

Religion, Terror, and America: Pastoral Care in the 21st Century

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Abstract The United States of America’s War of Terror has so radically affected life in the USA that American culture is experienced by many as a “culture of terrorism.” This description of American life might lead one to conclude that America’s culture of terror is a new experience in America. This article suggests that terrorism laid the foundation for the New Republic and is deeply embedded in the American experience. In order to truly care for the American soul, pastoral theology must address the terror resident within American daily life.

Keywords Terror · Terrorism · Lynching · Massacre · Pastoral care

Introduction

I was a seminarian in the latter quarter of the 20th century. This was an era when many theologues were being trained within our pastoral care courses to become “armchair psychologists.” This meant greater emphasis was placed upon learning psychological theories and approaching persons with psychological anthropology than was placed upon theological reflection. We were directed to be “competent to counsel,” with an emphasis upon clinical diagnostics as more important than hermeneutics or the theological loci. We were being trained to concentrate on the affective behaviors of our human subjects, whom we were to otherwise see as members when not in crisis. This contextual description, however, was what might be identified as one extreme of the swinging pendulum on what it means to practice pastoral care. For subsequent generations, the pendulum swung to the opposite position—refer your members to the nearest clinical psychologist.

To the extent that pastoral care continues to be responsive to and guided by crisis, we must assess the crises of the 20th and 21st centuries. There was a point in history when emotions were considered feminine and, therefore, unhealthy. Out of that moment, there developed approaches that declared the importance of men expressing their feminine side, so emotions and their expression became more acceptable, even healthy. Yet, the interpretations of emotions as healthy were still governed by the Eurocentric gaze, which interpreted emotional content as healthy within one group and dangerous within another. I want to suggest that

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“terror” is an important and appropriate emotion for defining the work of pastoral care in the 21st century. Pastoral care regularly extends its reach by incorporating other disciplines; the new field of terrorist studies will help pastoral care assess the terror that inhabits the American psyche.

Pastoral care in the late 20th century

“Pastoral care is a bastard discipline” was the first definition given to me as the best way to describe and understand pastoral care as a theological discipline. The statement was intended to communicate that pastoral care, as a theological discipline, is the synthesis of three different fields of study. The blend was the combination of theology, psychology, and ministry. What was not declared by the statement—but was clearly implied—was the way the statement also spoke of pastoral care’s position within the theological enterprise. As one of the practical disciplines, pastoral care has been positioned as a less important, less valid field of theology. This has, perhaps, been its position especially because providers of pastoral care have tended to focus on the emotions of the person in crisis.

Emotions have tended to be interpreted as an inferior function, as feminine, racially other, and unreliable. Then too, there is the idea that the expression of emotions, as well as the interpretation of emotions observed, is culturally influenced. This resulted in the interpretation of emotions often having been held captive to reductionist thinking. Gender, race, and culture were regularly the interpretive dividing lines for assessing emotions. For example, one group’s emotional expression could be interpreted as “passionate” while the same expression by another group could be interpreted as “angry.” The “passionate” and the “angry” are regularly interpreted on the basis of gender, race, and/or culture identifiers. If critical thinking continues to be maintained as superior to emotional expressions, pastoral care may well be phased out of the theological enterprise in the 21st century. And to the extent that pastoral theology is the field that is shrinking within or being eliminated from theological curricula, I suggest emotions are losing in the human struggle. While I do not want to advocate that pastoral theologians ought to prove their worth to the theological enterprise, I do want to encourage pastoral theologians to remain on the cutting edge of theological reflection.

The earliest days of the final quarter of the 20th century highlight how pastoral care was governed by steeple church understandings of health and helping. That quarter of the century was also when new and diverse paradigms began to be introduced into pastoral care. Prior to that moment, psychological theories were presented as universal truths rather than contextual expressions. The feminist critique began to make important inroads into theological reflection, which included a critique of psychological theories that was taken seriously by pastoral theologians. Although the feminist critique was taken seriously, which developed a first generation of feminist pastoral theologians, the methodologies remained Eurocentric, and, hence, universalism continued to rule the day. This is where poet-activist Audre Lorde’s often-quoted critique, “For the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house,” becomes essential for future developments of pastoral theology (Lorde 1984, p. 112). The context of Lorde’s critique was directed at White feminists who, at that time, were adopting patriarchal forms of analysis in the name of liberating women. The result of this approach was that those on the margins continued to be marginalized, even by feminist activists. Her critique also applied to pastoral care theory and practice. Although Black theology, Black feminism, and Black pastoral care were expressing themselves within theological discourse, they tended to not be taken seriously. The resources from the racial and ethnic margins were rarely referenced and were neither respected nor encouraged as critical pastoral theological approaches.

Attending to the 21st century

Pastoral care in the 21st century must do all it can to cease and desist from marginalizing racial, ethnic, and gendered voices and create a new methodological narrative going forward. This has already been initiated in small ways. There are today African American, feminist, womanist, Latino/a, Korean American, and intercultural approaches to pastoral care. Loren Townsend, who is European American, has taken this matter very seriously by interviewing a significant number of African American pastoral theologians and psychotherapists and publishing those conversations in his book, *Introduction to Pastoral Counseling* (Townsend 2009). Going forward, all pastoral theologians must commit to fighting against methodologies that re-inscribe the marginalization of racial, ethnic, and gendered voices.

Although we live in an era that declares America to be a post-racial society and, by some accounts, a post-sexist society as well, we should not assume the negative deep imprint of the past to be removed without intentional work and open conversation. In the same speech where Lorde declared that patriarchal methodologies will not dismantle patriarchy, she also declared America to be “a country where racism, sexism, and homophobia are inseparable” (Lorde 1984, p. 113). We cannot overcome one without overcoming all. Each of the aforementioned oppressions are deeply emotional experiences for both the oppressed and the oppressors. As a liberation theology, African American pastoral theology can support the field of pastoral theology as a whole to be more attentive to the social and cultural conditions that reveal the systemic evil that maintains human suffering at human hands. If we fail to identify and confront the painful portions of our national story, the pain will continue to negatively influence our lives as we seek to live into the 21st century.

Terrorism studies

Terrorism studies is a growing field of inquiry because exposure to and the experience of terrorism now touches everyone in every country around the globe. The majority of studies, however, are largely directed at researching groups outside of the United States. As a result, most studies tend toward evaluating the actions of marginalized persons of color who are identified as employing terrorism as their means of finding voice against their oppressors. For pastoral care in the 21st century to be most effective, our work must see the history of terror woven into American life. We must see every color in American life—Red, White, Black, Yellow, and Brown—intertwined as an emotional bundle of nerves. As my doctoral student, Teresa Smallwood, suggests, through our terror we mark out our territories, which we extend and defend with terrorism.

The atlantic world

If we begin gathering data to establish a case history or an American family history, we must go to the very foundations of the nation in the Atlantic World. Examining the historical events that shaped the United States reveals the terror and terrorism that inhabit American culture. More precisely, the Atlantic World is a world of the Enlightenment. It is a world of reason, individualism, and a new definition of human beingness. It is a Protestant northern European world that is marked by the language of freedom. It is a world where “modernity, mercantilism, and capitalism combine [d] to construct a world out of which modern empires were formed . . . which [gave] rise to the formation of Empire in the Americas. Although great fortunes were

made in Europe and the Americas, the Atlantic World was not constructed with equal access” (Long 2002). And like conversion experiences that establish new ways of living in the world, the trauma inflicted by the Atlantic World was ritualistically repeated, transforming the violent crimes into valor, heroism, and glory to God.

The United States of America was formed in the crucible of religion and violence, given texture by Red, White, and Black peoples, and sought to define itself through the acquisition of land and bodies as property. “The religion of the American people (which differs from Christianity) centers around the telling and retelling of the mighty deeds of the white conquerors. This story hides the true experience of Americans from their very eyes. The invisibility of Indians and blacks is matched by a void for a deeper invisibility within the consciousness of white Americans” (Long 1995, p. 163). The colonizing conquest molded a cultural expression of individualism that was framed by “freedom” and chose to be dependent upon no one and nothing. Because life itself is inclined to be interdependent, new Americans were violently aggressive to everyone and everything that reminded them of their dependent status in the world. The new Americans of the Atlantic World terrorized others because they were terrified of everyone and everything that they could not own and control. “The inordinate fear they [had of Indians and Africans was] an expression of the fear they have when they contemplate the possibility of seeing themselves as they really are” (Long 1995, p. 163). American culture is deeply implicated in this inordinate fear, also known as terror.

The Atlantic World created a myth, a dominant narrative, that subverted the history that preexisted conquest and colonialism. Because the Atlantic World became the site of religion and violence, as well as religious violence, the New World as Empire has religion and violence woven into the very fabric of its existence. Rather than telling the stories of the traumatizing religion and violence within the Americas, American triumphalism has constructed a narrative that focuses on celebrating Columbus Day and the discovery of the New World. Instead of telling the story of terror, and mourning the loss of 600 million lives that were genocide in the Atlantic World by conquest and colonization, Americans mold heroes out of blood-soaked clay and valorize their violence with descriptions of “how the West was won” as we sing “America the Beautiful.” A retelling of the story of America will help us to understand why violence, terror, and terrorism are so much a part of the American cultural landscape.

Describing the meaning and significance of myth for America, Richard Hughes writes: “[The] American myth, therefore, is a story that conveys commonly shared convictions on the purposes and the meaning of the nation” (Hughes 2004, p. 2). He suggests there is a national myth that identifies the nation as having been “Chosen by Nature” to be a “Christian Nation,” which has been proven to be an “Innocent Nation” by remaining faithful to its creed (Hughes 2004). To this sense of national innocence, James Baldwin retorts: “It is not permissible that the authors of devastation should also be innocent. It is the innocence which constitutes the crime” (Baldwin 1963, April, p. 53). There can be no doubt, says Long, that “the myth of America as a land of innocent immigrants from Europe who came to a virgin land no longer has the power to state the reality of the human case for us. The rise of other orientations regarding the peopling of this land and the appearance of new structures and sources of power within the ethnic communities of this land, though seen as political realities, are more often than not religious statements about the nature of human reality” (Long 1995, p. 26).

Religion and ritual

Religion, religious experience, and the ritualization of life that maintains religious practice are all part of the violence that inhabits the American psyche and the terror that influences

American behaviors. Religion, which Long describes as orientation, shapes responses to terror and often redirects inward terror to outward aggression. This phenomenon has led many social scientists to differentiate terrorist actions and reflect on terrorism specifically identified as religious terrorism. Many of these studies have been selective explorations that are contextually outside the United States and restricted to particular faith traditions. These studies have often resulted in pathologizing individuals within a specified religion, or they have demonized the religion, e.g., Islam. Very few of these social scientific studies have engaged the Atlantic World of North America and its generations.

People consumed by terror, which may manifest as a thirst for power, are inclined to be violently aggressive. Motivated by terror, they are far more inclined to name other people as their animal prey when they describe themselves as the vengeful hunter or the protector of the sacred that would otherwise be ravaged by wild beasts. These hunter-protectors, participating in rituals of sacrifice, regularly mutilate the bodies of those persons identified as animals by cutting off body parts to wear as talismans and trophies or to maintain as keepsakes. They feast their eyes on bludgeoned, bloody bodies and burn the flesh to present their God with a sweet-smelling savor.

Rituals of sacrifice—that is, religious rituals intended to save one's life—are reenacted from one generation to the next. Through the religious imagination, rituals of sacrifice are established as a person seeks to give life meaning, to sustain life's benefits, and to receive the power to overcome threats to existence. The slaughter of First Nation peoples, as a ritual of sacrifice, was associated with God's commandment to take the land and purify it by killing all living beings and creatures. The lynching of Black bodies, as a ritual of sacrifice, was reenacted to preserve White supremacy and restore American slavocracy. Ravaging women's bodies, as a ritual of sacrifice, is an attempt to satisfy the insatiable male appetite for power and control. Acts of sacrifice ensure benefits and blessings. And those seen as standing in the way of blessing must be sacrificed to express the sacrificers' faithful commitment to God and community.

Pervasive terror

My understanding of the Atlantic World and its impact upon American social systems has led me to believe that terror is the problem to be addressed by pastoral theology in the 21st century. Fear is a basic human emotion that constricts human behavior. While it is quite clear that fear can be an inhibiting force, fear can also instigate aggression, which can be a victimizing force. To live with terror is to live with a constant fear so intense that there is no place where one feels safe. Terror is a chronic condition that can be disorienting and debilitating. Absolute terror can cause one to “freeze in one's tracks,” lose total bodily control, and/or run blindly into the unknown. Fear and terror tend to be understood as polarities. There is yet another component affecting our experiences of terror. Rage is also related to terror. Typically, we associate anger with rage, identifying rage as intense anger. When a person is living at the extreme, however, the feelings at the extreme can coalesce. As a result, terror can also manifest as rage. Instead of the terror provoking flight, the terror can provoke rage and incite explosive fighting.

While most are familiar with “fight or flight,” many do not acknowledge that often the fight-flight instinct is not an either-or. Sometimes, it is a both-and. When the terror that would run becomes rage, it charges in to destroy what has been feared. Terror expressed in rage is also mob aggression in action. To illustrate, consider a fear of bees. A person seeking to avoid a bee will often swat at a bee before running from it. In such cases, it is fight and flight.

Another example is Ralphie in the movie *A Christmas Story*. Ralphie lives his days in terror, running from the school bully, until that moment when the running reverses its course and becomes an explosive and raging assault that leaves the bully bloody on the ground from Ralphie's terror expressed in rage. Many things that frighten us will often experience our aggression before they witness our retreat. While one group may live with perpetual fear, another group may seek to provoke deep feelings of fear in others in an effort to control what feels out of control. Yet far more profound than the fear that pervades our existence is the debilitating terror that denies life's vitality.

Confronting the terror within often results in the performance of compulsive solutions. We color-code the levels of threat to our safety and national security; then we check, and double check, and then triple check as we search for suspicious substances and look for our stereotyped profiles, which are also color-coded and ethnicized. Provoking the terror within gives others a feeling of the power to control people. With feelings of power, they insist on recreating the world to bring control to what feels out of control. Consequently, there is one who lives in terror and there is another who lives by or feels alive because of terrorism.

American culture is a culture of terrorism. As a result, pastoral theology cannot afford to ignore America's experiences with terror. The definition of terrorism used by the State Department of the United States, Title 22 of the U.S. Code, Section 2656f (d), states: "The term 'terrorism' means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience." I suggest adding to the definition the words in italics: "politically *generated and* motivated violence."

All Americans now live under the constant threat of being victimized by an act of terrorism. The description of the terrorist, however, is almost always Arab, Muslim, extremist, and non-American. Consider the Boston Marathon bombing, April 15, 2013, as an example. The marathon is held annually on "Patriots' Day," which commemorates the Battles of Lexington and Concord, April 19, 1775. Soon after the bombers were identified, the act was associated with Islam, even before there was any claim or stated reason for this act of terrorism and aggression. Because the bombing was immediately interpreted as a terrorist attack, the actions taken by those on the scene to aid victims were identified as "acts of heroism" rather than "acts of compassion."

Grappling with the dynamics of terrorism present within American life means we must stop focusing on marginalized persons of color living within under-represented communities as the sole source of terror in America. Not long before the Boston bombing, the nation experienced the Century movie theater, Aurora, Colorado (April 20, 2012) and Sandy Hook Elementary School, Newtown, Connecticut (December 14, 2012) massacres, neither of which had anything to do with Islam nor internationals. It is critical that the history of terror woven into American life be seen to include all. We must see every color in American life—Red, White, Black, Yellow, and Brown—intertwined as an emotional bundle of nerves set on edge by the terror of anticipated violence.

Terrorism in america

The American consciousness has been shaped in such a way that we have come to believe that bombers, and therefore terrorists, are, and have always been, Arab and Muslim. This belief, however, misrepresents American history and the traumas experienced by many Americans, even today. While some of us still live with the memory of the Oklahoma City bombing on April 19, 1995—a terrorist act perpetrated by a

White American—the history of terrorism on American soil has been centered upon "9/11" as our nation's first experience with terrorism. This view has become a revisionist rendering of American terrorism.

Conceiving of America as a place without a history of domestic terrorism is an attempt at maintaining the image of America as a ten-gallon white hat nation that is always the "good guy" and simultaneously the hero who overcomes adversity. America is never the villain who harms, but rather the resurrected martyr who saves the damsel in distress. This telling of history says that America has always been terrorized and has never been the terrorist. Before the Japanese dropped bombs on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the European American citizens of Tulsa, Oklahoma, dropped bombs from airplanes in 1921 on the segregated section of the city, the Greenwood district, better known as "Black Wall Street."

On the first anniversary of the Twin Towers attack, a special edition of the *Chicago Tribune* had the headline: "When Evil Struck America" (September 11, 2002). To the American consciousness, Americans have never engaged in the mass murder of Americans on American soil. If that is so, how does the country understand the countless massacres of Native Americans? What about the numerous African American communities and towns, such as Rosewood, Florida, in 1923, that were destroyed in efforts to limit African American progress? Mental illness has tended to be the answer. According to a staff writer of the *Christian Science Monitor*, "With the exception of the attacks on the World Trade Center, experts say the major terrorists attacks in the United States have been perpetrated by deranged individuals who were sympathetic to a larger cause—from Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh to the Washington area sniper John Allen Muhammad" (Marks 2003, May 27). The interpretation of "experts" has been that acts of terror have been individual acts by men and women labeled as "deranged." The suggestion is that organized mass movements of terrorism have not been a part of American life. But, not only has terrorism been a part of American life—American domestic terrorism has been organized and supported by American society.

Because terrorism is an effort to make one completely submissive to the force of another, terrorism has been the effort to locate a designated group, such as women, to an inferior social stratum and control the group's desires for the inalienable right of freedom. During the Civil Rights movement, African Americans lived with constant terrorist threats of the firebombing of their residences and churches. Robert Chambliss, the man considered the ringleader in the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama, on September 16, 1963, was reported to have said to his niece, Elizabeth Cobb, "Just wait until after Sunday morning; they'll be begging us to let them segregate" (Craughwell 2011, p. 99). As a member of the Ku Klux Klan, whose ideology was supported by the state, Chambliss was not acting in isolation. With terror as a feeling synthesized into the American psyche, it is essential that pastoral theology gives closer attention to the experience of terror as we live into this new century.

Long suggests that America can be discerned by recognizing the repetition of the republic's mythical rituals that run in 100-year cycles (Long 1995, p. 165). Therefore, reviewing the national terror from the past can be instructive for understanding contemporary experiences with terror. We do not have to dig deep into the recesses of our national consciousness to identify our experiences and feelings of terror resulting from terrorism. If our national negotiations with terrorism are grounded in and directed by terror itself, we will continue to live a national ethos that is based upon uninhibited projections and defensive constructions of otherness in the name of defending and preserving civilization.

Terror in technicolor

Identifying America's history with terror provides an interpretive frame for addressing terror in the future. Terrorism has been experienced by women, men, and children who are Red, Yellow, Black, White, and Brown across the length and breadth of this nation. Every racial and ethnic group that has trod this land has known the terror of walking through the blood of the slaughtered. Although my selective history begins in the 19th century, the terrorizing activities of North America extend back to the very foundations of the Atlantic World. Consider the long history of massacres that can be interpreted as terrorist attacks in as much as each massacre was rage focused against a specific racial and/or ethnic group.

Sand creek massacre

During the mid-19th and early 20th centuries, color lines were being drawn within and between the states by the Civil War over the issues of slavery and economics. Simultaneously, lines were being drawn toward and within the territories in the West to stake claims of land and gold by conquest. In 1864, the War Between the States was raging in the East. Desiring to stop the madness and to rebuild life with a fresh start, people began to move West. This movement was an effort to restore the feelings of fairness and justice to people who had been degraded and demoralized. The West represented new opportunities for freedom. For some, the West was a new space where they might create a new world out of a world that had been halted by the war. For others, the West was an open space to live separate and apart as real human beings. For one set of Western expansionists, the West became a version of imperialism as they redefined themselves to be called pioneers. For another set of Western expansionists, the West became the vision of dignity where their labor was for their personal and familial future.

One critical, pivotal moment in America's Western history is the Sand Creek Massacre of November 29 and 30, 1864. Sand Creek was an Indian treaty encampment located approximately 200 miles south east of Denver, Colorado. Colonel John Chivington led the attack on a peaceful encampment of Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians. Although many may not be familiar with Chivington by name, some may have learned about him in elementary or middle school social studies classes as late as the 1970s. He has often been introduced and recognized by his reputation as "the Fighting Parson." A Methodist minister, Chivington entered his pulpit with the Bible and two revolvers, declaring "by God and these revolvers" that he was going to preach. He later joined the Army demanding to fight rather than preach and was stationed in Colorado. He was absolutely convinced that "the only good Indian was a dead Indian." His Methodist zeal and passion were directed by Western Manifest Destiny, and he ordered 700 soldiers to kill everyone at Sand Creek. The soldiers pursued and killed everyone they found. No one was permitted to surrender. This went on for approximately 7 h. On the marker that overlooks the killing field are two dates. The killing lasted only one day. On the second day, the troops moved throughout the village area looting and mutilating bodies, taking body parts as trophies and awards to adorn their uniforms.

The glory attributed to the massacre resulted in one group naming a town after Chivington, several miles from the killing fields. Although it is today a ghost town, the establishment of the town is a testimony of the honor given to rage within the culture. The trauma that has been experienced by the Indians, which remains as a post-traumatic stressor, is artistically captured and represented by a sculpture located in the Denver Public Library. The sculpture is of a man with a dead woman draped across his lap. With his back arched, arms stretched wide, and face turned heavenward, he wails with unconsolable grief.

Hop alley riot

A few years after the Sand Creek Massacre, Denver residents' terror resulted in Denver's first recorded race riot of violence against Chinese. The first Chinese immigrants had settled in Colorado after completing the Central Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads in 1869. Denver, which had already expressed its ethnocentrism through its attitudes toward Native Americans, expressed its rage against the growing Chinese population. The "Hop Alley Riot" (as it was named) has been identified as "a violent event that foreshadowed the decline of the Chinese population in Colorado and was part of what one historian described as the early West's 'ethnic cleansing'" (The Associated Press 1996, October 30, p. 3A). "Cast against the backdrop of mass lynchings of Chinese in California and Wyoming, Denver's riot occurred when fears of the 'Yellow Peril' abounded in the West" (The Associated Press 1996, October 30, p. 3A).

It is important to note that "race riot" can be a misleading term. While the violence was racially motivated, the event was not characterized by two rival groups acting riotously. Many riots should be more appropriately named massacres. In the week preceding the Hop Alley Riot the local newspaper, the *Rocky Mountain News*, wrote articles with headlines calling the Chinese "Social Pests" and "Heathen Hordes." Headlining the terror resident among the people, along with provoking terrorism among the people, newspapers generated the terror that found a rageful outlet on October 31, 1880. Within Denver's Chinatown, on the blocks known as "Hop Alley" (slang for opium), an area populated by a number of opium dens, two Chinese men were playing pool at a saloon. After being harassed (assaulted) by three drunk White men, the Chinese men left the saloon. Followed out, one Chinese man was struck by a pool cue and the other by a board. One report noted that another Chinese man fired a shot that resulted in some 3,000 angry White men and boys flooding Hop Alley chanting, "The Chinese must go!" They beat Chinese residents, looted stores, and burned homes. The Chinese population probably only totaled a few hundred. Before the night was over, Look Young, a 28-year-old Chinese laundryman was lynched. He was dragged through the streets, kicked and beaten as he was being pulled, and lynched from a lamppost. "The story is [told, another crowd assembled] and then re-hung him so they could get in on the fun" (Steers 2002).

Lynching and riots against blacks

At the close of the Civil War, lynching black bodies became a ritualized effort to remove the Confederacy's mark of defeat and sense of shame. During the period identified as Reconstruction in American history, Ida B. Wells was the most powerful and persuasive anti-lynching crusader in the nation. Her 1892 pamphlet *Southern Horrors* declared the lies and inhumanity visited upon African Americans by lynching—a terrorist ritual of sacrifice enacted to restore the Confederacy (Wells 1892). As a terrorist act, lynching sought to declare and ensure the social vulnerability of African American men while advocating an ideology of White male dominance. Lynching is related to Black manhood the way rape is related to Black womanhood. Women were also lynched, even as a man can be raped. Yet, as acts of terror perpetrated by gender identification, the terror a Black woman tends to feel related to the possibility of rape is the terror Black men felt given the possibility of being lynched. Lynching, like rape, has been an act of violence for the expressed purpose of domination and control over the black body and soul to stave off the terror White supremacists felt after losing the Civil War.

In 1903, W. E. B. DuBois declared the problem of the 20th century to be the color line. Born during Reconstruction, DuBois was well acquainted with the colors that defined American life. Those colors were not red, white, and blue; they were Red, White, and Black. However, DuBois's research and reflections determined that it was the Black-White

axis, America's original axis of evil, that was at the very core of America's problem. After the War Between the States, one segment of America sought to reconstruct the nation into "a more perfect Union," while another segment of society sought to deconstruct the agenda of making Africans citizens of America. Observing these dynamics, DuBois was clear that 300 years of white supremacy would not be neutralized simply because the nation had crossed over into a new century. He did not subscribe to the adage that "time heals everything" (DuBois 1989).

Red summer and the tula massacre

Within 20 years of DuBois's famous identification that the problem of the 20th century was the color line, America experienced some of the worst racial conflicts and acts of racial violence known in our history. In 1918, America emerged from World War I needing a revitalized workforce. Although African American soldiers had fought gallantly in defense of the land of liberty, racial tensions grew as Americans sang the question: "How ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm, after they seen Paris?" Identified as "the Red Summer of 1919"—red because of the bloodshed—white Americans initiated race riots in approximately 25 cities across America from May through October. During that same year, 83 African Americans were lynched in an effort to restore the belief in white racial superiority.

The Tulsa Riot, May 31–June 1, 1921, has been identified as the worst race riot in the history of the United States. The community of Greenwood, known as "Black Wall Street," was a bustling and economically thriving community. This event has truly been mislabeled as a riot. The actions that decimated an entire community, that not only destroyed property but also resulted in mass murder, is more accurately identified as a massacre. The massacre was instigated by what appears to have been an accident. Dick Rowland, a Black man, while entering an elevator, accidentally stepped on the foot of the white elevator operator, Sarah Page, who screamed. The accident was revised to accuse Rowland of attempted rape, a crime often fabricated against Black men, and he was arrested. A lynch mob gathered at the jail to remove Rowland and execute "Southern justice" but was met by a small group of armed African American World War I veterans determined to prevent Rowland from being lynched. Black resistance to the lynch mob resulted in the mob's rage being directed on the Greenwood District. More than 1,000 homes and businesses were destroyed, with a death toll ranging upwards of three hundred (see Oklahoma Commission to Study the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921, 2001).

The lynchings of Will James and Laura and L. D. Nelson

Studying African American lynching history is painful and confusing yet very important. When I delivered an address on the subject at a university, the audience was not just horrified by the information, they also seemed to be confused about why a pastoral theologian should reflect on this topic. One person kept asking, "How do you teach that in pastoral care?" Although the question began with "how," the person's concern was really: "What does the history of lynched African Americans have to do with the care of souls?" In fact, it has everything to do with the care of traumatized African American souls. The history of lynching in America is one among many post-traumatic stressors within the African American experience. It is a terror that inhabits the soul and remains as a legacy of terrorism within the story of America. As such, it remains a phantom walking through American history that haunts us all. Novelist John Steinbeck wrote a short story, "The Vigilante," which reflected on how a person could be very easily seduced by lynch-mob mentality (Steinbeck 1936). Because the lynching of African Americans was experienced by more than one person and more than one

generation, lynching is known, experienced, and passed from one generation to another as a protracted psychic trauma (Butler 2000).

Lynching is a terrorist act enacted to exercise power and control over bodies and souls. Although lynchings were often executed by a small mob of victimizers, there were numerous spectacle lynchings that gathered communities from near and far to witness the ritual sacrifice. A spectacle lynching was a major community event that coordinated cameras, poses, and one brutal assault to the body after another, each brutality intended to entertain the crowd. Whereas spectacle lynchings were always illegal, they were, nevertheless, well-advertised events that could gather as many as ten thousand spectators to witness and participate in the ritual sacrifice of a Black body.

On November 11, 1909, Will James, also known as “Froggie,” was lynched in Cairo, Illinois, a small town at the southern end of the state near the border that touches Missouri and Kentucky. What was then a serene-looking community, now mostly abandoned, hosted one of the historic “spectacle lynchings.” James was accused of murdering Anne Pelley, whose body had been found in an alley. After an extensive search with the use of bloodhounds, James was caught and returned to Cairo. The details of James’s final moments reveal the sadism and brutality that characterized lynchings. Of the reported 10,000 people who were present, 500 were women who actively participated in the spectacle. James was beaten and hanged from Hustler’s Arch. The rope broke before he died, at which point he was dragged for a few yards and his body was riddled with bullets. He was then dragged by rope to the place where Pelley’s body had been found. His internal organs were removed, sliced, and dispersed as souvenirs. Women were reported to have started the fire where his body was burned to ashes. His charred head was severed and impaled on a pole for public display. All these scenes are depicted on photo postcards that were mailed through the United States Postal Service to preserve the eroticized brutality. On the same night James was lynched, the crowd also lynched a European American man, Henry Salzner, accused of murdering his wife. The mob gathered around the lamppost where Salzner stood with a noose about his neck and held a worship service before they took his life.

Contrary to popular belief, women and children were also victims of lynching. On May 25, 1911, Laura Nelson and her teenage son, L. D., were lynched at the same time. Both were arrested and jailed in Okemah, Oklahoma, for killing a deputy sheriff from Paden, Oklahoma. At midnight, a lynch mob took the mother and son from the jail and lynched them from a bridge over the North Canadian River, six miles outside of Okemah. The October 1911 issue of *The Crisis* magazine reported, “Laura Nelson, who was lynched with her son for killing a police officer, was raped before the mob tied a rope around her neck and threw her off the bridge” (Feinster 2009, p. 174). During the next day or so, crowds gathered to photograph, and be photographed with, the lynched bodies of Laura and L. D. A close examination of the photos reveals L. D.’s pants hanging at his ankles and whiteout on his genital area. Knowing what was regularly done to lynched Black men, it is reasonable to conclude that L. D. had had his genitals cut off, even as his mother was raped before she was thrown from the bridge.

Consider this example to illustrate the ongoing power of lynching. On a progressive university campus in the Midwest, during the spring semester of 2011, a Black college student reported his terror while walking a familiar route across campus. Passing a fraternity house, he viewed a life-size doll hanging by a noose around its neck from a second-floor balcony. The student was afraid to approach and challenge the brothers of the fraternity party. His mind filled with images of victimization, the student chose to quietly and cautiously pass by under the cover of the night. This student was too young to have witnessed the lynching of a man or woman during the time in American history when lynching was the primary act of terrorism against African Americans. The terror the student experienced, however, is a sign of the fact

that the trauma of lynching still inhabits our being. The terror shakes and awakens the trauma imprinted on the African American soul every time we see a noose hanging from a tree or see a noose dangling near an African American body.

Aurora massacre

On July 20, 2012, a lone gunman dressed in law enforcement tactical gear began a killing spree at the midnight showing of the movie *The Dark Knight Rises* in an Aurora, Colorado, theater. The theater was full of young adults who were initially unaware of what was happening until people began to die in the mayhem of tear-gas grenades and gunfire. The attack ended with 12 dead and 58 others injured. Of the 12 people who died, the youngest was 6 years old and the oldest was 51 years old. The majority of the victims were 20-something. Because of the geographical location, the nation was immediately returned to the terror and trauma of the Columbine High School Massacre of April 1999. Although the Aurora gunman was not a part of any terrorist group, the act had a terrorizing effect causing people across the nation to be fearful of going to the movies. Does the interpretation that the gunman was “deranged” instead of being part of a terrorist cell make us feel less terror and more comfortable? Does the fact that people were killed without a cause make their deaths more or less painful?

Sikh temple shooting

On August 5, 2012, America witnessed a terrorist attack against Brown people. This was the Sunday that the Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, was attacked by a lone gunman who had known ties to local white supremacist groups. The gunman killed six and wounded four before he committed suicide. This was not the first time that a place of worship was not able to maintain its designation as “sanctuary,” a place of safety. The victims were men and one woman ranging from 39 to 84 years of age. Why the gunman chose this temple remains a mystery, but the terror and the known possibility of a terrorist attack upon a sanctuary provokes vigilance.

Amish schoolhouse and Sandy Hook Elementary School massacres

Before Sandy Hook Elementary School made national news, there was a massacre in a small Pennsylvania Dutch community. On October 2, 2006, 12 girls ages 6 to 13 were taken hostage in a one-room schoolhouse, and the siege ended in murder-suicide. Five girls were killed and five more were wounded. In the end, the shooter committed suicide. This did not happen in an urban center, but in exurbia. Coming out of that tragedy, commentators talked about the pain of the perpetrator resulting from his despair, but there was no critique of a society that cultivates the victimization of the vulnerable, that fosters child sacrifice to free a tormented soul, that does not challenge a cultivated hatred against girls and women. Girls and women live with an unnamed terror that says no place is safe. Because this was a small isolated community, the nation was saddened but was not outraged or sent into deep grief requiring a national agenda to move us to act beyond the pain.

On Friday December 14, 2012, the nation tearfully fell to its knees in response to the traumatizing violence that occurred at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. Once again, 20 children and 6 adults and the lives of their families were devastated by a lone gunman who, after murdering his mother with her own gun, took vengeance on those he felt had replaced him in his mother’s eyes. This act of rage was horrifying. Although not identified as an act of terror, the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary

School led parents and whole communities across the country to live with new feelings of terror.

How could this happen in a quiet enclave of American life? To be sure, more and more quiet enclaves are being victimized by disenfranchised gunmen. Their sole motivation has been to express the torment and terror of their own souls by visiting their pain on others. While the devastation of Sandy Hook might too readily be identified as one of the worst acts of public violence in our history, a look at history reveals the Sandy Hook Elementary School Massacre to be one terrorizing trauma among many acts of terrorism.

Care for the terrorized

We must be very careful to not take a reductionist view of these traumatic and painful events. We must also cease from viewing these events as isolated events. If the divine requirement for eternal blessing is for everyone to be as a child, but our culture is one that terrorizes children as well as those identified as the children of God, the consequence will be a nation that does not bless but curses children and its children's children and considers terrorism an acceptable state. Randall C. Bailey, Distinguished Professor, Interdenominational Theological Center, analogizes the problem by referring to a biblical narrative of the massacre of children at the beginning of the Common Era: We praise God for Jesus' escape to Egypt, and we forget about all the children two years and younger massacred by Herod in and around Bethlehem. Our forgetting results in our approving the sacrifice of others by ignoring the impact of the terror upon everyone.

Pastoral theology has tended to take a "response team" approach to crises. That is, we have tended to focus on intervention after the crisis. In many instances, we know well how to attend to Rachel's and Ray's wailing and loud lamentation that results from Herod's genocidal rage (Matt. 2:16–18) visited upon all of God's children. Yet, when violence becomes a key identifier for American culture, trauma becomes normalized and suffering is easily compartmentalized. These compartmentalized containers get warehoused and sometimes become systems of mass incarceration that wear the sign, "Out of Sight, Out of Mind." In addition to attending to Ray's and Rachel's wailing, we must also work for justice and peace even as the nation declares liberty and justice for all. Pastoral theologians must dive into the anguish and identify and stand against the evil that consumes our souls while acknowledging the power of life in the face of death. After the scream that declares a mourner's heart has been ripped out, knowing that heart will never return as the casket is lowered into the ground, it is the pastoral care provider who works to heal the heart, to mitigate against a rage that desires to seek vengeance, and to transform the loss into a precious memory. And lest anyone forget, the gunmen must also be eulogized in the presence of their loved ones, who bear an additional burden and profoundly complicated grief. The gunmen, bombers, rapists, mutilators, and lynchers of terrorism must be considered in our reflective work of care and cultural criticism, too.

Each of the terrorist aggressions I have identified began as a rageful rampage initiated by the aggressor's own feelings of terror. That terror was ultimately projected or transferred as rage into public spaces where it became indiscriminate violence against others whose terrifying screams were ended by their murder while the surviving families' and community's wailing may never end. Although this reflection may sound like I am emphasizing that trauma should be the focus for the future, I am suggesting that trauma first and foremost results from the terror experienced within the soul.

Because theological education tends to emphasize a theological hierarchy that locates practical fields at the bottom of a list of important voices, feelings and moods are seen as far from paramount in addressing the issues of the day. In relation to terror, the feelings and moods associated with terrorism are regularly pathologized, making all the perpetrators deranged. Expanding our interpretation of terror will help us to do more to combat terrorism. Pastoral care is not solely a field that focuses on crisis intervention. Pastoral care is also a field that encourages prevention through early psychosocial diagnoses. We have the task of transforming a culture gripped by terror.

Conclusion

Women and men, boys and girls are wailing from the depths of humanity. Let us not placate, deflect, or ignore the terror.

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