-winner. The Dalai Lama's books often grace the *New York Times* bestseller list. His nonviolent campaign to end the terrible human rights abuses in Chinese-controlled Tibet finds him in high-profile places. We see him on the pages of newspapers and magazines, hanging out with U.S. presidents and movie stars such as his friend, actor Richard Gere. Clearly, peaceful persuasion is popular and holds immense global appeal. My question is, What makes it so? How do people peacefully persuade? What makes their speeches, their books, their actions, so compelling?

### THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOK

The purpose of this work, then, is to begin to tip the scales of scholarship, which have weighed so heavily on violence, back in the direction of peace and nonviolence. Through these case studies, I define what nonviolent rhetoric is and identify its key characteristics. My identification is by no means exhaustive, but it is a start. This list includes the rhetorical use of themes and orientations toward community, collectivity, mutual responsibility, and a pointed use of cooperation or noncooperation.

In *The Rhetoric of Reason*, James Crosswhite observes that there are two "forms" of rhetoric, which he calls a "primary" and a "secondary rhetoric" (277-78). The primary rhetoric deals with "civic, public purposes as well as more individual and personal ones" and requires a robust "public sphere, some domain of argumentative discourse within which people can take action in language, resolve disputes, further common projects." In the absence of such a public sphere, "Secondary rhetoric is focused . . . [less] on accomplishing social and civic purposes by way of reasoning and speech as on the forms and techniques of writing." In short, whereas primary rhetoric is "pragmatic and purposeful," secondary rhetoric is "literary and aesthetic" (277-78). The concern of this book, then, is in this form of "primary" rhetoric. While I do analyze and at times appreciate literary and aesthetic qualities in the chapters that follow, I am more concerned here with what effects these unique case studies in the rhetoric of peace and nonviolence have in the public sphere, in the real world.

This book offers no claims to furthering theory expansively; the contribution, rather, is more incremental and introductory.<sup>2</sup> Nor is nonviolence proffered as a panacea to the world's woes. My overarching aim is simply to open a fruitful discussion that may eventually lead to theoretical advances. In turn, such theoretical progress might yield positive political implications. As background, a part of each

case study is a brief survey of the literature, which examines what key theorists of nonviolence and scholars of rhetorical theory have to say about rhetoric as (1) a form of communication and (2) evidence of the great potential in humanity for nonviolently managing conflict.

### THE PROBLEM DEFINED

One basic problem this book is designed to remedy is that nonviolence, as a theoretical paradigm, is often conspicuously absent from the array of tools of inquiry and theory-building in the field of speech communication (among many other disciplines), especially in terms of *rhetorical theory* and *criticism of rhetoric*. To clarify and qualify the point this chapter makes that rhetorical theorists have not sufficiently examined nonviolence as a major rhetorical form, first let us look at the field of communication writ large, and how conflicts are examined. If we can realistically look at speech communication as a field of study and research, we can observe what tends to be studied in its various branches. The very imperfect and rough dividing line in the field, for the purpose of this discussion, may be thought of as falling between communication theory on one side, and rhetorical theory and cultural studies on the other. Clearly, there is much overlap, but in terms of the ways that attention to nonviolence gets short shrift, some important distinctions may be considered. For example, communication theory entails, for the most part, the study of interpersonal communication, organizational communication, medical field communication, and the like. Scholars on the communication theory side tend to utilize *quantitative* methods (i.e., surveys and empirical forms of study). Statistical analyses abound in communication theory and the journals in which communication theorists publish.<sup>3</sup> Scholars in communication theory are well versed with concepts and studies of violence and nonviolence in contexts ranging from interpersonal relationships to communicative exchanges in international conflicts.

What this book, however, directly speaks to falls on the other side of the theoretical divide in speech communication as a field. The method of study of cultural studies and rhetorical theory tends, by and large, to be *qualitative*; scholars who use qualitative methodologies tend to publish in separate kinds of journals than our colleagues in communication theory.<sup>4</sup> Thus it is those who conduct research in rhetorical theory and cultural studies that I am referring to when I argue that scholars of rhetoric need to be more well versed with nonviolence, and in particular, the rhetoric of advocates of peace and nonviolence. For instance, Kevin DeLuca's book, *Image Politics* (1999), uses both rhetorical theory and cultural studies theories to consider the nonviolent rhetoric of peace activists and social movements ranging from Greenpeace and Earth First! to smaller, local organizations such as Allegany County Nonviolent Action Group

(ACNag). However, the book often becomes cramped in its attempt to explain their peace-minded and nonviolent rhetoric. *Image Politics* labors to examine the nonviolent rhetorics through neo-Marxist methodologies that cultural studies scholars, such as Laclau and Mouffe, who DeLuca cites often, use. For instance, DeLuca uses Laclau and Mouffe's neo-Marxist framework to argue that "new social movements need to disavow an essentialist identity politics that balkanizes and instead link the different antagonisms that give rise to environmental struggles, workers' struggles, feminist struggles, and anti-racist struggles so as to make possible the disarticulation of the hegemonic discourse that constructs these various groups in relations of oppression" (82). However, as I show in Chapter 6 of this book, the nonviolent rhetoric of Aung San Suu Kyi derives its force and power through its marked use of essentializing her feminine persona. Indeed, in early December 2002, under the fomenting of another war in Iraq by the second Bush administration, the *Washington Post* reported that various groups, all relying on their essentialized identities, such as that of mothers, African Americans, Latino/a Americans, veterans, church members, union members, and so on, have organized effectively as identity groups to protest war in Iraq (Nieves A1). The problem with relying on Laclau and Mouffe or other forms of Marxist theory, is that at its core, Marxism often relies on violence to make revolutionary change. How can one be effective in understanding and explicating peace-minded or nonviolent rhetorics and actions when one is using foundationally violent theories? Moreover, while the term *nonviolent* appears occasionally in DeLuca's discussion of visual and protest rhetoric, nowhere is there to be found a clear definition of nonviolent rhetoric. How can nonviolent rhetoric be explained when it is not even transparently defined?

Another recent example of the lack of attention to what "peace rhetoric" means occurs in Francis Beer's *Meanings of War and Peace* (2001), a volume in the Presidential Rhetoric Series. Although the word *peace* figures prominently in the book's title, the entire book only mentions peace a few fleeting times, at none of which is peace, or peace rhetoric, defined or explained. The book focuses heavily on debates about the merits of going to war. Too little emphasis is placed on comparable rhetorical analyses of the merits of "going to peace," that is, keeping the peace when war might have been an option, or the rhetoric of supporting peace and justice in times of relative peace. For example, Beer devotes all of Part I to examining just three rhetorical words: "war, reason, and validity." But where is "peace"? It is conspicuously absent from the analysis. In this way, Peace Studies and even the term *peace* itself is elided as a word, subject, and field of research worthy of serious study and contemplation by political scientists and rhetorical scholars alike—those who Beer draws on for his analysis and who he says are among the intended audience of the book.

It is also problematic that Beer repeatedly uses the simplistic “peace/war” dualism, which, in his context of analyzing pre- or midwar debates, conflates the two terms and essentially nullifies any careful conceptualization or engagement with peace as a valid concept in and of itself. Beer writes, “The meaning of war and peace involves many elements. One of the most important is dying” (117) and “[t]alking about dying is an important dimension of the meaning of war and peace” (138). Certainly dying relates to the meaning of war. However, what most people, texts, or dictionaries say about the meaning of peace usually has something to do with tranquillity and calmness in life; it is absurd to offhandedly equate peace with dying (with the possible exception of someone “resting in peace,” by which time the dying has already been done). Elsewhere Beer mentions peace in the context of “an Orwellian twilight zone where peace was war and war was peace” (161). He also notes other forms of “peace,” by which he really means “war,” such as “hot peace,” “guerrilla peace” . . . “half peace’ . . . [in] which smaller creatures may still fight and the elephants . . . trample the ants” (170). Yet these alleged “peace” terms are ones that have been coopted by war-makers and are hardly encouraging or accurate forms of true peace, nor do they approximate peace with justice, or what Johan Galtung calls “positive peace.” Nowhere in the book does Beer even offer a single definition of peace. In short, the book exclusively covers discursive exchanges about war, yet its title, by default, and the content of the book, by omission, allows peace to be wrongly conflated with war. (For the full book review, see *International Journal on World Peace*, June 2002.) These are the kinds of research problems that can be overcome through a careful plotting out of both theories and definitions that more fully and fairly explain what peace is, what nonviolence is, what these rhetorics entail, and which theories might more aptly be used to understand the unique process of persuasion that occurs when peace-minded rhetorical means are used.

So while scholars in interpersonal or organizational communication might study violent or nonviolent conflict-reduction techniques, scholars of rhetoric or cultural studies, in my view, are often somewhat less well versed with definitions of peace and the rhetorical strategies of conflict reduction, as well as foundational concepts of nonviolence in theory and practice. Therefore, this book offers, in part, both a rationale for and a call to study (on the part of students, scholars, and practitioners) more, and well, the nonviolent rhetoric of peace, justice, and nonviolent activism.

Nonviolent rhetoric is important because it is a major feature of geopolitical changes in the 20th century, as well as of changes now unfolding. Political theorists such as Paul G. Lauren and nonviolence theorists like Johan Galtung posit that nonviolence will be of even greater import in the 21st century. In the July 1999 issue of *Spectra* [the official newsletter of the National Communication Association

(NCA)], NCA President Orlando Taylor lists the following as among the “top ten communication events of the 20th century”:

- Suffragettes’ Protests for Voting Rights
- Mahatma Gandhi’s Rhetoric of Nonviolence
- The Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” Speech (2)
- Nelson Mandela’s Inaugural Address (7)

These communication events feature nonviolent rhetoric; each event features themes of valuing human and civil rights for all people, and noncooperation with systems of institutional and structural violence or oppression. Another defining feature common to, but by no means the sole domain of nonviolent rhetoric, is that each of these communication events comes from women and people of color.

### Why Do We Need to Understand Nonviolence?

First, there is a need to study nonviolent rhetoric and rhetorics that encourage nonviolent approaches to handling conflicts. We need to look at the way some traditional characteristics of rhetorical approaches lead to violent or oppositional outlooks. *The significance of developing a critical awareness of nonviolent rhetoric is that its major characteristics often differ from those of conventional rhetoric.* More important, the unique traits of nonviolent rhetoric call for attention to the study of, theory of, and critique of past rhetorics in light of these differences.

Human beings worldwide are beset with problems of overpopulation, gross economic disparity, decreasing resources of viable land, water, air, and energy, as well as various forms of structural violence. Meanwhile, politically based animosities with historic racial, ethnic, and religious overtones are now proliferating with the help of international economic and military systems that operate through ideology. Ironically, this situation runs to the brink of nuclear warfare in Gandhi’s own India. So while nonviolence is not a cure-all, it does offer hope and one possible way to address our current conundrums.

Another purpose of this book is to show how nonviolent approaches to rhetoric can differ from existing approaches. The academic and political world too often labors under the *realpolitik* assumption that violence is the only, most powerful, or simply most expedient means to prevailing in hot or cold conflicts around the world. The NATO bombings of Serbia in 1999, Afghanistan in 2001, and the continuous, bombing war against Iraq throughout the 1990s and culminating in 2003 reveal the flaws of the assumption that violence brings or forces a

quick “solution” to conflicts. An alternative form of political power can be found in nonviolence in theory and practice.

A subaim of this project is simply to reveal the compelling force and reason of nonviolent civil action. Particularly through rhetoric, nonviolent civil action has been shown by historical precedent to be at least as effective in managing conflicts, if not more so, than using violent tactics. This project is useful because it provides strong indications that human beings can broach conflict in ways that can often exclude guns and violence, whereas more traditional theoretical perspectives (military strategies or Marxist theory, for instance) actually *call for* their use. Each chapter that follows helps to contribute to knowledge in a valuable way by uncovering and drawing out how some of the basic appeals of peace-minded persuasion operate and by identifying and demystifying hidden elements. I explore and explain basic modes of nonviolent rhetoric in different cultural milieus so that nonviolent communication can be widely understood and appreciated.

Once better understood, nonviolent rhetoric can be theorized, so that principles can be applied to assessing future conflict situations. This book is part of an exciting and growing trend in scholarship and social movement activism that (1) aims to prevent or greatly reduce the potential for destroying life on earth, while also (2) vitally enhancing the potential for improved human coexistence, and (3) fostering greater respect for both human and ecological diversity on earth. For a preliminary definition, let us consider that *peace rhetoric* and *nonviolent rhetoric* are comprised of these three facets of research and activism.

### Nonviolence Is a Powerful, Global Phenomenon

Violence surrounds us on a daily basis. There is the *interpersonal* violence of school shootings, including, increasingly, ones at college campuses. I shudder to think that on my way to class one morning at Penn State University in 1996, I unwittingly walked right by the site of a shooting shortly *before* it occurred. One young student that day was killed; others were injured. There is also the *structural* violence of corporate-caused environmental pollution, which is exemplified in the nonfiction book, *A Civil Action*. Today more than ever, peace and nonviolence represent both a desire and a potential balm for people living in stressful and unjust conditions. The focus of the case studies in this book is geopolitical rhetoric that broaches conflict *without* the use—or threat of use—of violence and weapons. By better understanding the inner workings of nonviolent communication practices, we can open the door to the exciting opportunity for theorizing how social and political power can exist and be amassed entirely apart from military and other forms of disciplinary power.



Nonviolence is taking hold in the collective psyche of contemporary society: more schools are starting programs to train nonviolent conflict mediators among children; a few progressive corporations support nonviolent working environments by offering flexible work schedules and more egalitarian stockholding plans; even the military has begun to investigate less violent means of crowd control for humanitarian or peacekeeping missions. Three U.S. presidents have, despite serious objections from China, met with the XIVth Dalai Lama of Tibet, a Nobel Peace Prize-winner and world-renowned harbinger of nonviolent rhetoric. So too has the U.S. Congress as a body (via initiatives that have condemned human rights abuses) supported many nonviolent political figures. President Clinton's parting attempt at including the U.S. as part of a United Nations' world-crimes tribunal, which would subject U.S. military personnel to scrutiny over human rights abuses, shows that even the United States cannot escape the world's concern about the excesses of those who wage war.

Learning about and understanding nonviolence is both the interest of citizens and government leaders; it is the world's mandate for a new era. Each of the case studies that follow sheds light on urgent current issues and events. For each case, and although each is very different in terms of geographic, political, and cultural factors, the leitmotif remains nonviolent rhetoric as a means to peacefully broach and manage (if not completely resolve) conflict. There is a degree of cross-cultural and international applicability in this work. I hypothesize that each case is generalizable, in important respects, to other regions and cases around the world.

### So, Why Is Nonviolence Ignored in Rhetorical Theory?

The term *passive resistance* has often been misconstrued by rhetorical critics and others to mean a repugnant, cowering weakness. David Cochran, former director of the peace-studies program at the University of Missouri, writes, "The American tradition of nonviolence has been consistently ridiculed and marginalized by those with a vested interest in the status quo. Even the nonviolent activists who make it into the official canon do so in a distorted way."<sup>5</sup> Some people misconstrue nonviolence as pure passivity. For them, it translates into recommending women to passively submit to rape or domestic violence; an accurate understanding of nonviolence, however, would recommend the opposite.

Nonviolence "is seen as cowardly expedience" and "masochism."<sup>6</sup> Nonviolence is considered the tactic of choice among wimps while violence is taken to be, without question, "the strongest and most effective means available to resist injustice, destroy an oppressive system, or counteract a violent attack."<sup>7</sup> Such attitudes stem from status quo representations of nonviolence that do not accurately depict it as a theory or practice.

In the study of public address and rhetoric, when nonviolence is actually included in analyses, it has historically been presented in a distorted manner. For example, in 1963, speech communication scholar Harry Bowen posed the question, "Do non-violent techniques really change the beliefs and actions of dedicated enemies?"<sup>8</sup> In observing the nonviolent protests of the civil rights activists, Bowen answers his question in an utterly equivocal manner, saying, "Against such white people non-violence has had no noticeable persuasive effect, although the *results of non-violence have compelled some change in the segregationists' behavior*" so that "[African Americans] can sit and eat where they please in some restaurants and transportation terminals" (emphasis added).<sup>9</sup> If such civil rights gains were *not* the result of nonviolent action, then what were they? More frustrating still is the fact that as distorted as it might be, Bowen's article is a rare one in the range of rhetorical theory because it is one of the few that actually addresses nonviolence outright. Although there is the occasional release of a book in rhetorical theory that focuses on nonviolent and peace rhetoric, such as *Women Who Speak for Peace* (2002), it remains a marginalized area of research, tending to represent the rhetorics of specific interest groups such as women or minorities, rather than cases of rhetoric of general interest to a wider array of students and scholars. If not ignored or omitted altogether, nonviolence is simply attenuated; it is only implicitly invoked by the theorist or critic, such as was shown in the case of *Image Politics*.

When nonviolence is implicitly invoked, nonviolence is distorted because both its viability and significance are downplayed. It is also distorted because no clear understanding of nonviolence is first established. Due to the many negative connotations the term *nonviolence* carries, among other terms pejoratively deemed "peacenik," clear definitions are crucial to understanding its impact. Yet nonviolence is left unexplained. For instance, in Richard Fulkerson's essay, "The Public Letter as a Rhetorical Form: Structure, Logic, and Style in King's 'Letter from Birmingham Jail,'" Fulkerson finds it important enough to note in the second paragraph of the essay the fact that King's "Letter" was printed ("50,000 copies") and distributed by the American Friends Service Committee; yet there is *no mention* that the group was a nonviolent organization that supported King's nonviolent mission.<sup>10</sup> Fulkerson's only other allusions to nonviolence in the *entire* essay occur (1) as a citation of one of his sources, a book title, buried deep in a footnote, and (2), in the unsubstantiated claim (in the second-to-last paragraph) that King wrote the letter to a "traditional audience who would generally oppose civil disobedience."<sup>11</sup> The simple and well-known fact is that King was modeling his nonviolent approaches to civil disobedience after his own father's and grandfather's nonviolent theological philosophy, and in part after Gandhi's success in India; Gandhi's forays into nonviolence were in part a result of Thoreau's ideas

successfully taking root in the United States.<sup>12</sup> Such a fact renders the lack of commentary a distortion in that it totally minimizes nonviolence as a significant theoretical and persuasive force in King's letter.

Similarly, in Donald Smith's essay, "Martin Luther King, Jr.: In the Beginning at Montgomery," Smith offers only three remarks about nonviolence in the *entire* essay, all of which are vague and presume an understanding of nonviolence: (1) "Love, not violence, must be the means for redress of their grievances. With these words, the speaker [King] reflected the love ethic of Jesus Christ and its *active application* by Gandhi and thus began to establish the philosophical basis of the movement"; (2) "that this would be a Christian movement, one *without violence*"; and (3) "[King's] talks were directed to four purposes . . . [including] *keeping the nonviolent tone and philosophy* of the movement ever before the boycotters" (emphasis added).<sup>13</sup> Despite the fact that nonviolence is noted by Smith to be *integral* to King's movement, Smith does not include nonviolence as being integral to the effectiveness of King's rhetoric.

By the same token, Malinda Snow's essay, "Martin Luther King's 'Letter from Birmingham Jail' as Pauline Epistle" also downplays nonviolence as an issue worthy of comment; in the whole essay, the only time nonviolence is mentioned occurs (again, in the second-to-last paragraph) when Snow quotes, *without* commentary, King's *own words* that "nonviolence is vital because it is the only way to reestablish the broken community."<sup>14</sup> These are just a few examples of how nonviolence is belittled: it is presumed to be understood as important to King's rhetoric, yet nonviolence as either a theory or persuasive communication strategy is somehow not deemed worthy of commentary by the critic.

In a rare instance of contrast to these examples of how nonviolence has tended to be elided in discussions of rhetorical theory and criticism, Mark McPhail, in *Zen in the Art of Rhetoric* (1996), does acknowledge that nonviolence is central to King's rhetoric. McPhail writes, "Martin Luther King's use of nonviolence as a form of moral action clearly illustrates a coherent metaphysical and epistemological grounding" (86). Likewise, Dorothy Pennington has argued that, for King, nonviolence was "the ultimate form of persuasion" and that the goal of using nonviolent action was "to persuade" (as quoted in McPhail, 86). McPhail adds that King's use of nonviolent rhetoric was "grounded in traditional rhetorical principles and strategies," yet, because it used democratic principles to "[call] into question the social inequities of American society" it was considered "radical" (86). King's famous speech, "Declaration of Independence from the war in Vietnam," can be seen as the textbook definition of nonviolent rhetoric; McPhail writes that "King's emphasis on the interrelatedness of human existence illustrates his reliance on coherent ontological and epistemological assumptions, assumptions which emphasized similarity over difference as a method for transcending the social and psychological divisions that

undermine human unity and cooperation" (87). Thus to formulate how argumentation operates in the nonviolent mode, McPhail offers that it "recognizes that which postmodernism privileges most, difference" (127), while also "[creating] common places" that enable the nonviolent rhetor to establish a setting (i.e., social, physical, or psychological) for argumentation in which the "power of argument will be distributed equally" (128).

Such insights into the mechanics of nonviolent rhetoric, however, are presently little known, referred to, or taught in basic courses on rhetorical theory; they remain consigned to the bin of special interest rhetorics at a historic time when the exigencies of global politics could really use them. Teachers and students of communication and persuasion could benefit from better understanding nonviolent theory and seeing how there is nothing "passive" about resisting oppression without resorting to violence. By no means does nonviolence invoke a sense of passivity, or mere waiting. Rather, nonviolent activity is aimed at orienting collective energies in the present into specific, concrete actions. Nonviolent rhetoric is designed to facilitate in one's adversary an acknowledgment of the validity of one's views. Such work is done so that the opponent will want to enter into the hypothetical role of the ideal and humane arguer (Johnstone).

#### TOOLS FOR ANALYZING NONVIOLENCE

The qualitative methodology employed in this book follows the instructive call of Kenneth Burke to "use all there is to use." Case studies are given of rhetorical-critical analyses of nonviolent rhetoric in action. I contextually situate (1) the growth of nonviolent theory and rhetoric in different cultural milieu and (2) in terms of the place of nonviolent theory in the unfolding events of recent history. This approach stems from Michel Foucault's useful method of the "genealogy," which "entertains the claims to attention of local, discontinuous," and often overlooked sources of data (Foucault, "Two Lectures" 83-84).

It is important to note, as Sara Ruddick has, that while "abstraction is central" to all thinking, it is particularly so for "militarist thinking" (as qtd. in Carroll and Zerilli 68). Therefore, in conceiving of characteristics of nonviolent rhetoric, it is crucial to retain a graspable, tangible element—real-world origins and applications—to the theoretical foundations constructed here. In this way, the theorizing contained in this book attempts as much as possible to work in the nonviolent mode, that is, against the grain of the "abstract" and "militarist" mind-set. On the whole, I employ an interdisciplinary approach to explore the interstices of rhetoric and nonviolence as they play out in global political conflicts. This book demonstrates the ways that nonviolent theory can complement rhetorical theory, expanding it to serve as a mode of political interaction and intervention. Ideally, this book will

help to spur a rethinking of existing models of rhetoric and the role of nonviolent rhetoric in both established and budding democratic societies in the world.

Rather than conceptualizing nonviolence through pure abstraction, the design of this project is to examine case studies of socio- and geopolitical conflicts to show how nonviolence works through human symbolic interactions. Accordingly, the focus of each chapter is on (1) why we need to study nonviolence and the nonviolent, political rhetoric of (2) activists as they are (mis)reported in the media; (3) education in Speech Communication as a field; (4) an independent film, *The Spitfire Grill*, (5) Kiro Gligorov, former president of Macedonia, (6) Aung San Suu Kyi, democratic leader of opposition party in Myanmar (Burma), and (7) townspeople of the spontaneous nonviolent social movement in Billings, Montana, who prevailed over neonazi terrorism. Each case study reveals the flaws, shortcomings, paradoxes, and problems with nonviolence in practice, but each also extols the successes and advantages of using nonviolent approaches to conflict management. Each chapter helps pull nonviolence down from the impossible pedestal of saintly perfection, or “principled nonviolence,” that many critics use to argue that nonviolence is impractical for the ordinary person, group, or nation (Burgess and Burgess 14–15).

#### SUMMARY

This first chapter has introduced the reasons why nonviolence deserves more attention from scholars and students of rhetorical theory and criticism, among other fields. (For pivotal terms and assumptions of this treatise as a whole, refer to Appendix 1.) Chapter 1 has introduced the research problems and theoretical context while sketching the potential of rhetorical theory to be expanded in peace-oriented and nonviolent directions. Through examples of a few of the pitfalls of analyzing contemporary political rhetoric and nonviolent civil action, this chapter posits that rhetorical theory can be enriched by the inclusion of nonviolent perspectives.

The remainder of the book unfolds as essays that can be read alone, or in any order. Chapter 2 covers what, in terms of enhanced media and public relations, the peace movement and nonviolent activists stand to gain from better understanding and applying rhetorical theory to their work. Chapter 3 discusses the problem of the inferiority complex that nonviolence has in education in general, in the field of communication, and in rhetorical theory in particular. In chapter 3 I suggest ways for educators to surmount this problem. Chapter 4 examines an independent film that featured nonviolence, and shows how the mainstream press panned it, largely due to the Western cultural orientation of valuing violence and devaluing nonviolence as a means to manage conflict.

Chapter 5 reveals the specifically nonviolent modes of discourse and persuasion that distinguish nonviolent rhetoric from peace rhetoric in general. The focus is on pragmatic nonviolence as a practical mode of communication and conflict engagement, prevention, and management. Chapter 5 takes a traditional, oratorical approach to rhetoric in examining the practical nonviolent rhetoric of a leader in the international political realm. I discuss the nonviolent rhetoric of a leader of a small, beleaguered nation called Macedonia that is struggling to foster democracy in a region at war. Specifically, this chapter provides the rhetorical analysis of the first public address of Kiro Gligorov of Macedonia, when the new nation was finally admitted as a member of the United Nations in 1993. Most speeches delivered in this forum are written off as simply “peace rhetoric.” Yet scholars like Michael Prosser, in *Sow the Wind*, are increasingly finding that conflict mediated in this and other international political arenas provides real and tangible results that foster conflict prevention, resolution, and peacemaking processes. Gligorov’s speech, analyzed and explained, is a clear exemplar of rhetoric in the pragmatic, not saintly, nonviolent mode. I also relate his rhetoric to a more nuanced understanding of the events of the war in Kosovo in 1999. Gligorov uses nonviolent rhetoric that alternately supports and challenges the notion of a cohesive, mutually responsible, international body politic.

Chapter 6 examines the visual rhetoric of a nonviolent activist—Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar (Burma)—and her use of a special rhetoric of the body to further her political drive to create a democratic society out of the totalitarian regime in her country in Southeast Asia. The case analyzed ponders the visual rhetoric of the nonviolent, gendered body of Aung San Suu Kyi, Nobel Peace Prize–winner, and its relationship to the international body politic. This chapter examines the unique role of the textually mediated body—physical, spiritual, and political—in fostering nonviolent persuasion. Questions concerning how nonviolent modes can essentialize or free people from categories are addressed. Culture, gender, territory, and visual/mental maps of displays of nonviolence are shown to pervade individual and political bodies.

Chapter 7 introduces the theoretical concept of a “rhetorical climate.” This chapter analyzes a case of how citizens effectively combated violent neonazi anti-Semitism and racism in Billings, Montana in 1993. Although this case could lend itself well to textual analysis in the traditional sense, I provide a different outlook and means for conducting rhetorical criticism. Instead of looking at a single speech or a text or symbol produced by a single leader, I consider the case from a holistic perspective. I examine the rhetoric of collectivity. In rejecting the binary thinking and dichotomies of mind/body and emotion/reason, this chapter explores the important role that new cognitive theories of rhetoric have in enabling us to understand how rhetoric is more than simply a symbolic or linguistic field of study.

Using sociological theory on the influence of the body in persuasion, rhetoric is viewed as a force beyond mere texts and words and the emotions they convey.

The case study in chapter 7 shows how nonviolent rhetoric and social action bolsters democratic community while it values differences among community members in the “asymmetrical” mode of communication. This case study also clarifies and explicates the concept of what a rhetorical climate is and how this concept can contribute to widening rhetorical theory to include nonviolence. Chapter 7, focusing as it does on cognitive aspects of rhetoric and the relationship of rhetoric to the differentiated body, is the culmination of this volume as a whole. This final case points directly to ways that enable us to conceptualize a nonviolent rhetoric. Nonviolent rhetoric focuses specifically on the intersection of nonviolence, rhetoric, and the human body as it reacts to its political and social environment. At the same time, I offer a critique of the problems of privilege and social inequity that nonviolent theories sometimes entail or ignore.

Finally, chapter 8 summarizes and relates the significance of the findings discussed in the preceding chapters. By encapsulating the central concepts explored in each of these case studies, constructs that may be useful in developing a theory of nonviolent rhetoric are advanced. Chapter 8 explores the ramifications and entailments of these constructs, including important areas for future research and scholarly inquiry in fields that include, but are not limited to, rhetorical theory, political theory, history, sociology, women’s studies, and peace and conflict studies. The ultimate aim I hope to achieve in chapter 8 is to remind readers that, far from flimsy or utopian, nonviolence in general, and nonviolent rhetoric in particular, is rather sensible and clear-eyed. The implication is that nonviolence, while not always being a perfect or definitive “solution” to social or political conflicts, does provide very real and practical means for engaging in conflicts in a peace-oriented manner; nonviolence can strengthen existing democratic societies and enable budding democracies to take root.<sup>15</sup>