

The Fearful Hush of War

“ On February 13, 2003, Pacifica’s Graduate Institute’s Academic Senate issued a unanimous statement entitled “The Fearful Rush to War” saying, in part, “We... appeal to our government and to all governments and thoughtful citizens worldwide to exercise restraint, to pause to reflect in sorrow on the enormous suffering that would result from this action.”

Our appeal—like so many others—failed to stem the headlong rush to war. Now there is sorrow everywhere. The shuddering failure of hastily crafted policies is bringing forth a harvest of wounded souls and bodies, of families of soldiers who have lost their beloved sons and daughters. This is the ultimate sorrow, the hollow ache of a beloved life extinguished.

As war progresses, there has come a fearful hush upon the land: the fearful hush of war. We continue to attack those we have never known, draw sides, blame the other, and seek certain security in easy responses.

As academics and persons of thoughtful action, we resist the numbing effects of slogans, clichés, political sound-bites and easy scapegoating of the stranger.

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While we must all acknowledge the very real forces of death that corrode our security and threaten our democracy, we must just as fiercely resist our fear that numbs our conscience, restricts our freedoms, and hushes our voices.

We are members of a living, thriving academic community who have dedicated our lives to the mindful investigation of what is beautiful, necessary, and true. We believe that to be truly alive is to be fully awake, critical, open to exchanging our ideas, and to resisting what makes our world less than it could be.

The time for honorable conversation about war and peace, life and death, fear and faith is long overdue. We ask that you lift your voice and, at the same time, invite others to take heart and speak their truth. Together let us resolve to find ways to penetrate the deadening hush of a world at war in order to once again liberate the passionate desire for a world of justice, healing, and peace. ”

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