

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CONTEMPORARY SCIENCE ASSOCIATION • NEW YORK

# **Analysis and Metaphysics**

VOLUME 9 • 2010

ADDLETON ACADEMIC PUBLISHERS • NEW YORK

## ***Analysis and Metaphysics* 9, 2010**

An international peer-reviewed academic journal

Copyright © 2010 by the Contemporary Science Association, New York

***Analysis and Metaphysics*** is an international journal in scope, submissions and readership. The journal publishes contributions fitting within various philosophical traditions, but manifests a preference of the analytic tradition in the broad sense of commitment to clarity and responsibility. ***Analysis and Metaphysics*** will serve both as a forum for and as a liaison among those who are dedicated to advancing the basic principles of philosophy as a constructive permeative reflective force in our culture rather than to restricting them to the advantage of a limited and closed society of professional philosophers. In accordance with these aims, we welcome papers which may best develop and sustain a philosophical continuum between philosophers and professionals of other academic disciplines.

***Analysis and Metaphysics*** is published once a year (December) by Addleton Academic Publishers, 30-18 50th Street, Woodside, New York, 11377. All papers in this journal have undergone editorial screening and anonymous double-blind peer-review. ISSN 1584-0778

Addleton Academic Publishers is an imprint of RIOTS, New York.

Addleton journals include reviews of books published by Cambridge University Press.

Please direct subscription, contributions, back-issue requests, and address changes to [editors@addletonacademicpublishers.com](mailto:editors@addletonacademicpublishers.com)

Produced in the United States of America

Journal ranking: **A** on a seven-point scale (A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D).

## **MARKETING**

The marketing strategy for ***Analysis and Metaphysics*** is designed to maximize the Journal's profile, reach and readership. This is achieved through: targeted electronic marketing to relevant contacts; promotion at conferences globally; highlighting the best content in the Journal; and attracting the best authors to publish in the Journal.

## **MANUSCRIPT CATEGORIES**

***Analysis and Metaphysics*** publishes research papers, review papers, conference papers, short communications, interviews, and book reviews.



***Analysis and Metaphysics*** is indexed and/or abstracted in EBSCOhost, EBSCO Discovery Service, ProQuest, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, Contemporary Science Association Databases, Universe Digital Library, Bridgewater College. Alexander Mack Memorial Library, Christopher Newport University. Paul and Rosemary Tribble Library, Elon University. Belk Library, Guilford College. Hege Library, Hollins University. Wyndham Robertson Library, Southern Virginia University. Von Canon Library.

## **EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD**

**Keith Ansell-Pearson** (University of Warwick)

**Francisco J. Ayala** (University of California)

**Mohammad Azadpur** (San Francisco State University)

**Jody Azzouni** (Tufts University)

**Stephen Barker** (University of Nottingham)

**Avner Baz** (Tufts University)

**Michael Beaney** (University of York)

**Jeffrey Bell** (Southeastern Louisiana University)

**Ermanno Bencivenga** (University of California)

**John Biro** (University of Florida)

**Nick Bostrom** (Oxford University)

**Robert G. Brice III** (Michigan State University)

**David Campbell** (University of Glasgow)

**D. E. Cooper** (University of Durham)

**Eros Corazza** (Carleton University)

**Daniel Dahlstrom** (Boston University)

**Mario De Caro** (Roma Tre University)

**Michele Di Francesco** (Universita Vita Milano)

**Juliet Floyd** (Boston University)

**Mitchell Green** (University of Virginia)

**Daniel Hutto** (University of Hertfordshire)

**Dale Jacquette** (Pennsylvania State University)

**Gary Kemp** (University of Glasgow)

**Heikki J. Koskinen** (University of Helsinki)

**Cristina Lafont** (Northwestern University)

**Henry Laycock** (Queen's University)

**Oystein Linnebo** (University of Bristol)

**Bernard Linsky** (University of Alberta)

**Tibor R. Machan** (Chapman University)

**John Marenbon** (University of Cambridge)

**Derek Matravers** (Open University)

**John McDowell** (University of Pittsburgh)

**John H. McDowell** (Indiana University)

**Mary Kate McGowan** (Wellesley College)  
**Scott Meikle** (University of Glasgow)  
**Inmaculada de Melo-Martin** (St. Mary's University)  
**Adele Mercier** (Queen's University)  
**Alex Miller** (Macquarie University)  
**Stephen Mumford** (University of Nottingham)  
**Jacob Needleman** (San Francisco State University)  
**Alan Nelson** (University of California)  
**Paul Noordhof** (University of Nottingham)  
**Walter Ott** (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University)  
**Derek Parfit** (Oxford University)  
**Michael A. Peters** (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)  
**Christopher Pincock** (Purdue University)  
**Stefano Predelli** (University of Nottingham)  
**Joseph Raz** (Columbia University)  
**Nicholas Rescher** (University of Pittsburgh)  
**Peter Roberts** (University of Canterbury)  
**Gonzalo Rodriguez-Pereyra** (University of Nottingham/  
Universidad Torcuato Di Tella)  
**Stanley Rosen** (Boston University)  
**Kenneth Seeskin** (Northwestern University)  
**Sanford Shieh** (Wesleyan University)  
**Hartley Slater** (University of Western Australia)  
**Antonia Soulez** (University of Paris 8)  
**David Stern** (University of Iowa)  
**Susan Stuart** (University of Glasgow)  
**Richard Swinburne** (Oxford University)  
**Charles Travis** (Northwestern University)  
**Nicholas White** (University of California)  
**Rob Wilson** (University of Alberta)

Scholars whose papers have been published in *Analysis and Metaphysics* include:

**Mark Addis** (Birmingham City University)  
**Francisco J. Ayala** (University of California)  
**Chantal Bax** (University of Amsterdam)  
**Michael Beaney** (University of York)  
**Jeffrey Bell** (Southeastern Louisiana University)  
**Nick Bostrom** (Oxford University)  
**Robert Greenleaf Brice** (Loyola University)  
**Dan O'Brien** (Oxford Brookes University)  
**Gerard Casey** (University College Dublin)  
**Gabriele Contessa** (Carleton University)  
**Matthew J. Densley** (University of Sussex)

**Chrysoula Gitsoulis** (City University of New York)  
**Alec R. Hosterman** (Indiana University South Bend)  
**Dale Jacquette** (Pennsylvania State University)  
**Timothy Koschmann** (University of Southern Illinois)  
**Peter Lamarque** (University of York)  
**Gregory Landini** (University of Yowa)  
**Henry Laycock** (Queen's University)  
**Norman Lillegard** (University of Tennessee, Martin)  
**Maurilio Lovatti** (Universita Catolica di Brescia)  
**Tibor R. Machan** (Chapman University)  
**Pete Mandik** (University of New Jersey)  
**Troy Nunley** (Denver Seminary)  
**Walter Ott** (East Tennessee State University)  
**Michael A. Peters** (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)  
**Matthew Pianalto** (University of Arkansas)  
**Randy Ramal** (Claremont Graduate University)  
**Nicholas Rescher** (University of Pittsburgh)  
**Greg Restall** (University of Melbourne)  
**Claus Michael Ringel** (Universität Bielefeld)  
**Mark Sainsbury** (King's College, London)  
**Robert Shaw** (The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand)  
**John Shotter** (University of New Hampshire)  
**Brent Silby** (University of Canterbury)  
**Hartley Slater** (University of Western Australia)  
**David Stern** (University of Iowa)  
**Robert Streiffer** (University of Wisconsin, Madison)  
**Arthur Sullivan** (Memorial University of Newfoundland)  
**Richard Swinburne** (Oxford University)  
**T.P. Uschanov** (University of Helsinki)  
**Jason Waller** (Purdue University)  
**Chuck Ward** (Millersville University of Pennsylvania)  
**Samuel C. Wheeler III** (University of Connecticut)  
**James Williams** (University of Dundee)  
**Ross Woodrow** (Griffith University)

## **EDITORIAL INFORMATION**

Managing Editor: Cynthia Neal

neal@addletonacademicpublishers.com

Associate Editors: Christine Wright

wright@addletonacademicpublishers.com

Director of Marketing and Web Development: Linda Burns

burns@addletonacademicpublishers.com

Publishing Executive Editor: George Lazaroiu  
lazaroiu@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Consulting Editor: Karen Lloyd  
lloyd@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Editorial Assistant: Steve Frechette  
frechette@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Book Review Coordinator: Richard Breillat  
breillat@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Director of Editorial Content: Susan Hull  
hull@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Senior Managing Editors: Heather Ridley  
ridley@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Assistant Managing Editors: Michael Farber, Adrian Constantinescu  
farber@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Publishing Assistant: Donna Laudan  
laudan@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Pubdata Coordinator: Mark Norton  
norton@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Publicity Manager: Harold Wade  
wade@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Cover Designer: Keith Maynard  
maynard@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Project Editor: Robert Packard  
packard@addletonacademicpublishers.com  
Indexer: Alison Russell  
russell@addletonacademicpublishers.com

## **REVIEWS EDITORS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE**

Gerard Adams, Viorica Barbu-Iuraşcu, Adrian Blăjan, Mihaela Chircuşi, Simon Culler, Earl Cushman, Erwin Dickenson, Albert Earley, David Galison, Roland Gilson, Jeffrey Griffiths, Charles Hodgson, Catherine Hughes, Margret Hutchings, Luminiţa Ionescu, James Makeham, Donald Maxwell, Ramona Mihailă, Jonathan Needham, Ion Olteţeanu, Ştefan Păun, Luminiţa Pogăceanu, Stephen Pollock, Carmen Stoianov, Petru Stoianov, Robert Taylor, Edmund Teske, Gerard Wigner, Martin Wilson, Constantin Zaharia, Ioana Zaharia.

## SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

With a cover letter to the Editors, send an original copy with name(s), institutional affiliation and full address (with e-mail if possible), plus two copies bearing *only* the paper title. This latter is for 'blind' review purposes; no name(s) of author should appear on the opening page, last page or in page headers. The suggested length for ***Analysis and Metaphysics*** papers is 4,000 to 8,000 words, or about 10 to 20 double-spaced, typewritten pages, with about one inch margins on all sides. References should be typed double-spaced in a separate section, and numbered consecutively. They will be printed at the end of the paper. No part of a paper can be rewritten in galley or page proofs. Any addenda on galley proofs other than corrections of typographical errors may be disregarded at the discretion of the Editor. Special conventions, if followed consistently, are permitted where formal language is used. Diagrams, tables, and illustrations should be on separate sheets with their desired position in the text clearly indicated. Symbolic formulae appearing as separate lines should be clearly distinguished in the text. Foreign letters (Greek, German, etc.), special symbols, as well as zero and capital O and prime marks should be indicated in the margin. Materials to be printed in italics, especially single letters in text or in formulae, should be underlined. Failure to follow house style requirements, provide disk or electronic copy, an abstract and institutional affiliation details may delay review process, publication schedule and citation.

All submitted manuscripts are independently refereed by readers recommended by the Editors in consultation with the Editorial Advisory Board. Anonymity is assured. Decisions to publish or not, to request revisions, if necessary resubmission, and/or extra adjudication, are entirely at the discretion of the Editors. Format acknowledgement may take up to one month, full consideration may take up to six months. Copyright and all rights therein are retained by authors. Permission for papers to be reprinted can only be granted by authors, who should be contacted directly. Due acknowledgement of source and authorship where applicable, and copyright clearance of cited matter in the articles are the express responsibility of the authors. The Editorial Advisory Board and the publishers accept no responsibility for any lapses or infringements. Endnotes are preferred to footnotes. They should be flagged in text by a superscript note number at the appropriate point (not via name and date). References within numerically ordered endnotes should follow Harvard style rather than Oxford style, i.e. last name, initials of author, title of book or article, name of journal or collected work, followed by publisher (excepting journals) and place of publication, year of publication and exact page citation (e.g. p. 82, pp. 86–87). Abstracts, of between 50 and 100 words, must be included. Longer quotations should be set in separate paragraphs, so as to be printed in small type. In the manuscript they should still be typed double-spaced, but separated from the remainder of the manuscript by a small space before and after. Quoted sentences should be indicated by double-quotes (""). Words or phrases mentioned should be in single-quotes ('). Single quotes are acceptable inside double when used for a quote within a quote.

# **CONTENTS**

**AN ELEMENTARY GRAMMAR OF RIGHTS AND THE LAW [9]**  
GERARD CASEY

**BEYOND BEAUTIFUL AND UGLY:  
NON-DUAL THINKING AND AESTHETIC THEORY [19]**  
JEFFREY BELL

**SUPERIMPOSING REALITY ON DIGITAL SPACES**

•

**A Search for Understanding, Explanation, and Questions [35]**  
ALEC R. HOSTERMAN

**PEDAGOGIES OF THE IMAGE: ECONOMIES OF THE GAZE [42]**  
MICHAEL A. PETERS

**READING PICTURES: THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM? [62]**  
ROSS WOODROW

**THE VIOLENCE IN LEARNING [76]**  
ROBERT SHAW





## AN ELEMENTARY GRAMMAR OF RIGHTS AND THE LAW

**GERARD CASEY**

University College Dublin  
gerard.casey@ucd.ie

**ABSTRACT.** Rights are many and diverse. They are jural rather than material entities that subsist in a society of rational beings and relate essentially to property, in the limiting case, one's property in oneself. Law is the product of social evolution and exists to vindicate rights. The conditions for the emergence of law are embodiment, scarcity, rationality and sociability. The context for the emergence of law is dispute resolution. The characteristics of such a customarily evolved law are its severely limited scope, its negativity, and its horizontality. A legal system (or systems) based on the principles of customarily evolved law could answer the needs of social order, namely, the vindication of rights, without permitting the paternalistic interferences with liberty characteristic of contemporary legal systems.

Keywords: rights, law, language, custom, legal system

### **Rights**

The supply of some commodities is unequal to the demand for them. Food and clean water are in short supply to many, all too many, people living in some parts of the globe and, somewhat less crucially, high-performance sports cars are in short-supply to those subsisting on academic salaries in the affluent West. The two shortages are not, of course, the same in respect either of urgency or of importance but they are both shortages. Whatever about the relative lack of food, water or sports cars, rights appear to be in plentiful supply. I have in front of me a volume entitled *Basic Documents on Human Rights*. This volume of *basic* documents runs to 896 pages and the rights mentioned in these documents include the rights to life, to liberty, to security of person, to equality before the law, to freedom of move-

ment, to asylum, to nationality, to marry and found a family, to freedom of thought, to conscience and religion, to opinion and expression, to peaceful assembly and association, to equal access to public service, to social security, to work, to free choice of employment, to protection against unemployment, to form and join trade unions, to rest and leisure, to an adequate standard of living, to education, to freely participate in the cultural life of the community and, if disabled, a right to medical, psychological and functional treatment, to medical and social rehabilitation, and so on.

Most people would find at least some items on this list difficult to reject – who could seriously deny that people have rights to life and liberty? – but there are other rights that are not so obviously unobjectionable, such as a right to social security or a right to medical treatment. The intuition behind our willingness to recognise some rights and our unwillingness to recognise others lies in the perception that the right to life and the right to liberty, for example, do not necessarily impose any positive obligations on other people whereas the right to social security and the right to medical treatment clearly do. One does not have to do much not to kill or enslave other people whereas the provision of social security and medical treatment require that somebody actually does the providing. For that reason, the former kind of rights is sometimes described as ‘negative’, while the latter kind of rights is described as ‘positive’.

If we take our list as indicative, rights are many and diverse but just what are these rights of which there are so many and of such different kinds? Where do they come from? How are they to be justified, if indeed they require justification? These questions may appear obvious but it is far from obvious that they have answers. Some, such as Garrett Barden and Tim Murphy in their recent book *Justice and Law in Community*, are sceptical about the possibility of uncovering a generally acceptable theoretical foundation for rights, asserting that “it [is] incontrovertible that no *agreed* normative justification for human rights has ever been proffered by anyone, irrespective of the extent to which they have been adopted in positive law.” (Barden & Murphy, 216)

Let us start with a favourite scenario for social thought experiments, Adam alone on his desert island. What rights does Adam have in this context? To ask this question is to answer it. The notion of rights can have no purchase in this situation. Whatever else it may be, a right is some kind of entitlement and there is no one else on the

island to observe or supply that entitlement to Adam. Rights then would appear to be inherently social; to assert a right is to claim an entitlement that others are bound to observe and respect. Let us introduce Felix the goat to the island. Does Adam thereby acquire some rights? No, for Felix is not a rational being and so cannot recognise entitlement claims. If Felix were to raid Adam's vegetable patch and eat his carrots it would be pointless sense for Adam to remonstrate with him about his misconduct.

Might it not be argued that, whatever about the futility of appeals to Felix's non-existent moral sense, surely, even on a desert island, if Adam has domesticated Felix he thereby owns Felix and that ownership is itself a matter of right. Again, I think not. Adam clearly possesses Felix but ownership is a jural entity, differing sharply from possession which is a factual matter. One can discover empirically who possesses what, or at least one can do so in many cases, but one can never tell just by the evidence of one's senses who owns what. One can own something and not possess it, possess it and not own it. Ownership is evident only to the possessor of a mind so that only when Adam is joined by other human beings, capable of appreciating his entitlement claims (and he theirs) and, in fact, recognizing and accepting one another's entitlement claims, do we have rights. Rights, then, emerge from and are sustained in a social matrix and are covalent with society.

A right is an entitlement claim in relation to one's property, a claim that is and must be acknowledged by others in society if for no other reason that they must make similar claims and so cannot, except at the cost of practical incoherence or special pleading, reject the very possibility of another's claims. Adam's entitlements claims are all of them property rights, most basically, his right to himself, derivatively, his right to that which he has legitimately appropriated or had legitimately assigned to him. It follows that that all rights are human rights, which is to say that they concern and bear only on human beings, that all human rights are property rights, which is to say that they pertain to some subject matter or other, in the limiting case, oneself. There is not, nor can there be, a society without some functioning notion of property. Of course, the specifics of that notion may vary from one society to another – what is or can be property, who may or may not own it, what manner of alienability is permitted – but some notion or other of property any given society must have.

A right, then, is a three-part relation. It is an entitlement claim made by a rational being A in respect of some property, P addressed to other rational beings B, C or D and recognised as such by those to whom it is addressed. All rights must be compossible inasmuch as it is a condition of a person's having a right that its possession or exercise does not violate the rights of another. Rights emerge from and have purchase only in the context of human society. Law, too, emerges from and has purchase only in the context of society; in fact, law comes into existence for the protection of property.

## **Law**

At the stage at which it enters history, law is already the product of a long period of social evolution. Law, in the sense of fundamental social regulative norms, is coeval with language and culture and, like language and culture, is not, in its origin, the product of deliberate design. "Law in the sense of enforced rules of conduct is undoubtedly coeval with society; only the observance of common rules makes the peaceful existence of individuals in society possible. Long before man had developed language to the point where it enabled him to issue general commands, an individual would be accepted as a member of a group only so long as he conformed to its rules" (Hayek 1982: I, p. 72). Nonetheless, whatever the evolutionary processes involved and however shrouded in the mists of history they may be, it should still be possible to articulate the conditions for the emergence of law. The following reconstruction must be speculative and is not intended as an historical description but rather as a rational construction.

There are a number of conditions that must be met for law to emerge. The first is that the members of the society in which law is to emerge be embodied. Human beings are essentially embodied beings and the first and inalienable property that each person has is in his own body. As embodied beings, we necessarily occupy space. While we don't have to be anywhere in particular, we have to be somewhere. As embodied beings, our existence unrolls over time and since we are mortal, time is, for each of us, *the* ultimate non-renewable resource.

The second condition for the emergence of law is scarcity. As I use the term here, 'scarcity' refers not to some absolute quantity or amount of goods but to relative or subjective scarcity in which two

or more human beings require the use or possession of one good in physically incompatible ways. Our bodies are our first and most fundamental properties but they are far from being our only properties. As embodied beings we cannot but stake a claim to the use of a portion of the earth's resources and that requires the development of the notion of property in external objects. If we lived in a magic world in which we could have anything we wanted simply by desiring it then it is difficult to see how the concept of external property could develop at all. In a magical world, one could have possessions but since scarcity has no meaning in such a world, the notion of property in external objects would have no purchase and without such property the need for law disappears. Even the wizarding world of Harry Potter requires some limits on the use of magic (rather arbitrary limits, one must say) otherwise, a wizard could always conjure up some Galleons at will.

A third condition is rationality. As we have already seen in noting the futility of remonstrating with Felix, irrational animals can possess things but not own them, so that a dog may possess a particular bone or dispute the occupation of a kennel but no sense could be given to a dog's having the concept of ownership. Ownership is a normative concept – it is not just possession but rightful or lawful possession. While two dogs may squabble over the possession of a bone one or the other will end up possessing it but it makes no sense to say that the victorious canine owns the bone.

The final condition for the emergence of law is the existence of society itself. Let us go back to Adam alone on his island. What possible point could law have in this context? Adam is an embodied rational being and the resources of the island, including those of his own bodily being and its temporal conditions, are scarce but what would be the point of law given that there are no social relations to regulate. If he found time hang heavy on his hands, Adam could work out an elaborate law code but, since this code could have no possible application, its elaboration would be as pointless as playing chess against oneself: "...human law is framed for a number of human beings, the majority of whom are not perfect in virtue." (Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*: I-II, q. 96, a. 2, c.)

We have seen the arrival of Felix the goat makes no significant difference to Adam's rights. Now, let Bethany wash up on the island so that she and Adam relate to each other. Do we not now have the appropriate material circumstances in which law can arise? Again,

however, the answer is no. With just two people in relation to each other, there can be no law, only agreement or disagreement, because another essential element of law, the possibility of an unbiased resolution of disputes will not obtain. For the unbiased resolution of disputes, we need a third party in communication with both Adam and Bethany. In summary, then, the conditions for the emergence of law are a plurality of embodied rational beings, minimally three, existing in relation to each another, in the context of scarce resources.<sup>1</sup>

Imagine a dispute to arise between Adam and Bethany, two members of our little island community. All disputes involve contested rights claims and can be resolved in only three possible ways: by agreement, by violence, or by adjudication. Agreement is often possible. Many potential disputes are resolved by the willingness of both parties to compromise or the willingness of one or other simply to yield. However, agreement is not always possible. What then? When both parties maintain their claims and agreement is not possible the matter can be resolved only by violence or by adjudication.

Violence is expensive and dangerous. Violence is expensive in that, apart from the opportunity costs involved and the diversion of resources from productive to unproductive uses, the increase in overall wealth that would have resulted from the division of labour will diminish or disappear and that is mutually non-beneficial.<sup>2</sup> Both parties to the dispute therefore have an interest in its peaceful resolution. Violence is dangerous inasmuch as one or other of the disputants could be killed or injured in the conflict.<sup>3</sup>

If agreement is unattainable and the parties desire to avoid violence, only adjudication remains. While dispute resolution is more efficient than violence, dispute avoidance is yet more efficient than resolution and that cannot be had by bare unreasoned judgements. In the long term, it will not do for the adjudicator simply to say that the dispute is to be resolved in one party's favour and leave it at that. He has to say *why* this should be so. Disputes are to be resolved via judgements which have the form: *decision + reason (rule)*; only in this form can they provide guidance for future conduct and so facilitate dispute avoidance.<sup>4</sup>

Why couldn't Adam simply ignore an unfavourable judgement? He could, but only at a cost. The loser in a dispute can refuse to accept judgement only if prepared to accept a return to violence and while this is possible, the reasons violence was rejected initially,

namely, its danger and its high cost, still remain valid as a disincentive. It is therefore in the long-term interests of all to accept judgements, even when these go against their short term interests.<sup>5</sup>

Rules are inherently general even though deduced from and applied to specific cases. But rules must not only be general, they must also be impartial. The rule deduced from Adam and Bethany's dispute can hardly be "Whenever Adam and Bethany have a dispute over a pig, the decision is to go in favour of Bethany"; it must be something like: "whenever a person's animal destroys another's crops, then that animal is forfeit." Rules, then, are abstract and impersonal though, of course, when applied, they are applied to concrete circumstances and particular individuals.

If the rule originally adduced is rationally adequate, then it will fit other disputes with similar fact patterns. Human beings require reasonable certainty as to which kinds of acts are legally permissible and which are not. Certainty, in turn, demands consistency. Consistency requires that the adjudicator give the same or similar judgements in similar circumstances; it also requires that those who have benefitted from one judgement accept other judgements, even if made against them, if they accept the essential similarity of the circumstances. Decisions, to have persuasive force, must be generally acceptable and over time, as society develops, there will be a convergence of rational judgements into a set of principles and rules, much as language develops spontaneously in accordance with rules. The difference is that law will have to be at least partially reflectively appropriated by at least some in the community whereas language can quite well be spoken by all without any *reflective* appropriation of its rules. The fundamental cultural institutions of human society – language, law, logic and morals – are all of them the outcome of a spontaneous evolutionary process. They are the creation of no one or no group's design but are nonetheless rational albeit not, to use Hayek's term, 'constructively' rational, that is, not the product of a pre-practical design.

The picture of law I have just sketched is that of the law emerging from the processes of adjudication as an endogenous growth as distinct from the law being exogenously constructed and imposed on a society from the outside.<sup>6</sup> Nor is such law a command of a superior authority, backed by force or the threat of force; it is, rather, the delimitation of customarily permissible and impermissible actions, adhered to by members of the community because they ac-

cept them as right and natural, and enforced by social disapproval and, ultimately, social exclusion.

Thus we have three essential elements of law: (i) an adjudicative procedure, (ii) a body of rules, and (iii) a means of enforcement. There is a dialectical relationship between adjudication and rules: rules emerge from adjudication and, in turn, feed into and constrain future adjudications. We start *ex post*, continue *ex ante*: “Even a vintage *ex ante* precept, however, had to be devised and imposed *ex post* for the first time in some case.” (Barnett 1998: 127)

## **Rights and the Law**

The extent of law thus construed is severely limited – it ranges over only those aspects of human action that infringe or are capable of infringing on our rights, in the first instance, our negative (or natural) rights, those rights deriving from our self-ownership, and later, on our positive or conventional rights deriving from our uncoerced agreements with others. All other matters are outside the scope of the law but not, alas, outside the scope of legislation which becomes daily ever more arbitrary and intrusive.<sup>7</sup>

The first characteristic of law whose material elements are constrained by a theory of rights is that it is almost uniformly negative. It does not consist of injunctions to do this or to do that but, rather, not to do this and to refrain from doing that. It thus concerns itself with matters relating to the peaceful co-existence of those who live in close proximity and tends to be limited rather than expansive in its operation.

The second characteristic is that it is horizontal; it concerns the adjudication of disputes between two parties, neither of whom stands in a hegemonic relation to the other. This is what is meant by equality before the law. Crime is not a matter of offending a state or a superior but of violating the rights of another. Punishment is primarily a matter of attempting, so far as possible, to restore the status quo ante or, where that is not possible (as in cases of homicide), making a mutually acceptable substitute restitution. Positive injunctions result from adjudication as judgements that restitution is owed by A to B as a matter of justice or in satisfaction of a properly constituted agreement – also a matter of justice, albeit not a primary case.

The third characteristic of such an endogenously evolved law is that its enforcement is not achieved by a particular social institution



but by the community as a whole by means of disapproval or exclusion, in extreme cases, outlawry.

## Conclusion

Our imaginations are limited by the tyranny of the present. We tend to believe, unreflectively, that the way things are is the ways things always have been and always have to be. Our contemporary legal systems, dominated by legislation, are historically contingent. The function of law is the vindication of rights. A non-hegemonic legal system (better still, a plurality of legal systems) based on the principles of customary evolved law (shorn of its irrational elements) could well answer the needs of social order, namely, the vindication of rights, without permitting the paternalistic interference with liberty that is characteristic of contemporary legal systems.

## NOTES

1. See in this context, Hart's 'minimum content of Natural Law'. (Hart 1994: 193–200)
2. Recent work in game theory has shown that "responsive cooperation is an effective strategy for maximising self-interest." (Skoble 2008: 95)
3. "One of the first causes of a legal system is the desire to prevent or discourage feuding and private warfare..." (Baker: 4)
4. This is still so even in the process of the 'ordeal' which, according to Baker, "was calculated to avoid reasoned decision-making." (Baker 2002: 4)
5. See Skoble: 99.
6. "The basis of Roman law, as of any law, was customary." (Leage 1961: 14)
7. Only adjudications concerned with assertions of rights will give rise to law. (See Fuller 1978: 353)

## REFERENCES

- Aquinas, St Thomas (1920). *Summa Theologiae*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (rev.). Fathers of the English Dominican Province (trs.).
- Baker, J. H. (2002), *An Introduction to English Legal History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Barden, G. and Murphy. T. (2010), *Law and Justice in Community*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Barnett, R. (1998), *The Structure of Liberty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brownlie, I. and Goodwin-Gill, G. S. (2002), *Basic Documents on Human Rights*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fuller, L. L. (1978), "The Forms and Limits of Adjudication," *Harvard Law Review* 92: 353.

Hart, H. L. A. (1994 [1961]), *The Concept of Law*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Oxford: The Clarendon Press.

Hayek, F. A. (1982), *Law, Legislation and Liberty*. London: Routledge.

Leage, R. W. (1961), *Leage's Roman Private Law*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Macmillan.

Skoble, A. J. (2008), "Radical Freedom and Social Living," in Long, R. T. and Machan, T. (eds.), *Anarchism/Minarchism: Is a Government part of a Free Country?* London: Ashgate, 87–102.

© Gerard Casey



## BEYOND BEAUTIFUL AND UGLY: NON-DUAL THINKING AND AESTHETIC THEORY

**JEFFREY BELL**

jbell@selu.edu

Southeastern Louisiana University

**ABSTRACT.** This essay compares Nietzsche’s philosophy with Zen Buddhist thought. It is argued that despite the number of dualisms that can be found in both – for example, master and slave morality, life-denying and life-affirming for Nietzsche, and enlightenment and attachment for Buddhism – these dualisms are to be understood as themselves conditioned by a reality that is irreducible to dualistic modes of thought. This is what is meant by non-dual thinking, and to situate this thinking relative to both Nietzsche and Zen Buddhism we will discuss the importance of artistic practice. Artistic practice, and especially music, provides for Nietzsche an example of non-dual thinking that offers a means to develop a non-Kantian understanding of thought that does not reduce it to being founded upon the \*identity\* of dualistic terms (or categories of the understanding for Kant). By finding a similar process at work within the tradition of Zen Buddhist thought this essay is able to provide an important basis for comparing and developing the implications of Buddhist thought in a manner that is consonant with Nietzsche’s fundamental concerns.

**Keywords:** Nietzsche, Zen Buddhism, dualism, Kant, thought, philosophy

*Not every end is the goal. The end of a melody is not  
its goal; and yet: as long as the melody has not  
reached its end, it also hasn’t reached its goal.*

*A parable.*

Friedrich Nietzsche

The self-conscious reference of this essay’s title to Nietzsche’s book, *Beyond Good and Evil*, might seem misplaced to some since this title is then connected with the notion of non-dual thinking. Is not Nietz-

sche's work replete with dualities – master and slave morality, life-denying and life-affirming, active and passive, etc.? This same point, however, could be made regarding an entirely different tradition: Zen Buddhism. Despite the frequent appeals in Zen literature to become free from thinking in terms of dualities,<sup>1</sup> this very appeal brings in tow its own dualities – enlightenment and attachment, freedom and bondage, active and passive, etc. To address this apparent inconsistency we propose, in the following essay, to argue that for Nietzsche non-dual thinking entails affirming 'that' which cannot be reduced to being one side of an either/or (e.g., mind or body, appearance or reality, good or evil, sacred or secular, etc.), but is 'that' which makes such either/or thinking possible. The 'that' which is thought and affirmed by non-dual thinking is not opposed to or other than the realities affirmed by either/or thinking. To state this would be simply to repeat either/or thinking. Nonetheless, there is, as Nietzsche repeatedly makes clear, a difference between master and slave morality, or between what we call non-dual and either/or thinking. Nietzsche's efforts to understand this difference without resorting again to either/or thinking are best exemplified by the way in which he employs aesthetics and art in order to circumvent the inevitable either/ors that are the stock and trade of traditional metaphysics. In Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* the importance of art as an alternative metaphysics is explicitly recognized: "I am convinced that art represents the highest task and the truly metaphysical activity of this life..."<sup>2</sup> In setting forth this interpretation of the role of aesthetic theory in Nietzsche, we shall then be able to sketch two important implications. First, we shall find a significant parallel between Nietzsche and Zen Buddhism, a parallel that has received little attention; and secondly we will begin to see how Nietzsche's implicit aesthetic theory is both supportive and critical of other more traditional aesthetic theories.

## I

The reason art, and especially music, emerges as such an important conceptual tool for Nietzsche is that *becoming* is 'that' which makes either/or thinking possible, and 'that' which is to be affirmed by non-dual thinking, a thinking beyond good and evil. Throughout Nietzsche's career he stressed the necessity and impossibility of thinking becoming, of reducing becoming to being. In his early

work, *Birth of Tragedy*, this is put forth as the necessity of imparting form to the Dionysian, to the “artistic energies which burst forth from nature herself, without the mediation of the human artist.”<sup>3</sup> These energies are further identified by Nietzsche as the “pain and contradiction” of the “primal unity,” what he will later refer to as the contradiction that is becoming, and it is the impossibility of living this pain and contradiction that necessitates a recasting of the “primal unity,” and in the *Birth of Tragedy* music is the form this recasting takes: “Assuming that music has been correctly termed a repetition and a recast of the world, we may say that he [the Dionysian artist] produces the copy of this primal unity as music.”<sup>4</sup> It is only then, only when the “primal unity” has been recast as music, when one’s existence then becomes bearable. It is for this reason that a few pages later Nietzsche boldly asserts that “it is only as an aesthetic phenomenon that existence and the world are eternally justified.”<sup>5</sup>

This same sentiment is expressed in Nietzsche’s more mature work, *Beyond Good and Evil*. Here he argues that “it might be a basic characteristic of existence that those who would know it completely would perish, in which case the strength of a spirit should be measured according to how much of the ‘truth’ one could still barely endure.”<sup>6</sup> This strength whereby the ‘truth’ can be endured comes to be referred to as “will to power,” and from the notebooks of this same period Nietzsche explicitly identifies this ‘will to power’ with the necessity to think becoming: “To impose upon becoming the character of being – that is the supreme will to power.”<sup>7</sup> And this is necessary, as Nietzsche says in another note, because, “supposing everything is becoming, then knowledge is possible only on the basis of belief in being.”<sup>8</sup> Moreover, this very effort to “know” becoming, to impart form and the character of being on becoming, is the work of art: “Art as the will to overcome becoming...”<sup>9</sup> This art itself is, as Nietzsche understands it, a form of becoming, or as he puts it: “Knowledge and becoming exclude one another. Consequently, ‘knowledge’ must be something else: there must first of all be a will to make knowable, a kind of becoming must itself create the deception of beings.”<sup>10</sup> This “kind of becoming” is art.

This becoming that is the condition for the creation of beings, and hence for the “knowledge” one has of becoming, is itself a form of becoming that is inseparable from the forms and beings that come to be known. In short, for Nietzsche “being” is not something other than becoming, but rather it is inseparable from a form of becoming.

This form, as art, is generally understood by Nietzsche in musical terms. For example, in a late note from 1888 Nietzsche argues that “in a world where there is no being, a certain calculable world of identical cases must first be created through appearance: a *tempo* at which observation and comparison are possible, etc.”<sup>11</sup> A strong case has also been made that in writing one of his last works, *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche composed the work in sonata form.<sup>12</sup>

Nietzsche’s continual preoccupation with art, especially music, was not simply an expression of his own personal love of music (although he would not deny this), but more profoundly reflects Nietzsche’s effort to think non-dualistically. Rather than begin with a metaphysical either/or, becoming or being, Nietzsche argues that there is only becoming and that it is becoming which of itself gives rise to the fiction of beings. To conceptualize or think this becoming, Nietzsche finds that art is best suited to explain the process whereby becoming gives rise to beings. Music in particular is especially appropriate for music is both dynamic and chaotic, and, if done well, it entails an order or form that is inseparable from it. Put in other words, art as understood by Nietzsche cannot be reduced to a pre-determining identity or being such as the “truth” of beauty, rules for proper art, etc., and art is beyond the either/ors such beings make possible – e.g., it *is* either beautiful or it *is not*. At the same time, however, Nietzsche does not hesitate to differentiate between an art (as well as life, morality, etc.) that affirms becoming as the source of being and that which denies becoming by reducing it to being a form of being. Non-dual thinking is therefore the effort to affirm becoming in a way that allows for the creation of beings, or affirm a “form of becoming” that is not predetermined by any conceptual identities.<sup>13</sup> Either/or thinking presupposes identity as an already established reality, a reality that founds the exclusivity of the either/or. For Nietzsche the identities that establish the mutually exclusive relationship of an either/or, e.g., an identifiable mind that is *other* than the identifiable body, are nevertheless made possible by a form of becoming, and a becoming that is inseparable from the beings and identities that are the work of becoming, or the work of art as Nietzsche develops it. Non-dual thinking is thus inseparable from the work of artistic creation.

## II

Turning now to a comparison of Nietzsche's aesthetic theory and Zen Buddhism, we should be able to clarify further the relationship between non-dual thinking and either/or thinking. This comparison should be fruitful precisely because the Zen tradition is quite explicit in its call for non-dual thinking. Moreover, Zen also emphasizes the importance and necessity of work and practice, much as Nietzsche emphasizes the work of becoming as art.<sup>14</sup> In the West the work and practice of Zen is primarily perceived to be the practice of meditation, but we must not overlook the significance of artistic work in the Zen tradition. In addition to meditative work and practice, artistic work is extremely important and evident. Painting, calligraphy, poetry, and gardens (rock gardens) are each significant artistic achievements that are not simply supplementary practices but are integral to the work of non-dual thinking.

What should perhaps be stressed first and foremost, however, is that we must be cautious in referring to non-dual thinking as "thinking." If by thinking is meant the formulation of "concepts," then Zen certainly does not promote non-dual "thinking." Zen master Huang Po is quite forthright in his rejection of conceptual thought. Only when one has "put a stop to conceptual thought" can one then expect that "the Buddha will appear before them." Moreover, "to make use of your minds to think conceptually," Huang Po adds, "is to leave the substance and attach yourselves to form."<sup>15</sup> By attaching oneself to form, Huang Po, in line with the Buddhist tradition generally, means the forms that arise through both thought and sensation, or the forms Nietzsche saw as the character of being that is necessarily imposed upon becoming. But for Huang-Po, once one attaches oneself to form, one is then inevitably caught in duality: "As soon as thought or sensation arises, you fall into dualism."<sup>16</sup> To avoid falling into dualism, or to think non-dualistically as we have been discussing it, Huang Po believes that one must grasp the "One Mind" that "transcends all limits, measures, names, traces and comparisons."<sup>17</sup> When one does this one transcends the "Three Worlds," referring to the Buddhist theory of the three sources of attachment – i.e., desire, form, and formlessness – and in this transcending one rises "beyond the dualism of good and evil...For you also the Three Worlds will vanish if you can reach the state beyond thought."<sup>18</sup> Non-dual thinking is

therefore not conceptual thought, but a thought beyond thought and the either/ors of this thought.

Nietzsche too would agree that the work of art that is non-dualistic thinking is not the work of conceptual thought. Conceptual thought, for Nietzsche, entails thinking in a manner that can be expressed verbally. Nietzsche's turn to music was in large part motivated precisely by this effort to think beyond thought, to comprehend non-conceptually the process whereby becoming becomes beings. This motivation appears early on in Nietzsche's career, as the following note from 1872 illustrates: "Music as a supplement to language: many stimuli and entire states of stimulation which cannot be expressed in language can be rendered in music."<sup>19</sup> The inadequacy of language and concepts to express the non-dual condition (i.e., becoming) that makes conceptual thinking possible will continue to be an important theme throughout Nietzsche's writings.

Despite the efforts of Nietzsche and Huang Po to think beyond "thought," one should not be quick to dismiss conceptual thinking altogether. Rather, one must affirm the becoming inseparable from the beings becoming created. Concepts are not separate realities – they are "empty," to borrow a term from Buddhism, of essential being – and yet these concepts in some sense *are* for they are what becoming becomes, what a "form of becoming" creates. The alternative to conceptual thought, therefore, is not nihilism – a point Nietzsche stresses repeatedly – but a thought that affirms becoming as the source of conceptual thought that is itself beyond conceptual thought. We can now see why Nietzsche claimed that "art represents the highest task and truly metaphysical activity of life." Art as the activity and work of becoming is the highest and "truly metaphysical activity" for it is the condition for the possibility of the conceptual categories and either/ors of metaphysics, the condition that is inseparable from these concepts and categories.

Similarly for Huang Po and Zen Buddhism, the move beyond thought is not a move to the denial of thought. Such a move would simply repeat the very type of either/or, dual-thinking that one is attempting to move beyond. Conceptual thinking thus comes to be understood as inseparable from the "one mind" that transcends and is beyond conceptual thought. Concepts are therefore understood to be phenomena, but phenomena that are empty of essential being. As Huang Po puts it, "All these phenomena are intrinsically void and yet this Mind with which they are identical is no mere nothingness. By



this I mean that it does not exist, but in a way too marvelous for us to comprehend. It is an existence which is no-existence, a non-existence which is nevertheless existence. So this true Void does in some marvelous way ‘exist’.”<sup>20</sup> The great Japanese Zen master Dogen will echo these same sentiments some five hundred years after Huang-Po. In explaining the techniques associated with *zazen* (seated meditation), Dogen states that the purpose is, to restate Huang Po, “to put a stop to conceptual thought,” but in doing this one is not to become attached to “not-thinking.” What one should strive for instead is to affirm the very coming-into-being of thoughts without attaching identity or being to them.<sup>21</sup> Stating this same point in more general terms, Huang Po offers this advice: “Do not permit the events of your daily lives to bind you, but never withdraw yourselves from them.”<sup>22</sup> This is the work and practice of Zen.

Inseparable from this work and practice of Zen are the works of art that are a pervasive part of the Zen tradition. Dogen, for instance, wrote poetry, and many of the masters of the tradition also excelled in various other artistic practices. These practices, moreover, are yet another way of working to move beyond conceptual thought. If art is understood to be a practice and work that is *not* predetermined by an already established concept of what the work shall *become*,<sup>23</sup> but rather as the work that gives rise to created identities, then artistic work is simply a different way of doing the work of non-dual thinking. To clarify further what this means, we turn now to discuss more traditional theories of aesthetics.

### III

Our claim that artistic practice and work is an activity that is not predetermined by any concept of what the work shall become has an important place in modern theories of art. R.G. Collingwood, for example, bases much of his aesthetic theory upon the claim that art is an act of expression, an act that is not predetermined by any identifiable rule or technique. “Expression,” Collingwood argues, “is an activity of which there can be no technique,”<sup>24</sup> and from this it follows for Collingwood that: “No artist, therefore, so far as he is an artist proper, can set out to write a comedy, a tragedy, an elegy, or the like.”<sup>25</sup> In Collingwood’s variation of expression theory, an artist is one who expresses an emotion in such a way that no predetermining rule, technique, or concept can dictate the act of expression

itself. Collingwood is nonetheless in line with more traditional expression theory, especially that of Tolstoy, and Tolstoy's position that a successful artist is one who is able to evoke in another the *same* feeling the artist once had themselves.<sup>26</sup> Collingwood thus claims that the successful expression of the artist through an artwork leads to the disappearance of the distinction between artist and audience for "the hearer who understands him [the artist] has that *same* thing in his mind."<sup>27</sup> The difficulty with this position is to clarify what this "same thing" is. Collingwood repeatedly emphasizes that what is expressed is a "given emotion," an emotion that is "endowed at birth with its own proper expression,"<sup>28</sup> and yet it remains unclear how the audience can be sure that they have gotten the proper expression. Presumably, the audience just "gets it" and knows that they have gotten it. To say how and why this happens would impose upon the activity of expression a predetermining set of rules and conditions, and Collingwood justifiably avoids doing this. Nonetheless, there remain problems with Collingwood's position, most notably it confronts the well-known intentional fallacy that has, since Wimsatt and Beardsley put it forward, led many theoreticians to be, we believe, rightfully suspicious of Collingwood's version of expression theory.<sup>29</sup>

Nietzsche would be equally suspicious of Collingwood's theory. Nietzsche, in fact, argues on a number of occasions that we can never be sure that the expressed "intention" of anyone has been successfully communicated, even to ourselves. In the *Genealogy of Morals*, for instance, Nietzsche argues that "we are necessarily strangers to ourselves...we have to misunderstand ourselves...we are not 'men of knowledge' with respect to ourselves."<sup>30</sup> Then again in *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche, in an outright criticism of Kantian moral theory, argues that the moral value of an action, and its aesthetic value too we would add, "lies precisely in what is *unintentional* in it, while everything about it that is intentional, everything about it that can be seen, known, 'conscious,' still belongs to its surface and skin – which, like every skin, betrays something but *conceals* even more."<sup>31</sup> Consciousness, intentions, and the known are, developing our earlier arguments, simply ways in which becoming is imposed with the character of being; moreover, the imposed form that becomes consciousness, intentions, and the known is a gross simplification of becoming, a skin that "betrays something but conceals even more."

Nietzsche nevertheless believes, as we have also seen, that there is a form of becoming that gives rise to the creation of beings (e.g., a conscious, intentional, and known “self”). Our argument has been that music functions as the model for Nietzsche in understanding this “form” that is itself a becoming that gives rise to beings, and it is likely for this reason that Nietzsche was intrigued by Eduard Hanslick’s formalist theory of music as set forth in his book *On the Musically Beautiful*. Hanslick, as is well known, was dismissively critical of any attempt to connect the value of a musical work to its ability to express emotions. For Hanslick, aesthetic theories of the musically beautiful have usually claimed that the role of music is to express beautiful feelings and emotions, when in fact Hanslick argues that the musically beautiful is independent of whether it elicits positive or negative feelings. As Hanslick puts it, “Beauty has no purpose at all. For it is mere form, which, of course, according to its content, can be applied to the most diverse purposes, without having any purpose of its own beyond itself.”<sup>32</sup> Among the many purposes to which music can be put is to express emotions, or even to evoke pleasant or unpleasant emotions. If the beautiful and ugly, therefore, is understood to be nothing but the successful or unsuccessful evocation of emotions in the hearer, which is exactly how most theoreticians see it according to Hanslick, then the musically beautiful is “beyond” the beautiful and ugly. For Hanslick there is a purely musical object, the formal composition and tonal structure of music – that is either beautiful (well-formed) or not.<sup>33</sup> It was for this reason that Schönberg claimed he wrote musical *compositions* rather than *musical* compositions, implying that they need not be musically beautiful, in the traditional sense of evoking pleasant feelings and emotions, to be a beautiful composition.

Clive Bell has set forth a more recent version of Hanslick’s theory, extending the application of its premises beyond music to art in general. Where Bell diverges, and significantly so, from Hanslick is in his acceptance of the role emotions play. Nietzsche too would diverge with Hanslick on this point for by calling for a musical idea or form as the proper musical object that is beyond the emotional experiences of those who hear the music, Hanslick in effect offers a Platonic theory. Nietzsche, however, is adamantly against any Platonist theory that proposes the transcendent reality of anything beyond the “known” realities of this life.<sup>34</sup> Nietzsche accepts, as we have seen, the notion of a musical form of becoming that is beyond the

“beings” that come to be known and identified, but used in this sense the musical form *beyond* the superficially “known” intentions of an artist is simply becoming as ‘that’ which exceeds and transgresses any predetermining identity (e.g., rule or technique). This is not, as with Plato, a beyond that is an identity *transcendent* to the identity of the beings that are known; instead; it is a beyond *immanent* to and inseparable from the identifiable beings that are known. This is, in short, a further example of non-dual thinking. For Bell, then, by claiming that “the starting-point for all systems of aesthetics must be the personal experience of a peculiar emotion,”<sup>35</sup> he could be interpreted to be rectifying the Platonism of Hanslick. With this change in place, Bell then defines what it is that provokes this peculiar emotion, and what it is that makes of this emotion a response to art: Bell claims it is the “significant form”<sup>36</sup> of the object. The emotion evoked by this “significant form” is still, as with Hanslick, beyond common emotional reactions to the beautiful or ugly, but is instead a peculiarly “aesthetic emotion” and response. We do not have the time here to examine fully the argument developed by Bell to clarify the relationship between “significant form” and the other social and cultural factors that have a determinant effect upon aesthetic judgments. Let us simply say that Bell ultimately holds a watered down Platonism in that he takes there to be a “significant form” that is explicitly identified with being the essential property of all art objects, a property that is present despite other social, cultural, and individual differences regarding judgment and taste.<sup>37</sup> Nietzsche would reject such an argument as a failure to affirm becoming, or to think, following the Zen tradition, beyond conceptual thinking.

When Nietzsche discusses art its social and cultural context is never far from his mind, and often it is at the forefront. One can see clear evidence of Nietzsche’s concern for the social and cultural context of art in his critique of Wagner. Just as Nietzsche’s early praise of Wagner in *The Birth of Tragedy* came from a belief that Wagner’s music could lead to a badly needed revitalization of society and culture, so too does his later critique result from what Nietzsche sees as not only the failure of Wagner’s music to cure society of its decadence but as being a reinforcing symptom of the decadence of the time.<sup>38</sup> For Nietzsche, therefore, to understand the value of art one must also understand its role within the broader social context. This places Nietzsche’s theory of art solidly within what has come to be called the institutional theory of art, and in two

important ways. First, Nietzsche would agree with Morris Weitz's claim, in contradistinction with Bell, that there is no essential property that any art object must have if it is to be art. Nietzsche might not accept Weitz's further, Wittgenstein-influenced claim that "knowing what art is is not apprehending some manifest or latent essence" but rather is being able to recognize the family resemblance of objects that come to be called "art objects."<sup>39</sup> We believe that a case could be made for interpreting Nietzsche's theory along Wittgensteinian lines – especially if you develop Nietzsche's statement that "seeing things as similar [family resemblances] and making things the same [essential property] is the sign of weak eyes"<sup>40</sup> – but this is not the place for developing such an argument. The second important way in which Nietzsche's theory dovetails with institutional theory is in connecting the value of art, or the standards to be used in judging art – to the broader social context. Within aesthetic theory this argument is most commonly associated with the work of Arthur Danto and George Dickie. Dickie in particular explicitly ties the value of an art object to the existence of "some sub-group of a society [that] has conferred [upon it] the status of candidate for appreciation."<sup>41</sup> Nietzsche nowhere argues for the necessity of understanding the value of an art object as something dependent upon a particular sub-group of society – art critics for example. However, in turning to music and aesthetics to clarify the manner in which a form of becoming creates beings, Nietzsche does *not* tie this "form" to the creative activities of a self that is distinct from others and society. This would repeat dualistic thinking. The self, in fact, is for Nietzsche from the start social. As he puts it in *Beyond Good and Evil* when discussing the feeling of having a free, independent will, Nietzsche claims that "the person exercising volition adds the feelings of delight of his successful executive instruments, the useful 'under-wills' or under-souls – indeed, our body is but a social structure composed of many souls – to his feelings of delight as commander."<sup>42</sup> Moreover, among the many forces or "under-souls" that constitute the "commonwealth" that is the self, there are the interactions with others, including already established traditions as embodied by institutions. In an aphorism that reveals both Nietzsche's recognition of the importance of social traditions while maintaining his effort to think nondualistically, Nietzsche claims that "He who strays from tradition becomes a sacrifice to the extraordinary; he who remains in tradition is its slave. Destruction follows in any case."<sup>43</sup> Art, then, and especially

music for Nietzsche, is a form of becoming that is inseparable from the social traditions and processes that allow for this art to be identified as the type of art that it *is*.

At the same time, however, Nietzsche clearly sees the value of art as dependent upon whether it is life-enhancing or life-denying. Nietzsche might argue that art has no essential property, that art neither *is* nor *is not* beautiful (either/or thinking). Nevertheless, Nietzsche does not shy away from his position that art is the manner in which existence is justified, or the process whereby becoming creates the beings of either/or thinking. From this perspective, Nietzsche will define the beautiful as that which affirms becoming, or, what is the same for him, affirms life, and the ugly will deny becoming.<sup>44</sup> By affirming becoming art, as we have been arguing, provokes a thought beyond conceptual thought. This thought beyond conceptual thought is not a denial of thinking – it is not nihilism – but is instead a thought that is not predetermined by any conceptual identity. On this point we found Nietzsche to be in agreement with Zen Buddhism and Collingwood. This thought beyond conceptual thought, this non-dual thought, is still a *form* of becoming, and it is this *form* that gives rise, according to Nietzsche, to the beings that come to establish either/or thinking. On this point we found Nietzsche to be largely in accord with the formalist theories of aesthetics (Hanslick and Bell). And finally, Nietzsche is incessant in his recognition that the beautiful as he understands it, the beautiful beyond conceptual thinking (i.e., beyond being either beautiful or ugly), is a form of becoming that is by its very nature unpopular. Since much of the social activities of life require means-end thinking, much of what is valued by society is for Nietzsche tied to its utilitarian function – that is, whether it facilitates the attainment of an already predetermined end. As an activity beyond conceptual thought, art that is new and truly creative does not produce works that will satisfy already established ends. For this reason common opinion, the opinions of the market place, will condemn such works. As Nietzsche puts this point in *The Gay Science*, “What is new...is always evil, being that which wants to conquer and overthrow the old boundary markers and old pieties; and only what is old is good.”<sup>45</sup> Art that is new, therefore, may very well then be recognized to have the life-affirming value that it has by only a few, by a sub-group within the society. Nietzsche will thus agree with Dickie’s institutional theory in this regard, though he may not necessarily believe that art critics

are indeed the proper sub-group to pass judgment. Whether recognized properly or not by art critics, life requires the creation of new values – “the ploughshare of evil must come again and again.”<sup>46</sup> For Nietzsche, as we have seen, it is precisely art that best releases human creativity and allows for the emergence of new values, for new beings, and for this reason among many others Nietzsche concludes that “in art man enjoys himself as perfection.”<sup>47</sup> This same sentiment was echoed some fifty years later by John Dewey, another thinker who is known for his efforts to establish a philosophy of non-duality. For Dewey, too, art is the non-dual process whereby humans can best engage with the world and with others; art is, as Dewey puts it, “the complete culmination of nature.”<sup>48</sup>

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. An important early example is Hui-neng, the Sixth Patriarch of Chinese Zen and one of the more influential figures within the tradition. In *The Sutra of Hui-Neng* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1998), he states that “Enlightenment and ignorance are seen by ordinary people as two, while the wise realize their essential nature has no duality” (p. 69), and earlier in the same work he encourages his disciples to attain “freedom from dualism” (p. 33).
2. *The Birth of Tragedy*, translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1967, pp. 31–2.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
6. *Beyond Good and Evil*, translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1966, p. 49.
7. *Will to Power*, edited and translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1968, p. 330.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 281.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 331.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 280.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 306 (emphasis mine).
12. This argument has been made by Michael Allen Gillespie in “Nietzsche’s Musical Politics,” in *Nietzsche’s New Seas*, edited by Michael Allen Gillespie and Tracy Strong. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988, pp. 117–149.
13. This is where Nietzsche is most profoundly critical of Kant. Kant, as Nietzsche reads him, understands becoming in terms of the identity of the

transcendental categories that *predetermine* the proper limits and identity of becoming.

14. In Part Four of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, this notion of work becomes especially evident. At the beginning of part four, Zarathustra leaves his cave and takes in the view. The animals who are at this point his companions ask him if he is looking for his happiness, to which he responds: “What matters happiness?” He replied: “I have long ceased to be concerned with happiness; I am concerned with my work” (in *Portable Nietzsche*, edited and translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Penguin Books, 1982, p. 349). At the end of part four, as the book concludes and as Zarathustra comes to recognize the pity that motivated him to pursue the encounters that occupy part four, Zarathustra repeats this claim: “Am I concerned with happiness? I am concerned with my work” (p. 439).

15. *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po*, translated by John Blofeld. New York: Grove Press, 1958, p. 30.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 86.

19. *Philosophy and Truth*, edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale. New Jersey: Humanities Press International, p. 40.

20. *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po*, p. 108.

21. See Dogen, *Moon in a Dewdrop*, edited and translated by Kazuaki Tanahashi (New York: North Point Press). In his rules for zazen, Dogen gives the following directions: “sit in samadhi and think not-thinking. How do you think non-thinking? Nonthinking. This is the art of zazen” (p. 30). In other words, one is neither thinking since one is thinking non-thinking, nor is one to deny thinking altogether and become attached to not-thinking; rather, one is to allow thoughts to come without thinking them, or attaching intentions to them. This Dogen calls nonthinking.

22. *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po*, p. 131.

23. Huang Po will speak of “enlightened” action in much this way: “when all action is dictated purely by place and circumstance; when subjectivity and objectivity are forgotten – that is the highest form of relinquishment” (*Ibid.*, p. 49). In other words, “enlightened” action entails acting without a predetermined rule or concept of how one should act, or how events should come to pass; instead one should, as with the artist, act “purely by place and circumstance,” responding to phenomena and affirming them without attachment. Only in this way will one, to rephrase Huang Po, relinquish the freedom of creativity.

24. R.G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938, p. 111.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

26. For Tolstoy’s position, see his book, *What Is Art?* New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1985.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 3118 (emphasis mine).



28. *Ibid.*, p. 294.
29. For Wimsatt and Beardsley's argument, see "The Intentional Fallacy," in *Philosophy Looks at the Arts*, edited by Joseph Margolis. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987.
30. *Genealogy of Morals*, translated by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1969, p. 15.
31. *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 44.
32. Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful*, translated by Geoffrey Payzant. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1986, p. 3.
33. See *ibid.*, p. 28: "If now we ask what it is that should be expressed by means of this tone-material, the answer is musical ideas. But a musical idea brought into complete manifestation in appearance is already self-subsistent beauty; it is an end in itself, and it is in no way primarily a medium or material for the representation of feelings or conceptions." Later we will present Nietzsche's critique of the Platonic essentialism of this theory, an essentialism evident in the either/or statement (it is either beautiful, well-formed, or it is not).
34. Nietzsche is quite forthright. In *Twilight of the Idols* Nietzsche argues that "A condemnation of life by the living remains in the end a mere symptom of a certain kind of life: the question whether it is justified is not even raised thereby. One would require a position *outside* of life, and yet have to know it as well as one, as many, as all who have lived it, in order to be permitted even to touch the problem of the *value* of life: reasons enough to comprehend that this problem is for us an unapproachable problem" (*Portable Nietzsche*, p. 490).
35. Clive Bell, *Art*, excerpted in *Reflecting on Art*, edited by John Andrew Fisher. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, p. 269.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*, p. 269: "There must be some one quality without which a work of art cannot exist...What is this quality? Only one answer seems possible – significant form."
38. In *The Case of Wagner*, for instance, Nietzsche says of both Wagner and Victor Hugo that "they signify the same thing: in declining cultures, wherever the decision comes to rest with the masses, authenticity becomes superfluous, disadvantageous, a liability. Only the actor arouses great enthusiasm" (p. 179). This criticism echoes Nietzsche's earlier statement from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in "On the Flies of the Market Place," where Zarathustra says that "Little do the people comprehend the great – that is, the creating. But they have a mind for all showmen and actors of great things" (*Portable Nietzsche*, p. 163). Wagner's festivals in Bayreuth were thus for Nietzsche a symptom of a decadent culture, and a symptom that reinforced and encouraged the decadence of the culture by portraying itself as "great" art.
39. Morris Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics," in *Reflecting on Art*, pp. 14–15.

40. *Gay Science*, p. 212.
41. George Dickie, "Defining Art," in *Reflecting on Art*, p. 138.
42. *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 26.
43. *Human, All Too Human*, translated by Marion Faber. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984, p. 243.
44. See *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man" (§20): "Nothing is beautiful, except man alone: all aesthetics rests upon this naïveté, which is its first truth. Let us immediately add the second: nothing is ugly except the degenerating man – and with this the realm of aesthetic judgment is circumscribed" (*Portable Nietzsche*, p. 526).
45. *Gay Science*, p. 78.
46. *Ibid.*
47. *Twilight of the Idols*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, p. 519.
48. John Dewey, *Experience and Nature*. New York: Dover, 1958, p. 358.

© Jeffrey Bell



## **SUPERIMPOSING REALITY ON DIGITAL SPACES**

### **A Search for Understanding, Explanation, and Questions**

**ALEC R. HOSTERMAN**

ahosterm@iusb.edu

Indiana University South Bend

**ABSTRACT.** This essay looks at the concept of the real as understood in the form of digital spaces. I begin with a very brief explanation of reality in relation to media objects and the virtual, and then explore how our sense of reality affects consumers' perceptions of new media technologies and environments. With this, I use Heim's theory of transformative technologies and the remediation of old technologies into new forms to discuss how this transformation might affect our ability to (mis)understands the hyperreal experience of digital spaces.

**Keywords:** hyperreality, digital, space, Heim, media, technology

“Perception always intercedes between reality and ourselves.”

Ann Marie Seward Barry

“Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.”

Albert Einstein

Reality. Semantically, an interesting concept. For centuries, philosophers have with grappled this daunting idea. What is the real, and what makes for a reality? Unfortunately, there's no consensus among the “ologists” – phenomenologists, ontologists, epistemologists – and theorists alike. In our daily discussions, the term is used quite fluently, as if there is something quite tangible about a lived reality: virtual reality, reality by proxy, hyperreality, and reality television. Reality exists in these tangible and digital worlds and is not even given a second thought: “We take the reality of our world very much for granted” (Baggott, 2006, ix).

So what constitutes society's understanding of reality? How does reality function in the digital world? And how has that conception affected our communicative actions and beliefs in digital spaces? This brief essay doesn't claim to answer these questions with definitive answers, but rather, shed light on how this perspective plagues the understanding and acceptance of digital spaces.

### **Where to Begin?**

If we start with an understanding of reality akin to that of the immovable object – something that cannot, and will not, be manipulated under the force of another – we begin to view the its unique hold on people and society. The real is conceived of as power: power that does not readily extinguish itself and is, perhaps, a second cousin to Truth, Objectivity, and Reason. In a way, reality has grown into the persona of a god that is worshiped when all things around us seem in flux, unsure or even surreal. We come back to reality as a way of grounding our understanding of the world around us. Reality is stable so *we* can grow, change, and adapt.

For the contemporary media scholar, reality has crept its way into mainstream artifacts like hypertext sites, movies, and television. The genre of reality television will suffice as an example. Its premise is simple: show real people doing real things (life, as it happens) and not actors playing a role (a theatrical persona separate from the actor's own reality). This type of show is in sharp contrast to the fictional realm of the drama, satire, or adventure: *Survivor* versus *Castaway*; *American Idol* versus *American Dreamz*; *Cops* versus *Dirty Harry*. In a way, reality programming gives viewers a glimpse into a world that is both their own making and their fantasies at the same time; a legalized voyeurism of sorts. For the viewer, that which is on the television screen is "real" because it parallels what they think, do, understand, and act in some manner and in some way.

Obviously, television is not the same medium as that of digital spaces, however this brief discussion shows two things: reality is perceived as something that grounds our motives, desires and actions; and reality is a tool that various mediums employ in order to better identify with their audience (ala Kenneth Burke, perhaps). So, then, how does this relate to digital spaces? How does reality function in hypertext-land?

Actually, I believe our understanding of the digital world is limited by our knowledge of reality. What we know about reality, or think we know, creeps into the lifeless world of digital spaces. As such, human beings seek to find something familiar in the digital space, and thus superimpose its fragile and narrow understanding of the real onto objects and actions that appear to be similar to those of our selves, but in reality (pardon the pun), exist only as a select group of pixels. Twitter, Yahoo Instant Messenger, and Second Life are prime examples. With ease, consumers construct avatars that represent themselves, go to familiar places on-line, and engage in equivalent human action (ie, talking, walking, gesturing, emotional reactions) while in digital spaces: “Virtual realities are real by virtue of our interaction with them, rather than by the virtue of what they are” (Woolley, 1992, p. 244). One can see this, potentially, as manipulating the environment to most closely represent the reality they know well.

In the end, if you alter the pixel, you manipulate the sign. Alter the sign and you manipulate its meaning. And alter the meaning and thus, you manipulate reality. If reality is that which is immovable, objective, tangible, then how can it be manipulated with such ease in digital spaces?

### **Reality as Manufactured Cognition or Manufactured Consent?**

At this point, our discussion begs an additional question: is it reality that alters form, or is it the consumers’ perception of reality that changes? Similarly, is it the thing (referent) or the thought of the thing (reference) that is manipulated? For Michael Heim (1999), the manipulation of the perceptual process is at hand: “Suppose we do entertain the possibility that certain ways of manipulating symbols develop in us distinctive modes of referring to and perceiving realities” (p. 46). Alter symbols and it alters reality.

What if reality is merely a selective, perceptual process understood through a person’s senses, that which they can see, hear, touch, smell, and so forth? Literary critic Kenneth Burke proposed something similar in the idea of terministic screens: “They reflect the reality that we believe exists. They select by focusing on a part of that reality that interests us. They deflect by marginalizing or ignoring that part of reality that does not interest us. In this way, terministic screens operate as filters” (Smith, 2003, p. 331). For Burke, our

rhetorical, perceptual processes are a myriad of terministic screens. What we know and understand is made up of that which supports our point of view, and we alienate that which goes against our ideology.

Within the past 40 years, research into cognitive processing has produced support for this idea. In *Visual Thinking*, Rudolf Arnheim (1969) claims “the cognitive operations called thinking are not the privilege of mental processes above and beyond perception but the essential ingredients of perception itself” (p. 13). The study of our perceptual processes as linked to cognition has continued in many directions, from psychology to biology to social factors (Caelli, 1981; Bruce, Green, and Georgeson, 1996; Schwartz, 2004; Hubel and Wiesel, 2005).

Anne Marie Seward Barry (1997) best describes the way in which the visual functions biologically and its overall purpose, rhetorical or otherwise: “The visual world, then, is an interpretation of reality but not reality itself. It is an image created in the brain, formed by an integration of immediate multisensory information, prior experience, and cultural learning. In short, it is a mental map, but it is not the territory” (p. 15). Our perceptual data is understood merely as maps guiding our understanding reality. Perception and interpretation are tools that lead to an overall understanding of how *real* the world really is.

One may argue that reality is a function of biology; that may be right. However, some scholars contend that knowledge is socially constructed (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). The social construction of knowledge is developed through Burkean terministic screens and is effected by the way in which our brains interpret stimuli. So how does this function in our interaction with digital spaces?

## **Superimposing Reality on Digital Spaces**

Michael Heim’s (1999) theory of transformative technologies – those writing technologies that have impacted the human thought process – argues that communicative systems have not only gone through significant changes throughout history, but “each new medium builds upon and extends the previous media...The residue of earlier forms of communication persists as integral moments in the whole configuration of a culture’s communication network” (pp. 66–67). From this perspective, it is logical to conclude there exists a “residue” of

reality in digital spaces and rhetoric, because reality preceded the digital realm by eons.

Drawing inspiration from George Landow (1994), electronic books might be an appropriate example to illustrate Heim's idea. Books have mutated from the tangible (ink, paper, and binding) to aural (books on tape and CD) to virtual (e-books, Google books, and Amazon Kindle books). What remains constant among all of these mediums is the message itself. Similarly, their purpose also remains the same: transmission of information and knowledge to the masses. In the end, it is the medium that has only altered its face, not its semantic DNA.

Yet, when is a book not a book? Are electronic books, books in the traditional sense? Can you turn the page and earmark a chapter the same way? Probably not. Digital pages (like web pages) are holdovers from the print media in the traditional sense. To make the transition from physical print to digital print, companies have adopted human terms (ie, book, page, bookmark). In doing this, they are imposing a known reality onto a digital artifact in hopes of the reader viewing it in much the same way as they have the book those entire years prior.

Perhaps "impose" is not the right word; "familiarity" might be a better descriptor. We use what is familiar to us to understand that which is new. In a discussion of the impact of the visual on the perceptual process, Tony Schirato and Jen Webb (2004) tell readers "The familiarity of the scene, and the everyday quality of the actions and objects and persons represented there, confirm our sense of the order of the world" (p. 70). There are limitations, though: "What we count as real or realist depends on the context in which we are looking, and what we expect from it" (p. 76). We only know that which we are currently exposed to: reality as an objective truth.

As Richard Lanham (1993) notes, "Today we model everything digitally, and usually visually, before we build it, manufacture it, or embrace it as policy or sales program" (p. 47). Likewise, Benjamin Woolley (1992) tells readers that "Indeed, war, computing and virtual reality are tightly interconnected, one shaping the other, all impossible as they are currently executed and understood without the other" (pp. 191-192). Does this imply that digital technology has affected our perceptual / procedural processes? Or does this imply that reality is manipulated / manufactured by our understanding of digital spaces and technology? Are electronic books created and

manufactured with the knowledge of the reader's technology in mind? Is a book "printed" onto an Apple iPad or computer screen designed the same way as that which a consumer knows as a "book"? Which one is more real? Finally, how can we truly understand the future of digital spaces given our limited knowledge and experience? Too many questions, so little time (or space).

### **Repercussions for the Reality Invasion**

It goes without saying that with any new advancement come uncharted and untested issues that will confound our sense of ethics, both personally and professionally. The level to which our perceptions of reality are effected begs discussion of the morality of persuasive rhetoric for altruistic motives. Unfortunately, we do not have room here to do just that, therefore let this serve as a prompt for another person, an extension of these thoughts so to speak.

The death of the real is one of the central issues for the post-modern philosopher: "The reality that has invented itself over recent centuries and which we have elevated into a principle is dying out" (Baudrillard, 2005, p. 17). If reality is being murdered, perhaps by technology, then how do we, as barkers and consumers in the circus of digital life, draw the line between that we know and that we *think* we know? Or how will we know in the future? The lines become blurred, and we begin to exist in the hyperreal like no other time in our known past. Technology is an extension of people, and the means by which we seemingly grow and become more fulfilled. But is this not merely the illusion we live under (Baudrillard, 2008)? Are we living under this illusion or is it still true? These are some of the questions that should be addressed as the realm of digital rhetoric seemingly invades our notion of realism.

For Heim (1999), the theory of transformative technologies is a way to see the "the impact of writing technologies on the human thought process" (p. 65). As I have discussed here, that same idea can be seen in our discussion of reality as manifested in digital spaces. It is not a discussion that has a beginning or an end, nor should it. For once the discussion ends, so does the idea of reality.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Craig Baehr for his comments and insight on this piece.

## REFERENCES

- Arnheim, R. (1969), *Visual Thinking*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Baggott, J. (2006), *A Beginner's Guide to Reality: Exploring Our Everyday Adventures in Wonderland*. New York: Pegasus.
- Baudrillard, J. (2005), *The Intelligence of Evil or the Lucidity Pack*. C. Turner (tr.). New York: Berg.
- Baudrillard, J. (2008), *The Perfect Crime*. C. Turner (tr.). New York: Verso.
- Barry, A.M.S. (1997), *Visual Intelligence: Perception, Image, and Manipulation in Visual Communication*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Berger, P.L., and Luckmann, T. (1967), *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Garden City: Anchor.
- Bruce, V., Green, P.R., and Georgeson, M.A. (1996), *Visual Perception: Physiology, Psychology, and Ecology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. London: Laurence Erlbaum.
- Caelli, T. (1981), *Visual Perception: Theory and Practice*. Ontario: Pergamon Press.
- Heim, M. (1999), *Electric Language: A Philosophical Study of Word Processing*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Hubel, D.H., and Wiesel, T.N. (2005), *Brain and Visual Perception: The Story of a 25-year Collaboration*. Oxford University Press: New York.
- Landow, G.P. (1994), *Hyper/Text/Theory*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.
- Lanham, R.A. (1993), *The Electric Word: Democracy, Technology, and the Arts*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Schirato, T., and Webb, J. (2004), *Understanding the Visual*. London: Sage.
- Schwartz, S.H. (2004), *Visual Perception: A Clinical Orientation*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Hightstown: McGraw-Hill.
- Smith, C.R. (2003), *Rhetoric and Human Consciousness: A History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Prospect Heights: Waveland Press.
- Woolley, B. (1992), *Virtual Worlds*. New York: Penguin.

© Alec R. Hosterman

## PEDAGOGIES OF THE IMAGE: ECONOMIES OF THE GAZE

**MICHAEL A. PETERS**

mpet001@illinois.edu

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

**ABSTRACT.** This paper investigates the changes to visual culture and education in the shift from industrial to social media and proposes a critical education that rests on the pedagogy of the image by reference to the work of Sartre, Lacan and Foucault on the history of the ‘gaze’, John Berger on *Ways of Seeing*, Guy Debord on the ‘spectacle’, Jean Baudrillard on simulacra, and Deleuze on cinema. These ‘pedagogies of the image’ provide a sort of collective repertoire of tools for analysis in an age dominated by the image and a cinematic mode of production.

**Keywords:** visual, culture, education, pedagogy, image, media

An historical epoch dominated by Greek ocular metaphors may...  
yield to one in which the philosophical vocabulary incorporating  
these metaphors seems quaint as the animistic vocabulary  
of pre-classical times.

Richard Rorty (1980) *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, p. 11

Publicity is the life of this culture – in so far as without publicity capitalism could not  
survive – and at the same time publicity is its dream.

John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*

### **Introduction**

We now live in a world of ‘visual cultures’, in a world of *re-mediation* and *cross-mediation* in which experience of content both appears in multiple forms and migrates from one media form to another (Bolter, 2001). If reality is mediated so too must be social relations. The language of the new social media is easily programmable given its algorithmic character and its numerical coding

which allows for the automation of many of its functions including media creation. New media are variable and interactive and no longer tied to technologies of exact reproduction such as copying (Manovitch, 2000). They are part of a wider paradigm and system that Castells (2000) calls 'informational capitalism' which is a new technological paradigm and mode of development characterized by information generation, processing, and transmission that have become the fundamental sources of productivity and power. More and more of this information that is the raw material of knowledge capitalism is increasingly either image-based or comes to us in the form of images. We now live in a socially networked universe in which the material conditions for the formation, circulation, and utilization of knowledge and learning are rapidly changing from an industrial to information and media-based economy. Increasingly, the emphasis has fallen on knowledge, learning and media systems and networks that depend upon the acquisition of new skills of image manipulation and understanding as a central aspect of development considered in personal, community, regional, national and global contexts.

These mega-trends signal both changes in the production and consumption of symbolic visual goods and also associated changes in their contexts of use. The radical concordance of image, text and sound, and development of new information and knowledge infrastructures have encouraged the emergence of global media networks linked with telecommunications that signal the emergence of a Euro-American consumer culture based on the rise of edutainment media a set of information utility conglomerates. What new subjectivities are constituted through social media and what role does image control play in this process? What new possibilities do the new media afford students for educational autonomy? What distinctive forms of immaterial labor and affect do social and image-based media create? And what is the transformational potential of new image-based and social media that link education to its radical historical mission?

The ubiquity of the image in an age of film, video and digital multimedia emphasizes both the ocularcentrism of the twenty-first century and the hegemony of the image that drowns us in an overflow and repetition of images. Is this the 'society of the spectacle' (Debord, 1967) that prefers the sign than the thing itself? Is it a society dominated by 'the violence of the image' (Baudrillard, 1998), of simulcra and simulations that demonstrate a suspicion and hegemony of vision (Jay, 1993) and points to the ultimate collapse at the

end of modernism based on the relation between image and reality? Remember Baudrillard's (1998: 27) four act drama: first, a simulacrum 'is the reflection of a profound reality', which corresponds to representation; second, 'it masks and denatures a profound reality'; third, 'it masks the absence of a profound reality'; and, fourth 'it has no relation to any reality whatsoever; it is its own pure simulation.'

In *The Future of the Image*, Jacques Rancière (2008) suggests that there are two prevailing views about image and reality: the first, exemplified by Baudrillard, maintains that nothing is real anymore, because all of reality has become virtual, a parade of simulacra and images without any true substance; the second believes that there are no more images, because an 'image' is a thing clearly distanced or separate from reality, and, as we have lost this distance, we are no longer able to discern between images and reality; and thus, the image, as a category, no longer exists.

With the increasing dominance of images over text can visual culture deliver on its promises of a pedagogy that exposes the deep bias of images and their inherently ambiguous nature? Can 'visual literacy' – a set of 'vision-competencies' (Debes, 1969) – really deliver on the promise of a critical approach equal to the moment? And, is visual literacy really co-present with linguistic literacy comprising a set interacting and interlacing modalities which complement one another in the meaning-making process?

The epistemology of the eye (as opposed to the ear) is central to the philosophical debate revolving around the primacy of vision in Occidental culture and the domination of the gaze that has interested French theory since Bataille and received extensive theoretical treatment by Sartre, Lacan and Foucault among many others. 'The look', 'the gaze', 'le regard', in the hands of these theorists becomes alternately a theory of subjectivity, a map of the existence of others, a form of development of consciousness, and a scientific means of governance and control.

This paper consists in a series of notes and suggestions toward a critical education. There are pedagogies of the image in the understandings of each aspect of these theoretical developments. This paper provides the conceptual basis for pedagogies of the image. First, it traces the history of gaze, briefly examining the work of Sartre, Lacan and Foucault. Second, and from a different angle it foregrounds John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* and its relation to the field of visual culture. Third, I focus on Guy Debord's *Society of the*

*Spectacle* and Jean Baudrillard's 'simulacra'; and finally, I discuss Deleuze on the cinema. Each of these approaches, I suggest, provides the basis for pedagogies of the image – a sort of collective repertoire of tools for analysis.

### **Pedagogies of the Gaze and the Manufacture of Subjectivity: Sartre, Lacan, Foucault**

'The look', as Sartre terms it, constitutes section four of Chapter 1 'The Existence of Others' in Part Three of *Being and Nothingness* that is devoted to 'Being-for-Others'. The Introduction is called 'The Pursuit of Being'. Part One deals with 'The Problem of Nothingness' and Part two is entitled 'Being-for-Itself'. Part Four includes 'Having, Doing, and Being', which is followed by a Conclusion. 'The look' is part of the examination by Sartre of avoiding deep Cartesian problems of solipsism that originate from a standpoint devoted entirely to the *cogito*, or the thinking subject. Sartre argues that we need the Other in order to realize our own being, and in the chapter on the existence of others he starts with an account of 'the reef of solipsism' based on an exposition of Husserl, Hegel and Heidegger to arrive at the following conclusion:

We have learned that the Other's existence was experienced with evidence in and through the fact of my objectivity. We have seen also that my reaction to my own alienation for the Other was expressed in my grasping the Other as an object. In short, the Other can exist for us in two forms: if I experience him with evidence, I fail to know him; if I know him, if I act upon him, I only reach his being-as-object and his probable existence in the midst of the world (p. 400).

Sartre is led on through the force of his argument to consider the body, both my body and the body of the Other, and the relation of the body to consciousness. Then Sartre proceeds to unpack the three ontological dimensions of the body before discussing concrete relations with others: love, language and masochism; indifference, desire, hate and sadism; and the notion of 'being-with' and the 'we'.

Sartre's account of the look and the Other as someone who must be encountered is a highly influential theory of subjectivity and the emotions. It defines an ontology defining consciousness as a nega-

tion aimed fundamentally at freedom formed through the choices we make. I become aware of the Other as a subjectivity and being-for-itself under whose gaze I am transformed into an object. 'The look' in Sartre's philosophy brings into play an intersubjective world and, indeed, the realm of interpersonal relations. Although Sartre emphasises vision in his initial characterization of our being-for-others – and in his continuing talk of 'The Look' – he is keen to point out that vision is by no means necessary. Sartre claims that conflict is the source of meaning of being-for-others, which means that 'the look' is objectifying and alienating, where the Other fails to recognize my freedom.

Jacques Lacan develops his view of 'the gaze' from a first encounter with Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* in the mid 1950s and then distinguishes his own view of 'the gaze' from Sartre's 'the look' in 1964: the Lacanian gaze is not the act of looking, but the object of the act of looking. The Lacanian theory of the gaze undermines Cartesian theories of optics that have always dominated modern theories of perception and made visual perception the paradigm of knowing. For Lacan, seeing is not believing. He develops his position on the Gaze in relation to the notion of the 'mirror stage' where the child achieves a sense of mastery by seeing himself as ideal ego. In this way, the child enters into culture and language establishing his own subjectivity narcissistically through mirror image. Later Lacan differentiates between the eye's look and the Gaze, an uncanny sense that the object of our eye's look is looking back at us. Thus, Lacan's writings on the Gaze and visuality theorize the importance of seeing in the formation of the child-subject through the mirror-self which is an ideal self. He defines the Gaze at one point as the presence of others and then focuses on the function of seeing per se which constitutes 'the manifestation of the symbolic within the field of vision' (Silverman, 168). Finally Lacan likens the gaze to the camera whose only function is to put us in the picture, so to speak. Lacan's views have been influential not only in psychoanalysis but also in the development of film theory (Mcgowan, 2008) and thus provide a preparatory critical pedagogy of the image.

In *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception* (*Naissance de la clinique: une archéologie du regard médical*) Foucault focuses on the power of the clinical or medical gaze to explain the creation of a field of knowledge of the body and the way it leads to a radical separation of the body from the person. Foucault de-

scribes how he became interested in how the medical gaze was institutionalised, that is, how this new form of the hospital was at once the effect and the support of a new type of gaze. In the essay 'The eye of power' (146–165) from the collection *Power/Knowledge* Foucault (1980) famously writes of the Panopticum beginning with observations concerning certain architectural projects following the second fire at the Hotel-Dieu in 1772 and the ways in which they revolved around the principles of centralised surveillance designed to solve the 'problem of visibility of bodies'. This problem which was both global and individualizing in terms of the surveillance of space Foucault discovers was not specific to eighteenth-century medicine and its beliefs. He goes on to explain:

Then while studying the problems of the penal system, I noticed that all the great projects for re-organising the prisons (which date, incidently, from a slightly later period, the first half of the nineteenth century) take up this same theme, but accompanied this time by the almost invariable reference to Bentham. There was scarcely a text or a proposal about the prisons which didn't mention Bentham's 'device' – the 'Panopticon'.

Later in the same essay he theorizes the relation between the gaze and interiorization:

We are talking about two things here: the gaze and interiorisation. And isn't it basically the problem of the cost of power? In reality power is only exercised at a cost. Obviously, there is an economic cost, and Bentham talks about this. How many overseers will the Panopticon need? How much will the machine then cost to run? But there is also a specifically political cost. If you are too violent, you risk provoking revolts...In contrast to that you have the system of surveillance, which on the contrary involves very little expense. There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by interiorisation to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself. A superb formula: power exercised continuously and for what turns out to be minimal cost.

The gaze becomes the central principle of a series of public architectures, an organization of the enclosed spaces of institutions and the basis not only for low cost, low maintenance infrastructure in clinics, prisons, factories and schools, but also the basis of the rise of disciplines and discourses based on systematic observation of the inmates of these institutions. With this development Foucault provides us with a critical pedagogy of educational disciplines ('architectures') that developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries designed to govern the child, to enhance its autonomy (in the liberal subjects) and to study the dimensions of the child's stages of physical growth and cognitive development.

### **Pedagogies as *Ways of Seeing*: John Berger and Visual Culture**

*Ways of Seeing* is the title of a 1972 BBC television series and later a book of the same name that questions the deep cultural bias in Western aesthetics based on the phenomenology of perception and the paradigm of seeing. Berger is interested in revealing the ideologies of the visual and, in particular, the ways in which art in capitalist society has become a commodity. To this extent Berger draws on the discussion of the history of art and art criticism utilizing Benjamin's seminal book *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. The medium is a complex system of rules that allows certain combination and permutations and prohibits others. In effect, it constitutes a language: 'The special qualities of oil painting lent themselves to a special system of conventions for representing the visible. The sum total of these conventions is the way of seeing invented by oil painting' (Berger, 1977:108).

The question of the image and ways of seeing is unquestionably tied up with the art philosophy and criticism and in particular the experience of the avant-garde whose best-known representatives – the poets Arthur Rimbaud, Paul Verlaine, Stephane Mallarmé and Charles Baudelaire, as well as leading artists of the major art revolutionary movements – sought new kinds of art and new forms of artistic expression (i.e., new ways of seeing) that opposed the traditional (bourgeois) institution of art that had been largely captured by industrial capitalism. The industrial (and digital) reproduction of images has permanently changed the visual arts; images have become our deeply immersable cultural environment and can be owned, manipulated and manufactured. They define us and our identities and



the struggle over their control serve to construct certain narratives, dramas, tableaux, scenarios and views at the expense of others.

Berger, critically aware of these movements and debates, and operating from a position that is informed by a critique of capitalism and antagonistic to mainstream culture, defines looking as a *practice*, 'much like speaking, writing or signing. Looking involves learning to interpret and, like other practices, looking involves relationships of power' (Berger, 1977: 10). As Berger argues: 'Perspective makes the single eye the centre of the visible world. Everything converges on to the eye as to the vanishing point of infinity' (p. 16). Modern technologies like photography and the motion picture change the perspectival centrality of the image 'What you saw was relative to your position in time and space. It was no longer possible to imagine everything converging on the human eye as on the vanishing point of infinity' (p. 18). As Berger explains, the meaning of a photographic image as compared to a prior painted image becomes both decentered and diffuse and it also develops allusion to other images in systems of images. Berger focuses on the distortions in capitalist consumer culture that are systematically generated through publicity as a particular system of image and image exploitation closely related to freedom of choice and of enterprise that conditions social relations through the glamour of the image. Publicity and advertising creates a society that depends upon an uncritical 'average spectator-buyer.'

The fact is that we are not born knowing how to see either physiologically or culturally. The great biologist J.Z. Young taught us that the human infant learns to see, to focus, to hold perspective, and to master the basics of seeing in a biological sense. But seeing is not acultural, asocial, or ahistorical. Seeing and looking (learning to look) is also learned socially and culturally as part of the production of differences (semiotically speaking) and through various representational technologies that reinforce the repertoire and banks of images that comprise visual culture. In this sense, vision and its physio-social technologies of seeing and looking are less a mirror of truth than 'instruments of power' – less faithful and accurate depictions of the world than actual constituent analytical schemas of visual intelligibility. On the basis of this model the ways we picture ourselves ('self-image') and see others are part of our history of seeing and learning to see just as much as is the way we understand and picture the world. These stable traditions of seeing that involve interpreting

the meaning of images and the relations between seeing and being seen also are constituted through perspectives of power that emphasize certain received, 'natural' and acceptable visual discriminations of body, sex, age, gender, class and culture over others. These traditions overlap and are reinforced by the complex relations between image, word, and sound (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001; Schirato & Webb, 2004; Mirozoeff, 2000). Berger provides the now-standard example: 'according to usage and conventions which are at last being questioned but have by no means been overcome – men act and women appear. Men look at women. Women watch themselves being looked at' (Berger 1972, 45, 47). Berger argues that in European art from the Renaissance onwards women were depicted as being 'aware of being seen by a [male] spectator' (ibid., 49).

Others, influenced by Sartre, Foucault, and a line of criticism dating back to Baudelaire and Benjamin, have sought to make the historical connections between vision and modernity evident. Jonathan Crary (1990), for example, has examined *Techniques of the Observer* and the complex relations between vision and modernity in the nineteenth century. He emphasizes the ways in which vision is located in history and links nineteenth century interest in the physiology of vision to demands of industrialization (pp. 81, 85), linking vision and visibility to the changing perceptions of human subjectivity and identity. Like others before him Crary finds that the observer is changed by technological developments, becoming 'the site of certain practices, techniques, institutions, and procedures of subjectification' (p. 5). Each technological device creates a different kind of observer: stereoscopic vision is replaced by photography and its 'illusion of reference' (p. 133). The stereoscope creates a fragmented observer whereas the camera creates an assumed unity in the viewer. The nineteenth century inaugurates 'the visual culture of modernity' which coincides with new 'techniques of the observer' (p. 96) first alluded to by Baudelaire's 'flaneur' a new urban observer/subject who is the 'mobile consumer of a ceaseless succession of illusory commodity-like images' (p. 21).

Pedagogies of visual culture would seek to understand both the meaning of images, the way in which they comprise a language and help us to analyse vision as a social, cultural and historical process. It would examine the history of changing technologies that are involved in the production, circulation and reception of images as well

as the exploration of theories of seeing and looking as social and cultural practices.<sup>1</sup>

### **Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* & Jean Baudrillard's *Simulacra***

*La Société du Spectacle* was first published in 1967 with the first English translation in 1970, revised in 1977. The work is a series of two hundred and twenty-one short theses (about a paragraph each), divided into nine chapters. It is a path-breaking text that provides a Marxian interpretation of contemporary mass media with a focus on commodity fetishism before the notion of globalization was used extensively. Guy Debord, for instance, writes:

1) In societies where modern conditions of production prevail, all of life presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation

4) The spectacle is not a collection of images, but a social relation among people, mediated by images.

6) The spectacle grasped in its totality is both the result and the project of the existing mode of production. It is not a supplement to the real world, an additional decoration. It is the heart of the unrealism of the real society.

147) The time of production, commodity-time, is an infinite accumulation of equivalent intervals. It is the abstraction of irreversible time, all of whose segments must prove on the chronometer their merely quantitative equality. This time is in reality exactly what it is in its exchangeable character. In this social domination by commodity-time, 'time is everything, man is nothing; he is at most the carcass of time' (*Poverty of Philosophy*). This is time devalued, the complete inversion of time as 'the field of human development'.<sup>2</sup>

Commenting on *The Society of the Spectacle* in 1988 Guy Debord said that he had tried to show that the modern spectacle was already 'the autocratic reign of the market economy' that had acceded to an 'irresponsible sovereignty' based on 'the totality of new techniques of government that accompanied this reign'.<sup>3</sup> Debord suggests that he distinguished two rival forms of spectacular power, the concentrated and the diffuse – the former a dictatorial ideology charac-

teristic of Nazi and Stalinist regimes, the latter Americanization of the world dedicated to maintaining traditional forms of bourgeois democracy. The combination of the two (the integrated spectacular) had since imposed itself globally. He also explains how the notion of the spectacular had originated with the Situationists that was influenced by the avant-garde movements Dada, Surrealism and Lettrism which sought to transform art into everyday life in order to overcome the ways that creativity of the people had become crippled and stifled under modern capitalism.

Baudrillard argues that a simulacrum is not a copy of the real, but becomes truth in its own right: the hyperreal. Where Plato saw two steps of reproduction two aspects, the genuine thing and its copy (simulacrum), Baudrillard sees four: (1) basic reflection of reality, (2) perversion of reality; (3) pretence of reality (where there is no model); and (4) simulacrum, which bears no relation to any reality whatsoever. He argues that ours is a postmodern society that has become so reliant on models and maps that we have lost all contact with the real world that preceded the map.

He argues that we have lost all ability to make sense of the distinction between nature and artifice. Baudrillard postulates three 'orders of simulacra': in the first order of simulacra associated with the pre-modern period, the image is a counterfeit of the real; in the second order of simulacra that Baudrillard associates with the industrial revolution, the distinctions between the image and the representation begin to blur because of the mass production and the proliferation of copies; in the third order of simulacra, that Baudrillard associates with the postmodern age, we are confronted with a *precession* of simulacra where the representation *precedes* and *determines* the real and the distinction between reality and its representation disappears entirely. As he reformulates in an essay called 'Simulacra and Science Fiction'<sup>4</sup>

There are three orders of simulacra:

- (1) natural, naturalistic simulacra: based on image, imitation, and counterfeiting. They are harmonious, optimistic, and aim at the reconstitution, or the ideal institution, of a nature in God's image.
- (2) productive, productionist simulacra: based on energy and force, materialized by the machine and the entire system of production. Their aim is Promethean: worldwide application, continuous expansion, liberation of in-

determinate energy (desire is part of the utopias belonging to this order of simulacra).

(3) simulation simulacra: based on information, the model, cybernetic play. Their aim is maximum operationality, hyperreality, total control.

He goes on to state:

There is no real and no imaginary except at a certain distance. What happens when this distance, even the one separating the real from the imaginary, begins to disappear and to be absorbed by the model alone? Currently, from one order of simulacra to the next, we are witnessing the reduction and absorption of this distance, of this separation which permits a space for ideal or critical projection.

Baudrillard's twin concepts of 'hyperreality' and 'simulation' refer to the virtual or unreal nature of contemporary culture in an age of mass communication and mass consumption, world dominated by simulated experience and feelings, which has robbed us of the capacity to comprehend reality as it really exists. As he indicates simulation begins from the radical negation of the sign as value, and envelops 'the edifice of representation as itself a simulacrum. This would be the successive phases of the image:

- it is the reflection of a basic reality.
- it masks and perverts a basic reality.
- it masks the absence of a basic reality.
- it bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum (Baudrillard, 1993: 194).

Doug Kellner (1995) suggests that we can read Baudrillard's post-1970s work as science fiction that anticipates the future by exaggerating present tendencies that provide early warnings about what might happen if present trends continue. In an assessment of Baudrillard, Kellner (2007) writes:

In retrospect, Baudrillard's early critical explorations of the system of objects and consumer society contain some of his most important contributions to contemporary social theory. His mid-1970s analysis of a dramatic

mutation occurring within contemporary societies and rise of a new mode of simulation, which sketched out the effects of media and information on society as a whole, is also original and important. But at this stage of his work, Baudrillard falls prey to a technological determinism and semiological idealism which posits an autonomous technology and play of signs generating a society of simulation which creates a postmodern break and the proliferation of signs, spectacles, and simulacra. Baudrillard erases autonomous and differentiated spheres of the economy, polity, society, and culture posited by classical social theory in favor of an implosive theory that also crosses disciplinary boundaries, thus mixing philosophy and social theory into a broader form of social diagnosis and philosophical play.  
([http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/baudrillard/.](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/baudrillard/))

### **Deleuze on Cinema<sup>5</sup>**

Deleuze makes a classification of three specific kinds of power: sovereign power, disciplinary power and ‘control’ of communication and views the third kind of power as becoming hegemonic, a form of domination that, paradoxically, is both more total than any previous form, extending even to speech and imagination. Deleuze suggests that it was William Burroughs who first used the term *control* to describe a new form of power and he mentions the way modern institutions of confinement and their principles of enclosure are breaking down. New open spatial forms – open systems rather than closed systems – interconnected, flexible and networked ‘architectures’ are supplanting the older enclosures. New open institutional forms of punishment, education and health are being introduced without a critical understanding what is happening. As he writes in ‘Postscript on Societies of Control’:

We’re definitely moving toward ‘control’ societies that are no longer disciplinary. Foucault’s often taken as the theorist of disciplinary societies and of their principal technology, *confinement* (not just in hospitals and schools but in schools, factories, and barracks). We’re moving toward control societies that no longer operate by confining people but through continuous control and instant communication.

And he provides the following education example:

One can envisage education becoming less and less a closed site differentiated from the workplace as another closed site, but both disappearing and giving way to frightful continual training, to continual monitoring of worker-schoolkids or bureaucrat-students (Deleuze, 1995a: 174–175).

Forms of ‘lifelong education’, ‘distance education’ and ‘continuous training’ have been conceived as part of a new educational ‘architecture’ designed to support the global ‘knowledge economy’. Deleuze warns of what he calls ‘ceaseless control in open sites’ and the quest for ‘universals of communication. Yet he argues that even before control societies have been established, already forms of delinquency and resistance – computer piracy and viruses – have appeared and instead of resistance to control societies he suggests ‘creating has always been something different from communicating’ (p. 175). The notion of ‘control’ as a political term Deleuze borrows from William Burroughs which is best illustrated in relation to Deleuze’s discussion and history of cinema.

Deleuze (1995b) provides an analysis of the cinematic image according to a threefold periodization: What is there to see behind the image? What is there to see on the surface of the image? And, what can we see at all when the background of any image is always another image? (See also Deleuze 1989a,b). Corresponding to each question is a stage of cinema based upon the changing function of the image. The first period characterized by the art of *montage* ascribes a depth to the image in a universal scenography, where filmmakers in the critical tradition, still buoyed by a metaphysical optimism of the new medium, sought to forge a link between the new Art and a new Thought that was capable of providing an *encyclopedia of the world*. In the second age, characterized by the ‘sequence shot’ and new forms of composition, the new function of the image was a *pedagogy of perception*, taking the place of an *encyclopedia of the world* that had fallen apart (p. 70). As Deleuze notes ‘Depth was condemned as ‘deceptive,’ and the image took on the flatness of a “surface without depth”’ (pp. 60–70); and:

Images were no longer linked in an unambiguous order of cuts and continuities but became subject to relinkings,

constantly revised and reworked across cuts and false continuities (p. 70).

The emergence of the third period reflects a change in the function of the image and a third set of relations where

it is no longer what is there to see behind the image, nor how we can see the image itself – it's how we can find a way into it, how we can slip in, because each image now slips across other images, 'the background in any image is always another image,' and the vacant gaze is a contact lens (p. 71).

Deleuze mentions two different factors in the new relation between images. The internal development of cinema which seeks new audio-visual combinations and pedagogies, and; the internal development of television which takes on a social function and, therefore, operates on a different level. Just as the critical impulse of the first great age of cinema was manipulated by the authoritarian power of fascism, so too 'the new social power of the postwar period, one of surveillance or control, threatened to kill the second form of cinema' (p. 71). The threat this time comes from 'the way that all images present the single image of my vacant gaze contacting a non-nature, a privileged spectator allowed into the wings, in contact with the image, entering into the image' (p. 72).

Thus, the studio audience is one of the most highly rated forms of entertainment and the zoom has become television's standard technique. As Deleuze argues:

The encyclopedia of the world and the pedagogy of perception collapse to make room for a professional training of the eye, a world of controllers and controlled communing in their admiration for technology, mere technology. The contact lens everywhere. This is where your critical optimism turns into critical pessimism (p. 72).

Television threatens the second death of critical cinema because it is 'the form in which the new powers of 'control' become immediate and direct' (p. 75). Deleuze continues:

To get to the heart of the confrontation you'd almost have to ask whether this control might be reversed,



harnessed by the supplementary function opposed to power; whether one could develop an art of control that would be a kind of new form of resistance. Taking the battle to the heart of cinema, making cinema see it as its problem instead of coming upon it from the outside; that's what Burroughs did in literature, by substituting the viewpoint of control and controllers for that of authors and authority (p. 75).

There is not space here for a full account of Deleuze on the development of cinema or the set of concepts he works up from Pierce's semiology and Bergson to describe the shift to time and movement. According to Deleuze, we now live in a universe that could be described as metacinematic and his classification of images implies a new kind of camera consciousness that determines our subjectivities and perceptions selves. We live in a visual culture that is always moving and changing and each image is always connected to an assemblage of affects and forces. There are three types of cinematic movement-images: *perception images* (that focus on what is seen), *affection images* (that focus on expressions of feeling) and *action images* (that focus on the duration of action), each type associated with long shots, close-ups and medium shots. Deleuze's work on cinema is not a history of cinema but rather a taxonomy, an attempt at the classifications of images and signs by means of Bergson and Peirce.

### **The Cinematic Mode of Production**

To be sure, as Jonathan Beller (2003) has argued cinema marks a profound shift in the relation between image and text – 'the watershed of the subjugation of language by image'. Inspired by Deleuze and early Critical Theory Beller theorizes 'cinema as an innovative shift in both industrial capitalism and cultural practice marks, therefore, the restructuring of language function in accord with the changing protocols of techno-capitalism'. He summarizes his argument

As a precursor for TV and computing and Internet, cinema transacts value transfer across the image utilising a production process that can be grasped as founded under the rubric of what I call 'the attention theory of value'. The deterritorialised factory that is the contem-

porary image is an essential component of globalisation, neo-imperialism, and militarisation, organising, as it were, the consent (ignorance of) and indeed desire for these latter processes. Thus 'cinema', as a paradigm for image-mediated social production, implies a cultural turn for political economics. It also implies that it is the interstitial, informal activities that transpire across the entire surface of the socius as well as in the vicissitudes of the psyche and experience that are the new (untheorised) production sites for global capital – and therefore among the significant sites for the waging of the next revolution (p. 91).

And Beller (2003: 105) concludes:

When appearance itself is production, the ostensible immediacy of the world always already passes through the production-system. Cinema is a deterritorialised factory which extends the working day in space and time while introjecting the systems language of capital into the sensorium. Cinema means a fully-mediated *mise-en-scene* which, like the magician's forced deal, structures human choice by providing the contexts and options for responses that are productive for capital. Yet we must remember that it is humanity who made the cinema, despite the masters of global appearance's claims to the contrary. The star is not out there, but s/he is of ourselves. Cinema is the secularisation of a world historical revolution in human interaction that contains in *potentia* the material realisation of a universal disaffection with capitalist domination and oppression.

Beller (2006) argues that cinema and other media formations, including the Internet as media platform, are deterritorialized factories in which spectators work or perform value-productive labor. The cinematic mode of production (CMP) is an exploitation of the sociality that characterizes a spectator economy. The question is whether we have already moved beyond spectatorship and the spectator economy to one now centered on new social media and a social mode of production that requires collaboration and co-creation as a matter of participation and entry.

Social media are different from industrial media in that they are designed to be disseminated through social interaction using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Using Internet and

web-based technologies to transform broadcast media monologues (one-to-many) into interactive and participatory dialogues (many-to-many), which results in the democratization of knowledge and information and transforms participants from spectator-consumers into content producers. There is reason to think that the CMP is closely tied to the principles of industrial media and industrial capital while social media operates on different principles reflecting the logic of free software. As Christopher M. Kelty (2008: 2) argues:

Free Software is a set of practices for the distributed collaborative creation of software source code that is then made openly and freely available through a clever, unconventional use of copyright law. But it is much more: Free Software exemplifies a considerable reorientation of knowledge and power in contemporary society – a reorientation of power with respect to the creation, dissemination, and authorization of knowledge in the era of the Internet.

When he writes of the *cultural* significance of Free Software, he means

an ongoing experimental system, a space of modification and modulation, of figuring out and testing; culture is an experiment that is hard to keep an eye on, one that changes quickly and sometimes starkly. Culture as an experimental system crosses economies and governments, networked social spheres, and the infrastructure of knowledge and power within which our world functions today – or fails to.

The logic of free software as it underwrites social media has breathed new life into new facets of culture from music to politics, engendering what Kelty calls a recursive public – one that is ‘*vitality concerned with the material and practical maintenance and modification of the technical, legal, practical, and conceptual means of its own existence as a public*’ (p. 3). In this new social media culture, the individual imagination is harnessed in forms of hypertextual forms of multi-creation that ties the expressive to politics and to democratic action, transforming and reshaping the deterritorialized community as one a global polis with shifting and temporary alliances mobilized for particular causes and social movements and political events. In this way, social media becomes a re-imagination

machine, and education based upon it, in both public and personalized forms, moves from pedagogies of the image and economies of the gaze to pedagogies of creative P2P collaboration and economies of the imagination.

## NOTES

1. This description is based on various visual pedagogy website including Viz. Visual Culture: Rhetoric: Pedagogy at <http://viz.cwrl.utexas.edu/>, Visual Studies Initiative at Duke University at <http://visualstudies.duke.edu/>, Visual Culture Collective at <http://visualculturecollective.googlepages.com/home>, Visual Studies program at the University of Houston at <http://www.visualstudies.uh.edu/>, and Visual Studies at the University of California at Irvine at <http://www.humanities.uci.edu/visualstudies/>.

2. These selections are based on *The Society of the Spectacle* at [http://library.nothingness.org/articles/SI/en/pub\\_contents/4](http://library.nothingness.org/articles/SI/en/pub_contents/4).

3. This commentary appears at <http://www.notbored.org/commentaires.html>.

4. See <http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/backissues/55/ baudrillard55art.htm>.

5. Part of this section on Deleuze is based on material taken from Peters (2009).

## REFERENCES

Ann, Michael and Moxley, Keith (2002), *Art History, Aesthetics, Visual Studies*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Baudrillard, Jean (1983), *Simulations*. New York: Semiotext(e).

Baudrillard, Jean (1993), "The Evil Demon of Images and the Precession of Simulacra," in Docherty, Th. (ed.), *Postmodernism: A Reader*. New York, Columbia University Press.

Baudrillard, Jean (1994), *Simulacra and Simulation*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Baudrillard, Jean (1988), "Simulacra and Simulations," in *Jean Baudrillard. Selected Writings*. Poster, Mark (ed.). Stanford: Stanford University Press, 166–184.

Beller, Jonathan (2003), "The Cinematic Mode of Production: Towards a Political Economy of the Postmodern," *Culture, Theory and Critique* 44(1): 91–106.

Beller, Jonathan (2006), *The Cinematic Mode of Production*. Dartmouth: University Press of New England.

Berger, John (1977), *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin.

Debord, Guy (1977), *The Society of the Spectacle*. London: Black & Red, at <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/debord/society.htm>.

- Deleuze, Gilles (1989), *Cinema: The Movement Image*. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbera Habberjam (trs.). Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Deleuze, Gilles (1989), *The Time Image*. Tomlinson, H. and Galeta, R. (trs.). Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press.
- Deleuze, Gilles (1995b), "Letter to Serge Daney: Optimism, Pessimism, and Travel," in *Negotiations, 1972–1990*, Joughin, M. (tr.). New York: Columbia University Press: 68–80.
- Deleuze, Gilles (1995a), "Postscript on Control Societies," in *Negotiations, 1972–1990*, Joughin, M. (tr.). New York: Columbia University Press: 177–182.
- Dikovitskaya, Margaret (2006), *Visual Culture: The Study of the Visual after the Cultural Turn*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Ewen, Stuart (1999), *All Consuming Images: The Politics of Style in Contemporary Culture*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. New York: Basic Books.
- Fuery, Kelli and Fuery, Patrick (2003), *Visual Culture and Critical Theory*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. London: Arnold.
- Jay, Martin (1993), *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in 20th-Century French Thought*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Jay, Martin (ed.) (2005), "The State of Visual Culture Studies," themed issue of *Journal of Visual Culture* 4(2).
- Crary, Jonathan (1990), *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Kellner, Doug (1995), *Media Culture. Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics between the Modern and the Postmodern*. London-New York: Routledge.
- Kellner, Doug (2007), "Jean Baudrillard," *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ baudrillard/>.
- Kelty, Christopher M. (2008), *Two Bits: The Cultural Significance of Software*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Lacan, Jacques (1988), *The Seminar. Book I. Freud's Papers on Technique, 1953–54*. Forrester, John (tr.). New York: Norton.
- Mcgowan, Todd (2008), *Film Theory after Lacan*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Morizoeff, Nicholas (1999), *An Introduction to Visual Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Peters, Michael A. (2001), "Gilles Deleuze's 'Societies of Control': From Disciplinary Pedagogy to Perpetual Training," *The Review of Education/Pedagogy/Cultural Studies* 23(4).
- Sartre, Jean-Paul (1958 [1943]), *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*. Barnes, Hazel, E. (tr.). London: Methuen.
- Schirato Tony and Webb Jen (2004), *Understanding the Visual*. London: Sage.
- Sturken Marita and Cartwright Lisa (2001), *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.

© Michael A. Peters

## READING PICTURES: THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM?

**ROSS WOODROW**

r.woodrow@griffith.edu.au  
Griffith University

**ABSTRACT.** In this paper I chart the seismic shift that has occurred over the past three decades in attitudes towards the interpretation of visual images. My strategy implies the argument that the reading of visual images would appear to be an inevitability given the accelerating change of attitudes towards pictures as containers of determinate knowledge. French critical theorists (Foucault, Barthes, Derrida et. al.) dominated debate on interpretation of text and image in the 1980s, where my survey begins. Michel Foucault dismissed the image (in *Madness and Civilization* 1959/1988) as a fascinating site for the madness of dreams but one standing outside of reasoned interpretation because of an inherent excess of meaning and deeply hidden attributes and allusions. Generally, however, when images were discussed using identifiable interpretive strategies in the 1980s the framework was a variant of semiotic analysis (Marin, Eco and Barthes – who famously, diverges from this mode in *Camera Lucida*). I use W. J. T. Mitchell's *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* 1986 as a focal text from the 1980s and follow this with two of his publications on images, one from 1995 and another from 2005 to demonstrate the dramatic shift in the approach to pictures across almost three decades. Around these focal texts by Mitchell I reference other texts and trends that culminate in the more recent proliferation of texts related to visual studies and the re-emergence of aesthetics.

**Keywords:** image analysis and interpretation, pictures and theory, visual studies, pictorial turn

Over the past few years within the theoretical discourse that engages the visual there has been a renewed interest in aesthetics by theorists from a range of disciplines (Halsall 2009) as there has been particular attention given to what was once considered a marginal curiosity,

visual literacy. This trend is indicative of the need for academics to come to terms with the fact that measures of competence in most university disciplines are text-based when real-world cultural, social and even political operations are primarily visual (Elkins ed. 2008, p. 3). In this paper I present a survey of the state of play in visual studies over the past three decades, drawing on the experience in Australian university art schools, and demonstrate an accelerating trend towards accepting the material image as a site for serious scholarly attention in its own right.

My paper is divided into three chronological sections: 1980s, the 1990s, and 2000–2009. Each section takes as its point of departure a text by the same author, W. J. T. Mitchell. The choice of these three texts by Tom Mitchell is not simply to establish a connecting thread through the mass of publications over that period, but one made because these particular texts supply a synoptic view of the dramatic shifts in attitudes towards the theorizing of images over the past three decades.

### **The 1980s**

W. J. T. Mitchell's text *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (1986) attempted to subvert the twentieth-century methodological meaning of the term "iconology" and is a perfect exemplar of the approach of that decade; a book on images so dependent on linguistic models, history and allusions that it needed no illustrations, apart from a few line diagrams. Admittedly, by the early 1980s even the most conservative art history departments would have favoured a soft hermeneutics or even softer semiotics based on iconography rather than a rigid methodology that could be described as "iconology." The use of iconological method had been cultivated by Erwin Panofsky from its roots in the pioneering attempts by Aby Warburg and Fritz Saxl early in the twentieth century to establish a "science" of art history through a systematic identification of iconographic sources, a developed understanding of symbols, allegories and related codes, to reveal the meaning of a work. Mitchell avoids this territory but nevertheless his approach to pictures is still backward looking since he engages instead with Ernst Gombrich and Nelson Goodman who had for more than two decades dominated the debate on how to read images, with each occupying different but not entirely incompatible positions in accepting that images were made up of symbolic sys-

tems and therefore their reading was essentially cognitive. It was in the realms of psychological functioning and expressional aesthetics that Gombrich's approach differed from Goodman.

The importance of Mitchell's *Iconology* does not match his own recent assessment of it as the launching text for the study of "visual culture, visual literacy, image science and iconology" (Mitchell, in Elkins ed. 2008, p. 14) and certainly his claim that it was written in the mid-1980s at a time when "notions such as 'visual culture' and a 'new art history' (p. 14) were nothing more than rumors" does not ring true considering every art student in progressive art schools in Australia, if not elsewhere, had read Rees and Borzello's *The New Art History* (1986) and Hal Foster's anthology *The Anti-Aesthetic* (1983) long before approaching Mitchell's *Iconology* in the library. The text that is most representative of the 1980s would undoubtedly be the Foster anthology in one of its various editions, or Norman Bryson's *Calligram* where the semiotic paradigm can be more clearly identified. It should also be noted that Mitchell's oversight in almost ignoring Panofsky was amplified by the fact that in the 1990s Donald Preziosi would frame Panofsky's iconology as a precursor to modern semiotics (Preziosi 1998, pp. 227–275).

Two of the most significant, or significantly scrutinized, essays in 1980s Australian art schools and art history departments were Louis Marin's "Towards a Theory of Reading the Visual Arts: Poussin's *The Arcadian Shepherds*" and Michel Foucault's "Las Meninas." Both essays appeared in the popular 1988 anthology *Calligram: Essays in New Art History from France*, edited by Norman Bryson. Foucault's essay was the first chapter of his seminal *The Order of Things* (1966) so had been available in translation since 1970 and Marin's essay was first published in English in the 1980 anthology significantly titled *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*, Leiman and Crossman (eds.). Both these essays involved intensive scrutiny of the works under analysis. Each author paid particular attention to the visual syntax of the image stressing its basis in renaissance perspectival construction of the space in which the drama depicted is enacted, by denial of the spectator's presence in the case of the Poussin and by direct engagement of eye contact as in the Velázquez, although only Marin made direct reference to Panofsky and art historical sources. It now seems a stretch of definition to describe the method used as semiotic when placed against later applications of the semiotics of Roland Barthes



or the semiology of Umberto Eco such as in Michael O'Toole's *The Language of Displayed Art* of 1994, for example. Not forgetting Foucault's association with the "death of the author," although both essays intended to reveal the mechanisms of the classical representational paradigm and imply its terminal point, both authors assume the internalized critique of representation is the intended specific reading or 'meaning' of the picture – a "message sent by Poussin" in the case of the *Shepherds* (Marin, in Bryson ed. 1988, p. 88).

However radical they appeared at the time, these essays were anchored to the established methodology of art history. This was the approach that Carlo Ginzburg identified as the evidential paradigm, built on the forensic unraveling of clues, iconographic or iconological reference, stylistic and autographic nuances (Ginzburg 1989, esp. p. 96 ff). An approach that favoured "puzzle pictures" as James Elkins would claim in his strident critique of the excess of writing on particular sorts of images. Velazquez's *Las Meninas* certainly qualified as one of Elkins' "monstrous pictures," a painting surrounded by a literature so vast as to be beyond the reading scope of the lifetime of one scholar (Elkins 1999a, p. 123). By the mid-1980s the field for art history and theory was expanding to such a degree that it was not just the canon that was called into question but also the special status of paintings and related objects. At the risk of brutal simplification it can be said that by the end of the 1980s, images were interpreted or analysed not as containers or carriers of complex determinate meaning that could be measured against established value systems but as one piece of a larger puzzle that made up visual culture in its totality of signifying activity (Corbett, in van Eck and Winters 2005, p. 18).

It is possible to show with simple graphs, as James Elkins has done, the dramatic collapse in citations of the leading lights of traditional art history such as Panofsky and Gombrich for the period 1980 to 2000 and the associated exponential rise of alternative theoretical approaches such as semiotics, feminism, psychoanalysis or more generally visual theory (see Elkins 2006, figs. 1, 2, pp. vii, ix). The postmodern fragmenting of methodological approaches and the shifting focus of attention on objects and images outside the field of high art changed the sort of writing about images from the old exegetical writing, where humanistic or aesthetic values could be extracted by working on the autonomous art object to unravel its meaning within an established history, to one where theories of cul-

tural production or psychoanalysis, for example, were applied to the image as with a lens to reveal the countless possible conditions behind it which led to its creation or formulation (Belting 1987, p. 28). Such an approach can be best illustrated with a quotation by John Tagg from one of the most significant anthologies of the 1980s on photographic practice.

The transparency of the photograph is its most powerful rhetorical device. But this rhetoric also has a history, and we must distance ourselves from it, question the naturalness of portraiture and probe the obviousness of each image. As we begin this, they must appear strange, often incompatible one with another. Comfortable notions of the history of photography and sentimentalities about the Family of Man must be left behind (Tagg 1988, p. 35).

In retrospect, the probing of obviousness did not often result in a making strange and a search for critical texts from the 1980s and 1990s that take a single “obvious” image as their locus of analysis will show how rarely writers stray from the familiar art image. It seems that the pattern of writing within the field of visual studies that emerged over that time favoured theoretical arguments held together by constellations of examples as opposed to close-reading of single images. Where concentrated attention was paid to particular images they were often paintings or photographs from the established canon.

Interestingly, in critical feminist writing of the 1980s and 1990s, this latter trend is only most obvious in the strand that comes from within the discipline of art history by key figures such as Carol Duncan, Lisa Tickner and Griselda Pollock. Feminists in the 1970s, notably Lucy Lippard and Judy Chicago, had developed the twofold strategy of dismantling the assumptions on which the canon was built while at the same time expounding alternative exemplars, her own work in the case of Chicago, and Laura Mulvey’s focus on cinema in that decade had expanded the field of feminist analysis into popular culture. Even so, the dominant critical strand of feminism that emerged in the 1980s, exemplified in the work and writing of Mary Kelly, might be characterized as anti-image. The cross-disciplinary scope of feminist theory and its integration with the more generalized field of critical theory tended to elide high-art images in favour of a socio-cultural analysis of popular art and entertainment. The writing of the most important of the French feminist theorists

translated into English in the 1980s, particularly Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray, was grounded in philosophy, psychoanalysis and literature rather than art history. Such theoretical texts generally needed no images or illustrations. Admittedly, only the dedicated art student during the 1980s read Kristeva's *Powers of Horror* (1982) or *Revolution in Poetic Language* (1984) but *The Kristeva Reader* (1986) edited by Toril Moi was on every art theory reading list as it was for many other disciplines well into the 1990s. Nevertheless, during the 1980s, feminist art historians continued the direct attack on canonical works, constantly demonstrating that a feminist critical analysis was more devastatingly immediate in its impact on the status quo if it was applied to Gauguin's *Nevermore* (Solomon-Godeau 1989), for example, rather than to an automotive poster. This might explain to some degree the persistence of canonical works, such as Manet's *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, forming the basis for critical pictorial analysis (e.g. Collins 1996). However, it does not explain the almost total lack of monographic studies of images outside of historical or contemporary art during this and the following decade. John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* from the 1970s established a particular pattern of critique with direct attack on paintings from the canon and images from popular culture presented in generalized rather than individuated form.

## **The 1990s**

Although Mitchell has presented his *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* 1994 as a sequel to *Iconography* from the previous decade it is a very different book. Pictures were shifted to centre stage as indeed they had been in popular culture and all aspects of contemporary experience. Mitchell identified this "pictorial turn" and the need to come to terms with it across a range of images (Mitchell 1994, pp. 11–34). He was not alone in triggering or identifying this new paradigm shift from the linguistic metaphor of "reading texts" to the pictorial models of spectatorship and visuality but this work by Mitchell "contributed powerfully to this trend" and an acceptance that the image was demanding its own unique mode of analysis (Jay 1996, p. 3). It should be acknowledged that an inescapable influence on this movement in academe towards an interest in the visual during the 1990s was the impact of the "ecology of

images” from the first Gulf War, better remembered as the first television war (Bryson et. al. 1994, p. 325).

In *Picture Theory*, Mitchell identified the image-picture distinction as an important issue in understanding the pictorial turn since the picture or material image such as a painting or photograph seems to operate in a different way to the image represented in that painting or photograph and can be evoked in memory or with a single word. The material or iconic image would be something Mitchell would more fully explore in the next decade. His identification of “metapictures,” that is a particular class of pictures that reflect on the nature of pictures, was a more secure classification. For example *Las Meninas* and the *Arcadian Shepherds* conform precisely to Mitchell’s definition of metapictures in that they each function as a “foundational metaphor or analogy for an entire discourse” (p. 19), in this case the representational system that required the canvas to simultaneously act as window to open space and a reflecting surface of the depicted scene.

To accommodate the interdisciplinary nature of the emerging field of visual studies the published texts during this decade often focused on “seeing,” “looking” or “vision” as a unifying theme. Teresa Brennan and Martin Jay’s *Vision in Context* is a good example but the James Elkins’ *The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing* (1996) is surely the text of the decade in crossing disciplinary boundaries, not to mention academic and popular divisions, to foreground picture theory and become a minor best seller in the process. However with a selection of images that did not avoid the most abject examples, written in a colloquial style (for example: “Still, there is something creepy about the idea of objects staring back,” p. 73) and without direct citations to sources (further reading for each chapter was placed at the back) the text was never going to become a fixture on reading lists in any university discipline. The later publication by Elkins titled *How to Use Your Eyes* (2000) was an odd compendium of unrelated images and objects informed by text that drew from many sources. It was impossible to know what audience the book was aimed at although it was clearly not an academic readership, as can be demonstrated by comparison with a text on “looking” that was published soon after as a visual or cultural studies text. This was Marita Sturken and Lisa Cartwright’s *Practices of Looking* from 2001. In fact this latter book is but one of many pedagogical texts specifically aimed at the burgeoning development of

studies in visual culture or visual studies in the Anglo-American academy. Margaret Dikovitskaya has comprehensively surveyed those texts and although there is no point repeating the process here, a number of observations can be made in relation to Mitchell's work since he is one of the seventeen theorists, including Martin Jay, Michael Ann Holly and Janet Wolf who were interviewed by Dikovitskaya for her survey. Reading Mitchell's interview is interesting as he seems to resist having his work subsumed into "visual studies" and he notes that visual culture studies are analogous to linguistics in that art plays the same role in the former as literature does in the latter when in fact visual imaging and picturing in no way operate in the same structured symbolic way as language. (Dikovitskaya 2006, pp. 55, 56 and 239) When Mitchell describes the content of a visual studies course he developed at the University of Chicago in 1995 it seems evident that his focus is on the techniques of "looking" at and "appreciation" of pictures rather than on the analysis of social contexts, ideological formations or representational practices. In contrast, Dikovitskaya makes her position very clear. "I argue that if we accept Mitchell's thesis that visual studies was born to the marriage of art history (a discipline organized around a theoretical object) and cultural studies (an academic movement echoing social movements), we should also recognize that it is the 'cultural turn' that made visual studies possible in the first place" (p. 47). On these grounds, Dikovitskaya rejects Mitchell's "pictorial turn" in favour of Martin Jay's "visual turn" as the best terminology to describe the dramatic emergence of vision and visibility as key issues in the humanities and social sciences in the 1990s (Martin Jay introduced the "visual turn" in his 2002 essay in the first issue of the *Journal of Visual Culture*). Mitchell seems to be seeking a theoretical formation that would put the image or picture at the centre of the discourse on the visual while Dikovitskaya was drawn to formations that revealed the processes of exchange between objects and audiences, with no particular status given to the art image. As she put it: "The scholarship that rejects the primacy of art in relation to other discursive practices and yet focuses on the sensuous and semiotic peculiarity of the visual can no longer be called art history – it deserves the name of visual studies" (p. 49).

## 2000–2009

Regardless of how creepy it seemed to acknowledge the disturbingly seditious power of images this is exactly the path that Mitchell took in his 2005 publication *What Do Pictures Want?* Inspired by a review of his 1994 text, the title had been first used in his contribution to *October* magazine in 1996. However, *What Do Pictures Want?* was truly a sequel to his *Picture Theory*, where Mitchell in identifying the “pictorial turn” had attempted to diagnose the widely accepted notion that visual images had replaced words as the dominant mode of expression. In particular, in *Picture Theory*, Mitchell questioned the possibility of any singular disciplinary approach to formulating ideas about “images replacing words” in this pictorial (“iconic” or “visual”) turn. As noted above in the summary of his response to Dikovitskaya, Mitchell remained skeptical of any theoretical approach that negated the centrality of the visual image and in retrospect he was able to see that *Picture Theory* in attempting to open a new initiative called visual culture – “the study of human visual experience and expression” – was also closely linked to the older enterprise of iconology that he had eschewed in his 1984 *Iconology*. Acknowledging a debt to the major studies by the art historians David Freedberg and Hans Belting, in *What do Pictures Want?* Mitchell began with the premise that the double consciousness of belief and disavowal or mix of magical and skeptical attitudes, in dealing with images in the so called ages of faith, is no different in the modern world. What is not explicitly acknowledged by Mitchell is that in creating this parallel between living organisms or species and pictures to capture the vitalistic status of images, his strategy clearly resonated with the approach of iconologists such as Rudolf Wittkower teaching at the Warburg Institute in London in the 1930s to 1950s where the migration of image species was used as a fundamental explicatory metaphor (*Allegory and the Migration of Symbols*).

Mitchell’s move towards a poetics of living pictures can be framed as an escape from the rhetorical study of discourse analysis, semiotics, hermeneutics or other approaches to images that had hardened into discrete disciplines by 2000 (see Rose 2001 for a comprehensive summary of the visual methodologies operational then as now). During the same period in which Mitchell was writing *What Do Pictures What?* in the US, Jean-Luc Nancy in France was

drawing similar conclusions that the image was “neither world or language” but a “real presence,” not the presence of the real but a sacred intimacy projected as wisdom (Nancy 2005, esp. pp. 9–13) Like Mitchell, Nancy’s “poetic image” does not refer to simply “a decoration provided by a play of analogy, comparison, allegory, metaphor, or symbol” or the “pleasant game of an encoded displacement.” Also in France, Jacques Rancière extended Mitchell’s idea of the metapicture, at least in the field of painting or art images. Rancière defined such an image as the “ostensive image” – that posits its presence as the peculiarity of art but also with the “powers of meaning that alter this presence: the discourses that present and comment on it, the institutions that display it, the forms of knowledge that historicize it” (Rancière 2009, p. 23).

In 2008 Mitchell’s approach to images was literally foregrounded in Elkins’ *Visual Literacy* where Mitchell would summarize or synthesize the results of his work in *Picture Theory* and *What Do Pictures Want?* into four fundamental concepts of image science: the pictorial turn, the image-picture distinction, metapictures and bio-pictures (pp. 14–21).

What is more, by 2008 Mitchell’s treatment of the lives of images was widely enough accepted to have an entire anthology premised on images as “forms of life” (Costello and Willsdon 2008 – The acknowledgement of Mitchell’s influence is specific, p. 17). The “image wars” of post 9/11 and the second Gulf war were the central motivation for this particular collection for it was now obvious that no ostensive image, no poetic image could compete with the naked, abject power of the destruction of the Twin Towers or the images from Abu Ghraib prison. Importantly the subtitle for the anthology *The Life and Death of Images: Ethics and Aesthetics* highlights the most recent and perhaps inevitable trend to a return to aesthetics as the field of enquiry most suited to the task of understanding images.

My strategy to highlight Mitchell’s texts as indicative of a pivotal evolution of the way visual images have been theorized over the past three decades does demonstrate the rise of the visual and the renewed primacy of the picture as a site of serious study. In the 1980s the term “reading pictures” was only a figure of speech to describe the semiotic and hermeneutic approaches of that decade and the idea of actually reading a picture in a determinate way was considered an impossible dream – the path to madness, as Foucault implied. We have come a considerable distance since then. After reading *What*

*Do Pictures Want?* it might even be imagined that the intractable abundance of meaning in any picture could be penetrated by a singular focus on its internal coherence and experiential impact. Nevertheless, the seemingly exponential development of “picture theory” in Mitchell’s model or “visual studies” more generally from 1995 to 2009 does not in any way imply that this process will continue and the “pictorial turn” or “visual turn” will no doubt ultimately be replaced by alternative theoretical paradigms in academe and outside it. The process could well be underway already.

It would be possible to trace an alternative trajectory through the last two or three decades with a singular focus on the status of aesthetics and its evolution from the margins of art or image analysis in the 1970s to its absolute rejection at the height of postmodernism in the 1980s (it is not for nothing that Foster’s seminal anthology of 1983 was titled *The Anti-Aesthetic*) followed by the “relational aesthetics” of Nicolas Bourriaud in the 1990s to more recent claims for “complicity aesthetics” (Drucker). Such a survey would no doubt also reveal that the linguistic turn was not extinguished by the rise of visual studies since, apart from Drucker, very few of the recent key texts could be said to engage directly with the visual image. In fact, if such a survey included the aesthetics of the philosopher Jacques Ranciere the visual primacy of the image would be called into question since Ranciere gives no special status to the material image over other forms including the images constructed in a novel, for example. Looking at recent publications would however demonstrate that at least art historians and aestheticians are beginning to talk to each other, as facilitating such an encounter is the rationale for the Art Seminar Series 2006 volume *Art History Versus Aesthetics* edited by James Elkins.

This brings me to the most recent publication of collected essays on aesthetics edited by Francis Halsall who works in a contemporary art theory department and Julia Jansen and Tony O’Connor, both teaching in philosophy. *Rediscovering Aesthetics* showcases a range of cross-disciplinary voices speaking very much from their disciplinary base in art history and philosophy, with the interesting addition of three art practitioners, Adrian Piper, Carolee Schneemann and Robert Morris, all trained in textually dense theory prior to the pictorial turn in the 1990s. The Morris essay charts a much longer survey than the last three decades as he speculates on the nature of aesthetics and art but he specifically locates himself as part of a



generation trained before the pictorial turn identified by Mitchell. He positions himself with those who could, like Foucault, relentlessly subject the surface of a painting to inch by inch analysis to unpick its multiple differences in the continuous flow of the image. Furthermore in the context of speculating if the innate aesthetic faculty could have shifted with the pictorial turn he asks the question: “Are we freer now that our aesthetic faculty is exercised on the discontinuities of the post-high art general spectacle?” (Morris, in Halsall et al., p. 235). The magical, poetic, living image is not to be found in the view of the contemporary visual world that Morris presents and he sees the reordering of aesthetic response to digital images as “scan reading” with the aesthetic faculty being honed to triage the incoming barrage of images for a rapid response (p. 235).

In an echo of Mitchell’s *Iconology* from over twenty years ago this book has no pictures, just a line drawing and images do not form a particular focus since television programs, images from the Hubble Space Telescope, theoretical writings and painting styles all become equal as forms of evidence for particular arguments. In Claire Bishop’s essay “The Social Turn” in which she surveys socially engaged art beyond the “relational” work discussed by Bourriaud, she calls on Rancière to argue that since the term *aesthetic* “denotes the very linguistic and theoretical domain in which thought about art takes place” it follows that “all claims to be anti-aesthetic or to reject art still function within the aesthetic regime of art” (Bishop in Halsall et al. 2009, p. 249). Even so, Bishop acknowledges the disengagement of much relational art from the aesthetics of the visual image: “Many social projects photograph very badly, and these images convey very little of the contextual information so crucial to understanding the work” (p. 247). All of which raises the possibility that this current reemergence of aesthetics could just as easily mark the end of the pictorial turn as it could suggest the elevation of visual studies or picture theory to another level in university-based education where visual practices or image competence have a foundation in the sensitive science of a new aesthetics or perhaps a Neo-aesthetics.

## REFERENCES

- Belting, Hans (1987), *The End of the History of Art?* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- (1994), *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bourriaud, Nicolas (1998), *Relational Aesthetics*. Dijon: Presses du Réel.
- Brennan, Teresa and Martin Jay (eds.) (1996), *Vision in Context: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Sight*. New York: Routledge.
- Bryson, Norman et al. (eds.) (1994), *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations*. Hanover-London: University Press of New England.
- Collins, Bradford R. (ed.) (1996), *12 Views of Manet's Bar*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Costello, Diarmuid and Dominic Willsdon (eds.) (2008), *The Life and Death of Images: Ethics and Aesthetics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Dikovitskaya, Margaret (2006), *Visual Culture: The Study of the Visual after the Cultural Turn*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Drucker, Johanna (2005), *Sweet Dreams: Contemporary Art and Complicity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Elkins, James (1997), *The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing*. New York: Harcourt Brace.
- (1997a), *Our Beautiful, Dry, and Distant Texts: Art History as Writing*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- (1999a), *Why Are Our Pictures Puzzles? On the Origins of Pictorial Complexity*. New York: Routledge.
- (1999), *The Domain of Images*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- (2000), *How to Use Your Eyes*. New York: Routledge.
- Elkins, James (ed.) (2006), *Art History versus Aesthetics* (Art Seminar Series). New York: Routledge.
- (2008), *Visual Literacy*. New York: Routledge.
- Freedberg, David (1989), *The Power of Images: Studies in the History of Theory of Response*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ginzburg, Carlo (1989), *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Gombrich, Ernst 1960 (5th ed. 1977), *Art and Illusion*. London: Phaidon Press.
- Goodman, Nelson (1976), *Languages of Art*. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Halsall, Francis et al. (eds.) (2009), *Rediscovering Aesthetics: Transdisciplinary Voices from Art History, Philosophy and Art Practice*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Holly, Michael Ann (1984), *Panofsky and the Foundations of Art History*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Honour, Hugh et al. (eds.) (1970), *A Heritage of Images: A Selection of Lectures by Fritz Saxl*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books.

- Houghton, Charlotte (2004), "This Was Tomorrow: Pieter Aertsen's Meat Stall as Contemporary Art," *Art Bulletin* 86(2): 277.
- Jay, Martin (1994), *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-century French Thought*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- (2002), "That Visual Turn: The Advent of Visual Culture," *Journal of Visual Culture* 1(1): 87–92.
- Kelly, Mary (1983), *Post-Partum Document*. London: Routledge.
- Mitchell, W.J.T. (1986), *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- (1995), *Picture Theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- (2005), *What Do Pictures Want?* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Moi, Toril (ed.) (1986), *The Kristeva Reader*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- O'Toole, Michael (1994), *The Language of Displayed Art*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.
- Panofsky, Erwin 1939 (reprint 1972), *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 1955, *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Prosser, Jon (ed.) (1998), *Image-based Research: A Sourcebook for Qualitative Researchers*. London: Falmer Press.
- Preziosi, Donald (ed.) (1998), *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nancy, Jean-Luc (2005), *The Ground of the Image*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Rancière, Jacques (2009), *The Future of the Image*. London: Verso.
- Rose, Gillian (2001), *Visual Methodologies*. London: Sage.
- Solomon-Godeau, Abigail (1989), "Going Native," *Art in America* 77(7): 118–129.
- Sturken, Marita and Lisa Cartwright (2001), *Practices of Looking: An Introduction to Visual Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tagg, John (1988), *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Van Eck, Caroline and Edward Winters (eds.) (2005), *Dealing with the Visual: Art History, Aesthetics and Visual Culture*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Wittkower, Rudolf (1977), *Allegory and the Migration of Symbols*. London: Thames-Hudson.

© Ross Woodrow

## THE VIOLENCE IN LEARNING

**ROBERT SHAW**

robert.shaw@openpolytechnic.ac.nz  
The Open Polytechnic of New Zealand

**ABSTRACT.** This paper argues that learning is inherently violent. It examines the way in which Heidegger uses – and refrains from using – the concept in his account of Dasein. Heidegger explicitly discussed “learning” in 1951 and he used of the word in several contexts. Although he confines his use of “learning” to the ontic side of the ontic-ontological divide, there are aspects of what he says that open the door to an ontological analogue of the ontic learning. In this discussion it emerges that what precludes “learning” behaving as does “willing”, “waiting” and “thanking”, is something that derives from the relatedness of Dasein. The paper finally examines violence within the disclosure of truth. The approach to the investigation is experimental and is to some extent modeled on Heidegger’s own later enquiries.

**Keywords:** violence, learning, thinking, truth, Heidegger, curriculum, school management

### 1. Introduction

Schools use the correspondence theory of truth all the time. Its use is probably the most characteristic feature of Western schools. It defines them. Students and teachers spend their time seeking right answers. Rightness is inherent in the formal and informal curriculum, teaching, classroom and school management, and all issues of student and teacher conduct. The examinations system, student progression, and the students’ subsequent employment, all depend entirely on the correspondence theory of truth.

The correspondence theory of truth dominates school learning. Every student uses the correspondence theory each day as they seek to learn. Student success, both day-by-day and ultimately, entails

correspondence. Students are pushed by the motivation system enacted by their nation and its schools to demonstrate their competence through correspondence. Even such objectives as “creativity” and “religious conviction” render as percentage results or judgements made against criteria.

The broad context of the present paper is an assault on the hegemony of correspondence in schools. The immediate target is the concept of learning, which is at the heart of school practice and the dialog about schools. The thinking recorded here is facilitated primarily by Heidegger. This paper is in three substantive parts. It begins with a discussion of Heidegger’s use of the word “learning” and relates this to his thoughts on teaching. Some analysis of the words he selects to describe learning follows. The second part, which seeks “learning” in formal ontology, examines the way that Heidegger seeks to explicate that which is beyond language and puzzles why the technique is not applied to “learning”. The penultimate section muses about “the violence in learning” in relation to school learning.

## **2. Learning from Teaching Practice**

“Learning” is not one of those words that Heidegger uses intensely. Frequently he lets the word be – meaning, that his customary use of the word is unsurprising to us, he makes no analysis of it, and uses it without any connotations of ontology. He uses the word “learning” as a part of his vocabulary regarding ontic studies. Some examples of his use of the word are:

... for us to learn to conceive ... (Heidegger, 1962, p. 40).

... rhetoric is conceived as the kind of thing we learn in school ...” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 178).

...when we learn not to take problems too lightly ... (Heidegger, 1962, p. 425).

...without any prospect of learning something ... (Heidegger, 1962, p. 229).

Can anything be learned from this about ... (Heidegger, 1966, p. 66).

...if indeed learning is to arise in the course of these lectures ... (Heidegger, 1968, p. 16).

We will choose the most secure way to learn what is said and thought in the words of Parmenides. We will follow the text (Heidegger, 1992, p. 3).

... you will learn to experience... (Heidegger, 1992, p. 4).

...to translate a Greek word we must in the first place learn that foreign tongue (Heidegger, 1992, p. 13).

... attained by someone only through studying and learning... Doctors and the practice of medicine do not grow the way trees do (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 196).

... motorcycle, we would remain standing before it and make a speech about it with the intention of learning in this way how to ride it (Heidegger, 1992, p. 15).

The mathematical as ... the teachable as such, that is what can be learned in a preeminent sense; ... learning (Heidegger, 2010, p. 25).

... with the reception or communication and what is known and cognized as such, truths as such, for precisely that is learning and teaching (Heidegger, 2010, p. 26).

This means learning to grasp that this great inception of our Dasein has been cast out over and past us as what we have to catch up with ... (Heidegger, 2010, p. 71).

That his Dasein (roughly, human being) “learns” is apparently not problematic for Heidegger. As indicated above, he uses the word in a common, conventional way that is a clue to his usage being ontic. It may be seen in these examples that ‘learning’ is associated with change or progression and thus with time: “... in the first place ...”, “... experience ...”, “... in the course of ...”, “... learned from ...”, and “... learn to ...”. In some of the quotations, “learn” could be replaced by “acquire” or “attain” and thus it relates to a specific thing. It is the thing that one might possess or hold, such as a truth or know-how. We might say it is the Heideggerian analogue of acquiring specific knowledge or particular skills. This is supported by his discussion about medical skills and knowledge not being integral to Dasein – as quoted above, the practice of medicine does not grow the way that trees grow.

The “customary usage” described above, is reinforced in one lecture where Heidegger does specifically address the concept of learning. In his winter 1951 account of thinking (the first lectures he is permitted to deliver after the Second World War), as a way into a discussion, Heidegger reflects on the concept of learning specif-

ically: What is learning? Man learns when he disposes everything he does so that it answers to whatever essentials are addressed to him at any given moment. We learn to think by giving our mind to what there is to think about. (Heidegger, 1968, p. 4)

The words at issue are “disposes”, “everything”, “answers”, “essentials”, and “addressed to him”. The second quoted sentence is more specific than the first. It focuses on the mental which is to be interpreted as an example or aspect of “everything”. The whole statement presents two challenges, first, to seek in his statement any possibility of an ontological notion of learning, and second to develop the ontic account of learning which is that account required for a regional ontology. The second challenge is not addressed in the present paper.

As a step towards both the challenges, the word “dispose” needs attention. At issue is, first, what makes “disposing” possible, and second, how this “disposing” is actually deployed by Dasein. This last issue is assumed to embrace the circumstances and “context” of disposing. “Dispose” is a distinctly better word for Heidegger’s notion of learning than “deploy” or “direct ones effort towards”, or “use”. There are connotations in “dispose” that encourage us to towards helpful patterns of thought regarding the being of Dasein. When a human being expires, it disposes of carbon dioxide that has been produced by the Krebs’ cycle in mitochondria. This removal of particular molecules leaves the tissues in a state that allows further biochemical reactions that are necessary to life. Households dispose of their acquired rubbish and if they did not do this their living conditions would deteriorate. It may be seen that in disposal it is that which remains that is of prime importance (ongoing biochemistry, sanitary living). This structure suggests we ask: What remains when we deploy our resources to “answer essentials”? As Heidegger well understood truth remains, and this refers to both correspondence, *adaequatio*, and the truth of disclosure, *alētheia* (Heidegger, 1962, p. 257; Heidegger, 2002, p. 6; Heidegger, 2007, p. 280).

Disposing also involves re-location. Expiration is spectacularly a re-location of a gas. Likewise, rubbish spectacularly accumulates in landfills and away from households. What is the re-location entailed in Heideggerian learning? The answer that rushes forward is “truths”. However, it is not the truths that are sought, but those other truths that hide those that are to appear. Dasein has to relocate truths that cover over the “essentials”. There are several aspects to this:

1. The word “sought” here must be considered delicately. The teacher may seek to have the student possess specific truths in correspondence formulations. From teacher’s point-of-view there is seeking in several senses that might relate to the ontic concepts of pedagogy such as motivation and effort. However, from the students point-of-view regarding the presence of what is learnt – the unitary truths – there is no seeking. They are not actively sought in themselves.
2. Learning is about a progressive clearance of things. Some things require more clearance than others. (Notice that here there is potentially an interpretation of the lit clearing that supplements the horizontal interpretation of Heidegger’s clearing.)
3. The things to be re-located are respectable in themselves, in other words they are truths. They are not to be despised or undervalued by us the ontic interpreters of the situation. Is such undervaluing apparent, for example, when a science teacher does not address a student’s myths and superstitions an appropriate manner? That which is removed holds its own dignity and integrity by virtue as its standing as truth.
4. A Socratic dialog, in that original sense of leading the student to see the contradictions and false trails, might be a sensible way to advance learning. It is the removal of covering truths. Each time something is asked by the teacher the student takes something away from what they held in the foreground. This applies to both truth as correspondence and truth as disclosure, *adaequatio* and *alētheia*.
5. It explicates one aspect of Heidegger’s statement that teaching must allow learning to happen. Teaching is separated from the event of learning.

The re-location aspect of “dispose” is present in “deploy”. When troops deploy they move and occupy a place. This deployment aspect of “dispose” is in an obsolete use of the word (Meaning I.1.d.for “dispose, v.” in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1989). When an army deploys it moves everything. Likewise with the movement of the covering truths, they all must go. In this may be seen Heidegger’s “everything”.

Later in the present paper, Heidegger’s use of the word “logistics” is considered in relation to thinking. This is also a word conditioned for today’s reader by having a common use in the military



and positivist management theory. Again, there is an obsolete use of “dispose” that emphasises the authoritative character of disposing (Meaning I.3. for “dispose, v.” in the *Oxford English Dictionary, 1989*). This becomes relevant in relation to Heidegger’s notion of learning where his notion might be contrasted with that which suggests *inter alia* that the mind is a calculator.

In the already cited work, *What is Called Thinking*, he presents his ideas about teaching and learning. His leading points are conventional ideas today and include for learning:

1. That learning to think should be construed as similar to learning any handcraft.
2. Any attempt to learn begins with an acknowledgement that there is something the learner does not know.
3. Even if we are gifted at thinking we still have to learn it as a skill.
4. Close listening is important. Which means finding in words those meanings and adumbrations that are subtle, forgotten, or hidden. This is of course one of Heidegger’s own consummate skills and disciplines.
5. It is desirable that student avoids “one-track” thinking which is the kind of thinking analogous to being on a railway track and which occurs with the failure of 5 above (Heidegger, 1968, pp. 24–27).

Regarding teaching, he says:

1. Teaching is more difficult than learning.
2. This is because the teacher is less sure of his ground than the student.
3. The teacher must at times motivate the student (by becoming “noisy”).
4. It is also, most importantly, because the teacher’s task is “to let learn” (p. 15).
5. Nobody any longer wants to be a teacher.
6. This is because teaching is “downgraded”, for example through an emphasis on business.
7. Being an esteemed teacher is entirely different from being a famous professor (Heidegger, 1968, pp. 14–15).

These points about student learning and teaching indicate that Heidegger’s working context was similar to that of modern teachers (Some relevant historical material is in Riley, 2009). Had it been

possible to set aside the events of the Second World War, he would have spoken about his work – the students and the institutions – as many teachers speak today (Achour et al., 2008).

Something more (than the points above concerning the nature of truths and their disclosure) needs to be said about the teacher's task being "to let learn". It suggests teachers might do best if they resign forthwith and stay well clear of students. "To let learn" apparently contradicts his statement that teachers must become "noisy" at times. This confusion is about the motivation of students and unpacks if some distinctions are made. The lecturer or classroom teacher is involved in many tasks with the students. There may be the need to maintain order in the classroom, issue books, and set out the prescription, for example. However, when the focus is directly, specifically, and purely on that to be learnt (some would say the "course content", in a sense that embraces both skills and knowledge) then the student is on their own. Harking back to what was said above about the uncovering of truths by the removal of truths – this is something that only the learner as Dasein can achieve. We learn alone. Today the implications of this are relevant in discussions about e-learning pedagogy (for an example in science education, see Shaw, 2004; Shaw, 2005; Shaw, 2007; Shaw and Love, 2007).

To return to the present line of thinking – which is to indicate how his views may relate to the learning of Dasein – it is helpful to focus on the "essentials" to which he refers: "Depending on the kind of essentials, depending on the realm from which they address us, the answer and with it the kind of learning differs. ..." (Heidegger, 1968, p. 14). This solidifies several things that come from his "definition" of learning (cited above, Heidegger, 1968, p. 4) and the critical words it contains:

1. There are alternative "essentials". Although these are not discussed by Heidegger in the passage being considered, his acknowledging of "essentials" harks back to Husserl regarding how different types and sub-types of entities might be secured.
2. The alternative essentials address us from different realms. The present paper does not consider regional ontology, but this is a direct reference to regional ontology.
3. The word "address" could probably be replaced with the word "question". If this is so, it returns us to a substantial body of Heideggerian theory around method in both philosophy and science.

4. The answers in their essentials are determined by the corresponding essentials of the questions. These answers are entailed in the questions asked initially. Accordingly, there may be “kinds of learning”.

5. It is the nature of the objects that determines the kind of learning. These “objects” are variously glossed as “entities”, “existents”, and “truths”. The preferred word in the present paper would be “truths” because this indicates the discreteness and accords with Heidegger’s emphasis later in his work.

Obliquely, Heidegger provides further information on learning. There is apparently a distinction that may serve to dissociate learning and the truths of regional ontology on the one hand and academic learning on the other hand. He writes against “learnedness”. Heidegger wrote to Jaspers upon his appointment in 1928 to Husserl’s chair at the University of Freiburg: “Freiburg for me will once more be a test of whether anything of philosophy is left there or whether it has all turned to learnedness” (Safrański, 1998, p. 189). Learnedness is a potential outcome of learning and relates to both what is learnt and how the learning is held by the learner. It might seem that the distinction between “philosophy” (as a genuine regional ontology) and “learnedness” could be argued back to the “how” of learning. The use of such an argument would be rendered if it was possible to relate it to unitary truths. For example, we might think that there is a truth that is factual, (say) from the ontic realm of science (the Earth will cease to exist in some billion year’s time). If the philosopher and the learned person – both as Dasein – are in some relationship with this unitary truth, is the situation intrinsically different in each case? One of the initial problems with apparently unitary truths is their mysterious lodgement (existence together, entailment of each other) with ostensibly different Dasein. The truths we tend to think of as unitary because of their specificity and “objectivity”, are somehow “repeated” in many Dasein. The challenge is to say how Heidegger’s model of truth can accommodate the independence of truths and their dependence upon Dasein which appear to us as discrete examples of Dasein-ness. This challenge is, of course, an old discussion. In the 1980s, Badiou (2006) produced insights into the unitary character of truths, building directly on the work of Heidegger, in his *Being and Event*. Incidentally, by 1933, when Rector Heidegger “had long since lost touch with reality” he was arguing for truth in the absolute

singular and ultimately for “indoctrination” (Ott, 1993, p. 156 and 225).

### 3. Seeking ‘Learning’ in Relatedness

‘Learning’ is not blatantly apparent in foundational ontology. Accordingly, the questions arise, why not and how does learning narrate to relatedness which is definitive of Dasein? To approach these questions a method used by Heidegger is applied, yet we should not be too optimistic about Heidegger’s methods. As Peters sweeps: “Heidegger’s strategy for getting beyond ‘man’ will not do the trick...” (Peters, 2007, p. 3). Ignoring Peter’s pessimism, this paper here seeks to draw upon one of the techniques that Heidegger uses to explicate one idea (learning) within this mysterious thing – the Being of beings. In doing this, the paper provides yet another interpretation of Heidegger, as opposed to a commentary.

Even greater than Peter’s pessimism is Heidegger’s frustration when he is locked into this same enterprise. Many reflective people understand the central problem of ontology as our arriving at an understanding about the foundational nature and origin of human beings. Many realise that science cannot deliver all that we apparently require. The frustration Heidegger felt is evident in his persistence. It is of course not desirable to simplify what drove Heidegger. The “dreaming boy” that Jaspers described as the post-war Heidegger, holds some similarities to the “Young Heidegger, who poetized his way though his neurosis” (Kisiel, 2002, p. 182). The present paper inherits these deliberations and seeks to locate a method in them. It asks why that method is not by Heidegger applied to “learning.”

Heidegger states that leaning is a “way” but not a “means” by which unconcealedness happens. The context for this is Lecture II in *What is Called Thinking?* where he uses Hölderlin’s line “Who has most deeply thought, loves what is most alive” (Heidegger, 1968, p. 20) to establish that “inclination reposes in thinking” (pp. 20–21) and to argue that this line tells us we can only fathom when we think. Such thinking – that required – is not the thinking of logic that has largely dominated the Western tradition which culminates (he specifies in “America and elsewhere”) in “logistics” (Heidegger, 1975, pp. 60–61; The same expression “logistics, psychology, and sociology” he uses in reference to the now manifest disintegration of

philosophy at the end of the tradition which is marked by Hegel, see Heidegger, 1998a, p. 323). “Logistics” appears here in the old sense of pertaining to reasoning or calculation. This situation (“fateful submission” he says, p. 22) is derived from “far away” and is still properly approached by considering the Greek distinction between poesy and technology. This situation – precisely the withdrawing of poesy – provides for us genuine food for thought. Although this withdrawing began in the Western intellectual tradition over 2,000 years ago, what is in its being and its grounding Being, is close at hand, and we must learn to hear and intuit what is still there. It is this situation and continued presence that he claims is most thought-provoking for those who practice thinking: Whether, by way of this learning though never by means of it, we shall attain relatedness to what is most thought-provoking, is something altogether out of the hands of those who practice the craft of thinking (Heidegger, 1968, p. 25).

Consequently, learning as it is pursued in schools (in other words, ontic learning, that learning requiring correspondence, *adaequatio*) may be advantageous in the creation of circumstances that facilitate, or hold open, the possibility of, “relatedness”. However, he indicates relatedness in itself can never be directly learnt by learning. Relatedness is not something one can “learn” in Heidegger’s use of that word. This is because the required associations are not to be established by our learning the relationships of correspondence. The “relationships” of relatedness are integral to Dasein and already entailing of the world. Apparently this “world” can appear to us in a manner that leads us to intuit to some aspect of Dasein. For example, this method shows in the consideration Heidegger gives to Hölderlin’s line: “It is the land of your birth, the soil of your homeland, What you seek, it is near, already comes to meet you” (Heidegger, 2000a, p. 27).

There are several associated ideas in Hölderlin that are relevant to the present enquiry and they are considered by Heidegger. In summary, there is a seeking, a searching, that requires a finding. There is also the idea that the looking is in the present but that the answer was present in the past (actually distant past, although you would not know it from the two quotations above). There is, additionally, the notion about method that relates to Hölderlin’s style in poetry (how he says what he says) which is to state in simple words a description of some physical situation that is reasonably comprehensive, and

without being explicitly, directly, or specifically told the reader comes to realise that this is an account of something more profound. This depends on a moment of insight and answers to the name of truth, *alētheia*. For example, a description of a river from its source becomes the history of the people who live in that vicinity. Painters use the same technique, a pair of old work boots speaks to us of working people, honest toil, injustice, death, and social strata. The strength of such a method is that it does bring forward, disclose, things that might not be disclosed in quite the same way (as quite the same thing), whilst the difficulty is that we cannot be certain what anyone takes from the situation. This latter point applies to what is written intending the technique; perhaps particularly (meaning in special regards, or drawing upon special features such as those of language) in examples about his enduring topic, being.

Heidegger is not concerned with any perceived need for communality regarding insight. This is about Dasein, and particularly how Dasein might arrive at an understanding of its ownmost and of its ownmost as being. Facticity is involved comprehensively and this is integral to Dasein and without a necessary recourse to any categories of ontic deliberation.

With “by way of this learning though never by means of it” he opens the door to a consideration of “learning” in formal ontology. The door opens because both “way” and “unconcealedness” describe Dasein on both sides of the ontological divide. In other places he also opens this door. For example it is convenient to use “learning” in relation to the possible advance of humankind to a totally new sphere of insight and being, a new generation of Dasein, a generation that can think into things that are at present precluded. Some Kantian philosophy emphasises the limits of human reason, and Heidegger asks if those limits cannot be altered. This alteration is not to be thought as an extension, but rather as a radical new beginning: “... For the learning of his [humankind’s] own poetic vocation is something which is coming, which also allows the homelike to be something which is coming” (Heidegger, 2000a, p. 123).

As Heidegger says, building on and quoting Hölderlin, the what-has-been comes back to the one who thinks it from the opposite direction. In nature, in the paddock, the wind “goes” (his quotation marks) away from the poet, but “re-thinking-of (*An-denken*)” does not admit objects or directions in the manner of the wind. This analogy may be applied to, and extended within, the pre-cognitive

realms of understanding. In other words, it may be thought without any form of subject-object categorising. It is apparent that the strategy Heidegger uses to explain this situation is to begin with an expression we will naturally interpret ontically and with a fullness of associations and with a context, and then to remove from that understanding certain, selected critical elements. The last move he makes is to ask us to now think what is left behind.

There are several places where Heidegger adopts this distinctive strategy in his determined efforts to explain to us aspects of the foundation of Being. After considering the strategy he uses in some examples, the question is posed: can it be applied to “learning”? More specifically, the strategy often draws attention to a transitive verb that applies in an ontic deliberation and then removes from that verb its object. The question Heidegger poses is: what are we left with? Whatever it is, we are allegedly taken closer to an apprehension of Being. The strategy certainly problematises the words that he renders to this treatment, whether it reveals anything about Being is another matter. Perhaps the most immediate question we have is why he selects some words for this treatment, and not others. Be that as it may, there is something humanly appealing in his examples – it is possible to discern that there is a waiting that is not a waiting for something, and to wonder about such waiting. That said, such thought requires a particular frame of mind, a kind of openness, towards the gaining of insight from poetry and the use of words in a manner that does not proceed from definition-to-definition (meaning, by correspondence). This is, in Heidegger’s account of Dasein, in each example related to both the horizons involved and mood.

There are two points to make about his strategy in general. Firstly, it would be a mistake to think that the moves he makes are to be assessed with regard to the correct management of transitive verbs, sentences, or concepts. In this work, Heidegger does not proceed from sentence-to-sentence or even from concept-to-concept. Instead, he paints in words a potential picture, and allows space for something akin to a Gestalt moment. The horizon within which all these “deliberations” reside is that of thinking within formal ontology and the use of transitive verbs as displayed in rules of correspondence is distinctly ontic.

Secondly, induction is also implicated in such deliberations. It is important to be circumspect about a term like “induction” because “induction” itself derives from a particular ontic science, specifically

and foundationally the science of logic. Heidegger came to these deliberations via an extensive examination of Brentano and Lotze and their insights into the difficulties of the discipline of logic. In 1925, Heidegger wrote “Logic is the only science that, strictly speaking treats of truth” and Dahlstrom begins his book on Heidegger’s notion of truth at this apt starting place (Dahlstrom, 2001, p. 1). The thinking that has just been sketched, with Hölderlin as the example, is at first acquaintance “inductive”. And, the approach being taken in the present investigation is also inductive. A general proposition is sought for Heidegger’s use of specific words, and then that proposition is to be applied to “learning”. This approach derives from the context in which any author (as Dasein) must work. Yet, with Heidegger, we must not in an ontological enquiry admit any such thing as a general proposition (law). Instead, we have a pattern. In the deliberations here, we do no more than notice the pattern and should refrain from attaching to it a label derived from ontic enquiry.

Before considering the strategy in relation to learning (which Heidegger apparently does not do), the strategy is considered with the some Heideggerian examples. The examples are all associated with his analysis of the ontological, of the things that are equi-primordial and entailed in the ontological essence of Dasein. Here it is the strategy that is inherent in the manipulation of words that is at issue, and why that strategy seems oddly inappropriate when applied to “learning”. Some positive examples include: waiting (without waiting for anything), thanking (that does not have to thank for something), willing, releasing (releasement), apprehending, having (as derived from Husserl’s notion of intentionality), and sheltering.

The example of Heidegger’s use of “having” has as specific origin. According to Kisiel it appeared first in his Marburg winter semester lectures in 1925–26 (published as *Logik: Die frage nach der Wahrheit, Logic: the Question of Truth*) and built upon Husserl’s “principle of all principles” (Dahlstrom, 2001, p. 9; Kisiel, 2002, p. 182). Husserl’s principle, intentionality, is that our mental awareness is always directed at, or carries with it, an object. With Heidegger, the relationship between the intuition and the object of the intuition is described with the words “having” or “apprehending” (Kisiel, 2002, p. 182).

In *Logic: the Question of Truth*, Heidegger challenges the notion of truth when it is entailed in the logical prejudice and comes to blame Lotze for:



more than anyone else ... cementing the logical prejudice in the minds of a generation, at the outset of the twentieth century (Dahlstrom, 2001, pp. 9–10).

... intentionality designates a relation or, more precisely, a way of relating or behaving (*Verhalten*) in which what is intended and the way it is intended are necessarily and originally united. In Heidegger's further elaboration of this phenomenon as a 'relating that means something' (*bedeutendes Verhalten*) or 'being-in-the-world,' it becomes a 'primary' understanding in the sense of 'simply having something' (*schlichtes Haben von etwas*) (Dahlstrom, 2001, p. 101).

Dahlstrom uses the words "further elaboration" to describe Heidegger's step ahead. However, it is a large step – more than an "elaboration" of Husserl, because it entails two new ideas and the rejection of the leading idea in Husserl's intentionality. The new ideas are:

1. The removal of intuition and object and their replacement with one "necessarily and originally united" entity which Heidegger comes to call truth or more atomically "truths", and which in *Being and Time* are integrally Dasein.
2. The widening of the grounding of the world (both in itself and in its examples that are unitary truths) that is primordially distinctly holistic, but which subsequently articulates (becomes broken into categories, better termed horizontal structures, and also broken into released truths within those horizons).

This situation produces comportment. Being-in-the-world is not sitting in the world as a stone sits in the world, but it entails going about one's business as Dasein comports. Importantly, it is non-thematic, and does not of itself necessarily entail anything mental. Husserl's intentionality is atomic, mental, and discussed in examples drawn from the realms of science. Heidegger's equivalent of intentionality is prior to Husserl's, undifferentiated, not mental (non-thematic), and described in examples (comportments) that are universal to Dasein and necessary before Husserl's forms of truth can comport.

In *Being and Time* (1962, pp. 259–262) Heidegger shows that the derivation of truth in the sense of "*adaequatio*" is derived from the

primordial sense of truth as disclosedness-discoveredness. He deplores the way in which the derivative *adaequatio* was taken as the primordial. This, he says, has been the attitude of the scientists, where the abstract, decontextualized world of the structures generated through the derivative representational devices of language and mathematical equations were taken as the source of the underlying, equipmental, lived world (for example of tables, chairs, and buildings). Succinctly: “The *Being-true (truth)* of the assertion must be understood as *Being-uncovering*” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 261). This account of truth is then related to intentionality, in the words of Dahlstrom:

Intentionality [as understood by Heidegger] is to be investigated precisely with respect to what is thereby a priori in the original sense, namely, its manner of being or, more precisely, the sense of the manner of being. Just as the truth is originally experienced but not grasped in a categorical intuition, so the sense of being discloses itself unthematically in the intentionality of being-in-the-world. ‘With this discovery of intentionality, the way for a radical, ontological research is given for the first time in the entire history of philosophy’. (Dahlstrom, 2001, p. 102, who translates Heidegger GA 17, p. 260)

This account of an insight by Heidegger is necessary to support a simple observation: The having of truth follows from the holding open. The truth is originally experienced but not grasped (to use Dahlstrom’s words). All of this occurs without any Dasein having to work or force the situation. It is Dasein’s way of being. In a word, it is a “passive” process or situation.

Heidegger also uses the notion of “willing” in a way similar to that displayed for “having”. In the *Conversation*, it is the Scientist who summarises:

Am I right if I state the relation of the one sense of non-willing to the other as follows? You want a non-willing in the sense of a renouncing of willing, so that through this we may release, or at least prepare to release, ourselves to the sought-for essence of a thinking that is not a willing (“Conversation on a Country Path,” in Heidegger, 1966, pp. 59–60).

Re-leasement does not belong to the domain of the will. It lies beyond the distinction between activity and passivity and is hidden (p. 61). With this Heidegger separates the domain of the object from the notion of the re-leasement, and leaves us in that domain that is ahead of any particular re-leasement. What is the nature of this “re-leasement”? It is to be seen when traced etymologically to the word “lax”. The word “release has a Latin source as “relax” which in turn can suggest to us “lax” (Entries for “release” and “relax” in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1989). The notion that is essential within this releasement is “passivity”. This is a releasement that accords with opportunity and circumstance. It is the opposite of “forced”, “violent” or even “managed” releasement.

Incidentally, the use of “domain” for the first time on page 61 in the *Conversation* associates his discussion of releasement with regional ontology and ontic enquiries. On page 64 and 65 this is developed to entail an horizon, and the notion of sheltering and securing what presents to, or within, an openness. Problematised in very few words are the issues that Husserl dwelt upon in relation to objects within horizons.

There is the example of “waiting”. When one waits, one waits for something or someone. Can Dasein just wait, without the presence of a waited for something or someone? Heidegger calls such waiting “releasement towards things” and there is the notion that thinking is waiting:

Waiting, all right; but never awaiting, for awaiting already links itself with re-presenting and what is re-presented. Waiting, however, lets go of that; or rather I should say that waiting lets re-presenting entirely alone. It really has no object.... In waiting we leave open what we are waiting for. ... A word does not and never can re-present anything; but signifies something.

Further, there is the example of thanking in relation to fundamental ontology. Again, this is related to thinking as thanking: “... that thanking which does not have to thank for something, but only thanks for being allowed to thank” [“Conversation on a Country Path about Thinking,” *Discourse on Thinking*, 59, 67, 68–69, 85 (1945)]

This same line of argument appears elsewhere in his works. For example in this quotation, the foundational form or kind of thinking is brought forward and contrasted with ontic deliberation in the most

broad way using the expression “realm of language”. The use of the word “realm” has the effect of reminding us that the model is spatial, geographic:

Thinking is poetizing, and indeed more than one kind of poetizing, more than poetry and song. ... Thinking is primordial poetry, prior to all poesy, but also prior to the poetics of art, since art shapes its work within the realm of language. All poetizing, in this broader sense, and also in the narrower sense of the poetic, is in its ground a thinking (“The Anaximander Fragment”, written in 1946, in Heidegger, 1975, p. 19).

To advance the discussion, the question may be posed: why not “learning”? One possible answer is about the seen by contrasting learning with those words he does use with their objects removed – having, waiting, and thanking. As mentioned, it is possible to imagine waiting, without waiting for any event or object. Having existence is a form of having and there is a debate out the extent to which existence is a substance or a property, and accordingly there is the possibility to what “is” that is not substance or property.

However, one apparently consistent and immediate characteristic of the group is that they do not require a mental aspect. The exception possibly is the notion of “thanking”. Creatures that are not Dasein, have and wait. This may be seen in an earthworm. In the case of Dasein, this being with objects, and then, potentially, applying Heidegger’s strategy, being without objects. “Thanking” is closer to an activity of mind than the others, but even “thanking” may be construed in a manner that is free from a cognitive component. It may be seen in the comportment of animals that cling to life. It may be possible to construe the instinct to remain alive and to preserve the self into a form of “thanking”.

“Learning”, in contradistinction, stands without the same form of possibility. It cannot be associated with Dasein, or indeed with animals that are not Dasein, without some object. There is no “learning to be”. There is just being. Skills may be acquired, learnt, without mental involvement in Descartes’s sense of mind-body. However, the skill always has a reference that is an object. You cannot have a totally abstract, non-referred skill. Every skill must have an effect that is palpable and recognisable. In short, it must relate to something that we might say is real.

#### 4. The Violence in Learning

Our focus must now become *alētheia*, or truth as disclosure; however *alētheia* is here approached in an unusual way. The present paper to this point has largely attended to that which is revealed – construed as the unitary truths which include (roughly speaking) those that teachers seek to have their students learn. These truths are those rendered by correspondence in the tedious, pervasive underside of school learning. These truths, like all Heideggerian truths, are neither desirable nor un-desirable in themselves. They are constitutional of Dasein. Now the paper must attend to that which is removed and the procedure of “uncovering”. These things removed are also truths, but they apparently acquire a “pejorative” status in that they are not-present. There is a residual sense in which it may be said they are undesirable, an adumbrated pejorative sense. They are to be re-moved, re-located, and perhaps for a period, discarded.

For all that, those relocated are truths with the status that the being of truths entails. To recall the earlier analogy, neither carbon dioxide nor rubbish is false because it is unwanted and discarded. Recall that for Heidegger the truths in this discussion are neither true nor false, except in one particular sense of having truth or falsity as a “property”. Of course “property” is the wrong word because it is magnificently the word of an ontic science. Truth and falsity have an association with the truth only when truth is within a particular theoretical frame. Truth and falsity always serve to maintain belongingness so far as Dasein’s ownmost is concerned.

It is not correct to say that the truths proceed into oblivion or nothingness, even though there is no law of conservation of matter in ontology. Nor is there a law of contradiction in ontology as there is in logic. “Re-location” is a helpful word for it fits well with Heidegger’s “uncovering” and with the phenomena we seek to explicate. It works well with the analogy seen in forgetting and remembering. Forgetting may lead to remembering. When Dasein forgets, the forgotten object remains with Dasein but not within foremost consciousness. When Dasein remembers, Dasein relocates the object and identifies it as that sought which is a constitution of itself in a complex that involves truth. Schooling provides many examples. For example, whilst the Pacific Island student learns the mantra of science and says the living world is composed of plants and animals, the classification of their culture (plant, animals, insects, and man)

will continue to exist as an equally convincing configuration of truths and can emerge under stressful conditions such as examinations.

Dasein does not destroy those truths that re-locate to allow others to shine. All truths hold their presence integral to Dasein. For that reason, they are available to be re-located a second, and a third, and subsequent times. Each Dasein is re-ordering, re-configuring, its ownmost landscape of truths all the time. In this model, the ontological equivalent of one “property” is important to each and every truth. Namely, they are always “known” in categories. These categories themselves are something that Dasein “establishes” and “dis-establishes”. This discussion here uses the ontic equivalent words of the ontological framework being described. These truths are not “known” mentally. Nor are the categories like those that Aristotle and others developed into the school subjects that we have today. Ontological “categories” are further considered below.

The account of truths – now with its focus on those particularly “desired” for students by teachers – is a model of the human way of being. It is from within this model that the notion of violence appears. As developed here, following Heidegger, integrally there is truth and Dasein. However, over two centuries ago, and without the specific references to truth, one academic wrote about the structural situation being described and used the word “violence” in a manner that is effectively modelled with the notion of unitary truths. Around 1715, the Scots mathematician Gregory had an insight into Dasein. He had in his first book on astronomy set out the views of astronomers on “the realm of Phenomena” (Book I of Gregory, 1726). With this he sought to explain solar dynamics and particularly diurnal motion. Then he continued “but Methods must be explained”, and this was the task of his second book.

There are some who may interpret his second book as a plea for empiricism and model building in science. Indeed, he does say that to explain the words of astronomers he must describe the use of “Spheres, Globes, and other Instruments” (p. 200) and accordingly there is indeed an aspect of this in what he wrote. Others may see a concern for the common people and the need to relate science to them. Indeed, Proposition I of Section I is a detailed account of how space looks to the everyday, ordinary observer on Earth (Book II of Gregory, 1726, p. 201). Others still may see a concern for science itself and its need for popular appeal. Regardless of Gregory’s pur-

pose, attention is drawn to his account of how the mind functions. Although apparently he does not refer to unitary truths, his account is consistent with the ideas about them. His statement below refers to “our” reason and “our” senses, thus it holds science integrally as thine ownmost. The statement comes about by his consideration of two groups with what we might say are different mind-sets: “the common People” and “Astronomers”. However, the two groups are forgotten when the one individual person or single group appears as “our” and the tussle is about something more profound because it is more foundational: “We must ... not make our Reason and Philosophy perpetually offer violence to our Sight and other Senses” (Book II of Gregory, 1726, p. 200).

“Violence” here is pejorative and entails an unwanted intensity. It rightly conjures images of conflict with alternatives. In such a tussle there is an object tussled over. There is the pulling of the one to be an object of “Reason and Philosophy” or the other way to be an object of “Sight and other Senses”. “Violence” is the appropriate word even today for the concept that Gregory seeks within a model that entails unitary truths akin to those of Heidegger.

Equally important to the object involved in what is above, is the necessary entailment of two distinct horizons or spheres – that of “Reason and Philosophy” and that of “Sight and other Senses”. Thus, Gregory constitutes a model that is about the functioning of the mind and involves what we naturally see as “categories” but which are better cast as areas or volumes within a model. Probably knowingly, Gregory establishes as issues the nature of boundaries and the nature of truths within boundaries.

The notion of violence within learning was implicit in the deliberations of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century philosopher-scientists. Gregory is an example. He was involved in wide discussions on these topics with the Royal Society and other academics. The notion of violence in learning became more explicit in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Heidegger’s companion volume to *Being and Time*. Precisely, it was the companion volume to the seventh edition (1953) where Heidegger refers his readers to the now published version of his 1935 summer semester lecture course (Translator’s introduction to Heidegger, 2000b, p. vii).

Heidegger’s translators specifically warn of the difficulties around the “ordinary German” word for violence, *Gewalt*. Fried and

Polt specify two separate meanings for the same word in their translation:

1. Violence in the sense of arbitrary and willful (*sic*) force, and
2. Violence as employed by the legitimate force employed by the institutions of the State (Heidegger, 2000b, pp. xii–xiii).

They note that *Gewalt* is related to *Walten* (hold sway) and *das Walten* (the sway) which in turn, via the Greek word *phusis*, relates violence to being itself (Heidegger, 2000b, p. xiii). Ostensibly, the use of the word “sway” is to be interpreted as representing a “powerful upsurge in the presence of beings”, and the reader is urged to pay “special attention” to this (xiii). ... Heidegger seems to want to underline the radically transformative work of *Gewalt-tat* and the *Gewalt-tätiger*” – the act of violence and the doer of violence ...” (Heidegger, 2000b, p. xiii).

The phrase “radical transformative work” echoes Gregory. His Astronomer may view the planet Venus scientifically on Tuesday, but on Wednesday respond to the same object with “twinkle, twinkle, little star”. How does this thunderous phrase – radical transformative work – come to require underling in *Introduction to Metaphysics*? It emerges from a discussion that begins with lines 332 to 375 from Sophocles’ choral ode *Antigone*. The ode itself in these lines is an account of the joys of the eco-friendly lifestyle. It does not obviously refer to violence. Heidegger makes a characteristic move when he asks us to consider what must be presupposed and present before such an ode can exist. He thereby interrogates the ontological foundations for Sophocles’ thought.

According the translators of *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger’s translation from the Greek is unusual (footnotes, pages 156 and 157). One word at issue is “uncanny”. It is in *Antigone*, and, *Antigone* also provides an apt example. This word correlates to what occurs when the poet leaves home and consequently abides with truths that were not present at home: In the happening of uncanniness, beings as a whole open themselves up. This opening up is the happening of unconcealment. This is nothing other than the happening of uncanniness. (Heidegger, 2000b, p. 178)

To this must be applied the standard Heideggerian technique of explaining in the ontic and meaning in the ontological. As he explicitly said earlier “But we do not mean the uncanny in the sense of



an impression made on our emotional states” (Heidegger, 2000b, p. 161).

“Violence” enters this model of Dasein, our way of being, with meaning from both of the Fried and Polt senses. The truths that become constituent of the poet do so without the poet’s action or volition. Dasein does not ask for homesickness, nor can Dasein avoid it. Truths become with us. There is in this the arbitrary and the wilful and there is the legitimate that derives from constitution.

The essential process is the uncovering process. The truths that are present and dominating at home are moved, re-located to reveal other truths that were not “expected”. (“Expected” is too mental.) Ontological uncanniness emerges in the both the movement of the upper layer and the discovery of the lower layer. If learning is about the acquisition of truths then learning entails violence in the sense of involuntary movement and in the sense of uncomfortable outcome.

It is possible to relate this to school learning; that is, to relate it to how Dasein comes to be integrally with particular ontic truths. The line of thought above, which starts with Gregory, launches a discussion of regional ontology. However, we may also look in the other direction, in the direction of the singular Dasein and the notion of truth therein. Heidegger tackles this directly when he says he will show three things:

1. Apprehension is not a mere process, but a de-cision.
2. Apprehension stands in an inner essential community with logos...
3. Logos grounds the essence of language. As such, logos is a struggle and it is the grounding ground of historical human Dasein... (Heidegger, 2000b, p. 179)

The mainstay of schooling is also language and logos in Aristotle’s sense of argument from reason. To enter the sphere of schooling as language and logos, it is necessary for Dasein to leave the everyday. Entering the realm of language and logos is to leave that which Gregory saw as the way of the ordinary People, to leave the way of the senses. It is to enter a further way of being which we grandly associate with abstract thought. However, thinking and judging are more than that with which we commonly associate them. Logos involves more than “a struggle”: “But such essential deciding, when it is carried out and when it resists the constantly pressing ensnarement in the everyday and the customary, has to use violence” (Heidegger, 2000b, p. 179).

## 5. Final Comment

This paper, though many related discussions, suggests that violence in Heidegger's ontological sense is at the heart of schooling. At issue are two formulations of truth, correspondence (*adaequatio*), and disclosure (*alētheia*). There are several occasions when the strategy of thought has been to pose the questions about the ground or foundation that allows distinctions to be drawn, a formulation of the hermeneutic circle. It is not a claim of the present paper that anything original has been discovered. Instead, aspects of the work of others, particularly Heidegger, but also some translators, have been brought together to contribute to a conclusion.

Something needs to be said about the approach taken to enquiry, the discussions, in the present paper. The form of the recorded enquiry holds some similarity to the form of Heidegger's later investigations. It muses on words and circumstances, and then pronounces to test lines of thought and build relationships between ideas. There is a high dependence on analogy and a constant awareness of the need to enquire into the grounding of what is at issue. The result is that the enquiry becomes as series of shorter bursts of iterative activity as opposed to as sustained line of argument. A developed model is to be found in Heidegger's work *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* (Heidegger, 1999).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to thank the members of the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia for discussions on an earlier version of this paper.

## REFERENCES

- Achour, I., Cavelier, P., Tichit, M., Bouchier, C., Lafaye, P., and Rougeon, F. (2008), "Tetrameric and Homodimeric Camelid Iggs Originate from the Same Igh Locus," *Journal of Immunology* 181(3): 2001–2009.
- Badiou, A. (2006), *Being and Event*. O. Feltham (tr.). New York: Continuum.
- Dahlstrom, D. O. (2001), *Heidegger's Concept of Truth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Gregory, D. (1726), *The Elements of Astronomy, Physical and Geometrical*. E. Stone (tr.). London: D. Midwinter.
- Heidegger, M. (1962), *Being and Time*. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (trs.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Heidegger, M. (1966), *Discourse on Thinking: A Translation of Gelasenheit*. J. M. Anderson and E. H. Freund (trs). New York: Harper and Row.
- Heidegger, M. (1968), *What Is Called Thinking?* F. D. Wieck and J. G. Gray (trs). New York: Harper and Row.
- Heidegger, M. (1975), *Early Greek Thinking*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Heidegger, M. (1992), *Parmenides*. A. Schuwer and R. Rojcewicz (trs.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Heidegger, M. (1998a), "Hegel and the Greeks" (1958), R. Metcalf (tr.), in W. McNeill (ed.), *Pathmarks*. Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 323–336
- Heidegger, M. (1998b), "On the Essence and Concept in Aristotle's Physics B, 1" (1939), T. Sheehan (tr.), in W. McNeill (ed.), *Pathmarks*. Cambridge-New York: Cambridge University Press, 183–230.
- Heidegger, M. (1999), *Contributions to Philosophy (from Enowning)*. P. Emad and K. Maly (trs.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Heidegger, M. (2000a), *Elucidations of Hölderlin's Poetry*. K. Hoeller (tr.). Amherst, NY: Humanity Books.
- Heidegger, M. (2000b), *Introduction to Metaphysics*. G. Fried and R. Polt (trs.). New Haven-London: Yale University Press.
- Heidegger, M. (2002), *The Essence of Truth: On Plato's Cave Allegory and Theaetetus*. T. Sadler (trs.). New York: Continuum.
- Heidegger, M. (2007), "On the Essence of Truth" (Pentecost Monday, 1926), T. J. Kisiel (trs.), in T. J. Kisiel and T. Sheehan (eds.), *Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of His Early Occasional Writings, 1910–1927*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 275–288.
- Heidegger, M. (2010), *Being and Truth*. G. Fried and R. Polt (trs.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Kisiel, T. J. (2002), *Heidegger's Way of Thought: Critical and Interpretative Signposts*. A. Denker and M. Heinz (eds.). London: Continuum.
- Ott, H. (1993), *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*. A. Blunden (tr.). London: HarperCollins.
- Oxford English Dictionary* (1989), J. Simpson (ed.). OED Online: Oxford University Press.
- Peters, M. A. (2007), "The Humanities in Deconstruction: Raising the Question of the Post-Colonial University," *Access: Critical Perspectives on Communication, Cultural and Policy Studies* 26(1): 1–11.
- Riley, D. A. C. (2009), "Heidegger Teaching: An Analysis and Interpretation of Pedagogy," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 42(5–6): 1–19.
- Safranski, R. (1998), *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*. E. Osers (tr.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Shaw, R. K. (2004), "Towards a Heideggerian Pedagogy," paper presented at the 33rd Annual Conference of the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia, Melbourne, 26–28 November, 2004.

Shaw, R. K. (2005), "Heidegger's Concept of Truth at Work in Western Schools: Building an Ontological Model of Truth and Describing Truth in the Life of the Student," paper presented at the 34rd Annual Conference of the Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia, Hong Kong, 24–27 November, 2005.

Shaw, R. K. (2007), "Pedagogic Thinking that Grounds E-Learning for Secondary School Science Students in New Zealand," *E-learning* 4(4): 471–481.

Shaw, R. K., and Love, D. (2007), "A Heideggerian Analysis in the Teaching of Science to Maori Students," *He Kupu* 1(3): 31–43.

© Robert Shaw