

Touchstones Project Theme: Power

Power-over, or domination, is the power we're all familiar with, the power of a small group to control the resources or to limit the choices of others. Ultimately, it stems from violence and force and is generally backed by the police and military power of the state. But the word "power" itself comes from a root that means "ability." We each have a different kind of power: the power that comes from within; our ability to dare, to do, and to dream; our creativity. Power-over seems invincible, but ultimately it rests upon the compliance of those it controls. ...If we refuse to comply, if we call the legitimacy of the system itself into question, ultimately the system cannot stand. ...To do so requires great courage, and the faith that ...creativity must triumph over violence. *Starhawk*



In trying to show what binds together the seeming scatter of things, I find myself pointing to an elusive energy, a shaping power that flashes forth in nature, in gesture, in human speech and action. And when I glimpse it, I can do little more than cry, "There it is!" All the names we use for the fire at the heart of matter are risky — God, Yahweh, Creator, Allah, Manitou, among countless others — for each comes freighted with a long, compromising history. From all the possible names I favor spirit, because the word seems to catch the lightness, radiance, and wind-like subtlety of the power that I seek. This power seeks me, as well, or so it seems, for time and again I feel the pressure of an inescapable force that is sometimes delicate, like a wing brushing my face, and sometimes fierce, like a hand squeezing my heart. *Scott Russell Sanders*

Join us in exploring Power

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