SILENCE DESCENDS
THE EFFECTS OF RISING AUTHORITARIANISM AND FEAR ON CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

Neutralized by fear, so called first world citizens have failed to react to massive inequalities in the distribution of wealth, or the ongoing reductions in basic freedoms and social justice at home and abroad. The University itself is arguably suffering from this same malaise as powerful interests infiltrate its higher echelons and subvert its public responsibility as "truth tellers and truth seekers." The apparent inactivity and non-responsiveness of citizens and students to injustice can be partially if not wholly attributed to the systemic and ubiquitous use of fear contained within the intensive influence campaigns undertaken by the authoritarian-infused milieu of politics, economics, and religion now dominant in modern societies.

Beginning in the 1950s, research on and application of intense influence tactics began to accelerate. Authoritarianism at both individual and systemic levels in politics, economics and religion, benefited from these advancements in and proliferation of influence techniques. Further, intense influence is easily understood through an examination of common social processes and psychological conditions delivered in specific ways; however, the vast majority of the citizenry remain unaware or unconvinced of the efficacy of these techniques. Subsequently, modern society allowed, even assisted, powerful institutions to successfully subvert public resources for private gain. The ubiquitous use of influence techniques increasingly permeated with attributes of fear not only work to the benefit of those persons and institutions who utilize them for specific purposes, but also, have a cumulative debilitating effect on the citizenry intimidating and eliminating much needed reactions to any and all abuses. Here, I consider the possibility that the aforementioned scenario has nullified long-held assumptions that ever more education, research, information, and knowledge eventually contributes to significant improvements in society. The endless collection and extension of knowledge is probably of little use in a society where generalized fear of imagined repercussions prevents any meaningful transfer of that knowledge into action. I conclude that a critical thinking stance combined with a rapid increase in overall radical (direct) activism is needed to overcome the current malaise—in short, we are in desperate need of heroes.

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DEDICATION

For the rebels and heroes who struggle on, against oppression and authoritarianism in all its manifestations, in a world that urgently needs them but seems agonizingly slow to realize it.

1. INTRODUCTION

> We live in dark times, and the specter of neoliberalism and other modes of
> authoritarianism are gaining ground throughout the globe. We need to rethink the
> meaning of politics, take risks, and exercise the courage necessary to reclaim the
> pedagogical conditions, visions, and economic projects that make the promise of
> a democracy in a different future worth fighting for. (Giroux 2007:180)
>
> Ever since I was a baby, crawling around the TV, I've been lied to. I've been
> propagandized. I've been told all my life that I'll be happy if I buy stuff and
> worship the cool. Now I feel diminished, warped. I'm a pale version of what I
> could have been. I've been mindfucked. And now it's payback time. (Lasn 2008)
>
> The candle flame gutters. It's little pool of light trembles. Darkness gathers. The
> Demons begins to stir. (Sagan 1995:27)

This is an unconventional thesis, written for an unconventional time. It is a time in human
history where the collision point between slowly evolving brains and rapid cultural and
technological change is looming over us all.

Science, the scientific method, research, reason, rationality, debate, art, diversity, resistance,
activism and the university itself have all contributed, with some degree of success over time, to
our struggle to explain the world and make it a more understandable, comfortable and equitable
place in which to reside. However, currently the university and the world at large are being
permeated by the worst of authoritarian economics, politics and religion
(Barber 2007; Bloom 2000a; Chomsky, et al. 1992; Conason 2007; Giroux 2005; Giroux 2007;
Jacoby 2008; Klein 2007; Lifton 1989; Rushkoff 2009; Spong 2005). The university *is* "in
chains" (Giroux 2007:1) and the battle for reality is upon us, once again. Religion, economics
and politics are three distinct and disturbing areas of powerful systemic influence on that reality.
I used to believe that "more is better" and that economists actually knew something about the
economy but I now believe these both to be dangerously false. As James T. Galbraith remarked
recently "It's [the global economic collapse] an enormous blot on the reputation of the
profession. There are thousands of economists. Most of them teach and most of them teach a
theoretical framework that has been shown to be fundamentally useless" (Galbraith 2008).
Simon Johnson, *former* chief economist at the International Monetary Fund, confirms
Galbraith's sentiments, saying "my intuition is that this [economic catastrophe] is going to get a
lot worse. It's going to cost us a lot more money. And we are going down a long, dark, blind

alley" (Johnson 2009). I used to believe in democracy, politics and freedom; however, I have begun to understand that politicians do not work in the best interest of their constituents, freedom is a fabrication, and democracy has been subverted from the beginning (see also Curtis 2008). As for religion, it is abundantly clear that there is no god, just magnificent transcendent mythic stories being distorted, twisted and maimed, then deployed anew as bludgeons for power (Armstrong, 2000; Dawkins, 2006; Krakauer, 2003). Finally, and perhaps most upsetting, I used to believe, or even just hope, that education was the key to a better world, that better research, more study and deeper insights into the sciences and the humanities would result in benefits and gains for societies and cultures around the world[1]—but now, these assumptions may be simply inaccurate, false and misleading.

I do not intend to prove these overly broad statements or pretend to have convinced you of their validity. Rather, I will present a case for how it is likely that we have underestimated the degree to which we have been *Easily Led* (Thomson 1999) to believe anything we are told. It seems that once again, only this time amidst a plethora of advanced knowledge, we have been easily led to believe in our own powerlessness and to act in ways that not only harm others but are destructive to ourselves as well. The mechanism empowering dysfunctional systems creating the chaos and destruction that is human history remains with us in the here-and-now. The mechanism distorting our sense of reality, immobilizing us, manipulating thought, word and deed, twisting existence is as powerful as it is ancient and it has a name—authoritarianism. Authoritarianism is both the subject to be understood and the object that hampers that understanding. Authoritarianism is what desperately needs to be remembered but is easily forgotten. Authoritarianism is a small part of each of us and the whole part of some of us. To acknowledge and respond to authoritarianism in human affairs is sometimes difficult—to ignore it is perilous.

And ignore it we have. Consider economics where ancient impulses driving powerful technologies have completely undone the global financial world amidst our collective memory lapse of the relentless nature of authoritarianism, power, and greed. The powerful heads of the biggest banks in the world gorged themselves on their own bodies, essentially robbing their own institutions until they went bankrupt (Black 2005; Black 2009). The wolves (stock traders) themselves complain of over predation because the sheep (us) have become too docile (Achbar

2003). As academic economists continue *en masse* to ignore the failings of their revered economic models (Cohen 2009), the financial institutions with untold billions of taxpayer dollars in bailout money continue to enrich themselves with an arrogance and hubris that is as astounding as it is enraging (Johnson 2009). Allowing the powerful to manipulate in their own best interest is no longer a viable strategy, even for them.

Again, this is an unconventional thesis for an unconventional time. It is unlike my previous academic work in which I took some liberties primarily with ideas and style, while the writing remained within the realms of the academic and I was duly compensated with high grades. However, this present work *must differ* because it suggests that the promise of education, a promise that leads us to believe that education and knowledge acquisition (research) inevitably leads to improved conditions – although questionable at the best of times – is seriously misleading under the rising[2] authoritarianism that many profess. Further, 'educational pacifism'[3] is not only ineffective in dealing with authoritarianism, it becomes just another tool for manipulation. If I made my arguments here purely academic, passionless, a tour de force of logic, research and fact, irrefutable even, those arguments would not just simply retain a certain meaninglessness in the world but something even worse. In a world where ideology "succeeds in determining the mode of our everyday experience of reality itself" (Zizek 2004:723), contradictory evidence, including research and fact, disputing that ideology can be easily shifted to the point of unabashedly supporting it. So, as I muse upon the inability of education and academia to deal with authoritarianism and its attendant and multifaceted ideological "fantasies" (Zizek 2004:722), I cannot use the same academic approach that I argue is ineffective. I am thus compelled to attempt the creation of something different. That difference turns out to be a combination of the emotional and autobiographical (lived experience) mixed with the academic conventions of critical thinking, research, and fact. The many unconventionalities of the thesis include my preference to write in the first person, mix the polemic and passionate amidst the academic, attempt an interdisciplinary macro level analysis, and the inclusion of powerful personal narratives. I will defend these choices, but ultimately the paper is structured to allow for high levels of creativity and discovery throughout the writing process unconstrained by convention. A difficult aspect of that discovery process is the consistent worry about how the academy will respond to a thesis perched precariously on the edge of academic foolishness. But

as I consider what I have studied, experienced, what was revealed through interviews, and then turn my gaze outwards to the world, it seems all too clear—we are all on the edge together.

The road ahead may sometimes seem disjointed and I will stumble making any defence difficult and criticism easy and I accept these consequences knowingly. I also understand the strong negative reactions that come forth from considering a worldview where so many in positions of trust and power have been providing distorted information and manipulating you and me, often purposefully, always relentlessly and too often successfully.

Interdisciplinarity

> But even if I am to be found at fault and the accuracy with which I have borrowed or translated from other disciplines, I am unrepentant. I think it is worth the risk if doing so stimulates the imagination and, especially, if it opens new lines of thinking even if these might be better pursued by others more expert than I. (Prout 2005:145)

This is an interdisciplinary thesis that accesses the knowledge of many disciplines including sociology, psychology, neuroscience, health sciences, social work, cultural anthropology, biology, history, and economics. Within the context of this Masters thesis the attempt to link concepts from across a wide breadth of disciplines may often lack the depth of analysis some would prefer. That more traditional depth of analysis is beyond the scope of this work. My purpose, and my preference, is to look through the wider lens of "Omnology"[4] and bring together that which is not so easily connected. Even so, this smorgasbord approach, with its focus on the social sciences, might be attacked as too difficult a task, disorderly, diverse, and even contradictory or inaccurate in its representations[5]. These criticisms may be applicable to some degree, yet this "messiness" is a reflection of the complicated interconnected nature of the world in which we now live. Interdisciplinarity is now a necessity for opening up new ways of thinking and connecting knowledge previously unavailable within the disciplines (Prout 2005). The need to defend interdisciplinary study has come and gone; it is disciplinarity that must now defend itself.

> The idea that will change the game of knowledge is the realization that it is more important to understand events, objects, and processes in their relationship with each other than in their singular structure. (Csikszentmihalyi 2009:np)

Authoritarianism and Influence

Authoritarianism (behavioural) as an individual psychological construct is not without its difficulties and confusions. I will rely on Stenner (2006) who synthesizes and solves many of the arguments and debates regarding the *Authoritarian Personality* as put forth by Adorno (Adorno et al 1950). Authoritarianism (social) by contrast simply refers to a preferred system of control whereby decision-making power within groups or societies is concentrated to one or several 'authoritarian' individuals. Social – political/economic/religious – systems, when authoritarian-based, can be conceptualized as being a manifestation of the characteristics and ideals that are steeped within an authoritarian (psychological) worldview. In any such 'authoritarian' system those in power exert increasing levels of control over citizens and/or members of the group. I tend to use the term 'authoritarianism' in an undifferentiated style, meaning I do not demarcate shifts between *individual* authoritarianism (psychological) and *group/systemic* authoritarianism (social). Authoritarianism can and does impact and infiltrate to varying degrees at various times democracy itself, as well as all the other 'isms' including communism, consumerism, socialism, and capitalism. Authoritarianism exists on a continuum from mild to extreme (totalism) accompanied by increasing levels of influence and control over all aspects of peoples' lives.

Influence and influence "peddlers" are a fact of life. Influence is part of societal interaction and has been integral to our survival in social groups for thousands of years. Indeed it has "evolved" over time into more effective and powerful forms that require increased efforts to resist so as not to be successfully lied to on a continual basis (Cialdini 2004). The distinction between ethical and unethical influence is often a matter of contention further complicated by considerations of who is using it and for what aims—quis judicat? (Taylor 2009). In a 'free and democratic' society the idea of unethical influence clearly exists however misunderstood and often, unconstrained. However, any drift towards increasing authoritarianism causes the line delineating 'ethical' from 'unethical' influence to move. This gradual movement of the 'line', imperceptible to many, represents how increased levels of undue influence become normalized and accepted (Singer and Lalich 1995). Influence also exists on a continuum, from mild influence techniques normally used within society to intense influence (coercion and brainwashing). The mechanisms employed are similar along the continuum but with increasing

complexity and significant increases in intensity. Influence techniques themselves are easily delineated and understood using current knowledge from social, psychological, and neurobiological study. The relationship between authoritarianism and influence techniques and technologies is direct and dynamic.

The Structure

The literature review in Chapter 2 was directed by my efforts to understand why societies continue to abandon and abuse children in so many ways (Leach 1994), why we elect public officials who remove our rights, empower corporations to abuse us, create armies to impoverish others (Barber 2007; Curtis 2002; Klein and Cuaron 2007), and why we revert to religions steeped in ignorance and exclusion (Dawkins 2006; Harris 2004). This initial search led to the study of influence, authoritarianism and their relationship with religion, economics and politics. Chapter 3 utilizes 'modern' (constructivist) grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Clarke, 2005; Corbin & Strauss, 2008) as a research method for its flexibility in text collection and analysis, and its ability to influence social change (Charmaz 2005). The selection of interview participants and many of the texts were determined (theoretical sampling) by the explorations undertaken in chapter 2. Chapter 4 is the synthesis of all that has come before.

Note to the online reader – fourth level headings beginning with *Feel The Real* are active hyperlinks to brief narratives at the back of the document. These hyperlinked headings are meant to be activated as they are encountered. A return link appears at the end of each narrative to bring you back to your original position in the main document. These narratives have a specific purpose and placement and are a significant aspect of the thesis.

Note to the offline (paper copy) reader – The above process can be done manually by turning to **Chapter 5. Feel The Real – Hyperlinked Narratives** and locating the appropriate narrative (they are in order). Then as described above return to the main document at the original position.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW/lived experience

I realized in 1998, after eight years of working with over four thousand two to twelve-year-olds, that powerful new influences were shaping children's worldviews not only within but beyond the family. It became apparent to me that free-market economics (consumerism) was having a detrimental effect on childhood. As a result, I created whomindsthechild.org, a media education organization in 2003. By 2004, the broad scope of the negative effects of consumerism on children was being exposed (Barber 2007; Dittmar 2007; Giroux 2000; Kasser 2007; Kasser and Kanner 2004a; Kramer 2006; Kunkel, et al. 2004; Linn 2004; Schor 2004). The depth and breadth of the resistance to acknowledge or act upon the evidence of harm to children in contrast to the dire warnings of academics and others, was the starting point for this work. Becoming more familiar with the wide reach, across institutions and cultures, and the favourite techniques of the "*relentless beast"* was the outcome.

Part 1. The Relentless Beast: Authoritarianism

> This worldview [authoritarian] induces both personal coercion of and bias against different others (racial and ethnic anode groups, political dissidents, moral deviance), as well as political demands for authoritative constraints on their behaviour. (Stenner 2005:17)

Authoritarianism refers to an individual's predispositional preference for group authority and uniformity, with such predispositions activated to a higher degree by "normative threats" to that sameness (Stenner 2005). An authoritarian worldview[6] is one that sanctifies aggressive coercion of individuals and promotes group prejudice towards difference (Adorno 1950; Stenner 2005). Authoritarianism is on the rise globally; it drives intolerance and generates societies that promote uniformity through group authority using coercive means to reduce diversity of people, beliefs, and behaviour (Adorno, 1950; Bloom, 2000a; Giroux, 2005; Lifton, 1989; Stenner, 2005). In other words "groups under threat constrict" thus eliminating individual freedoms and crushing diversity in favour of conformity (Bloom 2000:194). A review of the literature regarding rising authoritarianism and influence shows the increasing use of advanced influence-techniques driven by technology and a powerful media, utilized by economics, politics and religion throughout the world (Chomsky et al., 1992; Sagan, 1995; Taylor, 2004; Zimbardo, 2007). Bloom (2000:177) argues that the struggle between conformity and diversity in human

cultures[7] is thousands of years old and continues today in an intensely fierce battle. Evidence is also mounting regarding the deleterious effects of rising levels of authoritarianism in capitalist societies, such as shifting definitions and declining levels of critical thinking, reason[8] and evidence-based decision-making. (Adorno, 1950; Giroux, 2007; Harris, 2004; Jacoby, 2008). The advancement and proliferation of coercion techniques, rising authoritarianism, and reductions in critical thinking interact synergistically and doubtless have correlations that allow reinforcement of each other. The interdisciplinary group of academics involved in amassing evidence on rising authoritarianism together create a surprisingly uniform and ultimately disturbing view of our present situation—increasing authoritarianism, the relentless drive for group authority and uniformity through coercion, coupled with associated declines in critical thinking and social justice in democratic societies (Barber, 2007; Bloom, 2000a; Dawkins, 2006; Giroux, 2005; Jacoby, 2008; Juergensmeyer, 2003; Klein, 2007; Taylor, 2004). Finally, academics' recommendations to counteract our susceptibility to influence and authoritarianism generally focus on increases in critical thinking and call for more immediate action from society and academia. This small but surprisingly vociferous interdisciplinary academic call to take action before it is too late became an interesting aspect of the literature review and prompted the selection of research participants and texts analyzed in Chapter 3. Academics seem especially concerned about the growing risk of rising authoritarianism leading to the creation of a society where critical thinking itself is often under attack. Ultimately, "when conformity enforcers [authoritarian] overwhelm diversity generators, all of us are in trouble" (Bloom 2000a:203).

The Anti-Authoritarian

Feel the Real – Public School Blues 1 – pushing the limits

I'd like to think I am a human barometer for authoritarianism. Not only can I sense, smell, and taste it, I have been known to seek it out and fight against it. This tendency has been a gift and a burden. It has caused pain, failure, and sorrow while also leading me towards my most significant insights and accomplishments. The skirmish with authority, narrated above in my first year classroom placement (practicum) while in the York University Faculty of Education, was only the beginning of my difficulties in teaching. In my second year placement, I was threatened by an adjunct professor (public school teacher with a power title) after she tired of our discussions regarding excessive testing in grade two. In a moment of honesty and exasperation she exclaimed: "you give me what I want or you don't get the mark." In this

circumstance, a York University professor came to my aid. It was this same professor who, after a battery of personality tests given in the class, took me aside and told me I had a rare blend of traits for creative teaching and that although education desperately needed people like me, my complete lack of patience with authority and conformity was going to make for a difficult career.

Upon reflection, I now see how my experience in teacher education and the schools can be understood as an example of how systems under threat revert towards authoritarianism making resistance within that system more difficult. In this case just as I began the first of three years in the Faculty of Education, the education system, and more directly, teachers came under a severe and sustained attack by the government of Ontario "boldly" led by then conservative premier Mike Harris (OECTA 1996). As someone who was both participant and observer, it was clear to me that many teachers reacted to this attack as a direct threat to their livelihood and at times, the situation became quite unstable. To make matters worse the education system in which I practiced teaching had just begun a three-year implementation of complicated and time-consuming requirements for assessment in the primary grades[9]. Regardless of whether teachers ignored this fundamental shift in grading practice or were pressured to implement it from above, it was all quite stressful. The Ontario education system prior to this point was imperfect, tended towards the authoritarian, did not serve all students equally well all the time, and had other misgivings. However, the bureaucratic changes imposed contributed nothing to improve the actual imperfections of the system but they did manage to separate teachers from administration, parents from teachers, and to confuse the public. Additionally, and concurrently, increasing diversity of the student body and technical complexity in the way of computers were both well underway. I had clearly entered into an education system and schools under serious stress (threat) with somewhat predictable results if we consider the dynamics of authoritarianism.

The "Authoritarian Dynamic" as proposed by Stenner (2006) demonstrates how persons within groups under real or perceived "conditions of threat" to their "groupiness" move towards the high limit that their authoritarian predispositions allow (Stenner 2005:7). The individual level of one's authoritarian predisposition is chiefly determined during childhood (nature/nurture), is not solely attributable to social learning, *is* cross-cultural, does result in a stable set of responses, and is easily measurable on a scale of child rearing values (Stenner 2005). In times of relative

stability and conformity, the predisposition to authoritarianism can remain fairly unobtrusive and balanced; once activated to its highest level from threat (fear) a concomitant increase in authoritarian behaviours results. Diversity of people, beliefs and behaviours experienced as threat or direct real threat can have extreme consequences depending on the groups' overall level of authoritarian predisposition or the level of power the group leader has. Education, for example, traditionally leans toward conformity and authority as a group and generally operates reasonably well. However, intolerance for ideological (belief) difference should accelerate under any sustained change or threat. When the authoritarian predisposition is abnormally high, meaning unbalanced and heavily weighted towards a preference for conformity and group authority and a rejection of diversity, or is influenced to its highest point through normative threat, it expresses itself in a stable set of authoritarian responses. The school system I was involved in was under multiple threats while undergoing increases in diversity. My resistance, even abhorrence, of testing and streaming in the younger grades and my preference for constructivist, experiential, play based, child-centered environments was not tolerated in an educational system under threat, obsessed with testing and accountability, and under pressure to achieve the impossible task of speeding up development. What I had studied, learned and believed in about best practices for young children, acquired in arguably the best teacher education program available, began to deteriorate just as I arrived in schools. My efforts to investigate and/or employ those practices were understandably met with intolerance and threats.

Feel the Real – Public School Blues 2 – the little boy and the school

I played a significant role in the above scenario. First, I seem to have a comparatively low authoritarian predisposition and/or possibly just a higher tolerance for normative threat and diversity[10]. Another associated factor is our 'set point for freedom,' a baseline which is most likely established around the age of two (Taylor 2004:214). Our freedoms encroached above a certain point sets off an internal alarm, alerting us to search for the problem *and react* to recover our equilibrium (Taylor 2004:214). Sustained or generationally-rising authoritarianism in combination with influence techniques may well lower the set point for freedom among the general population allowing for greater infringements on freedom with less reactance. Finally, depending on childhood circumstances, one can just plain dislike and distrust authority and/or conformity; such as in the caricature of the creative rebel. In a time of societal stability between diversity and conformity, this anti-authoritarian tendency remains less problematic as the

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general level of authoritarianism remains low or inactivated. When someone with an initial distrust for authority, a low set point for freedom and predisposition for authoritarianism finds themselves encased in a group (education for example) that tends toward conformity and authority there is always tension. When that group becomes threatened, thereby ramping up the authoritarian predispositions of many of its members, that tension can become extreme. Those adjunct and seconded professors set off my internal alarm by not only restricting how I would teach or how I was to think about teaching, but by having me disregard what I had already been convinced was exceedingly well-researched, developmentally appropriate practice. My approach to teaching young children was *not radical*, was not subversive, unknown or untested. It did however become *radicalized* in an unforgiving educational environment.

The Beast Is Cruel

Feel the Real – The Devil in the Basement 1 – higher education

The vibrant democracy and diversity of ancient Athens was annihilated by the authoritarian war machine called Sparta where brutality and conformity were nurtured from birth (Bloom 2000b). Europe, the citadel of Western civilization, worked diligently to destroy itself in endless wars over the past 400 years culminating in the mass extermination of large segments of its own population (Adorno, 1950; Niebuhr, 1958). Cruelty on that scale and cruelty in general is only possible through a process of "otherization" whereby the constructed "other" is an alterity, understood to be fundamentally different from us (Sen 2006; Taylor 2009). **Authoritarianism is an "otherization" machine** separating and dividing us into them through the mechanisms of group authority, intolerance and influence. It seems that although many, such as Adorno, Niebuhr, Horkheimer, Deleuze, Lifton and others were well aware of the human tendency towards authoritarianism we tend to easily forget. Adorno in 1950 describes accurately and concisely the American politics of today:

> the goal toward which the pseudo-conservative mentality strives diffusedly and semi-consciously—is to establish a dictatorship of the economically strongest group. This is to be achieved by means of a mass movement, one which promises security and privileges to the so-called "little man" (that is to say, worried members of the middle and lower middle class still clinging to their status and their supposed independence), if they join with the right people at the right time. This wish appears throughout the pseudo-conservative ideology in mirrored reflection. Government by representation is accused of perverting democracy. Roosevelt and the New Deal particularly are said to have usurped power and to have entrenched themselves dictatorially. Thus pseudo-conservatives accuse the

progressives of the very thing which they would like to do, and they utilize their indictment as a pretext for "throwing the rascals out". They call for defense of democracy against the "abuses" and would, through attacking the "abuses," ultimately abolish democracy altogether. (Adorno 1950:685)

Adorno describes the authoritarian mechanisms already visibly at work in 1950 that will soon shape the American industrial-military-political-religious complex culminating in the Bush years. Currently, the fall of the American empire that began circa 1965, with the switch to deficit financing and the authoritarian takeover of the Republican Party is arguably entering its final phase (Bacevich 2008). This "final phase" is also characterized by the economic disintegration of what was, just yesterday, the most powerful economic force in history, now a staggering $53 trillion in debt ($170,000 per citizen), with zombie banks in charge (Black 2005; Black 2009; Wiggin, et al. 2009).

The current economic 'breakdown' and the growing chasm between rich and poor were foretold with some precision by Kenneth Galbraith in *The Affluent Society* (Galbraith 1958). As Galbraith's ideas about income disparity and public/private inequalities were being dismissed and critiqued by so many, including academia (Schor 2007), unfettered free-market infinite growth economics was ramping up at the Chicago School of Economics led by Friedrich von Hayek and Milton Friedman (Klein 2007). As I briefly reviewed the history of the Chicago School of Economics – kick-started by the charismatic Friedman/Hayek duo beginning in the 1950s – the word "cultic" and "guru" as defined by Langone (Langone 1993) and Storr (Storr 1996) became all too applicable to both Friedman/Hayek, and the entire 'free market' movement. Just as all religions may well have started as cults (Stevens and Price 2000), free market ideology seemed to have had similar beginnings and unfortunately, similar results. The CIA, Milton Friedman, and the "Chicago boys" worked together closely in establishing the political (dictatorship), economic ("free-market") and physical (torture) horror with which General Agusto Pinochet brutalized Chile beginning with a Coup d'état in 1973 (Curtis 2002; Klein 2007:82-83). This initial success of "disaster capitalism" in 1970s Chile – rather than being taken as a warning that the Chicago school "free market" ideas were dangerously related to brutality and authoritarianism – was allowed numerous repeat performances right up to and including the recent Iraq war (Klein 2007). The melding of 'free market' economics and more authoritarian-like political parties, albeit briefly discussed, have made a significant contribution

to the rise of authoritarianism in the US and globally over the last 50 years, with great acceleration over the last eight. Alarmingly, this destructive trend tends to be ignored, especially within North American societies (Bacevich 2008; Conason 2007; Giroux 2005; Jacoby 2008; Jarecki 2006; Klein and Cuaron 2007; Zimbardo 2007). Part of the reason authoritarianism is ignored and people like Klein, Adorno, Giroux, Moore, and Chomsky are often vilified and attacked for presenting a more accurate retelling of historical events is made succinct by historian Margaret MacMillan:

> It can be dangerous to question the stories people tell about themselves because so much of our identity is both shaped by and bound up with our past history. That is why dealing with the past, in deciding on which version we want, or on what we want to remember and to forget, can become so politically charged. (MacMillan 2008:53)

People by and large do not want to reflect on their history and see the authoritarian influence or economic brutality that would impinge upon their selective and/or 'collective memory'—our *certainty* regarding our group or our societies past (MacMillan 2008:50)—of who they are.

Authoritarianism has been a part of the human psyche and experience for millennia (Bloom 2000a). Nobel Laureate Eric Kandel, who experienced the Holocaust and is a pre-eminent brain scientist, expresses our tendency in groups thus: "The desire to destroy people outside the group may be an innate response and may thus be capable of being aroused in almost any cohesive group" (Kandel 2006:30). It is disconcerting then to realize that something so relatively obvious as the destructive force of authoritarianism which promotes group authority and "otherization" seemingly escapes our consciousness. Currently, (rising) authoritarianism within late modern pluralistic democracies is being facilitated by both our collective memory lapse regarding recent history, and the significant adoption of intense influence techniques by powerful systemic forces directed towards a citizenry largely unaware of its own susceptibility. Considering authoritarianism is a constant in human affairs, and in human beings, and that history clearly shows authoritarianism creates chaos, violence and inequality on a massive scale, it seems implausible that we continue to ignore it. I can only assume, as others have before me, that authoritarianism itself has some capacity to blur and shape reality.

Skeletons In The Closet – Marx, Gramsci, Engels, Weber, Durkeim, Delueze, Foucault

The shaping of reality, usually instigated for the benefit and control of the ruling class, has a long dialectical history amongst brilliant and prescient writers. It is not my task here to attempt a summary of the contributions that each of the above has made toward differing aspects of societal control. However, by way of acknowledgement, however brief, of both Gramsci and Delueze who are especially salient to my argument, and who both build and extend theories initiated by the others, I attempt to recognize them all.

Marx, Engels, and then Lenin conceptualized 'political hegemony' (seizure of state power) as the primary step in instituting the values of the ruling class and subordinating the masses. Political hegemony is direct domination through institutions such as parliament, courts, military, police and prisons. And then, only secondarily, would cultural control develop. Subsequently, Antonio Gramsci argued that 'Cultural Hegemony' is the primary step towards domination and maintenance of political and economic control of the society.

> A given social class maintains itself in power not by means of monopolization of the means of production, the means of violence or administration but primarily through a more *subtle process of winning the consent* of all other subaltern classes to its ideology… (Salamini 1974:369, emphasis added)

That 'subtle process' that Gramsci refers to is a significant theme throughout this thesis and is generally referred to as 'influence'.

> His [Gramsci's] contention is that the domination of the bourgeois is exercised on a deeper level through a profound unconscious transformation of human consciousness. Bourgeois Weltanschauung diffused, popularized, and finally internalized by the masses becomes "common sense knowledge". Bourgeois domination is essentially an ideological and cultural fact: and this is original indeed in the history of Marxist analysis of capitalist society. (Salamini 1974:370)

Gramsci suggests that domination of the masses is *primarily* achieved and/or maintained through some process of manipulation within the mental environment. That 'unconscious transformation of human consciousness' is what might now be described as ideological resocialization. So, a hundred years after his original analysis, Gramsci's work continues to be utilized by numerous critics and theorists, although in a somewhat different world—a world of globalized electronic media and advanced processes for "winning the consent" of the masses.

More recently, Deleuze (via Foucault) argues that beginning circa 1950 significant structural changes began occurring within society enabling a new, more powerful control system which he describes as 'the society of control'. The 'society of control' is a significant departure from what had come before in terms of how the powerful rule over society. A major aspect of this developing society is an all-powerful economic system (capitalism) that is inherently destructive:

> Corruption thereby gains a new power. Marketing has become the center or the 'soul' of the corporation. We are taught that corporations have a soul, which is the most terrifying news in the world. The operation of markets is now the instrument of social control and forms the impudent breed of our masters. (Deleuze 1992:4)

This statement seems predictive of the *economic Coup d'état* described by congresswomen Marcy Kaptur (Moore 2009a) that occurred in the United States as the wealthy corporate elite aided by a kleptocratic president (Bush) commandeered control of the Senate and successfully stole seven hundred billion dollars from the electorate. Deleuze refers to these institutional types of problems as "the crisis of the institution, which is to say, the progressive and dispersed installation of a new system of domination" (Deleuze 1992:5), which indicates that institutions themselves have become corrupt and complicit in the 'society of control.'

Deleuze illustrates how the prison systems, school systems, hospital systems and the corporate system are 'very small examples' of a more extensive 'crisis of the institution'. I have tended to generalize this 'crisis' out to simply economics, politics and religion. Technology as well plays a significant role in providing the means for the shift to 'societies of control'. There is so much more[11] to both Gramsci and Deleuze that is relevant to the difficulties of the current world that it becomes difficult to understand why their ideas seem so easily forgotten while systems of control continue to increase in power.

Apparently, the only response to these recurring problems of oppression is an increased awareness of authoritarian influence and the use of critical thinking strategies by a greater majority of the citizenry. However, critical thinking itself is a casualty of (rising) authoritarianism and its attendant influence techniques. *My contention is, therefore, that rising authoritarianism is of particular interest because it is both the subject to be understood and the object or mechanism that inhibits understanding.* This difficulty brings up the alarming

possibility that our glacially slow, often violent, but nonetheless forward movement towards a more complex, diverse and overall less violent world (Bloom 2000a; Chomsky 2002) could be stalled or reversed. The experiment in diversity/democracy/research may be coming to a bad end as authoritarian power expressed through economics, politics and religion adapts itself permanently within "democracy" by acquiring and using new technology such as modern media, and increasingly neuroscience-powered influence techniques.

The Teacher

Feel the Real – Public School Blues – there's a gun in her briefcase

Regardless of past difficulties in teaching I still consider myself a teacher and a learner. My tendency over many years has been to learn something new, practice briefly or extensively, and then teach it to others. This applies to numerous subjects and all age groups – two to seventy – in both public and private spheres. I have taught adult computer use, auto mechanics, early childhood education, primary/junior/high school curricula, skiing, windsurfing, kiteboarding, young children to deal with death as a bereavement counsellor, troubled children to cope with life as a youth justice counsellor, many children to play, and parents to beware of consumerism. This teaching and learning has occurred in daycare centers, schools (so many schools), community centers, businesses, on the beach and in the snow. After all of this experience I must conclude that the hardest thing to teach, or sometimes even to talk about, is our susceptibility to influence and the malleability of the mind. The relentless sociopathic-like push of authoritarianism has always made excellent use of influence techniques to increase and solidify power. Authoritarianism in all its forms and applications is not to be trifled with at any time, especially not in our time of easily understood and increasingly powerful influence techniques delivered by a few to the many through extensive media—advances in influence techniques have been a great gift to authoritarianism.

Part 2. Influence

Feel the Real – The Devil in the Basement 2 – primal scream

Authoritarianism, as I understand it and have attempted to explain it, condones and fully utilizes any and all means to induce conformity through group authority. If influence and coercion techniques progress significantly, it stands to reason that those most adept and willing to use

those techniques will benefit most. This is especially true if the majority of citizens remain uninformed, uncaring, or just unaware of how easily manipulated the human mind actually is. Advancing influence techniques are the primary agents of change with regard to authoritarianism. All systems of political and cultural hegemony use existing structures to maintain and expand their power by convincing the population it is in their best interest to act in ways that increase and secure power for the hegemon. If those structures, take media for example, are concentrated in the hands of the powerful few, and influence techniques become more refined, their ability to maintain and expand their own power through the subjugation of the masses becomes expanded. Thus immediate access, expanded reach and advancing influence technique comprises a major difference between the authoritarianism or hegemony of today and authoritarianism in the past.

It becomes clear early on in this discussion of influence that it takes surprisingly little influence to facilitate morally questionable, even cruel, behaviours in human beings. This fact alone must give us pause regarding the effects of more advanced systems of influence. Philip Zimbardo (1971: 2003) and Stanley Milgram (1960; 1965; 1975) clearly illustrated the power of simple influence techniques to deceive individuals and demonstrated how harmful behaviours quickly manifest regardless of age or gender in specific *situational* contexts. The aforementioned concept of "otherization", as a prerequisite for cruelty, is also evident here as any former sense of common 'groupness' is effectively splintered by the situation. Zimbardo separates university students into guards and inmates, where cruelty can more easily manifest between the ingroup and outgroup. Even Milgram's slight separation of participants into 'us' (the teacher assistant) and 'them' (the student) seems to be enough 'othering' for cruelty to flourish.[12]

> Before we begin to deal with specific means for combating mind controlling influences, we must consider another possibility: the old illusion of personal invulnerability. Them? Yes. Me? No!... Know that you do so at the cost of being caught with your defenses down and your tail twisted. (Zimbardo 2007:447)

The actual levels of our individual susceptibility to even simple situational influence from an authority figure is, as Milgram demonstrated, a shock for most people. Milgram's obedience to authority experiments in the early 1960s are noteworthy for the ease with which deception is achieved, control is exerted and compliance attained. The high level of compliance was

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achieved primarily through the use of *authority,* just one of the soon to be discussed "six weapons of influence."

> Stark authority was pitted against the subjects' [participants'] strongest moral imperatives against hurting others, and, with the subjects' [participants'] ears ringing with the screams of the victims, authority won more often than not. The extreme willingness of adults to go to almost any lengths on the command of an authority constitutes the chief finding of the study and the fact most urgently demanding explanation. (Milgram 1974)

The experiment also demonstrated that the pre-experimental prediction group of 'experts' and normal 'folks' alike, including forty psychiatrists, seriously underestimated both the percentages of participants who would shock people and the high levels of shock the majority of people were willing to give (Burger 2009; Milgram 1974). The ensuing and ongoing arguments that 'we' would react differently today were disproved in a recent milder copycat shock experiment. Dr. Burger of Santa Clara University explains

> …that the question about changes over time may represent another example of the fundamental attribution error. That is, rather than acknowledging the power of the situational forces set in motion in Milgram's procedure, those who suggest changes in obedience-proneness over time may be too focused on the individual… my partial replication of Milgram's procedure suggests that average Americans react to this laboratory situation today much the way they did 45 years ago. (Burger 2009)

In Zimbardo's 1971 Stanford prison experiment, it took just a few days for 'normal' undergraduate students to turn into sadistic guards who abused inmates causing them extreme stress and depression.

> Cruelty is not, by and large, the domain of madmen or natural born-evil doers. Rather, much cruel behaviour is rational, that is, it is done for reasons which seem good to the perpetrators at the time, and done by people like you and me. (Taylor 2009)

When Zimbardo returned to his experiment on the sixth day, after a few days of absence, it was spiralling completely out of control. Zimbardo, still clinging to the detached clinical stance required for research, finally acknowledged what was actually happening after an intense and desperate plea by a lone research assistant who had been observing events (Zimbardo 2007:171). It had been convincingly and painfully demonstrated once again that situational variables can and will overpower many individuals' capacity to oppose any requirements, for

that situation, including cruel behaviours (Zimbardo 2007). However, Zimbardo clarifies for us that people and situations exist and are bound by a wider "sphere of influence"—the system.

> The person is an actor on the stage of life whose behavioral freedom is informed by his or her makeup—genetic, biological, physical, and psychological. The situation is the behavioral context that has the power, through its reward and normative functions, to give meaning and identity to the actors roles. The system consists of the agents and agencies whose ideology, values and power create situations and dictate the roles and expectations for approved behaviors of actors within its spheres of influence. (Zimbardo 2007:445-446)

Zimbardo in his continuing study of influence became more convinced of the power of *systemic* influence which he admits was greatly underestimated in the past and is the primary mechanism for "creating evil out of good" (Zimbardo 2007:x). The power of the system (institution if we consider Deleuze) – political, economic, religious or otherwise – that creates the *environment* in which citizens exist is of critical importance when considering authoritarianism. Stenner (2005) hypothesizes that an individual's level of authoritarianism is somewhat dependent on the environment. This means that entire populations under certain environmental circumstances of "normative threat" will have their predisposition for authoritarianism activated to its highest degree enabling further increases in conformity, intolerance, group authority and cruelty.

Realistically, people can be made to believe and do almost anything under certain situations, especially when located within powerful systems (Meerloo 1956; Milgram 1975; Taylor 2004). The mistaken personal belief of invulnerability to influence, regardless of the situation or system, just makes for easier targets for influence agents (Zimbardo 2007:180). For example, almost all of us believe monetarily what we have been told since birth, that "more means happier" and "less means sad" (Van Evra 2009), regardless of the overwhelming evidence that above certain minimums personal happiness does not depend on more stuff or more money (Ben-Shahar 2007; Green 2008; Kahneman, et al. 2006; Layard 2005). This example is what I believe Gramsci was referring to regarding how the aforementioned "unconscious transformation of human consciousness… internalized by the masses becomes 'common sense knowledge'"(Salamini 1974:370). As whole societies internalize the common sense efficacy of classical free-market economics (endlessly more is endlessly better), the top one percent make a killing while the majority are left, unhappily to say the least, to deal with the deteriorating global financial/ecological situations. And even then, democratic societies increasingly vote for heads

of state who blatantly act in the best interest of the wealthy one percent ignoring social justice and the law (Johnson 2009; Moyers and Simon 2009). The environmental conditions necessary for destructive beliefs and behaviours to be established within a population are easily created through known influence techniques in combination with institutional systemic application.

That "Brainwashing" Problem

Feel The Real – they took my mind

> **…** the real process of brainwashing involves only well-understood processes of social influence orchestrated in a particularly intense way. It still is, and should be, frightening in its intensity and capacity for extreme mischief, but if you will there is no excuse for refusing to study something simply because it is frightening. (Zablocki 2001:163)

Brainwashing, also variously referred to as thought control, mind control, behavioural change technology, undue influence, propaganda, indoctrination, and coercion, actually denotes the concept of "a form of influence manifested in a deliberately and systematically applied traumatizing and obedience-producing process of ideological resocialization" (Zablocki 2001:168). Brainwashing has been under study since 1950, when the CIA invented the term in response to Communist brainwashing techniques used on American POWs in the Korean War (Taylor 2004; Winn 1983). The argument regarding whether or not brainwashing actually occurs has now generally devolved into an argument based on semantics (Zablocki 2001). Given less rigid experimental protocols (introduced after the Milgram/Zimbardo experiments) brainwashing would likely have been strengthened as a theory long ago. Regardless, the study of intense influence continued outside the military setting largely by those involved in the study of cults. Stephen Langone (1993), who previously had been studying brainwashing of Korean war POWs at Walter Reed Hospital, developed the 3D Syndrome as an explanatory tool for cultic recruitment techniques and brainwashing[13].

The 3D Syndrome

The 3D Syndrome (Langone 1993:20)—Deception, Dependency and Dread—is a concise and accurate description of unethical influence and coercion techniques originally constructed to explain "ideological resocialization" in the cultic environment. Although I will go into some detail about how the 3D syndrome actually works, I prefer the 3D concept primarily for its quick usability when considering influence: What Deceptions are being used? What is it exactly

I'm to be Dependent upon? What am I supposed to Dread (fear). The 3D Syndrome is adapted from a US military sponsored research paper; *Brainwashing, Conditioning, and DDD (Debility, Dependency, and Dread)* (Farber, et al. 1957). Through the original DDD research, the US Government and Military discovered, adopted, and refined brainwashing techniques that were used in Korea and Communist China on American POWs and Communist Chinese (Farber et al., 1957; Lifton, 1961; Meerloo, 1956). Two of the three researchers who co-wrote the original DDD report for public consumption are particularly noteworthy; one was Harry F. Harlow who subsequently became famous in his work with primates (Harlow and Mears 1979), the other was Louis Jolyon West, M.D, who later, like Langone, became concerned that brainwashing techniques were being successfully applied in western cultic environments.

> People can also be induced to adopt beliefs and behaviours far different from those that were characteristic of them before the stress was applied. Terms like brainwashing, thought reform, coercive persuasion, and mind control have been employed to describe these processes and to account for consequential changes in personality and behavior. In the past such terms, and the processes they defined, referred mainly to techniques for influencing prisoners of war, political detainees, hostages held by terrorists, and the like. Recently, scrutiny has focused on similar methods used by leaders of cults to recruit, retain, and exploit members. Persons who have been exposed to such conditions in cults may suffer considerable harm. (West 1993:1)

The 3D Syndrome improved upon the original DDD by substituting Deception (lies) instead of Debility (physical controls). Deception, powered by the shrewd use of Cialdini's (2004) "six weapons of influence" to be discussed below, turned out to be as powerful and much easier to apply than Debility. Lifton's eight themes of totalism were then applied in whole or in part to intensify the depth of control during Dependency and Dread. The outcome of this brainwashing research activity was the discovery that "the rack was no longer necessary" as a way to achieve compliance and belief change (Meerloo 1956:20). Subsequently, influence techniques infiltrated deeper into the wider North American culture through three established social structural institutions: economics, politics and religion (Barber 2003; Chomsky et al. 1992; Spong 2005). At one end of the spectrum the 3D syndrome is an efficient tool that, when maximized, can be used in the pursuit of power and the move towards absolute authority and totalism (Langone 1993). At the other end, selected aspects of the 3D syndrome can be used as an effective method of influence by any person or group to obtain situational compliance such as in the Milgram and Zimbardo studies. The Milgram/Zimbardo studies also demonstrated that

simple influence alone can cause significant harm. The psychological processes vary only in depth, intensity, length, and completeness—a matter of degree (Langone 1993; Taylor 2004).

1957 DDD Original Research

The original U.S. Army funded research on communist brainwashing found 'Debility' was achieved by controlling the physical environment and applying deprivation techniques. Next, 'Dependency' is fostered by giving intermittent breaks from deprivation and social exclusion under which the prisoners became highly dependent on their captors. Third, 'Dread' as a natural and generalized fear is generated by the situation moment-to-moment, and fear of the future. In the early stages each "D" is delivered independently in the order of Debility, Dependency, Dread. As the brainwashing process continued, the three Ds were integrated and mixed to reinforce each other. As a result of the psyche being hit with this triad, the victim became deceived, dependent and scared, thus vulnerable to their beliefs being easily and successfully manipulated. This process becomes brutally real as demonstrated in the film adaptation of Orwell's *1984* in which Winston Smith experiences the horrors of the "Ministry of Love" (Radford, et al. 2003). Debility turned out be an inefficient and unnecessary influence tactic for initiating belief change. In 'free and democratic' societies, Deception is a more efficient and effective method to achieve compliance, particularly, when enhanced by any or all of the "six weapons of influence" (Cialdini 2004).

Six Weapons of Influence

Social influence techniques have been under study for 50 years (Cialdini 2004). Robert B. Cialdini in particular, has been studying the specific influence techniques that are most useful in acquiring compliance to a (deceptive) request. Cialdini states that that these techniques have undergone a process akin to accelerated natural selection as a result of public relations and advertising professionals refining and developing the six techniques outlined below (2004, p.78). Unlike social conditioning, cultic brainwashing uses unethical persuasion for the specific purposes of control (Langone 1993). Cialdini warns that citizens within democracies need to become more aware of these tactics *for their own protection* because of their prevalent and manipulative use (Cialdini 2004).

 Reciprocation is the natural tendency to respond favourably when something is given. This powerful trait is easily manipulated—for instance by giving something small, and then

making a request for something significantly larger. We strongly favour *consistency* between what we publicly say and what we do, a seemingly innocuous public statement squeezed out of us by someone can have a surprisingly strong effect on our future actions. If we believe many people are engaged in a particular activity, whether or not this belief is real or perceived and the activity is positive or negative, it becomes a *social validation* by encouraging us to do the same. Physical attractiveness, complements, cooperation, similarity, and prior trust, all contribute to *liking*, and the more we can manoeuvre ourselves into a position of being viewed positively by another person, that is, being liked, the easier it is for us to persuade them. Real, perceived or faked, an *authority* figure induces compliance. Finally, just the notion of *scarcity* embedded in any request will yield more compliance, regardless of whether scarcity exists or not. Each of these weapons, whether applied in isolation or in combination, are effective aids to deception and achieving individual or group compliance. Although prevalent in the cultural development of social groups, the present-day enhanced techniques are targeted at specific individuals for specific purposes not necessarily of an ethical nature or for the benefit of the individual. In the cultic setting, a charismatic leader utilizes some or all of these techniques to deceive recruits and mold them into more compliant members so as to be further manipulated for the leader's benefit (Hassan 2000; Singer and Lalich 1995). Once an individual is deemed sufficiently compliant through the use of initial deceptions powered by the weapons of influence, the application of the integrated 3D syndrome is applied. This integrated system uses some or all of another set of powerful psychological tools: Lifton's (1961) eight themes of totalism.

Eight Themes of Totalism

> Totalism, then, is a widespread phenomenon, but it is not the only approach to re-education. We can best use our knowledge of it by applying its criteria to familiar processes in our own cultural tradition and in our own country. (Lifton 1989:22)

In his seminal study on totalism[14], *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism* (1961), Lifton developed theories on thought reform through his study of brainwashing in Communist China. He continued this work while studying the Vietnam War, McCarthyism, and Nazi doctors. His theory lays out eight psychological conditions that are present where totalistic ideologies develop and maintain power. These conditions are integrated and intertwined into the 3D syndrome and are aided extensively by the six weapons of influence. Lifton later linked these eight conditions to the type of cultures found within cults (Lifton 1981).

First, he identified that *milieu control*, the limiting of external communication or alternately, flooding all communications with similar messages, is used to facilitate greater influence by those in power in the ongoing process of reshaping a person's reality. This communication control would eventually extend into an individual's internal voice; as well, they are increasingly expected to think and feel in prescribed ways. Second, he noted that *mystical manipulation* encourages the convert to view themselves as an instrument working for some vital, higher purpose delineated by the leader and allows the controlling of behaviours without evidence of manipulation. Using *the demand for purity*, leaders were also identified as presenting a strong demarcation between good and evil and eventually, fostering an association of good with the in-group and evil with all others (otherization). Lifton revealed that within authoritarian groups individuals are molded to "the cult of confession" and confess thoughts or behaviours that are counter to the cult's ideology; the result is a loss of privacy for its members. Lifton noted that leaders *load the language* reworking meanings and creating emotionally laden sound-bites that eliminate complex and critical thinking (Chomsky, et al. 1992) and minimize resistance to the dogma proselytized. He also stated that cults are able to enforce their dogma and increase leaders' authority by citing texts of *sacred science* that provide a moral exactness in favour of the culture of the group. This unassailable sacred science assists in the *primacy of doctrine over person* where actual personal experience is minimized and/or eliminated in light of the experience laid out by doctrine. Finally, *the dispensing of existence* gives enormous perceived power to the leader and the group to determine and control the fate of each member and those who are not members, up to and including life or death. (Langone 1993; Lifton 1989)

Propaganda, forceful coercion and rudimentary brainwashing methods have been used throughout history (Lifton 1989; Thomson 1999). The existence and proliferation of modern cults, the worst of which are small paranoid dictatorships using tactics reminiscent of Stalin and Hitler, are powerful examples of successfully applied 3D syndrome influence systems within democracies (Langone 1993:7; Storr 1996:2). Consider just two infamous cult leaders, Jim Jones (The Peoples Temple, 900 dead, self annihilated, including 220 children, 1978), and David Koresh (Branch Davidian, 86 dead self-immolated, including 22 children, 1993). Both men were teetering on the edge of insanity throughout their lives and eventually ended up as psychotic yet, easily implemented the mechanics of advanced influence techniques on ostensibly

free, normal, and often intelligent people within a democracy (Storr 1996:4). In another example, the thousands of devotees of Rajneesh (a drug addicted totalist dictator who bilked hundreds of millions of dollars out of mostly American followers and the American government until finally being booted out of the country) had the following educational credentials: 83% college-educated, 64% bachelor's degrees, 36% advanced degrees and 12% PhDs (Storr 1996:58). Clearly, the common belief in our own 'educated' ability to resist influence is unfounded. The ongoing study of cults and other authoritarian groups allows the astute observer to realize that many of the cultic influence tactics are spreading into the wider culture (Langone 1993; Singer & Lalich 1995; Taylor 2004). Robert Lifton, in his introduction to the 1989 reprint of *Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism* states that, the current *epidemic* of totalism and fundamentalist thinking throughout the world is a viable threat to humanity (1989, p.x). In a 2004 keynote address at the International Cultic Studies Association annual conference, Alan Scheflin (2004)**,** co‑author of *The Mind Manipulators* (Scheflin and Opton 1978) and Professor of Law at Santa Clara University stated that "We are fast approaching midnight on the atomic clock of freedom of mind"—a chilling comment indeed.

It is now technically possible to have wider more comprehensive control, not just in the isolated totalist state, or the closeted cultic groups nestled away within democracies, but in the wider democratic culture itself. The leaders of a dominant party, even within a democracy, now have the ability to mold, influence and coerce a vast number of citizens, in numerous aspects of their lives—using techniques identical or similar to the 3D syndrome—into directions that solidify and increase his/her power at the expense of democracy and the public good (Chomsky, et al. 1992). Our modern capitalist system with its centralized media and powerful corporate advertising machines (advanced experiments in coercive techniques) abound with examples of the use of this Deception, Dependency and Dread triad (Barber 2007). And now, the bad news…

The Neurogenetic Complex – Malleable Minds

> There is no need to invoke the extraordinary pharmaceutical productions, the molecular engineering, the genetic manipulations, although these are slated to enter the new process. (Deleuze 1992:4)

> Although using brain scanning technology to sway political decision is in its infancy, I predict that the 2008 American presidential showdown will be the last ever election to be governed by traditional surveys, and that by 2012, neuroscience will begin to dominate *all* election predictions. (Lindström 2008:30)

As any respectable historian knows, "Memory is not only selective it is malleable" (MacMillan 2008:48). And malleable memories are only the beginning. Brain Science, incorporating the science of the mind (cognitive psychology), the science/biology of the brain (cognitive neuroscience), brain scanning technology and molecular biology, has now established that the mind is much more malleable *throughout* one's lifetime than previously thought (Greenfield 2000; Kandel 2006; Restak 2006). However much my psyche or yours rejects the idea that our minds are easily adjusted, that beliefs, experience, memories, even the very self are malleable, changeable and moldable—we now know all this to be true (Kandel 2006; Restak 2006; Taylor 2004). The 3D syndrome and its attendant components merely acknowledge this malleability of mind and sets out simple, effective and proven techniques to exploit it. Neuroscience not only gives credence to the capacity of the mind to be brainwashed, it delineates and specifies how to enhance such techniques to be even more powerful. This is certainly the case in the increasing use of fear which I will discuss separately. Secondly, neuroscience holds the "promise" of directly altering the brain. British neuroscientist Kathleen Taylor touches on both the old and the new in coercion techniques.

> The trick is to disable the brain's alarm signal by breaking the connections (or preventing them from forming in the first place), so that reactance is no longer triggered when, for example, the right to free speech is infringed. Then there will be no emotional reaction, no fire to be damped down—or stamped out by force. At present, our methods are slow and imprecise: repeatedly playing down the value of the freedom in question, emphasizing potential threats which make the freedom unsustainable, offering enjoyable distractions, and so on. In the future we may possess alternative methods giving us—or those who control us—the power to pinpoint an association's neural source and tidily remove it from our minds. (Taylor 2004:243)

Even "slow and imprecise" influence methods have advanced considerably in their ability to change people below the level of conscious awareness, reducing their reactance to losses of freedom, slowly, steadily brainwashing by stealth (Taylor 2004). However, the black cloud that hangs restlessly over the burgeoning neurogenetic/industrial/academic/political complex is contained within its "offer to treat, to manipulate, to control" (Rees and Rose 2004:8). This offer extends to political tendency, aggression, addiction and religiosity removing these beliefs from the social and psychological *mind* and placing them firmly into the biological and reductionist *brain*. Even as neuroscientists and others voice concern about the mind/brain's inability to withstand current influence techniques, they warn new technology is growing exponentially—the ability to maintain a critically thinking self, or any self, can only become more difficult (Greenfield 2003; Restak2006; Taylor 2004).

The blossoming (think gold rush) of brain science and its unavoidable integration into economics, politics, and religion is currently underway. In this regard the National Core For Neuroethics at UBC is "tackling the ethical, legal, policy and social implications of frontier technological developments in the neurosciences…to align innovations in the brain sciences with societal, cultural and individual human values." Unfortunately, as societal and individual values fall further into the depths of authoritarianism, academia's track record on such ethical (and profitable) issues continues to deteriorate (Giroux 2007).

Fear and Dread

> I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. (Herbert 1965 *Dune*)

> Practically every brand category I can think of plays on fear, either directly or indirectly…I predict that in the near future advertising will be based more and more on fear driven somatic markers, as advertisers attempt to scare you into believing that not buying their product will make us feel less safe, less happy, less free, and less in control of our lives. (Lindström 2008:158)

> …the agency formerly charged with controlling disease became agents of the maintenance of fear… The BioShield[15] program supported a state of dread by preparing, prominently and publicly, for a disaster that was highly improbable yet, it implied, inevitable. (Alcabes 2009:164)

Fear plays a multifaceted and interconnected role in the world of influence and authoritarianism.

The current 'war on terrorism' for example has been designed to mobilize the maximum level of fear in the population for purposes of control (Curtis 2004; Giroux 2005:41). Fear is a fundamental aspect of any influence campaign whether political, economic or religious. Fear is readily visible in the modern world as the 24-hour news delivers a steady drip of orange alerts, kidnappings, killings, pandemic scares and every other imaginable fear-based item to the population. I propose some considerations when comparing the use of fear today and the use of fear in past wars, rationalized genocides, McCarthy witch hunts, and political advertising campaigns. First, fear today is more effectively researched and applied through experiential use and neuroscience experimentation. Secondly, the fear delivery system (media) has undergone a rapid expansion (with centralized ownership) and has access to more people more of the time. And, considering that "fear and aggression [violence] are intimately connected…[and] a picture of a bleeding survivor of a terrorist attack is only slightly different from actually seeing that person" the passive viewing of violence[16] induces significant amounts of fear (Restak 2006:66-73). The combination of the targeted use of fear for manipulation *and* passive viewing of violence in news and entertainment all primarily through visual media encourages the suburban brain, although situated safely and luxuriously at home—to believe it is actually experiencing an extremely violent and fear inducing situation.

These two blankets of fear – directed use of fear for purposes of compliance and viewing of media violence – layered upon a society in all manner of advertising, politics, religion, and entertainment may be critical in explaining (or further establishing) rising authoritarianism. Recall that the level of activation of authoritarian attitudes and behaviours latent within individual predispositions are raised by conditions of "normative threat". A normative threat occurs when persons *believe* their "oneness or sameness" delineated by people, authority, institutions, values, and norms, that which makes "us" "us" is threatened (Stenner 2005:17). The more fear a person feels, with regard to the security of their groupness, the more they express intolerance of difference and demand conformity and group authority. It may well be this deep-seated fear-based human reaction to normative threat is being fanned by the normalized culture of fear. And considering the pre-eminence of the individual in North America, 'our' group may be conceptualized as just 'I.' This scenario would have the effect of experiencing all threats as normative threats to individual 'I-ness'.

Normative threat can be induced knowingly. Directed fear campaigns activate the authoritarian predisposition, then the authority figure or institution can more easily manipulate and coerce the target into the conformity that they have decided upon, often then assisted by those very targets. Another scenario is, as a democracy moves towards equality in one or more areas (women's rights, gay rights, children's rights), that those in opposition feel threatened and respond by constricting, by becoming more authoritarian (Stenner 2005). The key is fear. From weapons of mass destruction and pandemics to using the wrong tooth paste and having flyaway hair, the goal is the same—compliance and belief change through the use of Fear (Dread). Rising authoritarianism in a culture of fear is unavoidable.

Repetition, repetition, repetition, repetition, repetition, repetition, repetition, repetition

Any successful propaganda minister, such as Hitler's Joseph Goebbels, knows that "If you tell the same lie often enough people will believe it" (Thomson 1999:74). Simple repetition works. I have used some minor repetition throughout this paper, repeating certain ideas because repetition is so effective. The repetition of anything directed at a group of people often enough, no matter how true or obviously and patently false, horrible or ridiculous it might be, will become truth to a significant portion of that group (Restak 2006:78). Advertising, for example, is annoyingly repetitive because of this fact. Regardless of how annoyed, entertained or indifferent we are, advertising works. Two instances where this 'repetition power' has been acknowledged in European law are Holocaust denial and cults. Prosecuting Holocaust denial as a criminal offence is an effort to prevent the Holocaust facts from being altered and/or erased from memory (Kandel 2006). Questionable ideologies being proselytized by recognized cults on or near university grounds where easy targets abound is also restricted. Authoritarian ideologies, especially those unrelated to any scientific evidence or reality, routinely utilize the power of repetition. In the United States forty percent of people deny evolutionary science, one of the strongest scientific theories in history (Jacoby 2008). Repetition of dogma, *loading the language*, and *sacred science*, that is, intelligent design, are essential components to maintain this stance amidst no proof. One of the defining characteristics of authoritarianism in small cults or larger systems is the seemingly relentless and repetitive push for group authority through coercion. The repetitive and relentless nature of authoritarianism transfers easily into a media savvy communication style using simplified sound bites over and over; a style that perfectly exploits the fact that the more anything is said, the truer it becomes.

Damn, It's Hard To Think Around Here

Feel the Real – The Devil in the Basement 3 – thinking?

> Critical thinking is self-guided, self-disciplined thinking which attempts to reason at the highest level of quality in a fair-minded way. People who think critically consistently attempt to live rationally, reasonably and empathically. They are keenly aware of the inherently flawed nature of human thinking when left unchecked… They embody the Socratic principle: *The unexamined life is not worth living*, because they realize that many unexamined lives together result in an uncritical, unjust, dangerous world. (Elder 2007)

> The idea of critical thinking is not new. For decades - no, for centuries, it has been recognized as an important educational goal by practitioners and theorists alike. Curriculum documents and learning resources in all subjects at every level of school recommend that students be taught to think critically. Despite this long-standing (and, at least, formal) commitment, the extent and manner of teaching for critical thinking is disheartening. Many studies document the enormous preoccupation with transmission of information and rote application of "skills", and how little of class time is devoted to thinking. It is a rather depressing irony: critical thinking is much valued and yet inadequately addressed. (Case 2001)

Currently, under the auspices of the BC Campus Project, professors in UBC Okanagan's Faculty of Education are developing 'rich media objects' designed to help teach "tools for thought" in conjunction with the Critical Thinking Consortium's pedagogy. It is certainly not news that higher education continues to promote critical thinking, regardless of how (un)successful that ongoing effort has been. It is news however, when the pre-eminent marketing wizard advising transnational corporations all over the world *starts warning the public* to wake up and start thinking critically in order to "escape all the tricks and traps that companies use to seduce us to their products and get us to buy and take back our rational minds" (Lindström 2008:205). Lindström is not the only one recommending critical thinking as a survival strategy in the modern world. In fact, it is a common refrain that the ability to employ critical thinking strategies—stop and think—is *the* preferred method of thinking because of its ability to resist manipulation and brainwashing (Taylor 2004). It is possible to view the current battle for reality as a battle between two factions; those who endorse critical thinking (as defined above) and those who benefit enormously from dissuading critical thinking. Issues in our culture are framed within a bubbling cauldron of sound bites, visual images, slogans and logos that influence us on those issues without our even being aware (Zimbardo 2007:554). The brain is not given space or time to obtain the necessary mindfulness to think critically: "Our brains work

best in evaluating new information when we slow up a bit and consciously attempt to discover whether our instant impressions really hold water" (Restak 2006:56).

Our media-saturated world of distraction does not aid in our efforts to teach or apply critical thinking or stop and think strategies. Media education itself (critical thinking in media), however vital it is proposed to be as a critical thinking necessity and despite all efforts to date to provide even nominal media education in the schools, has essentially failed (Buckingham 2003). The bubbling cauldron framing style of modern media in combination with influence techniques themselves become structurally problematic for critical thinking while being structurally preferred for those who profit from 'uncritical' thinking. Authoritarianism stands to gain as critical thinking deteriorates, a situation many propose is taking place currently (Harris 2004; Jacoby 2008; Sagan 1995). The battle lines seem clear as large segments of academia, especially those who have studied and investigated authoritarianism, or have made various attempts to integrate knowledge into the wider culture (Raphael 2004) advocate critical thinking amidst what seems to be culturally condoned attacks on critical thinking (Jacoby 2008).

Part 3. The Battle for Children's Minds – Authoritarianism in Religion, Politics and Economics

> I feel that a democracy requires that people think on their own, and if we can't think on our own and have our own ideas when we're children, I don't see at what point we develop the capacity for forming our own ideas. We become very good at following instructions. My concern is if children stop playing, if we stop having ideas of our own, if then, heaven forbid something happens, like our country or another country slips into totalitarianism, where are the citizens who know how to think, to have their own ideas their own creative experiences. Who will really fight off the totalitarianism? That's what I'm concerned about. (Goodenough 2008)

Feel the Real – Jesus Camp – little children can make kings

If authoritarianism and its attributes of conformity, group authority and influence have powerful negative effects on you and me as adults; babies, toddlers and children with their trillions of neural connections open and available, are at significantly greater risk. Nowhere is advancing authoritarianism in large institutional systems more evident and damaging than its effect on childhood, in the past and present. I have chosen to discuss children here, in part, because it was

the current "troubles" besetting childhood (neither recognized, addressed, nor solved) that piqued this deeper investigation of authoritarianism. I was initially shocked by the inability of so many young children to engage in authentic self-directed play—'the' essential component of early childhood development (Gopnik 2009; Weininger 1979; Winn 2002). Further investigation indicated that the deterioration of children's physical, emotional and psychological well-being seemed to be accelerating amidst an intense consumerism and a zombie like-citizenry (De Graaf 2005; Giroux 2000; Leach 1994; Linn 2004; Schor 2004; Winn 1983b). Why prescribing Paxil, Dexedrine and Ritalin by the bucketful, turning young children into child soldiers for the neoliberal Army, Nike, or God are not illegal or even frowned upon struck me as problematic. Yet, has the neoliberal army, consumerism and religious fervour just replaced the more traditional nationalist propaganda that affected children in the past? In terms of negative outcomes, maybe drugged children, religious zeal and over consumption are less destructive outcomes than the nationalism of the past produced. Possibly, but for now consider that authoritarianism can manifest in a multitude of forms including nationalism and consumerism. Whatever mask is chosen, sooner or later, the majority will lose.

Many of the childhood troubles including depression, an "epidemic" of ADD/ADHD (Restak 2006:45), and the obesity/anxiety "pandemic" (Yang 2009) that are both correlated and now causally connected with higher levels of consumer involvement have been debated over the past 25 years. The year 2004 proved to be a watershed year as numerous academics became more concerned, convinced and vocal that a serious disruption of childhood with long-term implications for society was taking place (Achbar 2003; Bakan 2004; Cross 2004; De Graaf 2005; Holt 2005; Kasser and Kanner 2004a; Kramer 2006; Kunkel, et al. 2004a; Linn 2004; Schor 2004; Schor 2006; Taylor 2004; Winn 2002). Despite an abundance of knowledge about child development, we have difficulty providing the most basic underlying needs of children— psychological safety, emotional warmth, and an abundance of time for authentic play (Leach 1994).

A serious transgression in many modern democracies is the condoned and often endorsed psychological abuse of children through the application of what appears to be the equivalent of 3D syndromes (Leach 1994). Even as we discover adult minds are more malleable than we first conceived, children's minds have been known to be extensively malleable for quite some time.

The importance of a human being's early years is undisputed. The most dramatic effects on our worldview happen in early childhood when neuronal plasticity is at its greatest and an abundance of neurons are available and malleable (Greenfield 2000). Children are easily indoctrinated when they are young (Thomson 1999:81), and their future health is largely determined in those early years (Friendly 2004). If early childhood is utilized properly by providing children with developmentally appropriate environments, extensive cognitive webs are built. Alternately, if the environment is restrictive and deficient for childhood development, many of the trillions of available neural connections will be underutilized and lost. (Gardner 1991; Greenfield 2003; Hirsh-Pasek, et al. 2003; Taylor 2004). Children are seriously at risk in a culture of rising authoritarianism as the cognitive webs necessary to resist the influx of authoritarianism, to have a sense of freedom, to be able to critically think, even developing humour, may not be formed at all (Greenfield 2000; Leach 1994; Taylor 2004). Alternately, if we institute known developmentally appropriate practice for children, the complex cognitive webs necessary for healthy development and resistance to persuasion can be fostered (Taylor 2004). The extensive use of coercion, fear and intolerance of authoritarianism is then in direct conflict with basic child developmental needs for psychological safety and emotional warmth. Additionally, the most accurate measurement of an adult's predisposition for authoritarianism is their stated child-rearing values (Stenner 2005), thus indicating some deeper connections between authoritarianism and childhood. In brief, authoritarianism is integral to understanding why DeMause (1974:1) states that "the history of childhood is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake". The struggle to influence children by various groups is not new, but the tactics and weapons have changed, and the battle has probably intensified. Considering the obvious importance of the early years to the development of the human mind and brain, the battle for children's minds will, or possibly, already has, determined the future of societies.

Religion and Children: get them when they're young

Feel the Real – Jesus Camp – it just gets crazier and crazier

Religion has been given a rough time as of late considering the Globe and Mail's non-fiction bestseller list on Saturday, June 23, 2007: at number one, *God Is Not Great: how religion poisons everything* (Hitchens 2007); at number four; *The God Delusion* (Dawkins 2006); at number nine, *Infidel* (Hirsi Ali 2007); and on a slightly different but significant note, at number two, *The Assault On Reason* (Gore 2007). Add to this vitriolic, polemic, personal,

heartbreaking, and intellectual slamming of religion and unreason, the 2009 online launch of the [Reason Project](#) by Sam Harris with a significant cast of the world's intelligentsia on board attempting to defend reason while debunking religion. Clearly, there is a segment of academic and professional people extremely upset with religion and how it is being dealt with in society.

The Old Testament and subsequently all Abrahamic religions—Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—have employed techniques equivalent to the 3D syndrome from the beginning right up to present-day resurgence in the form of fundamentalist dogma (Armstrong 2000; Barber 2003; Dawkins 2006). One could argue that books such as the Koran, the Bible and other religious texts are literally filled with Deception, Dependency and Dread. The use of forceful coercion for the purposes of altering or constructing an individual's belief system or worldview for the sole benefit of those in power has a long, dark, religious history (Armstrong 2000; Meerloo 1956). Considering the world's most prominent religions may have all begun as cults (Stevens and Price 2000), religious leaders' use of absolute authority and absolute truth in the pursuit of power and control is entrenched. Absolute authority, which is so well developed and defined within the Abrahamic religions, is arguably one of the worst ideas human beings have ever fostered (Spong 2005; Taylor 2004). The more absolute the truth and authority become, the greater the tendency towards a totalist framework (Lifton 1989). Brainwashing, thought control, mind control, behavioural change technology, undue influence, forceful coercion, have been a religious adjunct for quite some time.

Religions are perpetuated through indoctrination, especially of children who are predisposed to swallow whatever their parents and tribal elders tell them (Dawkins 2006). Children, however, have not been particularly well served by the authoritarian, violent, guilt-ridden, deluge of scripture poured down upon them like so much acid rain. Of the 2000 references to children in the Bible, rampant violence by adults, and an expectation of strict obedience are plentiful—what is not only in short supply, but entirely absent, is any reference at all to the child's needs (DeMause 1974). The complete absence of psychological safety and emotional warmth from empathic parents within a Biblical context is noted by DeMause (1974): "When one actually reads each of over two thousand references to children listed in the *Complete Concordance to the Bible*, these [images of empathic parents or caregivers] are missing. You will find lots on child sacrifice, on stoning children, on beating them, on their strict obedience...but not a single

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one that reveals any empathy with their needs" (pp. 16 – 17). The type of scenario enabled by much of religion is an authoritarian's dream—absolute authority, extensive licence to apply Debility/Deception, Dependency and Dread.

On the positive side, religion kept on a more even keel, moderated somewhat from authoritarian and fundamentalist influences does correlate with happiness and has provided many with comfort and care that they would not otherwise have received. However, as Arthur C. Clarke points out to his religious friends, "perhaps it is better to be un-sane and happy, then sane and unhappy. But it is best of all to be sane and happy" (Clarke 1997:262).

Politics and Children: get them when they're young

> You believe in studying reality, a senior [Bush] adviser said contemptuously to the journalist Ron Susskind in 2002. "That's not the way the world really works anymore," he continued. "Were an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality—judiciously, as you will— we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors… and you, all of you will be left to just study what we do." (MacMillan 2008:160)

One of the alternative theses I considered two years ago that eventually morphed into this current version, occurred to me as I was watching children's "duck and cover" propaganda footage in the documentary film *Atomic Café* (Rafferty, et al. 2002). The 'training film' made clear what children were to do when an atomic bomb went off in the neighbourhood—just "duck and cover" like the turtle does in the funny cartoon. I considered this "bomb proofing" in light of child development and the current literature outlining rising socio/political authoritarianism in the United States since the 1950s (Bacevich 2008; Barber 2003; Brownlee 2007; Chomsky, et al. 1992; Chomsky, et al. 2007; Conason 2007; Cooley 2004; Giroux 2005; Giroux 2006; Harris 2004; Jacoby 2008; Jarecki 2006; Klein and Cuaron 2007; Lewis 1935; Niebuhr 1958; Sagan 1995; Schein 1959). It occurred to me that many of those same children (or young parents of those children) who had been taught to hide under desks as the Communist hordes nuked their neighbourhoods were now in positions of power. Might that manifesting culture of deception, dependency and dread created by the Cold War have a significant effect on children and subsequently rising authoritarianism within society? Considering the Cold War was just one in an endless procession of American wars (Jarecki 2006), I cannot help but think that

Orwell was correct—"the war is not meant to be won it is meant to be endless," (Orwell 1954) as are the effects of war on citizens. America was forewarned directly by Dwight D. Eisenhower in his farewell presidential address regarding this very tendency to abuse and extend military power:

> In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together. (Jarecki 2006)

This prescient warning delivered on January 17, 1961 was essentially ignored and I now consider that generations of children bombarded with "normative threat" amidst endless war contributed to higher authoritarian predispositions in citizens. Predispositions easily activated to a highly authoritarian worldview. Political ideologies beholden to authoritarianism are common over history, so common that the word authoritarianism itself is most often applied to a <u>political</u> system of concentrated power. The Chinese Cultural Revolution is a case study on authoritarianism and the inculcation of children into a political belief system. The effects on children of the long, complicated authoritarian Cultural Revolution in 1950s and 1960s China is brilliantly, albeit heartbreakingly, examined and presented through the eyes of a young growing boy in the award-winning 1993 Chinese film *The Blue Kite* (Tian 1994). The film was immediately banned in China and the filmmaker was forced into a ten-year exile from filmmaking. Unfortunately, North America can no longer claim the moral high ground in the authoritarian political indoctrination of children as the current melding of politics, religion and economics attempts to create a new breed of neo-liberal or neo-conservative citizen through an ongoing process of ideological resocialization.

Economics and Children: get them when they're young

> The data over the past 25 years have shown, and continue to show, that enhancing consumerism in children, tweens, and teens causes harm. (Kramer 2006:293)

> I'm not optimistic about any real improvement for kids society-wide until consumerism is exposed for what it is and some sort of brakes put on it. The priorities of parents with young children are powerfully altered in the direction of getting the goods and services marketed as necessary and desirable, and parents

are driven to overvalue social status and careerism. The values of consumerism
are envy, selfishness and greed. Such values are inimical to the altruism required
to care for helpless little infants and toddlers. (Barker and Hunt 2004)

A significant indicator of rising authoritarianism in the western world has been the changing

economic relationship between corporations and children characterized by consumerism.

Consumerism can be defined as the "mass participation in the values of the mass-industrial

market" (Ewen 1976:54) and our 'participation' in that market dominated by materialism and

consumption are at historically high levels. The attraction and the long-term benefits of

'branding' children when they are young, embedding the unquenchable desire to not only

consume, but to consume specific products, earlier and deeper, are well known and they are

enormous. Nowhere is this better illustrated than the shift in economics to a focus on children

over the last 25 years where multibillion-dollar corporations, utilizing university trained

psychologists, neuroscientists and other academics, directly target younger and younger children

(Achbar 2003; Klein 2000; Linn 2004). History may look back on this 25 year attack on

children with total *disbelief*. To allow unfettered access to childhood and children from the vast

institutional power of multinational corporations whose primary mandate is to maximize

shareholder profit is as unjustifiable as it is cruel.

The systemic authoritarianism that I have outlined is easily identifiable by its unrestrained

willingness to use the influence tactics summarized by the 3D syndrome. The increasing

sophistication of advertising techniques in combination with the intensive mediated corporate

targeting of children is to see the 3D syndrome fully operational. Parents and society remain

seemingly unaware as children are led, just as the cultic recruit is led, "along the path of change

that will lead them to serve interests that are to their disadvantage" (Singer 1995:52). The view

of consumerism and children presented here is not without its detractors who might argue,

among other things, that children's consumption provides empowerment and choice. Some of

those objections may be answered as I briefly outline two specific cases here: first, the

seemingly benign case of baby videos, and then, the troubling complicity of psychology and

psychologists. Otherwise, please refer to whomindsthechild.org, *The Corporation* (Achbar

2003), or the multitude of other critiques of consumerism for a longer discussion and some

response to the rationalizations most often promoted by capitalism and the corporation.

Baby First TV and Baby Einstein Video: Dumb and Dumber

> In this prospective study, TV viewing between birth and 2 years of age was neither beneficial nor deleterious to child cognitive and language abilities at 3 years of age….The potential benefits of limiting exposure to TV in early childhood are multiple and include less exposure to violent media content, improved diet quality, lower risk of overweight and obesity, lower risk of attention problems, and improved sleep quality. (Schmidt, et al. 2009:374)

> In my clinical practice, I am frequently asked by parents what the value of these products is. The evidence is mounting that they are of no value and may in fact be harmful. Given what we now know, I believe the onus is on the manufacturers to prove their claims that watching these programs can positively impact children's cognitive development. (Christakis 2007)

> This analysis reveals a large negative association between viewing of baby DVDs/videos and vocabulary acquisition in children age 8 to 16 months. (Zimmerman, et al. 2007:367)

Twenty million *Baby Einstein* videos were sold by Disney through 2006 (Jacoby 2008). Just a typical market need being filled in capitalist society, Disney representatives might argue. However, when we initiate a "stop and think" (Taylor 2004) or "think straight/think clear" (Bakker 2009) strategy, a very different picture rapidly emerges. There is <u>no</u> evidence to substantiate the claims that Disney and other corporations make regarding the "educational" or any other benefit for babies watching *Baby Einstein* or any other screen-based media. In fact, evidence to date indicates that screen time exposure may actually damage baby brains and slow language development, the opposite of what is claimed. (CCFC 2008a; Zimmerman, et al. 2007). Dr. Michael Rich, a co-author of the Schmidt (2009) study, calls baby educational DVDs and videos "just wasted time….at the very best, they steal time from much more productive cognitive developmental activities….Ultimately, what it's about is to make parents not feel guilty about an electronic baby sitter" (CCFC 2008b).

The television/video/screen-time issue has been a losing battle for parents and babies ever since the American Academy of Paediatrics recommended over seven years ago, *no screen time* for children under two (Certain and Kahn 2002). Nevertheless, as the child development experts (e.g. Brazelton, Spock, Elkind, Poussaint) began to speak out against the rising tide of *Baby Einstein* videos and the Baby First TV channel, they were attacked, ridiculed, then labeled elitist and arrogant in the mainstream media (Jacoby 2008:248). In contrast to the professionals and

academics who have spent their entire careers on child development, the most quoted expert for, and on the advisory board of, Baby First TV is *geneticist* Dr. Edward McCabe. Unfortunately, "nothing in his [McCabe's] medical background suggests that he knows any more than the Maytag repair man about the impact of television on the intellectual development of normal babies" (Jacoby 2008:247). The latest generation of parents, "even the smart ones" as my local librarian reported to me, continue renting or buying videos for babies with the expressed delusion that it will enhance development. Furthermore, in fitting with North America's focus on the wealthy one percent, former President Bush honored and praised the originator of *Baby Einstein* video who became independently wealthy after selling it to Disney (Jacoby 2006:316).

Millions of adults have been influenced and coerced into a belief system that is patently false and possibly harmful. They have been deceived, become somewhat dependent on a video, and often even scared that their children might fall behind in the hypercompetitive 'free market' world without the assistance of Disney. This deceit is built upon the back of a greater deception that has infiltrated child development in North America—earlier is better. Reading earlier, printing earlier, watching TV earlier, competing and computing earlier, being sexualized earlier all have some magical power to improve one's life. This is a dangerous myth. Earlier is not better in child development (Healy 1998; Hirsh-Pasek, et al. 2003). To tell a parent that earlier is better and that *Baby Einstein* will make the child smarter earlier is a multilevel deception. Not only is there no benefit and indeed possible harm to early screen exposure, parents are actually assisting corporations to entangle their children in the media infotainment web before the child has developed a significant understanding of their own world (Jacoby 2008:360). The most significant damage in all of this is an early indoctrination into the world of screen media and television, heralding an early repetitive barrage of subtle and not-so-subtle messages upon a highly malleable developing mind. The main benefactor of those messages are arguably not children, parents or society.

Kasser, Kramer, Ditmar et al. vs Psychology

> I sometimes think that the world will either be saved by psychologists—in the
> very broadest sense—or it will not be saved at all. (Hoffman 1988:207)

> There is an entire field of psychology devoted to research in directing consumer
> behavior…much of it is being used to help corporations understand children,

tweens, and teens, as consumers, using psychological principles to target them directly. (Kramer 2006:292)

The goal of corporate capitalism over the past 25 years to "control the very formation and development of consumer preferences" (Schor 2007:28) is now being realized with the assistance of psychology and various other disciplines. Amidst this successful venture combining massive amounts of corporate capital and power with extensive psychological research, the actual psychological effects of increased consumerism on children and society were largely ignored (Kasser and Kanner 2004). I am left to wonder with Kasser et.al (2007) why psychology, for all intents and purposes, sidestepped widespread investigation into the most powerful, psychologically impacting phenomenon of modern time—consumerism. Corporations can be partially excused because their only mandate is to create wealth for the shareholders within the rules/laws of society. Unfortunately, the trend of continuously reducing corporate restrictions has empowered corporations to often act psychopathically:

> But when you're in the executive offices, when you're getting prepared for a call with an analyst, in the financial medium, what you think about are the numbers. You don't think about individual people. You think about the numbers, and whether or not you're going to meet Wall Street's expectations. That's what you think about, at that level. And it helps to think that way. That's …[what] enables you to stay there, if you don't really think that you're talking about and dealing with real human beings. (Potter 2009)

Consumed by their own self interests multinational corporations forge ahead focused on the numbers, creating a small group of ultra rich, and all the while, making significant contributions to human, ecological, and financial turmoil throughout the world (Achbar 2003; Bakan 2004; Black 2005; Klein 2007; Rushkoff 2009). Psychologists offer a different mandate. The founding mission of the American Psychological Association includes the following: "work to mitigate the causes of human suffering"; seek to "improve the condition of both the individual and society"; and, "help the public in developing informed judgments" (Kramer 2006:291). Consider that mission statement in light of advertising techniques developed by consumer, child, and cognitive psychologists, funded by billion-dollar corporations and directed at 0 to 16 year olds (Linn 2004). I am not making an extensive argument regarding possible harms to children in modern consumerism because there is growing evidence enough for concern on that count. The interesting part is why psychology has chosen, in large part, not to look. Psychology over the past 120 years has barely a sprinkling of literature "that investigates the psychology of the

capitalistic economic system and the psychological and social consequences of living under it" (Kasser 2007:2). Interestingly, Kasser (2007) was *warned* directly by the editor of the *Psychological Inquiry* "to write extra carefully so that readers did not 'discount the *ideas* as left wing propaganda'" (p.3). The dangerous (leftist, diverse, anti-capitalist, non-conforming) *ideas* in that 2007 target article were centered on how American Corporate Capitalism (ACC) was having a measurable, powerful, negative, psychological effect on much of the population and that those effects were now spreading around the globe. Kramer questions the morality of psychologists assisting corporations in their relentless targeting of children, and considers the research evidence which shows "that a culture of consumerism and materialism has a dramatic and negative impact on children's physical and psychological health" (Kramer 2006:29). The American Psychological Association belatedly, in 2004, published a startling paper on the negative psychological effects of advertising and strongly recommended an advertising ban for children under eight (Kunkel, et al. 2004). There has been no significant action or response to this recommendation by psychologists, corporations, or society.

Psychology is a discipline which prides itself on investigation and evidence, on helping society through research. The rebels within psychology have indeed attempted to help society by advocating that "We, as psychologists, have a collective responsibility to make visible consumer culture as the 'cage within' and to document the psychological and physical impact of consumer culture on individuals in order to identify targeted interventions…" (Dittmar 2007:28). The discipline itself eventually published a recognition of part of the problem after minimizing evidence-based responses on capitalism's psychological effects over a 25 year period (Kunkel, et al. 2004). Meanwhile, psychologists poured resources into developing higher levels of consumerism in individuals and then children. Psychology refined techniques involving the use of fear and deception, manipulation and coercion for use by corporations (and political elites) and *no discipline was more qualified for this task than psychology*. Indeed, psychology's research methodology of choice for over 40 years was deception (Pallone and Hennessy 1995:9). The Zimbardo and Milgram studies already discussed are but two famous examples of the enormously successful use of the deception of participants as methodology to attain results in psychological research. The person was not being shocked, the 'authority' figure had no authority, the experiment was not about teaching anybody anything. The results are valid and powerful *because of* the skilful use of initial deceptions. Others include "Sheriff and Ashes

studies on social perception in the 1930s, through Festinger's investigations on cognitive dissonance in the 1950s and Krech and Crutchfield's on conformity in the 1950s" (Pallone and Hennessy 1995:10). Psychologists' extensive practical use of deception as well as the experimental results and subsequent contributions through corporate payrolls may be viewed as being an invaluable aid to a rising authoritarianism, considering deception is the entry point for influence and belief change. The disciplines of psychology and economics are not the only two disciplines that have succumbed to rising authoritarianism, they are just the two I have chosen to discuss within the confines of this paper. For a more expansive and extensively researched present-day and historical picture of authoritarian economics and its integration with political power see Naomi Klein's (2006) *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise Of Disaster Capitalism.* And more recently, Michael Moore's *Capitalism; A Love Story* (Moore 2009a).

Summary

The predisposition for authoritarianism can be maximized during childhood by certain environmental/systemic conditions, or by a substantial deficiency of developmentally appropriate environments. It can be activated to its highest degree in adulthood by certain environmental/systemic conditions especially those conditions that are experienced by the individual or group as a normative threat. Authoritarianism "sanctifies aggressive coercion of individuals" (Stenner 2005) to reduce diversity and attain group authority. This aggressive coercion is facilitated through techniques and systems such as or similar to the 3D syndrome of Deceit, Dependency and Dread. Extensive application of the 3D syndrome assists in the obedience-producing process of ideological resocialization made increasingly precise by advances in coercion techniques begun in 1950 to present. Examples of rising authoritarianism and the use of the 3D syndrome can be found in religion, politics and economics. A by-product or intentional product of the now ubiquitous use of fear (Dread) throughout society is the activation of normative threat and rising levels of authoritarianism throughout society. Because of the extreme malleability of the human mind, experience, beliefs and realities can be altered. Furthermore, the generational increase in influence techniques, authoritarianism and coercion can become normalized and invisible to a majority of the population. Neuroscientist Susan Greenfield (2003:271) considers the self, our private ego and mind, far more vulnerable in the current world than ever before; it is now vital to be born in a suitable environment to develop a sense of self, a sense of freedom.

> And it would no longer matter whether you, or they, had minds of their own. Time could be running out on the luxury of considering any options at all–who knows, we may be the last generation of individual's able, or willing, to have them (Greenfield 2003:272).

To be born human may no longer be an assurance of being human, as the mind/brain is manipulated in evermore powerful ways from birth to death, by whomever has the power and for whatever purposes they desire—the self may cease to be.

3. RESEARCH

Taylor: Many people have argued that knowledge is the best defense. However, knowledge by itself can have remarkably little impact when people are put in the kinds of situations that trigger specific behaviours. *Practical experience* would probably be a better strategy, but that raises feasibility issues.

Raphael: Now you can lose your charitable status if you use the word advocacy, so the word advocacy is now, you're talking about education so you've got community development going down the drain you have advocacy being less... well it's just not talked about... and gradually you have, whether you want to call it a suppression or denial but basically there is a retreat from democratic participation.

McKay: I think we're open as a society and probably open as a species to complete manipulation.

Rancourt: When I see that model, when I look at it and see how it operates in our society I think it is a huge lie. It is a lot of crap. They pulled one on us, it's very disturbing to see everyone gobble that up because it is not true, it is not true. Information and education do not lead you to higher consciousness and wanting to actually act, it leads you to needing and wanting more information and wanting to organize it even better in your head and thinking about more elaborate ways that you'll maybe, eventually, be able to, maybe, change something. It neutralizes you, that is what I see.

Two weeks after being interviewed for this project, Prof. Rancourt, a fully tenured physics professor, was fired on March 31, 2009 by the University of Ottawa for teaching with a physics pedagogy backed by extensive research. There was little response at the University of Ottawa to this procedurally flawed, politically motivated firing of a full professor with an exemplary research and teaching record. So, however I might argue, believe or prove through this example and others that knowledge, intelligence, information and research is of declining importance in an authoritarian infused culture; I still find myself compelled—from without, as research is a requirement, and from within, as I wanted to speak to the academics myself—to add research to the vast compendium out there.

The vast majority of citizens in modern society continue to have a difficult time recognizing their own susceptibility to propaganda, influence and coercion from economic, political, religious and other groups in positions of power. Some academics clearly understand and delve (or are sometimes swept) into these problems. The lack of public awareness of manipulation becomes critical as we quickly move into the gold rush age of the brain sciences which, while promising some benefits, continues to reveal powerful coercive possibilities and techniques to influence *minds* (Greenfield 2003; Restak 2006; Taylor 2004) and, more directly, to alter *brains*

with the myriad bio-chemical concoctions currently under study (Rees and Rose 2004). The purpose of my research is to explore the experience of academics who have demonstrated concern or expertise related to authoritarianism, critical thinking and influence using a grounded theory process to analyze interview data. The stated research question is: *What relationships, if any, exist between authoritarianism, undue influence and critical thinking in a modern capitalist society?* I chose grounded theory because of its flexibility in data sources, ongoing analysis, its ability to discover new theory and a capacity for influencing social change (Charmaz 2005). The use of grounded theory is uncommon in a Masters level thesis because of its complexity, time consumption, and the extensive data needed for theory development. However, this perception of extensive time and data needs may be based on the more positivist grounded theory of the past. Corbin (2008) significantly updated the third edition of her grounded theory text to recognize and incorporate Adele Clark's (2005) postmodern and situational analysis and Charmaz's (2006) constructivist concerns regarding the positivist drift of grounded theory research. In practice, "A researcher need not go all the way to theory development. He or she could stop after concept identification and development and do a very nice descriptive study, adding elements of context and process, as he or she feels competent to do" (Corbin and Strauss 2008:162).

Method

This is a qualitative research study using grounded theory methodology as outlined by Corbin and Strauss (2008). Grounded theory is an inductive data-driven form of research in which data analysis occurs immediately following acquisition (in this case following each individual interview or reading/viewing a secondary text) enabling continual development of theoretical leads and concepts relevant to the problem. Grounded theory is thus a concept driven methodology whereby concepts are constantly generated in a cumulative process that leads to multiple core categories (themes) and culminates in a single saturated core category with the capacity to build theory. The use of memos and diagrams is central to grounded theory. It is within memos and diagrams that the researcher makes visible the internal critical thinking processes that create analysis out of data.

I approach the use of grounded theory experientially, playing with it in order to understand how it works and what its possibilities and capabilities are: learning it by doing it. In that spirit I find

myself unable to resist moving past description into some rudimentary data driven theoretical musings. While primarily allowing the participants to speak in the results section I also attempt a macro level view of the data to make connections, comparisons and extrapolations.

Participants

Three of the four primary research participants were professionally recognized academics (two fully tenured professors and a science writer). The fourth participant was an acquaintance of mine with interests in influence and authoritarianism whom I interviewed to test the interview guidelines. This interview also became data. All participants were willing to be identified and chose to be interviewed at their homes except for the lone e-mail interview. The participants are: Denis Rancourt, PhD, Professor of Physics, University of Ottawa; Dennis Raphael, PhD, Professor of Health Policy and Management, York University, author of The Social Determinants of Health: Canadian Perspectives (2004); Kathleen Taylor, PhD, Neuroscientist associated with the University of Oxford, author of the award-winning book *Brainwashing: The Science Of Thought Control* (2004) and her recently published book *Cruelty: Human Evil And The Human Brain* (2009) (e-mail interview); and, Brian McKay, MSW, Manager Of Social Work, BC Interior Health Authority, a rebel working diligently in the belly of the beast.

Procedures

Entry into the field

Sampling decisions were derived from the literature review. Academics were identified who had been active presenting research and/or had personal experience relating to authoritarianism, critical thinking or related issues. An e-mail request form with the research question and questionnaire approved by the UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board (BREB Certification – Appendix D) was sent to 12 possible participants. The four participants responded positively within seven days and were contacted by e-mail with interview times and dates arranged. All participants signed consent forms including the affirmation of revealed identity.

Data Sources

The document system revealing all data sources is presented in Figure 2. Primary data was obtained from participants through open-ended, unstructured interviews in order to "understand the complex behaviour of members of society without imposing any a priori categorization that may limit the field of inquiry" (Fontana and Frey 2005:706). Interviews are understandably "not

neutral tools of data gathering but rather active interactions between two (or more) people leading to a negotiated, contextually based result" (Fontana and Frey 2005:698). In the interview situation, I maintained a stance of "active listening, empathic reflection, and minimal encouragers" (Creswell 2007:289) to allow participants to discuss the topic freely in any direction concerning authoritarianism or related issues of authority, conformity and coercion, or beyond that, what they felt relevant or compelled to discuss at that point in time. The 'official research' question on the BREB application—'what relationships, if any, exist between authoritarianism, influence and critical thinking in a modern capitalist society'—and the open-ended questions provided in the interview guide (Appendix A) were employed only once in practice, during the e-mail interview with Kathleen Taylor. This e-mail interview went back and forth twice for clarifications and additions. I began the in-person interviews by having participants read the quote(s) in Appendix B, beginning with the Giroux quote and using the second and third quotes later on as needed. I used prompts or questions sparingly as the participants easily "took off" into the discussion. I entered into the discussion more freely near the end of the interviews. The interviews done in person had significantly more breadth and depth, were between sixty and ninety minutes in length, recorded digitally and transcribed in their entirety. This divergent open-ended interview style fits with grounded theory.

Secondary data sampling and collection was initially directed by concepts derived from the literature review. This data came from a variety of sources including documentaries, movies, books, magazine\newspaper articles, letters and second party interviews. Secondary data was not analyzed to the same depth as the four main participant interviews (of 315 total coded segments 237 were from the four interviews and the remaining 80 from all other sources). This secondary data pool includes the many non-technical observations, statements and recommendations contained within technical literature. For example, embedded within their scholarly books and papers, Zimbardo (2007), Taylor (2004), and Schor (2007) express personal hopes, fears, and advice about the current global situation. Other non-technical examples might include Noam Chomsky's response in the documentary video *Manufacturing Consent* (1992) when questioned about how he is able to keep going in his seemingly endless battle against authoritarianism. Linus Pauling responded to a similar question posed by Carl Sagan (Sagan 1995) and his response also constitutes data.

Data Collection, Analysis and Writing

> …the very act of writing memos and doing diagrams forces the analyst to think about the data…[and]..Thinking is the heart and soul of doing qualitative analysis. Thinking is the engine that drives the process and brings the researcher into the analytic process. (Corbin and Strauss 2008:183-118)

Secondary data collection and analysis began with the first text, code and memo entered December 29, 2008 and continued from that time. The primary data, collected and analyzed in March 2009, is small for grounded theory research comprising approximately 4 hours of interviews and an additional 2 pages of the e-mail interview. However, I am encouraged by the ongoing, albeit cursory, analysis of the secondary data especially the 7 one-hour interviews April through July 2009 by Bill Moyers (PBS) with various academics and professionals on current global economic and political crises. The Moyers' interviews contain significant parallels to the primary data. Each primary text data analysis began with a complete reading of the interview followed by breaking the data into smaller chunks where natural breaks seem to occur or changes in idea or flow were apparent. Each chunk was then analyzed for the ideas contained within it and a one or two word concept was worked out that best illustrated the "essence or meaning of the data" (Corbin and Strauss 2008:160). These concepts were primarily labelled with *in vivo*[17] code as in the phantom zone or the steamroller. These initial coding sessions, often referred to as "open coding," were followed by periods of "immersion in the data" (axial coding, comparative analysis) to further elaborate the analysis of concepts, examining the *relationships* between concepts, forming them into **categories**, and finally, allowing a **core category** to emerge (Corbin and Strauss 2008). Theory was obtained using the *interpretive* definition suggested by Charmaz:

> Theories flash illuminating insights and make sense of murky musings and knotty problems. The ideas fit. Phenomena and relationships between them you only sensed beforehand become visible. Still, theories can do more. A theory can alter your viewpoint and change your consciousness. Through it, you can see the world from a different vantage point and create new meanings of it. Theories have an internal logic and more or less coalesce into coherent forms. (2006:128)

A word on Quality and Credibility (reliability/validity). Qualitative research has to retain the freedom to maintain its core creativeness (the art) without being subsumed by the structure (the science). Qualitative research has to "feel right" (Corbin and Strauss 2008:307) to the "sensitive" researcher trying to get to the essence of what a participant is trying to say. Maintaining creative quality is true of both quantitative and qualitative research. For example,

Santiago Ramon y Cajal (1852-1934), "arguably the most important brain scientist who ever lived" (Kandel 2006:61) began as a painter, an artist. Although eventually mired in the most scientific of pursuits, the study of brain cells, he utilized an "uncanny ability to infer the properties of living nerve cells from static images of dead nerve cells. This enabled him to capture and describe in vivid terms in the beautiful drawings the essential nature of any observation he made" (61). Cajal was able to describe correctly how living brain neurons worked by looking at dead neurons through a microscope. It was this intuitive leap derived from a sensitivity to form and function, a "feeling right," upon which Cajal "formulated the neuron doctrine, the basis for all modern thinking about the nervous system" (61). Grounded theory can provide the necessary framework for retaining the creative quality, which breakthrough research often necessitates, within a credible structure. As qualitative and quantitative research methods continue to have difficulty integrating any significant research findings into the wider culture this should not be taken as a sign to become ever more lax or rigid about the quality aspects of research, but as an indication that research must now impact people emotionally, through "an innovative, thoughtful, and creative component" (Corbin and Strauss 2008:301).

Thesis writing took place two months after analysis with a focus on creating a "clear analytic story with the logic spelled out" (Corbin and Strauss 2008:278) derived from the research diagrams and memos. I used MAXQDA (European) computer software for all memos, diagrams and textual data analysis from initial coding, conceptualization, core categories, storyline, and theory development (see Corbin 2008). I am certain that without advanced software as an organizational tool, I would have reverted back to a simpler phenomenological study inclusive of the primary research participants only, for better or worse.

Results

Raphael: Are you people familiar with the <u>Phantom Zone</u> from the Superman comics... these criminals are projected into the zone and they talk to each other and they communicate but they have no effect on the outside world... I said this is what we are doing, we've been doing this for 10 years!….20 years! We talk about it we do workshops we put out funding for knowledge translation and absolutely nothing is happening.

Brillinger: What is your experience as an academic when, despite extensive evidence and personal effort over long periods of time, your work remains unaccepted and/or ignored?

Taylor: I sigh and keep going, hoping I don't end up like Cassandra.

In Greek mythology Cassandra was granted the greatest of gifts from Apollo, prophecy, the ability to see the future, to see the truth of things, and to only speak the truth. Unfortunately, this gift was short-lived as Apollo, angry that Cassandra rebuked his amorous advances, cursed her, not by taking away the gift but by making others disbelieve her words. Hence, the Trojan horse was admitted to the city ignoring her warnings and protestations and Troy was destroyed. The main participants in this study, and many of the secondary sources, were grappling with a certain angst connected with the inability of public and professional alike to significantly understand and initiate changes to what seemed like obvious and critical situations developing within their areas of expertise and throughout the world. The research results, although initially directed by the research question and in actual practice just a single quote from Giroux, seemed to serve as an outlet as participants attempted to try and understand for themselves and/or explain the Phantom zone/Cassandra effect.

Five categories resulted from the analysis: **To Think Or Not To Think** (the phantom zone concept is subsumed here)**, The Change**, **The Chill, The Steamroller**, and **We Can Be Heroes**. The categories follow in the order I have just listed them with selected coded segments and memos. I have made few comments while presenting the segments and memos as they tend to speak for themselves, but I think it is helpful to consider the results within the following visual metaphor. Each category builds somewhat on the one before as if one was climbing up a very steep hill or tower with **The Chill** and **The Steamroller** as the most filled out or saturated categories (the steepest part of the climb). Each category moves one higher until you reach the top where it becomes difficult to go back down the way you came. The top is where the participants are or have been. Shrouded in the clouds and mists of rising authoritarianism, calling out warnings like Cassandra in a Phantom Zone. However, through the mist intermittently visible is the final category, **We can be heroes**, where each of the participants dabbles in the experience of active resistance to authoritarianism.

The research arrives at a skeleton like (unsaturated) theoretical model of the connections and interactions between concepts, and categories leading to the single core category (theme) presented in Figure 2. The code system/document system overview is provided in Figure 1. The complete document and code systems are provided in Appendix C.
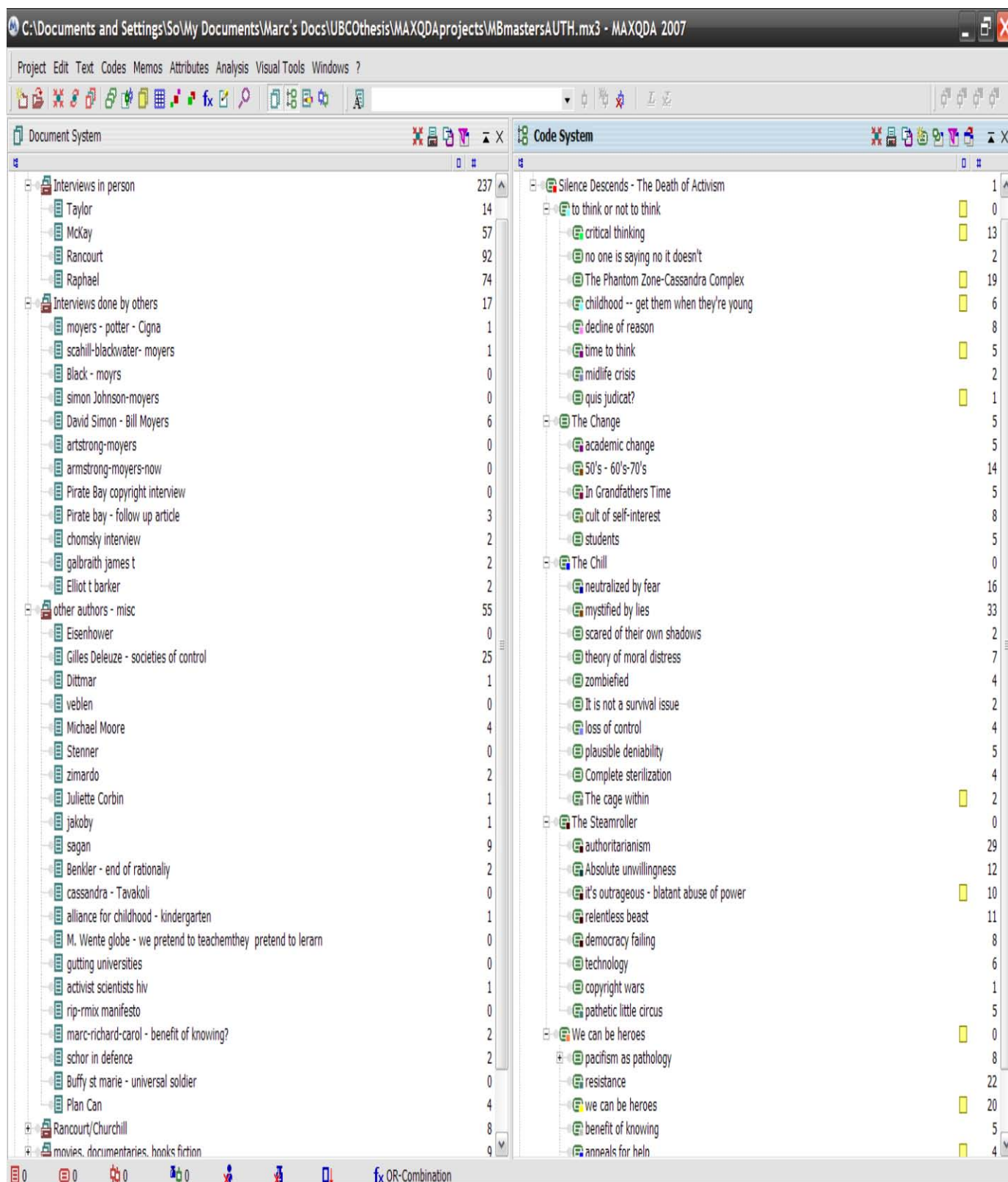
Figure 1 - Overview of Code and Document System

Primary data is delineated from secondary data in the following manner: Primary participant data is preceded by the participants name; secondary data is preceded by an introductory sentence and followed by a reference. Underlining indicates a concept (in text), bolding indicates a category, both indicate the core category.

To Think Or Not To Think

Concepts   critical thinking

no one is saying no it doesn't

The Phantom Zone-Cassandra Complex

childhood -- get them when they're young

decline of reason

time to think

midlife crisis

quis judicat?

The initial concepts and memos for this category constitute the earliest stages of the research process and began while I was outlining the thesis itself in January 2009. There was no reason for this particular start point other than the software arrived and I needed to start learning to use it. Originally a concept, **to think or not to think** developed into a category as the various concepts of thinking, critical thinking, information, knowledge and their interactions surfaced in the interviews and secondary data.

Memo – to think or not to think – 10/01/09
So as I was trying to organize the thesis outline and determine some kind of picture, some reasoning that connects it all, I started visualizing these two opposite camps: thinking versus not thinking. So many academics and others are advocating that we must absolutely think critically. Meanwhile, large powerful segments of the culture spend enormous amounts of time and money making sure many don't think. In politics for example the advertising and public speeches are not generally designed to enable critical thinking and debate they are designed to induce fear and appeal to the subconscious old brain. The same for economics and religion. It is a battle for children's minds and our minds and the battle lines are increasingly drawn between thinking and not thinking.

A few days later after the above memo I coded the following passage from Corbin regarding the importance of taking adequate time to think. Time seems to be a commodity that is often scarce:

> One of the most salient points that I wish to convey is the importance of setting aside time to think. Young researchers are often constrained by time and work. They don't have the large grant that established researchers often have allowing them to put aside their regular teaching or other duties. I can't emphasize strongly enough that qualitative research can't be rushed. Qualitative researcher have to allow time for sensitivity to grow and for the evolution of thought to take place. (Corbin and Strauss 2008:244)

As time to think becomes available critical thinking becomes more entrenched.

Taylor: My first reaction to these statements was: they sound polemical, where is the evidence for them? That's not really fair, since they're out of context. My second was: is that Sam Harris, the famously intemperate atheist? I see it is; that gives me some context. My third reaction was: you two writers sound very sure of yourself; how do you know that your judgment of what is "worth fighting for", or which beliefs should be eliminated, is the right one? And finally, I have little idea of what "rethinking the meaning of politics" would actually involve, how one would go about it, or whether it is at all possible.

Rancourt: a quote like that (Giroux interview quote) to me is (sigh) not specific, it's a very general, very broad, sweeping statement

Memo   critical thinking 9/03/09
Very academic, intelligent critical thinking, and reluctant to move away from the highly intellectual stance. Taylor does not like the tone of the first two statements "polemical". Makes a good point about what is actually worth fighting for what beliefs should be eliminated? And this is an incredible problem that the authoritarian leverages to great advantage when it does define what words mean and what is actually worth fighting for. It's like Adorno said in the 1950s that the Republican Party accused the Democrats of what the Republicans themselves were actually doing.
Is there no way out of this quandary, where the reasonable and rational lose power to the authoritarian who become more powerful and then redefine what is reasonable and rational?

Brillinger: As you, the neuroscientist (interdisciplinary) sit at your desk gazing out through the window upon the university, and beyond to the community, the country and then globally, what is it that catches your eye and makes you wonder whether the future will indeed be better than the past?

Taylor: The disparity between human intelligence and human wisdom. We do not seem to be as good at certain kinds of thinking as we need to be in order to solve the long-term, public goods-related, problems facing us (like climate change).

Taylor: Freedom certainly appears to be a core value, but I'm not so sure how many would extend that to the freedom to think critically.

Critical thinking, however desirable, seems perpetually at odds with alternative choices and modes of thought.

> Avoidable human misery is more often caused not so much by stupidity as by ignorance, particularly our ignorance about ourselves. I worry that, especially as the millennium edges nearer, pseudoscience and superstition will seem year-by-year more tempting, the siren song of unreason more sonorous and attractive. (Sagan 1995:27)

Mckay: The relative intelligence of people doesn't have that much to do with whether they will or won't do anything about something that is presented as a problem.

Taylor: Many people have argued that knowledge is the best defense. However, knowledge by itself can have remarkably little impact when people are put in the kinds of situations that trigger specific behaviours. *Practical experience* would probably be a better strategy, but that raises feasibility issues…

If the relationship between knowledge, experience, and action remains uncertain or inoperative Sagan muses upon the consequence.

> If we can't think for ourselves, if we are unwilling to question authority, then we're just putty in the hands of those in power. But if the citizens are educated and form their

own opinions, then those in power work for us… this may be all that stands between us and the enveloping darkness. (Sagan 1995:434)

Rancourt: I don't think you can have knowledge without experience.

Rancourt: Information-based activities don't become part of your worldview because you're not, as you say, connecting it to the situation through action, that is the missing link, and they do everything they can to hide that from you.

Thinking, research, information, intelligence and critical thinking itself remain indeterminate as a means in and of themselves to effectively halt **The Change**.

The Change

Concepts   academic change

                           1950s - 60s - 70s

                           In Grandfathers Time

                           cult of self-interest

                           students

This category consists of concepts all related to something elemental changing (for the worse) in society over the last 20 to 50 years. It is fairly consistent across participants throughout the analysis.

McKay: I think that the decisions my grandfather had to make…were way, way simpler than the decisions we have to make today about whether we're being lied to.

McKay: In my grandfather's time in the 40s and 50s, there was the technology you needed to understand and he totally understood and could work with it, whereas with the IT technology I have to work with, I have no clue how it works so I'm completely dependent on the expert.

Memo - grandfathers time – March 2, 2009
McKay begins with this metaphor of grandfather and continues to use it through the interview. I can't help but think there is some nostalgia there for a return to that simpler time. Where things are known like how to fix the tractor and that the fruits of one's labors are evident each summer in the fields. This idea of disconnection, between food and food production for instance, assists in our mystification whereby our sense of what is real and what isn't flounders. Mystification is also a code word for lying, for influence and coercion tools that are used to confound one's reality. But of course we could take issue with the idea that the past was a more honest and simpler time. I'm going to understand this idea of grandfather's time, of the 1950s, of something happening there as a possible higher-level concept (category).

Rancourt: I think it's probably true [Giroux quote], but it's true here and now in our society in North America, it's true we have experienced this. We've seen it since the 60s, let's say the 50s and 60s. We've seen corporate financial interests play bigger and bigger parts, roles in our lives, taking bigger and bigger controls, more monolithic control in a sense of, say, the economy,

Deleuze as well points out a significant shift in control circa 1950:

But in their turn the disciplines [institutions] underwent a crisis to the benefit of new forces that were gradually instituted and which accelerated after World War II: a

disciplinary society was what we already no longer were, what we had ceased to be. (Deleuze 1992:1)

Rancourt: Yes, I mean it was clear back then [50s 60s], even though I was quite young, I remember that employees of small companies for example all understood that they were not going to kill themselves…they have lives, that they have families, that this [job] is what you do but you do it in such a way that everybody understands that you're not killing yourself. You're not really working for the boss, and that has been driven out us

Rancourt: I saw how the managers came in and said it was better this way, you know centralizing will save, this kind of crap. I saw how we hire people as well, it used to be that you basically got to choose who the next prof of physics was going to be. You got to meet him, you chat with him, have big discussions about it, have internal fights about who is going to be in what area of research their in and so on, and what is needed in the department. These days it's nothing like that. The very top people tell you it will be this person who has these ties with the corporate sector who does this kind of research and who brings in these kind of connections. That is who you are going to hire. If you don't want them then you won't get anyone and you will just divide the extra teaching among yourselves. It is that blatant…I have seen that happen over the last 20 years, just in my own little environment in academia in the physics department in the University of Ottawa. If you're just there long enough to see these <u>changes</u>.

Memo 4 (Rancourt) - **the change** - 23/03/09
This is my conceptual term **the change** [that became a category], that came out as Rancourt spoke about the shift in his own department from the professors' collegiality to the corporations' oligarchy. Inherent in this concept is the rise of the Corporation within institutions that are not essentially corporate.

The Change is referred to in different ways by different participants generally involving some type of constriction or restriction in thinking or acting.

Raphael: So I think what you had is gradually tightening up of discourse and greater recognition that this [social determinants of health] was something potentially dangerous to raise. In the 70s and 80s you could talk about it….the difference between now, the 2000s, and maybe the 70s and 80s is that in the 70s and 80s health units [and] community development organizations, were more willing to talk about these things.

Brillinger: So the healthcare stance at the beginning was that people are not capable of thinking critically.

McKay: Right, exactly, it's too complex, you can't understand it so let us understand it. And that started in the late 50s probably with the mantra of get thee to a doctor…so the negation of homeopathic medicine, of people curing themselves through sensible diet change through activity and exercise, we successfully devalued all of that self-knowledge.

The change was also attributed to affect students.

Rancourt: I've seen dramatic changes in attitudes of students, what kind of people they are in the last 20 years…it's very sad when you think of it. You know 20 years ago the students, to me, appeared to be real people. They came in…they had a life force. They knew they did not want to be taken advantage of, that you have to make sense. They were even prepared to take on, to challenge, the professor.

Rancourt: And they've been treated this way and funneled into this since grade school. Now, to be fair the transformation involves many things. The Harris revolution in Ontario,

taking apart the high school system, taking out a year so they're younger in a sense…and the high school teachers are abused more than ever, they don't have time to prepare anything they're…just following orders basically. I mean high school now is just crazy compared to what it was so that is part of the problem.

Rancourt connects The Change with the next category The Chill.

Rancourt: Well fear definitely plays a big role, but…I think fear has more of a paralyzing impact on us now than it did before.

Brillinger: You mean like 1950 – 1960?

Rancourt: Yes, or even just 20 -30 years ago, because the more neutralized you are politically, the less you do in terms of your personal agency, the less experience you have in the real world…of risk and action.

The Chill

Concepts   neutralized by fear

mystified by lies

scared of their own shadows

theory of moral distress

zombiefied

It is not a survival issue

loss of control

plausible deniability

Complete sterilization

The cage within

Rancourt: I've interviewed people on this question, and what I find is that the first world, privileged, ball-less, castrated people that we are, we are completely <u>neutralized by fear</u>.

Rancourt: So if you go around obedient you are controlled by fear. The reason you're obedient is because you don't want to see what the consequences are going to be if you're not obedient. And you're not about to experience them because you imagine them to be terrible, and you will be seen as a troublemaker, and you will lose…your societal image or whatever. So you imagine all these terrible consequences and as a result the fear of those imagined consequences keep you in line. So I think fear in that sense plays a much bigger role than it did before. *You know I have seen less fear in actual armed guerrilla warfare situations than I see here in the first world with privileged citizens.*

Raphael: well the activists will continue to be activists, it is *the people that you hope to influence [who] will become more scared.*… Now you can lose your charitable status if you use the word advocacy. So… you're talking about education, so you've got community development going down the drain, you have advocacy being less...well it's just not talked about...and gradually you have, whether you want to call it a suppression or denial…a retreat from democratic participation.

Memo - 74 - 07/23/09 Raphael brings up this advocacy "problem" a few times indicating the intent of the government to reduce or punish advocacy of all, or certain types. The nonprofit - whomindsthechild.org - that I attempted to get charitable status for in 2003 was denied. It took well over a year to be denied and the charitable law lawyer involved was dismayed both, at the time taken and the result. Throughout this process I contacted various government people to inquire as to why charitable status had been denied. Basically, we were *advocating* on behalf of children from a 'certain point of view' (it is not relevant whether or not that point of view is factually correct or backed by extensive research) and that automatically eliminates you from charitable status. As I perused the list of charitable nonprofits I became completely bemused by what some of them said and did and still received charitable status.... intelligent design anyone? This non-charitable status effectively neutralizes a nonprofit by removing all of the major funding sources.

It is indeed a difficult reality when you have to take the default position that everybody is lying to you, or manipulating you.

Raphael: you have the epidemiological tendency towards biomedical individualism and risk factor, and you combine neoliberal government where basically the marketplace dominates and they're unwilling to spend any money or do anything... yet on the other hand they know they have to do something…If the WHO [World Health Organization] European office can put out a document called *The Social Determinants Of Health: The Solid Facts*, and distribute it widely, why can't we do it? Why can't…the national coordinating center organize seminars for reporters?... *because they're absolutely terrified of their own shadow.*

The participants expressed the concept of <u>mystified by lies</u> consistently and in various ways.

Rancourt: They choose a language in order to justify and confuse, confuse others...they define and choose the language. 'They' meaning power defines the mental environment, and that includes language. So one should not be surprised that words don't mean what you think they should mean.

McKay: The easiest way to be nice to people is to just eliminate the distress by telling them lies, medicating their experience of distress, or mediating their experience of distress.

McKay: So when we participate in the mass kind of corporate discussion of what's good or bad in the world we have no clue what's good or bad about food production, what's good or bad about genetically modified organisms. We don't have a stake in it anymore, so I think that lays the groundwork for an authoritarian culture where we can be <u>lied to and mystified</u>…because we've lost the capacity to critically understand how our world actually works.

Raphael: My experience has been that it is more perception than reality. I wrote a paper that was just published a few days ago entitled *Escaping From the Phantom Zone* (Raphael 2009). I was at this think tank and they were anticipating the release of this report…funded by the public health agency…reports coming out, we have to do this and do that and we have the conference next month. I just said, are you people familiar with the <u>Phantom zone</u> from the Superman comics…

Raphael: let me show you something here which I think you will find very interesting. This is from the US report where countries were ranked on infant mortality in 1980 where Canada was ranked 10th... by 2002 we slipped to 23rd. Do you think anybody's interested in this? I sent it to health reporters, nothing.

Chomsky reminds us of the Bush advisor quoted on page 35 who told us how the "powerful" create the reality and the course of history is whatever "they" make it.

The immediate problem is to free ourselves from the shackles imposed, very consciously, by the kind of people you're talking about. Who don't want the facts to be known. And for very good reasons. Because if people know the facts they aren't going to tolerate them. So therefore you have to prevent them from knowing. You have to indoctrinate them, you have to tell them stories about how we're really good guys, and if we use violence, it must be for the general good because we represent the course of history. (Chomsky 2002:np)

Memo - 9 - who do you trust? 05/03/09
It is indeed a difficult reality when you have to take the default position that everybody is lying to you, or manipulating you or convincing you that doing certain things is in your best interest when in fact it's in their best interest. It is difficult to maintain a sense of trust, joy, optimism. How do we relate to people or institutions/systems when the influence methods they are using we know to be below the level of your ability to recognize them? The time and effort it takes to think critically about all of these issues is enormous. So you let some go, reject some, but considering the relentless drive of just economics, it has to wear down the psyche to the point where critical thinking and reason just becomes too much a burden. So you just begin to participate in the circus; Baby TV, how bad can it be?

McKay: I don't know that we can recognize instantly when we're having something sold to us on the basis of lies.

McKay: We still have that medical metaphor that says basically we [health authority] know more about what's happening with you than you know, and what's happening to you is not within your control. It's mysterious viruses, things you cannot see, it's processes that you can't understand. So we continually mystified that whole process of human life to the extent that we are completely dependent on that authority. So if that authority is lying to us we have no way of knowing.

Brillinger: 'Mystified process' is an interesting term because within Lifton's eight themes of totalism, one is 'mystical manipulation.'

Mckay.   Perfect. The medical model would be a good example of that.

Rancourt: Yes, but that's true…of our lives in general. You don't have to be subjected to intense brainwashing to experience that [distress at discovering you have been extensively lied too]. I think In our society what is known as the midlife crisis where you realize that…your life is not that meaningful…you have been chasing a career all these years and you wonder what it amounts to, and so, in a sense you have been lied to all these years, or you've taken in these lies and you agree to be manipulated, to chase these ideals, to chase these things that were proposed.... It's bound to be a broad phenomena to feel life is meaningless, that you're not completely satisfied, you're frustrated that you can't put your finger on it, or even to [recognize] the depression of a midlife crisis. These are all things that are bound to happen…given the incredible sterile and vacuous cage that we're kept in. I think that that's just natural, the animal reacts to the circumstances.

Rancourt: T*here is real resistance from the students because they want to defend the system that they have been brought up in…* adapted *to* and decided that they are going to perform within those bounds…and they will defend it. They made the deal with the devil that they're going to go through it in this way. They'll get good results in this way and they're even convinced that this is giving them learning. They're coming to the point, they are so zombiefied, a lot of the students, that they measure their understanding by the grades they get…in other words they've lost the ability to discern what they do and don't understand.

Raphael: I've said to the people who want to do something, why don't you do a focus group with 10 medical officers of health and find out what their problem is?…You go out to talk

about politics, support local initiatives when they happen, you try to train them. I sent a copy of the Phantom Zone paper to the Association of Ontario public health units and...you write books you give talks and somehow *you try to shame them*.... you throw everything against the wall and hope something will stick; Human rights, Norway and Sweden, suffering, lived experience.... you just throw everything against the wall and you wonder, you hope that something will stick, and it's not sticking.

Memo 8 - nothing sticks - 23/03/09
Trying to shame authoritarian personalities is hopeless. I think this is a large part of what Raphael is struggling with here. Still hoping that more information and pointing out obvious inconsistencies will result in some sort of change. Although he admits that he has thrown everything against the wall and nothing sticks. 'They' will do nothing unless seriously pressed, and as power becomes more centralized and disconnected from society, this pressing becomes ever more difficult, because we become more chilled, more reticent to act, more afraid.

McKay: We have actually been infected by the appeal of the cult of self-interest to the extent that we're unaware…we are not aware that we're being manipulated…we are not aware that the Emperor has no clothes… If we are aware we can't allow it, or lend it, expression because it is completely counter to participating and continuing to participate in the pathetic little circus.

Raphael: So all these good documents…I commented at this conference that Canada is a health promotion *document* powerhouse, because people around the world they see all these documents and they think Canada is a health promotion powerhouse. It's a health promotion document powerhouse. We have all these documents, if you go to the public health agency we have the health officers report, all this involvement, all these words, probably millions of dollars are spent on knowledge dissemination, knowledge translation...even that would be something if they disseminated to the public but they don't do that either.

Brillinger: so it is this idea of knowledge versus experience or action, lots of knowledge very little action?

Raphael: Absolute unwillingness and to give you an idea of not only is it the right wing or the conservatives that are the problem, even among the people who have lofty titles… here is a volume entitled, *Healthier Society From Analysis To Action*, all the big names here...look at this last chapter…"Where Do We Go From Here?"

Brillinger: Don't tell me they're asking for more research?

Raphael: Of course, they're asking for more research.

Memo 6 - absolute unwillingness 6/03/09
This is at the connection between Rancourt and Rafael... the inability, through fear, of people to act in a manner that is needed. Canada is the 'document production powerhouse' while 'doing' nothing. This is a very interesting tactic of power. Like the television program *30 Rock* which is an advertisement for NBC and General Electric (General Electric being one of the five companies that runs and owns 90% of the film and music industry in North America). On the show they bash themselves about being wasteful, anti-environmental, even cruel, while all the time advertising themselves. The end result is nobody does anything about the overriding inequality of General Electric. For instance in the copyright wars General Electric is partially responsible for the punishing lack of creativity and innovation in North America through its association with hundreds of lawyers suing thousands of people for dubious copyright infringements. Update: June 19, 2009, a single mother (first Nations) found guilty by a jury of downloading 24 old songs was fined 1.92 million ($80,000per song). What kind of culture does this represent? Her real crime, by the way, was she refused to settle out of court, unlike the majority who

were bullied into giving up a few thousand dollars to avoid court. The documentary *RIP: a remix manifesto* (Gaylor, et al. 2009), chronicles the copyright wars.

Memo 5 -no one is saying it doesn't exist   30/03/09
I think what Raphael is saying (regarding massive document production versus no action), is that the nefarious part of the game plan is to admit completely the benefits of the social determinants of health, do the research, write the appropriate professional and scholarly papers, and then do nothing, knowing no one will respond. Knowing that our attention spans are *short, distracted and meek*.

McKay: I don't know whether the best way to look at that [cult of self interest] is through…how we establish basic trust or mistrust, or whether, you can…lie to enough people enough times with misinformation that you could gradually convince everyone that what's in your interest is in their interest as well. So we're open, in that sense…as a society, and probably open as a species, to complete manipulation.

Rancourt: When I see that model, when I look at it and see how it operates in our society, I think it is a huge lie. It is a lot of crap. They pulled one on us. It's very disturbing to see everyone gobble that up because it is not true, it is not true. Information and education do not lead you to higher consciousness and wanting to actually act, it leads you to needing and wanting more information and wanting to organize it even better in your head and thinking about more elaborate ways that you'll maybe, eventually, be able, maybe, to change something. It neutralizes you; that is what I see.

Memo 8 - pacifism/education as pathology 24/03/09
This actually answers the question regarding why we do not act on evidence. We do not act because we continually seek more information bamboozled by the promise that more information will eventually lead to some action. This explains Rafael's conundrum with Canada as the expert report writer on the social determinants of health, but totally ineffective at actually doing anything about it.
          The idea of inexperience in activism leading to the neutralization of change becomes useful in many ways. If you can scare citizens when they're young, and get children into the non-active mode you can reduce any activism later in life. Just as if children are overprotected they tend to accidentally kill themselves at 16 and 17 year old because they have no idea of risk management, activists tend to either go too far ineffectively, or not at all through anger/fear. I'm not sure this really makes any sense but I see something forming with regards to an deeper explanation of why society, so often, does not respond to both conclusive research and rising authoritarianism in any meaningful way. It is because it is far safer and easier to just seek more information, convince ourselves that everything is okay, that authoritarianism is not present, it is safer to be afraid (while saying the opposite) than to act.

The Steamroller

Concepts   authoritarianism

                    absolute unwillingness

                    it's outrageous - blatant abuse of power

                    relentless beast

                    democracy failing

                    technology

                    copyright wars

                    pathetic little circus

The Steamroller category began as an *in vivo* code (concept) from Rancourt and was further

developed through the eight concepts listed above into a category. The descriptive data reviewed

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here is primarily taken from the first five concepts: authoritarianism, absolute unwillingness, it's outrageous, relentless beast, and democracy failing.

Taylor: If you mean social authoritarianism, I understand this as the tendency of political elites to attempt to increase their level of control over their citizens' lives, which not only makes the citizens less free, and thus less content, but doesn't improve the quality of government. This however is not as simply negative as it looks. For one thing, people appear to need/desire a certain amount of external control. Unfortunately, not only does that desire show individual differences, but there is not always a clear link between what people desire and what is beneficial for them.

Raphael: Authoritarianism is a strong word. My masters [degree] involved authoritarianism so I have read Adorno etc., so rather than say authoritarianism...authoritativism, authoritative in the sense that authoritarianism implies an active denial of alternative views in a putative manner. So...the biggest problem we encounter with determinants of health, especially now, is an unwillingness to raise issues that have political implications.

Rancourt: It [increasing authoritarianism] is Incremental. On the one hand, you have powerful interests who know what they want. They want more power and more influence, more profit, more control, a bigger piece of the economy...they're always there and they're always looking for more, and that is the name of the game...it is a very cannibalistic sort of capitalism if you like. So on the other hand you have that force that drives things, and that is the same force that lobbies for the laws to look a certain way, that choose who the politicians are going to be, control the media to a large extent etc. That is a constant force pushing societal evolution in a certain direction one that is beneficial to them. That's always there and then you ask yourself "okay...how could this happen, how could this force just be allowed to pursue its interests?" Well, it is all hidden, it's not like they tell people, look we are trying to screw you over. It's all done incrementally through a multitude of means you don't notice...as an individual. In fact they make it hard for you to organize. They make it hard for you to talk to each other about this, and systems where you would be organizing, or becoming conscious of it. So they convince you that politics is voting for their chosen puppet once every four years and that that is democracy. So you should concentrate on that and you get involved in representative democracy and that's where you can have political agency. They push all these ideas on you that people accept to a large extent because they're presented with the reality that if they try to do anything else there is real resistance. So you're funneled into accepting the gradual changes that lead you to less and less control over your own life until...

Brillinger: This idea of the relentlessness is something that I see and I think that is part of what you're saying.

Rancourt: Yes, **the steamroller**

Brillinger: They do little bits at a time, but there is no such thing as enough and they never stop.

Rancourt: **The steamroller,** yes, this is what they talk about in the boardroom, this is what they talk about on the golf course, constantly scheming for more to take over, to have a bigger advantage, there is an entire hierarchal army of schemers trying to figure it out, how to do this.

Brillinger: Schemers?

Rancourt: (Laughs) I mean it's a conspiracy, right. There is a local Ottawa poet that I love, his name is John Akpata, and he has this one poem that he screams at the top of his voice and one of the main lines of the poem is "conspiracy theories are true".

Memo 5 The Steamroller (*in vivo* concept to category) – 23/3/09
This is an excellent description of the relentless beast. The incremental increase of powerful interests over public interest pushing continually where there is no such thing as enough in their own self-interest. Scheming endlessly over the years, over millennia. It is a dark concept.

Mckay: If I boiled it down, I would say that the cult of self-interest and the dominance of the cult of self-interest within... [is] global. That's why we're destroying the planet, that's why we are passing by opportunities to lift people out of poverty, which is quite doable, that's why we are ignoring mass genocide, and lots of other atrocities across the planet. Because it's been deemed by decision makers not to be in 'our' best self-interest to do anything about it.

Mckay: So the cult of self-interest is maintained, and ramped up…on steroids, because of the industry of advertising. The industry knows basically how to present information in true kind of brainwashing mind control technical ways, so that we'll continue to have the illusion that we have, that really we can live the lifestyle the way that we want and it doesn't affect anybody else.

Memo 1 (Raphael) – overview 30/03/09
So I read over Rafael's transcript and in so many ways it feels similar to Rancourt. The lack of action with regard to basic information. The lack of response from anybody. The brazen repetition of doing nothing from those in power. The twisting of language. The use of more and more research when absolutely none is necessary. This might be the most important part of the Raphael transcript—the idea of Canada as a world renowned production machine of documentation on the social determinants of health while remaining a laughingstock because of the complete lack of implementation of any of the concepts. Another thing that stands out is the change from the 1970s to 2010, from red Toryism, where maintaining stability meant giving people decent jobs, to neoliberalism, where everybody fends for themselves. Of course, Rafael goes on extensively about the lack of action, about how people are scared to rock the boat, and concludes nothing can be done until political change occurs at some significant level.

Raphael: In Ontario they are looking for every possible excuse not to do something, even though they have a big anti-poverty program plan. So in terms of authoritarianism…or authoritativism, where epidemiologist public-health officials are basically scared of their own shadows, they're unwilling to raise these issues for *fear of being smacked by their political masters.* When it does happen, when there is an opportunity, when you do get the chief public health officer's report, it is not being pushed in a big way.

Raphael: So when you talk about villains, considering the mental health conference the other day, people say you cannot blame people, we have to move forward... I said, yes we can blame people, we can blame people that not only have the knowledge, they have the power, and the influence. You can't blame some poor public health worker; but [you can blame] medical officers of health, the people that have influence and power, that are not going to be fired, that are not going to be removed. They are the ones who should know better. They *do* know better…they are not willing to do it.

Rancourt: Certainly the main players are very conscious of what they're doing, they're screwing everybody over to their benefit, and they know what they're doing. And, they don't care. They're in a different class… they would never allow their children to marry one of those other people etc., that's obvious. They are certainly conscious of what they are doing, but it is a complex system of many layers of the mosaic.

Raphael: You get them angry, you get the political masses angry and *they will not hesitate to cut funding.* Look what the Harper government did to the status of women... just closed

the offices down... they're doing that now with the court challenges[18] and…nobody cares...I don't know whether it's just a sign of the times or a sign of the culture. Sometimes I'd said that Canadians have had peace order and good government for too long, that when it goes off the tracks they don't know how to deal with it.

McKay: …we can keep you healthy, or keep you more productive, keep you in the marketplace participating in the pathetic little circus, by managing a chronic illness or chronic disease condition that happened to come up for you. It initially smacked so much of authoritarianism that lately, the global thinking is that you must add the self-management component to that.

Memo 4 – pathetic little circus (concept) –02/03/2009
This relates to mystification again, this idea of 'chronic disease management' that Brian brings up as a healthcare savior, mainly saving money. But, the 'chronic disease management' mantra apparently came across to the public as too authoritarian. So the health care system had to shift the message so that it at least seemed to contain a self help component (perception management). The reference to the true purpose of chronic disease management as just a ploy to keep people in the marketplace participating in the pathetic little circus is at second glance deeply disturbing. Because of what it says and because of who said it.

Brillinger: So this idea that it's going on at a higher level, there's lots of papers published, no one is saying no it doesn't exist.

Raphael: (Excitedly) yeah, yes you're absolutely right…I said that today in class, there is no argument, nobody ever comes out and says we are doing well on poverty, nobody comes out and says we are doing well on infant mortality... they just ignore it, it is just not in the discourse.

Raphael: You have the weakening of democratic structures. Governments were much more willing to support advocacy groups and when the Harper Conservatives cut the court challenges program... nobody said a word. Hell, when Campbell came in and cut legal aid for poor people, nobody said a word. I'm sure they said a word, they took it to court but it went nowhere. So they're getting away with it because, they think they can get away with it.

Taylor: What we have now is, as I understand it, nothing like what democracy originally meant. Moreover, critical thinking is hard work. It has been suggested by some that for maintaining democracy, separation of powers is more important.

Rancourt: To even question the administration of student funds that have been agreed upon for decades through a student referendum, that this research group will be funded in this way, and to say as an administrator, I'm going to look at the mechanics of that and see if I can find some way to cut your funding. I mean it's outrageous (expressive)

Rancourt:. Yes, yes and that's the most stunning thing…the president or vice president says something that's just outrageous and you don't get a reaction from the prof, or the students…well it's like nobody heard it, like they don't recognize how outrageous it is.

Memo 6 - it's outrageous 23/03/09   This relates to the cage within. This large scale, blatant lying and abuse of power that administrations, corporations, politics and religions get away with today amidst an 'informed' citizenry. Maybe it happens just before the fall of civilization everybody gets comfortable or caged, and can't be bothered to respond when their freedoms get chipped away at. At the University of Ottawa the current president seems to be able to get away with anything. And this is maybe why it seems difficult to bring up some of these freedom issues with people...I'm free, what's *your* problem?

Professors Olivieri and Noble react vehemently against the administrative university forces involved in the firing of Rancourt:

> The greatest challenge for these few genuine academics, however, has not been the enemies of truth outside the walls of universities but the enemies of truth within: the disreputably respectable self-perpetuating oligarchies of boards of governors and trustees and their unremarkable ranks of presidents, chancellors, provosts, rectors, principals, vice-presidents, deans, and chairs. For these miscreants of hierarchy and bureaucracy, and their retinue of retainers who lie for a living, the defining mission has always been not dogma, or dictate, or profit, much less the truth, but the sociopathic acquisition, maintenance, and enlargement of their own individual and collective power and privilege within the institution. Experts at nothing but manipulation, intimidation and the intricacies of policies and procedure, they are answerable to no shareholders, taxpayers, or regulators, immunized (insidiously, by appeal to academic freedom) from public scrutiny and accountability, and free to exercise autocratic control over faculty, students, and employees behind a facade of collegiality. Ambitious, ruthless, shameless, they ride roughshod over their easily disarmed colleagues who remain preoccupied with, and fatally distracted by, their honest dedication to the truth—easy prey for their superiors when and if the truth begins to hurt. (Olivieri and Noble 2008)

Raphael: ... but it's a downward spiral, it's getting really bad! And this was before the recession, I'm not even talking about the recession, all this stuff was like really bad before the recession. So it's going to take a real sea change.

We Can Be Heroes

Concepts	
	pacifism as pathology
	praxis
	resistance
	we can be heroes
	benefit of knowing?
	appeals for help
	true cost

Memo - we can be heroes 12/01/09   19/03/09
I really started thinking about heroism after reading *The Lucifer Effect* (Zimbardo 2007). The entire last section of this book is dedicated to how we can resist systemic influence, that is, authoritarianism. And it goes into some detail as to what heroism is and how we can better set ourselves up to become heroes and resist authoritarianism.

In a intensely personal paragraph Zimbardo reveals the confrontation where his graduate student (and future spouse) clearly points out his complicity in the cruelty of the Stanford prison experiment:

> I told her that dozens of people had come down to this prison and no one had reacted as she had. She was furious. She didn't care if everyone in the world thought what I was doing was okay. It was simply wrong. Boys were suffering. As principal investigator, I was personally responsible for their suffering. They were not prisoners, not experimental subjects, but boys, young men, who were being dehumanized and humiliated by other boys who had lost their moral compass in this situation…. it was a

slap in my face, the wake-up call from the nightmare that I had been living day and night for the past week. (Zimbardo 2007:170)

Zimbardo: …when most give in and few rebel, the rebels can be considered heroes for resisting the powerful forces toward compliance, conformity, and obedience. (Zimbardo 2007:xiii)

What moves someone to rebel to be heroic and what might that cost?

That's mainly a matter of whether you can look yourself in the mirror I think. (Chomsky, et al. 1992)

I did it [resisting authoritarianism, 2 Nobel prizes] to be worthy of the respect of my wife, Helen Ava Pauling. (Sagan 1995:418)

On a personal note, it's no secret that I have had to suffer an avalanche of hate and attack as I stuck my neck out to simply do my job. Some day I will tell you what the true cost of this has been for me, but not today. Today [Inauguration day for Barack Obama as US President] is a time for celebration and optimism and hope. (Moore 2009b)

Rancourt: …until, maybe, and I guess we are seeing some of it now, some people start to realize, no wait, this is really insane, it's gone too far, what do these words mean, this is the opposite of what they should mean, no wait a minute. Maybe they react and maybe they start to try to do something about it in an authentic way and maybe that catches on or maybe it doesn't…. I don't know, but that's how I see it.

Rancourt: I think that the only reason we're a little more conscious of it [   ]…in our modern societies is because there are so many transformations of the rules of the game…the economy, technology and technological development. There is so much turmoil, wars etc., that it makes room for becoming conscious.

Raphael: what you find is that the health units that are going ahead and doing this [implementing change based on the social determinants of health] are usually headed by medical officers of health who are fearless. They are fearless, they are saying…just go ahead, and they do it.

McKay: Revolution baby! (laughter) Kill the host, accelerate the decline (laughter). you know the interesting thing is that, when you're heavily involved in the trance that's required to be in the cult of self-interest, you're not open to that information. You can't be open to that information; it would produce such cognitive dissonance and distress that it would be unbearable. So you have to keep functioning, even though you know that they're lies, and…keep functioning as though somehow, someway, this great ship would be able to turn and go in better directions, despite mountains of evidence that say it won't turn until it has to. It won't turn until the decision to turn is more comfortable than the decision to keep going straight ahead. Historically, its only revolution that changed that.

Indeed, revolution; and revolution is facilitated by activism.

Core Category/Theory – <u>Silence Descends</u>[19]

Rancourt: Certainly the system works very, very hard to make everybody forget that action works, that risk-taking and direct action works.

Taylor: …knowledge by itself can have remarkably little impact when people are put in the kinds of situations that trigger specific behaviours. *Practical experience* would probably be a better strategy.

Raphael: Of course, they're asking for more research.

The core category indicates that critical thinking, knowledge, information and research in and of themselves are limited by their inability to reduce injustice and affect society at this time. Practical experience, risk-taking, activism and direct action are the essential elements that when duly mixed with critical thinking and knowledge provide the catalyst for significant change. Although activism in general refers to "a policy of taking direct and militant action to achieve a political or social goal" (Princeton:2009); a specific type of activism involving the 'mixing' of critical thinking and risk taking action is referred to here. Rancourt explains the risk/action aspect:

> I'm going to actually get involved, put myself at risk, and see what that's like and see what happens. Then you learn something, then you learn something about the psychology of the oppressor, you learn something about how the system works, how the systems going to respond, what the backlash is going to be like. What was the actual amount of risk that you exposed yourself to, what were the consequences, you learn something and you learn something real about the system that you could never have learned any other way…that's the kind of risk that I think is essential.

Rancourt goes on to further explain the combining of critical thinking, action and risk:

> Paolo Freire[20], called it 'praxis' using the word in a very special way where he talks about information and study and reflection **in combination with** action to liberate yourself, to fight your own oppression, that in turn motivates you to want to learn more, and that learning is directly relevant to the action you're taking because it has to be, because your survival depends on it... that's the 'praxis' of Paolo Freire…Without the action element you're not going anywhere, you're not actually participating in anything, you're not actually achieving anything, you're not actually changing anything. I believe that. I think there is a big dividing line in activism and it basically divides up between those who are practiced in taking risk and are willing to take risk, in order to push back, in order to confront the machine that is eating him up; versus the ones that are only fooling themselves and invent all of these excuses to not take risk, like, I have to study it first, I have to get more information.

It is this critical thinking approach to activism and oppression with the action element as conceptualized by Freire/Rancourt and encapsulated in the word "praxis" that is threatened by authoritarianism. The tendency to 'study' the problem to the point of complete inaction or, alternately, respond with excessive unconstructive violence, are both problematic, equally ineffective, and both encouraged through the mechanism of rising authoritarianism.

Feel the Real – Rancourt: direct action explained (full version)
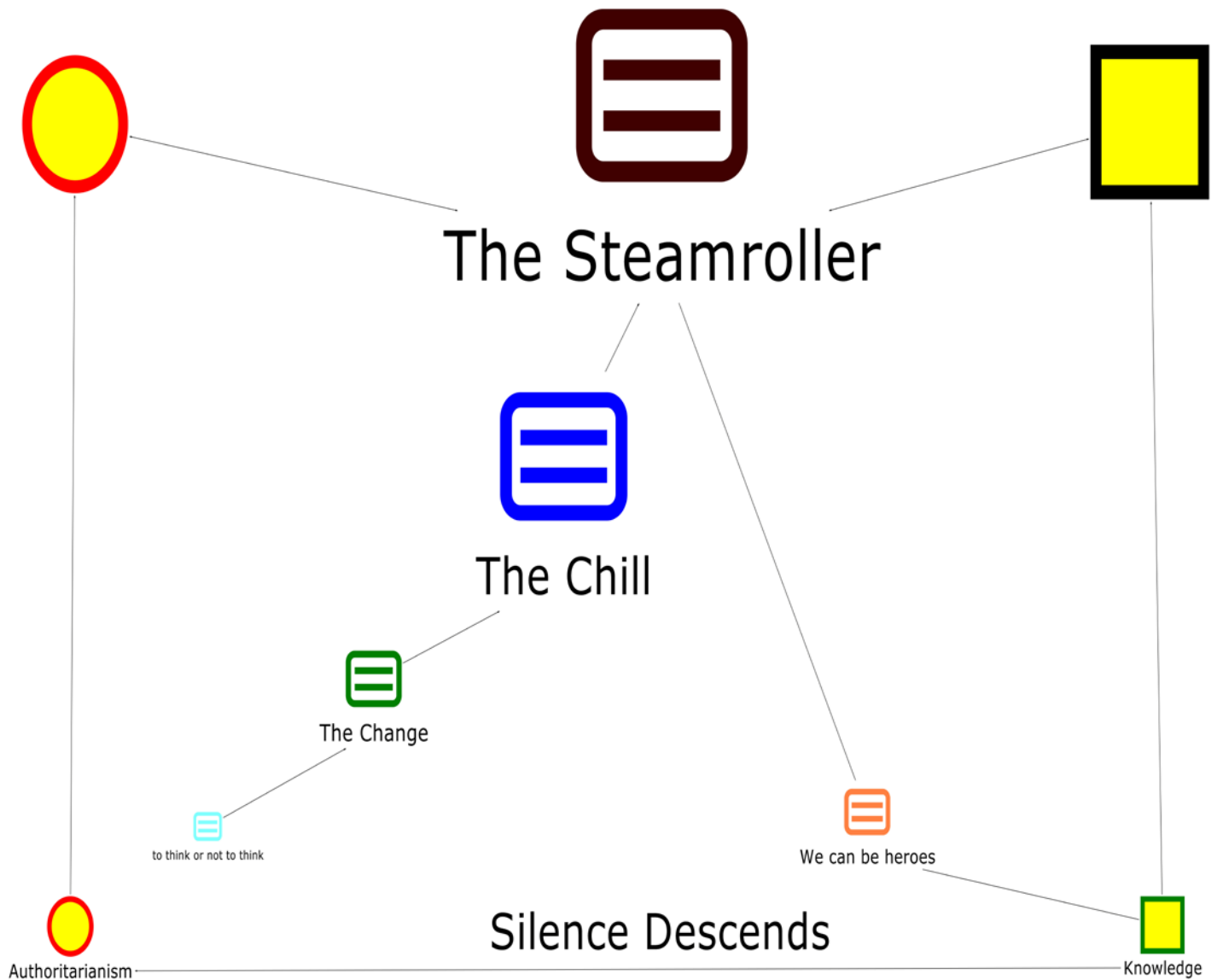
Figure 2 - Silence Descends

The central theoretical insight (Figure 2) is that the interaction and cumulative effect of the first four categories over extended periods of time reduces the level of societal activism below the level necessary to effectively counterbalance individual or societal tendencies towards authoritarianism or other systemic dysfunctions. No institution seems to be immune from this pervasive effect, regardless of their stated function and purpose within a society, including academia. Without a substantial *activist* element of diversity generators, rebels, and anti-authoritarians willing to risk and act directly in society (providing some necessary restraint on authoritarianism), authoritarianism itself becomes self reinforcing through expansion of the four categories and reduction of the one (**we can be heroes**).

Secondarily, and counter intuitively, the process of rising authoritarianism outlined here is often *aided* by the mistaken belief that information and research somehow provide resistance to authoritarianism in a progressive or democratic society. This basic misunderstanding regarding the efficacy of the pacifist educational model, or pacifist model in general (Churchill and Ryan 1998) to actually restrain authoritarianism or influence significant change also *provides the necessary illusion that something is being done while nothing is happening*; thus allowing authoritarianisms insidious and relentless growth despite increases in knowledge.

Authoritarianism is both the starting point and the ending point for the Silence Descends model. Initially authoritarianism is responsible for small reductions in critical thinking (**To Think Or Not To Think**) that ultimately result in societal shifts (**The Change**) in directions that normalize and expand the control mechanisms (**The Chill**). This extension and normalization of influence, manipulation, fear and lies through media saturation and concentration of power in turn allows Authoritarianism (**The Steamroller**) unobstructed growth. This growth of authoritarianism is the underlying mechanism that reduces our capacity to mount an adequate response to any and all abuses. Individual heroism/activism (**We Can Be Heroes**) is not eliminated through this model but its effect on society in general becomes minimized as the majority tend to remain or become inactive.

As information, knowledge, and research expand exponentially—Silence Descends; activism, action and resistance contracts. This theoretical model may have some explanatory power for understanding the current world and the directions in which it is moving.

Discussion

In most research endeavours there arise a few key thoughts in the form of sentences or paragraphs that reveal the underlying assumptions or logic of the author, sometimes they are recognized by the writer and expounded upon, but often not (Corbin, 2008). As I considered this 'one sentence' idea from Corbin the following did stand out:

> Memo <u>critical thinking</u> 9/03/09: …Is there no way out of this <u>quandary</u>, where the reasonable and rational lose power to the authoritarian who becomes more powerful and then redefines what is reasonable and rational?

The redefinition of what is reasonable and rational utilizes existing knowledge primarily to increase one's power while discrediting information (even knowledge you yourself use) when it impugns your power. Therefore, the reason knowledge and research is not incorporated into society with regard to children or ourselves is simply because it is not, as McKay points out above, in the self-interest of those in power. As authoritarianism rises, this situation becomes more common. I knew in advance that the research participants would reveal some aspects of authoritarianism that I was studying although I was somewhat surprised about the extent of support as the categories emerged. As I reflected upon each interview during the results writing, I was taken back to the sense of hope I felt just after the interview with Rancourt. That hope occurred because Rancourt provided the most eloquent answer to a way out of the 'quandary'— through the use of 'Praxis' intelligent, critically thought out direct action.

However, as I continued with the data analysis while simultaneously following the Rancourt firing case, I began to have doubts about the efficacy of any intervention strategies. Just as the University of Ottawa was about to fire Denis Rancourt in a procedurally flawed meeting, Prof. Ward Churchill was poised to win his wrongful dismissal suit against the University of Colorado. Churchill was fired in 2007 for an 2001 essay he wrote after the Sept. 11 World Trade Center bombing entitled "*Some People Push Back: On the Justice of Roosting Chickens*" (Churchill 2001). This essay so angered the right-wing donors and 'public' that the University of Colorado, terrified of losing a certain percentage of its financial support, easily did the wrong thing and fired Churchill. After failing to find grounds based on the essay itself and meticulously analyzing thousands and thousands of pages of his research, he was fired for plagiarism. The jury in his trial unanimously concluded on April 4th 2009, that the plagiarism charges were false and that the reason Churchill was fired was the essay, which was critical of US foreign policy (Editorial 2009). Churchill had won in Court and would likely be reinstated.

Feel the Real – And you'll excuse me this moment of excess

Rancourt's sins seemed minor in comparison as he gave out grades of A+ on the first day of a fourth-year physics class in order to proceed in the course with extensively researched, pass/fail, physics pedagogy. He was fired for this even though other professors had used this grade practice at other universities over the years, for example, David F. Noble, Professor of History at York University (Noble 2007). As it turns out, the grade issue was minor and it is highly

likely that Rancourt was actually fired for his activism and criticisms (specifically of Israel and of the President of the University, Alan Rock)—it was a political ideological firing just as Churchill's had been (Rancourt 2008).

As I continued to follow the unfolding of the Churchill and Rancourt situations over the span of a few winter months, the sense of hope I had previously acquired from the interview with Rancourt and from Churchill's win in court began to seriously fade. First, Rancourt's firing meant being driven into the court system and, like Churchill, this meant years before getting a positive verdict and being reinstated or paid out. And more importantly from my own research and as Rancourt himself stated, that to go into the court system is in large part to lose the battle for change.

Rancourt: … pacifist methods are not going to give you results is what he (Churchill), says. You can go and occupy the president's office because he is not allowing you to poster and eventually the police will come in and drag you out and <u>you will be in the court system and that is all wonderful, but you did not win the battle</u>.

Both Churchill and Rancourt understand the court system is a difficult improbable way to win the larger battle. In Churchill's case he eventually won, but did he? He was removed from the University of Colorado for two years while those political ideological interests that had him fired no doubt solidified their control, and even now continue to attack Churchill despite the court result. **The Chill** effect on campus has to be significant, just as the outcry was minimal. The reaction to Rancourt being fired was muted at best, other than the scathing attack on the University administration by Olivieri and Noble (Olivieri and Noble 2008), indicating the necessary level of activism is just not there to have him reinstated quickly. If the Churchill case is anything to go by, Rancourt could be attacked ceaselessly, dragged through the mud by the university, the media, and anyone else who cares to, or worse, completely ignored over the next two years before hopefully being vindicated by a win in court. This is the *Hero's Journey* (Campbell 1968) just as Churchills' was, but in Rancourt's own words that court route is an ineffective way to win and, as he expressed to me directly, it was not the way he wanted to go. In his case, he will have been removed from all of his activist activities on campus, as well as important research[21] and effective teaching for a number of years. **The Chill** of course is, in effect, be afraid, be quiet, and conform or—we can, and will, fire you. Finding a way out of the 'quandary' is only to find that way blocked—activism wanes and heroes battle alone amidst the ruins, becoming at best martyrs in a dying cause.

[Churchill Verdict Update July 8th 2009: Denver District Court Judge Larry Naves **vacated** (totally erased) the jury verdict. Churchill receives no reinstatement, no compensation, and is left with a million dollar legal bill, all this after his 'win' in court. His lawyer David Lane explains: "Essentially, this Court has ruled that regardless of how egregious any Constitutional violations are by the Regents of the University of Colorado, as long as they provide a sham, a kangaroo court for individuals targeted for termination and/or persecution because of their political beliefs, the courts of the State of Colorado will never interfere with any such wholesale violations of the Constitution…" (Lane and Bruce 2009). Churchill has vowed to continue the legal battle for reinstatement.]

The literature review was undertaken in an effort to understand, initially in the case with children, why we do not act on what we know is in the best interest of society despite all the evidence and all the research. The research interview component was still permeated by this question despite the official research question: *What relationships, if any, exist between authoritarianism, undue influence, and critical thinking in a modern capitalist society?* The research also brought out the associated 'quandary' idea, whereby the powerful do not have any obligation or necessity to acknowledge or implement information other than to manipulate it in their own best interest. Returning to my previous discussion regarding psychology as a possible aid to authoritarianism, could it not be just another example of the 'quandary' where powerful forces within psychology deemed it not in their _self-interest_ (McKay) to pursue the psychological effects of consumer capitalism on children or society. When eventually forced (by research rebels) however, the American Association of Psychology produced some documents.

> Given the significant role played by advertiser-supported media in the lives of the nation's children, it is time to move forward with new policies that will better protect the interests of children and new research that will address the vast array of unanswered questions in this important topic area. The stakes are too high to ignore these issues or their impact on the nation's youth." (Kunkel, et al. 2004:24)

While admitting to the problem and recommending a ban on advertising among other actions, nothing happened, nothing sticks (Rafael). Psychology remains mired in the _Phantom zone_ delusion that more information, more documents will eventually lead to some action when in fact this is not true as Rancourt and the historical record points out.

Personal Experience – Feel the Real Narratives

> Saw Elvis last Saturday night. He lived ten minutes away in a smaller town than [----]. He was a finalist in the Elvis impersonators. His voice is so similar. His last song was, "but I did it my way". It reminded me of you so much because you did it your way and because of that you saved us from the evil empire. Your greatest gift (to question authority at all costs) is also a source of great pain. I thank you and my family thanks you for being the main catalyst behind the exiting. (e-mail to author, 2003)

The personal experience and narratives sprinkled throughout the paper are an attempt to bring the topic alive and bring the reader closer to the experience of authoritarianism and influence. Put simply, to feel it to the point where it becomes more personal. It is some combination of personal experience and critical thinking that may be the key to action. Academic or scientific detachment have been a necessary component of research and other intellectual pursuits. Of the research participants, Taylor seemed most successful at maintaining academic detachment with regard to authoritarianism. Rafael, Rancourt, and McKay moved beyond the academic into the personal and I believe this is because authoritarianism *is* intensely personal. It is an abusive attack on the person, on the self. If authoritarianism, or other sub-fields of injustice for that matter, are continuously studied in a detached way, as in the purely clinical view of the researcher, the tendency to actually do anything wanes and eventually vanishes. In the absence of activism, direct action/active resistance, in response to social, political, economic, and environmental injustices, authoritarianism continuously expands because there are no restraint mechanisms whatsoever. When authoritarianism becomes personal because of the overwhelming evidence or because of some impact on one's life, as in the case of Zimbardo, the impetus to become more of an activist, even if it is just in the writing or speaking out on the topic, occurs. Wendell Potter, whom I quoted earlier as an example of the Corporation turned psychopath, recently left his million-dollar executive job at Cigna (one of four private health insurance giants in the United States) because the people he had previously considered only as numbers became real. Potter explains to Bill Moyers what happened:

> I was [still working for Cigna]. I went home, to visit relatives. And I picked up the local newspaper and I saw that a health care expedition[22] was being held a few miles up the road, in Wise, Virginia. And I was intrigued.
> I borrowed my dad's car and drove up 50 miles up the road to Wise, Virginia. It was being held at a Wise County Fairground. I took my camera. I took some pictures. It was a very cloudy, misty day, it was raining that day, and I walked through the fairground gates. And I didn't know what to expect. I just

assumed that it would be, you know, like health booths set up and people just getting their blood pressure checked and things like that.

But what I saw were doctors who were set up to provide care in animal stalls. Or they'd erected tents, to care for people. I mean, there was no privacy. In some cases, and I've got some pictures of people being treated on gurneys, on rain-soaked pavement. And I saw people lined up, standing in line or sitting in these long, long lines, waiting to get care. People drove from South Carolina and Georgia and Kentucky, Tennessee – all over the region, because they knew that this was being done. A lot of them heard about it from word of mouth. There could have been people and probably were people that I had grown up with. They could have been people who grew up at the house down the road, in the house down the road from me. And that made it real to me….

It was absolutely stunning. It was like being hit by lightning. It was almost – what country am I in? …it just didn't seem to be a possibility that I was in the United States. It was like a lightning bolt had hit me. (Potter 2009)

For Wendell Potter it became personal and he rebelled against the injustice of his career by quitting and then telling people how the private health insurance business works—in order to continuously increase already obscene profit levels, health insurance companies focus on denying claims to enhance the "medical loss ratio" and drive up stock prices:

Well, there's a measure of profitability that investors look to, and it's called a medical loss ratio…how much of a premium dollar is used by the insurance company to actually pay medical claims. And that has been shrinking, over the years, since the industry's been dominated by, or become dominated by for-profit insurance companies. Back in the early '90s, or back during the time that the Clinton plan was being debated, 95 cents out of every dollar was sent, you know, on average, was used by the insurance companies to pay claims. Last year, it was down to just slightly above 80 cents.

…And they [wall street] think that this company has not done a good job of managing medical expenses. It has not denied enough claims. It has not kicked enough people off the rolls. And that's what happens, what these companies do [is deny more claims], to make sure that they satisfy Wall Street's expectations with the medical loss ratio.

For others, like neuroscientist Kathleen Taylor, writing a book about brainwashing might be taken as a rebellious even heroic act within the normal confines of that discipline. Rafael pointing out the *Phantom Zone* concept, Rancourt pointing out the glaring weakness in the educational model, and McKay deconstructing the medical model are probably enough to have them shunned, ignored or fired. So I agree with Zimbardo that, when "most give in and few rebel, the rebels can be considered heroes for resisting the powerful forces toward compliance,

conformity, and obedience" (Zimbardo 2007:xiii). The participants were all resisting at a time when resistance was waning—rebels and heroes.

This research is not a particularly rigorous or extensive instance of grounded theory methodology. It is a rudimentary application using the basics of what grounded theory represents without achieving data saturation or the use of its many advanced analytical tools. I consider the research successful in that it does represent the participants' views in some authentic way, as three out of four interview participants did read and respond to the final thesis in a positive manner with none, or only minor changes. The participants and the secondary data sources were all similarly predisposed to a certain 'negative' (realistic) view of society concerning authoritarianism or influence or critical thinking. What about the other side? The arguments that run counter to what I have produced here are everywhere. They are the meta memes[23] of the free market propagated by a dysfunctional media. The arguments for religion, free-market economics and distorted democracies are brilliantly articulated and barbarically followed in the status quo. I feel no compulsion to give the other side 'equal space' as it promotes itself exceedingly well within each and every one of us. I also do not believe a "softer, more balanced, better researched approach" would have improved my arguments, quite the contrary. It would only make the paper another amorphous academic element fading into oblivion. Not that this paper will not 'fade' but as I mentioned in the introduction, first and foremost I wrote this for myself and I prefer this style.

Anyone who reads this document will consider a plethora of counter arguments and so they should as critical thinkers. It is up to the individual to determine which of those counter arguments are actually their own and who benefits, and which have been "planted and nurtured" by an environment infused with the elements of authoritarianism. This rationalization does not eliminate my cognitive bias toward confirmation (Creswell 2007) throughout the paper and the research, but neither does it attempt to hide it. As I moved back and forth between the three pillars holding up the thesis (my experience, the literature review and the research) it proved overwhelming not to use the ample confirming evidence that seemed to endlessly appear. Credibility is enhanced by the "prolonged engagement and persistent observation " (Creswell 2007:207) that I have with the topic, two years of intensive interdisciplinary academic study, personal interviews and extensive personal experience, observation, study and investigation over

thirty years. The use of the interdisciplinary method has allowed for wide-ranging "triangulation" bringing together theories from disparate disciplines to strengthen the thesis. The participants views were of such strength and directness that they stand alone inasmuch as I have attempted to present them honestly. I find most rewarding the discovery of the core category, Silence Descends. This is an idea that I had not previously considered and its theoretical implications regarding the interactions between authoritarianism, critical thinking, knowledge and activism is an area worthy of exploration. Unfortunately, it also indicates that such exploration is of little use in an increasingly authoritarian infused society where the addiction to research may be instrumental in crushing the will to act.

4. SYNTHESIS – Pandora's Box

I have tried to demonstrate that authoritarianism represents a significant concern within so called first world democracies and by extension globally. The advances in coercion and influence techniques starting in the 1950's, combined with the current advances in the brain sciences, are powerful tools in any culture where unethical influence is normalized. I presented the 3D Syndrome of Deception, Dependency and Dread, along with the six weapons of influence and eight themes of totalism to more easily understand commonly used influence techniques. Dread (fear), repetition, and the malleability of the brain (children and adults) are especially significant. And, considering the advancing *Culture of Cruelty* (Giroux 2009; Taylor 2009) in North America it is worth repeating that authoritarianism, "otherization" and cruelty are intimately linked. I have tried to demonstrate that, to various degrees, coercive techniques common to authoritarianism can, and are, being used in 'democracies'. I incorporated my experience, both personal and academic, throughout the paper and specifically, with children to illustrate authoritarianism in the large and powerful institutions of religion, politics and economics. I concluded that any group or society constantly exposed to an environment permeated by fear would unavoidably experience an increase in authoritarianism. This increase in authoritarianism can be started, directed and/or manipulated by those in power, to further advance an authoritarian and even totalist worldview among citizens, thus solidifying and extending their power.

The research indicated that information, knowledge, document production and research itself are not providing the necessary catalysts for social action and progressive change in the modern world. The research revealed that the generally accepted benefits derived from increasing knowledge and technology is somewhat illusory and may in fact dissuade people from actually *doing* anything. It is experience, risk, activism and critical thinking that are the necessary components for efficient direct action to take place—especially in a culture of fear and rising authoritarianism.

It is probably most worrisome to assert that the current manifestations of authoritarianism globally seems headed toward a finality where the ancient balance between conformity and diversity that has enabled human progress up to now might be lost (Bloom 2000a:206). This

"end of days" scenario, however remote, is a relatively new outcome of authoritarian power. It was first seen during the 1962 Cuban Missile Crises when " reason and rationality were not enough" (Morris and McNamara 2004) and supposedly sane, and intelligent, leaders came shockingly close to starting an all-out nuclear war. The present 'end of days' scenario is that an authoritarian predisposed world free of restraints would, as it in large part already has, slowly cannibalize its own environment to the point of complete ecological collapse (Conners, et al. 2008; Diamond 2005:498).

This deteriorating situation then would imply that we are at a historically significant juncture in the evolution of human beings. The short term effects of rapid cultural evolution on the brain (driven by technology) are colliding head-on, so to speak, with the much more slowly evolving old brain from 150,000 years ago where our reactions to fear were hard wired. Meanwhile, as current and future technology grows at a staggering exponential rate (Kurzweil 2005); the brain sciences are delving ever deeper into how the brain operates at a biological level providing new and powerful tools to anyone willing and able to buy and use them.

> The world of *Neuropath* is a world where the 'unwanted truths' have reached critical mass, both socially and spiritually. It's a world where the pace of technologically driven social change has outstripped culture's ability to cope, where the black box of the soul has been laid bare to the appetite of irresistible institutional forces. And it very well could be *our world.* (Bakker 2008:306)

I am not alone with the many ideas and theories put forth here and with the underlying critique of power within and without the University. I have taken many ideas and theories across a wide range of disciplines and made what I felt were reasonable links, connections and extensions. Discovering the many academics and professionals who have enabled and reinforced this work has been a rewarding aspect of writing and researching. Alternately, the most disquieting aspect is that I am deeply troubled by what I have constructed and the worldview that has emerged. I can understand completely why people would prefer not to know, to argue with, or to ignore what is proposed here. I question at times the *benefit of knowing* if what I have conjured up is an accurate or partially accurate view of the world. However, that same group of academics and professionals who have accompanied me throughout this journey indicate there is probably more truth here than anyone would like to admit. Pandora's box has been opened wide and as the dark secrets within come tumbling out rebels and heroes will continue to do what they have always done:

The modern hero, the modern individual who dares to heed the call and seek the mansion of that presence with whom it is our whole destiny to be, cannot, indeed must not, wait for his community to cast off its slough of pride, fear, rationalized avarice, and sanctified misunderstanding. 'Live,' Nietzsche says, 'as though the day were here.' It is not society that is to guide and save the creative hero, but precisely the reverse. And so every one of us shares the supreme ordeal, carries the cross of the Redeemer—not in the bright moments of his tribe's great victories, but in the silences of his personal despair. (Campbell 1968)

It remains to be seen whether a 'diminishing' supply of courageous activists, rebels and heroes is enough to stem the tide of authoritarian-tainted systems. Our environment, conceived of in the widest possible sense and a necessity in the proper development and growth of human beings, remains balanced precariously on a precipice, both psychologically and ecologically.

Bombarded with deception, dependency and dread, citizens and societies continue to constrict and conform; while authoritarianism thrives, utilizing advancing knowledge in coercive techniques in its endless pursuit of group authority, conformity and power.

The neglect of the plurality of our affiliations and of the need for choice and reasoning obscures the world in which we live. It pushes us in the direction of the terrifying prospects portrayed by Matthew Arnold in "Dover Beach":

"and we are here as on a darkling plain
swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
where ignorant armies clash by night."

We can do better than that. (Sen 2006)

Can we?

5. Feel The Real – Hyperlinked Narratives

Public School Blues 1 – pushing the limits

Our mid-day 'discussion' began to get heated. The professor (a seconded teacher from a public school) and I were seated across from each other in a public school library, separated by a table strewn with binders and papers. The meeting had started as a standard check-up of my practicum work in a grade one classroom but had seriously devolved into a skirmish about educational philosophies. My determined refusal to conform to the professor's philosophy of teaching increasingly infuriated her. I was apparently insulting her 30 years of experience teaching primary math with my constructivist, experiential, play-based views. I did not argue she was wrong, only that I be allowed to teach differently than her. I began to sweat as she began to totally lose her composure. I still could not bring myself to agree to teach the 'farm unit" in that traditional style she preferred. She suddenly went what I can only describe as, berserk, stuffing documents in a satchel, getting up, and smashing through the internal library door so hard it rattled throughout the entire school. I sat there surrounded by books, sunlight streaming in, children reading at the far end of the library and thought, "maybe I pushed her too far?" The next week as I worked with the grade ones, I was 'summoned' from upstairs. As I walked into the dim, windows blocked, second-floor room, the professor and the school based adjunct professor were already lined up on the other side of the table, with that brutal look 30+ years of experience in public schools can give. Ambushed and outnumbered I remained standing as they got straight to the point "If you don't do exactly what we tell you to do, we will have you kicked out of the faculty of education." I was tense, hell, I was terrified, but I responded automatically "I don't work for you, I'm not here for you, I work for them, I'm here exploring methods of teaching and learning with young children." "Ha, ha, ha," they laughed, then replied "you're naïve, and you'll give us what we want or you won't get the mark or worse." I was livid. This was not what I understood university to be; at least it was not my experience with those professors I admired. I eventually acquiesced to at least teach the unit they wanted, in sort of the way they wanted, but I made it clear before leaving "I don't agree with either of you or your approach." My turn to slam the door. In the end they did the worst they could with their limited power and gave me a scholarship killing grade of C. I went to the Dean, regardless of having been told "*they* never change marks," who after careful consideration, significantly altered and

then signed the practicum form, and raised the mark significantly—scholarship saved. The Academy, I learned early, was not without its flaws that must be overcome. This is not my only, nor worst experience with authority. As I continued on into the third and final year in the Faculty I never saw that professor again but I found many other authoritarian personalities, some infinitely more powerful than the one we had nicknamed "death," or they found me.

Public School Blues 2 – the little boy and the school

"No, No, No, No," the teacher said, "we don't do it that way here; we do it this way!" "Oh" said the little boy and he thought, "That popcorn tree idea was OK but what is wrong with my popcorn snake crawling through the grass with a cloudy popcorn sky?"
"No, No, No, No," the teacher said, "we don't do it that way here; we do it this way!" "Oh" said the little boy and he thought; "What is wrong with my picture of a bright blue sun over a yellow sea in a place far away?"
"No, No, No, No," the teacher said, "we don't do it that way here; we do it this way!" "Oh" said the growing boy and he thought; "I wonder what is wrong with my way, I even had the right answer?"
"Why, Why, Why, Why," the teacher said, "don't you do the work your capable of?" "I don't know" said the bigger boy and he thought; "I used to do the work I was capable of, but then…?"
Much later when the boy left school he tried to think again and "do the work he was capable of"—it was very hard. It had been so long; but, after some time the boy (now a man) had been many places and learned many things—he began to think again. He thought that maybe he could work with children and help them to grow and develop. He tried it and the children said "stay with us, play with us." He worked harder with the children and the teachers said "you're wonderful with them, stay with them and teach them what you know." The man loved his work so much that he went back to school so he could learn to be a better teacher to more children.
"No, No, No, No," the teacher said, "we don't do it that way here; we do it this way!" "Oh" said the man and he stopped playing with the children at recess time.
"No, No, No, No," the teacher said, "we don't do it that way here; we do it this way!" "Oh" said the man and he stopped creating things the children loved to do.

"No, No, No, No," the teacher said, "we don't do it that way here; we do it this way!" "Oh" said the man and he stopped trying to understand children's feelings and children's needs. "Why, Why, Why, Why," the teacher said, "don't you do the work your capable of?" "I don't know" said the man "but this is school, isn't it?"   (Brillinger 1996)

Return

Public School Blues 3 – there's a gun in her briefcase

It was afternoon nap time in the municipal daycare system in which I worked, the only male of over fifty early childhood educators in the system. The 22 three to six-year-olds were either sleeping or laying quietly, the room was dim. The supervisor came in and explained there was someone in the office to see me and that she would stay with the children while I was gone. I had a bad feeling that only worsened as I walked into the supervisors office and the two women seated there did not rise to greet me. One had taken over the supervisor's desk and as she opened her briefcase I saw the handgun nestled comfortably in the corner. Just as I realized she was a police detective, she spoke "there has been an accusation, but we are not charging you with anything at this time." I replied all too quickly "I guess it was only a matter of time." The children's aid worker in the other chair said nothing. The detective behind the desk replied for both of them "but we can and will use anything you say against you." I quickly explained what I meant, that in my position of being the only male in a large daycare system and working with literally hundreds of children in four different centers the possibility of false accusations was a reality, a risk I had accepted. At the end of the "interview" the two women express some regret at having had to interrogate me, both convinced, correctly, I had done nothing. The incidents referred to were extremely unlikely to have happened at all, and regardless, they had supposedly occurred when I was not physically there. Of course, they still leave you hanging. I returned to the dim room with the 22 sleeping children and the supervisor left me alone, saying nothing. I looked around, shattered, knowing that something had changed, that the bull's-eye I sometimes felt on my forehead was real. I made the difficult decision to remain teaching young children, but as I think back, I probably never fully recovered from that moment.

return

The Devil in the Basement 1 – higher education

Scene - large exercise hall in a highly respected Canadian university, high ceiling, no windows, padded floor. "Yoga" students lined up along both walls. The Yoga "teacher/instructor" situated center front under the lights. April 1990

"You're a coward, a gutless coward Alex," remarked the "teacher" casually while continuing to berate and belittle Alex in the closing minutes of the class. "that wife of yours, I made that happen, I gave her to you and I can take her away, so you better wise up and do what I say." The rest of the group, highly educated, various ages, remained passive. The cult in the basement lasted 20 years until a small group of people responded heroically to the endless psychological abuse and brought it to a shuddering, painful and proper end in 1999. It was a brutal psychological war, casualties were common and recovery was arduous ..……..

The Devil in the Basement 2 – primal scream

The primal scream rattled the windows and doors. You could feel the psyche tear and I trembled. Maybe, again, I had gone too far, been too relentless in demonstrating again and again and again that the "guru" was not what he purported. Was not a guru at all but just another powerful authoritarian personality, scoring high on the sociopath scale, gifted at coercion and deceit, a narrow minded bigot, wrapped in spiritual nonsense, twisting souls and implanting fear for profit and power. The scream represented the overwhelming psychic pain of someone realizing that years of a life had been stolen away with lies. It had taken well over a year, destroyed my physical and emotional health, and probably ruined my career but I had done what all involved had thought virtually impossible, I had orchestrated the fall of a small but very powerful cult leader by facilitating the exiting of seven deeply embedded members—the close group. Highly educated, successful, bright people had been manipulated and coerced into virtual servitude for years and I had been involved, I had also been a witness to how it was done, and finally how it was undone in my Trojan horse role. This initial pain is the nature of waking up from the nightmare of lies, of realizing you have been caged within, it makes you crazy. One must be prepared, for the beast is real.

The Devil in the Basement 3 – thinking?

"I will do the thinking, you will do the following."

Jesus Camp – little children can make kings

Setting 1: Jesus Camp for children group meeting in a large hall in South Dakota, 2006.
Approximately 80 Children ages 4-13 are present, some accompanied by parents, many alone.
Organizer and children's preacher Becky Fischer watches as fellow preacher "Bob" preaches.
No laws are being broken.

Bob: "you gonna be radical!"

Children: screaming and yelling, clapping, swooning

Bob: "how many of you want to be those who give up their lives for jesus"

Children: continue to scream, "yes, yes, yeah, "

Bob: "Jesus can, yes we can break the power, we gotta break the government, god must be in

government... righteous government… they took jesus out of your schools….(Bob holds up a

porcelain teacup)…how many of you want to break this cup…"

Child ~7: tears in her eyes, "righteous government cup" smashes the cup with a hammer

"righteous government".

Bob: smashing a cup, "we break the power of the devil in this nation"

Children: screaming, yelling, clapping, some enraptured.

Becky: "little children can shape kings"

Jesus Camp (Ewing 2006)

Jesus Camp – it just gets crazier and crazier

Jesus Camp
Setting 2: Radio host (both host and station are Christian moderates) sitting at his consol calls
up children's preacher Becky Fischer.

Host: "Why kids? Why are they supposed to be some new Army of God, why are we using
kids to do that?"

Becky: "Anyone who does any work with kids knows, because the reason you go for kids is
because whatever they learn by the time they are or their [sic] 7, 8, 9 years old is pretty well
there for the rest of their lives. The statistics, you can see for yourself"

Host: "No, no, I know the statistics, but you use the term learn, the word learn is different than
indoctrinate. God gave us a brain, the freedom to choose, and learning is part of that choice, and

I think with the fundamentalist movement we're doing harm, we're harming the progression of mankind."

Becky: "I don't think any child chooses or gets anything by choice. Yes, if you're asking me if indoctrination is okay, yes fundamentally it is, every other religion is indoctrinating their kids"

Host: "But…." [host is exasperated]

Becky: "Hellooo, I would like to see more churches indoctrinate"

Host: "But you can tell a child anything, you can make them into child soldiers with AK-47s… you're creating child soldiers for the Republican Party."

Becky: "You can call it brainwashing, but democracy is designed to destroy itself because we have to give everyone equal freedom and ultimately that's going to destroy us, so a perfect world will not be a perfect world until Jesus is truly Lord."

Host: "Becky, thanks for joining us." Host looks ashen, pulls the headphones off hangs his head, rubs his eyes and face and sighs deeply "man, the more I hear about this, it just gets crazier and crazier."

Jesus Camp (Ewing 2006)

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They took my mind

Commercial Script Scenario – Bright lights cascade down on a middle aged women as she begins to tell her story. Slowly as she continues, the lights dim until she is enveloped in darkness as she recites the last line.

I guess of the worst part about it
is what they did to my brain
they took my brain
and along with it my feelings
my control
my passion and my love.

They took my brain and
made me something
other then I wanted to be
I lost sight of the meaning
I sunk into the madness
I lost my self-control
my self-respect

(continued next page)

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myself.

I wanted to make a better world
I was willing to fight for that
willing to sacrifice
but they took my soul
turned it inside out
made me something
other than I wanted to be.

And I guess the worst part about it
is that I did the same to others
just like me.
(Lalich 1993, p.53)

Rancourt: direct action explained

Rancourt: What I'm trying to say is, it's [resistance], not one-dimensional, not about rage alone. Well, to give you an example, since we're talking about pedagogy to some extent… the model of change that power would like us to adopt is the model pushed by all university professors, --everyone, it is uniform across the board--, is the model that is pushed by the entire educational system, all the propaganda in our mental environment pushes a model about how societal change occurs. That model says you want to change the world, you do it through education. You get out there and you give people education. You educate them, create information…put it out there, diffuse it through a blog, make a website, put some advertisements in some papers, write some good books—it says ideas are powerful. You just have to organize the information…people do not know there is a blockade and the Corporation control the media so what you have to do is educate people by whatever means you can. Organize talks, show documentary films, do what you can. It is all about education, because the model says, if you can educate people they will become aware of these problems, you will help to make them more conscious and once they attain a sort of critical mass of consciousness or awareness they will go into action and through that action you will be able to change and make the system better. And what will that action looks like? Typically, *it will be more education*. They will be part of a struggle to get more, and proper, and good, reliable information. So they will be part of that struggle, writing letters to members of Parliament, part of demonstrations at key moments. Get the people out to be active in your union, in your activist group, or from within, and to work for an NGO and try to produce change that way. You look at the kind of actions that this education will lead you, to it's those kinds of actions. Always founded in the belief that first you educate, first you learn, then you go into action, and that is the model that everybody pushes.

When I see that model, when I look at it and see how it operates in our society I think it is a huge lie. It is a lot of crap they pulled one on us. It's very disturbing to see everyone gobble that up because it is not true, it is not true. Information and education do not lead you to higher consciousness and wanting to actually act, it leads you to needing and wanting more information and wanting to organize it even better in your head and thinking about more elaborate ways that you'll, maybe, eventually, be able to maybe, change something. It neutralizes you that is what I see.

And it pushes you into actions that are ineffective because you can't learn about action and influence by reading about it. You can't learn about action and influence by thinking about it. You can't learn about action and influence by being told about it. You have to actually experience it, you have to say, okay that is an injustice, I feel it in my heart, that my emotion… to some extent I can understand that that is an incredible injustice that I just witnessed and I'm going to do something about it. I'm going to step in front of that guy and say you stop hitting a person or whatever. I'm going to actually get involved, put myself at risk, and see what that's like and see what happens. Then you learn something, then you learn something about the psychology of the oppressor, you learn something about how the system works, how the systems going to respond with the backlash is going to be like. What was the actual amount of risk that you exposed yourself to, what were the consequences, you learn something and you learn something real about the system that you could never have learned any other way. Without this kind of action, we're back to your quotation about risk taking, see that's the kind of risk that I think is essential.

Without that kind of action, Paolo Friere, called it 'praxis' using the word in a very special way where he talks about information and study and reflection in combination with action to liberate yourself, to fight your own oppression, that in turn motivates you to want to learn more and that learning is directly relevant to the action you're taking because it has to be, because your survival depends on it... that's the 'praxis' of Paolo Friere…Without the action element you're not going anywhere, you're not actually participating in anything, you're not actually achieving anything, you're not actually changing anything. I believe that. I think there is a big dividing line in activism and it basically divides up between those who are practiced in taking risk and were willing to take risk, in order to push back, in order to confront the machine that is eating him up; versus the ones that are only fooling themselves and invent all of these excuses to not take risk, like, I have to study it first, I have to get more information. You don't want to often just do things that might be hurting more than it helps, so we will think about it some more, etc.

So that's sort of the dividing line and that's what I think Ward Churchill is talking about in this book *Pacifism as Pathology (1998).* He is talking about the pacifist model that is the zero risk....well, he's talking about different kinds of pacifists. The authentic, Gandhi-like, true pacifists who are willing to be beat up, willing to actually be engaged, and put themselves at risk;, and, on the other side…another variety of pacifists who really are averse to any kind of risk at all so they're not authentic or legitimate pacifists in the sense of Gandhi. But all of these [fake]pacifists are working under the illusion that…you can operate change without engaging in a confrontation, a direct confrontation. So basically Ward is saying depending on the level of the problem, like if it is armed conflict and they're coming at you, you have to defend yourself in those circumstances and that means you have to take up arms. If it is a conflict involving an insane poster regulation on a university campus then the response is to put up posters, (not going to argue that the regulations should be changed), and then fight with the guards and employees that are going to try and take them down, use permanent glue etc. So depending on what the nature of the conflict is, the action which is considered high risk needs to be appropriate. It depends what the oppression is like and he is saying you can't just sit... pacifist methods are not going to give you results is what he says. You can go and occupy the president's office because he is not allowing you to posters and eventually the police will come in and drag you out and you will be in the court system, and that is all wonderful, but you did not win the battle.

And you'll excuse me this moment of excess

April 3, 2009
(Cover the kids' ears.)
I've spent the last four years watching a good man get his name drug through the mud for making the eminently reasonable point that you ought not be killing other peoples' kids. And that if you are in the business of killing other peoples' kids, they have the absolute right to fight back in any way they can.
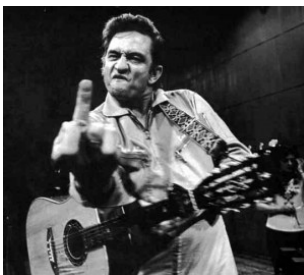
I've seen the most vicious smear campaign of my lifetime. A horde of shiteating columnists and radio shockjocks have made it their life's work to destroy one man. They went after his life, his livelihood, his family, and his reputation. There is no level to which they haven't stooped to ruin him.

I've watched Denver's local media crawl like dogs to eat the shit of their canine superiors in the rightwing national media. There has not been a single article in the Denver media to actually interrogate the trumped-up charges of academic misconduct levelled by the hopelessly biased CU investigative committee. Not one. Like with their coverage of the Iraq war (or for that matter, the preceding sanctions), they have gone to incredible lengths to never actually investigate the shit they were more than willing to eat out of the paws of their presumed betters.

Moreover, in that so-called bastion of higher learning at CU, I can count on my fingers and toes those faculty members who were willing to actually stand up and point out the absurdity of the smear campaign launched against Ward Churchill. Almost to a man or woman, they refused to make any kind of stand for the principles they pretended, every day, to represent. Nothing has been more disheartening than the absolute, unmitigated cowardice of the faculty of my alma mater. I've met pedophiles and rapists with whom I'd rather share an occupation.

But, I've also watched Ward Churchill, with his family, put their stake in the ground and refuse to back up an inch. That's what courage is, and I've been proud as hell just to witness it. In the last round of McCarthyism, there were very few to fight back. I think of Dashiell Hammett, and I think of Ward Churchill. So this one's for CU. And for Bill O'Reilly, Caplis and Silverman, Vincent Carroll, and the rest of the Denver media.

Fuck you

http://wardchurchilltrial.wordpress.com/2009/04/03/and-youll-excuse-me-this-moment-of-excess

Return

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Appendices

Appendix A – E-mail request, Questionnaire and Consent Form

Interview Guide

1) What relationships, if any, exist between authoritarianism, undue influence and critical thinking in a modern capitalist society?.

2) Follow up Questions or probes:

   a) Are we capable of maintaining critical thinking strategies necessary to retain democracy in a modern capitalist society?

   b) What role, if any, does authoritarianism play in your worldview?

   c) What is your experience as an academic when, despite extensive evidence and personal effort over long periods of time, your work remains unaccepted and/or ignored?

   d) What is your understanding of authoritarianism and its impact on society?

   e) Will you continue trying to highlight the effects of authoritarianism? Why/why not?

   f) Has the study of authoritarianism affected you personally?

   g) What, in your opinion, is the best strategy for us, as a society, to better understand our susceptibility to undue influence/authoritarianism?

   h) What has been your professional and personal experience researching the effects of authoritarianism and its associated components—conformity, authority and coercion?

   i) What is your biggest concern in the current time? What is responsible for this concern?

   j) How do you cope with what you know?

   k) What are some of the ways the university can become more engaged in assisting society

Appendix B – Interview Quotes

"We live in dark times, and the specter of neoliberalism and other modes of authoritarianism are gaining ground throughout the globe. We need to rethink the meaning of politics, take risks, and exercise the courage necessary to reclaim the pedagogical conditions, visions, and economic projects that make the promise of a democracy in a different future worth fighting for" (Giroux 2007:180).

"Our world is fast succumbing to the activities of men and women who would stake the future of our species on beliefs that should not survive an elementary school education" (Harris 2004:25).

"One of the most poisonous ethereal ideas in human history is the concept of an absolute authority which overrides all other moral or legal considerations"(Taylor 2004:253).

Appendix C – Document System (texts) and Code System

Texts
- Interviews In Person
  - Taylor
  - McKay
  - Rancourt
  - Raphael
- Interviews Done By Others
  - Moyers - Potter - Cigna
  - Scahill-Blackwater- Moyers
  - Black - Moyers
  - Simon Johnson-Moyers
  - David Simon - Bill Moyers
  - Artstrong-Moyers
  - Armstrong-Moyers-Now
  - Pirate Bay Copyright Interview
  - Pirate Bay - Follow Up Article
  - Chomsky Interview
  - Galbraith James T
  - Elliot T Barker
- Other authors - misc
  - Eisenhower
  - Gilles Deleuze - Societies Of Control
  - Dittmar
  - Veblen
  - Michael Moore
  - Stenner
  - Zimardo
  - Juliette Corbin
  - Jakoby
  - Sagan
  - Benkler - End Of Rationality
  - Cassandra - Tavakoli
  - Alliance For Childhood - Kindergarten
  - M. Wente Globe - We Pretend To Teach'em, They Pretend To Learn
  - Gutting Universities
  - Activist Scientists Hiv
  - Rip-Remix Manifesto
  - Marc-Richard-Carol - Benefit Of Knowing?
  - Schor In Defense
  - Buffy St Marie - Universal Soldier
  - Plan Can
- Rancourt/Churchill
  - Ward Churchill Wins Fu

Olivieri2
Rancourt Fired Citizen
Olivieri1
Rancourt - Noble Letter
Churchhill
Hall Support Rancourt
Bill Ayers On Churchill
Churchhill - Reinstatement Letter
Ward Churchill Timeline
Churchill - Fish - Ny Times
Movies, Documentaries, Books Fiction
Neuropath - Bakker
Pattern Recognition - Gibson
Where Do The Children Play
The Blue Kite
Equilibrium
Vendetta
Commitee Recommendations Etc
David Reccomendations
Memos Commitee/Thesis

Code System

Silence Descends
To Think Or Not To Think
critical thinking
no one is saying no it doesn't
The Phantom Zone-Cassandra Complex
childhood -- get them when they're young
decline of reason
time to think
midlife crisis
quis judicat?
The Change
academic change
50's - 60's-70's
In Grandfathers Time
cult of self-interest
students
The Chill
neutralized by fear
mystified by lies
scared of their own shadows
theory of moral distress
zombiefied

It is not a survival issue
loss of control
plausible deniability
Complete sterilization
The cage within
The Steamroller
authoritarianism
Absolute unwillingness
it's outrageous - blatant abuse of power
relentless beast
democracy failing
technology
copyright wars
pathetic little circus
We Can Be Heroes
pacifism as pathology
praxis
resistance
we can be heroes
benefit of knowing
appeals for help
true cost

Appendix D – BREB Certificate of Approval

The University of British Columbia
Office of Research Services
Behavioural Research Ethics Board
Suite 102, 6190 Agronomy Road, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z3

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL - MINIMAL RISK

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:	INSTITUTION / DEPARTMENT:	UBC BREB NUMBER:
Naomi M. McPherson	UBC/UBCO IKE Barber School of Arts & Sc/UBCO Admin Unit 1 Arts & Sci	H08-02862

INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT:

Institution	Site
UBC	Okanagan

Other locations where the research will be conducted:
Subject interviews will be carried out at Canadian Universities where the interviewee is currently employed as a professor.

CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):

Marc Brillinger

SPONSORING AGENCIES:

N/A

PROJECT TITLE:
The Battle For Reality: Rising Authoritarianism In Capitalist Societies

CERTIFICATE EXPIRY DATE: February 19, 2010

DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:	DATE APPROVED: February 19, 2009	
Document Name	Version	Date
Consent Forms:		
Consent Form	CF2	February 16, 2009
Questionnaire, Questionnaire Cover Letter, Tests:		
Interview Guide	N/A	January 30, 2009
Letter of Initial Contact:		
Initial Contact Letter/Email	IC2	February 9, 2009

The application for ethical review and the document(s) listed above have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Approval is issued on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board
and signed electronically by one of the following:

Dr. M. Judith Lynam, Chair
Dr. Ken Craig, Chair
Dr. Jim Rupert, Associate Chair
Dr. Laurie Ford, Associate Chair
Dr. Anita Ho, Associate Chair

Endnotes

[1] Originally dubbed the 'Enlightenment Project' this education premise was first developed in the 18th century by Smith, Diderot, Millar, Schiller, Hume, Kant and Rousseau. It was later critiqued by Derrida, Foucault, Habermas, Adorno, Lyotard and Luhmans as having failed due to its basic misunderstanding of dominate group influence. http://www.yorku.ca/jdwyer/images/THE%20ENLIGHTENMENT%20PROJECTlatest.htm

[2] 'Rising' authoritarianism refers to a shifting, changing and seemingly 'rising' level of authoritarianism manifesting globally, nationally, and institutionally. It is a blanket statement whose individual parts are put forth in diverse ways by diverse disciplines from which I cite throughout the paper.

[3] 'education pacifism' is the tendency to study, and then study some more and so on, while avoiding actually doing anything about the problem at hand (this term will be expanded in the research section).

[4] "We are blessed with a richness of specializations, but cursed with a paucity of panoptic disciplines-categories of knowledge that concentrate on seeing the pattern that emerges when one views all the sciences at once. Hence we need a field dedicated to the panoramic, an academic base for the promiscuously curious..." (Bloom 2003)

[5] Please refer to On Ethnographic Authority (Clifford 1988:21-54) for a discussion on this topic.

[6] Worldview meaning 'Weltanschauung' "a comprehensive conception or apprehension of the world especially from a given standpoint" (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/weltanschauung).

[7] Culture is "based on the uniquely human capacity to classify experiences, encode such classifications symbolically, and teach such abstractions to others" and is composed of "those features of thought [ideas, beliefs, and values], speech, behavior and technology that are learned and socially transmitted to other individuals" (Cultural Transmission 2007)

[8] Reason (and rationality) are critical thinking strategies and used and understood in the philosophic or scientific sense.

[9] The new (expensive) assessment implementation was scrapped after 2 years, and the Harris government initiated education changes were deemed a failure and most were reversed by 2000.

[10] However, I am certainly not immune from becoming more authoritarian under certain environmental conditions (to be discussed in Part 2. Influence) and/or, upon acquiring too much 'power'.

[11] In the reference section see Deleuze (Postscript..) and Gramsci (Gramsci and Marxist...), and Morrison (Marx, Durkeim, Weber...).

[12] Jane Elliott's Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes Experiment on Racism (1968), is to see the process of 'otherization' actually take place on camera, complete with all its associated cruelties...in a primary school classroom. http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/divided/

[13] For a more clinical and thorough description of "ideological resocialization" please refer to Benjamin Zablocki's academically excellent work in "Towards a Demystified and Disinterested Scientific Theory of Brainwashing" (2001).

[14] Totalism - extensive authoritarianism, especially when moving beyond political structures into any and all areas of civil society.

[15] Project BioShield announced in 2002 by President Bush earmarked 10 billion dollars for bioterrorism and biosecurity purposes by mid-2004.

[16] High Definition media approaches making the difference to the mind between real and mediated violence almost negligible.

[17] Invivo codes use the exact wording of participants.

[18] "In September 2006, Harper cancelled funding to the Court Challenges Program, thereby eliminating funding for both language rights and equality rights test cases." (http://www.rabble.ca/news/e-word-harper-hostile-equality)

[19] I first noticed this expression in *Silence Descends: The End of the Information Age 2000-2500* (Case 1997). A fascinating book of fiction that chronicles the collapse of information technology as the environment crumbles.

[20] Prominent theorist in critical pedagogy, see http://www.infed.org/thinkers/et-freir.htm

[21] In 2001 Rancourt was awarded the largest Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) Strategic Project Grant ever obtained in the Faculty of Science (to study boreal forests and lakes), and in 2008 had his current grants extended to 2013.

[22] Remote Area (free) Medical USA "This is the annual Wise County expedition, and is our largest regularly scheduled expedition held in the USA. In recent years, we have seen over 7,000 patient contacts in its 3 days" http://www.ramusa.org/expeditions/2007/expeditionwise2007.htm

[23] Memes (idea's, beliefs, values i.e culture) are units of information that reside in human brains and either successfully get copied with whatever mechanism of transmission is available or do not.

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