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Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.
Solomon, Prov. 12:19

Steve Biko: An Exemplary Modern Warrior

by Midn 2/C Lisa Steinmetz

Racial conflict exists as one of the oldest battles waged in human history. Many players have devoted their lives to their separate causes and have lost those lives. One of the most explosive and longest standing racial situations existed in South Africa. In 1993, the apartheid system was finally eliminated. The profound and unprecedented progression in civility between Afrikans, those of native heritage to Dutch South Africa, and nonwhite races, which include Africans, Asians, Indians, and a mixed race commonly called the "coloureds," received global exposure. In order for Americans to relate to the atrocities that occurred in South Africa, a striking analogy was often made. Birmingham, Alabama, one of the most notoriously segregated Southern cities during the height of the discriminatory Jim Crow laws, was commonly called "the last stop before Johannesburg, South Africa." The numerous triumphs in race relations in South Africa did not come easily. The attainment of those victories resulted from the relentless efforts by a dedicated few who believed that equality could exist. A version of warriors had to emerge to lead the way. Steve Biko and his unsung battling against apartheid raised the awareness of humanity to the injustices and oppression caused by South Africa's racial policies. More importantly, he led the Africans of South Africa to believe that they deserved citizenship and equal treatment under the law. His courage, dedication, nonviolent means, intellectual approach, and ultimate sacrifice exemplified those of a truly modern warrior.

Bantu Stephen Biko and his supporters had much to overcome. He emerged from the chains of oppression to dynamically lead many of the South African people to a new and youthful way of confidently thinking. Hypocrisy permeated the culture of South Africa:

> South Africa was the most westernized country in Africa, but lacked many of the freedoms taken for granted by the western democracies, such as a free press, a free judiciary, free elections, and the right of free association and free speech. South Africa was the continent's richest and most powerful nation; however, a majority of its inhabitants were poor.

The most restrictive of those limitations was that of free speech. Steve Biko was an intellectual warrior. He attacked apartheid using the power of ideas and the "might of the pen." His cause was righteous, and he possessed the ambition and savvy to pursue it. He began his campaign in high school where he was expelled for "political activism." However, he managed to get into and graduate from a liberal boarding school, St. Francis College. From there, he headed to the University of Natal Medical School, which was where his real ambitions for achieving equality began to take root.

Biko established the South African Students' Organization, which eventually evolved into the Black Consciousness Movement. The movement began on university campuses and spread to the ghettos of South Africa. He taught the people to take pride in themselves and spent years traveling around the country professing black consciousness. This movement called on blacks "to shake off the habits of subservience, demand equal rights with whites, and eventually take part in a multiracial society."

Some key characteristics of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) include its slogan: "Black man, you're on your own." The movement defined "'black' to include all four of South Africa's nonwhite racial categories-Africans, Asians, Indians, and mixed race coloureds." As the influence of the African National Congress lessened in South Africa, the country's black townships began to "come alive" in the early 1970's under the influence of the BCM. C. R. D. Halisi interpreted the BCM principles as this:

> At the core, Black Consciousness philosophy embraced the existentialist view that individuals and communities choose freedom or enslavement. In order to overcome fear, it was essential for the oppressed to confront their oppressors. For the Black Consciousness Movement, political action had to approximate 'a way of life' or a 'gut reaction.' By striving to be indistinguishable from everyday life, Black Consciousness philosophy sought, at once, to articulate mass sentiments and fuse intellectuals and masses.

That he never advocated reverse discrimination exists as another attractive quality of Steve Biko's ideas. He wanted one multiracial society where all people could have their voices heard.

The Black Consciousness Movement liberated the minds of many nonwhite South Africans. Black Consciousness "provided a model for the transformation of black society in South Africa." The

revolutionary thinking "empowered blacks to take charge of their political and social destinies and thereby push back what had until then been internalised" potential. Biko's ideas advocated "black solidarity" on which the "township youth" of South Africa based their demonstrations from 1976 throughout the 1980's.

Biko looked to his heroes for inspiration. One statement by Nelson Mandela shows the kind of attitude Biko took in his efforts to spread his views and unite his people: "When we, as one people, act together decisively, with discipline and determination, nothing can stop us." He fought partly to free Mandela from his life term sentence for his own political activism. A noble warrior knows how to choose leaders to emulate and support. Mandela was eventually elected the first African president in the open elections. That obviously proves his merit as a positive and effective role model. Mandela's actions and what he stood for motivated Steve Biko to strive in his own crusade for freedom. Biko shared similar ideas with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as well as comparisons. Dr. King's pillar of "nonviolent resistance" to segregation and discrimination in the United States found its way into Biko's own basic principles on protesting and demonstrating. Warriors are often characterized by their strength and will. Maintaining a policy of "nonviolent resistance" in the face of such horrible and unfair treatment by the authorities displayed more strength of will and character than any physical act. This policy proves that he thought violence was not a viable option to combat racism. Therefore, a warrior does not necessarily have to kill to be called a "warrior." A true warrior fights for his cause first, using the best possible means to achieve that end. Violence would not have helped Steve Biko's fight for equality. His only advantage over a strategically superior government armed with a "ready-and-willing" police force was to expose their weaknesses and hypocrisy. They had to resort to extremely oppressive measures against those who were exercising their god-given rights to expression. Steve Biko smartly attacked his oppressors; he did not run wildly into the fight like a berserker, which, thus, prolonged his positive influence and his cause.

An occurrence in 1976 diverted worldwide attention to South Africa and its race relations. The horrific Soweto uprisings that began in mid-June in a black township outside Johannesburg were the events that began Steve Biko's unfortunate march to martyrdom. The demonstration against the forced use of the Afrikaans language, a variety of Dutch, in teaching mathematics, science, and social studies, escalated into riots when police intervention occurred. Student protests throughout the nation continued for months. By October 3, the killing of 100 people and the arrests of 3,000 people had occurred. During that time, authorities instituted martial law and other violent, repressive measures. Steve Biko was automatically linked to the demonstrations since they were of an "intellectual" nature.

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The government had banned Steve Biko in 1973. He could not be referred to in the press or visited by more than one person at a time and had a confinement area around his home. Then, after the government blamed his ideas for causing the Soweto uprisings, he was arrested. After being imprisoned without trial and thrown into solitary confinement, Biko's release came in November of 1976. However, he traveled despite his banishment status to continue spreading his ideas and motivate Africans to demand equality. One final arrest occurred on 18 August, 1977, and fatal imprisonment resulted. Biko died in custody under suspicious circumstances. Biko's close friend, Donald Woods, the liberal white editor of South Africa's East London Daily Dispatch said, "This is the big one, the one they cannot get away with, the one they cannot explain away." Up to that time, most white South Africans had no idea Steve Biko existed. The explanation of his death as a result of a hunger strike did not satisfy those who wanted justice. The world and South African blacks demanded a truthful explanation.

As years passed, the truth about the death of Steve Biko slowly surfaced as the white power structure deteriorated. He had been held for over twenty days shackled, naked, and suffering from three brain lesions from blows to the head. Then, finally after realizing the high probability of his not regaining consciousness, the authorities transported him, still naked and shackled, by van to a medical facility 740 miles away where he died. His guards were cleared of any wrongdoing. His death shocked and horrified many people around the world

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The Real Stregth of the Naval Academy Lies in the People

by Midn 1/C Alpa Patel

I distinctly remember the feeling I had when I got on the plane this past December to depart Annapolis on Christmas break. It was a feeling of pure unadulterated bliss, somewhat reminiscent of the giddiness most five-year olds have on Christmas Eve. It is a unique feeling shared by all firsties and five-year olds alike. It is the realization that there is only one more semester left, only one more semester of Weapons to endure, and only a handful of excruciatingly painful formations to go. It is the realization that you are almost through with the roller coaster ride of emotions only known by midshipmen, and fathomable only by the severest of manic-depressives. It was this feeling that I had on December 10th as I boarded my flight to none other than sunny Florida to visit a friend for the first few days of break. What could be better than sunny weather for an equally sunny disposition?

Four days and one phone call later, my entire existence changed. I found myself in the passenger seat of the family sedan amidst a rainstorm in Evanston, Illinois, my hometown. All I knew at that point was that my jaunt in Florida was cut short because my father was ill. The emergency blinkers were on and my sister had quite literally pulled the car onto the curb while she ferociously clutched the cell phone to her ear. It took one look, only one meeting of our brown eyes, for the tears to come streaming down both our faces. It was safe to assume that it had been a long time since either one of us had cried openly, but the occasion warranted a lapse in our normally stoic demeanor. The preliminary diagnosis was in, with the worst imaginable prognosis. My father had cancer-gleosarcoma to be exact. It was a rare form of brain tumor that in recent years is becoming less of an anomaly among males between the ages of forty and sixty-five. Life expectancy for the size of tumor found on the MRI was roughly nine to twelve months. Quality of life would greatly resemble that of a patient diagnosed with Alzheimers. Needless to say, any remnants of a sunny disposition were gone and the only feeling left within me was one of numbness to be thawed only in later days by anger.

The next three weeks were spent split between a chair in the ICU room and a phone booth stationed in a tiny crevice of Evanston's hospital. It was at that phone booth that I spent many hours talking about nothing and everything with the people in my life who know me the best—those people who attend the very institution that I have yearned to graduate from for the last four years. There have been many challenges at USNA ranging from such trivial things as plebe chemistry to more lasting events such as service selection, but through it all there has been this enormous base of support and understanding that has grown from shared experience and emotion. For me, this truth was reiterated over a phone line. For 1/C Ken Neptune, who was diagnosed with leukemia during his second-class year, support came in the shape of a birthday celebration hosted by the Brigade a few Thursdays ago. For Ensign Jonathan Brianas, a survivor of testicular cancer and former 2000 lacrosse team captain, understanding came in the shape of more than a dozen bald lacrosse teammates —a symbol that perhaps even the fraternity created at Navy could overcome a seemingly unbeatable disease.

> *Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved.*
> *Helen Keller*

Though the feeling of giddiness I felt when I left for Christmas break is no longer existent, it is a feeling that has been replaced by something else—something a bit more profound. Granted, I could easily say that all is well and that many lessons have been learned over the course of these last two months, but that is not clear. What is clear is that for all that is trivial and worthy of bickering about in the eyes of midshipmen, there is one aspect of this institution that may very well redeems its faults—the bonds it engenders between those that traverse its gates. Though the future is less precise and a bit more precarious than it was two months ago, I can safely say that when I do finally get on a plane in May, and leave this institution—my home for the last four years—there will be a part of me, as with all my classmates, that wants to come back here, suffering through another weapons class and laughing with my friends.

Bigs and Littles

by Midn 1/C Caroline Nietman

It is not often that the Navy hockey team gets mobbed for autographs. However, it is also not often that they make such a substantial difference in the lives of so many young children. Such was the case on January 27th when the Naval Academy's chapter of the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring program had its monthly event at the Navy hockey game against Villanova.

The January event was a huge success. The "littles," as the youth are affectionately called, enjoyed the Navy victory, the company of their midshipmen "bigs," and especially the Dahlgren pizza. At the second intermission, they all received programs and flocked to the nearest midshipmen wearing a hockey warm-up. Although this might seem like nothing to us, it was probably one of the biggest moments in the lives of these children.

In fact, when you speak with the "littles," they all say the same thing. Their big brothers and big sisters are huge influences on their lives, and they look forward each month to the weekend event when they can get together.

Personally, I have never felt so good about an organization as I do about Big Brothers Big Sisters. My little sister has made me laugh, cry, and feel proud. She is an inspiration to me; whenever I feel bad about some petty issue here at school, I realize that she is an awesome example of someone who overcame adversity and continues to excel. Though she comes from a troubled background, she is constantly smiling, and she possesses a remarkable level of maturity.

All of the children share this same light. They walk around with an appreciation of the little things, many of the same things that we take for granted. Even though I am a mentor, I often feel that I learn just as much from the "littles" as they do from me. You too can feel this joy.

Are you interested? Do you want to learn more? Well, the program at the Naval Academy was brought back by Midshipman 1/C George Messner, who participated in a similar program while on service exchange at West Point. It is a site-based program, which means that all of the "bigs" and "littles" attend preplanned monthly events.

Some of the previous events besides the hockey game included Navy baseball and football games, as well as a Halloween party. Meeting only once a month is not enough for most involved in the program, and as the relationship develops, so does the contact. Midshipmen and "littles" keep in contact through telephone calls and letters, especially during the summer time.

The purpose of the Big Brother Big Sister program is not necessarily to be a mentor, but to be a friend to a child who needs more stability in his or her life. The children involved in the program enjoy having their own "bigs". The "bigs" in turn are able to provide friendship and understanding to underprivileged children. Volunteering through the program allows a "big" to make a connection with a "little," and to have a positive influence on his or her child's life. "It is a win-win situation," says Project Leader David Zane, "My 'little' brings as much joy in my life as I do in his."

The program is growing at a rapid pace, and more midshipmen are needed. If you are interested in this rewarding opportunity, please contact 3/c Daniel Moynihan.

White Lies Vs. Integrity

by Cadet 2/C Aaron Sick

George is having dinner at his grandparents' house, struggling to swallow a bite of his grandmother's tuna casserole. The inevitable question proceeds from the mouth of his beloved family member, "So, George, how do you like my tuna casserole?" Quickly sipping a glass of milk for necessary lubrication, George swallows and manages to squeak out, "It's great." Everybody, except maybe grandmother, knows that the tuna casserole isn't really great, but that the false response was made to spare her feelings. Most people would agree that such a response, merely a white lie, is permissible, and would justify this situation as "social tact." However, there's a fine line between social tact and integrity. Through a few examples, it will become apparent that a person should strive to tell the truth, in order to strengthen the relationships he wished to preserve by telling a white lie in the first place.

Several days ago, I helped a friend with some homework. When his phone rang, he immediately knew it was his girlfriend and handed the phone to one of his roommates. "Tell her I'm not here," he quickly told him. The roommate did just that. The response seemed like a blatant lie. However, the other two considered the situation "social tact," since trying to explain homework to the girl (she's a foreign national) would only make it seem as though the boyfriend didn't want to speak with her, and, consequently, hurt her feelings. From this perspective, their response is understandable.

In another instance, I overheard a comment from one company mate to another (paraphrased with my own conjecture): "I told my mom we received the anthrax vaccination, because she was so worried about me with everything that's going on." As of today, Navy midshipmen have not been vaccinated, nor have I heard of any plans to begin such an endeavor. Once again, the intention of telling one's mother this falsehood is to protect her feelings, or at least to relieve her from worrying about an anthrax attack on her son.

In each of these situations, the person told a white lie. While these white lies are basically harmless, and do not in themselves necessarily represent a deficiency in character and integrity, there are alternative ways to handle these situations effectively and still tell the truth. In the first situation, a response such as, "He can't talk right now. May I take a message?" spoken in a courteous manner, may have fulfilled the job. The long-term method of solving such a problem falls on the shoulders of the boyfriend. He will continue to be challenged with balancing time and people, especially in personal relationships. In a marriage, an understanding of a spouse's work commitment is very important to the foundation of their relationship. While a one-time white lie may "solve" a single situation, an answer of integrity lays the foundation for a healthier relationship, where a wife and husband work together integrally as a team.

In the second situation, a son attempts to protect his mother from worry. Mothers have that sense about them. They care deeply for the child they gave birth to and raised. Not only so, but they seem to carry a sixth sense about their children; this may come across as nagging or unnecessary worry to others, but is the reason why mothers take such good care of their children. It can keep a mother up at night or stressed during the day. In one sense, it's noble to try and remove this worry. However, once again, there are other options to solve this problem. Of course, explaining the situation and listing precautions in place at the Naval Academy, such as gate guards, ID checks, and Anthrax training, is the beginning. The fact that there has not been an attack is another factor. While an attack is, at the moment, "imminent," the son could also have the mother contact his commanding officer, who probably has more information than the midshipmen, and may be able to give an authoritative response to the questions and concerns the mother may have. In any case, a son's word to his mother should be truthful. His mother places trust in what he says. While the white lie provides an escape hatch for the first incident, a stronger relationship is forged through tactful honesty.

Each of these situations does not present a large breach of integrity, or really shakes the foundation of honor. However, they bring up the point that every individual should look to be a person of integrity in every situation, even in those where the answer is not clear-cut and the quick white lie seems like the best solution. Truth forms the strongest foundation for a relationship. If the truth is always known, then questions about meaning, semantics, or whether a white lie is being told, do not exist. While the truthful avenue is narrower, the end result is far worth the effort.

National Character and Leadership Conference

by Midn 2/C Mitchell McGuffie

I recently had the privilege of representing the U.S. Naval Academy along with nine other midshipmen at the 9th Annual National Character and Leadership Symposium held at the U.S. Air Force Academy. The theme of the conference was "Undaunted Leadership" with emphasis placed on three sub-themes: Unassailable Integrity, Unceasing Service and Uncompromising Excellence. During the three-day conference I had the opportunity to hear many great speakers address the challenges of leadership and the importance of moral character as they paralleled these themes to their own personal experiences and successes. I had the privilege to visit with CDR Scott Waddle, Dr. Marvin Berkowitz, David Gergen and many other superb individuals. One of the most valuable experiences of the week was visiting with Japanese students from the National Defense Academy. We talked about everything from leadership, culture, and academy life, to military strategy. I could not help but think the situation was a little awkward at first considering less than 60 years ago our nations were at war. By the third day we were trading addresses, promising to write each other, and handing over small tokens of memorabilia. What a great idea! When you are planning a conference don't limit yourself to the Western World. We all had a lot to learn from each other.

With famous faces like David Gergen, CDR Scott Waddle, Mr. Dan Clark and Dr. Leo Mackay, the week was filled with excitement and valuable knowledge. I was impressed with the prestige and variety of the speakers and presenters. Each of the presenters at the conference offered different perspectives on leadership, integrity, service and excellence. Everyone from the keynote speakers to the concurrent discussion group leaders was outstanding. Although a majority of the speakers had some association with the military, I thought the schedule was nicely presented to offer more than just a military dominated focus.

A few of the speakers were truly exceptional and offered extremely unique and personal insight on leadership. CDR Scott Waddle seemed to be one of the biggest hits with the Air Force crowd as he shared his traumatic story in front of a few thousand people including the Japanese students from the NDA. In CDR Waddle's speech, he addressed faith, integrity and people who matter. CDR Waddle spent the week visiting with individuals and amazing hundreds with his charisma.

Best selling author Dr. Tom Connellan presented an intriguing topic that is very applicable to all aspects of life entitled "Bringing Out the Best in Others." Dr. Connellan focused on the three ways to bring about "Sustained Superior Performance." He argued that if you set high expectations, allot more responsibility, make people more accountable, and provide proper feedback, you can achieve what the ultimate leader desires, "bringing out the best in others."

David Gergen offered a perspective on leadership in the executive branch that only a few Americans can. David Gergen has served nobly in four presidential administrations and he recently combined his observations into his latest book entitled "Eyewitness to Power: The Essence of Leadership." He argues that great leaders must possess seven core elements: personal character that inspires trust, a moral vision for the nation's future, the political skills of both a lion and a fox, a capacity to mobilize followers through the modern media, an ability to recover from defeat and face future crises, an ability to attract and listen to wise advisors, and a capacity to bequeath a workable legacy. Although these seven core elements are formed from his direct observations of the most powerful men in the world, they can be interpreted to apply to all leaders in both the military and civilian sectors. When I had the chance to speak to Mr. Gergen, he asked me about the recent leadership conference we hosted at the Naval Academy. He would be a great speaker to bring to the Academy.

Other notable speakers included: Major General Jerry D. Humble, Commanding General, U.S. Marine Corps Recruiting Command; Brigadier General Stephen Ritchie, Vietnam Ace Pilot; Lieutenant General Timothy Kinnan, USAF, U.S. Military Representative to NATO; and Dr Leo Mackay, Jr., Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs, USNA Class of 1983.

The 2002 NCLS Conference was a great experience. To be able to visit and interact with successful leaders presents an incredible opportunity to learn about leadership first hand from those who have excelled in leading others. Overall the conference was one of the best I have attended. It was truly an enlightening experience, one I will never forget.

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who thought that society had progressed to a state of civility; however, the gruesome details surrounding Biko's death showed his true courage and influenced many to believe in his sincere intentions for change and not for anarchy.

He did not fight apartheid for fame or fortune. The cause was his only priority. After Biko's death in September 1977 at the age of thirty, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, "compared Biko's death to the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, and predicted that it would prove to be a 'major loss for the future of South Africa.'" The legacy he left eventually evolved into the freedom enjoyed by all South Africans today.

The modern warrior should use the life of Steve Biko as an example. He seemed destined to lead his people to freedom and knew the best path to take. He dedicated his life to spreading ideas and leading by nonviolent means in the face of unbelievable odds. The world today is progressing out of a nuclear age to an age where diplomacy and political disputes are handled through negotiations, compromise, and neutral arbiters, all nonviolent means and not threats of mass destruction. Steve Biko's principles and values as used to attack apartheid are highly applicable in such affairs. The modern warrior has to restrain the use of violence to achieve progress and further his or her cause. Steve Biko truly exemplified a modern warrior.

Endnotes

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*Midn 2/C Steinmetz's paper was selected for presentation at the U.S. Air Force Academy's 2002 NCLS (National Character and Leadership Conference) Student Consortium.

The Character Quarterly Staff

Editor
Midn 1/C Anne Gibbon

Writers
Midn 1/C Caroline Nietman
Midn 1/C Alpa Patel
Midn 2/C Mitchel McGuffie
Midn 2/C Lisa Steinmetz
Cadet 2/C Aaron Sick

Officer Representative
LT Karen Porter

Character Development Divison
US Naval Academy, Stop 3N
101 Buchanon Road
Annapolis, MD 21402-5005

We welcome any articles or ideas you may have to contribute to the Character Quarterly.
Please contact LT Karen Porter at:

Phone: (410) 293-1920
DSN : 281-1920
Email: kporter@usna.edu