

## Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?

Historian Henry B. Adams once said, "In plain words, Chaos was the law of nature, Order was the dream of man." This quotation is existentialist because it infers that the universe is random and disorderly, and it infers that order is just a dream of man: an improbability. The word order is often associated with the word *community* because a community implies peace, stability, and structure. When asked the question, "Where do we go from here: Chaos or Community?," civilizations usually respond that they *want* to go towards the peace and stability offered by Community, and while this response is necessary for the advancement of our species, true order—a global community without strife—is not possible. We do, however, currently seem to be advancing towards community rather than chaos in our own country.

The solution to the question lies in the principles of existentialism. The basic theory of existentialism is that life is random, senseless, and chaotic. We cannot choose to have only the ordered structure of community because chaos, as a function of the universe, can never be stamped out completely. Chaos is used as a comparison for order. Without chaos, order would not exist. It is natural that we continue to strive towards our concept of peace (i.e. harmonious community), despite being unable to actually achieve that goal. We can never choose to surrender to chaos because then all progress would halt, and society would crumble.

We must always answer the question, "Where do we go from here?," by saying that we're choosing to move towards community—even if we actually end up moving closer to chaos. There are many examples of this throughout history. Think of the

general acceptance of diverse people (diverse in race, sexual orientation, and religion) in the ancient Greek culture and the regression to hatred and chaos that followed in the Medieval Period. The question, "Where do we *choose* to go from here?," can be answered, but the question, "Will we go where we intend?," is unanswerable without hindsight.

Although hindsight is required to truly tell if we have journeyed towards chaos or community, it seems to come in measurable cycles. After an intense period of chaos there is generally a pendulum effect, which swings the direction in which we are heading back to community. The racial turmoil in the 1960's was a period of chaos. The Civil Rights Movement was the action that inspired the swing back towards community, and Martin Luther King, Jr., was the major catalyst behind the change.

To bring a final answer to the question, "Where are we heading: Chaos or Community?," I would say that we are heading towards community, for that seems to be the cycle we are in. We can never completely eliminate chaos, nor will peace and tolerance ever exist worldwide. We can, however, try and make things better, as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., did.