

In A Nutshell

Summer/Fall 2002



As summer ebbs, we enter the rhythms of the fall.

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In Memory of Sam Roddan

by The Roddan Family

Sam Roddan born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, January 29, 1915 died June 8, 2002 in White

Rock, BC, 87 years young. Teacher, journalist, writer, soldier, story teller, family man, supporter of those he knew. Sam's early years were spent in Winnipeg, the first son of the Reverend Andrew Roddan, a Methodist minister. In his early teens he lived in Port Arthur, now Thunder Bay. Sam recalled the struggles his father had at the time the Presbyterian and Methodist churches became the United Church of Canada. In 1929, his father received a call to the First United Church at Hastings and Gore in the East End of Vancouver. Here, in one of Canada's poorest neighborhoods, Sam learned about social conditions during the Dirty Thirties. Sam helped deliver countless hampers to the poor. He learned to fight for the downtrodden and those who were "down on their luck".

Sam graduated from U.B.C. in 1937. Reverend Andrew Roddan's small salary couldn't cover the cost of his education and provide for the six other children in the family. So Sam earned the money to pay for his education by driving streetcars after classes. Later, as a writer, Sam drew from his childhood experiences in the East End of town to create touching, poignant and beautiful reflections.

After university wanderlust caught him. He set out for Europe on a bicycle with an old typewriter strapped to the handlebars. He arrived in England on a freighter and traveled all over Europe on his bike, puffing up and down the Swiss Alps and peddling out of Germany with a copy of *Mein Kampf* in his pack. Sam was one of the first hippies.

When he returned to Canada he began teaching high school in Burnaby. He was assigned a class of difficult boys whom he kept interested and occupied using his old jalopy as a daily teaching tool. Sam was a brilliant teacher. Over the years many students have returned to visit Sam and speak of how he was able to inspire them in their lives.

When war broke out Sam was happy to escape the strictures of the public education system. He joined the Canadian Army and soon found himself back in England. After a brief period of training, Sam became a lieutenant and was put in charge of a battalion of men and sent to the front lines in Holland. But war is not for the sensitive and self-searching individual. Sam was never able to adjust to the reality of war. He was unable to lead men to kill others and so he was sent home in 1945.

After the war, Sam worked for the Education Department of the Saskatchewan (then CCF) government. He traveled the province setting up night schools in many of the small towns. They were

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called the *Lighted School Houses*. He encouraged local artists and writers to learn, develop and teach their crafts.

Sam married Hulda Laycock in 1954. They had three children. During the next twenty-five years he taught English at Lester Pearson High School in New Westminster, B.C. During his teaching career he supplemented his small salary by writing short stories. Many of them were published by the Vancouver Sun and the Globe and Mail. His work was often read on CBC Radio's Morningside. In 1964 he won the Young Canada Gage Award for his story "The Sunflowers". He also wrote his classic "The Bell Ringers" which recently was made into a TV Special in which Sam acted as one of the feature characters.

Sam was a life-long learner. He liked to explore many outlets for his creative drive and energy. After his retirement, Sam built his own home at Crescent Beach. He was proud of using recycled lumber, beams and

driftwood in it's construction. Later, he experimented with sculpture, wood-carving and finally at 80, he took up painting. He spent the last years of his life crafting his talent in painting. He created lively, colourful works of art which, like his writing, held a special concern for the tiny detail and quirks in life. Sam sold his works to the local residences and donated the money he earned to the First United Church in the Downtown East Side.

His long and varied life ended abruptly when pneumonia took him after a week-long struggle in the hospital. He painted up to the day he was admitted. Sam was a bon vivant, he always cheered on the underdog, the little guy, the loser. He had an extremely creative perspective which he freely shared through both his writing and his painting. He maintained his vim and vigor right to the end. As a friend commented at his funeral, "At 87, Sam was too young to die".

Editorial Note

by Jim Gifford

Sam Roddan, a regular and valued contributor to 'In A Nutshell', has passed into the mystery of eternity. He was in his 88th year.

For me, Sam was a teacher, mentor and close friend for well over three decades. He was endowed with joie de vivre and this was reflected in his written work, as well as paintings, which were chock full of humour, humanity and colour.

Sam, in your own favourite expression, 'Atta Boy' for a life well lived. I will cherish fond memories of you for the rest of my days.

Peace Be With You.

P.S.: The writings of Sam Roddan will continue and posthumously appear as a feature in our journal.

The Editorial Board of "In A Nutshell" welcomes letters, articles, and poetry on mental health issues from you, our readers.

Warning! Do not abruptly stop psychiatric medications! Most psychiatric medications are powerful drugs and should be withdrawn from gradually under the care of a physician or other health practitioner.

"In A Nutshell" is a publication of the Mental Patients' Association, #202 -1675 W. 4th Ave., Vancouver, BC, V6J 1L8, ph. (604) 738-2811, fax (604) 738-4132. The MPA is a non-profit organization that offers a variety of programs in ADVOCACY, HOUSING, RECREATIONAL, and SOCIAL ACTIVITIES for former mental patients. For more information on any of the above programs or housing waiting lists, please phone the office at (604) 738-2811. Editorial Board: Jim Gifford, Terrence Levesque, Reinhart, Byron Fraser, D. Paul Strashok.

The opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the individual writers and not necessarily those of the MPA. Donations toward the cost of "In A Nutshell" will be gratefully accepted by MPA.

A Boy's Soaring Kite Lofts the Spirit With It

by Sam Roddan

I was on the beach watching a boy trying to get his kite into the air. The kite was a fragile thing made of crossed sticks and brown paper and flour paste.

A man standing beside me said that back in the Old Country he had a kite off the ground before he was six.

"I remember flying my first kite on the banks of the Tweed," the man said, waving a cigar. "A box kite she was, and let me tell you, when the wind got hold of her she went up like a rocket and no fuss at all."

The boy with the kite was young and his face was smooth and eager. He adjusted the bridle. He lengthened the tail with twists of paper. He tested the wind with a wet finger. Then he sped along the beach dragging his kite. This time the kite soared a few feet over his head before it nose-dived into the sand.

The man laughed and puffed on his cigar.

"Those lads today are all the same," he said. "They haven't the know-how. And they haven't the touch."

The beach was growing crowded and more people were watching the boy with his kite. Some people were shouting out advice such as "give her more slack!" or "shorten her tail!" or "your bridle ain't right!"

A stout, perfumed lady was saying the beach was no place for a boy to fly his kite and kick up all that sand and dust.

But the boy was in there trying and using his head and he was not for quitting.

And I was hoping, more than I can tell, that the kite would soar like a startled gull and sail right over the Fish and Chip Shop and Mr. Gifford's flagpole and

then just keep going until it moved into those lacy white clouds and blue sky over the Nicomeki river.

"The poor kid just hasn't got what it takes," the man said, shaking his head. "It's a funny thing. There's all kinds never gets a kite off the ground."

Once again the boy was running and stumbling and falling along the beach and then suddenly the kite was taking off on a freshening breeze.

And it was going up steady, and climbing past the Fish and Chip shop and up and over Mr. Gifford's flagpole and still going up and tugging hard and the boy was digging in his heels and working the string and figuring out his next move.

I turned to the man who had been standing beside me.

I was going to say the boy's kite was a good symbol for hope and spirit and that sort of thing.

But the man was gone except for the black butt of his cigar smouldering on the sand. And the stout, perfumed lady was pointing ecstatically to a long white cruiser churning into the pier.

For a long time I watched the kite climbing into the immeasurable space of the sky above Blackie's Spit.

Then I walked over to the boy to tell him that for his age and weight and size he sure had what it takes.

Also I wanted to know if I could hold the string just for a minute and feel once again the tug and pull of a kite soaring like a young eagle into the wild, blue yonder.

*"...the boy's kite
was a good
symbol for hope
and spirit..."*

"Never. Never. NEVER give up."

Sir Winston Churchill

Minute Particulars

by Andrew Feldmár

In my late teens and early twenties I had romantic notions about suicide. Romantic, as in heroic, adventurous, mysterious, fabulous. I thought that if I told a girl that I'd been contemplating suicide, she would become my lover out of pity or concern or compassion or admiration. It never worked, so I gave up being morbid as a technique of seduction.

I remember reading about a group of men in ancient Greece who called themselves *The Suicide Club*. They carried a phial of poison in their navels, and their slogan was, "If the room gets too smoky, there's always the back door". They were brave men, everyone respected and feared them, for they felt free to do what they wanted and not what they didn't want. They agreed, upon joining this group, that if the consequences of their actions were to become too painful or unbearable, they would use the poison to deliver themselves from the situation. Janis Joplin used to sing, "Freedom is another word for nothing left to lose". If you are not fearful of death, you are a desperado, beyond ordinary social constraints.

James Hillman's book, *Suicide and the Soul*, made a deep impression on me, when I first read it in 1976. He questioned suicide prevention, and stated that a therapist's job is to attend, to pay attention to, but never to interfere with, a patient. Premature rescue attempts might preempt the possibility of someone discovering on their own, just before attempting suicide, that that would be a mistake. It is possible to connect robustly with one's will to live just in the nick of time. Some of us feel that we didn't ask to be born, so we are alive reluctantly, as if we were condemned to life in a penal colony. Suicide offers itself as a way out, jailbreak, freedom. You can tell who the people are in this predicament, because they are filled with complaints. Nothing is right, everything is a chore! Now, if I say to myself, "Thanks, but No, thanks: Just because my mother and father had a bad fuck, and as a result they conjured me up, precipitated me into this world, that doesn't mean that I have to live out my life, so I will exit now!" – then I have to realize that being

alive is optional, voluntary, and not compulsory. If I go through with it, well, that's the end of me. If, because I like the blue color of the sky and realize that I would miss hearing the eagles chortle, I *decide* to live, then I will live fully knowing that that's *my* choice, and there won't be anything left to complain about: I will enjoy the miracle of experiencing anything at all!

There is a whole industry of predicting risk of suicide, of preventing suicide, and of providing care after a failed suicide attempt. I don't believe that suicide can be predicted or controlled. Or that it should be.

"...I decide to live, then I live fully knowing that's my choice..."

Voluntary death, or self delivery, as some people refer to suicide, is within the realm of possibility for all of us, all the time. The only way one can make sure that someone stays alive is to keep a 24-hour vigil, day after day... It can be, and has been done: I have in the past organized friends and family for such a vigil. At times such care and devotion communicates to the person who wants to exit, and the support and love make it worthwhile to stay. At times

such efforts were experienced as interference and control, and were bitterly resented.

Jean Améry, a successful writer, attempted suicide in 1974. In 1976 he published *On Suicide: A Discourse on Voluntary Death*, intending to describe suicide from within, completely entering into the closed world of the suicide, not working from a sociological or psychological point of view at all. In 1978 he succeeded in killing himself. The book is very instructive. Améry survived Auschwitz, and experienced capture and torture. The faces of his torturers, he noted, were ordinary human faces, no different than any he could meet on a walk or in a friendly pub. After the war, he noticed that his torturers have never been called to task, they were free to walk on the streets as if they had done nothing unconscionable. After Auschwitz he couldn't trust anyone, for behind a seemingly benign face could lurk a torturer, and his sense of justice was deeply offended, as his torturers got off scot-free. A world where you cannot trust, and where there is no hope of justice, is a hostile, unfriendly world. He didn't want to play in, partake of, such a world. He exited.

When I was speaking with a man in his eighties, who consulted me, wondering if planning to kill himself before he lost control over his life was a mistake, I realized that there was no easy answer. We found that there was a desire in him to control, to be in charge; we called this energy his ego. Then, he had to reckon with his animal-body, which, of course, would never want to die, and would fight any attempt of the ego to kill it. No animal wants to be 'put down'. We also discovered that the ego is out of touch with his spirit, and what's more even doubts its very existence. By spirit, we meant that which lives us, that which possibly incarnates and disincarnates, the life force, some superior intelligence. He realized that if he could connect with his spirit, the ego wouldn't have to battle the animal-body. When the time is opportune the spirit could just pull out, so to speak, leaving the body behind, de-animated, lifeless, like a discarded placenta. Then he wondered, how *does* one connect with spirit? Meditation? Martial arts? Music? Nature?

R. D. Laing told me that for many years every morning he contemplated the possibility of suicide. Then he decided never to take things into his own hands in such a headstrong way, for, as he said, "It would be ungrateful to the Powers-That-Be!"

In Heine's poem *Morphine*, he writes,

"Sleep is good, death is better – of course
The best would be never to have been born."

Lichtenberg, in 1793, wrote that "attempts of one person to argue against another's suicide are useless. The only arguments that work are those that one has found for oneself and are the fruit and result of our whole store of knowledge and of our acquired being. Thus everything calls out to us: strive daily after truth, learn to know the world, pursue the friendship of worthy men; then you will act always as is best for you.

And if one day you find that suicide is the best step to take, if (in other words) all your arguments are not adequate to keep you from it, then that too is permissible".

Permissible, (well, who could really forbid it?), but not advisable. A Hungarian poet I used to know, hung himself in his Budapest apartment at 2 PM one day. The mailman came at 3:30 PM that day, and later, when the poet's body was found there were three letters on the floor unopened. One was from his publisher, apologizing for the delay, and agreeing to print his new poems, also asking if they could edit a selected collection of his works. The other was from the Hungarian National Theatre, apologizing for the delay, and informing him that they have accepted his new play for production in the Fall, and would he, please, direct it himself. The third letter was from his estranged wife who went to live with her mother in the country, saying that she's done a lot of soul-searching, and she loves him, and could she, please, come back and live together again?

One conclusion could be, "Never kill yourself *before* the mailman comes!" Another, that even in the midst of the darkest despair, when it feels like nothing will ever change for the better, it might pay off to endure and wait for what tomorrow brings. The moment one feels that there is no choice, I have to do what I have to do, one is mistaken: there *always* are choices, there *always* are alternatives.

I wrote this to make it easier to talk about a very difficult topic. Even when you feel totally cut off, you are NOT alone. Talk to somebody. Two heads are better than one. If you have run out of friends, call the Crisis Center! They won't shame you, won't blame you, you might actually find someone with an open heart to listen to you.

"Life is never as good as you hope or as bad as
you fear."

Anonymous

Bookworm

Madness: A Brief History

By Roy Porter

Oxford University Press, 2002

Reviewed by Andrew Feldmár

Near the end of this book, in a section entitled *Business as usual*, Porter speaks of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association, and notes that it was first published in 1952. The fourth revision, DSM-IV, came out in 1994, bringing a fresh crop of disorder labels. He refers to the "notorious postal vote, held by the American Psychiatric Association in 1975, [that] led to the belated removal of homosexuality from its slate of afflictions. It is not only cynics who claim that politico-cultural, racial, and gender prejudices still shape the diagnosis of what are purportedly objective disease syndromes". He notes the explosion of this lucrative enterprise: DSM-I was some hundred pages; DSM-II ran to 134 pages, DSM-III to almost 500; the latest revision, DSM-IV-TR (2000) is a staggering 943 pages! Porter concludes, "More people seem to be diagnosed as suffering from more psychiatric disorders than ever: is that progress?" I don't think so, but guess who is making a lot of money?

R. D. Laing, in 1987, commented that the DSM "is a comprehensive compendium of thoughts, feelings, desires, of all sorts of experiences, many usual, some unusual, deemed undesirable, to be prevented or stopped in our culture, and not only in our culture, but throughout the whole human species". There is no getting away from it, Laing says, "all psychiatrists who operate within the global psychiatric mainframe use and comply with it in practice". He was worried that it was a tool for rendering us, with our ordinary human experience, obsolete. "We are to be cultured out. The left-overs will be tranquilized and lobotomized into homogenized creatures I can not recognize as human. I recognize myself, shredded to criteria, strewn over every page.... I fear it. I hate it".

Porter formulates the key conundrums of his subject: What is the meaning and mystery of mental illness? Are psychiatric diseases "real" diseases at all?

What, therefore, is the epistemological status of psychiatric knowledge and the scientific standing of psychological medicine? Then, more ideological questions follow: in its essence, is psychiatry's past the story of a humanitarian ministering to acute sufferers of the mind, or is it a way of labelling and locking up the difficult, the deviant and the disorderly of society? Well, we know what R. D. Laing thought.

Porter died suddenly on March 3 this year, at the age of 55, a few weeks after the publication of the book under review, leaving behind over 80 other books that he had authored. He published extensively in the history of psychiatry, including *A Social History of Madness* (1987), and *The Faber Book of Madness* (1991). He lived, wrote and taught in London, England. How could he be so prolific, and also be Professor of the Social History of Medicine? It is rumoured that he never slept more than three hours a night, and started his working day at 6 am each weekday morning. This book summarizes the author's lifetime of learning and reflection. Mark S. Micale, reviewing this book in the *TLS*, calls it "a brief bravura piece that serves as a punctuation point to his publishing career".

Porter himself announces that he intends this book to be "brief, bold, and unbiased". And so it is. The book has 28 illustrations, ranging from *Immersion in cold water as a cure for madness* to *Mentally ill patient in a straightjacket*. In slightly over 200 small pages, Porter manages to cover a vast range of thought and practice. He often disagrees with Foucault (1926 – 1984), whose *Madness and Civilization* (1961) set the standard approach to a history of madness. Porter's work is always securely anchored in empirical research, whereas Foucault tended to overgeneralize.

In Europe and in North America, the rise of the asylum, had more to do with commercial and professional society than state legislature. Porter

"This book summarizes a lifetime of learning and reflection."

writes, "Growing surplus wealth encouraged the affluent to buy services – cultural, educational, medical – which once had been provided at home". Asylums operated for profit as, what was frankly termed, the 'trade in lunacy'. Around 1800, in England, there were around fifty licensed private madhouses. Some of the best were lay-led, and as Porter notes, "[their] high repute proved a thorn in the side of the medical profession's call for a medical monopoly".

Porter sets the record straight, when he says, "The asylum was not instituted for the practice of psychiatry; psychiatry rather was the practice developed to manage its inmates". A good example of Porter's "brief, bold, and unbiased" delivery is the following paragraph: "American thinking had its darker side too. The trial in 1881 of Charles Guiteau, the assassin of President Garfield, spotlighted issues of

heredity, criminality, and moral insanity, since psychiatrists based their defence testimonies on the claim that Guiteau was a degenerate. By 1900 lobbies were urging compulsory confinement, sterilization, and other eugenic measures, as well as the use of psychiatry in immigration control. Psychiatric sterilization gained a hold in the United States long before Nazi Germany".

Having read this concise little book, I couldn't detect any scheme of "progress". It becomes evident how much psychiatry doesn't know. For centuries there has been confusion between what are brain diseases and what are problems in living, and there is still no light at the end of this tunnel.

Underdog Thanks to Prozac

by Jim Gifford

'Prozac Is Out; Exercise Is In'. Thus declares the big banner on the wall of Ron Zalko's fitness center, facing onto a busy Burrard Street. What is disturbing about this propaganda is its demeaning, ignorant and simplistic nature regarding the serious affliction of depression.

True enough, a good walk and some physical activity can stimulate the brain chemistry and lift one's mood. But the discovery and subsequent use of Prozac (and other psychiatric drugs) for those debilitated by mental dis-ease has been a godsend.

Lives have been dramatically enhanced, renewed and gifted with opportunities for functional and meaningful existence due to such medications. What upsets and concerns me is how the likes of Ron Zalko and his entourage take so lightly, indeed flippantly,

the drug revolution and its positive impact on those suffering from mental and emotional illness.

I wonder if it would be acceptable or medically prudent for Zalko and his cohorts to advertise that 'insulin (or digitalis) is out; exercise is in'. I think not.

The Ron Zalko ad is symptomatic of an attitude that prevails among some members of society who feel those stricken with depression, or other mental ailments, need to get up off their butts and get on with life.

Indeed, that is exactly what many of us are doing, thanks to Prozac and other drugs.

Empathy for Ethnic Discomfort

by Frank G. Sterle, Jr.

While I feel strongly about Israel's maltreatment of the Palestinian people, I nonetheless feel frustration and fear at reading news stories (in April) about an act of arson against a synagogue in France, a bombing of another synagogue in Tunisia and, a little more recent, a warning to Ottawa Jewish-Canadians that a local synagogue was likely to be targeted — anti-Semitic acts that bring to my mind a memory that, years later, still haunts me.

In a college computer lab with some classmates, someone brought up the topic of an approaching Jewish holiday:

Having been questioned as to her Jewish family's plans for the Jewish holiday, one female student quietly, gently answered (something I cannot accurately recall, though that fact should not negate the factual reliability of the rest of this essay).

Although it was implicit, I could nonetheless unmistakably sense the discomfort — incredibly almost a tinge of shame — in her quite-uncharacteristically shy and humbly-withdrawn reply, "Yeah," which was to my query, "Are you Jewish?"

She smiled and gave a slight giggle when I uncomfortably, somewhat-nervously reacted with a patronizing, "Really? That's cool."

And let me emphasize that this girl was otherwise no shrinking violet; she was in all other aspects an assertive, very friendly (even towards me, a non-social guy), rambunctious and perhaps even a bit naughty (in the partier-type sense of the term).

She very much appeared discomfited — perhaps even a bit embarrassed; though, I'm convinced, it was a discomfort/embarrassment not because of her race in itself, but rather due to the conspicuousness of the Jewish race after so much has occurred to them and have been endured by them — after they have been so brazenly forced into the proverbial limelight by Holocaust revisionists and deniers, besides the Palestinian/Israeli conflict (though back then not as atrocious as is the current Middle East situation).

but a brown-nose for expressing such sentiment; though, it's rather a case of empathy than patronage: for, I feel uncomfortable about being a descendent of a Croatian mother (not that I'm equating the histories and conditions of the Croatian and of the Jewish peoples). I feel embarrassed over the sometimes-atrocious Croatian involvement in the 1990s Balkans War; and all of this embarrassment regardless of the fact that I was born in Canada (and that my mother was not involved in the 1990s Balkans War or the Second World War).

But it was in 1983 that a Canadian of Jewish ethnicity came to my desperately-required aid: I had suffered a very-serious injury that actually should have not allowed me to survive for as long as I did. At the time, my mother did housekeeping work for a woman of Jewish ancestry — who, as a very little girl, was interned with her parents in a Nazi concentration camp; an ordeal that has left her suffering fairly-frequent migraine headaches (which, to me, helps explain her often emotionally-abrasive treatment towards my mother).

While one of my regular doctors did naught but prescribe Tylenol 3 painkillers and the other suggested neck-muscle massage therapy for my inexplicable pressure headaches, Mom's employer (able because of the fact that her Jewish husband practiced medicine at UBC's hospital) made an effort — i.e., gave enough of a damn — to arrange an appointment for me at that hospital (for which I would otherwise have had to wait some time, perhaps to death). There, a CT scan showed that I carried a large blood clot in my head that occupied a third of my skull space and thus exerted a great amount of pressure on my brain.

Also, although not nearly as significant, I also received much-needed moral and educational support from ethnic-Jewish teaching instructors after I dropped out of regular high-school immediately following my completion of Grade 9 — two ordeal-infested public-school years that I'd completely erase from my memory if I could.

"She very much appeared discomfited — perhaps even a bit embarrassed."

I realize that I would likely be perceived as naught

"Yes, there are good Jews," acknowledges my good;

though anti-Semitic, friend (ironically, he's otherwise a very decent, honest person), who refuses to appreciate, and barely recognizes, the great strides of accomplishment and thus benefits to society contributed by the generous efforts of Jewish people; but he then readily adds, and without any specific example, "but so many have behaved so despicably."

Needless to say, I don't buy his general and rather-dangerous claim(s). Nonetheless, I suggested the following to him, one who professes to be "Christian": While in the Biblical city of Sodom, Abraham, who did not want God to smite the "righteous with the wicked," conversed with God:

"And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes."

However, Abraham even talked God down from 50, to 45, then to 40, 30, and even down to 20. But, "Peradventure ten shall be found there[?]," queries Abraham. "And he [God] said, I will not destroy [Sodom] for ten's sake" (Genesis 18:23-33).

I point out to my friend how God told Abraham that if the latter could find but ten righteous, moral citizens from amongst the many city dwellers, God would spare the entire city. Therefore, I say to my friend, the Bible basically teaches that for the 'very few good, the very many bad' should be accepted by us all.

Nevertheless, my friend dismisses those blessings I had received, for they are, to paraphrase him, but the result of the efforts of a racial group with disproportionately-large access to a wide assortment of social

services. Regardless, I futilely tell him, they have greatly saved/helped me when they were not obliged at all to do so.

My friend's quite-stubborn attitude is much of why I'm no longer a Chomsky-ite proponent of unconditional free speech. When I hear someone (usually a newcomer to this country) spout an erroneous platitude about how great it is in Canada because 'we have freedom of speech', I correct them by informing them that we here actually do not at all have absolute freedom of speech, but rather considerably limited expression rights. I then add that I believe that's the way it should be, because absolute free speech can immorally and cruelly result in a contemptuous/hateful assault, physical or not, against entire identifiable groups within our society.

Although of course hindsight is 20/20, if I could 'do it all over again', I, firstly, would definitely not have responded with an air-headed, "Really? That's cool" to her humble-toned "Yeah" to my query as to her Jewish(Canadian) ethnicity. Rather, I would have mindfully asked her, in a respectful and mild tone of voice, something along the lines of, "You sounded kind of hesitant and uncomfortable when you said 'Yeah' ... Why's that?"

Perhaps then something constructive and positive could have transpired ... Especially when considering how she may feel with the current bloodshed in Israel/Palestine.

"Friends are people whose faults don't clash."

Anonymous

"Everybody is ignorant, only on different subjects."

Will Rogers

The Big Event

Part One: Headlines

by Jim Gifford

this is how i imagine the headlines
i never saw
in the columbian on august 9th, 1973

grandiose of me to think so isn't it

anyway i'll give you the facts first
then the behind the scenes of the episode

the facts:

James Hugh Gifford, age 25, of 2818 O'Hara Lane, Surrey, was arrested last night after he fought several soldiers at the New Westminster Senior Secondary School, the location of residence for the Canada Games athletes.

Mr. Gifford walked by the front desk and did not respond to orders for him to stop. After a brief scuffle with members of the Westminster Regiment, Gifford was taken into custody for the night. He is now under psychiatric examination at UBC Health Sciences Centre Hospital in Vancouver.

Mr. Gifford, the son of Former Mayor of New Westminster, J. Stuart Gifford, has a history of mental illness.

Part Two: Behind the Scenes

like a tidal wave washing over me
psychic fever enveloped me
swallowing me in a magical fervor

you might say
i was flying at 40,000 feet

the heat of the late afternoon
drove me in our chrysler convertible
to my aunt's place for the big party

aunt julia's 85th birthday
her older brother and my grampa jim
hugged everyone in his presence
powerful as his old lacrosse playing
days legend has it he knocked out
a future heavyweight champion of the world

the kind of vital prowess i'd need for my ploy
because you see alan jay
columnist for the columbian newspaper wrote
the high school, sleeping quarters
for the athletes at the Canada Games,
was an impenetrable fortress

my plan: penetration

why so reckless a course?
manic psychosis certainly helped
but there was more fuel to the fire

five years earlier
in university our frat made headlines
'tarzan types destroy hall'

true the grass skirt dance got out of hand
but what ired the brothers
was the scathing column by
alan jay
who now threw a challenge
to a wild beast named jim gifford
that the military had successfully cordoned off the
school

no unauthorized personnel could get through

i accepted the challenge

what outwardly appeared a crazy act had precise
reasons
for happening
and happen it did

Shades of Grey

by reinhart

how often have they told you
twixt love and hate is but a thin line.
that genius and madness
will oft afflict the same mind.
the most abhorrent sinner
may become the greatest saint;
while some courageous soldier
at a drop of blood grows faint.
and though there's noah's great rainbow
twixt the colours black and white,
all we see is yellow blue and red,
and shades of grey at night.
la la la, la la la, la la la la....

how many emotions do we really know
which we may add and mix;
dilute into feelings and sentiments
from a palette of seven or six.
they say we must be able to choose
twixt evil and good to be free;
that we live in a world of opposites;
that this is how it must be.
yet who among us has ever lived
according to just one way:
each of us must testify
and confess to shades of grey.
la la la, la la la, la la la la....

you are born to the world,
helpless, defenseless and bare;
when all your needs are provided
and you haven't a care,
then from your fortress of autonomy
you behold your kind;
you judge right and wrong magnanimously;
and the distinctions are easy to find.
but the day must come when you must join
the struggle to survive,
and learn the necessity of compromise:
shades of grey help you stay alive.
la la la, la la la, la la la la....

so you live and learn, grow and age;
you do what you can with the choices you have.
and try to maintain some decency,
and hope one day you'll fall in love.
yes, good and bad, which were once so plain;
right and wrong, which you knew so well;
they were simple as black and white,
elemental as heaven and hell.
but now the choices aren't so clear,
and even in the light of day,
boundaries merge and distinctions fade
like so many shades of grey.
la la la, la la la, la la la la la....

all through the chaos and illusion
of universal grey,
contradictions, paradox and delusion
are the order of the day.
good is bad, wrong is right,
and absolutes dissolve.
the standards which we measure by
eternally revolve.
and so we cry to heaven,
we who are made of clay;
and the answer comes upon us:
our souls are shades of grey.
la la la, la la la, la la la la la....

and pity the poor genius,
whose mind may never rest.
who consumes his days with questioning
whether life or death is best.
and pity the poor lover,
whose heart is like a wound.
whose nights are dark and hollow.
whose romance is all but doomed.
and pity the poor madman,
whose reason's gone astray.
whose mind and heart are in revolt
against the shades of grey.
la la la, la la la, la la la la la....

Dual Review:

Why Do I Feel Guilty When I've Done Nothing Wrong?

(Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993, 134 pages. Paperback. Available from Support Coalition International, PO Box 11284, Eugene, OR 97440 for \$11.95 U.S. See also: www.MindFreedom.org)

by Dr. Ty C. Colbert

Without Guilt and Justice: From Decidophobia to Autonomy

(New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1975. 288 pages)

by Walter Kaufmann

Review Essay by Byron Fraser

Introductory Quotes

"If it be humiliating to believe one's self that wicked animal, which the Bible represents man to be, it is because it is contrary to nature and reason to be willing to consider ourselves wretches worthy of all detestation, especially when our own knowledge of the moral character of our intentions gives the lie direct to any such supposition. Every human being knows, or may know, if he will but reflect upon the motives which have governed him, that he never in his life performed a wrong act *simply from a desire to do wrong*. . . . Men are induced to wrong actions by a *variety* of motives, and desires, but the simple desire to do wrong never inhabited the breast, or controlled the conduct, of any individual. . . ."

But the very reverse of the doctrine of intrinsic wickedness is true of every man living. . . ."

—Lysander Spooner, *The Collected Works of Lysander Spooner in Six Volumes*, "An Essay, On Man's Accountability For His Belief" (1834), Vol. 1, pp. 9-10.

"But I who have seen the nature of the good that it is beautiful and of the bad that it is ugly, and the nature of him who does wrong, that it is akin to me, not [only] of the same blood or seed, but that it participates in [the same] intelligence and [the same] portion of the divinity, I can neither be injured by any one of them, for no one can fix on me what is ugly, nor can I be angry with my kinsman, nor hate him."

—Marcus Aurelius, *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*, Sec. 2, No. 1.

"Guilt Fails as a Deterrent

Guilt not only fails to prevent crimes; it can break down completely and result in the most heinous atrocities, as the individual seeks to obliterate his pain by excesses of viciousness. This is one reason why deeply disturbed people commit such apparently senseless crimes.

Guilt is also a poor method of control because oppressors are usually self-oppressors as well, who may welcome the sense of guilt and may seek to increase it. They may *encourage* others to place blame on them.

Guilt is also a poor means of control because it fosters irrationality. . . .

The violence of the guilt-feeling person almost always has a strongly self-righteous air to it. [The injured other] is thought to 'deserve' whatever is done to him or her. Often the violence in action or in covert feeling has the quality of retribution. It is also a statement—"I'm so right that I will use violence." The violence rendered becomes a kind of godlike wrath against the wicked. This attitude can usually be found to one degree or another in anyone who feels or acts violently. . . .

Authoritarians and totalitarians propagandize on behalf of guilt. They argue that guilt prevents people from harming others. They really mean that guilt manifests the subjugation of the individual—. . . These authoritarians want their subjects to suppress themselves on behalf of [their] morality. [They] create confusion between guilt and responsibility to bind their victims into a submissive, guilty style of life.

. . . I have come to believe that most or *all* guilt, shame, and anxiety is explainable as self-oppression. . . .

. . . in the vast majority, if not all, of the cases in

my experience, guilt, shame, and anxiety are not 'merited' or 'deserved' and have little or no basis in reality, reason, or sound ethics....

...The guilty, ashamed, or anxious person is rendered less able to pursue rational self-criticism and is greatly impeded in finding a self-determined method of pursuing self-interest. Guilt, shame, and anxiety have no place in a rational, self-determined life."

—Peter Breggin, *The Psychology of Freedom: Liberty and Love as a Way of Life*, Ch. 10: "Guilt Is an Unethical Emotion," pp. 110-128.

"Millions realize that neither God nor reason has determined once and for all what each person deserves and that it is up to us to weigh alternatives and to make difficult decisions.

...The decidophobe loves retributive justice because she tells him precisely what is to be done: wrongdoing must be punished, and there is only one penalty that is just and therefore mandatory. But I say:

1. Punishments can never be just.
2. Even if a punishment could be proportionate, it would not follow that it ought to be imposed.
3. The preoccupation with retributive justice is inhumane.

...I shall try to show...that there is no just proportionate punishment for *any* crime."

—Walter Kaufmann, *Without Guilt and Justice*, Ch. 2: "The Death of Retributive Justice," pp. 52, & 56-57.

"To be ashamed of one's immorality: that is a step on the ladder at the end of which one is also ashamed of one's morality."

—Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Part 4: "Maxims and Interludes," Sec. No. 95.

"A very popular error: having the courage of one's convictions; rather it is a matter of having the courage for an *attack* on one's convictions!!!"

—Nietzsche, as quoted by Walter Kaufmann in *Without Guilt and Justice*, Ch. 1: "Decidophobia," p. 33.

Everyone could use a double dose of guilt to smarten them *down*, n'est pas? Especially innately evil, incorrigable reprobates like myself, who have never sufficiently comprehended that true civility entails buying into that age-old dictum that "You're gonna have to _____ somebody" (as, I think, Bob Dylan so poetically put it). —Or so I've been told by quite a number of mothers—both male and female—who keep saying that it doesn't *pay* to be "too good" to do the Patriarchal Mind Meld—particularly if I would avoid the grasping tentacles of *Medical Nemesis*' and "live long and prosper." Of course, without the weapon of guilt-inducement (and/or sickness and crime "*production*"?), THEY might be deprived of THEIR

main tool to "get *in* on"—and vice versa—but that would be "telling." ("And just exactly *whom* and *what* do you mean by 'THEY', Mr. _____?" we hear echoed as the truth-preventative Medico/Psychiatric trip-wire alarm bells go off in duly reactive Pre-programmed Collective unison. —"For C_____ 's sake, am I the only one left who can still walk on water?!" "Perhaps not, but another diagnosis is pending, Mr. _____. Have I told you the story about the 3-Blind Mouse?")

Such irreverent esoterica to one side notwithstanding, guilt-related psycho-social behaviour problems figure very prominently in the lives of many, if not most, people suffering from temporary or ongoing mental disorders. And so, I thought it might be helpful, for anyone wanting some useful "starting point" introductions to this subject, to offer as references the two above-named titles. *Why Do I Feel Guilty?* is a very good bare bones, "general reader"-friendly manual outlining a lot of the psychological "basics"—the finely-honed distilled essence of an original 400-page manuscript and over a decade of extensive clinical experience in this area by the author—whereas *Without Guilt and Justice* is far and away the "more sophisticated" and complex study, a recognized modern "classic" of both philosophy and criminology, representing the vast erudition of world-renowned scholar, Walter Kaufmann (probably best known to most people as the foremost modern-era American [though originally German-Jewish] translator and interpreter of Nietzsche—see especially his *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Anti-Christ*). So we have one for the lowbrows and one for the highbrows, as it were; a very serviceable guide for both laymen and mental health practitioners, and a searching in depth critical analysis for those with the time and energy to expend working a good deal harder at a more abstract and refined conceptual-task level.

I should hasten to add that Dr. Ty C. Colbert's presentation does not lack "refinement" or consummate skill, in its way (his Ph.D. in psychology is from the most prestigious private university in California—USC—so one would expect no less); it is just that the format for his work is a different, essentially non-academic, one (and, therefore, any sort of comparison really would be out of place). The book—his first—basically grew out of his work as a Christian outreach youth minister in the inner city of Los Angeles dealing with victims of child abuse, incest, rape and violence. And, inasmuch as it is published by the major Christian publisher, *Thomas Nelson*, it does reflect *some* religious overtones and was obviously directed mainly at "that market"—though the sum and substance of the treatment actually stands very well alone, theoretically, independent of the theistic references. (That Dr.

Colbert has this background may come as a surprise to many readers familiar with his later works, such as the best selling *Broken Brains or Wounded Hearts: What Causes Mental Illness*, wherein I believe it is mentioned not at all, nor is there any specific religious focus. But none of this, it should be stressed again, really detracts in any substantive way from its relevance for strictly “mental health” concerns. Indeed, as any ex-mental patient or professional Psych.-Industry worker will tell you, spiritual/religious questions are inextricably bound up with unresolved syndromes in probably well over half of the diagnosed population.)

In any case, to move right along to the specifics of the book, two thoughts immediately came to mind when I first read its provocative title:

1. Oh no, another “progressive” upper-class liberal-professional is going to deign to stoop down amongst all the pathological peons with the lure of a few simplistic “excuse-making” temporary “feel good” bromides—for the usual *unstated your-life-instead-of-your-money two-pricy* / “extra-charge” fee!
- and, 2. The more interesting question—for *me*—is why do I *not* feel guilty, when I know that I *have* acted wrongly? And, furthermore, what do others “get” out of—why do so many seem to have a vested interest in—trying to make *me* feel guilty and miserable like themselves?

Well, thankfully, these quandaries—and much else—are addressed in the book. And, as to the title, this actually refers to just one subcategory of his broader subject-matter: the phenomena of *false guilt*. In fact, the study is a more widely ranging survey of *guilt and shame* and how they can be separated into four kinds of emotion: true guilt, false guilt, constructive shame, and destructive shame. In the process, Dr. Colbert makes a lot of useful distinctions; to begin with, for instance, between the concepts of guilt and shame:

“Even though guilt and shame often mesh themselves together to form one single emotional and cognitive experience, theoretically they can be defined as two distinctly different aspects of our emotional systems. Guilt is usually associated (both correctly and incorrectly) with a person’s behavior, while shame is more closely associated with a person’s selfhood or self-worth. Guilt is more a cognitive response; shame is more a feeling response.”

And this last, in large measure, answers my previous query and its corollary (point 2 above) about: Why do I *not* feel guilty when I know that I *have* done something wrong? As he says, “The key to distinguishing true from false guilt is whether the action was intentional. In other words, you are not guilty of any wrongdoing unless you *intentionally* chose to do

something wrong.” So it really devolves to a matter of looking within and asking yourself honestly: “Did I consciously intend to do wrong here, was that what I had in mind?”, etc.; and I’ll bet you “dollars to donuts, 9 times out of 10,” as they say, that if you find a person who has ostensibly “done wrong” but who feels totally guiltless (and barring the all too self-serving currently fashionable no-brainer cop-out of dismissing them as merely “sociopathic”), they probably are truly not guilty, in this sense. After all, and speaking as someone who has had a good deal of first-hand personal experience facing these questions as they present themselves in the criminal justice system, one of the biggest fallacies when trying to assess guilt based on “the facts, just the facts,” is the totally non-scientific presupposition that *objective* facts are most material (what is meant by “material”, in the legal sense, of course, is *germaine*—not “materialistically” quantifiable) to judging such issues. In many, many instances the *most* pertinent fact is: *you* were not there, *you* have no idea what a person may have been dealing with psychologically, what the background to their circumstances was—even what their motivation may have been, etc. So it behooves *you* to presume that “the other” *prima facie* is probably the best judge of whatever may have been going on in their own mind—and look at the evidence of how they react to that. In other words, what I’m saying is that, in my experience, if you find some ostensible criminal or “other” wrongdoer who *seems guiltless*, they probably are.

Which brings us to the matter of “false guilt.” And Dr. Colbert is very good about frankly delineating this prominent feature of everyday life both when it manifests as “doing it to ourselves” via producing “guilty thoughts” and guilty behaviour as a coping or defense mechanism against experiencing emotional pain, and when it manifests as “doing it to others” via attempting to manipulate, control and/or belittle/berate through guilt-inducement. Surprisingly enough, too, in a book by a Christian and largely meant for a Christian readership audience, he states that ministers and wannabe preachers are amongst the worst offenders in regard to this last. (I am reminded of Tim Leary’s comments about the misgivings he had when attempting to save his Harvard research project on the therapeutic uses of psychedelic drugs under the 1st Amendment “cover” of his International Foundation for Internal Freedom [IFIF]: “I must confess that I was uneasy about falling back on the religious paradigm. For 40 years I had been conditioned to respond negatively to the word ‘God.’ *Any time someone started shouting about God, I automatically expected to be conned or threatened by some semiliterate hypocrite* [emphasis mine—B.F.]”—*Changing My*

Mind, Among Others, Part 3: "Humanist Interpretations of the Religious Experience," p. 86)

He is clear, nevertheless, that there is a place for true guilt and *some* constructive shame in life, but his efforts are aimed at teaching us how to minimize them while hopefully learning to recognize false guilt and destructive shame so as to virtually eliminate these as well. And in his chapters there are many real-life examples highlighting his points, some instructive graphics, and worksheet exercises to illustrate and guide the step-by-step process. I particularly liked his emphasis on recovering and reclaiming lost selfhood in his last chapter on "Searching for Your True Self" which gets at the nub of why the alienation-aspect of guilt and shame issues is so crucial for their link with mental disorders. And whether or not one cares to understand this in religious terms of the necessity to—from the Latin—*re* (back) *ligare* (tie UP), or reconnect with one's ORIGIN-al Spiritual Source, or merely the need for existentialist/humanist-type "authenticity," this falling away from our essence surely *does* seem to be at the heart of the matter. Seeing this was, again, very helpful by way of answering my additional puzzlement above about why so many broken and suffering persons obsessively seek the come-down-ance (akin to the commonplace merciless Christian's desire for crucifixions—or what has been called the base *ressentiment* aspect of Christianity's mass appeal) of the guiltless and happier ("Higher") other. This, for them, is kind of a perverse expression of the spiritually "drowning" desperately grasping to reconnect with healthful life "from above" which has not died to the usual "ways of the world"—and attendant chronic misery, interspersed with momentary titillations/distractions—yet. As Nietzsche expressed the matter (*Beyond Good and Evil*, Part 4: Maxims & Interludes, Sec. 90):

"Heavy, melancholy people grow lighter through precisely that which makes others heavy, through hatred and love, and for a while they rise to their surface." (emphasis mine—B.F.) And so, of course, much more could be said about how we love to hate those "evil ones" OUT-there to deflect from our own morbidity IN-here, but methinks that one could accept the wisdom of Jesus Christ's teaching that "I am in this world, but not of it" alongside the following uplifting reframed directive of Tim Leary and not be too far from the truth (which *is* OUT-there!). Thus:

"The mission of DNA is to evolve nervous systems able to escape from the doomed planet and contact manifestations of the same amino-acid seeding that have evolved in other solar systems. The mission is the message—to escape and come home." (*Changing My Mind, Among Others*, Ch. 24: "Neuro-

logic," p. 203)

Now is that *so* Far OUT?!—In terms of *re-ligare*?

Finally, on the Colbert book, it should probably be said that his version of "finding The True Self" is the typically dualistic/pragmatic fundamentalist Christian one of what many might deem to be arriving at a sort of *modus vivendi*, or "cutting a deal," with the "god of this world" in the *name* of "Christ" but not the person or teachings of Jesus—what Walter Kaufmann and others would call a type of false or fake "perfectionism" (Paulist-type "*Manichaeism*," as he terms it—see page 20 of *Without Guilt and Justice*), the accommodation of a Matriarchal Dominance Domestication Agenda: "You're here for a reason, and that's to be with an opposite sexual number (or 'partner,' in the modern translation [if you're not realizing your duality in the 'normal' way, then you *must be gay/deviant/predatory/exploitative* and so on]); you're here to 'make babies', live the 'good' life, do your reproductive/sex-energy exchange/duty, etc.; 'it's all about sex' (what WE mean by 'love') and, if only everyone were Communistically Subsumed by the 'Eternally Female' (Goethe) Level of Collective Consciousness (where 'everything is "known"—the presumption H.L. Mencken, aptly enough, termed 'female conceit'), we'd have a blissful and problemless Kingdom of God on Earth—and everything would be 'perfect.'" Well, that's millenarianism, or what Nietzsche and many others referred to as the Paulist inversion of the original message of Jesus and coup-like triumph of Judaism over genuine Christianity (see especially the recent work by top Biblical scholar, Burton Mack, *Who Wrote The New Testament?—The Making of the Christian Myth*, in this regard). And *qua* worldviews, it certainly has a sort of validity or substantive basis in realistic, but perhaps not always readily apparent, facts of life (in other words, an honest answer to the person who objects: Well how much does the typical "wise-guy" revelation or decoding of all the Judeo-Christian double-&-triple talk to the effect that "It's really just all about sex" explain?, pretty much has to be: Actually, *quite a lot*). Moreover, one would also have to grant that, in spite of the fearsome system of threats-&-promises entailed in Judeo-Christianity as a Matriarchal Dominance Project to tame "the savage beast"—*man*—something along these lines can be seen to have been pretty much necessary at a certain historical stage and for the vast majority of people—that is: Big Mother Jehovah probably did know best in the Domestication Department (at least *for Her "time"*). So my feeling is that if bringing on those "End Times"—*all over again* (and "keepin' 'EM 'coming")—gives some people temporary relief or solace from ongoing problems of living, they're welcome to it, but this is hardly the only possible game in town, nor is it a *truthful* utopian vision, nor is it inevitable—and certainly not as purported in the secular Marxist version², and nor is it any sort of ultimate

solution which in any way eliminates false guilt; it may even exacerbate it!

Anyhow, all of *that* said, let's move along to *Without Guilt and Justice*, the subtitle of which pretty much says it all as far as the dominant theme or orientation of the book goes (an updated version might read: "A Study in Complexity Theory and the Art of Critical Thinking"). This is because, for Walter Kaufmann, writing in the immediate aftermath of World War Two—and having been intimately involved in that conflagration and greatly psychologically influenced by it (he worked for U.S. Military Intelligence as an interrogator of German POWs and suspected war criminals in the lead-up to Nuremberg and the other post-war trials)—the most pressing question, as with many thoughtful men of his generation, was: *How* could this possibly happen? *How* could horror and tragedy of this magnitude possibly occur? And his answer, in essence (though this is an extreme simplification), is: Well, we *just weren't thinking*—we *just weren't "rational" enough*. More precisely: we weren't making the important decisions (what he calls "*fateful*" decisions) that we needed to make. Hence: "decidophobia" as Problem No. 1 for mankind.

To appreciate the poignancy of this perspective, it is important to realize that Kaufmann takes a position diametrically opposed to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's famous "Man was born free, and [yet] everywhere he is in chains" (*The Social Contract*—1762) and answers the common philosophical quandary about how it is that "man is determined yet free, free yet enslaved" by essentially positing *the reverse*: that "man" begins with a state of original existential *and psychological unfreedom*, and that moving beyond the latter is the key or necessary "starting point" for achieving any meaningful "outer" freedom with respect to the former. In other words: if there's a problem *out there*, it's probably because there's a problem *in here*. To be sure, he recognizes that we can speak meaningfully of an innate/ "inalienable" capacity for "free will," but he also recognizes that the historical reality is that we have been moving from the *actual* existential case where few were able to exercise this capacity—in part what he means by *autonomy*—consistently, to a general societal situation where more and more are so able. And this *from-to* orientation is very important to understand in terms of why what he feels is *now* possible is so *now*, whereas it wasn't before. To escape our previous tendency to act stupidly and in grossly harmful ways in society, he says we need to throw off the dominance of our "fixed ideas" and unexamined prejudices—his focus on traditional concepts of "guilt" and "justice" being just a couple of select examples, in this regard—such that we develop a new level of discernment and "independent thinking" skill, but this is a learning process and learned ability he

intends to direct us towards.

A brief outline of the chapter headings will give some idea of where he's going with all of this. The book consists of 8 chapters with 80 numbered subsections and a 9th brief titled segment/afterword: "The Serpent's Promise." The headings are:

- 1) Decidophobia
- 2) The Death of Retributive Justice
- 3) An Attack on Distributive Justice
- 4) The Birth of Guilt and Justice
- 5) Against Guilt
- 6) The Need for Alienation
- 7) The New Integrity
- 8) Are Autonomy and Happiness Compatible?

But before describing the analytical tools/ categorical thought-aids/delineated in Chapter 1 and touching on a few general points, it is necessary to say a few more words about the "why" of Kaufmann's interest in this overall subject-matter, the context/milieu his thought has been "shaped" in, and what have been the animating forces guiding the forming of his project. First of all, then, it must be remembered that what we have here is a top Jewish intellectual and Zionist intimately familiar not only with Western Philosophy in general, but with German philosophy—and the Nietzschean corpus—in particular (and much affected/ impressed by the latter). And amongst his post-war "generation" or affiliated "crowd" of official intelligentsia (he was a professor of philosophy at Princeton University for over 3 decades from 1947 on), there was the widely-held opinion that Nietzsche—though no proto-Nazi or anti-Semite—was through his capacity for *value-creation* or, more especially, his work of doing what he termed *revaluing all values*, largely responsible for unleashing the forces culminating in W.W. 1 and W.W.2. Far-fetched as this may sound, philosophers take such seeming imponderables seriously—and so do Military Intelligence people.

The upshot is that amid all the erudite references to Heidegger, Sartre, Hegel and on and on—and ostensibly "detached" academic interest in the fallacies entailed in retributive and distributive justice, etc.—there is only too obviously just one major agenda driving Kaufmann's concerns: the backdrop of the World War Two drama and trauma, and how this has impacted he and "his people." Clearly, too, his major operating premises is: Well, if Nietzsche unleashed the Nazi Beasts, to wreak havoc and terrible suffering upon my people, with his amoral deconstruction of the previous ideological value-superstructure which had held such forces relatively in check, what is the proper response to this?—Why, of course, do an imitation inverted "talk-back" to "the Master's" *Beyond Good and Evil* theme and *revalue his values* such that you "throw away the (traditional ethical) rulebook," you become

without (i.e., unrestrained by any “limiting” notions of *guilt and justice* (read: humanity or legality), and you *write your own script* on how to have *carte blanche* to deal amorally with the immoralists—all the while trying not to feel guilty about it! This is that script.

So this is very much the unmistakable motivating frame of the text (also made explicit in the appendaged “Acknowledgements”)—which becomes very pronounced after you get past the initial chapters with their phoney lure/“façade” of genuine “liberal”-type universalist-humanitarian concern. The mask really begins to drop and all of the seemingly contradictory assertions and dialectical sophistry devolving into jumbled solipsism become quite comprehensible: this is Kaufmann’s m.o. To give but one blatant example: after dissembling for most of Chapter 2 on the supposedly “radical” theme of “The Death of Retributive Justice,” he concludes that “Punishments are needed, invocations to justice are not.” To repeat, what he is mainly wrestling with are his own deep-seated post W.W. 2 guilt, fear, and justice issues—guilt about his own (probably) unseemly complicity in the travesty of “Victor’s Justice” (and the inadequacy of then extant legal notions for either protecting his people or for meting out due vengeance upon his/their enemies); fear about the horrors which occurred during the Nazi reign ever happening again; and scepticism about any notions of retributive or distributive justice *ever* being able to realistically apply to compensation to his people for their losses (certainly a totally understandable sentiment in view of the historical circumstances and one with which all persons of good will can readily sympathize). And his conclusion—extracted beyond all the highfalutin philosophical rigmarole—that *amoral deterrence* of one’s “Enemies” at all costs, regardless of traditional principles of law/justice, inconvenient facts, or honourable/noble ethics, is the best policy, certainly is not without historical precedent. One might even want to grant that it often has had a good deal of validity—and *some* justification—as an “efficient” or “winning” political survival stratagem. As someone born to the political-cultural lineage of “Perfidious Albion” (the widely used derisive moniker/epithet for the character of British diplomacy for many years [—or, as the great Jewish—and libertarian—comedian, Lenny Bruce, said in a similar vein: “The British are the greatest bullshitters in the world.”]), I hardly feel in any position to throw many stones here. In any case, if you don’t “see this” about “where Kaufmann is coming from”, you won’t “get” a lot of the book.

(I should also hasten to add that, in referring to the “travesty” of justice at Nuremberg and the horrendous retribution visited upon the German people immediately post-war [see especially on this: *Crimes and Mercies: The Fate of German Civilians Under Allied*

Occupation, 1944-1950 (London: Little, Brown and Company, 1997) by Canadian historical writer, James Bacque], I am not in any way intending to dispute the legitimacy of the *basic legal aims* of this and other like War Crimes Tribunals, but merely stating my belief [shared by a large consensus of modern legal and historical authorities] that the objective circumstances surrounding it made for a *de facto* Show Trial farce—at the same time as equivalent crimes of perhaps even greater enormity than those being prosecuted were being perpetrated with abandon and left unchallenged. As Noam Chomsky has truly said, if the same standards were applied to the American government, every president since the Second World War [and not a few other Western/“democratic” heads-of-state] could be indicted *and convicted* of numerous “crimes against humanity.” And this might not necessarily be a bad thing.)

To return to the specifics of the book, it should additionally be stressed that, once you understand Kaufmann’s overriding purpose in constructing a sort of “Zionist Manual/Guide to Operational Thinking For Survival” (a *goal* which *this* author is overwhelmingly in complete sympathy with), the secondary discussion critically assailing many, many unquestioned assumptions about historical legal notions will not be found to be without merit, keen psychological insight, or independent interest value. Many points are very well taken, valid, and make the book an engrossing read regardless of what one might think about its global thesis. For instance, here’s a brief synopsis of his 10 common strategies of decidophobia, outlined in Chapter 1, which he proceeds to apply to all subsequent chapter discussions of historical examples:

1) *Religious communitarianism*: Losing oneself as an amorphous individual in one or another form of collectivism where all one’s thinking is done for one and any consideration and/or evaluation of a spectrum of alternatives is dismissed in an authoritarian/moralistic manner.

2) *Drifting*: Allegiance to *any* particular *status quo* so as to make life “easy” by never making the effort to think independently; floating with “the tide”, never “going against the grain.” The “Good German” syndrome or “Eastern” religiosity: selective worldly or other-worldly industriousness combined with moral lassitude—all rationalized as clever/“social” *adjustment*. Settling for the “bread and circuses”; “How about this weather we’re having?”, etc.

3) *“True Believer”-type movement allegiance*: “...this type...has made a decision once and henceforth needs only to extrapolate from that. His views come nowhere near doing justice to the complexity of fact, but he makes a virtue of simplicity and despises subtlety and cleverness..., he has made himself stupid. He prizes

certainty above truth or considers it, untenably, a warrant of truth,..." (p. 11)

4) *Allegiance to a school of thought*: Where endless working *within The (Thought) System* gives a false, exclusivist sense of omniscience. "One has chosen the game and the rules and can have a good time planning one's moves. Microscopism spells safety.... The most common reaction to members of a rival school is simply lack of interest. Rival schools are not so much tolerated as they are ignored." (p. 14) OR, as Adam Smith put it (*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*): "The man of system... is apt to be very wise in his own conceit...."

5) *Exegetical thinking*: The assumption that the text one interprets is right no matter what—or, at least, still endowed with *Unquestionable Authority*; if one is proven wrong on this or that point of fact or logic, well then one merely reinterprets The Authoritative Text—never revokes one's tie to the primary Ideological Entity as an (even entirely fallacious) whole. This applies not merely to official religious texts like the Bible, Kaufmann points out, but also famously—and notoriously—to quasi-religious ideological adherents, such as Marxists, who after repeated historical and theoretical refutation of virtually every tenet of their creed, have continued to come up with yet another version of "Well, that's not what [the Master] really meant/said" arguments (see also on this: *What Marx Really Said* by H.B. Acton, *What Marx Really Meant* by G.D.H. Cole, and *The Socialist Tradition* by Alexander Gray, pp. 321-22). "*Exegetical thinking* [also] *permits the exegete to read his own ideas into a text and get them back endowed with authority.*" (p. 16)

6) *Manichaeism*: Involves decision-making but the choice is loaded and already channelled/blinkered by a black and white/"forces of good" vs. "forces of evil"/type of dualism; thinking exclusively in terms of "opposites" and either/or logical polarities.

7) *Moral Rationalism*: The fallacy of presuming that the rationality/logicality or even *factuality* of your views or "positions" necessarily tells you what *ought* to be thought or done. (This error, of course, was first famously associated with Hume's demonstration that you cannot derive an "ought" from an "is"—and is a function of the subjectivity of all valuation—but remains probably the most prevalent one in ethical thought today.)

8) *Pendantry*: Specialist/"professionalist" evasion; absorption in microscopic distinctions/"details-of-the-job"/or technical and mundane affairs that are "so important" that they keep you well clear of having to muster the sort of courageous creativity entailed in doing what's *really* ("fatefully") *important*.

9) *Riding "the wave of the future"*: Going with whatever current majoritarian fashion has the "aura of inevitability"—which almost always turns out to be

wrong (see also the classic work: *The Art of Contrary Thinking* by Humphrey B. Neill).

10) *Marriage*: When it entails declining responsibility, an escape from difficult thought-choices, or deferring all, or most, might-have-been "fateful decisions" to the spouse (Kaufmann is mainly thinking here of female to male).

Looking at the other chapters, there is a great deal more worthy of comment which I simply do not have space for here. One highlight of somewhat topical interest worth relating, though, is his critique of traditional notions of alienation wherein he says, in effect, "Listen, if you are going to be autonomous [in the sense of making those hard choices entailed in "doing the right thing" or that are "fateful" for the greater good of society], you are not only going to *feel* alienated, you are going to *be* alienated by other people. To think otherwise is to fall for some false utopian chimera; this is part of living, so get used to it." And he correctly cites Karl Marx's infamous virulently anti-Semitic diatribe, *A World Without Jews* (also known by the title: *On the Jewish Question*), as the main source of the 3 leading fallacies about alienation—viz.: 1) that all alienation is bad, 2) that alienation is a distinctively modern phenomena, and 3) that alienation is a function of capitalism, or at least of advanced industrial society. Kaufmann's treatment of this is excellent and his citations are very choice. As he says, many of Marx's passages are on a par with what you might find in the Nazi's leading anti-Semitic journal, Julius Streicher's *Der Sturmer*, and certainly also with Martin Luther's *The Jews and Their Lies*, etc. For those who don't know about this (which is, of course, why internationalist socialism generally, and the former Soviet Union in particular, were major opponents of Zionism and the State of Israel), Marx viewed Judaism as "the *highest* practical expression of human self-alienation" and predicated his struggle against the capitalist class, at least in part, on the question: "What particular social element needs to be overcome in order to *abolish Judaism*?" Here are a few select excerpts, referenced (pp. 168-69, Sec. No. 58) by Kaufmann, of Marx attacking Jewish materialism, which I think he also correctly identifies as, essentially, collectivist-thinking "slanders":

"Money is the jealous God of Israel before whom no other god is tolerated...."

The God of the Jews has secularized himself, has become worldly, has become the god of the world....

What is abstractly present in the Jewish religion — the contempt for theory, for art, for history, for man as an end in himself —

that is the *actual, conscious* position, the virtue, of the money man.

...Emancipation from usury and money, that is, from practical, real Judaism, would constitute the emancipation of our time. In the last analysis, the emancipation of the Jews means ultimately the emancipation of humanity *from* the Jews.

...Let us not seek for the secret of the Jew in his religion; let us rather seek for the secret of his religion in the actual Jew.

...And so we find the real nature of today's Jew not only in the Talmud but in contemporary society as well. Indeed, the practical dominance of Judaism over the Christian world has reached its unambiguous normal expression in North America. The Jew has emancipated himself in a Jewish manner. *With* the Jew and *without* him, money has become a world power, and the practical spirit of the Jews has become the practical spirit of the Christian peoples. The Jews have emancipated themselves to the extent that Christians have *become* Jews."

Well, pretty strong stuff from a man descended from six generations of Rabbis! But it should probably be noted in Marx's "defense" (and usually is by socialist apologists) that this was amongst his earliest published writings—and that due to his father's forced conversion to Lutheranism, the very young Marx was a rather dedicated orthodox Christian, who therefore must have picked up a lot of these then commonplace prejudices sort of by cultural osmosis, and even evincing some of the first glimmerings of his "alienation" theory in writing during his Christian phase³.

All of which, one might suppose, takes us pretty far afield from everyday mental health concerns with "guilt" and manifest psychiatric syndromes. But does it really? How far is the personal from the political—or the philosophical? Is spending time contemplating such "idle speculative matters" really irrelevant when we have just witnessed, for instance, numerous persons admitted to psychiatric institutions in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, etc.? (And consider as a matter of relevancy, incidentally, the parallels between Marx's rant against The Money Power of World Jewry, with its base in America, and the typical radical Islamic line about the "Great Satan" America under Jewish/Zionist control from their bases in New York and Washington, D.C., etc. If we had taken the time to find out that this is what these terrorists think—and *why*—[again, a main point in Kaufmann's central thesis], would anyone have

been so surprised ["unprepared"]? Would it have needed to have happened at all?)

Most of us cannot begin to realistically imagine the daily mental suffering and anguish of both the Jewish and the Palestinian peoples as their conflict (just one of many, of course) drags on and on. And why?—Essentially because some people feel that "justice" is "on their side" and that "the other side" (people) are "guilty", worthy of retribution, and so on. Or that abstract concepts/principles don't count and "winning" at all costs is all that matters. So these are all still very real problems or "live issues" of everyday experience for many. And they do affect our mental health in myriad ways.

In conclusion, I am in agreement with much of what Kaufmann has to say—especially about courage as the main ingredient required for the necessary creative and independent thinking needed when facing up to our most difficult societal problems with requisite personal integrity. And I believe his thought-exercise is a notable contribution as well as being a fascinating window to the intellectual history of his era. But, in the final analysis, I found this supposed *tour de force* wanting—"too clever by half" and essentially a solipsistic, mere "mind freedom" loop the loop which, in its hypercritical transcendence of all conceptual categories, to use Marx's phrase (though I am loath to), appears to show "contempt for theory." That is to say: for principle, *on principle*. In other words, he winds up "standing nowhere." A verdict *from* history, or a verdict *of* history? Decide for yourself—if you are UP to it.

"The best way of avenging thyself is not to become like [the wrong-doer]."

—Marcus Aurelius, *The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius*, Part 6, No. 6.

Notes

¹ This term for the Moloch-like modern medical profession was coined by Ivan Illich as the title for his famous searing critique of clinical, social and cultural iatrogenesis first published in 1975. An enlarged, definitive edition was recently published under the title *Limits to Medicine—Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health* (London/New York: Marion Boyars, 1995). Interestingly enough, the word "nemesis", in addition to meaning a bane on society or adversarial "antisocial force", also is the name of the Greek goddess of retribution and vengeance.

² See also on this the brilliant essay by distinguished economist/historian/political philosopher, Murray N. Rothbard, "Karl Marx: Communist as Religious Eschatologist" in *Requiem for Marx*, edited and introduced by Yuri N. Maltsev (Auburn University, Alabama: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 1993), pp. 221-294. Of related interest is *Anti-Liberalism 2000—The Rise of the New Millennium Collectivism* by David Henderson.

³ *Ibid.*, Murray N. Rothbard, p. 280.

Branches Over the Wall

The Early Days

by D. Paul Strashok

There was a time, in my past, when I had an ongoing battle with the psychiatric profession. They diagnosed me as an acute, chronic schizophrenic, and it seemed to me like the passing of a death sentence on my life. There was no therapy, no negotiation, no give-and-take. I was simply ushered into the psychiatrist's office (on a ward at Riverview Hospital in B.C.) and told that I had had a psychotic break and would have to be on medication for the rest of my natural life.

At that time, I was part of an East Indian religious group, which had firm and fixed rules and standards, one of which was "no drugs", so it only seemed normal to me that this included psychiatric medication, as well as street drugs. What I found out, in a most difficult and painful way, was that I had absolutely no choice in the matter. If I refused oral medications, I received a painful, brutally administered injection, which left me sleeping for a day or two. The attendants were always nearby to make sure I wasn't "acting out".

Looking back on that period in my life, I realize that I was going through a phase of intense mania with delusions and voices in my mind causing me to react to what I then believed was a "heavenly plane". The rigor and extreme self-denial involved in the religious group had taken over to the point where normal eating and drinking to sustain my physical body became a fearful thing to me, involving much superstition and self-condemnation. I had become a walking skeleton and had literally suffered a "nervous breakdown". One day, while I was among the group of devotees on the streets of Downtown Vancouver, chanting and praising our god, I seemed to hear a voice from heaven, asking me, "Do you want to live?" In my extremely debilitated state, under high stress, and believing that the destiny of my life was to leave the mortal plane, I answered to that voice, "No!" In that moment my will to live shattered, I froze solid on the streets of Vancouver, unable to move, and my eyes rolled up in my head. My so-called "brothers" grabbed my musical instruments and my begging bowl and left me standing there frozen (somehow, I think they had seen this kind of thing before). A little later I heard the sounds of a police siren and two officers came up to me and took me by the limbs and stuffed me (like a piece of cardboard being folded up) into the back of their police car. I still remember the voice of one of the officers saying, in utter amazement, "What's the matter with this guy? He can hardly move and his eyes are rolled up in his head and all I see is blood in his eyes!"

In one instant, because of the shattering of the will to live, I went from a chanting devotee to a completely catatonic person as totally helpless as the little piece of wood we worshipped and to which we offered our food.

When I "came to", I was in St. Paul's Hospital and the true God sent someone my way. He was a doctor who walked into the room and up to my bed (I could see now, but was still as stiff as a board in catatonia). He took one look at me, then took the knuckle of the index finger of his right hand and pressed firmly and sharply, directly into my solar plexus. I took a huge gasp of air, and suddenly I could move and talk again (as much as my vocabulary had become after repeating sixteen words thousands of times a day for months). Looking back, I wonder how many people who are in a catatonic state would be helped by this same technique, although I know it was radical and I was "snapped" out of it early-on in catatonia.

As I remember these events (some 30 years later) they are an example of what Dr. Peter Breggin has termed schizophrenia to be, "psycho-spiritual overwhelm". My life in those days was definitely one of extremes or as Paul Simon said in one of his songs from his award-winning album "Graceland"—"thinking I had supernatural powers, I slammed into a brick wall." Many things have changed since then. I am more mellow and less prone to the extreme impulses and radical spiritual pursuit of my younger years. But one important lesson that seems to shine through is that in any spiritual pursuit, the desire to escape from life as we know it now, does not reflect the essence of a genuine path. I am reminded of the Biblical verse "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come," (1 Tim. 4:8). Any true spiritual path does not reflect a desire to escape from the trials and vicissitudes of this present life, but is, instead, an affirmation of life in all its forms and manifestations, temporal and eternal. This is, perhaps the greatest lesson I can learn from that past trauma, and certainly, I know that my own life, since then, has been a series of experiences that, at times, have asked me that same essential question: "Do you want to live?" And through the muck and the mire, the ups and the downs, the chaos and the confusion, the glory and the shame, my answer, I believe, has been a resounding "Yes!"

Bulletin Board

The Self-Help Resource Association of B.C. (SHRA) conducts regular Facilitator Training Workshops for Self-Help and Mutual Aid Support Groups. They also publish a quarterly newsletter and the Directory of Self-Help/Support Groups in Greater Vancouver with approximately 600 listings, many of them dealing with mental health. The latest edition (2001-2002) of the Directory is now available for \$12.00 or \$10.00 at the office if you drop by and pick it up. SHRA is located at Suite 306 – 1212 West Broadway, Van. B.C. V6H 3V1. T: (604) 733-6186. Fax: (604) 730-1015. www.vcn.bc.ca/shra

The Alternative & Integrative Medical Society (AIMS) at UBC publishes the free AIMS Wellness Directory: Lower Mainland Guide to Complementary Health. It contains approximately 250 paid and many unpaid listings dealing with a broad spectrum of mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of healing. For a Directory and/or more info. about the Society, phone (604) 822-7604. Fax: (604) 822-2495. E-mail info@aims.ubc.ca. Web: www.aims.ubc.ca. AIMS, University of British Columbia, Box 81 – 6138 SUB Boulevard, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z1. Office: B80A Woodward Building, UBC.

Vancouver Women's Health Collective has peer counselling and makes referrals to support services, groups, and does advocacy work in health care reform. Their address is #1 - 175 E. 15th Ave., Vancouver, B.C., V5T 2P6. Info. by phoning (604) 732-5262.

Vancouver/Richmond Mental Health Network sponsors many self-help groups including a Women's Circle. Their address is #109 - 96 E. Broadway, Vancouver, B.C., V5T 4N9 and the Co-ordinator of the Network may be reached at 733-5570.

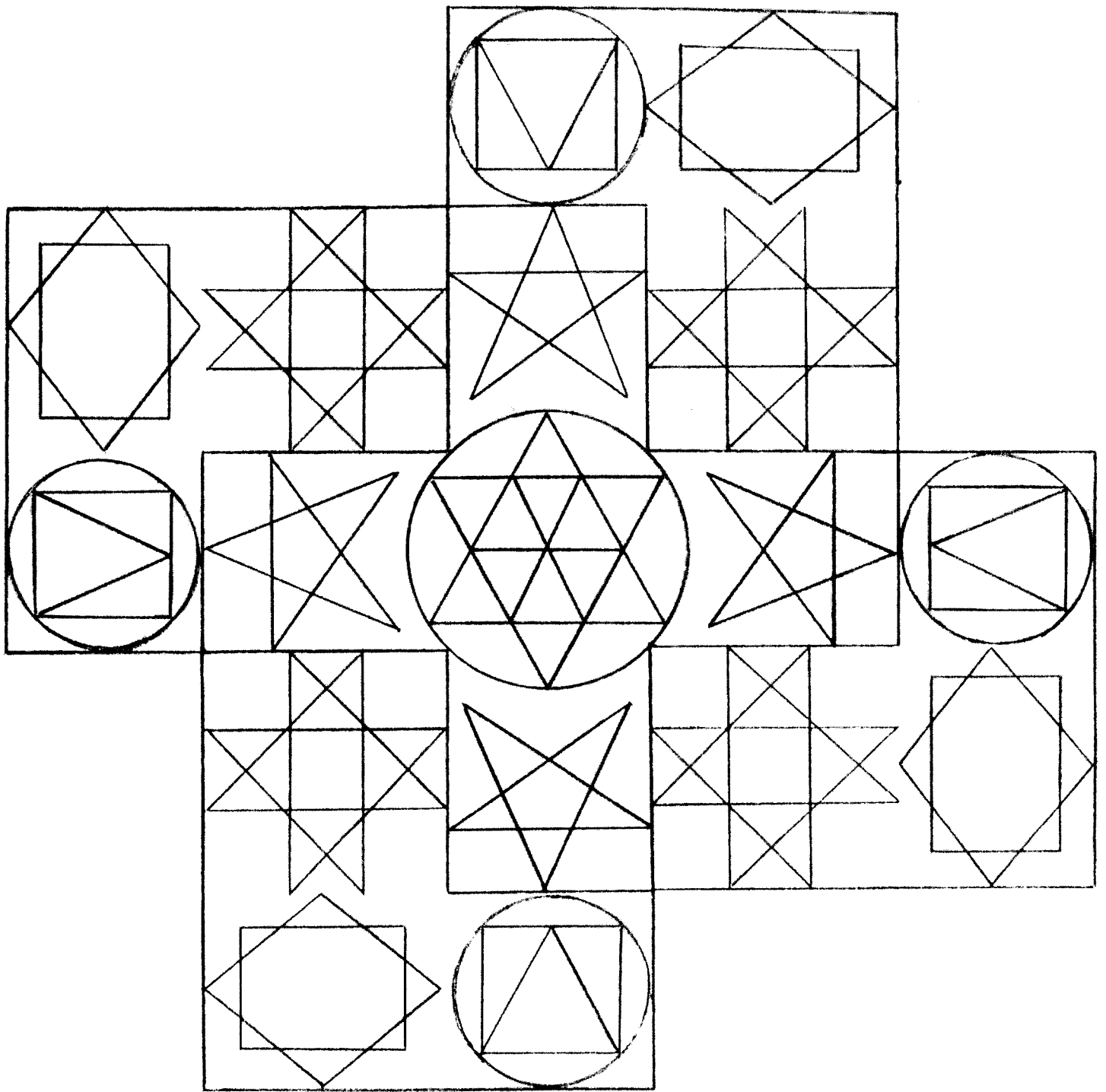
Upcoming events in the Madness 101 Mental Health Dialogue Series can be found by contacting Millie Strom at 604-255-0255 or by e-mail at info@madness101.com.

Named after Vincent van Gough's homeopathic doctor, Paul Gachet, Gallery Gachet works to provide a safe, borderless place of artistic expression. It strives to be a place of healing and a center of artistic excellence. Founded in 1994 we provide opportunities to exhibit, perform, publish and sell work and to offer a place for support and community. We aim to use the canvas of the outside world to educate and demystify the public on issues related to mental health and abuse.

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