

## Deepmoon critiques Daniel's Gandhi essay

Author	Message
<b>Daniel Mackler</b> Site Admin  Joined: 03 Aug 2006 Posts: 525 Location: New York City	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span>📅 Posted: Sun Oct 29, 2006 1:37 pm</span> <span>📄 Post subject: Deepmoon critiques Daniel's Gandhi essay</span> <div style="text-align: right;"> <span>🗨️ quote</span> <span>✎ edit</span> <span>✖ IP</span> </div> </div> <hr/> <p>I found these two posts – one from Deepmoon and the other a reply of mine – from March of 2006 that I saved in MS Word. I thought they were lost forever when I mistakenly nuked the old forum [<i>I didn't understand how to use the administrative "pruning" tool, and deleted the whole forum!</i>], and I am glad for the chance to be able to repost them. I went by the name Truthtraveler then.</p> <p>-Daniel</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p>Daniel Mackler</p> <p><a href="http://iraresoul.com">http://iraresoul.com</a></p> </div>
<b>Daniel Mackler</b> Site Admin  Joined: 03 Aug 2006 Posts: 525 Location: New York City	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span>📅 Posted: Sun Oct 29, 2006 1:38 pm</span> <span>📄 Post subject:</span> <div style="text-align: right;"> <span>🗨️ quote</span> <span>✎ edit</span> <span>✖ IP</span> </div> </div> <hr/> <p><b>DEEPMOON'S POST</b></p> <p><b>early March, 2006</b></p> <p>To truthtraveler: Some of the facts you state are wrong about Gandhi.</p> <p>a) Him sleeping nude with nude teenage girls? Where did you get that from? He did sleep with women in the room, but it was communal living in ashrams, and not nude and they were not teenagers, they were adult women who worked in his movement. You have stretched the truth quite a bit for effect or was it that you forgot to check your facts?</p> <p>b) No he was not married at 13.</p> <p>He was a lawyer in South Africa before he came to India. Going to law school would be impossible at 13 married and trying to make a living go to high school and law school. His parents merely agreed with his wife's parents when he was 13.</p> <p>So your theory about his anger at his parents is bunk. Because that was a custom for parents to arrange for their children suitable partners early. Besides, bitching at your parents for your misery is a western custom and not an eastern custom. So its unfair to project your anger to others. Didn't you claim to be a therapist on Amazon?</p> <p>-Deepmoon</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin-left: 0;"/> <p>Daniel Mackler</p> <p><a href="http://iraresoul.com">http://iraresoul.com</a></p> </div>
<b>Daniel Mackler</b> Site Admin  Joined: 03 Aug 2006	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;"> <span>📅 Posted: Sun Oct 29, 2006 1:40 pm</span> <span>📄 Post subject:</span> <div style="text-align: right;"> <span>🗨️ quote</span> <span>✎ edit</span> <span>✖ IP</span> </div> </div> <hr/> <p><b>DANIEL'S REPLY TO DEEPMOON</b></p> <p><b>March 05, 2006</b></p> </div>

Posts: 525  
Location:  
New York  
City

Hi Deepmoon,

Welcome to the forum.

As to the first part of your critique of my essay, about Gandhi sleeping with nude girls, I believe I am right – but you make a good point, as I do not yet have the proper literary references to back me up. I do remember reading (over ten years ago) that Gandhi invited nude teenage girls into his bed to sleep with him to test his celibacy, and when I went to hunt for the book that had the reference – I couldn't find it! In an earlier draft of the essay I stated that I couldn't remember the reference, but then I took that part out. Perhaps a mistake on my part. And it is possible that my memory is faulty – though I doubt it. Regardless, I should be more careful. Nevertheless, try this reference from the internet: <http://history.eserver.org/ghandi-nobody-knows.txt>

Its writer states, in an article titled "The Gandhi Noboby Knows," – about a private screening of a movie on Gandhi – : *"I cannot honestly say I had any reasonable expectation that the film would show scenes of Gandhi's pretty teenage girl followers fighting "hysterically" (the word was used) for the honor of sleeping naked with the Mahatma and cuddling the nude septuagenarian in their arms. (Gandhi was "testing" his vow of chastity in order to gain moral strength for his mighty struggle with Jinnah.) When told there was a man named Freud who said that, despite his declared intention, Gandhi might actually be \*enjoying\* the caresses of the naked girls, Gandhi continued, unperturbed. Nor, frankly, did I expect to see Gandhi giving daily enemas to all the young girls in his ashrams (his daily greeting was, "Have you had a good bowel movement this morning, sisters?"), nor see the girls giving him \*his\* daily enema."*

However, as I have not seen the film myself, I can't authenticate it.

Or this internet reference, from a book by a UCLA historian (which I have not yet read, but should): <http://www.international.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=30808>

The article states: *"Despite this aversion to sex as "impure," Gandhi started in his 70s to sleep nude beside young female followers, including one he called "granddaughter." He defended the activity that apparently never resulted in intercourse as an attempt to stop the division of India through "sublimating powers of sexual restraint." While scandalous to many of his followers, the prescription derived from ancient Hindu yogic faith, Wolpert found. When a follower resigned after learning of the practice, Gandhi went through a period of self-doubt and promptly stopped after his "granddaughter" requested that he do so."*

So maybe I'm actually not stretching the truth.

As to the second part of your critique of my essay, Gandhi himself stated in his autobiography (on page six) that he was in fact married to his wife Kasturbai at age 13. Some quotes: *"It is my painful duty to record here my marriage at the age of thirteen." And then: "Let the reader make no mistake. I was married, not betrothed."* He then went on to state that he believes they were betrothed when he was seven.

Then he says a couple of pages later that *"little did I dream then [as a boy] that oneday I should severely criticize my father for having married me as a child."*

I would think that this degree of criticism implies some anger. And even if Gandhi himself does not openly FEEL his anger at his parents, many people are enraged at their parents but do not consciously feel it. There are many ways to express unconscious rage at one's parents that allows one to live in seemingly perfectly happy and peaceful association with them.

Also, just because something is an acceptable custom in one culture does not make it healthy – and does stop it from engendering trauma and rage in the victims of the practice. Gandhi himself fought against child marriage and thought it totally unhealthy and inappropriate, and he

also fought against the caste system. Would you blame him for going against his "eastern" culture too?

So I am not so sure that I am projecting my anger onto Gandhi here. I might be to some degree, but I think it is much less the case than you state.

-Truthtraveler

P.S. I found the book I originally read years ago on Gandhi's sleeping nude with young women: William Shirer's book "*Gandhi: A Memoir*." I reread it and my memory seems to have held well, except the book doesn't mention about Gandhi having had "copious nocturnal emissions" during this period, as I stated in my essay. I fear I may have read that somewhere else – that or I'm combining separate incidents from different times in his life.

---

Daniel Mackler

*[the next segment is from a different thread, but overlaps with the information above]*

Author	Message
<p><b>Kaleo</b></p> <p>Joined: 06 Oct 2006 Posts: 209</p>	<p>Posted: Wed Nov 01, 2006 3:27 pm    Post subject: Gandhi</p> <p>It was really hard for me to read Daniel's essay on Gandhi because I'm from India and Gandhi is a personal hero of mine, but it made me question my own beliefs, and that's good. I'm glad to have read your post just now, because it reminds me not to fall for anything or anyone "hook, line and sinker", no exemptions. That's what I take from your experience right now, and it's much appreciated.</p> <p>best, Kaleo</p>
<p><b>Daniel Mackler</b> Site Admin</p> <p>Joined: 03 Aug 2006 Posts: 523 Location: New York City</p>	<p>Posted: Wed Nov 01, 2006 3:38 pm    Post subject:</p> <p><b>kaleo wrote:</b></p> <div data-bbox="488 1283 1435 1377" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>It was really hard for me to read Daniel's essay on Gandhi because I'm from India and Gandhi is a personal hero of mine, but it made me question my own beliefs, and that's good.</p> </div> <p>Gandhi was a great role model to me, but now only PARTS of him serve that function. I find it just as important to try to get the full picture – warts and all – of others as I do to get the full picture of myself.</p> <p>One of the more painful email I ever received was one I got a few years ago from a little girl, age about eleven, who loved Helen Keller and HATED my book review on her book "The Story Of My Life."</p> <p>She ripped me to shreds for what I wrote about Helen Keller, really was very vitriolic and hateful toward me, but the sad problem was...what I wrote about Keller was correct (all based on the biography OF Helen Keller). I gently explained this to the little girl, and suggested that she read the biography – what else could I say? – and I got an email back a few weeks later in which she apologized for her nastiness. She said she had read the biography.</p> <p>That said, Kaleo, do you think my Gandhi essay is fair?</p>

	<p>Daniel Mackler</p> <p><a href="http://iraresoul.com">http://iraresoul.com</a></p>
<p><b>kaleo</b></p> <p>Joined: 06 Oct 2006 Posts: 209</p>	<p>Posted: Wed Nov 01, 2006 3:54 pm Post subject:</p> <p><b>Daniel Mackler wrote:</b></p> <p>That said, Kaleo, do you think my Gandhi essay is fair?</p> <p>I do, actually. Our heroes - <b>especially</b> our heroes - have to be scrutinized with the same lens as anyone else. I have some of the same issues with his personal life as you do, including his negligent treatment of his wife Kasturba, who supported him tirelessly. He was a man of his times and cultures, and that he rose beyond it as much as he did was remarkable. Have you seen the movie "Water", about the treatment of child widows in India during Gandhi's time? THAT is an honest movie, and shows how deeply entrenched, self-serving and destructive cultural beliefs can be. To fight for the most downtrodden in an already oppressed society - now that's courage. (Forget "Monsoon Wedding" - see "Water" instead!)</p> <p>Perhaps Gandhi is a good example of what I meant when I said that I don't see working toward inner enlightenment as conflicted with making a difference in the external world. On the other hand, he might gotten further on the journey toward personal enlightenment had he not pursued his dreams for India (or vice versa). Maybe that's why I admire him so much, for treading both paths as best he could.</p> <p>Question to you: do you feel he (or anyone else) compromises both paths by doing so?</p> <p>-Kaleo</p>
<p><b>Daniel Mackler</b> Site Admin</p> <p>Joined: 03 Aug 2006 Posts: 523 Location: New York City</p>	<p>Posted: Wed Nov 01, 2006 4:18 pm Post subject:</p> <p><b>kaleo wrote:</b></p> <p>Question to you: do you feel he (or anyone else) compromises both paths by doing so?</p> <p>Yes and no. I see myself make a difference in the external world in a radical (but sometimes small) way every day – as a therapist, mostly. And yet this work I do greatly enhances my inner journey. Sometimes come Monday morning I resist going back to work because I feel it takes away from my personal journey time, but then as soon as I get back into Therapist-Mode I can feel it as great for my personal progress. It actually fuels my journey, and I OFTEN get inspired by my patients.</p> <p>As my friend Fred says, "Work in the world!"</p> <p>But at the same time, I think it's quite possible to compromise one's inner path by getting lost in the externals. Gandhi may have done that. I think often having children does that for people too. (In Gandhi's case he admitted – from my recollection – that because of his external political work in India he was a lousy and neglectful father.) When external work in the world becomes allied with grandiosity or other forms of emotional acting out it can serve to work against the inner journey.</p> <p>But even this is complex, because sometimes even grandiose success in the world sets a good foundation for later REAL (and non-grandiose) success... That's been my experience.</p>

-Daniel

---

Daniel Mackler