

Frontiersman

Facing the truth, however great the cost.

September 2023

Mere Keep (1984 – 1996)

Sam Aurelius Milam III

When I established Mere Keep, I took the name out of one of my old dictionaries. A mere can be regarded as a pure, unadulterated boundary or limit. A keep can be regarded as a place for holding or retaining something in a safe condition. The word can also mean the act of doing so. Thus, Mere Keep was a place for the protection of boundaries.

The boundaries that I'd intended to protect at Mere Keep were the boundaries between ideas. I had in mind the boundaries between such ideas as freedom and permission, rights and privileges, currency and money, sin and crime, God and religion, law and legislation, diversity and complexity, brainwashing and education, and anarchy and chaos. Such boundaries are intangible. They exist only as the differences between the ideas that they separate. They're expressed as the differences in the meanings of the words that represent the ideas. Such a boundary will disappear when the understanding of the differences between the ideas that it represents is lost, and those ideas are no longer understood as being different from one another. Such a loss of understanding is revealed by obfuscation in the use of the words that ought to express the different ideas. Mere Keep was intended as a place for the discovery, exploration, and protection of such boundaries.

A while back, I was riding with a member of my family. I commented that, in the USA, there are very few things that a man can do without permission. He quickly announced, "I don't need permission to drive this car!" I tried to explain to him that his driver's license represented his permission to drive the car. He didn't seem to understand that there's a difference between being permitted to do something, and being free to do it. Maybe to him, rights and privileges were identical. Permission is the boundary between those two ideas. If there isn't any difference between privileges and rights, then permission is a meaningless word. Such loss of meaning both reflects and encourages inaccurate thinking. When the ideas become identical, then one of them will eventu-

The Definitions

keep, *n.* 4. A stronghold in the middle of a castle, the last resort in a siege

keep, *v.t.* ...[ME. *kepen*, *kipeu*; AS. *cepan*, to keep, observe, await.] 1. To hold; to retain in one's power or possession; not to lose or part with 2. To have in custody for security or preservation 3. To preserve; to retain

mere, *a.* [L. *merus*, unmixed.] 1. Pure; unadulterated; free from admixture. [Obs.]

mere, *n.* [ME. *meer*, *mere*; AS. *gamære*, a boundary, limit.] A boundary.

mere, *v.t.* and *v.i.* To divide; to limit; to set bounds. [Obs.] —*Webster's Universal Dictionary of the English Language*, 1910

ally disappear. Privileges will be mistaken for rights. Currency will be accepted as money. Forced behavior will be proclaimed to be voluntary behavior. For that last item, the fall of Mere Keep is a case in point. After a long confrontation with the fascist thugs in Santa Clara County, California, I was forced to voluntarily sell Mere Keep. That story, and others, is told in *Pharos*, under the heading [Adventures and Misadventures](#).

Even after the fall of Mere Keep, I didn't abandon the principle that it represented. I still advocate the importance of the distinctions between the meanings of words, and the understanding of the differences between the ideas that are represented by those distinctions. The legacy of Mere Keep has influenced much of my writing since then. It was my main reason for starting [Milam's Dictionary of Distinctions, Differences, and other Odds and Ends](#), which is available in *The Sovereign's Library*. Sometimes, I still make additions to it.

Blather and Blunder

Sam Aurelius Milam III

An investigator, reporting on an interrogation said, "He sang like a bird right off the bat!"

The writers of the *Declaration of Independence* famously stated that all men are created equal. Any moron can see that it's a stupid statement. Worse yet, it addresses the wrong subject. They ought not to have been trying to define the people, but to define the government. Instead of stupidly claiming that all men are created equal, they should have required that the government must treat all men equally.

It's amazing that anything is ever understood correctly in this language.

Survival Instinct

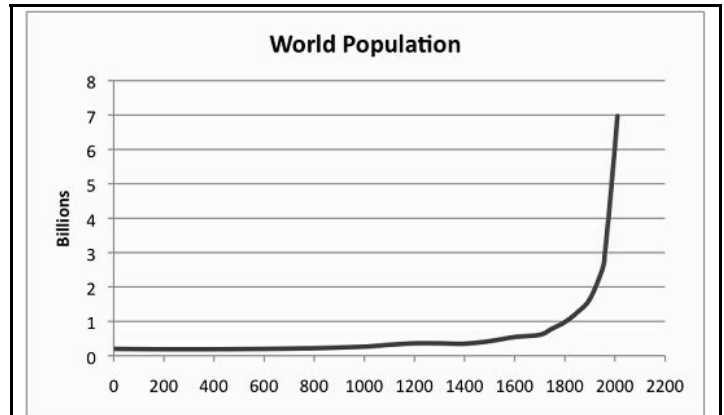
Sam Aurelius Milam III

In a natural environment, survival sets the standard for behavior. Animals take what they want without asking. Carnivores kill without hesitation or remorse. Lacking human intervention, there aren't any charities or food banks. An animal that can't survive on its own will die. Nature is a nice thing to see on a TV screen or through the window of a tour bus, but I wouldn't want to live there.

We're presently living at a time in the history of our species when survival is easy. It isn't necessarily easy for individuals but it is easy for the species. Anybody who doubts that can look at the graph of human population growth for the past few centuries. Survival is so easy that, for now, we can afford all kinds of humanitarian things like feeding the hungry, healing the sick, and caring for the disabled. It all seems very civilized, but such "humanitarian" activities encourage population growth and genetic deterioration.

Early this year, the UN announced that the world population has exceeded 8 billion. In May of this year, a Professor for Environmental Politics at King's College London [reported](#) that the world population is expected to reach 9 billion "in just a couple of years". Presumably, that means by May of 2025. That suggests to me that it's headed for 10 billion by May of 2026, 11 billion by November of 2026, and 12 billion by February of 2027. Obviously, that's impossible but, since the entire socioeconomic system of the planet is a Ponzi scheme, it can't function in a steady state. If it can't keep growing, then it must crash. I don't know how far the population will fall, or how bad things will get but, if there aren't enough people to sustain our technology, then the surviving population could be reduced to lone wanderers and scattered groups of nomads, living as scavengers in what remains of the natural environment.

I've noted elsewhere in my work that prejudice seems to be inherent in our DNA. If it is, then there must be a reason why. The simplistic answer is that it was inherent in the DNA of our ancestors. Idealists today assume that we've risen above the animal nature of those ancestors. Various idealists have declared that prejudice is no longer an acceptable human attitude. Exercising that very same prejudice themselves, they condemn anybody who disagrees with them. In fact, their belief is only an unproved assumption. Whether or not it's a good assumption might depend on why prejudice against variations of one kind or another was in our ancestors' DNA in the first place.



—from *Overpopulation and the Growth Obsession*

<http://bluepyramid.org/storey/archives/3026>

U.S. Census Bureau, Current World Population

<https://www.census.gov/popclock/world>

Also See:

<http://frontiersman.org.uk/Population/Curve.html>

For much of the time that our species has existed, survival has set the standard for human behavior. In our present state of easy survival, we can afford behaviors and attitudes that don't have any survival value but, if my predictions are correct, then those easy conditions might end soon. Survival might again set the standard for human behavior. If that happens, will people revert to their animal nature? Consider how horribly we treat each other now, while survival of the species is easy. I expect that, if the population crashes as I've suggested, and the survivors are just trying to stay alive, then they'll take what they want without asking and kill if necessary, probably without remorse. There won't be any charities or food banks. People who can't survive on their own will die. They won't be watching nature on a TV screen or through the window of a tour bus. They'll be living in it.

I don't know if prejudice will be useful when things get tough, but there must be some reason why it was in the DNA of our ancestors. Maybe, living in a natural setting, they had a better chance of survival if they were prejudiced against strangers. Maybe they passed that behavior on to us. Prejudice seems harmful, now, but since it appears to be a part of our inherent nature, and seems to have been so for a long time, then maybe we should be grateful that we can't legislate it away. Maybe it served our species reasonably well for the 1,995,000 years prior to the beginning of recent history. Maybe it will do so again. I don't know. If the good times return, then maybe our descendants can try again to eliminate it. 🦋

Addiction

Sam Aurelius Milam III

Here's something that I've noticed on the news lately. People who're trying to cross a border into a different country, with only what they can carry, still have their cell phones. People who're leaping out of the way, just ahead of an enemy bombardment, still have their cell phones. People who live in refugee camps, and depend on charity for everything, still have their cell phones. People who live on the street, and can't afford to buy food, still have their cell phones. I even saw a woman in a destroyed town in northwest Syria, after the earthquake, claim that she could live without the power and the water, but not without her cell phone. That doesn't seem like using a device that's convenient. It seems to me like an addiction.

If somebody wants to test himself for cell phone addiction, then he can remove the battery and mail his cell phone to somebody far away, with a note requesting its return. If he has withdrawal symptoms while it's gone, then he's an addict. He needs to get some help. 🐦

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sam,

Hello. I pray this letter finds you well. Your *Frontiersman*, July '23 had some interesting reads. The article "[The Power of Human Fecundity](#)". You asked, "why are so many women having children?", to me, the answer lies in a plight of the impoverished. You generally don't see the rich having 10 plus kids, etc. What is the one thing a poor person can afford to do that's fun? sex, sex, and more sex. It just appears that "safe sex" isn't on the agenda.

Next, in your "letters to the editor", and the letter about Rand's opinions, sent in by Don Cormier, I tend to agree with you [[page 3](#)]. That a person's instincts and intellect aren't in any way connected. We are like animals ourselves and if you look into the driving force at our core. What we have is the desire to live, or the fear of death, whichever way you want to look at it. And the desire to have sex as much as possible. So we can procreate and leave our mark on this world.

Wherever you have time to philosophize, life has become too easy. It used to be outrun predators, catch something to eat, sex, sleep, repeat. A society's downfall begins when life becomes easier, i.e. art, music, philosophy, etc. And, your story, "[The Word](#)" it's a great intro to what could be a great novel. I really liked it.

Anyway, I hope the Georgia summers aren't being too brutal with humidity.

Be well friend, —S. H., a prisoner

Prejudice Police

Sam Aurelius Milam III

I've been interested in the irrational prejudice thing for a long time, clear back to when men were condemned for having long hair. After years of commotion, I still don't see a society in which irrational prejudice is being resolved. Instead, I see a society in which people are being compelled to behave contrary to their beliefs. Every noble cause that has ever resorted to forced compliance has become an authoritarian power structure, a police state of one kind or another. No matter how prejudiced people might be, a moralistic police state isn't the way to solve the problem, yet today we're establishing a new orthodoxy in which prejudice is a secular equivalent of sin. We're establishing a new inquisition to enforce it and defining a new population of heretics, prejudiced people, to punish for noncompliance.

People who want to make things better would be well advised that they'll probably do more good by example than by edict. If they want to end irrational prejudice, then I suggest that they should start with themselves. 🐦

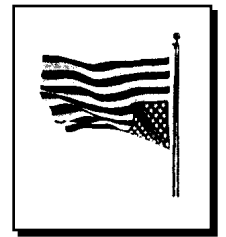
My question about so many women having so many children was intended to be sarcastic. I answered it myself, right after I asked it.

After the scenario that I described in my story, [The Word](#), there will be a few thousand years of accumulating myths and legends. Eventually, the descendants of the survivors will write [The Book of Origins](#), in which they'll present their distorted version of the fall from Paradise and the coming of the Darkness. If you view the past few thousand years of our own myths and legends as a forecast of the myths and legends that those fictional descendants will preserve, then I don't need to write the novel. Just study our own myths and legends. Our past is the novel. —editor

Dear *Frontiersman*:

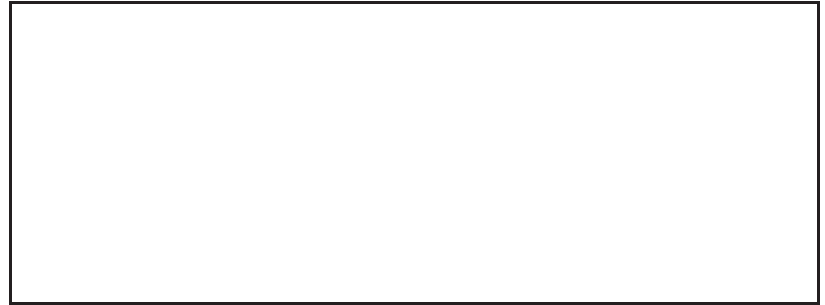
Are you familiar with the "Cop City" disturbances in Atlanta? If you are, I would be very interested in hearing your interpretation of this on-going conflict. —Sir Donald the Elusive

I recall hearing the controversy mentioned, but I'm not familiar with the details. My understanding is that it involves training cops and fire fighters in the same facility. That's a bad idea because it might tend to turn the fire fighters into gestapo thugs, like the cops. As far as I can recall, my earliest writing about cops was in the late 1970s or the early 1980s, and included my [satirical essay](#). It's available in [Pharos](#), in my collection of essays about money, taxes, and corporations. —editor



Nation in Distress

Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed. —Mahatma Gandhi



Acknowledgments

My thanks to the following: El Dorado Bob; Betty; Eric, of Stockton, California; and Sir Donald the Elusive. —editor

Websites

<http://frontiersman.org.uk/>
<http://moonlight-flea-market.com/>
<http://pharos.org.uk/>
<http://sam-aurelius-milam-iii.org.uk/>
<http://sovereign-library.org.uk/>

Old Friend

Original Source Unknown. Forwarded by Don G.

An elephant walked into a bar, walked over to the pianist, and suddenly started to cry.

“There, there”, said the pianist “Do you recognize the song?”

“No,” said the elephant. “I recognize the white keys.” ∞

Computer Error

Original Source Unknown. Forwarded by Marilyn, of Bingham County, Idaho.

I was having trouble with my computer, so I called the 11 year old kid next door, whose bedroom looks like Mission Control, and asked him for help.

He came over, looked at the monitor, clicked a few buttons, and solved the problem.

As he was walking away, I called after him, “So, what was wrong?”

He replied, “It was an ID ten T error.”

I didn't want to appear stupid but, nonetheless, I inquired, “What's that? In case I need to fix it again.”

He replied, “Write it down. I think you'll figure it out.”

So I wrote it down:

I D 1 0 T ∞

Frontiersman

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—Sam Aurelius Milam III, editor