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In A Nutshell

Summer 04

Summer 2004



Gentle to Myself

by Jim Gifford

For those of us who are mental health consumers, it can be a daunting challenge to cope with the everyday world. Panic attacks, anxiety, paranoia, flare-ups, depression, each and all can attack our state of well-being.

In our efforts to get through the day, we can be overwhelmed by daily personal maintenance of our lives as we try to function in a demanding and complex world. As the late comedienne Gilda Radner's character, Rosanna Dana, used to say, 'it's always something'.

Doing laundry, buying groceries and sundries, cooking, washing dishes, cleaning house, personal hygiene, banking, taking medications (if we do), all require a disciplined regimen of time, money and energy skills. Then there are our families and friends, and the strains of relationships. We have appointments and ongoing dealing with financial aid workers, psychiatrists, psych nurses, outreach workers, dentists, family doctors. Plus there is our modicum of work, volunteer or otherwise. Everyone in society feels some pressure but carrying on is especially acute for mental patient survivors. Enter coping skills and mechanisms.

For me, when stressed out, I return to a primary meditation technique: breathing. The word Spirit means breath and, when you practice deeply inhaling and exhaling several times, you enter the clarity of here and now. Problems drift away and the silence of mind is enveloping.

A famous poet once said 'music will heal the world', and this is markedly true in my case. A song in my heart has for me been a valuable staple. Personally, I get a kick out of singing or whistling to myself and spontaneously for others, on the beach, at the MPA Community Resource Centre, at Kewal Café and to the elders at mom's nursing home. When I really need to relax, I quietly sing the Irish lullaby 'Trura Lura Lura'. I have written my own pieces and once was enticed, by a busdriver, to stand beside him and serenade my fellow passengers with one of my creations. I chose 'The Salt Factory Under The Ocean', an amusing ditty that reveals my sense of humour.

Truly, 'laughter is the best medicine'. Regularly, I have the pleasure of the company of witty individuals who entertain me no end. And I reciprocate. A special

gift of mine is the ability to make my elderly mother chuckle, at the drop of a hat. From her I have been blessed with an attitude that penetrates the paradoxical absurdities that the universe displays all around us. I am reminded of the story of the Taoist sage who, upon arising in the morning, had a belly laugh and, before going to sleep, had another belly laugh. When questioned about this behaviour by a disciple, he replied when he got up he thought about the funny things that would happen to him that day and, at night, he recalled the funny things that did happen to him that day.

Night and day, as I live across from Kitsilano Park, I regularly stroll along the pathways, among the trees, by the seashore, watching and listening to the birds: ducks, seagulls, crows, pigeons, and occasionally a blue heron or eagle. I am emptied of thoughts and concerns on these sojourns in nature. And then there are my canine friends.

Pets are cherished and respected for bringing their owners both health and happiness yet, unfortunately, in my residence they are not permitted. Raised as a child with dogs in our household, for me they possess a key place in my scheme of things. In Kits Park, a vast array are at my beck and call: mongrels, purebreds; sniffing, wandering, loping, chasing sticks and balls; each with its own distinct mannerisms and

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personality. My pal Susan has two golden labs, Bentley and 'The Divine Miss Em'. Emmy has so taken to me that her master kiddingly says we were probably an 'item' in a previous incarnation. Then there is Harley the spaniel, Maddy the gold retriever, Quinn, the german shepherd, and Gail the border collie, among others. My unique bond is with a Pomeranian/Chihuahua cross named Mohandas. Owned by chums, he was only a few weeks old when we first met and when I visit he goes 'bananas'. Petting them and simply being in their presence, brings an immediacy and naturalness of unconditional love, that is truly soul food.

Like many of my canine comrades, I love to swim and bathe in the ocean, although for me it only embraces April through October. Refreshing in the seaside waters serves as a vital connection with Mother Nature, a wonderful and grounding activity that soothes the nervous system. Discovering a nearby cove to the west of The Pool and The Showboat, I have been admitted to and joined The Puddle Point Irregulars, a smaller group of older persons of like-mind. Although I attend our annual Polar Bear Swim on January 1st, I stand back and do my bit by offering encouraging words.

Wordplay, written and spoken, are my artform and vocation. The creative impulse of putting ideas and observations on paper is a form of expression which I always anticipate and find rewarding. A feeling of accomplishment is derived from completing a poem, short story, essay or article, and giving life to my work through readings and speeches is an added bonus. As a student of the art of conversation I understand the importance of listening. This gift has helped me immeasurably in doing interviews and profiles. Small talk and good discussions, with friends, acquaintances, or strangers, over coffee, or sitting on a park bench, provides a worthwhile pastime and is something for which I have an aptitude.

Reading has been a lifelong love and these days I select books that cater to my adopted role as a

contemplative loafer. Selecting works from the public library, and browsing neighbourhood stores like Banyen and Hermits, my interest and indulgences are broad and deep. Presently, I am engrossed in *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau, a Ralph Waldo Emerson Anthology, and *Leaves of Grass* by poet Walt Whitman, all American classics of the 19th century. It is a rich and rewarding hobby, an escape from crassness and mediocrity, so prevalent around us.

Attempting to omit the influence of commercialism and pop culture from my environs, as a danger to both head and heart, has been an ongoing struggle. At present, I've been successful in letting go and eliminating, as much as possible, from my personal experience, television, radio, and the computer. Something of a Neo-Luddite in my quasi-rebellion against infringing technology, I find myself vastly more free of the imposing wasteland of superficiality, incessant advertising and information overload. In saving myself from the unredeeming nagging of the media, I have been granted a serious clarity.

Recently, I said 'no' to my brother's Christmas gift to join him in attending a Canucks/Montreal Canadiens hockey game. For the vast majority, it was a 'hot' ticket and dream outing. For me, it meant too much hype and a large boisterous crowd, where I would feel uncomfortable, no place to 'be' and march to my own drummer.

Over the years, slowing down has marked my lifestyle changes, from youthful ambition to middle-aged man today who sees through the worldly illusions, and dwells in an atmosphere of joy, contentment and detachment.

My humble abode is a sanctuary, a place to listen to my heart and touch my soul. Here, in the late evening, I light a candle, lay on my bed and, quietly in solitude, reflect on the day's happenings. I appreciate the sacred, unique and special nature of life and have learned to be gentle to myself.

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 MPA Society, #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, Ely Swann, 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.

Thoughts from My Compost Heap

by Sam Roddan

Many people may smile when they note I pretend to a knowledge of gardening. It is true I have never lifted a fork for years but at one time I was a specialist in compost.

I could stand for hours by the side of my old compost heap, marvel at the slow, smoldering warmth, the faint wisps of breath rising toward the sun.

But on with my 'lies'.

In many gardens the compost heap is concealed, hidden away, carefully screened from view as though it were something uncouth or obscene. Gardeners like to cover it with scented roses, thorny black berry bush or camouflage it with grape vines.

Our puritanical sensibilities associate the compost with moral decay, dissolution, corruption, the 'moth and rust' of the Bible, the dark evils of the flesh.

As I remember now, (always a rebel), I liked to have my compost heap out in the open and as an adornment to my garden. And what a delight I took in spring to discover that autumn refuse, grass clippings, leaves, potato peelings and sprinklings of wood ash had been transformed into rich loam ready to nurture the tender plants in my garden.

The heaviest feeders of compost are often the most fragrant of flowers. The sweet pea loves to have its roots wallow deep in trenches of rotting manure. And dare we mention the tender blossoms, pendant on tall stems and bringing so much pleasure and delight, are indeed the reproductive parts of the plant itself.

In literature, the flower has always been the symbol of feeling and emotion. In the language of flowers, the violet stands for faithfulness, the daisy for innocence, the lily for purity. The honeysuckle symbolizes rustic beauty, the rose and forget-me-not are forever associated with love.

In the great scheme of things, the poet has ignored the significance of the compost heap. No one has made it a metaphor in the folklore of the garden. Nevertheless, the compost heap is a philosopher's gold mine, the alchemy of life that transforms chaff and corn husks, the parings of the table, into portents of beauty. If lemon blossoms are fidelity, and jonquil, desire, the compost heap is fecundity and promise of birth and new life.

Every gardener, worthy of his barrow and digging fork, delights in the wisdom gained from working the soil. The Farmer's Almanac abounds with proverbs, anecdotes and pleasantries that elevate the soul and keep one in touch with the eternal verities.

Sometimes, in thoughtful and reflective mood, I devoutly wish I could toss into my seething compost my own wintry prejudices, chilly pretensions and withering indifference.

Would that I had the courage of the aging Lou, great folk singer of Weaver fame, who requested his own ashes be sprinkled over the compost heap of his beloved garden.

Time takes its toll of even the most ardent and devoted gardeners. It has been years (and years) since I last heard my partner, Huddy, cry, "Atta boy! Atta boy!" as I spaded deep into her garden.

Today, as I take it easy at home, I compensate Huddy with words of gratitude and praise as she staggers once again into our kitchen with the bountiful harvest from her garden.

"Next time I'll give you a hand stirring up the compost, I say cheerily. "I've got some good ideas, you might like to try out."

Ah, that "next time"... Eternal cop-out... alibi... tragic flaw... I hear those words in my dreams.

"...the compost heap is a philosopher's gold mine..."

"In Beverly Hills ... they don't throw their garbage away.
They make it into television shows."

--Woody Allen

Satya's Soapbox

by Satya Devi

JUNE 16, 1904 - June 16, 2004 - The Centenary of
Bloomsday in *Ulysses* - Notes on Jimmy Joyce.

How exquisite and dedicated an artist was Joyce - who, by capturing a single day of life in Dublin with naked scrutiny and no sacred cows, sacrificed living in his homeland and lived in self-exile the rest of his life, exiled by the hounds who pulled at his heart strings. At the end of *Ulysses*, Leopold Bloom, the Wandering Jew, returns home and offers Stephen Daedalus a courtesy to stay the night, which is politely declined and Stephen does not return home. And neither did Joyce.

When I was 12 years old, there was a novelty record on the radio called Hello Muddah, Hello Faddah by Alan Sherman and one verse went:

"And the head coach wants no sissies,
so he reads to us from something called *Ulysses*"

We all wanted to know what "*Ulysses*" meant and adults only said it was damned along with anyone who read it. I headed down to the library the next day after school, snuck into the adult section, and there it was in all its raging glory. I read the Martello Tower sequence and have since read, or attempted to read, it as a muse -- for it defines the fragile moment called life, and I guess, because like him, I felt misunderstood.

There is a lovely story about how James Joyce as a young man once sang by memory against the great John McCormack and won the first round hands down. The second piece was to be read from sheet music, and Joyce refused to take part, saying one must sing a song by heart to put true artistic emotion into it. Some cynics say Joyce's eyesight was too poor to read the sheet music.

"Oh, the wild rose blossoms on the little green place."

Recently, in the *Courier* newspaper, there was a long article on Joyce and the Centenary of Bloomsday, and I was sickened by the blatant exploitation and his popularity around the world. It wasn't until the late 60's that *Ulysses* was allowed in Ireland. I wonder if Dublin has really changed that much and would they tolerate and open their loving arms to James Joyce if

he or one such as he were alive and writing in Ireland today. Joyce was always bitter that he did not get recognition from the Emerald Isle in his lifetime.

He lived in Paris with his wife, Nora, and their two troubled children, and he wrote all night by poor light sources with already failing eyesight. Nora, in the next room, could hear him snickering to himself as he wrote by the hour. In the morning, James would come out and show Nora his 100-letter word for the sound of thunder. Nora would smile and say, "Sunny Jim" (which she always called him) "go get some bread and eggs for breakfast", and then sent him with a note so he wouldn't forget. Arguable the most brilliant novelist of the English Language of the 20th Century, he didn't know his Royal Irish Arse from a hole in the ground in any other capacity, and Nora was not merely "incidental" in his life. She was a strong rock of a woman who got James Joyce through many difficult times, kept him steady and kept his life in perspective. He couldn't have been easy to live with.

I wanted to write an essay on the Martello Tower sequence for a book report and the teacher said I could not understand it. I said: "At least I read it. Most of the other kids are showing you the hard cover copy of a book and then go to read the Classics Comic and write either that or copy out the inside flap of the book."

So then, the book ends with Molly's Soliloquy and that is probably the best role written for women, as there was up until then only Jean Brodie or that interminably insufferable Lady Macbeth walking the snakepit, which every Psychiatric Institution put on if they didn't do Marat/Sade.

The poet, John Thompson, in his classic book of *ghazals* (a form of ancient Persian poetry -- Ed.) Stilt Jack, wrote:

"One fish, one bird,
one woman, one word,
that does it for me, and the last word in *Ulysses* is
yes".

That does it for me, too, and it would be a completely different book if the last word was no.

So, Happy Centenary, Sunny Jim, and Happy Birthday, Sunny Al. ■

Stigma and Disclosure

by D. Paul Strashok

(First appeared in the April, 2003 issue of *Consumer Voice of Richmond*)

Since most of my friends and acquaintances are individuals within the mental health community, I do not feel the particular sting or barb of stigma although, recently, I had an experience that relates to the stigma around mental illness in some ways.

This incident actually relates to the area of 'disclosure', that is, knowing when and to whom you can disclose the fact that you are a consumer of mental health services. Many of us have had the experience of making a new acquaintance and having been asked almost immediately "What do you do?" Well, now that I'm in the Peer Support Worker Training Program I can truthfully say "I am a student", but beware if you are asked what you are studying, because it might then become a matter of 'disclosure'.

This is exactly what happened to me one morning at the local coffee shop. In the course of a conversation with a married couple, I brought in the term Peer Support Worker and was asked exactly what that meant. In the process of my explanation, I revealed that I am a consumer of mental health services trying to get training to help other consumers. These people were a couple who are seeking spiritual renewal in their Christian faith. When I made my 'disclosure' the result was two very different opinions from each member of this couple. The woman, in a very gentle, caring manner, encouraged me in my new-found opportunity, but the man took a much different stand, saying that there was no reason for me to suffer from this illness and

that what I was lacking was Christian Community. I immediately felt quite 'put upon' and realized that I had blundered in revealing too much personal information.

The irony is that, in my earlier years, I had been a part of a very strong Christian Community and had looked for them to be the answer to my mental health problems, but had felt let down by the elders and leaders of the church assembly when they told me to seek the help of psychiatry. Eventually I came to identify much more strongly with mental health consumers than with members of the Christian Community. So, here was an old problem rearing its ugly head again.

Well, back at the coffee shop, I quickly turned the conversation in other directions and eventually beat a rather hasty exit. The whole conversation had been rather unpleasant for me, but I realized that it had been my own foolishness in being so 'out front' about my position as a mental health consumer. Hopefully, I have learned an important lesson about 'disclosure' and about the lack of understanding about mental health issues that is in the general community and even in the community of those who express a faith in Christ. Hopefully, I will respond, when asked "What do I do?" with a noncommittal "I am semi-retired" or "I do volunteer work" to people who are not familiar with mental health issues. And, hopefully, I will find myself feeling much better about the conversation and interaction because I did not foolishly reveal too much. ■

Beyond Disclosure (A Peer Support Worker's Dilemma)

by Frank Molnar

Having read the insightful article, "Stigma and Disclosure" by Paul Strashok in *Consumer Voice of Richmond* (Issue 3, April 2003) I was inspired to respond in turn. As an active Peer Support Worker with the Richmond Team, I have been asked to elaborate on my role. In such cases, whether speaking to laypersons or people in the mental health field. I consider it my duty to offer the clearest job description possible. Such a task, as cited

in the article, however, is not achieved without a certain degree of personal disclosure.

Fortunately, I've been unashamed of my bipolar diagnosis for many years now, even grateful to the extent that it's given me cause to speak of the stigma involved and aid, if only a little, in its abolishment. As for the acquired role of Peer Support Worker, it was

one I had trained for vigorously and was proud to attain. In short, I had little reason, if any, to balk at the disclosure inherent in the Peer Support Worker title or job description.

Despite my confidence in this matter, I too, like Paul, had a brush with disclosure that opened my eyes to a dimension of the issue I should have foreseen. Up until then, the questions I asked before disclosing the duties of a Peer Support Worker all pertained to me – e.g. : Are the circumstances right for me to disclose this? Is the present company trustworthy with this type of information? Is my comfort level placated?

Over time I discovered that the act of disclosing the personal information inherent in the Peer Support Role is indeed a two-way street. Although the layperson may innocently ask and we may be ready to respond, we must remember the nature of the information we are sharing. This information can incite others to face a host of unsettled feelings such as undealt with prejudice, shame, discomfort and even pain. Feelings that we were forced to face perhaps so long ago that we've become blind to the struggle.

A personal example of the above-mentioned nearsightedness runs as follows. A few months ago, I arranged to speak on mental illness and psychosis to a group of adolescent students. Convinced that I was bringing entirely new information to them and their teacher, I sought to capture the essence of what a psychosis was like for me. It was thrilling to describe how I had not only returned intact, but empowered as well, from the fringe of my psychotic episode. Unfortunately, the audience seemed unimpressed. Had I done or said something wrong?, I wondered. I sometimes get carried away in description. But, no, it was only later, upon hearing from the teacher the reason for the mixed reaction, the reason for her own forlorn expression, that I understood. For she, and a few others in the room, had their own intimate glimpse of mental illness. It had touched their lives too. My optimistic outlook, my belief in ultimate recovery was, to them, an exception to the rule. I was simply an

example of what might have been, a reminder of the pain their loved ones continue to suffer without recourse. I was so taken aback by this reaction that I swore off speaking engagements for a while.

The disappointment I felt, however, was not without a lesson learnt. For it reminded me that "mental illness" means different things to different people. As a Peer Support Worker, I feel it is my responsibility to know this, to know that in describing what I do I am capable of inciting such mixed reactions.

Whether my description of the P.S.W.'s role is, "an aid to clinical staff in the field of mental health rehab and recovery" – and aid with experiential knowledge, of course – or that of a "wounded healer", I still am disclosing the fact that I've been diagnosed with a mental illness and have been through the psychiatric system. In personal encounters with laypersons I have the advantage of "being there" to respond to any questions they may have. But in the case of a prospective employer who reads the words, "Peer Support Worker", on my resume, when I am absent and unable to clarify, what then? How will the words, the role and the job description appear to them?

It is because of these deliberations that I consider it my duty to offer the clearest job description possible. One that both illuminates perception and does away with the existing stigma. Mental illness is something we can all discuss to varying degrees. The more adept at discussing the topic we are, the better our chances of diminishing stigma. As a Peer Support Worker I feel I can achieve this via the words and expressions I use describing both my role and duties. Instead of dreading the thought of disclosure I now look upon it as an opportunity to learn increased compassion for the feelings of others and to be creative in my own right as well.

In closing, I wish to thank Paul Strashok for the well-written article, "Stigma and Disclosure" which inspired my reply.

"...my description of the P.S.W.'s role is... that of a 'wounded healer'..."

"Good deeds shun the light as anxiously as evil deeds: the latter fear that disclosure will bring on pain (as punishment), while the former fear that disclosure will take away pleasure (that pure pleasure, that pleasure per se, which immediately ceases once the vanity's satisfaction is added)."

-- Friedrich Nietzsche

Man Bites Black Dogs - News Briefs From All Over

Compiled by Scott Dixon

A UBC law professor says the treatment of a mentally ill man at the Whitehorse jail was a gross human rights violation, the CBC reported.

Professor Michael Jackson says putting the man in an isolation cell for more than a month goes against both international and Canadian standards. The man, who was in a psychotic state, was kept in a tiny cell until a judge ordered his transfer to a hospital. The judge called the man's treatment "cruel and unusual punishment."

Jackson says mentally ill prisoners were treated the same way at the old B.C. Penitentiary until the 1970s. "It's shocking to think that a mentally ill person would have been kept in conditions in 2004 which drew the condemnation of a judge 30 years ago," he says. "What this man needed was some compassionate, professional help and compassionate, professional help usually doesn't take place in an isolation cell."

At Ohio psychiatric centers, workers molested children, denied them food or gave them alcohol and drugs. Some kids suffered broken bones. Others lived in homes so dirty they urinated on the floor by their beds.

Taxpayers shell out \$160 to \$1,000 a day for each mentally ill child who lives in these private treatment centers.

But a Cincinnati Enquirer investigation reveals that kids don't always get the help they're promised. Some struggle just to survive.

"You have kids secluded, restrained and injured over and over again," says Carolyn Knight, director of the Ohio Legal Rights Service, a state-funded agency that investigates how children are treated inside facilities. "It's like Dante's *Inferno*: 'Abandon all hope, ye who enter here.'"

Whether a child ends up in a troubled treatment center or one that helps is largely a gamble, state records and interviews show. A review of the 10 largest facilities statewide shows that conditions were so bad in the past three years that the government ordered three not to

admit new children and a fourth to stop putting kids in seclusion.

In the book *Movies and Mental Illness: Using Films to Understand Psychopathology*, the authors explore some of the misconceptions about mental illness that Hollywood has perpetuated over the years :

- The myth that people with mental illness are homicidal maniacs, as is shown in the film "Nightmare on Elm Street."

- The myth that one single traumatic event (like incest or rape) always triggers the disintegration. In "The Fisher King," the shooting of Robin Williams' character's fiancée seemed to precipitate his disintegration.

- The myth that poor parenting is the cause of mental illness, as in "Shine," where pianist David Helfgott is shown to deteriorate as a result of harsh treatment by his father.

- The myth that harmless eccentricity is frequently labeled as mental illness and that such eccentrics end up in psychiatric hospitals where they receive extreme treatments like ECT and lobotomy, as is shown in "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest."

- The myth that love - while certainly important - conquers mental illness, as in the feel-good ending in "Benny and Joon," where one is left thinking that Benny, even with his learning disabilities, can mitigate Joon's schizophrenia.

(From the New York Daily News.)

"Why millions of women are hooked on the happy pills"

- Headline from the Observer newspaper in Britain. The story was about anti-depressant medications. (One wonders if the paper would ever run a headline "Why millions of women are hooked on insulin".)

Norms and Ments

by Frank G. Sterle, Jr.

SETTING: 2009 - 2023 AD

PLACE: Greater Vancouver Regional District

PLOT: People with mental illness ("Ments") are physically hunted down by the normal/general population ("Norms") because the Ments are psychic or potentially psychic threats to Norms' puppet master — big corporate power interest forces in the form of InterTopStandard Products Inc. (referred to by the Ments, in short, as the Corp). Simultaneously, society is adopting the philosophy that survival should be for naught but the fully employed and the wealthy.

A new "breakthrough medication" called Pronetic — basically forced upon the Ment populace through the Corp's monopoly psychiatric-medication supply methods — unleashes the psychic abilities held by the vast majority of Ments. The Corp used the mentally-ill population as lab animals to test the new medication because it suspected that this medication might have such significant psychic-ability and very profitable side effects — profitable, as in enabling the Corp to swallow up competing corporations by using the psychic abilities to know, and even control, the thoughts and plans of those competing corporations' CEOs and board members. However, the Corp did not anticipate that their new medication's psychic side-effect would eventually be utilized against the Corp by the Ments. In layman's terms, it backfired.

The only sure way to exterminate the Ment threat

is through surprise attacks: utilizing a helmet-like head gear that suppresses, though with limited ability, all Norm brainwave transmissions, the Ments cannot know of oncoming Norm threat and thus can be shot dead — a task that must be done efficiently, because the psychic Ment can, if calm and focused enough, retaliate telekinetically if he's/she's not finished off.

The Corp's biggest concern is the threat posed by the Ments' ability to expose its interests' parasitic exploitation of the large-majority Norm community — who are actually, in themselves, the average citizens, with average life-sustaining incomes and "human rights"; therefore, those Corp interests must largely succeed in turning the huge Norm population against the small-minority Ment population by emphasizing/ accentuating the "fact" that the Ments "are parasites sucking 'Working Society' dry through welfare/pension payments and other means, such as 'criminal activity'." It becomes "common knowledge" that "Ments have had it too easy, for too long" — "common knowledge," at the Corp's mass-media persistent behest and insistence.

What exactly are the Corp's goals that are threatened by the Ments' new abilities?

Its goals are so significant that "Big Tobacco" — a product in which the Corp holds no shares — is used as a diversion from public consciousness of a new and greater cancer-causing evil: genetically manipulated foods, such as produce (i.e., fruits, rice, wheat and vegetables), meats and dairy products (through genetically altered and cloned animals) like milk, eggs and yogurt.

Furthermore, a widely-syndicated media-release campaign is initiated by the Corp against the Ments, especially the Ments' claims against genetically-altered foods. "Such claims are nothing but self-serving lies. They [the Ments] cannot eat — they're too paranoid to even try these foods — these healthier, better-quality foods and are only motivated by anger and envy of others wise enough to consume these superior products. They [the Ments] are just spreading propaganda against quality foods."

It is found that when in proximity (of fifty feet or less) to five or more full-ability psychically-focused Ments, the Ments can force Corp officials to tell/reveal

the truth about the serious risk of developing cancer by the consumption of the Corp's genetically-engineered foods; a Ment truth countering "many studies and much research" commissioned, of course, by the Corp, "revealing that such genetically-altered products are healthier, less perishable and easier to produce in much greater quantity — thus feeding a lot more people with less material, resource and effort input." These "study revelations" are, of course, propagated by a willing mainstream news-media.

It's through such basic control of the mainstream news-media — for, the Corp holds majority shares in the dominant privatized news-media entities — that the Corp fabricates statistics and "study findings indicating that [Ments] are the largest source of criminal behavior, especially violent homicides — they're an intolerable threat." It becomes crucial to the Corp, in order for them to maintain societal economic control, to demonize the Ments and minion-ize the greatly-dominant Norm population. "Ments' illness is overcome with mental discipline," claim the Corp, and eventually agreed upon by the general Norm population. "Ments need only choose to have the courage to come back to the normal population."

The Norms soon come to hate — with the encouragement to do so by the Corp — the Ments for what the new medication has made the Ments into, beings with psychic abilities (thus, the targets of the Norms' contempt and jealousy). The Corp go to great lengths to brainwash the Norm populace: for example, compact disk players are mass-produced to emit subliminal messages and to ideologically program the young, and adult, listeners into hating Ments ever so much more.

Also, the Corp finds a bonus in the Ment populace's extremely high socially-disproportional suicide rate, encouraging even more Ment suicides: The Corp, it's rumored (but actually quite true), has its own "suppressive psychics" — telepaths (some of whom are paid turn-coat Ments), whom they use to telepathically pressure potential-threat Ments into suicide. And it all conveniently reinforces the Corp's assertions to the Norm community that the Ments "are not worth the space they fill and the air — our air — they consume!"

Too many Norms resent Ments — but especially fear them — for the latter's abilities of "mysterious

psychic manipulations"; the Corp, therefore, convinces Norms that mental illness is actually contagious, and the news-media propagate such specious claims made by the very influential Corp and its "research findings." And all of this occurs for so long, unseen and unsuspected, that the Corp is able to have it continue basically completely unhindered. Until ...

... Eventually, after some years, it becomes known amongst the general Norm populace, almost common knowledge, that mental illness is indeed a form of psychic-ability suffering/endurance. Thus, the Norms begin to realize that, literally at any time, it could

*"...mental illness
is indeed a form
of psychic-
ability suffering/
endurance."*

become them who must endure this apparently very undesirable "mental-illness psychic ability" — this torturous burden. The Corp then attempts, but fails for the most part, to convince the Norm community that such a threat — "real as it is," they say — is indeed prevented by exterminating (a.k.a., "purifying decent society") and "alleviating this menace" well-known as the Ments.

If mentally ill people did not endure all of the mentally ill, emotional struggles that they do, a lot of important normal socially-functioning tasks simply would not occur. Indeed, Ments' illnesses are the result of their (Ments') endurance of the world's emotional and functional woes, immorality and cruelty: manic-depressive people endure, mentally, the vicious ups-and-downs that would otherwise be endured by the dominant-society Norm populace; schizophrenics hear the evil thoughts of the Norms, or at least in the Norms' subconscious, and see the distortions of those very thoughts in the form of visual hallucinations; chronic/clinical depressives endure the world's Norms' debilitating sadness otherwise endured by the Norms, like some intense form of true, absolute empathy; the obsessive-compulsive people endure the debilitating obsessive compulsions that would otherwise be endured by the Norms (e.g., if the OCD Ments didn't compulsively, repeatedly wash their hands, for example, the Norm community would not wash their hands at all).

Thus the Ments slowly but surely regain, after such a long period of time, the respect of the general Norm populace.

"The future is just as much a condition of the present as is the past.
'What shall be and must be is the ground of that which is.'"

--Friedrich Nietzsche

Minute Particulars

by Andrew Feldmár

I was introduced to the practice of yoga by Mina Semyon in London, England, in 1974. At that time she was married to Arthur Balaskas, who also taught yoga. Mina was always gentle and attentive. The one time I allowed Arthur to get near me, he bent my arm back with such force that I could feel the burning of tearing muscle. I was hurting for weeks afterwards, and he thought it was good for me. I became aware of my limitations through pain. The prospect of possible change, of loosening up, seemed so remote. I realized that I didn't want to experience *any* pain; I simply wanted to change, *gratis*.

Mina recently sent me the manuscript of her book, soon to be published, entitled The Distracted Centipede. I've known the authorless ditty, from which she borrowed, for many years, but until now I didn't realize its essential message:

The centipede was happy quite
Until a toad in fun
Said, 'Pray, which leg comes after which?'
This raised her mind to such a pitch,
She lay distracted in a ditch,
Considering how to run.

Every midwife, obstetrician, birth coach, all the experts who want to help women to give birth might do well to meditate upon these few lines of wise poetry. The martial arts, yoga, meditation, music, dance, and singing – all teach, transmit the same wisdom: GET OUT OF THE WAY! Life knows how to bring new life into this world. Life knows how to protect itself. Life lives us. We are not surviving because of our cleverness and heroic efforts; we survive in spite of them. Faith is surrender to that which lives us. Life knows how to walk the centipede; the self-conscious centipede doesn't. Toad's question became a debilitating distraction.

There are so many distractions! Mina's list includes anger, greed, craving, envy, jealousy, arrogance, pride, praise, blame, what other people think of you, you name it. I would add fear, one of my major distractions. Whenever the world threatened me, didn't conform to my ideas, disappointed me, from childhood on, I began to develop reactions that were adaptive to my environment. These adaptive behav-

iours helped me to survive danger, antagonism, even lovelessness, but the resulting habit patterns became rigid and obstructed my connection with my inmost being, with what was living me. *Original trust* was replaced by a reliance on knowledge, possessions, and my own capacities, with all their false promise of security. *Original faith* gave place to reliance on conventional patterns and the effort of keeping up the appearance required by the world. *Original union with Life* was supplanted by dependence on the acceptance and approval of others. When I started to practise yoga and meditation, I began my journey back to a heartfelt *response* to life, away from automatic, defensive reactions that ensured survival once upon a time. This seems like a never-ending process, and each moment is the best of all opportunities. Each moment is a critical moment. And although freedom is reality, and habits are illusion, layer upon layer of illusion lifts, yet layer upon layer remains.

The world expects us to be continually *doing* whereas the Life that lives us requires us, simply, to allow what needs to happen, happen. Laing often asked, "What to do when you don't know what to do?" The implied answer was, "Nothing!" Do nothing, wait until you are moved by what is larger than yourself: by *the situation*.

Karlfried, Graf von Dürckheim, in Daily Life as Spiritual Exercise, which I first read around the time I met Mina in London, says there are two great enemies of the right way of being. One is *hypertension*, when "excessive self-will, persistent self-control and constant surveillance by an all-too-watchful ego, block the flow of the forces of" Life. All hypertension is an expression of a lack of trust in Divine Being. The other is *slackness*, when "man has let himself go and therefore forfeited his inherent form... If he remains true to his conscience, it is impossible for him to be without form." No straining, no lassitude... Caring, but not willful... My father was both hypertense and slack. He had a responsible, high profile job in communist Hungary, which meant, at the time, playing very careful theatre in public under scrutinizing, paranoid, policing eyes; in private, he would fall asleep, whether he tried playing chess with me, or wanted to listen to a concert. He was either hyper-on

or slack-off. I've never seen him in a relaxed state of attentiveness.

Change is risk. We cling to the familiar, even if it causes suffering. When using biofeedback, you learn to relax your muscles, by quieting a tone representing tension, and when you succeed, the actual sensation in your body is uncomfortable. The attending technician is often asked, "Can I relax now?" Becoming comfortable again means returning to one's habitual, familiar level of chronic tension. And so it is with all habits.

Mina writes, "I, personally, don't want to be less transformed by lovemaking than by standing on my head, otherwise I'll prefer to stand on my head for a half an hour, feeling connected and in one piece. I want lovemaking to enhance my connectedness not disturb it."

It is worth reminding ourselves that in lovemaking we may open to the earliest feelings of intimacy and the earliest hurt. Can I trust you with my heart? Can you trust me with your heart? It is a constant process of letting go of what stands in the way of being open and loving. If both partners are open to explore this journey then there is hope for true intimacy, for God's sake."

It's not easy to drop the armor that once protected us from being annihilated. Yet keeping it on imprisons us in loveless isolation.

Yoga helps to crack the armor. And my armor keeps me from wholeheartedly practicing yoga...

Getting Higher

by reinhart

From an altitude of 33,000 feet I gazed down upon the soft, white rolling expanses of cumulous clouds. The Earth was obscured from sight by this ghostly carpet of cottony covering. The puffy, feathery blanket of vapors extended from horizon to horizon. It seemed vaguely ethereal, and yet at the same time deceptively solid. From my seat aboard the 737 jet airplane it seemed almost as if one could step down upon the billows and stroll across the sky—walk upon the clouds. Above the nebulae of mist and haze, level with my mode of transportation, the environment consisted, most naturally, of endless blue sky. Farther up in altitude, the blue sky darkened by degrees as it approached the blackness of outer space.

Flight 549 left Vancouver at 10:10 in the morning. The jet engines roared and we were sucked back in our seats, as the plane ascended at a thirty degree incline. Soon the totalities of squared fields of agriculture, warehouses and large structures became visible. Temporarily, we traveled west, and I could easily see the Gulf Islands and, of course, Vancouver Island itself. But, within minutes, the plane tilted and we curved into an easterly direction. Eventually, the details manifested below us became indistinguishable and the only features remaining recognizable were the squares and rectangles of humanly contrived fields of farmland.

At the Vancouver airport the attendant asked me if I would prefer an aisle seat or a window seat. Of course I said a window seat. Then I told him that I had never flown before. He replied to me that he would make

sure that I received a window seat on both flights. I was going to be connecting in Calgary, on my way to Saskatoon. On board the plane, at 33,000 feet, I looked around at the other passengers aboard the flight. Some were reading, some were chatting and some were sleeping. I was quite surprised. Hardly anyone was looking out the windows at the remarkable vistas unfolding below and around our flying machine. I wondered what kind of events some of these people must have experienced that had made them so jaded and uninterested in the marvels of flying. Perhaps they had flown so many times that the wondrous views apparent to me, for them had blurred and blended into banality, somewhat like the receding landscape that faded into uniformity below us. But for me, even this fading of details was a wonder to behold.

As we came upon the Coast Mountains, the cloud cover gave way to clear skies. I was amazed at how close we passed over the peaks. The mountains appeared almost magical—enchanted—even friendly. White streaks of snow carved into the bluish rock formations and the green, timbered lower mountainsides. As a whole, the mountain range looked both majestic and yet highly accessible. As I peered down from my window seat, the strange thought occurred to me that I might jump down from the plane and land unharmed on my feet down upon one of the stretches of snow. I smiled at the folly of my own imagination and then realized that I was, in actuality, on top of the world. Why stand on a mountain when one can sit at an even higher level? And this perspective, somehow, made my flights of fancy seem rational; even logical in some strange manner.

We left one range of mountains behind, below and beneath us and aimed at The Rockies. The Coast Mountains eased into hills, stretched into flats, prairies of golden grasses and evergreens, lakes, rivers and bridges. We passed over forests of birch, poplar, fir, spruce, pine and patches of oak. This was the real Canada, the true north; unlike the cities of the American south that cling close to the border. We flew over golden waves of wheat, flame-like grasses of the tundra, thorns, thistles, the thunder and lightning of desert storms, and the flat sea of dust that stretches from Alberta to Manitoba. The great, white cold of north—strong and free.

We burst upon the Rockies in a glittering blaze of sunlight and silver wing. The jagged peaks and mountaintops sliced into the atmosphere. Devoid of habitation, the blue and white vistas presented a pure, clean, pristine wilderness. The crags and precipices of these imperial eminences gave evidence of the nobility of nature. The rugged streaks of snow, ice and rock spoke to me of freedom, and peace, and dignity, and grace, and honour, and liberty, truth and integrity, art and creativity—the beauty, harmony and sanctity of life.

We left The Rockies behind, as once again the mountains gave way to sloping hills becoming ever more gentle with distance from the high peaks. After having flown for some seventy-five minutes, since take-off from Vancouver, we landed on the flat, level plains of Calgary. It took us ten minutes to disembark, as we squeezed out of our seats into the narrow centre aisle; fumbling for our coats and carry-on luggage. I headed straight for the designated smoking area—The Pit, as we call it—at the Calgary airport. I cannot lie—I inhaled deeply. I smoked a couple of cigarettes, one right after the other, made a pit-stop at the airport facilities, and then made my way back to the boarding area. I didn't have to wait long.

Within the hour, I was once more airborne. We continued flying east, to the land of a thousand lakes and rivers—Saskatchewan. Most people are familiar with the prairies' golden oceans of wheat, waving in the breezes of pleasant summer winds. However, what most people don't know is that farther north in that province there is a great variety and wealth of terrain, flora and fauna. Northern Saskatchewan boasts engaging, rolling hills and a delightful multitude of grasses. The rivers and lakes teem with many and myriad fowl and fishes. There are deer, caribou, moose, bears, wolves, bison, and resources in a thriving, plenteous forestry. There are numerous, abounding groves of cedar, alder, birch, poplar, fir, spruce, pine, and oak. Unlike the forests of British Columbia, those in Saskatchewan grow in a varied amalgamation of groves. Patches of cedar beside patches of birch, or poplar, or pine. In such manner the forests of Saskatchewan consist of an assortment of groves and patches. Whereas the forests of B.C. are for the most part

uniform. Great areas of B.C. forest consist largely of a single species of tree.

Such was the country I witnessed from my window seat aboard flight 115 from Calgary to Saskatoon. And so it was that I stared into the miracle of creation. From the Earth below to the skies above I was enraptured by the marvels of existence. And then, suddenly, the exhilaration of flying and the exhilaration of witnessing the allure, the beauty, of my world, filled me with the urge for getting higher. I wished to fly through the stratosphere, through the ionosphere, through the farthest reaches of the atmosphere. And I wished to get higher still. I wished to fly past the sun and moon. I wanted to fly into space, to other solar systems and other worlds. I wanted to explore the farthest reaches of our universe. Indeed, I wished to fly out into space; navigate, probe, search and inquire into the great unknown. I desired to traverse the cosmos.

And as I ruminated in such fashion, other ideas occurred to me. I thought about the many great and wondrous things that mankind has accomplished and is able to accomplish. We can erect skyscrapers one hundred stories high. We can construct giant bridges and ocean liners the size of football fields. We can put satellites into space and send rockets to the moon. We can build stations in space and service them with shuttles that are able to go there and go again. We can build submarines and power stations and huge, massive, hydro dams. We can fashion supersonic jet airplanes that ride on the wind and circumnavigate the globe. We can chart the complete and entire human genome and predict the weather. We can harness electricity and send audio and visual communications to the other side of the planet. We can engineer computers that operate at the speed of light.

Thereupon, other considerations occurred to me. The other face of humanity came to mind, so to speak. I reflected on the billions of people who are starving, or sick, or homeless, without water, lacking in clothes, or destitute, or exploited by the rich, or poisoned by pollution, or jobless, or imprisoned, or those who are living without hope. And I recalled the old, cynical adages—you can't change the world—or—the poor will always be with you.—And I tell you: it is a lie. I tell you that if we can craft airplanes that fly faster than the speed of sound, computers that work at the speed of light, etc., etc., then we can most certainly, and most obviously, feed the hungry, heal the sick, clothe the naked, provide for the poor, shelter the homeless, pay a fair wage, free the prisoner and live in harmony with nature rather than destroying it with exploitation and pollution. The truth is not that we can't change the world, but that we don't want to. We, the affluent citizens of the developed, Western World have too much invested in our comfortable lives to risk reaching out to our unfortunate brothers and neighbors from the Third World. We don't want to give up our advantage, our wealth that is based on the exploitation, labour, resources and backs of the poor—and of

environments from every corner of the globe. We have the technology, we have the capability, we have the means and the knowledge, to establish the disadvantaged, hopeless, wounded, dejected, grieving, and all the sorrowful, on a foundation of development. We have the ingenuity and expertise to provide a decent living for all the peoples of this, our Earth. I am not speaking about charity. I am talking about inclusion

and real investment and education; autonomy and sovereignty, ownership and development of resources; respect, recognition, cooperation and all manner of fair treatment. We have the abilities to repair our world, to make it function properly. What we do not have is the will.

Enlightenment: Search for the Inner Child

by Oliver Cross

Biologically speaking, paying attention is closely tied with survival. If you think about it, animals other than humans rely on their own paying attention in order to eat, and also not to be eaten. They need to notice possible nearby food, and other animals that may think of them as such.

Plants and vegetation are a source of food that is no threat to us, physically speaking. In Buddhism, paying attention is reduced to its bare necessity in the form of meditation, paying attention to the posture and breathing. Apparently, we need to practice paying attention regardless of whether or not we actually rely on it for our physical survival. It must be hard wired. Our health still depends on it. Buddhism also encourages vegetarianism.

Today, we may only pay attention as much as we need to, instead of as much as we are able. For us, in order to eat, we now only pay attention enough not to drop our money on the floor as we're handing it to the cashier. We may believe that if someone is going to be hurt, it's going to be someone else, somewhere else.

In the martial arts, it has been said the best are constantly practicing their awareness of their surroundings. There's self-conscious attention of scrutiny and examination, which is exhausting and the awareness of listening (when you hush to carefully listen for something very quiet, the most subtle thing perceptible). The power of martial arts is not that of brute force, but of balance.

I remember seeing after the September 11th disaster a television program explaining why the two towers feel down when struck by airplanes. They weren't giant blocks of concrete; they were carefully constructed and placed materials designed for the strength of balance,

which allows for space to be created between the materials. Buildings in general are not designed for the strength of brute force, apparently contrary to popular belief.

Everything's connected. We may not realize this unless faced with a crisis. I remember breaking my leg in 1993, and in the months following, hobbling around gingerly on crutches. What I remember about the experience was realizing that not only was just my leg in recovery, but all of me was along for the ride. When my leg was sore and I had to rest, my whole body had to take a break. I couldn't leave just my leg on the couch to rest while the rest of me went out to enjoy myself. It can be easy to lose sight of this fact of connection when we're healthy, because then it is most subtle.

Children are very musical, they sing with every word they make. We are all born musical. Here's an excerpt from the liner notes written by Thomas Moore of a CD I'd recommend to anyone, by our own Vancouver Symphony, called *Music and the Soul*:

"The story has often been told throughout history that Pythagoras, the mystical philosopher of ancient Greece, discovered through experimentation that numbers reveal the very nature of the world and that the universe holds together because of musical proportions. The later Roman philosopher Boethius taught that music is the texture of the world and of human beings, which can be imitated in the art of sound. In India sacred texts described the nada-bindu as the original sound out of which the entire universe is created."

(Continued on pg.17)

Three Haiku

by Oliver Cross

Life

Splashes on a pond
Cyclical, repetitive
After a stone tossed.

Beats

Addictive object
Dying again and again
To clear reflection.

Music

Circular motion
Translated to ratios
Lines and angles joined.

Arm & Hand Lengths

by Satya Devi

The page is poisoned.
Crumpled,
a slow curve ball.

On my backache
I surrender
my hands to the night.

Exiting,
you rob my hands of caresses;
chilled;
flint hands rub.

A bugle emits a futile tap.
Light loses its gamble.

Yoke

by Satya Devi

voices, voices, turn, turn.
a schizophrenic yogi.

water becomes eyes.
crystal vision.

a secret snails out.
butterfly in a dream, fingerprints
out.

a leaf falls. ducks on a pond:
not moving, but moving.

salmon spawn; return, return,
my thoughts the same.

Bookworm

Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience

By Giorgio Agamben

Verso, 1993

Reviewed by Andrew Feldmár

The love of talk, speech or argument is denoted by the word *philology*. It comes from the Greek *philologos*, literally, the love of words and learning. Agamben, a contemporary Italian philosopher, refers to this book as a "philological project." It's poetic, it's passionate, and it's infectious. In the title the word *history* [From L. *historia* "narrative, account, tale, story," from Gk. *historia* "a learning or knowing by inquiry, history, record, narrative," from *historein* "inquire," from *hisor* "wise man, judge," from base **wid-* "know, see." Related to Gk. *idein* "to see," and to *eidenai* "to know."] has to do with time; the word *infancy* [*Infant* from L. *infantem* (nom. *infans*) "young child, babe in arms," noun use of adj. meaning "not able to speak," from *in-* "not" + *fans*, prp. of *fari* "speak."] has to do with experience. History is a story in language, in words; a trace, a footprint left by complex and multidimensional events; a schematic memory of a time past. Infancy is outside of language, words are sounds, experience is full, undifferentiated, unexplained; infancy is the stormy *here & now*. There is a great danger in losing ourselves in stories, ours and other people's, while ignoring and forgetting our own infant who never grows up, who stays from birth to death, who is our actual, moment-to-moment lived experience.

Agamben writes, "The moment has come to end the identification of history with a vulgar concept of time as a continuous linear and infinite process, and thereby to take cognizance of the fact that historical categories and temporal categories are not necessarily the same thing. It is a precondition [of my] proposed undertaking to reach a new point in the relationship between time and history – that is, first and foremost, a new and more primary experience of time and history. There must be a critical demolition of the ideas of process, development, and progress whereby historicism seeks to reinsert the pseudo-meanings of the Christian 'history of salvation' into a history which it has itself reduced to a pure chronology. Against the empty, continuous, quantified, infinite time of vulgar historicism must be set the full, broken, indivisible and perfect time of concrete human experience; instead of the chronological time of pseudo-history, the cairological time of authentic history; in place of the total social process of a dialectic lost in time, the interruption and immediacy of dialectic at a standstill."

Robin Blaser comments, "'Cairological time' would unfold a sense of the due-measure (Gr. *kairós*) of time, the poetic quest streaming alongside each of us." There is also hidden in this dimension (of *kairós* as opposed to *chronos*) the distinction between *fate* and *destiny* (see my BOOKWORM review of Margaret Visser's *Beyond Fate*). "For history is not," Agamben states, "as the dominant ideology would have it, man's servitude to continuous linear time, but man's liberation from it: the time of history and the *kairós* in which man, by his initiative, grasps favourable opportunity and chooses his own freedom in the moment." Every moment is a critical moment, and contrary to behaviourism, freedom is reality, and habit is illusion. The Stoics, Agamben reminds us, thought of time as springing from the actions and decisions of man, its model "is the *kairós*, the abrupt and sudden conjunction where decision grasps opportunity and life is fulfilled in the moment."

I live in time. When I manage to live in the instant, anxiety disappears. After pre-frontal lobotomy the patient is *presentized*. Read Robert Burns (1785):
Still, thou art blest, compar'd wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But Och! I backward cast my e'e,
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
I guess an' fear!
Science doesn't understand healing, because it doesn't understand the place of events in a temporal matrix sufficiently well. *Health, disease, wellbeing* – are all events, taking place in time. The Greeks, and our science based on their notions, minimize interest in time; try to focus on the eternal. In studying the Pythagorean Theorem, you don't ask, "When?"

Healers have always recognized that in the condition of illness there is always a large rent between the individual on the one hand, and his total life condition on the other. Illness causes alienation, and alienation causes illness, is a determinant of illness. How to restore a harmonious relationship between the sufferer and her existential condition? How can one person do something that reduces another's suffering and end it? What all humans learn in infancy, due to our inordinate dependency, is that you cannot survive without another's care. Notice that the word *nursing*

can mean 'taking care of the sick' or 'provide an infant with nourishment.' We humans are never self-sufficient, at any age. Trying to be, speeds up dying. The child expresses agony in a way that expects another to understand his distress. How the mother responds, sets up patterns, expectations, hopes or despair, for a lifetime of experience when not well. The promotion of imagination is a major therapeutic tool. If one's dependency needs were not welcome, therefore were not fulfilled, one has to be able to *imagine* what welcome would feel like, before one could actually seek a nurturing environment and allow oneself to be nurtured, nursed, without having to rush, without feeling like a burden. Nursing, all through most of history, didn't cost money. We cannot express or signal *Welcome!* by free service today.

Agamben describes the present mistrust and avoidance of imagination in the following: "Nothing can convey the extent of the change that has taken place in the meaning of experience so much as the resulting reversal of the status of the imagination. For Antiquity, the imagination, which is now expunged from knowledge as 'unreal,' was the supreme medium of knowledge." Imagination and desire are very closely connected. If our and our children's imaginations are being expunged, then so are our and their desires. Gaetano Pesce, designer, architect and theoretician, said, "The boy or girl, hero or heroine of a fairy tale from my childhood, having done some good deed and been promised by the fairy that she will grant any wish

as a reward, is today aware of not knowing how to reply. In other words, the child is aware of being unable to express his or her real needs. Discovering that he or she has no particular wishes, unaware of anything of pressing importance, incapable of deriving satisfaction from self-expression – indeed not even liking him or herself, and so on, and so on – the boy or girl has no wish to take decisions concerning his or her life; denies, and thus is protected from, him or herself by an evident lack of awareness of self-identity; is incapable of being happy."

In Antiquity, mystical experience was highly valued, initiations into the mysteries were sought after. Agamben notes that "what was at the heart of the experience of the mysteries was not a knowing, but a suffering." That is why they were secret, not because they had to be hidden and guarded, but because the suffering was un-speakable, not unlike an infant's experience.

If we ignore our experience (infant) and get lost in roles demanded by the theater governed by language, life becomes meaningless, robotic, a chore. No wonder so many of us get depressed.

And yet, there is hope in the rejuvenating, joyful action of language that is poetic, that jogs the imagination, that jolts one back into the full colour of experience. Giorgio Agamben is just such a poet. ■

Enlightenment: Search for the Inner Child (Continued from p. 13)

The healing time of music is relative time. It is the time of one note compared to the one before and the one after, the momentum of one beat following another, one footstep after the other, one heartbeat following another, one breath following another... and the symphony they make together and between them. Even musical taste is subjective, and so is the sense of balance.

As a musician, not paying attention gives feedback but thankfully leads to harmless consequences, "missed notes," which do interrupt the emotional experience of the music for the listener. Whether it be meditation, martial arts or music, the goal is to transform suffering or harmfulness into something harmless, something more playful.

When things are harming or threatening to harm us, we feel we are running out of time. The time of music

is not the absolute, logical, stressful time of clocks, as we have come to say, "Time is money."

Psychiatrists are proclaimed critics of the music of life. We don't need to read their reviews. Some of us are terrible performers, yet with practice, we can all be blessed and improve like the beginning musician. Have you ever heard a school band program's beginning band? Without giving up, there's no other way but to go through it.

The list of ways transforming harm into harmlessness is not finite. To each their own. Do what you love, and practice paying attention. Surviving depends on it. If you aren't paying attention to survive, then pay attention to accomplish beyond that. If you don't know what you love to do, then simply start by paying attention. Either way, one tends to lead to the other(s). ■

Mad Woman Monocle III

by Marie Annehart Baker

If mad women did surge forth into therapy, do we docile apostle go? Just as a circus elephant might follow while gently holding the tail of her predecessor, is the mad woman to tramp onward from any particular diagnosed disability or disorder? Is it enough to replace our monocle (symbol of our class distinction and distance from our own healthy being) with a feminist lens? Our new outlook might appropriate existing psychological theories and treatment strategies. We must turn our critical eye upon our more favoured feminist stances and check out our own essentialist tendencies. When we engage in essentialist thinking we limit our vision by remaining trapped within binary logic. Even white woman speaks with forked tongue. Ugh.

For starters, for over three decades feminists believed that sex role socialization is a major source of individual pathology for both men and women. The concepts of "sex roles" and "women experiences" were once almost revolutionary but have now become institutionalized. Gender is understood as something one has as opposed to something one does. Put more simply, privileging a distinctly feminine voice continues to reify the categories of "men" and "women". As we have always known, there are the "manly hearted" women or the "feminine sensitive" men. The common sense that we must also see how men and women are similar and that women are a heterogeneous group. Unity among women is important but not at the expense of excluding the important similarities or differences. So a cultural feminist lens may blind the potentiality of a wider vision which might include more women. We must be vigilant not to substitute a White middle-class heterosexual female norm for a White middle-class heterosexual male norm. Privileging sex over other determinants of difference among women is also a form of oppression. Exploiting diversity as a commodity does not let us work toward a truly inclusive feminist psychology.

Not to throw out the madwoman with bubbly foaming bathwater, a glance at the contributions to women's counselling must be made. Women clinicians and researchers documented the effects of domestic violence and sexual abuse on women client's lives. Conse-

quently, the recognition of trauma treatment and its aftermath have become integral to therapy as practiced by informed women counsellors and therapists. Apparently even the diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder has become scrutinized because it fails to take into account the effects of trauma on identity and coping. It did seem to some that it was a catch-all category. Excesses have again obscured this just about rosy picture because women became encouraged to reduce the whole complex of life histories to a more tight ass tale of victimization. Some women have become a sole organized narrative of victimization identity. Disclosing past abuse is a powerful operating force at women's gatherings where women get the spotlight and go-ahead to dominate the proceedings. They are even entitled to "re-traumatizing" themselves and others. Paying attention to commodifying disclosure is necessary because of the influence of television talk shows that thrive on conflict and the entertainment value of particular human predicaments. Even survivor discourse has been co-opted by psychotherapy or new age healing/spiritual remedies. Again, the survivor is re-inscribed with helplessness and much in need of expert witness or interpretation. Breaking the silence becomes coercive imperative where survivors must confess, recount assaults and give details, more and more fascinating details. A refusal to heal or recount may even be an advantageous position to uphold! Certain disclosures create emotional, financial, and physical difficulties. Yet, women are told more often than not to even confront their abusers! On the usual bumpy road to therapy, because of the expense of all the therapeutic assistance that may be required (besides vitamins, tonics, whole foods, massage, reflexology and all that jazz), women may not be able to work on their problems as easily as others (even helping others) might expect or demand. Keeping the transgressive potential of survivor discourse alive is now even more to be cherished!

There is a miracle cure of sorts in the therapy session that allows women to recognize the ways in which they have internalized sexist beliefs. Many psychiatrists, therapists and counsellors would benefit from the reality of such exchanges. Here, it is the employ-

ment of a dialectic and mediated relationship between our embodied experience (e.g. our neurochemistry) and our environment that might be allowed to happen. Instead, artificial dualism partakes the linear and unmediated path to recovery because it pits the "individual" against the monolithic structure of "society". So easy to then subscribe to the idea that a woman must be "empowered" (another hackneyed expression). Doesn't that process leave out the woman's own will and determination? Even a discussion on self-empowerment does not solve the dilemma of the creation of a sovereign subject-one who just needs to be empowered to change herself. Don't meds promise to empower?

Now might be the right time to suggest that we adopt a "double vision" instead of the refinement of the monocle with which to gaze upon mad women. Buddhists and even Don Juan of Carlos Castenada's quasi-anthropological inquiry recommended a blurring of one's sight in order to "see" more. No, it is not the cross your eyes technique. So we must not focus on what appears to be a cause of anything. Instead, we must also observe what discourses are operative. Say, if a feminist response to the question "What causes depression?" is an obvious sex role socialization, then we must further ask "What are the dominant discourses which position a woman as depressed?" Even further on, we must ask "how do these discourses work to create and sustain femininity and masculinity?" Does it appear that we (writer and readers) are on a merry-go-round? We are talking about talking about talk! Reverting to street talk takes us back to the usual assumption that fecal matter of mad cows and the bulls that love them is layered. BTW so is a torte cake!

Using double visioning as an approach allows for inquiry into both a critique of normative androcentricism and exploring seemingly disparate feminist positions. Without essentializing, we may continue to see a feminist approach where a focus on reciprocity is valued over hierarchy, connection over separation, and caring over power. Amen! And, You Go Girl too!

Unfortunately, we must reach the bitter end by taking the bitter pill! We must abandon the assumption of a

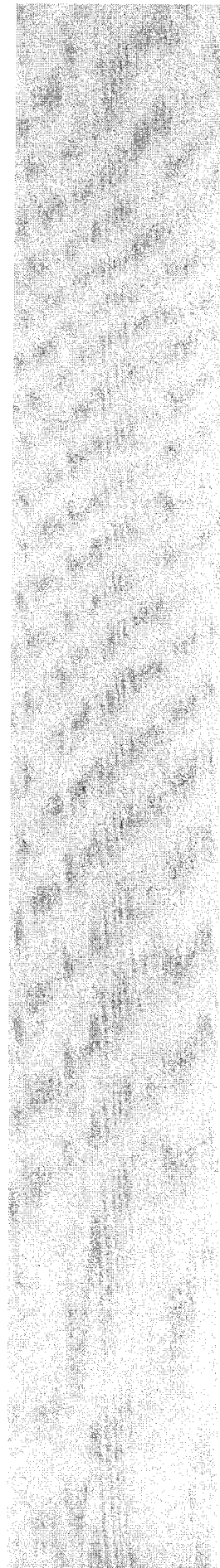
normative woman! We have to quit romancing culture/romanticizing too and not render difference as deviance. We must toss out the "monocultural standpoint" that is underneath many theories and practices. We must move on to a truly multicultural feminist therapy theory. The multiplicities of women's experiences would then be honoured and more respected. Therapists must listen to the diverse ways in which oppression is beheld (not just sexism, but also as racism, ageism, classism, etc.).

Sounds like the beginnings of a madwoman manifesto? Seeing beyond pathology is to look for resilience and resistance. Ever wonder why the mental health professional has a problem seeing "appropriate" coping. I have even pondered that the term "mental health worker" is an identification of just another disorder or diagnostic category. Usually untreated of course! How does a mental health professional cope with a consumer who chooses not to access the mental health or other support services? Such a person

wearing occupational blinders might not appreciate effective coping responses grounded in resilience. (Oh dears, there is a "lie" in that word!) Back to the attack on the jaded concept of empowerment, it is the imperial method by which therapists (as individuals and at their conventions) impose and privilege individualism over community. This treadmill leads to sustaining the self-improvement industry. Save me and others from another motivational speaker hip hopping from disease of unknown choice to dependence on an addictive ideology (enlightenment or liberal humanist view).

"...empowerment... is the imperial method by which therapists... impose... individualism over community."

Better to close shop while exhilarated by my discovery of these questions posed and answered by Lisa Cosgrove in "Resisting Essentialism in Feminist Therapy Theory: Some Epistemological Considerations" published in **Women and Therapy**, Vol. 25 (1) 2002. I am impressed by my accidental find of this work in an SPCA Thrift store. I was looking for help in my Madwoman Monocle trilogy which still may be extended. It is no wonder we are mad because of the complexity of this inquiry about mad women in history, in the movies and especially in yours and my neighbourhood.



FREE WILL REDUX

Freedom Evolves

(New York, NY : Viking Penguin, 2003. 372 pages)

by Daniel C. Dennett

No Place for Sovereignty— What's Wrong with Freewill Theism

(InterVarsity Press, P.O. Box 1400, Downers Grove, IL 60515, 1996.

252 pages. www.ivpress.com/ Ph.: 630-734-4014 / Fax: 630-734-4200)

by R. K. McGregor Wright

Dual Review Essay by Byron Fraser

— continued from the previous issue —

Further Quotes

"We delude ourselves with the thought that we know much more about matter than about a 'metaphysical' mind or spirit and so we overestimate material causation and believe that it alone affords us a true explanation of life."

— C.G. Jung, Basic Principles of Analytical Psychology.

"...The idea of field consciousness suggests a continuum of non-local intelligence, permeating space and time. This is in contrast with the neuroscience-inspired, Newtonian view of a perceptive tissue locked inside the skull.

...Mind and matter may be part of what physicist Victor Mansfield describes as 'a radically interconnected and interdependent world, one so essentially connected at a deep level that the interconnections are more fundamental, more real than the independent existence of the parts.' [See also: The Connectivity Hypothesis (SUNY Press, 2003) by Ervin Laszlo]"

— Dean Radin, The Conscious Universe: The Scientific Truth of Psychic Phenomena (1997), Ch. 10: "Field Consciousness", pp. 159 & 172.

"This very brief expose of the most accurate findings of...paleontological and anthropological studies shows that the connection between Pithex, Pithecanthropus, and thinking Anthropos contains gaps impossible to fill with the theory of simple transformism through heredity and adaptation.

'As with all great creations of life, the appearance on earth of man, the accomplishment of hominization, bears all the characteristics of an invention.

...[despite] attempts...made to determine the moment when the human species made its appearance on the globe....it must be recognized that true beginnings can never be grasped by paleontology: The origins escape us....'

'It cannot be overly stressed that ontogenesis [i.e., genesis based on the development of fundamental "being" or subtle/non-material/"invisible" morphological field-characteristics or field-formative causation] is the indispensable link between successive generations : It is the phase of active [but "unseen"] construction which may eventually see the manifestations of mutations unexpectedly appearing [at the grossly discernable mechanistic-materialistic "links"-level]....'

'We...admit that evolution occurs through sudden and hereditary modifications in the morphogenetic organization....However, we have postulated nothing [definitive] as to the nature or the cause of these ontomutations [simply by demonstrating their material-level sequence-of-appearance]....' "

— R.A. Schwaller de Lubicz, Sacred Science— The King of Pharaonic Theocracy, Ch. 3: "Man", pp. 62-65.
Quoting various scientific authorities.

"Modern physics now considers classical fields as critically important models for understanding nature. Although the fields are not visible, they can be easily represented in visual diagrams. They are substantial, since fields carry energy and momentum and have measurable effects. Despite their invisibility, fields have become as real and substantial, with the same ontic status, as the particles they effect. In other words, classical particles and fields are equally substantial and real entities existing in spacetime.

Even at this uncomplicated level, classical fields are appropriate metaphors for the action of the unconscious on the consciousness....As we will see, well beyond this minor application, the field concept has descriptive power in delineating the interaction of the unconscious with consciousness.

...All classical physics is based on the assumption that the interacting particles and fields are independently existent, that is they have an autonomy, separateness, or inherent existence that is fundamentally free from interactions and conditions. For example, we may conceptually remove a particle from the interacting field and consider either the particle or the field independently. In other words, the relations are much less real or fundamental than the independent existence or autonomy of classical objects.

...[When] we...discuss even more dramatic and controversial suggestions[and discoveries] about the therapeutic interaction [this] requires that we employ some ideas from quantum fields....

The advent of quantum mechanics in the late 1920s not only revolutionized physics, but it greatly expanded our notion of fields. Now we understand quantum fields as not existing physically in spacetime the way a classical gravitational or electromagnetic field does. Instead, quantum fields are potentials for manifestation in spacetime, which are not directly measurable. Such nonspatial and nontemporal quantum fields provide us with probabilities for particles manifesting in spacetime. Although quantum fields share many mathematical properties with classical fields they are of a much more abstract order of being, especially because, unlike classical fields, they are neither in spacetime nor directly measurable.

..., in quantum mechanics probability is introduced at a much more fundamental level. The quantum particles simply do not have definite positions and velocities and probability statements are all that we can make. It is not that we are ignorant of the details, but that there are no details. At this level nature is inherently indeterminate and probability is an expression of its true indeterminate being. In other words, quantum probability expresses the ontic indeterminacy of physical systems, not our ignorance of the fine details. [That is to say, we here come to one of the most 'telling'— and still unanswered —determinist dilemmas : Sure we can look back and posit— 'in abstraction' — that we could theoretically discern every cause for every effect at the level of materialist-mechanism (as in the much-vaunted gedankenexperiment whereby, for the know-it-all 'Laplacean demon', 'the future just like the past would be present before its eyes' [A Philosophical Essay on Probabilities (1814), Pierre-Simon Laplace]— see also the relevant larger quote and discussion at p. 28 of Dennett) but, not only does it seem like it is practically impossible to exhaustively chart (forward or back), at any given time, every extant stream-of-determination in the REAL WORLD, even if this were possible, we (or some omniscient 'demon' or God, etc.) would only know some gross 'details'— i.e., have only a partial knowledge of all probabilities. And quantum physics tells us that this is necessarily so because, even with Total Knowledge of all the material-level 'details' at any given time-T, it is practically as well as theoretically impossible to know what new 'details'— as yet, non-extant —will certainly manifest and alter all heretofore 'known' causal relations. However unflattering to Anthropocentric Ambitions (or what Biblical religionists are wont to refer to as this-worldly humanist "pride") and Intimations of Possible Utopian Omniscience, then, our best science now equates materialist determinism with a static-Universe worldview— which is not consistent with the nature of reality (however well it may have served us, contextually, as a limited-model abstracted from what we knew of that reality).— B.F.]

Because of this fundamental indeterminacy nature is acausal— there is no well-defined cause or causes for a particular event....no well-defined causes for individual occurrences at the quantum level.

Without a doubt, this introduction of acausality at such a fundamental level is an enormous shift in intellectual history. According to quantum theory, the most successful theory in history, we must now abandon our servitude to strict causality, the idea that all events have some well-defined set of causes and that the same initial conditions always generate the same effects. Now we must learn to appreciate that although nature is structured and lawful, it is acausal—This discovery inspired Jung....It provided intellectual support for the introduction of his idea of synchronicity as acausal connection through meaning of inner psychic states with outer events.

...Surprisingly, this instantaneous interaction or dependency [of nonlocal phenomena] occurs without any information or energy exchange between regions A and B. The effect occurs without a definite cause— a truly acausal connection....

...The false belief in their [nonlocal events] mutually independent existence then gives rise to the demand that we understand this interconnectedness in terms of effects propagating faster than the speed of light...., the view we have

come to appreciate in the last two decades is that nonlocal quantum fields are expressing a profound level of mutual interconnectedness and interdependence, a level impossible to understand if we cling to the old notion of independently existent objects causally inter-acting. In other words, classical, local fields cannot account for quantum interdependence. The assimilation of this revolutionary idea...will...without doubt have extraordinarily far-reaching consequences.

[To] summarize...on quantum fields. They are invisible, nonspatial, nontemporal potentials or probabilities for manifestation. The processes governed by them are acausal in that they lack definite causes for particular events. Finally, the quantum fields are nonlocal and thereby express the deep interconnectedness and mutual interdependence of quantum systems—a kind of interconnectedness that defies a classical characterization in terms of independently existent parts connected by faster than light signals or forces.

...Because of our deep, and often unconscious, commitment to causality, accepting the reality of an acausal connection is difficult for us. This is true whether we are psychologists or physicists.

The quantum field seems like an appropriate explanatory vehicle because of its nonlocal nature, because it implies a deep acausal interconnectedness, a profound and mutual interdependency between apparently distinct parts of a system.”

— Victor Mansfield & J. Marvin Spiegelman, “On the Physics and Psychology of the Transference as an Interactive Field”, *Journal of Analytical Psychology* (1996), pp. 5-12. www.lightlink.com/vic/field.html

“Emotional, mental, sexual, and ethical behavior is based on accidental imprinting of the nervous system during ‘critical’ or ‘sensitive’ periods of development [phases of ‘imprint vulnerability’]—a fact devastating to pretensions of free will and conscious choice....

The paradox : You can only begin to de-robotize yourself to the extent that you know how totally you’re automated. The more you understand your robothood, the freer you are from it. I sometimes ask people, ‘What percentage of your behavior is robot?’ The average hip, sophisticated person will say, ‘Oh, 50%.’ Total robots in the group will immediately say, ‘None of my behavior is robotized.’ My own answer is that I’m 99.999999% robot. But the .000001 percent non-robot is the source of self-actualization, the inner-soul-gyroscope of self-control and responsibility.

Of course, there’s paradox at every single level of this genetic enterprise. The more freedom you have, the more responsible you have to be. The higher you go, the more precise your navigation [Self-direction/Self-determination must be. I am totally committed to doing something about my own robothood and the robothood of those around me, sending out signals that will activate singularity.”

— Timothy Leary. From Ch. 26: “Exo-psychology” & Ch. 29: “Socio-biological musings” of *Changing My Mind, Among Others* (1982), pp. 217 & 255.

“...there is no ‘Struggle for existence’ in nature....Such struggles for existence as do occur are the exception; the rule in Nature is abundance....It becomes thus, not a ‘struggle for existence’, but a spiritual necessity of being one’s self.”

— Francis Parker Yockey, *Imperium—The Philosophy of History and Politics* (1948), pp. 69-70.

“Natural selection is not random, nor does it operate by chance. Natural selection preserves the gains and eradicates the mistakes.”

— Michael Shermer, “Part 3 : Evolution and Creationism”, *Why People Believe Weird Things— Pseudoscience, Superstition, and Other Confusions of Our Time*, p. 150.

“One of the standard (and much-needed) correctives issued to those who study evolution is the old line about how natural selection has no foresight at all. It is true, of course. Evolution is the blind watchmaker, and we must never forget it. But we shouldn’t ignore the fact that Mother Nature is well supplied with the wisdom of hindsight. Her motto might well be ‘If I’m so myopic, how come I’m so rich?’ And while Mother Nature is herself lacking in foresight, she has managed to create beings— us human beings, pre-eminently—who do have foresight,...

...The open-endedness of evolution by natural selection depends on the extraordinary richness of the real world, which constantly provides new undesigned elements....”

— Daniel C. Dennett, *Freedom Evolves*, pp. 53 & 50.

“ ‘Natural (supposedly blind/random) selection’, as a concept, begs the question: selection on the basis of what ? The answer— adaptability (to survival) —obviously implies the choice of survival over non-survival, and that implies (indisputably) purpose or teleology. All ‘natural selection’ theory really tells us is that some preceding

Primary Cosmic Intelligence (let's call 'IT' Father-Nature, just for the sake of tradition) came up with this great Design-Idea : produce abundant life forms and see which work out best to serve MY overall ('Universal') survival needs! If 'Ma-terre Nature' is so rich, how come She is not 'smart', too ?!

Moreover, the theory of natural selection is, on the face of it, a form of paradoxical circular— if not contradictory —reasoning, inasmuch as it says : 'Nature' chose ('selected') for adaptability; and why ?— because it's all 'blind chance' and there's 'no choice' (discernable teleological intent) in the matter. In other words : it's a non-random process that's random! Further : if, in fact, natural selection— as we know it, and as postulated —works like a computer programmed with necessarily non-random selections (Dennett's essential thesis), what does this prove? It proves that, at the very least, this process of 'Nature' emphatically does reflect Intelligent Design— i.e., had to have had a 'Programmer'! We know of no computer model where such a necessary preceding condition is not the case."

— Byron Fraser. Marginal riposte contra Dennett.

Moving right along with our chapters overview of Freedom Evolves, you will recall from Rupert Sheldrake's introductory quote remarks that Daniel Dennett's favored model for his Materialist Conception of Consciousness History is the computer. And his second chapter gives an extensive account of just such "A Tool For Thinking About [Mental] Determinism": a "Democritean Universe" in the form of an updated version of a computer-game simulation first developed in the 1960s by British mathematician, John Horton Conway, and called Conway's Life World. This attempt to "dethrone God" by constructing a completely inanimate (in the common usage sense) world of objects and interactions, irreverently terming it "Life", and then holding it up— analogously —as a more or less complete explanatory model which might allow us to dispense with traditional theological notions about Creation by way of "reflecting it back" onto REAL LIFE processes, as it were, is certainly audacious, but well worth considering.

The use of the term "Democritean Universe" for the depiction of the desired portrayal of a world of suitably causally thing-a-fied ("mechanical minds") ideation is borrowed from a 1969 essay of philosopher, W.V.O. Quine, titled, appropriately enough, "Propositional Objects"(8) (emphasis mine— B.F.). And, lest anyone think that Dennett is not seriously engaging in the atomistic reductionist segmenting of thought in a classical determinist and classical physics sense, here are a couple of instructive quotes:

"The atoms in a Democritean universe [and hence the digitalized representative thought/object-units in the Conway Life World] are not modern atoms full of quantum complexities but truly a-tomic (unsplittable, unsliceable) atoms, tiny uniform points of matter with no parts at all, rather like those postulated by Democritus." (p. 29)

(For the record, Isaac Newton's thinking was not substantially different from this:

"...Like the Greek Atomists before him, Newton treated matter as passive and inert. Indeed, inertia played a central role in his theory of the world. If a material body is at rest, then according to Newton's laws it will remain forever at rest unless acted upon by an external force. Similarly, if the body is moving, it will continue to move with the same speed and in the same direction unless a force acts to change it. Thus matter is entirely passive.

Newton's own words in this respect say it all. Matter consists of 'solid, massey, impenetrable, movable particles.' For Newton and his contemporaries, no essential distinction existed between the properties of everyday material objects and the elementary constituent particles that supposedly made up their substance, save in respect of the impenetrable quality of the latter."(9)

It is not surprising, therefore, that this mental habit of categorical objectification should have been carried over by— and seem natural to —the subsequent materialists-of-the-mind.)

And:

"We don't have to worry about how 'fine-grained' to make our description, since a Democritean universe has a defined limit, a smallest difference,..." (p. 30)

So the attentive reader will already be alert to how this maneuver is a pretty heavy-handed and blatant attempt to pre-emptively foreclose on any discussion of the extremely important (and devastating to Dennett's central moralistic "case" predicated on discrete, linear, mental billiard-ball notions of cause-&-effect) more fundamental scientific truth about both the non-material and interactive nature of consciousness— as illustrated prominently in the preceding quotes from Schwaller de Lubicz (Note ref. No. 6) and Mansfield-&-Spiegelman. In his own words, what the Conway Life World depictions are meant to give us are "complete' snapshot[s]" of the Laplacean demon's hypothesized world (see the Mansfield-&-Spiegelman quote above) so as to provide single "state description[s] of a

Democritean universe"(p. 29) which can then be compared, one against the other, to see if his definition of the determinist thesis (adopted from Peter Van Inwagen(10))—"there is at any instant exactly one physically possible future"—holds. "A universe is deterministic," he tells us, "if there are transition rules (the laws of physics) that determine exactly which state description follows any particular state description. If there is any slack or uncertainty, the universe is indeterministic."(pp. 28-29) Well, "fair enough", on the face of it, one might think— except that: 1) isn't it peculiar, to say the least, that Dennett-&-Co. had to go to such extravagant lengths so as to definitionally preclude quantum reality and its laws from his "state descriptive" modeling from the outset?, 2) even if a set of "transition rules" seems to hold invariably in this particular automated "virtual world", why is it necessary for the determinist thesis that this be an artificial "world" exclusively abstracted and considered apart from the REAL WORLD?, 3) where, in fact— again, in the REAL WORLD —, despite the approximations to certainty we routinely derive from acting in accordance with those regularities in Nature we call "laws", do we find any reputable scientific authority claiming that they can determine exactly one state description— invariably — from any particular previous state description? (All positivism, all philosophy of science, says that we can and should only speak— experimentally[and that is the essence of the scientific method] —in terms of probabilities because this [level of infallible predictive exactitude] is both theoretically and existentially impossible.), 4) besides the very real problem— always extant —of never actually being able to know all of the material-level particulars ("the details" in the Mansfield-&-Spiegelman excerpt quoted above) or streams-of-determination which might impinge upon any given state description following another, there is the further stumbling block (also already well-elucidated in the excerpt) that : even if you somehow had identified every single possible physical-level determinant-variable in state A, you emphatically could not have certainly identified (—i.e., "determined exactly" from "the laws of physics") which hidden, probalistic, non-physical-level variables would causally-manifest at REAL WORLD state B; this vital information is inherently indeterminate— and so, therefore, is any future state (at least, to a degree). So the upshot of all this strained IMAGE-think is that, even asserting that determinism does not imply fatalism or inevitability— but merely that, for every material event B, there is a preceding material cause A —, is not really any qualification that will save the theory over-&-against the validity of the uncertainty principle and the fact of quantum-level acausality. As distinguished physicist, Amit Goswami, put it when describing wave-particle duality as a function of quantum measurement or observation:

"...Whenever we measure it, a quantum object appears at some single place, as a particle. The probability distribution simply identifies that place (or those places) where it is likely to be found when we do measure it— no more than that. When we are not measuring it, the quantum object spreads and exists in more than one place at the same time, in the same way that a wave or cloud does— no less than that.

Quantum physics presents a new and exciting worldview that challenges old concepts, such as deterministic trajectories of motion and causal continuity. If initial conditions do not forever determine an objects motion, if instead, every time we observe, there is a new beginning, then the world is creative at the base level.

...This is the message of quantum mechanics. The world is not determined by initial conditions, once and for all. Every event of measurement is potentially creative and may open new possibilities."(11)

Finally, on this point:

"...the message of quantum nonlocality is that 'the fundamental process of Nature lies outside space-time but generates events that can be located in space-time'."(12)

But, over and beyond this, there are several other very interesting conclusions we can derive from all of these computer simulations of evolution. First of all, Dennett asks the very poignant question (p. 47) : "Is there any Life world [computerized game-tool/'toy'-program], of any size, in which the sorts of human R&D described are carried on by natural selection?" And his answer ultimately is : not unless an intelligent human designer has first programmed the mock "Life"-world to imitate what we know about the "natural" selection process. And, with the standard scientific defining characteristic of biological Life understood to be anything which has a capacity for self-replication, he knowingly adds:

"...In such a Life world, there would have to be self-reproducing entities, and we do know that they can exist, since Conway and his students embedded their Universal Turing Machine in just such a contraption. They devised the Game of Life, in fact, in order to explore John von Neumann's pioneering thought-experiments about self-reproducing automata, and they succeeded in designing a self-reproducing structure that would populate the empty plane

with ever more copies of itself, rather like bacteria in a petri dish, each one containing a Universal Turing Machine...." (p. 48)

So what has he actually proved here? Unfortunately for the determinist case, this is a classic instance of : far too much. — Because, the main fallacy of this mode of modeling is even more apparent : the only way— within this paradigmatic method —to maintain the classical "natural selection" hypothesis is to arbitrarily include the necessary prior Intelligent Programmer "out", at every stage of the much-vaunted R&D process that supposedly "just happens". And to have done that is to have given a false initial "state description" upon which all subsequent conclusions about causality were, hypothetically, going to be based. It's plain that, just as he has had to do this at his "modeling tool" level, he has to also do this at the level of considering REAL WORLD historical evolution. Dennett has, in effect, proved his opposition's case (without knowing it). Here's how.

When we back things up and apply a true and complete "state description" of what his modeling tells us about the REAL WORLD, what do we find? We find that :

1) Just as in his model, a creative and purposeful consciousness can be seen to be not only prior to, but also continuously permeating and co-extensive with, all material-level cause-&-effect interactions, self-replicating or otherwise. This is not a new observation but it's only been recently that it has found extensive scientific support in such works as The Self-Aware Universe— How Consciousness Creates the Material World (quoted above) and many others. As long ago as 1932, the noted physicist and astronomer, James Jeans, gave more or less "official" scientific sanction to this thesis when he stated : "Mind no longer appears as an accidental intruder into the realm of matter; we are beginning to suspect that we ought rather hail it as the creator and governor of the realm of matter." In a similar vein, about the same period, Arthur Eddington declared flatly that the raw material of the whole universe is "mind-stuff". Of course, when speaking of extended mind this way, beyond the more familiar parameters of a narrowly human— or even strictly biological/Life-based —context, we must add some explanatory qualifiers. As Fred Alan Wolf well-said : "As Goswami uses the word 'consciousness', he is implying something perhaps more profound than you or I would imply. In his terms consciousness is something transcendental— outside of space-time, nonlocal, and all-pervading." And, more colloquially, Deepak Chopra has expressed this as:

"We are localized bundles of consciousness in a conscious universe. The word 'consciousness' implies more than just energy and information— it implies energy and information which is alive as thought. Therefore we are bundles of thought in a thinking universe. And thought has the power to transform."(13)

We see, too, in the realm of biology, with Rupert Sheldrake's work following up on and supplementing C.H. Waddington's idea of morphogenetic fields(14), that there is substantial scientific reason to posit non-material, invisible creative precedents from levels of morphic and mental field ideation. Indeed, at the risk of being slandered as a completely Neanderthal Backwoods Bumpkin, something like what Creationists having been trying to say for umpteen years— minus the looney-tunes dating keyed to Biblical chronology — is looking more and more to be the actual case. That is to say, as pretty much anticipated by Schwaller de Lubicz in the 3rd lead-in quote above and elsewhere(15), what we seem to have had, all the way along, is material-level development coterminous with morphic field-level non-material forces working on change which has been expressing itself as formative causation. Now you don't have to call this "God" but you certainly do have to call it intelligence or "consciousness" of the above-described, broader-meaning sort. More : you have to now admit that the essence of the Creationist's critique of strictly materialist-mechanistic notions of evolutionary causation as being wholly unsatisfactory was basically correct. Especially the recent work of theorists like Stephen Jay Gould and Niles Eldredge, et. al., on punctuated equilibrium(16) would seem to point to Intelligent Design Creation taking place at morphic field levels in a paradigmatically shifting, quite spontaneous and sudden, manner— without material sequential steady/connected "steps" (e.g., fossil remains "links") being visibly evident/empirically verifiable/ —such that new-form levels have emerged seemingly "whole", quantum-leap style, as material-level manifestations. But the main point, to say it again, is that Purposeful Intelligence appears to be inseparable from "natural selection"— just as in Dennett's "Life"-world model —any way you cut it.

2) What if we go back before the emergence of biological Life in our universe, you say? Where would you derive your "living intelligence" from then? Well here, interestingly enough, "standing Dennett on his head" comes to our rescue once again. And it so happens that this type of argument was rather magnificently anticipated in John Gribbin's pioneering cosmological study, In The Beginning: The Birth of the Living Universe (1993), which has since been paralleled and substantiated in far greater detail by many other works in the same genre. What Gribbin essentially did, somewhat analogous to James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis, was to take the standard defining charac-

teristic of Life— self-replication —and then apply it in a kind of systems analysis way to our Universe as a whole. And he came to some rather startling conclusions. First of all (and this thesis has since been endorsed by numerous other cosmologists), it seems extremely probable that our Universe is merely one of virtually innumerable Universes. And, secondly, it seems that our Universe— and presumably others —has all the necessary qualities to be classed as a Living Entity which not only has been “born” and will “die”, but also has the capacity for— and very probably The Goal of —replication. All of that is gone into in an extremely learned, well-researched and persuasive way (too much to even touch upon here) but the point is, again : what does this very credible account do to Dennett’s attempt to dispossess any Rebirth of Animism (what Rupert Sheldrake calls “the Greening of Science and God”) with the Dead Hand of his Mechanist-Materialism?

Well, mainly what it does is to oppose holism to fragmenting reductionism. It says : “Listen, Daniel, you can’t do this because we’re bigger than this, Life’s bigger than this— and, yes, ‘God’ (you don’t have to call ‘it’ that) is bigger than this (— and you, by the way). Sure, you can focus on some inanimate, isolated machine-world action-reaction sequences and throw-UP that ‘world’-model as a clever affront to the Universe, but that’s analogous to me trying to purport that mineral elements in my body (iron, zinc, calcium, etc.) are not ‘alive’ or part of the Living Intelligence Field which is my body because of their ‘independent material nature’.” So , in a very well-supported, scientifically-verifiable sense, then, we can argue— non-speciously —that the revolt against Natural Order which Dennett desires, taken at any level, is an illusory separatism, a misapprehension of the Larger Whole.

To sum on this topic, when Dennett tells us that “the Darwinian revolution is indeed an inversion of everyday reasoning” and a “strange...foreign language, full of traps for the unwary”(p. 47), I think we’re best to take him at his word. However, when we find him claiming, as he does, that “When we invert the top-down [theological] perspective of tradition and look at creation from the bottom up[materialist-mechanistic evolution], we see intelligence arising from ‘intelligence,’ sight being created by a ‘blind watchmaker,’ choice emerging from ‘choice,’ deliberate voting from mindless ‘voting,’ and so on”(p. 48), I don’t think we have to search too far for the proper word to describe this language; if this looks and sounds like sophistry, it’s because that’s exactly what it is. And the necessary corrective, it seems to me, for inverting the inversion (would that yield the OUT-version?)— not because it’s “not right”, but because it’s not true —might be best expressed as a paraphrase of one of his favorite lectern-maxims oft-repeated throughout the book. I’m thinking of his kind of humorous play on economic “law” which he uses as an admonition to would-be responsibility-shirkers : “If you can make yourself small enough, you can externalize everything”. Contrariwise, methinks: “If we can make ourselves (define and develop our nascent Spark of Divinity) large enough, we can ‘in’-turn-alize any ‘thing’!” “ Dig ?

— to be continued —

Notes

- 8) Ontological Relativity and Other Essays (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), pp. 147-55.
- 9) Paul Davies and John Gribbin, The Matter Myth— Dramatic Discoveries That Challenge Our Understanding of Physical Reality (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster/Touchstone, 1992), p. 11.
- 10) An Essay on Free Will (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 3.
- 11) The Self-Aware Universe— How Consciousness Creates the Material World (New York, NY: Tarcher/Putnam, 1993), p. 42.
- 12) Ibid., p. 61, Note 23. Quoting physicist, Henry Stapp from “Are Superliminal Connections Necessary?”, Nuovo Cimento 40B, 1977, pp. 191-99.
- 13) The Seven Laws of Spiritual Success (San Rafael, CA: New World Library, 1994), Ch. 2: “The Law of Giving”, p. 31.
- 14) A New Science of Life— The Hypothesis of Formative Causation (Los Angeles, CA: Tarcher, 1981), The Presence of the Past— Morphic Resonance & the Habits of Nature (Rochester, VT: Park Street Press, 1988), The Rebirth of Nature— The Greening of Science and God (Rochester, VT: Park Street Press, 1991).
- 15) For example:
 “...Activity does not make the organ : An abstract harmony, energetic in nature, summons the organ, creates it....They are not adapted to the milieu, they are born from it
 The idea of form antecedes physical definition....” (op. cit., p. 184)
- 16) Niles Eldredge, Time Frames : The Rethinking of Darwinian Evolution and the Theory of Punctuated Equilibria (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985).

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 (2004-2005) 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. Tel: 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/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 604-733-5570.

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.

Call for Volunteers! Please call the Gallery for more information. Tel: 604-687-2468

Or visit our website www.gachet.org

GALLERY GACHET, 88 East Cordova St. , Vancouver BC, V6A 1K2

Public Resource Centre in the Areas of Mental Health, Wellness and Mental Illness. Books, videos, journals on loan for 2 weeks. Working and reading space, and internet access computers available.

Open: 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Location: CMHA (Vancouver-Burnaby), 175 West Broadway Phone: 604-872-4902, Ext. 236 (Alan)

* Our newsletter 'All About Us' is created by Resource Centre volunteers and staff.

The University of Ottawa in cooperation with **Our Voice** present Alternatives Site
<http://aix1.uottawa.ca/~nstaman/alternatives/>

***Our Voice** is a publication containing viewpoints of the psychiatrized since 1987.

The CIF sponsored **Tardive Dyskinesia Group** meets on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month at 2:00 pm at the Self-Help Resource Association, #306 - 1212 W. Broadway. Call 604-733-6186 for more information. You can also get a free info-packet on tardive dyskinesia from the NEC; to contact, see below.

THEO BC provides education and employment services to people within the mental health community. Drop - in orientation sessions are held at our Vancouver location every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month starting at 9:30 a.m. We are located at #100 – 112 E. 3rd. Ave (one block west of Main.). For more information contact us at 604-872-0770 or check us out at www.theobc.org.

The **National Empowerment Center (NEC)** may be found on the Internet at www.power2u.org or by phoning toll-free 800-power2u. The NEC is a C/S/X information and self-help organization headed by Dr. Daniel B. Fisher and Laurie Ahern, both of whom have successfully recovered from psychiatric disorders.

