VERDANDI

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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ABOUT THE JOURNAL . . .

Verdandi, the scholarly journal of the Honors Program at Westchester Community College, was created to showcase the academic writings of Honors students and to acquaint the campus and community with the Program. Papers published in *Verdandi* were written in different Honors courses on topics assigned by the instructors or on topics developed by the students themselves. Only a small percentage of the essays submitted to the editors are included in each issue of the journal. Those that do appear are chosen on the basis of general interest, readability, and academic quality. They celebrate critical thinking in a wide range of fields.

For more information about *Verdandi* and the WCC Honors Program contact Prof. Mira Sakrajda at 914-785-6472 or Prof. Michael Berkowitz at 785-6915.

ABOUT THE TITLE . . .

Because our campus is located in Valhalla, a place in Norse legend, the founders of the WCC Honors Program decided to look within Norse mythology for a name for this journal. There are three Norse goddesses of time — for the past, present and future. Verdandi is the goddess of the present, and it is her name that was selected.

The Golden Braid of Social Theory: Signs, Language and Myth.

by José Luis Fernández

From the age of the Pre-Socratic philosophers to the meta-pontificating of our postmodern thinkers, intellectual man has engaged in the daunting task of seeking to uncover the exact nature of social reality. Paramount in this quest is the search for plain and universal absolutes; the truth, it is often said, is reducible to simple statements.

Indeed, this exercise is known to students of scholastic philosophy as applying Occam's razor. Named after the medieval philosopher William of Occam, Occam's Razor is a conceptual tool. It maintains that we should never state more than is needed to explain what we can observe; that is, that the most probable theory for explaining anything (a phenomenon) is the one that involves the least deviation from the way we explain other things (phenomena). Thus, accessibility and irreducibility are its joint aims. As part of our own, current search for irreducible facts, the Human Genome Project, for instance, seeks to register the absolute basics of human identification down to a series of Cs As Ts and Gs.

Similarly, gifted cancer researchers sprint to develop life-saving vaccines, building on the monumental data provided by the Nobel Prize winning tandem of Watson and Crick; while popularizers of science doggedly assert how laws that govern nature are held as elegant, economical and easily stated. Building on this idea, contemporary theoretical physicists are enthusiastically enjoined in the race to ascertain the Theory of Everything (TOE).

Perhaps better known as the Unified Field Theory, proponents of "TOE" speculate that the ultimate principle reconciling Einsteinian Relativity with Quantum Mechanics will turn out to be no longer than one inch in length.

Therefore, it is conceivable that future answers to questions posed by superstring theory, non-Euclidean geometry, cognitive neuropsychology, big bang cosmology, the mind/body problem and the harmony of the spheres will be able to be expressed comfortably within the margins of this paper.

Moreover, if one takes the course of intellectual history as a reliable indicator, in his search for valid facts, man has sought to reduce what is known and observable, and then he has endeavored to reduce some more. Once reduced to their basic structures, these facts often manifest in fields that at first appear incongruent, yet proves on closer inspection to be utterly consistent and uniform. This wondrous happening is seen throughout all branches of human undertakings from dramaturgy to Chinese crockery, and is indeed observed all through the study of natural phenomena. Yet while I leave for your deliberation the correspondence between, say, the Crab Nebula with, say, the crockery that accompanies Crab Rangoon, take into consideration what at first glance mistakenly appears gargantuan and irreducible: Wagnerian opera.

Richard Wagner's operas are suffused with thunderous cadences, mellifluous melodies, heroic leitmotifs and a masterly blend of restrained and stentorian vocal virtuosity. Yet, in spite of the palpable genius of Wagner's oeuvres, what enthralls his audiences - indeed, as confirmed by the New York Metropolitan Opera's April 2001 production of Wagner's *Parsifal* with the inimitable Spanish tenor Plácido Domingo in the title role - are leitmotifs replete with psychological impasses, mythological symbolism and the ubiquitous, perhaps unattainable, problem of purification that can never quite find resolution. Richard Wagner was many things, not all of them favorable, but above all he was an artist of grand scope and similar, musical endowments. Accordingly, and in keeping with the aesthetic ideal, the creator of the mammoth tetralogy *Der Ring des Nibelungen* was a seeker of truth and an assessor of vital essences.

Immeasurably influenced by reading the grim and gravity-laden philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer, Wagner found sizeable inspiration from the world of mythology. Most notably, he delved in the Norse and Christian mythological canon and, in particular, the Grail myths: namely, the quest for the Holy Grail. In his work *The Real Wagner,* Rudolph Sabot notes, "One understands [Wagner's] works as manifestations of the search for the hidden interrelations of human striving," (Sabot 135). With his soaring compositions, Wagner strove to uncover the tortuous, yet organized, quintessence of man's daily life. Through his music, Wagner continuously tried to find the illusive quality that binds human experience. As such, much like the aforementioned philosophers, physicists and geneticists, Wagner was, in practice, one who sought to illumine the unseen and shed light on the all too real machinations of social life and all of its relationships.

Consequently, with music as his medium, Wagner, titan of German opera, was in fact engaging in a form of sociological study. By fusing his distinctive orchestral sound with his interpretation of mythology, Wagner was, in a grand sense, trying to provide an understanding of the human condition.

Perhaps more so than any other form of social theory, the movement known as Structuralism presented a bold attempt to provide an outline, or structure, for human interaction. Structuralism emerged primarily from the pioneering work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. Saussure, his seminal work *Cours de Linguistique Générale* would be published posthumously, focused his attention on the nature of the linguistic sign. Basically, Saussure founded a procedure of studying the meaning of signs. Today, his study is known as Semiology to Continental thinkers and as Semiotics to the American acolytes of Charles Sanders Pierce.

In simple terms, Saussure defined the linguistic sign as a two-sided entity. He called this entity a dyad. One side of the dyad possessed what he termed the signifier; on the other side of the dyad was found what he termed the signified. Simply, a "signifier" is the material aspect of a sign (i.e., the letters on this page, a green traffic light, a smile). The "signified" is the meaning of the interpreted sign (i.e., the meaning of the words on this page, the right go in traffic, an interpretation of content).

Interestingly, Saussure stated that the signifier is not real; that is to say, only the signified has authenticity. For instance, there are many words to signify cat: cat, chat, gato, feline, frisky quadruped, Garfield facsimile, et cetera; however, the words, or signs, are meaningless and inconsequential. The reality of the word *cat* is found within the mental concept of "cat." Then, of course, there are different breeds of cats to contend with. Thus, the word *cat* is a poor representation of the mental image of cat. Here, the point must be made that a sign means something to a great degree because it is not something else (in Aristotelian logic this is known as having a negative inference). Simply, when put together, the letters C-A-T represent the mental image of a cat because the letters B-A-T, when put together, do not.

Thus, actuality is revealed only when there is a negative relation: A is A because it is not B. It can be confusing, to say the least, but there are areas where one can turn for enhanced clarity. For example, there are clear parallels between Saussure's semiology and Plato's conception of the "Forms" found in his watershed idea of the "Simile of the Line."

In Book VI of *The Republic,* Plato posited that eternal truths are found within the realm of pure reason, the so-called realm of the Forms. Plato's Simile of the Line theory holds that objects and images are both poor representations of reality. For Plato, reality is found within the realm of pure thought and is deciphered solely by rigorous contemplation. The main point of both Saussure and Plato is the finding that the process of communication through language involves the transfer of the contents of mind; signs, in themselves, are arbitrary.

Therefore, it is the assigned symbols (written and spoken language, icons, gestures, etc.) that create the codes that unlock the routes of understanding between individuals.

It is this combination of the contents of mind, with a special key to unbolt the meaning underlying the sign, that encourages and fosters exchange, understanding and communication. I contend that this idea bears true. For instance, in translating, say, Goethe's <u>Faust</u> from German to Spanish, if languages were simply an arrangement for a set of universal concepts, it would be easy to translate from one to the other. Of course, this is not the case. If the process of language translation were like this, the task of learning new languages would be so much simpler than it really is. Attesting to this view, the literary critic Jonathon Culler observes:

The French "aimer" does not go directly into English; one must choose between "to like" and "to love." "Démarrer" includes in a single idea the English [mental concept] of "starting" and "accelerating." Or again, what English calls "light blue" and "dark blue" and treats as two shades of a single color are in Russian two distinct primary colors, (Culler 31).

Hence, Culler's example serves to better illustrate what Saussure means when he calls the signifier, or material sign, as indiscriminate and arbitrary. The concern, then, for Semioticians is to go beyond language and broaden linguistics structurally by incorporating other signs and symbols like body language, literary texts, customs, mythologies, and, indeed, all known forms of human communication.

The work begun by Saussure was perhaps made most famous by the contributions of the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. Levi-Strauss is celebrated in academic anthropological circles as "the father of structuralism." By studying the large scale, or macro, structures and institutions of the social world, Lévi-Strauss concluded that they were really not structures at all. He found that such large societal structures actually concealed the real, if more succinct, underlying structure of society. Like Saussure and Plato, Lévi-Strauss held that it is the structure of the mind that is the ultimate reality, or prime configuration. This example of Lévi-Strauss's thinking is best illustrated by his model of the similarities between linguistics and kinship systems.

Lévi-Strauss thought that the overall structure of kinship systems (or for that matter, any other system) gave each of its component parts meaning. In other words, it is the relationship of individual components to each other that define themselves. For instance, in his famous study of New Guinea tribesmen, he proposed that marital alliances between groups of tribes took the classic form of a gift-exchange relationship. Not surprisingly, the most important gifts exchanged were women. Thus, Lévi-Strauss came to see the function of kinship systems as regulating and ensuring the exchange of women between groups. In such a system, Lévi-Strauss explained his synthesis of Saussurean semiology and his anthroplogical finding thus:

> The rules of marriage and kinship systems are like a kind of language, that is, they constitute a set of operations whose function is to ensure, between individuals and groups, a certain type of communication, (Lévi-Strauss 154).

Although Lévi-Strauss dedicated the above study to primitive societies, his scrutiny revealed that all societies, including modern ones, have analogous essential structures.

To illustrate this view, Levi-Strauss turned his attention to the study of myths. In his work *Mythologiques*, Lévi-Strauss points out that myths are structures that realize themselves in and through the listener, or interpreter. Furthermore, he states that myths do not have any meaning in themselves, but only in relation to each other. Here, Lévi-Strauss is returning to his semiological roots. Unlike functionalist anthropologists who hold that social phenomena must be explained by finding their hidden utilitarian functions, Lévi-Strauss argues that important forms of behavior have no literal utility whatsoever. Behavior, according to Levi-Strauss, has only symbolic value. For instance, he posits that myths function like languages, so mythology, like linguistics, must locate the basic units of myths. These basic mythological units are given the appellation of mythemes. Mythemes are unique linguistic characteristics or, much like language, rules for forming combinations and exclusion. Recalling semiology, all configurations of language — in this case, myths denoting human behavior — are codes which, when decoded, reveal themselves as attempted solutions for universal human dilemmas. Thus, myths express the contradictions and foibles of life in a structured pattern.

Interestingly, this helps to explain why there are so many parallel myths in seemingly disparate cultures. For instance, there are creation myths in ancient Egyptian, Hebrew, Hindu and Hopi Indian cultures. Myths of the great flood inundate most of all recorded civilizations. As well, similar findings are apparent when one investigates hero myths and tales of the apocalypse. Indeed, in David Adam Leeming's highly praised *The World of Myth,* the following passage deserves special attention:

> In recent times we have gradually broadened our understanding of myth. Psychologists, linguists, and anthropologists have taken us beyond an appreciation of myths as primitive literature, science, or history to a realization of their importance in our own lives today.

When we study mythology now, we tend to concern ourselves with the basic assumptions that define a person, a family, or a culture – with informing reality that resides at the center of being" (Leeming 4).

Simply, myths are a form and extension of our cultural dialectic. Not only are they formed out of language, but are a language in itself. Language, as is often pointed out, mirrors the mind. Therefore, myths, like language, attempt to make cognitive sense out of myriad chaotic data provided by nature. Moreover, "[Levi-Strauss] has always insisted that a myth can be translated only by another myth," (Levi-Strauss x). Hence, just as words have meaning only in relation to other words, myths have meaning only in relation to other myths. This idea is the foundation of structuralism: underlying the overt appearance of facts is a complex and vast network of grids and scaffolds; and it is this frame that supports communication, indeed perhaps reality itself.

The French critic Roland Barthes is another structuralist of note. In his writings, Barthes has employed semiology to study not only literary texts, but also to critically examine contemporary cultural events. In his work *Mythologies*, Barthes exhibits his keen analytical skills as a structuralist, and directs his accipitrine gaze towards mass culture.

However, it must first be noted that Barthes's meaning of myth is closer to what Karl Marx termed "Ideology" rather than what Lévi-Strauss had in mind. This is to say that Barthes considered myths as a form of discourse that tried to make cultural norms appear as facts of nature. Hence, Barthes "demythologizes" by revealing the semiological codes that myths employ. Barthes concludes that "it is possible to complete the semiological definition of myth in a bourgeois society: [simply,] myth is depoliticized speech," (Palmer 59).

One of Barthes' most amusing essays in *Mythologies* is titled "The World of Wrestling." Barthes postulates that the popularity of wrestling matches is due to the form's ability to signify ideas of Good, Evil and Justice. Plainly, these are false views as wrestling matches are not real contests. He continues to describe how the viewing public enjoys watching the wrestling matches even though it is obviously staged. In his study, Barthes examines wrestling as a demonstration of overindulgence. He provides this observation, "[wrestling]gives the audience what it wants: not passion, but the image of passion," (Barthes 25). Signs and images take on a reality of their own. Additionally, Barthes goes on to examine clothes as a fashion system: fashion magazines, billboards and television serve as carriers of information and are, thus, systems of signs. Barthes looks closely at this system and gazes into what is signified by the signifiers of Madison Avenue advertising firms. Running alongside Barthes in this respect is the French social theorist Jean Baudrillard.

Jean Baudrillard contends that consumerism (the buying of goods) is like a linguistic sign. In his works, he emphasizes the abstract code of consumption. For instance, Baudrillard states that, "consumption, in so far as it is meaningful, is a systematic act of the manipulation of signs. Objects are categories of objects which quite tyrannically induce categories of persons," (Horrack 23). The idea behind this statement is that consumers don't just consume objects as signs, they consume the relationship between objects.

Thus, for Baudrillard, social difference is organized by a system of objects. Here, Baudrillard is remaining faithful to his structuralist origins and regards the relational differences between the quality and cultural value of an object. For example, he maintains that an object has not only practical use (e.g., an automobile to get around in), but has symbolic use (e.g., a Mercedes Benz to connote social standing). Thus, for Baudrillard, culture is the production and consumption of signs. He concludes that mass culture is repressive because it holds back individuals from experiencing "truth."

Like the members of the famed Frankfurt School of Social Theory — particularly, Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer — Baudrillard agrees that the "culture industry" supplies illogical ideologies and mediates human experience. The outcome of this construction is an insane rationality where item replications hold more reality to consumers than the original objects. Thus, images of things are deemed more real by consumer culture than the things they are representing. The danger for society, according to Baudrillard, lies in harboring the illusion that these "signs" stand for the truth.

Whatever the outcome for society, the postmodern thinkers that comprise the school of structuralism, at the very least, munificently left much to ruminate about. Their studies constitute a vast, interdisciplinary attack on the nature of social reality. Indeed, one need only to closely read the arts, politics or business sections of today's newspapers to see the effects postmodern theory is having in shaping today's cutting edge thinkers and avant-garde creative artists. Certainly, whether one is reading Clifford Geertz in anthropology, Brian Arthur in economics, or Edward Witten in physics, the exercise remains the same: win or lose, man will endeavor to reduce the vast body of available data to its minimum essence. Like our genetic code being read as a series of Cs As Ts and Gs, and our computer language being a binary series of reading 0s and 1s, the basic units of signs – be they mythemes or Sausurrean dyads – will continue to be broken up, analyzed and decoded for a more precise understanding of the human condition. Through it all, our collective findings must be bound together by discourse. At its start or finish, it is a feat only language can accomplish; a feat only the auriferous knot of language can convey.

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The Vice of Morality: The Paris Peace Negotiations

By Christian A. Fils-Aime

Historian Robert H. Ferrell, in his work "Peace in Their Time," vividly describes the profoundly emotional atmosphere that emanated from the Armistice of 1918. Celebratory bliss abounded in London, Paris, and Washington. Even in Berlin, the multitude of the German armed forces "…looked forward…to returning home and…living in peace the rest of their days" (Ferrell 3). Indeed, there arose in 1918 a deep longing for peace, and a longing for the international mechanisms whereby such an environment could come into being. Henceforth, the overarching purpose of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 was to exact a lasting settlement among the belligerents. However, despite consensus among the victors with respect to this goal, there existed much dissention regarding the means to achieving this so desired end. The French, who were both militarily and psychologically demoralized, sought to attain peace and security through the traditional implementation of the balance of power system. Conversely, the Americans, under the stewardship of Woodrow Wilson, sought to revolutionize and transform the international order by thwarting the balance of power mechanism and replacing it with a system of collective security through a league of nations. In this paper, I will argue that moral propositions, in the context of international relations, are problematic with respect to the negotiating process, for not all nations and peoples conceive morality in the same way.

November 1918 exemplified a profound intellectual and emotional zeal which manifested in dynamic conviction with respect to the idea of peace in the international order. David Lloyd George, British Prime Minister, declared his vision of future world order when he articulated that: "I hope that we may say that thus, this fateful morning, come to an end all wars" (qtd. in Kissinger 218). American President Woodrow Wilson, a vehement advocate of progressive idealism, envisaged a world in which moral principles embodied in the rule of law would replace power politics and the balance of power system of international relations. He "proposed to found peace on the principle of collective security. In his view and that of his disciples, the security of the world called not for the defense of the national interest, but of peace as a legal concept" (Kissinger 222).

Wilson observed the traditional European balance-of-power system as a fundamentally amoral, hence destructive, method of conducting foreign policy, for it agitated and militated against the inherent and natural harmony of humanity. He perceived this system, moreover, as one of the "…root causes of the war and related disturbances…" (Knock ix). He thus argued that "[t]here must be not a balance of power but a community of power" (qtd. in Buehrig 260). Moreover, according to Wilson's thought, victory must cease to exist as a war aim in order for a true and lasting peace to manifest, "…for only a peace between equals can last" (qtd. in Buehrig 260).[1] Historian Norman A. Graebner writes:

> For Woodrow Wilson such mundane objectives as the preservation of the national interest and the balance of power simply underestimated the moral and intellectual resources of the nation [America] to reform the entire international order…[H]e was unable to conceive of international relations except in moral terms…His acceptance of…nonpower approaches to international settlements, such as arbitration conventions and cooling-off treaties, was reinforced by his own deep faith in democratic processes.
> (409)

For Wilson, however, geopolitics and power considerations were an aberration of human goodness. He was concerned only with the moral outcome; yet, he did not believe that the means justified the ends. Wilson expresses his view with these words:

> War before this one used to be a sort of national excursion…with brilliant battles lost and won, national heroes decorated, and all sharing in the glory accruing to the state. But can this vast, gruesome contest of systematized destruction…be pictured in that light…wherein the big, striking think for the imagination to respond to was untold human suffering? . . . Where is any longer the glory commensurate with the sacrifice of the millions of men required in modern warfare to carry and defend Verdun?
> (Knock 107)

Hence, according to this view, morality was perceived as a necessity in the process of attaining a lasting peace. According to Henry Kissinger, former American Secretary of State, this moral inclination manifested into ideals that "…held that peace depends on the spread of democracy, that states should be judged by the same ethical criteria as individuals, and that the national interest consists of adhering to a universal system of law" (30). Thereupon, international treaties and organizations such as the League of Nations would provide the state system with a moral doctrine through which peace would become an attainable aspiration.

According to the idealist perspective, there exists a fundamental tension between the moral law and traditional modes of national security. They are, in essence, diametrically opposed concepts, wherein the pursuit of one objective results necessarily in the abdication of the other. Nevertheless, this distinction was eradicated in the context of Wilson's political thinking. Indeed, the moral law was, in Wilson's view, the means whereby national security would be achieved. Recourse to war was illusory for it subverted the harmony inherently manifest in human nature; to pursue war was to engage in a process detrimental to national security. Likewise, to engage in a war for the explicit purpose of achieving national security objectives independent of principled considerations was tantamount to a declaration of war upon the premise of collective security. Thus arise the questions: How does a world order based upon the rule of law and moral principles provide for national security without violating the premise of its existence? Moreover, how are differing conceptions and interpretations of moral formulas reconciled without resulting in additional conflict? These were, indeed, questions which would plague the Peace Conference, especially with respect to the opposed positions of the United States and France.

The American position preceding the Paris Peace Conference was profoundly influenced by Wilson. He insisted that his Fourteen Points be the unequivocal basis for a settlement. However, "Wilson's idealism stopped short of the belief that his views would prevail in Europe on their inherent merits" (Kissinger 224). He clearly understood the European position and recognized that the diplomatic tradition that existed would persist unless it was acted upon by an external agency able to produce change. Thus Wilson, perceiving the financial degradation upon Europe as a result of the war, sought to exploit their dependence upon American aid so as to ensure the application of the Fourteen Points to the peace process. Thus, in a note to Colonel House written in April of 1917, Wilson argued that "[w]hen the war is over we can force them [Allied Powers] to our way of thinking, because by that time they will, among other things, be financially in our hands" (qtd. in Kissinger 224).

Colonel House, writing in his diary, illustrated the prominent position the League of Nations held within Wilson's mind. House described how "[t]he President…desired to…take up the most important subject with Clemenceau—the League of Nations…" (Czernin 84). One may thus ask: the League manifested as the most important subject with respect to whom? France did not desire to be a part of such an abstract approach to the implementation of a peace process, and did not perceive that security requirements could be achieved against the backdrop of such principles.

Indeed, "[t]he French statesmen were fully aware that their program ran counter to the letter and the spirit of President Wilson's Fourteen Point peace program, to which France had subscribed to by accepting the Pre-Armistice Agreement" (Czernin 46). The French, however, were resolute with regard to their security objectives. Thus, according to Ray Stannard Baker, Wilson's foremost public relations officer, "[t]he French had their programme worked out before the Peace Conference met. They were the first to place their memoranda in the President's hands. No other nation approached them…in diplomatic preparedness of singleness of purpose" (qtd. in Czernin 47).

Henceforth, Clemenceau's unequivocal politico-military objective was the pursuit of national security for France. The French had a four-fold plan for achieving this overarching war aim. The first of these objectives was the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine to the dictates and control of French sovereignty. The second, and somewhat overlapping, war aim was to provide France with the ability to decide the extent to which Lorraine, which possessed high levels of iron ore and coal, would be included within their borders. Third, the territories which existed on the left bank of the Rhine were to be severed from German rule, and these territories were to be granted autonomy, hence forming an independent state. Moreover, the state was to be occupied by the French military "…until such time as the enemy states have completely satisfied all the conditions and guarantees indicated in the Treaty of peace" (qtd in Czernin 45).

Conceptually, "France's peace aims were very simple: guaranteed security for France. The peace which was to be hammered out would have to make quite sure that Germany would never again be able to menace her" (Czernin 44). However, in order to achieve these aims, France would have to reconcile their strategy with the American inclination toward collective security—a concept quite foreign to the French, and all of Europe for that matter.

Georges Clemenceau, the French Head of Government, did not entirely disdain the concept of collective security, especially if it could indeed provide additional security for France. However, he questioned the ability of such a system to manifest into existence. Furthermore, he questioned exactly what such a system would consist of and how it would work. Ten days after his meeting with Wilson, Clemenceau addressed the chamber of deputies with these words:

> With regard to international guarantees…I will say that if France is permitted to establish her own defense…I, personally, will joyfully accept any additional supplementary guarantees that may be offered to us…I would be lying if I said that I immediately agreed with him [Wilson] on all points. As I remarked a little while ago, America is far removed from the frontiers of Germany. I have, perhaps, preoccupations which, I would not exactly say are foreign to him, but which do not affect him as closely as they do a man who, for four years, has watched his country being devastated…
>
> (Czernin 84-85)

Hereupon, France sought, with great energy, a settlement that would provide tangible security guarantees from a perceived German threat. On November 30, during an evening meeting in London, Marshal Ferdinand Foch, France's Commander-in-Chief, explicitly articulated and defended the concerns for French security. He argued that a dense population of Germans in the Rhine—estimated at approximately fifty-five to seventy five million—may be inclined to endeavor, retrospectively, to their objective of 1914. He writes:

In such an event, what would be the means of defense? If there were no material barriers set up, and no special precaution is taken, the invasion of France, Luxembourg, and Belgium, might again be undertaken. More particularly, the Belgium Coast would be easier for the enemy to reach, for they now realized the importance of it, and would endeavor to cut England from France. The natural barrier against such an invasion was the Rhine (Czernin 48).

Lloyd George, in response to Mr. Foch's analysis, inquired of the specific objectives for which France endeavored. Foch argued that the objective would consist of creating a viable buffer state between France and Germany. The State, moreover, must not be neutral for "[i]t was perfectly useless to rely on neutral states as barriers" (Czernin 48). Foch therefore would work to assemble a coalition of nations on the left bank of the Rhine. If this objective were completed successfully, Germany would be militarily incapable of westward aggression; however, if the buffer zone were henceforth not established, the Rhine would be vulnerable to an attack similar to that of 1914. And if this did occur, the French insisted that "…it was absolutely essential…" (Czernin 49) the American and British forces supplement their security requirements. Because the partitioning of Germany was deemed morally unacceptable by America, and because France insisted upon the strategic fallibility of collective endeavors toward security objectives, "…the only remaining solution to France's problem was an American and British pledge to defend it" (Kissinger 233).

To this end, however, the Americans and the British exemplified a profound reluctance. Thus, France's security dilemma was propounded by a psychological insecurity that only exacerbated the perceived need for an uncompromising security apparatus. Indeed, France "…now found itself in a truly tragic position. For two centuries it had struggled to achieve the mastery of Europe, but, in the war's aftermath, it no longer had the confidence in its ability to protect even its own frontiers against a defeated enemy" (Kissinger 228).

How were the French and the Americans to reconcile such fundamentally differing views on how to construct a viable settlement? Wilson, due to his uncompromising idealistic posture, "…from the outset, rejected all the plans drawn up by the French Foreign Office…" (Czernin 74). France, however, due to the devastation that it had incurred, was not willing to compromise its security objectives. "The attempt to reconcile American idealism with France's nightmares," according to Kissinger, "turned out to be beyond human ingenuity" (229). Kissinger, furthermore, implies that America's moral posture was reinforced by its geographical location. He writes:

> With no such assurances forthcoming, France was reduced to pleading for expedients. Geography protected America, and the surrender of the German fleet had dispersed British concerns about control of the seas. France alone among the victors was being asked to rest its security on world opinion.
>
> (Kissinger 233)

What was France to do? Neither America nor Great Britain were prepared to agree to a formal security guarantee. Was France supposed to depend solely on the League of Nations? The options that were available to France were seemingly obsolete. They could not achieve security independent of American and British power; however, they were equally unable to attain a tangible guarantee. Thus the French continued to fight for the dismemberment of Germany and the creation of an independent buffer state. The United States and Great Britain, perceiving this policy as fundamentally destructive to the moral principle of self-determination, sought to create an incentive that would propel the French toward the abdication of such an action. Kissinger elaborates on this point with these words:

> In an effort to placate France, Wilson and the British leaders offered as a substitute for the dismemberment of Germany a treaty guaranteeing the new settlement. America and Great Britain would agree to go to war if Germany violated the settlement…[However], Great Britain and the United States did not really believe in a German threat; they offered their guarantees without being either convinced that it was necessary or particularly determined to implement it (238).

In the end, because the United States' Senate did not ratify the Treaty of Versailles, the guarantee became a moot point (Kissinger 238). France's security objectives became, by default, dependent upon the principles of collective security.

Stephane Lauzane, editor in chief of *Le Mation*, a French publication, argued that the Versailles Treaty of 1919, which was very much a product of Wilson's moral thought as manifested through his works and deeds, was "…a compromise between a Wilsonian idealism and a Napoleonic realism which irritated Germany without offering France any security guarantees" (Graebner 499). Lauzanne contended, furthermore, that "[t]he Treaty does not give birth to a true League of Nations with a charter, court, army, police, and a means of coercion. As a matter of fact it constitutes little more than a debating Society…There will be much talk, much writing, but little or no action" (Graebner 500).

According to the final provisions of the Treaty, Germany was legally obligated to cede 13 percent of the territory that it had acquired prior to the war. Upper Silesia, which was considered to be important with respect to economic considerations, was appropriated to a newly established Poland, hence the manifestation of the "Polish Corridor." Moreover, Eupen-et-Malmedy, a geographically small territory, was appropriated to Belgium, and Alsace-Lorraine was expropriated to France (Kissinger 239). The German Army, according to the Treaty, had to be reduced to 100,000 volunteers, while its Navy was reduced to a level at which it was rendered almost obsolete (Shrirer 91, Kissinger 239)

The actual provisions of the Peace Treaty, in the end, only exacerbated France's security dilemma with respect to Germany. Kissinger describes this dilemma as a manifestation of a political "paradox."

> . . . France's vulnerability and Germany's strategic advantage were both magnified by the Treaty of Versailles despite its punitive

> provisions. Before the war Germany had faced strong neighbors in both the East and the West. It could not expand in either direction without encountering a major state . . . But after the Treaty of Versailles, there was no longer a counterweight to Germany in the East. With France weakened, the Austro-Hungarian Empire dissolved, and Russia out of the picture for some time, there was simply no way of restructuring the old balance of power, especially since the Anglo-Saxon powers refused to guarantee the Versailles settlement.
>
> (242-243)

Notwithstanding the demise of the Treaty of Versailles in the American Senate, Wilson's thought was nevertheless still omnipresent in the Treaty's provisions. Moreover, in the end, due to power asymmetries, essentially France's weakness compared to the relative strength of the United States—France had little choice but to accept the American articulation of morality as it manifested in the ideal principles of collective security. Intransigence gave way to necessity, and the obvious lack of power left the French vulnerable to external influence, therefore circumscribing their range of choice.

The war aims of both the United States and France had been thrust into a position of a seemingly intractable conflict. America endeavored to achieve an international order based on the rule of law and moral principles through the League of Nations—the doctrine of collective security. France desired to achieve security through the mode of traditional alliances; peace settlements were to be determined through a profound analysis of military and geopolitical factors. America perceived the balance of power system as an inherently evil devise. Conversely, France perceived the doctrine of collective security as a political absurdity. At the conclusion of the Paris Peace Conference, it could be argued, the American version of diplomacy and international relations had one out, but not without implications.

The particular objectives of the Americans and the French at the Paris Peace Conference tend to obscure the deeper moral implications that were inherent in the process. The essential problems that arise from the application of moral principles to international relations are thus: who decides as to what moral proposition is right? Must right moral prescriptions necessarily emanate from the powerful? If a weak state, such as France, seeks to impart what it perceives as moral upon the international order, how could such principles ever be enforced without the requisite power? Moreover, and more germane to the Peace Conference, how do nations reconcile their differing interpretations of what "should be" without exacerbating further conflict?

Wilson was cognizant of the vast human suffering that was produced by the war. Moreover, he perceived such an outcome of human action as without having recourse to moral principle, for if these were principled actions, the suffering, the pain, and utter destruction that troubled Wilson would cease to exist. Unfortunately for Wilson, his proposed alternative to war, the League of Nations, was not capable of alleviating such disasters of carnage such as the war which had just ended. Its flaws were both philosophical and practical in nature; the philosophical emanating from the practical. Not all nations and peoples conceive what is moral in the same way.

Despite France's willingness to examine Wilson's normative moral theorems, to concede that he was right would be, for the French, to declare that their security and survival as a nation was not only a secondary concern to Wilson's principles, but, moreover, to concede that their exhortations with regard to what security itself should consist of was, at its essence, immoral. The French and American positions stood in a profound, mutual, contradiction to each other. Indeed, the American side articulated that "such a peace [the French proposal] would then be made as would be contrary to everything we have stood for" (qtd. in Kissinger 233). France was possessed of similar inclinations toward the American peace proposal.

The debacle over France's security in the context of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 made manifest the problems inherent in applying moral principles at the international level. First, to claim that amorality pervades the international system is to argue that a nation's instinct and ability to protect itself does not conform to moral principles; that, essentially, acts of survival do not possess intrinsic moral value. This proposition, however, stands in contradistinction to historically existent conceptions and incarnations of social phenomena. John H. Herz, in an analysis of the root cause of political conflict, examines this concept with clarity:

> With the development of consciousness of the natural limitation of one's life, this life itself assumes a different character. It becomes something expanded, something between a beginning and a necessary end, filled with "lived through" …time, events making it a story in the remembrance, actual lived through, and prescience of which man becomes an "historical" being (2).

Fear of death, dread of postulated realities, and anxiety with regard to the unknown constitute the conceptual phenomena that perpetuate insecurity in the human mind. Indeed, the individual's natural contemplation of the problematic of mortality, the self-realization that finite being is a tragically inescapable reality, creates a profound psychological propensity toward the principle of self-preservation.

Second, the idea that principle should be the basis of international order presupposes that there exists an objective moral reality that can readily be discerned by the observer. However, the mere existence of cultural variance provides problems for such an articulation. Kissinger writes:

> The whole domestic effort of a people exhibits an effort to transform force into obligation by means of a consensus on the nature of justice. The more spontaneous the pattern of obligation, the more "natural" and "universal" will social values appear. But the international experience of a people is a challenge to the universality of its notion of justice, for the stability of an international order depends on self-limitation, on the reconciliation of different versions of legitimacy…Not for nothing do so many nations exhibit a powerful if subconscious rebellion against foreign policy, which leaves the travails of the soul inherent in arriving at decisions unrewarded, against this double standard which considers what is defined as "justice" domestically, merely an object for negotiation internationally.
>
> (qtd. in Cleva 56-57).

A proposition that is purported to be moral in nature implies that the proposition must be "right." It is by virtue of its very postulation that a moral proposition must not be wrong. Hence, in international relations, if a nation X asserts that its policy with respect to nation Y is moral, and nation Y has a contradicting policy, it must follow that nation Y's policy is not moral and cannot be right from the relative perspective of nation X. The argument is applicable, moreover, in a reciprocal instance. Thus, any resolution of a conflict between competing prescriptions and conceptions of morality will always, by virtue of necessity, produce a perceived injustice on one side or the other. This was indeed the dilemma of the Americans and the French in the post World War I era, a dilemma that would require the resolution of a paradox in order to become fruitful policy.

1. Buehrig argued that "…underlying Wilson's whole policy of peace without victory…was an appreciation of the balance-of-power point of view: namely, that stability is to be found in an equilibrium of forces no less than in moral excellence" (274). Graebner, contarily, argues that "…there is little *evidence that… his [Wilson] later opposition to a German victory was motivated by a desire to preserve the European balance of power" (409).*

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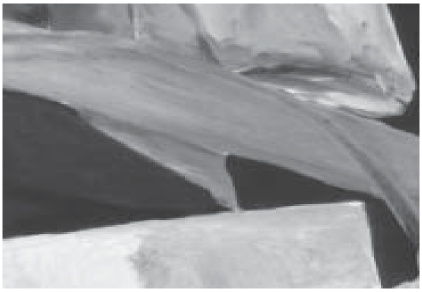

The Introduction of the Euro in the EC Countries: A Gamble For Political and Economic Unification

By Sonja Hahn

In 1848 Victor Hugo, French poet, novelist, dramatist, and most important of the French Romantic writers, well known for such novels as *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831) and *Les Misérables* (1862), said, "[a] day will come when all nations on our continent will form a European brotherhood… A day will come when we shall see… the United States of America and the United States of Europe, face to face, reaching out for each other across the seas." Even if the idea of a united Europe developed fairly early in the last century, the first initiatives to establish a union of European countries were made in the aftermath of the Second World War. This paper will discuss the history of the euro, including reasons why the euro was introduced, and will provide background information regarding the advantages and disadvantages the introduction of the euro will bring.

Ratified in 1958, the Treaty of Rome instituted a European Economic Community of six Member States, which became the driving force behind subsequent unification initiatives (Chabot 32). However, it was the Maastricht Treaty, ratified by referendum in 1992, which provided for the introduction of a European single currency, called the euro, no later than 1 January 1999 (Chabot 37).

What exactly does the euro stand for and what does it mean for participating countries? The euro is the monetary unit of the European Union (EU). The euro was introduced in 1999 and has replaced the Austrian schilling, Belgian franc, Finnish markka, French franc, German mark, Irish punt, Italian lira, Luxembourg franc, Dutch guilder, Portuguese escudo, and Spanish peseta as the exclusive legal tender of those 11 nations as of January 2002. Former national currencies were permanently eliminated. Instead, these 11 countries are sharing a common currency, a single monetary policy, and a single foreign exchange rate policy (Chabot 5). The euro is represented by the symbol . To avoid any struggles between member countries, the name euro was chosen as a complete name, not just a prefix affixed to the names of national currencies (www.cmutuel.com).

Currencies play a crucial role in the functioning of modern economies. Currency is not only a standardized value of measurement that serves as a consistent way of expressing value. Currency also functions as an efficient means of payment, which makes it possible to avoid having to list prices of every product for which one specific product could be traded with. Further, currencies serve as a store of value, allowing us to transport wealth easily over a distance and to store it for indefinite periods of time (Pride 479). Participating countries have the opportunity to take advantage of one currency when they invest their money, travel in Europe and conduct business with other member countries. However, the euro is not an economic project as many people think. The euro really is an intensely political project that has been deeply entangled in European history for many years.

The euro was born on January 1, 1999. Legally, the euro became the national currency of the eleven countries participating in the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) on that date. The euro came into existence in two ways. First, the euro replaced the European currency unit (Ecu) in 1999 (McArdle 21). The Ecu was a notional unit of exchange, conceived in 1979 based upon a “basket,” or weighted combination, of the currencies of nations that belonged to the European Community. The principal currencies involved were the German mark, the French franc, the British pound sterling, and the Italian lira. The Ecu’s goal was to establish a single currency of a unified western European economy. It was used in commercial banking transactions because its relative stability rendered it more suitable than a national currency for fixing contractual terms. In the early 1990s, the Ecu became the second most widely used currency after the U.S. dollar in the international bond market (www.Britannica.com). Second, fixed conversion rates for each of the eleven national currencies to the euro came in force (McArdle 21). 1.9666267 German mark was fixed to 1 euro, while 0.790322 Irish punt was fixed to 1 euro (McArdle, 23).

Historical Background

The euro is part and parcel of the more general process of European political unification, a process that has captivated political leaders for decades and has often been pursued without regard to economic logic. It all began in 1946 when Winston Churchill, the former British Prime Minister, urged a union between the countries of Europe and reconciliation between France and Germany (www.cmutuel.com). He believed that the creation of a single European government would usher in an era of lasting peace to a continent destroyed by two world wars. In 1947, U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall announced $13 billion in U.S. aid over 4 years to help fight hunger, poverty, despair, chaos and to restore the European economy. In order to receive American financial assistance, European countries had to make coordinated efforts to rebuild their continent. Coal and steel led to the next step in the European unification. Since coal and steel were the most important strategic resources of the time, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was established. Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg signed the ECSC. The creators were required to delegate their powers over those resources to an independent authority made up of 9 members appointed for six years, operating independently from national governments (www.cmutuel.com). Despite the economic nature of the agreement, it was primarily designed to prevent any military conflicts between France and Germany. The ECSC definitely supported a greater political cooperation between its members.

To guarantee economic development and thereby political stability in Europe, France, West Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Italy ratified the Treaty of Rome in1958 and signed the ECC (European Economic Community) (Chabot 32). The EEC's two objectives were to 1) liberalize trade in order to foster a common market and 2) to ensure implementation of common economic policies by the member countries (www.cmutuel.com). The Common Market mechanism focused on free circulation of goods and free circulation of labor in Europe. The EEC was very successful in stimulating trade in Europe; however, establishing a lasting peace in western Europe seemed to be more important than developing free market ideologies.

In 1944, the International Monetary System (IMS) was born in Bretton Woods, a small town in the United States. This system was based on two principles. First, the dollar became the benchmark currency and second, currencies were pegged to official parities and allowed to fluctuate only 1 percent above or below pre-designated values (Chabot 33). The Bretton Woods fixed-exchange rate system played a crucial role in restoring economic growth and stability to Europe in the postwar period, even though Bretton Woods showed increasing signs of weakness in the late 1960's. The stability of European currencies was in danger because the German mark and the French franc were devalued. Finally, President Nixon decided not to risk America's gold reserves for the sake of maintaining Bretton Woods' predefined exchange rates against the dollar. The dollar was floated and resulted in the collapse of the Bretton Woods system.

The European answer to the collapse of the Bretton Woods system was the creation of the European Monetary System (EMS) in 1979 (Chabot 33). The EMS was based on four principles. First, a common account unit named Ecu was created. Second, each ECC currency had an official exchange rate to the ecu, where a fluctuation band of 2.25% was accepted. Third, all countries helped support the official parities, which for example meant that if the lira threatened to drop out of the fluctuation band, all Central Banks in the EMS intervened to support it. And fourth, reserves were pooled in order to maintain solidarity between member states (www.cmutuel.com).

The Single European Act of 1987 promised to systematically remove any border checks, tariffs, customs, and capital and labor restrictions that still remained after decades of efforts to unify European economies. Its objective was to reach an unrestricted common market by the end of 1992, which began with the elimination of barriers to banking, securities, insurance, and other financial services (Chabot 36).

Shortly after the EC passed the Single European Act, Jacques Delors, then president of the European Commission, published a report that revised the idea of Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Delors presented a plan for implementing a monetary union calling for the creation of a single trans-European currency. It was extremely well received by those who believed that integration was the best way to produce long lasting peace in Europe as well as by those who were only interested in economic progress.

Implementation

The first stage of the EMU took place in July 1990 and had the same general ideas as the Single Act: to ensure that all restrictions on the movement of goods, services, labor, and capital were permanently eliminated (www.cmutuel.com). The second stage of the EMU started on January 1, 1994, and was characterized by the establishment of the European Monetary Institute (EMI) to improve coordination of monetary policy and to lay the technical groundwork for changeover to the single currency. Stage two also witnessed the first use of the term euro (Chabot 37).

In December 1995, the Madrid Council agreed on the name euro for the single currency. Further, a changeover scenario to the single currency was created, which is also characterized by three phases. The first phase (May 3, 1998 to December 31, 1998) is characterized by the European Council designating the countries participating in the Economic and Monetary Union according to the five convergence criteria, which I will explain later, stipulated in the Maastricht Treaty. The second phase, from January 1, 1999 to December 31, 2001, was given to commercial banks to change over their entire business to the single currency and to manufacture notes and coins in the single currency. The euro remained a scriptural currency; banknotes and coins were not available at that time. A single monetary policy for the euro-zone came into the picture and various legislation came into force, notably on the legal status of the euro (www.europa.eu.int). The transition period, which is characterized as the orderly changeover to the euro by the whole economy, took place in the beginning of January 1999 through December 2001 (www.europa.eu.int). At the end of 2001 banks and large retailers were "frontloaded" with euro banknotes and coins. And finally, the third phase (January 1, 2002 to June 31, 2002) introduces the euro-denominated notes and coins. During this phase, the general public starts using the euro. This is also the time in which government administrations complete changeover of public accounting, taxation, social security and so forth (www.cmutuel.com). By February 28, 2002, national banknotes and coins should have been withdrawn from use and the short dual circulation period should end (www.europa.eu.int).

The third stage of the EMU began on January 1, 1999, where countries that met the convergence criteria officially adopted the euro as the single currency (www.cmutuel.com). These criteria included: "annual budget deficits not exceeding 3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), public debt under 60 percent of GDP, exchange rate stability, inflation rates within 1.5 percent of the three lowest inflation rates in the EU, and long-term inflation rates within 2 percent" (www.Britannica.com). The "Maastricht Treaty" further decided to add that a country must be a member of the European Union in order to participate in the common currency. Membership in the EU requires, among other things, the removal of trade barriers and tariffs, the streamlining of customs, the elimination of passport controls, and the willingness to surrender limited political authority to an independent body (Chabot 20). The EU created these criteria to ensure that (1) any country joining the monetary union is fiscally responsible, and (2) participating countries are sufficiently similar to warrant a single monetary policy.

Currencies are an important source of national identity and symbolism. Honoring these characteristics, the European Monetary Institute held an official design competition between February and September of 1996. In addition to a few practical restrictions, competitors were prohibited from entering images that could be associated with any particular country. An Austrian designer named Robert Kalina, an employee of the Austrian National bank, won this competition. Each of the seven banknotes reflect a specific period of European history: Classical, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, the age of iron and glass, and Modern. As a theme, Kalina chose "bridges, gates, and windows," but none of his images are similar to any popular buildings in Europe. Euro coins were not part of the design competition. The faces of euro coins depict maps of Europe and the 12 stars of the European Union, while the reverse sides feature national symbols. Since the 11 individual countries, as opposed to the European Central Bank located in Frankfurt, Germany, mint euro coins each national government is responsible for the reverse side of those coins printed in its country. Also, the official International Standards Organization (ISO) code for euro is "EUR" (Chabot 10 and 15). Further, the euro symbol was chosen following extensive public research across the European union. This symbol "was chosen for its stability, combination of modern look and classic lines, and because it projects a strong image" (www.cmutuel.com).

Risks and Concerns

Of course there were concerns about a single currency, including worries about loss of national sovereignty and national identity. Britain, Denmark and Sweden, for example, delayed their participation in the euro project and excluded themselves from the participating countries also known as the euro area, euroland, or euro zone. Public opinion in those countries is highly fractured, and leading political parties are hostile to the euro. The British, for example, have long prided themselves on independence from the rest of the continent and, with a booming economy during 1997-1998, saw little benefit from joining the monetary union (Cowell). It even went so far in Britain that William Hague, Conservative Party leader, characterized Prime Minister Tony Blair's Outline National Changeover Plan as a "national hand-over plan that would hand over the economic and political freedoms of the country" (Cowell). Before they will commit to joining the Euro, British authorities are looking for evidence of greater economic flexibility on the continent, positive gains for investment and the British financial services industry, and guarantees that euro membership would not lead to greater unemployment. British inflation rates are comparable to the other euro nations, but British unemployment rates are about half the continental average of about 10 percent (Cowell). In Denmark, voters are generally unsupportive of European unification and specifically opposed to the euro. And in Sweden, sharp political disagreement over the euro has fractured the major political parties and left public sentiment toward the euro somewhat hostile. Sweden tends to see international alliances with skepticism; it didn't even join the European Union until 1995 (Chabot 25).

Britain, Denmark and Sweden are three strong economies. Their reluctance to join the euro project might make outside observers think there are too many costs involved with the introduction of the euro. There are definitely three costs I would like to mention to make clear that the euro has disadvantages as well as advantages. First, transition costs exist. Billions of dollars were spent to adjust invoices, price lists, price tags, office forms, payrolls, bank accounts, databases, keyboards, software programs, vending machines, ATM's, parking meters, phone booths, postage meters, and counting machines, to name only a few items. Production of the euro coins and notes required billions of dollars.

Second, there were the countless training and disruption costs of making euro transitions (Chabot 50). Job losses are also a concern. Currency traders and analysts are wondering where their income will come from once EMU is fully completed. The Accounting Firm Price Waterhouse estimates that some banks could lose up to 50 percent of their foreign exchange business and 60 percent of their revenue from bond arbitrage trading (Chabot 50). Bureaux de change are clear losers in EMU, losing perhaps $1.9 billion, or two-thirds of their business, by 2010 (Cohen 11). Even if some of these jobs are going to be replaced by jobs associated with software and office machines, the sheer magnitude of EMU poses a painful threat to many professions.

Third, there were the opportunity costs. We must consider the tremendous effort devoted to developing the project by local, regional, national, and international governments, as well as the countless hours of analysis and preparation required by the private sector. Critics argue here that these billions of dollars could have been used to reform Europe's troubling structural problems, such as those stemming from unemployment, unsustainable public welfare programs, skewed taxation systems, stagnant innovation, or ineffective privatization. Although it is impossible to measure the euro's total opportunity cost, all parties agree that the investment has been enormous (Chabot 51).

It is crucial to realize that there are two major risks that could disrupt, or even destroy, the euro's success. The first risk is that countries could suffer economic shocks. Economic shocks are unexpected changes in the macroeconomic environment of a country or region that disrupt the careful balance of production, consumption, investment, government spending, and trade (Chabot 52). The asymmetric shock is the most threatening type of economic shock for a single currency area. It is called asymmetric shock because shocks like that affect countries unequally. They can be caused by sharp declines or increases in demand for the primary goods and services of a specific country. For example, if the world demand for wine and tourism declines, France is hit much harder than Finland or Belgium. Economic growth in one country slows while that in surrounding countries does not. Before the euro countries could handle asymmetric shocks by interest adjustment, exchange rate intervention, and fiscal adjustment (Chabot 52). However, the euro makes independent interest rate adjustments impossible, because Euroland's national central banks surrendered monetary policy authority to the European Central Bank in Frankfurt, Germany. Further, if an asymmetric shock sent a country into recession, government spending generally increases because unemployment and social welfare costs rise during hard times (Chabot 54). Government tax receipts decrease because fewer people are working and wages stagnate. Governments go into debt so they can spend more money on social programs. However, the euro introduces severe restraints on such fiscal stabilizers, because participants must adhere to the new Stability & Growth Pact, the agreement that requires deficits to be less than 3.0 percent of GDP. Basically, the euro precludes independent interest rate movements, it prevents currency devaluations and it restricts the ability of government spending to stabilize an economy (Chabot 54). The combination of these three factors shows the biggest threat to the euro. Further, the European Union lacks an effective international fiscal transfer system. Most taxes are paid to national and local governments and very small fiscal transfers occur between Euroland nations. The chances that such transfers will increase in the future are slim, because continental politicians who propose large fiscal transfers to other countries sign "political death warrants" (Chabot 57). The significant risk that fiscal transfers will be unable to cope with the dangerous economic disparities that follow asymmetric shocks shows another big threat.

A second risk is that of political discord. European political integration is still in its infancy. Member governments may become financially profligate, thereby endangering the viability of a single currency. Fiscally conservative and stable countries may be hurt by the excessive borrowing of others because the "excess demands on the capital market of a heavy borrower push up the cost of borrowing for everyone else borrowing in euros, even though distinct national interest rates still exist" (Currie). Additionally, there is also the risk that a member government may become insolvent, which would unnerve financial markets and thereby destabilize all Euroland economies. Last but not least, we also need to consider that Euroland does not have a president like the United States of America. There could possibly be tension between member countries because they are lacking a strong political union.

It is debatable whether the euro's advantages really outweigh its disadvantages. No one really knows whether the euro's long-term advantages outweigh the risks posed by economic shocks and political instability. However, we cannot forget that from the beginning the euro had only a pure political goal of a united and integrated Europe. It is a great gamble that the European Union has taken, whose outcome won't be determined until the next big economic downturn (Chabot 59). But one thing is for sure: the EMU is one of the most exciting economic events of recent history.

The Future

Despite the disadvantages, the euro promises macroeconomic stability for its member countries. The euro introduces a new regime of low inflation and macroeconomic stability for many Euroland countries. This is the case because the European Central Bank (ECB) is the most independent central bank in the world. Therefore, it is less likely to succumb to the political pressures of its government to allow an economy to grow too fast or to finance excessive public expenditures. EU leaders further hope that the euro will become a major international reserve currency, which are used by central banks, governments, and private firms worldwide as a long-term store of value and to meet their ongoing financial requirements (Chabot 48).

The big gamble of the euro has advantages and disadvantages. Many think that the euro will deliver Europe to a golden age of higher economic growth while others fear that national sovereignty will be eliminated and political struggles will arise between the member countries. We will know better in the coming years, when euro banknotes and coins will be well circulated and we will see how Europeans adapt to the complete changeover to the euro. Until then, we must speculate about all the pros and cons regarding the euro.

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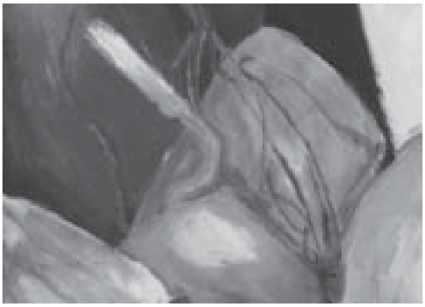

The Imprisonment of the Soul: Consequences of the Modern Penal System

by Beth Kostrzewa

The stigma of serving time is permanent. Excluding state facilities, the Federal Bureau of Prisons currently incarcerates 170,000 inmates. With no solid and effective rehabilitation programs, recidivism is on the rise. This paper examines the United States penal system and how it affects the lives of those it holds within its walls. The goal of this paper is to elucidate the degradation of the inmate's soul as transformed by prison culture. Through examination of the steps that should be taken to prepare inmates for life after incarceration, it is possible to provide the insights necessary to fuel reasonable humanitarian prison reform.

> On a windowsill beyond the bars a pigeon stands on pink feet, chest fluffed out, preening in the morning sun. Some paint has peeled off the painted-over window, and, pressing my forehead right up against the cold glass, I peek out at him sitting there, a universe away. The pigeon doesn't see me staring at him. His feathers have a subtle iridescence to them. The hand of my mind reaches out and touches him through the bars and the thick security glass. A spirit touch. He doesn't seem to notice. He pecks his small sharp beak into those iridescent chest feathers and ignores me.
>
> I marvel at the miracle of him, standing there, so near yet far, unfettered as the wind. The whole sky is his, and yet from all that infinite space he's picked this bleak prison windowsill to pause upon this winter morning, blessing me with his sudden unexpected presence, his astonishing reality.
>
> To me, the jailbird, this pigeon is as holy a messenger as an eagle. He tells me of the Sky World beyond the steel and cement and razor

> wire. Once, when we came out of the prison sweat lodge, we looked up and saw two eagles circling high above us. They came to bless us, sent by Sky Father.
> So I am known to the eagle and to the pigeon, holy messengers both. Sky Father hasn't forgotten me. He sends his winged children to comfort me.
> And I send skyward through the bars a winged prayer of thanks. No prison bars can stop a prayer.
> - *Leonard Peltier, United States Prisoner #89637-132*

He's in the *big house*. He's *on the inside*. He's *behind bars, locked up*, *doing time*. He's *away at college*. He's *out of town*. He's *over sea*s. These are just a few of the most common phrases used when a loved one is in prison. The last three phrases are reserved for those situations in which you cannot bring yourself to have *the conversation*. You see, the stigma of being in prison, or of having been in prison, does not rest solely with the incarcerated individual. *Everyone* is affected by this stigma. Prison is a dark little secret that we want no one to know about. It's a black hole of sorts; an ugly place no one wants to talk about. Yet, contrary to what we would like to believe, prison is very real, and the people who exist behind those walls are even more real. With the high number of individuals incarcerated in America today, it is important to understand prison culture. Most of these individuals will return to society. Some will become productive citizens; some you will look at and never know their dark secret. Others will return to prison. In this paper, I will look at the birth of the prison, the degradation of the inmate's soul through inmate and prison culture, and what is waiting for these individuals when they return to society. Even though hundreds of thousands of women are being incarcerated at an alarming rate, for the purposes of this paper, I will be referring to the inmate in the masculine form. Let us not forget that everyday thousands of women are torn away from their children and sentenced to harsh mandatory minimum sentences for committing victimless crimes.

I. Public Punishment and the Birth of the Prison

> *"The prison system is absolutely and entirely wrong. I would give anything to be able to alter it when I go out. I intend to try."*
> – Oscar Wilde

"A total institution provides a regimented living and working existence for its members, who are isolated from the rest of society. Some total institutions are organized solely to provide a highly controlled custody for those whom social authorities want isolated" (Luhman 130). A prison is such an example of a total institution.

Europe in the early 1700s saw particularly cruel forms of punishment. During that time period public execution was at its height. Punishment as a public spectacle was the means to achieve social control and order in society at that time. The condemned were subjected to inhumane torture such as amputation, dismemberment, branding, public dragging, stretching, and burning; all with their body exposed alive or dead to public view. The end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century was a new time for penal justice in Europe and the United States. Controversy began to arise, lashing out against the old forms of penal justice. In 1838, Leon Faucher drew up his rules for the "House of young prisoners in Paris." His rules, or "articles," clearly defined, at length, the daily rituals and routine of the incarcerated man. From the minute he rose in the morning until the minute he rest his head at night, not one single moment of the prisoner's day was left to the imagination, or to the freedom of the individual. There is argument over the exact reason for the change in sentiment toward public humiliation. In French philosopher Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, he writes, "Punishment of a less immediately physical kind, a certain discretion in the art of inflicting pain, a combination of more subtle, more subdued sufferings, deprived of their visible display, should this not be treated as a special case, an incidental effect of deeper changes?" (8). Is this a deeper change in the moral psyche of society or is this simply a society that wants to know nothing of its capacity for cruelty?

This is where the change occurred. Punishment has now become the most hidden part of the penal process. Punishment is the subject you fail to discuss at the dinner table or at social events. It is taboo. It no longer has its place or relationship with the public that it did hundreds of years ago. The consequences of hidden punishment are: it leaves the realm of everyday life and enters into an abstract world that we have a *choice* to view or enter into; its effectiveness is a result of its "inevitability" and not its "visible intensity"; the deterrent to crime is the "certainty" of being punished and not the degrading, torturous public spectacle. The result is that we as a public no longer take responsibility for the violence and humiliation involved in the process. "Now the scandal and the light are to be distributed differently; it is the conviction itself that marks the offender with the unequivocally negative sign: the publicity has shifted to the trial, and to the sentence; the execution itself is like an additional shame and that justice is ashamed to impose on the condemned man; so it keeps its distance from the act, tending always to entrust it to others, under the seal of secrecy" (Foucault 9-10). The modern penal system, for the most part, has distanced itself from the public spectacle and from the infliction of pain on the physical body. Instead, the prison system is constructed with its significant difference of focusing on the individual's loss of wealth and rights. However, there are still physical aspects involved in modern punishment that concern the body itself: rationing of food, sexual deprivation, corporal punishment, and solitary confinement.

So, if the penal system no longer uses the physical body as a focus of its infliction of punishment, what has taken its place? The answer is that if it is no longer the body, then it must be the soul. The torture belongs now to the heart, the thoughts, human will and desire. Now we find that something new is judged and sentenced – a man's soul.

II. The Role of Prison in Modern Society

> *Doing time creates a demented darkness of my own imagination…*
> *Doing time does this thing to you. But, of course, you don't do time.*
> *You do without it. Or rather time does you.*
> *Time is a cannibal that devours the flesh of your years*
> *Day by day, bite by bite.*
>
> - Leonard Peltier, United States Prisoner #89637-132

The birth of the modern prison system marks an important moment in the history of penal justice: its access to humanity. Prison is considered the "penalty of civilized society." Prison reform and simply the discussion of prison in general tend to leave a bad taste in the mouths of many. We know that prison is dangerous and inconvenient, but we cannot envision replacing it. Prison is a necessity. "It is the detestable solution, which one seems unable to do without" (Foucault 232). The role of the penal system now is incarceration, resocialization, and rehabilitation. However, as I will show, there is a fine line between what the public perceives as the role of the institution and reality. The main goal of such a total institution is to deprive an individual of liberty and to transform him – in essence, to resocialize.

"Resocialization is an extreme form of secondary socialization in which drastic changes are deliberately brought about in the thinking and behavior of an adult" (Luhman 130). Effective resocialization occurs only when the socializing agent has complete control of the individual. This process requires that everything the individual knows and acts upon up until this point is broken down systematically. This is intended to create disorganization in the individual's previous ways of thinking. Therefore, the first goal of the institution is to completely disorient the individual by breaking his ties from the life he has known up to the moment of his entrance into the institution.

Erving Goffman, in his book *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates*, writes in his preface, "It was then and still is my belief that any group of persons – prisoners, primitives, pilots, or patients – develop a life of their own that becomes meaningful, reasonable, and normal once you get close to it, and that a good way to learn about any of these worlds is to submit oneself in the company of the members to the daily round of petty contingencies to which they are subject." The *total* character of the institution can be seen in the way it completely and efficiently severs its ties from the greater society. The key fact of total institutions is the handling of many human needs, by the institution, of whole blocks of people. When people are moved in blocks, they can be supervised by personnel whose primary activity is not in guidance but rather surveillance. This surveillance is strictly meant to see to it that everyone does what he has been *told* to do, under conditions in which one person's digression from these rules is likely to stand out "in relief against the visible, constantly examined compliance of the others" (Goffman 7).

In a total institution, there is a basic split between two groups – inmates and staff. I intend to focus primarily on this first group, inmates, and the function of this group within the greater system. However, I must comment briefly on the situation between these two groups. I must note that each of these groups tends to view the other in terms of narrow, hostile stereotypes. The staff often views the inmates as untrustworthy, beneath them, dysfunctional, and hostile. The inmates often view the staff as condescending, self-righteous, and mean. This often results in the inmate feeling inferior, weak, and very guilty. "Social mobility between the two strata is grossly restricted; social distance is typically great and often formally prescribed" (Goffman 7). Not only is talk between these two groups restricted, but so is the flow of information about the staff's plans for inmates. This is one of the most frustrating aspects of incarceration for the inmate: the exclusion from knowledge of the decisions taken regarding his fate. It is circumstances such as this that help to facilitate the antagonistic stereotypes between the two groups.

III. The Principles of Prison and Inmate Culture: A Curtailment of Self

"How can I explain the way faith constructs itself within the

> *narrow architecture of correctional institutions? They're not natural, these facilities, there's not ever enough space for a human being to live. And because of this, you have no choice, really. In order to survive, you must expand not only what you believe, but also how you go about believing it. You must expand it until you're nearly like a small child, accepting the implausible, the fantastic."*
>
> - Asha Bandele, "The Prisoner's Wife"

One of the first principles in a total institution, specifically prison, is isolation. Isolation is used as a tool of positive reform, or so they would like everyone to believe. It was Alexis de Tocqueville, in 1831, who said, "Thrown into solitude, the convict reflects. Placed alone in the presence of his crime, he learns to hate it, and, if his soul is not yet blunted by evil, it is in isolation that remorse will come to assail him" (Foucault 237). However, one of the most predominant roles of isolation of the inmate is the guarantee that this isolation will allow the staff to exercise complete control over the individual. Solitude is the primary condition of total submission. This places the inmate in the precarious position of becoming completely vulnerable to becoming institutionalized. The total institution is of sociological importance because they are houses for *changing* people and this results in numerous experiments of what can be done to the self; how we have the ability to destroy the human soul.

The inmate world is one that is foreign to most of society, yet familiar enough to a significant population. When an inmate arrives at prison, he does so with a sense of self, a sense of the world around him, a sense of his culture. It is not the goal of the institution to substitute its own culture for the one that already exists. Instead, it is their intention to create and sustain a particular breed of tension between the inmate's home life and prison. The institution then manipulates this tension as "strategic leverage in the management of men" (Goffman 13).

Upon entering the prison, the infamous "degradation ceremony" occurs. Named for its degrading nature, this ceremony is a successful attempt at stripping away any remnants of the inmate's former identity. It is at this moment that he begins extreme shifts in his moral career, a career that is made up of significant, expeditious changes in the beliefs that he has regarding himself and significant others. The degradations of self that occur upon admission are significant. I wish to look at a few specific curtailments of self, even though many are experienced daily by the inmate.

The first curtailment of self is physical nakedness. Physical nakedness is routine throughout the inmate's incarceration. An ultimate source of humiliation, this humiliation is most apparent upon initial entrance into the institution. However, it is also a significant part of inmate visits, as the inmate is strip-searched after visits with family members. Physical poses, such as bending over for anal searches, are part of the degradation process. Just as humiliating as these physical poses are the humiliating verbal responses that must be given. Examples include asking for permission to use the phone or permission to use the bathroom. "Whatever the form or source of these various indignities, the individual has to engage in activity whose symbolic implications are incompatible with his conception of self" (Goffman 23). It is these "petty contingencies" Goffman referenced in his preface that clearly prove that the rule is intended more for humiliation than for any sort of logical control. In fact, these humiliations only succeed in breeding a culture of anger and contempt for staff.

A second curtailment of self is the dispossession of property. People invest feelings in their property and the loss of that property is symbolic to the loss of identity. The inmate's personal possessions are substituted with those belonging to the institution, which are clearly marked as belonging to the "house" and not the individual. Cells are changed frequently so as not to allow attachments of any kind. An individual's possessions have a special relation to self. The individual ordinarily has control of the way he presents himself to others. He normally has at his disposal an "identity kit" that is used to maintain his "personal front". By being stripped of the means to maintain his appearance, he suffers a "personal defacement" (Goffman 20).

Perhaps the greatest curtailment of self is the loss of one's name. Inmates are no longer known by their name, but instead by their *number*, or their *unit*, or their *cell*. This is perhaps the most degrading moment in being institutionalized – giving up one's name is symbolic to being *totally* stripped of one's identity. In Phillip Zimbardo's *Stanford Prison Study,* on status and role, there was a significant moment regarding the loss of name and assignment of number by one of the experimental subjects. "Prisoner number 416" dramatically spoke about how his number had become a source of pride for him. Interestingly enough, this assigned number takes on great significance; it comes to represent the new self.

Other examples of loss of identity are collective sleeping arrangements and doorless toilets – in essence, a complete and total loss of privacy. The inmate is never fully alone; he is always within earshot or sight of someone, even if it is only his fellow inmates. Inmate mail, whether being received or mailed out, is subject to search and review for inappropriate content. Another example is the "enforced public character" of visits, which I will discuss in another section of this paper (Goffman 31).

Mortification of the self also takes on less direct and distinct forms than the ones I have listed above. One example of this is a disruption of the usual relationship between the individual and his actions. Goffman calls this situation “looping.” “‘Looping’ is where the [prison] creates a defensive response on the part of the inmate and then takes this very response as the target of its next attack.” (35-6) The easiest way to explain this concept is to say that in normal everyday life, we all experience circumstances that affront our conception of self. As free individuals, we are allowed a variety of face-saving mechanisms. We are allowed to express our disgust, dislike, or disagreement. In prison, the guards consistently create situations that attack an individual’s conception of self, provoking such a natural response as ours above. However, the inmate cannot walk away in disgust or even show the slightest emotion or indifference without fear of reprisal. This situation is almost unidentifiable by those of us on the “outside.” Unfortunately, this is experienced *daily* by the inmate.

IV. Privilege and Punishment

> *“But while to propose to be a better man is a piece of unscientific cant, to have become a* <u>*deeper*</u> *man is the privilege of those who have suffered.”*
>
> – Oscar Wilde

In normal society, by the time we are adults, we have gone through a process of socialization in which we have incorporated into our lives socially acceptable standards for our actions. The correctness of our actions is judged only at certain points, such as when we are judged for our productivity. We are allowed to go at our own pace and need not look over our shoulder for fear of being persecuted or criticized. In a total institution, however, the tiniest aspects of an individual’s activity may be subjected to scrutiny and judgments by the staff. The inmate’s life is constantly interrupted by sanctioning interaction from the staff, especially upon his initial incarceration, prior to his internalization of the new “norms” of prison culture. “Each specification robs the individual of an opportunity to balance his needs and objectives in a personally efficient way and opens up his line of action to sanctions. The autonomy of the act itself is violated” (Goffman 38). Although this process of social control occurs in all organized societies, we forget how painfully detailed and obtrusive it is in the total institution. It was Goffman who also said that “a total institution is like a finishing school, but one that has many refinements and is little refined” (41).

While the process of mortification continues, inmates also receive an education in the "privilege system." It is the "privilege system" that is primarily responsible for the reorganization of the self within the institution. This system consists of the "house rules," clearly defined rewards and punishment. House rules are integral to the institution's control over the inmate. These rules lay out the main requirement of inmate conduct. House rules also play a significant role in the inmate's resocialization. The second part of this system, small rewards or privileges, is held out in exchange for obedience and kindness to staff. It is very important to note that many of these rewards come from the support that the inmate had previously taken for granted. The building of inmate life around these simple rewards is integral, and many of these rewards are shared with other inmates. The third element in the privilege system is punishment. These punishments are more severe than anything experienced in the outside world. Punishments range from the revocation of phone privileges and personal visits, canceling of trips to the commissary, and solitary confinement. In prison, the above privileges, ones we take for granted on the outside, become luxuries to those incarcerated. Circumstances in which these few privileges are valued highly are the same conditions in which their absence has a terrible significance.

It is the opinion of American professor of philosophy Jeffrey Reiman in his book *The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison*, that the goal of our criminal justice system is not to eliminate crime or to achieve justice "but to project to the American people a visible image of the threat of crime" and that threat as coming from a particular segment of the population (1). The reason for mentioning a radical theory such as Reiman's is that it ties into the view that I personally have of the correctional system in this country. My view is that the system is less about rehabilitation and more about degradation and oppression. One of the degrading rituals that the inmate must experience is his humiliation, put on display, in front of his loved ones. It is at precisely this moment that I would like to mention and discuss the ritual of prison visits.

V. I Never Thought I Would Be Here: Visiting a Prison Inmate

> *"We knew nothing of prisons then, Nicole and I, as we passed the women nearly every Friday night. And as we passed, perhaps we whispered, but we never really wondered about them, who they were, what they thought, what they were doing there. And we never feared, at least I never feared, that the sharp-edged world our parents tried to warn us about and protect us from could come slicing down into the heart of our dreams. Wherever Nicole is now,*

> *perhaps she is safe, perhaps she has avoided ever getting cut. I hope this is true, that she has never bled, in the way I have now bled, from the center of my life, from the very pulse of it."*
>
> - Asha Bandele, "The Prisoner's Wife"

It is at this moment in this paper that I wish to refer to a personal relationship to the subject of incarceration. My boyfriend is currently serving a four-year sentence in a federal facility for a non-violent crime. Humiliation and degradation are not sources of injury reserved solely for the inmate. We, as loving family members, are allowed into this dark world, if only for a few hours each week. These visits, which have occurred regularly for me in the past two years, have opened my eyes to a world that once existed, for me, only on television and in film.

Seeing a loved one inside the walls of a prison is an experience that I would not wish on my worst enemy. For it is in these moments, that a person finds the strength to persevere or the resolve to give up completely. Prison life provides a test of the soul of which we are both participants. It is in these moments that I see *his* courage in the difficulty of being a strong man at his weakest moments. I cannot put into words the respect I have for him and his ability to transcend every obstacle that is placed in front of him. Prisons are meant to break you, of that I am certain. They destroy relationships, tear families apart, and douse the bright flames of youthful dreams. I am lucky, because through all the darkness and pain, I have found a love more beautiful and more certain than the love I dreamed of as a little girl. It still amazes me how we sustain the greatest love we've ever known from within the worst place we've ever known.

I will never forget the moment I was subjected to my first prison visit. The corrections officers are cold and mean. Every once in a while, there will be a compassionate tone of voice that eminates from their stiff, uniformed selves, but that is rarely the case. The prison lobby is filled with colorful faces; being white means being the minority in this world. There is paperwork to be filled out, boxes to check, I.D. photos to be taken. The waits are long and appear calculated. Let me re-phrase that: they *are* calculated. The levels of anxiety are high and the process of simply entering the prison visiting room is manipulated to heighten this anxiety. The staff *never* lets you forget where you are or why you are there. Once your name is called, *harshly*, as if you committed the crime yourself, you then proceed to walk through the metal detector. Pockets must be emptied and jewelry removed. Often your clothing is critiqued and if dressed inappropriately (as defined by the institution), you are either not allowed in or are given an extra-large t-shirt to wear over your clothing.

The humiliation is apparent at this moment. These women come from all over the region, sometimes crossing several states, to see their loved one. It is the desire of a woman to want to look beautiful for the man that she loves. The guards do what ever they can to harass visitors and play "fashion critique" prior to admission. I have seen women break down in tears and I have seen them angrier than you can imagine in these circumstances. I see the excitement of the children when they embrace their fathers and their tears when they are torn away. The look of confusion and fear in a young child's eyes is a moment which even *time* cannot make one grow accustomed to the situation. All of these are perfect examples of Goffman's "looping." We are put in these positions to feel resentment; yet if we exhibit this resentment, we can lose our visiting privileges indefinitely. I cannot express in words the helplessness, frustration, and resentment I feel when going through the ritual of visiting at a prison; the anger I feel when I see a strong, intelligent man treated as if he has no worth and no redemption; the anger *I* feel when I am treated with the same indignity. Who do these people think they are? I must always keep in the back of my head that this is a *privilege* accorded the two of us. I also realize that my ordeal must seem small in his eyes and the thought of this toughens me up. If he can survive all these *daily* indignities, surely I can survive a simple visit.

As the months went by, a routine developed, and soon I could visit him and do so without even realizing where we were, so to speak. Of course, there was the occasional rough tone of voice that the guard takes with an inmate or visitor; but we learned how to make the time our own. It is amazing what you are capable of overcoming if you set you heart and your mind to it. I have taken to listening to the other women and their conversations at the visits now. I pretend that the moment in the lobby leading up to my visit is some sociological experiment and that I am involved in participant observation. I am beginning to learn that the consequences of incarceration exist well beyond the boundaries of the prison walls. They affect more than just the inmate. Prison affects everyone in society. For those of us with enough contact to the incarcerated individual, we are constantly reminded of the social order and control of society. We are constantly reminded that life is precious and that it is the simplest things that bring the greatest pleasures in life. When taken away, it is the simplest things that are missed the most.

VI. The Stigma of Having "Done Time"

> *"Many men on their release carry their prison along with them into the air, hide it as a secret disgrace in their hearts, and at length like poor poisoned things creep into some hole and die. It is wretched that they should have to do so, and it is wrong, terribly wrong, of Society that it should force them to do so. Society takes upon itself the right to inflict appalling punishments on the individual, but it also has the supreme vice of shallowness, and fails to realize what it has done. When the man's punishment is over, it leaves him to himself; that is to say it abandons him at the very moment when its highest duty to him begins. It is really ashamed of its own actions, and shuns those whom it has punished, as people shun a creditor whose debt they cannot pay, or one on whom they have inflicted an irreparable, an irredeemable wrong. I claim on my side that if I realize what I have suffered, Society should realize what it has inflicted on me; and that there should be no bitterness or hate on either side."*
>
> \- Oscar Wilde, "De Profundis"

Oscar Wilde was no stranger to incarceration. He spent two years imprisoned in a hard labor camp for being a homosexual. It is in *De Profundis* that Wilde writes of his experiences with the indignities brought on by incarceration. Written in 1897 while he was incarcerated in Gaol, as a long letter to Lord Alfred Douglas, Wilde's sentiments are as significant today as they were when they were written. Wilde's concerns with the way society treated him after he served his time are reflected in some of the concerns of modern prison reformists. What exactly are we accomplishing by the incarceration of such a large part of our society? It is no coincidence that most of the prison population is minority, young, male, and incarcerated for victimless crimes. Mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses leave an even younger population incarcerated for extreme amounts of time with no rehabilitation, work training, or financial support systems for post release. The system is breeding intolerance, aggression, and hopelessness. Inmates are often incarcerated hundreds of miles away from their family members, making a familial support system often impossible to sustain. In a sense, upon release, an inmate is ejected from the prison system in a worse state than when he first entered.

Therefore, it is no surprise that recidivism occurs at a very alarming rate. Yes, prison is a place of resocialization, indeed. It is a place where we strip the individual of all emotion, compassion, love, and self-respect.

Where do we expect them to go from there? Those fortunate enough to have the strength to turn their experiences into positive change will come out as better men, there is no doubt about that. Yet, the better man is thrust into a society that relentlessly continues to punish him for a crime he just spent years paying for. I ask you, where is the justice in that? He is left fending for himself, leaving prison with virtually no money. Those that have some financial network or family support are definitely the exception to the rule.

The stigma attached with having been in prison is a stigma that is indelible. "The enforced childhood of imprisonment may be the painful penalty offenders deserve, but if it undermines their capacity to go straight after release, we are cutting off our noses to spite our faces" (Reiman 196). Individuals cannot learn to control themselves responsibly if they have just spent years having every aspect of their lives—from the very minute they awake to when they eat, when they work, when they exercise, until the lights go out—regulated by someone else. Not only that, but most ex-convicts return to society with no marketable skills and very little chance of getting a decent job with the stigma of a prison sentence hanging over their heads. What is the result? The result is a system in which we *never* let criminals finish paying their debt to society, a system in which we give them every reason to return to crime (Reiman 196). These were Oscar Wilde's sentiments exactly.

VII. Life after Prison: Where Do We Go From Here?

"...if I know anything at all
it's that a wall is just a wall
and nothing more at all.
It can be broken down."

--assata shakur

If we are going to continue punishing people by depriving them of their liberty, then we must at least prepare these individuals for life after prison. The Constitution's Eighth Amendment gives every citizen in this country a guarantee against "cruel and unusual punishment". "Depriving a person of his or her liberty may be an unacceptable punishment, but *depriving people of their dignity and a chance to live a law abiding life when their punishment is supposed to be over is cruel and (*should be but sadly is not*) unusual!*" (Reiman 196). We need to start implementing new rehabilitative programs for inmates serving drug offenses and other non-violent crimes. We need to encourage the support of family members, which means, the end to the alienation of family members at prison visits and locating inmates within reasonable distances from their family members. We must narrow the range in which police officers, prosecutors, and judges exercise discretion. We must also hold those same individuals accountable to the public for fairness and reasonableness of their decisions. We must revisit the meaning of "equal right to counsel" and transform that into "equal right to counsel as far as it is possible." These are just a few of the many reforms that need to be made.

Oscar Wilde said, "I now see that sorrow, being the supreme emotion of which man is capable, is at once the type and test of all great Art." When Wilde was imprisoned for being a homosexual, those that imprisoned him, deserted him, and left him to his sorrow, had no way of knowing the historical greatness of the man, and how his crime would one day be viewed as acceptable behavior. It is true that what we view in society as deviant or criminal behavior is only deviant and criminal to those who do the defining. We, as a society, are in control of how we treat individuals that we deem to be deviant. What we don't realize is that these individuals, these *numbers*, are our fathers, our sons, our husbands; they are our mothers and daughters. We keep imprisoning them by the hundreds, stripping them of their identities, bruising their souls, and throwing them out with last week's garbage. We make them pay harshly for their crime and then when they are done, we tell them they have not paid enough. I do not have all the answers. I do know, from personal experience, that there are great men behind those walls, great men, who stumbled, but still want to live life and become even greater. Don't we as a society owe them that chance? What about the thousands of children that need to be raised in this country? Don't we own them a chance at a better life? How can they succeed when mom or dad can't even find a job?

Punishment has changed significantly in the last few centuries, but one thing that has not changed is the humiliation it brings upon the incarcerated individual. In modern society, we focus less on the physical degradation and destruction of the individual and more on the destruction of his soul. Often times we wrongly incarcerate individuals, such as Leonard Peltier, political prisoner and Native American activist. Leonard Peltier is serving the rest of his life at Leavenworth, a maximum security federal prison, for a crime even our government *knows* he didn't commit. He is known as one of the leading crusaders for the Native American cause. So, as you can see, prison is nothing to be ashamed of. If anything, it can lead you to unexplored places you never knew existed. Surely, I may appear to be making light of the situation. It is only by looking for the positive and working for reform that anyone can deal with the ramifications of a place like this. Prison life can take you to deep, dark places. However, as Oscar Wilde wrote from such a place, over a hundred years ago, "The soul… can often reveal itself most perfectly through what was intended to desecrate or destroy.

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Walt Whitman and Pablo Neruda: An Exploration of Nature

by Alexandra Skiba

By reading his poetry, one can clearly see Walt Whitman's love of nature. Nature is mentioned in just about every one of his poems. Pablo Neruda's poetry is very similar in that regard. Nature is also greatly mentioned throughout his work. One can also sense not just their love of it but their feelings of truly being connected with it. Both Whitman and Neruda felt so deeply connected with nature that they were able to use it to explain different aspects of themselves and of their lives.

In his poem "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd," Whitman uses the night sky to describe the situation in life in which he is stuck.

O powerful western fallen star!
O shades of night - O moody, tearful night!
O great star disappear'd - O the black murk that hides the star!
O cruel hands that hold me powerless – O helpless soul of me!
O harsh surrounding cloud that will not free my soul. (7-11)

This is such a beautiful metaphor to use for death. Thinking of the deceased as a "fallen star," having disappeared into a "black murk," explains what is happening in a unique way, but does not take away from the sadness of the loss at all. When Whitman describes his feelings of powerlessness as cruel hands holding him, one can actually see a man struggling for freedom. And when he describes his confusion in terms of a cloud, one can imagine the hazy disorientation he is feeling. A cloud of confusion is such a simple but beautiful image.

In Pablo Neruda's poem "To the Dead Poor Man," he also uses the night sky metaphorically to explain an aspect of life through the tragedy of death.

> Luckily…they were all of the same mind,
> From the bishop to the judge,
> In assuring him of his share of heaven;
> And dead now, properly dead, our own poor man,
> …he will not know what to do with so much sky.
> Can he plow it or sow it or harvest it?
> (13-19)

Neruda uses the sky as a metaphor for heaven. He wonders how a man who has worked so hard all his life, never knowing true joy, just hard labor, could possibly know what to do with himself in a place like heaven. It would be like nothing he had ever known. The poem goes on to say, "He did that always; cruelly/ he struggled with raw land,/ and now the sky lies easy to his plow" (20-22). Those lines can give the reader a better idea of the feeling of struggle associated with field work, and the relief "the sky" or death must be after a life filled with it.

In "Song of Myself," one again can see Whitman's feelings of connection to nature. There is no greater way to feel connected with the earth than to be of it. "My tongue, every atom of my blood, form'd from this soil, this air, / Born here of parents born here from parents the same, /and their parents the same" (6-8). He claims that humans are all essentially the same, for they are all of the earth.

Neruda does somewhat the same thing in his poem "In You the Earth." He uses the earth to describe his love:

> Your shoulders rise like two hills…
> my arm scarcely manages to encircle the thin
> new-moon line of your waist:
> in love you have loosened yourself like seawater:
> I can scarcely measure the sky's most spacious eyes
> And I lean down to your mouth to kiss the earth.
> (15-21)

This is an especially beautiful comparison. One can see the almost angelic image from this description. Neruda describes everything so softly, so gently. All of the images give the reader a real sense of the way Neruda views this woman: " . . . rise like two hills…new-moon line of your waist…loosened yourself like seawater." Through this description one can see the glowing curvature of her waist and the gentle movement of the water. The last line, however, may be the most beautiful, "And I lean down to your mouth to kiss the earth." This conveys exactly how the poet views this woman, as being "the earth," maybe the reason for his being. It allows one to see how incredibly important she is and how highly she is held and in the most tasteful and beautiful way.

In "A Noiseless Patient Spider," one can see the direct connection Whitman makes to nature. In this poem he compares himself to an animal of nature, a spider. Admiring the spider, he sees how easily it makes connections to other things as it weaves its web. " Mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,/ Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding,/ It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament out of itself" (173, 2-4). Whitman goes on to compare himself to the spider, comparing the spider to his soul, "And you O my soul where you stand, / Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,/ ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the spheres to connect them" (6-8). Such a sad image Whitman creates here--a soul who wants to connect but is not able to. It is somewhat odd that he says "surrounded, detached." One can only assume that he is trying to say that there are people around yet something is holding him back from connecting with them. It is also easy to see his desperation, especially in the last two lines of the poem "Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile anchor/ hold, / till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere, O my soul" (12-13). By the language one can sense that Whitman is so desperate to make any connection that he does not really care to where it is made. He just hopes that it will "catch somewhere." The desperation and sadness can also be felt in the repetition of "O my soul."

Pablo Neruda similarly compares himself to another one of god's creatures. In his poem "The Condor," Neruda connects himself directly to this awesome bird:

> I am the condor, I fly
> over you who walk
> and suddenly in a wheeling
> of wind, feather, claws,
> I assault you and I lift you
> In a whistling cyclone
> Of hurricaned cold. (1-7)

This poem is nowhere near as gentle as Whitman's spider poem. Neruda really sets the stage for this fierce animal. It was quite interesting how “The Condor” also mentioned the need of connection:

Female condor, let us pounce
upon this red prey,
let us tear life
that passes throbbing
and lift together
our wild flight. (14-19)

Neruda is really trying to call out to this woman or a woman for a deep connection. The words used here seem to be describing some sort of sexual relationship. However, it may just be describing a passionate relationship. Whichever it may be, there is no question about the author’s need for connection and his use of nature in helping him convey those emotions.

The poem “I Saw in Louisiana a Live-Oak Growing” is another example of Whitman’s use of nature to explain himself. This time he compares himself to a tree.

I saw in Louisiana a live-oak growing,
All alone stood it and the moss hung down from the branches,
Without any companion it grew there uttering joyous leaves of dark green,
And its look, rude, unbending, lusty, made me think of myself,
But I wonder’d how it could utter joyous leaves standing alone there
Without its friend near, for I knew I could not. (1-6)

It is difficult to think that the characteristics of a tree could resemble a human, but Whitman finds the oak tree resembles himself. However, there are also their differences. One may say that Whitman envies the fact that the tree doesn’t need anyone else to be present in order to be happy. On the other hand, he may just be rejoicing in the fact that he has such great people in his life and would be unable to do without them.

Further along in the poem, Whitman takes a small branch of leaves off the tree and brings them back to his home. He further explains that he did not do so to remind him of his friends, but rather just to say that, although the tree is able to be content without a friend or lover, he definitely could not.

In Neruda’s poem “Ode and Burgeonings,” Neruda compares himself not to a tree but to a plant, referring to himself as “an unfulfilled plant/ of your life putting out its roots/ toward my heart that was waiting for you." The description, though not as detailed as Whitman's, is still quite a beautiful image: arms outstretched, longing for a person to draw closer and into its heart, very similar to roots stretching out to find water and quench its thirst, to fill its "heart," its needs. Both Whitman and Neruda state their feelings of being unfulfilled within these poems. Neruda states it outright in the above lines, saying that he would be unfulfilled without his lover, and Whitman states in his poem that, although the tree may be able to be happy without a friend or lover, he surely could not.

Another instance in which one can see Whitman's connection with nature is in his poem "That Shadow My Likeness." In this poem Whitman explains himself in terms of his shadow. He gives it life, almost if it were a being all in its own. "That shadow my likeness that goes to and fro seeking a livliehood, / chattering, chaffering, / How often I find my-self standing and looking at where it flits, / How often I question and doubt whether that is really me" (73). Whitman gives an interesting im-age of standing still and watching a shadow move on. One may assume that Whitman is just using this as a metaphor for his own disbelief of some of the things that he has done throughout his life, looking back upon the shadow of himself, almost as if he were an outsider to his own life. One can see more clearly the point he is making using the images of the shadows by reading the last lines of the poem: " But among my lovers and caroling these songs, / Oh I never doubt whether that is really me." These lines help the reader see more clearly that Whitman is clearly taken aback by the things that he has done, for here he states so clearly what he always knew was real, the things that were true and natural to him, his lovers and his writing.

Neruda uses shadows similarly to explain an aspect of his life in his poem "Thinking, Tangling Shadows." Like Whitman, he uses the images of the shadows to represent people; however, he uses them more to rep-resent the absence of someone: "Thinking, tangling shadows in the deep solitude./ You are far away too, oh farther than anyone./ Thinking, freeing birds, dissolving images, / burying lamps" (1-4). This description allows one to see an image, two shadows "tangled," two shadows entwined with one another. Just the thought and the image of the shadows and not the bodies together allow one to feel the absence of the lover from the other. One can also assume that maybe Neruda is not just explaining his lover. He is describing what is going on in his own mind, using the "Tangling shadows" to describe the murky thoughts in his mind. Neruda may have been describing both the absence of his lover and the thoughts occurring in his mind simultaneously.

In the poem "The Wound Dresser," Whitman uses the shore of the sea to describe things that have been forgotten. "But in silence, in dreams' projections,/ While the world of gain and appearance and mirth goes on,/ So soon what is over forgotten, and waves wash the imprints off the sand" (44). Whitman uses an exceptionally beautiful image here to describe what happens when one forgets. Everyone has experienced watching waves roll upon the shore and watching footprints slowly become less noticeable with each wave until finally there is nothing there. That is exactly what happens with one's memory as well. Certain things one remembers fade slowly over time. They become a little more unclear with each passing year, just as the waves slowly wash away all that was imprinted in the sand.

Neruda also uses the image of the shore to represent forgetting in the poem "To E.S.S." This poem is more directly about the death of a young boy who apparently was killed by the sea. Towards the beginning of the poem Neruda states, "and each time, at such a stretch of time,/… you left your footprints across my sand…"(23-24). These lines can clearly be interpreted as an image to describe both the effect that this had on Neruda and the memories Neruda has of him through each stage of his life. This seems somewhat different from Whitman's description in terms of the lasting affect of the imprints in the sand. Neruda says nothing of the sea, just of the sand, which can give the reader the more lasting effect of these memories. These memories are not to be washed away. Towards the end of the poem Neruda describes the sea: "the keys of its rage, the spume/ of its thunderous coming and going/ which comes and goes and stays/ changed into the sand/ of forgetting" (64-68). The way Neruda describes the ocean here is quite interesting. He describes it with such fury, furious at the ocean for taking the boy away from him. However, one may wonder exactly what he means by, "changed into the sand/ of forgetting." One can assume that Neruda is describing how the water changes as it hits upon the shore and disappears into the sand upon the shore, and comparing that to the memories getting absorbed into our minds and many times forgotten.

Through the works of Whitman and Neruda, it is easy to see how deeply connected they feel with the earth. Both poets use nature in all forms to explain all aspects of themselves. Maybe Whitman was able to speak for them both when he said, "I see my soul reflected in nature" (48).

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The Handicapped in Germany: Changing Attitudes, Changing Times

by Kim Tamura

Germany was the first modern nation to provide its citizens with a system of national health care. Instituted by the government of Otto von Bismark in the 1880s to include sickness, accident, and disability insurance, the system has remained largely unchanged in structure to this day (Graig 87). Yet at one point in its history, the country was guilty of grievous crimes against some of its most vulnerable citizens. In recent decades Germany has made a major effort to rectify the shameful events of that period. The handicapped are now well-cared for; Michael Burleigh, author of the first full-scale study in English of the Nazi euthanasia program, states that Germany is now, "a country which […] has enviable provision for disabled people" (7). Special schools for children with physical or mental disabilities, rehabilitation and self-help programs for adults, and job training are all available under the country's system of comprehensive care. Yet, less than sixty years ago in this same country, the handicapped of all ages were shot, gassed, starved to death or given lethal overdoses in order to rid Germany of "useless eaters." Trained doctors and nurses were willing participants in a program to eliminate the "life unworthy of life." How can this contradiction be explained? While the shocking misuse of medical knowledge and abuse of the most vulnerable members of a society is without parallel in modern history, there were unique influences that worked together in an unfortunate manner to allow the unimaginable to happen. Severe economic stress brought on by war losses and the punitive Treaty of Versailles, notions of social inequality popularized by Social Darwinism, and racism sanctioned by prominent scientists and intellectuals created an unparalleled climate of intolerance and apathy toward the less fortunate.

I

Francis Galton, the father of eugenics, envisioned it as the science of giving "the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable" (Kevles ix). The English mathematician coined the term in 1883 after almost twenty years of investigations in heredity and statistics. His ideas quickly won favor in the U.S. and in England; by the turn of the century, eugenics had gained a following in several European nations (63). It became popular at a time when class prejudices were strong and racial inequality was taken for granted by many educated people. Proponents of mainline eugenics asserted that races could be ranked according to level of intelligence, that social traits were inherited according to Mendelian laws, and that intelligence and ability were controlled by heredity and could not be improved by education or change in circumstance. Daniel Kevles explains that "eugenics enthusiasts […] were largely middle to upper middle class, white, Anglo-Saxon, predominantly Protestant, and educated" (64). Eugenic theories provided scientific-sounding explanations for social disparities and placed the blame for social injustices on bad breeding, freeing the more privileged members of society from the responsibility to challenge and correct them.

Parallel with the development of eugenics was the advancement of the idea that some human beings were inherently unworthy of life. In the 1890s, German polemicist Alfred Jost promoted euthanasia not only as a method of allowing a suffering individual the right to die, but also as a way to eliminate "the negative burden placed upon relatives or the community by the incurably ill and mentally defective" (Burleigh 12). In 1920, German professors Karl Binding and Alfred Hoche published their work, "Authorization for the destruction of life unworthy of life." In it, Binding advocated legalizing assisted suicide, but his main purpose was to advance the argument that those who were unworthy of life should be killed to preserve the country's resources for the fit (Friedlander 15). Their theories became very influential in Germany, which during the 1920s was suffering severe economic depression and rampant inflation. During World War I, inmates in asylums had been subjected to the same rationing as the rest of the population. As a result, about thirty percent had died from hunger, disease, or neglect (Burleigh 11). Therefore, a precedent of mistreatment had already been set. Moreover, it was a time when the disabled were stigmatized with labels such as "idiots," "crazies," and "cripples" (Friedlander xxii). By the time the National Socialists had come to power, there were many scientists and physicians who were willing and enthusiastic participants in Nazi extermination policies (Friedlander 19).

II

The process began with compulsory sterilization. The law for the prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Progeny took effect on January 1, 1934. Estimates are that approximately 400,000 people were sterilized between 1934 and 1945. Throughout the 1930s the Nazis conducted a propaganda campaign in both print and film that was designed to "criminalise, degrade, and dehumanise the mentally and physically handicapped" (Burleigh 183). In 1939, as war approached, Hitler authorized implementation of a children's euthanasia program. It began with a decree from the Reich's Ministry of the Interior dated August 18, 1939, requiring that physicians and midwives report newborns and children under age three born with specific medical conditions. In the beginning, even the medical professionals did not suspect its real purpose. The first of the killing wards was established at Brandenburg-Görden in July 1940; in the course of the war, additional centers were secretly set up in some thirty state institutions throughout Germany, Austria, and Poland. Parents were persuaded to cooperate with promises that "the child would receive the best and most modern therapy available" (Lifton 54). Later the program was expanded to include older children and teens. Even after Hitler had signed an order in 1941 to halt the killing of adults in response to protests from the churches, the killing of children continued until the end of the war. Estimates are that approximately 5,000 children were killed.

The killing of handicapped adults, known as Operation T4, began with a decree in September 1939 for local governments to list all institutions, public and private, which held "mental patients, epileptics, and the feebleminded" (Friedlander 75). These institutions later received registration forms for the physician to fill out for each patient. As in children's euthanasia, the physicians did not suspect the true purpose of the registration forms at first. Patients were selected for killing by medical experts solely on the basis of the answers on these one-page forms. Lists of names were then sent to the Transport Office, known as Gekrat, which picked patients up from the institution, ostensibly for "relocation due to the war emergency" (Friedlander 84). Some victims were shot, others were killed with lethal injections; however, most were killed in gas chambers disguised as shower rooms.

Although Hitler and his henchmen took great pains to keep the medical killing secret, both programs eventually became known. Bureaucratic slip-ups with falsified death certificates, deaths of whole groups of patients transferred from the same institution on the same date, sudden deaths of healthy individuals, and foul smoke from asylum crematories aroused the public's suspicions. Letters from asylum patients to relatives revealed the mistreatment and fear that they experienced. "Dear mother!" wrote one, "I want to write these final lines to you, because I must leave here and do not know the destination. It is difficult for me. I thank you all whole-heartedly and say farewell, if not in this world then hopefully in heaven! With heartfelt greeting, your grateful son." (Friedlander 170). Because all of the T4 records were destroyed before the end of the war, the actual numbers of those killed can only be estimated; it is believed that there were about 80,000 victims.

III

Knowledge of wartime crimes committed against the handicapped still weighs heavily on the collective conscience of the German nation, which has made tremendous progress in its policies and is now held up as a model country in its treatment of the disabled. The Federal Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is the organ responsible for assistance to the disabled in present-day Germany. The government subsidizes various self-help associations which offer specialized counseling, information, and support for those suffering from specific disabilities or diseases. In addition, statutory health insurance funds are required by law to support the self-help associations in prevention and rehabilitation work. In 1999, The German Disability Council (Deutscher Behindertenrat) was founded as a national body to help co-ordinate the work of the self-help associations with international groups (Fed. Min. for Health 2). Disability is evaluated in rather a unique way. Individuals may receive an official disability certificate from the government with an officially assigned disability percentage which ranges from 10 to 100 percent (Burkhauser and Daly 5). Those with a disability of 50 percent or more are considered severely disabled. According to figures from the Federal Statistical Office for the year 1999, 6.6 million people were registered as severely handicapped, 53 percent of whom were men. Eighty-six percent had disabilities arising from sickness, 4.5 percent were born with disabilities and 2.5 percent were handicapped as a result of accidents. Fifty-one percent were 65 or older; another 24 percent were between the ages of 55 and 65. Only 2.5 percent were children and youth under 18. The low numbers of those under 55 classified as severely disabled is largely due to the strong emphasis on the rehabilitation and full time reemployment of younger workers. Burkhauser and Daly state, "The goal of the German system is to provide early detection, rehabilitation, job retraining, and employment when ever possible" (3).

In addition to government mandated programs there are many private, non-profit, and volunteer organizations working to integrate the handicapped into society. "Workshops for the Handicapped," part of a fifty plus member network of such organizations, offers a total of 140,000 positions that "provide a protective environment which replicates 'normal' working conditions as closely as possible, while insuring the participants get the special attention they require" ("Germany - Job workshops" 1). After preparation, many participants are successfully placed as trainees in local companies. Project leader Eleonore Gramse claims, "Heads of firms meet highly motivated disabled workers, and become sensitized to working people with disabilities as a result" (2).

At present there is no anti-discrimination law that protects the rights of the handicapped. In 1993, an amendment was added to the German Constitution stating that "Nobody may be disadvantaged because of his disability" (Michailakis ILSMH Country Reports 1). However, many disability rights groups feel that this is inadequate and a National Equality Law (Bundesgleichstellungsgesetz) is presently being debated.

The "Act to ensure the integration of severely handicapped persons in employment, occupations and society (severely handicapped persons)" was enacted on March 1, 1980. This law mandates that every business, public or private, with at least sixteen posts must employ severely handicapped persons for six percent of those posts. Employers who fail to meet the quota are fined 200 DM (approximately $125) a month per unfilled post. Burkhauser and Daly report in figures for 1990 that although 44 percent of companies had disabled people in their employ, only 19 percent actually fulfilled their quota (3). It is obvious that groups such as "Workshops for the Handicapped" are needed to educate employers about the abilities of the disabled, and that anti-discrimination legislation is necessary to give force to the employment laws. Legislation does not only protect employment rights. Ever mindful of Nazi abuses, German law guarantees the disabled the right to marriage, the right to parenthood/family, and political rights, among others. Benefits guaranteed by law include "medical care, training, rehabilitation and counseling, financial security, independent living, [and] participation in decisions affecting themselves" (Michailakis ILSMH Country Reports 2).

Although the disabled are permitted to use public transport free for trips up to 50 km, and special transport arrangements can be made for any purpose (education, recreation, work, medical, etc.), accessibility remains a problem. Laws require that "public places, the outer environment, land, sea, air transportation, and housing are made accessible," but in practice implementation of the policy has been inadequate (Michailakis Gov't Country Reports 2). Volker Krause, who is physically disabled, describes his experience in Germany in an article in World Health:

Handicaps of several kinds were an everyday experience in Germany […]. Ramps, elevators, accessible public transport and adapted public facilities are mostly absent […]. Experts […] declared that I could only drive a car that was specifically equipped for my needs. Their ruling that special equipment would have to be installed at a cost of US$ 18-20,000 put an end to my hopes of acquiring a driving license there[…] For almost six years now [in the US] I have been driving a regular car with […] no problems.

> There is no official recognition of sign language and there is no uniform sign language that is taught to all of the hearing impaired; however, the government is sponsoring research projects in order to develop a uniform German sign language. For the vision impaired, literature and newsmagazines are available in Braille or on tape (Michailakis DPI 2).

According to a document published by the Federal Ministry of Education, *The Education System in The Federal Republic of Germany 2000*, the first special education schools in Germany were established in the 19th century for blind and deaf-mute children. In the early years of the 20th century, these evolved into what were known as Hilfsschulen (literally "help schools"), "schools for children of limited learning ability." After the Second World War, various institutions for mentally handicapped children and those with behavior problems were established. In the 1960s and 1970s the present system of Sonderschulen, or special schools, were created. There are ten different types of Sonderschulen to serve children with different handicaps: for the blind, the deaf, the visually impaired, the mentally handicapped, the physically disabled, the sick, those with learning difficulties, those with speech defects, and those with learning problems (137). Since the 1980s, there has been a movement to integrate special-ed students into regular schools. Parents and educators continue to fight for this approach with varying degrees of success throughout the states of Germany. Statistics from the same document from 1999 record that out of a total of almost 470,000 disabled students, only 54,000 were integrated in general schools (147).

IV

So much has changed in Germany since the dark years of the war.

Economically, the country is strong, and the social climate could not be more different. Many people of conscience are aware of the crimes that were committed and are determined that they will not be repeated. “Horror Expressed in Germany Over Dutch Euthanasia” is the headline for an article written by Roger Cohen in the April 12, 2001 edition of the New York Times. “This is a catastrophe on moral and social grounds,” declares a German hospice director. “Some people in Holland have forgotten German history. Such programs can be misused.”

An article written by Hartmut Wewetzer on the UNESCO web site discusses the current state of genetic research and bioethics in Germany. He quotes Benno Müller-Hill, a geneticist at Cologne University, “The whole subject was taboo among German scientists until the early 1980s. We can’t walk past this ocean of blood and continue on our way as if nothing had happened.” Nurse-historian Hilda Steppe states her viewpoint:

> We have a moral obligation to the millions of victims of National Socialism, even if it only means that, through historical research, we assure that they are not forgotten. By taking responsibility for this part of our history, we can become more sensitive for the future, with eyes and ears open for all social injustices. (qtd. in Benedict and Kuhla)

Michael Burleigh reports on a self-help group, called the League of Victims of Compulsory Sterilization and “Euthanasia,” that represents the interests of those affected to the government. It was founded by Klara Nowak, herself a victim of sterilization (57). Friedlander records a letter written by a woman to a Hamburg newspaper in 1971 about her child who was murdered in 1944: “I have brought seven children into the world, including two who were premature, but all are healthy and normal. Still, to this day I have not been able to get over the death of this one child of mine, although I am now seventy-two years old” (178). While the struggle to change laws and attitudes is not over for the handicapped in Germany, people of conscience have indeed learned from the country’s bitter experiences. The continued presence of so many who were and still are victims of Nazi policies gives the German people a unique perspective on many current issues, and the rest of the world would be wise not to ignore the lessons they have learned.

Can the German people be forgiven for what was done? Forgiveness requires sincerity on the part of the transgressor and a certain amount of magnanimity on the part of those who were wronged. Germans have shown their willingness to take responsibility for the evils done by a previous generation and have created a superior system of health care and education for the disabled. Perhaps only those who were directly affected have the right to bestow or withhold forgiveness. However, events around the world today demonstrate that the eternal perpetuation of grudges and hatred only breeds more of the same. It is my opinion that the German people have shown true remorse and should be recognized for the advancements they have made.

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Reiki: Healing by Accessing Universal Life Energy

by Sandra Taurisano

Reiki is an ancient healing practice with roots in Tibetan and Christian methods known as "the laying-on of hands." Throughout history, hands have been relied on as a healing force. Dr. Mikao Usui, who uncovered and deciphered 2,500-year-old Sanskrit sutras, reintroduced the thousand-year-old tradition of Reiki. During a Reiki treatment, universal life energy is transferred through the hands of a practitioner into a recipient, thereby allowing a self-healing process to begin. The existence of this universal life energy is at the forefront of some scientific research today. Many pieces of evidence that all things in the universe are connected have been presented, and there may indeed be a "life force flowing through the universe" (McTaggart xviii), which may account for a credible explanation of "the effectiveness of alternative medicine" (McTaggart xviii). In fact, many reputable hospitals and healing institutions have begun incorporating alternative healing methods, including Reiki, into their treatment plans. This paper will encourage you to examine through the alternative healing method of Reiki, the connection between health and an intelligent life energy responsible for such healing to occur. I believe that scientific research begins with the open minds and endless curiosity of true scientists. I implore you to keep an open mind regarding this subject matter.

A Brief History of Hand Healing

Healing through the 'laying on of hands' dates back thousands of centuries. There is evidence supporting this method of healing in 15,000-

year-old cave drawings located in central and western France where "palaeolithic priest-healer artists left a remarkable collection of paintings of hands" (Harpur 16). For centuries in China, Qigong practitioners used their hands to reportedly heal a variety of illnesses. This practice continues in China to this day. As told in the Gospels of Mark, Jesus Christ used the 'laying on of hands' to heal many times. This method is also noted in the earliest scriptures from India and Tibet.

However, "the context in which [Reiki is] practiced is not religious, but scientific" (Fontaine 220). Its goal is to restore the recipient to a state of balance, thereby facilitating self-healing properties. A typical Reiki session will take anywhere from 45 minutes to one hour. The Reiki healer places his/her hands a few inches above the recipient in a series of 15 hand positions placed over specific areas of the recipient's body. Each position is held for 5 minutes. During this time, universal life energy flows into the practitioner and out through the palms of her hands into the recipient. Sometimes the communication between the life force, the healer and the recipient dictates that a position be held for a longer period of time until the energy flow is reintroduced.

The Meaning and History of Reiki

"Reiki", by definition, means "universal life energy". The word itself is comprised of two Japanese words, 'rei' and 'ki.' 'Rei' is defined as endless universal energy and 'ki' is the vital life force energy that is continually flowing through all that lives in the universe. 'Ki' is known and referred to "[by the] Chinese as Chi, by Christians as the Holy Ghost, by Hindus as Prana, and by Russian scientists as Bioplasmic Energy" (Baginski 16). Whatever one chooses to call it, this "life force energy is universally recognized in biofield therapies as the core of life and the driving force in healing" (Fontaine 223).

Although Reiki healing techniques took place in ancient times, it was in the mid 1800's that this method resurfaced. Dr. Mikao Usui was a 19th century monk in a Christian seminary located in Kyoto, Japan. During lessons, he was questioned by his students about the healing methods used by Christ. They had never been educated in regard to the actual methods used and wondered if Dr. Usui could teach and carry out these types of healings. Thus began Dr. Usui's search for knowledge in regard to such healing practices. He felt that the answers would lie in a Christian country and traveled to the United States where he enrolled in the University of Chicago. During his time in America, Usui became a Doctor of Theology. Unable to find sufficient answers in Christian or Chinese scripts, Dr. Usui went to India and studied the Holy Writings, without success. It was not until he returned to Japan that he discovered the Sanskrit formulas and symbols in Buddhist sutras that contained the information vital to his quest. Through various methods, he translated the ancient texts and began implementing Reiki on himself and his family. Dr. Usui "then began to share his knowledge with the larger public. He opened a clinic in Tokyo in 1922 and his fame for healing spread quickly [throughout] Japan" (Fontaine 222).

Upon his death, "one of Dr. Usui's closest collaborators, Dr. Hayashi, took his place [and became] the second Reiki Grand Master. [Dr. Hayashi] ran a clinic in Tokyo until his death in 1941" (Baginski, 24). His student, Hawaya Takata, a citizen of the United States, became his successor. Hawaya Takata was introduced to Reiki at a time in her life when she was quite ill. She was scheduled for major surgery and was guided by her own inner voice that the surgery was not necessary and she should to go to Japan to seek an alternative healing method. There,

Takata received extensive Reiki treatments daily for several months and, without surgery, was completely healed. She decided to study Reiki under Dr. Hayashi and upon becoming a Reiki Master herself, she returned to her home in Hawaii, where she "lived and healed for many years [and] began to train Reiki masters […] when she was in her seventies" (Baginski 26).

At the time of her passing, she had trained 22 Reiki Masters who were scattered throughout the U.S. and Canada. Prior to her death, Takata and a few of the Reiki Masters she had trained formed the American Reiki Association in order to "organize and [pass] on the knowledge of Reiki" (Baginski 26). Today there are two Reiki organizations in existence: The American International Reiki Association (now called T.R.T.A.I.) and The Reiki Alliance founded by Takata's granddaughter, Phyllis Lee Furumoto.

The Scientific Connection

Science cannot explain everything, nor can it prove beyond all doubt, a right idea: "The best that science can ever hope to achieve is to disprove wrong ideas" (McTaggart, xix). Research, to this date, cannot prove that Reiki works. More importantly, research has not been able to prove that it does not. Recent experimentation by several respected scientists has uncovered the existence of a field of energy that implies "that all matter in the universe [is] interconnected by waves, which are spread out through time and space and can carry on to infinity" (McTaggart 24), thereby connecting all parts of the universe to each other. This energy field is known to physicists as the Zero Point Field. Believing Zero Point Field to be immaterial to their research because it was always present and, therefore, changed nothing, quantum physicists, since 1926, discounted Zero Point Field by subtracting it out of their equations.

Hal Puthoff, a laser physicist, was drawn to studying the Zero Point Field since he read Timothy Boyer's papers on the subject. Boyer's papers concluded that "you didn't need two types of physics [Newtonian and Quantum] to account for the properties of the universe. Everything that happens in the quantum world [can be defined] with classical physics – so long as you take account of the Zero Point Field" (McTaggart 20). Puthoff, re-inserting the Zero Point Field equations into his physics calculations, showed "that fluctuations of the field's waves drive the motion of subatomic particles and that all the motion of all the particles of the universe in turn generates the Zero Point Field [in] a sort of self-generating feedback loop across the cosmos" (McTaggart 25). This field of energy, referred to by scientists as all intelligent, opens the door to the validity of alternative healing methods such as Reiki. It proposes the possibility that the body communicates via wavelengths with this universal energy thereby accessing the information necessary to initiate a self-healing process.

Theoretical biophysicist Fritz-Albert Popp conducted studies that verify this connection. He carried out much research with light and compounds and how they react only at certain wavelengths in a process known as photo-repair. Using a photomultiplier machine developed by the experimental physicist Bernhard Ruth, Popp was able to determine that through biophoton emissions, "cell coordination and communication […] could only occur in a holistic system, withone central orchestrator" (McTaggart 47).

Popp found through experiments that in a healthy body, "light emissions followed certain set patterns" (McTaggart 50), or biological rhythms. These rhythms were correlated and flowed with other biological rhythms in nature "as though the body was following the world's biorhythms as well as its own" (McTaggart, 50). When studying unhealthy people, Popp found that, in certain illnesses, such as cancer, there was a lack of these rhythms and their coherence: "The lines of internal communication were scrambled. [The unhealthy people] had lost their connection with the world. In effect, their light was going out" (McTaggart 51).

In multiple sclerosis and other illnesses, Popp discovered that there was too much light. He believed this blocked flexibility and individuality, creating an imbalance that prevented cells from doing their jobs. When he studied the effects of stress, Popp found that biophoton emissions went up – “a defense mechanism designed to return the patient to equilibrium” (McTaggart 5). His studies led him to the conclusion that “biophoton emissions [act as] a sort of correction by a living system of Zero Point Field fluctuations” (McTaggart 51). Popp realized that light in the body was connected to health and illness and that his work might explain how illness develops when there is a blockage of ‘ki’ or life force energy along the pathways of the body.

Many studies have also been done in an effort to verify or negate the effectiveness of distance healing. Behaviorist William Braud’s studies brought to light the power of human intention as a healing force. Popp agreed with this notion, as did Puthoff. In order to allay remaining questions regarding the possibility of distance healing, it became vitally necessary to conduct a carefully designed study that would put these ideas to test in real life.

Ironically, the scientist who chose to conduct the research was Dr. Elisabeth Targ, an orthodox psychiatrist and confirmed skeptic of the idea of this type of healing. To compound matters she used a group of patients who had advanced AIDS. Targ was known to vacillate between “wanting science to embrace and study the miraculous, and wanting alternative medicine to be more scientific” (McTaggart 182).

Targ’s study was double blind. The 20 patients all had advanced AIDS with the same T-cell counts. All healing was done at a distance by healers of different backgrounds and approaches whose only required criterion was that they believed in their work. “During the six months of the trial period, 40% of the control population died. But all 10 of the patients in the healing group were not only still alive, but had become healthier, on the basis of their own reports and medical evaluations” (McTaggart 190).

The experiment was repeated on a larger scale and with a tighter protocol. At the end of six months, the patients treated with distance healing “were healthier on every parameter – significantly fewer doctor visits, fewer hospitalizations, fewer days in hospital, fewer new AIDS-defining illnesses and significantly lower severity of disease” (McTaggart 191). Twelve in the control group had been hospitalized and acquired new AIDS-defining illnesses. When questioned, the healers informed Elisabeth that they “put out their intention and then stepped back, [surrendering] to some other kind of healing force, as though they were opening a door and allowing something greater in” (McTaggart 193).

Reiki can be transferred from the healer to the recipient over an extended distance. It is known as absentee healing. The law of physics allows radio and television transmissions sent in waves through the air.

Absentee Reiki healing works in the same way. "Our thoughts are nothing other than vibratory patterns which are transmitted by our brains, and like radio waves, they [are] picked up by the right kind of receiver" (Baginski 65).

An intriguing case of a cow severely ill with an undiagnosed illness is an example of absentee Reiki healing. One cow would not eat at all and blood was secreting from its anus. The vet could neither diagnose nor treat the animal, and it died. Another cow caught the illness and was sent to the slaughterhouse. Subsequently, a young bull named Max developed identical symptoms and began to run a fever. Not knowing where else to turn, the farm owner phoned an acquaintance that was a Reiki healer. Two healers began absentee healing on Max and the rest of the cows on the farm. Five days later the healers were telephoned and told "that Max had just been brought back from the slaughterhouse […] and none of the other cows caught the disease after this" (Baginski 69).

There are many documented cases involving animal and even plant healings through Reiki. What makes these healings compelling is that, unlike humans, plants and animals cannot convince themselves that they are being healed. This supports the possibility that the healing method of accessing the universal life energy through Reiki exists and that the Zero Point Field may, in fact, be this energy. "The latest evidence available, based upon careful research, shows beyond a shadow of a doubt that some kind of subtle energy exchange is involved in genuine healing. Something physical does indeed happen in the laying on of hands […] for its results can now be measured and verified by the latest scientific technology" (Harpur 35).

Widespread Acceptance in the Medical Field

Hospitals and wellness centers throughout the United States and Europe have begun to embrace alternative healing methods such as Reiki as useful and positive therapies in their treatment protocol. Many of these institutions have implemented a controversial patient-care philosophy known as Planetree into their wellness programs. Planetree is a holistic system of healthcare created more than two decades ago in San Francisco. It "promotes the emotional, social and physical health of patients [by mixing] complementary therapies [including Reiki] with conventional treatments" (Romano 2).

Although Planetree has struggled in the past to establish itself, its number of members continues to grow. From its conception to the mid 1990's its roster of dues paying hospitals was merely 15. From the mid

1990's to the present, its membership surged to 61 hospitals, 29 of which joined within the last two years. These include the Windber Medical Center in Pennsylvania, Griffin Hospital in Derby, CT, Beth Israel Medical Center in New York, Albert Einstein Medical Center in Philadelphia, and the University Medical Center in New Jersey. All of these institutions offer Reiki in their treatment plans for patients. Although not all physicians believe in these methods or even understand them, they continue to witness the positive results Reiki and other alternative methods produce. Nick Jacobs, president of the Windber Medical Center says, "I can't tell you scientifically, that if you give people flaxseed-filled eye bags and you rub your feet you pray with them, that they're going to get out of here faster, but it certainly looks to me like it's having that kind of impact" (Modern Healthcare 4).

Another enterprise of a concept similar to Planetree is currently under construction in Germany. It is a wellness hospital known as Univiacom. "[Its] concept is to build a hospital that is a center of research and practice attending to the whole human being – mind, body and spirit" (Health Forum 1). It will incorporate homeopathic medicine and other alternative healing methods, including Reiki, with traditional medicine.

Reiki is known as one of the three major hand-mediated biofield therapies. The other two are Therapeutic Touch (TT) and Healing Touch (HT). The goal of these therapies is to "accelerate the [patient's] own healing process and to facilitate healing at all levels of body, mind, spirit and emotions. [They] are not designed to diagnose physical conditions, nor are they meant to replace conventional surgery" (Fontaine, 220-221). They are meant to work in conjunction with traditional Western techniques, beginning with the compelling benefits of touch.

Touch is crucial to effective patient care. It has been found to be "fundamental to nursing and has been listed as a nursing intervention" (Alternative Therapies 1). The number of nurses currently practicing hand -mediated therapies is, to date, higher than 30,000. "The use of complementary therapies, with a specific increase in the use of touch or energy therapies, [has] increased from 34% to more than 40% between 1990 and 1997" (Engebretson 2). It is not unreasonable to believe that these numbers have risen from 1997 to the present as Reiki is considered "an excellent method to purposefully reestablish caring as a critical factor in a medical system overwhelmed with machines and technology" (Nursing Admin. 2). Dr. Mary Kashurba notes the benefits she observed of Reiki treatments given by nurses and others in health care facilities as "promotion of wound healing, decreased fracture healing time and decreased pain in burn patients"(Brill 3). Observations by professionals in specific fields of care are as follows: "Obstetrics – decrease in anxiety leading to less discomfort during labor; Pediatrics – reduction of anxiety, pain and fever; Hospice – calms patient and can reduce the need for pain medication" (Brill 3). Reiki has repeatedly facilitated deep states of relaxation through the autonomic nervous system, thereby lowering blood pressureand heart rate. Recognition and knowledge of the effectiveness of Reiki has even reached medical campuses: "Recently medical students at both Brown and Tufts Universities have requested that Reiki be taught as part of their programs" (Buch).

The most influential evidence I have found regarding the legitimacy of Reiki as a healing method is my own personal experience with it. Not knowing anything about Reiki, I went to my first healing mostly out of curiosity. I did not have a specific illness, but felt generally out of sorts physically and emotionally. Prior to the commencement of the healing, I did not relay any specifics to the Reiki practitioner. During the treatment, I felt incredibly relaxed and at times, weightless. Upon completing the healing, the practitioner asked me if I had a problem at the center of my chest. I told her that ever since I could remember, I would sporadically feel a sharp stabbing pain there. It came and went randomly, never occurring in any specific pattern. No one I knew experienced this phenomenon and doctors labeled it stress related. The practitioner then told me that the Reiki energy healed the area. That healing took place more than a decade ago and to this day, I have never felt that pain again. Subsequent healings alleviated symptoms of fybromyalgia for months and helped lessen my bouts of insomnia.

Recently, I have become a Reiki healer myself. The most significant experience I have had as a healer was with a woman who suffered with excruciating back pain for five months.

Her prescribed medication was not working. As I have little experience as a Reiki healer, I did not think that I would be able to significantly help alleviate her pain. I worked only on the section of her back in which the pain was based. My hands were placed over the area for 15 minutes, at which time I felt we were done. Throughout the healing she spoke to me of various sensations in the area, including alternating sensations of hot and cold and what she could only describe as fingers quickly yet gently tapping and moving around inside her back. Of course, my hands never actually touched her, as they were traditionally placed a few inches above the area.

That night, she was in more pain than ever before. However, the next morning, upon waking, she was completely pain free and remained so for many weeks. Although her pain is now beginning to recur, it is significantly less severe and her medication is helping her. At her request, we have scheduled more healings.

There are many false cures and fads out there. The majority of Western medical publications do not recognize non-traditional healing methods and try to portray healing methods such as Reiki as being 'faith healing' types of hoaxes. These publications rely heavily on advertising placed by huge pharmaceutical companies. It is the major source of their income and it is not surprising that they rarely present non-pharmacological methods of treatment.

This is also the reason for the lack of funding available for research into unconventional therapies. Yet the natural curiosity and desire to search for the truth ingrained in true scientists has sparked them on to discover the energy field responsible for these non-invasive healing techniques to work. Whether it is referred to as the Zero Point Field, Ki, Prana or bioplasmic energy, it is the universal life force energy present in all things. It is channeled through the hands of a practitioner into a recipient in the healing process known as Reiki.

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Rest Stops: Factors Along the Road to Hysteria

By Amy Zerello

"Down with a world in which the guarantee that we will not die of starvation has been purchased with the guarantee that we will die of boredom." This quotation, which prefaces Elizabeth Wurtzel's *Bitch*, a study of manipulative female behavior, is more appropriate, I feel, to the early nineteenth-century. It was during this time that a mental hunger for that which was denied to women was matched by an ideal of idleness, resulting in boredom, which, in some cases, became unbearable to the point of hysteria. I'd like to propose that the needs of women, for education, excitement, self-expression and the like, gave way to "a burdensome absence whose weight" was so much greater than the woman herself. I feel we may then find that it was "psychic starvation" which paved women's paths toward a strange epidemic. Hysteria was women's drastic escape from the stifling ideal of domesticity and a condition enlisted once they realized invalidism would be met with resentment. Those guarding the exits of the domestic sphere initially may have looked upon invalidism as interesting, yet scornfully once its implications to woman's role were acknowledged. Women therefore relied on hysteria to provide them that which society failed to serve them, a dish of power they may have prepared, yet were incapable of trying and forbidden to taste.

Social ornaments. Women? As America became industrialized, class distinction became more apparent. During the years from 1865 to 1920, America was confronted with rapid urbanization. This revolution thrived upon the "exploitation of working people" and just as fast as "fortunes were made and destroyed overnight" came the creation of a new role for upper-class women to assume. Women were not exempt from the harshness of this new world, which was tainted with an insatiable desire for success and ruthless competitiveness. They were "as much a product of [it] as [their] husbands or his employees" (Ehrenreich and English 16). Women became signs of the times through "class polarization" and it became solely the affluent man who, with "wealth extracted in that harsh outside world" was "enabled to afford a totally leisured wife" (Ehrenreich and English 16). The leisured lady, through her idleness and autonomy from labor toiled over by the lower classes, thus became a symbol of the wealthy man, a "social ornament that proved man's success" (Ehrenreich and English 16).

When we consider ornaments we may happen upon descriptions such as "beautiful" and "fragile." In fact, most items we are conscientious about and wish to preserve are either elaborately wrapped up or placed out of harm's way on shelves, more often, in boxes labeled "fragile." So it makes sense then, that if women were considered "social ornaments," they must have resembled ornaments in a way, employing elaborate practices to enhance their appearance. At the same time women were enhancing their appearances, they were consciously producing images designed to appear fragile, becoming thus an embodiment of what we may feel the need to wrap up or place upon a shelf.

Fashion's physical appearance took various forms in the nineteenth-century, yet its most predominant was the fragile and submissive maiden of the Victorian stereotype (Banner 45). Fashion magazines portrayed and personified her dimensions through drawings and illustrations of ethereal women, which were also mass-produced as lithographs (Banner 45).

Victorianism as a social code was based on a separation between masculine and feminine spheres of life. Paralleling the industrialization of America was the increased degree of literacy, which provided, for women who read, numerous guides for achieving the ideal. One particularly notable representation of this was excerpted from the writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau, who declared in *Emile* (1762) that:

> The whole education of women ought to be relative to men. To please them, to be useful to them, to make themselves loved and honored by them, to educate them while young, to care for them when grown, to console them, and to make life sweet and agreeable to them – these are the duties of women at all times, and what should be taught them from their infancy (qtd. in Gilbert and Gubar 289).

The ideal woman was thus pure, submissive, decorous, and angelic (Gilbert and Gubar 289).

"Social ornaments" and "angels"? One may think of Halloween considering the distinct paradox between the realistic image of women and the envisioned ideal they were all too often measured against. As epitomizing the ideal with exactness was impossible, women's energies were invested toward coming as close to it as possible, with little precaution of the grave dangers they risked through their attempts. "Marriageable maidens on both sides of the Atlantic drank vinegar to cultivate an 'interesting' pallor, tight-laced themselves into narrow corsets so as to achieve an uncannily slender waist, and practiced the 'art' of fainting to remind beaux of their delicacy" (Gilbert and Gubar 290).

The frail, even sickly ideal steadily moved toward necrophilia, as dead and dying women received glorification and increasing interest. Art and literature began portraying ill and indisposed women; Edgar Allan Poe claimed them literature's most fruitful subject (Gilbert and Gubar 290). This concept brought forth an "extraordinary imperative that underlay much of the nineteenth-century ideology of femininity: in one way or another, woman must be 'killed' into passivity for her to acquiesce in what Rousseau and others considered her duty of self-abnegation 'relative to men' " (Gilbert and Gubar 290).

To understand the relationship between the female cult of invalidism and hysteria, one must consider not only the standards of the ideal, but also the social sphere women were encapsulated in. Women depended heavily on men, a fact that invokes little wonder once one understands the massive discrepancy which existed between their power and men's.

"Severe restrictions were imposed on women by education and social custom" (Gilbert and Gubar 292). Women were advised the most intelligent acts involved the submersion of their interests into and in favor of their husbands and children. The "custom of training working-class daughters for domestic service" was evident in the education they received, if any, as although "a girl should be taught to subordinate her interests to men's," she should not develop "virtual ignorance" (Gilbert and Gubar 292). In the 1830's women received their first opportunities for higher education. Oberlin College exemplified the restrictive education women received. It was here that "women students followed the 'ladies course,' received special degrees, and entered men's classes only with special permission" (Woloch 276).

It would seem reasonable that, reflecting the ideology of the times manifested in Rousseau's quote from *Emile*, in order for women to meet these criteria she should be capable of "[conversing] intelligently with gentlemen" (Gilbert and Gubar 292). We may believe then that women studied the same subjects as their counterparts, yet in doing so we favor fiction over fact.

The “ladies course” at Oberlin is a single example of the phenomena that infiltrated all aspects of the education of women. “Women were admitted to Oberlin in order to improve education for men” (Woloch 276). Such reasoning was supported by the idea that the admittance of women into traditionally all-male colleges raised the “emotional tone” and prevented the “growth of vulgar customs” (Woloch 276).

A woman’s studies were not really her own at all. Women’s studies lacked the entire essence of their existence altogether. To “converse intelligently with gentlemen,” women were trained minimally in modern languages and fine arts, which included embroidery, drawing or water coloring, and music. These endeavors were countered with “strict training in ‘propriety,” which, wrote the influential educator Hannah Moore in 1799, “is to a woman what the Roman critic says action is to an orator: it is the first, the second, the third requisite” (Gilbert and Gubar 292).

A married woman of the Nineteenth Century encountered restrictions of the same degree as women met in attempting to further their “education.” She owned no property, and what she may have possessed upon entering marriage was soon no longer her own. A wife’s husband could will his estate away from her, whether or not a portion of it had originally been her own. The earnings of upper-class women who were not autonomous from labor were not her own either. According to the law, a woman’s husband “had sole rights in their [children’s] guardianship if the couple were separated for any reason” though “divorce was virtually unobtainable.” Further, as a parent is customarily responsible for his or her child today, in the nineteenth-century this was mirrored by the fact that a wife’s husband was held responsible for “all her acts and debts”(Gilbert and Gubar 292).

What constituted the many restrictions and bindings of a woman’s sphere was and is something that stood “between biology and social policy, between the ‘mysterious’ world of the laboratory and everyday life” (Ehrenreich and English 5). This “keeper of the keys” is the medical system, and it has proved to be both “strategic for women’s liberation” and “strategic to women’s oppression” (Ehrenreich and English 5). Medicine has always possessed great power. We may seldom consider medicine’s strength, yet must for recognizing the unjust and sexist implications it had upon women of the nineteenth-century. “Of course, medicine did not invent sexism. The view that women are ‘sick,’ or defective versions of men is as old as Eden” (Ehrenreich and English 6).

The medical establishment believed woman’s sole purpose was the home. “Domesticity was also assumed to constitute women’s primary source of satisfaction,” thus concerns of the world beyond one’s home were dangerous, as one's present condition of fragility, when combined with "physical or even mental labor" would undoubtedly worsen (Gilbert and Gubar 968). The advice to women not to entertain "masculine pursuits" was supported by the medical community, who ironically were granted belief and compliancy by society despite lack of a "very clear idea of human physiology" (Ehrenreich and English 26). They proposed "women's weakness rested on the most basic physiological law: 'conservation of energy'" (Ehrenreich and English 27). It was this theory that explained female fragility and weakness while fostering invalidism.

By insisting women were predisposed to sickness and offering their appearances and reproductive systems as evidence, doctors granted women a hand in the tug-of-war struggle for lack of social power and attention in their homes. The cult of female invalidism entered the arena on smooth, paved roads. Sickness had already been regarded as characteristic of women; women were, based upon their biological make-up, indisposed already. The upper class knew it was in vogue to appear delicate and pale. "It was acceptable, even fashionable, to retire to bed with 'sick headaches,' 'nerves,' and a host of other mysterious ailments" (Ehrenreich and English 18).

I propose that the boredom women experienced on account of the restrictions of social and educational venues, paired with the ideal that favored fragility, fostered female invalidism with the help of the medical establishment's misconceptions. Women keenly unearthed their biological stigmas and manipulated them…each time they put themselves "to bed."

"Physicians insisted that biological characteristics permitted women to pursue only special activities" (Rothman 23). This notion parallels the "conservation of energy" theory that claims "each human body contained a set quantity of energy that was directed variously from one organ or function to another. This meant that you could develop one organ or ability only at the expense of others, drawing energy away from the parts not being developed" (Ehrenreich and English 27). As the belief was that the uterus and ovaries dominated a woman's entire body, according to the medical professionals, "reproductivity was central to [her] biological life." Therefore, intellectual pursuits, or for that matter any activity which may draw woman from the sphere, resulted in her energy's unequal distribution; inviting competition between her mind and reproductive organs. As "reproduction was woman's grand purpose in life, doctors agreed that women ought to concentrate their physical energy internally, toward the womb" (Ehrenreich and English 27).

These radical ideologies "perpetuated the notion that women were not only inherently frail but also predisposed to insanity" (Rothman 24).

Nervous exhaustion, which women were far more prone to suffer due to their biological makeup and inherent delicacy, was labeled "neurasthenia," a disease without an etiology. I suggest that these supposed "dispositions," employed by women, functioned from their resentment toward the boredom caused by restrictions. Others may have used the "sick role to their own advantage, especially as a form of birth control. If some women resorted to sickness as a means of [contraceptive,] others undoubtedly used it to gain attention and a limited measure of power within their families" (Ehrenreich and English). Obviously invalidism did attract attention as it exempted women, briefly, from their domestic duties.

The syndrome of invalidism reached epidemic numbers in the nineteenth-century. Doctors, when they found no organic basis for its symptoms, claimed it only a power grab. Reluctant to label it a genuine illness, medical professionals soon found neurasthenia "affected upper- and upper-middle class women almost exclusively." Beneficially and mysteriously, this syndrome was resistant to doctor's medical treatments. For these reasons invalidism became an "ideal disease for doctors: it was never fatal, and it required an almost endless amount of medical attention" (Ehrenreich and English). But it was not an ideal disease from the point of view of the husband and family of the afflicted woman, based upon its implications.

Doctors found neurasthenia frustrating. They could find neither successful cures nor explanations for the afflicted women. The methods they initially employed can be seen, in light of their ignorance, as well intentioned. The prescriptions devised to treat the symptoms of neurasthenia, sinister for they were aimed to alter women's behavior, were popularized by Dr. S. Weir Mitchell as the "rest cure," which I suggest led to hysteria.

In his *Fat and Blood: And How to Make Them*, published in 1877, Mitchell offers both an etiology of neurasthenia and a comprehensive account of its treatment's procedures. The "rest cure" consisted of five components, and Mitchell devoted a chapter to each, beginning with 'rest,' which should last six to eight weeks during which "prescribed periods" the patient was "not permitted to sit up, sew, feed herself, read, or write." To this was added the patient's seclusion from familiar surroundings and family to curtail harmful, "cherished" habits. Diet included excessive feeding to improve the color and number of red corpuscles of the blood and to increase body volume and energy. Massage and/or electricity was employed to counter the atrophy *too much* rest may cause.

Mitchell claims no matter the source of the "nervous condition," the "woman grows pale and thin, eats little, or if she eats does not profit by it." His treatment's design epitomizes the resentment invalidism met from a woman's family and her doctor. Their mentality rested on spitefulness; if a woman wanted rest, through invalidism, to escape constitutes of her body and her home, why not make rest unbearable? Mitchell evidences this when he writes:

> To lie abed half the day, and sew a little and read a little, and to be interesting and invite sympathy, is all very well, but when they are bidden to stay in bed a month, and neither to read, write, nor sew, and have one nurse — who is not a relative — then rest becomes for some women a rather bitter medicine, and they are glad enough to accept the order to rise and go about when the doctor issues a mandate which has become pleasantly welcome and eagerly looked for (qtd. in Golden 48).

The late Charlotte Perkins Gilman, prominent author and feminist activist, exploits the trouble and torment she personally experienced when prescribed to follow the "rest cure." Her fictionalization, "The Yellow Wallpaper," is a short story that effectively narrates the implications of confinement. Her depiction of the "rest cure" illustrates the extreme restrictions and limitations confronting women of her society in order to accentuate the fatal consequences of making women completely dependent on her male protectors (Golden 9). The story was published only after Gilman employed a literary agent. The rejection that it initially encountered centered on its provocative quality; the protagonist who descends into madness is a middle-class wife and mother (Golden 3).

The story's power resides in its purpose and effect. Gilman's autobiography, *The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman*, includes the statement that "the real purpose of the story was to reach Dr. S. Weir Mitchell and to convince him of the error of his ways" (qtd. in Golden 7). Mitchell's advice to Gilman, for relieving her "nervous prostration," was to "Live as domestic a life as possible" and "never [to] touch pen, brush or pencil as long as you live" (qtd. in Golden 7). Gilman managed not only to "get back" but to turn her sickness into a creative work of art that exposed Mitchell. She sent her doctor a copy of [the story] to urge him to rethink his treatment of nervous prostration. Learning secondhand that Mitchell changed his methods upon reading her story, she proudly remarked: 'If that is a fact, I have not lived in vain' " (qtd. in Golden 8).

Not all women chose to, or could afford to, express themselves polemically. Some complied with the treatment, "which you would think would be stifling [yet essentially is] the exhilarating expression of [the] soul dying to be free" (Wurtzel 185). A significant number of women chose neither route, however. These women detoured through what would later be referred to as the "epitome" of the cult of female invalidism: hysteria (Ehrenreich and English 39). With no discernable organic basis, and strong resistance to "treatment," hysteria put doctors "on the spot. It was essential to their professional self-esteem to either find [a basis] for the disease, and cure it, or to expose it as a clever charade" (Ehrenreich and English 40).

Indeed, we may conclude in favor of the latter, for most conditions facing women of the nineteenth-century nicely factor into hysteria's equation. Doctors claimed it a "disease of the uterus." Additionally it was understood that "no matter how many women might adopt it, it remained completely individualized: hysterics don't unite and fight"; therefore, as a "form of revolt it was very limited" (Ehrenreich and English 41). Hysterics received ridiculous and disturbing treatments, ranging from mere ridicule to potentially dangerous suffocation. "More than a bizarre twist of medical history, the nineteenth-century epidemic of hysteria had lasting significance because it ushered in a totally new 'scientific' approach to the medical management of women" (Ehrenreich and English 43).

The advancements considered are called so only because they would come to replace the more ludicrous and harmful treatments that preexisted. "Sigmund Freud, in Vienna, was beginning to work on a treatment that would remove the disease altogether from the arena of gynecology"(Ehrenreich and English 43). Through his development of psychoanalysis he "banished the traumatic 'cures' and legitimized a doctor-patient relationship based solely on talking" (Ehrenreich and English 43). Despite the fact that Freud's theory of female nature remained in accordance with the view it replaced, it became representative of a sharp break with the past and a genuine advance for women (Ehrenreich and English 44).

Today the medical system remains a "powerful instrument of social control." Ehrenreich and English attest that the tendency of doctors to diagnose women's complaints as psychosomatic evidences the existence of some of the same opinions maintained in the Nineteenth Century. They explain that the "view of women has not really shifted from 'sick' to 'well'; it has shifted from 'physically sick' to 'mentally ill.' " The field of psychiatry today has inadvertently replaced the mentality that once centered upon gynecology, serving to currently "uphold the sexist tenet of women's fundamental defectiveness" (Ehrenreich and English 80).

To inquire of hysteria in exclusion of its context and without addressing its contributing factors would produce an incomplete picture of a widespread epidemic. The depiction of a frail ideal, the social unjustness, and women's restrictions could possibly have functioned autonomously from one another in contributing to hysteria. A truth rests in the notion that starvation's avoidance is purchased with boredom. Little difficulty would be encountered in comprehending how angry one would be after trooping miles of road, whose tiresome length is made up for with its smoothness, only to arrive at one's destination, hungry, and to be told the enticing scent of pots boiling with freedom are *not* for you. Go to bed.

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Drawing Connections Between Art and Psychology

by Desiree Blackwell

Art is the purest form of expression and can often capture what cannot be understood in words. At one time or another we have all created a piece of artwork, even if it was a simple crayon drawing. What if that one piece of art were key to the understanding of our unconscious, revealing emotions and feelings we never thought we had? Since the earliest recorded history, art has served man in restoring physical, psychological, and spiritual health. It has been used to reflect human experience and contains a catalog of emotions from our greatest joys to our deepest sorrows. Recent years have taught us the great psychological significance art has to the human race. This concept has driven endless numbers of artists and scientists to draw connections between art and psychology. This paper will examine various aspects of art and psychology, ancient and modern, in an attempt to draw correlations between the content of art and psychology.

Part I: Art and the Ancients

In order to fully understand the connection between art and psychology, we must first examine the earliest forms of art and draw conclusions as to art's underlying psychological significance. The first forms of art were created by Stone Age humans, who drew on the walls of caves using primitive tools. These primitive people were pre-occupied with protecting themselves from outside elements including animals, and the weather. These struggles were apparent in the content of their art. Some of the most famous cave paintings depict the capturing of an animal in the midst of the woods. Psychologists and archaeologists alike believe that this depiction was a way for primitive people to "will" a successful hunt by first "capturing" the prey in pictorial imagery. Many writers have noticed the psychological impact: Bernard Feder writes "[t]here is evidence that strongly suggests that primitive people's art was functional, like a magical formula, bringing together spirits, in exorcism, providing places for evil to rest, creating wild animals when game was scarce for the hunt, and invoking rain or fertility" (1). We can make the assumption that the paintings of Stone Age humans were "functional" because they were too worried about everyday life to create art for decorative purposes. This theory is proven by the underlying ideas of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which suggests that only when a person's basic needs are met can they hope to achieve self-expression. So, unlike artistic expression of today, early forms of art had practical purposes, but this practicality was achieved through the psychological impact it had on the viewer and artist.

Later, more advanced civilizations like the Egyptians and Sumerians created entire alphabets made up of pictorial symbols "…in order to give permanence to their expressions, and convert them into communications. The search for meaning among early humans must have involved the desire to communicate that meaning to others" (Feder 70). Art was also a key part of many rituals. The Egyptians would paint symbols on the tombs of the dead in the belief that this would preserve the bodies. The Hittites used strands of different colored wool in rituals of protection, and in African societies masks were used a great deal in rituals, to ward off danger, call forth ancestors, and take on the identity of animals and other spirits.

Recently, in more contemporary cultures, art has taken on the job of healing. For instance, the Navajo Indians use sand paintings, accompanied by music and dance, to bring forth physical and mental health. Tibetan monks also use the sand painting in the shape of the mandala as a center for prayer, and this symbol is thought to bring relief from pain and suffering. The example most closely associated with psychology is that of the shaman. The job of the shaman is to heal the mind, body and soul using symbols. These symbols he wears on his shroud, and they are supposed to allow an ailing person to achieve "alternate states of consciousness", much like the concept of hypnosis (Malchiodi 23). The purposes of art in ancient and contemporary cultures lead the way for modern psychologists to discover the connection between the visual image and the psyche.

Part II: Psychology and Art

The twentieth century brought with it a new found interest in the psychological connection between imagery, emotion and the unconscious. This idea was the basis of the belief that art "provides tangible evidence as to the nature of a person's inner world" (Malchiodi 23). In the year 1901, French psychiatrist, Marcel Reja began to collect and analyze the art of his patients. What he discovered was that the artwork of his patients reminded him of the art of young children and the primitive artist. Other psychologists, including Emil Kraepelin and Karl Jaspers, observed their patients creating works of art and tried to use their art in an attempt to better understand psychopathology. However, it was Sigmund Freud who first connected the relationship between the image and the content of dreams and the unconscious:

> We experience it [a dream] predominantly in visual images; feelings may be present too, and thoughts interwoven aswell; the other senses may also experience something, but nevertheless it is predominantly a question of images. Part of the difficulty of giving an account of dreams is due to our having to translate the images into words. 'I could draw it,' a dreamer often says to us, 'but I don't know how to say it.'
>
> (Feder 60)

Freud's theories gave psychological significance to dreams, fantasies and linguistic "Freudian Slips," and these were thought to be various ways in which the unconscious revealed itself. However, Freud fell short in one area; he did not allow his patients to draw their dreams when they asked him to. Freud viewed art in a negative light stating "he [the artist] turns away from reality to fantasy and transfers all his interest to the libido, to the wishful constructions of his life phantasy, whence the path might lead to neurosis" (Case 15). Freud believed art would only perpetuate the problem and did not view it as a means of psychological healing.

After his split from Freud, Carl J. Jung came to recognize the connection between art and psychology, and put it into practice. Jung introduced the idea of collective unconscious, or as he put it, "psychic inheritance." Collective unconscious is defined as the universal memories and experiences of human kind, represented in symbols or images known as archetypes. Jung's interest in the connection between psychology and art can be attributed to his own experience with art as a way of accessing his own feelings and as an aid in finding self-understanding. Jung strongly believed it was important to uncover any emotions that may be dormant in the unconscious mind, because if they were not released, it would have a negative effect on a person's personality. He also recognized that dreams, memories and art could all bring forth what is hidden in the unconscious. Jung studied in great detail art expression and symbolism. He was particularly interested in the mandala or "magic circle", universal archetypes and the artwork of his patients. Jung, unlike Freud wanted his patients to draw their dreams and noted that "[t]o paint what we see before us, is different from painting what we see within" (Malchiodi 24).

Freud and Jung opened the doors for the psychiatric community to recognize the importance of incorporating art into the process of psychoanalysis. With this, psychiatrists began to realize that art could reveal things that words often failed to communicate. The concept that art was symbolic of our hidden feelings and emotions took hold, and the artwork of the insane took center stage.

Numerous psychiatrists began examining the artwork of the insane in great detail. One such person was Ambriose Tardieu, who published a series of books on mental illness, one of which documented what he believed to be characteristics of artwork of the insane. The pages of this book noted specific colors and styles that were considered to be signs of emotional distress. Later, Paul Max Simon published a series of documents and studies of the paintings and other creations of the mentally ill. He became known as "the father of art and psychiatry" (Malchiodi 25). His studies greatly influenced the idea of using art to diagnose and asses the condition of mentally ill patients.

These early studies of artwork would also allow modern psychologists to design and develop new forms of testing that could help in the diagnosis of patients.

Part III: Integration of Art into Psychological Testing

The growing interest in the art work of the mentally ill led to the creation of various tests that were used to diagnose and assess mental conditions. From this the idea of diagnostic testing was born, in an attempt to determine the difference between normal and abnormal behaviors. The most famous of these tests was the Rorschach Inkblot Test, which consisted of a series of ten cards with symmetrical abstract patterns. The idea was for the patient to project their feelings onto the abstract picture, and this was supposed to reveal a person's inner motives, conflicts, and unconscious. Leonardo Da Vinci is said to be the first to notice the associations you can make to an inkblot. He said, "Various experiences can be seen in such a blot, provided one wants to find them in it-human heads, various animals, battle, cliffs, seas, clouds, or forests and other things" (Malchiodi 27). Extensive trials revealed that this was not a reliable test of the personality; however, it was one of the early trends in intergrading art into the psychological fields.

A more recent phenomenon is the integration of art into traditional psychotherapy and is more commonly known as art therapy. Margaret Naumburg is credited with the creation of the field, and based it on the following principle: "the advantage in the making of unconscious pictured projections is such that symbolic images more easily escape repression by what Freud called the mind's 'censor,' than do verbal expressions, which are more familiar to the patient" (Naumburg 2). Unlike traditional psychotherapy, art therapists ask their patients to interpret their own art. While interpreting their art, the patient should experience transference defined by Freud as "the revival of psychological experiences by transferring them onto another object" (Case 5). The success of art therapy in helping patients reveal their inner worlds has given it great recognition. In fact, just recently, art therapy has been recognized as "a mind body intervention" by the National Institutes of Health Office of Alternative Medicine, and is becoming increasingly popular.

Part IV: Art and Psychology

Artists have always sought to express themselves in visual imagery in an attempt to better understand themselves and the world around them. The theories of Freud had a great effect on the works of many artists. Most important to the artistic world was Freud's concept of the unconscious. The unconscious is defined as the part of one's mental life of which one is not ordinarily aware, but which is often a powerful force in controlling behavior (Webster 789). This idea spurred an entire artistic movement known as Surrealism, which was based on Freud's idea that images came from the unconscious. Surrealists believed dreams contained meanings that could be interpreted, and the movement was an attempt to capture the unconscious by focusing on the content of dreams. The mission of surrealist painters was to express the images they saw in their dreams and to elaborate on them to create works of art that would shock and fascinate people. Painters of this movement included Salvador Dali and Max Ernst, whose art often contained bizarre images and striking colors. The surrealist movement was an attempt to move away from painting the exterior reality and looking within oneself to reveal the unconscious processes.

New techniques of drawings also evolved out of the surrealist movement, and later influenced psychology. One such technique was called automatic drawing. Artists who used this technique, like Joan Miro, believed that the creation of spontaneous art was a better way of revealing the unconscious. They attributed this theory to the fact that spontaneous art was free of influence and could reveal ones true emotions. Later on, while undergoing psychoanalysis, Jackson Pollack used a method called "psychic automatism" to help him express his feelings and relay those feelings onto paper. This emphasis on spontaneity is an essential part of art therapy today.

The expressionist movement followed, and its focus was also expression of emotion. Painters of this movement included Vincent Van Gogh, and Paul Gauguin. Members of this movement became increasingly interested in the process of free association, which at the time was being put into practice by Freud. Free association can be simply defined as allowing the mind to flow from thought to thought without intention. Among artists, a point of great interest was the art of children and the mentally ill. Studies of "outsider art," allowed artists and psychologists alike to recognize that art is a universal human urge, and that anyone can create meaningful art.

In the midst of the connection between art and psychology is the correlation between creativity and madness. The philosopher Plato believed that artists were born with what he called the "divine madness." Throughout history, the greatest of artists have suffered from mental illness in the midst of emotionally complicated lives. This was depicted in *Touched with Fire* where author Kay Redfield noted that "By psychiatry's current diagnostic criteria, many artists have suffered from one of the major mood disorders, such as manic depressive illness or major depression" (Malchiodi 32). The greatest example of the creativity that comes with mental illness is the art of Vincent Van Gogh, who suffered from severe depression throughout the course of his life. Many art historians and psychiatrists have attributed Van Gogh's swirling paintbrush strokes to his severe mood swings, a result of his manic depression. Even Van Gogh himself noted the manic emotions that he expressed in his paintings "I am painting immense expanses of wheat beneath troubled skies, and I have not hesitated to express extreme solitude" (Malchiodi 33). Van Gogh's most famous and final painting entitled "Wheat Fields with Crows" depicts a dark stormy sky, and a large flock of black crows flying through the fields, it is a great example of his fragile mental state.

Works of Van Gogh and other artists intrigued many who believed that there was a correlation between art and psychological disturbance. Although there seems to be a direct correlation between artists and madness, there is no evidence that this is the norm. In fact, many have found art to be the one thing that helped them to recover from periods of psychological turmoil. However, recent years and studies in the mental health profession have shown us that all too often there is a direct correlation between brilliance and madness.

Part V: Making Connections

Although I can't offer a definitive answer as to the exact correlation between art and psychology, I have a few ideas about it. Art allows us to express ourselves without being hindered by the rules of grammar and syntax. It allows us to "think visually," which Cathy Malchiodi defines as "our ability and tendency to organize our thoughts, feelings and perceptions about the world in images" (9). Because of this tendency it is often hard for us to express ourselves in verbal terms, and often the meaning of what we say is not the same as how we really feel.

In short, art is one of the most important connections we have to the inner workings of our unconscious mind. Ultimately, every time we create some sort of spontaneous art our unconscious is revealing to use our inner hopes and dreams, fears and anxieties, and in some cases mental illness. It can help us heal from traumatic experiences and is a useful tool in modern day psychology. Art is as much a part of life as breathing; it is a natural human urge that cannot be suppressed.

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The News Media: a Social Imperative Threatened

by Elena Marinaccio

> "The most stupid boast in the history of present-day journalism is that of the writer who says, 'I have never been given orders; I am free to do as I like.'"
>
> George Seldes, 1938

The media, from its rudimentary forms to the most up-to-date methods of intelligence access, is the means by which the public connects with the community and the world. This connection is a social imperative, as events around the globe take on a butterfly-effect of influence upon each of our lives. The media patrols and exposes the world, and, in turn, the Federal Communication Commission regulates the media. The fact is, the public feels the effects of every new media outlet consolidation, whether they know it or not. From the stifling overlay of cable programming to the ad-placements popping up in local news broadcasts, everyone is affected, usually in more ways than one, by the transformations taking place in television and radio ownership.

The most recent conflict was set in motion on June 2, 2003 when the Federal Communication Commission, which is composed of five commissioners appointed by the president, voted along party lines to oblige the likes of corporate media colossi and slacken its media regulation. The changes allowed a single company to own up to three television stations and one newspaper in large cities, and among other changes, raised the percentage of U.S. households reached by a television broadcast company from 35 percent to 45 percent. The degree to which the committee has chosen to wield its power has fluctuated throughout the years, and in doing so the FCC has facilitated the continuous remolding of the American media landscape.

The prelude to the recent wave of deregulation actually began twenty years ago with the globalization of media corporations, resulting in the rise of "transnational media giants" (McChesney). In 1983, 50 corporations occupied the media market. Deregulation ominously persisted throughout the close of the millennium with the eradication of the fairness doctrine in 1987, and the advent of the Telecommunication Act of 1996. Now, in 2004, the number of preponderate owners has dwindled down to a mere five: Disney (ABC), News Corp. (FOX), GE (NBC), Time-Warner (CNN), and Viacom (CBS). According to Robert McChesney's article, "The Global Media Giants," global scope is now necessary to compete in today's media-market. This all-inclusive span is secured by two methods: getting big by dominating the markets, and synergizing by conglomerating assets (McChesney).

The upshots of conglomerate media ownership are far-reaching and compelling in impact. Synergy, ostensibly innocuous as an entertainment-business staple, now deceitfully infects virtually all media outlets as the line between advertising and news is nearly blurred beyond recognition. Earlier this year, Clear Channel radio stations in Chicago ordered its on-air talent to report Kennedy Expressway travel times to the Allstate Arena rather than the "landmark endpoint" that is O'Hare Airport. Although Barry Butler, general sales manager for Clear Channel Traffic Chicago, refused to say how much the arena was paying for "product placement plugs in traffic reports," he did boast that, "all of the concerts that are booked at the Allstate are from Clear Channel Entertainment!" (Feder 1). In March of 2000, WCBS-TV in New York ran a newscast including a feature on a laser eye surgery procedure. The story featured the same doctor and patient that appeared in one of the station's website advertisements for which the station had accepted over $300,000 for running (Fear & Favor 2). These increasingly common quid pro quos silently degrade and obscure the reliability fundamental to serving the public with useful and honest information.

The opposite end of the misinformation spectrum is censorship. A prime example is GE-owned NBC News coverage: NBC failed to cover General Electric's hand in polluting the Hudson River with toxins, consumer boycotts of GE products, the inferior working conditions at Mexican GE plants, or the fact that GE was involved in a story about faulty bolts used in airplanes (Naureckas 1). In 2000, editors of the *Boston Herald* decided to kill a newsworthy report concerning the consumer fee increases generated by the Fleet/Bank Boston merger because of the bank's "role as a big advertiser and a lender to the paper" (Fear & Favor 2000). Journalistic—not economic—integrity should be our only interest valued with such a seemingly despotic fervor.

On January 23, 2004, Congress passed an omnibus spending bill containing provisions to the FCC ruling, including a "compromised" 39% cap on broadcast media ownership and a quadrennial review of ownership rules. On February 11, 2004, the 3rd Circuit Court of Appeals heard arguments from the Media Access Project (on behalf of Prometheus Radio Project). MAP attorneys contended that "the FCC applied the wrong legal standard and irrationally and inconsistently adopted the rules in violation of the law" (Media Access 1). Advocates for the deregulation aim to "foster competition through deregulation rather than government manipulation" (Jackson 7). But the corporations that are made to look as though they are pitted against one another in competition actually engage in equity joint ventures where they split the ownership of "concerns with their 'competitors' so as to *reduce* competition and risk" (McChesney 2). The FCC has also awarded private broadcasters profitable monopolies on frequencies that rightfully belong to the public. Robert McChesney told *Newsweek* that "when the government awards licenses for these services, it isn't setting the terms of competition—it is picking the winners" (Jackson 3).

It is important to note the difference between a news corporation that "owns across different media" (newspapers, TV news, radio, etc.) and diversified, global conglomerates composed of various holdings, in addition to owning media outlets (Kovack 31). There are effects other than those caused by a corporation's supplementary, non-media holdings' blatant influence upon news content and coverage. One conspicuous distinction is that, by law, the management of a corporate news outlet "must not allow other considerations (like journalistic ethics or the public interest) stand in the way of profits—otherwise it would be abandoning its fiduciary responsibility to its stockholders, and would be subject to a lawsuit" (Naureckas 2).

The media will be reshaped by further consolidation of ownership, as evident from the aftereffects of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which allowed Clear Channel and Cumulus Media to buy out numerous radio stations. There are now 1,700 fewer owners of commercial radio stations—a one-third decline (Tompkins 1). The consolidation led to a "marked decrease in local news and music diversity on the radio, fewer jobs for local DJs and journalists, and greater control by Clear Channel [and Cumulus Media] over the news, opinions and music that reach much of the American public" (Stop 1). Contrary to the "cable industry promise that deregulation would stimulate market competition and lower monthly cable bills," the 1996 deregulation actually increased the cost of cable services by 45% due to the monopoly-generating mergers it served (Lewis 1). This allowed the largest cable operators to control over 75% of the market today (Tompkins 1).

Further deregulation will curb any prospects for innovative programming, and reduce the coverage of community news, politics and culture by local, independent media outlets (Stop 2). Other concerns are that popular or racy programming will take over public television and other family-centered entertainment, and that the increased amount of commercialism will negatively affect children's programming (Stop 2).

The less specific, much more dangerous effects of corporate ownership are those that weaken the standards of journalism by restructuring the principles by which it must operate. Of the journalists surveyed for a study conducted by the *Columbia Journalism Review*, 41% admitted that they have "softened" and/or "'purposely avoided' important stories to benefit the interests of employers" (Shumway 5). Robert McChesney remarked that, "The system has minimal interest in journalism or public affairs except for that which serves the business" (2).

In the weakening of those standards, a converse concept--call it pulp non-fiction--serves as a proxy institution for the people. This streaming, misinformed cant only works to creates national polarity, public cynicism and personal isolation--not to mention a breakdown of the fourth estate's crucial responsibility to properly assess the actions of our government. After all, the public's defense against autocracy is only as good as the nation's ability to clearly communicate the checks and balances of its democracy.

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