

**Sensual Preciousness: the Earthfolk vision and
practice of living peacefully and comfortably
at home on the Living Earth**

Earthfolk Papers, Volumes 1 and 2

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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUMES 1 AND 2

Sensual Preciousness, Volumes 1 and 2, introduces the Earthfolk and our vision and practices of living peacefully and comfortably at home on the Living Earth. This is a fundamentally distinct way of understanding what it means to be human, and how humans as individuals and communities can interact with each other. It is a radical vision of the power present within and expressible through personal intimacy

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But why is *Sensual Preciousness* being written? Is it responding to a crisis? Or a discovery? Actually, both.

A Crisis and a Discovery

Crisis. There is a crisis of intimacy which is reflected in the Endless Warring which is the defining characteristic of human history. In the Endless War, the vision of other people is that *you*—the Other—is Intimate Enemy. In this vision, you, as Intimate Enemy, are someone to be feared and, eventually, dominated and subjugated. Even the most intimate sexual space is defined as an arena where the “War between the Sexes” is waged.

It is a crisis reflected, moreover, in the almost unimaginable fact that there are enough nuclear bombs to blow the Earth to smithereens and, in so doing, vaporize every human being and every living thing. To grasp our Earthfolk vision is, in part, to understand the connections and disconnections between *Sensual Preciousness*’ vision and practices of intimacy and the vision and practices of the Endless War with its Intimate Enemy and nuclear bomb. The latter is a way of defining and approaching other humans that is grounded in a millennia old vision, that of the

- **Warrior's Quest**, which seeks to exercise dominion over all peoples, all living things, including the Earth, itself.

It is a vision of the individual, described quite often in terms of a Hero's Journey, on which an Intimate Enemy is overcome, vanquished, slain. The Warrior's Quester practices "living as if you are my Intimate Enemy." For the Warrior's Quester, "you" is any Other who stands to thwart the Quest. The reward, as the Warrior's Quest ends, is individual victory, enlightenment, salvation.

This crisis of intimacy has assumed a special characteristic since the Warrior's Quester has created a weapon he cannot control, namely, the Atom Bomb. The Atomic Bomb's Mushroom Cloud is the Warrior's Quest victory icon. It expresses the fulfillment of the Warrior's Quest imagination which is the act of human self-annihilation. The Warrior's Quest has always envisioned an apocalyptic End Time, but it was foretold as an event of triumph by the Warrior's Quester's returning god. Now, the Warrior's Quester's final victory is within his own grasp, yet it can only be achieved through an act of individual and total human self-annihilation.



In sharp contrast, our

- **Earthfolk vision** is of *you*—the Other—as precious and Beloved.

In our vision, your embrace of an Other effects an intimate convergence which simultaneously makes present each other's preciousness. When preciousness is made present, you are "you," that is, an individual in relationship. For Earthfolk, you are "you" only when beheld by an Other. This is a **vision of intimate presence** which we Earthfolk describe as a quest of Beloveds. It seeks and finds fulfillment in the immortal experience of communal presence, which Earthfolk call the Forever-Family. This is the communal "we" from which, to which, and in which you exist. For Earthfolk, Forever-Family is comfortably at-home on the Living Earth. Our Earthfolk daily practice is "living as if I am no one's Enemy."

Yet, the most telling aspect of this crisis of intimacy is that those on the Warrior's Quest adamantly deny that there is a crisis! We Earthfolk describe those who created the Atom Bomb with its Mushroom Cloud as being, as a people, in post-traumatic stress. They are a psychically and spiritually numbed people who have long forgotten how to ask for help. To Earthfolk ears, they babble on, aimlessly talking to themselves about how happy they are in their Land of Peace and Plenty as they simultaneously set about endlessly raping, pillaging and destroying whatever is before them.

With a twist on the macho playground taunt, the Warrior's Quester is "afraid of his own Shadow," here meaning his Dark Side. Even after reflecting on the Mushroom Cloud, the Warrior's Quester denies that humans are now living in apocalyptic times. The Warrior's Quester denies that the world is engulfed in Endless Warring, and that the Other is seen as Intimate Enemy. The Warrior's Quester peers at the vaporized shadows of humans left by Hiroshima's "Little Boy" atomic bomb and hails

them as signs of Victory for the Free World. We Earthfolk hold that those who do not see their Shadow (and all aspects of human darkness) are doomed to be controlled by their Shadow.

If asked, would you say to yourself and others, "I don't see the Other as Intimate Enemy." Or, "My life isn't part of an Endless War, that's just a political problem." Or, "I love all people. And I feel loved. Mine is a happy family. There is no crisis of intimacy." If so, we invite you to consider the possibility that you cannot but answer in this manner. For how you, the individual responds, is more greatly influenced by communal feeling than by your personal act of self-evaluation. But what is the communal feeling which pervades your world?

We Earthfolk invite you to reflect upon what communal feeling is generated as a result of the dropping of the Atomic Bomb. Earthfolk describe this feeling as one of "dreadful fear." It is a communal feeling of dreadful fear which we Earthfolk also traumatically feel because all humans live under the Mushroom Cloud. Indeed, one factor in the our Earthfolk awakening was our insight into and acceptance of ourselves as in the throes of post-traumatic stress. In this light, how else is anyone to respond to what the Mushroom Cloud conjures up in the mind, heart and soul but with acts and words of self-delusion and denial? Who wants to say, "Yes, I am responsible for vaporizing other people." No one wants to stand up in public and state that they are fully responsible for creating a world which has already begun to self-annihilate; to proclaim, "I am Earth's slayer!"

We Earthfolk hear the many War Stories (popular and literary) which those committed to the Warrior's Quest tell themselves to justify

engaging in Endless Warring. In the main, these are stories of misdirection which enable the Warrior Quester to avoid accepting responsibility for the import of their heartfelt acts, most notably, for waging Nuclear War. Do you acknowledge that you are, right now, an active participant in a phase of nuclear war? Are you willing to explore the possibility that the way you are living, right now, is structured by personal and social rituals which make present a world where intimacy is defined and valued solely in Warrior's Quest terminology and images, such as the "War between the Sexes"? Are you living in a world drenched by pornographic media, which is being communicated 24/7/365 on a world-wide-net? A net of imagery whose heartfelt acts are ones of personal degradation, sexual abuse, domination of the weak and violent subjugation?

For Earthfolk, the Warrior's Quest imagined the Mushroom Cloud and so it became reality. It imagines a world which seeks to snuff out intimacy, and so such becomes reality. But the Mushroom Cloud after all is there because it was and is imagined. Are you open to the possibility that you can imagine a world wherein you are precious and a Beloved? We Earthfolk have discovered such a way of imagining.

Discovery. Our Earthfolk discovery is that the only power which can counter Endless Warring and nuclear power is the vital zest made present when humans intimately embrace as Beloveds. This is a discovery which startled us Earthfolk as we were experiencing the darkest of moments, the most forlorn of days. It is a discovery they most often made at various moments of personal and communal breakdown: on the battlefield, in prison, during the seduction of suicidal despair. For Earthfolk, it was and is breakthrough as we contemplate the dreadful fear

which peering at the image of the Atomic Bomb's Mushroom Cloud chillingly evokes. As we pondered and were paralyzed by the terror of impending nuclear self-annihilation, so did we breakthrough to an experience of the power of intimacy. We discovered the Other as precious. Embracing *you*—the Other—as precious releases an intimate vital zest as physical, quantitative and powerful as the Bomb's nuclear energy.

The Warrior's Quest vision, which fears you as Intimate Enemy, expresses itself through the social ritual of Endless War from which arose the Mushroom Cloud. When you approach an Other as Intimate Enemy, you are enacting a personal Warrior's Quest ritual. This is "living as if everyone is my Enemy." Through this ritual you nourish and expand the dreadful fear which is symbolized by the nuclear bomb's iconic Mushroom Cloud. In sharp contrast, when you approach an Other as precious, you are enacting a personal Earthfolk ritual. This is "living as if I am no one's Enemy." Through this ritual you nourish and expand the sense of being comfortably at-home on Earth which is symbolized by another iconic image, that of Starship Earth.

In this light, when the Warrior's Quest was heralding its brightest hour, that is, at the moment it achieved military dominion over outer-space, so did, unintentionally, our Earthfolk vision breakthrough. This was breakthrough as we Earthfolk contemplated the astronaut's snapshot of Earth as first seen from outer space as "Starship Earth."



During these moments of reflection, we Earthfolk sensed that the Earth is alive. More, it was clear that all other people, all Others, are precious. It was even clearer, still, that all people live on the One Earth and are One Family. Yes, for Earthfolk the Earth is alive, and it is precious.

We Earthfolk discovered the simple truth that making the Other precious through intimate embrace is the singular act which unleashes an energy and makes manifest a spiritual presence which can counter the seemingly inevitable nuclear vaporization of the Earth and all people. Earthfolk name this intimate energy, **vital zest**. As this vital zest is shared within an intimate embrace it makes manifest the presence of the Other's preciousness. This is the presence of the Other as known only as each share their preciousness. It is a presence evoked in a moment of transformation, that is, as intimacy opens to Belovedness.

Preciousness is that distinct vital zest which makes "you," *you*. Note, however, that it is a *coupled energy*, and a presence which only the coupled Beloveds discover and manifest. Consequently, for Earthfolk, *you*—who are Other—are the one who will either continue to wage Endless War or be the one to unleash the intimate vital zest and make present that preciousness which will transform the Earth. You will continue to either behold the Other as Enemy and create a world wherein individuals seek only Dominion, Victory and Salvation or you will embrace

the Other as precious and transform yourself, humankind, and the Earth, itself, as you make present Belovedness. We Earthfolk anticipate that this discovery might sound very odd, off-beat and somewhat absurd to you. Yet, we hope that it also intrigues you enough for you to reflect upon our vision and practices.

Becoming Sensually Precious and “Big Stories”

Our Earthfolk invitation is for you to experience a new sense of intimacy, which is an experience of being sensually precious. If accepted, this is an invitation for you to transform yourself on the mental and spiritual planes, but, even more significantly, to refashion your physical body. Physically, you are invited to experience yourself, through rituals, with an uncommon sensuality.

To come to the place where this invitation to Sensual Preciousness can be distinctly heard, and where you have sufficient understanding to breakdown your current sense of intimacy so that you feel secure enough to risk experimenting with an Earthfolk ritual or two, requires that you understand your present sense of intimacy. We Earthfolk hold that how you imagine what intimacy can mean, and how you make yourself present during intimate moments, is profoundly influenced by the Big Story you profess.

A **Big Story** provides Big Answers to life’s Big Questions. Earthfolk contrast our own Big Story to that of three globally dominant Big Stories, namely, the *Religious*, the *Secular* and the *Scientism* Big Stories. As you are presently, we Earthfolk, it is important to note, have lived within and professed during their lives the purported truths and values of the three Big Stories which are the dominant cultural forces in the current globalization movement.

Whichever Big Story or Stories grounds your present sense of intimacy, what we Earthfolk invite you to explore is the insight that *each Big Story is primarily concerned with explaining what intimacy is and how to express it*. Earthfolk hold that a Big Story presents a way of sensing the energy of human intimacy, and that it offers social and personal rituals which make intimacy present. These Earthfolk claims, more than likely, will not seem apparent to you upon first reviewing a Big Story because “intimacy” does not seem to be a clearly stated Big Question. For most people, Big Stories and Big Questions focus on grand-scale and cosmic events such as, “Where do humans come from?” “Who or what created the Earth?” “What is the purpose of Life?” We Earthfolk claim, however, that Big Stories are, foremost and fundamentally, all about intimacy.

We Earthfolk claim that intimacy is the Biggest of Big Questions. More, that the specific questions about intimacy, such as what is it, how to express it, why are humans intimate, etc., are the most significant Big Questions in the three dominant Big Stories. Yet, you would be not out of line to say, at this juncture, “I don’t see that. In fact, what I do know about these three Big Stories is that they appear *not* to be concerned with intimacy at all.” A key challenge of *Sensual Preciousness* is to enable you to see as Earthfolk see. This requires practicing what is called the discipline of sensual immersion.

Earthfolk practice a discipline called sensual immersion. One aspect of sensual immersion is “peering at” and “sitting in silence with” the Big Stories. Earthfolk’s startling discovery about the centrality of intimacy as the foremost Big Question comes from the significance of a negative fact. Namely, that the dominant three Big Stories collectively *deny* that

intimacy is sensually precious. These three Big Stories appear to say that intimacy *must* be understood in other than precious light. Indeed, after intense sensual immersion, it is clear to us Earthfolk that these Big Stories imply, in not so subtle ways, that the concept of “sensual preciousness” is either meaningless, absurd, evil and/or oxymoronic. It is the centrality of this common denial in each of the three Big Stories which Earthfolk grasp is an act of misdirection. This collective denial is not trivial. Rather, as we Earthfolk will develop and present, it is this denial of the possibility of a sensually precious intimacy which is a defining characteristic of each of the three Big Stories. However, convincing you that our Earthfolk fundamental claim that a Big Story is about enabling individuals to understand and experience intimacy is another key task and challenge of *Sensual Preciousness*.

A companion claim is that every Big Story is expressed through an array of social and personal rituals. Our Earthfolk claim that you, presently, live ritually, though many of the rituals you enact may not be apparent to you upon first review. Earthfolk define rituals as acts and activities which consist of symbolic images and practices which make present that which binds a people or a group. Rituals endow individuals and groups with their sense of identity and, of great significance to us Earthfolk, they determine how individuals and groups experience and express their intimate sensibilities. Rituals are, not uncommonly, mistakenly confused with religious ceremonial acts or rites, which are a specific form of ritual.

In this light, as we Earthfolk will present, Endless Warring is a core social ritual of the three dominant Big Stories. One example of a core social ritual of which most participants are mostly unaware is that of America’s Selective Service System (the “draft”). Registering for the draft is the

singular ritual act which every eighteen year old male must enact through registering. Every male, by law, must register, despite his physical, mental or spiritual character or health. It is that bedrock ritual act which binds all American males and bestows cultural and spiritual identity as a Warrior's Quester. Even if a male eventually receives a deferment, the act of registration makes one present as a Warrior's Quester. Through the act of registering, males become Warrior's Questers just as inductees do when they "step forward" and take the oath of allegiance. If you doubt the ritual character of this act of registration, consider that not to do so is a criminal act, a felony with a sentence of five years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. <http://www.sss.gov>

Even less obvious to most is that Warrior's Quest males see and experience the presence of female bodies and the feminine through a fundamental personal ritual which we Earthfolk describe and present as the Ritual of Skin. Earthfolk trace this ritual back to a vision of dominion, a set of images about the body, and a description of what counts as intimate acts of relationship, first expressed in the *Genesis* account in the dominant Religious Big Story. There, female bodies and the feminine are "skinned" out of the male body. The import of this ritual act is staggering. Suffice it say, at this time, that since females and the feminine have no skin, they cannot experience intimacy. Nor can they make present any aspect of sensual preciousness. They cannot ever be Beloved. Rather, they have meaning only in respect to the male body and the masculinity from which they are derived. However, opening insights into the Big Stories and their rituals is another key task, challenge and objective of *Sensual Preciousness*.

Earthfolk Glossary

Our Earthfolk vision of precious intimacy can be followed by anyone and everyone. It is a vision and set of practices which serve as a source for daily living. The Earthfolk movement is diverse and, consequently, composed of individuals with widely varying emotional profiles and intellectual backgrounds. Some learn and teach best through practices and disciplined repetition. Others are more analytical and scholarly. Still others need inspiration before they apply perspiration to attacking a new task. We Earthfolk realize that our vision and practices are sourced in deeply emotional and intellectually distinctive personal and communal experiences. And, that Earthfolk use common everyday words and images with slightly different meanings and twists.

As we Earthfolk grew in self-understanding and benefited from introducing others to their vision and practices, we clearly grasped that the ideas, interpretations and explanations which have lead us to our Earthfolk understanding are numerous and complex even when presented in popular language. To remind you of our particular Earthfolk meanings, certain key words are sometimes capitalized. For example, Sensual Preciousness, Earthfolk, Beloveds, Forever-Family, Intimate Enemy, Warrior's Quest and so forth. A glossary in *Appendix B* and is included as an easy reference for understanding Earthfolk's key words and the connection between ideas.

Volume 1 presents our Earthfolk vision as an invitation and a statement. How we Earthfolk arrived at our personal experiences and intellectual interpretations is not explored in great detail. The volume is intentionally not academic, though its interpretations are sourced in scholarly research. Volume 1 is intended to inspire, though it also requires some perspiration. Its main objective is to interest you in practicing a Sensual

Preciousness ritual and so open yourself to the Earthfolk experience, that is, to experience yourself as sensually precious.

Since Volume 1 is an invitation and a statement, there are many broad claims forwarded which, upon first reading, will move you to ask, “Who’s saying this? What is the source? Why isn’t so-and-so mentioned? Where are the footnotes?” While these challenging questions and skeptical queries are welcomed, the main objective of Volume 1 is to issue a statement and an invitation. As a partial response, brief biographical information about *The Author* is listed in *Appendix D*, and *Appendix C* presents a modest listing of *Links*.

Volume 2 submits a more personal and detailed intellectual and experiential explanation and interpretation of our Earthfolk vision and practices, but it is also not an academic presentation. Its Table of Contents has some parallels to that of Volume 1. However, for you to properly analyze and evaluate the Earthfolk vision and imagination requires that you discern your brooding emotion and the Big Story or Stories that provide you with your identity and sense of security and well being. I am an activist intellectual, so Volume 2 grounds my analyses and interpretations in my own journey from the loss of one Big Story— chapters of which lay strewn on the courtroom floor after my trial—and the discovery of the Earthfolk Big Story—after a ten year Dark Night of the Soul after prison.

This volume is for those who require a deeper intellectual grasp of matters before they risk opening their minds and emotions to a fundamental re-imagining and re-ordering. However, the scope and range of this Volume’s assertions, claims, interpretations and critical insights is

considerable, and will be for many quite controversial. Volume 2 is intended for those who, upon reading Volume 1, will continually ask for deeper and more complex answers to, "How did he arrive at that explanation and/or interpretation?"