Perspectives

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Editorial: Compassion, Connection, and Response-Ability

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Welcome to the second issue of *Human Science Perspectives (HSP) Vol. 2 No I*, the journal of the Human Science Institute (HSI). This issue comprises of material from the second annual HSI Conference, which convened September 8-10, 2016, at the Officer's Club, University Guest House, University of Utah in Salt Lake City. The conference was co-sponsored with the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) and Seattle University (SU). The conference theme of Compassion, Connection, and Response-Ability garnered presentations that linked scholarship with action and Human Science perspectives. Accepted proposals were grounded in an appreciation of diverse ways of knowing, cognizant of different cultural contexts and focused on responding to real world problems. The themes included ways of engaging to make a more humane and ecologically sustainable future in this fundamental question, what motivates and inspires individuals to engage in initiatives to create positive change? Compassion can engage individuals and groups to respond to challenges, which are increasingly determined by catastrophe, real and imagined and reported at an ever-increasing degree in all facets of culture. Compassion does not necessarily translate into action due to the overwhelming nature of this disturbing dynamic.

The presentations and panels addressed these themes in diverse and engaging discussion, and compassion was a guiding force. The HSI panelists, Robert McAndrews, Wendy Wood, JoAnn McAllister and I presented on connection, altruism, epistemology and aesthetic action, respectively. Joseph Subbiondo, (CIIS) presented the Keynote: "*Integral Education and the Development of a Compassionate Community"* and also convened a CIIS panel presentation, titled, *"Transformative Compassion and Connection"*. This panel focused on *"Teaching As An Act of Compassion",* Kathy Littles, *"How Authentic Self-Expression can Bring Much Needed Transformation to Our World",* Michelle Coleman, and *"Techniques that Foster Caregiving Abilities in Individuals",* Jules Kennedy.

Other subjects presented included perspectives on responding to social issues and challenges with David Benfell, "*Vegetarian Ecofeminism",* Andrea Montgomery di Marco and Stephen Mitchell, *"School Shooting and Gun Control in the United States: Promoting Awareness and Theories for Change"*, and Wendy Wood, *"Do No Harm: Mindful Engagement for a World in Crisis"*. The theme cultivating compassion and connection included Jocelyn Chapman and Karen McClendon's *"What's Love Got to Do with Higher Education? How Teaching into the Heart of Knowing Can Foster Compassionate Action"*, my paper,*"Mindfulness and Aesthetic Action"* and Kevyne Baar's *"The True Power of Apology: Admitting it Happened in the First Place".* Robert McAndrews moderated the panel, *"The Pattern Which Connects: The Environment, Natural Systems and Gregory Bateson"* , which included his presentation *"Gregory Bateson and Connection in the Human Sciences"*, James Smith's, *"Consciousness, Mind, and Nature: the Intelligence of Ecology"* and JoAnn McAllister's, *"A Connection with Nature and Commitment to Environmental Action"*. Crete Brown, Henia Belalia, Joan Gregory and Muriel Roberts discussed social change as regional, environmental and social justice activists.

Kevin Krycka, (SU) Director of the Master of Arts in Psychology (MAP) delivered the Plenary titled: *"The Therapeutic Relationship Ground for Social Change: Healing as the*

Platform for Human Agency". He also moderated a MAP panel which began with his *"Social Change from the Inside Out"* and included *"Paradox of Power and Weakness in Therapy and Social Change"*, Claire LeBeau, the *"Importance of Hermeneutic Process in Therapy and Social Change"*, Shannon Solie, *"Applications: Working with Marginalized Sexualities"*. The conference concluded with Monique Derr's presentation: "*Art and Social Change: A workshop and Performance*".

Current Issue

During the proceedings I was struck by the uncanny resonance with the conference theme: Compassion, Connection and Response-Ability. Each presenter and panelist addressed these themes from diverse perspectives and each aspect intertwined, weaving a harmonious and inspiring interplay between Human Science philosophy and real-world action. One unifying theme was underscored from Human Science philosophy, the attempt to iterate and understand what it means to be human. Giorgi's (1970) reflection on *the meaning of human* is useful: "Our method is to accept the notion that the meaning of human is an ideal that is yet to be achieved and we are concerned with *all* that man does, even if it turns out to be 'inhuman'" (p. 212).

Many of the core values derived from Human Science, such as openness, compassion, reflexivity, acceptance, critical thinking, agency, and acceptance were embedded in the conference presentations and subsequent discussions. Re-animating epistemology from a Human Science perspective was also evidenced. A cogent aspect of this practice resonated throughout several presentations, with compassion integrated with conversations across a broad spectrum of ways of knowing. The impasse between compassion and action was also addressed as the flow of the conference embraced this common thread. It was Appiah (2008) who insightfully noted this discrepancy, which he believed could be mitigated by arming compassion with courage, to insure empathic and decisive action could be brought to bear on injustice and cruelty. Compassion and courage grounded in scholarship, which is appreciative of otherness, is also a necessary requirement to provide authentic understanding, care and change oriented strategies. Giorgi (1970) noted certain necessary requirements for the humanistic psychologist, "he must be open to himself, others and the world in such a way that he allows what is present to him to be the way it presents itself" (p. 224).

Several papers from the conference comprise this issue of HSP. Jocelyn Chapman and Karen McClendon's paper, *What's Love Got to Do With Higher Education? How Teaching into the Heart of Knowing Can Foster Compassionate Action* examines methods in higher education designed to open and change minds. These authors employed a transdisciplinary inquiry grounded in Human Science, in order to facilitate individual and collective connection, while ensuring inquiry honors multiple perspectives and each individual's unique creation of self and meaning-making. Love and compassion occupy a special place in this endeavor because subjectivity grounded in emotional self-awareness can ground educational practices in true subjectivity, which can challenge fixed conventional viewpoints rendering them open to critical reflective practices. Chapman and McClendon stress the open, reciprocal, and relational nature of changing student's minds, which hinge on the teacher's truthful embodiment of shared values. Compassion for self and others includes an ethical commitment and responsibility, which Chapman and McClendon stress can promote "response in the face of difficult, complicated situations through the generation of multiple choices, which may never have been considered through conventional thinking and habits of mind".

In *Aesthetic Experience and Mindfulness*, I explore the shared dimensions of these

experiences to illustrate attending to the present moment can heighten consciousness, loosen the fixed structure of self and open experience and beliefs to new possibilities. Both art and mindfulness inherently challenge knowledge claims, fixed beliefs and can potentially provide freedom from repressive narratives created by self and others and culture. Human Science informs the application of an alternative mode of being free from human will preoccupied with desires and cravings, which often lead to living life ill unexamined and negatively determined by the weight of temporally informed and automatic responses. Aesthetic experiencing and mindfulness provides freedom from reactive negative responses and living based on past and potential future experiences. The applications of these concepts are given in an art therapy research vignette, which demonstrate compassionate positive change can be achieved.

James Smith asks, "What is consciousness?" in his paper: *Consciousness, Mind, and Nature: The Intelligence of Ecology.* The diverse theories of Bateson are the focal point of the paper and provide some answers to this initial question. In keeping with the two previous papers, the emphasis on actively constructing meaning with the world, rather than in response to the world-out-there, is stressed. Bateson's ecological insight shed light on the falsification of dualistic modes of thinking and being. Binary organization asserts division, difference and separation, such as the Cartesian mind and body split. Chapman and McClendon's challenge to integrate love and compassion to animate subjectivity to change fixed minds and the example of aesthetic experience and mindfulness applied to shed false beliefs and fixed self-structures, resonate with Smith's use of Bateson's ecology of mind. Reductionism applied to organisms is pointless, Bateson claimed, since each is bound by the ecology of itself and its environment.

The three papers in this issue each contain another common thread, consideration of the role of art or aesthetic experience within traditional or language driven knowledge; in higher education, art practice, psychotherapy and art therapy and understanding holistic consciousness. Chapman and McClendon look to help students connect and develop their inner reality or their non-rational subjectivity through tapping into "aesthetic seduction". This promotes more authentic experiencing and ownership and responsibility of choices, leading to a more conscious and nuanced ways-of-being. I describe the benefits of aesthetic experience integrated with mindfulness to achieve present-centered experiencing. This promotes understanding and self-reflection as reactive responses decrease and a person can accept unfolding experience without judgment. Smith recounts Bateson's assertion that without art and dreams, consciousness is depleted and cannot appreciate the systemic nature of mind.

Kevyne Baar's viewpoint paper, *The True Power of Apology: Admitting it Happened in the First Place*, details past and recent contexts for government apologies. While Baar does not specifically describe compassion in apology, she provides numerous examples of the pitfalls of apology, which are embedded in the phenomenon that the very act of an apology can permit an aggression to occur again. Rather than a simple apology, Baar stresses the importance, born out in particular from Ellie Wiesel's lifework, of making sure that atrocities are never forgotten: "I have to fight those who would forget. Because if we forget, we are guilty, we are accomplices" (Wiesel, as cited in Baar). This perhaps, is the ultimate test of acceptance and responsibility; let history, regardless of how unpalatable or noble, stand in its own right for future generations and especially within education, without censorship or revision. The ultimate focus of Baar's paper is the role of compassion in the action of kindness; do not forget but be kind and do not repeat.

On Reflection

There are several pressing issues that surface while reflecting upon the conference proceedings and the offerings in the current HSP volume. The theme itself presupposes individual and collective agency, free will, consciousness and moral action, in the face of apathetic impasse, insurmountable inhumanity and a crisis in faith regarding each of these human dimensions. I recently returned to read Jean-Luc Nancy's, The Inoperable Community (1991), which somewhat clouded these complex relations, but also provided valuable insight into the relationship between the individual and community.

If subjectivity and by implication the phenomenological promise of intersubjectivity (Husserlian community of egos) and humanism can be accepted, there can be no doubt they are contested. The enduring frustration of the often-called third force of psychology has revolved around the dissolution of the subject, made less than human by behavioral reductionism and rendered captive by past events in psychoanalysis. Continental philosophy and postmodern thought further contributed to the erasure of the transcendent metaphysical realm. The humanistic charge was heard in the call to recover what it means to be human and by extension each individual. This pressing need may be partially illuminated by briefly looking at Nancy's (1991) striking discussion, via Bataille, of the dynamic between the individual subject and the (in)operative community:

> Distinct from society (which is a simple association and division of forces and needs) and opposed to emprise (which dissolves community by submitting its people to its arms and to its glory), community is not only intimate communication between its members, but also its organic communion with its own essence. It is constituted not only by a fair distribution of tasks and goods, or by a happy equilibrium of forces and authorities: it is made up principally of the sharing, diffusion, or impregnation of an identity by a plurality wherein each member identifies himself only through the supplementary mediation of his identification with the living body of the community. (p. 9)

The essence of this discussion hinges upon several key tenets. 1. Any horizon of possibility for a community exists in the past. For Nancy (1991) this hinges upon the failure of the true community promise of communism, "we must allow *communism* can no longer be the unsurpassable horizon of our time" (p. 8). There has not been passage beyond this horizon, "Rather, everything is inflected by resignation, the impossibility, or the condemnation of communism" (p. 8). As this promise dissipated so the horizon disappeared, fading into the past. 2. The death of the individual reveals community: "Community is what takes place always for others and for others" (Nancy, 1991, p. 15). 3. "a thinking of the subject thwarts a thinking of community" (p. 23). This admittedly oversimplifies this work but this still conveys the essential dilemma for subjectivity and for the individual, who is caught in the web of community. What this means is that the individuals or I's in a community are not egos, which Nancy describes as immortal subjects and substances, or collective individuals. Nancy explained, "It is not communion that fuses the *egos* into an *Ego* or a higher *We*. It is the community of *others*. The genuine community of mortal beings, or death as community, establishes their impossible communion" (p. 15, italics in original).

For the crystallization of disillusionment of community, especially one held in the true Marxist promise of equality and humanity, Nancy (1991) recalled Bataille who,

> [F]irst of all went through the ordeal of seeing communism 'betrayed.' He discovered

> later that this betrayal was not to be corrected or made up for, but that communism, having taken man as its end, meaning the production of man and man as producer, was linked in its principle to a negation of the sovereignty of man, that is to say a negation of what man in man is irreducible to human immanence, or to a negation of the sovereign excess of finitude. (p. 16)

Perhaps one of the harshest realities that accompany this, alongside the readily understood failed or betrayed evolution of communism, and the appearance of dictatorships and totalitarian regimes, is the modern fate of democracies. Connor (1991) noted the generalized acceptance of democracy, albeit caught in the power relations of force and socioeconomic class "make us forget that 'democracy,' more and more frequently, serves only to assure a play of economic and technical forces that no politics today subjects to any other end other than that of its own expansion" (p. xxxvii). Can an individual exist amongst such forces and what kind of individual subjectivity can reasonably be felt to exercise agency?

Jung (1957/2006) was also gravely concerned with the plight of the individual in modern society,

> Happiness and contentment, equability of soul and meaningfulness in life – these can be experienced only by the individual and not the State, which, on the one hand, is nothing but a convention of independent individuals and, on the other, continually threatens to paralyze and suppress the individual. (p. 111)

As democracy or community expands solely for itself, the individual is diminished through paralysis and suppression. Connor (1991) noted the interplay of economic and technical forces is a cruel game, "which will destroy 'democracy' if 'democracy' persists in tolerating it" (p. xxxvii). Suppression of the individual exacerbates what Jung (1957/2006) described as limited self-knowledge, based upon a simple understanding of ego consciousness, which understands only its own limited contents. For Jung, obviously, true self-knowledge necessitates a deeper understanding and connection with the unconscious and its contents: "What is commonly called 'self-knowledge' is therefore a very limited knowledge, most of it dependent on social factors" (p. 6). In this way the social dimension negates the individual, rather than enriching, thereby rendering agency a function of community.

Knowledge was conceived by Foucault (1980) to be intertwined in the twin pole of knowledge/power, embedded in discourse with pervasive effect. Power is no longer sovereign and something wielded as commonly believed, but rather power exerts its positive and negative effects everywhere. The social dimension has increased from the need to control through enclosures and panoptocism, and now affects self-knowledge and directs what constitutes the individual, to such a degree, as Foucault observed, that external control from power relations are unnecessary, since individuals freely discipline themselves. Deleuze (1997) agreed and also noted how postmodern society has evolved into *societies of control,* primarily carried out with socio-technological mechanisms of control. These have extended the means of control of the prison, school, hospital and corporate systems; this "is what is meant by the crisis of institutions, which is to say, the progressive and dispersed installation of a new system of domination" (p. 312).

When an individual's self-knowledge is determined and conditioned by the power/knowledge relations, limited self-knowledge can then become an instrument of discourse

determined by expectation, constraint and conformity for the community discourse.

In Conclusion: A Word on Strategies

On a more hopeful note Foucault saw discourse not simple dominated by power or only workable in opposition to power, rather discourse is unstable and capable of disturbing power by exposing its mechanisms (Foucault, 1998). Sheridan (1980) relayed Foucault's concept of the complex and intricate network of power which,

> For that reason, "power" cannot be overthrown and acquired once and for all by the destructions of institutions and the seizure of state apparatus. Because "power" is multiple and ubiquitous, the struggle against it must be localized. Equally, however, because it is a network and not a collection of isolated parts, each localized struggle induces effects on the entire network. (p. 139)

Foucault (1980) understood this as the ultimate reason for the failure of revolutionary power, since by necessity it must rebuild the same mechanisms of power under a different guise but is doomed to repeat its failure to deliver its promises. Foucault described this subtlety,

> [T]here are no relations of power without resistances; the latter are all the more real and effective because they are formed right at the point where relations of power are exercised; resistance to power does not to come from elsewhere to be real, nor is it inexorably frustrated through being the compatriot of power. It exists all the more by being in the same place as power; hence, like power, resistance is multiple and can be integrated into global strategies. (p. 142)

The conference themes, Compassion, Connection, and Response-Ability take on greater significance in light of these complex issues. The discussions and the various strands of these themes embedded in the papers represent local disruptions and resistance. From reintroducing love into subjectivity within models of education, Krishnamurti's plea to each person to truly understand, Bateson's attempt to maintain links to a non-reductive complexity of all ecological systems, which include the "mind" and subjectivity, and finally to Wiesel's stance of the imperative to never forget are each such strategies. Foucault (1980) cautioned against one-sided characterizations of power, such as a repressive or purely oppressive force, rather, power also produces. The local resistances to power/knowledge therefore interact with this network to produce and effect alteration and change. The work of community (Nancy, 1991) and power/knowledge can quickly be identified in the subject of the papers in this issue; education; psychiatry; psychology and politics, which has propelled these authors to think through alternatives to the blinding limit of the individual and subjectivity.

Clearly this is no easy feat, made more profound by an urgency to think and act through the entangled web of discourse, culture, knowledge/power, and recover the breadth of what it means to be human. Qualitative research has increasingly embraced Foucauldian discourse analysis as a counter practice designed to regain the individual, and the wider community from hegemonic control and unequal discourse replete with destructive effects of power/knowledge. This is an important task, as noted by Minnich's (2005) articulation of what is at stake,

> So again, knowledge that begins as partial but takes over as the very standard of impartiality can be kept closed to correction because knowledge matters: worlds are built to conform to it, and those worlds then produce "evidence" of the accuracy of their own original premises. (p. 239)

Partial knowledge can be seen across disciplines to evolve into dogmatic standards demanding implementation and adherence to their subsequent effects. Edward Said (1994) described much the same fate in Culture and Imperialism, but he also described certain practices of infiltration and opposition to recover the individual and community,

> All these hybrid counter-energies, at work in many fields, individuals, and moments provide a community or a culture made up of numerous anti-systemic hints and practices for collective human existence (and neither doctrines or complete theories) that is not based on coercion or domination. (p. 335)

Understanding community is political (Nancy, 1991) continues second wave feminism's slogan, "The personal is political", which aptly encapsulates discourse which disrupts and resists power. Another site of engagement is art, which can be deeply political, as artists have increasingly contested the power/knowledge dynamic, with its marginalizing effects and misrepresentations. In Art on my Mind: Visual Politics, bel hooks (1995) wrote, "Representation is a crucial location of struggle for any exploited and oppressed people asserting subjectivity and decolonization of the mind" (p. 3). For a method hooks cited Trinh T. Minh-ha:

> To disrupt the existing systems of dominant values and to challenge the very foundations of a social and cultural order is not merely to destroy a few prejudices or to reverse power relations within the terms of the economy of the same… Aware that oppression can be located both in the story told and in the telling of the story, an art critical of social reality neither relies on mere consensus not does it ask permission from ideology. (p. 170)

In closing, Said's (1994), "hints and practices for collective human existence", and hooks' (1995) "decolonization of the mind" (p. 3) beautifully underscore the tasks at hand, presenting an ideal point of departure in the call for action grounded in compassion, with recognition of difference, and self and other. These subtle tasks are not totalizing, demonstrating subversive resistance to be multiple, localized and transdisciplinary.

Geoffrey Thompson

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What's Love Got to Do with Higher Education? How Teaching into the Heart of Knowing Can Foster Compassionate Action

Jocelyn Chapman and Karen McClendon

Abstract

Today's seemingly intractable social and environmental challenges are beyond the scope of a single policy solution--their complexity requires holistic thinking to see the big picture and identify leverage points for positive change. One such leverage point exists in higher education: educators have the opportunity to change students' minds through developing capacities for thinking that is creative, dialogic, nonlinear, connecting, and adaptive. To prepare students for rapid change impacting all areas of ecological, political, and social life in the 21st century, teachers must change minds in ways that open hearts and in so doing, create possibilities for positive change. Such an education is possible and rewarding--and urgently needed--and we will present a case for how educators can create such a transformational learning experience for their students.

Keywords: constructivism, epistemology, transformative learning, love

Editors Note: Jocelyn Chapman, Ph.D., is an educator and researcher who has taught courses on the principles of systems thinking and second-order cybernetics in the context of developing creative practices that bring forth systemic change. Her expertise stems from years of research in cybernetics and from embodying the conversation-based interactive teaching practices she puts forth in her dissertation, *Teaching into the Heart of Knowing in Online Education: Aesthetics and Pragmatics*. She currently teaches at Santa Rosa Junior College, where she presents developmental math as personal development, inspired by Gregory Bateson's ideas on learning. She begins teaching in the Transformative Leadership MA program at CIIS in fall, 2017. Dr. Chapman is on the board of directors for the Human Science Institute and can be contacted at: jchapman@humanscienceinstitute.org.

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Introduction

Today's seemingly intractable social and environmental challenges are beyond the scope of a single policy solution--their complexity requires holistic thinking to see the big picture and identify leverage points for positive change. One such leverage point exists in higher education:

educators have the opportunity to change students' minds through developing capacities for thinking that is creative, dialogic, nonlinear, connecting, and adaptive. To prepare students for rapid change impacting all areas of ecological, political, and social life in the 21st century, teachers must change minds in ways that open hearts and, in so doing, create possibilities for positive change. Such an education is possible and rewarding--and urgently needed--and we will present a case for how educators can create such a transformational learning experience for their students.

Changing minds has profound consequences because what become habits of mind become habits of action. Every way of knowing contains an ethical trajectory, which, for constructivism, includes knowing that since we construct meanings, we are responsible for them--and must respect this responsibility and choice in others. In so doing, we experience others as "legitimate others"—biologist Humberto Maturana's (1997) definition of love. Physicist Arthur Zajonc (2006) adds that knowing is partial–deformed–if it does not include an epistemology of love. However, students are generally trained in an objectivist, reductionist way of knowing that entails "an ethic of competitive individualism, in the midst of a world fragmented and made exploitable by that very mode of knowing" (Palmer, 1987, p. n.p.). This way of knowing is divisive, exclusionary, and reductionist rather than connecting, expansive, and inclusive. What is needed, instead, is a paradigmatic change from objectivity to a self-referential, participatory epistemology fundamentally concerned with responsibility, respect, and relation. Students who have experienced this transformation report greater empathy and enhanced capacity for attending to issues effecting social change, whether in families or organizations.

What's Love Got to do with Higher Education?

Parker Palmer (2007) stated in a commencement speech at CIIS, "No one is truly educated until heart and mind have been joined with action and we have learned to think and act the world together rather than think and act the world apart." He called for

> an intellectual and cultural transformation that takes the reality and power of the inner world just as seriously as our culture takes the reality and power of the outer world. It's a revolution that links inner and outer, that rejoins soul and role, that understands that the world we live in is constantly being co-created by the interplay of what is within us and what is around us. (Palmer, 2007)

How do we, as educators, rejoin students' "soul and role"? Can we? Should we? Why aren't teacher candidates asked in a job interview to describe how they will foster a cultural revolution or get students to take their inner world seriously? Should "rejoining soul and role" be added to teachers' job description? The essential question is, "What's love got to do with higher education?"

Many believe that the fate of the world depends on a "reform of thinking," called for by French philosopher Edgar Morin (2008). Specifically, the reform in thinking needed is from our culturally conditioned habits of reductionism, duality, and linear thinking to more relational, systemic thinking. Since educators are largely responsible for shaping the minds, values, and perceptions of students, one way educators can work toward meaningful change in socio-ecological systems is to foster transformative change in students' thinking. Maybe a teacher's job description *should* include transforming students' thinking in ways that help them change the

world, encouraging students to rejoin soul and role, and fostering a cultural revolution. As educators, we have a responsibility to help students develop an understanding of how knowledge is constructed so that they might take responsibility for how they make sense of the world and how their interpretations influence how they act.

Taking the Reality of the Inner World Seriously

Marc Chagall (as cited in Capacchione, 2001) made this hopeful comment on the love of the inner life in connection to fruitful work in any discipline:

> Despite the trouble of our world, I have kept the love of the inner life in which I was raised and man's hope in love. In our life there is a single color, as on an artist's palette, which provides the meaning of life and art. It is the color of love. I see in this color of love all the qualities permitting accomplishment in all fields. (p. 83)

Chagall, however, was socialized "in the most forward-thinking of circles" (Mataev, 2015, n.p.) and was recognized as having a progressive ideology (Harshav, 2004). The significance of the development of one's interior life for the capacity to express love in ways that benefit all of humankind is highlighted by Ken Wilber (2001):

> Let us immediately note; we cannot simply recommend love and compassion per se, for those unfold from egocentric to ethnocentric to worldcentric, and do we really want an increase in ethnocentric love? Isn't that exactly the cause of much of these problems? …Surely, by 'love and compassion,' the Dalai Lama and other leaders are actually calling for postcoventional, worldcentric, universal love and compassion. But that is a stage of development reached by less than 30 percent of the world's population… Clearly, the interior quadrants have some catching up to do. (p. 105)

Therefore, developing self-and soul-aware individuals and flourishing, competent world citizens involves developing the whole person, including helping students understand the origins and consequences of their beliefs, values, and meaning-making practices. Educators must strive to develop students' skills involving outer realities, such as reasoning with disciplinary and cross-disciplinary contents, communication skills, and perspective-taking--as well as developing skills more closely associated with inner realities, such as developing a sense of identity, emotional competence, and resiliency (Hersh et al., 2009). In essence, it is through helping students understand their role and responsibility in the perspectives that they choose to take and the meanings that they choose to assign that students can learn to see and act in ways that evoke positive change.

Taking inner realities seriously means taking individuals and their values seriously. It means recognizing that learning and making sense involves the personal (Dirkx, Mezirow, & Cranton, 2006)—the subjective. It means giving attention to personal questions about the meaning of life, of chosen work, of relationships, of what matters and why these things matter. Focusing on inner realities is educative because it calls into question and brings into focus personal authenticity and integrity.

Rejoining Soul and Role

According to John Dirkx (1998), learning *is* soul work. Soul work is the transformative learning that comes from a focus on our subjectivity, on the nature of the self, and on the various ways we understand our senses of self and identify. Soul work involves integrating the deeply personal intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual dimensions of our being in the world. In our view, our being in the world is at the center of soul work, where beliefs and actions recursively inform one another. Ray Ison (2010) contends, "An action in the world changes perception of the world which in turn changes the action, again. Action and perception develop as a circularity. This leads to the understanding that observers bring forth their worlds" (p. 32). Therefore, our ways of being and acting emanate from who we are and what we value. Our ways of being and acting perpetuate one another, so acting in ways that bring forth the world we wish to live in starts with focusing on what matters.

From this perspective, the educator's role shifts from impersonally teaching "subjects" and pieces of "knowledge" to personally creating a sacred space where souls can be engaged. Students' role shifts from receiving knowledge to learning how knowledge is constructed, uncovering personal beliefs and biases, and taking responsibility for their meaning-making and how this meaning-making impacts one's ways of thinking and acting. "Knowledge construction, in the sense of discovering ever more adequate truths, is entwined with moral constructs such as respect, integrity, and justice" (Chapman, 2013, p. 1175). It is through a sense of moral or ethical responsibility that students may be inspired to lead or participate in social or institutional change and take their role as world citizens seriously.

Taking Responsibility for our Interpretations

Von Foerster (2002) asserts that people are not simply observers of a world onto which they look but also participants in that world. Therefore, people are a part of that which they observe and are never able to avoid subjectivity. Yet, it is customary to view knowledge as having its own existence and, from this conventional perspective, the purpose of education is to acquire knowledge, especially by reducing it to distinct parts. This process entails notions of being able to utilize unbiased objectivity and detachment, which continue to underlie much currently accepted practice in universities. What is needed, instead, is a paradigmatic change from objectivity to a self-referential, participatory epistemology fundamentally concerned with responsibility.

Teaching principles of Human Science is one approach to triggering such paradigmatic change. Broadly speaking, Human Science involves the subjective practices of description, interpretation, and reconstruction of meaning structures for the purpose of improving the human condition (Smith, 2016). This is one reason why Human Science is a useful approach to focusing students' attention on their internal experiences and how they make meaning of them. Better known in Europe than the U.S., it is often associated with phenomenological inquiry and philosophy, particularly that of Husserl and Merleau-Ponty (Dahlberg & Dahlberg, 2004). Human Science also has a distinct social justice orientation. JoAnn McAllister (2016) notes that the transformative learning induced by adopting principles of Human Science also describes characteristics of effective change leaders, including

> 1) an appreciation of multiple ways of knowing and diverse belief systems, 2) the use of modes of inquiry focused on understanding the meaning people attribute to their

> experience, and 3) a commitment to theories of change that are emancipatory and dependent on the context of people and their communities. (n.p.)

The Human Science philosophy can be utilized to help students cultivate multiple ways of knowing and become cognizant of their own (and others') meaning-making and inspire educators to create a learning environment in which students create possibilities for change and develop the skills to become change leaders.

Systems thinking and complexity theory can also be utilized as ways of knowing that embrace subjectivity and are connecting and relational. Ison (2010) considers systems thinking "the understanding of a phenomenon within the context of a larger whole. To understand things systemically literally means to put them into a context, to establish the nature of their relationships" (p. 22). Ison (2010) contends that through the cultivation of a systemic perspective that contextualizes situations, major societal, global, and environmental problems can be better addressed.

Robert Fritz (1989) asserts that a shift to systems thinking is a change in orientation from that which is responsive-reactive to that which is creative. Making this shift means thinking about what is needed—what one wishes to create that, in turn, will change situations-- rather than focusing on what needs to be fixed. According to Otto Scharmer (1987),

> The way we pay attention to a situation, individually and collectively, determines the path the system takes and how it emerges. On all four levels—personal, group, institutional, and global—shifting from reactive responses and quick fixes on a symptoms level… to generative responses that address the systemic root issues… is the single most important leadership challenge of our time. (p. 55)

Helping students learn to generate possibilities for change through shifts in their thinking is an important goal for educators. We believe it is our responsibility, professionally and ethically, to teach students to think systemically, to free students from habits of fragmenting knowledge and fragmenting mindsets. To cease perpetuating entrenched habits of interpretation and begin making fresh distinctions requires awareness of our socially conditioned thinking as well as exposure to different ways of knowing and freedom to experiment with them. Complex, systemic thinking, by its very nature, involves contextualizing knowledge and transcending the boundaries of disciplinary paradigms and the limitations of objectivist, reductionistic thought.

For most students and many teachers as well, this requires thinking differently than our conditioned ways of knowing which tend to be reductionistic, linear, and dualistic. Complex thinking includes epistemological reflection and the ability to creatively manage ambiguity and uncertainty and to sustain multiple perspectives. Not easy to teach or do!

The Art of Changing Minds

To cultivate new ways of knowing, one must change the way one thinks about and views the world "out there." To do so, one must come to accept von Foerster's (2002) assertion that people are not simply observers of a world onto which they look but also participants in that world—that everything one 'knows' is subjective; there is no reality that can be 'accessed' in a place beyond one's own senses and experience. What gets in the way of utilizing one's ability to determine meaning is the belief that this is not a choice. Therefore, it is important for educators to give attention to the grace and art of changing minds.

Andy Bilson and David Thorpe (2007) argue that: "epistemological change requires an approach that goes beyond rational argument… and instead requires aesthetic seduction" (p. 936). In this context, "seduction" refers to a natural attraction to what is beautiful and trustworthy. Jürgen Kremer (1987) provides this expansive definition of aesthetics:

> Aesthetics is the study of processes in the creator or onlooker whereby beauty is created and acknowledged - be that in the arts, be that in any of the other creations of information by humans, or be that in non-human nature. All these can be looked at from the viewpoint of systemic integration, from the viewpoint of the beauty of problem solutions they show. (p. 6)

Aesthetic seduction, then, describes how students may be enticed to participate in learning experiences that can lead to new understandings. One purpose of aesthetic seduction is to activate students' passion and creativity so that conversations that change minds and lives can occur.

It is important to recognize that emotions are complexly intertwined with cognition, guiding all sorts of processes from rational behavior to creativity. Since aesthetic experiences are imbued with emotional vibrancy and often disrupt habits of thought, fostering aesthetic experiences can serve an important educative function (Barone, 1983; Parrish, 2009). Aesthetic experiences serve another educative function: students are quick to recognize that their interpretation of these experiences is very personal and "recognizing we are responsible for our interpretations in the more obvious cases of aesthetic experiences, where subjectivity is sometimes brightly illuminated, can prompt a leap to the generalization that we are always responsible for our meaning-making" (Chapman, 2013, p. 1175).

There are many techniques for triggering aesthetic experiences including poetry, story-telling, viewing or creating art, and spending time in nature. Perhaps surprisingly, image posting in online classroom forums can trigger deep emotional responses that are not easy to put into words. Having students reflect upon these aesthetic experiences provides a way for them to connect their subjective inner responses with the unavoidable subjectivity of their experiences of the outer world as well. Aesthetic experiences thus provide a mechanism whereby students can delve deeper into their hearts and psyche and begin to see that they choose how to interpret their inner and outer realities; they may choose new ways of seeing and impacting these worlds.

A Transdisciplinary Approach to Changing Minds

Gregory Bateson (1972), a systems theorist and transdisciplinarian who influenced fields ranging from anthropology to family therapy to evolutionary biology, viewed aesthetic experience as a necessary corrective to the tendency towards objectivity, stating "mere purposive rationality unaided by such phenomena as art, religion, dream, and the like, is necessarily pathogenic and destructive of life" (p. 144). Reason and poetry are like the pragmatics and aesthetics of knowing, each offering different entry points in the recursive dance between rigor and imagination. Creating conditions that foster aesthetic experiences is a necessary but insufficient approach to changing minds. Students must also be guided in learning how knowledge is constructed, to uncover their unexamined biases and beliefs, and to experiment with other ways of knowing. A transdisciplinary education accomplishes this by putting students at the center of their learning.

Transdisciplinary education involves integrating the student–the inquirer–within the inquiry. In other words, embracing subjectivity. As an epistemology, transdisciplinarity rejects the possibility of objectivity. It is based on the premise that although reality is independent of human thought, meaning–or knowledge–is always a human construction and not solely rational. In transdisciplinary practices, all inquiry is self-inquiry (Bateson, 1972).

Rather than simply disseminating knowledge, to teach constructively requires presenting complex and controversial stimuli for students to actively engage with, helping to identify biases and conflicting or vague ideas, confirming learning identified by students, and providing opportunities for reflection and revisiting topics in greater depth. This approach to teaching develops metacognition or awareness of one's thought process, aiding students in learning how knowledge is constructed and in learning to think differently. Transdisciplinary education also makes possible a reconciliation of arts, sciences, religion, and all forms of human endeavor so we can face crisis of sustainability in an integrated and embodied way, unbounded by disciplinary prejudices and conflicts of the past.

Education that encourages transdisciplinary inquiry can connect students with their source of creativity, their sense of purpose, and appreciation for ways of knowing that generate new possibilities (Montuori, 2005, 2010). Educators can guide students to contemplate how every inquiry can also become a self-inquiry. Students can learn to reflect on what beliefs are indicated by how they form their questions and what values they embody in their inquiry. Students should learn that effective inquiry involves making the inquirer's beliefs and assumptions transparent, not attempting to "bracket" them in pursuit of an impossible objectivity. Then inquiry becomes more circular and self-reflective, as the inquirer also becomes the subject of (self-)inquiry (Montuori, 2008). Edward Freeman and Ellen Auster (2011) stress the relational aspect of self; "We create self in part by creating connection, and as we create connection, we create self" (p. 22). Transdisciplinary education is therefore both intrinsically and explicitly relational in nature: students learn about self through their relationship to their inquiry and perceive how the topic of their inquiry is understood in relationship to a myriad of systems.

Teachers Must Change Minds in Ways That Open Hearts

If we want to attract students to relational ways of knowing and increase their circle of care, then we better be prepared to get naked. When teachers are authentic – "naked and unprotected"– students find that "such behavior is always seductive in a respectful way because all questions and fears suddenly become legitimate and completely new possibilities of encountering one another emerge" (Maturana & Poerksen, 2004, p. 71). The teacher must embody what is being taught, with no discrepancy between words and actions, because it is through the integrity of the teacher and the teacher's practices that students develop trust and become willing to take risks, to reveal his or her thoughts, and to experiment with new ideas. It is in such an environment of openness that creative inquiry is likely to occur - inquiry into how we interpret and create knowledge, which simultaneously involves self- inquiry (Montuori, 2008).

Heinz von Foerster (2002) calls it an ethical imperative that we "Act always so as to increase the number of choices" (p. 227). In education, to increase the number of choices can mean freeing minds from the limitations of reductionist thinking, to think in unconventional ways, with a systemic mind for wider implications. Cultivation of a systemic mind often brings forth a higher quality of response in the face of difficult, complicated situations through the

generation of multiple choices, which may never have been considered through conventional thinking and habits of mind. The application of systemic thinking can translate into actions that create positive situations for a greater number of patients utilizing a particular medical group or stakeholders in a company, solutions that may benefit a greater number of people in a society or within a community, plans that may bring people together towards a common cause to the betterment of our planet, our world.

Habits of mind and action that involve recursively observing the effect of our actions and using this feedback to adjust our subsequent actions invite contemplation of goals. As educators, we can invite our students to engage in this type of contemplation as an important part of helping them change their minds, actions, and hearts. We can ask our students to ask themselves, "What goals are you adjusting your behaviors for? What responsibilities do your actions serve?"

When students are asked these questions, they will say things like: living in a just world; protecting the environment for future generations; restoring the planet to a healthier state; ending hunger, war, loneliness… These are all variations of love. McClendon (2016) asserts, "Love is the foundation onto which new perspectives can be painted, new notions of oneself and one's relationships with the world beyond can be realized, minds and hearts can be touched, stirred…transformed" (p. 137). At the heart of knowing is love. Talk about love. Your students want to.

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Aesthetic Experience and Mindfulness

Geoffrey Thompson

Abstract

This paper explores art, aesthetic experience, mindfulness and humanistic art therapy. The common threads between aesthetic experience and mindfulness are discussed in relation to their efficacy in psychotherapy, art and art therapy. Certain shared dimensions are examined, including, increased awareness and attention to the present moment, decreasing reactive thoughts and feelings, letting go, abandoning judgment and quieting the mind. I present a brief description of the role mindfulness has played in psychotherapy with examples from contemporary art. Agnes Martin's (1992) mindful aesthetic approach to painting is explored with Krishnamurti's (1971/2005) insights on mindfulness. I conclude with a qualitative research vignette to illustrate the potential benefits yielded from this reflective approach to a positive way of being-in-the-world.

Keywords: aesthetics, mindfulness, art, art therapy, qualitative research, mental illness.

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Introduction

"Ideally a painter (and generally, an artist) should not become conscious of his insights: without taking a detour through his reflective processes, and incomprehensibly to himself, all his progress should enter so swiftly into the work that he is unable to recognize them in the moment of transition." Rainer Maria Rilke (1907/1985, p. 75)

This paper explores the relationship between aesthetic experience and heightened state of consciousness or mindfulness. Aesthetic experience and mindfulness are each explored, followed by a discussion of their common threads and their implications in psychotherapy, art therapy and art practice. Certain shared dimensions are examined, including attention to the present moment, decreasing reactive thoughts and feelings, letting go, abandoning judgment and quieting the mind.

The integration of an aesthetic and a mindful way of being-in-the-world is discussed in relation to several domains, including a cultural dimension, to increase an understanding of the positive effects derived from reflective self-experience within psychotherapeutic practice and studio art therapy. Examples from contemporary art are provided and a research vignette with a

person diagnosed with a severe mental illness will demonstrate the effectiveness of these approaches.

Background

Art and aesthetic experience encompass a broad spectrum of theories, ranging from the ordinary to the transcendent, where essential truths of human experience can be understood, felt and communicated within a shared experience. Dating back to 1766, Lessing (1965) in his influential treatise on painting and poetry commented that both allow the viewer/reader to perceive, and "represent absent things as present, [and] give us the appearance of reality" (p. vii). Early aesthetic theory considered mimesis an essential attribute, which provided the "like nature" or the "appearance of reality" quality knowable in art. According to Lessing (1965), both "produce illusion, and the illusion in both is pleasing" (vii). The experience of pleasure and emotion in art has long been linked to the concept of beauty (Burke, 1757/1990; Kant, 1951; Guyer, 2016).

Schopenhauer, (1851/1974) believed aesthetic beauty could reveal the truth and the nature of what it means to be human and happiness can result from this experience, which he believed was separate from will, "or as we like to put it, our aims" (p. 155). This highlighted a philosophical position that desire fuels the pursuit of pleasure as a direct aim, yet art or aesthetic beauty is divorced from bodily pleasure and therefore separate from our will. Art enters a Platonic Idea as "a pure intelligence without aims or intentions" (p. 155). Schopenhauer stated:

> when an aesthetic perception occurs the will completely vanishes from consciousness. But will is the sole source of all our troubles and sufferings. This is the origin of the feeling of pleasure, which accompanies the perception of the beautiful. It therefore rests on the abolition of all possibility of suffering. (p. 155)

The pleasure derived from the experience of art has also been theorized as derived from a psychic distance (Kris, 1952), a disinterested mode of consciousness (Kant, 1951), or a phenomenological shift of one's subjectivity through an art-imbued sense of reality (Dufrenne, 2002; Merleau-Ponty, 1964).

The early modern period freed art from the grand religious and mythological narratives to focus on the humble reality of life and reveal the human condition. Art became increasingly anti-mimetic, signaling a modernist obsession with abstraction, spirituality, philosophy and the pursuit of truth. The beauty of pure plastic form was avidly investigated. One constant has remained; the pleasure (or repulsion) derived from art retains vitality. Art for art's sake has an inherent freedom from purposeful behavior as a means to another end and aesthetic experiencing has been described as *intrinsic* perception (Berleant, 2000). This requires a qualitatively different form of experiencing and of understanding and reflection can be self-contained.

Rothko (2004) commented on modern artists' achievement, "in their abstractions they have carried the world of tangibility, and the tactility of the plastic world, to their logical conclusions, producing pictures which have made of painting a thing of itself, as freed as possible from human associations" (p. 110). The freedom Rothko described bears resemblance to Schopenhauer's (1851/1962) idea that art provides freedom from human will and Danto's (2003) assertion that "art is a modality of free spirit" (p. 64).

Strikingly similar was Krishnamurti's (1971/2005) call for an inward revolution, which

he believed could only be accomplished through the mindful practice of the self, attending to the present moment: "If a person would change radically, he must observe *what is* and not *what should be*" (p. 12). Glickman (2003) related mindfulness practitioners and experienced mediators' accurate observations in reading people's emotions: "Both demonstrated an extraordinary level of accuracy – an indication of compassion and emotional sensitivity. People who are skilled at recognizing emotions are also more open-minded, reliable, and efficient" (p. 71). Research in neuroscience has demonstrated a potential positive effect derived from Buddhist mindfulness in neuroplasicity: "the ability of the brain to generate new nerve cells and neural connections, thereby altering emotions, behaviors, and perceptions" (Glickman, 2003, p. 72; Doidge, 2007). This relates to the role creativity plays in mindfulness and art in actively creating our identities (Appiah, 2005). Doidge (2007) cited the benefits of relabeling in psychotherapy whereby patients can gain distance from debilitating identification with an obsession "and view it in somewhat the same way Buddhists view suffering in meditation: they observe its effects on them and so slightly separate themselves from it" (p. 171).

The Eastern context for mindfulness incorporates a no-self, where impermanence flows, rather than the Western view of continual self-development through maturation. Chisholm (2015) observed, "What is remarkable about Buddhism is that it regards the self as fundamentally empty, indeed as no self at all" (p. 32). When immersed in studio practice it is not uncommon to loose one's self, as the material or willful dimension of selfhood fades. Heightened perception of a transpersonal reality then materializes as the attachments to the self begin to lose their solid grip. Horton, (1974) discussed a patient losing her self in mystical states and likened these to transitional phenomena that offer protection from loneliness or even thought of suicide, "therefore, the mystical experience can become a special, potentially adaptive, ego mechanism of defense" (p. 379). Transpersonal psychology has actively explored non-ordinary states of consciousness (NOS), such as mystical experience and places these more in line with James' (as cited in Horton, 1974) assertion that they can relate to an "upward ladder" (p. 378) of higher consciousness rather than being aligned with psychosis or insanity.

Chisholm (2015) observed that while the Eastern concept of no-self may appear at odds with Western values, in psychotherapy the receding self can bring, "the client's attachments to mindful awareness, [thus] freeing them of their compulsive character becomes possible too" (p. 33). Krishnamurti (1970a) advocated outward societal change through changing oneself, primarily by knowing and understanding one's true self: "To know yourself, there must be the awareness, the alertness of mind in which there is a freedom from all beliefs, from all idealization, because beliefs and ideals only give you a colour, perverting true perception" (p. 23). This requires brutal honesty and keen perception: "The understanding of what you are, whatever it be – ugly or beautiful, wicked or mischievous – the understanding of what you are, without distortion, is the beginning of virtue" (p. 23).

Aesthetic Experience

When using this term in this paper I refer to both the sustained and purposeful practice of making art, and to the experience of art or aesthetic phenomena in general. Beyond my own practice as an artist, I began to pay closer attention to aesthetic experience in my clinical work as a creative art therapist. Studio art involves much more than concrete art production and encompasses a wider aesthetic dimension: experiencing aesthetic process, focus on the present moment, letting go (of preconceptions; of aspects of the self; and judgments), venturing into

unchartered personal territory, observing and understanding process from inside. This often requires a non-directive approach in order to facilitate the freedom required for NOS. When these aspects have been deeply experienced individuals often demonstrated a corresponding growth of self-awareness and insight into difference within self. In particular, I was struck by the sense of freedom from basic concerns and anxieties the clients experienced, a decrease in destructive emotions and an increase in positive emotions. This experience was consistent with an easing and in some cases an end to suffering. Was this the freedom from will that Schopenhauer (1851/1962) described?

Freedom from the everyday realm when making art facilitates a different way-of-being and dispenses with the habitual reliance on language. Martin (1992) explained the beauty in art is located within its character of being, "wordless and silent" (p. 89) and Franklin (1999) in applying a transpersonal approach to art therapy, noted the solitary character of studio work, which he likened to meditation since making art, "often operates in the context of silence" (p. 4). Thoughts and feelings come and go, moving within awareness but not requiring any immediate response, which is usual for most people. This phenomenon could be dismissed as play or insignificant, yet to do so would miss the complexity, which is behind the self, or discovered as the self recedes towards the mindful no self. Certain attributes of making art, such as the precision needed for mixing a particular color have what might be described as a mindless quality, yet in reality this mindlessness can itself signal a mindful state of being. Mixing paint or priming a canvas can itself be a meditative practice and mindless naming belies the unfamiliar characteristics of mental freedom from excessive reactivity and the reliance on un-reflected thoughts and actions. Existential and Gestalt psychologist Perls (1969) engaged this dynamic when he admonished clients to, "stop thinking. Lose your mind and come to your senses" (p. 69).

Martin's (1992) mature paintings are prime examples of work with the preceding qualities, which she deliberately situated to contest and refute language and illusion. Martin embraced Buddhist spirituality and retreated from New York City, to paint in New Mexico with her "back to the world" (as cited in Laing, 2015). This turning away (by turning inward) from materialistic concerns permitted a concentrated attention, with heightened observation directed towards the present moment of painting. Martin's oeuvre illustrated her devotion to fully integrate a highly personalized mindful practice. Just as the Dalai Lama (as cited in Epstein, 1995) stated the purpose of life is to be happy, Martin (1992) believed the purpose of life was beauty, which provides access to the feeling state of happiness. Striving for perfection in art was Martin's chosen way and happiness can be felt through awareness of its fleeting presence. Her search for perfection hinged on inspiration, which is a primary attribute of art but one she cautioned must not to be mistaken as belonging exclusively to an artistic elite. Inspiration is a constant presence but often shrouded by the mental preoccupation of a busy mind, barraged by thoughts of mundane details. Inspiration for Martin equals peace and is the direct result of "an uncontrolled mind" (p. 62)

Inspiration can be mindfully accessed whereby we cease to be controlled by a barrage of thoughts, as Krishnamurti (1970b) asserted: "It is only the unoccupied mind that can be fresh to understand a problem" (p. 137). Inspiration is the route to beauty, which is also pervasive and more accessible when the mind is uncontrolled and perception is heightened. The simple act of pausing to take time to smell the roses exemplifies mindfulness directed at fully experiencing life. Maslow's (1971) concept of self-actualization includes experiencing life fully in the present and in particular paying close attention to beauty in the world, in order to fully experience joy. Maslow acknowledged that humanistic and transpersonal psychologists have drawn from mystics

and Zen monks the importance of recognizing sacred experience embedded within the ordinary, to emphasize, "*everything* is miraculous" (p. 333).

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is derived from the Eastern Buddhist and Hindu traditions and includes spirituality and meditation practices designed ultimately to reach a state of nirvana or enlightenment. Beitel et al (2014) summarized Buddhist theory and practice, "The Four Noble Truths reflect the Buddha's observations about the nature of reality" (p. 190). These are: life brings suffering, mental states cause cravings (and more suffering), when cravings cease suffering ends, and lastly,

> the Buddha prescribed a path that leads to the cessation of suffering. This Eightfold Path involves (1) gaining mental discipline through effort, concentration, and mindfulness, (2) living in accordance with one's ethical principles in speech, action, and livelihood, and (3) gaining wisdom by fostering healthy intentions and by seeing things as they are rather than as one wishes them to be. (Beitel et al, 2015, p. 190)

Mindful practices permit concentration in order to slow the mind and attend to what is present, rather than what should be occurring. As noted the original goal of mindfulness is the end of self-interest, and the suffering that result from this to attain enlightenment.

Goleman (2003) reported the positive effects derived from mindfulness meditation, which impacted the function of the brain (or mind) and reduces harmful and destructive emotions. Through inquiry into the nature of self, "The self-states that are discovered along the way provide opportunities to examine the hold that such idealized experiences can have over us" (Epstein, 1995, p. 141). Destructive emotions can be eliminated and thereby inner equilibrium can be restored as healthy emotions grow (Goleman, 2003). Epstein (1995) noted mindfulness has been compared to Freud's conception of the *oceanic*, a state of narcissistic bliss, with important differences:

> He [Buddha] taught that one must not escape into the concentrated absorption of the tranquil mind, but rather contemplate what he called the "Four Foundations of Mindfulness," particularly the body, the feelings, the mind, and the thoughts and emotions, which he called "mental objects" or "mental factors". (p.142)

Happiness can only be achieved through inner peace and ultimately harmony between inner and outer worlds. Goleman (2003) differentiated between altered states and altered traits; the latter provides a lasting healthy change, achieved only by the sustained practice of re-training the mind, whereas the former remains a transitory or fleeting identification with happiness or transcendence.

Krishnamurti (1971/2005) vigorously attacked the reliance most people have on *thought*, which can prevent attunement to the present. Thought is the product of memory, complete with a temporal dimension, cultural history and knowledge, each of which includes identifications with multiple positions. Knowledge has brought about modern advances but also pervasive conflict, never-ending wars, and ultimately ignorance of difference, with an insistence on rendering other with bias and categories. Aanstoos (1994) aptly described knowledge and thought, in this case

derived from the reductionist and totalizing effect of positivism, which contributed to the "loss of the meaning of human existence" (p. 5). Krishnamurti (1971/2005) noted thought is responsible for the never-ending global racial and religious conflicts and division, "There is linguistic, national, and cultural division. There is conflict, and out of this conflict there is war, both inwardly and outwardly" (pp. 125-126).

A lack of mindfulness can manifest in thoughts, actions, and behaviors occurring as if without a self or a self on auto pilot, replete with opinions, judgments, biases and emotions in conflict or destructive emotions such as hate, jealousy and cravings (Goleman, 2003; Krishnamurti, 1971/2005). Krishnamurti stated, "Opinions have no value" (p. 118), since they serve to maintain opposition and conflict and prevent an authentic (mutual) understanding. Attending with purpose encourages experiencing the present moment without judgment, noting the feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations, which may be pleasurable or painful, beautiful or sublime. Rather than a utopian escapism, this practice notes both the good and bad aspects of life and can help to prevent destructive emotional reactivity. Awareness of the present moment helps a person to differentiate between the past and the future, rather than being controlled by these. Abandonment of thought and knowledge promotes radical change with the promise of a conflict-free existence.

The concept of time is anathema to present moment understanding since culture and society have conditioned human beings to link past experiences and collective histories towards an indistinct future. Krishnamurti (1971/2005) explained this simple statement: "I will be a better person" focuses on a potential future change, while ignoring the present. Neither does this utterance make it any likelier that this change will emerge, since change occurs in the present moment. This also governs attention and inattention according to Krishnamurti: "When you are completely attentive, there is no time" (p.130). Therefore this question "How can I remain present all of the time?" could be answered through the understanding we cannot cultivate attention because this depends on time. Rather, the passing, or letting go, of each moment of being present or attention simply occurs. Krishnamurti explained: "Therefore perceive, act, and end there; forget it; begin again, so that the mind, the brain cells, are fresh each time, not burdened by yesterday's perception" (p. 130). Doidge's (2007) investigation into neuroscience's discoveries of brain plasticity discovered the relatedness and importance of this phenomenon. Krishnamurti's (1971/2005) inward revolution requires praxis, whereby each person has an ethical responsibility to understand and to find out, rather than seeking others for knowledge, answers or wisdom. Teachers and gurus are eschewed in favor of listening or experiencing together, in order for each person to find out (meaning) for oneself. The temporal dimension harbors racial, ethnic, class, sexual and other biases, which are embedded in value systems over long periods of time.

Aesthetic Experience, Mindfulness and Psychotherapy

Within the realm of aesthetic experience a wordless silence can emerge, which has striking similarities to mindfulness and a degree of attention shared by psychoanalytic practice. Epstein (1995) noted Freud's requirements of the analyst to bring an "evenly suspended attention" to whatever emerges from the client, while maintaining an open mind. Each shares a particular mode of attending without passing judgment to allow experience and associations space to simply exist. The analyst applies this to his or her own internal process as well, which resonate within the transference. Phenomena can then be observed and potentially understood as

well as open new possibilities. Chisholm (2015) expressed this, "By adopting an attitude of mindful attention, the therapist encourages the client to become open to finding possibilities that his life may hold, but which may be hidden by the blinders of mindless habit" (p. 33).

Mindful attention and listening can be challenging:

> Can you listen without any conclusion, without any comparison and judgment, just listen as you would listen to music, to something that you feel you really love? Then you listen not only with your mind, with your intellect, but also with your heart; not sentimentally - which is rather terrible - or emotionally, but with care, objectively, sanely, listen with attention to find out. (Krishnamurti, 1971/1975, p. 116)

Mindful listening to a client without judgment or remaining present while distracted by intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamics can be even more difficult. Authentic empathic listening was the exact stance taken up by humanistic psychologist Carl Rogers (1995) in person-centered psychotherapy and ethical responsibility is also a mainstay of existential psychotherapy. Mindfulness may be implausible for psychotherapy clients and theoretically inconsistent, as noted by Chishom (2015): "teaching the techniques of mindfulness is not always useful for psychotherapy, if indeed it is not actually counterproductive. Although Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) sometimes teaches mindfulness techniques to beneficial effect, psychotherapy is obliged to work less didactically" (p. 33).

The less in this instance is reminiscent of the core values of humanistic psychology's emphasis on being the true self you are, rather than living with a conditioned self, replete with devaluing or destructive attachments. Aten, Felder, Neudeck, Robbins and Shiome-Chen (2014) undertook an overview of the early connection between mindfulness and existential-phenomenology and humanistic psychology: "For example, approaches that emphasize bare attentiveness to the unfolding flow of experience or full awareness of the contextually integrated nature of existence have always been hallmarks of phenomenological practice (cf. Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism)" (p. 8). Within the humanistic paradigm mindfulness is not taught as a skill as in CBT, but rather, it is in situ within the empathic mutuality of the relationship between client and therapist. This is equally true for establishing the requisite favorable conditions with a combination of art and mindfulness to engage clients in studio practice. Clients can then "listen" as Krishnamurti (1971/2005) noted (with music) and see with clarity, unfettered by judgments, and be able to simply observe experiences as they unfold.

Epstein (1995) explained some of the cultural difficulties many Westerners have with the Eastern spiritual practice, notably, the unpleasant feelings of emptiness or the confrontation with a no-self. Westerners often experience Balint's (as cited in Epstein, 1995) concept of the *basic fault* within their personalities when practicing mindfulness or meditation practices. This term describes childhood neglect where a person feels unheard or unvalued. These feelings lead to a sense of self, determined by estrangement, a state of being alien to Eastern culture. Western alienation, profoundly felt through modern industrialization and urbanization, has undergone some revision within the postmodern era. Loy (2001) stated: "The self's modernist alienation has given way to a fragmentation which releases our subjectivity from the intentionalities that used to focus it, encouraging a more fluid and multiple sense of personal and social identity" (p. 262). Plurality has become a more accepted reality in the postmodern world where fragmentation can inform multiple positions while challenging transcendent Truth. This fluidity is more in keeping with a way-of-being where mindfulness and other forms of consciousness can co-exist.

Often intention has been observed in psychotherapy as a source of distress and suffering, originating in belief that our lives should be different from what they are at present. Watts (1961/1975) was one of the earliest writers to bring Eastern practices into psychotherapy, which increasingly has integrated mindfulness and meditation within a more integrative model of psychotherapy: with CBT (Beitel, et al, 2014; Dimidjian & Linehan, 2008; Hayes, 2004; Linehan, 1993; Wilson, 2011); for stress reduction in medicine (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; 2003); combined with existential therapy (Harris, 2013) and integrated in art therapy (Allen, 1995a, 1995b; Betensky, 1995; Farrelly-Hanson, 2001; Feen-Calligan, 1995; Franklin, 1999. 2010, 2012; Horovitz-Darby, 1994; Moon, B. 1990). Linehan (1993) applied Zen Buddhist practices, in particular mindfulness in skills training, to treat individuals with borderline personality disorder (BPD) using Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). Corey (2013) summarized these practices, which,

> Include being aware of the present moment, seeing reality without distortion, accepting reality without judgment, letting go of attachments that result in suffering, developing a greater degree of acceptance of self and others, and entering fully into present activities without separating oneself from ongoing events and interactions. (p. 250)

Kiehn and Swales' (2010) work with BPD patients using DBT echoed present moment awareness and noted, "The 'core mindfulness skills' are derived from certain techniques of Buddhist meditation, although they are essentially psychological techniques and no religious allegiance is involved" (p. 6). Aten et al (2014) described the integration of mindfulness with person-centered psychotherapy: "clients are free to authentically experience, reflect, and choose in closer accord with the ground of their (there) being and within a therapeutic clearing or frame that carefully provides the relationship conditions conducive to mindful awareness and reflection" (p. 16). In accord with Zen Buddhism Maslow (1971) stressed the need for the therapist to possess the ability to perceive both the sacred and the profane in each person. Gendlin's (2007) method of *focusing* also harnesses mindfulness to highlight the knowledge residing in the human body to gain insight into embodied present moment awareness. Mindfulness can be traced back to Husserl's (1973) attention to present moment experiencing in the field of phenomenology and James' (1958) embrace of Eastern tradition and his concept of multiple selves or pluralistic concept of self (Taylor, 1996). van Manen (1990) commented on Husserl's phenomenology, it "must describe what is given to us in immediate experience without being obstructed by pre-conceptions and theoretical notions" (p. 184). By experiencing immediate experience the goal of "finding out" is facilitated, without judgment or comparison, which entails giving up internalized "shoulds", "oughts", or "musts".

Martin (2016) agreed: "In meditation it seems as though you go into another phase of consciousness, it's the same thing that's required in painting, as you turn away from materialistic response to this world, into something else" (n/p). Tuttle (2004) described a blissful state of meditation derived from the luminosity of a specific color relationship in one of his paintings. Freedom results from the turning away from will or usual conscious preoccupations and permits a new clarity of mind without a specific end in mind (Schopenhauer 1851/1962). Epstein (1995) used the mindful metaphor of the raft to describe a particular mental acuity attainable, where floating on a raft allows a man to reach the opposite shore. Once back on dry land the raft, although it has proved invaluable, is discarded or simply let go. Art process is attentive to this

dynamic, of discovery, and movement between spheres via "floating" and a sense of mental stillness conducive to letting go. This provides freedom and opens experience to discovery and potential connections. Letting go aptly described mindfulness practice and the phenomenon of continually finding and discarding form while inside the process of painting (Rilke, 1907/1985). Previously I (Thompson, 2015) described some benefits of this process including, "increased acuity for inspiration and happiness, plus an increased tolerance and self-acceptance of inevitable imperfection" (p. 30). Self-reflection and self-acceptance is paramount to both aesthetic experience and mindfulness, where an inner and outer dialogue takes place:

> If we can perceive ourselves in the work – not the work but ourselves when viewing the work then the work is important. If we can *know our response*, see in ourselves *what we have received* from a work, that is the way to the understanding of truth and all of beauty. (Martin, 1992, p. 89)

While Martin (1992) used the term inspiration, Hofmann (1986) believed intuition was the foundation of "the confidence of spirit. Art is a reflection of the spirit, a result of introspection, which finds expression in the nature of the art medium" (p. 59). Berenson (1948/1953) saw art as supremely humanistic and that happiness is derived from the work, which is not only required to humanize mankind but is imperative.

Sustained mindfulness can offer a lasting reprieve against destructive emotions so even when a person momentarily moves into a destructive feeling state the effects are short-lived and the person can move quickly back to healthier emotions (Goleman, 2003). To achieve mastery through recognition, Krishnamurti (1971/2005) advised seeing without verbalization, which frees vision from time and thought, and the space these take which prevent present moment understanding. This means seeing an object, person or thing without an image or any thought about the symbolism of the image. Krishnamurti noted emotional connections can make this kind of pure seeing more challenging (for example, your husband or wife) and provided a more accessible example:

> You can observe a tree fairly easily without the image, without the word, without thought. When you observe that tree without the whole mechanism of thought coming into operation, then the space between you and the tree disappears. This doesn't mean you become the tree or you identify yourself with the tree. You see the tree completely, not partially. Then there is only the tree, without the observer. (p. 126)

Rollo May (1975/1980) described the clarity of awareness derived from accurately reading and understanding the form in a painting:

> When we engage a painting, which we have to do especially with modern art if we are authen-tically to see it, we are experiencing some new moment of sensibility. Some new vision is triggered in us by our contact with the painting; something unique is born in us. (p. 11)

This, in part, answers one of Krishnamurti's (1971/2005) main challenges embedded in a simple question he often repeated, "Can you understand?" Understanding can be gained through an empathic encounter with art, once again exemplified by May (1975/1980): "I can say without

exaggeration that I never really saw a tree until I had seen and absorbed Cezanne's paintings of them" (p. 78).

Vignette

In my work with individuals in acute and chronic psychological distress, a new sense of freedom has sometimes been attained in the studio from automatic thoughts, negative self-judgments, false self-narratives and the conditioned self. By harnessing mindfulness and aesthetic experience within art therapy, I have often witnessed profound positive effects, which resulted from the freedoms gained, which were described earlier and the experience of newfound joy and happiness. In this necessarily brief example, I summarize a research participant's decreased observable and self-reported symptoms and the emergence of her new present-centered sense of self.

Rachel (name changed). Rachel attended an adult outpatient program in a psychiatric hospital in New York City and consented to be a participant in an art therapy research study. She had two *DSM-IV* Axis I (American Psychiatric Association, 1994), diagnoses, Major depressive Disorder, Recurrent Severe with Psychotic Features, and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. Rachel had a history of physical and sexual abuse and experienced command auditory and visual hallucinations. She had been hospitalized more than twenty times and was attending a psychiatric outpatient clinic. Rachel had been observed responding to internal stimuli during groups and described her experiences in psychotherapy as though she was out of her body and watching herself and other group members from above.

At times she could not differentiate between psychosis and reality, especially when she experienced flashbacks of past traumatic events, "sometimes it's a little scary because you don't know if it's happening now or if it was the past" (as cited in Thompson, 2015, p. 304). Rachel confided in me that she had always loved art, which she could identify as a more authentic form of expression regarding the pain she had long felt, "the only way I could really express it because even as I'm speaking to you now I'm just touching a layer of it [talking] but it's only through my artwork that it comes out deeper and as real as it is [and] you can see my feelings through my art (as cited in Thompson, 2015, p. 306). Sadly, Rachel had stopped making art many years ago after an apartment fire destroyed all her possessions. When I first met Rachel she described her experiences:

> I felt so broken, so different and everywhere but nowhere you know ungrounded I always felt above just floating I used to see myself [pause] in my group or other groups like talkative groups, that you talk with your mouth like words and I used to see myself, my body I used to see myself coming out of my body and floating and seeing myself on the ceiling and seeing my body down here with the rest of the group but not being a part of it because I didn't feel real – it was too unrealistic it was too dissociative - too broken up. (as cited in Thompson, 2015, p. 309)

Rachel was an active participant in the research study and in the post-research interview I asked whether she had noticed any changes in her sense of self:

> Yes I did I notice [pause] I noticed I was able to ground myself … when I started the artwork doing the art therapy group I felt grounded I felt I could feel the floor I could feel

> myself be a part of [pause] I didn't feel disoriented I didn't feel separated I didn't feel you know dissociated [right] like everything came together you know and it was a really unfamiliar feeling but it was um a positive great feeling like [pause] I want to always feel like that you know? [yes] I always want to feel that I can feel myself in my body and not feel myself out of my body. (as cited in Thompson, 2015, p. 502)

Rachel credited the painting experiences, working collaboratively, feeling safe, being a member of a caring "family-like" group, not being judged or stigmatized and being able to take back the messages and meanings of her art while seeing her work in an exhibition, with her newfound feelings of being grounded. She described the impact the art open studio exerted on her negative self-experience:

> I have a tendency of wearing a mask [mm] you know because I always feel that mm I'm not worth it and nobody is going to upset me and because of the stigma of mental illness but in the group in art all that comes off you unveil yourself. (as cited in Thompson, 2015, p. 308)

The disturbing sensation of out of body experience, dissociation, fragmentation and feeling split had dissipated, "I had the opposite, a real connection I felt attached like someone took crazy glue and glued me back together" (as cited in Thompson, 2015, p. 503). Prizing her as an individual and providing unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1965), while facilitating an open reflective studio milieu encouraged mindfulness and Rachel was able to tap this creative space and reconfigure her sense of self. She was able to take back many disconnected aspects of her true self, and explore her own being in a judgment free zone. Rachel became mindful and was, "open to direct observation of experiences, to describe them without elaboration, to accept them without judgment, and to act with awareness" (Beitel et al, 2014, p. 190). Rachel connected to the internal and external freedom from negative judgment,

> there was nobody criticizing; nobody saying 'Oh my God' we could all accept each other, encouraged each other… And you encouraged and let everyone know it's all okay right? And that's what we did and it felt like a little family there. (as cited in Thompson, 2015, p. 503)

Conclusion

Rachel's statements echo Krishnamurti's (1971/2005) description of the negative effects of thought and knowledge, which can distort one's true self. These thoughts amassed into damaging self-judgments, fears and comparisons, feelings of inferiority and susceptibility to stigma. These were internalized and contributed to a negative self-narrative and a conditioned self. Her self-worth was diminished causing her to hide her true self for fear of more negative judgments. These were self-perpetuating and reinforced externally within the psychiatric milieu intent on identifying symptoms of mental illness. Krishnamurti (1970a) wrote, "To transform oneself, self-knowledge is essential; without knowing what you are, there is no basis for right thought, and without knowing yourself there cannot be transformation" (p. 23). Altering the space and allowing alternative narratives to co-exist created new opportunities for Rachel to discover her own truth. The freedom she discovered from negative thoughts and feelings

manifested in an uncontrolled mind, which led to the cessation of suffering as she found inner and outer peace. Rachel had begun to apply the four types of mindfulness identified by the Dalai Lama (as cited in EIN PRESSWIRE, 2016, September 16):

> Mindfulness of the body relates to understanding the nature of suffering; mindfulness of feelings relates to understanding the origin of suffering; mindfulness of the mind relates to cessation; while mindfulness of the way things are corresponds to understanding the path. (Para 8)

In accordance with May's (1969) insistence each person's truth or reality derives from participation in their life-world and awareness of this relationship, Rachel participated in creating a new self and a new reality. Immersed in this process she abandoned distorted narratives and found beautiful, healthy, creative and courageous aspects of herself that were marginalized by a conditioned self. Painting provided Rachel the means to let go of attachments and traverse the void of no-self simply by existing in the present. In the parallel relationships between aesthetic experience, mindfulness and humanistic psychotherapy Rachel had attained the core requirement of phenomenology, which "demands of us re-learning to look at the world as we meet it in immediate experience" (p. 184).

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Consciousness, Mind, and Nature: The Intelligence of Ecology

James L. Smith

Abstract

What is consciousness? That seems to be the fundamental question. As mind and self are intrinsically related to each other, and to the larger construct of consciousness, it is difficult to abstract them from one another in the attempt to answer this question. Damasio's views of consciousness are explicated. An exploration of Bateson's conceptions of mind, ecology, knowledge, difference, evolution, and their interrelationships and interconnectedness are undertaken. In addition, his concept of "high civilization" is explored.

Keywords: consciousness, mind, Bateson, nature, ecology

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Introduction

It seems to be a universal feature of human perception, a feature of the underpinning of human epistemology, that the perceiver shall perceive only the product of his perceiving act. He shall not perceive the means by which that product was created. The product itself is a sort of work of art. Gregory Bateson – 1977

What is consciousness? That seems to be the fundamental question. As mind and self are intrinsically related to each other, and to the larger construct of consciousness, it is difficult to abstract them from one another in the attempt to answer this question. Other areas of equal importance are the role of language, culture, emotion, imagination, and memory in consciousness. Additionally, the exploration of perception, the brain, or somatic experiences could be addressed in how they relate to consciousness, mind, and self, but will not be in this paper. Lastly, the question of the evolutionary purpose of these aspects of *human being* also will not be addressed, even though this offers some of the most fascinating areas of discourse.

A clear presentation of the questions of what are mind, self, and the nature of consciousness, are the views of Damasio (2012), which seem to me to be succinct and enlightening. Damasio has essentially outlined four levels of consciousness:

- Basic life regulation, which includes reflexes autonomic activity, and basal being

- Emotions - which have 3 levels - background emotions, secondary emotions and primary emotions - these have all evolved as an integral aspect of survival (this gets deep, but Sartre came to the same thing, essentially)
- Feelings - emotions carried to an awareness of pain, pleasure and emotions as having import and meaning (you know, one of those days when you are on edge, but you don't know why, or you are happy, but you can't seem to base it on anything overt in concrete events)
- High reason or aware consciousness – that is, your "known" levels of consciousness - abstract reasoning, thinking focused on objective reality, purposeful behavior, and so on.

From these levels, he then goes on to develop the corresponding levels of self. By the way, he does not see humans as the only creatures with all these levels of consciousness or self. So "doing consciousness" is engaging actively with the world in a complex manifestation of these levels of being in an integrated way which are partially known and partially innate or sub-conscious (although he might not use these names for them) integration of your being.

Think about the simple act of drumming your fingers on the table. You are making your body do it, but you do not have to send a command in the form of a sentence to make it happen, your body just responds to your wishes and it happens. Now read the sentences in a book; your mind interprets the words and gives them meaning and the meaning of the whole conception that the sentence is conveying, but you do not have to be conscious of what is happening. We create or "construct" our thoughts in a streaming flow of interconnectedness with the objects of our thoughts (whether they are exterior to us or symbolic objects in our mind) and maintain our involvement with these aspects in various levels of voluntary or involuntary "becoming" with them, depending on the level of focus with what we are contemplating or are involved with. The main point is that, it seems to me, that this happens in a flowing relation between active and passive awareness and involvement based on levels of focus with the aspects of the world we are involving ourselves with, in a dynamic and yet, subtle way.

Consciousness is a co-creative involvement with the world. We do not think "of" the world, with think "with" the world. In this way, it seems to me, his work in neuroscience confirms the thinking of existentialism and phenomenology, that is, that there is no consciousness over here and the world over there, but rather that consciousness is a dialectical interaction with the world such that both are co-created in so far as the person is in a state of awareness of the world.

Humanist View of Consciousness

As a humanist, I hold the perspective that the human realm is unique. Humans are inherently social, cultural, and communicative, and that human "being-ness" is contextual, temporal, and grounded in shared reality. Human being's existence is a summation of experience, which is full of nuance and subtlety derived from a dialogue with the social and natural environment that is mediated through language and culture. Human's lives and consciousness cannot be reduced to components, due to the fact that human consciousness is an awareness that is has the potential to be reflective, self-reflective, and is created by an on-going awareness of the larger social, environmental, planetary, and cosmic context of life. In addition, human consciousness is a co-created socio-cultural manifestation of what is called *human*

species being as a collective of creatures, who give meaning to life through language, tools, and culture.

This human consciousness and reflective awareness has meaning for the individual and the group because meaningfulness is culturally based, linguistically expressed, and historically grounded in the current context. Human beings have choice and free will to ethically and responsibly develop their potentials within the parameters of this multifaceted context, based on their aims, intentions, creative talents, physical attributes, and access to the resources made available to them through the existing socio-cultural paradigm.

Consciousness is social, as every bit social as language and culture. To attempt to analyze consciousness as an aspect of an individual is as misdirected as attempting to understand language and culture as the product of one person. Human consciousness is an emergent facility and property of social existence. Language, consciousness, and the human-species-being are intrinsically interrelated in the development of social self and are all grounded in a complex dialectical relationship to the natural and social world. In today's modern urban world, we have become numbed to the role of nature as an integral component of this dialectic. The relationship to place and environment is taken for granted and overwhelmed by technological representations of space, time, and social connection. In contrast, indigenous and aboriginal peoples have a historical comprehension that their very existence and meaning are tied to place and the ecology of their culture. Their culture, language, and society are a creation of a deep interconnection between their ecological basis in a natural setting and the expression of their unique human existence. Exploring the relationship between these facets of social, cultural, and natural spheres will help us to understand consciousness as a natural expression of humanness.

Gregory Bateson's Ecological Framework

Without this perspective, dualism always seems to emerge in the analysis of mind, self, and consciousness, along with the re-establishment of a central controlling aspect of these interrelated facets of humanness. Bateson (1972/2000; 2002; 2005) has, perhaps, shown us a clearer path to some levels of understanding.

Gregory Bateson's views, I would argue, cannot be reduced to a form of systems theory. He has a much broader project developed in his writings, views, and the discourse he carried out over the course of his life. Several fundamental themes come out through a reading of Bateson, which, if you will, is his work of art, his exploration of the signifiers and meaning of an intellectual elaboration of the interconnectedness of human existence to that of the earth and the cosmos. Perception, language, epistemology, and curiosity were his mediums to express the nuanced understanding he strove to attain.

One level of Bateson's work was in exposing the incorrectness of the dualisms that exist in modern philosophical and scientific thought – mind/body, human/nature, society/ecology, biological/emotional, God/nature – were all falsifications to him. Likewise, the limits of linear thinking, compartmentalization, and the languages that evolved to represent this way of thinking had become obstacles to greater understanding and the ability to comprehend the reality in which living (and non-living) things exist. Here is an example of this view:

> If you put God outside and set him vis-à-vis his creation and if you have the idea that you are created in his image, you will logically and naturally see yourself as outside and against the things around you. And as you arrogate all mind to yourself, you will see the

> world around you as mindless and therefore as not entitled to moral or ethical consideration. The environment will be yours to exploit . . . If this is your estimate of your relation to nature and you have an advanced technology, your likelihood of survival will be that of a snowball in hell. You will die either of the toxic by-products of your own hate, or, simply, of over population and over-grazing. (Bateson, 1972/2000, p. 468)

Bateson's views evolved over his decades of work in various intellectual and pragmatic disciplines – anthropology, biology, linguistics, psychology, cybernetics, ecology and philosophy. What he was saying is that in the context of modern society, people have created a false representation to themselves of their being, which then enforces the idea that mind exists only as an expression of humanity. Mind and consciousness are given the same meaning, confused as being one and the same thing. For Bateson this is another expression of the arrogance expressed in the quote above.

Key to understanding Bateson is grasping his conceptions of mind, ecology, knowledge, difference, evolution, and their interrelationships and interconnectedness. To begin with, we have his view of mind. In *Mind and nature: A necessary unity*, (1979/2002), Bateson lays out an explicit discussion of what he means by "Mind" in which he elaborates the following points:

1. *A mind is an aggregate of interacting parts or components.*
2. *The interaction between parts of mind is triggered by difference*, and difference is a nonsubstantial phenomenon not located in space or time; difference is related to negentropy and entropy rather than energy.
3. *Mental process requires collateral energy.*
4. *Mental process requires circular (or more complex) chains of determination.*
5. *In mental process, the effects of difference are to be regarded as transforms (i.e., coded versions) of events which preceded them*. The rules of such transformation must be comparatively stable (i.e., more stable than the content) but are themselves subject to transformation.
6. *The description and classification of these processes of transformation disclose a hierarchy of logical types immanent in the phenomena.* (pp. 85-86, italics in the original)

From this outline Bateson (2005) stated, "If you consider these criteria, you will recognize that they fit a number of complex entities that we are used to talking about and investigating scientifically, such as animals and persons and, in fact, all organisms" (p. 19). But in addition to all living organisms, "Mind" is even more than this; it "applies to a much wider range of those complex phenomena called "systems", which include systems consisting of multiple organisms or systems in which some of the parts are living and some are not, or even to systems in which there are no living parts" (Bateson, 2005, p. 19).

In *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution, and Epistemology* Bateson (1972/2000) stated, "We get a picture, then, of mind as synonymous with cybernetic systems – the relevant total information-processing, trial-and-error completing unit . . . I am calling 'Mind' immanent in the large biological system – the ecosystem. . . . What I am saying expands mind outward" (pp. 466-467). Further, Bateson sees "mind" also as identical with the concept of "unit of evolution" and he believed "that this identity is the most important generalization which I have to offer" (Bateson, 2000, p. 466). If you take Bateson's (1979/2002)

criteria of mind, as noted above, and apply it to the natural world, it is clear that this is also a good definition of an ecology, whereby we could re-write this as follows:

1. [An ecology] *is an aggregate of interacting parts or components.*
2. *The interaction between parts of* [*an ecology*] *is triggered by difference*, and difference is a nonsubstantial phenomenon not located in space or time; difference is related to negentropy and entropy rather than energy.
3. [Ecological] *processes require collateral energy.*
4. [Ecological] *processes require circular (or more complex) chains of determination.*
5. *In* [ecological] *processes, the effects of difference are to be regarded as transforms* [i.e., impacting future development] *of* [processes] *which preceded them*. The rules of such transformation must be comparatively stable (i.e., more stable than the content) but are themselves subject to transformation.
6. *The description and classification of these* [ecological] *processes of transformation disclose a hierarchy of* [steps] *immanent in the* [evolution of aspects within the ecology]. (pp. 85-86, italics in the original)

Bateson (1972/2000) addressed these potential connections,

> If, now, we correct the Darwinian unit of survival to include the environment and the interaction between organism and environment, a very strange and surprising identity emerges: *the unit of evolutionary survival turns out to be identical with the unit of mind*. (p. 491)

I believe what he is getting at is that the basic unit of evolution is the not an individual entity of a species, nor is it simply the population of every member of that species. He went to great lengths to elaborate and explicate the stochastic (random) nature of learning and evolution, and their relationship to one another. An ecology and a mind (or ecology and mind, if you will) are overlapping identities of the same process or level of existence, not bound by space and time, but not ungrounded either.

> We face, then, two great stochastic systems that are partly in interaction and partly isolated from one another. One system is within the individual and is called *learning*, the other is immanent in heredity and in populations and is called *evolution*. One is a matter of a single lifetime; the other is a matter of multiple generations of many individuals. (Bateson, 2002, p. 141)

The two systems work at different levels, one within the other, but "fit together into a single ongoing biosphere that could not endure if either somatic of genetic change were fundamentally different from what it is" (Bateson, 2002, p. 141).

Evolutionary change takes place in the population of a given species, in this view, because the ecosystem (ecology or biosphere) reaches a point where change does take place somatically, phenotypically and genetically due to the complex interrelationship of changes expressed in the interactions and developments within and without this system. Whether this change leads to the further survival of the population or its extinction cannot be foreseen. Neither

out-come is a determined necessity, but "the *unity* of the combined system is *necessary*" (Bateson, 2002, p. 141).

Change (in an evolutionary paradigm) may be fortuitous, allowing the affected species to continue to survive or even flourish in the face of ecological change, or disastrous and lead to extinction, or may even be benign, and have no influence at all on the future of this species. One of Bateson's points that underlie this view is that organisms do not exist in any other place but embedded in their natural ecological space. Attempting to comprehend or understand the life of an organism or a species, abstracted from its environment is an absurdity. Bateson, (1972/2000) explained the various levels of existence:

> cell and a tissue, between tissue and organ, organ and organism, and organism and society. These are the hierarchies of units or Gestalten, in which each subunit is a part of the unit of next larger scope . . . such that certain differences in the part have informational effect upon the larger unit, and vice versa. (p. 464).

To understand the Batesonian worldview we must shift our thinking, away from linear assumptions and predispositions to a different perspective. First is to view the world as patterns and connections, which comprise the manifestations of whole systems of interrelated unities or wholes. These unities have expression in various rhythms of activity which make them knowable, and that the boundaries of each system are defined by the interfaces between systems or the components within systems. Information within and between systems is a product of the difference caused by the relationship of two or more things, which "causes" an immanent interaction that can be sensed such that it is "news" to the system or organism. It is here that we have the 'difference that makes a difference" (Bateson, 1972/2000, p. 381).

Bateson's systems are, to me, more real and less abstract than those of the classical systems proponents, von Bertalanffy, (1968), Jantsch (1980), and Jantsch and Waddington (1976) for example. He is challenging all previous scientific systems, including systems theory. He has gone beyond these, and cybernetics, psychology, biology, anthropology, and so forth and is trying to move the investigation or inquiry into the world, and its related epistemology, to a radically new view. This new perspective, in Bateson's terms, involves process, forms, themes, and typologies in a dialectical relationship represented in a "zigzag ladder" of interconnectedness. But it is here that I have a criticism of Bateson.

Ecological Dialectics

Had Bateson's orientation allowed him to accept and incorporate a dialectical approach, Hegelian, Marxian, or Sartrean, in his worldview, he would have, it seems to me, been saved from having to arrive at his understanding in such a long protracted and painful way. Much of Bateson's writing has to do with developing a new language or meanings of the relationships his inquiry was uncovering. He wants to reject the linear thinking, dualism and narrowness dominant in scientific and philosophical paradigms. Here is an overt statement of this project:

> I shall now argue that the relations implicit or immanent in the events of the personal story (*concerning his development of the concept of schismogenesis*) I have just told (i.e., the zigzag sequence of steps from form to process and back to form) provide a very powerful paradigm for the mapping of many phenomena, some of which have already

> been mentioned. . . In other words, when we take the notion of logical typing out of the field of abstract logic and start to map real biological events onto the hierarchies of this paradigm, we shall immediately encounter the fact that in the world of mental and biological systems, the hierarchy is not only a list of classes, classes of classes, and classes of classes of classes but also has become a *zigzag ladder of dialectic between form and process*. (Bateson, 2002, p. 182)

The description that Bateson lays out in the pages just preceding this quote concerning his development of the concept of schismogenesis is clearly a struggle to, on the one hand, avoid an idealistic paradigm of the relationships symmetrical and complimentary interactional sequences, and on the other, escape a materialist presentation of the same concepts and their possible manifold interactions, relationships and permutations. His perception of the primacy of perception, and the transformation of the perception into meanings, and then into understanding and then, finally, into knowledge, can be seen throughout his writings. But he was hamstrung by the very scientific and philosophical grounding he wished to escape. In short, Bateson could see it (the complexity of the biological, psychological and social reality), but he couldn't say it.

It is not clear that Bateson ever engaged in an exploration of the writings and insights of the **phenomenological dialecticians or the critical thinkers of the Frankfurt School** and others, but one cannot but wonder that their dialectical and nuanced critical thinking would have helped him to clarify and conceptualize his insights in a more succinct and dramatic way. His writing often begins to go beyond two-dimensionality (which is what he is trying to do in his zigzag mapping) but it never quite gets to the three dimensionality of the kind of dialectical expression of thinkers grounded in what I would call Hegelian dialectic. He gets close, but then his writing and expression, quite literally, fall flat. Concepts and phrases such as "end-linkage," "double–bind," "symmetrical and complimentary schismogenesis," "themes of interaction are mutually negating", "self-correcting feedback," "loops and circuits of interdependence" and "'calibration' is related to 'feedback' a higher logical type is related to lower" all seem to me to be trying to get to a paradigm or system which can express the complexity and dynamic nature of what he was seeing.

I would characterize this whole struggle in this way – Bateson was seeing things as organic, systemic, and transparent in their interconnectedness and complexity, but when it came time to explain what he saw, he didn't have the words. His writings and talks take you on a journey of guided discovery, but he either didn't want to put up the sign-posts or simply could not develop a way of truly conveying what he saw. This, I think, explains the feeling that people got that he was "hiding" something from them, not telling them the full story. In addition, when he began to take up the position that "purposeful activity" as being part of the problem of ecological destruction he also was caught in the "double-bind" between idealism and materialism. He could see that human thinking and activity had, and was, destroying the natural balance of and in the world, and yet, as much as he chastised about changing our ways, it seems that the action we should all take is towards an intellectual and spiritual enlightenment. I am not saying this is wrong, just incomplete. I think his view of "immanent mind" as the larger transcendent expression of cosmic existence has within it this contradiction between seeing the need for change and wanting to merge with letting "nature" to take its own course.

> St. Paul (Galatians VI) said that "God is not mocked," and immanent mind similarly is neither vengeful nor forgiving. It is of no use to make excuses; the immanent mind is not "mocked."
>
> But since our minds – and this includes our tools and actions – are only parts of the larger mind, its computations can be confused by our contradictions and confusions. Since it contains our insanity, the immanent mind is inevitably subject to possible insanity. It is in our power, with our technology, to create insanity in the larger system of which we are parts. (Bateson, 1972/2000, p. 473)

Bateson was radical, a truly innovative and original thinker, in his perceptions and in the expression of these in a system of ideas and paradigms of understanding. At the same time, he was conservative, and did not see a way out of our stumbling toward ecological and social destruction:

> The ecological analyst faces a dilemma: on the one hand: if any of his recommendations are to be followed, he must first recommend whatever will give the system a positive budget of flexibility; and on the other hand, the people and institutions with which he must deal have a natural propensity to eat up all available flexibility. He must create flexibility and prevent the civilization from immediately expanding in to it. . . Flexibility may be defined as *uncommitted potentiality for change*. (Bateson, 1972/2000, p. 505)

He views the problem as one of technology and resource management, but did not (or could not) bring himself to see the economic system of capitalism (or any other economic system) as being the culprit of ecological destruction. In all of his writings there is no direct reference to the role of economic exploitation of the earth, people, colonialism, imperialism, underdevelopment, slavery, etc. etc. Other than a few brief references to the "Industrial Revolution" and the role of "Marxian" predispositions in the thinking of some anthropological views, Bateson is almost other-worldly in having avoided an opinion on these areas of enormous social, political and ecological change which took place in his life. His sole reference (1966) of political history is to explain that the Treaty of Versailles after World War I explained the collapse of modern civilization and the origins of World War II. To use one of his phrases when exasperated by the obliqueness of various viewpoints – "Extraordinary."

Conclusion

So what is Bateson's view of why we are where we are, and what is the solution? Bateson (as cited in Brockman, 1977) clarified human consciousness is an integral aspect of our relationship with nature, when he stated, "It seems to be a universal feature of human perception, a feature of the underpinning of human epistemology, that the perceiver shall perceive only the product of his perceiving act. He shall not perceive the means by which that product was created. The product itself is a sort of work of art" (p. 238). This reinforces Bateson's further elaboration of his view of consciousness as being embedded in our natural relationship with our human ecology,

> Consciousness is necessarily selective and partial, i.e. that the content of consciousness is, at best, a small part of truth about the self. But if this part be *selected* in any systematic manner, it is certain that the partial truths of consciousness will be, in aggregate, a distortion of the truth of some larger whole. (Bateson, 1972/2000, p. 144)

Bateson (1972/2000) differentiated between the fully integrated mind or network with his proposition that, "if the content of consciousness is only a sampling of different parts and localities in this network, then inevitably the conscious view of the network as a whole is a monstrous denial of the *integration* of that whole (p.145). Bateson (1972/2000) examined limitations to consciousness, "What the unaided consciousness (unaided by art, dreams, and the like) can never appreciate is the *systemic* nature of mind" (p.145). These limits of our consciousness create or impose limits to our understanding and thus help to impact our relationship with nature in a negative way. Essentially Bateson (1972/2000) stated, "That *all* of the many current threats to human survival are traceable to three root causes: (a) technological progress (b) population increase (c) certain errors in thinking and attitudes of Occidental culture. Our 'values' are wrong" (p. 498). The common basis of all three of these points are the values and ideas that view humans as opposed to nature, opposed to other humans, that the individual (or nation) is all that matters, that we can control nature and the environment, that we live in a permanent and infinite frontier, that economic determinism makes sense and, lastly, that technology will solve our problems. The "man against nature" ethos, in Bateson's (1972/2000) view, are "simply proved false by the great but ultimately destructive achievements of our technology in the last 150 years . . . *The creature that wins against its environment destroys itself"* (p. 501).

Bateson (1972/2000) does not, however, leave us stranded in despair on this note. Thankfully there is a much more positive outline of what it may take to reverse this trend and create a "High Civilization" which can live in harmony with nature.

> I suggest then that a healthy ecology of human civilization would be defined somewhat as follows: A single system of *environment combined with a high human civilization* in which the flexibility of the civilization shall match that of the environment to create an ongoing complex system, open-ended for slow change of even basic (hard-programmed) characteristics (Bateson, 1972/2000, p. 502).

After noting that there is no logical point in trying to return to some past time of innocence, Bateson (1972/2000) goes on to elaborate on the nature of this civilization by giving us "a definition of 'high' (for civilization) as follows:

> (b) A "high" civilization should therefore be presumed to have, on the technological side" whatever gadgets are necessary to promote, maintain (and even increase) wisdom of this general sort. This may well include computers and complex communication devices.
>
> (c) A "high" civilization shall contain whatever is necessary (in educational and religious institutions) to maintain the necessary wisdom in the human population and to give physical, aesthetic, and creative satisfaction to people. There shall be a matching between the flexibility of people and that of the civilization. There shall be diversity in the

> civilization, not *only* to accommodate the genetic and experiential diversity of person, but to provide the flexibility and "preadaptation" necessary for unpredictable change.
>
> (d) A "high" civilization shall be limited in its transactions with environment. It shall consume unreplaceable natural resources only as a means to facilitate necessary change (as a chrysalis in metamorphosis must live on its fat). For the rest, the metabolism of the civilization must depend on the energy income which Spaceship Earth derives from the sun. In this connection, great technical advance is necessary. With present technology, it is probable that the world could only maintain a small fraction of its present human population, using as energy sources only photosynthesis, wind, tide, and water power. (pp. 503-504)

I have quoted these passages at length because they are disturbingly deep in their challenge to our ethical standing as human scientists. One of the strengths of these views is the assertion of the necessity to always return to humans as part of nature and that we need to learn to live within and as a part of it. As Bateson (1972/2000) stated,

> The question is not only ethical in the conventional sense, but it is also an ecological question. The means by which one man influences another are part of the ecology of ideas in their relationship, and part of the larger ecological system within which that relationship exists. . . . We are not outside the ecology for which we plan – we are always and inevitably a part of it. (p. 512)

Ultimately, this is his legacy and the outcome of his search for a natural human system.

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The True Power of Apology: Admitting it Happened in the First Place

K. Kevyne Baar

Abstract

The scholarship surrounding the "power of apology" inevitably hinges on the possibility of forgiveness even when there is no one left to do the forgiving. This article is written to demonstrate that the more responsible end result lies in not forgetting. This thesis will be explored through events ranging from slavery to the Holocaust; in places from Hawaii to South Africa. In his documentary film, *Where to Invade Next*, Michael Moore issues a challenge to America that helped to frame this project. He closes his segment on how Germany deals with the Holocaust by telling us, "that if you acknowledge your dark side, and make amends for it, you can free yourself to be a better people, and to do well by others. If they can do it, surely we can."

Keywords: apology, Hollywood Ten, slavery, lynching, Japanese internment, Little Bighorn, Hawaii, Tuskegee, Georgetown University, Sorry day, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Shoah, Germany, Holocaust.

Editors Note: In 2001, Dr. Baar left a life in theatre and union organizing to pursue a PhD in Human Science at Saybrook Graduate School. Her dissertation, *Investigating Broadway*, became one of the first to be catalogued into the National Archive. Dr. Baar spent the 2013-14 school year teaching at Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey on a Fulbright Award. She is currently writing a book on Broadway and Blacklisting for McFarland & Company Publishers. She can be contacted at: kkbaar@msn.com

The Hollywood Ten

On October 27, 1997, 50 years to the day that the House Committee on Un-American Activities called before it a group of motion picture professionals who would go down in history as the Hollywood Ten, the major Hollywood unions (The Writers' Guild of America, The Directors Guild, The Screen Actors Guild, and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists) came together to apologize for their part in this dark era known as the blacklist. Awards were handed out, apologies given along with the promise it wouldn't happen again. When it was over, I asked blacklisted writer/director Abraham Polonsky how the evening was for him. He remarked, "It wasn't so much that they apologized, but that they admitted it had happened in the first place" (A. Polonsky, personal communication, October 27, 1997). The scholarship surrounding the "power of apology" inevitably hinges on the possibility of that apology leading to forgiveness. This project exists because I never forgot what Abe said to me. I also never forgot a friend who once told me that to forgive someone, to accept an apology, is to allow the action to be repeated. I had a number of Catholic friends growing up, and I was always intrigued by the cycle of confession/repentance/ forgiveness/repeat as necessary. As a teacher of history, it is often startling to my students just how much history really does repeat.

The Unites States Government's Apologies

At this very moment we are being asked by a large segment of our population (at least much larger then I ever would have thought) to erase all the bad stuff, for by doing so, we can "make America great again." In this brief paper I hope to demonstrate that the more responsible end result lies in not being allowed to forget. As civil rights lawyer Bryan Stevenson, (Song, 2016, August 16) creator of the Memorial for Peace and Justice that will commemorate some 4,000 lynching victims, stated in a recent interview that we in the United States, have "a narrative of denial" (Para 12).

Now don't think for a moment that America doesn't apologize, Congress passed a number of joint apology resolutions, although none since 2009.

- Reparations were included when in 1988, Congress passed and President Reagan signed legislation that apologized for the incarceration of Japanese Americans in internment camps between 1942 and 1946 (Yamato, n/d).

- Even renaming a place can raise consciousness. In 1886, ten years after the Battle of Little Big Horn, the site was proclaimed, "National Cemetery of Custer's Battlefield Reservation." It wasn't until 1991 that the site was renamed "Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument" by a law signed by then President George H. W. Bush (Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, n/d).

- In 1993, The Congress apologized "to Native Hawaiians on behalf of the people of the United States for the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii on January 17, 1893 with the participation of agents and citizens of the United States, and the deprivation of the right of Native Hawaiians to self-determination" (United States Public Law 103-150, 1993).

- 1997 found President Bill Clinton formally apologizing to the survivors and relatives affected by the 1932 "Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male." A CNN TIME news article stated: "President Bill Clinton offered an emotional apology today for the U.S. government's notorious Tuskegee syphilis study, calling it shameful and racist" (Clinton Apologizes to Tuskegee Experiment Victims, 1997, May 16, Para 1). The President clarified, "What was done cannot be undone, but we can end the silence" (Clinton Apologizes to Tuskegee Experiment Victims, 1997, May 16, Para 4).

- In 2009, there was S.J.Res.14. Using much of the background material from the 1993 apology to Native Hawaiians, there was a joint resolution to "acknowledge a long history of official depredations and ill-conceived policies by the Federal Government regarding Indian tribes and offer an apology to all Native Peoples on behalf of the United States" (Baucus, et al, 2009, April 30, Para 1).

In looking at these apologies, I am struck by two things: first, there is never a mention of working to make sure the events that brought about these apologies would never happen again, and second, you won't read about most of this in any of your standard El-Hi textbooks.

And then there is Georgetown University. Georgetown University gave us a dramatic example of how an apology might work in today's society: admitting something happened, apologizing, and using descendents as their vehicle for forgiveness. According to Rachel L. Swarns (2016), writing in the *New York Times*:

> Georgetown's president, John J. DeGioia, who announced the measures in a speech on Thursday afternoon, said he would offer a formal apology, create an institute for the study of slavery and erect a public memorial to the slaves whose labor benefited the institution, including those who were sold in 1838 to help keep the university afloat. In addition, two campus buildings will be renamed — one for an enslaved African-American man and the other for an African-American [female] educator who belonged to a Catholic religious order.
>
> …[In addition], Dr. DeGioia's decision to offer an advantage in admissions to descendants, similar to that offered to the children and grandchildren of alumni, is unprecedented, historians say. (Para. 2, & 3)

Argument Against Historical Apology

In Robert R. Weyeneth's (2001) article, "The Power of Apology and the Process of Historical Reconciliation," the history professor presents us with arguments against just such "historical apologies." After each comment he parses the pros and cons of each statement. I leave it to those interested to follow up.

- People alive today did not commit the past acts.
- There are so many past deeds for which to apologize.
- It is time to look forward not backward.
- Why dredge up the past? It's too divisive.
- War is war. There is nothing to apologize for.
- It was a tough decision, and people today cannot understand the historical circumstances at the time.
- It's too easy to use the past as a scapegoat when blame can be found in the present.
- Apologies are just lip service when material support is needed to repair historical injustice. (Weyeneth, 2001)

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that the type of apology discussed here is being used to great effect in a number of foreign countries.

- Since 1998, Australia commemorates a "Sorry Day" which acknowledges one of the injustices done to their indigenous peoples: a government policy that forcibly

> removed Aboriginal children from their families on the assumption that their culture was doomed. (Sorry Day and the Stolen Generations, n/d)

- Established in post-apartheid South Africa in 1995, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission represents an ambitious effort to use admissions about the past to further the process of political reconciliation. (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, n/d)

- Even the Vatican came forward in a report, "We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah" (Commission For Religious Relations With The Jews. 1998, March 16) that acknowledged the Nazi genocide and complicity of some Roman Catholics during World War II to speak out when they saw their Jewish neighbors disappearing with the goal: it "will indeed help to heal the wounds of past misunderstandings and injustices" (Letter of Pope John Paul II, Para 3). And in June of this year Pope Francis said that Christians and the Catholic Church should seek forgiveness from gays for the way they had treated them. (Reuters, 2016, June 26)

For me, the most stunning example of not forgetting that I have personally experienced was in Berlin, Germany. Students as young as 12 years old were at the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp when I visited. They learn at this early age what happened and are already able to acknowledge that it is their responsibility to make sure that it doesn't happen again. Michael Moore, (Shapiro, Staeger, & Birleson, 2015) in his documentary film, *Where to Invade Next,* takes the viewer into just such a classroom and into the streets of Germany. At the conclusion of this segment he tells us, "that if you acknowledge your dark side, and make amends for it, you can free yourself to be a better people, and to do well by others. If they can do it, surely we can".

In accepting the Nobel Peace Prize Ellie Wiesel (1986) spoke of being asked by a young Jewish boy, "What have you done with my future? What have you done with your life?" (Para 6) Wiesel answered:

> And I tell him that I have tried. That I have tried to keep memory alive, that I have tried to fight those who would forget. Because if we forget, we are guilty, we are accomplices.
>
> And then I explained to him how naive we were, that the world did know and remain[ed] silent. And that is why I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Wherever men or women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must – at that moment – become the center of the universe. (Wiesel, 1986, Para 7 & 8)

If there is an action we can take, I believe it lies in not forgetting. It lies in putting history, warts and all, back into our schoolbooks and our curriculum. It lies in understanding those who

are different. It lies in remembering that, unless you are a Native American, we were all once immigrants to what our forebears saw as the promised-land that is the United States of America. It is time we learn from our mistakes and "make America kind again." No apologies needed.

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