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Science, Hope, and the Agnostic Attitude

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ABSTRACT: In this essay I argue that the agnostic attitude is warranted neither by scientific materialism nor by the vagaries of our knowledge about nature when we are anchored in the virtue of hope. The challenge to materialism is twofold: (1) I argue that our impoverished definition of matter undermines confidence in scientific materialism; (2) I further argue that scientific materialism results in self-contradiction when it uses immaterialistic presuppositions in its own defense. I also consider how some of the cryptic commitments espoused by Albert Einstein, the premiere practitioner of science in the twentieth century, sometimes illuminate and sometimes confuse the longstanding debate between the claims of science and religion. What God has joined together....

ARISTOTLE TOUTED THE GOLDEN MEAN as staking out the landscape of virtue between opposing extremes of vice. Some see agnosticism as a virtue by the way it is perched between opposing extremes of theism and atheism. I will argue that the mindset of a materialistically minded science does not achieve all that its adherents claim in regard to the undermining of religious belief. *A fortiori*, the dogmatic claim that religious belief should be suspended until sufficient evidence warrants it, a good working definition of agnosticism, does not follow once the conceptual difficulties inherent in materialism are acknowledged. Thus any science-induced agnosticism is not an intellectual virtue. Additionally, I will argue that the theological virtue of hope inclines us more towards theism than agnosticism. While Aristotle characterizes hope as a waking dream, the poet Pablo Neruda reminds us that the spring will always arrive despite winter's decimation of the flowers. Thus it should come as little surprise if our innate predisposition to hope motivates us toward a maintenance of belief in the spiritual springtime promised by the theistic alternative, which alone allows for the very possibility of our own eternal future. Alexander Pope said it well in his *Essay on Man*: "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." Thus I also want to contest the notion that skepticism in relation to God's existence is an intellectual virtue.

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The Limits of Science

Darwin's bulldog, Thomas Henry Huxley, coined the term "agnostic" in an attempt to suppress the superstition of religion with thrationality of science.[1] Belief in what is not known to be real should, agnostics claim, be suspended in the face of a mountain of seemingly contrary and credible evidence that does not stretch beyond the limits of matter and sense experience. Huxley thus injected a scientific slant into our contemporary understanding of the agnostic attitude. Adopting an attitude of doubt in regard to religious claims, however, need not necessarily be done in the name of science. Moreover, the scope of science has never been satisfactorily settled.

The words "scientist" and "agnostic" are relatively recent additions to the English language; the former was coined by William Whewell[2] in the 1830s as an analog to "artist," while the latter was ushered into our parlance, as indicated, by Huxley. In terms of its historical context the term "agnosticism" entered the language as a prod to curb wanton theism in the face of a new scientific theory that posed a powerful biological challenge to beliefs that were thought not to be completely anchored in reason.

Those who espouse materialism in relation to scientific commitments (the view that everything can be explained by science on the basis of the properties of matter) would do well to realize that their own scientific beliefs presuppose an epistemological commitment that transcends the explanatory resources of the materialistic credo. Materialism maintains that only matter is real. Macbeth was onto something when he instructed the physician to first heal himself, for surely materialists who do not abide by the precepts of materialism proclaim their own hypocrisy. Hence one thorn in the side of the materialistically motivated agnostic attitude has to do with the lack of epistemological integrity involved in attacking religious belief upon grounds that are also present in scientific belief. If

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[1] *Agnostic* (from ancient Greek ἀ, meaning 'without,' and γνώσις *(gnōsis)*, meaning 'knowledge'), was used by Thomas Henry Huxley in a speech at a meeting of the Metaphysical Society in 1869 to describe his philosophy, which rejects all claims of spiritual or mystical knowledge. A reader might find it surprising that Huxley hedged his bets and adopted a Humean style note of caution in regard to concluding that materialism is the true philosophy. He endorsed the view that life is to be explained in protoplasmic terms. In epistolary exchanges with Herbert Spencer we learn that Huxley's agnosticism seems to allow for the possibility in principle that agnosticism can be defeated should credible evidence appear that favors a theistic posture. Spencer was much more adamant and inflexible in his agnosticism. On the spectrum of belief he tilted strenuously toward outright atheism, while Huxley, to his credit, practiced what he preached: agnosticism.

[2] The word was coined by Whewell in 1833. It appeared in written form a year later in Whewell's anonymous 1834 review of Mary Somerville's *On the Connexion of the Physical* Sciences in the *Quarterly Review*.

materialistically oriented science is itself dependent upon commitments of faith, a kind of scientific fideism, then it cannot consistently call for any principled suspension of religious belief.

The scientific attitude is quasi-paradoxical to the extent that it values skepticism as an incentive while at the same time adopting a lofty confidence that its efforts can in principle succeed. Such paradoxicality mirrors the scientific practitioner's implicit avowal and vocal disavowal of non-materialistic commitments. In the case of Thales, for example, the positing of a unitary nature was perched upon an unsupported intuition that nature is knowable. Max Planck was thus more than merely poetic in maintaining that an attestation of faith should adorn the portal to the temple of science.

The concept of truth in science is a goal toward which we aspire, but perhaps can never attain. Philosophers of science continually remind us that science is not about truth. And yet it remains the Holy Grail of all scientific activity. Materialists are quick to argue that many so-called spiritual or immaterial aspects of cognition and mental life are rooted in the activities of the brain. But much more than a promissory note is needed to satisfy the burden of proof that all of human reason, which includes scientific reasoning, can be fleshed out in nothing more than neurochemical terms, with no remainder. Ockham's razor, for what it is worth, might very well be on the side of a non-materialistic explanation of reality. Anthropic explanations, for example, sometimes loom more credible than various speculative binges of the scientific imagination. I suggest that the credal commitment or innate confidence that science is not a futile project ranks as a non-materialist presupposition with which materialism must contend. In this vein it is helpful to recall that Einstein once proclaimed, albeit with a degree of oracular pretension, that the most incomprehensible fact about the universe is that we can understand it. A critic might easily counter that confidence in science is an induction that emerges out of its past success. While plausible, such a critique shifts the conversation into the murky waters of justifying induction, and does not do justice to how such confidence originally emerged so as to bootstrap the entire scientific enterprise from its Presocratic beginnings. Such confidence is etymologically connected to the word "faith." Something done "in confidence" is done "with faith" (*fides*).

There is undoubtedly a credal dimension to materialism. Science, as understood by many if not most of its practitioners, is wedded to materialism. Thomas Henry Huxley is often credited with coining the term "scientific naturalism." I view materialism and scientific naturalism to be essentially interchangeable. Yet the concept of science has never achieved definitional unanimity as to its own function and scope. The same lack of rigor applies to the concept of matter. It goes without saying that the doctrine of materialism depends

upon the concept of matter. Therefore, the vagaries of the concept of matter undermine any materialistic recommendation to adopt an agnostic attitude.

An analogous argument is also possible in regard to empiricism. While traditional Lockean or Millian empiricism maintains that all knowledge is based upon sense experience, it would be utterly impossible to justify every step of the knowledge acquisition process in purely empirical terms. Take the concept of experiment, for example. Kant thought that rationalism and empiricism are codependent in regard to the cognitive machinery that is a prerequisite for knowledge acquisition: "Precepts without percepts are empty. Percepts without precepts are blind."[1] He fleshed out what he meant by such precepts in his Table of Categories. Einstein mimics this Kantian aphorism in regard to the complementarity and reciprocity of science and religion: "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind."[2] Ernest Rutherford provides one of many *prima facie* examples in the history of science of the thought-driven character of experiment, the latter serving as the face of empiricism since the Baconian beginnings of modern science.[3] While the knowledge gleaned from experiments is based upon precise observation and measurement, there is obviously much more to experimental technique than what we can see, hear, taste, touch, smell, or measure. For Rutherford, experiment requires a complex synthesis of both empirical and rationalistic components, the latter roughly standing for a mixture of imaginative, creative, and intuitive factors. While we perform experiments to test hypotheses we do not rely upon the experimental method for our choice of experiment. With string theory empirical reinforcement is still lacking, and thus it remains mainly a mathematical tool, while the famous *Gedanken* experiments of Einstein were more *gedanken* than experiment. While experiential factors always contribute to the devising of any experiment, they do not provide the total input to any of our experimental designs. Experiments test hypotheses, but according to both Einstein and Popper the latter always bear the

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[1] This famous quote comes in several variations, depending upon the translation. It appears in both the A (1781) and B (1787) editions of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.

[2] This is what Albert Einstein wrote in a letter to philosopher Eric Gutkind, in a response to the book entitled *Choose Life: The Biblical Call to Revolt*. The letter was written on January 3, 1954, in German, and explains Einstein's personal beliefs regarding religion and the Jewish people. The letter is often taken as summing up Einstein's generally negative view in regard to the merits of religion, despite a lifetime of bon mots which adherents of religion interpret otherwise. The best book on Einstein's views on religion, as far as I know, is Max Jammer's *Einstein and Religion: Physics and Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[3] Along with Hans Geiger and Ernest Marsden in 1909, Rutherford carried out the famous gold foil experiment. This famous experiment demonstrated the nuclear nature of atoms by deflecting alpha particles passing through a thin gold foil.

signatures of inspiration and creative thinking. Additionally, many of the fundamental precepts of science cannot be properly tested. Inertia is an assumption, as are the first two laws of thermodynamics and the conservation laws. The notorious philosophical status of the logic of discovery in the philosophy of science makes it abundantly clear that we possess neither an algorithmic formulation nor any straightforward experiment-based methodology for decoding the blueprint of nature. The moral of this story is that the totality of what we ascertain cannot be completely reduced to empirical factors.

Any commitment to materialism presupposes a satisfactory definition of matter. And yet the very definition of matter remains an intractable problem. The old standby definition that equates matter with anything having mass and occupying space simply will not do. Even the best of physics textbooks suffer from this glaring omission in their indices of terms. Matter is nowhere to be found. Matter thus functions almost like a Euclidean axiom that can only be assumed but not proven. Aristotle posited the existence of *prima materia*, which has about as much right to be characterized as matter as virtual reality has to be passed off as the real McCoy. No less a scientific savant than Werner Heisenberg was wary about matter.[1]

The popular understanding of matter seems to be predicated upon the paradigm of some fundamental building block of nature. Historically, the meaning of matter has been very much bound up with atomism. To suggest that the smallest unit of substance is what we mean by matter is not altogether enlightening. Equally unenlightening are other definitional approaches, such as matter is what is capable of being transformed into energy, or matter is what obeys the laws of physics.

The atom was thought to be the basic unit of matter for centuries. Yet the history of science illustrates that what was meant by the atom changed significantly over time.[2] What Democritus and Lucretius meant by the atom was different than what John Dalton meant (*Elements of Chemical Philosophy*, 1815). In turn, this was radically different from what emerged from the work of Rutherford and Bohr in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Since that time the atom has been superseded by a zoo of subatomic particles, a metaphor coined by Oppenheimer, which in turn, according to the advocates of string theory, somehow spring forth from filaments of stringlike energy. In more recent

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[1] Werner Heisenberg, *Philosophical Problems of Quantum Physics* (New York: Pantheon: 1952; reprinted by Ox Bow Press, 1979); *Physics and Philosophy* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1962). See also Lothar Schafer, *In Search of Divine Reality: Science as a Source of Inspiration* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1997).

[2] Arthur Miller, *Insights of Genius: Imagery and Creativity in Science and Art* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2000).

decades the assault on the essence of matter has been joined by the likes of both Dark Matter and Dark Energy. While these two cosmological exotica supposedly account for the vast majority of the mass/energy in the universe, they are much less understood than Mendelyeev's Periodic Table of the Elements.

The Presocratic enchantment with the possibility of material reductionism initiated a mindset that contemporary scientists still endorse, although the prolonged influence of Aristotle led to a centuries-long hibernation of interest in the prospects of atomism. In Aristotelian hylomorphism, matter could be conceptually disentangled from form only by means of analysis. Aristotle could do no better than to define matter as pure possibility. Heisenberg adopted a position akin to the Aristotelian attitude of materiality as possibility (*potentia*) in regard to the quantum actualization of a probabilistic wave complex into some particulate manifestation. In the *Timaeus* Plato took matter to be forged by the mingling of mathematical entities at the disposal of a master craftsman. In later antiquity, with Stoicism, Epicurean atomism, Gnosticism, Christianity, and the philosophy of Plotinus, matter took on more of a moral valence in its featured role as a player in the perpetual struggle between good and evil.

The scientific consensus as to the existence of atoms is only of recent vintage. In the seventeenth century the allegedly atheistic implications of atomism added to the metaphysical headaches of Descartes and Galileo, in part because it was difficult to reconcile their respective conceptions of primary qualities with the Tridentine definition of the Eucharist. It is no wonder then that the physicist Ludwig Boltzmann would later characterize metaphysics as the migraine of the human mind. Berkeley's attack upon Newtonian materialism was also motivated by an intention not to allow science to remain completely autonomous so as to squeeze out any spiritually based or so-called immaterialist view of the world. But the truly serious scientific debates and doubts about the actuality of material atoms did not take place in earnest until the nineteenth century and persisted into the early years of the twentieth.

In his book *Insights of Genius* the historian of science Arthur Miller documents the wars over atomic theory in the post-Dalton and pre-quantum era. The main thrust of the polemic, as in the previous skirmish between a realist versus a hypothetical construal of Copernicanism, had to do with whether atoms actually existed or were merely a matter of theoretical convenience and conventional artifice. Since many of the results of gas theory were derivable without any need to invoke unobservable atoms as an explanatory device, many physicists were loath to take the atomist leap of faith. Under the hard-hitting and relentless empiricist propaganda of Ernst Mach, for whom atoms were but convenient fictions, even such scientific titans as Max Planck and Henri Poincaré resisted conversion to any form of atomism for a long time, with the latter

probably dying in a state of disbelief in 1912. Shortly thereafter Niels Bohr unveiled his celebrated model of the hydrogen atom (1913), and Jean Perrin published the results of his experimental work on Avogadro's number, which corroborated the existence of atoms (*Les Atomes,* 1913).

In works such as *Philosophical Problems of Quantum Physics* (1952) and *Physics and Philosophy* (1962) Heisenberg, one of the leading architects of the quantum theory, went on record in documenting his doubts concerning the material pedigree of elementary particles. Heisenberg held that elementary particles, such as the electron, are not distinct material entities that occupy both space and time. In recent years some have characterized quantum systems as bearers of information, a direct challenge to the practically monopolistic discourse of materialism. In his book entitled *Microcosm: The Quantum Revolution in Economics and Technology* George Gilder refers to the "overthrow of matter" in favor of the fundamental importance of information and organizational strategies. Understood in this way quantum theory thus provides us with epistemological access to the unfolding dynamics of informational relations rather than with any direct insight into the essence of microscopic reality. As in the case of scriptural exegesis, the still lingering literal interpretation of the materiality of invisible particles is challenged on another level by a reading in which quantum concepts pose as symbolic constructs.

From the quantum perspective, Bishop Berkeley was not far wrong when he cast perception as a criterion of being, for the classical notion of matter in Copenhagen-oriented quantum theory is but a manifestation of wave-collapsing observations. The legacy of the early twentieth-century Rutherfordian assault on the architecture of the atom, which was coupled with Einstein's solution to the problem of Brownian motion and the measurements of Perrin, which provided an acceptable underlying rationale for Avogadro's number, has all but vanished in a puff of quantum legerdemain. About the quantum reality of material atoms and their subatomic parts one might easily employ the old magical mantra: now you see them, now you don't. On the one hand, it is held that the atom constitutes a system of lowest energy and greatest stability for its constituent particles. On the other hand, the electron is no longer thought to exist in well-defined quantum orbits but bides its time in terms of smoothly varying probability distributions in which it can be located anywhere at all relative to its nucleus, including within it. The quantum contribution to the concept of matter has added an irrevocably subjective perspective that, unlike the once golden touch of King Midas, turns everything once thought to be unequivocally real into the dross of possible illusion.

If quantum theory at the very least succeeds in both befuddling and toying with our commonsense conception of what matter is thought to be, then the

enigma of Dark Matter is responsible for threatening to trounce the classical conception of matter into insignificance. According to the current consensus, visible matter, as we think we know it, is thought to comprise but a paltry percentage of the entire mass needed to run the universe in accordance with existing physical theory. Moreover, Dark Matter is just a label. We are perhaps more certain that it is dark or invisible than we are of its being some variant of known, or even knowable, matter. As in the cases of the extraplanetary predictions of Vulcan and Neptune the original postulation of Dark Matter represented an attempt to salvage existing gravitational theory. While we humans derive many of the elements in our bodies from the death throes of stars, the universe as a whole does not follow suit, at least not according to the scientific consensus that has elevated Dark Matter to the level of a veritable cosmological dogma.

In *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, T.S. Eliot likens the labyrinthine streets of London to a "tedious argument of insidious intent." With the unceasing march of contemporary science it seems as if the pathways of our classically trained common sense have been dealt one insidious blow after another. The comfortable ways by which we are accustomed to reckoning the world about us are being rudely cut off: space, time, matter, energy, causality, and dimensionality are no longer, as the saying goes, what they used to be. What then, we may ask, is Dark Matter? The short answer is that we do not know. But physical theory apparently cannot live without it, even though it relegates our existing theory of matter, notwithstanding the ontological and explanatory vagaries of quantum theory, into a mere cosmological sideshow.

According to recent estimations Dark Matter is thought to comprise close to 90 percent of the matter in the universe. A recent addition to the inventory of the fabric of the universe is Dark Energy, which is touted to be responsible for the antigravitational propulsion that allows for the eternal expansion of the universe. This energy, which has been likened to Einstein's infamous cosmological constant of 1917, came out of cosmological left field within the last two decades or so to stake its claim to being a whopping 70 percent of the stuff of the universe. Prior to that Dark Matter was allotted an even higher percentage of the universe than it currently enjoys. Today only 30 percent of the universe is thought to consist of matter, with only 1/6 of that matter (5 percent of the entire universe) consisting of the type of stuff that presumably has any commonsensical meaning to anybody.

The baryon is one of four families of subatomic particles, along with gauge bosons–which carry the forces that govern the structure of matter–leptons, and mesons. Originally, the different types of subatomic particles were differentiated in terms of mass. The actual names of these families were accordingly assigned on the basis of etymology: lepton meaning light, meson meaning medium, and baryon meaning heavy. This so-called massive method has been rendered obsolete

since leptons and mesons have been discovered that are more massive than baryons. Nowadays distinctions between mesons and baryons are made on the basis of internal quark or antiquark structure, while the half-integral spinning leptons have no known internal structure whatsoever.

If the preponderance of Dark Matter turns out to be non-baryonic, then its fundamental nature will not be revealed by photonically sensitive telescopic observations. In such a case the constituents of non-baryonic Dark Matter will need to be identified by high-energy accelerator experiments here on earth. For various cosmological reasons astrophysicists now believe that most Dark Matter in the universe must be non-baryonic. A dominance of baryonic Dark Matter is difficult to reconcile with nucleosynthesis, that is, with the observed abundance of the light elements ^{3}He, ^{4}He, and ^{7}Li. Non-baryonic Dark Matter is further subdivided into a hot and a cold variety, which depend in turn upon the extent to which it cools and clumps at non-relativistic velocities. Such exotic matter can, however, be detected indirectly by means of its gravitational effects. With gravitational lensing, for example, missing mass is postulated as the cause of a visual distortion relative to more or less fixed standards of reference. Nevertheless, the mere existence of Dark Matter yields no clue as to its essence.

The existence of matter is as much a dogma as any of the belief systems comprising the various religions of the world. Many (if not all) materialists are card-carrying skeptics, but their skepticism does not extend to the very foundation of their own materialist convictions. No concept is immune to the scalpel of philosophical scrutiny. Given the changes in science over the last century, the concept of matter, which is as scientifically theory-laden as a concept can be, is in need of a complete overhaul. Knowing that the concept of matter does not carry the weight put upon its shoulders by its standard bearers can offer a modicum of solace to those whose ontological commitments incline toward more ethereal beliefs. Philosophers of mind such as Gilbert Ryle have raised the issue of a ghost within the cerebral machinery of human nature. The entire behaviorist project in fact was founded upon a seemingly unproblematic and underlying commitment to the reality of matter. Only mind was suspect. But as two leading science writers, John Gribbin and Paul Davies, so eloquently point out in the concluding sentence to their book entitled *The Matter Myth*, "we can see that Ryle was right to dismiss the notion of the ghost in the machine – not because there is no ghost, but because there is no machine."[1] That the ancient concept of matter continues to thrive in the currency of common sense is testimony, not to its precise ontological status, but to its enduring utility. Materialism has no theoretical power to debunk anything

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[1] Paul Davies and John Gribbin, *The Matter Myth* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 309.

if matter is not a well-defined concept. Nevertheless, despite the many problems still in search of a solution the particle physics community has had recent reason to celebrate the possibility of progress in regard to our understanding of the enigma of matter with the confirmation of the detection of the Higgs boson at CERN.

When confronted with the question of what matter is, Bertrand Russel once quipped: Never mind. While a little wit may smooth over a number of awkward social situations, it very rarely succeeds in solving the problem that it sidesteps. Using the nomenclature of logic, I think it is fair to say that the definitional status of the classical concept of matter is both inconsistent and incomplete. It is inconsistent in that what is meant by matter often seems to be conflated with what is immaterial, as in the case of quantum theory. Such inconsistency is exacerbated when the immaterial derives its meaning by negation from the material. It is incomplete in that our paltry attempts to define the so-called matter that we perceive are overwhelmed by an ocean of invisible stuff of a highly unusual type.

Heisenberg's quantum reveries led him toward rather than away from spirituality. In his latter years he delved into the interface between quantum theory and the mystery that lies behind materialism with something of a vengeance. He supported efforts to connect quantum reality with Taoist philosophy. The English translation of his memoirs entitled *Physics and Beyond* (1971) appears as volume 42 of a series of mystical and religious monographs entitled *World Perspectives*. Thus the mask that masquerades as the true face of matter still persists in its disguise. To all those materialists who would scoff at the unhealthy state of mind that would harbor belief in any non-material reality, I would remind them that the creed of funda-materialism, unlike fundamentalism, cannot survive on faith alone.

Materialism is challenged by the non-materialistic character of our basic cognitive structure. Theologian John Haught identifies the trust and confidence in which we hold our ability to reason correctly as being logically at odds with the doctrine of materialism.[1] In this way reason is allied to our innate faith in the knowability of nature. Since confidence is etymologically connected to faith, placing trust in the efficacy of our cognitive faculties, including the exercise of our faculties in constructing a scientific understanding of nature, aligns with the immaterial nature of our entrenched religious beliefs.

In a letter to W. Graham dated July 3, 1881, Charles Darwin wonders how it is that the conclusions of human intelligence can be trusted any more than those of the animals from which the human brain has evolved.[2] Many philosophers,

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[1] John Haught, *Is Nature Enough: Meaning and Truth in the Age of Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), chap. 3, pp. 32-54.

[2] Ibid., 32. See *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, ed. Francis Darwin (New York: Basic Books, 1959), 285.

including Santayana, have resorted to the metaphor of animal faith in their writings. Descartes's positing of clear and distinct ideas as the criteria of certainty was an admission that our own critical intelligence is the standard against which all tentative conclusions must be compared. The possibility of explaining human reason and consciousness in terms of evolutionary processes does not prove that human nature can be explained materialistically, without remainder. Aristotle was the first to terminologically distinguish between efficient and final causation. Thus even if all aspects of consciousness and cognition possess neuroscientific correlates in the brain, we are not entitled to conclude that they have been exhaustively explained. To do so is to beg the very question of whether materialism can be equated with all of reality. Charles Sanders Peirce writes: "Let us not doubt in philosophy what we do not doubt in our hearts." While such homespun wisdom is debatable, it does elegantly underline the point I am trying to make. There needs to be, as Haught maintains, "a coherence between your worldview and the critical intelligence by which you experience, understand and know the world."[1]

Einstein was besotted with religion, not in any theological sense, but in the sense that scientific speculation was thought by him to be permeated by mystery. According to Einstein, science requires a deeply religious sensibility, by which he meant our overall attunement to the rationality and comprehensibility of the universe. In an interview conducted by J. Murphy in 1930, Einstein said: "Speaking of the spirit that informs modern scientific investigations, I am of the opinion that all the finer speculations in the realm of science spring from a deep religious feeling, and that without such feeling they would not be fruitful."[2] What Einstein means strikes me as reminiscent of the Presocratic preoccupation with the problem of the one and the many. The leap forward of Thales was not so much that he prescribed water as the fundamental element, but that he had the audacity to think that the complexity and diversity of the cosmos could be grasped in thought in a simple and straightforward manner. What was the materialistic justification for such an ambition? What motivating factors stood behind such intellectual arrogance? As a child of Prometheus, Thales and his chutzpah are aptly described by the words of Hamlet (2,2) when taking man as possessing the apprehension of a god.

Scientific knowledge, according to Einstein's view, is both born and nurtured prior to any empirical or experimental considerations by certain intuitions of the

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[1] See Charles Sanders Peirce, *Selected Writings* (New York: Dover, 1966). Haught, *Is Nature Enough*, 36.

[2] "Man wird zum tief religiösen Ungläubigen." Einstein to H. Muhsam, March 30, 1954. Einstein Archive, reel 38-434. Max Jammer, *Einstein and Religion: Physics and Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 157.

intellect. Such intuitions are by definition a priori, thus allowing and enabling us to bootstrap the entire discursive process of scientific speculation. In equating scientific thinking with a religious sensibility Einstein is going beyond the mere claim that science presupposes certain implicit and intuitive presuppositions that can then be shaped into a more sophisticated and self-conscious speculative process. Einstein's religious interpretation of the origins of scientific speculation is akin to that of Aristotle in that the quest for knowledge begins in a natural desire to know. Einstein's thesis in regard to the intuitive and perhaps prerational or religious nature of scientific thinking accords with that of Origen, who thought that science was an essentially spiritual enterprise. Responding to a criticism concerning the role of religious sensibility in scientific thinking Einstein writes that whenever the religious feeling that stimulates the scientific imagination "is absent, science degenerates into uninspired empiricism."[1]

While Einstein rejected the label of mysticism, he joked that he prayed with his violin. Describing his own sense of the religiosity of science, Einstein was a mystic to the extent that his cogitations were spurred on by the intrinsic rationality of nature. In an essay entitled "Religion and Science" Einstein described the source of scientific speculation in terms of a "cosmic religious feeling."[2] Fulton J. Sheen, the Catholic apologist and television personality, did not mince words in pronouncing Einstein's attitude in regard to the spiritual dimension as more comic than cosmic. Such a cosmic spirituality can in no way be labeled as a form of theism. It is pantheism pure and simple. Einstein had great respect for Spinoza's profession of an intellectual love of God, or *Amor Dei Intellectualis*. Like Spinoza, Einstein disavowed any belief in a personal God and held that God was to be equated with cosmic order. God was, he thought, *ausserpersonlichen* or superpersonal.

For Einstein, there were three dividends to be reaped from his cosmic religious attitude. The cosmic attitude is, he thought: (1) a necessary condition for scientific speculation; (2) a catalyst for individual scientific discoveries or ideas; and (3) a basis for a priori skepticism in regard to certain scientific commitments. Several celebrated scientific atheists of our time have been caught lapsing into language that is suggestive of Einstein's commingling of religiosity with science. Referring to the persistence of his former religious attitudes, a legacy from his misspent youth as a Southern Baptist, the sociobiologist Edward O. Wilson writes: "Still, I had no desire to purge religious feelings. They were bred in me; they

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[1] Albert Einstein, *Out of My Later Years*, rev. ed. (New York: Bonanza Books, 1956), 26. This statement occurs in the essay entitled "Science and Religion," which Einstein read at a conference held at the Union Theological seminary in New York in September of 1940.

[2] Max Jammer, *Einstein and Religion*, 68-69.

suffused the wellsprings of my creative life."[1] Even more surprising are the stirring thoughts expressed by that former poster boy of scientific materialism, the astronomer Carl Sagan, who refers to a mystic core that sits at the center of our being. He adds that our sense of awe for the beauty, depth, and intricacy of the universe stems from the religious instinct rooted in human nature. He acknowledges that there is something religious, in the broad sense, about the nature of scientific speculation. We feel at one with the universe, he asserts, because we are made of the very same stuff as the stars.[2]

Einstein's unrelenting animosity toward quantum theory during his decades-long debate with Niels Bohr is a case in point of how his religious sensibility could engender and persist in an a priori-based skeptical attitude. Additionally, the necessity of safeguarding his deterministic and aprobabilistic view of nature inspired Einstein's imagination to conjure up problem after problem for Bohr and his quantum followers, most notably in the paper he coauthored with Podolsky and Rosen in 1935. Despite overwhelming experimental corroboration in favor of quantum theory Einstein just could not accept the prospect that God might play dice with the universe. God is subtle, he thought, but not malicious. The universe would not be rational if causality were to be abandoned, according to Einstein. Thus a quantum construal of reality that banishes causation from the inventory of scientifically respectable concepts was at odds in principle with the causally real and deterministic character of the universe that Einstein held to be intrinsic to the nature of our cosmic intuition. His own form of scientific spirituality imposed a barrier that simply would not allow certain theories to pose as scientifically viable. Einstein's rejection of the acausal implications of the uncertainty-based probabilities of quantum theory was therefore, in a certain way, religiously motivated.

Einstein was convinced that an appreciation of the mysterious is the "fundamental emotion which stands at the cradle of true art and true science."[3] In saying this he was not declaring the mystical attitude as performing the function of a sufficient condition for scientific thinking. If it does, then we might have expected mendicant mystics like Francis of Assisi to have excelled more in science than in the rough and tumble art of begging for their daily bread. Einstein did not believe that the so-called religious impulses were in any way efficacious

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[1] Edward O. Wilson, *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge* (New York: Vintage, 1998), 6.

[2] From Carl Sagan, *Broca's Brain* (New York: Random House, 1979), 284, and an interview that Sagan gave to Edward Wakin that appeared as "God and Carl Sagan: Is the Cosmos Big Enough for the Both of Them?" *U.S. Catholic*, no. 5 (May 1981): 19-24.

[3] See Albert Einstein, *The World as I See It* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948), 4-5.

in regard to theory construction, but he did maintain that they were a necessary condition for scientific speculation. Einstein's own Ionian enchantment concerning the deep and knowable causal structure of the universe, which for him is what provides the intuitive basis for the possibility of scientific speculation, is reflected in the causal edifice of his own theory of General Relativity.

Einstein was also motivated by his cosmic sensibility in more specific ways. His invocation of a cosmological constant in 1917, which he would later declare, according to George Gamow, to be the greatest blunder of his scientific career, marks one such instance of a directed application of Einstein's religious sensibility to the crafting of scientific theory. Einstein incorporated this constant into his field equations in order to stave off the possible theological implication that General Relativity sanctioned a beginning to the universe. Spinoza's philosophical conception of the universe, which Einstein endorsed, consisting of the one solitary and eternal substance that is *Deus sive Natura*, simply was not thought to be consistent with the idea of a beginning or an end. In this instance Einstein's religious intuition may have served as an impediment to science, although the role of the cosmological constant has been resurrected in recent years with the discovery of the so-called Dark Energy. Such problems notwithstanding, for Einstein "science can only be created by those who are thoroughly imbued with the aspiration toward truth and understanding. This source of feeling, however, springs from the sphere of religion…. I cannot conceive of a genuine scientist without that profound faith."[1]

Philosophers have long debated the anthropological credentials of the moral and aesthetic senses. But what are the merits, if any, of Einstein's so-called cosmic sense? Hume, Wittgenstein, and the Logical Positivists wanted to purge science of all vestiges of non-verifiably based utterances and beliefs. When Einstein speaks of religious feeling he wades into waters that are both ethical and aesthetic. His views on the nature of scientific creativity, for instance, bear an easy comparison with Jacques Maritain's aesthetic conception of a creative intuition. For Friedrich Nietzsche, the entire enterprise of science itself was considered to be an extension of essentially aesthetic activity. On the ethical front, however, Einstein espoused the view that religion is the sphere that spawns our moral norms, and that to involve science in moral evaluations was to commit the naturalistic fallacy.

Einstein's description of the religious sensibility that is antecedent to all scientific speculation would seem a likely target for the criticism of Stephen Toulmin. In an essay entitled "Contemporary Scientific Mythology,"[2] Toulmin

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[1] Jammer, *Einstein and Religion*, 94.

[2] Stephen Toulmin, "Contemporary Scientific Mythology," in *Metaphysical Beliefs*,

claimed that so-called scientific hypotheses jeopardize their scientific status when they are intended to answer primarily religious questions. He points to the theory of evolution in support of his thesis, claiming that its identity as a strictly scientific theory that can answer questions pertaining to reproductive success has been compromised by religious questions having to do primarily with our origin as well as our destiny. Toulmin drew the conclusion that evolutionary theory was therefore on a par with scientific myth. All scientific theories whose terms are extended beyond their original scientific scope merit a similar devaluation in status.

Einstein's understanding of the nature of scientific speculation runs the serious risk of any a priori predilection that would serve as a surrogate for hard empirical evidence: the specter of being led into major error. His characterization of the religious origins of scientific thinking represented his own idiosyncratic way of attempting to deal with the logistics of discovery. And yet the study of logic informs us to be wary of the genetic fallacy. The value and the status of a scientific theory is in no way undermined because of how it came into being, even if its logical origins remain shrouded in mystery. Simply because we may be descended from apes, it does not follow that we live on a diet of bananas and swing freely from trees.

Many thinkers have challenged the naturalistic account of science, and in doing so have brought science to the very doorstep of the religious sensibility that Einstein thought was the basis for scientific speculation. The activity of knowing points beyond itself to a ground of ultimacy, to use the language of Paul Tillich. The logical gap or revolution that Michael Polanyi and Thomas Kuhn respectively refer to in discussing progressive leaps within the history of science can also be likened to the non-rational or heuristic venture that takes place in any act of individual discovery. John Dewey maintained that the pragmatic enterprise of science is initiated by the nagging sense of dissatisfaction and perplexity we feel in regard to deficiencies in our understanding of particular states of affairs. Despite his strong empirical inclinations, he possessed a deep sense of the extent to which human concerns and passions enter into what is often perceived as the dispassionate realm of scientific inquiry.

Martin Heidegger spent the better part of his philosophical life trying to get us to appreciate the message that Being tacitly communicates to us in each and every act of knowing. Like Einstein, Heidegger was not loath to lobby for a depersonalized form of transcendence that overarches all reality and to which we are in some way attuned. Einstein would no doubt agree with St. Augustine that

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ed. A. MacIntyre (London: SCM Press, 1957), 13-81. Also of interest is Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1964), 160-71.

in all acts of cognition the human mind comes into contact with something that transcends it. The ground of our ability to know transcends knowing itself or, in the quaint language of George Santayana, transports us beyond skepticism into the realm of animal faith. Michael Polanyi suggested that scientists always employ metaphysical presuppositions in their thinking about scientific problems. Such presuppositions he held constitute the transcendental preconditions of scientific problem solving. In various works Alfred North Whitehead professed a view that perfectly coincides with Einstein's cosmic attitude toward scientific speculation when he says that the pursuit of scientific knowledge is motivated by a kind of rationalist faith. Thus we can know the world in its particulars because we already espouse a general belief of what the world must be like.

It surely does not take an Einstein to realize that Einstein played fast and loose with both the meaning of religion and the logistics of the scientific imagination in various oracular utterances concerning the source of his own scientific inspiration. One glaring inconsistency in Einstein's position in regard to scientific speculation is the contradiction between his belief in a free and uninhibited scientific imagination, which can creatively synthesize a morass of disparate facts into a coherent and efficacious hypothesis, and the contrary belief that human actions are just as predetermined as everything else in the material world. Einstein was fond of the statement of Schopenhauer to the effect that while we can do what we want, we nevertheless cannot want what we want. Despite some easy to detect weak points in Einstein's overtly religious interpretation of scientific thinking, he does nonetheless succeed in pointing out the very real possibility that what we call science is forged in the crucible of our innate predisposition to interrogate and interpret the world.

A core orientation in the philosophy of science is scientific realism. Do our scientific theories and laws commit us to a belief in such invisible entities as electrons, quarks, and magnetic fields? It is easy to draw a comparison between the scientific urging to be agnostic in the case of religious belief and the various ways by which scientific realism is challenged in the philosophy of science. Does our commitment to the predictive accuracy of scientific theories commit us to specific explanatory accounts or to the existence of any underlying entities? Expectations are arguably higher in science, as opposed to religion, that empirical evidence might eventually support the existence of invisible entities. Those who indict scientific realism espouse the view that the business of science does not legitimately stake a claim to ultimate explanations. For such individuals the goal of science is predictive efficacy, not underlying truth. Thus existential commitment, some would therefore argue, is not a legitimate option in principle. Despite the differences there is nonetheless a striking similarity between the scientific critique of religion as a basis for agnosticism and the various schools of

thought in the philosophy of science that take their aim at scientific realism. Scientific realism nonetheless remains a vibrant candidate as to the status of the most fundamental theoretical constructs of science.

Hoping for the Best

Along with the pandemonium that escaped her infamous box, Pandora fortuitously released a healing spirit named Hope. From ancient times, people have recognized that a spirit of hope had the power to heal afflictions and help them bear times of great suffering. In Hesiod's *Works and Days* the personification of hope is a spirit named Elpis. Hope is symbolized by the swallow in Aesop's fables. In traditional Freudian psychoanalysis hope was crucial to the art of dream interpretation in its likeness to the concept of wish fulfillment. Various theories in modern psychology relate the importance of hope for the achievement of goals. The possible health dividends to be derived by patients from a hopeful attitude is also an area of ongoing research. Evolutionary psychologists investigate possible links between hope and evolutionary advantage, while phenomenologists attempt to understand hope as a feature of consciousness.

The theological virtue of hope is an impediment to agnosticism as it is an incentive to faith. If one accepts that the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity are all conceptually intertwined, as well as mutually supportive of each other, then it follows that hope is connected to, if not vitally crucial to, faith. The *Letter to the Hebrews* (10:22) treats them as somewhat interchangeable, equating the fullness of faith to the upper limit of our hope. The same interchangeability also occurs in the *First Letter of Peter* in which the *logos* is cited as the meaning and reason of hope. For Pope Benedict XVI in *Spe salvi* hope is prior to faith in that "we possess the hope that ensues with a real encounter with this God."[1] In this sense faith represents the degree of fulfillment of an initial hope. There is a kind of circularity in how a simplistic type of scientific critique of religious faith logically self-destructs on account of the role played by a certain kind of scientific faith embedded within scientific thinking. The theological virtue of hope psychologically reinforces our faith in various religious precepts. St. Paul informs us that hope is an attitude of the person to believe in things unseen. "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb 11:1). My view is that hope is a basic orientation or predisposition of the human person that is linked to our deepest desires to survive, to excel, and to derive benefits for ourselves and those for whom we care. While hope is certainly linked to the Christian religion, since the time of Francis Bacon onward it is also clearly a concern of science, as nothing less than our ongoing hope-based faith in the

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[1] Pope Benedict XVI, *Spe salvi*, 3.

inevitability of scientific progress.

William James writes: "The thesis I defend is, briefly stated, this: Our passional nature…must decide an option between propositions, whenever it is a genuine option that cannot by its nature be decided on intellectual grounds." The skeptic's way out, that of suspending belief, is itself a passional or emotional decision. "To preach skepticism to us as a duty until sufficient evidence for religion be found, is tantamount therefore to telling us, when in the presence of the religious hypothesis, that to yield to our fear of its being in error is wiser and better than to yield to our hope that it may be true."[1] Leibniz writes of those reasons that incline without necessitating. Analogously, the virtue of hope, according to the traditional Christian anthropology, is a component of our native psychic and emotional constitution, whether God-given or the result of evolutionary adaptation, or both, which inclines us toward a theistic perspective. Since agnosticism represents an attitude of compromise in relation to faith, and faith is tied to hope within the triad of theological virtues of (faith, hope, and charity), then either hope should be set down a notch or two alongside faith, or, as I propose, hope is the reason that makes it both rational and emotionally compelling to persist in faith. It is our ingrained human sense of hope that allows Robert Browning to hit the nail upon the poetic head when he writes: "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?"

Conclusion

I have attempted to challenge two longstanding dogmas of agnosticism: (1) that scientific commitment warrants and promotes agnosticism and (2) that skepticism concerning the existence of God is an intellectual virtue. The logical inconsistency of materialism in regard to its harboring of immaterial commitments, our blind devotion to the powers of matter despite the deficiency in its definition, and the virtue of hope all offer good reasons for resisting any premature conversion to agnosticism. As the theory-laden character of fact teaches us, sometimes we need to believe in order to see.

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[1] William James, "The Will to Believe." An address James delivered to the Philosophy Clubs of Yale and Brown Universities. First published in 1896.

With the Same Voice

Clara Sarrocco[*]

ABSTRACT: In 2002 the Bishops of England and Wales published a book entitled *Teachers of Faith* edited by Thomas Howard. It contained a somewhat obscure essay, originally given as a lecture in 1988, by Josef Cardinal Ratzinger in which he extensively quoted C.S. Lewis. While not quite contemporaries, being separated by thirty years, the two Christian writers actually come to Christianity at almost the same time – Ratzinger by baptism and Lewis by conversion, the most reluctant convert in all of England. However, both presented a Christian vision of hope in a world destroyed by false philosophies and doubts. They certainly changed the faith of many. They were brought together by their common recognition of values, and morals written in the hearts of men. It is closer to the center of things that men of disparate beliefs come together in mutual understanding. The perennial question is why Lewis did not become a Catholic. The answer, of course, rests with him and God, but perhaps his influence has been greater than it would have been had he been given that light. In any case, Lewis shares that commonality of belief with Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, a great Catholic theologian.

T HE HISTORY OF Cambridge University dates back to 1209 when a group of scholars left Oxford as a result of the frequent wars between "town and gown" during the Middle Ages. They left Oxford to escape these conflicts and sought refuge in the small fenland town of Cambridge. By 1226 enough scholars had congregated to establish regular courses of study. In the ensuing centuries thirty colleges were eventually founded. They boast of may famous professors and graduates, including Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, Thomas Cranmer, Francis Bacon, John Milton, Sir Isaac Newton, Samuel Pepys, Lord Byron, and, more recently, Jawaharial Nehru and Ludwig Wittgenstein, among many others.

By 1428 King Henry VI approved the establishment of a place for Benedictine monks who came to study canon law at the university. They named their hostel located beside the bridge on the River Cam, after St. Mary Magdalene. Today's Magdalene College was the destination of another scholar who left the "wars of Oxford" to settle in Cambridge. It happened in 1954 when C.S. Lewis was asked to accept the Chair of Medieval and Renaissance Literature that Cambridge had newly created.

After almost forty years at Oxford, first as a student and then as a professor

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Science, who spent twenty-nine years giving tutorials there, Lewis left for Cambridge. The Oxford he loved had changed. In the post-war years the fellowship among the faculty had become fractious, and Lewis was passed over for senior appointments at least three times. When Cambridge presented him with the invitation to accept this professorship, Lewis at first declined. But eventually he was persuaded to accept it and took up the position in Lent Term, January 1955. Oxford's loss was Cambridge's gain.

On November 1, 1954 Lewis wrote to the "American lady," his long-time American correspondent:

Did I tell you I've been made professor at Cambridge? I take up my duties on Jan.1 at Magdalene College, Cambridge (Eng.). Note the difference in spelling. It means rather less work for rather more pay. And I think I shall like Magdalene [Cambridge] better than Magdalen [Oxford]. It's a tiny college a perfect cameo architecturally and they're so old fashioned and pious, and gentle and conservative – unlike the leftist, atheist, cynical, hard-boiled, huge Magdalen.[1]

Cambridge treated Lewis with great deference. His teaching schedule was such that it allowed him to return to the Kilns in Headington Quarry, his beloved home, every weekend. It was a three-hour trip to traverse the eighty miles between the two universities by a slow train euphemistically named the "Cantab Crawler," but Lewis apparently did not mind it. He used the time to read, and sometimes to say his prayers. In 1956 he was asked to write an essay comparing Oxford and Cambridge that appeared in *The Cambridge Review* on April 21, 1956. He wrote: "Cambridge is a very much like the Oxford I first knew.... I was bred at a small college in Oxford. I am now most gratefully and happily domiciled in a small college at Cambridge."[2]

Even before his move, Lewis gave his inaugural lecture at Cambridge on November 29, 1954, his fifty-sixth birthday. *De Descriptione Temporum* was attended by a vast audience, from both Oxford and Cambridge. It took place on Mill Lane, in the largest lecture room available. Lewis typically lectured with very few notes but had written out his remarks in full, and it was eventually published.

In his "description of the times" Lewis showed how well he knew his audience. He knew they would comprehend the polemics of the age and understanding that much ancient learning had been lost:

In our time something which was once possession of all educated men has shrunk to being the technical accomplishment of a few specialists.... [I]f one were looking for a man who

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[1] *Letters to an American Lady* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1971), 85.

[2] "Interim Report," *The Cambridge Review* 67 (April 21, 1956): 468.

could not read Virgil though his father could, he might be found more easily in the twentieth century than in the fifth.[1]

He continued:

It is my settled conviction that in order to read Old Western literature aright you must suspend most of the responses and unlearn most of the habits you have acquired in reading modern literature.... Speaking not only for myself but for all other Old Western men whom you may meet, I would say, use your specimens while you can. There are not going to be many more dinosaurs.[2]

It is not difficult to find a confirmation of Lewis's claim today. On the web page for Cambridge University, just above information about the university's courses and schools, we find Cambridge's motto: *Hine lucem et pocula sacra*, followed by a note in parentheses, "(Latin)," and then an English translation of the motto: "From this place, we gain enlightenment and precious knowledge." It is a sign of the times that Cambridge found it necessary not only to translate the original motto from Latin but also to identify the language as Latin.

In 1895, Cambridge University founded a Catholic chaplaincy, which by 1924 was known as Fisher House. It was in 1871 after the repeal of the Test Acts that the university was forced to admit Catholics. The Chaplaincy now boasts a very beautiful church known as the Chapel of St. John Fisher. All members of Fisher House have access to the chaplaincy, where many educational, social and religious events take place. Attached to this is the Fisher Room, a large space for gatherings containing both a library and a large roof garden. In 1988, thirty-four years after Lewis's *De Descriptione Temporum*, Josef Cardinal Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) was invited to Fisher House to give a lecture.

A few years before, Ratzinger had been appointed to the formidable position of Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Like Lewis, he too had turned down the position being offered to him, but after some further deliberation accepted it. In 1986 he was also appointed as head of a twelve-member commission responsible for drafting the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church.* At the invitation of the Catholic bishops of England and Wales, he agreed to speak at Fisher House. The *Times* of London reported that it was one of the best attended lectures on a theological topic in modern times. His lecture was titled "Consumer Materialism and Christian Hope." William Doino provides a short account of his remarks:

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[1] *Selected Literary Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 4.
[2] Ibid., 13.

Addressing what he called "the characteristic signs of our time," he names them: an overwhelming sense of gloom, paradoxically alternating with a naive sense of "progress," a spiritual emptiness finding expression in sexual excess and drug abuse, a secular conformism which forbids serious criticism of social immorality ("whoever dares to say that...is put on the sidelines as a hopeless obscurantist"); and – most prophetically – a false and fanatical search for "liberation," which spurs terrorism, "a real prevention of its root causes has not yet taken place...and, as long as this is so, it can erupt anew at any time."[1]

Refusing to be deterred from speaking about the "forbidden types of social criticism," he used the opportunity to diagnose the moral problems of our time and to suggest something supportive and healing.

Speaking of the then recent nuclear accident at Chernobyl, Ratzinger notes: "Those who would be considered enlightened could not describe the danger...in terms drastic enough."[2] Then, commenting on the way in which the rapid advance of the then new viral disease, AIDS, had destroyed many people, he observed:

There is no doubt that many more people will become sick and die from AIDS than have already died in the wake of Chernobyl, and that the danger posed by this new scourge of mankind stands nearer the door of each individual than does the peril [of] nuclear power.[3]

The Cardinal also addressed another scourge of modern times, the abuse of drugs. He took this practice to originate from a spiritual emptiness and a thirst of the heart longing for something deeper: "The grand trip which people look for in drugs is a perversion of mysticism, the warping of the human desire for immortality, the 'no' to the impossibility of overcoming the immanent and the attempt to enfold the limits of one's own being in the eternal."[4] Speaking thirteen years before the attack of 9/11, he connects these trends to terrorism in words that are prophetic and prescient:

The point of departure for terrorism is closely related to that of drugs. Here too we find initially a protest against the world as it is and the demand for a better one. Terrorism is in its roots a kind of [misdirected] "moralism"...which turns into a cruel parody of the true aims and methods of the moral person.... Only from this closer perspective can one see the devil's foot upon the whole business and hear the sneer of Mephistopheles.[5]

What is needed, Ratzinger urges, is Christian hope and a return to morality and

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[1] William Doino, Jr., "Ratzinger at Cambridge: A Preview of Benedict in the U.K.?" *First Things* (September 14, 2010).

[2] Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, "Consumer Materialism and Christian Hope," in *Teachers of the Faith* (Cornwall: MPG Books, 2002), 76.

[3] Ibid., 79.

[4] Ibid., 81.

[5] Ibid., 81-82.

religion. If we are to have real freedom, justice, and peace, there is need to respect "God's message, constantly bursting forth anew." He notes the many stumbling blocks that stand in the way of achieving these goals. Yet he thinks that Christian history shows the way. What was common to all premodern mankind, he observes, was the conviction that man does not devise morality by mere expediency. He explains that there is need to return to "the conviction that in man's being there lies an imperative, the conviction that man does not devise morality itself by calculating expediency; rather he comes upon it in the being of things."[1]

Mindful of the original mandate of Fisher House, to support and guide the Catholic members of Cambridge University in living out their faith, Ratzinger brings his insights to bear:

Long before the outbreak of terrorism and the invasion of drugs, the English author and philosopher C.S. Lewis called attention to the grievous danger of the abolition of man which lies in the collapse of the foundation of morality. He thus gave stress to humankind's justification upon which the continuance of man as man depends.... Lewis shows the continuance of this justification with a glance at all the great civilisations [sic]. He refers not only to the moral heritage of the Greeks and its particular articulation by Plato, Aristotle and the Stoa. These intended to lead man to an awareness of reason in his being and from that to insist upon the cultivation of his kinship of being with reason.[2]

Cardinal Ratzinger's acquaintance with Lewis was not superficial. He observes:

Lewis also recalls the idea of the Rte [sic] in early Hinduism, which asserts the harmony of the cosmic order, the moral virtues and the temple rituals. He underscores in a special way the Chinese doctrine of the Tao. "It is nature, it is the way, the road. It is the way in which the universe goes on.... It is also the way in which every man should tread in imitation of this cosmic and super-cosmic progression, conforming all activities to that great exemplar" (*The Abolition of Man*). Lewis refers as well to the law of Israel. which unites cosmos and history and intends above all to be the expression of the truth about man as much as the truth about the world.[3]

To stress the degree to which ideas about moral character and moral imperatives are held in common among all the great civilizations, Ratzinger quotes from Lewis's *The Abolition of Man*, where Lewis expressed this point emphatically:

This thing which I have called for convenience the Tao, and which others may call natural law, or traditional morality, or the first principle of practical reason, or the first platitude is not one among a series of possible systems of value. It is the sole source of all value judgments. If it is rejected all value is rejected. If any value is retained, it is retained. The

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[1] Ibid., 87.
[2] Ibid., 87-88.
[3] Ibid., 88.

effort to refute it and to raise a new system of value in its place is self-contradictory.[1]

In reflection on this text, Cardinal Ratzinger comments: "Modern mankind has been persuaded that human moral values are radically opposed one to another in the same way that religious are. In both cases the simple conclusion is drawn that all of these are human inventions."[2]

For Ratzinger, the theory of evolution plays its part in the devaluation of man. When speaking about evolution, he explains that "evolution" makes the assumption that the new morality depends on the perfection of the species, and the survival of man becomes the moral value. We might also note what Lewis wrote in *The Weight of Glory:* "It is a remarkable thing that such philosophies of Progress or Creative Evolution themselves bear reluctant witness to the truth that our real goal is elsewhere."[3]

For both Lewis and Ratzinger the imperative is learning to appreciate once again that the great moral insights of mankind are just as reasonable and true, indeed truer, than experimental findings in the realm of science and technology. They are truer because they touch more deeply upon the reality of being and they are more crucial for the existence of humanity. In conclusion Cardinal Ratzinger wrote:

What is seen in the ethical realm is essentially the same moral message which lies in creation itself.... The Christian faith, which helps us to recognize creation as creation, is not a handicap for reason.... If morality – as we say – is not the enslavement but the liberation of man, then the Christian faith is the outpost of human freedom.[4]

Like Lewis, Cardinal Ratzinger, recognized the need to appreciate great civilizations of the past. It is Lewis's notion of the abolition of man that Cardinal Ratzinger refers to so eloquently. Most of the ideas expressed by Lewis came out of the Riddell Memorial lectures given by him at the University of Durham in 1943. It was written of him in *The Socratic Digest*: "Mr. Lewis first demonstrated the existence of a massive and immemorial moral law by listing precepts from Greek, Roman, Chinese, Babylonian, ancient Egyptian and Old Norse sources."[5]

The fact that Pope St. John Paul II was a great admirer of C. S. Lewis is attested to by Walter Hooper, the literary executor of the Lewis estate. He also was Lewis's friend and personal secretary during the last months of Lewis's life, and is editor of Lewis's posthumously published works. Hooper, an former

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[1] Ibid., 89.

[2] Ibid., 88.

[3] C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory* (San Francisco: Harper, 1949), 31.

[4] "Consumer Materialism and Christian Hope," 94.

[5] *The Socratic Digest* no. 1 (February 1943): 23.

Anglican priest, converted to the Catholic Church in England in 1988, the year of the Ratzinger Fisher House lecture. He states that his personal meeting with Pope John Paul II was the most memorable encounter of his life. What is lesser known is Pope Benedict XVI's admiration for C. S. Lewis. His lecture at Fisher House removes any doubts.

At the time of Cardinal Ratzinger's lecture, C. S. Lewis was dead twenty-five years, and this year (2018) marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Cardinal's appearance at Fisher House. In the *Preface* to *Mere Christianity* Lewis wrote: "It is in her centre, where her truest children dwell, that each communion is really closest to every other in spirit, if not in doctrine. And this suggests at the centre of each there is something, or a Someone, who against all divergences of belief, all differences of temperament, all memories of mutual persecution, speaks with the same voice."[1]

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[1] *Mere Christianity* (New York: The Macmillan Company,1957), preface, viii.

Jacques Ellul's "Technique"
and Walker Percy's "Alienation":
On the Necessity of their Complementarity

Jason Morgan[*]

ABSTRACT: Walker Percy attributes the poverty of modern man's anthropology, his being "lost in the cosmos," to the modern condition in general, seen as a necessary corollary of the scientism that has driven out awareness of man's alienation and radical unbelonging in the postlapsarian universe. Percy's alienated men are sui generis and need a broader picture of how alienation haunts the very structures of their society. Jacques Ellul supplies this complementary specificity, seeing "technique," or the raft of prerogatives accompanying the domination of human society by technology, as engendering man's surrendering of his own humanity. In technique we find the way to translate Percy's episodic, anecdotal musings into more overarching terms, thus catalyzing Percy's insights and allowing them to roam much more freely across wider expanses of societal territory.

> *Technology is the real metaphysics of the twentieth century.*
> Ernst Jünger

THE MAIN CONTRIBUTION to modern literature of novelist and philosopher Walker Percy (1916-1990) was foregrounding and studying man's radical alienation. Percy returned again and again to the theme of man's blindness to his own alienation – why man is "lost in the cosmos"[2] but cannot seem even to admit the fact of this unnatural *Entfremdung*. Heavily influenced by American philosopher Charles Peirce (1839-1914)[3] and Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), Percy attributed this blindness to man's inability to understand himself on the terms presented to him by science, the default epistemological mode of modernity.[4] Percy's prose lays out how man has become

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[2] Cf. Walker Percy, *Lost in the Cosmos: The Last Self-Help Book* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1983).

[3] On Peirce's semiotics, see John Deely, *The Red Book: The Beginning of Postmodern Times, Or: Charles Sanders Peirce and the Recovery of* Signum (Helsinki: The Meta-physical Club of the University of Helsinki, 2000).

[4] For example, Walker Percy, "The Fateful Rift: The San Andreas Fault in the Modern

alienated by identifying with the universe in which he is only a "wayfarer."

However, while alienation pervades Percy's works, both academic and literary, his depiction of that alienation is anecdotal and episodic, and also often overly generalized. Percy feels deeply that man is alienated, and he describes how this alienation affects a given person in his or her everyday life, including most importantly the interior life, the life of the heart, mind, and soul. In 1961's *The Moviegoer*, for example, Percy follows his protagonist Binx Bolling's Dostoevskian struggle with a gnawing sense of nihilism, focusing on how Bolling confronts and eventually overcomes alienation in his own life. As invaluable as these first-person accounts are, Percy's works carry sparse political and societal commentary, rarely analogizing the alienation of a single person into terms capable of describing cultural alienation as a whole. Percy's work is thus in need of a complementary *oeuvre* able to translate Percy's individualized, personal, anecdotal analysis into a more abstract considerations of the way that alienation deforms society.

This corrective is to be found in the work of French philosopher and social critic Jacques Ellul (1912-1994), and in particular in Ellul's concept of "technique" or the overall subsuming of the human person within the unhuman prerogatives of technology and mechanization. Likewise, Ellul's penetrating analysis of man's societal alienation is unapproachable and unrelatable without the literary corollary to be found in the works of Walker Percy. With fitting irony, Ellul and Percy were alienated from one another – I have not been able to find reference to the other in either man's work.[1] But these two towering figures of twentieth-century letters, both working on the same subject, are fruitfully read in tandem.

Percy's most detailed exposition of his theory of man's alienation is laid out in "The Delta Factor," the first chapter of his 1975 book, *Message in the Bottle: How Queer Man Is, How Queer Language Is, and What One Has to Do with the Other*.[2] Here, Percy's general starting point resembles that of Søren Kierkegaard,

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Mind," *Design for Arts in Education* 91, no. 3 (1990): 2-53, originally published as "The Divided Creature" in *The Wilson Quarterly* (Summer 1989). On Percy's semiotics, see, for example, J. P. Telotte, "Charles Peirce and Walker Percy: From Semiotic to Narrative," *Southern Quarterly* 18 (Spring 1980), and J. P. Telotte, "A Symbolic Structure for Walker Percy's Fiction," in *Critical Essays on Walker Percy*, ed. J. Donald Crowley and Sue Mitchell Crowley (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1989).

[1] However, it is known that Walker Percy owned at least nine volumes by Jacques Ellul. See Joseph Nicholson, "Listening to the Dead: Marginalia in Walker Percy's Library" (MS thesis, School of Information and Library Science, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, April 2006), https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:715ca210-cc60-48e9-b41c-c23b49c3b769.

[2] Walker Percy, *The Message in the Bottle: How Queer Man Is, How Queer*

who noticed that a Hegelian professor who had built an enormous mansion of philosophy, a world-embracing system of thought, had nowhere for himself in the stately building and so had to live in a tumbledown shack nearby.[1] Following Kierkegaard's indictment of Hegelianism's apotheosis of Reason, Percy similarly finds that modern man, despite (and because of) the extraordinary refinement of Enlightenment scientism – capable of explaining particle physics and microbiology and chemistry in great detail – suffers from a rudimentary anthropology that cannot even offer a simple definition of its own subject matter, namely, man himself:

Science cannot utter a single word about an individual molecule, thing, or creature in so far as it is an individual but only in so far as it is like other individuals. The layman thinks that only science can utter the true word about anything, individuals included. But the layman is an individual. So science cannot say a single word to him or about him except as he resembles others. It comes to pass then that the denizen of a scientific-technological society finds himself in the strangest of predicaments: he lives in a cocoon of dead silence, in which no one can speak to him nor can he reply.[2]

The scientific triumphs of the Enlightenment, Percy finds, have ironically erased from the scientific worldview the very human beings who were supposed to have been scientifically enlightened thereby.

Unlike the Judeo-Christian anthropology that had preceded the Enlightenment, an anthropology that had been "cogent enough and flexible enough...to accommodate the several topical alienations of the twentieth century," Percy finds that modern man – unable to "accept this anthropology of alienation [because of its concomitant] notion of an aboriginal catastrophe or Fall, a stumbling block which to both the scientist and the humanist seems even more bizarre than a theology of God, the Jews, Christ, and the Church" – has invented his own anthropology, one that elides man's alienation and instead seeks to ensconce him in the material world.[3] In these anthropologies, and in particular B. F. Skinner's behaviorism, man is a product of his environment. Percy's critique of these anthropologies is that they are fundamentally incapable of understanding man, because each man is radically unique and bound for a destination outside of the visible universe, and therefore not explainable by science on either score. If we are seeking an understanding of man, Percy argues, then we will have to look

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Language Is, and What One Has to Do with the Other (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1975).

[1] See Ralph Wood, "Walker Percy: A Brief Biography," in *A Political Companion to Walker Percy*, ed. Peter Augustine Lawler and Brian A. Smith (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2014).

[2] Percy, "The Delta Factor," in *The Message in the Bottle*, 22.

[3] Ibid., 24.

outside his immediate environs, because man is an utter stranger in the cosmos. Unlike dogfish (one of Percy's favorite examples), each human person must be approached as a *sui generis* being, not as an instantiation of a collective.

Percy calls this indifference to the human person's uniqueness "the loss of the creature." In the chapter by that name in *The Message in the Bottle*, Percy cites the "fallacy of misplaced concreteness"[1] of Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), which is "the mistaking of an idea, a principle, an abstraction, for the real.... As Kierkegaard said, once a person is seen as a specimen of a race or a species, at that very moment he ceases to be an individual."[2] But man is an individual, an individual who can communicate with other individuals. Paradoxically, man is most himself, Percy argues, when he is using language (that is, using symbols): "*Homo loquens*, *Homo symbolificus*."[3] Man's fundamental problem, therefore, is that, on scientific terms, he cannot know himself and therefore cannot know anyone else either.

Percy thus articulated in great detail the causes and the consequences of man's alienation. However, in many ways Percy does not go nearly far enough, especially in understanding alienation as a function of the widespread use of technology and in contextualizing that alienation within the broader social context. The fallacy of misplaced concreteness leads him to lean too heavily on the *sui generis* at the expense of the larger social and cultural problems of his day. For example, in *The Moviegoer*,[4] Binx Bolling recalls having worked for a time in a medical research laboratory but then having lost interest in the bacilli he observed through a microscope.[5] Understanding life, Bolling realized, is not a matter of increasing the power of magnification and looking at it close up. This is a turning point in Bolling's life, the beginning of his disenchantment with the science that he and others thought could explain the world. But how does this scientism of American life affect more than just one fictional character? What are the societal ligaments of widespread alienation? Binx Bolling's personal story is important, and without it we have a hard time understanding what alienation means in our own private lives. And yet, Bolling's story is just one of many. Unfortunately, Percy demurs from extrapolating Bolling's experiences into a bigger social commentary.

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[1] Cf. Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1926). On the "fallacy of misplaced concreteness" in particular, see https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/whitehead/#PrimLit.

[2] Percy, *The Message in the Bottle*, 58.

[3] Ibid., 30.

[4] Walker Percy, *The Moviegoer* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961).

[5] See, for example, Woods Nash, "*The Moviegoer*'s Cartesian Theater: Moviegoing as Walker Percy's Metaphor for the Cartesian Mind," *Perspectives on Political Science* 40, no. 3 (2011): 153-60.

Percy also explores technology's juxtaposition with man's alienation in, for instance, "The Man in the Train" and "Notes for a Novel about the End of the World."[1] Here, too, Percy boils the overarching down to the momentary, the structural down to the fleeting. To be sure, the questions Percy asks are important. How is it, Percy wonders in the former, that it takes a jarring expulsion from the everyday – the breakdown of a commuter train, for instance – to allow men to see the reality of the technology-modulated lives they mindlessly lead? And in the latter, Percy asks what, for example, nuclear scientists at Los Alamos could possibly see in a small church but religious or architectural taxonomy. Can the scientist understand faith? Can modernity approach God? These are questions that need to be asked, but Percy asks them in a way that leaves us with little purchase for expanding them out into a larger social and cultural analysis. How are the various technologies Percy considers, and the blindness to the transcendent and immanent that accompanies them, linked to alienation in general? How are they part and precipitative of it? Why are the scientists at Los Alamos in the first place? Why do men get up every day and drift through commutes and office work that ultimately fulfill no one? In Percy, man is trapped in a slow-motion play of the meaningless, but Percy does not show us the edges and facets of that play, how it iterates into society, culture, politics, ideology, and "technique."

While Percy attributes the poverty of modern man's anthropology to the modern condition in general, seen as a necessary corollary of the scientism that has driven out awareness of man's alienation and radical unbelonging in the postlapsarian universe, Jacques Ellul is more specific, seeing "technique," or the raft of prerogatives accompanying the domination of human society by technology, as engendering man's surrendering of his own humanity.[2] In technique we find the way to translate Percy's episodic, anecdotal musings into more overarching terms, thus catalyzing Percy's insights and allowing them to roam much more freely across wider expanses of societal territory.

Ellul's most forceful investigation and deconstruction of technique is found in his 1954 book *La Technique ou l'enjeu du siècle*. As sociologist Robert K. Merton explains in his foreword to the first English-language edition of Ellul's book:

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[1] Chapters 4 and 5, respectively, of *The Message in the Bottle*.

[2] Cf. William Thomas Jenkins, "Rescuing the Human Mystery: A Study of Walker Percy's Thought in His Fiction, 'Lost In The Cosmos', and Other Writings" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arkansas, 1992), wherein the author points out that both Percy and Ellul "specify how the ascendency of life as a problem instead of a mystery has diminished the lives of countless people." http://www.iupui.edu/~arisbe/rsources/dissabs/jenkins.htm.

By *technique,* [Ellul] means far more than machine technology. Technique refers to any complex of standardized means for attaining a predetermined result. Thus, it converts spontaneous and unreflective behavior into behavior that is deliberate and rationalized. The Technical Man is fascinated by results, by the immediate consequences of setting standardized devices into motion.... Above all, he is committed to the never-ending search for "the one best way" to achieve any designated objective.[1]

The key point is that this prioritizing of technique affects not only individual men but society as a whole:

Ours is a progressively technical civilization: by this Ellul means that the ever-expanding and irreversible rule of technique is extended to all domains of life. It is a civilization committed to the quest for continually improved means to carelessly examined ends. Indeed, technique transforms ends into means. What was once prized in its own right now becomes worthwhile only if it helps achieve something else. And, conversely, technique turns means into ends. "Know how" takes on an ultimate value.[2]

Percy would surely concur with this assessment. But whereas Percy saw alienation in terms of the individual, Ellul's alienation carries a distinctly social (and not just interpersonal/triadic) valence.[3]

Ellul's explication of modern man's loss of individuality thus helps complete Percy's diagnosis of the same phenomenon. By the same token, Percy's Binx Bolling is, in a real sense, Ellul's *l'homme-machine*, the man who has been completely colonized and deadened by technique.[4] Binx Bolling lives in Gentilly Woods, a genteel suburb of New Orleans that Percy portrays as an enclave isolated from wider society. Robert Merton might have had Binx Bolling in mind when he wrote of Ellul's "modern man" in the introduction to *The Technological Society*:

Not understanding what the rule of technique is doing to him and to his world, modern man is beset by anxiety and a feeling of insecurity. He tries to adapt to changes he cannot comprehend.... In Ellul's conception, then, life is not happy in a civilization dominated by technique. Even the outward show of happiness is bought at the price of total acquiescence. The technological society requires men to be content with what they are required to like; for those who are not content, it provides distractions – escape into absorption with technically dominated media of popular culture and communication.... Progress then

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[1] Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, trans. John Wilkinson (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), vi.

[2] Ibid.

[3] See John F. Desmond, "Walker Percy and Suicide," *Modern Age* 47, no. 1 (2005).

[4] The English edition followed ten years later. Ellul, *The Technological Society*, 395. Ellul is in turn citing Julien Offroy de la Mettrie (1709-1751), who used the term in 1748 to advance "the materialistic thesis that the soul, like the muscles, is the result of metabolism" (translator's note).

consists in progressive de-humanization – a busy, pointless, and, in the end, suicidal submission to technique.[1]

Ellul's technique thus makes visible Percy's anthropology of alienation as consequence of man's failure to understand himself dyadically. Conversely, in Percian terms, technique is the process by which man futilely seeks to force his understanding of himself into dyadic categories. This results in his "progressive dehumanization." Submitting to technique is "busy, pointless, and, in the end, suicidal" – just like many of the characters in Percy's novels.

L'homme-machine – "technique man," we might also call him – is a product of what Ellul calls "psychotechnique." In his description of psychotechnique we can see more clearly Ellul's tendency to shift from the individual to the social and political – the tendency that necessitates a supplementary reading of Percy to provide the granularity, the human scale, that Ellul's writing often lacks:

Technique, in the form of psychotechnique, aspires to take over the individual, that is, to transform the qualitative into the quantitative. It knows only two possible solutions: the transformation or the annihilation of the qualitative. It is precisely by way of the former that technique is totalitarian; and when the state becomes too technical, it too becomes totalitarian; it has no alternative.[2]

This tendency pulls Ellul far from the detailed, sympathetic investigation of alienated lives that lends such depth to Percy's novels. Where Percy sees the individual, Ellul sees the mass, even while criticizing this tendency as a function of all-pervading technique. For Ellul, technicians tend to assert that "the Man for whom I am working is Humanity, the Species, the Proletariat, the Race, Man the creature, Man the eternal, even You." However, "all technical systems, whether they be expressed in Communist or Liberal phraseology, come back in the final analysis to this abstraction. All technicians, too.... The abstraction, Man, is only an epiphenomenon in the Marxist sense; a natural secretion of technical progress."[3] Elsewhere, Ellul similarly asserts that "I do not believe there are many proponents left of the idea that man is something in himself, that he has an essence independent of his milieu."[4] Ellul's work is badly in need of a Binx Bolling as a kind of Beatrice of technique, a leaven to the "massification" which Ellul described as smothering the essence of mankind.

For Ellul, technique works precisely by working against man's nature. This deracination of man is evident in Percy's novels, too, but Percy never states the

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[1] Ibid., vii.
[2] Ibid., 286-87.
[3] Ibid., 390.
[4] Ibid., 393.

case as forcefully or in such painstaking detail as Ellul. Consider Ellul's description of man's distance from his own humanity as a product of his reliance upon technology:

This tension, this dichotomy [that is, between humanity and technology], is harder and harder to bear and begins to appear more and more baneful in its influence even to the psychologists, sociologists, and teachers, that is, to the psychotechnicians in general. They want to restore man's lost unity, and patch together that which technical advances have separated. But only one way to accomplish this ever occurs to them, and that is to use technical means. Since the human sciences are applications of technical means, this entails rounding up those elements of the human personality that are still free and forcing ("reintegrating") them into the expanding technical order of things. What yet remains of private life must be forced into line by invisible techniques, which are also implacable because they are derived from personal conviction. Reintegration involves man's covert spiritual activities as well as his overt actions. Amusements, friendship, art – *all* must be compelled toward the new integration, thanks to which there is to be no more social maladjustment or neurosis. Man is to be smoothed out, like a pair of pants under a steam iron.[1]

Ellul's vision of the dehumanization of modern man is thus a vision of man in the aggregate, of man cut off from the uniqueness of his contemplative self.[2] By contrast with Ellul's "thick description" of alienation, alienated man for Percy is not "man" in the collective but "a man," "a woman," individual people whom the novelist notices and describes.

Consider how Percy treats of alienation in this short scene from *The Moviegoer*. There is technology in abundance, but in Percy's telling we can understand how Ellul's bleak vision translates into experience, even if that experience is fictional and vicarious:

On its way home the MG becomes infested with malaise. ["Malaise" is Percy's word for alienation.] It is not unexpected, since Sunday afternoon is always the worst time for malaise. Thousands of cars are strung out along the Gulf Coast, whole families, and all with the same vacant headachy look. There is an exhaust fume in the air and the sun strikes the water with a malignant glint. A fine Sunday afternoon, though. A beautiful boulevard, ten thousand handsome cars, fifty thousand handsome, well-fed and kind-hearted people, and

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[1] Ibid., 410.

[2] For example: "Technique is a means of apprehending reality, of acting on the world, which allows us to neglect all individual differences, all subjectivity....Technique, moreover, creates a bond between men. All those who follow the same technique are bound together in a tacit fraternity and all of them take the same attitude toward reality[,] ...but there is no need for them to know or understand one another. They need only understand the technique involved.... Technique has become the bond between men. By its agency they communicate, whatever their languages, beliefs, or race. It has become, for life or death, the universal language." Ibid., 131-32.

the malaise settles on us like a fall-out. [Note: in "fall-out," the gesture toward the societal implications of technology, albeit rooted in deeply personal terms.]

Sorrowing, hoping against hope, I put my hand on the thickest and innerest part of Sharon's thigh.

She bats me away with a new vigor.

"Son, don't you mess with me."

"Very well, I won't," I say gloomily, as willing not to mess with her as mess with her, to tell the truth.[1]

Without reading the passage from Ellul about psychotechnicians, we would have no definitive idea about what Percy is trying to convey in his short sketch of the afternoon moment in the MG. And yet, without reading Percy's poignant vignette of sorrow and lostness, we would not know, in our human, experiential way, what "man's lost unity is," what it feels like to have had unity, lost it, and to drift through life seeking its return.

Percy and Ellul should be read together for another reason, namely, because Percy is too vague in his etiology, derived from Kierkegaard and Peirce, that science is incapable of allowing man to understand himself. Ellul is more specific: it is not science per se, but technology – the full panoply of dehumanizing technique pervading art, politics, biopolitics, criminal justice, diplomacy, war, education, religion, and all other institutions – that undoes man's humanity and renders him self-unintelligible. "In the coupling of man and machine, a genuinely new entity comes into being," Ellul argues. "[There occurs] the complete adaptation of the man to the machine."[2] And when Ellul says that "technicized man literally no longer exists except in relation to the technical infrastructure,"[3] this is much easier to understand than Percy's generalized "science" as the author of man's "malaise."

Ellul argues that technique is prescientific, and so would likely disagree with Percy's focus on Kierkegaardian anti-Hegelianism as articulative of man's spiritual dislocation. For Ellul, technique is logically and temporally prior to science, but science exacerbates the effects of technique:

Everyone has been taught that technique is an application of science; more particularly (science being pure speculation), technique figures as the point of contact between material reality and the scientific formula. But it also appears as the practical product, the application of the formulas to practical life. This traditional view is radically false. It takes into account only a single category of science and only a short period of time: it is true only for the physical sciences and for the nineteenth century.... Historically, technique preceded science; even primitive man was acquainted with certain techniques. The first techniques

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[1] Percy, *The Moviegoer*, 166.

[2] Ellul, *The Technological Society*, 395.

[3] Ibid., 397.

of Hellenistic civilization were Oriental; they were not derived from Greek science. Thus, historically speaking, the relationship between science and technique ought to be reversed. However, technique began to develop and extend itself only after science appeared; to progress, technique had to wait for science. Bertrand Gille has rightly said, in this historical perspective: 'Technique, by means of repeated experiments, posed the problems, derived general notions and the four primary elements; but it had to wait for the solutions' – which science provided.[1]

This is not Percy's view. For him, it was the Cartesian divide between mind and matter, and the botched Kantian repair attempt that followed it, that led to the loss of the person in the panoply of science. Before the Cartesian/Kantian(/Hegelian) epistemological shift, mankind operated under a sound scholastic semiotics that was no hindrance to the flowering of the human person.[2] Without reading Percy and Ellul in concert, we would miss the implications of these differences.

Also, while Percy is much more adept at personalizing the consequences of science's/technique's hold on the human person, Ellul's critique of science and scientism is more specific and personalized than Percy's. Whereas Percy sees science as a kind of lever prying man out of his spiritual orientation toward God and Heaven (and, at the same time, as a kind of shoehorn forcing man into accepting false at-home-ness in a world in which he is radically alien), Ellul's vision is more tragico-comedic. For Ellul, many scientists are fools, and the failure to see the pervasiveness of technique turns even so-called scientific geniuses into ridiculous figures whom Ellul mercilessly lampoons:

If we take a hard, unromantic look at the golden age [of science] itself, we are struck with the incredible naïveté of these scientists [who are making predictions for science's triumph over man's suffering].... The banality of Einstein's remarks in matters outside his specialty is as astonishing as his genius within it.... Even J. Robert Oppenheimer...is not outside this judgment. His political and social declarations, for example, scarcely go beyond the level of those of the man in the street. And the opinions of the scientists quoted by *l'Express* are not even on the level of Einstein or Oppenheimer. Their pomposities, in fact, do not rise to the level of the average.... [T]he fact that they represent the furthest limits of our scientific worthies must be symptomatic of arrested development or of a mental block. Particularly disquieting is the gap between the enormous power they wield and their critical ability, which must be estimated as null.[3]

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[1] Ibid., 7.

[2] Ellul, by contrast, took a dim view of the scholastics. "The Middle Ages created only one new, complete technique, an intellectual technique, a mode of reasoning: scholasticism. The very name evokes its mediocrity. With its gigantic apparatus, it was in the end nothing but an extremely cumbersome formalism; it wandered for centuries in intellectual blind alleys, notwithstanding the prodigious intellects of the men who used it and were deformed by it. The balance sheet shows no triumphs, even on the historical plane." Ibid., 35.

[3] Ibid., 434-35.

Percy is never this unkind. Percy's humane vision looks with pity on the scientist as also a wayfarer lost in the cosmos. And yet, there is truth to Ellul's harsh denunciation. Not all scientists are humanitarians – far from it. Here, too, we must read Ellul and Percy in tandem if we are to appreciate the full weight of their respective insights into the modern condition.

Ellul's mockery of the scientist hints at the biggest difference between Ellul and Percy on man's loss of subjectivity: Ellul is a pessimist, while Percy is an optimist. Ellul views technique as total and totalizing, a wave that has overtaken mankind and engulfed him. In the past, technique was still at a human scale.[1] Now, however, technique has come to replace man's humanity, putting society beyond his reach[2] and self-knowledge forever out of his mind. It has "reconstituted" man, made him into something other than what he was before technique's rise to dominance.[3] True, technique offers to reform itself, but what is offered is always just more technique.[4] Technique has achieved what Ellul calls "total integration," and has become the event horizon of man's changed mode of being in the world.[5]

For Percy, though, man's alienation is a betrayal of his true human nature. There has been no evolutionary mutation in the human person. Man is still man, as he always was. The fault lies in man's having mistaken the physical universe for his home. There is a way out of technique, however total its victory in the present may appear. Redemption is always possible, and it comes from the Catholic Church, which proposes Truth to which man is free to assent. Percy's crucial distinction between disciples and prophets is germane here. Percy sees Hegelians, and science in general, as (false) prophets, claiming to lead men out of their predicament but always ultimately just making the predicament worse.[6] Up to this point Percy agrees with Ellul. But whereas Ellul does not see how technique can be thwarted, Percy says that the antidote to false prophets is discipleship. The Catholic Church is not a prophet but a disciple, a follower of a man who claimed to be God. The Incarnation, Passion, and Resurrection change everything, make everything new. And the Church has what science lacks: authority to proclaim the fullness of Truth.[7] Ellul's mankind is blind in the murk

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[1] Ibid., 72-74.

[2] For example, ibid., 334-35.

[3] Ibid., 431-32.

[4] Ibid., 336 ff.

[5] Ibid., 410 ff. Elsewhere Ellul calls this phenomenon the "monism" of technique. See, for example, ibid., 94.

[6] See, for example, Gary M. Ciuba, "The Omega Factor: Apocalyptic Visions in Walker Percy's *Lancelot*," *American Literature* 57, no. 1 (March 1985): 98-112.

[7] See Walker Percy, "Why Are You a Catholic? The Late Novelist's Parting Reflections," *Crisis Magazine* (September 1, 1990), https://www.crisismagazine.com/1990/why-

of all-pervasive technique; Percy's mankind is not congenitally incapable of escaping, just lost along the way.

The abiding estrangement of Ellul's Protestantism and Percy's Catholicism forces the reader to consider the overall alienation of mankind in a religious context, even though it is possible to read both Percy and Ellul in isolation, without taking into account the religious traditions that deeply inform their writing. Stereoscopically, the juxtaposition of Ellul the Protestant and Percy the Catholic brings out the full depth of their works, showing that alienation, parsed by both in largely secular terms, is in actuality a religious question. For example, in *The Humiliation of the Word*, Ellul argues that modernity's error has been to believe that truth is visual, when in fact it is verbal.[1] For Ellul, however, the authority to pronounce Truth to mankind was thus not the Word of God, Christ, in the Church, but the Word of God as written in the bible. By contrast, as a Catholic Percy was able to take what might be categorized as a Derridean approach to technique: even if, as Ellul argued, there was nothing beyond technique,[2] at least nothing visible to modern man, there was still, for Percy, the Church, which operated in an entirely different register. Also, Percy's distant mentor, Charles Peirce, recapitulated scholastic semiotics by way of Iberian philosopher John of St. Thomas (1589-1644), an intellectual tradition that Ellul rejected outright. Percy, therefore, saw language as revelatory and participatory in truth greater than man. Words, as bits of triadic communication, are by their very nature inimical to technique. Further, under a scholastic aesthetic, there could be no war between words and images. Technique could not possibly be as totalizing as Ellul asserts.

Taken thematically or as a whole, the works of Jacques Ellul and Walker Percy do not attain their full potential to reveal the alienation of man unless read as complementary halves of the same overall project. Without the other, each *oeuvre* is alienated from its explication of alienation, unable to come around finally to the completion of its task, namely, to show that the human person has been badly misled by the modernity that most people now accept as a given and even welcome as a boon. To overcome this hidden, internal alienation Percy's and Ellul's many volumes should be taken together as complete set.

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are-you-a-catholic-the-late-novelists-parting-reflections.

[1] Jacques Ellul, *The Humiliation of the Word* (bilingual English/French edition) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1985).

[2] Ellul sees even the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola as "technique." Ellul, *The Technological Society*, 52.

Engineering Transportation's Future with Artificial Intelligence

Charles E. Sprouse III[*]

ABSTRACT: Artificial Intelligence (AI) promises driverless fleets of vehicles, traveling by land (road and rail), air, and water, more safely and efficiently than is possible with human operators. Such technological capabilities are among the most disruptive of any technology under development, which explains why transportation AI milestones are earnestly reported by media outlets worldwide. While the public interest is warranted, there is a need for citizens to delve deeper than lamenting that 4 million Americans working as drivers will lose their jobs,[1] or contemplating what they would do if their average commute of 26.9 minutes (each way)[2] was spent riding in an autonomous vehicle. Today, engineers are making design decisions that will define the scope of our privacy, determine our safety, and shape our society, with little legislative guidance. My aim is to describe the landscape of AI transportation technologies, including Autonomous Vehicles (AVs), and offer an engineering roadmap for a transportation future that recognizes the primacy of the human person and the proper role of technology.

C URRENTLY, THE TERM "artificial intelligence" is closely tied to computer programs that use neural networks (named after neurons) to mimic natural intelligence displayed by humans. Neural networks are interconnected layers of nodes, an input layer that receives information, one or more hidden layers ("deep learning" refers to multiple hidden layers), and an output layer that provides the desired result. Each node in the network has a weight, indicating node importance, and each connection has a strength, indicating connection importance. Nodes can also include biasing and functions, such as the sigmoid function. A simple deep learning neural network is shown below, with larger nodes indicating stronger weighting and thicker lines indicating stronger connections:

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[1] Center for Global Policy Solutions, "Stick Shift: Autonomous Vehicles, Driving Jobs, and the Future of Work" (2017).

[2] United States Census Bureau, "American Community Survey" (2017).

Input Layer   **Hidden Layers**   **Output Layer**
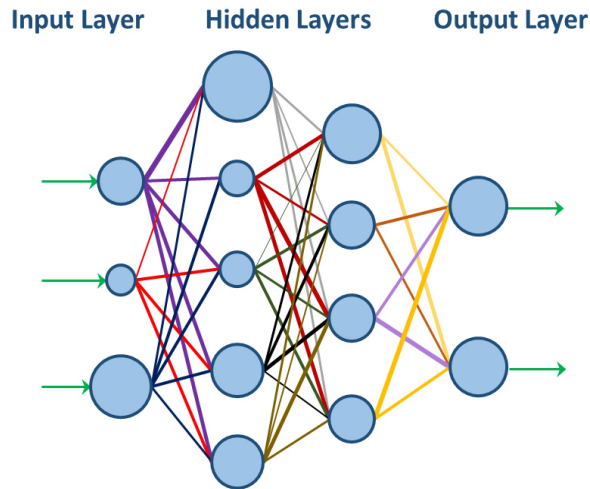
In transportation AI, a common task is to use vehicle sensor data to classify an object near a vehicle. Correctly classifying an object (for example, a pedestrian) requires sending large amounts of "training data" (for example, pedestrians, cyclists, cars, trucks, traffic cones) through the network. As more training data pass through the network, the network tunes the node weights and connection strengths to reduce the occurrence of incorrect classifications, thereby "learning" to classify different objects accurately. After the training data produce a network of various node weights and connection strengths, a previously unseen image of a pedestrian will pass through the network, exciting the nodes and connections most closely tied to pedestrians, thereby causing the output layer node representing a pedestrian to have a higher value/confidence than any other output node, such as a node representing a car. While programmers define the structure of the network (for example, number of nodes in the first hidden layer), they need not know what each hidden layer node codes for physically; rather, programmers determine the point at which the AI program is sufficiently tuned to classify objects (recognizing that the classification accuracy will be <100 percent). Following AI classification, codes typically proceed with a traditional logic-based decision tree (that is, rule-based AI) to determine the vehicle's action, including acceleration and steering.

Current efforts to improve AI programs surround developing faster codes (including removing logic-based rules), and codes with improved "generalization," or ability to perform tasks with little training data. Progress has been made on generalization using techniques like "actor-critic reinforcement learning," which handles acting separately from observing/learning; however, experts disagree on the level of "intelligence" that has been demonstrated and the

ability of current methods to significantly improve at generalization. Regardless, generalization will inevitably improve, and the AI conversation will become increasingly uncomfortable for many Catholics, especially those who question the use of the term "artificial intelligence."

In computer science and engineering, artificial intelligence is a broad field of research dedicated to imparting humanlike cognitive abilities into machines, including artificial intelligence programs (more precisely known as Artificial Narrow Intelligence [ANI]) that imitate human thinking in narrow situations and Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) programs that can equal humans in performing any cognitive function. Most experts working on these programs acknowledge that it may take decades to achieve AGI, which deviates significantly from the information the average person receives from the media, where "Artificial General Intelligence Is Here" makes for a great headline.[1]

As AGI moves closer to becoming reality, we should acknowledge that computer programs are superhuman in their rate of processing information (for example, the billions of miles of training data used to tune transportation AI programs) and in making decisions within a precisely defined action/response structure – even with vast possibilities, such as Deep Blue in chess, AlphaGo in Go. However, the coding behind the world's most advanced robot maid is still living in "the Chinese room" of Searle,[2] using its manual (a computer code) to achieve a desired output (for example, retrieving a beer from the fridge).

Future programs will be able to perform increasingly cerebral activities, especially with advances in neuroscience, but it is unclear (except to computationalists) how such programs would be able to understand the meaning of any activity. As AI develops, Catholics should realize that most computer scientists and engineers knowingly base claims of AGI on a utilitarian, task-based view of human thought, and are not hostile to recognizing differences between human thought and the abilities of computer programs.

Artificial Intelligence Applications in Transportation

Implementation of AI is already occurring in many areas of transportation and driving transformative changes. If you can imagine vehicles being able to do something intelligent, someone is likely working on that right now. In fact, Ecomotion, a smart transportation community, reported 580 startup companies in

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[1] Aaron Krumins, "Artificial Intelligence is Here, and Impala Is Its Name," https://www.extremetech.com/extreme/275768-artificial-general-intelligence-is-here-and-impala-is-its-name.

[2] John Searle, "Minds, Brains, and Programs," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 3, no. 3 (1980).

2018.[1] Below is a sampling of AI transportation technologies and their stage of development:

Application #1 – Fleet and Route Optimization: These technologies, sometimes lumped under the name "self-learning," determine the most fuel-, time-, and/or cost-efficient collection of vehicles (cars, vans, semis, drones, boats, planes) to meet an organization's needs. Going further, airplane flights are also determined by AI, allowing packages to arrive on time and airlines to minimize fuel costs, which can constitute up to 30 percent of their operating expenses.[2] Also, as has been widely done through apps like Google Maps, AI can predict the time and fuel required by different routes.

Application #2 – Car-Driver Communication: With technologies like Volvo's Driver Sense Estimation, released in 2007, sensors within vehicles have used AI to make sure that drivers are paying sufficient attention to driving (including warning drivers who are sleepy or asleep). Other systems offer personalized vehicle information displays and cabin arrangements (seat, steering wheel, mirrors, and so on), and respond to visual and voice commands. With several nationwide 5G networks being developed, plans also include car-to-car communication, allowing an additional stream of data that can improve safety.

Application #3 – Autonomous Vehicles: The Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) defines five levels of autonomy, which lead to more driver freedom, increased safety, and faster parking.[3]

> Level 0: No Automation. A traditional vehicle where driving is completely reliant on humans.
>
> Level 1: Driver Assistance. Human-controlled vehicle with driving assist features, like Volvo's introduction of blind spot warnings in 2007.[4]
>
> Level 2: Partial Automation. Vehicle autonomously performs some functions for the driver, such as Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB) systems, first displayed by Mercedes-Benz in 2002.[5]
>
> Level 3: Conditional Automation. Vehicle fully assumes the role of driver, but the driver must be prepared to resume control at all times upon notification by the vehicle. This level has been achieved by Audi on the A8 with a LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) system.[6]

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[1] People and Computers, "Future of AI 2018 Conference" (Lago, Israel, 2018).

[2] "Fuel costs of airlines worldwide from 2011 to 2019, as percentage of expenditure," https://www.statista.com/statistics/591285/aviation-industry-fuel-cost/.

[3] SAE International, "Levels of Driving Automation" (2014).

[4] Volvo Car USA, "What's New: 2007 Volvo XC90" (2006), https://www.media.volvocars.com/us/en-us/media/pressreleases/3835.

[5] Mercedes-Benz display of S-Class, "Paris Autoshow" (2002).

[6] Audi display of A8, "Audi Summit" (Barcelona, 2017).

Level 4: High Automation. Under certain conditions, such as the highway driving exhibited by an Otto semi-truck in 2016, the vehicle is capable of performing all driving functions.[1]

Level 5: Full Automation. Simply put, the steering wheel is optional; there are no conditions under which a driver is necessary. No such vehicles are currently available.

Application #4 – Vehicles on Demand: Building on ridesharing technologies like Uber, and shared ownership models used for high-cost purchases such as houses and airplanes, companies are aiming to make vehicle ownership optional. In this framework, instead of vehicles being privately owned and idle 95 percent of the time, users could "pay by the mile." By splitting up vehicle costs, more expensive vehicles, such as those with autonomous driving systems or large battery packs, will become accessible to more drivers. To manage the high workload of shared vehicles, they are expected to be "self-healing," with additional vehicle monitoring equipment to manage vehicle upkeep. A study "A New Relationship – People and Cars" by the IBM Institute for Business Value found self-healing to be the technology that drivers found most appealing.[2]

With thousands of transportation technologies under development, inexact projections of future component costs and performance, and underdeveloped regulations, the shape of the far-term transportation landscape is impossible to predict. Still, there appears to be a large opportunity for autonomous delivery drones (such as Amazon's PrimeAir),[3] autonomous delivery vehicles (road-, rail-, and water-based), and autonomous passenger air vehicles (such as Boeing's eVTOL aircraft).[4] Each of these, along with the most widely discussed smart transportation technology, autonomous (road) vehicles (AVs), will need to overcome the many of the same design challenges in order to contribute to transportation's artificial intelligence revolution.

Autonomous Vehicle (AV) Function

Currently, autonomous vehicles are testing in several states, with very similar hardware. The heart of autonomous driving systems is LiDAR, which uses

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[1] Guinness World Records, "Longest continuous journey by a driverless and autonomous lorry" (2016), http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/361214-%E2%80%8Blongest-continuous-journey-by-an-autonomous-vehicle.

[2] IBM Institute for Business Value, "A New Relationship: People and Cars" (2016), https://www-935.ibm.com/services/multimedia/A-new-relationship-Exec-Report-v3.pdf.

[3] Amazon, "First Prime Air Delivery" (2016), https://www.amazon.com/Amazon-Prime-Air/b?ie=UTF8&node=8037720011.

[4] Boeing, "Boeing Autonomous Passenger Air Vehicle Completes First Flight" (2019), https://boeing.mediaroom.com/2019-01-23-Boeing-Autonomous-Passenger-Air-Vehicle-Completes-First-Flight.

rapid laser pulses (>100,000 pulses/second) to create a 3D map of the surroundings of the vehicle. Using AI, the system classifies each object in the field of view (car, cyclist, bus, pedestrian, and so on) and monitors objects' motion and possible changes in status (such as lane change or a cyclist raising his arm before turning). Further information is integrated into the on-board computer's AI driving program through preloading high-definition roadmaps, cameras for additional sensing of the vehicle's environment (for example, traffic light color), radar (or LiDAR modules) to monitor distances, and antennae for GPS positioning. This architecture may change, such as if Tesla's quest for full autonomy without LiDAR materializes; however, existing systems operate similarly, with some featuring added complexity (for example, Otto's 2016 semi-truck featured three LiDAR beams and real-time monitoring by engineers).

Autonomous Vehicle (AV) Design

As Ibo van de Poel's *Ethics and Engineering Design* makes clear, design is not morally neutral, and technology is not simply a means to an end.[1] Instead, van de Poel emphasizes that the following stages of the design process intrinsically involve ethics: defining the requirements and goals of a technology, deciding from among different design concepts (which meet requirements and goals with varied effectiveness and efficiency), and considering cultural effects. More broadly, I would say that all design stages involve ethics, as the way in which each stage is conducted impacts the final product. Early on, the decision of whether to undertake a project involves ethics, as does planning to include sufficient testing and forming teams with adequate expertise. Moreover, after release, ethics demands that attention is paid to the safety and performance of the product.

Engineers' ethical responsibility stems from their unique ability to discover applied scientific knowledge, to spread beauty, and to solve technical problems for the betterment of mankind. As a fundamental principle of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers states, "[e]ngineers shall hold paramount the safety, health and welfare of the public."[2] One could say, then, that the engineering profession is responsible for both the work it does and the work it fails to do. Thus, a question of primary importance is, "Should engineers develop autonomous vehicles?"

Most people would agree that humans are already good drivers, in terms of avoiding crashes, with only one crash per 165,000 miles traveled.[3] However, even

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[1] Ibo van de Poel, "Ethics and Engineering Design," IEEE International Symposium on Technology and Society (2000).

[2] American Society of Mechanical Engineers, "Code of Ethics of Engineers" (2012).

[3] Chris Taylor (citing data from the Federal Highway Administration and Allstate), "Google Driverless Cars Safer Than You" (2012), https://mashable.com/2012/08/07/

with the infrequency of crashes and the improved safety of modern vehicles, the United States still lost 37,133 people in crash deaths in 2017.[1] Engineering has a role in reducing the number of crashes and crash deaths, and a promising avenue toward that goal is the development of autonomous vehicles. Furthermore, autonomous vehicles free "drivers" for leisurely activities of their choice, whether that be interacting with passengers, reading, enjoying the beauty of nature, or pondering life's deepest questions. For certain tasks, vehicles could travel unoccupied, such as when going in for maintenance. Or, if people still desire to pilot vehicles, they could do so with enhanced safety assistance and a customized experience (for example, personalized information display, traffic notifications, parking spot information). With these and other benefits, and since autonomous vehicles are not objectively immoral, engineering's answer to whether autonomous vehicles should be developed is an emphatic "yes!"

Considering that thousands of projects are underway in smart transportation, engineering has clearly and correctly responded to the promise of AVs. The next questions concern the structure and goals of the projects. With respect to structure, engineers are following the best practices of closed-course testing, speed-limited testing using high-definition maps, and human-supervised testing with override capabilities, all of which are valuable for public safety. Also, as the technology has proven more difficult to develop than originally expected, companies have rightly delayed release dates and paused or even discontinued troublesome projects. If a critique is to be made, it might surround the slow expansion of autonomous emergency braking systems, which have been shown to reduce rear-end crashes by an impressive 38 percent.[2] Regardless of the marketability of AEB systems, such a dramatic enhancement of vehicle safety should have been aggressively implemented. Despite the lag, twenty automakers (responsible for >99 percent of vehicle sales) have now agreed to make AEB systems standard equipment on all new cars by September 1st, 2022.[3] Hopefully manufacturers will be less hesitant to expand technologies that monitor whether drivers are paying sufficient attention, such as Volvo's Driver Sense Estimation. Such technologies, though, naturally lead to other challenges of AVs that involve questions of privacy and autonomy.

Privacy safeguards are essential design features in AVs that telemetrically

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google-driverless-cars-safer-than-you/#TTuISEy3Igq4.

[1] National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, "2017 Fatal Motor Vehicle Crashes: Overview" (2018).

[2] Brian Fildes et al., "Effectiveness of low speed autonomous emergency braking in real-world rearend crashes," *Accident Analysis and Prevention* 81 (2015): 24-29.

[3] National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, "NHTSA-IIHS Announcement on AEB" (2017), https://www.nhtsa.gov/press-releases/nhtsa-iihs-announcement-aeb.

track driving speeds, lane changes, destinations, and so on, and record audio/video inside vehicles. Just a few potential abuses include the sharing of driving habits and destinations with insurers and marketing firms. Currently, with U.S. privacy protections (especially regarding technology) trailing behind the General Data Protection Regulation of the European Union, and with the National Highway Traffic Administration's standard AV regulations still under development and not likely to be privacy-focused, engineers of AV systems have significant freedom to decide what data are collected, how data are stored, and what controls users have over data collection.

Engineers would be mistaken to consider it immoral not to collect as much AV data as possible, even though additional data improve AI program performance, thereby saving lives. Instead, AI systems should be designed to give users the choice of opting in to data-reporting in order to improve system performance, being particularly transparent regarding data that are of a personal or sensitive nature. As stated in "The Malicious Use of Artificial Intelligence: Forecasting, Prevention, and Mitigation,"[1] AI systems must borrow the best practices from all arenas, including the most advanced security measures to prevent hacking and the best encryption/anonymization protocols to protect privacy. Furthermore, with car-to-car communication and increasingly accurate methods of identification, AVs should not indiscriminately report data on other vehicles. In sum, vehicle owners should have the option to have their AVs locally collect the data necessary for vehicles to function properly without having the data be reported to the automaker or third parties.

The autonomy of vehicle owners is also at risk as AVs become far safer than human-piloted vehicles, building on Google's 300,000-mile stretch without an accident in 2012.[2] A widely recognized benefit of AVs is the freedom of owners not to drive; however, many citizens enjoy driving and recognize the skills and knowledge that come from driving, such as integrating sensory information, participating in an ordered public system, and recognizing physical limitations. As vehicles without steering wheels enter the marketplace,[3] manufacturers and legislators should still see to it that vehicle owners, including AV owners, have the option to drive. In other cases, engineers wrongly preserve autonomy, mostly

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[1] Miles Brundage et al., "The Malicious Use of Artificial Intelligence: Forecasting, Prevention, and Mitigation," Collaborative Report from 14 Different Institutions and Organizations (2018).

[2] Frederic Lardonois, "Google's Self-Driving Cars Complete 300K Miles Without Accident Deemed Ready For Commuting" (2012), https://techcrunch.com/2012/08/07/google-cars-300000-miles-without-accident/.

[3] Andrew Hawkins, "GM will make an autonomous car without steering wheel or pedals by 2019" (2018), https://www.theverge.com/2018/1/12/16880978/gm-autonomous-car-2019-detroit-auto-show-2018.

in relation to level 3 (conditional) automation: these are vehicles or driving features that are not capable of operating without human supervision/intervention, so when driver-monitoring systems sense an inattentive driver, or when a system requiring "hands on the wheel at all times" senses the absence of hands, the system should quickly move from passive notifications to acting autonomously and overriding the driver. Simply put, engineers need to safeguard against the danger of users attempting to overextend an AVs capabilities.

Another important aspect of AV design, which unfortunately has been explicitly barred from discussion by senior engineers in Q&A sessions at high-profile venues, includes the ethical dilemmas encountered by AVs on roadways. For example, if a mother with a baby carriage emerges directly in front of a vehicle, and any change of direction would be lethal to those inside that vehicle, what should engineers have the vehicle do? The "trolley problem" has now become the "programmer's problem," and engineers, as proximate agents, must give each ethical dilemma full consideration instead of a simplistic or utilitarian assessment. In all situations, the vehicle should do what a good driver would do, not by calculating "the right answer" but by considering that all lives are valuable, and that the death of children/innocents is especially grievous. In Catholic ethics, not only must oversimplified decision-making be avoided, but the intent of the algorithms must also be moral. For example, an acceptable end is to protect vehicle passengers, even those of advanced age, out of respect for the elderly. Contrarily, engineers could immorally reach the same decision by coding to protect the vehicle's passengers at all costs in order to make AVs more marketable.

A recent publication in *Nature*[1] gathered public opinions on these "unavoid-able accident scenarios," aggregating 39.61 million decisions across 233 countries. Awad et al. found a strong preference for sparing humans over animals, sparing more lives, and sparing young lives, and they suggest these preferences as possible building-blocks of machine ethics. However, the authors also note that the German Ethics Commission has already proposed rules[2] against distinctions based on personal features (such as age), revealing a potential tension between legislative motives and public mores. Further complicating matters, the authors also note the importance of consensus on machine ethics, since even if ethicists and engineers agree on ethical principles, AVs will not proliferate without public support of the embedded machine ethics. It is also well known that citizens report a *general* preference that AVs should take action to avoid pedestrians, but at the same time they would prefer inaction on the part of *their own* AVs, pitting citizens

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[1] Edmond Awad et al., "The Moral Machine experiment," *Nature* 563 (2018): 59-64.

[2] Cristoph Luetge, "The German Ethics Code for Automated and Connected Driving," *Philosophy & Technology* 30 (2017): 547-58.

against owners. Taken further, a sales pitch of "this car will not actively change direction to your detriment unless you are or become old" is certainly not compelling. Clearly, there is public desire for "opacity of car's decision-making algorithms," and research has also found the public to be very sensitive to AV accidents.[1] Awad et al. emphasize that efforts in the area of machine ethics "would be useless if citizens were to disagree with their solution," and "any attempt to devise artificial intelligence ethics must be at least cognizant of public morality." As engineers are monitoring the preferences of an increasingly ideologically diverse population, they should realize that the profession's increased role in ethical decision-making is accompanied by a greater responsibility to promote sound machine ethics in the public square.

Environmentally, with such varied and rapidly developing autonomous capabilities, a design challenge is to avoid outfitting vehicles with hardware that will quickly become obsolete or unnecessary, resulting in landfills full of useless AV system hardware. Instead, care must go toward outfitting vehicles with hardware that can be updated to add autonomic capability, such as software updates that more effectively use existing sensors, and computers that can accept updated graphics cards. In today's throwaway society, another environmental concern is the longevity of AV system components, with cost and quality being pressured downward by automakers' 7- to 8-year design life and the added expense of AV systems. While citizens will rightly be on the lookout for "discount AV systems," the average consumer will have little ability to judge quality on the lot, without decades (or even years) of proven performance. Since AV system costs are high, the public should consider whether tax credits should be offered to accelerate the development and adoption of AVs. Governments that instituted generous tax credits to accelerate electric vehicle adoption, both for environmental and anthropological benefits, could be rightly criticized for not similarly promoting life-saving AV technologies.

Socially, designers and managers should generously employ citizens currently working as drivers as part of their ongoing efforts to refine AI driving technology, which builds on the existing expertise of drivers, while also minimizing the employment disruption of AVs. Not only will hiring drivers into the developmental portion of the technology be beneficial during the technology's development, but the familiarity drivers will gain with AVs will position them for permanent jobs in the growing AV industry. Also, companies should increase transparency by entering the National Highway and Traffic Administration's voluntary AV data-reporting program and should "issue public statements only in

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[1] Azim Shariff et al., "Psychological roadblocks to the adoption of self-driving vehicles," *Nature Human Behavior* 1, no. 10 (2017).

an objective and truthful manner,"[1] particularly when commenting on AV incidents. One could imagine, based on the previously described AI program structure (with nodes of unknown physical coding), that companies could claim not to understand why an AV took an action that caused a crash, but unless the input data were lost in the crash, that claim would be less than truthful. As a final design point, engineers should also strive to preserve vehicles' data at the time of incidents, since those data are the most important for system improvement. Improvements to AV systems should be should be lauded; however, at the same time, engineers should take care to prevent any social devaluation of the human intellect.

Conclusion

AI is leading a major transformation of the transportation industry, with autonomous vehicles on the road today, and with the long-time goal of full autonomic capability within reach. Advances in AI programs, such as the use of deep learning neural networks in recent years, have reduced fuel costs and harmful emissions through route/fleet optimization, prevented accidents through autonomous emergency braking and driver sense technology, and freed drivers from highway driving, allowing them to engage in other activities. Going forward, the opportunity exists to save tens of thousands of lives each year with AVs.

As engineering pursues smart transportation technologies, including full automation, the profession assumes a large ethical responsibility. AV design duties can be fulfilled only by drawing from the best practices of all fields of study, which include protecting public safety during AV testing, using safeguards to protect user data and prevent AV hacking, incorporating connectivity to improve safety and performance, working cooperatively to develop informed legislation, and judiciously developing decision-making algorithms that respect the primacy of human life, especially the innocent and the vulnerable.

Engineers have admirably switched back from allowing AV AI programs to determine actions based solely on neural network outputs, which do not have an ethical filter, to using AI outputs as inputs to traditional decision trees. While the switch was largely motivated by poor AI performance, hard-coded ethics should remain a part of AI systems, despite the additional computational burden. Having AI programs, with layers of nodes with undefined connections to the physical world, make life-or-death decisions in the mold of the "trolley problem" would be a big moral failure. Furthermore, ethics-based components of decision trees must not be simplistic, and must be developed with moral intentions, in addition to pursuing moral outcomes. Since all members of the public share the same

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[1] American Society of Mechanical Engineers, "Code of Ethics of Engineers" (2012).

roadways, these algorithms should be transparent and deemed acceptable by society.

As AV technologies mature, advances in system performance will increasingly conflict with personal privacy and autonomy. Engineers should give AV owners the option report driving data for future AI improvements, as opposed to forcing data-sharing. The data collected by an AV, from travel histories to audio/video recordings of drivers, are sufficiently personal that owners may justifiably desire to maintain ownership of that data. Of course, AV owners who do agree to report data should be informed of any other uses of that data, including selling it to marketers. When AVs significantly outperform human drivers, automakers should not completely eradicate steering wheels (that is, the human ability actively to drive), for many consider driving enjoyable and developmental, and (at least in the near-term) scenarios exist where humans will outperform AVs (for example, driving on wet or icy roads, parking in a new garage, or driving with a malfunctioning AV system component).

This is an important opportunity for engineers to fulfill their duty to society, and for society to fulfill its duty to itself, to work together to save lives and increase leisure, and to preserve privacy and autonomy. We should not passively accept a future where machines use simplistic or utilitarian ethics, or where the respect of human privacy and autonomy is not ubiquitous among AV manufacturers.

Interior Dialogue, or Self-Talk:
Psychological and Theological Foundations

David M. Cutton[*]

ABSTRACT: Self-talk is categorized as a cognitive learning strategy harnessed to provide instruction, motivation, attentional focus, encouragement, relaxation, and so on. Conscience has been described both as the voice of God and one's own voice, simultaneously; and conscience is influenced by other human voices. The voices may also include the media (including social media), which influence our self-talk and our judgments of conscience. Conscience could also be considered one of the sources of self-talk. Periodically, self-talk involves our true inspirations, including judgments about one's better and worse motivations, motivations that involve conscience. This paper argues that there are three steps toward effective use of self-talk, comparable to the steps in the practice of the virtue of prudence.

PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE in theology, psychology, kinesiology, and Christian bioethics has explored the nature of "self-talk," "inner speech," "interior monologue," or "interior dialogue." Grattan Brown, for example, referred to an "inner voice" and "dialogue with oneself" when discussing conscience.[1] St. Augustine captures much the same reality in his dialogue with God: "I will do this or that – I say to myself in that vast recess of my mind, with its full store of so many and such great images – and this or that will follow upon it. O that this or that could happen! God prevent this or that. I speak to myself in this way."[2] And Benedict XVI has written: "To find fulfillment one must exert an effort to contemplate God so as to move 'toward a spiritual life, a life in dialogue with God.'"[3]

In the kinesiology and psychology literature, self-talk has been categorized as a learning strategy that is cognitive (for example, perception and processing of

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[1] Grattan T. Brown, "Discovery and Revelation: The Consciences of Christians, Public Policy, and Bioethics Debate," *Christian Bioethics: Non-Ecumenical Studies in Medical Morality* 18, no. 1 (2012): 41–58.

[2] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, ed. A. C. Outler (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955), 131.

[3] Benedict XVI, *Great Christian Thinkers: From the Early Church through the Middle Ages* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011), 59.

information) and behavioral (for example, affected by changes in physical approach). It can be harnessed to provide instruction, motivation, attentional focus, encouragement, relaxation, and so on.[1] Practitioners include surgeons, elite athletes, students, musicians, businessmen, and even small children. Self-talk can occur before, during, or following a presentation, action, or interaction with others, and it has been found to be effective for learning and performance enhancement in both novices and experts.[2] One of its functions is to focus attention and to direct emphasis on what is most important at a particular point in time, or to help one to prepare, perform, and/or reflect.

Furthermore, God discerns our self-talk; it is not our secret. He knew what the Pharisees and the Apostles were turning over in their minds and muttering to themselves. "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin" (Heb 4:15).

Frequently self-talk involves restating what we recently heard, saying to ourselves what we may anticipate saying to someone else, rehearsing what to say the next time we may meet with a person, or reflecting on an upcoming situation. "He was rude to me.... I should have left the room immediately.... Next time I will say *this*.... No, I will say *that*.... That sounds good to me!" Surgeons and musicians may dialogue within themselves about an upcoming event, going over details in their minds, whether in anticipation or reflectively after the fact. "Remember to emphasize.... Don't forget to.... Focus your attention on..." this patient's sternum area, the new guitar strings, whatever. An entrepreneur may rehearse an upcoming conversation with a client, reviewing expected questions and appropriate responses to them. He may also reflect afterward on how the conversation went, what was said, and how he should prepare for the next meeting. In kinesiology, examples include the instructional and motivational self-talk of Leo, a power lifter, as a learning strategy:

This is it, the last heavy squat workout of the training cycle. I feel so good after finishing the heavy sets today. While it's not the heaviest day of the training cycle...the most demanding ...don't get hung up on what's on the bar, I'm here to lift whatever it is.

Excellent work out! I feel better than last week. No issues . . .

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[1] J. Hardy, "Speaking Clearly: A Critical Review of the Self-talk Literature," *Psychology of Sport and Exercise* 7 (2006): 81-97.

[2] Ibid.; Y. Theodorakis, A. Hatzigeorgiadis, and N. Zourbanos, "Cognitions: Self-Talk and Performance," in *Oxford Handbook of Sport and Performance Psychology. Part Two: Individual Psychological Processes in Performance*, ed. S. Murphy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 191-212.

Leo's focus of attention, on where his concentration and resources should be attending toward was used again, mostly during the world championship competition: 'Stay focused. That's not important. Just make attempts. Right here, right now.' Also, Leo tried to block out distractions such as actions or objects around him, and would refocus self-talk.[1]

Another brief example: while trying to teach the technique of the tennis forehand, Cutton and Landin developed with success the following behavioral self-talk words for students to use while they performed the groundstroke: "ready," "turn," "step," "hit," and "finish." These are intended to focus attention on correct execution or behaviors.[2]

Sources of Self-talk

What is the source of our interior dialogue or self-talk? "The addressee of such internal utterances can be not only a part of the self in the strict sense (a personal viewpoint) but also an imaginary other (someone else's perspective)."[3] Do our words to ourselves originate from us, or could they be coming from external sources? Psychologist Charles Fernyhough has called self-talk

a way to attain that distance...understand the voice as coming from a nonphysical entity. More people...make sense of voice-hearing...within a spiritual framework, than they do within any other...a spiritual interpretation would seem to flow naturally.... [I]t seems plausible to me that many believers would see some of their ordinary thoughts as having a supernatural origin.[4]

Conscience could be considered one of the sources of self-talk. At times, it involves our true motivations, including a judgment about our better and worse motivations, motivations that could involve conscience. Brown states, "[St.] Paul understands conscience to be a sort of dialogue within the self in a fashion similar to the Greek understanding of conscience as a witness."[5] Furthermore, in *Gaudium et spes* we read:

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[1] D. M. Cutton and C. Hearon, "Self-talk Functions: Portrayal of an Elite Power-lifter," *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 119, no. 2 (2014): 10-12.

[2] D. M. Cutton and D. Landin, "The Effects of Self-talk and Augmented Feedback on Learning the Tennis Forehand," *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* 19, no. 3 (2007): 288-303.

[3] Malgorzata M. Puchalska-Wasyl, "Self-Talk: Conversation with oneself? On the Types of Internal Interlocutors," *The Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied* 149, no. 5 (2015): 444.

[4] Charles Fernyhough, *The Voices Within: The History and Science of How We Talk to Ourselves* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2016), 244-45.

[5] Brown, "Discovery and Revelation," 43.

Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment.... For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God.... His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths.[1]

Furthermore, we read in the *Catechism*: "When he listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God speaking."[2]

Is the voice we "hear" really our own voice, or are we replaying something from our memory? Are we remembering a fine homily presented to us during Mass the previous Sunday, a statement from a news report we heard this morning, words in the book we read last night, or something we saw on one of our electronic devices?

We can use self-talk to reflect and discern whether to incorporate certain ideas, concepts, and suggestions into our developing conscience, or even put them to immediate use as we deliberate about a particular course of action. Brown maintains: "Conscience nonetheless expresses itself as a type of dialogue within oneself that is influenced by dialogue with others, especially with society."[3]

Moreover, we may fruitfully incorporate Catholic scripture in self-talk. The Bible provides us with virtuous material to read, reflect on, contemplate, and pray with, and to integrate with the of ideas and information in our long-term memory in the cacophony – or harmony, as the case may be – of self-talk that may assist us in a variety of endeavors.

Brown asserts, "conscience is 'inward knowledge' and 'moral consciousness,' like an inner voice that sounds during wakefulness, urging good actions and avoiding evil ones, and working out which is which."[4] It seems reasonable to hold that conscience can include both the voice of God and our own voices, and we may also assume that conscience is influenced by other human voices. The teachings of St. Ignatius of Loyola may suggest that the voice with prudent discernment of spirits, or spiritual discrimination, if it does not speak against the service and praise of God or the true love of others and is not contrary to charity or hope, may truly be input from the Holy Spirit:

[The] Spiritual Exercises is meant every way of examining one's conscience, of meditating, of contemplating, of praying vocally and mentally, and of performing other spiritual actions, as will be said later. For as strolling, walking and running are bodily exercises, so every way of preparing and disposing the soul to rid itself of all the disordered tendencies,

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[1] *Gaudium et spes*, 16; *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC), 1776.

[2] CCC, 1777.

[3] Brown, "Discovery and Revelation," 41.

[4] Ibid., 42.

and, after it is rid, to seek and find the Divine Will as to the management of one's life for the salvation of the soul, is called a Spiritual Exercise.[1]

God allows the enemy to challenge and test us, in the process we come to rely more on God's grace and are strengthened in our faith. St. Augustine expresses the struggle: "While I talked about these things, and the winds of opinions veered about and tossed my heart hither and thither, time was slipping away."[2] And further: "Let them perish from thy presence, O God, as vain talkers, and deceivers of the soul perish, who, when they observe that there are two wills in the act of deliberation, go on to affirm that there are two kinds of minds in us: one good, the other evil."[3]

At the conclusion of the test, we hope to find the authority of God speaking through our conscience. As Peter Kreeft has commented:

[C]onscience has absolute, exceptionless, binding moral authority over us, demanding unqualified obedience. But only a perfectly good, righteous divine will has this authority and a right to absolute, exceptionless obedience. Therefore conscience is the voice of the will of God.[4]

Kreeft also suggests, perhaps echoing Benedict XVI,[5]

Of course, we do not always hear that voice aright. Our consciences can err. That is why the first obligation we have, in conscience, is to form our conscience by seeking the truth, especially the truth about whether this God has revealed to us.[6]

And to connect all this to the issue of self-talk, we may consider St. John Paul II's words in *Veritatis splendor*:

The importance of this interior *dialogue of man with himself* can never be adequately appreciated. But it is also a *dialogue of man with God*, the author of the law, the primordial image and final end of man. Saint Bonaventure teaches that 'conscience is like God's herald and messenger; it does not command things on its own authority, but commands them as coming from God's authority, like a herald when he proclaims the edict of the king. This is why conscience has binding force.' Thus it can be said that conscience bears witness

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[1] St. Ignatius of Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, trans. Elder Mullan, S.J. (Library of Alexandria, 2009), 9-10, https://itunes.apple.com/us/book/the-spiritual-exercises-of-st-ignatius-of-%20loyola/id523779648?mt=11.

[2] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 76.

[3] Ibid., 105.

[4] Peter Kreeft, "The Argument from Conscience," par. 19, http://www.peterkreeft.com/topics/conscience.htm.

[5] See Benedict XVI, *On Conscience* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007).

[6] Kreeft, "The Argument from Conscience," par. 20.

to man's own rectitude or iniquity to man himself but, together with this and indeed even beforehand, conscience is *the witness of God himself*, whose voice and judgment penetrate the depths of man's soul, calling him *fortiter et suaviter* [*firmly and gently*] to obedience.[1]

Finally, on discerning the inner dialogue of God among all of the distractions of everyday life, Blessed John Henry Newman writes:

For we are between two, the inward voice speaking one thing within us, and the world speaking another without us; the world tempting, and the Spirit whispering warnings. Hence faith becomes necessary; in other words, God has most mercifully succored us in this contest, by speaking not only in our hearts, but through the sensible world; and this Voice we call revelation. God has overruled this world of sense, and put a word in its mouth, and bid it prophesy of Him. And thus there are two voices even in the external world; the voice of the tempter calling us to fall down and worship him, and he will give us all; and the voice of God, speaking in aid of the voice in our hearts: and as love is that which hears the voice within us, so faith is that which hears the voice without us; and as love worships God within the shrine, faith discerns Him in the world; and as love is the life of God in the solitary soul, faith is the guardian of love in our intercourse with men; and, while faith ministers to love, love is that which imparts to faith its praise and excellence.[2]

Yet certainly so it is, that in spite of the world's evil, after all, He is in it and speaks through it, though not loudly.... Without faith, we either do not perceive Him at all in the ordinary matters and accidents of life or we hear His voice in a distorted way which easily leads to superstition or following after false religious professions.[3]

Effective Use of Self-talk

How can we effectively manage our use of self-talk or inner dialogue to cultivate our relationship with God? Perhaps we can approach self-talk as time with him in solitude, while also relying upon the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to guide us through the inner conversation of "ourselves" and God. Recall the words from Genesis: "God who answered me in the day of my distress and who has been with me wherever I have gone." We need to dialogue with God, much in the way we might speak with a good friend. And we need to listen, as did St. Benedict Joseph Labre, who "did not speak often, keeping always a spirit of prayer and recollection."[4] Finally, we need to form our conscience.

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[1] *Veritatis splendor*, 58.

[2] Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, IV.XXI:313–14.

[3] Ibid., VI.XVII:248. Quoted in Michael Chan, "Vocation in the Life and Writings of John Henry Cardinal Newman" (Doctoral thesis, Universidad de Navarra, 1991), 395, https://dadun.unav.edu/bitstream/10171/10762/1/CDT_XX_06.pdf.

[4] Guild of St. Benedict Joseph Labre, *The Holy Wayfarer* (2008): 3, https://guild bjlabre.org/Portals/Guildstbenedict/CMAdmin/Files/newsletter08B%20to%20printer.

Our conscience is not hidden from God. He hears all and sees all. "No creature is concealed from him, but everything is naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must render an account" (Heb 4:13). At times, we may feel that our interior dialogue is our own personal discussion. But God is aware of all – our thoughts, self-talk, overt talk, and actions.

In prayer or contemplation, we could try to empty and open our minds, or just try to maintain mental silence. This silence appears to be ever more difficult to attain because of new technologies and our hectic lives. But Benedict XVI has commented that it important for us "to know how to make silence within us to listen to God's voice, to seek, as it were, a 'parlor' in which God speaks with us: learning the word of God in prayer and in meditation is the path to life."[1]

During silent prayer we can recite a word or phrase to enhance our ability to keep silent and thus open to God's voice, after reading his Word in scripture or when he is otherwise speaking to us. We may repeat certain words in prayer, such as "God is love," to keep the mind silent and able to hear the Holy Spirit.

Ann Diller, in a discussion of self-talk and ethics in the educational psychology literature, suggests "refute and replace" as a method to instruct others in the ethical use of self-talk – replacing negative self-talk with "self-supporting statements."[2] She advocates internal honesty, self-justification, and the self-care approach, and she examines our tendencies toward anger and the development of a "heart enlightened by reason" for the further development of the ethical self.[3]

Benedict XVI, however, suggests that the proper focus extends to a reality beyond the self: "Only by learning to fit into the common freedom, to share and to submit to it, learning legality, that is, submission and obedience to the rules of the common good and life in common, can society be healed, as well as the self, of the pride of being the center of the world."[4] As St. Paul says in Ephesians 3, when we are "strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self" we are "able to accomplish more than all we ask or imagine, by the power at work within us." This idea stands in opposition to the modern psychological sense of self where *we* decide for ourselves, as opposed to discerning what God wants for us.

Michal Dinkler comments on the foolish self-talk of biblical characters in Luke's gospel: "Though Lukan interior monologues resemble Hellenistic inner speech structurally by heightening the dramatic tension of a character's inner

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[1] Pope Benedict XVI, *Great Christian Thinkers*, 199.

[2] Ann Diller, "The Ethical Education of Self-Talk," in *Justice and Caring: The Search for Common Ground in Education*, ed. S. Katz, N. Noddings, and K. A. Strike (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 85.

[3] Ibid., 92.

[4] Benedict XVI, *Great Christian Thinkers*, 180.

conflict, they are more similar to Jewish literature insofar as the thinking characters exhibit foolish self-talk. The evidence for these claims lies in the text itself."[1] Consider the parable of the rich fool:

Then he told them a parable. "There was a rich man whose land produced a bountiful harvest. He asked himself, 'What shall I do, for I do not have space to store my harvest?' And he said, 'This is what I shall do: I shall tear down my barns and build larger ones. There I shall store all my grain and other goods and I shall say to myself, "Now as for you, you have so many good things stored up for many years, rest, eat, drink, be merry!" But God said to him, 'You fool, this night your life will be demanded of you; and the things you have prepared, to whom will they belong?' Thus will it be for the one who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich in what matters to God. (Lk 12:16-21)

Dinkler comments, "Luke's interior monologues can prompt readers to consider what they would say in their own hearts if they faced a similar dilemma and to assess whether their self-talk would align with the divine will."[2]

Again, conscience is at once both the words of God and our own speech. What the law requires is written in our hearts, while our conscience reveals our conflicting thoughts that blame or support our self-talk. This is when God, through Christ Jesus, will assess the secret thoughts of each and every one of us (Rom 2:15).

Technology, and Self-talk in a Tech-focused, Busy, Chaotic World

We may consider these words of St. Paul: "Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Then the God of peace will be with you" (Phil 4:8).

Moreover, from the *Catechism*: "It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience. This requirement of *interiority* is all the more necessary as life often distracts us from any reflection, self-examination or introspection."[3] We need to focus our attention on the knowledge of God, and limit lapses in this knowledge by not becoming distracted. We must make efforts to discern where, how, and why we gather our information in an era of information-overload. The media (including social media) influence our self-talk and our judgments of conscience.

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[1] Michal B. Dinkler, "The Thoughts of Many Hearts Shall Be Revealed": Listening in on Lukan Interior Monologues," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 134, no. 2 (2015): 384.

[2] Ibid., 394.

[3] *CCC*, 1779.

The voices and comments of those around us can influence our formation.

"My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me" (Jn 10:27). We should examine our self-talk and our dialogue with others, in person or on social media, in the spirit of God's love so as to discern his will. As Newman mentioned, "in spite of the world's evil, after all, He is in it and speaks through it."[1]

Three steps toward effective use of self-talk[2] are analogous to the three steps to exercising the virtue of prudence and the process of discernment described by St. Ignatius of Loyola.[3] First, *become aware* of self-talk and gather information, often from others, about moral judgments to be made. Keep a log, either paper or electronic, of self-talk in periods of both spiritual consolation and spiritual desolation. Both may provide opportunities to address issues in one's prayer life or interactions with others. Next, *reflect* on how effective self-talk was at different times of the day or week, and remember to remain patient and willing to be open to God's graces, in order to discern his will. Finally, *act* by following through on decisions arrived at through the use of self-talk. One is not prudent if he does not act on his well-formed judgment.

Perhaps we will find that more patience is required in our speech, both with others and with ourselves. On occasion we may need to proceed with more kindness and to be less demanding. Sometimes we may notice ourselves beginning to say something negative, at which point we can pause and pray for God's grace – and revise our words. Throughout we should show gratitude for God's graces, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, by contemplating how he has helped us to change our speech and to develop our conscience. In this way, God's will can permeate our life decisions.

In conclusion, we may need to change how we think about our preparation for prayer, becoming more mindful of how we dialogue with Jesus before important situations or events. For example, reminding ourselves to reflect before we enter into a stressful conversation with someone, and talking with ourselves about it afterward – to know if what we said was appropriate, whether we could have done something better, or what we may need to do and say the next time.

What will we do with our freedom? "[W]hen love is given back to us in spite of what we did, we can say, 'I am really loved!' Then, facing the 'infinite goodness of God,' we ask, 'What will I do eventually or what must I do' in return?"[4]

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[1] Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, VI.XVII:249.

[2] See D. M. Cutton, L. Killion, and D. Burt, "Self-talk Repertoire of Physical Education Teachers: Awareness, Reflection, and Action," *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance* 86, no. 8(2015): 22-26.

[3] See St. Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises.*

[4] Pierre Wolff, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius: A New translation from the Authorized Latin Text* (Liguori, MO: Triumph, 1997), 121.

"Oh, that today you would hear his voice: Do not harden your hearts" (Ps 95:7-8). What might the Holy Spirit be encouraging us to say and do today? What will be our response?

The Middle Way: Catholic Social Teaching and the American Political Spectrum

David S. Bovée[*]

ABSTRACT: This paper presents an outline of Catholic social teaching from the time of Pope Leo XIII's social encyclical *Rerum novarum* (1891) to the present and relates it to the history of the two major political parties in the United States during the same time period. The thesis of the paper is that the relationship between Catholic social teaching and the two political parties changed over time, especially at two key moments, in the 1930s and the 1970s; that Catholic social teaching has been a middle or third way between the Democratic and Republican parties; and that in light of this situation American Catholics should consider joining a third party.

THIS PAPER PRESENTS an outline of Catholic social teaching as it relates to the history of the two major political parties in the United States from the time of Pope Leo XIII's social encyclical *Rerum novarum* (1891) to the present. I propose that the relationship between Catholic social teaching and the two political parties changed over time, especially at two key moments, in the 1930s and the 1970s; that Catholic social teaching has been a middle or third way between the Democratic and Republican parties; and that in light of this situation American Catholics should consider joining a third party. Although my thesis is somewhat related to the argument that Catholic social teaching was a middle way between capitalism and socialism, it is based on the relationship of Catholic social teaching to the two political parties, not to economic ideologies. By using the term "middle way" I am not implying that Catholic social teaching somehow splits the difference between the two political parties, embodies a compromise between them, or something of that nature, but simply that it is a distinct, unique way that is different from the policies of both of the two parties. Perhaps another term such as "Catholic way" would better express the concept.

The Catholic Church has a tradition of social teaching that goes back for two millennia. Traditional Catholic social teaching subordinated politics and economics to the demands of the faith and put them within the context of a teleological ethic "oriented toward the hope of eternal salvation."[2] One way of

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[2] Brad S. Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 244.

summarizing Catholic social teaching would be to describe it as being based on several pairs of concepts that eventually came to be known as solidarity and subsidiarity, the dignity of the human person and the common good, and the universal destination of goods and the right to private property. In the first pair, solidarity stresses the sharing of spiritual and material goods in an effort to bring about a just social order, whereas subsidiarity holds that larger or higher-level institutions should not perform functions that can be performed by lower-level bodies. Second, the life and dignity of the individual human person should not be violated, yet all share a responsibility to further the common good. Third, the universal destination of goods holds that the goods of creation are destined for the human race as a whole, yet the Church also upholds the right to private property in order to do one's duties by one's dependents and to ensure the proper development of the individual.[1]

Modern Catholic social teaching (since the Industrial Age) is usually viewed as starting with Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum novarum*, "On the Condition of Labor," in 1891.[2] Its most important principles included, first, supporting the right of private property (opposing state control of property or socialism) and its widespread ownership; second, supporting workers' organizations, specifically labor unions; and third, supporting the right of workers to a basic "living wage" that would "be enough to support the wage-earner in reasonable and frugal comfort."[3] Although Pope Leo opposed government ownership of property, as in socialism, he supported an active government role in the economy to help achieve the other goals of justice for workers: a more equitable distribution of property, support for workers' rights through labor unions, and a living wage.[4] All of these points would be important aspects of future Catholic social teaching.

In 1919, the Catholic bishops in the United States issued a statement of social policy that applied the principles of *Rerum novarum* to American conditions. Popularly called the "Bishops' Program," the document advocated such policies

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[1] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ##1939-1942, 2402-2463; cf. Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004), 71-92 (sections 160-208).

[2] Michael J. Schuck, *That They Be One: The Social Teaching of the Papal Encyclicals, 1740-1989* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1991); Maciej Zięba, *Papal Economics: The Catholic Church on Democratic Capitalism* (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2014).

[3] Aaron I. Abell, "The Reception of Leo XIII's Labor Encyclical in America, 1891-1919," *Review of Politics* 7 (1945): 464-95; Aaron I. Abell, *American Catholicism and Social Action: A Search for Social Justice, 1865-1950* (Garden City, NY: Hanover House, 1960), 73-78; *The Church Speaks to the Modern World: The Social Teachings of Leo XIII*, ed. Etienne Gilson (Garden City, NY: Image Books, 1954), 229-38.

[4] Gilson, *The Church Speaks to the Modern World,* 230-38.

as widely distributed ownership of family farms, the minimum wage, and workers' cooperatives.[1] In 1931, Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical *Quadragesimo anno*, added the principle of subsidiarity to Pope Leo's teachings. By holding that it was wrong both "to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community" and "to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do," the principle implied a limitation on government intervention in society and the economy.[2] Thus, by the 1930s, both the popes and the American bishops laid out a conception of Catholic social teaching that opposed socialism, yet supported a limited governmental role in assuring the widespread distribution of property and social justice for workers.

Meanwhile, the Democratic and Republican parties had also been taking positions on social and economic issues. Although little reform had taken place during the Gilded Age from the Civil War to 1900, during the Progressive Era (1900-1920), both the Republicans under Theodore Roosevelt and the Democrats under Woodrow Wilson had championed numerous reforms that regulated business and helped workers, the poor, and the vulnerable, yet avoided socialism. In the conservative and prosperous 1920s, both parties eschewed reform in the interest of letting the good times roll. Catholic social teaching thus had little to choose between them.

The first key moment in the relationship of Catholic social teaching to the American political parties occurred during the Great Depression and New Deal years of the 1930s. Catholics opposed Republican President Herbert Hoover's stand-pat policies in the face of the Depression and overwhelmingly supported Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt's election in 1932.[3] During the campaign, FDR appealed to Catholic voters by quoting from *Quadragesimo anno*, wherein Pope Pius XI pointed out the need to control "limitless free competition" during an age when "not alone is wealth accumulated but immense power and economic domination are concentrated in the hands of a few."[4] When the Roosevelt administration responded to the economic crisis with the New Deal reform programs, most American Catholic bishops (along with the laity) thought that such

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[1] *American Catholic Thought on Social Questions*, ed. Aaron I. Abell (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1968), 325-48; Joseph M. McShane, *"Sufficiently Radical": Catholicism, Progressivism, and the Bishops' Program of 1919* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1986); Kevin E. Schmiesing, *Within the Market Strife: American Catholic Economic Thought from* Rerum Novarum *to Vatican II* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2004), 41-45.

[2] *Quadragesimo anno,* 79.

[3] George Q. Flynn, *American Catholics and the Roosevelt Presidency, 1932-1936* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968), 1-21.

[4] Ibid., 17-18; *Quadragesimo anno*, 105, 107.

government intervention in the economy was justified by the encyclicals. The bishops judged that programs to help the economy, workers, and the poor such as the National Recovery Act (which included an occupational group structure similar to that advocated in *Quadragesimo anno* and the principle of the minimum wage asserted in *Rerum novarum*), the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the National Labor Relations Act (which protected labor unions), and the Social Security Act were in line with Catholic social teaching. However, by the late 1930s, many Catholics began to have doubts about some of these programs, believing that they entailed too much government involvement, thus violating the principle of subsidiarity.[1]

The situation generally remained the same during the next four decades. The Catholic Church continued to support Democratic programs to achieve justice for workers and support for the poor and vulnerable. For example, the Church supported Democratic farm programs over Republican ones, and also favored migrant farm workers' right to organize and aid to developing countries—policies that were generally supported by Democrats.[2] Catholic clergy and Catholic Democratic President John F. Kennedy were instrumental in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Catholics such as Joseph Califano and Sargent Shriver were major contributors to President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs of the 1960s, which aimed at relieving poverty and racial discrimination. During that time of racial tension, the American Catholic hierarchy strongly condemned racism and supported the civil rights movement.[3]

At the same time, many Catholics supported the Republican-championed free

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[1] David J. O'Brien, *American Catholics and Social Reform: The New Deal Years* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 47-56, 61-63, 106; Flynn, *American Catholics and the Roosevelt Presidency*, 55-59, 68-77, 78-82, 94, 117-21, 195; Schmiesing, *Wtihin the Market Strife*, chap. 4, esp. 103-04.

[2] David S. Bovée, *The Church and the Land: The National Catholic Rural Life Conference and American Society, 1923-2007* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 192-223, 275-82, 297-98, 316-25; David S. Bovée, "The Middle Way: The National Catholic Rural Life Conference and Rural Issues in the 20th and 21st Centuries," *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 75, no. 3 (May 2016): 762-808.

[3] Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 237-39, 243-44; Hugh Davis Graham, *The Civil Rights Era: Origins and Development of National Policy, 1960-1972* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 183, 262-63; *Gaudium et spes*, 29; Catholic Bishops of the United States, *Discrimination and the Christian Conscience* (1958); National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Statement on National Race Crisis* (1968); John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 89-91, 175-207; Michael Warner, *Changing Witness: Catholic Bishops and Public Policy, 1917-1994* (Washington, DC: Ethics and Public Policy Center; Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 84-89.

market capitalist economy, especially as it became prosperous during the postwar period (1945-70) and the United States entered the Cold War against communism. Catholics called upon the principles of the right to private property and subsidiarity to bolster this attitude.[1] This is an attitude that has found a strong foothold among neoconservatives today.

The second key moment in the relationship of the Catholic Church to the American political parties was the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. The Catholic Church, having recently affirmed its position against contraception, let alone abortion, in Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae vitae* (1968), strongly opposed the *Roe v. Wade* decision. Within a few years, the Democratic Party came to support the decision, while the Republican Party more immediately rejected it.[2] This revolutionized the Catholic Church's position regarding the two political parties: Now the Republicans rather than the Democrats were aligned with Church teaching on a vitally important issue.[3] This was the beginning of a cultural divide between the Catholic Church and the Democratic Party. In the ensuing five decades, what came to be the "pro-choice" Democratic Party has taken a number of positions on "culture war" or "social conservative" issues – "the woman's right to choose" abortion, assisted suicide, and same-sex marriage – that have divided it from the pro-life Catholic Church.[4] Since *Roe v. Wade*, the Republican Party has increasingly favored Catholic social teaching on the "social" issues.

Contention regarding abortion played a role in the recent health care debate that showed that neither Democratic nor Republican policies fully fit Catholic social teaching. The Democratic-sponsored Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare") in 2010 was controversial. In his response to the passage of the act, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Cardinal Francis George of Chicago endorsed the bill's overall intent of providing healthcare for all:

For nearly a century, the Catholic bishops of the United States have called for reform of our health care system so that all may have access to the care that recognizes and affirms their human dignity.... Many elements of the health care reform measure signed into law by the

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[1] Schmiesing, *Within the Market Strife*, chaps. 5-6.

[2] Warner, *Changing Witness*, 107-11, 158-59.

[3] Timothy A. Byrnes, *Catholic Bishops in American Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 7.

[4] For studies of shifting American Catholic voting behavior, see William B. Prendergast, *The Catholic Voter in American Politics: The Passing of the Democratic Monolith* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1999), George J. Marlin, *The American Catholic Voter: Two Hundred Years of Political Impact* (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2004), and Steven P. Millies, *Good Intentions: A History of Catholic Voters' Road from Roe to Trump* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2018).

President address these concerns and so help to fulfill the duty that we have to each other for the common good.... [W]e applaud the effort to expand health care to all.[1]

However, at the same time George declared that

we as Catholic bishops have opposed its passage because there is compelling evidence that it would expand the role of the federal government in funding and facilitating abortion and plans that cover abortion. The statute appropriates billions of dollars in new funding without explicitly prohibiting the use of these funds for abortion, and it provides federal subsidies for health plans covering elective abortions.[2]

George's response shows clearly the Catholic dilemma of supporting Democratic goals of social justice such as health care for less well-off Americans while favoring Republican goals of preventing abortions.

With regard to the environment, it is the Democratic Party that is more in line with Catholic social teaching. The Democrats favor more regulation in this regard to ensure protection of our common environmental goods, and the Republicans, with their more hands-off approach in general, promote deregulation. Pope Francis has actively supported government action to protect the environment against the effects of climate change in his encyclical *Laudato si'* (2015). But the concern for the environment is not new: for example, in his encyclical *Centesimus annus* (1991), Pope St. John Paul II stated: "It is the task of the State to provide for the defense and preservation of common goods such as the natural and human environments, which cannot be safeguarded simply by market forces."[3]

In general, it seems to me that Catholic social teachings were very much in line with the economic policies favored by the Democratic Party from the 1970s to the present. With regard to unions and the living wage, it is the Democratic Party that dovetails more with Catholic social teaching. St. John Paul II, in his encyclical *Laborem exercens* (1981) upheld the dignity of work, writing that work is human participation in activity of God. He wrote that workers should be honored and treated with dignity. In *Centesimus annus* St. John Paul supported the ideas of Leo XIII and Pius XI on justice for workers – including the need for a living wage and labor unions. Echoing the name of his native Poland's labor union Solidarity, St. John Paul discussed the principle of solidarity – the cooperation of people for the common good – as a complement to subsidiarity.[4]

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[1] http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/health-care/upload/health-care-cardinal-george-statement.pdf.

[2] Ibid.

[3] *Centesimus annus*, 40.

[4] *Laborem exercens*, 9, 25; *Centesimus annus*, 7-8, 10, 15, 48, 49; *Catholic Social Thought and the Teaching of John Paul II: Proceedings of the Fifth Convention (1982) of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars*, ed. Paul L. Williams (Scranton, PA: Northeast Books,

The American bishops, for their part, applied the popes' social teachings to conditions in the United States. In their 1986 pastoral letter "Economic Justice for All" the bishops emphasized the right of all to gainful employment, care for the poor and vulnerable, and human rights and dignity being protected in every economic decision.[1] Specifically, they called for "national standards for welfare benefits, a higher minimum wage, increased public sector employment, gender pay equity, affirmative action, government subsidies for private job formation and training, broader crop control programs, and more steeply progressive taxes on incomes and farm acreage." The statement generally criticized Reagan administration policies, and its proposals aligned with Democratic priorities.[2]

The Republican Party clearly supports Catholic social teaching on abortion and the life issues more than the Democratic Party does. But it is not so clear that the Democrats are more closely aligned to Catholic social teaching on the economic issues than the Republicans. The key point of contention between the two parties concerning economics is the extent to which outside control should play a role in the free market. This affects the Republican position on unions and the minimum wage, since unions interfere with the free market setting of wages. This affects the Republican position on the environment, since governmental regulations interfere with the free market disposition of lands and other natural resources.

Catholic social teaching can be interpreted to support the free market strongly, since human beings made in the image and likeness of God have freedom to cooperate with God in creative activity. Neo-conservatives such as George Weigel and the late Michael Novak have maintained that Republican free market policies are in line with Catholic social teaching.[3]

Indeed, Catholic social teaching can be seen as quite compatible with capitalism and the free market. *Rerum novarum* defends the institution of private property at great length and firmly rejects socialism. This tradition is continued through *Quadragesimo anno* and – especially in the minds of the neo-conservatives – finds its culmination in *Centesimus annus*. There St. John Paul II writes of human dignity being expressed in free, creative activity, which the neo-

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1983); George Weigel, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II, 1920-2005* (New York: Harper, 2005), 419-21, 612-19; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, ##1939-1942.

[1] United States Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All* (1986), Pastoral Message, 13-18.

[2] Warner, *Changing Witness*, 139-46 (quotation on 143).

[3] Michael Novak, *The Catholic Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Free Press, 1993); George Weigel, *Soul of the World: Notes on the Future of Public Catholicism* (Washington, DC: Ethics and Public Policy Center; Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1996).

conservatives apply to individual economic participation in the free market.[1] Nonetheless, the free market should not be given free reign.

Pope Benedict XVI in his encyclical *Caritas in veritate* (2009) favors economic correction when free markets result in injustice:

[T]he social doctrine of the Church has unceasingly highlighted the importance of distributive justice and social justice for the market economy.... Economic activity cannot solve all social problems through the simple application of *commercial logic*. This needs to be *directed towards the pursuit of the common good*, for which the political community in particular must also take responsibility. Therefore, it must be borne in mind that grave imbalances are produced when economic action, conceived merely as an engine for wealth creation, is detached from political action, conceived as a means for pursuing justice through redistribution.[2]

Most recently, Pope Francis has attacked the "economy of exclusion" and criticized the excesses of free market capitalism in his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* (2013).

Understandably, St. John Paul, given his experience of living under communism, emphasized the dangers of government involvement in the economy and downplayed the harmful effects of free, creative participation of individuals in the economy. Yet despite his concern for an overly controlled economy in *Centesimus annus*, St. John Paul also followed traditional Catholic social teaching since *Rerum novarum* in calling for an active government role in superintending the free economy.[3] For example, in his encyclical, he stated, "We find a new limit on the market: there are collective and qualitative needs which cannot be satisfied by market mechanisms. There are important human needs which escape its logic."[4]

St. John Paul stated that original sin can lead to centralized bureaucratic control that diminishes freedom: "Moreover, man, who was created for freedom, bears within himself the wound of original sin, which constantly draws him towards evil and puts him in need of redemption."[5] This same problem of original sin, however, can taint the workings of the free market. Human creativity is susceptible to being directed by non-virtuous motives, including being drawn by greed and selfishness. Even a band of robbers has creativity in the brilliant way they may rob a bank, but their ingenious creativity is no justification for theft.

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[1] *Centesimus annus*, 32; Novak, *Catholic Ethic*, 130-32; Weigel, *Soul of the World*, 139.

[2] *Caritas in veritate*, 35-36.

[3] *Centesimus annus*, 15.

[4] Ibid., 40.

[5] Ibid., 25.

Nor is such creativity justification for the growing gap between the rich and poor in the United States. Such disparity is most condemned by the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, where Abraham says to the ungenerous rich man after he dies: "My child, remember that you received what was good during your lifetime while Lazarus likewise received what was bad; but now he is comforted here, whereas you are tormented."[1] Neo-conservatives argue that Catholic social teaching does not mandate redistribution of wealth, but rather "wealth creation." They cite *Centesimus annus* in support.[2] But again, the vast majority of papal encyclicals, such as *Caritas in veritate* just quoted above, do not support this position. Instead, they praise widespread distribution of property and cite biblical precedents such as the Old Testament Jubilee year, in which land was redistributed after every forty-nine years.[3]

People of good will can certainly disagree (and discussants of Catholic social thought certainly have), but since the New Deal years the historical record shows that in the vast majority of cases the American bishops in their statements have held that Democratic policies favoring government regulation of the free market have been more in line with the principles of Catholic social teaching expressed in the papal encyclicals than have Republican policies.[4]

This situation suggests some concluding reflections on American Catholics' possible responses to the current political situation. If my analysis of the situation is correct, Catholics who support the full social teachings of the Church – and others who think similarly – should be dissatisfied with both of the existing major political parties, each of which supports some aspects of Catholic teaching but opposes others. The Republicans are right on the most important issues – the life issues – but fail in the broad-ranging economic area. A laissez faire approach to the economy ignores a human reality tainted by original sin and ignores the dictates of social justice for workers, the poor, and the vulnerable. To achieve these important goals, faithful Catholics might benefit from a third party, a political party aligned with all the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Perhaps Catholics today should consider supporting a third political party that embodies a third or middle way, one that is both pro-life and pro-social

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[1] Luke 16:25.

[2] George Weigel, "The Free and Virtuous Society," https://eppc.org/publications/the-free-and-virtuous-society/; Weigel, *Soul of the World*, 139.

[3] *Caritas in veritate*, 35-36; *Rerum novarum*, 46; *Quadragesimo anno*, 58, 60-61, 136; Leviticus 25:8-10, 13-17; *Tertio millennio adveniente*, 12.

[4] That Democrats are said to support Catholic social teaching on *more* issues than Republicans (though not necessarily the *more important* life ones), is noted in Byrnes, *Catholic Bishops*, 6; George Weigel, "Foreword," in Warner, *Changing Witness*, xvi; Deal W. Hudson, *Onward, Christian Soldiers: The Growing Power of Catholics and Evangelicals in the United States* (New York: Threshold, 2008), 270-71.

justice.

Hurting or Helping?
A Catholic Ethical Analysis of the Practice
of Physical and Mechanical Restraints
by Human Services

Marc Tumeinski

ABSTRACT: Jesus embodies for the Christian the model of true service, which should be discernibly distinct from secular service. Even for non-Christian services, the Church offers relevant models and teaching. Contemporary service structures often lose sight of the dignity of served and server, and have grown dependent upon technology and technique, straying outside the realm of relationality. An example within certain service fields is reliance on physical and mechanical restraints to restrict movement, causing harm to recipients and to the relationship between server and served. Such techniques overshadow the nature of Christian service, which is personal, relational, and communal. Catholic social doctrine and many personalist frameworks build on the pillars of dignity, responsibility, and subsidiarity. Rules alone will not be protective against service-mediated harm; however, principled servers can protect vulnerable people, particularly when guided by a concern for the common good, fraternity, and solidarity.

S ITTING THERE, clothed and in his right mind.[1] From the onset of his mission, driven by the Holy Spirit, and with truth and love, Jesus served the lowly and those in need: feeding the hungry, visiting outcasts, releasing those bound by chains and possessed by demons, protecting those whose lives were threatened. Jesus laid this same charge upon the communi-ty of his followers.[2] He embodies for the Christian the model of true service. Guided by God, the Church today strives to continue this messianic mission, whether in direct service to the needy or indirectly by witness and teaching.[3]

In light of this mandate, Catholic service to the vulnerable ought to be discernibly distinct from secular service efforts.[4] This is a foundational theological

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[1] Mk 5:15.

[2] Mk 10:43-45.

[3] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 783.

[4] Pope Benedict noted that "[t]he Church's charitable activity at all levels must avoid the risk of becoming just another form of organized social assistance." Benedict XVI, "On

claim, yet one that can get lost amid worldly drives for greater organizational efficiency or notions of success. Serving the lowly is constitutive of Christian discipleship and of the Church and should reflect the manifest marks of both.[1] Christian disciples are called and formed to serve others – as priest, prophet and king. As an expert in humanity, the Church acts as a witness of the true nature of service to person and society.[2]

Even for those who are not Christian, however, the Church and Catholic theology can offer, at least in part, relevant models and advice.[3] For example, the philosophy of personalism incorporated within various ecclesial documents and present in certain Catholic theological circles provides a concrete set of ideas and principles that are highly relevant to a discussion of service and that can be understood and applied within (secular) services.[4] For instance, Jans describes personalism as promoting the good of the person, by which he means something similar to Catholic teaching on integral human development.[5]

In many sectors around the world, contemporary service forms – often highly professionalized, bureaucratic, specialized, relatively large in scope, as well as commercialized – are at risk of losing sight of the dignity of served and server and thereby causing more harm than good to those who are vulnerable, even in the

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the Service of Charity" (11 November 2012). The Church is not a social service agency but serves the lowly in response to her faith in Christ. See also Benedict XVI, *Deus caritas est*, 31-39.

[1] Benedict XVI, "On the Service of Charity." Cf. Pontifical Council Cor Unum, "The Church for the Salvation of Humanity: Diakonia in some Apostolic Administrations and Sui Iuris Missions in Europe and Asia" (2-5 July 1998), 1.

[2] A proper theological understanding of service is both *anthropological* (rooted in the nature of the human person) and *social* (understanding the nature of relationship and communality). See Daniel Lynch, "Technology and Catholic Social Thought," paper delivered at the 2005 conference of the John A. Ryan Institute, Univ. of St. Thomas, 3-4.

[3] I use the term "server" to refer to someone intentionally serving a lowly and vulnerable person, whether in a paid or voluntary context.

[4] It is more accurate to speak perhaps of multiple schools or philosophies of personalism. Nonetheless, many of these share certain basic tenets, for example, the inalienable dignity of each person, the call to communion with other persons. Matthew Schaeffer, "Thomistic Personalism: A Vocation for the Twenty-First Century," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 86, no. 2 (Spring 2012): 181-202, at 185-86. Engage-ment with personalist ideas can be seen in the writing and teaching of John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis; and it is reflected in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (for example, in chapter 3 of part 1).

[5] Jan Jans, "Personalism: The Foundations of an Ethic of Responsibility," *Ethical Perspectives* 3 (1996): 148-56, at 154. The concept of integral human development is evident in Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* from 1967, as well as in the teaching of John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis.

presence of good intentions.[1] Without the anchor of a principled appreciation of intrinsic human dignity, service in the public domain has often become dependent upon technology and technique, and too often strays outside the realm of relationality that is vital to the nature of serving those in need.[2] It is a key part of my argument that instead of service between persons with equal and inherent dignity, a created tool or technique often takes greater priority. Furthermore, as Lynch points out, once a technique is embedded in a social process, it has moral consequences.[3] Rather than serve the well-being and needs of vulnerable persons and communities, such organizations can instead end up serving the "needs" of various technologies, techniques, paid servers, and even an organization itself – to the detriment of vulnerable and dependent people.[4]

The above represents a fairly general commentary, so it may be helpful to concentrate upon a concrete illustration of a specific human service practice that is, for all intents and purposes, unmoored from the anchors of dignity and the common good. This includes widespread use of restraints (including physical, mechanical, chemical) in various service locations (for example, schools, residential programs, hospitals, treatment centers, nursing homes, foster care facilities) and programs (for example, for the elderly, those with mental disorders,

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[1] See Francis, *Laudato si'*, 112, on the concept of technocratic paradigm. See also Lynda Shevellar, "'I Choose To Be a Person of Integrity:' A Model for Constructive Relationships Between Human Services and Their Bureaucracies," *The SRV Journal* 3, no. 2 (2008): 6-17. A compelling statement on this risk can be found in the 1984 E. F. Schumacher lecture entitled "John Deere and the Bereavement Counselor" given by John McKnight.

[2] For the purposes of this paper, I treat *technology* as the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes, and *technique* as a relatively standardized way of carrying out a particular task. See Lynch, "Technology and Catholic Social Thought," 2.

[3] Ibid., 7-8.

[4] The witness and teaching of the Church and the actions of Christians can shed the light of faith and reason on such contemporary difficulties. Pope Francis warns of a technocratic paradigm which "exalts the concept of a subject who, using logical and rational procedures, progressively approaches and gains control over an external object. This subject makes every effort to establish the scientific and experimental method, which in itself is already a technique of possession, mastery and transformation" (*Laudato si'*, 106). This point is not meant to dismiss the importance of clear thinking or prudence. However, authentic service is not about exerting control, possession, or mastery, but is rooted for the Christian in a humble disposition that seeks to serve the hidden Christ in the lowly, walk with those in need, listen, and do what one can to relieve hardships. While focused specifically on care for aging parents, Zola's exploration of the ethical dimensions of service, prudence, beneficence, memory, docility, shrewdness, and so on is highly relevant to the topic of this paper. See Charles Zola, "Prudential Elder Care: A Thomistic Approach," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (Winter 2013): 137-64.

children and adults with intellectual impairments).[1] The contemporary human service practice of restraints uses physical and/or mechanical force to restrict or prevent bodily movement of service recipients, often people who are vulnerable and highly dependent upon others – the lowly, in Biblical terms.[2] Note that this consideration of a particular human service example is offered to illustrate several overarching points of this paper, and is not meant to be exhaustive of the topic.[3]

One common problem with the contemporary practice of human service restraint use is that in essence it removes personhood from the situation, thus undermining the nature of service. Note the link to concepts of image and likeness, dignity and personhood. This detachment is often accompanied by a second problem, namely, a misreading of the nature and the context of restraint use at best, or by deception at worst. In a brief paper like this, I will not offer a comprehensive analysis of the problematic elements of this particular human service practice, but rather I will focus on several key elements as a way of inviting discussion, reflection, and potentially individual and communal action on the broader question of Christian service to those in need.[4] Accordingly, the balance of this paper is structured in two parts: problem and response.

Problems with Human Service Restraint Use

The use of restraint techniques in contemporary human services is endemic and, in some fields, growing.[5] Basically, human service restraint is the use of some degree of material force by servers to limit the bodily movement of human service

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[1] The focus on this particular example derives from my fifteen years of experience in the field of human services. In this paper, I focus primarily on physical and mechanical restraint. The use of chemical restraints is a much more complex practice that raises additional questions beyond the scope of this paper. Cf. Marc Tumeinski, "Problems Associated with Use of Physical and Mechanical Restraints in Contemporary Human Services," *Mental Retardation* 43, no. 1 (2005): 43-47.

[2] I use the term "service recipient" to refer to a lowly or vulnerable person who receives help or service from a human service program.

[3] For such a widespread practice with known adverse consequences, it is perhaps surprising how little awareness of this problem exists outside of the field of human services.

[4] In light of the nature of human services, there is a great need for ethical development and analysis when it comes to human service approaches, technologies and techniques. Cf. Brian Patrick Green, "The Catholic Church and Technological Progress: Past, Present, and Future," *Religions* 8, no. 106 (2017): 10.

[5] For example, see Roy Deveau and Andrew McDonnell, "As the Last Resort: Reducing the Use of Restrictive Physical Interventions Using Organizational Approaches," *British Journal of Learning Disabilities* 37 (2009): 172-77; Lucy Fitton and Dominic Ryan Jones, "Restraint of Adults with Intellectual Disabilities: A Critical Review of the Prevalence and Characteristics Associated with Use," *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities* (May 2018): 1-16.

clients.[1] It commonly takes one or more of three forms: (a) physical so-called holds, (b) mechanical, that is, the use of mechanical devices such as straps, and (c) chemical, that is, the use of drugs, either one-time or long-term.[2]

The use and the predictable impacts of restraints is one of the practical and ethical dilemmas that cuts across a wide variety of human service organizations and systems today.[3] An obvious sign of the problematic character of this practice is the ongoing and foreseeable number of injuries and deaths of service recipients proximate to restraint use.[4] This is especially prevalent when restraints are used

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[1] Restraints used, taught, and mandated by human services agencies, programs, and systems can be distinguished from personal, informal, and *ad hoc* efforts, such as a parent stopping a child from running into the street or a friend stopping another friend from getting into a fist fight. Devices used for a legitimate medical purpose (for example, to assist someone in body positioning) are also not restraints as discussed in this paper.

[2] As noted above, I limit my discussion primarily, but not exclusively, to human service use of physical and mechanical restraints, mainly because the use of chemical restraints is such a complex issue that it raises a whole host of related issues which would make it unmanageable given the intended length of this paper. See W. Wolfensberger, "Let's Hang Up 'Quality of Life' as a Hopeless Term," in *Quality of Life for Persons with Disabilities: International Perspectives and Issues*, ed. D. Goode (Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books, 1994), 285-321.

[3] Relevant literature is substantial and increasing. Select examples include the following. Wanda Mohr, Theodore Petti, and Brian Mohr, "Adverse Effects Associated with Physical Restraint," *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry* 48, no. 5 (June 2003): 330-37; Pauline Cusack, Frank Cusack, Sue McAndrew, Mick McKeown, and Joy Duxbury, "An Integrative Review Exploring the Physical and Psychological Harm Inherent in Using Restraint in Mental Health Inpatient Settings," *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing* 27, no. 3 (2018): 1162-76; Peter Jones and Biza Stenfert Kroese, "Service users and staff from secure intellectual disability settings," *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities* 12, no. 3 (2008): 229-37; Rebecca Fish and Eloise Culshaw, "The Last Resort?: Staff and Client Perspectives on Physical Intervention," *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities* 9, no. 2 (2005): 93-107; Edwin Jones, David Allen, Kate Moore, Bethan Phillips, and Kathy Lowe, "Restraint and Self-injury in People with Intellectual Disabilities," *Journal of Intellectual Disabilities* 11, no. 1 (2007): 105-18.

[4] While hard data is difficult to find, there is enough to warrant a closer look, as family and advocacy groups have made clear. See example: Mind for Better Mental Health (London, UK), "Mental Health Crisis Care: Physical Restraint in Crisis. A Report on Physical Restraint in Hospital Settings in England," June 2013 in *National Review of Restraint Related Deaths of Children and Adults with Disabilities: Lethal Consequences of Restraint*, Equip for Equality, 2011; Michelle Denison, "The Attitudes and Knowledge of Residential Treatment Center Staff Members Working with Adolescents who have Experienced Trauma," Ithaca College Theses, Paper 318 (2016); Sadami Kurata and Toshiyuki Ojima, "Knowledge, Perceptions, and Experiences of Family Caregivers and Home Care Providers of Physical Restraint Use with Home-dwelling Elders: A Cross-sectional Study in Japan," *BMC Geriatrics* 14, no. 39 (2014); David Ferleger, "Human Services Restraint: Its Past and Future," *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities* 46, no. 2 (2008): 154-65, at 157; U.S. Department of Education, "Restraint and Seclusion:

with children, elders, people with certain preexisting medical conditions, and those in a state of heightened agitation.[1] This pattern of injury and death was compellingly brought to national public attention in the U.S. through a series of newspaper articles published in 1998.[2] However, the problems preceded 1998 and have continued since.[3]

On top of these adverse physical consequences, the prevailing pattern of restraint use in contemporary services is likely also to cause emotional and psychological harm,[4] not just for those who are repeatedly restrained[5] but even for those who routinely carry out restraint practices as part of their service role.[6]

As horrendous as such consequences are, even emotional harm, injuries, and deaths are perhaps just the tip of the iceberg.[7] Problems and causes just below the surface are also deeply troubling. Two grave problems within the context of human services are (1) an explicit or implicit denial of personhood[8] and thus of relationality, and (2) a denial of the truth and reality of vulnerability.[9] Both of these denials can lead to or exacerbate an idolatrous fixation on technique and technology, such as the use of restraint, to the detriment of all (or at least most) involved, and to the detriment of carrying out of the stated missions of (many)

Resource Document" (May 2012).

[1] Ferleger lists a number of relevant studies in "Human Services Restraint: Its Past and Future," 158.

[2] The Connecticut newspaper *The Hartford Courant* ran a series of articles on injuries and deaths caused by restraint use in 1998, with related items in 1999, 2000, 2002, 2006, 2014, and 2015.

[3] See for example the report "How Safe is the Schoolhouse? An Analysis of State Seclusion and Restraint Laws and Policies," by Jessica Butler, published in 2017 by the Autism National Committee.

[4] Eimear Muir-Cochrane, Deb O'Kane, and Candice Oster, "Fear and blame in mental health nurses' accounts restrictive practices: Implications for the elimination of seclusion and restraint," *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing* (2018).

[5] The use of restraints, once started, tends to increase not decrease; once initiated, it tends to be used on more and more people in more and more situations; and it often opens the door to other controlling and aversive techniques being used, such as the service practice of seclusion, that is, locking someone in a room for a significant period of time.

[6] The repeated use of coercive power, both bodily and material, in human services can bring about a degree of stress, anxiety, and even "moral injury" to servers.

[7] The incidence of violence, no matter who the violator or who the victim, is traumatic. It raises moral questions. These questions, although relevant to our topic, lie beyond the scope of this article.

[8] *Donum vitae*, 1.1.

[9] We might consider these two problems in light of the principle of the preferential option for the poor in Catholic social doctrine, as well as in relation to what Pope Francis has said about a "revolution of tenderness."

service organizations.[1]

Denial of person and relationality. One common and observable dynamic of contemporary organizations, including human service ones, is to become larger, more complex, and more stratified over time.[2] This is particularly true for funded services, including those that are faith-based, although voluntary service efforts are not exempt from this dynamic. The more that services grow in scope, size, and organizational complexity, the greater the need for true charity, yet in some ways, the harder it becomes actually to practice charity.[3] Signs of this hazardous process within a human service context can include, for example, an overabundance of policies, committees, regulations, and organizational layers. The risk is real that individual service recipients as well as servers can lose their (moral) bearings and freedom in such a bureaucratic thicket.[4] John Paul II warned in the encyclical *Fides et ratio* of the error of pragmatism, of deciding and acting without ethical principles. Such decisions and acts often de facto result in institutions and agencies making decisions, rather than persons, and reflect a highly compromised anthropology.[5]

Furthermore, these developments within human service programs can take away from a sense of relationship,[6] interpersonal identification[7] and personal

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[1] Ferleger speaks of the social costs of human service restraint use. "Human Services Restraint: Its Past and Future," 161.

[2] The principle of subsidiarity can provide an effective bulwark against this dynamic.

[3] John Paul II, *Christifideles laici*, 41.

[4] "Diakonia flows in fact from a life of faith. In this way the bureaucratization of charity and a leasing of it to 'professionals' can be avoided. The fundamental intention is not to build a perfect organization but to have a Christian vocation. The Church does not strive to have bureaucrats but persons who can enter into the dynamic of the gift of themselves. Charitable activity must spread from person to person." Pontifical Council Cor Unum, "The Church for the Salvation of Humanity: Diakonia in some Apostolic Administrations and Sui Iuris Missions in Europe and Asia," 2. The above dynamics can be both a cause and a result of non-programmatic factors driving out programmatic ones. According to Wolfensberger, programmatic factors are those most directly linked to addressing the real, fundamental, and pressing needs of service recipients, a distinction rooted in a deep understanding of the fundamental identity of service recipients. By comparison, nonprogrammatic factors will certainly affect provision of service but are primarily rooted in the needs and interests of others, not of service recipients. Some nonprogrammatic factors include staff pay scale, paperwork, and funding requirements, regulatory issues, union demands, political pressures, and so on. Many (though not all) of these nonprogrammatic factors can be quite legitimate in and of themselves, but intrinsic problems arise when they take priority over, limit, interfere with, or even drive out the programmatic factors. See Wolf Wolfensberger, *Advanced Issues in Social Role Valorization Theory* (Plantagenet, ON: Valor Press, 2012), 258-60.

[5] John Paul II, *Fides et ratio*, 89.

[6] Cf. Adam Gerace and Eimear Muir-Cochrane, "Perceptions of Nurses Working with Psychiatric Consumers Regarding the Elimination of Seclusion and Restraint in Psychiatric

involvement between the people served and servers, which speaks to a lessening of solidarity. When the preconditions described above exist, concerned servers are much more likely to find themselves physically, emotionally, and/or socially separated from the people served. Too often, this separation can develop to the point at which servers feel they have little or nothing in common with the people served, not even a shared humanity.

Particularly in a bureaucratized environment, a sense of responsibility for one another is therefore more likely to be weakened, damaged or lost.[1] Servers may find themselves thinking, "I know this doesn't feel right, or is wrong somehow, but it's out of my hands...it's not my job...anyway, what can I do about it?" When we do not see a person as like me or as neighbor, but rather as other, as threat, or as enemy, using force to repeatedly control another's movement (including through the use of restraint techniques) is no longer seen as crossing a line, but becomes seen as an acceptable, even suitable or therapeutic, technique. Furthermore, once the moral boundary of immobilizing another person against his will is crossed, reason and experience tell us that it can open the door to further dehumanizing practices.[2]

Where relationship, identification, and personal responsibility are lacking, this can lead to apathy, neglect, or even outright abuse on the part of at least some servers. When a server is transformed into a "slot on an organizational chart working on" a depersonalized service recipient, or when they do not see service recipients as fellow human beings, then it becomes easier to slip into treating service recipients abusively, even if those doing so are less aware of what they are engaged in.[3]

Inpatient Settings and Emergency Departments: An Australian Survey," *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing* (18 July 2013), https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.12522.

[7] The concept and practice of interpersonal identification in a human service context is described by Wolf Wolfensberger, *A Brief Introduction to Social Role Valorization*, 3rd rev. ed. (Syracuse, NY: Training Institute for Human Service Planning, Leadership and Change Agentry [Syracuse University], 1998), 118-20.

[1] In various retreat talks, the Melkite priest Emmanuel Charles McCarthy has described this concept powerfully and succinctly: Apathy in the face of relievable human suffering is radical evil.

[2] Some may claim that human service restraint use is no different from, for example, a parent stopping a child from danger. However, these are different in many fundamental ways. Some of the differences include, for example, that the nature of the parent's relationship is radically different from paid staff's relationship with the person, and that the parents often take on hardship themselves when they do decide to limit their child's movement. In light of this paper, two of the significant differences lie in the nature of the relationship between family or friends, and the nature of a professionalized serving relationship.

[3] The reality of lack of awareness or consciousness in human service contexts is laid

Denial of the truth and reality of vulnerability. We can identify several common contemporary moral dilemmas raised more specifically by the all-too-common human service use of restraints on vulnerable people.[1] One such dilemma is tied to the prevailing misconception that surrounds the use of restraints, namely, that it is most often or even always used only in situations of imminent personal danger to human service clients, family, staff, members of the public, or others.[2] This is one of the more significant misapprehensions, in part because it tends to shut down or at least dampen needed reflection and analysis. Many people – who are learning, perhaps for the first time, about the practice of restraint within human service programs – are likely to presume that such techniques are used only or primarily in circumstances of immediate personal danger, that is, a service recipient is about to harm others or himself.[3]

On the contrary, studying the available literature, talking with people who have been restrained as well as with their families or advocates, and reading accounts of restraint use will indicate that in many instances when someone was injured or killed as the result of a restraint, the initial situation was not one of imminent danger but more often of staff acting to control clients, that is, to maintain the status quo and a smoothly operating program. These latter goals may not be inherently bad, but they do risk prioritizing systems over people, and losing sight of the image and likeness of God in each person.

Over and over, it has become clearer that restraints are not primarily or necessarily being used by many contemporary services under conditions of immediate physical threat, despite claims to the contrary. For example, parents and advocates often have to dig for the truth of what actually happened to their child or dependent injured or killed as a result of restraint.[4] The moral law is clear

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out clearly in Wolfensberger, *A Brief Introduction to Social Role Valorization*, 103-04. Note that restraint may even at times be used essentially as a tool of abuse, while maintaining the patina of legitimacy.

[1] By dilemma, I do not mean an academic problem but a flesh-and-blood problem for real people.

[2] Paterson provides a thoughtful analysis of this dynamic. Brodie Paterson, "Violence toward Mental Health Nurses in England and the Nature of the Policy Response: A Frame Analysis," *Journal of Risk and Governance* 1, no. 2 (2008): 1-11.

[3] In "Human Services Restraint: Its Past and Future," 156, Ferleger notes that the "use of these human services restraint techniques is not simply a response to client behavior. There is an interplay among staff, setting, the characteristics of the individual, and the individual's behavior, which is perhaps best conceptualized, in the words of one researcher, within an 'ecobehavioral' perspective (Day, 2000)."

[4] See for example U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, "Dangerous Use of Seclusion and Restraints in Schools Remains Widespread and Difficult to Remedy: A Review of Ten Cases," Majority Committee Staff Report (12 February 2014), esp. 19-21. Gil Bailie's description of the supposed respectability and the official

about the dangers in such a situation: deception can open the door wider to (further) violence.[1]

A Potential Response, Grounded in a Christian Understanding, to Human Service Restraint Use

The relatively typical practice of using restraints in human services has thankfully raised ethical concerns within various professional and advocacy organizations.[2] Even the responses to these concerns, however, have tended to focus on technical "solutions," such as the development of different techniques, specialized training, new agency policies, and/or legal safeguards.[3] While technical approaches are potentially helpful and may aid in raising awareness, a narrow fixation on technique or technology, broadly understood, does not address the heart of the matter. This may be an example of science and technology dominating the human, rather than the proper order visible in chapter one of Genesis.[4]

A technical and technological mindset tends to overshadow fundamental elements of the nature of Christian service, namely, that service is personal, relational, and communal, and that service is a mission for Christians. Relatedly, and as briefly noted earlier, a personalist approach can offer a clearer moral framework for taking responsibility and for addressing problems of human service restraint use; and it can "translate" into a secular context.

I cannot point to any simplistic or quick fix for the problems and dilemmas of contemporary human service restraint use specifically, nor to the broader dysfunctionalities of many contemporary service paradigms and structures that may contribute to a reliance on restraint techniques. The roots of the problems are

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aura of "veiled violence" may be instructive in this respect. Gil Bailie, *Violence Unveiled: Humanity at the Crossroads* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1995), 15.

[1] See Gen 4:9 as well as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2486. Furthermore, when the prevailing mindset in a service organization is one of fear of people served, vulnerable people are more likely to be perceived as menaces, for example, and to be treated as such. This is a particular risk within certain services for certain groups of people, for example, people with mental and psychiatric disorders. Many if not most devalued people are far more likely to be victims of violence, rather than perpetrators, particularly when one considers multiple expressions of violence, such as physical, sexual, structural abuse. See for example Paul Farmer, "An Anthropology of Structural Violence," *Current Anthropology* 45, no. 3 (June 2004): 305-25.

[2] See for example Ferleger, "Human Services Restraint: Its Past and Future."

[3] Rather than new techniques or technologies, what is needed are better or more virtuous people, along with beneficial practices and structures. Cf. Green, "The Catholic Church and Technological Progress," 10.

[4] See *Donum vitae*, introduction, 2.

too deep and too many.[1] What I can do in this paper however is to briefly examine the two dynamics described above (that is, denial of the person, denial of truth) from a theological and personalist perspective. Note that my focus, rooted in an understanding of Christian service and in a personalist approach, is to think about identity and relationship – that is, who am I called to be in the life of this vulnerable person – rather than fixating on "fixing" the vulnerable person.

Service is a mission for Christians. In light of revelation (Scripture and Tradition), we understand that service is fundamentally personal, relational, and communal. The values and principles of Catholic social doctrine and practice provide a useful guide to this Gospel reality.[2] Potentially adaptive responses to both the general and specific dilemmas narrated above can also be drawn from key thinkers associated with certain schools and philosophies of personalism.[3] For example, Catholic social doctrine, and many of these personalist frameworks, build on the pillars of dignity, responsibility, and subsidiarity.[4] Even just these three tenets can provide clear insights into offering more adaptive service to those in need. Although they sound simple, they are not simplistic. While they may seem old, these pillars represent "a philosophy so old, that it seems like new," in the words of the personalist thinker Peter Maurin, and they have the power to "create a new society within the shell of the old."[5]

Dignity can become a "point of contact between the concerns of the Church and the world."[6] Simply put, dignity refers to the inherent worth of a person.[7] In human services, this includes the dignity of societally devalued people as well as their family and friends.[8] Admittedly, dignity can be very difficult to perceive

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[1] These include but are not limited to legal and financial considerations and constraints, large numbers of people served congregated together, few or poorly trained staff, and so on.

[2] See part 1, chapter 4 of the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

[3] Cf. Thomas Williams, "What is Thomistic Personalism?" *Alpha Omega* 7, no. 2 (2004): 163-97.

[4] Note the overlap with foundational principles within the domain of Catholic social teaching.

[5] Peter Maurin, "The C.P. and the C.M." This "easy essay" makes clear that the initials refer to the Communist Party and the Communitarian Movement.

[6] Jay Martin, "The Personalist Awakening in 20th Century Catholic Moral Thought," *Church Life Journal* (11 July 2018).

[7] "To be a human person is to be made in the image and likeness of God. It is to be absolutely unique and unrepeatable. It is to exist from love and for love, with others and for others. It is to be embodied, incomplete and in need. It is to be called to a life-giving union and communion with God and others – or, with God through others." Katie Von Schaijk, "Personalism Is the Key to Understanding Pope Francis," *National Catholic Register* (5 November 2014).

[8] Devaluation refers to a social process whereby certain individuals and groups are

under certain circumstances. In a highly segregated and congregated service, for example, or when services are of low quality, consider the effort necessary to see the dignity of one specific individual within a large grouping, or of someone struggling to survive in the chaotic environment of a prison or of a large state psychiatric hospital, who may then engage in out-of-character behavior in an effort to survive.[1] Note that the dignity of servers (those who are helping others) should also be taken into account when considering this core principle.

Our faith, and a personalist approach, calls individuals to strive to uphold the dignity of each person regardless of age, ability, social status, personal history, bad decisions, income, culture, personality, and so on.[2] This approach counters the denial of personhood and relationality prevalent in many contemporary services.

Adherence to this first pillar can provide an anchor for servers *within* impersonal service structures and *against* impersonal institutions. Dignity elevates the person above a thing, such as a technique, tool, program, law, regulation, policy, or system. Even when an agency and its rules or practices do not recognize the dignity of people served, an individual (server) can still do so. Recognizing dignity personalizes rather than depersonalizes. It helps the server to identify with the person served *as a person*, thus building a safeguard against abuse and harm-doing.

Personal moral responsibility speaks to the obligation to do what is right and to try to live morally.[3] This speaks to concrete human acts aimed at the good, informed by conscience and guided by requisite virtues.[4] Implicit in this pillar are the assumptions that: right and wrong exist; that human beings can discern (albeit

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perceived and treated as having lesser social value than other members of a social grouping, for example, perhaps because of poverty, impairment, age, and so on. Wolfensberger, *A Brief Introduction to Social Role Valorization*, 3-24.

[1] The related conditions of segregation and congregation have bedeviled the history of human services. So often, good intentions and initial efforts to be helpful to a particular vulnerable group have grown in time into mammoth depersonalized structures that group lowly people together and apart from society. The history of efforts to help those with various physical and intellectual impairments, those with mental disorders, the poor and homeless, or even orphans are but a few examples.

[2] *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 108-11. This is not to deny need or to deny sin, but to honor the image of God in the other.

[3] *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 113, 126, 135, 139, 151. Note that this pillar does not imply that we necessarily work alone, but rather that we seek out other moral actors and allies. Additionally, we can invite, support, and encourage others (no matter where they stand on an organizational chart) to take responsibility for their own acts, perhaps remembering with gratitude when others have similarly reminded us of our responsibilities.

[4] David Carey, "A Primer for Love: Personalist Ethics," *Religion and Liberty* 13, no. 5 (20 July 2010).

imperfectly) what is right and what is wrong; and that human beings should strive to do the right and to avoid the wrong as much as possible.[1] If asked as part of a service role to do something which one believes will cause great physical or emotional harm to a vulnerable person, such as the repeated use of restraint has been shown to cause, then personalism may call for a courageous "No."

Personalism teaches that human beings are responsible for what we do. We are not culpable for other's (bad) decisions or acts; they are. We are not compelled to carry out someone else's bad decisions if it goes against what we fundamentally believe is right and true. Indeed, in serious matters, an assumption of personal moral responsibility would impel us *not to* carry out that bad decision. We are not robots but persons who are free to decide.

This pillar raises difficult questions. How do we take on personal moral responsibility in the face of pressures not to do so? How do we invite others to assume personal responsibility, some of whom will not want to even think about it? Acting as part of a communality of like-minded allies can help us to address to some extent such difficult realities.[2]

In a human service context, *subsidiarity* calls for those closest in relationship to the devalued person to be involved in helping.[3] Those with the closest perspective on an issue (that is, the persons themselves, their family, their friends, their neighbors or coworkers, often their long-time and closest servers, and so on) should ideally be part of addressing it. Thinking first or more about people rather than systems, and more about small and informal efforts, can help to make individual and systemic abusive practices less likely to arise or to persist.[4]

Focusing on local, and perhaps even more informal, efforts requires an ongoing striving for consciousness and prudence. A common tendency is to jump straight to an organizational approach. We in the developed world of the twenty-first century especially have learned to go almost instinctively to an agency or to the government for help when faced with a problem. Personalism invites us to

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[1] This calls to mind the Church's teaching on natural law and the nature of the moral act.

[2] We can also learn from examples of families taking small steps as well as extraordinary measures to care for a vulnerable family member themselves, resisting the tendency to place their loved one under the total care of a human service program or system: the parents who give up luxuries as well as essentials, or who go into debt, to care for their impaired son or daughter; the mother who rarely gets a good night's sleep because she spends each restless night by the bedside of her daughter who has a serious lifelong medical condition or may be trying to hurt herself.

[3] Cf. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 186.

[4] In this context, and regarding human service restraint specifically, see B. Paterson, I. McIntosh, D. Wilkinson, S. McComish, and I. Smith, "Corrupted Cultures in Mental Health Inpatient Settings. Is Restraint Reduction the Answer?" *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* 20, no. 3 (May 2012): 228-35.

resist this tendency, as well as the tendencies for organizations to get bigger, to add layers, or to build up formal bureaucratic structures, which often grow out of individual control. Big is not intrinsically bad, yet it does create a set of predictable and often intractable problems. An important question is, how do we resist those temptations to get bigger in order (theoretically) to help more people, without also acknowledging the associated short, medium, and long-term problems in getting bigger, including inevitable problems we may not foresee?

How do we accompany or walk with people as the programs and systems around them get bigger and more formalized? Sociologist Pierpaolo Donati posits that when subsidiarity and solidarity are practiced in relation, this reciprocity will contribute to the common good.[1] Though not perfect, a personalist approach and the concept of subsidiarity at least have the potential to help us individually and communally to respond adaptively to such matters.

Conclusion

Catholic service to the vulnerable ought to be rooted in the Gospel, and thus discernibly distinct from secular service efforts. It is imperative to strive to ground one's service in fundamental *principles* (for example, what must we believe to serve vulnerable people or to embrace a personalist stance?) as well as in core *virtues* (for example, who are we to be in the lives of vulnerable people?). Rules and principles by themselves will not necessarily be protective; however, principled servers with the characteristics, habits, and virtues that can help them to serve others are more likely to protect vulnerable people, particularly if servers work together with like-minded others for the common good in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity.[2]

The Church, in her teaching and prophetic witness, provides a much needed authority in a world that has in many ways lost touch with the reality of what it means to serve the lowly and vulnerable.

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[1] Pierpaolo Donati, "What Does 'Subsidiarity' Mean? The Relational Perspective," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 12, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 211-43, at 225.

[2] We may, for example, join or form a group of committed and self-reflective servers who are capable of hearing and striving to live in accord with a personalist narrative and tradition, who can hold each other accountable and provide mutual support as well as mutual responsibility. Such reflective groups will necessarily be small, though networks of autonomous groups may profitably form under certain conditions.

Letter from the President
of the Fellowship

Dear friends,

I have exciting news about our 2019 convention.

For the first time, we will be heading north of the border! In association with the Canadian chapter of the Fellowship, we will be holding the annual convention in Montreal, Canada. If you haven't been, it is a lovely city, with an indelible Catholic character...as well as four basilicas, two of which, in my humble opinion, are as beautiful as any in the world.

The convention will take plae on September 27-29. Please make sure your passports are up-to-date, as we will need them to travel to Montreal.

Our theme for the convention is, "Goodness, truth and beauty – and the encounter with evil." We will be presenting awards to Archbishop Terence Pendergast of Ottawa for courageous witness to the Faith, and to Douglas Farrow of McGill University for his scholarly contributions. Professor Farrow will also be one of our speakers.

Do plan to join us in Montreal!

Cordially,

William Saunders, Esq.
President, FCS

From the Editor's Desk

Semper Paratus: On Necessary (but not always pleasant) Reading

Joseph W. Koterski, S.J.[*]

T O BE READY FOR THE BATTLES that we are likely to face in the years to come, there is need to include in our reading certain items to which we may not be spontaneously inclined. To study them is crucial for being ready for the choices that we ourselves will face and for helping the students entrusted to us to be ready. There are many saints as examples in this regard, and the papal statement of February 12, 2019 declaring József Cardinal Mindszenty Venerable points us to his labors to understand, as fully as possible, the ideology of his adversaries.

Have you ever read, for instance, Saul Alinsky's rules for community organizers and social activists? Doing so can be eye-opening, whether our concern is to understand Chicago politics or the "burn it down" approach of the revolutionaries on our own campuses, or the tactics of those who try to use the recent scandals in the Church to promote their own agendas.

Reading the manuals of those who want to subvert the good order that we cherish is not always pleasant, but no less necessary for that, if we want to defend the rule of law in our political communities, the ordered liberty that is vital to our institutions of higher learning, and the way of life that Christ established by instituting the Church, the priesthood, the sacraments, and the moral order prescribed in the Sermon on the Mount.

Saul Alinsky

Shortly before his death, Alinsky (1909-1972) published *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals*.[1] It is a guide for community organizers that incorporates into the program that he had set forth in *Reveille for*

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[1] Saul Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals* (New York: Random House, 1971).

Radicals[1] the lessons he learned from three decades of experience with welding together low-income communities so as to gain economic, political, and legal power.

Each of the book's ten chapters offers a lesson on building grassroots organizations that can be effective in bringing about radical change. He puts special attention on symbol construction as important for strengthening the unity within an organization and for differentiating members of the group from outsiders. He lays great stress on finding a common enemy for the community to be united against. And, like other proponents of Marxism, he encourages using "direct action" to bring about conflict situations and describes reliable techniques for careful management of these conflicts to bring about the desired results. By observing the rules that he proposes, the organization can make progress to its goals faster than through normal bureaucratic processes.

Even reading the mere list of Alinsky's rules is likely to stir up memories of events that we have regularly witnessed on campus, in politics, and in ecclesiastical circles. Sometimes we find ourselves wondering how radical groups achieve as much success as they do, for goals that seem preposterous. It may well be due to their fidelity to Alinsky's program:

  • Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have.
  • Never go outside the expertise of your people.
  • Whenever possible go outside the expertise of the enemy.
  • Make the enemy live up to its own book of rules.
  • Ridicule is man's most potent weapon.
  • A good tactic is one your people enjoy.
  • A tactic that drags on too long becomes a drag.
  • Keep the pressure on.
  •The threat is usually more terrifying than the thing itself.
  •The major premise for tactics is the development of operations that will
      maintain a constant pressure upon the opposition.
  • If you push a negative hard and deep enough it will break through into its counterside.
  • The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative.
  • Pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it.[2]

In listing Alinsky's rules and in encouraging a reading of his works, my point is not that we should imitate his methods but that we can be better prepared to

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[1] Saul Alinsky, *Reveille for Radicals* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946).
[2] Alinski, *Rules for Radicals* (chapter headings).

counter them precisely by realizing that what we see is part of an organized pattern and by publicly calling attention to such nefarious tactics when we spot them. Often the tactics proposed in this list depend on lies and bravado in telling those lies ("power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have"). The remedy for this distortion includes discovering and making well known the truth about the situation. Often the Alinsky program involves the use of terror ("pick the target, freeze it, personalize it, and polarize it"). The remedy requires real courage and solidarity, and that includes coming to the aid of those who are targeted so that they do not become polarized and isolated.

Marx and Mindszenty

The value of preparing ourselves to resist the recurrent onslaught of these techniques is evident when we consider the lives of great figures like József Cardinal Mindszenty. His *Memoirs* might seem to come from another age and another land, but reading his book[1] this past summer at the same time that I was reading Alinsky brought me to reflect on the need for real preparation in our current situation. His account is full of stories about the importance of not taking orators and politicians at their word and about the need to figure out what they really mean, for they often said one thing and did another. He had studied the writings of Marx in detail and was later able to employ this knowledge to expose the tactics of his adversaries with great advantage.

To imitate Mindszenty's example, a good way to begin would be to read *The Communist Manifesto*.[2] It is astounding to realize the degree to which many of its ideas have already been effected in contemporary America. Among the tenets of communism that Marx elaborates in the opening pages of the *Manifesto* are these:

(1) *The abolition of private property in land and application of all rents of land to public purpose*. Here one might reflect on the way our courts have interpreted the Fourteenth Amendment (1868) to justify such sweeping powers as eminent domain and the forfeiture practices for the seizure of property under the RICO statutes.

(2) *A progressive or graduated income tax*. The Sixteenth Amendment (1913), lobbied for by Wilsonian progressives, has incorporated this practice into our federal and state taxation laws. The result has been a vast growth in the federal government, financed by the use of a power not assigned to it in the Constitution, and a massive change in the structure of American society and

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[1] József Cardinal Mindszenty, *Memoirs*, translated by Richard and Clara Winston, documents translated by Jan van Heurck (New York: Macmillan, 1974).

[2] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*. The Norton Critical Edition by Frederic L. Bender contains an annotated text, an explanation of its sources, and help ful background (New York : W.W. Norton and Company, 2013).

governance.

(3) *The abolition of all rights of inheritance*. Both federal and state estate taxes and other forms of inheritance taxes have severely reduced the right of private property owners to decide about the distribution of their estates upon death.

(4) *Centralization of credit in the hands of the state, by means of a national bank with state capital and an exclusive monopoly*. On this point it can prove helpful to consider how the Federal Reserve System (created in 1913) can manipulate interest rates for political purposes

(5) *Centralization of the means of communication and transportation in the hands of the state*; *state ownership of the means of production.* The tendency to replace free-market private enterprise with government cartels is evident in the work of the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the Federal Communications Commission (established 1887, 1903, and 1934, respectively).

(6) *Equal obligation of all to work; establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.* In our situation the need for a "two-income family" has deprived many children of having their mothers at home during their formative years.

(7) *Free education for all children in government schools*. There are many ways in which contemporary education amounts to a relentless form of indoctrination of our children into values that are completely at odds with our religion. In addition, we see the resistance of the public school establishment to the voucher system and to charter schools, let alone the relentless attack on private schools.

Calling attention to the socialist tendencies that have slipped into our law and politics is, of course, only a first step in what is needed to resist them. In some parts of the world, there is nothing so subtle about the pressures that Christians in particular face.

China and Kung, Clifford and Ciszek

It is difficult to understand why the Vatican recently signed an agreement with the current government of China that gives every appearance of compromising the heroic underground Church there.[1] The long history of suffering by faithful Catholics in China does not seem honored by this new understanding. One need only think about the long years of imprisonment and torture suffered by

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[1] For the background, see Joseph Cardinal Zen, *For Love of My People I Will Not Remain Silent: A Series of Eight Lectures in Defense and Clarification of the 2007 Letter of Pope Benedict XVI to the Church in the People's Republic of China*, translated by Pierre G. Rossi (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2019).

Ignatius Cardinal Kung and others to understand what is at stake here.[1] Early reports are making it ever more clear that the authorities are simply trying to use the compact to round up leaders of the underground Church.

The evidence of new persecution is growing abundant. Signs, for instance, have been posted on church buildings that no one under eighteen years of age is to enter. This is not religious liberty. Each new detail that has emerged reinforces the suspicion of an organized campaign to bring Christianity under government control. That the Communist Party has a sophisticated strategy and countless effective tactics for achieving its goals has long been documented, and there is nothing surprising here, except for the naivete of thinking that there could be good faith on the part of a repressive government.

For those who are now suffering for the faith in China, we need to sacrifice and pray, and where we can, to act by charitable gifts and by alerting those who deal with matters of international relations about the need to exert pressure that will promote real religious freedom there.

What would we do if such things ever happened here? The temptation is not even to think about this prospect, given our long tradition of respect for religious liberty. Thankfully, there are groups that have been working in politics and in the courts to protect the right of religious freedom, such as the Beckett Fund. Imagine, however, a future scenario of great darkness. Suppose that the reprieve brought about by the 2016 elections proves only temporary and that the foes of religious freedom regain control and succeed in pursuing their agenda aggressively.

In addition to such intellectual preparations as part of our metier, there is also the need to consider our personal spiritual preparations for persecutions and challenges that may arise. Should we think to ourselves that "it could never happen here," we do well to be mindful of the surprising speed with which other cultures have experienced rapid and revolutionary transformations. Our resistance to the lures of socialism and communism also requires personal preparations, and here too there is valuable reading available.

One very insightful classic in this area is *In the Presence of My Enemies* by Fr. John W. Clifford, S.J.[2] While serving as a newly ordained missionary in Shanghai, Fr. Clifford was arrested and imprisoned from 1953 to 1956. His book recounts many of his experiences from that time, not in the form of a biography but as illustrations for his thesis that it is possible to withstand the brutality of

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[1] Although Cardinal Kung did not himself write much about his own years of imprisonment, his story is movingly told in Paul P. Mariani's *Church Militant: Bishop Kung and Catholic Reistance in Communist Shanghai* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).

[2] John W. Clifford, S.J., *In the Presence of My Enemies* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1963).

brainwashing. Clifford insists that it is possible even for an ordinary person to resist the kind of pressures that brought many of his fellow prisoners to capitulate, provided that certain things be put in place in one's preparatory training.

Fr. Clifford lived through three years of intense efforts at brainwashing by his jailors in Shanghai. By figuring out how to defeat his captors at their own game, he not only survived but emerged from imprisonment stronger than those who sought favors from the guards by collaboration. To do this required him to fight the communists with uncompromising dedication. Often this meant keeping silence, insisting on a policy for himself of strict noncompliance, and a tough dedication to holding on to his own dignity.

In his judgment, the purpose of brainwashing is not to convert the captive to some ideology, not to make the victim into a communist, but to break a person's will as completely as possible, to turn a prisoner into a soulless robot who will be available for manipulation. Those who capitulate and perform actions against their conscience will find that afterwards they are increasingly subject to self-hatred and to a deepening guilt complex that will prompt them to collaborate more easily the next time.[1]

What made the communist jailors Clifford encountered believe that they would be successful with those they subjected to this intense psychological manipulation by force and the threat of force was a set of perceived weaknesses. Presuming that Americans were very materialistic, they operated on the principle that their prisoners could be bought for small favors. They took them to have little moral conviction and no sense of a need for loyalty to their friends or country. They understood their captives to be ignorant of American history and of world affairs.[2]

There is considerable evidence to show that the prisoners subjected to torture and inhumane treatment during the Vietnam War had profited considerably from the reflection that took place in the prisons of China and Korea in the decade before. The reports of figures like James Stockdale[3] and Jeremiah Denton[4] are filled with accounts of how military discipline was maintained in a way that helped the men to retain a sense of their human dignity. Insisting, for instance, that anyone who was interrogated give a full and truthful account of what happened not only promoted truthfulness and camaraderie (even when these reports had to be made by tapping on walls in Morse code by prisoners in solitary confinement)

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[1] See, e.g., Clifford, 49-50.

[2] Clifford, 58-60.

[3] James B. Stockdale, *In Love and War: The Story of a Family's Ordeal and Sacrifice during the Vietnam Years* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984).

[4] Jeremiah A. Denton, Jr., *When Hell Was in Session* (Washington, DC: Morley, 1976).

but also gave a tactical advantage, for the officers in charge thereby learned what had and what had not actually happened in a given interrogation. Clifford and others like him a decade before had to remember constantly that they were fighting a one-man-war throughout the period of their captivity.

We can well wonder if any one of us would manage to stand fast as Clifford did, even for a short time. But even from those who did capitulate there is much to learn. For instance, the life and writings of Clifford's fellow Jesuit, Walter Ciszek, give us much inspiration. The first book Ciszek published, *With God in Russia*,[1] gives a moving account of the events that followed his assignment to work in eastern Poland shortly before the Russian invasion in 1939. Swept up in the chaos of the situation, he was soon arrested under the suspicion of being an American spy and subjected to long years of solitary confinement at Lubyanka Prison in Moscow. He eventually broke under pressure and was convicted on espionage charges. After years of hard labor in a Gulag and internal exile in Siberia, he was unexpectedly exchanged in 1963 for two Russian agents convicted of spying in America.

In 1973 Ciszek published an even more remarkable book, *He Leadeth Me*.[2] The personal disclosures about his spiritual life deepen the account of his story in many ways. Despite his sustained attention to rigorous physical training and to spiritual asceticism, Ciszek found himself at a certain point overwhelmed by the pressures of interrogation and torture. Broken in spirit, he capitulated and signed statements that he knew were false. In profound desolation at his failure to hold firm against his captors, Ciszek experienced nearly insufferable pain and despair. But eventually, in prayer of contrition and abandonment to God, he learned that God had never abandoned him. Hence, the title of this second volume, *He Leadeth Me*.

Pondering Ciszek's honesty in recounting his debilitating disappointment with himself can be yet another part of the preparation that we would do well to make if we want to become as ready as we can. He realized that the strength he really needed for coping with life after his Petrine moment of failure was a strength that comes only from God. Like Peter, he had wanted to be faithful, but even in his failure he found God and could again become faithful. Thankfully for us, he lived and was able to write about it, and his writings can be an inspiration for us.

Could such things ever happen here? We pray not. But the history of our faith bids us to be ready to be ever faithful to Christ, even amid suffering. Thinking about these matters is an invitation to pray as well as to study, and especially to

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[1] Walter J. Ciszek, S.J., *With God in Russia*, with Daniel Flaherty (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964).

[2] Walter J. Ciszek, S.J., *He Leadeth Me* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1973).

ask the grace of perseverance. No amount of study and no understanding of ideologies can be successful without divine help. What Cardinal Mindszenty and Cardinal Kung, Fr. Clifford and Fr. Ciszek all had in common was their own devotion to live deeply in God. This strength made their resistance possible. But as faithful members of the Church, they were bound together in a love of God and a life of prayer that has an importance for all of us, whatever the political conditions under which we live. We do well to seek to deepen our own lives in God, for we do not know how we will be tested.

Memorial Notice

†Donald J. Keefe, S.J. (1924-2018)

Joseph Murphy, S.J.[*]

W HEN WE WERE SEMINARY STUDENTS of Fr. Keefe in the 1970s, I once asked a frustrated colleague what he thought our teacher did for relaxation. His response: "I suppose he makes ammunition." In fact, we both discovered later that the professor's quarters housed an intricate apparatus designed for the multicalibrated manufacture of bullets. Although one morning a cleaning lady accidently vacuumed the powder from a table of 45s (a mistake that presumably could have saved her life?), there was no vengeance in sight. Even though this bullet-making professor lectured with a deadly and penetrating aim and was never mistaken by his targets for having a bedside manner, he was nonetheless incurably chivalrous. No female student of his, in search of a working computer, a better living arrangement, a recommendation for promotion, or a dose of friendly masculine patronage could ever find a nobler advocate. His undying admiration for the indispensably feminine character of creaturely reality surely inspired the title of his great work, *Covenantal Theology: The Eucharistic Order of History.* The cleaning lady was off the hook.

Donald Joseph Keefe was the oldest child born into a farming family on July 14, 1924 in Hamilton, New York. His parents, Donald and Frances Keefe, had four other children: Richard, Charles, David, and Mary Frances. Don left the farm for service in the naval air corps as a navigator in World War II. Returning from North Africa with the rank of a navy lieutenant, he acquired a bachelor's degree from Colgate, where years later he was commencement speaker. After that, he proceeded to Georgetown for a J.D., was admitted to membership in the bar, and then went on to the Jesuit novitiate at the age of 29. As an older and more mature man, a war veteran who had come of age in the Depression and entered with a law degree, he was then surrounded by green and carefree eighteen-year-olds, and he fit in poorly. His superiors favored the majority, forcing Don to take refuge in studies, to do battle with metaphysicians, and to resign himself to nine years of

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toleration. On the day of his ordination in 1962, he once confided, a great depression was lifted from his soul, and he committed himself to John Courtney Murray's challenge to fill the need for systematic/dogmatic theologians, just as Vatican II was on the horizon.

At Woodstock during his theology studies he had greatly admired Gus Weigel, and he became an advocate of Henri de Lubac, absorbing from him an independent Augustinian streak. His subsequent doctoral studies had a rocky beginning. He decided against doing theology in Strasbourg and gratefully accepted Bernard Lonergan's encouragement to come to the Gregorian. Two years later his dissertation, *Thomism and the Ontological Theology of Paul Tillich*, was initially rejected by a second reader who denounced it for a being a book, not a thesis. A new second reviewer fortunately passed it. It saw publication in 1971 as a masterful study of theological methodology that compared Paul Tillich, whom Keefe regarded as the greatest Protestant systematician of the twentieth century, with Thomas Aquinas. The former presented an *answering* theology with a deep Platonic heritage and the latter a *questioning* one in dependence on Aristotle.

Fr. Keefe's first academic position was in the divinity school at Saint Louis University. When it closed in 1978, he moved to Marquette. In the next dozen years, along with writing a handful of articles, he directed several brilliant dissertations and produced his one major work on systematic theology. Or would it be better classified as sacramental theology, or perhaps philosophical theology, or a theology of Redemption and of creation, or an exercise in Mariology, or perhaps an apologetic for marriage? His book contains all of these subjects, and yet in no way is it a scattered or overly ambitious work. Its 764 pages (two volumes) spirals around a half dozen classical ideas. Its density is rescued by its profundity and novelty. Its style? One might skip the daunting introduction and simply note that the fifty-nine pages of its text precede sixty-three pages that contain 132 smaller-font endnotes. Subsequent chapters are more balanced, but the erudition of the notations often surpasses the accompanying text and offers a bewildering but reinforcing (and often necessary) repetition. Even so, we are not victimized by a Keefespeak. What he says has not sufficiently been said before, and therein lies the reason for our interest and admiration. What then does Donald Keefe offer us, and what is he about?

Cosmos and History

In a rather startling fashion, Keefe contends that the prime analogate that is studied in the philosophy of God had to be, counter to scholastic tradition, historically concrete, not totally transcendent. Instead of taking it as Being itself, *Ipsum Esse Subistens*, Keefe held that the prime analogate is the New Covenant, the Christ Event, the union of Christ with his Mother, that is continued in the

Eucharistic sacrifice across the time and space of history. He feared that the traditional analogy of being was subject to pantheism or to the remoteness of the Absolute from the cosmos itself. He greatly respected the objections of Tillich and Barth to natural theology and philosophy of God, but he realized that the faith of Tillich's Ultimate Concern, for example, never grounded the Absolute God in time and space. For Tillich, Christ was meant to be Essential God-Manhood, except that he claimed that, by the Protestant principle, Jesus the Christ was only *a* Christ, not *the* Christ, that which should be but is not affirmable as what is truly present in the world. Tillich ended up with the Ultimate not being God but, to avoid idolatry, a totally transcendent inaccessible "God beyond God."

For Keefe, what Tillich missed was an Immaculate Conception, an historical holy creature who could bear the divine, not by imposition upon her but by her sinless freedom. The historical event of the Incarnation, beyond the limited textbook description as "two-natures/one Person," meant for Keefe the co-personal union of Jesus and Mary, the Christ Event, the prime analogate for all historical meaning and cosmic worth, carried forth and ongoing through the Eucharist in the union of Christ and the Church, the New Adam with the New Eve.

Keefe understood the secondary analogate, the cosmos itself, the plurality of beings distinguished from the ground of Being itself, as fallen throughout and thus not explainable by its own natural dynamisms. It should not be understood as a secular calendar of neutral activity independent of the divine. For him there is no cosmological *a priori* with its own final intelligibility. All history is salvation history in which Christ, the Alpha and the Omega, from creation to eschaton, sanctifies it by the perpetual novelty of his sacrificial act. History is no longer subject to the pagan circularity of fate. The cosmos then, groaning for recapitulation in him (Rom 8), becomes truly sacramental, healed from its evil and reflective of the divine. Hence, the leaves in the fall are ever beautifully new and the glory of the sunset transcends spectral variations. But if the cosmos has its own sufficient and unfallen intelligibility, it need not require divinization, much less forgiveness. Our own creation at best, if apart from Christ, would be like that of sticks and stones, products of a First Cause. In this view, whatever "natural" autonomous revelation science, art, and technology could give us gets easily isolated from any supernatural extrinsic revelation, which could be reduced to merely external information. De Lubac had protested this disease of the mid-twentieth century for causing the demise of religious interest with its two types of revelation. For Keefe, revelation had to be unified in the *a priori* event of the Covenant. There was otherwise no way to identify the sweep of a "natural" earthquake or the "beauty" of a tsunami as destructive evils. After all, in these "scientific" occurrences no so-called natural laws are broken. They cannot be

affirmed as evil outside of the judgment of Christian faith in which death and suffering should never have existed. Keefe clearly rejected calling death natural. He saw animal death as prefiguring our own and attributed Aquinas's nuances about death to a dependence on Aristotle's descriptions of nature. Keefe thought that Aquinas portrayed the Fall as mostly a deprivation, which invited his interpreters to focus on the possible creation of a pure, ungraced nature to which a higher supernature would be an optional and extrinsic addition (precisely de Lubac's complaint above).

In sum, the cosmos in Keefe's thought is an estranged and fragmented one throughout. It is ever recouping its integrity by the presence of Christ in the sacraments until that time when the terrors of night and death will be no more in the light of eternal Sun, when the lamb will lie down with the lion, the baby will play in the viper's den, nature will be restored to its harmony, and death will be no more. Like Ratzinger, Keefe wanted to overcome the problems of the separated soul after death while also dealing with the mysterious time between death and resurrection for the individual person. Both of them initially dismissed the residual Greek notion of immortality as non-Scriptural, but both left us with incomplete answers and work to be done.

Nature and Grace

In rethinking the analogy of being, Keefe had to revisit the neuralgic controversies around the relation of nature and grace. In his effort to transcend the post-Tridentine squabbles between Jesuits and Dominicans in the *de auxiliis* controversy over grace and freedom, Keefe saw that grace was often portrayed as accidental and subsequent to creation, not as substantial. Creation had almost been portrayed as a distant temporal event of its own, the product of a Deity. The graced order would then intervene at the time of the Incarnation to elevate nature. However, since Christ is the first-born of a world created in him and since the world is fallen, estranged from its original being, Keefe decided to make the further and startling claim that the order of grace is the order of creation. The former is not a further optional enhancement of the latter, but a consistent and free determination of a single original prelapsarian offer of beatitude. This original state is, for him, not a three-layered stage of a separable, optional natural/preternatural/supernatural construction but a single result of our creation in Christ. Grace is not accidental or optional to creation, but substantially transformative and fulfilling. The separation of grace from nature is achievable only by sin, by an entry into the irrationality of unfreedom, the destruction of an original unity. Preserving the freedom of the supernatural, which preoccupied Pius XII in *Humani generis*, does not require an imaginable "optionalizing" of the original unitive holiness of Genesis in order to avoid tying God's hands. Keefe

insists that we start with what God did rather than what he didn't do. Therefore, for him sufficient grace becomes our substantial creation in Christ and efficacious grace refers to its acceptance in the Holy Spirit. Just as the Incarnation of Christ is a single act of total self-donation (the irrevocable sufficiency of his gift), which includes his *inevitably* total and yet *free* death, resurrection, ascension, sending of the Spirit and immanent historical Eucharistic presence, so likewise the salvation of the world, requiring its free acceptance by the redeemed (efficacious grace), is the effective continuance of his being the first-born of all creation, the Alpha and the Omega, and the eventual Lord of history and King of the universe.

In other words, for Keefe, freedom is understood not as an endless optionality that preserves the freedom of God but as a response to mystery (with Tillich), a mystery that is beauty itself, the freedom of truth, an original gift of God himself that does not need to be protected by imagining what God did not do but by accepting what God originally willed. In short, the only God we know is the Father sending the Son to give the Spirit. Keefe feared that the God of scholastic philosophy, if understood to be free (in the sense of having had the option of noncreation) would seem to portray an indifferent, almost hateful creator who would require a "reason" for creation, thereby making it necessary. The perfect unlimited love of God is absolute freedom itself necessitated by nothing and we need not unthink it by standing behind it to justify it. Hence, Keefe would presumably agree with the displeasure Ratzinger shows in *Introduction to Christianity* over Anselm's *Cur Deus homo*, which emphasized atonement and reparation as the reason for the Incarnation instead of love itself, which would be given, sin or no sin. In leaning toward Scotus, Keefe would endorse the primordiality of Christ and his Mother as "in the beginning," as uncreated and created wisdom, she the darling of Proverbs 8 who stands with the Lord at the beginning of time. Both Ratzinger and Keefe would then consider Christ primarily as plan A, not plan B (Anselm's theory of the atonement). His view is thus more in accord with Rahner's claim that when God gives himself man appears as created in Christ, who himself is the first-born of all creation. That is, our sinfulness inevitably (so to speak) turns him into our Redeemer, so irrevocably and deeply is he present to us by his Incarnation. Even though remaining pure and sinless, the vine is affected unto death by its inseparability from the branches. Love, for Ratzinger and for Keefe, has preceded in the divine plan the redemptive suffering that we caused.

Philosophy and Theology

Keefe understood theology not as academic speculation but as intellectual worship. The faith cannot be rationalized. The task of the theologian is to make its teachings intelligible rather than to deconstruct them along the bar of reason.

Theology is intellectual because faith and thought have something to do with each other. In his view, Barth's reservations about natural theology, for example, reject too much. Theology contains and circumscribes philosophy, and faith makes use of reason, but the starting point is not the latter. The academy does not judge the Church. In the end, philosophy, history, science, art, and so on all have their partial explanations of reality, but none of these can be ultimate. They need subjection to the *a priori* truth of the faith for their final meaning.

Secondly, Keefe calls theology worship. We worship that which is mystery, that which we can love but not entirely domesticate. In this Keefe borrowed Tillich's definition of freedom as being a response to mystery, and mystery itself being not a finite puzzle but a participated object of our total striving for the infinite through our unrestricted desire to know and love. Worship is therefore a response to the Other, to God or to one in God's image who participates in his absoluteness. A man can worship his wife not because he temporarily lacks finite information about her to be learned, but because through her open-ended participation, as in the image of God, in her likeness to the Creator she is mystery for him and is his fulfilling truth. She is lovable until death because she is ever unfinished and ever new by her participation in the divine. In short, we worship what we cannot control, not something fearful but something that comes to us first as gift and call and is increasingly beautiful in inviting us in.

Therefore, by his worship, the theologian's task is totally in service to the Church, not first to the academy, and his conclusions are hypothetical, to be submitted to the Church for coherence with revelation. They are attempts to praise and proclaim the Christ Event in intelligible language. For Keefe, therefore, since reason is never superior to faith and since faith validates whatever has meaning, all the sciences (especially philosophy) are also hypothetical in that they stand before the mystery of creation to admire its beauty. For him the whole creation, even the subpersonal, can appear as mystery reflecting the freedom of its Creator. The mountains and the sunsets can never be tamed or reduced to quantities. He often noted how even the discipline of mathematics with its seemingly unassailable conclusions stands open to revision, as twentieth-century physics has often demonstrated. For him the event of the Fall produced our dependence on the autonomy of reason, the temptation to figure everything out reductively and exhaustively, a cause of the excesses of the Enlightenment and the modernist crisis. Reason should rather stand before the mystery of the universe in neither a spirit of Stoic resignation nor one of rational domination.

The Freedom of Truth and the Metaphysical Conversion

In this vein, Keefe firmly proposed another novel startling understanding: that throughout the history of ideas one could see truth in one of two ways, as

necessary or as free. The former seeks a kind of reductionism, an exhaustive explanation of everything through the hard sciences, a redemption through deductive analysis. It is a kind of scientism, searching in recent decades for a Grand Universal Theory or for the Theory of Everything that in time would possibly eliminate the remaining "God of the gaps" that is worshiped, for example, by people praying in fear during a solar eclipse before their enlightenment about such a God's nonexistence. Keefe acquired his early distaste for such scientism in his days of philosophy studies. His dislike extended to metaphysics whenever it was presented as a body of closed and necessary truths.

Alternatively, however, to say that truth is free, Keefe's most original methodological insight (if not his most brilliant and difficult one), is baffling to the autonomy of human reason. A free truth would seem to be an uncertain or changeable one, or an optional one at best, as if $6 + 5$ could be other than 11. But this mathematical "beginning" truth is only a fraction of an integrating ultimate truth that makes the fraction intelligible in light of the human good. This good (this beauty) is the gift of the entire revelation, which can never be perfectly owned or exhausted by the canons of mathematical reason. For Keefe, beauty is truth or, better, beauty is the freedom of truth. A beautiful portrait or landscape or person is beautiful because I cannot tame such an object categorically and can never exhaust its meaning. As a revelation to me, it becomes my truth and invites my worship through its participation in the transcendence of the good creation. Keefe considered this either-or notion of truth, necessary or free, to be the least understood and least recognized discovery within our intellectual culture, even from within his own writings. That is, readers would simply regard a free truth as self-contradictory. It's true or it isn't. But if the beautiful object is a holy mystery, its propositional partial truth is not compromised by its inexhaustibility. It is totally true, for example, that Mary is the Mother of God ever and always, but it is a truth of faith not rationalizable or reversible but one that is open and inexhaustible. In no way does its freedom make it optional. It is more like a truth of a vocation, or of a call to enter into the mystery of marriage. The rich young man in the Gospel, for example, could not reduce his gifted higher calling from Jesus, his new mysterious truth, to one of his earlier obligatory manageable commandments. Hence, his turning away in sadness and frustration.

If Keefe did not find much free thought among metaphysicians, he nonetheless spoke of a metaphysics of the Covenant and a metaphysics of history, for he was unable totally to sideline his philosophical skills. Here his thought took a turn. In fact, he would refer to Christ and Mary as our true metaphysical beginning at the center of history in order to contrast them with the temporal beginning in the old Adam and Eve, unavailable to us on account of our inability either to rationalize or to transcend our fallenness. We can never catch them

before sin but can only affirm in faith that it did not have to be so and was not so in the originally good creation. Since we cannot stand at the moment of the original creation, our available historical creation is our new one in the union of the holy and historical couple who redeem us by the restoration of integrity to our time and space. The major turning point in Keefe's thought occurred, he confided, one cold day in 1988. For months, maybe years, he had struggled to find a metaphysics into which he could insert the Eucharist. By a stroke of revelation it suddenly dawned on him that he must turn the project inside out. No cosmic metaphysics, he realized, can ever explain the Eucharist if it is the intelligibility of the cosmos itself and the cause of cosmic meaning and integrity, metaphysics included. The truth of the cosmos, of existence itself, of nature and the heavens, revolves around the dynamic action of Christ. He alone is the free formal, final, and efficient cause of the universe. Our very being and meaning is achievable in responding to his words, his action: "Take and eat..., take and drink." In the Eucharist the Christ Event of the Father sending the Son to give the Spirit is perpetuated and ever new as one and the same sacrifice of his effective death in total self-donation. All temporal reality revolves around and receives its validation thereby. Any metaphysical explanation would also have to be theological, hypothetical, and free, dictated by revelation itself *a priori.* No metaphysical system first permits the Eucharist to be what it is. At this point the Eucharist, the Christ Event, had to become the center of all Keefe's theology.

The Eucharistic Order of History

From de Lubac Keefe learned how the Eucharist causes the Church to come into existence and then be made holy by union with the true Bridegroom to become one flesh with him. For Keefe, it could be said that the Eucharist also causes the world. Such statements are normally superficially misunderstood, as if to say that the reception of Communion makes people holier and they inspire others to lead salutary lives of exponential conversion, and so on. After all, the world was caused a long time ago, was it not? But such an understanding would make the sacraments only an instance of exemplary and extrinsic conversion. Keefe means the Eucharistic causation to be substantial and ontological. In other words, for him the autonomous world is helplessly circular, a cosmos of factual unrelated happenings unable to be valued by themselves, a place for Stoic resignation where what happens just happens unless revelation can give it direction. For Keefe, the primary sacrament is the Eucharist, the Christ Event itself, a continuation of his mission and Incarnation and sacrificial self-donation. The Eucharist is then the locus of historical novelty, without which we are just waving our arms and kicking our feet here on earth in the hope that something under heaven will last definitively. Can the world actually bear the divine? Can

God be active within it? If the death of Christ, the same event as the Mass, can heal the self-centeredness of the world and give it direction, then the world comes to mean around this event. The love of a man and woman in marriage is then not self-serving. It is indissoluble because Christ's presence unto death cannot be dissolved. Their love actually counts, and they are empowered to say "forever." Subsequently, the whole creation can take on a sacramental nature that truly signs the divine. Daily work, spousal fidelity, the labors of politics and commerce – all need centrality and validation.

Speaking metaphysically, Keefe could say that Christ is the formal cause of the universe. Readers might agree that efficient or final cause is intelligible but fret that a formal cause deprives the recipient of his or her freedom. A formal cause is intrinsic, they say, and we are not all one organism but isolated substances. But if Christ is not the formal cause something else is – an idea, a cosmic force, a utopian pull? Creation in Christ is a mere sentimental notion if it has no true formative power on the level of being. Christ is not one more bean in the jar, standing over against others in the hope that we imitate him. Salvation is not by mere imitation but by substantial transformation and on the part of all sacraments by substantial transformation occurring through the agency of all the sacraments. Keefe lamented the superficiality with which sacramental realism is understood. A sacrament for him is not a devotional and subjective experience but an event, a continuation of the Christ Event itself. Christ's being not only consubstantial with the Father but also consubstantial with us is a doctrine that Keefe saw as usually forgotten if not mistakenly considered heretical. He also dismissed the Boethian notion of a person as substance of a rational nature if it destroys the essence of person as dynamic relation. For Keefe the true anthropological substance is humanity, wherefrom his thought could be open to seeing persons as subsistent relations in a way analogous to the Trinity.

Readers are correct in fearing that formal causality is totally determinative in, say, a living animal, an organic unit. Even the notion of one body, as in Corinthians, portrays a unity that the members are to dependently follow. Given this intimacy with Christ, however, he can be the formal cause of created reality only if he is, paradoxically, the *free* formal cause. This intelligibility, departing totally from Aristotle, can be understood only in faith. To be free the formality has to be accepted by the recipient. It would then not be an accidental formality around daily actions but the acceptance of what one basically is. Tillich was insightful here for Keefe by calling sin fundamentally a refusal to be, not just minor daily departures from virtue. Conversely, holiness is then the acceptance of the offer to be, making sense of Keefe's designation of sufficient grace as creation in Christ and efficacious grace as the acceptance of what we most basically are, two graces reflecting the presence of Christ and the Spirit and separable only

through the impossible possibility of sin. This ontological union with Christ makes intelligible the eschatological total and liberating, and free, oneness of heaven in contrast with the terrible pain of those below who have lost the Spirit but cannot escape their original gifted creation in him.

The Marital Structure of Reality

Fr. Keefe would like to be remembered as a Eucharistic theologian. But he could be equally pleased to be known for his doctrine of marriage. For him marriage is the image of God's relation to the world and a true covenant in imitation and continuation of the sacrificial action by which Christ the Bridegroom makes holy his bridal Church in union with him. This union is misunderstood when the Christ-Church relation is described as a metaphor, as if the man in the tuxedo and the woman in the white dress are the real spouses. Rather, the couple in their one flesh union are a secondary analog to the true one flesh union of Christ and his people, modeled further on the one flesh union of Jesus and his Mother. The Christ-Church relation is not to be spiritualized and so reduced to sentiment, as if it needs enrichment from below. The very reverse is true. The love of the couple effects nothing, absent the work of Jesus and Mary to ground it. Just as God the Father is more a father to each and all of us than our own fathers are, so is Christ more a Bridegroom than the husband on earth. He is the originator of self-donation who empowers a man to be definitively faithful, excusive, and fruitful. Nonetheless, popular Christian consciousness too easily thinks of God as only named Father by us whereas a real father is flesh and blood. The concreteness of the Incarnation needs to correct this. Keefe, moreover, saw in the marital union, the man–woman–bond, as did John Paul II, the concrete imaging of God's tri-relationality. Thereby the imaging of God is not merely spiritual, Platonic, or angelic. Man and woman differ as persons, not as substances. Keefe relied heavily on Genesis 1:26-28 to emphasize the unity of humanity and to protect the substantiality of Christ with us.

For Keefe, humanity is created male and female in the image of God, fallen from that imaging by the disobedience of male and female, restored to that imaging as male and female (marriage), precisely by male and female (Jesus and Mary) obediently saying yes to the redemptive mission in a one flesh union. Thus, the restoration parallels the breach of the original covenant and corrects it by achieving the co-personal union. The one-flesh terminology serves better to exemplify the free relations of persons than the one body imagery of Corinthians. In this respect Keefe relies more heavily on Ephesians, where Christ and the Church appear in marital union.

John Paul II was also influential for Keefe in his reference to marriage as the "first" sacrament of creation, the human condition of original unity. In this vein

Keefe developed his preexistence language and his emphasis on the primordiality of Christ and Mary. He described them as the sinless beginning, the New Genesis. Since they are the cause of our meaning and the center of our history, Keefe could place them at the "beginning." If Christ is the first-born of creation, the Alpha and the Omega, Keefe did not want him understood as only beginning, so to speak, two thousand years ago. Jesus is the Christ from beginning to end and always the Son of God. He refused to distinguish in any way Jesus of Nazareth from the immanent eternal Son whereby the humanity of Christ would become merely instrumental for the unchanging divine Word. Likewise, for Keefe, Mary is the woman in the beginning, the true Eve as Jesus is the Real Adam. These ideas are perhaps the most challenging, and challenged, elements of his thought. Keefe places Jesus and Mary at the beginning of time, since space and time themselves are conditions of fallenness, unless perhaps one believes in the temporality of the Eden story. For Keefe, the Fall is at the moment of creation, and it effectively fragments the universe across space and time. To say that Mary and Christ were in the beginning is to side in part with those like Scotus who said that they would have come to us sin or no sin. It coheres with Rahner's notion of creation in Christ where the God-man is exemplary of our union with God and it fits with Ratzinger's preference to see Christ first as love before he is Redeemer. Future scholars will examine Keefe's preexistence language, which is why he devoted an initial appendix to it.

Lastly, if history is Eucharistically ordered, it simply means that the Father sending the Son to give the Spirit continues in the liturgical sacrifice where Christ is present to the world both synchronically at every moment and diachronically down the ages. "This is my Body..., this is my Blood" continues to achieve the holy-making union of God with the world, that very power by which it can be called a world at all. This free offering of Christ to us, the offer to fully be, to exist in him, is matched by our free acceptance in the Spirit, just as Mary said yes to the Spirit of God coming upon her. So is the broken world healed and made holy and restored to integrity.

This Eucharistic-marital structure of reality itself, the meaning of existence around which the world turns and is constituted a world at all, replaces for Keefe any other social, political, cosmological, or historical centrality that would pose as its replacement today. Covenant for him signifies the free co-personal unity of God and man, effected concretely in the union of Jesus and Mary, Christ and the Church and the ongoing marital oneness of man and woman. Absent this freedom, effected in the Eucharistic consecration, there is no newness under heaven, only a repetitious pagan circularity where quantitative power, political or otherwise, will compete to make mankind totally autonomous in being its own creator. Fr. Keefe would surely see, in the hypersexualized world of today, Sartre's fear of the

Other, or the ancient Anaximander's dissolving of all opposites because all differences are threatening and inimical. In a brave new world where male and female differences as persons no longer define us but must be neutered and dominated, Keefe would see the Anti-Christ at work. The philosophy behind same-sex marriage, the transgender movement, and the horrific attempt to combine human with animal gametes, whereby the beautiful transcendent mystery of male and female must be reduced to competing material quantities and then dissolved in the name of "fairness," proclaims a sterile androgynous creation. It was the offer of the serpent in Genesis when he approached the woman first, the flowering high point of God's creation, rather than the man. In this way he could begin to unravel the unified marital covenant in its co-personal union and invite its members to control their very being with individuated and autonomous self-creation. Our sexuality, God's defining gift by which we image his tri-relationality is then ours to manipulate, the result of which Fr. Keefe named the truly demonic.

From my limited attempt to display some key principles of Donald Keefe's original thought in tribute to him, I see that any one principle could be the first, last, or central thesis. Is his theology founded on the freedom of truth, the historical prime analogate, the marital structure of reality, the unity of grace and creation, the Eucharistic order of history? They form a unified, extremely coherent whole that he himself could not easily break into parts without moving into all of them. In his case the whole is not greater than the parts because each part speaks about the whole work and the man himself.

An obituary would serve better by talking of the man instead of his work. For Donald Keefe, however, it is hard to say who he was or what he did apart from his productive dedication to the academic life. His projected book on law and theology was never under way, so taken was he with revisions to *Covenantal Theology*. He was grateful for those who taught him much, even if he strenuously disagreed with them. He appreciated Rahner's early Christology, de Lubac's *Corpus Mysticum*, the sacramentalism of Augustine, the wisdom of Origen, and the great thinkers of the contemporary culture. Even though he had admirers of his brilliance, he did not cultivate disciples, probably because he was not any thinker's disciple himself. He sparred with authorities in his early Jesuit days and was always intellectually wrestling with adversaries, and he was disheartened if he thought they knew better but held their positions out of cultural or political correctness.

Fr. Donald Keefe could not let his two-volume achievement stand without further commentary. He crafted an appendix based on the criticism of his preexistence language in the first edition, an "appendix" that inevitably and unsurprisingly grew by year 2015 into volumes 3 and 4, still unfinished and as yet unpublished, and consuming a further 1300 pages. He conceded that these might

only see a life online someday, in parts or as a whole. It is hard to say just when, where, and how *Covenantal Theology* will keep appearing, but it surely must remain into a new generation. He gave up wrestling with his overtaxed computer in 2016, enjoyed attending daily Eucharist, and passed to the Lord on February 27, 2018. What did he think of his work and of himself? He would be satisfied, I know, in spite of his intellectual brilliance and academic erudition, to have his theological vocation remembered with these his very last words of the two-volume work:

In sum, our objective reality as human is covenantal through the Eucharist, the center of objective existence as the constituting event of the historically free world, the Good Creation. The work of theology is not speculation but practice, the Eucharistic worship of the Church. It is the work of the theologian to inquire into the freedom of this Good Creation, into the nuptial dignity of our imaging of God, and in that inquiring to remember that such understanding he may gain is a gift, carried in a most fragile vessel, and that his questions mark his indigence, not his self-sufficiency. The theologian is very much Our Lady's juggler; by himself he is only ridiculous: his sole dignity is his service to the Church.

RIP

Book Reviews

John R. Wood. *The Light Entrusted to You: Keeping the Flame of Faith Alive*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018. 294 pp.

Reviewed by Joshua Dieterich, Director of Catholic Formation, St. Mary's Visitation Parish, Elm Grove, WI

Setting out to pass along what he learned from some of the most popular authors, theologians, and speakers in the Catholic Church today, John R. Wood echoes the messages of Matthew Kelly, Scott Hahn, and Bishop Robert Barron, among others. This work is intended to serve the newly evangelized and those looking to make the Faith a more permanent fixture in their lives.

By day Wood is a mobile eye doctor, and he shares experiences from his work throughout this book. But the flame of his deep personal faith and the desire for others to experience the same comes through clearly these pages. Indeed, it is this passion that lets him affirm, "I love the Catholic Faith. I have an insatiable hunger to learn more about the faith. There is always more to learn, and the more I learn about the faith, the more I love it" (9).

In this spirit Wood develops what he calls "Saints in the Making University" (SIMU), using his own experiences as a medical scholar and a serious athlete to develop a curriculum to help the reader to become a saint. As Wood reminds us, "nothing else really matters" (18). The first letter of the constituent classes of his curriculum form an acronym: <u>S</u>aving Grace, <u>A</u>thletics, <u>I</u>nstructor's Manual, <u>N</u>eed to Know Him, <u>T</u>heology of the Body, <u>S</u>acrifice & Service (19).

In the chapter on "Saving Grace," Wood describes the primacy of grace as an inexhaustible font that is available to the world from Christ's sacrifice on the Cross. He considers the way in which the saints are models for how we too can draw upon it.

Wood, a former college athlete, takes the opportunity to reflect in the chapter on "Athletics on the way some great athletes have lived lives of faith. He stresses their "self-discipline, perseverance & passion, obedience, repetition & recreation, teamwork, and sportsmanship" (64). This chapter finds inspiration in Paul's call to Christians to finish the race for which there is only one prize (cf. 2 Tim. 4:7; 1 Cor. 9:24).

To live a championship-caliber life of faith, we need to know Christ personally and intimately. Wood's chapter "Instructor's Manual" gives an overview of salvation history, with special attention to the various covenants described in the Old Testament and the life of Christ. He includes suggestions for keeping the flame of faith alive in times of difficulty (139-41).

In the chapter called "Need to Know Him" Wood reflects on the way we can come to know the Trinity through its icon, the family. His humble gratitude to his own earthly father for helping him to have a childlike faith in God the Father comes through strongly here.

The chapter on "Theology of the Body" makes good use of the author's medical background. He examines the role of the virtue of chastity in pursuing holiness as well as the potential health hazards of unchastity for oneself and for society. And the final chapter, "Sacrifice and Service," shows the need to let Faith permeate the whole of our lives in sacrificial love through service to others for God's glory. Guided by Thérèse's "Little Way," Wood discusses the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.

In all, *The Light Entrusted to You* offers a sustained call to personal holiness as a call that each of us needs to hear if we are to become "a saint in the making" (294).

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Colin Farrelly. *Genetic Ethics: An Introduction*. Malden MA: Polity Press, 2018. 207 pp.
   Reviewed by Joseph W. Koterski, S.J., Fordham University

The problem with the idea of eugenics proposed in the first half of the twentieth century was not simply its racism. But one would not know that from this book, innocuously titled *Genetic Ethics: An Introduction*. Charmingly written, this volume needs to be recognized for what it is – an effort to present the idea of eugenics as an enlightened moral position that can be justified for its service in promoting such goals as "equality of opportunity" and "reproductive freedom." By repudiating the racism that tinged previous applications of eugenics, Colin Farrelly hopes to rehabilitate what ought to strike us as an approach to morality that was rightly discredited long ago.

One of the pervasive assumptions of the book is the inevitability of the widespread use of recent biomedical advances in such areas as genetic screening, gene therapy, and genome editing. The questions that the author chooses to raise pertain to what he perceives as the relevant moral quandaries, such as whether there is really any moral objection to allowing parents undergoing IVF to screen embryos for the sex of their offspring and whether it would be ethical to alter the rate at which humans age so as to greatly increase longevity at a time when the human population seems already to be at potentially unsustainable levels.

By lumping such unquestionable desiderata as the reduction or elimination of chronic and infectious diseases with a disinclination to take a stand on the

morality of abortion, embryo experimentation that involves the embryo's destruction, and euthanasia, Farrelly attempts to redeem the concept of eugenics from its historical association with horrendous abuses. The volume exhibits a steady preference for concentrating instead on such topics as epigenetics and evolutionary biology. Passing over any discussion of the intrinsic dignity of each human being as a person, it puts its stress rather on laboring to show the compatibility of such ideas as autonomy in individual decision-making with the genetic enhancement of the human species. There is much focus on the need to use genetic screening and abortion in order to allow disadvantaged members of minority groups to have equality of economic opportunity.

The book's true colors are clear from its repeated invocation of Bertrand Russell's definition of eugenics as "the attempt to improve the biological character of a breed by deliberate methods adopted to that end." The original text being quoted here is from Russell's essay on "Eugenics" in his notorious *Marriage and Morals* (New York: Loveright, 1929), 254-73. Farrelly holds that this definition permits him to claim that eugenic aspirations may be "morally defensible, even morally obligatory" when they pursue "empirically sound" aims like the promotion of health and when they treat all persons as free and equal (22). It is regrettable to find in the text no worries about the way in which just such language quickly devolved into forced programs of sterilization and euthanasia in what were thought to be highly rational and enlightened cultures.

There is yet another level at which this book strikes me as questionable, if not pernicious. The author claims to have a novel approach to these bioethical topics by presenting "an original virtue ethics framework" for the assessment of the genetic revolution. Virtue ethics is, to be sure, very popular today and has been repeatedly shown to make a valuable contribution on many questions.

But, as J.J. Sanford has shown in his *Before Virtue: Assessing Contemporary Virtue Ethics* (2015), not all those who claim the mantle of virtue ethics deserve the title. Sanford's study thoroughly and convincingly undermines the credibility of any theory of virtue ethics that is grounded in utilitarianism to be a genuine theory of virtue ethics. He does this by showing that the utilitarians who want to style themselves proponents of virtue ethics do not really ever free themselves from reducing ethics to a calculus of the utility-value. Invariably they end up valorizing only the virtue of prudential calculation, whatever rhetorical appeals they make to the range of other virtues typically associated with genuine theorists of virtue ethics like Plato and Aristotle. However much they claim to eschew rule-based theories, the inner logic of utilitarianism entails an avoidance of teleological considerations about human nature and about the virtues that human beings need in order to perfect that nature and to live well. They concentrate instead on articulating rules for the judgment of actions on the basis of their utility in

maximizing values and minimizing disvalues.

It is just this sort of stance that we find in the present volume. Rather than taking up the substantive claims of ancient philosophers about what is genuinely good for human beings that ground the normativity of pursuing virtue, Farrelly is content to cite Socrates's refutation of Polemarchus's rather narrow definition of justice in terms of telling the truth and returning whatever one borrowed as the revelation of the shortcomings of any "rigid conception of justice." Aristotle fares little better when Farrelly uses his definition of virtue as residing in the mean between extremes as a justification for not being overly fearful about new genetic technologies (15-16).

Rather than making any significant argument about what human nature really requires for the happiness of individuals and of societies, Farrelly employs again his predilection for Russell's eugenic ideal by constructing a spectrum of possible stances on the question of one's willingness to use genetic technology. At the one end of the spectrum, "the Biomedical Luddite Society" represents an excessive fear of its use; at the other, "the Biomedical Technophile Society" stands for excessive enthusiasm. It is no surprise that the enlightened stance of this new form of eugenics stands as the virtuous mean, but it is hard to see how devising clever names for straw-man opponents constitutes a worthy argument. Allusions are even made to Plato's approval of eugenics, with no sense of the satirical character of the fifth book of the *Republic*.

The insights that are possible through more reliable forms of virtue ethics, it seems to me, are insights that are only possible on the basis of a sound view of the human person – the sort of perspective that utilitarianian cannot in principle offer because of the limitations intrinsic to its fundamental assumptions. In Aristotle, for instance, one finds a well-developed virtue ethics that presumes a vision of the human being such that there are some things that are simply wrong always and everywhere, like adultery and murder. Admittedly, Aristotle does not provide any argument for his views on these points (see *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.5.1107a9-25), but there is no other plausible interpretation of his text than to say that these are his assumptions.

In adopting, adapting, and extending Aristotle's virtue ethics, Thomas Aquinas not only makes a trenchant case for the natural moral law (see *Summa theologiae* I-II, 90-97) but provides an elaborate philosophical and theological anthropology that explains why the various virtues that he describes are objectively good for the development of human beings and play a constitutive role in personal happiness and in a good social order. There is no reduction of all the other virtues to prudential calculation, but rather a thorough-going appreciation of what is needed for human life and moral excellence.

The point here, of course, is not to complain that Farrelly is not Aristotelian

or Thomistic. It is simply to point out that his efforts to claim the title of virtue ethics for the support of his utilitarian defense of eugenics fall short of being a real virtue ethics. To uncritical scrutiny, the volume could pass for an interesting new way to think about adapting our morality to what seems like an inevitable onslaught of new technology. There is need, however, to resist such sophistry and to recognize that a rose by any other name is still a rose.

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Silas S. Henderson. *Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, S.J.: With an Undivided Heart*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2017. 290 pp.
    Reviewed by John Gavin, S.J., College of the Holy Cross

In his book *Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, S.J.: With an Undivided Heart*, Silas Henderson dedicates a remarkable chapter to the moral-spiritual climate of Rome in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Rome was a "dirty, plague-stricken, and dangerous place," struggling in its response to the Reformation through the implementation of Tridentine reforms. Hope for the restoration and union of the Church must have seemed, at times, remote in such a confusing atmosphere. Yet, the Holy Spirit called forth a remarkable group of saints in the Eternal City during this period, including: St. Phillip Neri (1515-1565), St. John Leonardi (1541-1609), St. Camillas de Lellis (1550-1614), St. Joseph Calasanz (1557-1648), and St. Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621). This was a truly incredible constellation of lights for a Church that was stumbling in the darkness!

The youngest of these lights was St. Aloysius Gonzaga. He was the eldest son of Ferrante de Gonzaga, of the powerful House of Gonzaga, and Marta Tana de Santena. His birth on March 9, 1568, in the family's castle in the Duchy of Matua was greeted by the firing of cannons and the praying of the *Te Deum* in the parish church. The Marquis Ferrante had great plans for his boy that included a military career and the eventual inheritance of his title. God, however, had other plans.

One would not readily expect a saint to emerge from the rather corrupt atmosphere of the Renaissance nobility. Indeed, his first lessons in military life at the age of five included the repetition of vulgar jokes – ribald tales for which he was severely rebuked by his tutor. Furthermore, the sensuous nature of the courts and the omnipresence of luxuries worked to suppress the movements of the spirit. Yet, during an illness at the age of eight Aloysius spent time in prayer and reflection that served as the foundation for his future vocation. Throughout his further education he maintained a life of prayer and penance that was much at odds with the prevailing values around him.

The discernment of his vocation benefited greatly from encounters with such

lights as St. Charles Borromeo, Cardinal and Archbishop of Milan, as well as regular visits to Capuchins and other religious. Yet, it was particularly the influence of his Jesuit confessor in Milan that led him to the Society of Jesus. His father vehemently opposed his son's desire to enter religious life but in the end relented. The eldest son renounced his inheritance and title in order to embrace the evangelical counsels in the Society. In a letter to the Father General of the Society, Claudio Aquaviva, upon his acceptance, Aloysius wrote: "Your Reverence can scarcely believe the great consolation God has vouchsafed to grant me during these last few days. I have always put my trust in the infinite mercy of his Divine Majesty, and hoped that he would let this hard and painful struggle turn out for the best, and for the salvation of my soul" (106). In November 1585 he entered the Jesuit novitiate in Rome. The noble became the humble servant of Christ and the Church.

His time in the Society, however, would be brief. His deep piety and humility impressed his Jesuit brothers. Yet, his health, which had never been good, became a regular obstacle during his formation. His studies in Milan, for instance, were cut short by an illness that required his return to Rome. Yet, it was love and service that would abruptly terminate his course in the Society of Jesus. A deadly plague attacked Rome in 1591, and the Jesuits responded by opening a hospital and other facilities to serve the sick and dying. Aloysius insisted on serving the ill and finally contracted the disease himself. In a final letter to his mother, Aloysius wrote that he was ready to go "from the society of men here below to that of the angels and saints of Heaven; in short, from the sight of earthly and perishable things to the contemplation of God, Who is in Himself all that is good" (232). He died on June 21, 1591 and was canonized on December 31, 1726.

Henderson's book provides an accessible and inspiring account for modern audiences. Though it does not break any new ground, it successfully portrays this great saint as a hero for our own time. St. Aloysius resisted the dominating cultural influences of his world and, through divine grace and asceticism, gave witness to the transformative power of the Gospel. Among the saints of his age, he also demonstrated that youth and brevity of life are no obstacles to holiness. He therefore serves as a powerful example for youth today. Pope Leo XIII wrote in 1890 that this noble Jesuit "bore himself so that he not only far excelled everyone, but left behind him a splendid example of holiness" (266). We need such saints today. Indeed, this volume offers spiritual reading for anyone looking for hope in our own confusing times.

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Catherine O'Donnell. *Elizabeth Seton: American Saint.* Ithaca, NY: Three Hills, an imprint of Cornel University Press, 2018. xiv + 508 pp. Cloth, $25.85.
   Reviewed by Thomas Jodziewicz, University of Dallas

A rich archival trove does not necessarily guarantee good history. What is required, of course, is the observation of high scholarly standards in the use of such sources, including a good sense of historical context and a sensitive appreciation of human activity and aspirations. A wonderfully concise definition of written history might be "exact imagining," the joining of the critical use of sources with an empathy regarding their connections and their meaning. This book qualifies on both counts.

   Fr. Simon Bruté, a Sulpician who was a spiritual director of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (1774-1821), and later a bishop of Vincennes, Indiana, is the conservator of much of the archival treasure that allows for a richly textured approach to Seton. Embarrassed by the 1817 publication of *Memoirs of Mrs. S: A Fragment of Real History Written by Herself,* edited by Isaac Kollock, Seton was determined to burn her papers, including journals and letters written before and after her conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1805. Her fitful journey to that moment can be traced in those papers. We can also discover there her at times difficult interactions with others, including Catholic clergy and bishops. She may have feared having these papers available to strangers and thus possibly to insensitive scrutiny. Anti-Catholicism was never far below the surface in American life, and the success of the women's religious order she had established in Emmitsburg, Maryland, was not welcome in all social circles. Bruté, however, intervened:

The priest believed even more fervently than Elizabeth that her life before Catholicism was filled with error. But he was an inveterate chronicler and collector who thought that truthful history, like good science, taught God's lessons. He and Elizabeth may have destroyed some documents . . . , but Bruté made sure that much of her life's writings were preserved. . . . [He] believed that Elizabeth's archive offered its own evidence of her deliverance from error into the truth of the Church. It is not without irony that his single-minded confidence preserved the story of Elizabeth's life of inquiry, struggle, and choice. (374-75)

One is struck by some similarities between Dorothy Day and Seton. In *The Long Loneliness*, her 1952 autobiograhy, Day recounts her own struggle to integrate a thirst for social justice and an enduring desire to worship God. After her conversion to Roman Catholicism, Peter Maurin would enter her life. He would facilitate her personal integration of the Two Great Commandments in the Catholic Worker moment. Seton too is revealed in her writings as a thoughtful and analytical seeker. She would finally integrate her own philosophical and

theological questions and spiritual yearnings into an American religious order dedicated to teaching and charitable work, the Sisters of Charity. Both Day and Seton were very much creatures of their own American culture and times. Seton's energy was fostered by her rather individualistic father, Dr. Richard Bayley, Sr., who was not one to accept received wisdom lightly. Her initiatives brought her into close collaboration with contemporaries such as Archbishop John Carroll and Bishop John Dubois, the Baltimore Sulpicians, and other Catholics and non-Catholics in early Republican America. This collaboration was not always harmonious. Carroll, for instance, made his way slowly to an appreciation of an American sisterhood grounded in a European Vincentian charism but more American in its social and educational involvement in the nation. Along the way his admiration and respect for the courage and energies of Elizabeth Ann Seton only increased, influencing his own efforts to establish the Church in America.

Seton was a widow with five children, two of whom would precede her in death. Of the others, two sons would be a constant source of worry to her as they made their lengthy ways into adulthood. A daughter, who would eventually become a Sister of Mercy, seemed for a long time unable to settle into a secure circumstance. As the foundress of the Sisters of Charity, Seton was challenged in other personal and institutional ways that are evident in her letters and other writings. Catherine O'Donnell brings all of this together in an excellent monograph.

O'Donnell takes notice of such issues as the War of 1812 and the general blindness of Catholic eyes regarding slavery. Her treatment of the historical context is firm and helpful for providing a sure, detailed, and balanced account of the Seton record. Before her conversion, she was involved in a Protestant charitable initiative in New York City, the Society for the Relief of Poor Widows with Small Children. According to O'Donnell, "Elizabeth's work with the widows' society looms large in both hagiographic and historical accounts of her life" (68). This book provides a critical and scholarly account of the life of Elizabeth Ann Seton and gives good reason for the judgment that she is a saint.

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James Como. *The Tongue Is Also a Fire*. Nashville TN: New English Review Press, 2015. Pp. 240. Paper $19.99.
    Reviewed by Clara Sarrocco, New York C.S. Lewis Socity

Professor Como appropriately chose a quotation from Scripture (James 3:6) as the title of his book in homage to his forty-four years as a professor of rhetoric and public communication at York College of the City University of New York. Well aware that rhetoric often suffers from a bad reputation, he successfully attempts

to repair its bad press and revive its noble reputation. Or rhetoric he writes: "This is the work of the Queen of the Liberal Arts.... As a formal academic discipline, rhetoric is the oldest of these three liberal arts [grammar, logic, rhetoric].... Of course, like any queen rhetoric has been attacked, defended and interpreted" (138).

In his preface Como presents his purpose: "I hope to encourage an appreciation of the rhetorical scaffolding that goes with our various conversations.... My vocation over nearly five decades has been the effective transmission of a healthy culture, the prosecution of which...is achieved by rhetoric beyond all other means. Exploring and upholding that belief is my agenda."

The first part of the book is a set of reminiscences of a lifetime of teaching, reading, talking, and traveling. The second part is given to a more formal diagnosis of rhetorical theory and its application to famous orators and their speeches.

The chapter entitled "Reflections of a Rhetoric Professor" gives us some biographical insights into Como's own development. He touchingly describes his father as a young widower raising two sons virtually alone. He was a "raconteur, living room debater, versatile conversationalist, salesman, and most of all a respecter of language...." The effect of "like father – like son" is difficult to deny.

The next few chapters tell tales of the classroom. Some stories are humorous, some frustrating, and some touching as only a teacher with great empathy can recall and relate. In his chapter "Education – educate: from *educare*, 'to lead forth'" Como shares with the reader a letter he once posted to the faculty email list. In it he outlines the foundational deficiencies and substantial causes of the poor performance of the weakest students. It seemed a bold move, full of truth, but not necessarily a prudent act. He admits, however, that it did not even make a ripple. It elicited absolutely no conversation in a situation that he calls "institutional entropy at its worst.

Como also takes on the use of rhetoric as a tool of persuasion that is not always for the good. In the essay "The Tongue Is also a Fire: Ethics, Manners and Madness on the Left," he takes note of Senator Edward Kennedy's speech about Robert Bork, then a nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court. Como notes: "I do claim that, in public places both high and low, *diseased* speech has never been more rampant, and never has the Left owned it more than it does now" (70). This is followed by "LBJ Declines," "Sinners in the Hands of a Great Tradition," and "Rhetorical Peru." The latter essay is taken from the years he spent in Peru as an observer of its culture and politics. Further essays are on topics as disparate as Shakespeare, Thornton Wilder, the movies, and Mickey Mantle.

There are three essays on C.S. Lewis, as we might expect from such a renowned Lewis scholar. The most moving essay in this set is "His Fugitive Voice (after Fifty Years)," where Como writes: "[Lewis] has left us that fugitive voice

(which I first encountered nearly fifty years ago).... For his imaginative effusions remain as radical as nature itself; his reason and reasoning as dependable as the multiplication tables; and his spirit as beckoning, as liberated, and as liberating as the open arms of the Cross at which he worshipped" (187).

The Tongue is Also a Fire is an eclectic collection of essays touched with humor, instruction, and pathos. In accord with his patron saint James, Como knows that the tongue must be tamed. If the tongue is a fire, the word is its flame. My only regret is that the book lacks a bibliography. The essays mention so many books and authors of a professional and cultural nature that one wishes they were all collected in one place to make easy reference for future reading.

Books Received

Dale Ahlquist. *Knight of the Holy Ghost: A Short History of G.K. Chesterton*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018. 191 pp.

Sohrab Ahmari. *From Fire by Water: My Journey to the Catholic Faith*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2019. 225 pp.

Robert W. Artigo. *Black and Pro-Life in America: The Incarceration and Exoneration of Walter B. Hoye*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018. 253 pp.

Ulf and Birgitta Ekman. *The Great Discovery: Our Journey to the Catholic Church*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018. 276 pp.

Peter Kreeft. *Symbol of Substance? A Dialogue on the Eucharist with C.S. Lewis, Billy Graham, and J.R.R. Tolkein*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2019. 232 pp.

Stephen Ray and R. Dennis Walters. *The Papacy: What the Pope Does and Why It Matters*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018. 164 pp.

Christine Schintgen. *Canadian Sonnets*. With art by Joseph Ferrant. Ottawa: Justin Press, 2018. 93 pp.

Henrik G. Stoker. *Conscience: Phenomena and Theories.* Translated by Philip E. Blosser. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2018. 378 pp.

James P. Ware. *Paul's Theology in Context: Creation, Incarnation, Covenant and Kingdom*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2019. 270 pp.

Thomas G. Weinandy, OFM Cap. *Jesus Becoming Jesus: A Theological Interpretation of the Synoptic Gospels*. Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2018. 478 pp.

Joseph Cardinal Zen. *For Love of My People, I Will Not Remain Silent: On the Situation of the Church in China*. Translated by Pierre G. Rossi. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018. 153 pp.

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