

What 50 great sentences (a) have been most influential in your spiritual formation and life formation, and/or (b) best represent who you are in terms of what you hold to and what holds you? (At a rabbi's suggestion I'm making the list, as he is making his, preparatory to doing a book together.) This thinksheet's title is from one of mine: "There is beauty and there are the humiliated. May I never be unfaithful either to the one or to the other."--Camus....This thinksheet asks some questions hanging between these two norms:

#1578 for a fable on this.

1. How orchestrate power, property, and population? A few months ago (spring '81), Nantucket closed immigration: more people would (1) overpollute the fragile life-support system and (2) mar the island's beauty. In other words, more people would be bad for people and flowers, as an antiwar poster says about children and flowers. War and more people are both bad for humanity, for the truly human and for the ecosphere. Option #1: Let the human womb flow as an open sewer all over the earth; #2:....over only some areas, such as Calcutta (which is supposed to have 1 billion in less than a century); #3: nowhere. Option #3 requires coercive conception control, on which Indira Ghandi was thrown out of power. #2 is elitist and would require that each nature/population-balance reserve be a fortress, like the pathetic armed airraid shelters in the backyards of America's rich in the 1950s. Option #1 alone seems "workable" and is self-destruct, doomsday (dropping water-tables and polluted aquifers, e.g. Long Island and [soon, within a half-century] Cape Cod: should Loree and I be against letting any more people move onto Cape Cod?).
2. How protect "tribes" (bio-tribes, cultures, and subcultures) from dilution and thus destruction while at the same time providing "equal opportunity" for other "tribes"? Instance Israel: How keep the ballot boxes from being stuffed with non-Jewish votes, as would rapidly happen if non-Jews of the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan Heights could vote? Instance S. Africa: How prevent the 14% minority (whites) from being swamped, which would happen immediately if blacks and "colored" were enfranchised? Instance Ireland: How preserve Ulster Protestantism, the minority, from swamping by Irish Catholics? Or the Gaels of the west from the majority (English-speaking) in Ireland? Or the English in Ireland? Or the Anglo-Irish? Or the United States: How protect the vegetables in the stew from being overcooked into soup (the media working us all toward soup, the bland leading the bland)?
3. How trade off the values of particularity and privacy, on the one hand, and the values of universality and publicity on the other? The locks on our house, and the heat-sensitive security system, intend to keep the public off our property in a township that has three house-breaks per day. We are not so stupid as to fail to protect ourselves with the latest passive technology. When we retire, the private section of the house is locked off, with phone inside. We are not so stupid as to risk being killed while sleeping, which happened near our Chappaqua home two years ago to philosopher Charles Frankel and his wife. But what does all this have to do with the "soul"? It's good and bad for the soul. Bad: Living in the human jungle, seeing one's fellows as potential predators. Good: Providing one's family and one's guests (of whom we've had many score!) with protection, and securing one's artifacts, over 100 of which in this Elliott-Gangwish museum have descended through the generations, carrying the freight of historical depth and the riches of memory--riches not to be compared with the few thousand dollars burglars would get for fencing the lot (different meaning from the "fencing" we do to protect ourselves and our property). Troubling question: How trade off the rights of the individual and society's right to civilization ("the public tranquility")? I oppose expanding the effete prison-system, and propose forced-labor work-farms and work-factories (in Russian, "gulag"--but I'm strenuously against the USSR's gulags!).
4. Where are there models of adjudicating the human values on both sides of the beauty / the humiliated divide? Last evening at supper in our home a guest reported on three of them! And I'm on Craigville B&G (Bldg. & Grounds Committee): Craigville Beach is divided into three sections: general public, homeowners, and private renters. Private renting would be better, but Loree and I can't afford it. Model?