T.'S LIFEWORLD AND LANGUAGE

by

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Abstract

During his twelve years of life, T., a gifted boy who was born with severe cerebral palsy, achieved the ability to communicate with "the rest of the world" at an advanced level, though he used facilitated and augmentative communication. The author of this narrative and interpretive study is T.'s father, who maintained a unique dialogue with his son. T. himself volunteered to contribute actively to the study by helping to plan and to edit, and by supplying a number of autobiographical sketches. The pedagogical relationship that existed between T. and his father is prominently featured.

The study explores T.'s individual case through thirteen narrative "scenes" (beginning with his birth and ending with his twelfth year), which address various particulars of his lifeworld and his language development. Each narrative scene is followed by two, three, or four interpretive passages, each of which interprets one of seven themes that emerged from T.'s life. The seven themes are: memory, observation, scientific/technological assessment, not foreclosing on the future, integration, communication, and growth.
The interpretive passages treat the seven themes at four levels of interpretation: the literal level, the moral level, the allegorical level, and the anagogic level. The attempt is to revive an exegetic practice common in the days before the Enlightenment, Cartesian doubt, and the "mathematical project" (Heidegger, 1993c, p. 293). Following the dictum that "the hermeneutic imagination is not limited in its conceptual resources to the texts of the hermeneutic tradition itself" (Smith, 1991, p. 201), the study borrows from a variety of sources, including Astrology, Waldorf education, and Zen.

The reader is offered a direct experience of "the fecundity of the individual case" (Gadamer, cited in Jardine, 1994, p. 143). Emerging, through the thirteen scenes, the seven themes, and the four levels of interpretation, is a unique picture of an exceptional boy's language development.
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Introduction

Every child learns how words mean through hermeneutics. (Friedrich Schleiermacher, 1990, p. 68).

The Hermeneutic Circle and the Hermeneutic Situation

The concept of the hermeneutic circle speaks of the relationship between part and whole. Habermas (1990) describes this relationship in the following words: "We can decipher the parts of a text only if we anticipate an understanding--however diffuse--of the whole; and conversely, we can correct the anticipation only to the extent to which we explicate individual parts" (p. 221). He goes on to define the hermeneutic situation as that which guarantees impartiality in hermeneutic inquiry, saying that only "by monitoring the initial situation of the interpreter" can the interpreter avoid being "seduced by the illusion of objectivism into concealing from himself the methodologically indissoluble bond to the hermeneutic initial situation" (p. 223). Gadamer (1977c) would add that the hermeneutic situation includes the prejudices that the interpreter brings to his or her acts of interpretation: "Prejudices are
biases of our openness to the world. They are simply conditions whereby we experience something—whereby what we encounter says something to us" (p. 9). But prejudices are not forever fixed and immobile; they constitute an advancing horizon: "Actually, the horizon of the present is constantly being developed to the extent that we must continually put our prejudices to the test" (Gadamer, cited in Habermas, 1990, p. 221).

"The individual moment," says Dilthey (cited in Habermas, 1990), "[has] significance through its connection with the whole, through the relation of past and future, of individual being and mankind. . . . This relation of part to whole within life . . . is never entirely completed" (p. 229). It takes little imagination to connect Dilthey's expression of the hermeneutic circle and the advancing horizon of the hermeneutic situation with the expression of the relation between microcosm and macrocosm that is captured in the "hermetic" formula from the Emerald Table of Hermes Trismegistus: "As above, so below" (cited in Anonymous, 1985, p. 22).

The hermeneutic situation is both historical and personal, both social and individual. The hermeneutic circle is universal, recursive, intertextual, dialectical, and evolutionary. It is multidimensional and multivocal, as Ast (1990) recognized at the beginning of the nineteenth
century, "rising from the temporal grounds of the grammatical and historical interpretation to the ethereal heights of the spiritual . . . above the author himself, through the idea of the True, the Beautiful, and the Good . . ." (p. 54). Any attempt to step outside of the hermeneutic circle immediately becomes a part of it, as William Blake recognized when he said, "Everything possible to be believ'd is an image of the truth" (Blake, 1974, p. 151).

It is a circle in a vast sense, like the food chain or the cycle of life on earth, like the growth of humus for the growth of vegetation; the only evils it knows may be aloofness from dialogue and the pride of univocity, both of which disdain generativity and, therefore, foreclose on the future. Dilthey (cited in Habermas, 1990) has stated for all time the hermeneutic concern for the future: "What we set as the goal of our future conditions the determination of the past's significance" (p. 230).

Whatever is new or unique plays back into what is generally known. A theory of the unique suggests that the whole may be illuminated through close scrutiny of any of its parts: "As above, so below." Or as Nicholas of Cusa understood in the fifteenth century, the human being "is both an image of God and a microcosm in which is reflected the total macrocosm. . . . Every part of the universe is present in every other part" (Reese, 1980,
p. 390). A modern recursion to this antique attitude emerges in Karl Pribram's use of the empirical relation between part and whole in the science of holographics to explain the human brain's nonlocal storage of memories (Hampden-Turner, 1981, pp. 94-97). Combination of the old with the new in such a way that the result is greater than the sum of its parts indicates the true fertility of the hermeneutic circle and its role in what Kuhn (1957) calls scientific revolutions or paradigm shifts.

The Subject of the Study: A Portrait of T.

Above are some of the philosophical concerns that occupied my son T. and me, as we spoke about this study during the year prior to his death. T. was the young man whose "being" prompted this narrative/interpretive study and whose language development and lifeworld have provided much of its substance. He was very interested in hermeneutics because he thought hermeneutics validated his own style of interpretation, which he practised constantly, whether he was sharing a book or a movie, watching a documentary program on television, or constructing an essay on a literary theme.

For six years, T. lived during the week with his foster mother, Ca.,
and on weekends with his Mom, his brother, C., and me. When T. died he was twelve years and two months old. He was getting stronger and more capable every day we thought, but for several months he had been wanting to sleep more, and he had been more emotional than usual. He was a tall, slim boy with long blond hair. He prided himself on his taste in clothing. He wore designer glasses that darkened in the sunlight so that he could participate more thoroughly in his environment. His favorite descriptive term for himself was "handsome," but he despised "cute," and he would not tolerate "beautiful." He was physically disabled, and he could neither walk nor talk, nor could he move much independently, but he had a vast curiosity for information about human society, the earth on which he lived, and the earth's position in the cosmos. His range of interests was extremely broad: from poetry to mathematics, from astrology to quantum physics, from opera to figure skating, from symphonic music to Japanese drumming, from theatre to baseball. He stated many times that he needed to know everything.

In spite of his physical handicaps T. had a friendly nature and a highly developed sense of humor. The word, handicap, was personally preferred by T. (see Appendix A), partly because of its potential for deflating people who search compulsively for the politically correct term.
His favorite tactic was to begin a conversation with gentle teases so that he could probe a person's readiness for friendly repartee. T. liked to enter a contest of wit with anyone who would respond in kind.

*T.'s Communication*

T. attended a small school for children who could benefit from non-coercive education. There, he was allowed to do advanced studies (see Appendix B). He knew every student personally, and he spoke to everyone using a form of communication that involved pointing to the right letters on a keyboard, while a facilitator (his teaching assistant, his foster mother, or I) steadied his arm in the right way. He could program his voice synthesizer to say his words aloud for him, or he could ask his facilitators to speak aloud the words that he showed them. He could accompany his speeches with "yes" and "no" signals (nodding or shaking his head) and with loud vocalizations and facial expressions, by which he could confirm or challenge the words spoken by his facilitators. T. was able to use two types of switches to make independent choices: a head switch that he found a bit embarrassing to use, and a hand switch that he thought was "so cool"—he could switch it on and off by moving the fingers
of his left hand. But to set up the apparatus to let him communicate through switches was a slow process, and communication through switches lacked the element of human contact that he treasured. Immediacy and fluency of speech were of the utmost importance to T.

During his last three years, T. participated in a variety of "internet" forums, using his computer modem to send out messages and to enter into discussions on topics that interested him. T. shared "his views on physics, education, mathematics, and religion with professional minds all over the world" (Nuwer, 1994). His most frequent topics were quantum physics and cosmology (see Appendixes C, D, E, and F); physical disabilities (see Appendixes G, H, and I); giftedness (see Appendix J); homeschooling (see Appendix K); family dynamics (see Appendix L); ethics and the nature of evil (see Appendixes M and N); and consciousness and freewill (see Appendix O). For most of his on-line correspondence Ca. facilitated T.'s words. At the time of T.'s death she received, from people who knew T. only through his words, a flood of messages paying tribute to his "shining mind"; his wisdom "well beyond his years"; his "quick wit . . . thirst for knowledge and . . . crusading nature"; his "joy and impishness"; his "achievements on an absolute scale"; his "loving kindness"; and his "great spirit."
The Research Tradition

I am grateful to van Manen (1990) for pointing out the fact that the relationship between parent and child is pedagogical in nature. However, three other educational researchers have supplied me with important primary stimulation and have introduced me to the philosophical literature of the hermeneutic tradition; their indications have lead me to examine works by Habermas, Gadamer, Heidegger, Husserl, Dilthey, Schleiermacher, and Ast. These three educational researchers are D. G. Smith, D. W. Jardine, and T. T. Aoki. My encounter with their writings inspired me to engage in a dialogue with their tradition of interpretive research and to transport that dialogue into the pedagogical relationship that I enjoyed with my son, T.

T. and I found it remarkable how well this tradition dovetailed with our existing interests. We were struck by the appropriateness to T.'s life experience of the following statement by Smith (1991): "The aim of interpretation is human freedom which finds its light, identity, and dignity in those brief moments when one's lived burdens can be shown to have their source in too limited a view of things" (p. 189). We greeted
many of the threads of the interpretive tradition with surprise and approval: its critique of the "scientific instrumentalist posture" (Aoki, 1991, p. 185); its concern with "life as it is actually lived" (Jardine, 1994, p. 192); its focus on "kinship" or "who I am in relation to my children" (Smith, 1991, p. 188).

The insistence of the hermeneutic tradition on a "deep attentiveness to language" (Smith, 1991, p. 199); "the voice of the logos" (Aoki, 1992, p. 22); "the living word--a voice crying out from within the midst of things" (Jardine, 1992, p. 119); "living metaphoricity" (Jardine, 1994, p. 205); and "family resemblance . . . the belonging together of word to thing" (Jardine, 1994, p. 120) struck us as deeply poetical.

Also we liked the tradition's critique of "univocity" (which may be defined as a single standard interpretation based on methodological rectitude) and its critique of univocity's failure to enter into a "conversation with young people" that is "never finished" (Smith, 1991, p. 198). We liked its desire "to allow the tension to be as it is" (Jardine, 1994, p. 75) or to maintain a "good tensionality" of "twin poles" (Aoki 1991, p. 183) without, as Keats would have said, "any irritable reaching after fact and reason" (1964, p. 304). We saw in its "distinct resistance to closure" (Aoki, 1991, p. 187) a willingness to trust "the unsaid to shine
through the said" (Aoki, 1992, p. 27) that promised "generativity and rejuvenation" (Smith, 1991, p. 189) and a refusal to "foreclose on the future" (Jardine, 1992, p. 116). T. especially approved of Jardine's (1992) assertion that "each new child embodies the possibility that things can become other than what they have already become" (p.116) and Smith's (1991) concern with "the matter of how we might learn to live more responsibly within the earthly web of our planetary home" (p. 188).

Our Hermeneutic Situation

T. and I were father and son. As such we were acutely aware that "the rest of the world" might view our assessment of each other's abilities as subject to the distortions of intimacy. We struggled to find ways to assure ourselves of the honesty of our perceptions. We finally agreed to trust each other to reveal our co-constructed truth while acknowledging its "subjectivity." In the process we discovered that there is a knowledge available to intimacy that may be denied to "objectivity."

The historical situation. In one form or another, T. and I had been in dialogue for twelve years. Our dialogue, prior to the period of the
study, already involved a concern that science and technology had brought the earth perilously close to a bad end. T. himself valued a magical world view that predated the introduction into western thought of the aggressive intellectual doubt that many thinkers blame for the ascendency of our technological civilization and its divorce from nature. T. felt strongly that, if people could practise forgiveness and unconditional love toward their fellow humans, the situation could be saved. For several years our conversations centred on specific practices and attitudes of preindustrial peoples, some of which might be recoverable for a planetary future that would recoil from the dangers of a technology that pollutes and destroys but does not regenerate. He persuaded me of the absolute seriousness of the situation. For us, this was not "the absurd wish to revive what is past," as Heidegger (1993) said, "but rather the sober readiness to be astounded before the coming of the dawn" (p. 327).

Though these concerns had emerged strongly during my ten year inquiry into Rudolf Steiner's (1985) critique of modern scientific materialism, T. showed a special interest of his own, which seemed to predate the information that I shared with him. For instance, he and Ca. had long been interested in David Suzuki's pronouncements on the earth's delicate ecology (expressed, for example, in Knudtson and Suzuki, 1992).
T. was only seven years old when he first began to express concern for the earth. In his youthful way, he was far more passionate than I had ever been in his hope that modern science would forgive itself for the damage it had done and seek in the past for the healing that it required. He hoped, among other things, that quantum physics was closing in on a way of describing the cosmos that returned to a view of the "spirit world" as it was experienced in shamanistic spirit flight.

According to Jardine (1994), Descartes is a convenient historical villain. Heidegger (1993c) appears to agree:

Until Descartes, everything at hand for itself was a "subject"; but now the "I" becomes the special subject, that with regard to which all remaining things first determine themselves as such. Because—mathematically—they first receive their thingness only through the founding relation to the highest principle and its "subject" (I), they are essentially such as stand as something else in relation to the "subject," which lie over against it as objectum. The things themselves become objects (p. 303).

And so we may seek a return to the spirit of a time when Cartesian doubt was not a founding requirement of human reason. Our quest is to determine whether there once was a way of experiencing the cosmos that, discovered again, might reopen a path to the "individuality," a path which does not isolate the human ego in its pride of intellect. Rudolf Steiner (1985) would have said that the ego needed the isolation brought by doubt,
in order to mature to the point where "intellectual" doubt could be abandoned and "consciousness" and "imagination" could be trusted instead. Until the end of the English Renaissance, at least, thinkers were able to look to the heavens to discover their "individualities," or to foresee the future. Astrology was then a means of exercising imagination without the interference of intellectual doubt. An upsurgence, in recent days, of interest in a non-deterministic astrology may give hope that a new respect for imagination is dawning now at the end of the twentieth century.

In structuring this study, T. and I have chosen to use astrological imagery. This imagery embodies our hope that a new attitude toward the individual can emerge for a future in which education is capable of pursuing utopian ideals while invoking neither the dysfunction of the isolated ego nor the dystopia of the collective soul. This hope defines the hermeneutic situation of our study from the historical perspective.

The personal situation. The personal hermeneutic situation stems from the fact that, as father and son, T. and I have been so close in our dialogic intimacy that some people may have difficulty distinguishing his ideas from mine. I do not exaggerate when I say that T. frequently
corrected me, as I sometimes tried to correct him, but we found that our most interesting ideas came from sharing the substance of our reading and viewing, and from T.'s ability to connect ideas in astonishingly fresh ways. He was learning continually, from various sources, and he imported whatever he learned into our existing dialogue. I have been T.'s student as much as he has been mine, for as Jardine (1994) said: "Our adult world is also full of animism and metaphoricity, once we give up the strictures of univocity which make this likeness [to the child's world] hide away" (p. 202).

T. also was able to maintain a constant overview, and clear direct memories of our accumulated thoughts, which kept me honest and gave me complete respect for T.'s own honesty. He used to joke that he should be given credit as the author of the study and that I should be acknowledged as the facilitator. I acknowledge that I have learned a great deal from T.

Method

No single correct method. "What is being investigated itself holds part of the answer concerning how it should be investigated. Genuine inquiry always has much more the character of a kind of
dialogical messing around, in tune with what the Greeks simply called "thinking," said Smith (1991, p. 198). In our case, T.'s unique consciousness entered into all of our discussions concerning method.

Method for us was a matter of telling stories from T.'s life and trying to establish meaning. We attempted "to give our lives a sense of text which we can then interpret" (Smith, 1991, p. 200). The golden thread in the study evokes T.'s personal transformations, as language became available to him for communication with the outside world. The stories are based on memories. "Understanding that which comes to us as new is made possible in the 'now' by virtue of the forestructure of understanding that is already in us from past experience," said Smith (1991, p. 193). Thus, interpretation brings fresh understanding to past experience.

Understanding was established in dialogue between T. and me. In our dialogue we never wished to exclude anything that was inherently meaningful for either of us. As we shaped our study, we were well aware that "the hermeneutic imagination is not limited in its conceptual resources to the texts of the hermeneutic tradition itself but is liberated by them to bring to bear any conceptualities that can assist in deepening our understanding of what it is we are investigating" (Smith, 1991,
A poetic use of language. Language is of ultimate importance in this study. The "deep sensitivity to language" that Smith (1991) describes was my motivation to continue my daily writing. The "metaphoricity" that Jardine (1994) frequently mentions is present in the astrological structure of the study, which may itself be encountered as a metaphor of the individual in the cosmos--a very apt metaphor, I think, where the topic is the role of education in the human lifetime.

Poetry remained T's first love in the midst of his many other interests, in the same way that the logos, "the living word," according to Jardine (1992), was "born right out in the middle of things" (p. 120). Gadamer realized that language lost its connection to living things whenever it became abstract and spiritless: "A mystical and gnostic note that at best might have its true home in poetry (1994b, p. 99) . . . now seem[s] manneristic, artificial, rigid" (1994a, p. 15). Heidegger (1993e) relentlessly pursued a language that would reenliven thinking in the modern age: "Every thinking that is on the trail of something is a poeticizing, and all poetry a thinking" (p. 425). Rudolf Steiner (1966b) stated that a living thinking was both the beginning and end of
"imagination" (p. 189). Twentieth century poets like Robert Graves (1961, 1966) and Kathleen Raine (1985) have called for a return to "poetic thinking." Poetic thinking requires a careful use of language so that its "predispositions in terms of metaphor, analogy, and structure" (Smith, 1991, p. 199) are honoured, enlivened, and saved from degenerating into a corpse of language in "a valley of dry bones" (Graves, 1966).

T. and I were aware of our responsibility to practise poetic thinking in our study. Our effort was to achieve the "true poetic metaphor" that Barfield (1964) spoke of: "Reality, once self-evident, and therefore not conceptually experienced, but which can now only be reached by an effort of the . . . mind--this is what is contained in a true poetic metaphor; and every metaphor is 'true' only in so far as it contains such a reality, or hints at it" (p. 88).

The Role of the Reader in a Hermeneutic Study

The fruits of our dialogue are offered to our readers in the hope that, as interpreters, they will enter into dialogue with the texts that we have generated and make an effort to establish meaning for themselves. In the following exposition of Gadamer's hermeneutics, Smith (1991) gives
eloquent voice to our hope: "Understanding between persons is possible only to the degree that people can initiate a conversation between themselves and bring a fusion of their different horizons into a new understanding which they hold in common" (p. 193).

The expectations placed upon the reader by a hermeneutic study are not the conventional expectations for reading "technical" prose. The reader of this study must be especially sensitive to "juxtaposition", a poetic device which occurs in Haiku writing, and which may be the primary mode of poetry. The technique of juxtaposition maintains "a good tensionality" between the singularity of statements and their metaphoric fusion: The "twin poles" are divided by a generative gap of silence.

When juxtaposition is rotated onto a vertical axis, it can be called "layering." In horticulture, horizontal propagation is also called "layering." Vertical layering can proceed in an upward or downward direction. Horizontal layering can proceed forward or backward, to the right or to the left, all around the circle.

Conventional studies are written according to a tree-like structure, with trunk, major branches, and a system of ramifying limbs. Our study is written more in the manner described by Deleuse and Guattari (1983): With its "multiple entrances"; its "lines of segmentation"; its sudden
"breaks" and "lines of flight"; its abrupt changes of level; and its multiplicity of voices, registers, and genres, our study is more like a "rhizome" than a tree. Though our overall structure may be called spherical and cyclical, a type of structure that Deleuze and Guattari would exclude from their notion of "rhizomatics," we were reminded that the "rhizome" itself is a metaphor that emerges from nature and, as such, is subject to the micro and macro cycles of nature. "Many people have a tree planted in their heads, but the brain is much more like a grass," said Deleuze and Guattari (1983, p. 34). But grass itself depends on climate. We know not all that climate depends on, but we know it is a global issue.

Regarding structural "breaks," Iser (1980) said, "such breaks act as hindrances to comprehension and so force us to reject our habitual orientations as inadequate" (p.18). "When one is reading," he continued, "the text begins to unfold its potential; it is in the reader that the text comes to life", for "without a subjective contribution and a context there is no such thing [as meaning]" (p. 19).

Readers of our study should be prepared to suspend disbelief, while withdrawing the assumptions that may have oriented their reading in the past; or at least, in line with Gadamer, they should acknowledge their own prejudices, while at the same time allowing the picture of a very unique
boy in a very unique lifeworld "to shine through." In so doing, the reader will not fail to experience "the fecundity of the individual case" (Gadamer, cited in Jardine, 1994, p. 143).

*The Structure of the Study*

The reader needs to be particularly aware of the astrological structure of our study, and its animation by a preindustrial world view.

*The four levels of interpretation.* The interpretation of texts in the days before Descartes was not a simple act of univocity. Much interpretation may have been conducted at the literal level even then, but there were at least three other levels of interpretation, perhaps as many as six in all. Dante wrote to his patron to tell him how to interpret *The Divine Comedy* at four levels: the literal or historical level; the moral or tropic (figurative) level; the allegorical level; and the anagogic or spiritual level (Beckman and Ganz, 1989, p. 94). Rudolf Steiner would say that these levels (when understood at the anagogic level themselves) correspond to intellect, imagination, inspiration, and intuition, respectively (1966b, p. 96). In the myth of the cave in Book VII of Plato's
Republic, these four levels are shown as an ascent in perception from the shadows within the cave to the ultimate source of light, the sun.

For the purposes of our study, T. and I agreed to the following astrological correspondences: The literal or historical level would correspond to a planet's being in "detriment" in a given zodiacal sign; the moral or tropic level would correspond to a planet's being in "fall"; the allegorical level would correspond to a planet's being in "exaltation"; and the anagogic or spiritual (or archetypal) level would correspond to a planet's being in "dignity." These four terms are explained further in the section which follows on "the seven planets."

The reader should be aware of the implicit "family resemblances" between the above-mentioned correspondences and other common fourfold classifications.

The seven planets. The seven planets of antiquity were Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, and Moon. They moved through the twelve zodiacal signs and discovered a different relationship in conversation with each sign. With some signs a planet resonated positively, with some negatively, while with other signs the same planet remained completely neutral. A planet in dignity resonated in complete
accord with the nature of the sign. In exaltation, the resonance was very positive but not in complete accord. In fall, the resonance was approaching discord. In detriment, the resonance was discordant. Each of the planets had a personality that functioned differently in each of the signs, depending on its relationship with the sign in question.

T. and I chose seven interpretive themes for our study, because of their prominence in T.'s life story. They are: memory, observation, scientific/technological assessment, an unforeclosed future, integration, communication, and growth. For the purposes of our study we have agreed to the following correspondences: (a) Saturn corresponds to memory, limitation, and the potential for redemption; (b) Jupiter corresponds to observation, the higher mind, and the potential for perceiving the whole; (c) Mars corresponds to scientific/technological assessment, aggressive doubt, and male univocity; but more positively also, to Blake's "mental fight," and the potential for spiritualizing "the word"; (d) Sun corresponds to an unforeclosed future, the warmth of the heart, the glow of poetic thinking, and the potential for synthesizing the personalities of the other six planets; (e) Venus corresponds to integration or social inclusion, the emotional response to life that manifests in sympathy and antipathy, and the potential for real social improvement; (f) Mercury corresponds to
communication, the god Hermes, the hermetic tradition, redemption from the underworld of silence, and the potential for vertical as well as horizontal communication; (g) Moon corresponds to growth, physical development, sensitivity to sound, and the potential for overcoming reflected, secondary, or "received" impressions.

The reader should be aware of the implicit family resemblances between the above-mentioned correspondences and other common sevenfold classifications.

*The thirteen signs.* There are thirteen signs in the Zodiac—if in circling it one stops at the same sign where one began. When T. and I first started to talk about writing episodes from his life, I proposed seven scenes, but the seven scenes expanded to nine scenes, then the nine expanded to twelve, and finally we agreed upon thirteen. Before writing the scenes, we decided that each scene should make some symbolic gesture to the zodiacal sign to which it would correspond. As I made the decisions which shaped the narrative passages, T. helped to keep my thinking relevant to his life story.

A year before we started to negotiate the correct number of scenes, T. had addressed the zodiac in an essay he had written on Camelot as a
utopian society (see Appendix P). He favored thirteen scenes because the myths that he examined implied to him that there is one star in the heavens that represents a unifying thirteenth principle in the midst of the twelve zodiacal signs. In our study, the order of the signs begins with Aries, circles the zodiac, and ends with Aries; the unifying thirteenth scene is the first scene, the scene that recalls T.'s birth. In the sequence of the scenes, there is only one deviation from strict chronological order. The scene titled, "T. and the Surgeon," which happened when T. was eight, proceeds the scene titled, "T. and the Shaman's Relics," which happened when T. was still seven. The deviation from chronological order was necessary because both T. and I felt that the surgeon scene was more suited to the sign of Scorpio, while the shaman scene was more suited to the sign of Sagittarius.

The reader should be aware of the implicit family resemblances between the above-mentioned correspondences and other common twelvefold or thirteenfold classifications.

*The Writing*

Acts of writing are central to the processes of interpretation and
understanding as practiced in this study.

A work of art. Gadamer speaks of the "art of hermeneutic writing" (cited in Smith, 1991, p. 201). He also states that "the distinctive mark of the language of art is that the individual art work gathers into itself and expresses the symbolic character that, hermeneutically regarded, belongs to all beings" (Gadamer, 1977a, p. 104). We were determined to make our study artful and poetical and to propagate metaphors that derive from nature and myth.

The narrative scenes. Every narrative scene was to have the qualities of an "epiphany," a term that T. and I shared in our recent readings on James Joyce (Norri and Flint, 1994, pp. 76-77). All thirteen of the narrative scenes were completed in advance of any of the interpretive passages. We met after school, at least twice a week at T.'s foster home, to review the output that I had produced between our meetings. As I completed each scene, T. claimed full editing privileges. He was a very insightful editor, taking me to task particularly for "obscurities and bad puns." Eventually all thirteen scenes received T.'s full approval.
The interpretive passages. Then T. and I discussed the proper way to interpret the scenes. At first we thought of interpreting all thirteen of the scenes according to all seven of the themes that we had agreed upon, but it would have meant writing ninety-one interpretive passages, a prohibitive number. We began to think of the seven planets moving through the thirteen scenes, and the four manifestations of the planets in the signs: dignity, exaltation, fall, and detriment. We thought, "Why not simply interpret each scene according to the planetary theme that is in dignity in the scene's corresponding sign?" But we were sensitive already to Dante's four levels of interpretation, which we had been discussing together for at least two years, and we feared restricting our interpretation to the anagogic level, which is the most confusing for readers who are unfamiliar with spiritual interpretation. I toyed with the idea of making the interpretations correspond with aspects of T.'s individual horoscope, but we rejected that idea because we thought it might limit the extent to which our final product would "belong to all beings" (Gadamer, 1977a, p.104).

However, to interpret each of the seven themes according to each of the four levels in each of the thirteen signs would still require a total of forty-two interpretive passages. We considered other ways to trim the
number of interpretive passages. For instance, as some of the planets are in dignity or in fall in two different signs while some are not, we could have ignored the second occurrence of any theme at a given level. Once again we were drawn by an apprehension of wholeness. We decided that I should do all forty-two interpretive passages.

I found myself writing an interpretive "meditation" of five to seven hundred words, early each morning, before getting ready for work. Meditation, according to Moffett (1983), is a "consciousness of consciousness" that "already resembles the reflexiveness, the introspection, the concentration required for writing. . . . Meditation represents the archetype toward which reading and writing both tend" (p. 64). When T. and I met after school we would discuss my meditations. Sometimes I would have typed up my materials during the course of the day, and then T. would help me with preliminary editing, correcting any misassumptions that he thought I was making, providing me with information that I might not have had, and offering me advise concerning future directions that he favored for the interpretations. In these ways, a practical reflexivity was established in the creation of our interpretations.

At the same time, he began writing some of his own paragraphs in
response to the thirteen scenes, but not necessarily in the strict zodiacal order of the study. He was more interested in writing his responses to some scenes than to others. Some of the scenes involved emotions that he did not want to stay awake at night to think about. T. was at complete liberty to contribute to the study in any way he chose. Most often he chose the roles of co-planner and special advisor.

*Continuing the Dialogue with the Hermeneutic Tradition*

Even as we wrote, our dialogue about ideas continued. Every day, when I left T.'s foster home and started to walk to the bus, I would mull over his pronouncements in my mind. Sitting on the bus on the way home, I would open a book of hermeneutic philosophy, by Gadamer or Heidegger usually, and read for the half hour it took to get to my stop. I would mark the passages that I thought would interest T. because I wanted to share them with him the next time I visited.

Two anecdotes will illustrate T.'s interest in the literature I was reading. A certain passage in Heidegger’s "The Question Concerning Technology" (Heidegger, 1993d, pp. 213-218) excited him especially. It addressed Aristotle's four levels of causation: material cause, formal
cause, efficient cause, and final cause. For T., it said that a final cause is not an efficient cause and that an efficient cause is not necessarily a material cause. T. recognized these four levels of causation as he had discussed them on the Physics Forum on his internet service (see Appendix C). He was excited to realize that Heidegger was reversing the scientific tendency to see the material cause as the final cause, and he talked happily to me about including that insight in some part of the study where we discussed the four levels of interpretation, because he thought probably that Aristotle had abstracted the four levels of causation from Plato’s myth of the cave. At about the same time, T. insisted that I take some of his birthday money and spend it on a text entitled The Hermeneutic Tradition (Ormiston and Schrift [Eds.], 1990), with the expressed hope that we would read Schleiermacher together. T. was interested in our pursuing together a line of thought that might connect hermeneutics to Rosicrucianism, through Goethe and German Romantic philosophy (see Appendix Q, for T.’s interest in Rosicrucianism).

A Change in the Hermeneutic Situation

T. was especially interested in two things about our study: (a) that
his story should be told to the rest of the world, and (b) that his interest in saving the earth should be strongly portrayed. He continued to urge me to hurry and finish the writing so that he could be sure that his intentions would be carried out. T.'s death came unexpectedly; he was pronounced in good health only a few weeks before. But the urgency that he brought to our last few discussions suggests to me that he thought of our study as his final testament. He wanted to ensure that it would be properly completed. He quizzed me to make certain that I understood the plan.

Following T.'s death, I rested for two weeks. Then I began to write my daily meditations again, trying to recall T.'s words from recent conversations, his words from conversations that occurred when we had read the thirteen scenes together, and his words from other conversations that had occurred over the years, in which he had strongly stated a feeling or a thought. During the final editing process, without T. to help me directly, I have had greater recourse to surviving documents and to conversations with people in T.'s close circle, than T. and I had originally thought would be necessary. Until T.'s death, the hermeneutic situation of the study had been an advancing horizon: dialogic, reflexive, intertextual, and recursive. In completing the study, I have endeavored not to let his death foreclose on the future.
I believe my attempts to reconstruct T.'s opinions in the interpretive passages of chapters ten to thirteen pay proper tribute to the importance of his contribution. This was his final project. He put aside work on his proposed novel about Shakespeare's early life (see Appendix R), specifically to guide my progress. He viewed this study with pride.

_Dramatis Personae_

What follows is a list of persons who figure most prominently in the study. I supply this list to avoid the confusion that may arise from the use of first initials in place of the names of individuals.

1. T. is my son, who also referred to himself as "a boy" and sometimes as the _HGB_, the "handicapped genius boy."

2. L. is me, the author of the study, T.'s father, Dad, speech facilitator, and friend in life and scholarship.

3. M. is T.'s Mom, his strongest advocate, and my wife and partner of twenty years.

4. Ca. is T.'s foster mother, his most sensitive facilitator, and confidante. T. and Ca. were together for a period of six years, which began when T. was six years and two months old.
5. C. is T.'s brother, the older son of M. and L. He was born three years before T.

6. K. is T.'s favorite speech therapist, his first facilitator, and T.'s close friend. K., and several other therapists from a "neurological center," proved to T. that he was "a smart boy."

7. A. is the Teaching Assistant who attended school with T. during his school years in grades 3, 4, and 5. She became a very competent facilitator of T.'s words.

8. P. is T.'s child care worker of many years, who became his T. A. for his grade six year. She learned to facilitate his words so that he could have conversations with the girls and boys at his school.

9. E. and H. are the teachers at T.'s "new school" with whom T. bonded most closely.

10. Mrs. T. is my elderly friend, who saw T. as a "spark of the divine."
The Narrative

T.'s birth took place over a period of twelve days.

It was supposed to have happened at home. But ten or fifteen days before T. was due, our family doctor thought his heartbeat was slow. He thought we should have the fetal heart monitored the next day at the regional hospital, the largest medical facility in the district.

He had granted us a special visit on a Wednesday, his day off. He was relaxed and full of quips and good humour. First he had difficulty locating the baby's head. Then he thought there might be two heads. Then he had difficulty tracing a heartbeat. Finally, he located one, a slow one: one hundred and fifteen beats per minute. An acceptable fetal heart rate ranges from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and sixty beats per minute. He wanted a fetal heart strip. He telephoned the regional hospital, made contact with an obstetrician, and arranged for an electrocardiograph in the morning.

T. was born at the regional hospital. His birth was induced after an
obstetrician monitored his heart rate for several hours. M. lay in the hospital room with probes on her abdomen and watched red digital numbers declare that her baby's heart rate was declining progressively. The obstetrician stated, after sharing the ticker-tape graphs with another doctor, that there was fetal distress. He proposed that we "get the baby out with as little delay as possible."

M. needed time to think. Did this mean a caesarian section? That would be the quickest way. It ruled out our home birth. There was an option that was not considered: We could have detached M. from the monitor, gone home, and let nature take its course, whatever that might have been. M. would not countenance a caesarian. In any case she still wanted a natural delivery, unless it meant the death of the child.

We were well prepared for the birth, well schooled in the procedures of natural childbirth by a team of midwives from the U. S. We lost little time in grieving over the abrupt change of plans and went right to work. M.'s calm proficiency was admired by the nurses. We found time to laugh at the way I tried to model "transition" breathing: sipping, puffing, blowing—like a whale's feeding. She gave birth to a five pound twelve ounce baby boy at 18:37 Pacific Daylight Time, April 8, 1983.

Curiously, the fetal heart rate had jumped twenty points as soon as
labour was induced; it had remained strong until the probes were detached just prior to the birth of T.'s head. The umbilical cord was wound twice tightly around his neck. The obstetrician thought this was the source of his low heart rate in utero. He cut the cord and T. began to breathe spontaneously. The slim figure of a baby came out. Examined beneath the warming lights, T.'s colour was good. His APGAR scores were within normal range.

He was placed on M.'s abdomen. "Hello T.", she said. She had found the name in a book of rare names, the kind of book that expectant parents buy and pore over winter evenings when the housework is done. She had not been completely sure that the "boy's name" would be T., but T. she said, and T. it still is.

The next day we were allowed to leave the hospital. I left with a sense of relief. M. held the newborn baby in the back seat as I drove over the highest mountain pass in the province. The accumulated snow at the summit still glared in the afternoon sun; it wasn't spring yet at that altitude.

M. was exhausted. T. was not sucking. We were afraid of jaundice, but we were also afraid that nourishment from glucose water would make him less likely to suck spontaneously. She had been told before she left
the hospital that T. had no subcutaneous fat. He had no stores to draw
upon. She expressed colostrum and used an eye-dropper to give it to him.
She gave him boiled water by the same method. She was spending all of
her time with the baby, while I took care of the household needs and tried
to assure T.'s active three year old brother that everything was still all
right, that he was still our boy, that we still loved him, and that he
wouldn't have to sleep at our friends' house again soon. I remember
holding both brothers, T. and C., in my arms, reading to C. as M. tried to
rest in the back bedroom that I had finished specially for the home birth. I
had lined it with fir two-by-six, which I had planed myself.

Of course there were other worries, close to the surface, left with
M. by the pediatrician at the regional hospital when she said that T.'s birth
weight was low; that his head was small; that the placenta was small;
that T. was undernourished; that he would probably get jaundice; but that
we should take him home and treat him "like a normal child."

A few days later I received a call at school. It was M.'s closest
friend. I should not be alarmed, she said, but the baby's bilirubin count was
high. He would have to go under ultraviolet light for a few days. There
was no need to rush over to the local hospital till after school. M. and T.
were both doing fine.
However, T. was still not taking the breast. It was necessary to give him glucose water to flush out the jaundice, but M. was adamant that he should have no formula. She was an avid breastfeeder and was well supported with information from the La Leche League concerning the role of "formula" in diminishing the lifelong advantages of breastfeeding for the child. Our family doctor was unable to treat such information as anything but feminist propaganda. He plainly believed that a woman should listen to "just what the doctor ordered." The doctor ordered formula. M. refused it. Before he would discharge T. from the local hospital he wanted me to promise that T. would get formula. I answered, "Well, she will just have to confront that issue," knowing very well what her answer was.

Meanwhile, in the hospital, a nurse had suggested that T.'s high-pitched cry, his jaundice, his refusal to suck, and his jerky arm movements might indicate damage to the central nervous system. T. and M. returned to their fir-lined room in the back of the house where, after eleven days of ceaseless faith and effort on M.'s part, the first small miracle of T.'s life occurred: T. began to suck. His birthing was complete.
Interpretation

*T.'s words.* T. wrote the following words in response to my memories of his birth and his earliest days:

My birth was really a sad occasion for a boy's Mom. It was meant to be a joyous welcoming of a special new child into the family but I was born handicapped. When I arrived my Mom said, "Hi T.," and so I was immediately recognized as a "man of poetry". My father was worried at the moment of birth that I would not breathe but I breathed immediately. So I entered a lifetime of being neglected and misinterpreted by everyone but a few loyal people who respected my right to live. When L. says that my Mom fought hard to teach me to breastfeed I am filled with respect for her willpower and reminded of the female lion's fierce protection of her cubs. So I became the second son of a mother and father chosen to show the world that a boy was here to stay.

Theme one: *Saturn in detriment (memory--literal level).* This narrative contains what I literally remember about T's birth. It does not contain all of my possible memories, nor does it contain all of my possible associations. Certainly I have withheld names: the names of doctors and the names of friends. Certainly I have withheld details--of my relationship with my wife, of things she might have said, of conversations we might have had, of the pain I suffered on her behalf--that in some contexts could be retrieved: in psychoanalytical anamnesis,
in deep conversational reminiscence, in meditation, under hypnosis, under cross-examination, on judgement day; there is more that could be said. Also, there are trivial details we have edited out.

Yet, Freud may be right: No detail may be trivial. And Husserl may be right: All of these trivialities may constitute "life-world--the world of our common lived experience" which offers itself "in every perceptual experience and all its possible derivatives" (Kockelmans, 1994, p. 336). And Pribram may be right: Any of these details, recalled, might invoke the conditions holographically for total recall (Hamden-Turner, 1982, pp. 94-97), which folk belief tells us comes after the moment of death when we review the vast tableau of the events of our lives that we can neither edit nor suppress. The possibility presented itself to me spontaneously in childhood that the 'now' as I experienced it might, in fact, be memory as I relived it at the end of my life; this possibility evoked an oscillating resonance with an idea of eternal return: that each moment had within it the awareness that it was linked to a whole lifetime that could be recalled in (and through) the moment, "now."

But more mundanely, we are told that human beings have notoriously bad memories; that they pay very lax attention while events are occurring; that they are highly distractable; that they interpret events, even as they
are happening, according to intellectual prejudices, value systems, ingrained cultural assumptions, linguistic limitations, family dysfunctions, personal neuroses; that their memories decay unless they are rehearsed; that they are very susceptible to suggestions embedded in the questions that are asked about the past (Neisser, 1982). Yet sometimes strong memories erupt into consciousness after long absence.

I am reminded of Chomsky's notion of 'deep structure' and the uses made of this notion by Bandler and Grinder (1975) in linking "deep structure" to actual experience. The "deep structure", what really happened, is generalised, deleted, or distorted by seven strategems (Passivity, Permutation, Deletion, Nominalization, Ambiguity, Missing Reference, Presupposition) depending upon audience or upon the speaker's intentions, be these intentions conscious or unconscious (Hampden-Turner, 1981, p. 146-147). According to this notion, every communication is already an interpretation, if not so formed by language itself, then at least by the speaker's condition.

Every communication is a memory, divided in the "now" by speech itself from the "then" of experience, subject to the hermeneutic situation of the speaker's distortion. Paradoxically, every memory enters the "now" again and is hermeneutically defined and redefined, refined in the alembic
of a personal interpretation or besmirched in a further flooding of distortion.

Personal memory is risky, particularly when there are no external facts to rely upon for confirmation, no field notes, no data, no collection of recorded measurements, no documents to examine, particularly since it is easy to catch oneself in error, to notice one's forgetfulness, to find evidence of displacement, loss, inadequacy; it is evidently a flawed process. Too many times memory proves unreliable. But many times it surprises, churning up matter, one has no doubt, which is pure and true, which can be proved through external corroboration or documentation, or which simply has the "feel" of truth, all limitation fallen away. This "feel" of truth may come spontaneously as a form of grace, or it may come as a result of hard work in evoking memory, in refining distortion, in limiting limitation through conscious questioning and self-acknowledgement. These latter functions are the task of "the thinker" in memory work who lays bare the hermeneutic situation, identifies its elements, and accepts its inevitability.

I acknowledge my own hermeneutic situation in regard to my memories. There is an interpretive process already in the telling, a continuous recursive dialogue with the text. I am aware that, as I
language these memories (as they are languaged in me), I mix a natural process with an artful process. I prime the pump. I pour wonder in, to raise wonder from below. I know the effects of incantatory prose; I know the poetic trance (Graves, 1966, p. 89) where image follows image: where some images are true (they are from the body); where some are false (they are "should-have-beens," too cheaply transmuted by a mental wish); where some, subtler, bear the seal of truth but shine with a false translucency, as if lit from behind.

All must be witnessed from a point of stillness, with an even breath and a level heart, and languaged with words that come to requite them. We speak of a "flood of memories," but these images are motilities, feelings, fragments of former thoughts, the half-grasped words of other people; they come with the shape of a room, the tone of the light, specific smells, objects, sounds, textures . . . I am aware of selecting and shaping, shifting and juxtaposing to raise fresh wonder from below, to enrich the mix, sometimes to muddy it, sometimes to flood it with sewage.

I am aware that as I language my memories, I filter them. Some of the filters are for decency; they are large screen-mesh filters, which remove the floaters from the mix: the surface structures that might "wound and wouldn't"—notions and emotions of decency toward M., toward
T.'s grandparents, toward T. himself, toward T.'s foster mother Ca., toward teachers and friends, decency even toward the doctors and others for whom I feel less charity. Some of the filters are for acceptability: filters which screen out expressions of aesthetic disgust, vituperation, self-contempt, unprocessed grief; finer filters which capture pain, blame, the finer forms of self-justification, and obscure self-praise; filters which leave only suggestion and evocation; and finer filters still, which screen out speculations but leave their implications.

Then there are acts of distillation, as T. and I experience the narratives as aesthetic entities and live back into the texts: The liquid itself becomes subtler and airier, composed of images which have form, personality, shape, color, resonance, rhythm, gesture . . .

I think of writers/poets who were memorists: Jack Kerouac who claimed he never edited (his first words were his best, he thought); Marcel Proust for whom it started as a taste of cake and ended in a moral epic. I think of Thomas Wolfe: "a stone, a leaf, a door . . ." I think of William Wordsworth: "trailing clouds of glory . . ." I am aware that, in my memory pieces, art has attempted to encapsulate experience, to say it in "a different way and precisely by virtue of saying it in a different way, to say the same thing" (Gerhard Ebeling, cited in Linge, 1977, p. xxvii).
Theme two: Sun in exaltation (the unforeclosed future--
allegorical level). Yet, is it the same thing? For I am aware that the T.
for whom we wished has undergone transmutation by the T. who was born,
by the T.'s who were subsequently said to be, by the T.'s we have hoped,
and by the T. he is now.

The T. for whom we wished was wise and good: Born at home,
properly bonded with his Mom and family, he would glow all his life with
an inner warmth. One of the growing number of children who had not been
greeted in fear and pain, spanked and circumcised, blinded with
floodlights and silver nitrate, hung head downward and assessed in
affectionless tones, nursed and nurseried by dispassionate paid
attendants, loaned to his mother for feeding and brief blessing, admired
through glass by grandparents and siblings, and so certified viable by a
week in the womb of technology, he (and they) would change the world
(Pearce, 1980), bring "mercy, pity, peace and love" (Blake, 1974, p. 117): T.
would be born in Aries, a lamb of god, "making all the vales rejoice"
(Blake, 1974, p. 115).

Certainly T. underwent an abrupt transformation from the projected
baby of the home birth, surrounded by family and friends, welcomed gently
into life in a hand-built, naturally lighted room, cuddled to his Mom in gratitude and joy—when the red digital numbers confirmed his distress.

He was born "in the midst" of all we wished to save him from, and was named a "man of poetry." Pitying his slight helplessness, his naked vulnerability, as father I was able to touch him only with my eyes, allowed close to him only during his brief moment of repose upon his mother's abdomen. I had been so heartened in the floodlit, antiseptic room when he had breathed spontaneously, when his color had been good, when his APGAR scores were normal; I'd thought we had got him through it.

**Theme three: Venus in fall (integration—moral level).** The rumours and whispers of something being "wrong" began before T.'s birth, when our family doctor quipped about two heads, and they persisted through T.'s infancy until his fourth month, when the pediatrician said, "cerebral palsy" and "seizures" and "deaf" and "blind". He was "microcephalic," he was "hypotonic," he was "quadriplegic." He had not reached the "milestones"; he was "developmentally delayed." He would be "different," but we should treat him "normally."

The onslaughs against T.'s normalcy, against even his normalization, began in our family doctor's office with the stress that M.
experienced in his opposition to the homebirth. For the doctor, "normal" meant antiseptic and technical; "normal" meant under his control. He feared "damage" to the child if the birth were to proceed without technological assistance.

The conundrum for the parents, the sphinx-like riddle, resides in the "how," not in the "what": How should we proceed? But the doctors, as diagnosticians, function as namers of parts, telling the ways that one's child fails to meet the norms. They detail abnormalities, areas in which there can be limited growth, and they document, visit after visit, that no growth is occurring; they invoke fear of degeneration and ultimate loss, while reducing the child piecemeal toward invalidation. A child like T. is defined by addition and subtraction: an addition of deficiencies to count the incapacities, and a subtraction of future capabilities.

The addition of symptoms proceeds in the following way: His eyes are not tracking; he has low muscle tone; he can not roll over; he can not grip an object; he can not sit up; he is not responding to auditory stimuli; he can not control involuntary movements. At his current age, he should be able to do all of these things, but he can do none of them. He has cerebral palsy—not an infection that will get better, but "damage" to the sensory-motor cortex that occurred at, or around, the time of birth. The
diagnosis summed up, the subtraction of future capabilities proceeds: He will never walk; he will never talk; he will never think or write; he will not see and hear what you or I can see and hear (his brain will not interpret things the way our brains interpret things). If we do not suppress these jerky movements, these "seizures" will cause further brain damage, and so degeneration will occur; we can expect no growth or very slow growth at best; if he ever won't take comforting, then perhaps the end is near. It might be better if he died. This last statement is the ultimate subtraction; it invokes the ultimate exclusion.

Still, they advise acceptance and a normal rearing. But with what gesture of futuring do we accept no growth/becoming? Are faith, hope, and love subtracted with incapacity? And does subtraction mean that the child has no "being"?

This is the lower sling swivel. And this is the upper sling swivel, whose use you will see when you are given your slings. And this is the piling swivel,
Which in your case you have not got. The branches Hold in the gardens their silent, eloquent gestures, Which in our case we have not got (Henry Reed, "Naming of Parts," in Thomas, 1963, p. 141).

The last thing to go is love; it is the last thing to be dismissed by external certainty: not protectiveness, not indignation, not denial, not
rationalization; the last thing to go is love. The serene face of the sidelying infant, sucking (it seemed for hours at a time) sustenance from his source of life, his Mom, slowly spasmodically, never quite getting enough to satisfy the doctors that he was gaining normally, but gaining nonetheless, eventually plumping--called love from me. Holding him daily on the side of my heart, snuggling him cosy in the crook of my arm, comforting colic hour after hour, rocking, bouncing, pacing, soothing, speaking--I gave love to him. And love did not tell me of a ruined child.

The blossoms are fragile and motionless . . .
And the almond blossom
Silent in all the gardens
And the bees going backwards and forwards,
For today we have naming of parts (Henry Reed, "Naming of Parts," in Thomas, 1963, pp.141-142).

Theme four: Mars in dignity (scientific/technological assessment--anagogic level). The pediatrician wanted us to come to the regional hospital for a week of tests, saying that she needed an opportunity to observe. There we felt ignored. T. and M. were confined to the hospital, I to a motel room. T. was sedated, given an electroencephalograph, and started on phenobarbitol. Somehow in the doctor's mind, T.'s colic was linked to the seizures she believed he was
having. She appeared satisfied that the seizures were suppressed only when she had seen him thoroughly immobilized.

She made appointments for us in neighboring cities, first to see an eye specialist, then to have a C.A.T. scan of T.'s brain. The eye specialist was supportive. He examined T.'s retinas and described his optic nerves: the left one was pink and whole; the right optic nerve showed some atrophy. But he was quite sure that it would regenerate with use. "Try to get him to look at things, to follow things with his eyes."

"We'll teach him to read," I told M., reminded of a book by Glen Doman (1965) and his *Teach Your Baby to Read* kit, which I had purchased when C. was an infant but had not used more than two or three times, knowing somehow that those large red letters represented a confinement for C. Doman contended that not only could very young infants be taught to read, but that "brain-injured" children, if they followed a twelve hour a day regimen of "patterning" exercises (Melton, 1977, pp. 154-160) and were engaged by their parents in specific training for reading, would show significant physical and mental development. These practices were advanced at The Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential, Philadelphia, where Doman was Director.

We stayed overnight in the more distant city and got the C.A.T. scan
done, surprised that T. needed no further sedation. The phenobarb kept him asleep the whole time. He even fed with his eyes shut. The pediatrician sent us home, after receiving news that the C.A.T. scan was "normal". She put us in touch with the Infant Development Program and with a physiotherapist; they were seventy-five miles in opposite directions from our home valley.

At home, I reread Glen Doman:

Man's (sic) intelligence is limited to the information he can gain from the world through his receptive senses. [Doman differentiates three "receptive" neurological functions from three "expressive" functions.] The highest of these receptive abilities is the ability to read. . . . If all three of man's receptive abilities were totally cut off, he would be more of a vegetable than a human being. If one of these abilities is higher than the others, the person will perform to the top level of that ability, provided every conceivable opportunity is made available to that person to gain information through that single facility (Doman, 1965, pp. 87-88).

Now I knew that T. could see something, though he could not track a moving object with his eyes. I knew he had good retinas and one good optic nerve, at least. And I knew that he could hear: Loud noises startled him; a confusion of voices distressed him; if I spoke with an English accent, it brought a smile to his face; music comforted him, particularly Mozart, as it had comforted T.'s brother when he was T.'s age. T. could not explore through movement; he could not touch things or bring them to his
mouth. Therefore, I thought that "hearing" would be T.'s strongest "receptive facility." I elected to surround T., during his every waking moment, with music and with speech.

At the I.D.P. (Infant Development Program), they told us to stimulate him. They gave us a variety of bright plastic toys and showed us how to use sound to draw his attention to a moving object. We asked the I.D.P. therapists, and later the physiotherapist, about the Doman treatments. They discouraged any further inquiries on the bases of cost, false hope, attendant guilt, and the extreme demands on a family's time imposed by the Doman method. "It is abusive to families," they said.

The I.D.P. made a small library of books available to parents. I borrowed all of their books about seizures. As I read them from cover to cover, I found inconsistencies. When we asked the pediatrician what kind of seizures T. was having, she said, "Myoclonic." The messages from his brain to his muscles were "short circuiting," she said. I received this information, through M., at second hand. My fear was that the pediatrician meant massive myoclonic jerks or "salaam" seizures, which, according to the books, were a sure sign that there was no hope. But salaam seizures were not controlled with phenobarbitol, nor were myoclonic twitches of any variety. The pediatrician had declared that, on phenobarbitol, T. would
be able to focus better, that he would not experience the breaks in perception that were interrupting his development (though I was at odds to understand how suppression of consciousness could be developmental). This sounded as if she were observing petit mal, or "absense" seizures, which are not the same as myoclonic jerks. I was unable to discern, or to remember, anything in T.'s appearance or behavior that resembled grand mal seizures, for which phenobarbitol might at one time have been the drug of choice.

I wondered why some "brain injured" children had seizures while others did not. I wondered why the age of onset varied. If electrical activity on the surface of the brain was the cause of seizures, I wondered what was the cause of the electrical activity? Scar tissue? Tumors? Crystalline structures? Emotions? Something less tangible?

With the phenobarbitol, the pediatrician saw improvement, but still she detected something she did not like. She prescribed dilantin, a powerful medication with nasty side effects: thickening of the gums, increase in body hair, and (as we later heard from T.'s infant neurologist) "pseudo-retardation." We had to work hard to provide enough stimulation to keep T. awake. As his body grew accustomed to these new substances, his waking times increased, but his bouts of colic returned. I was up with
him nightly again, soothing him any way that I could, discovering that
music soothed him at times, as did nursery rhymes, as did rhythmic
clockwise circumambulation of the dining table. I discovered that my own
relative calmness was a strong inducement of calm in T.

As his periods of alertness increased, he began to respond to sights,
sounds, or rhythmic movements with smiles at times. He responded with
smiles to the bright mobile objects that M. had sewn from flannel,
originally for hanging above T.'s older brother's crib: geometric shapes in
bold hues upon which archetypal symbols were sewn in contrasting colors.
He would also smile consistently for certain musical themes. When we
reported these developments to the pediatrician, she dismissed them as
"reflex smiles."

The pediatrician wanted to send us to a larger center for a full,
rigorous assessment. Our sister-in-law, a medical doctor, made some
contacts for us. She arranged to have T. assessed in her home city by "the
best infant neurologist on the continent."

Three days before Christmas in T.'s first year, he developed a high
fever. It was frightening, and the young doctor on duty at the local
hospital could not, at first, locate the source of the infection. He feared
meningitis. He persevered in his testing and observation of T. He
congratulated us for having saved T. from dehydration, and within hours he pinpointed a urinary tract infection, which he treated with a course of antibiotics. Though extremely grateful to the young doctor, M. was exhausted. She needed a break. We left T. overnight in hospital and, for the first time in his life, he was fed with formula. He stopped smiling, and he would not respond to stimulation. Three weeks later, he was given the best medical assessment available at the time.

The assessment was not encouraging. The child the infant neurologist saw was immobile, unresponsive, and distant. He appeared to be very severely handicapped. His C.A.T. scan was not normal. The ventricles of T.'s brain were enlarged, and the convolutions on the surface of his brain were less defined than normal, although there were no tumors, growths, lesions, or calcifications present. His optic nerve appeared to be getting better. The seizures were nonexistent; the twitches, caused by muscle spasms, were non-medicable. The phenobarbitol and the dilantin were deleted from T.'s program. We were given a choice of two diagnoses: anoxia of pregnancy (lack of oxygen in the womb), or cytological malformation (an architectural fault in the structure of the brain cells). Neither of these causes was thought to be genetic but, in either case, development would be extremely slow. The second diagnosis appeared far
more limiting than the first.

These findings were arrived at by means of an impressive array of technological equipment. The big city neurologist, an authoritative individual, the best on the continent, could read the output of these machines independently; he could collate his interpretations and synthesize his conclusions in a brief span of time. Still, the data were not sufficient to pinpoint a single solid diagnosis. His best guesses were prefaced by, "I may be wrong but . . ." Even so, many of the descriptive terms he applied to T. have followed T. through life.

The specialist saw us again when T. was about a year and a half, at a less depressing time of year. Somehow sensing our respect for the man, T. was relaxed and happy that day. With an appropriate smile, he charmed the specialist, who said, "This is not the same child I saw in January . . . " (but this was the same child I had seen many times prior to January, the same child who had giggled ecstatically at six months old when I had held him close to the big bass speaker for a Mozart concerto, so that he could feel the vibrations of the music.)

The specialist was quick to add, "He is still severely handicapped," but he said there was more happening with T. than he'd thought. After this examination, a general physical, I felt privately thankful toward the
specialist for three reasons: (a) He did not deny, in this interview, information brought to him through direct, momentary observation; (b) again he prefaced his limiting statements with, "I may be wrong but . . ."; and (c) most importantly, he recognized T.'s "appropriate smile." He said that T.'s life expectancy could be normal. "Most of them die of aspiration," he said. I tried to imagine T. dying of hope, or in a vacuum cleaner, or as Jimi Hendrix died.

I'd like to end this section on scientific/technological assessment by quoting H. G. Gadamer's anagogic projection for "the experience of science."

Now if what we have before our eyes is not only the artistic tradition of a people, or historical condition, or the principal of modern science in its hermeneutic preconditions but rather the whole of our experience, then we have succeeded, I think, in joining the experience of science to our own universal and human experience of life (Gadamer, 1977c, p. 13).

Gadamer supplies my aspiration for the future of the medical and teaching professions. However, "today we have naming of parts."

_Coda._ We were brought perilously close to denying the being of the child and denying being for the child. There were times I felt that I was "grasping at straws." This metaphor, _grasping at straws_, so full of the
assumptions of worldly wisdom, shows me an external picture of myself: Cliffhanging, grasping a rooted clump of grass, my strong right hand sliding down the last few stems toward a cluster of seeds at the end, finally I plummet into the depths, clutching only a palmful of seeds. There were times I felt that the child I was sensing, feeling, discovering, was a personal delusion and, at those times, I would fall. And the duration of the fall was interminable, and the trajectory of the fall was groundless.

But the palmful of seeds I clutched were these: love, faith, and hope -- in that order. Love gave rise to faith and recalled me to being. I trusted that I was alive and valid, and that brought me ground: faith in myself, called out by love of the helpless child. And faith *thought* hope, and hope understood a meaningful future for a "so good" boy. My hope was a rosary of true observations of the being of T.

But the process was never accomplished for good and all. In a sense, I have had to speak T.'s world into being again and again, in the face of repeated diagnoses and doubts, which would render him null. However, as T. has gone forward, my assembled memories of his being have served to call forth an ever more resonant faith in his validity and continuing growth.
Chapter Two: T. And T.'s Uncle (Taurus)

The Narrative

I was sitting on a small couch, a love-seat really; it was composed of dark brown walnut dimensional lumber and grey corduroy-covered polyurethane cushions. I was wearing red cotton pants and a white tee-shirt. My feet were bare. It was a hot and sunny afternoon. Outside the temperature was in the thirties.

I was perched forward on the edge of the couch, with my left arm crooked, supporting T., who was seated on my left thigh. I leaned forward to provide support against my chest for his head, which sometimes fell backwards suddenly. T. was dressed in a red jumpsuit, decorated with light porridge stains. He was also barefoot. At one year and four months, he was a small but plumping child. His hair was very blond, and his eyes, which flittered about playfully, were bright blue.

Behind us was the counter which divided the sitting room from the kitchen. Vertical two-by-six pine tongue and groove panelling, evident everywhere, only recently applied, testified to my labour.
My brother from New Zealand (where he thought he might build golf courses), a large, red-haired, bushy-bearded bear of a man with a burbling laugh and a deep, soft burr of a voice, held a camera and fiddled with the settings, teasing himself for being maladept. His wife, N., petite, blonde, attractive, bantered and smiled comfortably. I enjoyed her sense of humour. T. was responding to these relatives with behaviour that, observed in any child his age, would be called mischievous delight.

T. and I had been alone together most of a week. I had been caring for his needs with a rhythmic fondness that had kept him from any discomfort. He had had very little colic; his bowels were functioning regularly. I had been talking to him constantly and playing with him while doing his physio, and wrestling with him and teasing him and getting lots of smiles in response. We had played music on the stereo constantly; his favorites were Mozart and the Celtic music of The Chieftains. He had been relishing the fresh fruit produced in our valley (hours on end I had been spooning it into him, with a small rubber-coated spoon) and the daily visits of his mother's good friends, who were providing me with time to work on the house. It was early August; T.'s Mom was in Toronto for ten days visiting her sister, and C., T.'s four year old brother, was in Winnipeg with uncles and aunts and grandparents.
I was saying to T. that it was too bad that Mom and C. were not there to enjoy this special visit by an uncle and aunt from New Zealand today. He was smiling and vocalizing, making sounds that sang in his happy range.

T. smiled, and his uncle pointed the camera at him. T.'s smile ceased, and T. looked away. He sounded his note of laughter, more like a bird call than the giggle of a happy child, and his uncle fiddled with the setting again. T.'s uncle aimed the camera. Instantly the smile vanished, and T. looked up and away. The camera came down; the smile returned. The bird call of triumph sounded.

T.'s uncle shot a whole roll of film, resorting to trickery, attempting to catch one of T.'s vanishing smiles, but he was still not sure that he had caught one. He searched in the camera bag for another roll of film. He and T.'s aunt had words about who had forgotten to buy more film. T. uttered bird call after bird call of delight, as his aunt and uncle bickered about film.

The conversation turned to how life had been with T. during this year and four months, and I spoke of our early difficulties. T.'s aunt, who is now a professor of occupational therapy in Japan, listened with approval as I described the Infant Development Program, T.'s developmental physiotherapy, and the types of stimulation we were using with T.
"You must be just ecstatic with the way he is now," my brother was saying, and T.'s aunt concurred.

**Interpretation**

T.'s *words*. Most children's early memories are explained as reconstructions from stories told by their parents. I have told T. the story of T. and his uncle many times. Also I have showed him the series of photographs taken by his uncle that day. The story of our week alone together has often been shared between us, but somehow I trust T. when he says that he has vivid memories of that time. In trusting him, I choose to advance him the benefit of the doubt. Very early memories appear to be accessible to subjects in hypnotic or meditative states. T. has often spoken of the experiments with memory, visualization, thought, and composition that he has conducted during his night waking periods and during some of his so-called naps. The following are T.'s words in response to my memories of T. and T.'s uncle that day. T. refers to me by my first name, here designated by the initial letter, L.

I was sitting on my father's lap missing my Mom. I had been enjoying my week with this funny father because he entertained me constantly, reading and reciting to me and talking like a filibuster. I had been so good for him that he showed me the baby cats that were
born the day my mother returned from Toronto. But the most
interesting thing I remember was [my uncle] and [aunt] surprising us
one afternoon as they drove through our valley after golfing at the
local golf course. When [my uncle] raised the camera the first time,
I stopped smiling because I knew he would show the picture to my
Mom, and she would think I was not missing her. As soon as I was
able to stop teasing [my uncle], I realized that he had run out of film
and so had to laugh at his being so gullible.

When L. says I uttered bird calls of delight, I think he is
exaggerating. Actually I was laughing. Also when I consider that
everyone in the world thought I was mentally handicapped except for
my parents, I am so grateful to [my uncle] and [aunt] for seeing that I
was intelligent enough to tease [my uncle] in a way that is similar
to hide and seek as most children play it at that age. I remember
something L. told me a few years ago. When I was still under a year,
L. always played a game with me designed to prove that I understood
object permanence. I would be on the couch lying on my side and L.
would put a ball beside my foot. Each time he would say, "Kick the
ball, T. Kick the ball," I would kick it across the room. Each time he
would return the ball, I would smile and laugh. So L. knew I was not
so far behind mentally as I was physically. L. was really telling me
something important by playing this game with me. He was telling
me that I was not a mentally handicapped child and observing a boy
at play to reassure himself that what everybody else was saying
about T. was far from true. When I was born, L. decided that I was
really a fine boy so I had a lot to live up to. So when I teased [my
uncle] that way I was showing knowledge that my smile was object
permanent, and [my aunt] knew it and so did [my uncle]. So I found
out that not only my parents were able to understand that I was a
normal child with a body that didn't work the right way.

Theme one: Mars in fall (scientific/technological
assessment--moral level). Though the pediatrician had recommended
the Infant Development Program and the developmental physiotherapy, she
gave little credence to the reports from these programs, as she continued
to "manage" the case. Doctors did not then speak of treating cerebral palsy, but rather of managing it. This managing, from the Latin *manus*, "a hand," implies more managerial supervision, or "viewing from above," than it does manipulation. The manipulation, or "hands on" treatment, is left to the workers in the field, the therapists. However, the reports of the workers in the field cannot be viewed as sufficiently informed to influence diagnosis, or "thorough knowledge," and prognosis, or "foreknowledge," these workers never having achieved the gnosis, or "knowledge," which comes with a physician's training. Unchosen, they may be pickers, but they can not be choosers. Therefore, though they gather details, they must forego description and withhold prescription, as privileges above their station.

The parents, the tenant farmers, are viewed as best equipped to supply the day to day needs of the vegetable child (feeding, medicating, lifting, positioning, comforting, exercising, transporting, stimulating), under the direction of the therapists at the mandate of the pediatrician, but the observations that are produced by parents are treated with reserve.

Our pediatrician had received a description of T. from a very lofty authority indeed. Diagnostically, it reflected several reversals of her
findings, and prognostically, it made much of her program appear whimsical. In turn, she rejected attempts by the therapists to detail progress, withholding credence from observations made by these workers in the field, with the same reservations usually extended to the observations of parents.

For her, T. was never on the growth curve. His length, his weight, and the circumference of his head provided numbers that were below the norms for his age. Though such measures as the therapists were able to apply regarding the milestones of physical development confirmed that he was behind the norms, the pediatrician would not admit their claims that T. showed progress assessable in months. He had only the capabilities of a new born infant; for her this did not change until he was over a year old.

It appears that, during the first year of life, the child moves along a plane--perhaps "the field" of the therapists. The child keeps pace with time or is "delayed" (or, less kindly, "retarded") and is, therefore, "challenged" to keep up or catch up, in spite of the weight of the "handicaps," for the plane is measured by time in a Newtonian way (distance = rate x time). The milestones, established by "rule" (implying both "measure" and "law") and "norm" (in Latin, *norma*, meaning "square"), must be reached at a decent rate. These rules and norms can be seen as
the "laws" of development, "prescribed" in the legal sense by the privileged (literally "those who are privy to the law"), the doctors—or scribed (in its creationist sense) by the Cosmocrator, with his rule and square, when he established the laws of nature.

The plane, inclined, becomes a "growth curve"—not a curve at all, but a normed reference to milestones, which have been established by the laws of development. The task of normalization, then, can be seen as squaring the delayed or unlawful development with the normal or legal development prescribed by the doctors who, as "physicians" or "knowers of nature," are privy to natural laws. The word, nature, itself is for them "a birth," a beginning, a development that is lawed into being once and forever at the moment of its primal "unveiling," and not, as Dylan Thomas says of the sun in "Fern Hill," "born over and over" (Thomas, 1952, p. 159).

At length, step-by-step progress along this graded "curve" will lead to the perspective from which laws may be discerned and decreed. But it is a long, arduous journey, and many travellers must content themselves to occupy stations along the way or, indeed, to be permanently delayed or waylaid--according to nature, educational potential, and social capital.

Child development appeared to be very inflexible and deterministic, but the question was forming in my mind as to what the development of a
child who might neither walk nor talk but who had high intelligence would look like, and how that development would unveil itself.

Theme two: Moon in exaltation (growth—allegorical level).

Yet, for us, T. was showing growth. "He was a small but plumping child."
For us, the plane of his development was not a field, measured in rods, squared to the neighbouring fields, fenced against intrusion, plowed in straight furrows, and harrowed into tillage, but a garden--an extension of mother and home that dissolved into its natural surroundings. Our acreage had no fences; it blended with the woods and with the promontory behind. The house itself nestled among tamaracks. Our outdoor dining table was embraced by an ancient saskatoon tree, which was a cloud of bright flowers in spring time. Small paths and byways wound through our woods, past bushes, shrubs, and wild herbs. T.'s Mom knew the name of every growing thing by heart.

It was here that we cared for T., in a hand built home, with "a rhythmic fondness" that sought to overcome the arhythmias of partial prognoses, antispasmodic drugs, severe bouts of colic, and our fears for the future. Insofar as the rhythm prevailed, the freedom to nurture emerged. This freedom dwelt in observances of the child who was,
instead of in delineation of the child who had failed to be. I use the word observance deliberately, with its connotations of reverence, attention, and esteem—for our observations of T. were not all visually appropriated. Many were processed through the body in a kind of proprioception which sensed his integrity; there was an emotional perception that felt joy in his smiles, that suffered his pain; and there was a monitoring of his facial and bodily movements, whether visually perceived or perceived in cuddling, which communicated to one's own body, and to which one's own body responded in natural mimicry. When I spoke to T. and his face and his body did their delayed and veiled dance, my own face and body experienced echoes of those movements and recognized their meanings.

It was just these perceptions that doctors ruled out as too self-delusive for admittance as data. It was a close friend, indeed, to whom we could speak of such things. But our bodies had no doubt as to T.'s appropriate smiles. Our bodies never doubted the meaning of a smile. Our minds were made to doubt and so, to devalue. Our observances were non-evaluative; they lacked the rigor of square and rule, but "assiduous" (from the Latin, assidere, "to sit") they were, as each day both of us "sat" in bodily contact with T. for hours, holding him to feed him, to play with him, to talk to him, to read to him, to comfort him.
M. took care to learn the techniques of the therapists, to implement them, to transmit them to me. After the breastfeeding had ceased, she quested each day for fresh goat's milk, mindful of T.'s bowels, mindful of his nutrition, mindful of his comfort and his pain, watchful, alert. She assembled information about feeding from diverse sources: *Nutrition Almanac* (Nutrition Search Inc., 1979), Dr. Christopher (Christopher, 1978), vegetarian literature, Macrobiotics (Moromoto, 1973). She made choices to help him flourish. Whenever possible, I completed the acts of feeding, allowing one to two hours for a bottle of milk, two hours at first for a bowl of food, speaking to him constantly.

*Theme three: Venus in dignity (integration--anagogic level).* I was sensing a child who intended to declare the milestones as met. I was aware of a whole child, parts of whom would not function, who wanted to salute those milestones and celebrate surpassing them. When I pulled him into a sitting position, he tried to hold his head forward and to the left, so that it would not loll backwards. Squiggling on his wedge in a prone position, he would finally reach the edge and roll over onto his back, looning aloud in triumph. Lying level on his stomach on the floor, he would repeat the same movements of his head until he brought himself full
circle. When I played the game of "kick the ball" with him, I observed an absolute consistency. I would show him the ball. He would acknowledge it with a momentary focusing of his eyes. I would place the ball at his feet, resting it against a foot so that he could feel its presence. There would be a delay, five seconds, ten seconds sometimes. Then, a spasmodic motion of T.'s leg would punt the ball across the room. I would congratulate T., saying silly things in funny voices. He would respond with smiles that lit his whole face and with songs of laughter. We could repeat this game over and over and over. But on a given day, in a test situation, in the presence of an evaluator, T. might show none of this liveliness, even in his own home. Anxiety (his or mine or his mother's, or all of ours combined) reduced his capacity. Pain reduced his control. I carried the burden of seeing, hearing, and feeling more, with greater congruity than the casual observer or the structured evaluator. It made for uneasiness. I often received humoring messages from colleagues and acquaintances. Years later, when T. was confirming a quick intelligence, a former colleague confessed that she thought I had been "flogging a dead horse." But the horse was disabled, not dead; and the rider was intact. I often intercepted expressions and gestures from evaluators, severing communication, declining reception of my observations.
T. was sensitive to the intentions of visitors to our home. His responses were not altogether random, I think. There were some people who could hold him and to whom he would show the happy T. we often saw. For others, he would be the distant severely handicapped child who showed no outward signs of response. Knowing now that these behaviors have remained consistent over the years, I can say that he was selecting his friends on the basis of feelings he had about them and feelings his parents had about them; his responses differed if visitors spoke directly to him and differed again if they acknowledged the messages he was sending in return. It was somewhat unsettling at the time to have a family friend elicit immediate smiles from T., at the sound of her voice, or to have another occasional visitor, whose observations we had always trusted, declare each time she saw him that T. was bright. We did not always see him as bright. Often he was simply a lot of work. Often he was in pain (physical, emotional, or emotional/physical?). It required a lot of energy to raise hope from the ground of faith and keep doubt at bay. T. had not been pre-scripted a secure future. "I may be wrong, but . . ." the authority had said—and sometimes there was no option in the "but."

The week of my brother's visit, which I had spent alone with T., was
the best week so far of our life together. We had enjoyed each other's company with absolute consistency. There had been nothing to detract from my consistent reading of T. as a good boy, as a whole child who could not move normally. The interpretation placed upon T.'s behavior by my brother and his wife was heartening to me, because it coincided with my own reflections. T.'s uncle and aunt perceived that T. was playing with them. They accepted his play and played in response. They joined his game. H. G. Gadamer describes this type of game as "a reciprocal behavior of absolute contemporaneousness ... an ecstatic self-forgetting ... the free buoyancy of an elevation above oneself ..." (Gadamer, 1977b, p. 54-55).

My brother and his wife showed no desire to remain distant, self-possessed, and judgemental, or to treat T. as a curiosity. There was no antipathy, no pity in their demeanors. I felt comfort in their presence of a type that, outside of my nuclear family, I feel only with my siblings. In fact, this comfort is my primary response to my siblings, so much so that its memory keeps me connected with my brother, though we are thousands of miles apart.

T. entered the game with his uncle in the same way that T. played with me. Auntie N. had the same calm, graceful, feminine presence that
T.'s Mom displays when she is at ease. Their recognition of T.'s "being" strengthened me against doubt. I still recall that afternoon with vivid fondness. T. was a real live boy that day, who extended his sense of family to an uncle and aunt who lived half way around the world.
Chapter Three: A Spark Of The Divine (Gemini)

The Narrative

I sat in the basement of a house situated on a high promontory, which faced south over the orchard land of our mountain valley. It was spring. The basement was spacious. It provided space for a long table, which was spread with drinks and baked goods; for three or four rows of chairs; and also for a performance area, immediately in front of the chairs.

The house was a monument to small enterprise, spacious and modern, having been salvaged at low cost by a young man whom we were acquainted with, and moved up the mountain to the best view lot in the valley, where, in anticipation, he had poured a new foundation for it. The basement floor was of smooth, shiney, professional-looking concrete. The influence of the young man's wife, and the weight of her association with the new age community in the valley, had secured this basement as the site of a tiny Waldorf School.

I was sitting in the back row of chairs, holding a three year old T. on
my lap, supporting his head in the crook of my left arm. He was very still and small and quiet. Occasionally, he opened his eyes and let them flit over the scene, as it offered itself to his position of calm recumbancy.

I was prepared to be a little bored, as I often was in situations of idle chatter, where the women were exchanging recipes for macrobiotic desserts, and the men their favourite mixes of cement. The children were beautifully dressed, the boys in white shirts and the girls in long dresses, and remarkably well-behaved, as was our son, C., now six years old and comfortably at home among these children of friends and local associates. But I found myself charmed, as the children recited short poems, sang plain songs, and played small tunes on their recorders. I remember how earnestly they recited, "Moses supposes his toeses are roses."

After the performances, C. brought me handful of cookies. M. brought me a cup of a coffee, a small glass of juice to give to T., and a large terry cloth bib, which would keep T.'s shirt from getting stained by the juice. C. was happy with the food and the company of other children. M. was content among the women; they were her closest friends. T. remained still and quiet. He sipped his juice, and the children played happily on all sides of him.

Beside me, on my right sat Mrs. T., an elderly friend whom I
respected immensely and with whom I was meeting every Tuesday evening to read from Rudolf Steiner's *Study of Man*. There was a rapport between this woman and me of a type that I have rarely in my life experienced. I could finish her sentences for her, or infallibly supply the correct word when her memory failed her. She had made herself known to our small group of alternative educators by answering an ad that we had placed in the local newspaper. We had been seeking advice about how to start a Waldorf School. She had introduced herself to us as the first Anthroposophist ever to come to live in Canada, and she had explained that Rudolf Steiner had founded both Anthroposophy and the Waldorf Schools as a result of his life's work in the field of esoteric Christianity. She was in her mid-eighties, and she emanated some of the same still recumbancy that I sensed from T. that evening. She spoke to me of the children's performances, apparently charmed as much as I was by song, word, and gesture. She commented on T.'s physical beauty: his hair, his eyes, and his skin. I remarked that people were often affected by his beauty. Sometimes, I said, they noticed first that he was beautiful, and only afterwards that he was handicapped. Her answer, "Yes," was full of implied information. Her belief, Platonist and reincarnationist, was that T. was closer than most children to his divine spiritual source; that he
would attract to himself spiritual protection and guidance; and that she, as an elder woman nearing the end of her life's journey, was able both to recognize his spirit-being and to give to him a blessing that rose out of the wisdom of her eighty-six years. As she gazed at him, she said, "He is a spark of the divine."

*Interpretation*

*T.'s words.* I sat on my father's lap the way I am doing now and listened to the other children playing recorders and saying verses. I too was charmed. I thought really it would be nice to go to a school like this one. When my Mom came to bring my father coffee I wanted to say to her, "I need a good school too," because I knew she was thinking of sending C. to a Waldorf school. She smiled and said to me, "Did you enjoy the music T.?" I opened my eyes and saw my beautiful Mom and realized that she was really crying inside because I was handicapped. She had so much love for me. When C. came to bring my father a cookie I felt ashamed to be hating him for being able to walk and talk like other children. When L. said to Mrs. T. that I was always getting complimented for my beautiful blue eyes and perfect skin, I felt embarrassed because many people were not able to see beyond my handicaps. But Mrs. T. was able to see that I was really a spiritual boy and I was charmed by her calm attitude. She really surprised me when she said, "He is a spark of the divine," because only L. had ever talked that way in front of me before. So I realized that there was something special about this woman and something special about the conversation that she and L. were having. L. always told me that I was a special person, so when I heard another person recognizing me in this way I knew that she was really close to her death because she was able to see me as I felt myself to be. But I was not afraid to realize that this woman would be dying soon because she had finished her life's work I thought.
Theme one: Jupiter in fall (observation—moral level).

Robert Graves (1967) describes something that happened to him one evening in adolescence:

One fine summer evening, at the age of twelve, I was sitting on an iron roller behind the school cricket pavilion, with nothing much in my head, when I received a sudden celestial illumination: it occurred to me that I knew everything. I remember letting my mind range rapidly over all its familiar subjects of knowledge, only to find that this was no foolish fancy. I did know everything. . . . I held the key to truth in my hand and could use it to unlock any door. Mine was no religious or philosophical theory, but a simple method of looking sideways at disorderly facts so as to make perfect sense of them (p. 137).

The ability faded for the young Graves a day or two later, after his failure to "record [his] formula on the back of an old exercise book," because "[his] mind went too fast for [his] pen."

I had a similar experience in the later years of my own adolescence, probably around the age of eighteen, when the urge to write poems was strong in me. But I did not feel that I knew everything: I felt instead that I could understand everyone, and that, understanding everyone, I had no right to praise or blame them for whatever they might do. I felt that their motives were quite clear to me, along with their degrees of inspiration or mistakenness. This experience did not arouse in me the desire to go out of myself and become the person whom I understood, whether it was D. H.
Lawrence, or Mr. Collins in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, or a classmate at my school. I understood them all by a manner of listening for their resonances within myself, dispassionately, disinterestedly, without any desire to change or to do. With this understanding came an almost excruciating shyness.

Unlike Graves' experience, for me this ability did not fade; it became so habitual that it was difficult for me to interact with any but a small circle of friends, whom I amused with my insights into personalities and my mimicry of voices. Like a time traveller in a science fiction film, I did not wish to intervene, fearful of altering the continuum between past and present or, in my case, between present and future.

At nineteen, I read with approval the following passage from a work by Basho (1966), a seventeenth century Japanese Haiku poet and Zen practitioner:

As I was plodding along the River Fuji, I saw a small child, hardly three years of age, crying pitifully on the bank, obviously abandoned by his parents. They must have thought this child was unable to ride through the stormy waters of life which run as wild as the rapid river itself, and that he was destined to have a life even shorter than that of the morning dew. The child looked to me as fragile as the flowers of the bush-clover that scatter at the slightest stir of the autumn wind, and it was so pitiful that I gave him what little food I had with me. . . . Alas it seems to me that this child's undeserved suffering has been caused by something far greater and more massive--by what one might call the irresistible will of
heaven. If it is so, child, you must raise your voice to heaven, and I must pass on, leaving you behind.

The ancient poet
Who pitied monkeys for their cries,
What would he say, if he saw
This child crying in the autumn wind? (p. 52).

I believed, at first reading, that Basho was a Zen master and, as such, he would be able to read the currents of the "waters of life" so authentically that his unclinging attitude toward his own pity for the child should be viewed as exemplary. I would have behaved in the same way, I thought, instead of "playing God" and rescuing the child, only to have him turn out a rapist or a thief. But Basho, though he is reputed to have achieved mastery at some point in his life, was not behaving as a master when he turned his back on the child. There is a resounding contradiction in the fact that pity moved the poet to give the child the last of his food, but the poet did not acknowledge that "the irresistible will of heaven" had created an opportunity for a linkage of souls. This opportunity Basho ignored. It was equally to "play God" for the poet to feed the child, to forget him, and then to proceed to his own preplanned destination. Had Basho been a Zen master he would have been enlivened by the vow of the bodhisattva; he would have known when and how to intervene for the future of the child's soul, the future of the culture, the future of humanity, and the future of the earth; he would not have thought
only of his private destination.

Or perhaps something spoke to me during the first three years of T.'s life, which did not speak to Basho in his encounter with the abandoned child. Perhaps, if Basho had held the child to his chest for two hours to feed him, the rhythm of the child's heart, beating in such close proximity to his own, would have excluded the option of abandoning the child again.

There are several ways I could have abandoned T. with full cultural approval: (a) I could have accepted the dire medical prognoses; (b) I could have accepted the social workers' advice that we put T. in "Cradle Haven"; (c) I could have fed him physically, but have abandoned any attempt to nourish his mind. To have made any of these choices would have shown no deviation from the "common sense" wisdom dispensed by social workers and psychologists: "You've got to think of yourself first. You've got to think of your own mental health."

Their question: "Where am 'I' if I sacrifice my 'self'?" My answer: "I am somewhere between the bridge of my nose and all that I sense of otherness. All that I sense of otherness comes toward me from an indefinite future, which I can shape as I "think" it now. But what is a future toward which I think only "I"? Where is the salvation in sauve qui peut?"
My observations were such that I could not accept versions of the future which diminished or negated T.—which abandoned him. Yet these versions of the future were persistently advanced from almost every quarter of our cultural environment.

However, I merely had the sense that I could understand human behavior—not, like the young Graves, that I knew everything. I had the courage to think a positive future for T. but not necessarily the knowledge of what to think, or the knowledge of what to do in order to intervene in the technologically determined prognoses, which were so dissonant with my intuitive understanding of T.

*Theme two: Mercury in dignity* (*communication—anagogic level*). Mrs. T., the elderly friend whom I respected immensely and with whom I was reading Rudolf Steiner’s *Study of Man* (1966b), helped me make several important adjustments. She eased my entry into a type of thought that, for all my reading on shamanism, psychoanalysis, mythology, poetics, and religion, was quite foreign to me and quite radical.

She was eighty-five when I met her, and she had no fear of death. She had no attachment to life, and yet there was no nihilism, no world-negation about her. She questioned why she was still alive, if not for
some purpose: For her that purpose was to communicate with me and a few others who had become part of her study circle. Her senses were fading, but when I read aloud to her she could hear every word. As we sat in conversation, I would complete her sentences. She was concerned about my future.

A month prior to meeting my elderly friend, when M. and I travelled to a distant city to attend a week of "summer institutes" on Waldorf Education, I had received an introduction to the type of knowledge that Mrs. T. was able to present to me. As an English teacher, I was interested in the rich literature curriculum followed by the Waldorf schools. As the father of a handicapped boy, I was curious about their "curative" educational practices, for "children in need of special care of the soul." It was possible that these two interests would converge for me in the answers to two questions, which I would bring to the lectures that I planned to attend. The questions were: (a) "Was it possible for a child who failed to meet the milestones of physical development to have high intelligence?" and (b) "If so, what should one do for the child to ensure that this high intelligence does not go undeveloped?"

T. was over two years old. Grandiose rehabilitation schemes, like Glenn Doman's, had proved impossible within the setting of our rural
family life. T. had not met many of the early milestones of physical development. He needed support to hold his head up properly. He could not sit without assistance. His needs for simple sustenance, his needs for physiotherapy and stimulation in the home, his visits with therapists in distant towns, and his trips to far distant cities for periodic medical assessments were proving both physically and emotionally exhausting for us as parents. I needed to know what I could do for T. within the immediate context of our daily routines, and it needed to have something to do with language, which was the best I had to offer him, and which also addressed T.'s strongest learning modality: his listening.

The week at the summer institutes was more informative than I had anticipated. I learned a great deal there that I still reflect upon. I began to absorb ideas that had direct bearing upon T.'s being and that eventually helped to confirm my observations of T.

The workshop that M. attended, called "Veil Painting," offered practical experience in a watercolor technique that consists of repeated thin washes or "veils" of faint color, which are applied one at a time in curvilinear fashion, the latest upon the earlier layers, as each veil dries. The colors and curves are varied and layered until dominant shades and shapes emerge. One danger in the technique lies in the use of too much
color, so that the appearance becomes opaque; a second danger lies in the temptation to bring the emerging shapes prematurely to form. The veils are kept thin, so that the colors remain translucent. The painter is encouraged not to seize upon the first emerging suggestion of form, as it probably will represent something culturally conventional that does not truly emerge as an "imagination."

The process struck me as exact training in the practice of suspending easy assumptions; refraining from the ready conclusions offered by culture, education, or language; learning to be vigilant and watchful; developing personal patience while "suffering", as it were, the images and attendant thoughts to "come unto" one.

Interestingly, the metaphor provided by this method of veil painting, as revealed to me that week in my conversations with M., gave me (in T. S. Eliot's phrase) an "objective correlative" for my experience in the classes on curative education. If I not already, in my self-education as a poet, acquired some experience of the type of "patience" demanded by the lecture presentations, I would have rejected their contents outright, labelling them mystic, archaic, and unscientific.

However, I recalled the advice of my poetic exemplars. With Coleridge, I willed my "suspension of disbelief" (Coleridge, 1965, p. 269).
With Keats', I practiced "negative capability," the capability of "being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason" (Keats, 1964, p. 304). I recalled Robert Graves' pronouncement that the listener had to join the poetic speaker in the experience of "poetic trance," before beginning to "think poetically" (Graves, 1961). With Owen Barfield, I remembered that words often "contain" a variety of future metaphoric meanings in latency (Barfield, 1964, p.85). And I remembered Ezra Pound's assertion that for language to be "charged with its utmost meaning," it needs to be apprehended as sound and visual image, and not solely as thought content (Pound, 1960, p. 63).

The lecturer secured my attention with his very first words. He stated that the curative teacher must see the individual child and not the "type of handicap," which in fact, constitutes "an obstacle lying between the child and the teacher." The teacher, he said, must observe without intellectualizing, so that the child's individuality can shine through and the teacher can "identify" with the child. He recommended that the teacher should observe her own reactions while identifying with the child, and that nothing should escape her notice: The child's way of moving, the child's way of breathing, the child's tone of voice, and the child's mode of expression all must be observed. The focus of the teacher should be on the
child and not upon the pain of the mother. The child, he said, has a different feeling for a teacher who has persistently taken the trouble to know the child as an individual and to accept the child in a human way; as a result, the child's difficult behaviors pass away.

As the week progressed, the lecturer delivered a number of challenges to the common sense, journalistic compendium of assumptions that I held suspended in my modern, western mind. In the most matter-of-fact way, he spoke of things that we cannot know by intellect alone. Statements such as those in the following series of paragraphs carried the self-referential question, "How does this statement mean?"

1. There are twelve "handicapping conditions," each one arising from one of twelve astrological elements that are usually harmonized in the human being. In a sense, each handicapping condition brings with it an exaggerated memory of a single sign of the zodiac.

2. "Consciousness" is a spiritual faculty that is higher than thinking and able to observe thinking. To become aware of one's "willing" requires a supreme effort to lift it into consciousness. A teacher must use this faculty of consciousness to perceive the nature of the child's consciousness.

3. Too much "sulfur" produces a child who can not remember. Too
little sulfur produces a child who can not forget. Sulfur is "the dragon of myth," whose being we encounter in the deepest levels of sleep. We must pierce this being with the "iron" of consciousness and control.

4. In the process of "incarnation" into a new life, a "prevision" reveals to the "individuality" his or her "destiny" or mission for the lifetime. For certain individualities, this can be very disturbing, as in the case of an autistic child, where the individuality has said, "No," to this prevision, and the "spirit" remains on the other side of the "threshhold."

5. Epileptic seizures result when the spiritual ego has difficulty integrating properly with the material nature of the body. A skin that is too thick prevents the ego from forming a proper relation with the "elemental world." Conversely, a skin that is too porous allows the ego to melt into the elemental world.

6. A state of "excarnation" occurs whenever we enter into sleep. At night, we are travellers in the realms of spirit. A state of "incarnation" occurs when we awaken from sleep. Dreams are the result of our movement between the two states.

7. The twelvefold zodiacal division of the cosmos is reflected in the human being's "twelve senses." These twelve senses are divided into four higher senses: Ego, Thought, Word, and Hearing; four middle senses:
Warmth, Sight, Taste, and Smell; and four lower senses: Balance, Movement, Life, and Touch.

8. In their earthly or incarnate state, all human beings are composed of four elements or "bodies": a physical body, an etheric body, an astral body, and an ego (which is neither the common ego of psychoanalysis, nor the transcendental ego of western philosophy).

I met privately with the lecturer to discuss my questions concerning T. He told me that the brain and the nerves are "the pole of death" in the human body, and that damage to the central nervous system increases "head consciousness." Many children who have cerebral palsy are highly intelligent, he said, but they have "too much consciousness brought to bear on movement," due to damage to the "control factor"--the motor nerves that should "monitor the relationship of the limbs." Excessive control creates rigidity. Children who have cerebral palsy are extremely conscious and extremely sensitive to sensory stimulation, which has greater impact upon them than normal, particularly upon their sense of hearing. Because of their hypersensitivity, such children should be carefully safeguarded against too much noise, too much light, or unexpected sensory stimulation. The caregiver should announce his or her
approach verbally, or take care to catch the "palsied" child's eye before lifting or turning the child, as any startling will produce "spasm." Palsied children "do not come into space"; they have no natural relationship with "above and below," "forward and back," or "right and left." They fear what is behind them.

He gave me the following advice: (a) We should always keep T. warm; (b) we should massage his shoulders and shoulder blades with a little warm oil in the evening to help "unlock the crossing caused by too much consciousness"; (c) we should play music for him, especially from a pentatonic lyre; (d) we should "imitate" T. to understand him; (e) we should try for "imitation of speech."

He told me that I could learn more about these issues by reading books by Dr. K. Konig (1984, 1989) and Dr. T. J. Wiehs (n. d.), and that I could seek additional information in Curative Education, by Rudolf Steiner (1981). He recommended that I browse among the books, which were on display at the conference center, and purchase only those that "spoke" to me.

I purchased several books for study. The newly-trained Waldorf teacher in our valley asked me to join her in studying with our elderly
friend, Mrs. T., who gave me access to her personal library. I discovered that the literature of the anthroposophical tradition is immense. I discovered also that the tradition represents a community of thought that invokes a common background of knowledge and practice. Paradoxically, in the midst of this commonality, the freedom of the individual is the greatest concern. Students of Anthroposophy, having rehearsed much of its knowledge time and again, follow the tradition not as idle recitation but as re-collection, re-envisioning. Each new "living back into" brings a fuller understanding of the thinking and, therefore, a building and a dwelling occur. As Heidegger stated, "Building and thinking belong to dwelling. . . . The one as much as the other comes from the workshop of long experience and incessant practice" (Heidegger, 1977a, p.362).

Though Rudolf Steiner did not utter every word that constitutes a knowledge of curative education, any more than he stated every word that now constitutes Waldorf education, he gave many indications which arose from his coherent response to the historical situation, and these indications have been carried forward by subsequent workers within the tradition. The carrying forward has been a working within. The building has been a dwelling, for as Heidegger reminds us, "The plight of dwelling lies in this, that mortals search ever anew for the essence of dwelling,
that they *must ever learn to dwell*" (Heidegger, 1977a, p.363).

"Anthroposophy," the lecturer on curative education had stated, "is knowledge derived from experience; when you can join what you have learned to what you have experienced, then it is real, then your heart says that it is right." Then, I might add, the "building" and "dwelling" in one's thinking produce a thinking that is "indwelling."

My two years of study with Mrs. T., "my elderly friend," made me conscious of choices in my life with T. The two major focuses of my study with her were "reincarnation and karma," and "esoteric christianity." In each case the result was to "tease [me] out of thought" (Keats, 1964, p. 248), or to help me to suspend many of the common assumptions of our culture. The one focus, reincarnation and karma, brought me face to face with the stunning idea that, in some sense, T. might have "chosen" his handicap—that, as an incarnating individuality, he might have "assumed" the handicap by choice, out of a sense of "mission." The other focus, esoteric christianity, suggested that the notion of "entropy," seen by modern science as the end point of all natural activity, might in fact present only a partial picture, which can be complemented by the idea that "regeneration" is an equally powerful polar tendency that abides in the cosmos. As the above two ideas began to coalesce in my mind, I was faced
with the choice between rejecting both of them in favor of materialism and doubt, or accepting both of them by acting "as if" they were true. I recalled Sartre's proposal that a human being must choose in the face of meaninglessness (Reese, 1980, p. 509). As an intellectual exercise, this type of choosing is not a difficult operation. Truly executed, however, it requires enormous will. For me, there was an urgency far beyond the intellectual exercise, for at stake in my choosing was my son's very being.

As long as the choices were mine to make, why should I not consistently make choices which maximized T.'s opportunities to reveal himself in the most positive ways? Interestingly, these same choices allowed me to function toward T. in the most engaging ways, in the most facilitating ways for him to unveil himself. It is not that these choices forever dispelled doubt. Rather, doubt always lurked in the background, producing its range of alternative scenarios, but the pole to which I held in my choosing could acknowledge doubt's scenarios while forever freshly affirming itself—though each fresh affirmation continued to be an act of enormous will.

Thus, I worked into my perceptions of T., through acts of intentionality, suggestions derived from curative education and the tradition of Anthroposophy. T. could have high intelligence, even though
we had not followed the regimen of the Doman exercises. His consciousness could be worked with to intervene in his own development. Through my own consciousness and through my will, I could observe and understand T.'s consciousness.

I consciously chose to embrace T.'s destiny, not as one which dictated punishment or compensation by means of his handicaps for errors or imbalances in past lives, but as one of sacrifices willingly undertaken by his individuality to achieve, as his mission, a fuller discovery of the human condition. Whether this discovery would exist merely in my own consciousness, or eventually in T.'s consciousness as well, remained to be seen, but I felt that I owed him the benefit of the experiment, at the very least. With the freedom that this choice brought to me, I was able to deflect without fear the accusations that I was denying the reality of the child's suffering, and that I was taking a short cut toward "justifying the ways of God to man." Theodicy was not a space in which I could dwell. All of my choices were confirmed in my thinking T.'s being, and in my attempts to free T. to be. "Furthermore, Sartre has said that when we choose, we choose for all [human beings]" (Reese, 1980, p. 509).

_Coda._ I remember how identifying with T. through mimicry and how
mediating the world to T. through language began to figure even more prominently in my behaviors toward him, after I had learned about curative education. I remember extending myself to include him through language, by reciting nursery rhymes, rhythmic jingles, fairy tales. I remember doing everything I could think of to bring him into space: bouncing, swinging, hammocking, wrestling, turning him upside down, throwing him in the air, carrying him everywhere in a front-facing, upright position, if possible. I remember always speaking to him as I approached him; telling him everything that was happening around him and where it was happening; explaining every sound; saying to him that he was interesting to talk to because he responded with such interesting facial expressions, vocalizations, giggles, and smiles.
The ceremony took place in the parking lot of the Valley Recreation Center. There was an outdoor stage, decorated with streamers and balloons. Rick Hansen, who by this time had been around the world, was rolling through our town, taking the highway to the coast on the last leg of his journey. From the high school, we accompanied our classes to take part in the event. Our teenaged students held back. We encouraged them to get closer. We asserted the importance of the event: This person had wheeled himself around the world. They asked, "What for?" To raise the profile of the physically disabled. To make the population back here at home realize how able a person in a wheelchair can be. They asked, "Why?" Canadians have always had to see their own people succeeding at things out there in "the rest of the world" to appreciate their capabilities. The high school students reserved judgement on our answers.

There were going to be speeches and presentations. One presentation, by a boy in a wheelchair, a dynamic little guy who had spina
bifida, whom we had already seen wheeling himself around at great speed, chatting excitedly with the people in the crowd, was eagerly expected. He would represent the people of the town, honoring Rick Hansen.

T. had been asked to make a presentation as well. It was arranged by members of our rural Community Association, with very little advance notice, but M. and I were happy to help him do it. Since his preschool was right there in the Rec Center and his child care worker lived only two blocks away, it was not difficult for his Mom to meet him before the ceremony and, when the time came, to help him make his presentation.

It was a sunny day in June. It got very hot on days like this, especially on the valley's eastern slope. Rick Hansen's arrival on the scene, wheeling into the parking lot of the Rec Centre and up the ramp onto the stage, brought excitement to the crowd and, drawn by the man's personal charisma, our high school students pressed forward to get a closer look. Amid the hoopla, I knew that my boy, T., was waiting in his Mullholland chair (propped and bolstered and secured into an upright sitting posture in his "mobile orthopedic positioning device"), waiting for his Mom to wheel him onto the stage. I could only imagine what he was feeling, because I could not perceive either his posture or his face.

There was a murmur in the crowd when the other boy wheeled up and
made his presentation. He and Rick Hansen exchanged words. They shook hands. They smiled. The crowd burst into applause, as the boy wheeled back to his spot on the stage beside his mother.

T., his arms hanging limply at the sides of his chair, his chair reclined at an angle of twenty-four degrees, was wheeled center stage. M., his mother, presented Rick Hansen with flowers. I assumed that T.'s eyes were shut against the glare of the afternoon sun, or out of public nervousness. M. exchanged words with Rick Hansen, bent to give him a kiss, then turned and wheeled T. to the sidelines, smiling, wiping away a tear. T. was wearing a pale blue sweatshirt to protect his arms from sunburn. His red cap cooperated by staying in place; the peak was pulled low on his forehead to shade his face.

I was prepared to believe that the contrast between the appearances and the physical capabilities of T. and the other boy would somehow devalue T. in the eyes of the onlookers, that he would be seen as a vegetable (a word which, one of our neighbors had told us, people were using in the town to describe T.). I was even prepared to believe that Rick Hansen's robust athleticism would diminish T., who had been included in the ceremony as something of an afterthought.

But I remember being very moved. I experienced a flood of gratitude
toward Rick Hansen, when he stated at the microphone that his deeds of will and courage were not so much for himself, or for the present, but for the future, for children like T. and the other boy. During the presentation, T.'s name had been mentioned only once previously. But Rick Hansen had remembered it. He had included T. in the moment—and in the future.

**Interpretation**

_T.'s words._ I went to really a good school at that time. My teacher respected me and my child care worker loved to take me to school. We played with the regular kids and I smiled and giggled lots. After school we always went to my child care worker's good new house where we continued to have fun together till my Dad got me after his school finished for the day. We really were a happy family I thought except my C. was sometimes in trouble at school and I resented going to respite care for a weekend. My Mom worked a few hours a day at a health food store and got along well with her boss. We sometimes picked her up after my Dad got me at my child care worker's.

The day I presented my flowers to Rick Hansen I really got excited at school and so my teacher thought I was a bit too excited and she told my child care worker to phone my Mom and say I needed comforting. We phoned and my Mom came to say I was really so fortunate because Rick Hansen was a famous man who was making people understand that it was okay to be handicapped and still to be considered a person. I was so reassured by my Mom's words. When she kissed Rick Hansen I realized that my Dad would not be jealous because my father thought Rick Hansen was a hero that day. My brother and my father were both proud of me because I was mentioned in Rick Hansen's speech. I felt a bit different from the other boy because I could not wheel my own chair and I could not talk but I was so happy that my family thought I really was a good boy.
that day. Rick Hansen was my hero for several years till I really met
Stephen Hawking. That meeting is described in the appendix (see
Appendix S).

Theme one: Mars in detriment (scientific/technological
assessment--literal level). "That he would be seen as a vegetable . . ."

There were a number of verses we began to say or sing before meals
in our family, which we learned from the teacher in our small Waldorf
circle. One was:

Blessings on the blossom,
Blessings on the fruit,
Blessings on the leaves and stem,
Blessings on the root.

The plant is a very important archetypal symbol for thinkers in the
Waldorf tradition, who see the plant not in any one manifestation of its
parts or phases but in its whole life cycle, as it arches through time. The
life cycle of the plant is often seen as analogous to the cycle of the
seasons or to the cycle of a human life. The type of observation necessary
to describe this arching through time is termed "Goethean science," a
reminder that Rudolf Steiner, who seeded the Waldorf tradition, was
editor of Goethe's scientific works.

I find curious our use of the word vegetable to describe certain
types of human beings. It is interesting that the types of human beings
that we describe as "animals" are passionate, dangerous, uncontrolled; they have to be caged, restrained; we must be protected against their unleashed fury. The "vegetables," on the other hand, are passive or incapable in some way; they lack personality, intellectual verve, emotional presence, or vivacity of movement. They need to be provided for in the same way that the vegetables in our gardens are fertilized, watered, and exposed regularly to sunlight, so that their vegetative functions can continue. They need to be attended to.

Science classes convince us, as school children, that the plant world does not have life in the same way that the animal world has life. Granting complete life status to a plant would be personification, anthropomorphism, primitive animism, the pathetic fallacy, magical thinking. Thus, intellectual name-calling puts firmly in its place any attempt to spiritualize the vegetable realm. It is vitally important for the maintenance of our technological attitude that the tree should not feel the bite of the chain saw. "Standing reserve" must not be felt to suffer consciously. This much is apparent in Heidegger's words from "The Question Concerning Technology": "The essence of modern technology starts man upon the way of revealing through which the actual everywhere, more or less distinctly, becomes standing reserve" (Heidegger, 1977d, p.329).
So, it may not have been out of malice, when members of the community spoke of T. as a vegetable. They may have been applying a descriptive term, supplied to them by their upbringing and their education, which they maintained unquestioningly in their vocabularies. They may have been using the term on occasion, with no attempt to injure, diminish, or deny. They may have been so unconscious that they never felt anything wrong with what they were saying.

*Theme two: Saturn in fall (memory--moral level).* The memory that I was perceived as "flogging a dead horse" churns up feelings of pain, limitation, and shame. I can understand the mixture of curiosity and horror that would run through a small community with the gossip of a vegetable boy. I can understand the religious superstition whereby such a child might be viewed as punishment for past sins, if not his own then "the sins of the fathers." I can understand also the view that such a "monster" might cause fear and dread, especially among expectant parents, for the word, *monster*, carries at its root the meaning of a "warning" or a "portent": Indeed, the title of a popular book, which I had read several times during T.'s first year, was *Is My Baby All Right?*

The question to the therapists was, "What will it take to put him
right?" This rightness, achieved, might put him "square" with the community, and he would be normalized. With the same fierce determination that she had pursued her newborn's breastfeeding, M. pursued T.'s acceptance in the local preschool, which was run cooperatively by parents in the community. It was the social workers, not the parents, who raised obstacles: There was no funding for the extra hours that T.'s child care worker would need to go with him to the preschool. The social workers questioned whether putting him in preschool would be of any benefit to T. They questioned whether it was a waste of money. It took lengthy insistence and emotional coercion to move them to find the funding.

T. loved being among the other children, and they were very fond of him. The teacher was good to T. She was not afraid to be alone with him. The other parents began to see T. first as a child and secondly as handicapped. They spoke of how educational T.'s being there would be for the other children. The "monster" had become "portentous" in a way that had not been thought of; the vegetable gave rise to a "quickening" (in Latin, *vegetare* means "to quicken") of new thought in the community. Instead of demonstrating shamefully as a root crop lopped of its stems, shorn of its leaves, T. was glowing in the midst of the little children, a
prized plant about to bloom.

*Theme three: Jupiter in exaltation* (observation--*allegorical level*). I myself had never seen a boy like T., so subtracted seemingly of human attributes. He had no deformities; he was not an elephant boy but a beautiful tiny primate, stripped of its animation. When I was a boy, I had seen amputees returned from the war with one limb lost, with prosthetic arms or crutches, but I had seen few people out publicly in wheelchairs, and none were like T. In two cases, friends of my parents had chosen to maintain their mentally disabled children in their family homes, even as adults. Their children had been "born that way," and yet one knew, if one thought, that they hadn't been; they had been born as babies, and they had grown to be something that was perpetually childlike, perpetually in need of parenting, but not inert, motionless, subtracted of soul. Such perpetually childlike people were not badly treated in our valley town, where many of them were housed in a large "center for the mentally handicapped" and sheltered in workshops run by highminded local employers.

Yet it is monstrous to contemplate the loss of one's faculties. The spectre of Alzheimer's disease haunts us with the loss of the vital
principles of memory and identity. Most adults have toyed with the question of which of our five senses we would most willingly part with. Most agree that either "seeing" or "hearing" is the most precious of the senses. But which sense would we choose to part with, if our choices included the twelve senses of Rudolf Steiner? Which of us would go without a sense of "life," without a sense of "warmth," without a sense of "word," without a sense of "ego"? Yet it is these faculties that we subtract from a person when we term him or her a vegetable.

I had heard the term, vegetable, applied to people who were in comas. Deprived, it was thought, of everything except their vegetative functioning, they took in sustenance through the artificial root system of intravenous tubing, will-lessly eliminating their bodily wastes. Yet now we are told that coma patients are not without sensory perception; some are alive in their senses of hearing and touch. The senses of word, thought, and ego have not necessarily disappeared even among those who are "sick unto death."

Of what do we speak when we say that we are "vegetating", when we term ourselves "couch potatoes?" The former term connotes rest and recreation, the latter the passive ingestion of electronic imagery. Even potatoes have eyes, and couch potatoes have chosen the balance of
horizontal equilibrium. Neither the person who is vegetating nor the couch potato is subtracted completely of sense.

It is obvious that none of us would choose the loss of their limbs. Those of us who are able to walk naturally do so unconsciously, already walking before we announce to ourselves the intention to walk. The loss of the ability to walk would bring extreme consciousness of what we had lost. Adopting a "cup is half full" philosophy would hardly compensate. We might imagine the loss of our four limbs as similar to being buried to the neck in sand. Experiencing this image in the body brings panic.

Those of us who remain able-bodied may play in our minds with various images of disabling conditions, subtracting senses and faculties until even consciousness is lost, then adding again, one by one, the senses and faculties we have subtracted. If we calm our feelings of fear and panic, we may approximate conditions sympathetic to those of people who have suffered such losses, but the conditions we approximate are not "real"; they are not permanent; we do not have to resign ourselves to experiencing them for a lifetime; they do not bring with them the susceptibilities to sickness, to error, or to despair that the true conditions may bring. Vicariously reconstituting ourselves, we may succumb to the fallacy of false reassurance.
The wheelchair athlete rehabilitates himself through "robust athleticism" and, through deeds of will and courage, rehabilitates the image of the man in the wheelchair in our society. Seen in the world as a "man in motion," the wheelchair athlete is accepted as never before. His chair is light, sleek, and aerodynamic; it is put to a "recreational" use, a use from which we need not recoil; it is seen as "equipment," and we forget its prosthetic nature. The man in the chair has the upper body form most admired in males: lean, muscular, athletic.

The "other boy" in his chair partook of the new image. Surgically rehabilitated, his condition was not degenerative; it did not permanently affect his upper body movement. He was capable in the way that the wheelchair athlete was capable, capable of the wholeness defined by the rehabilitated image of the man in the chair. The crowd cheered. It was a great day for the boy.

My fear for T. was that his "de(ha)bilitation" would be emphasized in contrast to the robust athleticism of the man in the chair, the rehabilitated image of whom might not extend to the boy in the "mobile orthopedic positioning device," whose immobile arms dangled above the small rear wheels of his chair. My fear was that he would be seen again as a vegetable who lacked the spark of animation that gave life to the new
image of the man in the chair. Hence my gratitude to Rick Hansen for remembering T.'s name and for including him in the day's celebration. I understood that Rick Hansen's intention was to extend the rehabilitated image of the "person" in the chair far beyond the image of the male charioteer. In Rick Hansen's mind, T. had not been an afterthought.

Theme four: Moon in dignity (growth—anagogic level). When T. helped me edit the narrative of "T. and Rick Hansen" he expressed anger, and then he expressed guilt for his anger. He realized that, though his memory for that period in his life was idyllic, because he was happy with his preschool, and he was happy with his childcare worker, and he was happy in his original family home--sleeping in a room that was built by his father in expectation of his arrival--he had uncovered a deep frustration. That happy child had been bursting to speak.

T. had been a vegetable in its root meaning. Just as the meanings, "to excite," "to enliven," and "to quicken," remain concealed within the root meaning of the word vegetable, so the real T. remained concealed within the root of his physical form. He had not been an ungrowing, undeveloping child but, because he lacked speech, his development had been veiled. The slow growth (or no growth), along the linear path toward the milestones
of physical development, concealed and confounded the growth that was
taking place within the child. Slow growth disguised soul growth. A "quickening" intelligence was confined to root and stunted stem. Like Ariel, sealed in the trunk of the pine tree, T. awaited a Prospero to set him free. And his magician-father, who knew T. was there, had neither Prospero's cloak nor Prospero's staff with which to set T. free—though still he sought the formulas in books and thoughts, by which to conjure leaf and flower.

During that period of his life, as he lay confined, concealed, and confounded within a speechless trunk and root, T. became confounding of the theories of intellectual development that root all future growth in sensory-motor exploration of the environment. The fact that T. can raise his past frustration to present consciousness alerts us to the fact that he was then as confounding as he was confounded. This last statement presents, in a cogent way, the root of his frustration: Though he was recognized by father and family, though he was accepted in a growing community, he still could not represent himself in any newly arising interaction. He was forced, instead, to accept every projection that issued from the outside world and emphasized his confinement. T. was still rooted in passivity, to be read or read into, not always able even to
smile at will, and so with a smile, to reflect or deflect the projection.

Yet the "spark of the divine" who was T. was the germ in the seed, which produced not only root and stem but also leaf, blossom, and the will to self-propagate, within a passive but receptive child. A secret rose arose in concealment.
Chapter Five: T. as Brother Bear (Leo)

The Narrative

It was the Progress Center classroom. Parents took seats in rows of orange-colored school board chairs, their rainproof winter clothing draped over chairbacks. The children were somewhere behind the scenes, being prepared for their roles in the class play. It was a large room, but I recalled M.'s impression that there was little personal space for the children, when the room was full of wheelchairs and teaching assistants.

M. and I, C. and my mother, who was visiting from Winnipeg, were seated in the center of the middle row. Many of the parents who were drifting in were acquainted with us: The various agencies, to which we subscribed as parents of severely disabled (then called multihandicapped) children, brought us frequently into contact. We recycled each other's child care workers. We competed for the same services: group home placements; space at respite facilities; time in summer programs; opportunities for placements in mainstream classrooms; the attention of physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists . . .
We greeted familiar faces. We chatted and smiled. We were polite but slightly distant. We had heard that T. was to take the role of Brother Bear in the Progress Centre play, that he was not happy about it for some reason, and that he had not been sparkling in the role at rehearsals. I had encouraged him, telling him about the importance of getting into character, but he had only given me impatient looks that veered between pain and pleading, his body tone tense. His vocalizations should have told me that he was really upset.

The lights had been altered to create the impression of a stage. The parents were expectant. There was a hush, some whispers. As each child was wheeled onto stage by a teaching assistant, to be mimed on cue through the narrative read by a class teacher, the family members in the audience made responsive and encouraging murmurs. They commented to each other—on the surprise of the costume, on the shock of ears, on the pleasure of face paint. Sometimes a parent would creep up close for a souvenir photograph.

The play was a small fable of anthropomorphic bear life, more like "Goldilocks" than "Winnie the Pooh." Some of the students appeared rather large, not to be cast as bears, but to be got up in face paint and wheeled before their parents; but I did not question the age appropriateness for T.
who was in kindergarten. When T. was wheeled onto the scene, having sprouted funny little black ears on his head where aliens usually grow antennae and wearing a brown splodge where his nose had been, he had obviously tuned out. I was hoping that he would smile. He didn't, but he kept his head up. Once he gave a stubborn nod, as if to prove to us that behind the face paint and the costume was a remote but waking T.

After the play, we were invited to the school library for refreshments, to be enjoyed by the guests while the teaching assistants removed the bear costumes. The Principal of the elementary school, where the Progress Center was sheltered, issued the invitation and stayed among us to socialize. The class teachers circulated among us. C. explored the goody table. In the midst of smiles, accessories, and perfume, M. spoke with other mothers, some of whom were gushing over the performances.

The teacher in charge of the Progress Center Program, to whom I introduced my mother, chattered volubly to us about the play, the rehearsals, the costumes, the children; about plans for "integrating" some of her students into regular elementary classrooms; about the successful integration of one of her more capable Progress Center students into a regular grade one classroom at his neighbourhood school; about T.'s
opportunities for integration in the following year. Almost imperceptibly, in the course of all this, she let slip a remark about T.'s ability level. She had dealt with children, physically like T., who had displayed many different levels of intelligence. All of them had strengths and weaknesses. But she, not I, had said it: "T. has it all."

Interpretation

T.'s words. On March 16, 1995, T. wrote the following letter, facilitated by Ca., to his closest internet friends in Colorado. He had been showing hesitation about writing paragraphs for the study. He asked me to read the letter and to use it in the study.

Dear B. and D.,
I am really wanting to tell you something that is happening to me. I have been helping L. with his Master's Thesis. The Thesis is about my language development so we have been recollecting episodes from my early experiences to illustrate stages in my language development. At the same time we [Ca. and I] have been reading a very important book called Care of the Soul by Thomas Moore [1994]. Well really, I have been having bad dreams about my Ca. ignoring me and really being so full of rage at my Ca. Well, tonight we were really reading about creating things that enrich the soul and Moore talked about creating things that don't satisfy the soul and about being inauthentic and the soul expressing rage at being unfulfilled. Well, I realized that those dreams were my soul expressing rage at not being authentic in the recollections I was writing. I was really not expressing all of the incredible anger and rage and frustration I had felt when I was little. Those feelings were so huge and so
overwhelming I was certain they would hurt my Mom and my L. and my Ca. But really I was only hurting myself by stuffing them in. Bad Ca. says probably making myself constipated. I love my Ca. so no thinking that wasn't a tease. Well, the point is I am really going to start writing my real, authentic memories. I am really terrified by how strong these feelings are, but I am really strong. These feelings won't hurt me. Ca. was so obtuse when I was little not understanding what I was trying to say!!

love, T.

Several days after writing the letter he produced the following passage, during a single half-hour writing session:

There is something that has always bothered me about my father. How could he know I was not mentally handicapped when everyone else was assuming that I had no visible intelligence? I will really say that's really a good question. I can hardly think about the time when I could not speak without being grateful to L. for realizing that I was always trying to tell him that I was needing something or tell him that I was wanting comforting. He was getting so good at interpreting my actual body language and facial expressions that he often said the right thing without realizing it because I could not confirm or deny his words. But sometimes I really cried and cried trying to tell him I needed comforting about something I can hardly talk about now.

But L. tried to understand me even though I was still crying. Sometimes when L. was really frustrated with his job being temporary he would look in the Saturday paper and say, "I will apply for a job as a Principal in the Yukon and send money to really solve the problem of unemployment." A young boy like I was then believes his father is really a god and can do absolutely anything so I thought L. was threatening to run away because I was a burden to him and my Mom. I know now that he was teasing my Mom a bit and teasing himself about never getting to be anyone important in [our town] except a union leader for those bad teachers who caused him so much worry. So L. decided he needed to move his family to [the city] so that he would not have to worry about T. and C.'s future if they grew up in a rural town without the services they needed.

It was really so embarrassing for rural people to listen to a
man talking about a handicapped boy as if he were something important to him.

The frustrations of not being able to speak are hard to describe to anyone who learned to speak naturally as a child. I will try to describe them however. Every day I wished that I would be able to say some words but the only word I could ever really say was "Mom." So I always had to do what everyone else wanted me to do and had so few choices in my life. Sometimes I felt totally defeated and sometimes agreed with the bad doctor who said, "It would be better if he died."

Theme one: Saturn in fall (memory--moral level). When we arrived as a family to live in the city, it took a period of months to get things set up for T. My wife was thrown back into a life that was totally occupied with T.'s needs. There was a variety of agencies to which we had to appeal for the services that we required as a family and the services that T. required as a handicapped boy. The Ministry of Social Services and Housing appeared to be the coordinating body; however, there had been a bewildering disbursement of the coordinated services to a range of non-profit organizations, each of which specialized in a certain type of service. An association for the physically handicapped provided child care workers, according to the number of hours per child per week designated by Social Services; this association also ran the only group home for physically disabled children and provided physiotherapy. At the same time
an association for the mentally handicapped controlled the infant
development program for children up to the age of three, the preschool for
developmentally delayed children up to kindergarten age, and the respite
care facility. Another association, a "neurological center," could provide
occupational therapy and speech therapy. Each of these associations was
prepared to offer counselling to parents in a reassuring, if fleeting, and
sometimes conflicting fashion.

It was open to question as to which of the services would be
extended immediately to T. and for which of the services he should be
required to wait. A group home placement, for instance, was out of the
question. T. was last on a lengthy wait list. It was also open to question
as to whether T. could benefit from a preschool placement. His entry into
the preschool was subject to screening and appeared doubtful at first.
The doubt concerned his level of alertness and the advisability of
displacing a child who might be more alert. I suspect the real issue was
the prejudice of labels such as "severely mentally handicapped" and
"profoundly mentally handicapped" because, as T. was untestable by any
standard instrument, his mental handicap was assumed to be profound.
Though it would have been neither professionally nor politically correct to
say so, the question once again was whether a "vegetable" needed anything
more than basic physical care: feeding, toileting, positioning, turning, and monitoring for pressure sores. Testimony from the child care worker who had accompanied T. to the preschool in our home valley and pictures of T. interacting with his brother convinced a committee that T. should enter the segregated preschool for children who had delays in development. At kindergarten age, he graduated from the preschool to a Progress Center (where little progress might be expected), and he became the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and the local school board.

T. did not have the means of speech to tell us how he felt about the segregated preschool. Though sometimes joyful there, he often cried, and he often appeared to be asleep in class. As he revisits that time in memory, he has unpleasant feelings. He easily comes to tears, and he experiences bodily tension and intestinal pain. He was convinced that he was mentally handicapped. At his graduation from this program they sang his favorite song. He smiled distantly at the lyrics: "Skidama rinky dinky dink, skidama rinky do, I love you." But he kept his eyes closed through the rest of the ceremony, finding even the little black grad cap that he wore unamusing.

T. was graduating to the Progress Center for his kindergarten year. This "graduation" indicated an "increasing differentiation" in the course
of T.'s progress toward the achievement of his individualized goals, for he was the only five year old in his personal "children's garden." All of the other children at the Progress Center were nonverbal and nonambulatory; they were also progressing in graduated steps toward their individualized goals. T. "graduated" into a more thorough segregation. His world narrowed. His mother knew immediately that this children's garden would starve T. of the incentive that he needed to be simply human, the social incentive of the presence of his "peers", a word ironically defined at the Progress Center as "similarly handicapped," rather than "similarly aged."

At the segregated preschool, T. could at least hear children speaking and see children moving about. Though they were "developmentally delayed," they were his peers, in that they were grouped according to age and not according to disability. At the Progress Centre, the movement T. witnessed was the movement of adult teaching assistants ministering to the needs of mostly motionless children, some of whom were approaching high school age. The conversations he heard were conversations formed in the day to day progress of adult routines, mixed with the gossip of the work place and the sometimes inappropriate speculations about the living arrangements, health problems, and uncertain futures of the children. For example, a child from the class, who died, had a scoliosis. Death and
scoliosis were mentioned in the same sentence. T. had a scoliosis and, therefore, T. thought that he too would die soon. Early in the school year, he was as likely to hear things spoken about himself as about the other children. The assumption was made that, because he was unspeaking, he was also uncomprehending. T.'s "large receptive vocabulary" exposed him to much that was not meant for him. His "too much consciousness" supplied him with fearful conclusions.

He was sometimes extremely unhappy at the Progress Center. Usually when children like T. cried as much as T. was crying, it was suggested that they might need hip surgery. In T.'s case, crying emerged as his only possible vocal response, as he longed for the integration he remembered in that magical time when he was among the little children at the preschool in his home valley. In those days, his father did not have to drive so many miles to work every day and risk accidents at high speed on the freeway. Anticipating foster placement, T. longed for the security of his original family home.

As the school year progressed, a team of specialists at the neurological center began to work intensively on T.'s communication. When news of the discovery of T.'s intelligence began to circulate, the need for his integration became a topic of open discussion. The lack of a
proper protocol in the collective agreement between the teacher's union and the school board, with respect to the integration of students who had special needs, was postponing all but "necessary integrations." T.'s crying increased in frequency and intensity. He was referred to the school counsellor but, lacking the speech to respond, he could not be counselled: The effects of the counsellor's reassurances could be determined only by T.'s restored silence. I could explain to M. the mechanisms of union/management bargaining, but my explanations did not address T.'s unhappiness. We exhausted all available avenues to argue that T.'s was a case of "necessary integration."

Theme two: Mercury in detriment (communication—literal level). "T. was to take the role of Brother Bear ... [and] he was not happy about it for some reason."

There was a controversy, during T.'s year at the Progress Center, which concerned his ability to say "yes" and "no." An enterprising teaching assistant thought that T. displayed pretty good tongue control. The idea dawned upon her that she might teach him to use his tongue to signal "no." She began to work on reinforcing his nod for "yes" and eliciting a consistent outward thrust of his tongue for "no." M. and I were aghast
when we found out. There was something vaguely indecent about teaching a five year old boy to stick out his tongue at the things that he disliked. But this was not the main issue. We had spent T.'s early years patiently working out a method of feeding that would overcome T.'s tendency to thrust out his tongue when we placed food in his mouth. Tongue thrust had been the main reason that a single feeding had taken up to two hours.

The report was that T. had been cooperating with the development of a tongue thrust for "no." Knowing T. as I do now, after thousands of hours of communication in actual language, I have no doubt that it was the social inappropriateness of the tongue thrust gesture and its potential for mischief in the classroom that made T. want to learn it. If he had been asked whether he wanted to learn to stick out his tongue to say "no," I am certain he would have answered, "Yes," though not for the expected reasons.

However, he was not asked. Until one of the teachers noticed that T. had his own facial expressions for "yes" and "no," it was assumed by the staff that it would be good to teach T. some "yes" and "no" gestures that they could notice for themselves. The "yes" and "no" gestures that the teacher observed (eyebrows up for "yes" and a minute lateral movement of the head, with a slight twitching of the nose, for "no") were part of a
repertoire of facial expressions that we were familiar with at home, but
for us to teach this repertoire to another adult required a long period of
one to one instruction, within the immediate context of T.'s day to day
routines.

Just as new "yes" and "no" gestures were imposed on T. (until M.
quashed them with a definite "no"), so was the role of Brother Bear in the
class play, and so was the face paint. It is hard to know how T.'s
resistance to the play was interpreted at school. I thought it was shyness
and a feeling of embarrassment at being portrayed as cute. I had
educational reservations about the age-appropriateness of the play for
some of the students in the center, though none regarding the attempt to
engage and involve these students in dramatic activities. I knew that
Rudolf Steiner would have condemned this little play, which depicted the
antics of anthropomorphenic bears. He believed that young children should
be exposed to nature stories and to fairy tales, but he preferred stories
that had emerged from the folk traditions of the various peoples of the
earth, as opposed to those that grew in the minds of discrete modern
authors. He believed that pictures of animals dressed in human clothing
should never be shown to children, and I projected his disapproval of T.'s
being cast, at the age of five, as an anthropomorphic beast.
I kept these concerns private, out of what I felt was professional courtesy. I did not wish to interfere in the teachers' program for T.'s participation in a class project. I suspect that T. was aware of my reservations, however, and that he sensed my contradictory feelings. I encouraged him to follow through with the experience of performing before an audience. What could have been the cause of his objection? Was it the face paint? Was it merely having his face altered without choice? Was it something physical, like the touch of the brush on his skin? Was it hypersensitivity in anticipation of not being able to say "no" as he was wheeled before a large audience of parents? Or was there something more subtle that this bright nonverbal child was sensing, which led him to try to reject the implicit, arbitrary promotion he was receiving from the vegetable realm to the animal kingdom?

He was a boy who could think "yes" and "no." He could even say "yes" and "no" to certain people, but he was not allowed to mean "no" or to resist an externally imposed "yes" except by crying, and when crying proved futile and exhausting, he would close his eyes and "tune out." He could already do what any animal can do: He could experience sympathy and antipathy, approach and avoidance, yes-wishes and no-wishes, but he could not execute their intended meanings.
It is possible that he was appealing to me to save him from several acutely imagined scenarios of personal embarrassment, to which I snickeringly encouraged him to go. But even so, I do not blame myself so much for having failed to extricate him from the situation, as I do for having failed to discern completely the sources of his distress, and for having failed to deliver the reassurances that would have aided him in accommodating his frustrations, so that he could have turned them into learning. Though I had a certain rudimentary ability to interpret T., we had not yet entered into dialogue. For dialogue, T. would need to have his own words.

Theme three: Sun in dignity (not foreclosing–anagogic level). "T. has it all."

"All" is a word that suggests wholeness. "Everything" defines each and every part. "All" is the whole of everything. "All" has integrity, wholeness, and carries a hint of renewal. The Progress Center teacher said, "T. has it all." Of what "all" did she speak, when describing a boy who could neither walk nor talk? The context of the statement was "integration," literally a "making whole." In contrast with the word, segregation, whose root meaning is "a parting from the flock," integration
becomes "a return to the fold." The teacher's implicit comparison was with another boy, who also used a wheelchair and who had been integrated in his neighbourhood school, a boy who had a lot perhaps, but who did not have it all. He had been folded back into the flock, and he was doing very well. She added that, once integrated, T. "would go from strength to strength." She was certain that his integration would not be delayed. Once we had entered the new school year, T. would not have to return to the Progress Center.

There have been three terms applied to the movement of children who have disabilities into "regular classrooms." The first of these terms was "mainstreaming." There is something metaphorically fishy about this term. It conjures images of young spawn with crooked tails being swept helplessly from the home pool in the nurturing tributary, out into the great river, with its swift current and deep waters. The second of these terms was "integration." A friendlier image lurks in the usage of this word, an image of some good shepherd seeking out the lamb who has gone astray and bringing it back to the fold, back to its true "gregarious" place in the flock. The third term, now the favored one it seems, is "inclusion," which exposes, at its root, an unpleasant connotation of being closed in--fenced in, perhaps, to prevent a recurrent straying, or an attempt to swim
against the stream.

It can not be said that T. "had it all" in a physical sense; he could not swim in the mainstream without an aide. Implicit in the teacher's comment is the assumption that everyone carries a measurable amount of intelligence: a total or sum. Ancillary to her comment is the thought that, though this intelligence can be manifested in a variety of ways, each type of intelligence can be measured and factored into a number that reflects the relationship of the individual's intelligence to a predictable range of abilities, which will be found in the culture at large. The teacher who said, "T. has it all," by comparing T. implicitly to other children whom she had taught who did not have it all, and to other children whom she had taught who did have it all, predicted that T. would be academically capable of surviving in the mainstream. Her statement that he would "go from strength to strength" predicted that he would swim even so far as the river's mouth at the great ocean's shore, perhaps metaphorically evoking an image of the university.

But there was another dawning sense in her statement, "T. has it all," which was beginning to enter the educational picture at the time--that there may be many different "intelligences," some of which are not measurable by the tests that predict mainstream success. One of the
schemata that seek to categorize these types of intelligences is Gardner's notion of "seven intelligences," a notion that for me bears a nostalgic family resemblance to the "personalities" of the seven planets of antiquity. With the dawning idea that there might be a wholeness that integrates each of the seven types of intelligence, I conceived a hope for T.'s intelligences, which is expressed in an image from ancient Greece, the Pythagorean image, incomprehensible as mere mental picture, of the music of the spheres.

I spoke to my mother after our conversation with T.'s teacher. "Did you hear her say, 'T. has it all?'" I asked.

"Yes," she said, "that is so encouraging, and he's going to be in a regular classroom next year."

I spoke to M. also: "She said that T. has it all."

She shot back: "Then what's he doing in that Progress Center?" She suffered for her child who had it all.
Chapter Six: T. Writes "MTSY" (Virgo)

The Narrative

T. and Ca. invited me to one of T.'s sessions at the neurological center, where his speech therapist, his educational specialist, and his occupational therapist had been working with him twice weekly for a number of months. I had heard bubbling reports from T.'s effervescent child care worker, who called him "Pal" and for whom he smiled almost incessantly, about T.'s work with numbers and his work with words. T. had said "yes" to the question, "Do you know what a vowel is?" and he had named the vowels correctly without previous formal instruction. M. had attended one of T.'s sessions at the neurological center and had been amazed by T.'s ability to propose a math problem that moved her in and out of minus numbers.

I had seen a videotape of T. doing math and reading. The most remarkable thing about it was that T. was alive in a way that I had never seen him before. T.'s body language, his facial expression, his eyes, his intentness--these things were not playful and giggly as T.'s liveliness had
always been in the past; they were focussed; they were productive; they were concentrated. I recognized the concentration. I had seen it once before, when T. was working with his occupational therapist, helping her to learn a neuro-motor technique. "He tries hard," she had said. She could feel the movement, the intentional movement, firing in his muscles. "He does try hard," I had said. In the video, the answers he gave to all of the questions were correct.

His child care worker moved back to Ontario, and T. was distraught. Except for his Mom, she had been the light of his life, and it seemed that he was always grieving losses of this sort. Soon after that, T. had moved into foster care with Ca., a woman with whom he had bonded when she worked with him at the respite home. As his foster mother, Ca. now took on the task of taking T. for "speech therapy" at the neurological center. She was busily organizing his "communication boards" for home and for school.

M. had prepared me with instructions on how to drive to the neurological center and where to find a parking spot. I found my way anxiously through the big city traffic, dreading left-hand turns. It was raining lightly. I parked beside Ca.'s blue car, which told me that Ca. and T. were inside the building. I had to ask directions to the room in the
basement where T. would be working. He was already at the computer. On
the tray of his Mulholland chair rested a large "unicorn board", a special
keyboard about the size of a cafeteria tray, which could be overlayed with
individualized "communication boards" programmed for use with symbols,
numbers, words, or letters, in a variety of sizes.

It took more than a minute for him to type, "HI DAD." His speech
therapist gave him delicate support at his elbow. T. was making great
effort to negotiate independent movement over the distances between the
letters. He was wearing a plastic device that straightened his wrist and
extended his fingers. A small pointer descended from the palm of the
device, which his occupational therapist called "a wrist splint."

There were two reasons, I was informed, that his output was so
slow. There was a gap between T.'s forming his intention to move and the
communication of that intention to his muscles. And his muscles,
receiving the message, might respond with spasticity, forcing T.
deliberately to relax so that he could move his arm. It was tricky for him.

His speech therapist asked him if there was anything else he would
like to say to his Dad. Again there was a delay between each letter, as T.
typed out, "I WRITE MTSY." Skepticism assailed me. The message seemed
to have degenerated into a random scattering of letters. For a moment my
attitude was, "Sure, they say he can communicate, but what they're saying is not what I'm seeing . . ." Then it dawned on me. "Mitzy is his dog," I said.

"T., you have to remember your vowels," the speech therapist added. But that was the whole message. T. was not writing any more. He had closed his eyes, and the therapist was sensing no more movement from his arm. He appeared to have tuned out.

A transition to another activity was suggested. He would always wake up for math, they said. Large numbers especially stimulated him. He gave me a demonstration of adding and subtracting numbers with many zeros after them. I said words of encouragement. T. was reminded of the math problem that he had presented to his Mom. He posed one for me, which danced in and out of minus numbers. "Do you want to show your Dad that you know the right answer?" He did want to show me. And he did know the answer. I laughed aloud and confirmed that I had got the same answer. I praised T. volubly.

Would T. like to show his Dad the work he was doing with the teacher? T. gave assent through movement of his arm. The teacher presented T. with a reading passage composed of words printed an inch high in red marker on large, white, flip-chart paper, about the size of the
unicorn board. The speech therapist helped T. touch every word as the teacher read it clearly aloud. The teacher then produced the same passage on another piece of paper with certain key words missing. In each case, his elbow steadied by the speech therapist, T. chose the correct word from a list of possibilities. I trusted the speech therapist, and I was familiar with the Cloze technique. T. must have been recognizing the words. He did not make any errors. I realized that T. was reading.

**Interpretation**

*T.'s words.* Very soon after he began to communicate in words, T. began to clarify his aims and interests. In a series of stories about Smesler, a special robot who is smart and sneaky and sly, T. may have been portraying himself: "He tries and tries to trick the rest of the world. He wants to talk and he thinks . . . and the rest of the world thinks he is smart." In addition, he began to issue invitations to share and to discuss:

I like to poet like my Dad [sic] . . .
To my Dad: I love you. I really really love talking to you.
You have wonderful ideas . . .
I love to make story boards for writing stories
I love words that sound interesting
I love poems
I love poet named Thomas who wrote A Child's Christmas in Whales [sic]
Theme one: Venus in detriment (integration--literal level).

"I realized that T. was reading."

T.'s life had begun in the presence of "red digital numbers." When I learned when he was four months old that he was capable of sight, I projected winning him back to wholeness using Glen Doman's large red letters to teach him how to read. Here, at six years of age, T. was reading "words printed an inch high in red marker." That he was doing this was neither speculation nor hearsay: It was evident to my senses. T. was literate. He was suddenly reading. And he was reading by reading. In the way that he should have sat up, or crawled, or walked--spontaneously, with adult encouragement--he was reading. It happened precipitately. Reading for T. was not built of fragments, of letters, of phonemes, of word bits. Having seen a word as the word was spoken, he remembered the word, and the letters again made word for him. The words, as letters, were as natural to his mind as the words as sounds. He was naturally a "whole word" child it seemed. But there was something curious about this, because he already knew the parts of the words. He had named the five vowels, although he did not always use them when he spelled words that he had never seen, and he had stated that the remaining letters of the
alphabet (which he also knew) were called consonants. Somewhere, from his environment, he had assimilated this information.

In the same way that I, the son of a teacher, with an older brother who had recently learned to read, knew all about words and sentences precociously, out of a desire to keep pace with my sibling, so did T. He was integrated with his environment through sound. Sound brought him words, and with those words came information. T. was informed by words. But many children are informed by words passively, content to let words have their way. What was curious about T. was that he had already become informed by words about words. He received incentive from words to want to know more from words and about words. Even the letters themselves were of interest to him, as were numbers, particularly zeros.

As I thought about what I had witnessed with T. at the neurological center, it occurred to me how much what T. was displaying ran against the odds. A betting person, one who weighed the probabilities, would have bet against precisely the scenario that was unfolding before me. For decades, teaching practices had stressed that the method most likely to produce success was to construct meaning for the child, to construct it in a sequential, interlocking way so that the child could prove mastery over the method at each step and, through mastery, integrate the newest step
into the previous series of steps, so that one day, when all the steps were assembled, the child could reconstitute the whole. Piaget's concepts of assimilation and accommodation seemed to support the building block theory, as did his notion of stages of development, each one of which supplied the substrate or foundation for the one that came after (Wadsworth, 1977). Even Rudolf Steiner, whose pronouncements I had come to savour as anodyne to materialist thinking, had stated that the child should first experience the letter as movement, as gesture, and then find the letter in a story from which the "picture" of the letter should emerge, before finally coming to the hardened form of the letter itself. For instance, the tower and the flowing hair from the tale of Repunzal would supply the picture of the letter R.

In addition, I had inherited the prejudice that "slow" children would need extra help, extra drill and practice, to reenact the mechanics of reading; and so I had transported T.'s physical disability, and the exquisite slowness with which he was mastering head control, not only into the sensory realm--suspecting that, though he might be very bright, he could very well reverse letters or have difficulty sensing sound/symbol relationships--but also into the thinking realm, where an amorphous, chaotic, primal confusion might need to have order brought to it in a very
piecemeal and painstaking way: "Let there be light just here now, and then light over there, and then just a bit of light in that corner . . ."

It had not yet occurred to me that, for this child, the letters themselves might be taken up as magical playthings in a mind that could rotate and flip them and find them three dimensionally aglow in the way that I, as a child, had physically manipulated my glowing wooden alphabet blocks. In subsequent years, I have had to consider the possibility that, in T., I was encountering a child who "had it all" mentally, in a way, at a level, and with a vibrancy to which I would have to rise even to understand it.

Theme two: Jupiter in fall (observation--moral level).

"Skepticism assailed me."

It would have been easier to disbelieve, to discredit. "The message seemed to have degenerated into a series of random letters." It would have been as easy as entropy, as easy as the doubt that forms the basic gesture of the intellect. I could have said that it was up to them, outside, to prove it to me. I would not have had to reach out and take up what was presenting before me. I would simply have to measure whether it fit with what I already thought I knew. If the new piece did not fit I could have
redefined it by rejecting it.

There is no word in English that begins with the letters MTS. I scanned and scanned in my mind for one, but I knew I would not find one. I wanted to believe that T. would write me a message full of portent, perhaps, "Hi Dad, I bet you didn't realize how much I really am alive inside." What are the first words of a six year old boy to a father for whom he has always been mute? What is the message from the other side? "I am happy? I have always been very happy?" The message was, "I WRITE MTSY." After my momentary disappointment and my fear that perhaps it was my presence, my interference, my excessive hope that had caused the degeneration of the message, and I identified Mitzy as T.'s dog, recently acquired for him as a birthday gift, we had said, "Oh T., you mean you are going to write a letter to Mitzy."

No wonder he tuned out. I know now that he was testing me and that I failed. Nervous L. had failed to bring his full faculties to bear upon the message and to understand it. A fragmented father, diminished by anxiety, had failed to bring wholeness to a message from a boy who had it all.

The message said at least four things that I had missed. (a) It said, "Dad, I am writing something that you know and I know, but K. (my speech therapist) doesn't know. (b) It said, "This will prove to you that it is T.
who is writing this message." (c) It said, "Dad, remember when you thought I wanted a dog and you said to my Mom that T. wants a dog for his birthday, and then suddenly a month later I got my wish when a Mitzy appeared in our yard. Well Dad, how long have you been wishing for a smart boy who could say his own words to tell you a secret." (d) It also said, "There is something special and joyful about my consonants that I am sharing with you, Dad: They are saying themselves!"

It has taken me six years to acquire the knowledge and the courage to interpret T.'s message in the above four ways, six years of opening myself to the possibility that neither reduction nor construction can explain what emerges when I experience my son's being. An enormous humility comes over me when I realize that only his physical helplessness and the complete care and sacrifice that I must bring to his communication allow me to open myself to the extent that I do without being overawed. There would be something so completely threatening about opening this way to most other human beings; this is because they are not so innocent, so forgiving, so unconditionally loving as this son who trusts me to say the words he sends through the movements of his arm. With this opening, this unprejudicing, I have let flow through me thousands of unapprehended observations of T.'s language, unapprehended
in the sense of not clung to, interfered with, analyzed with the intellect, and brought prematurely to form. His language has become rich in thousands of interweavings with the stuff of others, with the cloth of his culture. This richness has now conveyed to me an understanding of his being, his integrity, that allows me to interpret that first message, "I WRITE MTSY," in ways that I never would then have dared, without fear of entering the delusive state regarding T.'s intelligence that some people thought I had long inhabited—"flogging a dead horse."

*Theme three: Mercury in dignity (communication—anagogic level).* I am in a position now in my experience of T. to speculate concerning the reasons for his being "alive in a way that I had not seen him before" in the midst of communication. Communication was something that he had long intended. For those who were sensitive to him his limited range of voluntary facial and bodily movements had already made him an excellent mime. He could say "yes" and "no" and often have his meaning received. But he had not yet been able, in his play with words, to have them work for him in an outgoing way. Words had been his private internal toys, received and experienced but not used to the potential that he must have understood: Words could move others as words moved in him.
Letters and numbers, those glowing inner symbols that he could rotate in his mind space, when fixed on paper or on a computer screen, were the tools of "saying," the agents of moving other people in the outside world, and the means of making the "rest of the world" recognize T.'s being.

In the video from the neurological center, I saw T. poised, like the Magician in the Tarot deck, above his symbols of power. His right arm was his wand of power. He had become his own Prospero. Implicit in his pose, in the glow from his eyes, were concentration, intent, potential, and will. He had conceived an ability, an empowerment to transform "the rest of the world" with words.

"He tries hard." But for five years, like a candidate for initiation in the Pythagorean mysteries (Anonymous, 1985), T. had been silent. Why do some children survive the most dire repressions of the spirit while others fall victim? How long would T. have continued to try before hopelessness defeated him? At what point might recognition by his few loving helpers have ceased to be enough for him? At what point would the unrequited will to reach outward have turned to private charms or public pain? His speech therapist once speculated on "what kept that little boy sane." She spoke of his hope that one day he would be able to clarify his intentions to
"the rest of the world," so that he would cease to be treated as a passive object and would be valued instead for his contribution—in other words, his hope that he would become fully human through verbal interaction, his hope that he could achieve realization through dialogue. He tried hard because he had hope. He retained hope because he inspired love in the people who worked with him closely enough to get to know him. He craved reassurance that his hope was not useless, but lacked words to secure it.

However, it may be that the very richness of his internal world supplies the answer as to why he did not succumb to hopelessness and defeat. He was a boy with a large receptive vocabulary, as I had told his speech therapist in our very first interview. He made meaning of all the words that came to him; sometimes the meaning was fearful, and though he fretted for reassurance, he gained only physical comforting; other times the meaning was full of humor, or joy, or glory, or mischief, and his immediate world responded to his body's portrayal of the resultant emotion. He didn't cease trying, through his times of frustration, even in the midst of his too much consciousness and the paradox that, for T., any increase in effort was self-defeating.

I want to return to the image of the Magician from the Tarot deck. He is said to portray "concentration without effort" (Anonymous, 1985,
p.10), a formula that invokes the paradox of too much consciousness, and the muscular spasticity with which T. had to contend, when intending to move his limbs. T. was forced to develop a method of deliberate relaxation, which itself extends the paradox. The bipolarity of the concepts "concentration without effort" and "deliberate relaxation," if tolerated patiently, should "tease us out of thought." Once out of thought, we may cease anxious interference and permit ourselves, for a moment, a vicarious understanding of the sort of trying/not trying that T. has had to master, in order to send his words across the gap between his intention to move and his intention's tensing of his muscles. It was, and is, "tricky for him," and this should remind us that Hermes/Mercury, the god of communication, was a trickster figure whose tricks, properly interpreted, were lessons in understanding.

T.'s intention, or "tautness," leads to tension, or "stretching," of precisely the muscles that he must relax in order to extend his arm. This anomaly requires all of his attention (from the same Latin root, tendere, "to stretch"), and so he can not "say." Unable to say, he experiences frustration, anxiety, and further tension. Though he may dwell in "tensionality" (Aoki, 1991), his "intentionality" (Van Manen, 1990, pp. 181-182) remains untried, for nothing passes from him to the outside world.
He can not give "to take to give" (Thomas, 1952, p. 94). He can not communicate, unless his too much consciousness, itself brought to bear upon consciousness, releases the "trying" and so sends "saying" across the gap between intention and movement. Thus a young boy duplicates, with his every word, the feat of the Zen archer: "to release the bowstring without doing it himself on purpose" (Watts, 1963, p. 111).

At first, this release was terribly difficult for him, and the gap between question and answer, between intention and word, was long. Simple messages seemed to take hours to deliver. The first of his messages on my birthdays, which he sent to me when he was six years old, was the following:

To my special Dad  
You are my special Dad.  
Thank you for talking to me about contraptions for typewriter, typewriter, Neil Squire Foundation, write independent contraptions.  
I am excited!  
Mom visit, Dad visit T.  
Happy Birthday, love T.

T. and his foster mother, Ca., with whom he had been living for only four months at the time, worked on my birthday message over a period of several days.

His first "communication boards," huge laminated sheets of
cardboard the size of cafeteria trays, their letters arrayed in alphabetical order, seemed to take him forever to negotiate. The act of stretching his arm over distance was especially difficult. To save time, some of these early boards featured words or short phrases, to which he could point to make his intentions known. T. would not countenance Bliss Symbols; words were his bliss, and he would follow his bliss. Sometimes he would combine the words or phrases on his early boards with great ingenuity to communicate more complex messages, as he did when his child care worker facilitated T.'s message to his foster mother that he was crying because he had been pinched by his toilet seat. Neither woman knew what was causing his pain but, after he calmed down enough so that he could move his arm at all, he pointed first to "bathroom" and then to "uncomfortable" and got his message across.

T.'s need to construct meaningful sentences faster is illustrated in a letter that he wrote to a school district official asking for a computer. "I really really need a computer at school," T. wrote, "for talking, for working, for writing. . . . I need a computer for helping me program story boards for writing stories easier than pointing to each letter. When I get my computer at school I will be really, really glad."

His speed increased dramatically when he began using a QWERTY
keyboard, which he memorized very quickly. Small movements of the arm were easier for him. The shorter distances between letters allowed him bursts of mercurial movement, wherein messages flowed quickly and wittily from his arm.
Chapter Seven: T.'s Grade Two I.E.P. Meeting (Libra)

The Narrative

Present were myself, Ca., the itinerant resource teacher, the social worker, the speech therapist, the occupational therapist, the physiotherapist, the public health nurse, T.'s grade two teacher, T.'s teaching assistant, and the principal of T.'s neighborhood elementary school. I counted eleven people. T. was not included. M. had elected to stay away from the meeting, as she found such meetings emotionally draining.

The meeting took place in the library of the school. The low hexagonal tables with yellow arborite surfaces had been interlocked to produce a long meeting table. The chairs were of children's height. The early, aimiable chat among the participants began with remarks about the height of the chairs and the tables, then turned to the library itself, where a library technician was concluding her labors, and finally turned to the weather outside, where it was really autumn now. The entrance of the Principal, a tall, fairhaired woman in her forties, who appeared to expect
an instant response to her leadership, brought a tone of formality to the meeting.

The itinerant resource teacher, in his capacity as chairperson, asked if we could introduce ourselves and provide a brief overview of our involvement with T. I introduced myself as T.'s father and the person to whom T. turned most for reassurance. I called myself his "father confessor." The other participants gave their names and the titles of their jobs.

T., Ca., M., and I had often discussed the I.E.P. meeting as a place where T. would have the opportunity to raise problems and to voice preferences. We had used this as a point of reassurance. We had promised that a boy would be listened to. Prior to the meeting, T. had dictated to Ca. a number of requests.

(a) He wanted to be allowed to have a snack if he got hungry--because it would help him maintain the energy to stay alert--and not always have to wait for lunch.

(b) The books he had to choose from were too juvenile for him. He wanted permission to choose books from outside the classroom and from outside the school.

(c) He wanted to have his computer in the classroom so that he could
write stories with the class.

(d) He wanted to do more stimulating math.

The teacher and the teaching assistant showed immediate discomfort. A talking T. was dissonant with their experience. They appeared to feel challenged. The teaching assistant felt pressured to master a complicated communication system in a brief span of time. The teacher defended the varied selection of books that she provided as quite suitable for the developmental needs of her class, a grade one/two split.

She countered by asking about T.'s bedtime. He was often asleep in class, she said. We advised her that his "tuning out" could be caused by hunger or by his need for mental stimulation, which would call him out of his lethargy. We mentioned his love of learning, his high hopes for school. She suggested that he had to learn that he couldn't always get what he wanted; that was an important social lesson for him. She asked again about his bedtime. I advised her that T. had a disruptive sleep pattern and that long nighttime wakings, though less frequent now than they were in his infancy, were still a factor in our lives with T. She asked whether some sort of tranquilizer might be the remedy of choice. Then he could be alert in school.

She had another pressing issue: T.'s attendance. She thought that Ca.
was keeping him home too much. T.'s continually making a fresh advent
upon the scene was unsettling to the other children; they needed their
established routines. Ca. explained that, each morning, she had to make a
judgement about T.'s readiness for school. It depended on the amount of
sleep he'd had the night before, his emotional state, and whether or not he
had any physical ailments. I added that we had to be careful. Unlike most
students, T. could not be sent to school with the sniffles. Bed rest was
the remedy for any physical discomfort. If he was not getting enough rest,
especially when ill, pneumonia could result. I did not want to be alarmist
or to portray myself as overprotective, but we could be putting T.'s life at
risk if we mismanaged his health issues. The public health nurse was
quick to affirm my statements.

Each of T.'s helpers tried to offer clarification of T.'s needs as they
saw them, and each conveyed a willingness to assist the school. The
Principal had difficulty with the idea that these adults might be moving
randomly in and out of a classroom in her school without her knowledge.
All visitations must be arranged ahead of time through the office, she
said.

I had the feeling that, for some reason, we were having to assert
information that should have been obvious to any perceptive individual--
or, if not obvious, immediately and tactfully acceptable, out of a sense of human decency. Still, I wanted to be calm, balanced, reassuring, informative.

The answer to the food question was no. T. had to learn, like any child, the pattern of expectation demanded by school, and the social goals of T.'s integration were that he should be treated like any other child in grade two in regard to social and academic goals. In fact it might be wise, for now, to approach only social goals, until T. showed acceptance of, and cooperation with, the expectations of the classroom teacher. "I have no academic goals for T. until he is socially integrated," T.'s grade two teacher said.

The computer in the classroom would disrupt the other students, and there was no room for it. All of the open spaces in the classroom had educational purposes.

In the way of more stimulating math, the Principal intervened. She had a contact at one of the universities, and she would obtain a package of stimulating word problems. T. would have more stimulating math. But we had to be careful that T. was not developing gaps in his learning. These word problems should enrich, rather than accelerate, his math program.

I asked them not to worry about gaps. Academically, T. was well
Beyond grade level. His receptive language abilities were highly developed. His abilities in the four basic operations were very solid. He could already solve simple algebraic equations. He loved math. "Just offer him some time during the day when he can feel that he's learning something new."

I asked the teaching assistant to relax. The communication would come with time. We were not exerting any pressure about that. I told him that T. had a generous spirit, a great curiosity, a thirst for knowledge, and a wonderful sense of humor. I said, "As you get to know him, you will trust T. to tell you what he needs."

Interpretation

T.'s words. By grade two, T. was making the attempt to clarify himself to the people who misunderstood him and to address his ideas to "the rest of the world." Three examples will illustrate these early attempts.

[To his teaching assistant:] I am excited about working working [sic] with you . . . this year. Sometimes when I seem to tune out really I am concentrating. Sometimes when I am excited my arm doesn't listen to my brain.

[To his teacher:] I am sorry. I really want to work like other
children. I will try again tomorrow. I like you. I want you to give me harder math work please. I get frustrated when the work is too easy. I get frustrated when I can't talk to you about the work. I get really mad and I tune out. I get too mad. I used to do this before I talked, and I know I can talk now. I need you to help me try to talk about things. Not just tune out. P. S. [My speech therapist,] K. helped me write this.

[To the rest of the world:] I really think the planet is endangered by people who don't take their responsibility as citizens of the earth. We need to share this world with all living things. Environmental problems effect [sic] us all and each of us are [sic] responsible to future generations. We must treat our world with care and love so that it will be a wonderful investment in our future. I hope we will preserve what we have before it is too late.

Theme one: Sun in detriment (not foreclosing--literal level). In a heliocentric cosmos, the sun radiates warmth from its central position, broadcasting effulgence upon the planets according to their orbits and rotations. There is a certain sun-dependency in respect to ongoingness, but perhaps also some rivalry. Were the planets, earth included, able to meet together and regulate the sun, they might conceivably elect to discipline the sun's radiance more to their communal needs, if it were possible for so diverse a company to achieve consensus, exclusive of the sun's prior influence. Sun spots, flares, and solar winds would not reek their random intrusions, nor would variance in even glow exact its periodic toll. And so the planets, secure in their expectations,
would cease their gravitational competition, and a pleasant similarity would prevail among them.

But the sun rightfully is a star. It has star being, and it speaks of a realm that each planet can know only in the realization of its own sole being. Rudolf Steiner and subsequent students of anthroposophical thought (Powell, 1987, 1989; Stibbe, 1992; Sucher, 1993) have remained sensitive, in this century, to an ancient practice of assigning anagogic meaning to the personalities or soul moods of the seven planets of antiquity, as have Jung (1980) and "archetypal" therapists, like Hillman (1991) and Moore (1994). Certain allegorical interpretations of these seven soul moods have emerged in the work of Stibbe (1992), who speaks of seven "soul types" (p. 25), and in the work of Gardner (1993), who details seven "intelligences" (pp. 13-24), each of which appears in every human being to a greater or a lesser degree, and each of which is capable of both independent and concerted development. An individual's stronger intelligences, if each intelligence is given the opportunity and training to achieve its potential, can work communally to strengthen the individual's weaker intelligences. Astrologers have always been sensitive to this last fact in their analyses of the various "aspects" between the planets in the "birth charts" of individuals.
Gardner's (1993) intelligences are closely comparable to Stibbe's (1992) seven soul moods and the planetary personalities from which they have emerged. The comparisons are as follows:

(a) Gardner's Intrapersonal Intelligence, "the internal aspects of a person [which provide] access to one's own feeling life" (p. 24), corresponds to Stibbe's Self Conscious Type (pp. 27-33), and the planet Saturn.

(b) Gardner's Spatial Intelligence, "the ability brought to bear in visualizing an object seen from a different angle" (p. 21), corresponds to Stibbe's Dominant Type (pp. 49-52), with his or her capacity for thoughtful overview, and the planet Jupiter.

(c) Gardner's Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence, "the control of bodily movement" (p. 18), corresponds to Stibbe's Aggressive Type, who is "active in the world" (p. 25), and the planet Mars.

(d) Gardner's Linguistic Intelligence, "the talent of the poet" (p. 21), corresponds to Stibbe's Radiant Type, for whom "feeling and intellect work harmoniously together" (p. 57), and the Sun.

(e) Gardner's Interpersonal Intelligence, which permits one "to read the intentions and desires of others, even when these have been hidden" (p. 23), corresponds to Stibbe's Aesthetic Type, who makes "judgement[s] out of sympathies and antipathies" (p. 25), and the planet Venus.
(f) Gardner's Logico/Mathematical Intelligence, which "copes with many variables at once and creates numerous hypotheses rapidly" (p. 20), corresponds to Stibbe's Mobile Type, who exercises "combinative thinking" and "reaction on the spur of the moment" (p. 25)—along with, I might add, rapid classification within codes of numbers, letters, signs, sigils, ideograms, or hieroglyphs—and the planet Mercury.

(g) Gardner's Musical Intelligence with its "powerful reaction to . . . sound" (p. 18), corresponds to Stibbe's Romantic Type, with his or her "extreme receptivity" (p. 35), and the Moon.

Further interpretive analysis reveals that Bloom (1956) has provided classification of six of these "intelligences" in his taxonomy of the cognitive domain, but has either excluded (or regularized) the Sun, or Radiant (poetic) Type, from his description, a difficulty he sought to remedy when, with Krathwohl (1964), he metamorphosed the six categories of his cognitive domain into the five categories of their taxonomy of the affective domain, by altering the terms by which the six moods were signified. This type of metamorphosis is accomplished at the "tropic" (or figurative) level of interpretation, through techniques of metonymy and synecdoche whereby "God" is first suggested by "the church," and then "the church" is suggested by "the priest," and then "the
priest" is suggested by "the cloth." It is such literalization that places the sun in detriment in our current educational practice.

In our time, through this order of devolution, the concerted "music of the spheres" resounds as a hushed univocity, raised in quasi-Pythagorean glee--numbers having now been dedicated to statistical celebration of "intelligence scores," which give access, as Gardner (1993) laments, "to one dimension of mental ability along which we [can] array everyone" (p. 5). How many potential Christy Browns (Brown, 1990), Christopher Nolans (Nolan, 1987), or Davoren Hannas (Hanna, 1990) have been pronounced severely or profoundly mentally retarded/handicapped/challenged/delayed because their particular scale of intelligences has not been soundable upon the instruments at hand?

It may only be through interpretation of the beings of the seven planetary personalities at the anagogic level that we will scry the interconnections between the products of the literal, moral, and allegorical levels of their interpretation. But interpreters who are daunted by the remoteness of the anagogic level may take heart in the revelation that it is through the poetic openness of "suffering" the interconnections of the products of the other three levels of interpretation, with great patience, that we begin to intuit the true
natures of the seven planetary modes of being, which we sometimes call
intelligences.

T. "had it all" according to his kindergarten teacher. But in what
sense could that be true if he could neither walk nor talk? The key to the
development of T.'s other intelligences was his extreme receptivity. An
attempt to discern the order in which T.'s intelligences developed runs as
follows: First came his response to sound, or musical intelligence, with
his appreciation of Mozart and poetic recitation; secondly he developed
interpersonal intelligence within his family circle; thirdly he gained
intrapersonal intelligence, with the ability to look within himself and
sense that he existed; fourthly, he gained spatial intelligence from
swinging and hammocking and bouncing; fifthly he acknowledged his
logico/mathematical intelligence, with his discovery of numbers at the
neurological center; sixthly he displayed poetical intelligence in cryptic,
poetic utterances such as "bathroom-uncomfortable" and "I write MTSY"
(see Appendix T); and lastly he worked consciously on his bodily
kinesthetic intelligence, his growing ability to move by means of
"concentration without effort." There remains one caveat: Any attempt to
serialize betrays insensitivity to the quality of conversation among the
multiple intelligences. For instance, T.'s acquaintance with "the word"
predated his first poetical expressions by several years.

However, by the time T. arrived in grade two, all of his intelligences
were functioning with a high degree of self-consciousness, and all of his
intelligences were implicated in his hypersensitivity.

Theme two: Mars in fall (scientific/technological
assessment--moral level). I recognize that "the school" has two
tasks, one of which is an averaging and harmonizing that creates the
social atmosphere in which learning can occur. This has been well done
and with a certain scientific zeal that measures progress by recounting
its successes even as it discounts its casualties, much in the way that
modern civilization recites its progress as an evolution of technological
acumen, from notched stick to electronic calculator, from quill pen to
laser printer, from spearhead to warhead, pausing only recently for a
backward glance at the wake of its destructiveness.

The second task of the school is the recognition of the individuality
of every student, recognition that every student partakes of "sun nature"
and that every student's sun nature partakes of "star being." The second
task of the school has never been completely neglected, and every
educator will grant its importance; but often, for those educators who pursue the first task with unrelenting zeal, the second task is utterly confounding. Adulterated measures appear to result from attention to the second task: Norms and standards, if plastic, may be warped in the sunlight and rendered untrue. Tried and trued in a tradition of progress, the norms have become normative; they have proved their mettle; they may be bent but not to the breaking point. Because they are resilient, they must return to the norm.

In T.'s case, none of the traditional measures of the school could be applied in his assessment. Assidere, "to sit," the root of the word assessment, provides us also with the word assiduous. Only those who would sit beside T. and assiduously learn to hold his arm were qualified to assess him. He could not be tested in an atmosphere free of suspicion that it was his facilitator, and not himself, who answered the questions. None of his classwork was seen to be exclusively of his own hand. His behaviors, such as control of speech and control of movement, were not observable by ordinary means. Distractability and hyperkinesis, those childish social ills, were not in evidence. T. did not strike other children or call them names. However, his attendance could be noted to be erratic, and it was apparent that he slept in school. These were two difficulties
that demanded teacherly intervention. They were the only qualities of T. that stood out for the teacher, except for a certain level of incongruous demand for stimulation (which came to her not directly from T. himself but from agencies outside the school who sought to interpret T.'s needs).

But by isolating these two difficulties, the teacher failed to inquire of herself what was unique in T. She was reverting to standard practice in a situation that uniquely beckoned her to observe the individuality of the child. She was practising assessment by rote, rather than by root. Beckoned to "sit beside" T. in an assiduous manner, she balked, falling back on the excuse that she had neither the time nor the training required for "sitting beside" a boy like T. She became aggressive in the tacit assertion that the task of teaching T. was more than she had bargained for when she had chosen to teach professionally. The task she had been given by the joint committee of administrators and union representatives, who had decided to mainstream T., was to "integrate" him into her classroom. To her, this meant that all of the rules that applied to all of the students in her classroom should also apply to T., regardless of his disabilities.

To her, "integration" meant that T. should refrain from arriving erratically and distracting other students with his apparatuses and his adult teaching assistant; that he should cease demanding to be fed at
times other than the designated times; and that he should cease asking to have a computer in the classroom, as any enhancement the computer might bring to T.'s communication would be counterbalanced by the social disorder brought by its inherent disruptiveness. Until the wrinkles that T.'s presence was creating in the social fabric of the class were smoothed out, it was out of the question to provide this powerful child with the reward of having his own way academically. To do so would deliver a message that would only reinforce the apparent social maladjustment of the child. Her proposed solutions, drug therapy and behavior modification, were alike in that neither of them did honor to the individuality behind the targeted behaviors. While altering surface behaviors, these solutions would rule out recognition of the underlying, unaddressed needs of the boy who could not sleep at night and would not stay awake in school.

We failed in our attempts to help her to see that T.'s disabilities—though they excited curiosity in other students—were not to be included in the same category as disruptive behaviors. This made it impossible to ask her to take the next step toward understanding that disruptive behaviors might themselves more honestly be seen as forms of disability, to be recognized rather than extinguished. Such readjustment of her basic suppositions was not possible over the short term.
Theme three: Saturn in exaltation (memory--allegorical level). Teachers fear gaps in learning almost as much as they fear power in students. Power struggles tug at the social fabric of the classroom and separate warp from weft, creating "pulls" in the material. A tight serviceable weave demands evenly twisted yarns, spun consistently from the moral and intellectual fiber of the class. Uneven twisting or stunted, fragmented fiber spins a weak yarn which, when drawn by the teacher into a tight weave, may unravel, stretch, or break. The result may be a gap or gaps in the fabric, with fraying of the broken strands. The fabric must then be mended by staunching the gaps, through which random and chaotic elements might rush.

Teacher-as-spinner controls dispensation of the curriculum; teacher as-weaver measures out the yarn of the social fabric, "assigning [each student] his destined place in [the] society" of the classroom (Graves, 1960, Vol. 1, p. 204); teacher-as-disciplinarian extinguishes antisocial behaviors. Thus, the teacher fabricates "teacher" as spinner, measurer, and severer in replication of the Classical Three Fates.

There are gaps in the fabric of science; it is the work of science to wind filaments and weave them across such gaps, with rigorous
application of the "scientific method". There are gaps in my personal memory. I am free to fabricate the darning of such gaps, and by fabrication I might either distort or redeem the past. But gaps define the limits of memory and remind me that it is sometimes necessary to forget. "Too little sulfur" is the condition of not being able to forget. "Too much sulfur" would cause one not to remember. Sulfur, "the dragon of myth," has to be pierced with the iron of consciousness and control. T., a boy with too much consciousness, a boy with hypersensitivity to his verbal environment, was a boy who did not forget anything once heard, who wove his own rich fabric from the sounds of his environment. He had a penchant for producing multiple scenarios, for weaving multiple tapestries, gaps in which and between which created potential of tensionality, across which leapt the flash of realization. And this would occur without teacher spinning, without teacher measuring, without the iron scissors of teacher severing, but not without stimulation, not without conversation, not without reassurance. Unfortunately, for many teachers such flashes of realization smack of chaos.

In many cases, the teacher-as-disciplinarian brings consciousness and control to tame the dragon, to spin a gap-free yarn, to measure a gap-free fabric, and to subdue order from potential chaos. But what of a boy
whose mind could experience the ecstasy of chaos and so reorder the curriculum? T. was confounding. He had none of the might-be, guessed-at gaps that the teachers feared. T.'s gaps were synaptic gaps, delays in time between intention to move and realization of movement, and they were communication gaps, across which he could not yet leap to explain and realize himself—to create himself anew by making himself understood.

Theme four: Venus in dignity (integration--anagogic level).

"Trust T. to tell you what he needs." It did not take long for the teaching assistant to extend to T. the benefit of the doubt, to relax, and to begin communicating effectively with T. They had long informative and philosophical conversations together. The teaching assistant discovered that T. was interested in rockets and space travel, and one of T.'s strong persistent interests emerged in print for the first time: exploration of the universe. Exploring the theme of space, they closed their personal communication gap.

What allowed this closing was, I like to think, the teaching assistant's conscience as a father, which beckoned him to consider the rightness and wrongness of treating T. as a simple inconvenience of
symptoms or as a sum of deficiencies. His conscience advised him of the wrongness of such treatment, and informed him of the rightness of treating T. as a whole boy who was willing to assert integrity in spite of the most extreme impediments. As a result, the teaching assistant experienced conscience as conscire, which means "to know together inwardly," and he recognized T. as a boy who wished inwardly to weave a multidimensional tapestry of a vast, intricate, external universe. Thus the obsolete meaning of "conscience" as "consciousness" was rehabilitated in their dialogue. Then T. and his teaching assistant existed in school for each other. T.'s hopes for school revived as the teaching assistant became the interpreter through whom T. could go forth and realize himself. The best times of the school day occurred when they were alone in conversation, or when the T.A. aided T.'s interactions with other children on the playground. Originally called "the dead boy" by the playground wits, T. was able to attract friendships with many students of various ages, in the presence of whom he came alive.

The conscience of the teacher proved not so malleable, but a teacher's conscience is of a different mettle. A teacher can not exist solely for a single student, for to do so would be to neglect the remaining
twenty-five. The conscience of T.'s teacher dictated that she exist first for the collective, secondly for the smaller instructional groups, and only thirdly for the individual. To have reversed the order would have placed the teacher in jeopardy: The law of "the right distance" (Taubman, 1992) might be transgressed and a variety of indisgressions, ranging from sentimental attachment to subtle abuse, might result.

T.'s teacher dwelt in a tensionality between the need for order in the class and the need to recognize T. as a student whose needs were different. Her need for order ruled that his pleas for enrichment should go unheard. The prime factor in her reticence was not doubt, though doubt at first was present. Nor was the issue primarily one of resistance to the idea that T. should be allowed to make more engaging choices, though there was some degree of "teacher knows best" in her attitude at first. I believe it was conscience as "faculty by which distinctions are made between right and wrong" that made her deny T.'s requests. Primarily, she feared degeneration of the learning environment, a fear that I think was inspired by reports from teachers about the abandonment, in regular classrooms, of students who had special needs, as a result of the militancy of parents who marched under the banner of "integration."

T.'s benign misbehaviors, sleeping in class and asking, "Please can I
have more," simply triggered fears that her most valued teacher-student relationships were placed in peril by the integration movement. Soon she might be asked to consider that every student should have individualized treatment. The resultant state of seige denied the teacher any mobility of conscience. It took most of the year before she could experience "conscience" as "consciousness" and admit any "inward knowing" of T. It was only after being charmed by T.'s rocket essay (see Appendix U) that she thought his computer might fit in the classroom.

The teacher's refusal to allow T.'s computer in the classroom often isolated T. and his T. A. in the computer room. Ironically, this provided them with their best opportunities for developing T.'s communication and his incentive to learn. The irony of the situation is implicit in the word inclusion, whose root meaning is "to fence in." In self-defence, the teacher fenced T. into her curricular choices but fenced out his computer, which then represented his language, for fear that the computer would disrupt the community of her classroom. These acts, which denied him the stimulation (prodding) that he demanded to secure his alertness, created the opportunity for him to conceive incentive (en"chant"ment) in the presence of the fatherly mind of his adult T.A. It was the relationship, which T. cultivated in private with his T.A., that provided the language
that allowed T. to "integrate" (to become whole and sole and alive) in the midst of the community of the playground.

The conscience of the Principal was made of sterner stuff. She displayed conscience as "conformity in conduct to a prescribed moral standard." Her moral standard was pre-scripted in both the legal and medical senses. She herself, as Principal, represented that standard. Upright in posture and upholding in manner, she defined the school's principles of judgement by norm and rule. She defended the standard against laxity or extension, against revision or interrogation. Though T. could not stand independently, the Principal's standard was independent standing. To allow the professionals who supported T. unrestricted access would represent anarchic erosion of the standard. To offer T. advancement in mathematics would threaten the very quantities whose measurement defined the standard.

Education, like medicine, has its diagnoses and prescriptions; like law it has its prescriptions and rulings. She was as staunch and unflinching in her defence of the standard as any defender of the Hippocratic oath. The Principal was standard bearer and standardizer. Conscience as "personal determiner of right and wrong," conscience as
"inward knowing," could not be allowed to confound or adulterate the standard. As exemplar and executive of the standard, she displayed no mobility of conscience and, hence, no growth in consciousness, unless in the direction of hypersensitivity to the need of pre-serving the standard itself.

In the midst of the three types of conscience represented by the teaching assistant, the classroom teacher, and the Principal, there was T., the boy who had too much consciousness, the boy who was hypersensitive in each of his seven intelligences, including the interpersonal intelligence, which according to Gardner operates independently of language (Gardner, 1993, p. 23), and the intrapersonal intelligence, which gives access to one's own feeling life (Gardner, 1993, pp. 24-25). T. suffered every misunderstanding that he encountered in the school environment as an assault upon his personal integrity. Even individuals who privately believed that he was "profoundly mentally handicapped" but who behaved outwardly with formal politeness, assisted in the assault to the extent that they could not sense T.'s sensitivity. Only three people -- T.'s father and his foster mother, who were in daily dialogue with T. concerning his "mental fight," from which his will to prove his being to
"the rest of the world" gave him no respite, and his mother, who resonated profoundly with his feeling life--knew inwardly the true heroic dimensions of his patience and his suffering.
Chapter Eight: T. and the Surgeon (Scorpio)

The Narrative

When T. was eight years old, I wrote a letter to the orthopedic surgeon, trying to explain T. to him:

"He is a very sensitive, intelligent child who is prone to worry. He was very frightened by his last visit to your office when you talked about the operation, the possible complications, and the possible consequences of not operating. I hope that, in the future, communications that are potentially frightening for T. can take place when he is out of earshot."

T. wanted to speak with the doctor to find out whether his digestive problems were caused by his scoliosis. He often asked questions of his naturopath and of our family doctor, both of whom responded to him respectfully and gave him real answers. In each case the tone of the answers reassured him: The naturopath affirmed T.'s hope that anything could happen--his back could strengthen; our family doctor, though a cautious man, never dramatized T.'s problems. After I wrote the letter, T. thought he would try questioning with the surgeon.

T. and I made the visit together. The office was modern but not
spacious. There was no impression of windows, no view of the city. There had been a minor use of oak in the decor. The predominating colors, maroon and grey, were softened mistily to pastels. There was one main waiting room, shared by a number of pediatric specialists, and it was crowded with parents and their children. The children ranged from those like T., who were fastened into wheelchairs, to those who scurried around the cramped space playing with bright plastic toys. The hallways to the various doctor's examining rooms, which led past receptionists' cubicles, were narrow and uninviting.

I lifted T. out of his chair and onto my knee. I raised his "spelling board" for him. He told me that he was frightened that his scoliosis was going to be worse, that the doctor was going to say that T. needed major surgery, or that T. would die soon. I tried to reassure him. The letter asked the doctor to refrain from comments like those while T. was listening; it explained about T.'s intelligence and sensitivity.

The receptionist directed us across the main hallway to the X-ray room, where I was hung with a heavy leaden garment to shield me from radiation. I was instructed to hold T. in a sitting position that seemed to exaggerate his kifosis, the forward-moving component of his curvature. This maneuver was difficult in my bulky shield. I tried to keep his tiny
buttocks from sliding off the shiny metal seat while I held his upper body straight and centered on the midline of the apparatus.

When we returned to the waiting room, our seats had been taken by newcomers. I held T. in my arms while we waited for the receptionist to call. T.'s thick, outdoor clothing was piled on the wheelchair. We were blocking the aisle in front of us.

We were escorted to a small, vacant examining room where I was instructed to remove T.'s indoor clothing. There was space only for the examining table, myself, T., the small chair where I draped our outdoor clothing, T.'s wheelchair, the tote bag that contained T.'s diapers and a change of clothing, and the doctor himself (for the brief moments of the examination). As I removed T.'s hard plastic body brace and ankle splints, I recalled that the reason for the visit was to get the surgeon's authorization to renew these devices.

T.'s eyes, his face, his body told me that he was in distress. As I finished undressing him, I told him again about the letter. I told him, that if he smiled and showed that he was alert, the doctor would have to realize that he was an intelligent, sensitive boy.

The doctor entered. He did not close the door. Opening T.'s file, he discovered my letter on top of a sheaf of paper. He scanned it quickly,
cleared his throat, and began his examination. He clipped T.'s x-rays onto a lighted panel and drew some lines with a ruler and a pen. He measured an angle with a protractor. He scribbled some numbers on the x-ray, then announced that the combined angle of T.'s scoliosis and kifosis had advanced by several degrees, not a big jump over the past year, and he suggested that the body brace was doing its job as effectively as could be expected. T.'s appropriate smile went unnoticed.

I mentioned that T. thought that he needed a bigger brace, that he wanted his ankle splints checked, and that he had an important question to ask the doctor.

The doctor declared that it would be six months before the brace and splints would need renewing. He scribbled a note for the orthotics lab.

I helped T. to ask his question: "Doctor--I--Am--Having--Lots--Of--Bad--Gas--And--Indigestion. Do--You--Think--My--Scoliosis--Is--Causing--That--Problem?"

The doctor commented that there were two answers to the question. The answer for now was, "Not yet." The other answer was that it didn't ever have to cause a problem, if T. would have metal rods inserted in his back. But we'd been through that long ago, he said. Without the operation, the answer was, "First the lungs, then the heart, then the stomach."
I affirmed that our "no surgery" decision had come after a lot of consultation and soul-searching. He answered that we had to realize that our decision would shorten T.'s life. He went to a small counter in the immediate hallway and began to dictate his findings into a hand held tape recorder. He did not close the door. I dressed T. and spoke to him of our plans for the rest of the day, of our plans for the weekend.

**Interpretation**

*T.'s words.* T. was ten when he wrote the following words to one of his internet friends, a woman who had "become handicapped" later in life than T. had:

I think you are a wonderful and special lady. You are really wonderful with the children on the forum. I think you must love your boys very much. Sometimes I hear stories about people who have had accidents and they want to die just because they can't make their legs work. I just heard about a girl who really has lots of medical problems. I really think I am really a lucky boy. I am handicapped but that really isn't a horrible thing. I have been handicapped all my life so not feeling sad about that very much. Really, becoming handicapped later or having really bad medical problems that make things get worse would be harder. I can really learn new things and get stronger. Another thing is that my handicap is really visible. Some people have handicaps that are not visible like learning disabilities or ADD. Sometimes they are told that they should just try harder. No one says to me that I could walk if I just tried harder. Sometimes people think that I'm not really intelligent. But the people who are important understand that. You are really a brave
[person's name] trying hard to learn new things too. I am not going to die soon. The doctors told me probably I would die soon, but my inner wisdom tells me that my spirit is really strong and really part of the world.

Theme one: Moon in detriment (growth--literal level).

Literally, as T. grew physically, the curve in his spine increased, and from the surgeon's point of view there seemed to be no limit to it. Time after time he declared a two figure increase in the angle of T.'s curvature, until I thought, in an attempt to laugh away my fears, that T., like the foul witch Sycorax in The Tempest, would grow into a hoop.

T. believed that a scoliosis had caused the death of one of his Progress Center friends. He gained this belief from the words of the Progress Center Staff as they spoke without considering his "large receptive vocabulary." Similarly, the surgeon, never considering that T. might understand him, had spoken freely over the years about major surgery and the dangers of pulmonary complications during the recovery process. T.'s hypersensitivity, and his penchant for generating multiple scenarios of future distress, led him to believe that he was a burden to his family, particularly to his mother, whom he saw as suffering unbearable sadness on his behalf. He wondered whether his death, though it would bring intense heightening of sadness to his family, might at
length alleviate the suffering. Thus, he lived in continuous awareness of
death, and sometimes, until he was nine years old, like Keats he was "half
in love with easeful Death" (Keats, 1964, p. 245). But T. was strongly
attracted to life. It held so many good things for him: the music of
Mozart, the poetry of Shakespeare, a bouillabaise feast, cuddles with his
Mom, the company of his loved ones. He wished to abscond from the issue
of death, to run away, but not all of his muscles worked, and those that
worked, once tensed, would not untense themselves.

And so, the hoop that T. would grow into was patterned by a feedback
loop, a vicious cycle produced by too much consciousness. All of T.'s
attempts to abscond brought a one-sided tension that produced a twisting
away that increased his curvature. Again, T. was faced with the essential
sphinx-like riddle of his existence: How can too much consciousness,
described by Rudolf Steiner as the "death pole of the nerve," bring to itself
the ability to relax and cease the acceleration of the twisting away? How
could he emerge as his own Prospero on the physical plain and recreate
himself in the image of "the human form divine" (Blake, 1974, p. 117)?
With what magic could he overturn the entropic power of Sycorax and
unbend the hoop? How could one so young begin to acknowledge that he
bore within himself all three of the archetypes involved: Ariel imprisoned
in the pine tree; Sycorax, his imprisoner; and Prospero who could set him free?

Ca. and I spent hundreds of hours reassuring T., first by acknowledging the riddle that produced the tension, then by unraveling the scenarios of future distress, then by rehabilitating them in favor of faith in the future—a faith in T.'s growing abilities to manage his own difficulties and to solve his own problems. Normally such "cognitive therapy" might be misplaced in counselling one so young, but here the issue was conscious relaxation of consciousness. Each evening Ca. would help him to push the button on his speaker phone that dialed his parents' home. Together, over the telephone, we would help him unbind the substance of his fears: that school would never get better for him; that his Real Voice would never allow him to talk normally; that his Mom thought he was a bad boy for also loving Ca.; that his scoliosis was getting worse; that he would never be able to walk or talk; that he would die young; that his mother and his father would waste their lives in useless grief for him. As we separated the various worries, with T. answering our questions painstakingly (in the early years, spelling his words one by one for Ca.), he would begin to relax. As we reconstituted a future for T. and projected a scenario where there dwelt a host of opportunities for him to
accomplish wonderful things for himself and for the people whom he loved, he would continue to relax. "He is relaxing now," Ca. would say, and she would feel the tension draining from his body. T. would ask me to recite a poem, usually the sonnet by Shakespeare that begins, "Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediments" (Sonnet 116), or to read to him from Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, and, listening to the sound of my voice, T. would drift off to sleep.

In the reserved and balanced way that had always stood me in good stead when negotiating with officials on T.'s behalf, I was trying to apprise the doctor of the effects that his words were having on T. I was not blunt enough to tell him outright that I believed that surgery would kill T., and that I believed we were prolonging, not shortening, T.'s life by refusing the surgery. I had hoped to engage the surgeon's aid in alleviating the familial stress, which always followed in the wake of one of T.'s examinations, by suggesting that the doctor say a soft word to T., perhaps smile at him, tell T. that he was a brave boy, ask him if he liked baseball.

*Theme two: Venus in fall (integration--moral level)."We'd been through all that long ago."

It may be that the doctor thought we were morally wrong for
refusing surgery on T.'s back and the insertion of metal rods along his spine. It was very difficult to read the man. His communications were singularly without affect. In itself, this lack of affect gave me feelings of guilt for having to take up this busy person's time to maintain our "useless child" (Schaefer, 1982) in this brief life, at great cost to society. Though I know he saw many children like T. in the course of his practice, there was no accommodation in his office for a wheelchair--there was nowhere even to park a wheelchair in his waiting room. The narrow aisles, the self-closing door, the large area given over as play space for physically able children, the little space to maneuver in his examining room, all of these things inconvenienced T. and me to the point of exclusion.

T.'s other doctors acknowledged T. as a person. His chiropractor noticed T.'s strong incentive toward self-healing; his naturopath had long philosophical discussions with T.; his family doctor listened respectfully to T.'s questions and addressed his answers directly to T. Reassurance attended in their manners toward T.

T.'s fear of the surgeon was a fear of what the surgeon was going to say. This very conscious child could produce immediate self-exciting scenarios of suffering and loss. The surgeon, with his distant,
professional, almost mechanical manner, who permitted no tone of
reassurance to enter his voice, who allowed no friendly lineament to
animate his face, brought no cessation to T.'s fast-cycling fears, and
brought no simple human fellowship to his dealings with T.'s parents.

Would the surgeon have behaved so distantly toward a child who
could walk and talk? Would the surgeon, as physician, or "close observer
of nature," and as medical practicioner, or "healer," have refused at least a
smile for T.? T. and I had seen him behave avuncularly with a small boy
who had a minor flaw in his gait. T. was aware of being excluded, of
having his overtures toward conversation go unattended. Was the
surgeon's self-distancing a type of self-protection? Did T.'s x-ray stand
between the doctor and the child in the same way that the shield I wore
stood between me and the radiation from the x-ray camera? Did T. radiate
in a way that was dangerous to the doctor's form of practice? Would
acknowledgement of T.'s radiance have confounded the doctor's mode of
operation?

Theme three: Mars in dignity (scientific/technological
assessment--anagogic level). In a short essay on the life of
Copernicus, which he wrote when he was nine, T. made the following
Astronomy, Astrology and medicine were probably very closely connected in the Renaissance. Astrology was an indication of God's design for helping mankind to find the proper herbs and medicines for healing sick people. Copernicus studied Astrology because he was a medical doctor who desired to understand God's natural medicines. Therefore, Copernicus became interested in the imperfection seen in the heavens by Astronomers throughout the ages . . . and thought that a heliocentric solar system with a moving earth would solve the problem . . .

The reason that Copernicus followed up his heliocentric theory was to reconcile a perfect God with imperfect motions in the heavens. A perfect God would need perfect circular motions in the heavens to communicate his healing messages to mankind. Copernicus' interest in Astronomy, therefore, was his effort to understand God's relation to mankind and mankind's purpose on the earth . . . He believed the sun was the only heavenly body perfect enough to be the center of God's universe . . . (see Appendix V).

T. was most impressed with Copernicus as interpreter of God through the medium of mathematics, and with Copernicus as healer. At nine years of age, T. spent many hours in discussion with both Ca. and myself on the nature of paradigm shifts and what they represent. He was excited by the idea that the tools of the astronomer could help Copernicus to find God, though T. was aware that the attempt had failed. Einstein and Hawking had shown him an altogether more amorphous universe, in which it was rather more difficult to "find God." T. already was aware that attempts to think the cosmos into conformity with traces drawn by a compass and a ruler, according to angles measured by a protractor,
somehow disguised or negated what they attempted to measure. For centuries, scientists, seeing only the trace of their own cosmocratizing measurements, have taken the "tracing" for the universe itself (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983, p.25).

On May 15, 1995, T. added the following note:

[The] spiritual world showed that a more perfect cosmos was needed to clarify God's presence. Spiritual insight told Copernicus about the perfection of the circles. Anagogic interpretation of those perfect circles is lost in descent into materialism. What is left is the trace provided by technological investigation.

As subsequent astronomers began to overlook God while gazing into the mirror of a celestial map, which was drawn with geometric precision through the mediation of the telescope, so did T.'s doctor attempt to discern T. in the traces of black marking pen that he left on the x-ray photograph of T.'s spine.

However, the Renaissance was still aware of seeking, in T.'s words, "God's design for helping mankind to find the proper herbs and medicines for healing sick people." For this purpose, according to T.'s research findings, as a "medical doctor who desired to understand God's natural medicines," Copernicus studied astrology.

The difference between an astronomical map and an astrological chart is precisely the presence of the individuality (the microcosm)
within the universe (the macrocosm). The astrological chart purported to supply the Renaissance healer with precise information concerning the individuality who had need of healing. The healer would be guided by the astrological chart toward the selection of those among "God's natural medicines" that most precisely addressed the individual's need for healing. Between the Renaissance and the present day, what has faded from awareness, with the rise of technological medicine, is the very chart of the individuality that doctors have seen fit to abandon as superstitious nonsense.

By the time T. wrote his Copernicus essay, he had gained vast personal experience of both technological and alternative medicines. A contrast arose in his mind, and out of the contrast came his recognition of Copernicus' style of medicine as one of T.'s own needs for personal healing. When approaching the surgeon, T. wanted the same reassurance through dialogue that he received in his dealings with his "soft touch" chiropractor, his naturopath, and his Anthroposophical physician. But the surgeon continued to say things that made T.'s mother cry and made T. himself doubt his ability to continue in life.

I will explicate the surgeon's habit of "foreclosing" on T.'s future by
using a type of imagery that, in the English Renaissance, was termed "a
conceit." It runs as follows.

The caduceus, or hermetic staff, with its intertwining serpents and
its wings, enabled Hermes/Mercury to travel both horizontally and
vertically through the cosmos. It, therefore, represented a multiplicity
and interdependency of cosmic levels that was summarized in the
expression, "As above, so below." The implication for medicine of an
analogical correspondence between the heavens, the earth, and the human
being was that all things, being interrelated, conducted a like energy
through individual modes of operation; therefore, all medical
interventions were acts of discovery, acts of inspiration, and acts of
realignement that involved energy at all three levels, and that restored the
free flow of an energy that could be discerned as a form of "grace." The
caduceus of Hermes/Mercury could be seen to represent the "quicksilver"
movement of energy, above (in the starry and planetary realms), below (in
the human body), and horizontally (over the surface of the earth). It's
action, "no stronger than a flower" (Shakespeare, Sonnet 65), was
impressed in distinctive vibrations upon the plantlife of the earth, due to
the sensitivity of vegetation to the intermixing of the energies of the
earth with the energies of the planets and the stars. It's action was
constantly alive in the organs of the human body, and the energy travelled like quicksilver through the physical, emotional, and intellectual beings of all humans, in ways distinctive of their individual destinies. Major energy pathways, intertwining in energy centers, descending and ascending along the human spine toward the great wings of the ventricles in the human brain, gave habitation, within the human body, to the form of the caduceus, which would conduct its grace of healing there.

The caduceus remains the symbol of the medical profession, but its anagogic meaning has been lost. It is now no more that an emblem, or an insignia. It no longer functions as a conductor of souls. It signifies a four hundred year devolution into the materialism of works that are no longer medicinal, or "healing," but are now pharmaceutically and surgically intrusive.

T.'s doctor, as surgeon, would have inserted metal rods along T.'s spine; and so, along the energy pathways that T. labors to enliven in his efforts at relaxation, the doctor would have deposited an alloyed parallel structure of technological provenience, a true emblem of the meaning of the caduceus in modern times.

It was not only fear of the surgery, fear of the loss of blood, fear of
the pulmonary complications, and fear of T. dying in the recovery process that led us to say no to surgical intervention in the free development of T.'s scoliosis. It was also a kind of spiritual revulsion, in the sense of a "pulling back" to a place in western history where "physic" (knowledge of nature) and "medicine" (healing) were still cognate terms, neither of which excluded "magnanimity," (greatness of soul) or denied "regeneration."

"The letter killeth," said William Blake, who maintained a longstanding mental fight against the materialism of "Newton's sleep": "The spirit giveth life. It is spiritually discerned."

"Personally," said nine year old T., "I am excited by the scholar's quest for understanding the true nature of the cosmos in order to understand God" (see Appendix V).
Chapter Nine: T. and the Shamans' Relics (Sagittarius)

The Narrative

The following narrative was written by T. at the age of eleven. He describes an experience that occurred about three weeks before his eighth birthday.

When I was seven I went to Victoria to see the museum. My father accompanied me. So did my foster mother, Ca. We went early and had lunch there, and stayed as late as I was allowed to by Ca. We saw the entire museum, including some shamans' relics in the West Coast Indian section of the museum. I asked L. [my father], who was wheeling my chair, to let me stay and look at those shamans' relics for a long time. While I sat and examined every relic carefully, I suddenly realized they were all telling me something important. I felt that someone was speaking to me, saying to me that I should become a shaman. I believe that I was actually hearing these words: "When a shaman becomes a real healer, he heals the earth." That is the realization I had whether it was actually in words or not. I had been so worried about the actual earth. At school we often talked about saving the planet by recycling newspapers to save trees, by recycling soup cans to save minerals, and by recycling certain types of air to save the ozone layer. (Now I know we were talking about flourocarbons from "aerosol" cans.)

Then my father said, "Shamans were great healers T., and when they journeyed to the spirit world they discovered their animal spirits who gave them their special powers." I wondered how my father knew all this about shamans. Then he said, "When I was at university I studied about the native people in Manitoba. I was very interested in how shamans healed their people."
When I finished gazing at the shamans' relics I asked to be taken to the mask section, but my frustration was so loud with all the noise people were making that I shouted until Ca. told me I needed a stretch. Those masks were all so beautiful. Some of them obviously were worn by shamans but some were replicas I think.

When I was ready to go home I realized that I had already encountered a special idea in that museum. My father had actually been hiding knowledge from me a long time and I needed to understand more about shamanism. This was the start of a type of research that I am still actively engaged in independently. My father still hides knowledge but I am systematically questioning him until he reveals everything he knows. But so far I really am finding that he keeps learning new things almost as fast as I find out his present knowledge. I will some day overtake him in knowledge because my memory is better than his; but he will still continue to astonish me because many of the adults I meet already know less than I do and don't seem to learn very easily.

**Interpretation**

*T.'s words.* When T. volunteered to interpret his narrative, he wrote the following paragraph, the last one he dictated to me specially for the study:

When the shamans' relics spoke to me in the Royal Victoria Museum I was not at all startled. I heard an interesting voice say something afterwards also. A small voice inside me said, "You will actually be a great shaman in your lifetime." That was my own voice speaking within me, recognizing my attraction to those shamans' relics. I understood already that I was meant to be a poet, by which I mean someone capable of saying the right words to describe spiritual reality, but I had no understanding of shamanism as yet. When L. told me shamans were real healers, I became ecstatic to realize that I could take on the role of healing myself. If I had not
understood shamanism I could not have healed myself of pneumonia
and have survived [three and a half years] to heal the earth, which is
the mission of all children today.

*Theme one: Mercury in fall* (*communication--moral level*).

"My father still hides knowledge but I am systematically questioning him
until he reveals everything he knows."

Toward the end of his final novel, *Jude the Obscure*, Thomas Hardy
presents one of the most terrible scenes in modern fiction: Unable to
envision a decent future for himself or his family, Little Father Time, one
of Jude's three children, kills his two siblings and himself. Jude explains:

"The doctor says such boys are springing up amongst us--boys of a
sort unknown to the last generation--the outcome of new views of
life. They seem to see all of its terrors before they have the staying
power to resist them. He says it is the beginning of a universal wish

Jude's wife blames herself:

"I talked to the child as one should only talk to people of mature age.
I said the world was against us, that it was better to be out of life
than in it at this price, and he took it literally. And I told him I was
going to have another child." (p. 413).

And why did she speak to him in this way?

"It was that I wanted to be truthful. I couldn't bear deceiving him as
to the facts of life. And yet I wasn't truthful, for with a false
delicacy I told him too obscurely. . . . Why didn't I tell him pleasant
truths instead of half realities?" (p. 413-414).
Rudolf Steiner, a contemporary of Hardy, warned against premature abstraction. Children, he thought, should not be asked to deal with the hardened abstract facts of a materialist science. Hence, in the Waldorf schools instead of being told, for instance, that a squirrel is one of a taxonomic list of rodents, young children hear stories of the squirrel that speak of its habits specific to the current season of the year. Pictures from the stories do not dress the squirrel in human clothing, nor are they drawn with firm outline. Children are neither coerced nor encouraged to turn quickly to print as the valorized source of information ("the letter killeth"). They remain listeners and imitators till after the age of seven, when they become creatures of feeling. Hearing Aesop's fables in the second grade, they do not ponder the moral lessons, for abstract conclusions concerning the "facts of life" will foreclose on their lives of feeling. Progressing, as they mature, toward dealing with "hard realities," the children do not complete the transition to abstract thinking until the age of fourteen, by which time they understand that hard realities may be somewhat less durable now than they were, when encountered historically as "new views of life" in Hardy's nineteenth century.

In recent years, Elkind (1989) has recited the woes of a culture that creates the premature hardening of "the hurried child." There has been a
discomforting tendency in both public and private schools to draw abstract content down into the primary grades and, by imposing acceptable adult forms of knowledge, to militate against the child's wish to experiment with magical thinking or "pseudoconcepts" (Vygotsky, cited in Wertsch and Stone, 1985, p. 170). Often the dilemma of the appropriate curricular choice is ruled outside of the teacher's purview, and the child's individual development is crushed in the general press of correction. Curricular decisions are made by distant committees; textbooks are shaped by political decree and distributed for profit (Apple, 1988). The correctness of the child's concepts is measured with standardized tests, marketed by publishers. Intellectual development is arrayed along a one-dimensional graph of numerical scores (Gardner, 1993, p.5). The success of a public school graduation program is measured by the number of dollars in scholarship money earned by the graduating students. I am reminded of Heidegger's critique of the "mathematical project" and its preoccupation with "numerical measurement [which] betray[s] a notable accord with economics, with the calculation of success" (1993c, pp. 293-294).

Very young children sit helplessly for thousands of hours electronically ingesting the values and stereotypes of a commercial
culture that foresees no end to progress measured in rising numbers (Pearce, 1992), while television news reporters cry forth a world where there is no place that is safe and homelike. Predatory adults who abduct, rape, and murder children are now featured on the news more frequently than laureates or politicians. Incurable diseases spread from continent to continent. The very earth itself, the "great mother" of myth, is threatened by pollution, depletion, and explosion. These "facts" are vicariously experienced by children in their homes, either directly from television or indirectly through television's influence upon their parents' attitudes and actions. In public schools, many of these facts are brought to younger and younger children through well-meaning programs designed to "streetproof" the children, to keep them safe from sexual tampering, or to make them environmentally aware. Well-meaning as these programs may be, they are further examples of the adult will to "correct" the children and to hurry them into an adult mold.

Hardy's gruesome scene suggests a number of dangers inherent in the enterprise of teaching the young. There is the danger of "literalness"--that the authority of adult speech will transmit a reification that is not intended--especially if the adult conveys a momentary emotional attitude which the child generalizes and personalizes, as in the passage from Jude
*the Obscure*. What is fleeting for the adult becomes factual for the child.

The second danger is "telling too obscurely," wherein the child will make fearful inferences or will leap to unjustified conclusions, because the adult leaves gaps in the communication or speaks exclusively in adult terms. The danger of "half realities" is similar, but it involves the willful suppression of information that could be useful or interesting, if communicated directly to the child's mode of understanding.

The third danger, the danger of "pleasant truths," dishonors the child by refusing to address his or her true curiosity, at least to the extent that it remains curious and seeks satisfaction.

Fourthly, there is the temptation for the adult to correct the child, to bring the child into alignment with a particular religious, scientific, economic, or cultural view, which has pre-scribed the proper path of childhood.

None of the above dangers can be completely avoided in adult dominated discourse. Regardless of the doctrine of child development that may be motivating the adult, and no matter how enlightened the adult may be concerning the inner world of the child, if the adult's discourse is dominated by the tendency to import ready-made conclusions, then the child's part in the dialogue encounters a foreclosing influence.
It is natural that a young child should exhibit strong interest in the activities of the parents. I am not surprised that T. displayed an early interest in poetry. I never choose to hide Shakespeare from him because I assumed that his first response would be to the "sound" qualities of the verse, but I did not presume that, at the age of nine, he would turn to me with a request to understand the source and meaning of the "marriage of true minds" (Sonnet 116).

Certainly, M. and I wanted to protect T. against the dangers of premature intellectuality. I did not purposefully launch a campaign to have him investigate Renaissance Neoplatonism. Nor when I elected to present him with aspects of the biography of Stephen Hawking, hoping to supply him with a role-model for courageous tenacity, did I expect to enkindle an interest in quantum physics and modern cosmology. Expecting that T.'s too much consciousness might expose him to danger, we attempted to maintain a mythic and biographical approach to T.'s investigations. Ca. too was aware of T.'s strong need for meaning, his desire to "know everything," and his wish to compare one thing with another and to choose allegiance to the things that he believed were "right" and "true"; but she shared our quandary as to what was appropriate mental fodder for this extremely inquisitive child. During T.'s grade two
year, we began to allow him to explore documentary television. We encouraged him to ask clarifying questions and to propose his own topics for further investigation. His favorite documentaries have been about myth and legend, music, history, art, ecology, and cosmology. His particular favorite series have been Joseph Campbell's *The Power of Myth* and James Burke's *Connections 1* and *Connections 2*.

We resolved to trust his instincts, and we found that his mind instinctively recoiled from formulations for which he was not ready. For instance, at the age of eight he found the "big bang theory" extremely painful to contemplate, and he elected to table it until a time when he felt better equipped to think about a universe where a God was not included as a necessary final cause. Then, for a year, he studied creation myths to understand how various peoples had imagined the beginnings of the universe. Also, he rejected certain ecological programs, which were overtly pessimistic about the future of the earth.

After determining to trust T.'s instincts, we put aside all expectations concerning the path of T.'s intellectual development, except the expectation of ongoing dialogue. We resolved to allow T. to decide when his curiosity was satisfied or, if he happened to be dealing with content that he found disagreeable, when our reassurances were effective.
Our dialogue allowed us to propose that certain information or attitudes might not be appropriate for T. and allowed T. to make decisions that honored both his past experience and his future hopes.

When I spoke to T. in the provincial museum about shamanism, I did so having recognized his rapt expression, as he sat in front of the shamans' relics. Admittedly, I circumscribed the information that I conveyed to him. I thought that his avenue to knowledge about shamanism would be the idea of "healing," as he had extensive personal experience with a variety of healers. I also purchased a children's novel, which purported to describe a young west coast native boy's induction into shamanism. I began to read it to him, but T. rejected it forcibly before we were half way through. He told me that the author had not got it right. It was while T. and I discussed his dissatisfaction with the novel that I revealed the cosmic aspects of the shaman's vocation: conversations with animal spirits; spirit travel to the planetary and starry realms; soul retrieval; quests in the spirit world for special knowledge; direct meetings with "the mother of all living." His response to these communications was immediate and powerful. He declared to me that he was a shaman, that he would heal himself, that he would heal his people, and that he would heal the earth.
T. wrote the following "Father's Day Allegory" soon after he turned nine. It was facilitated by Ca.

Once upon at time there lived a shaman. He was young, inexperienced and frightened. The people of his village needed a healer, but the shaman was unsure of his abilities. He decided to journey to a neighbouring village to seek the help of an older and wiser shaman.

The wise shaman showed the youth all of the secret ways of the spirit. He helped him learn to listen to his inate [sic] intelligence and his creative mind. The young shaman discovered his inner strength and power. He learned to visualize his hopes so that they [would] become reality.

The young shaman returned to his village a wiser and more confident shaman. He was able to heal those who needed healing. He remembered the wise shaman all the days of his life.

by your loving son

T.

I still get accused of hiding knowledge from T., now that he is twelve, and I still submit to his systematic questioning, but I have come to an interesting realization: When I am in dialogue with T., we often achieve a level of knowledge together that I might never have reached alone.

Theme two: Jupiter in dignity (observation--anagogic level). T. tells me that when I visit him at Ca.'s or when I answer his call when he is at home, he observes me first before communicating with me--to determine whether I will be receptive to his plans. For several years,
his head control has been good enough that, as I hold him across my knees, I can watch him turn towards me and scan my face. He tells me that he learned from me to read facial expressions and body language, and he is able to read how tired, or worried, or tense I am from a glance at my face. If I am tired, he tries to relax me. If I am worried, he tries to reassure me. If I am tense, he teases me until I giggle; then he gives me an $RSW$ on his spelling board—"really so witty," and he questions me until I reveal the substance of my concern. He counsels me toward the transmutation of that base substance into something lighter and swifter, and then my mind can be receptive to his latest plans.

This form of dialogic intimacy is a reflection of the practices that M., Ca., and I have used with T. to help him to pinpoint and redefine what may be bothering him, whether it be physical or emotional; but it is not an exact mirror image of our practices. With T. there is always transformation. Whatever T. returns in kind, he has remade. He enters "the substance of my concern," and he speaks with his own presence from that place, making his own real observations and making his own real decisions to rework my concerns.

His physical helplessness has made him dependent, but his dependency has not made him selfish. In fact, it is as if, through the
filter of his own helplessness, he discerns the essential vulnerability of all that is human.

I told him that I intended to write about his spirituality. I thought, "What more fitting than from a lofty height to present an overview of the aspects of T.'s interest in the spiritual, and to describe how, from the secure home of his spirituality, his interests journey further and further into questions of science, art, poetics, mathematics, ecology, religion, and society."

T. responded that he recognized the connections that I was making, and he recognized the "family resemblances" between the planet Jupiter, the higher "viewpoint," and his own spirituality; he even liked the nice resonance between the words "overview" and "observation." But he reminded me that observations made within the context of a critique (such as our thesis) of the mathematical/technological/materialistic assessment of a human being must be grounded in what the human being actually does. If I wanted to describe his spirituality, I should observe and describe "how a boy cares for others," because that is where real spirituality is to be observed. "It is obvious, L."

I wonder if T. will take me to task for suggesting that he has internalized and transformed the interest in "how shamans healed their
people," which I had told him I had felt as a young man in the 1960s.
Chapter Ten: T. And "The Soldier" (Capricorn)

The Narrative

We were overprotective of T. for the year following his pneumonia. He complains that we still are. Near the end of his grade three year, he wrote an essay about festivals (see Appendix W), which proved to me that he understood the essay form—how it introduced a topic and pursued an exposition of related subtopics. With my help, he did most of the research and wrote the essay in the sunroom of Ca.'s house in a single day. Compared with his later essays, it contained little original thought, but it was full of T.isms, including a small hymn of praise to the salmon as the fish of choice for Ukrainian Christmas Eve, the feast of the Epiphany. It was an essay that signaled T.'s return to school after his second hospitalization for respiratory difficulties that year (see Appendix X).

So much work on a single day exhausted him. At Ca.'s insistence, we began a campaign of limiting T.'s actual writing time to the period of his ability to sit in the upright position and move his right arm without his back muscles spasming: This was an hour, or an hour and a half, at most.
We thought that limiting his work time would keep his immunities high. Because of this limit, T. began to compose his formal writing in advance and to hold it in his memory. He did not want to waste time on false starts and incomplete thoughts.

In this way, during the winter when he was nine years old, he composed an essay which interpreted several sonnets of Shakespeare (see Appendix Y). Our work on the project, at home and at Ca.'s, covered a time span of over a month, which was broken into two segments, before and after Christmas. T. celebrates Christmas with more zeal than anyone in the world I think, and so he does not work at Christmas time. At Ca.'s house and at home, he wrote sitting on my knee at the dining-room table.

For years, ever since he was a baby, I had recited to him the three or four sonnets of Shakespeare that I have stored in my memory, at first because speaking to him rhythmically (and in the Shakespearean voice that he loved) distracted him from intestinal pain, and later because he requested them, especially at bedtime. T. and I had read many more of Shakespeare's sonnets together. T. and Ca. had read many of them together also. In addition, they had perused an historical anthology of English verse to observe what uses had been made of the sonnet form by other poets in the English tradition. The sonnet that had amused them most was "The
Soldier," by Rupert Brooke.

T. decided, by way of contrast with the Neoplatonic perfection of his Shakespearean examples, to include a critique of the Brooke sonnet, as the last item in his essay. I include the entire paragraph:

This poem is about a soldier who dies at Skyros in the middle of the first world war who has really a funny attitude about England. He seems to feel that England is the greatest spot on earth. He says, "There is some corner of a foreign field that is forever England," meaning that because he is buried there a little piece of England will always remain there. Likely he doesn't believe that his body will decompose and enter into the dirt like every other body. He believes also that his dust is really special because he was raised in England. He thinks his English upbringing was a bit like being in Eden, "washed by English rivers and blessed by suns of home . . . hearts at piece under an English heaven." In contrast to this is William Blake's belief that England was a dirty, spiritually deserted place where a new Jerusalem needed to be built, not an Eden. The poet actually thinks his heartbeat was a pulse in God's mind but that is ridiculous because everybody is a bit of God's mind not just an English soldier. The thing I can't understand is how a gullible public could think it was a good poem when it was so badly written. The only excuse for this type of poem is patriotism and that is not a poetic criterion for judgement.

T.'s teachers at his new school, a non-coercive alternate school (modeled on the Sudbury Valley School in Massachusetts and similar to Summerhill in its outlook on education) where the students are allowed to choose an independent course of learning, responded favorably to his "Neoplatonic" interpretations of Shakespeare. I had read to him long excerpts from books by John Vyvyan (1960, 1961), also passages from
Plato's *The Phaedrus* and Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, when he had wanted to know more about Renaissance Neoplatonism. I taped some passages on audio cassettes, to which he listened several times. His English teacher responded favorably with five pages of handwritten comments; the head teacher wrote three-quarters of a page. However, they both took exception to his view of the Brooke poem.

The head teacher wrote: "Although I do not like the sentiments in many of Rupert Brooke's works, I am not as critical of "The Soldier" as you are. I feel that your statement, 'It is so badly written,' is not substantiated. I'd enjoy discussing this with you." T.'s English teacher's statement was rather more detailed:

I think you are too hard on this poem. You don't like the sentiments expressed in it, but disliking the ideas in the poem or being repelled by it's emotional content is not the same as showing that it is badly written.

To me, a terrible feeling of homesickness of a young soldier trying to overcome his fear of death comes across quite powerfully in this poem. He feels (I think) that the fact that he may die physically separated from all he knows and loves doesn't mean that he is spiritually separated. He *is* what he has loved--the beautiful countryside, the dear friends, that formed him as he grew up--and in some sense he will not be spiritually separated from them in death. I think as good a case for a neo-platonist vision of reality could be made for this poem as for the Shakespearean ones you discuss--if by neo-platonism we understand the idea that the spirit is real in a deeper sense than transient physical beauty and pleasure.

I think there is more to this poem than a narrow, jingoistic patriotism. Brooke doesn't say his heartbeat is a pulse in God's
mind, but his heart, "all evil shed away," which I take to mean his deepest loving feelings for the best that has formed him, is such a pulse. He doesn't say that only the feelings of the English are "pulse in the eternal mind."

Anyway, T., even though I don't agree with all your interpretations I found them thought-provoking, and I thoroughly enjoyed reading them. You have certainly enriched my understanding of Shakespeare's sonnets--and maybe helped me enjoy "The Soldier" more, too, in trying to put into words for you why I like the poem.

T. was perplexed. He had finally found a good school where a boy was allowed to write about Shakespeare, and now he was being told he was bad for rejecting a patriotic English sonnet. He was angry. He felt misunderstood. Ca. spoke to him about the nature of opinion, and how everyone has the right to a personal opinion about the worth of a poem. This did not satisfy him. He believed that his interpretation was true. After much protest and self-clarification, he decided that he had to explain himself. He shot off this response in a single sitting:

E., I want to really explain particularly why I think "The Soldier" is a badly written poem. First of all, E., there is a need to understand that a stylistic analysis is different from a spiritual analysis of a poem. I think that stylistically a poem cannot however be better than the spiritual equivalent. If a poem is perfect stylistically it cannot be imperfect spiritually. E., the poem "The Soldier" is sounding like a good poem stylistically until we realize that it is not equal stylistically to the spiritual equivalent. Now E., in my paragraph I am pointing out that the symbolic invocation of Eden is too huge a spiritual topic to be contained by the trivial day to day activities of the English middle class. So if the poem is nice stylistically, it really is inconsistent to say these things in Edenic terms. "Hearts at peace under an English heaven" is offensive to me, E., because that really says that Eden is only English and that to me
is being too patriotic because that is spiritually unrealistic. Now, an important thing to remember is that a spiritual visualization is needed to interpret a poem in spiritual terms. This visualization must be consistent with the stylistic expression if the poem is good.

After writing this, however, he felt guilty. He was afraid that his teacher, whom he liked very much, would think that he was a bad boy. I assured him that the teachers at T.'s new school would value his right to a divergent opinion. The school could not function non-coercively if such individual rights were not valued. Ca. asked him if he would like her to go to school and facilitate for him, so that he could discuss the matter with his teachers. He agreed that he needed to do that. The dialogue that followed between T. and his teachers was very reassuring. T. and his teachers agreed to disagree about this often-taught sonnet.

**Interpretation**

*T.'s words.* The following words are from an audio-taped interview I did with T. in the summer of 1993, when T. was ten. I have taken the liberty of editing out some of the superfluous "reallys" and the confirmatory "that's rights" to reveal the true eloquence of T.'s statement:

Word choice is so important to me because words are really friends. Words are telling me so much about the world that I want to use words in the actual way they are telling me about the world. I will
explain more. Every word is a friend and every word shows me its personality. The meaning is not everything. The sound, the spelling, and the whole word is really my friend. That's every word I know is a good friend, so I like meeting new friends and learning how to make them give more meaning to my writing. That's really important to understand. Sounds are really important to me. That's because I love good poetry. I want to explain that choosing a word is actually--the real actual truth is I really think--faith that the right word wants to reveal its friendly nature in the sentence and in my essay with the real meanings of my ideas.

Theme one: Jupiter in detriment (observation--literal level). In a little book called Practical Training in Thought, Rudolf Steiner (1966a) advises the following six procedures for strengthening observation:
(a) repeatedly observing "something in the outer world that is accessible" to the observer, who retains and juxtaposes exact pictures of successive events thus observed (p. 9);
(b) choosing events of the present, following them in thought into the future, and subsequently reviewing thoughts to discover mistakes and to "correct our erroneous thinking" (p. 13);
(c) linking an occurrence of today to what happened yesterday by tracing an event of today to a hypothesized cause from yesterday, then finding out "what had actually occurred and so discover[ing] whether or not our thought was correct" (p. 13);
(d) willing oneself to *choose* the subject about which one wishes to think
--"something quite apart from what enmeshes one during the ordinary
course of the day" (p. 16);
(e) practising completeness of memory by imaginatively adding details to
a memory picture until the picture is complete because "through efforts to
complete memory pictures [one] is induced to observe more accurately"
(p. 18);
(f) postponing the feeling, "in thinking about some matters" (p. 19), that it
is "necessary to come to a conclusion" (p. 19) by imagining how some
matter "might be handled in two [or several] ways"(p. 19), then deciding to
stop thinking about it for a while in order to exercise "the patience to
place the various possibilities before ourselves without forming any
definite conclusions, and . . . quietly let these possibilities work
themselves out within us" (p.20).

Steiner (1966a) extols Goethe as a thinker who always "lived with
his thoughts within the things themselves" (p. 14). Goethe's thought
"moved within the necessity of things" (p. 14); his thinking "was at the
same time perception and his perception was thinking" (p. 14). Goethe had
interest in the objects of his observations, and "interest, interesse,
means to be among and in the midst of things, or to be at the center of a
thing and to stay with it" (Heidegger, 1993b, p. 371).

Steiner's observations on Goethe's thinking style bear a striking "family resemblance" to Husserl's "intentionality" (Kockelmans, 1994, p. 95). But Steiner's observations also reflect upon the role of the will in "thinking": That is to use consciousness to create a space where, out of the flux of sensory impressions, certain memory pictures may dwell, the one overlaying the other, until, in the gathering of veil after veil and in due course of time, an unveiling, unconcealment, or revealing occurs.

Memory may be a conscious seeking in the stuff of consciousness for these composite impressions— or it may be such impressions consciously composed. Steiner (1966a) says, "A reliable memory is attained . . . by accurate observation and it can also be said that in a certain roundabout way of the soul it [memory] is born as the child of exact observation ( p. 17).

The verb to observe defines "a regarding with attention" so as to see or learn something, so as to notice or bring to knowing; this is the sense of observare. But pursued further, the Latin root reveals the ob servare, which means "to keep, to save, to pay heed to (or to guard and protect)."

"Saving," said Heidegger (1993a), "does not only snatch something from danger. To save properly means to set something free into its own
essence" (p. 352).

Observations on Teeglish: A lifeworld example of literal observation. T. wanted to speak like other children. He developed a very idiosyncratic banter, a "little language," which he used when teasing and when speaking with those of us who were close to him, though features of his banter crept at times into every register of T.'s expression, particularly prior to his conscious editing of his written words. We called it Teeglish. One feature of Teeglish was a number of favorite adverbs, so, probably, likely, really, actually, exactly, which he would insert in his sentences in ever-inventive ways, testing his facilitators' abilities to keep pace with his inventions. One of his tricks with language was to use a favorite word as an adjective, at times, but most often as an adverb, for example: "So Ca., probably you are late. I waited a so long time for so Ca."

He would work subtle variations on the same modifier, based on the position of the word in the sentence, for instance: "Really get me my porridge now," could become, "Get me really a boy's porridge, right this instant," or, "T. wants a porridge really now." The humour of T.'s variations would creep up on us over a period of time, until suddenly a change in the position of a single word would cause us to laugh aloud at
the implications: "I want a real porridge and stop stalling!"

T. had a large writing vocabulary, but when he was bantering in Teeglish he had a way of wringing nuances of meaning, which were unmistakable in the immediate context, out of very basic words. The following examples will illustrate this feature: "That's a good L. now," "that good Mom," and "the good boy," meaning himself, as opposed to "bad C.," meaning his brother; also, "Probably L. is bad," "I will really say your bad," "this bad Ca.," meaning his foster mother whom he really teased, and "That's really a so good tease." In context, he could surprise and delight with a few small words.

Another feature of Teeglish was the use of set phrases such as JLMTY, "just let me tell you," WRL, "well really L.," and, after a particularly good tease, TAGO, "that's a good one," or IRSGAT, "I'm really so good at teasing." This feature arose in T.'s language between the ages of eight, when he outgrew the unicorn board with its alphabetical array and its ancillary system of "levels" and "overlays" (which included phrases for every occasion and story boards for writing), and ten, when he started using a laptop computer. During those two years, he was continually coding the first letters of set phrases into his Real Voice, a portable keyboard/voice synthesizer, which he used at school and at home. He
continued to invent set phrases and to use them in his conversation after moving on to more sophisticated speech practices. The Real Voice gave T. a distinctive voice, but it was too slow to allow T. the true equality he desired in real conversations.

T. was capable of referring to himself as "I," "T.," "a boy," or sometimes, when really teasing, an HGB, or "handicapped genius boy." In later years he usually referred to me as "L.," but sometimes as "Dad," if he wanted to emphasize his relationship to me as "son." Sometimes he referred to me as "father," when he thought I was getting a bit too pompous, like the father swan in E. B. White's *The Trumpet of the Swan*.

By the age of eight, but with increasing sophistication as the years went by, T. could banter in Teeglish by indicating only the first letters of his words. Prior to that, he had to spell every word and, as his part in a conversation was then very slow, people's attentions would wander from T.'s statements. Then there was a transition period, during which he would allow his facilitators to guess a word after the first two or three letters. However, long after he had allowed K. and Ca. to guess his words from the first letters alone, he continued to spell every word for me, both because I had learned to facilitate later and because I was "really so good at second guessing." After T. finally started to allow me to interpret his
speeches by using only the first letters of his words, I could never make any presumptions about the sequence of the letters, unless they represented set phrases that T. often used; in every other case he varied his word choice, varied his sequence of words, and varied his use of the adverbial and adjectival forms of his favorite words. Hence his frequent interjection of the letters TR, "That's right," while I was facilitating. He needed me to remain alert. There was never a time when he would allow me simply to say his words, without real concentration. Paradoxically, as I had learned from observing T., the more effortless the concentration, the better the product.

I observed the development of Teeglish over a period of six and one-half years (right in the midst of things like Goethe) using the six methods of improving observation described by Rudolf Steiner (1966a). Dwelling in T.'s words, I got very good at saying the right word at the right moment as it was indicated by T. In the course of time, we developed the rhythm and fluency that gave T. a language for teasing, speech-making, and really enjoying the celebration of T.'s life.

Eventually, T. and I discovered that we could talk silently together. When we attended live performances of Shakespeare's plays, T. would sit on my knee and sometimes use his board to make comments to me about the
production. I found that I could understand his silent messages quite well but, because I could not speak aloud, I would move his arm to spell my answers to his questions or to ask him to confirm his messages. Later, we discovered that he could often correctly interpret the messages that I would send back to him, when I used only the first letters of words. Thus, we developed a method of silent talk that we could use to converse without a sound. T. usually spoke a variety of Teeglish during our silent talk, but I was strictly forbidden to imitate his Teeglish expressions. Though, in our preferred method of dialogue, I continued to speak both T.'s words and my own words aloud, we could sometimes spend as much as an hour together conversing without vocalization. Silent talk proved a very convenient mode of conversation whenever we watched "intellectual" programs on television together, because T. could watch a program and talk silently at the same time. He was a touch typer.

There was a large number of expressions that T. was fond of using, and varying, in his conversations with me. What follows is a partial list: *Well really, I will really say to you, Exactly really true, That's yes, That's really a true statement, Get away with that (idea), I want you to realize, And that's final, I want explanation, I want apology, Forget about that, Is there a good thought in your mind about (that)?, That is the point, Stop*
that, You are really teasing now, No saying that, It is obvious, What really is the point, And so you are teased, Question L?, A bit right and a bit wrong, That is the right answer, Probably L. is late, L. is stalling, L. is obsessed, Could L. be any sillier?, I knew it, Really a funny L. today, The real actual truth is, I will really tell about that, Exactly really true, This is important, You will be amazed, L. I want real silent talk . . ."

Two days before the end of his life T. listed his reasons for enjoying Teeglish expressions:

I attempt to say things in simple ways so that anyone could understand a boy. It gives me a chance to be playful with language. It gives a good feeling to L. about T.'s wit. It is a challenge to a boy to say complex thoughts in simple language. Teasing L. is the right answer.

Theme two: Moon in fall (growth--moral level). Italized passages that occur hereinafter represent materials that I have recalled from memory. Everything that appears in the italicized portions has been gathered from conversations that occurred between T. and me, prior to his sudden and unexpected death on Saturday, May 27, 1995, at 2:25 p.m. I have attempted to reconstruct T.'s thoughts, mainly from the constant conversations that took place between us during the last twelve months of his life; in doing so, I have sought to maintain the flavour of his
conversational style, including some of his "so good Teeglish expressions," and his habit of returning several times to the same topic to add the new dimensions of meaning, which had occurred to him between conversations. The words in the italicized passages may not be T.'s exact words, but they reveal the substance of our conversations. Neither the quality of insight nor the level of knowledge that T. displayed, as we engaged in our intertextual and recursive dialogue, during the last months of his life, is exaggerated in these passages.

T. might have said: *When I came to my new school I was expecting to be treated in the same way I was treated at my old school. I really thought I would still be restricted in my choice of good essay topics, so when I got there I decided not to write a good essay for a while. I got an assignment to research the life of a historical figure so I wrote a biographical sketch of Copernicus to test my teachers for the type of prejudice against good essay topics I had encountered at my old school. I wanted to be able to say some of my own thoughts in that biographical sketch. My teachers seemed to be able to accept my sketch without saying that I was bad.*

*Soon after the Copernicus essay, I very slowly wrote a number*
of paragraphs about Shakespeare's Neoplatonic view of love. I was thinking that my new teachers would really be wondering how a boy my age could compose such advanced thoughts in such simple language. So I was testing them again, but I worried the whole time that they would really question my ability to write about Shakespeare in this way. I was nervous about so many things in my first year at my new school.

When E. responded to my critique of "The Soldier," I thought I had discovered a bad thing. I thought E. was restricting my ability to say good things about sonnets, that she was saying I was a bad student for telling the truth about a favorite sonnet of hers. When L. and Ca. explained to me that E. was expressing an opinion and that I was expressing an opinion also, I got upset because I was really spiritually insightful, and I didn't believe that my opinion was wrong. So I wrote back to E. to tell her my method of interpretation, and she really laughed at my letter, I bet, because a nine year old boy was so positive that he was telling the absolute truth. She apologized for making me think that she was angry, and she told me that my opinion was important to her. She told me good things about her opinion being spiritual also. She gave me a feeling of self-
esteem. I realized then that I was in a very different type of school. I thought, "When I grow up, I will really try to be like E. and listen to students and not tell them what to think."

The growth that took place in T.'s expectations of what a school could be for him was enormous. He tested his teachers the way he tested everyone. He asked them his fundamental question: "Will you accept me as I really am?" The more audacious qualities of his desire to know everything and his determination to order everything into a whole that bore the meaning of truth for him were honored in his agreement with his teachers to disagree about the Brooke sonnet. T. was given licence to explore his own truth in ways that did not foreclose on his individual future. If T.'s more audacious qualities could be honored, then his other qualities would be respected. His qualities of fairness, loyalty, humor, gentleness, inquisitiveness, impishness, and love for others emerged strongly in the community atmosphere of the school.

Theme three: Mars in exaltation (scientific/technological assessment--allegorical level). T. might have said: When I took my essay on Shakespeare's Sonnets to the teachers
at my new school, I felt nervous about the way they would read it. I thought they would think I had got my father to write some parts of the essay, because my father knows a lot about Shakespeare. Sometimes people at my old school had accused me of getting my helpers to do my schoolwork. Some children like to sit and watch their parents do their homework for them, but I am a boy who really thinks writing is fun.

When E. read my first paragraph, she understood that I had written the paragraph myself because I sounded so sincere. She realized that any child would sound exactly the way I did, if the child had the ability to read Shakespeare and to understand his words. She read my sonnet paragraphs and realized that I was saying things in a simple, direct way. She realized that I understood Shakespeare in a simple, direct way also. She gave me the benefit of the doubt by saying to herself, "Why should I think that he is bad, when it seems so good to accept that he is really saying these things himself?" That type of trust is the first step toward real dialogue with a student. When my father teaches English, he allows his students the benefit of the doubt by not denying them the ability to say the wrong thing. (I always tease him about accepting wrong
answers, every year when I visit his grade twelve class.) So his students get a chance to express their own thoughts, instead of having them foreclosed upon.

E. expressed her opinion without saying that I was wrong to have an opinion of my own. She thought that my opinion was wrong, but she never said I had no right to be wrong, if I chose to be. When I got a bit upset reading E.'s response to my paragraph on "The Soldier," L. and Ca. said to me, "T., you should realize that E. would probably agree with you, if she understood your reasoning a bit better." Then I wrote a response to her response. Then we talked, and we became very friendly about an agreement to disagree that we agreed upon.

I must say that receiving advanced work from a student often makes a teacher mistrustful. The first effort of the teacher is to compare the new work to the profile of the student that the teacher has constructed, or received. Flexibility of assessment may depend upon the richness of the existing student profile. Some teachers stabilize a student profile early on, according to a letter grade. Other teachers find every new piece of student work a fresh opportunity to reassess the profile of the student,
to discern what growth may have occurred in response to recent dialogue, to discern how the words that have passed between teacher and student may have rooted or blossomed in the mind of the student. T. was fortunate that the teachers at his new school accepted his words and trusted him to deal in his own way with their honest responses.

T.'s new school recognized him and permitted him to challenge himself. He had declared himself to be a creative, intelligent boy with broad interests and a great sensitivity. M. and Ca. and I had substantiated his claims, out of our own experiences of T. All four of us had been treated with dignity. There was never a concealed snicker and never a demand for regulated proof that T. was, in fact, the person he claimed to be. T.'s new teachers were non-coercive. They did not coerce T. into the preconceived profile of a handicapped child, or of a nine year old child, or even of a gifted child. They permitted him to manifest as T., and they responded to his manifestation generously, from themselves. As a result, he was able to unveil himself progressively, in ways that will be of permanent value. The essays for which he gained audience at his new school can be read (and reread) profitably (see Appendixes P, Q V, and X). They provide a rich experience of the spirit of the boy who wrote them.
Theme four: Saturn in dignity (memory--anagogic level). T. was very moved by lines from Shakespeare's Sonnet 27:

Weary with toil, I haste me to bed,  
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired,  
But then begins a journey in my head  
To work my mind when body's work's expired;  
For then my thoughts, from far where I abide,  
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,  
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,  
Looking on darkness which the blind do see;  
Save that my soul's imaginary sight  
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,  
Which like a jewel hung in ghastly night,  
Makes black night beauteous and her old face new.

T.'s teachers were moved by T.'s commentary on Sonnet 27:

When I am feeling lonely because my mother is far away I really think about her when I am supposed to be sleeping. The reason I do not sleep is because I try to contact my mother telepathically and tell her how much I miss her and how much I love her. A weary body is not able to sleep when an active mind is actually contacting a loved one. Shakespeare really believed this because he believed Plato's assertion that spirits can commune with each other at a distance in the love relationship. The reason I say this is that Shakespeare is seeing the shadow of his beloved while he is not able to sleep. The beloved's appearance makes the blackness of night disappear and beauty shine all around. When I see my mother's image all golden in the light I realize what Shakespeare is talking about and the night is beauteous. As Shakespeare's reader I can identify with the feelings he communicates through his experience of love.

T. might have said: When I wrote this paragraph about my Mom and the way I stayed awake to think of her at night, I was only nine years old. A nine year old boy loves his Mom in a special way. She
represents to him all the good things in the world. His father is not as important to him as his mother is, because his father is always there in his thoughts, but his mother is deep in his feelings. My father always helped me say nice things about my mother, but he never let me cuddle her enough. I am teasing a bit about that, but I always tease my father anyway, because that is our relationship.

With my mother everything was different. She was so beautiful to me and so good to everyone around her that she seemed like an angel. When I wrote about her in this paragraph for school, I told the world a secret about myself. I said that I tried to contact my mother telepathically, but what I was really doing was sending silent messages of love to her. I would imagine her face shining with an inner light, and then I would remember how she loved me. I learned to love my foster mother also, but I wanted to tell my Mom that she was my special Platonic love, so that she would realize that I was always with her, even when I slept at Ca.'s. I said what I was really thinking in that paragraph, and my teachers responded by understanding that I was the writer of those words. My father writes a really silly type of prose, full of obscurities and bad puns, but my writing is simple and direct. My teachers never doubted for a
moment that I wrote that paragraph, because it communicated my own special experience.

As Shakespeare's reader, T. could identify with the love described in Shakespeare's words. T. had experienced love. We had attempted, all of his life, to surround him with love. When T. was six years and two months old, and M. and I gave him into Ca.'s weekday care, we were extremely weary. I had fought so hard to honor his spirit and to stimulate his mind, and M. had fought so hard for his physical safety and his emotional well-being, that we needed someone we could trust to take on part of the task --at least some of the appointments, at least much of the lifting and the changing and the feeding. Fortunately, in Ca., T. attached himself to a person who was willing to share completely in his life. Ca. quickly learned from T.'s Mom about his diet and his daily rhythms. From me, she learned about his favorite things to listen to, and how to include him auditorially in his environment. Her's was a complete loving acceptance of T., at his most astonishing and at his most dependent. She accepted his joy, and she accepted his pain. Between Ca. and myself, we spent hundreds of hours counselling T. about how to reconcile his different loves for the two women in his life--his mother and his foster mother. It was I who
suggested that T. visualize his mother's face and bathe it in a golden light, because this was the same advice that I had given T.'s Mom when he was still an infant--hoping that I would calm some of her distress over his failure to progress physically. "See him as fair and good and beautiful, and bathe him in a golden light," I had said to her.

By the age of nine, T. had received much love and, therefore, he knew how to give love. By the age of nine that fragile, vulnerable boy could find a place of deep security within himself and speak from it with great trust and courage. He could respond to Shakespeare and Platonic love out of personal experience of "love at a distance." His complete trust that Ca. and M. and I would accept and understand his words gave him the courage to reveal his true nature to his teachers and, subsequently, to "the rest of the world."
The Narrative

T. was very strict with L. when T. wrote his Camelot essay (see Appendix P). He was dissatisfied that people should wonder whether L. was changing his words. L. must set down exactly T.'s words, and L. must not try to influence the direction of the writing with leading questions or with suggestions for improvement. That would be editing. And T. would be the editor of his own essay. That was final.

T. would not reveal the overall plan of the essay, in case L. would try to debate the method or direct the design. L. was sneaky; he was a subtle teacher, and he had ways of deleting a "really" or an "actually" that T. might want in a sentence. There would be no editing until T. had finished his rough draft!

The essay unfolded mysteriously, a paragraph at a time, after school hours--two, sometimes three, days a week--at Ca.'s dining table. T. would sit on L.'s lap in the large, cool room, an overprotective blanket on his knees, a single lightbulb glowing in an antiquated swag lamp, overhead.
T. instituted a rule that Ca. should bring L. coffee and a snack, so that L. could concentrate. This was important. Teased about stalling, teased about eating too fast, teased about eating too much, L. was finally allowed to consume his snack. Then T. would begin, "Now L. concentrate. This is the first sentence." And he would dictate.

Mostly from the first letters, a word at a time, I would say the complete sentence aloud. He would stop me immediately if I said an incorrect word, and he would spell the correct word. I would scribble the sentence in pencil in T.'s notebook. If he suspected that I was making a copying error, he would make me read the sentence back, accept a scolding, and make a correction.

As the essay gained length, Ca. would listen to me read the entire piece aloud, before T. would add a new paragraph. At the end of each writing session, T. would request again that I read the entire work aloud. "T.," Ca. would say, "L. understands you, and probably I can see what you're getting at, but maybe you should explain a bit more about how you are making these connections. Explain a bit more of your logic T." This would animate him. I would feel the indignation in his body and his arm, a general tensing as if he would leap up and shout, "Ca. this is my essay! Really attempting to edit a boy's words is bad!"
The day he wrote the last paragraph, he asked me to read the entire piece aloud to him. "L.," he said, "type this onto the laptop from your school, and no thinking that you are making any changes. Then L., I am editing this essay."

T. did a fine job of editing. Sitting on my lap in front of the computer screen, he watched the words as I read them aloud. He removed many of the curious T.-isms, rewrote some unclear or tortured sentences, and occasionally inserted a bridging or a clarifying passage. He managed to remove most of bad L.'s typos, but he declared that he was not to blame when M. discovered two misspellings in the first paragraph of the good copy.

Ca. continued to advise him that he had not let the reader in on his reasoning processes. It was then that he stated that his true audience for this essay was L., and that this essay should prove to a critical L., once and for all, that T. was intelligent, and that was final.

*Interpretation*

*T.'s words.* The following passage comes, once again, from the interview with T. that I audio-taped in the summer of 1993, about two
months after the completion of his Camelot essay, when he was ten years old. This time I have transcribed every word to illustrate T.'s habits, when speaking excitedly, of repeating his favorite modifiers (really, actually) and verifying his words (That's right, really true) as I said them aloud.

So L. is still being consulted about really things I need to know ahead of the writing, the real writing. That's right. How am I ever going to be a really independent writer, if people think L. is really saying the words that I choose? That's wrong. So he is really helping me understand about stuctural things, really true, and about the real actual things I need to work on to be a better writer, but I'm not allowing any interference in the real actual composition process. That's really an important thing to realize. [Aside]: Really you are helping me become a better writer between compositions and not while I am composing them. The real actual truth is I want really to say that L. is helping me learn to edit by letting me actually help edit his essays for university. He let me help him edit a fairly good essay recently and that really actually helped me see how L. makes word choices and how he really changes the order of words to really make the sentence more vibrant, that's right, vibrant and effective, that's right. So L. is really showing that to me, and now that we are editing on the laptop, and I am able to really actually imitate L.'s editing process that is really good, learning to edit better. . . . L.'s faults are really telling me good things when I observe him editing.

Theme One: Sun in fall (not foreclosing--moral level).

T. might have said: When I wrote my essay about Camelot, I really had to concentrate. There was a problem in my life then, which I had to solve. My father tried to "teach" me all the time. He still thought
he was a better writer than I was. So I had to prove to him that
every word I chose for the Camelot essay was exactly my own
choice. So L. needed discipline. I knew that he concentrated better
if he was not feeling hungry, so I always got Ca. to give him coffee
and a snack, and I always teased him about snacking too much and
helping T. write too little. That was my way of making him giggle
and getting him into a good mood.

The concentration I had to exert caused me to tense up a bit.
The result was that Ca. always watched me to see if my back was
spasming. That meant I had so little time to actually sit on L.'s knee
that it gave me only about an hour of real writing time. I needed to
write a whole paragraph every time L. visited, but he thought he
should still try to teach me how to choose the best synonyms, the
way I used to let him when I was six years old and still learning
about writing. I had to show him that he was wrong about that.

Well really, a boy at ten years of age is not still a child who
needs to have his language corrected. I was so determined to prove
to L. that I was independently intelligent that I wrote the Camelot
essay in a new way. I took several visualizations that I experienced
in my reading and layered them and determined that they
represented the same spiritual idea. L. had talked to me a bit about ideas like this when he talked to me about poetry and myths, but I knew I could astonish L. if I showed him that I was able to understand, better than he already did, that certain ideas from the literature I was studying are so similar that they really are the same spiritual visualization.

Another reason that I had to concentrate so much was that I needed to show L. that I could write a good essay without revealing to him all of my thoughts in advance. That would prove to L. that I would not be influenced by his thoughts while I was saying the right words for my essay. I was attempting to solve the problem in my life which I will now say was that some people thought that, because L. was an English teacher, I should write as if he corrected every word I said. I will say that L. never wanted to interfere with my thoughts. He only wanted to make me aware of certain things that I needed to understand about word choice and complex sentence structure. But I felt that any attempt to help me during the writing and editing of the Camelot essay would make L. want to tease me about some of the things I was saying. I was nervous because I had such good ideas and visualizations in my mind, and they were so
special to a boy.

L. always told me that I was really an advanced thinker for my age, but he never realized how advanced I really was until I made him stop thinking that he could influence my writing. Once I had got him to realize that my own words represented my actual spiritual visualizations, he could stop thinking that I needed to be corrected, and he could realize that I needed exposure to lots of ideas and symbols, but that I didn't need help in spiritual visualization or in putting my spiritual visualizations into words. When L. stopped thinking that he had to be teaching me all the time, he became aware of my real soul type: radiance of the sun, and so he stopped being the type of teacher who forecloses on his son's future by thinking he knows more than the son.

Theme Two: Mercury in exaltation (communication--allegorical level). T. might have said: I was not able to communicate for really so long that I began to feel that no one would ever understand me. Everyone thought I was mentally handicapped, because no one could interpret my body language and facial expressions except L. and sometimes my Mom. I sometimes
thought of going to the spirit world permanently, because I thought I would never break through the communication barrier. When I discovered that I could say things with my right arm, I was so overjoyed that I resolved to stay on this earth a long time (see Appendix Z). When L. solved the problem of communication in my life by learning to say my words aloud at normal speed, I thought I really had a way of saying things to the world, and I sometimes said things to L. to tell other people.

But there was a problem with that way of speaking through L. My Mom thought sometimes that I was being told what to say by L., and she sometimes thought I was bad boy letting L. put words in my mouth. L. was good at saying the right words always, but as soon as someone doubted that I really said something, L. would start to ask himself questions about how he knew those were my words. Sometimes, he could not think of a way to convince a doubting person that my words were positively my own, because L. was saying the words faster than anyone could possibly reason out the right words to say. So I started thinking about a way to make L. aware that there was no way he could really not say my words, if I was strict with him.
The way I decided to test L. was to keep him unaware of the outline for my Camelot essay. If L. could not anticipate what I was going to say, he would never think to himself that he was subtly influencing my words and thoughts. L. never really doubted that I was very intelligent, but he always tried to think of ways to describe my intelligence. I teased him so many times about trying to test me that he always expected several teases any time he tested me. I was really so angry at him sometimes for testing me. I thought I would teach him a lesson about not ever having to test me in the future. With the Camelot essay, I showed him forever that I was in charge of T.'s words, when I astonished him and Ca. by saying very advanced thoughts in simple words. L. understood my essay quite well, since L. is really a special interpreter of written English. Also he knows a lot about mythology and poetry. But Ca. kept saying I should reveal the connections more thoroughly. She never thought about why I kept the connections concealed. That was because I needed to get L. to read so carefully that he could finally understand how advanced a boy's thinking had become.

When I showed my Camelot essay to the teachers at my new school, they had a bit of trouble seeing the connections between the
overlayered spiritual visualizations, but Ca. said, "Only T. and L. can understand this essay because they have a really good way of communicating. L. is not allowed to change a single one of T.'s words, and T. expects him to understand everything as soon as T. says it. He's quite strict with his L. Luckily, L. is quite good at understanding T.'s meaning." Ca. was able to recognize that a special type of dialogue existed between a boy and his father.

After I had proved to L. that I could write a whole essay without revealing my thinking in advance, he realized that he should relax and trust me to use his facilitation to express my own thoughts and visualizations. Well, I tested L., and L. really found it hard to stop anticipating and trying to correct me, because he had been taught that teachers should correct every error as it comes up. But I showed him that he could not possibly anticipate every thought that I could have, until my whole essay was complete. I showed him that I could easily connect thoughts together in interesting new ways by adding connecting sentences and paragraphs. By telling him repeatedly to stop thinking he could edit my words, I showed him that he was not allowed to make suggestions for editing my words ever again. I really teased L., and so I taught him a good lesson.
Theme Three: Saturn in dignity (memory--anagogic level). T. might have said: When I wrote my Camelot essay I was so bad to L. He had always said to me that I should write plainly. Well really, I wrote so plainly that L. started getting nervous that I was saying more than a boy my age could possibly know. Well that is ridiculous. L. should remember that it took almost a complete school year to write that essay. The actual writing was only a small part of my effort to say what I was experiencing in my spiritual visualizations. Really, there is no reason to expect a child to have no intelligence. There is also no reason to expect a child's spirituality to be any less spiritual than an adult's. When I slept badly at night, I often chose not to shout for my Ca. because I wanted to find ways to say things that would really astonish L. He sometimes doubted himself too much. He always told me that there was no way that he could convince a doubting person that my written words were really mine, because a doubting person doubts every proof. But I decided that I could convince L. that I was really a spiritual boy by showing him that I could analyze spiritual symbols in a good way.
I wrote my Camelot essay after so many nights of spiritual visualization that I was a bit too hard on L. I was so interested in Celtic mythology. I had so much information from all the reading and all the talk at school about Utopia, and all the talk at home with L. and Ca., and all the tapes that L. had made for me to listen to, and all the special topics I asked L. to read about and report to me about, that I really said things in a simple way to confuse L. I decided to hide the connections between my paragraphs to make L. read more carefully than he had ever read my writing before. I had to really stop Ca. from trying to tell L. that he should make sure that everyone could understand my connections. She was fussing about a boy's intelligence being recognized by everyone. But what I wanted to do was astonish L., so that he would stop doubting that I could be so mature about spiritual visualization.

L. had always told me that he thought I was very intelligent. But now I was saying to him that I was really a very spiritual boy. After he had stopped trying to hide knowledge from me, I was able to take some ideas he shared with me and transform them into spiritual visualizations, which told me there was a special knowledge that had been known for thousands of years and had been
passed by word of mouth from initiate to initiate for as long as there has been a human race. The poets I loved were Wordsworth and Blake and Shakespeare, because their words told me that they understood the knowledge of the initiates.

When I first told L. that I had finished the essay I really was teasing Ca. and L. They were amazed that I thought I could list a bunch of disconnected images without explaining why I should be interested in their being so similar in my spiritual visualizations. That was when I really astonished them by adding some bridging statements, which joined everything together into a whole essay. And so that was when Ca. finally understood that I was writing this essay in a special way to show L. that I was really spiritually intelligent. The new problem that came from that experiment in astonishing L. was that he started to think that I was far too advanced and that I should be writing different types of things, like Haikus (see Appendix AA) and good poems (see Appendix BB) and narratives (see Appendix S) and a boy's good play (see Appendix CC). The reason I actually started writing different types of things was that L. admitted to me that my Camelot essay was so advanced that no one would believe that he could possibly have written it. We
especially teased each other a lot with that "reverse tease."
Chapter Twelve: T. and the School Board (Pisces)

The Narrative

T. was well prepared. He had written a long speech (see Appendix B). He had Ca. type it onto his laptop for him, and he had practiced downloading it, a sentence at a time, to his voice synthesizer, so that he could "say" his speech to the school board. It was almost twelve minutes long, but T. had been allotted only four minutes of the school board's time. He rewrote the speech, cutting it to one-third of its original length. He practiced it again. It was under four minutes.

He was a bit nervous, not enough to give him "bad gas" and keep him awake at night, but he needed many reassurances from L., from his "good Mom", from Ca., and from the teachers at his school. These reassurances were in regard to:

- not getting a stuffed up nose and having to stay at home;
- not tuning out in front of the school board;
- not having the school board doubt that these were his own words;
- not having the school board think that his teachers were exploiting
a "handicapped genius boy" by having him go begging on their behalf;

-not having the school board refuse to be persuaded by his words and decide to say "no" to high school grades at his school or, in the worst case, decide to close his school completely.

Plainly, T.'s desire to complete the project by sitting in front of the school board and "saying" his speech was greater than any reservations he had. He never once suggested that he would rather stay home, though we suggested it more than once, only to have the suggestion sternly rejected. The needs of the school were greater than his own reservations.

When the evening arrived, M. and I encountered a huge crowd of parents, students, and friends who had also come to show support for T.'s school. We waited at the bottom of the stairwell that led up to the Board Room, until we met T., Ca., and T.'s child care worker, P. I helped P. as she "bumped" T.'s wheelchair up the twenty or so stairs to the second storey landing. M. and Ca. ascended in advance of us to clear the way.

At the top of the stairs, Ca. took control of T.'s chair and plunged into the crowd. T.'s child care worker followed. M. and I tried to inch our way in. We got as far as the Press Table and lost each other. My own anxiety level told me that T. needed us close to him. I resolutely edged through the crowd. Our social worker, who was sitting near Ca. and T.,
beckoned M. to join her. I helped Ca. as she fussed with T.'s chair and with his outdoor clothing. I took T.'s arm, thinking to reassure him, but he told me he was fine, that I should sit down and stop being "nervous L."

Perhaps out of courtesy to a handicapped boy, T.'s school was at the top of the agenda. The head teacher spoke and stated that two students from the school would address the board. T. would speak using his speech synthesizer with the aid of his attendant; but the second student, a girl who was too sick with the flu to attend the meeting (and extremely shy, except when portraying a character on stage), had asked her mother to read her speech. The head teacher would complete the presentation following the students' speeches.

Ca. did some nerve-racking things with T.'s laptop. I could see that T. was exhorting her with urgent body language to hurry up. Advised by the teacher that the voice synthesizer had limited volume, the hushed room waited.

T. chose the pace and rhythm of his delivery. Assisted by Cara, he downloaded one sentence at a time, like Stephen Hawking, with an important pause at the end of each sentence. He remained alert throughout, though quite still. He told me, after, that he was concentrating on making eye contact with the school board members, by
carefully looking at each of them in turn. This was T.'s speech:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

[My school] is the best possible school for a boy like me to attend in this school district. The reasons are many, but I will state a few of the most obvious ones. I am stimulated intellectually in ways that I never experienced at other schools. I participate socially with every age group in the school, including the parents and the teachers. I participate in all important school events, even playing parts in school plays. I am a frequent contributor to the Community Conflicts Committee, where important judgements are made concerning rules, discipline, and school structure. Soon [T. hoped] my own autobiographical play called "T. Wants a New School" will be acted out by the student body with an able-bodied actor playing T. This reverse "inclusion" shows what a wonderful school [this] really is.

[This] is my school. It's really important to me to go to a school that understands my real needs and where people treat me equally and where the teachers don't interfere with my learning. One day I intend to graduate from this . . . school.

This speech had to be shortened severely because of a slow speech synthesizer, so please read the complete speech which will be given to you by my favorite teacher. . . . Thankyou and please help us keep [this school] alive for young students in this community who need non-coercive education. The future of humanity is really important to me, and [this school's] students will make great citizens in the future. Thank you again and goodnight.

The head teacher distributed copies of the longer version of T.'s speech for the school board members to read.

The other representatives of the school spoke after T. The proposal was that the school board not only continue funding the elementary program at this non-coercive alternate school, but also provide complete funding for the school's secondary grades. Though the school board funded
the elementary grades, the high school functioned as a private school, receiving 50% of its funding from the ministry of education and 50% from the parents. There were students who could not maintain themselves in a regular high school at all, given the rigidity of the expectations, the size of the structure, the impersonality of some teaching styles, the competitive social scene, the inflexibility of the demands. It was these students whom the secondary school funding would serve.

The board asked the district administrators to look into the feasibility of the request, then the chairperson called for a brief recess so that the parents, students, and friends of T.'s school could clear the Board Room. Among the well-wishers, as I guided T. out of the room, were the two assistant superintendents, both of whom spoke to T. directly. T. considered one of these men a special friend of his. "I was a good boy Mr. K.," T. said. "I was nervous but I kept my eyes open and really made a good speech."

"You are a good boy, T.," Mr. K. answered.
Interpretation

Theme one: Mercury in fall (communication--moral level). T. might have said: When I took my speech synthesizer to the school board meeting, I did it for a reason. I knew from experience at my school that, if I spoke using my speech synthesizer, everyone would believe it was really me speaking. I learned that lesson at my first I.E.P. meeting at my new school when my teacher, H., told my father that the children would respond to me in a fully accepting way, if I said my words in a distinctive voice. She told the truth about that. After a while, they actually understood that I was also saying the words that I pointed to on my spelling board. Then my teaching assistant's voice was understood to be saying my words, when I was teasing other children and having fun at school.

When I spoke at the school board meeting, I used the speech synthesizer again. I hoped to sound really dignified and intellectual, so I used a style that I had learned from listening to Stephen Hawking speak. I wrote a very detailed speech, explaining about my school being the only school in the world where a boy like T. was treated like a special friend to everyone in the school. I was so
disappointed when H. told me that my speech was going to have to be shortened to four minutes from twelve minutes. But I never complained, because the mission I had to save my school, by getting the School Board to understand about our needing a high school, was so important to me. We decided to hand out the longer version of the speech after I finished saying the shorter version, so that people would not read while I was speaking. They were really listening carefully to the shorter version of the speech, and I delivered the speech beautifully, I think. The Board Room was silent.

When I dictated the long form of my speech to my Dad, he cried a bit because I said things so beautifully. When I mentioned that he was always talking about inclusion, I tried to mention his position in the school district. But L. said to take that out because everybody who needed to know that knew it already. But I wanted to say it, because I wanted to tell the school board that all my life my parents had been fighting to get me a good school, where everyone would accept me as a complete human being and not only as a bunch of physical disabilities.

I was congratulated for being a good boy by an assistant superintendent in the district. He was my friend. He helped me
move to my new school by deciding that I was allowed to change
schools. When I was younger, I had written a moving essay about
five things that I would put in my "life box" (see Appendix DD). It
was very simply written, because I actually said it as a speech at
the beginning of grade three. My grade three classmates were my
audience. I never intended for adults to read that essay, so I was a
bit embarrassed when L. told me that an assistant superintendent
was reading that essay every time he spoke in public about the
integration of students who had special needs. I told L. that I would
have written a far better essay than that, if I had been addressing a
group of adults. L. said that everyone was moved very much by the
simplicity of the essay. I was also embarrassed because I could not
include a picture of my Mom in my life box, because a boy of eight
loved his mother so much that he would have cried out loud and
spoiled the speech, if he had tried to mention his Mom in front of his
classmates. When the assistant superintendent congratulated me
after my school board speech, I got a good feeling that he had always
understood that I could have written a better speech than my life
box essay for him to use in his presentations to teachers and school
board members.
The reason I am mentioning my life box essay is to explain that I edited the longer form of my speech into a simple straightforward speech that would move the school board members the way audiences were moved by my life box essay. I felt a moral responsibility to communicate my feelings about my school so that everyone would understand how fully included I was in that school.

T. would have added: I want to thank the school board for allowing my school to become a high school this year. It was so much fun being a student at my school. I was treated so fairly there. All of the people respected me.

Theme Two: Venus in exaltation (integration--allegorical level). T. might have said: The reason I felt so included at my new school is obvious. I was allowed to be a whole person there. I got a chance to be the boy I never would have been at the school I left. I had such a difficult time at the other school getting some people to realize that I was even a bit intelligent, but it was never doubted at my new school that I could make my own choices about what to study. When I said, in my speech, that I was
"reverse included," I was pointing out an important thing. I told the school board that I was affecting the other students in a positive way. They were getting a good education about what it meant to be a handicapped genius boy. In that school, I was acting as an ambassador for handicapped people. My father always told me that I should not think of myself as "handicapped," any more than every other student at the school was also handicapped. He said that all people have things in their individual lives that make them have to overcome handicaps, so they can actually be complete people. My handicaps showed as soon as anyone met me. But I had so much love in me for the other people at my school that I could forgive them if they pitied me, by saying to myself, "I pity them also." I came to realize that my handicap was only slowing me down, so that I could understand all of these other boys and girls better. If my body had been the same as theirs, I probably would have been so far ahead of them that I would not have been able to understand them. I have to thank everyone at that school because, I was so beautifully and completely accepted in ways that I can tell about now, without repeating my words.

I was never able to attend my new school every day of the
week. My schedule included a sleepy Monday, after celebrating at home all weekend with my Mom and Dad and my brother, C. I celebrated so much on weekends because I got to spend quality time with my family. My social worker used the words, "quality time," to reassure me about my living with Ca. I got to be completely included in my family’s life because my father always insisted that I should be right there wherever anything good was happening. I really celebrated because I had a family who loved me. At about nine o’clock on Sunday night, L. would take me back to my foster mother’s house. That was always sad for a boy and his father, so I sometimes cried a bit on the way home, and so L. would reassure me that he was driving safely. I would stay up a bit longer being comforted by my Ca., because I got very emotional sometimes about leaving my family’s home. That made me quite tired on Mondays, and that made Monday my day of rest.

A Tuesday was a half day at my school, and I attended in the morning, whenever I could. That was really special to me. I got to see what was happening with all the students. They always ran up to me to talk, and so they heard me say witty things to tease them gently. I often talked with my teachers. They wanted reassurances
that they were doing enough to help me get a good education. They worried that I was not getting enough intellectual stimulation at their school. They needed to understand that I got plenty of stimulation by telling L. the same afternoon, or the next afternoon, about the plans I had for good writing projects, which would prove that I was getting enough stimulation at school. I really liked Tuesday afternoons, because I got to relax and watch good documentaries on T.V. and then nap a bit, before L. would visit on his way home from his school. I would tease L. a lot, and we would discuss whatever I had learned that was interesting—and everything that L. had experienced—since our last visit. My Ca. helped me set L. up for some good teases.

Every single day of the week, I had a rhythm that was special to the day. Wednesdays, I stayed at school most times, and also Thursdays usually, and Fridays I stayed there a half day only, or I stayed at home because I got my physio in the afternoon, then Saturday morning I got ready to go home. L. visited me after school every day when he was able to.

The twelfth year of my life was my happiest and most emotional year. I had a beautiful new home, which my Mom had found
for us. She wanted a house that was laid out in a way that would include me completely. She started coming to my school on Wednesday mornings to take care of the plants, and so I was able to cuddle her at school. Everyone was jealous of me because of my beautiful Mom. I felt so fortunate to be alive and to have everyone being so supportive.

T. might have added: When I knew that my school might become a school that graduated students, I thought it was a good idea to graduate from my school before I died. I defied the predictions of the doctors by keeping my lungs so clear and by continuing to live so beautifully, but I knew that one day I would have to die, because I had another task in the spiritual world.

Theme Three: Jupiter in dignity (observation--anagogic level). T. might have said: When I visited the school board, I was watched very carefully by L. and by Ca. They expected me to be nervous and to shut my eyes, because so many people usually scared a boy. I surprised everyone that evening by keeping my eyes wide open and by sitting up straight in my chair and keeping
my head up. I was observing those school board members very closely, and I was observing every speaker who spoke that night. I was almost eleven then, and I had worked so hard on my head control that I could turn my head and see everybody at that board table.

The reason I watched so closely was to see if those school board members understood how important it was to me, and to so many other people, to have those high school grades at my school. When I delivered my speech, I gave the right rhythm to Ca. with movements of my arm, and she almost forgot to help me push the "return" button once, because she was so absorbed in my speech's effect on the school board members. I reminded her with a big movement of my arm. Every school board member was listening very carefully. Every one of them believed I was actually saying that speech. When H., my teacher, handed out the extra copies of the longer speech, everyone took it and read it so respectfully that I was amazed to see that probably no one doubted that I wrote those words.

I thought that I could save my school all by myself. I realized, when H. spoke, that she had worked very hard for that school for many years. That's when I realized that the school was not going to
be allowed to suffer a bad decision from the board. I realized that H. would never give up fighting to keep our school alive and to keep it expanding to the higher grades. I know how I came to that realization. I saw H.'s determination as plainly as I saw her physical form in front of me, and I saw that the school board members did not have the same level of determination to stop our school from expanding to the higher grades. The combination of my good speech and H.'s firm determination touched every school board member, and it even touched the administrators of the school district. I knew I would still have a school the following year, which would provide me with the support I needed to help me continue my mission of saving the earth in a special way—that is, by writing special messages to send over the internet to help people in the world to realize that they had to love one another and stop being so bad to the earth. It was the way H. refused to accept easy answers that helped me get the inspiration that I needed to intensify those earth saving activities, as my real mission in my twelfth year.

My father told me an idea that he had heard about. All of the satellites that are orbiting the earth in its outer atmosphere are sending out microwaves and radio signals that could be causing a
change in the way people feel about spirituality. So I got the idea that people needed to use the internet to give each other courage, by sharing stories that would inspire each other. So I really started communicating very seriously with people who had difficulties understanding the joy of living. I always got so many replies that I became a frequent user of the internet.

I got to be famous for my letter about the Lattimer case in Saskatchewan [see Conclusion, p. 297]. On the same day that my picture appeared in several newspapers, I appeared on television. I had the same determination to stay alive that H. had to save our school, and that determination inspired so many people to communicate their love to me that I really felt I had made a big contribution to saving the earth, by making people realize that "life is a precious gift."

So when my televised image was relayed all around the world by satellite, people saw this frail little boy, who was so loved by his parents that everybody said, "That boy is really saying those words, because no one in a normal body could know the determination that is so evident in those words."
Chapter Thirteen: T. Is Doubted (Aries)

The Narrative

T. loves to celebrate. And he loves to plan celebrations. He plans the birthday celebrations for all of his close family members. Prominent in these plans are bouillabaise, presents, cards designed by T. (with verses written by T.), teasing, sibling rivalry, excited banter (what T. now calls repartee), and speech-making. Except for Christmas there is no event in the yearly calendar that calls out T.'s urge to celebrate as much as his own birthday.

For his eleventh birthday, T.'s guest list for his birthday bouillabaise feast included his good Mom, his father L., his big brother C., his foster mother Ca., his maternal grandparents (Granny and Grampa), his teaching assistant A., her boyfriend, his child care worker P., and her husband. The feast took place on the nearest Saturday to T.'s birthday.

The evening unfolded according to his preplanned schedule:

-arrive in the afternoon while L. is chopping leeks, so that L. can be supervised closely and teased about "intuitive measurements";
-have conversations with his guests, as they arrive;

-have private talk with his teaching assistant and get her to help him tease Ca. a bit;

-ask Grampa for a story about his economic development work in northern Manitoba;

-have cuddles with Ca., tease her directly, and doze a bit in her lap;

-tease L. lots about stalling with the bouillabaise;

-declare that Ca. is overprotective, when she states that he will not have three bowls of bouillabaise;

-sit on L.'s lap at the head of the table, after the bouillabaise is served; declare that he hopes that L. did not use too much garlic in the bouillabaise; answer C.'s, "I like lots of garlic, T.," with, "That's right C., but C., the extra garlic should be in the garlic butter and not in my bouillabaise, and really L., I hope you have not burned the dried bread this time";

-ask Grampa for a Grace;

-add T.'s own birthday blessing;

-continue to banter and to tease (using L.'s voice to banter), between mouthfuls of bouillabaise for L. and for T., as L. feeds both himself and T.;

-remind Ca. or Mom to bring L. a second bowl of bouillabaise, but to
make sure there is lots leftover for T. tomorrow;

- after a huge bowl of bouillabaise, offer candles, cake, and speeches;

- go to Ca. when L. has to get up, but mostly remain on L.'s lap to say "witty sayings," make speeches, and have intellectual discussions with his family and guests;

- admit to Ca. that back stretches might be necessary;

- remind his Mom that long cuddles are necessary to round out the evening.

T. was excited. He was on a roll. The evening was unfolding according to his expectations. His child care worker was a bit late, but T. had teased her for that. He remarked with satisfaction that she was on time for some bouillabaise, and she was complimentary when he said that he had saved the bouillabaise from bad L.'s intuitive measurements. Her husband, a young man known fleetingly at T. and Ca.'s house, but unknown in T.'s family home, would not arrive until much later.

The young man arrived in time for a late dessert. He sat listening, taking in the scene, as T. sat on my lap and regaled his guests. The young man squirmed and fidgeted, as if he had walked in on a seance. He took exception to T.'s vocabulary and to the speed and fluency with which I
uttered his words (generated mostly from the first letters). "He's not really saying that," he said. Ca. suggested that, oh, it was T. all right.

I asked T. if they were his words. T. explained that L. was his best interpreter for intellectual discussions and for speech-making, that sometimes L. made mistakes in word choice, but that if the mistake altered the intentions of T.'s speech, he would stop L. and correct him and tease him badly. He illustrated, "Really if I am saying 'silly' and L. says 'stupid', that is usually okay—unless L. needs teasing, or I am counting his mistakes. But if I need to say, 'I am frustrated,' and L. says, 'I am fine,' then I need to lecture him severely and I say, 'No! L., concentrate.'"

The young man was having none of it. I was a mountebank. T. was a ventriloquist's dummy. Here was some group delusion of a cultic nature. His wife revealed that the young man had seen an item on the news program, Sixty Minutes, debunking the use of facilitated communication among autistic adults who had lifelong aphasia. Often these adults made eloquent, poetic utterances, after very little inductive preparation. The phenomenon did not always hold up under investigation.

Several of us at the table tried to explain. We had been through all this before with T.'s speech therapist. She had refuted any concern about T.'s communication. M., Ca., and I had spent hours reassuring T. on just
this issue. But the young man appeared not to hear us, when we explained that it had taken almost six years to achieve this fluency. And he had no knowledge of the differences between the various disabling syndromes. Nothing could persuade him that T. had none of the "contact" difficulties displayed by autistic individuals.

T. made one more attempt to clarify: "The Anthroposophical definition of autism is refusal to incarnate. The Anthroposophical definition of cerebral palsy is too much consciousness," he said.

The boyfriend of T.'s teaching assistant understood these words clearly, having been a teacher in the Waldorf schools. He shouted his approval and slapped the table with the palm of his hand like a parliamentarian.

"He's not saying that!" the young man almost wailed.

"Are you T.?' I asked.

"That's right," T. said.

"Yeah, he is," I said. "T. and I have discussed these things many times." I assured the young man that T. was indeed capable of saying everything that he was hearing that night, but the young man remained rigorously skeptical. By now, he was visibly uncomfortable. There was urgency in his tone, though he tried to project the suavity of a Sherlock
Holmes. He insisted that he could prove that it was not T. speaking.

He proposed a test. There were four conditions:

(a) that the young man should whisper something in T.'s ear;
(b) that T. should repeat the whispered words to the young man's satisfaction;
(c) that Ca., not I, should facilitate T.'s response;
(d) that no talk should pass between T. and me, from the moment the words were whispered, until T. made his response through Ca.'s facilitation.

Ca. and I assured T. that he did not have to do this. T. said that he would do it. The young man whispered what appeared to be two sentences in T.'s ear. I watched T.'s eyes: The glow of outward engagement was fading. I lifted him over to Ca.'s lap. T.'s demeanour had instantly changed. His body tone had slackened. He was no longer smiling. Ca. tried to sense communication in his arm. She asked him several questions. Was he ready to answer? Did he still want to answer? He made small whimpering noises. Finally he said: "Ca., I will spell my answer. Answer is E-L-E-V-E-N."

"Eleven," Ca. stated.

The young man shook his head. "No," he said. He did not reveal the
whispered words. The young man's mood had also changed. He appeared calmer, and seemed for a moment to regret his interference in T.'s mood of celebration. "That's okay," he said in T.'s direction. He and his wife, T.'s child care worker, left soon afterward. She kissed T., told him that she loved him, and said that she would see him soon. The other guests began to leave. They paused individually to say some words to T. and to wish him happy birthday.

Interpretation

Theme One: Saturn in detriment (memory--literal level). T. might have said: When I planned my birthday party, I decided to invite only eleven people including myself. The reason I decided to invite eleven people is obvious. I was eleven years old that year, and I was really so good at planning.

When I thought of people to invite, I considered some friends from school, but I thought, "No, I will invite a really civilized group of people to sit around the table and listen to me tease everyone gently and give speeches and say witty things." I wanted to have a good party, like King Arthur must have had at the round table in
Camelot. I thought to myself that all of the important women in my life should be there, but I realized that my good friend B. would not be able to come from Colorado to enjoy my party. So I started to think of how many women I should invite, and I discovered that I wanted to invite everyone I knew—my teachers, my therapists, and all of my helpers, but I thought, "We are going to have to make such a big pot of bouillabaisse that L. will be exhausted from chopping leeks all day." I decided the number eleven was a really good compromise. I decided to invite the women who were closest to me in those days and also to invite their husbands and boyfriends.

I invited everyone I wanted to be there in an interesting way. First I thought of the person each one would sit beside, and then I thought of where they would sit, and then I thought of what I would say to tease each one so well. I thought of my speeches, and of the replies from my guests, and how much wine I would let each one drink, and how much my father would be allowed to eat, and when I would cuddle each of my special friends. When I chose to invite my child care worker, I knew she would be late, and so I knew her husband would be late also. I knew they would arrive without being able to understand that I was the master of ceremonies and the host
for the evening. I really thought that they would see how much fun I was having and that they would realize that I needed to tease them too.

I discovered something important that night. My Mom loves me so much that she was ready to throw that young man out of the house. She thought that L. and I were being too patient with him. But I was still the master of ceremonies, and so I was trying to reassure him that I was not angry with him for being silly enough to think that watching a program on T.V. would tell him everything there was to know about facilitated communication. I explained everything so slowly and clearly to him that he should have been able to understand easily. But I realized that he got so embarrassed about coming and spoiling a boy’s party that he could not understand any more, himself, why he was doubting so much, except that he was a bit foolish, and he was trying to be the center of attention, to impress his wife that his intelligence was greater than mine.

I considered telling him a secret about myself. The secret involved actually being eleven. I considered telling him that Piaget would even admit that a boy my age could think abstractly, but I had been thinking abstractly a long time because most of my experience
came to me through words. I knew about Piaget from talking to my father; he had often teased me about premature intellectuality. But I thought talking about Piaget would only confuse the young man more, so I finally answered his riddle with a riddle of my own. I expected that he would be quiet then, because he would think that he had spoiled my birthday party. And so that was my revenge, sending him home to worry about that for long time, and to worry about trying to convince my child care worker that he didn't doubt that I was really an intelligent boy, but he doubted that I could have said some of the really intellectual teases that I had been saying before he raised the issue of facilitated communication having been debunked by some journalist on T.V.--who had probably spin-doctored the story to sensationalize the issue, to get people to watch his program and so sell soap and laxatives.

I was really so offended by the young man's attitude that night that I decided not to invite him to Ca.'s house or to my parent's house ever again. I have always hated being doubted but usually doubting occurs when I am in unfamiliar circumstances, among people who do not know my usual sentence structure and vocabulary (and I have an extremely large vocabulary for a boy my age). I should
be given the benefit of the doubt, because I always say TR, "That's right," after every sentence or after any complicated statement, to prove to my facilitators that they have said my words correctly.

Theme two: Venus in fall (integration--moral level).
T. might have said: Integration is a word that means "wholeness." I was integrated at my new school. I was well integrated in my family's life. And I was integrated in my own thinking. But there was always the possibility that each new person whom I met would doubt that I was saying my own words. L. and I had so often explained how I showed him the right words to say (see Appendix Z). We always said that L. was very sensitive to my vocabulary and sentence structure, my knowledge base, and my usual topics of conversation. But L. never admitted that he has a special type of sensitivity to language. That is the reason that he can read aloud so beautifully from poems and novels, which he may have never read before. When he read Wordsworth or Shakespeare aloud to me, he would start up a rhythm that allowed him to say each word in the right way, sometimes for pages and pages without ever pronouncing a word wrongly. He would always tell people that it was quite
possible for him to say the wrong adjective or adverb for a letter that I was pointing to. He would give, as an example, the words silly and sarcastic, and then say that his choice was a matter of the context, and that I would interrupt and say NLC, "No L., concentrate!" if he made a mistake. Sometimes for fun I would count the number of mistakes L. would make during a good speech I was giving, and in an hour the most errors L. ever made was eight. I teased him about every mistake that day. He was really nervous because I was chairing the second I.E.P. meeting I had at my new school. It amazed me that, even that day, with so many people sitting around the table at my I.E.P. meeting understanding me perfectly and interpreting my words as my own good thoughts, there was still one person there who doubted me and treated me like a ventriloquist's dummy on L.'s lap. K., my speech therapist, had to tell that person not to think badly of L. and me, because talking that way made us both so happy. That was K.'s way of teasing that person. She (the doubting person) explained my speeches to herself as the speeches of a boy who was smart enough to trick his father into saying witty things for him, but not smart enough to stop his father from saying his own words instead of the boy's words. That is ridiculous, and it has nothing to
do with integration, which requires giving nonverbal people the benefit of the doubt and not denying them a voice, however they say things, whether in sign language or in smoke signals. I was so badly treated by some people who totally ignored me that I sometimes felt completely marginalized, but nothing made me angrier than having someone question my ability to get L., or Ca., or A. to say my words the way I wanted them.

When I was seven I sent a message to my speech therapist. I said, "K., my words are magnificent now." Those were my true words, telling her that I had discovered that L. was helping me to say some of the good words that he was using to describe poetry to me, and some of the good words that I knew from Shakespeare and from Wordsworth. When I was nearly eight, I visited L.'s grade twelve English class and amazed the kids by interpreting L.'s questions, which I did not know in advance, in ways that astonished them. Ca. was my facilitator that day, and I spelled every word of my answers on my Real Voice. The poem was "Andrea del Sarto," by Robert Browning, and I had never seen or heard that poem before, but I was so used to listening to my father read aloud that I heard every rhythm and emphasis in his voice, and I could interpret every word
of that poem really easily. So that was a test that L. gave himself, to prove that he had not been crazy when he told K., around my sixth birthday, that I had a large receptive vocabulary and that I understood everything that was happening around me.

L. and I had practised my talking so that L. could say my words in a special way when I was making speeches. L. would actually say every word correctly, if he opened himself and concentrated in the way a Zen archer has to concentrate on becoming one with the bow, the arrow, and the target, before the arrow is allowed to release itself. When he was concentrating in that way, he would not allow any thought to enter his mind except the words in the proper sequence, which I indicated for him by moving my arm to the right letter every time, without even having to look at the spelling board because I was a touch typer, able to send the arrow to the center of the target without having to look in that direction (Herrigel, 1989).

The last paragraph above is insightfully supported by the words of Gadamer (1977b), who stated: "I believe that understanding involves a moment of loss of self . . ." (p. 51).

About facilitated communication. As T. sometimes said,
"People are judging a book by its cover," but he knew better than anyone that appearances are often mere screens for the projection of unexamined prejudices and inherited antipathies. Crossley (1992) puts to rest an attitude that was prevalent among our grandparents:

Sixty years ago the received wisdom was that the severity of the physical impairment in cerebral palsy mirrored the severity of the intellectual impairment. Now with the advent of electronic communication and mobility aids, it has become clear that there is no necessary correlation between the severity of physical impairment and intellectual status. Many individuals with cerebral palsy without intelligible speech or functional hand skills have successfully completed tertiary courses (p. 57-58).

If the burden of proof of intelligence is placed solely on the disabled individual, we run the danger of marginalization by inquisition. We must avoid the arrogant assumption that the "tests" we design measure "intelligence" or "communication":

Some attempts have been made to set up tests to prove whether specific individuals can communicate with facilitation. In all cases the test strategies have been chosen by lawyers or psychologists without input from speech/language clinicians or other professionals working with AAC [augmentative and alternative communication]. The results have been variable. Four of the eight . . . clients tested by formally constituted tribunals since 1986 were held to have validated their ability to communicate with facilitation. Two of the four who failed testing have gone on to type independently (Crossley & Remington-Girney, 1992, p 43).

I wonder if those "two out of four" faltered due to messages of distrust. Biklen, Morton, Gold, and Berrigan (1992) discovered the
The arm support apparently has an emotional aspect. Individuals explained that their facilitators' belief in their ability to type gives them confidence (p. 12). . . . Some individuals have told their facilitators how important it is to be trusted. Several students explained that they cannot type with particular people who do not believe they can type (p. 14).

In no case should judgement concerning facilitated communication be made without careful investigation into an individual's history and personality. Writing about facilitation in cases of autism, Biklen, Morton, Gold, and Berrigan (1992) stressed that facilitated communication is a learning process for both client and facilitator:

We observed no instance of individuals typing conversational language without first being introduced to facilitated communication via structured work. . . . Facilitators reported that they usually had to go through a process lasting from an hour to several weeks or even months to move individuals from structured work to open ended typed discourse. . . . Sometimes new facilitators start from the beginning with structured work . . . (pp. 9-10).

These authors suggest a number of observational tests for validation of facilitated communication in individual cases. Included are: a degree of consistency "across facilitators," in regard to the client's fine motor control and idiosyncracies of language production; the appearance of verifiable content that is not known to the facilitator; and "perhaps most impressive and satisfying, through facilitated communication individuals
reveal their personalities" (Bicklen et al., 1992, pp. 19-21).

Theme Three: Sun in exaltation (not foreclosing--allegorical level). T might have said: When I was sitting on my father's lap trying to tell the young man that I was usually able to understand people better than they thought, he refused to listen to my words and decided instead to accept that the T.V. program's attitude about a few autistic people meant that all facilitated communication was bad. I realized that he was not able to understand that I was a genius boy because he was convinced that there was nothing in the world that was beyond his own intellectual grasp. I discovered an important thing about the young man that night. He was jealous of me because my child care worker always said how intelligent I was, and so he did a funny thing in his mind. He thought to himself, in three steps, that he could refute my intelligence:

(a) No one is more intelligent than I can think;

(b) T. is said to be more intelligent than I can think;

(c) therefore, the words T.'s father is saying are not T.'s words.

When I think about the young man's thought processes and
compare his style of communication to my own communication, I come to several realizations about myself.

1. I never assume that people are less intelligent than I am.

2. I always say the best thing I can to reassure people that I am listening to their words.

3. I never tell people that I doubt they are saying what they think they are saying.

4. I actually give people the benefit of the doubt that they are trying to say much more than I am able to understand.

5. I always tell people that I would like them to say things to me again some time.

6. I really always make people laugh a bit, so they feel good in my presence.

7. And I always say to them I really think they are nice people.

There is something wrong with entering a person's birthday party, where that person is having a good time laughing and teasing and feasting on bouillabaise, and telling that person, "You didn't say those words; your father did," when the reason you are denying the person his voice is because you resent people saying how intelligent he is. However, the flaw in the young man's thinking had no
relevance to him, because he was so desperately trying to prove his own cleverness. When the young man asked Ca. to hold me when I answered that bad riddle, he was actually admitting that he thought there was someone in the room who was smarter than him, and that someone had to be L. Somehow the young man must have thought that there was a way that L. was able to get the right answer, even though he believed that I was not smart enough to tell it to L. When he insisted that L. not facilitate for me, he was in fact admitting that he thought I would somehow give the right answer to L., or that somehow L. would be able to read the young man's mind (if I stayed on L.'s knee) and then say the answer, as if it came from me. The young man's thinking was really so confused that I am concluding now that he was confounded by me; and so he had a choice: accept that I was really a genius boy, or reject my communication completely. At the party he rejected my communication completely but, in order to reject my communication, he had to fantasize a picture of L. as a type of mad scientist who wanted to show the world that he could prove that mentally handicapped people have a hidden source of idiot savant intelligence, which comes through when someone like L. moves their arms.
When people doubt each other in this way, it is because their egos are big. They never think they will be in touch with another human being in a way that's described by Shakespeare as "the marriage of true minds." L. and I had so much love for each other of the type that early Christians called agape, or "selfless love," that we could interpret each other's words really easily. We had worked hard over a period of almost six years to perfect a system of communication that would allow me to converse with a table full of friends with the same speed and fluency as the friends would answer me. That allowed me to share the state of agape, which I experienced with L., through round table conversations with my closest friends, and show that I was a real person on my eleventh birthday. So one doubting person came to that party and tried to show that the ego is really so isolated in the human being that only the doubt supplied by intellectual analysis can show the reality of a given situation. L. was not the ventriloquist, putting words into my mouth that night. The opposite was true. I was the ventriloquist who was telling L. exactly what to say, and L. was saying my true words in the best way possible, with the right emphasis and no hesitation, in the same way that he reads the most difficult poetry
aloud, without pause or hesitation, and moves his listeners by saying the poet's own words in a good way.

Theme four: Mars in dignity (scientific/technological assessment--anagogic level). T. might have said: Doctors, at the beginning of my life, said that I would be mentally handicapped. They obtained that diagnosis partly by measuring the circumference of my head and calculating that I was in the third percentile for head size. But my head was the head that belonged to my body, and so it was really the perfect expression of my head. The same type of measurement was applied to my intelligence. Because I could not talk I could not express intelligence. Unfortunately, some people could never admit that my head had grown so that it was only slightly less than normal size for a boy my age. There were still doctors repeating the diagnosis of microcephaly after I had turned eleven, even though my head was only an inch and a quarter less in circumference than my father's, a fact that we discovered when I wore his hat one day. And in the same way, some people had to keep thinking that I was mentally handicapped, even though I spent most of my waking hours watching documentary programs on T.V., reading
difficult books, and discussing intellectual ideas with my father, my foster mother, and hundreds of people around the world on the internet.

The problem with science is that paradigm shifts happen only every few hundred years but, even after they happen, many people remain stuck in the old way of thinking. So "Newton's sleep" becomes the general population's waking state. William Blake said that he was building Golgonooza. I said, in my essay about the New Jerusalem at Camelot, that I was building Golgonooza inside my human skull, to create a New Jerusalem in my own little world. That is the true meaning of my essay. When I think that the imagination and intelligence that I showed in that essay could still be measured by some doctor who would take a tape and wrap it around the outside of my skull, and then read some numbers that are written on the tape, I still get angry.

When I studied about William Blake, before I wrote my essay about Camelot, I told my father to tape for me some essays that he was reading by a poet named Kathleen Raine (1991a, 1991b). She was a student of Platonic philosophy. The Platonic school of philosophy was influenced by the Pythagoreans, and the
Pythagoreans were influenced by ancient Indian and ancient Egyptian thought, according to legends about Pythagorus. I called these links with Egypt and with India the "Siriun Mysteries," a phrase I knew because I had asked my father to read me some books by Murray Hope, to see if she was a bit right and a bit wrong about ancient Egypt being connected with knowledge of the Dog Star, Sirius (Hope, 1990). I really think she was a bit right and a bit wrong. The reason I studied about Sirius in those books was because certain common millenialist prophecies kept saying that a pole shift would occur in the earth, toward the end of the twentieth century. I was really happy to discover in my heart that the pole shift was going to occur on a spiritual level, and that the amount of death that would occur on the earth would be minimized.

But the implications of my discovery are that people will have to stop measuring the outsides of other people's heads and predicting that they will be mentally handicapped by using numbers that have been abstracted from the measurement of what is hard and dead in nature: the material world. When the Pythagoreans used geometry and numbers to measure the earth, they discovered that spirit dwelt in matter, because the geometric shapes and the
numbers had deep spiritual meanings. When doctors begin to measure again in ways that enliven their spiritual insights, they will stop making errors in judgement that foreclose on the futures of children.

When teachers measure children with standardized tests, they commit the same errors as the doctors who measure the outsides of heads; they use numbers that have lost their spiritual meanings. Statistics become a way of foreclosing on the future, unless they are spiritually enlivened by real observations of every type of intelligence that the student may have. If these real observations are ignored, then statistics only measure the outside. The actual concealed part of the child's nature remains behind the veil of the figures, and so the child remains unrecognized, sometimes even by members of his own family.

When I chose my parents, I had several choices to make. I could have chosen someone like my father who lived in a different part of the world. Unfortunately, in some preindustrial societies, a boy like me would have been left out to die, and no one would ever have known my secret. I could have chosen a rich man and woman to be my parents, and they would have spared no expense in getting me
rehabilitated by the best professionals that money could buy.

Unfortunately, I would never have met a father who would spend his every waking moment thinking about ways to make life interesting for me. There is one more choice I could have made. I could have come into the world in a normal body that could walk and talk but, if I had, my father would not have been able to be as intimate with me as he has been, because he would have left my upbringing to my mother and the schools and maybe have done a lot of physical activities with me on weekends.

When that young man entered my birthday party, he lacked the sensitivity to realize that, when my father said my words aloud so well, it was because I had chosen him in a way that is not understandable by external measurement. The type of sensitivity that allowed my father to say my words aloud so quickly and so fluently was a result of eleven years of service to a boy's every need and every expression. How can that be measured by an outside observer and described in numbers?
T.'s Words

Every year on my birthday, T. would present me with a poem. At age eleven, he gave me a last birthday poem:

My Father's Gift

My father has given me the most precious gift. This gift has meant more to me than anything I have ever known. It has comforted me in times of sorrow. It has shielded me in times of fear. With this gift I can express my deepest yearnings and dreams. My father loved me so much he gave me this gift during long nights of pacing and holding and happy hours of sharing and laughter. My father introduced me to wonderful people like Shakespeare and Wordsworth and Blake, who kept me company during scary and lonely times. I love my father more than even words can express, because he blessed me with the gift of words.

love, T.
Lingering Notes

Generalizations emerging from this study must be of the sort that were indicated by Gadamer (1977c) when he said: "Precisely through our finitude, the particularity of our being, . . . the infinite dialogue is opened in the direction of the truth that we are" (p. 16). The unique story of the "handicapped genius boy," T., is artfully preserved here, and hence "the very truth of the thing [and the relevance of T.'s life] is still capable of coming forth in the work of art" (Gadamer, 1994b, p. 108). As such, the work of "the art of hermeneutic writing" that is this study opens itself to further interpretation within the "infinite dialogue" and offers its portion of humanity to assist in the interpretation of the whole.

The four levels of interpretation. Working with the four levels of interpretation has proved informative. The literal level, when seeking to distinguish itself from historical narration, tends more than any other level toward a foreclosing univocity. Historical interpretation proves to alter itself to suit the view of the future that is favored by the interpreter. The moral level, with its preoccupation with right and wrong, varies between literal foreclosure and tropic allegory, depending on the
directionality of thought, whether fundamentalist and foundational, or open to infinite possibility. The allegorical level itself is susceptible to the persuasion of literalism, when it forgets its own figurative nature. Allegories tend to invite a series of rigid one-to-one interpretations, and thus, they have lateral multivocity but little height or depth, unless ensouled from the anagogic level. In practice, it is anagogy that acts as the whole and serves to integrate the partial nature of interpretation at the other three levels. Anagogically animated, each of the other levels "becomes a microcosm in which is reflected the total macrocosm" (Reese, 1980 p. 390). This understanding may bring new meaning to Gertrude Stein's statement that "A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose," which may speak, perhaps, not of global reductionism, but of the mystery of the hermeneutic identity between part and whole.

To return to Aristotle's four levels of causation, which were so fascinating to T., the final cause of any occurrence must be determined by anagogic interpretation. The tendency has been for scientific thinkers to view the final cause as the last physical contact that has occurred prior to the event. This reduces anagogy to literalism, skipping over both formal and efficient levels of causation. As a result there is a denial, on the one hand, of any non-material agency of causation (the formal level) and, on
the other hand, of human free will (the efficient level). Heidegger (1993d) provides a very interesting explication of the four levels of causation (pp. 313-318). Teague's excitement about Heidegger's reordering of this ancient formula came from the fact that he thought Heidegger gave full acknowledgement to the role of human free will in the regeneration of thinking for the future, when he emphasized the human desire to function as efficient cause.

At twelve, T. would have been disgusted with me, if I had doubted for a moment that he was capable of this last-mentioned thought. Many people will doubt that he was so capable. However, correspondences can be drawn, which involve Dante's four levels of interpretation, Aristotle's four levels of causation, and T.'s four levels of participation in life. What T. could do, he would do by himself, independently in a physical way. This was not much in the beginning, but it increased slowly as he mastered his bodily movement. What he could not do in a physical way, he would do with physical help, hand over hand. What he could not do, even with physical help, he would plan and advise; his family, helpers, and friends would follow his advice and implement his plans. And finally, what he could not plan and advise, he would envision and think; the people who understood him best would acknowledge his visions and thoughts, and help
him record them and share them.

T. had much greater and much earlier experience in envisioning and thinking than most "normal children." The riddle of too much consciousness assures that envisioning and thinking were what he did most, and what he did best. He was "really so good at planning," and he never tired of giving advice. The advice he gave was fair exchange for the help he obtained physically. In many ways, T.'s development speaks of relationship among the levels of participation that is very different from the one we assume is normal. And he does not appear to have developed these levels according to the normal sequence. A deviation from the norm, of this sort, invites doubt. Doubt has been the primary stance of the intellect and, indeed, of the isolated ego, since the time of Descartes. Anyone who communicates in a way that does not fit our expectations of normalcy confounds our isolated egos, and we begin, in self-defence, to doubt. Doubt projects inadequacy. The projection of inadequacy invites criticism, classification, and remediation. Instead, I would like to counsel recognition and acceptance, as steps toward a perceptive interpretation of differences.

A generalization that emerges strongly from this study is contained in the words that I used to express T.'s strongest feelings (having relaxed
the defences of my own isolated ego, and having accepted him wholly):
"integration . . . requires giving the nonverbal people the benefit of the
doubt and not denying them a voice, however they say things, whether in
sign language or in smoke signals."

The seven themes. The seven planets may be said to represent
seven moods of the soul. As such they can operate in accord or in discord.
In astrological terms, they can be positively or negatively aspected with
each other. The hope expressed in this study is that the Martial attitude
of science and technology will cease its attempt to usurp the role of the
sun as the reconciling mood among the planetary personalities. Mars has
many virtues but lacks the Sun's centrality and its radiant wholeness.

During the course of our collaboration, I maintained that the growth
of T.'s ability to communicate with the rest of the world should define the
dominant theme of the study. On the other hand, T. consistently favored
the theme of not foreclosing on the future. Thus, according to our
preagreed planetary correspondences, I had been championing a
conjunction between the Moon and Mercury, while T. had been advocating
on behalf of the Sun. Therefore, our dialogue imaginatively reproduced the
alchemical marriage of Sol and Luna and, in the process, engendered their
offspring, the Mercurial homunculus (Jung, 1980, fig. 22, p.66). Attending this marriage and assisting at this birth were Saturn (memory, Old Father Time); Jupiter (observation, anagogic overview); and Venus (integration, Philo-Sophia) (Jung, 1980, fig. 23, p. 68). The combined will of these planetary personalities raised the hope of entraining the Mars nature in the direction of "right speech," the spiritualized word, the logos (Jung, 1980, fig. 192, p.356, which figure, attributed to Jakob Bohme, contains a special prefigurement of the New Jerusalem).

*The numbers twelve and thirteen.* The number twelve is thought by some to be the symbol of the universe. Twelvefoldness is coeval with the geometric form of the circle, which is generated, as any schoolchild knows, by "stiff twin compasses . . . the fixed foot of which makes no show to move, but doth, if th' other do" (John Donne, "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning," lines 25-27). The fixed foot is the "thirteenth" entity at the center which, in a single point, shares all of the circular movement along the "twelvefold" arc of the circumference. The suggestion, which I receive from this image, is that the individuality who was T. occupied a central position in my life for a period of twelve years. During the course of our study, the individuality who was T. spoke to me
out of the manifestations of thirteen scenes, through the voice of our collaborative interpretation and, in doing so, he completed his mission of birthing his soul's realization within "the rest of the world."

*The pedagogical relationship.* T. and I were really very fortunate. We were able to work more closely together than any father and son we had ever heard of. Our close pedagogical relationship gave us more practical experience of dialogical research than most writers are able to project even in theory. We were determined to show the rest of the world that we had a special way of understanding each other and that, by the time T. was eleven years old, we had become real colleagues in the way we exchanged information and opinions and in the way we speculated on conclusions. But we also needed the readers of the study to realize that T. had his own highly developed personality, along with a rare type of intelligence, which made our relationship very special for me.

T. wanted the world to realize that he was a smart boy. The difficulty, which kept bothering me, was that our dialogic intimacy had revealed to me that T. was much more intelligent than some people would ever be able to accept. T. had, in fact, been busy for years making me a better thinker and a better writer, and increasing my level of human
understanding, just as much as I had been busy facilitating T.'s coming to earth as a thinking and communicating being. I helped T. to gain the ability to take hold of his "too much consciousness" and to express it as thoughts in words, while at the same time T. helped me increase my own consciousness of otherness. The "radical difference," said Smith (1988), "of every child, of every other person, renders our pedagogical narratives ambiguous but at the same time hopeful, because the immanent ambiguity held within them opens a space for genuine speaking, holding out the promise that something new can be said from out of the mists of the oracle of our own flesh" (quoted in Jardine, 1994, p. 190).

I was afraid that my writing was not good enough to capture the insights that were generated in the collaboration that T. and I enjoyed. T. kept reassuring me that my writing really was good, and sometimes he even asserted that certain passages were brilliant. It was incredibly hard work for me to choose exactly the right words and images to express the realizations that emerged during the course of the study. My experience resonated powerfully with Owen Barfield's sense of "the tremendous effort . . . Plato had to make . . . of turning a vague feeling into a clear thought . . . in order that we should have the simple word . . . quality. . . . It is one of the most exhausting that [humankind] is called on to exert"
(Barfield, 1988, pp. 18-19). Sometimes I felt that, like Heidegger, I was going to have to initiate a whole new relationship to language to generate the intensity to thrust new "sayings" across the gap between potential and realization:

We need a transformation of language, a transformation we can neither compel nor concoct. The transformation does not result from the fabrication of neologisms and novel phrases. The transformation touches on our relation to language. . . . Perhaps we can in some slight measure prepare for the transformation in our kinship with language" (Heidegger, 1993e, pp. 425-426).

I also needed reassurance many times from T. regarding my insights into his development, but perhaps the most important thing that I realized was that T. cared for me enough to keep me forging ahead through times of vacancy and discouragement. I had written a small poem in uncertain French to encourage T.'s return to good health after his respiratory difficulties, at the beginning of his tenth year. It had special meaning for both of us. It was this poem that he would tell me to recite three times silently, to restore my confidence:

Courage

mon coeur

de lion,

mon amour
This was only one of the ways, during the course of the study, and during the course of T.'s life, that "The child [was] father to the man" (Wordsworth, "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood," line 1).

T. was sorry that he got emotional at times, and he never wanted me to think that I was the cause, but sometimes, when he remembered how badly he had been treated by some insensitive people, he got so angry that he had to shout. Some of my narratives were so evocative for T. of the actual happenings that he felt himself bursting to return to those times and lecture the bad people who had failed to understand him. But many of the narratives made T. smile and remember the people who had encouraged him and who believed in him. His will to clarify the life experiences of a highly intelligent but non-speaking child kept him urging me to listen to his words and to get inside of the feelings that he expressed. I believed I had always been good at getting inside of T.'s feelings, but I discovered that I had never fully entered some of the aspects of his consciousness, until he helped me interpret the thirteen scenes in the ways that he did.

The rest of the world would have found it easy to interpret the
relationship between T. and me as that of a doting parent to a somewhat spoiled handicapped boy, who may have had some real intelligence but whose father always exaggerated it. T. felt entirely stifled whenever he encountered this attitude, because he recognized it as simply another form of denial: denial of both his being and his voice. I shared this sense of feeling stifled, and I would often find myself carefully understating T.'s true capabilities, in an effort to be socially acceptable. This presented a problem for T., because it was a subtle form of marginalization practised by his own father, who should have continued to be his greatest champion. During the study, I recognized this subtle point in our relationship. I apologized and openly acknowledged to T. my feelings of awe at some of his particular abilities.

T. was advanced for his age in many of his mental abilities, but he still depended on his parents to help him understand how people could limit their own horizons by denying responsibility for all of the unfortunate children of the world. I would patiently explain that people needed to learn to let another person's consciousness merge, at least momentarily, with their own, in the way that T. had taught me, so that real conversations could take place.

We were fortunate that T.'s foster mother understood his need to
work on this study with me. As T.'s companion, counsellor, and confidante, she showed perfect understanding of Jardine's pronouncement that "interpretation must be resolved to tell the children the full richness of the tales of the Earth, but it must also be resolved that the children must be brought into the telling" (Jardine, 1994, p. 121). She gave T. the courage to speak his mind without fearing that I would be hurt, if he stated frankly that sometimes even I had misunderstood him. The most fortunate thing for T. and me was Ca.'s complete acceptance of his personal drive to interpret and to understand. Although she was sometimes surprised by T.'s words, as he aired some of the secrets that he harbored in his interior landscape, she always understood that it was T. himself speaking. She always recognized T.'s distinctive voice.

M. supported T.'s attempts to become a normal boy so consistently that he knew that she was his strongest advocate. She read to him and spoke to him so softly that people could easily underestimate her part in the growth of T.'s mental abilities. He learned from her to be aware of the personal relationship a human being can have with all living things and to respect the feelings of other people at all times. Her feminine presence assured him that the earth was his personal friend. For him, his love for his "beautiful Mom" was the light at the end of every dark tunnel. At his
funeral service, she read aloud the sonnet by Shakespeare, which he had interpreted for her: Sonnet 27, "Weary with toil I haste me to bed...."

The Future

With all of the emotional attachment to an ideal that a twelve year old is capable of, T. hoped that, in the future, the earth would cease to suffer under the burden of human irresponsibility. He foresaw a time when human beings would understand that the earth was a sacred domain that housed a mystery of deep antiquity which, if respected, would provide for the needs of human beings in the centuries to come, as they learned to interpret their lives with greater spirituality. When I asked him what he thought was the goal of his life, he responded without hesitation, "Saving earth is the right answer."

But I believe now, in summary, that the hermeneutic circle is the central theme of this study, because it forever renews the hope of a future. As I write now, in "the empty presence of the student's absense" (Aoki, 1992, p. 26), T.'s death would appear ultimately to have foreclosed upon his personal future and upon the future of our pedagogical
relationship, but I know that he would want me to refute that assumption. As T. would have said, I will refute it easily.

If T. had been born in a different way, with different or less severe handicaps (whether physical, emotional, or social), his life might not have inspired so many people to examine their own levels of determination to complete their personal "missions"—a word T. liked to use when talking about his need to deliver messages of reassurance and hope to other people (see Appendix EE). As it turned out, in his twelfth year T. was able to prove to himself that he was powerful enough to get one message across very strongly: "Life is a precious gift." T. was telling the rest of the world, in the words of the motto of his Celtic namesakes, to "neither fear nor wish for the last day."

His life was "astounding," but not in the way most people think of when they contemplate worldly success, for in the sense of his favorite biblical passage (1 Corinthians 1: 27), T. was also "confounding." He said, "No one should make the decision for another person about whether their life is worth living or not." T. would now further say that to decide that a person's life has not been worth living, or to assume that a person's work is over at the moment of death, is just one more way in which people try to "foreclose on the future."
In our view, the hermeneutic circle will not be foreclosed upon in this way. For T.'s twelfth birthday, I bought him a Philadelphia Eagles cap. It was green and grey, one of his favorite colour combinations. We explored a common understanding of the symbolism of T.'s new cap: The green represented the earth; the grey represented the spirit world where T. could soar, in spirit form, as an eagle. We both knew that the eagle was a solar bird and that, in Shakespeare's day, it stood among birds at the top of the great chain of being. We knew that its symbolism had been corrupted on this continent, through its use as an emblem of materialist power. We feared that one day the eagle would be an endangered species, like the condor. We understood that, according to the prophetic vision of William Blake and the idealism of the founding fathers of the United States of America, a utopian democracy was intended on this continent, but that its establishment had enforced near genocide upon the indigenous peoples, whose spirituality was so akin to the masonic beliefs of the founding fathers. We interpreted Philadelphia, the name of the original capital city of the United States (originally thirteen states in number), as "Love of Delphi," and we recalled that the inscription above the entrance to the Delphic oracle was "Know Thyself." I also informed T. that Philadelphia was the name that Rudolf Steiner had given to the state of
human society, which would occur in the distant future, when the words of
the Logos would prevail upon the earth: "A new commandment I give unto
you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one
another" (John 13: 34).

Probably, if T. were helping me write the concluding words of our
study, he would want to propose a final image. The hermeneutic circle, he
might say, is the same as the zodiac, the same as the round table, and the
same as the Holy Grail. He would want me instantly to approve of this
"spiritual visualization," but a skeptical father would have to supply
proof. I recommend reading the following quotation, then reading the
opening paragraphs of the introduction to this study, and finally reading
T.'s essay, "A New Jerusalem at Camelot" (see Appendix P) to determine
whether T. was right, when he said in his twelfth year, "I have so much to
give."

The Grail is the symbolic representation of what [human beings] will
discover about [themselves] and about the real meaning of life in
[their] search for the truth. The Grail is the essence of all that is,
and is yet to be manifested. It can therefore never be fully
comprehended, since life in the Cosmos will never end. At our
limited level of understanding, the Grail can be regarded
symbolically as the perfect blueprint of what [humankind] is meant
to be at the summit of [their] evolution on the planet earth
(Delaforge, 1987, p. 19).

As for T.'s last word in our study, perhaps it should be the full text
of his letter of affirmation, which brought him so much love in response from "the rest of the world":

My name is T. I am eleven years old and have really severe cerebral palsy. The Lattimer case in Saskatchewan has caused me a great deal of unhappiness and worry over the past few weeks. I feel very strongly that all children are valuable and deserve to live full and complete lives. No one should make the decision for another person about whether their life is worth living or not.

I have a friend who had C.P. and he decided that life was too hard and too painful. So he really let himself die. I knew he was leaving this world and letting himself dwell in the spiritual world. I told him that I understood that the spiritual world was really compelling, but that life was worth fighting for. I had to fight to live when I was very sick. The doctors said I wouldn't live long, but I knew I had so much to accomplish still.

I have to fight pain all the time. When I was little life was pain, I couldn't remember no pain. My foster Mom Ca. helped me learn to manage and control my pain. Now my life is so full of joy. There isn't time enough in the day for me to learn and experience all I wish to. I have a family and many friends who love me. I have a world of knowledge to discover. I have so much to give.

I can't walk or talk or feed myself. But I am not "suffering from cerebral palsy." I use a wheelchair, but I am not "confined to a wheelchair." I have pain but I do not need to be "put out of my misery."

My body is not my enemy. It is that which allows me to enjoy Mozart, experience Shakespeare, savor a bouillabaisse feast, and cuddle my Mom. Life is a precious gift. It belongs to the person to whom it was given. Not to her parents, not to the state. Tracy's life was hers "to make of what she could." My life is going to be astounding.
References


Appendix A: The Definition of Handicap

[Facilitated by Ca.; T. ten years old.]

Dear S., This is T. I really thought your letter was interesting. In a different letter you said, "If I weren't crippled then I know the world wouldn't be a big enough place for me." I think you should know the definition of handicap: "n. race or contest in which the competitor's chances are equaled by starts; conditions so imposed." In other words to keep some people from having an unfair advantage.

I am T., a boy, and probably gifted, and ten years old, and a trickster, and I use a wheelchair, and a speech synthesizer. I am not sick and not a victim. My body is not my enemy; it is that which lets me experience cuddles with my Mom, bouillabaise feasts, Mozart's music, and Shakespeare's plays. I really don't have time to feel sorry for myself, or to indulge other people's ignorance. Take care S., T.
Appendix B: T.'s speech to the School Board, January 25, 1994

[Facilitated by L.; typed by L.; all editing by T.; T. ten and three-quarters years old.]

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am a student at [my new school] and as you can see I am physically disabled, but not lacking in intelligence. Prior to registering at [my new school], I was "integrated" at [my old] school where I was allowed to be a member of the grade three class. Unfortunately I was really functioning at a high school level in English and Math but I could not get the principal and the teacher to realize that I needed more intellectual stimulation than the grade three program could provide. I was incredibly frustrated.

Finally a friend of the family suggested that [my new school] would be a school where I could study whatever I wanted. I was thrilled at the idea of visiting [my new school]. Well, I was equally thrilled when I saw such happy children never worrying about being yelled at by teachers and never worrying about having to complete an assignment before a bell. I told my parents I was not going to go to school if I could not go to [my new school]. I am grateful to Mr. K. and Mr. M. for allowing me to bring my teacher's aide with me to [my new school], and for really saying that I would be able to attend when I had enough energy and was not feeling ill. That took away a lot of my worries about school.

Now I am a full-fledged member of the [my new] school community. I am saying full-fledged because [my new school] has given new wings to my intellect and new wings to my heart. Intellectually I am really stimulated because my teachers let me study really important topics like Utopian Societies, Shakespearean Sonnets, the History of Astronomy, and Math that really prepares me for Calculus. My current projects are understanding the Victorian consciousness by reading Charles Dickens, and comparing the revenge themes in two Shakespearean dramas: Hamlet and The Tempest. I sit in on high school classes and study French with my teachers' aide who also tries to keep up with me in Math.

But truly my favourite aspect of the [new school] experience is the social aspect. At [my new school] I am allowed to play with kindergarten kids, to intellectualize with high school students, and to tease every single person in the school. I converse daily with teachers and visiting
parents. A Community Conflicts Committee functions at [my new school] to make rules, to consider violations, to resolve conflicts, and to give punishments if necessary. My favourite activity is to sit in on the CCC and really talk about how to solve problems concerning students' relations to students and teachers. And I am accepted as a very wise judge of situations. The CCC is the best way I have ever seen of coming to terms with the rules and the structure of the school.

The inclusion of handicapped children is a topic I hear a lot about in both my homes. When my father talks about inclusion he always tells the listener that he has never witnessed so caring a teaching staff. He seldom says that I am easy to include because he understands that I have very high expectations for total inclusion in every aspect of a school's life. I have been raised to expect to do everything that normal children do and more, so when I say that [my new school] includes me in everything, I am not exaggerating. I am active in every aspect of school life including the Community Conflicts Committee, high school academic classes, and conversations with everyone who visits the school. Well, I guess the most thrilling thing that I can tell you is that soon [my school] is going to be acting out my play called "T. Wants a New School", about how I felt when I was still frustrated about my schooling. But the best part is that "T." will be played by an able-bodied actor from the school. Well really, think about it. Isn't that reverse inclusion? And doesn't that make you think maybe this is a wonderful school?

Finally I will sum up by saying that my school is [my new school]. I have been in several other schools in this district and I have met many wonderful people in them. But if I had to choose one school in the world to recommend to my friends, whether they are handicapped, or really too smart for a normal school, or somehow don't really fit in, I would choose [my new school] over any school I know about. I hope to go to [my new school] for many years, and eventually to graduate from my school, [my new school].
Appendix C: Four Kinds of Causes

15-May-93 [Facilitated by Ca.; T. ten years old.]
Everybody, this is T. I have been really busy at school so this letter is late. I have actually been practising a part in a play, "The Barretts of Wimpole Street." Elizabeth Barrett Browning is really a wonderful poet. I have been thinking about quantum physics and determinism and causality. I think F. was right when he said, "We believe the current trend in physical/philosophy is to refute the determinist/materialist idea on these grounds." Probably quantum physics will make us think of cause and effect and actual time in a different way. Aristotle talked about four kinds of causes. In his model the actual cause of an event doesn't have to happen before the event in time. Actually a cause is sometimes the final state of a system. This is not determinism because I think beings with consciousness have free will. So individual wave/particles will behave in such a manner so an eventual state in a system will happen. That doesn't mean the mind can't actually cause the system to change. These ideas are still a bit confusing; I am still trying to organize them in my mind.

I really plan to understand the maths of quantum physics as soon as I can. I really want to work on that, but since I am only ten, I think I can probably do some philosophical speculation in the meantime. Probably I will be learning calculus by next year. I have to finish my high school math first. I think that will probably take a few months. So I will probably be talking about this stuff more. Thank you for your interest. T.
Appendix D: When Real Science Happens There Are Paradigm Shifts

06-Jul-93  [Facilitated by Ca.; T. ten years old.]
To M. and R. and G. and everybody else. This is T. I am really thinking that you don't understand the reason people like me visit this forum. I can't actually do science because I am only ten and I am physically handicapped. Visiting this forum gives me an opportunity to participate in scientific discussions and observe science really happening. When I first joined in on this forum some people talked to me with real generosity and greatness of heart. Others didn't. K. was one of the generous people. I think that is how all scientists should be to other seekers of truth and knowledge. You don't have to agree with what everyone else always says but everyone should be treated with respect. Some of the recent comments about K. have been unsolicited attacks in threads that he has not even been participating in.

I am going to write an essay soon about how I think science happens in society. The important thing to remember is that when real science happens there are paradigm shifts and people get confused. But people shouldn't get rude and angry. Signed a student of science, T.
Appendix E: The Local Expression of the Spiritual World

[Facilitated by Ca.]
Dear B, This is T. Thank you for your really good letter. I am really thinking lots about spirituality and the cosmos. I really believe that there is something about us that exists independent of our physical bodies. And that something spiritual is inherently part of the universe. I think this is something like Platonic forms, existing within the universe but being separate as well. This is what I call the spiritual world, and therefore, the ultimate entropy doesn't have to mean the end of the universe. Probably life is the local expression of the spiritual world. So life probably exists all over the universe. I will write A. today. She seems like a very smart girl. T.
24-May-95  [Facilitated by Ca.; three days before T.'s death.]
Dear B., So really some important things to talk about: the Fermat test for prime numbers doesn't prove a number is prime. Could there be a number that you really thought was prime but there was no way of proving it?

So really B., that twin prime thing: either there are an infinite number of twin primes because there are an infinite number of numbers, or something about the nature of twin primes precludes there being a pair above a certain N. So unless someone found the real mathematical proof of that last statement there would be no way of knowing whether there is an infinite number of twin primes because not finding a pair doesn't mean a pair doesn't exist in really big numbers. That right?

So B., do you think mankind really invented numbers or just the notation system and numbers really exist in a Platonic sense? Are we discovering real truths about the universe when we discover new mathematical proofs?

So B., this really is fun. Your friend, T. Say hello to that good M.
Appendix G: People Shouldn't Make Assumptions

[Facilitated by Ca., T. eleven years old.] Really I am working on helping the world understand that children with disabilities are really the same as other children and need love and a good education. Really people shouldn't make assumptions on what someone is like based on what they look like. I hope that by showing people that those assumptions are wrong about me that they will learn that assumptions about people based on religion and race and sexual orientation are really wrong too. I am doing this by talking to people, and making speeches, and writing articles for newspapers. This is really my mission. And really if one segment of the population, like really people with disabilities, are considered second class citizens, then that makes it easier for people to start treating other segments of the population that way too.
Appendix H: Proprioception

[Facilitated by Ca.; T. twelve years old.]

This is T. I am twelve years old and have really severe CP. So, my Ca. has read some messages to me from this actual list, and there are a couple of topics I would like to comment on. First, I like this new word, "proprioception." I actually have been working to increase this sense in myself for many years, actually since Ca. became my foster Mom. The person who said that this was the root issue with CP was a little bit right and a little bit wrong. Having more proprioception doesn't really cure the CP or even get rid of the spasticity but I have learned that having greater awareness of my body and where everything is has helped me learn to consciously relax my muscles when I really concentrate. Also, I can tell my Ca. where a real pain is when I really concentrate on my body. This is really important because when I was younger I couldn't actually distinguish where the pain was coming from. Ca. really taught me how to locate the pain so she could help me learn to manage the pain.

The other really wonderful improvement I have really discovered from having increased proprioception is I am getting more control over my muscles all the time. So first getting really better head control, so I am trying to learn a head switch, and now also really good movement in the fingers of my left hand so getting a new switch that works really well.

A father was asking whether to vigorously seek speech therapy services for his little boy with CP. I want to say that that really is so important. But not just any actual speech therapist. You need to find someone who has experience with augmentative and alternative communication. A speech therapist unlocked my world when she helped me to communicate when I was five. I really wished she could have helped me when I was younger. Being locked in my mind for so many years was so incredibly frustrating.

Well that is really all I wanted to say, but I would be happy to answer any questions about being a boy with CP. Yours truly, T.
Appendix I: I Am Really a Conscious Breather

[Facilitated by Ca.; T. twelve years old.]
Dear M., My name is T. I am twelve years old and have CP. My foster Mom Ca. read me some messages about how you are really in charge of your health like I am. I really learned to take charge of my health after nearly dying of pneumonia. I wanted to tell you some of the things I do to make sure I stay strong and healthy.

My doctor says that I am really a conscious breather. That means that my lungs expand deeper when I am awake and really concentrating on breathing with part of my mind. My oxygen saturation really drops at night, but since I recovered from being sick, not so much that I need oxygen at night. I use oxygen mostly when I eat and when I am digesting. The oxygen really helps me digest better and get more energy from my food.

Also it is really important to manage my energy. Sometimes I feel really good and want to celebrate and giggle and stay awake long hours. Or I'm having a really good intellectual discussion with my father, or watching a documentary on T.V. But it is really important for me to monitor my energy levels and rest when my body tells me that's important. That keeps me from getting overtired and really lowering my immune system.

So M., I would really like to write to you about being an independent boy in charge of your own health. Yours truly, T.
Appendix J: All Children Are Really Children First

[Facilitated by Ca.; undated]
Dear Mr. F., I really don't mind having a public conversation about this. Really the most important thing for you to understand is that all children are really children first. The thing about having CP doesn't really make me have different needs than other children. The thing that really makes me different is that I didn't communicate for the first five years of my life. That's really true for some famous writers who have CP as well, like Christopher Nolan. You should really try to find things written by other writers with CP. The thing about not being able to communicate, and then communicating really, really slowly only with certain people, meant that I spent a lot of time in my head. So my favorite things are playing with words and numbers and ideas. And really a good Ca. and my Dad, L., understand this and help me find new ideas to play with all the time.

The other experience that I have had which makes me different than most children, is really nearly dying. And being told I wouldn't live long. Most children don't have to deal with thoughts of their own mortality before they are actually ten. I have really had to think a lot about death, and life, and spirituality, and what I believe. Really love is the most important thing, and that's final.

I suppose being gifted is different than most children's experience, but talking to other gifted children has made me realize that I am more like other gifted children than I am different. Really, the experiences of people not believing my intelligence are a bit worse for me, since people actually thought I was mentally handicapped. But most gifted children have the experience of having their intelligence doubted sometimes.

I will write more next time about my actual likes and dislikes and stuff. I really want to know more about writing and how you write a short story. I am really going to be a writer and have written lots of things, but never any fiction. I am really thinking I want to write a novel like Dickens wrote: in installments. Do you think it is better to start with short stories? Your new friend, T.
Appendix K: Soak Up Knowledge like a Sponge

24-Apr-93  [Facilitated by Ca.; T. ten years old.]
This message is to all the parents who have been talking on this thread. I am ten years old and probably gifted. I am physically handicapped and couldn't communicate until I was five. I got my early education and "intensive learning" by being exposed to wonderful literature and music by my loving parents. I couldn't perform because I couldn't talk. I am probably better off because I could just soak up knowledge like a sponge and keep my ears open for new experiences. I think providing a child with a stimulating environment with many things to experience (and if he is lucky actually explore) is more important than expecting a child to demonstrate knowledge. Based on my demonstrated knowledge I was diagnosed mentally handicapped. My Dad (who is a high school teacher) thinks I am operating on a grade twelve level in English and grade eleven in math. But no one ever pushed me. I just ask for what I want to learn next. Now I actually want to learn quantum physics so my foster mother is reading me really wonderful books about that. I am in an ungraded school with children of all ages. I think if I were not physically handicapped I would want to be with children closer to my own age so I could play with them. My actual intellectual peers would run too fast. So parents need to understand that they should give their children love and attention and interesting things to experience. Being gifted does not mean being able to identify the actual presidents but being the best you can be at something you really love. T.
Appendix L: Communicate Your Frustrations

31-Mar-93  [Facilitated by A.; T almost ten.]
Hello J. and J., I probably want to find out how you are doing, J. My probable friend A. is helping me write this letter today. Some mistakes will be likely. Just teasing my gullible friend A. J., I really would like to hear from you. You can tell about your springtime now or any topic you may want to discuss. I have many wonderful people in my life and I am feeling really, really happy. Yes, but there was a time in my life when I wasn't so happy probably because people did not understand my ability to communicate. There are still times today when I have many worries and frustrations but a good L. (my Dad) helps me with my worries and Ca. helps me too. My mother is also really, really good at helping me feel good and relaxed. I hope you are able to communicate your frustrations to your family so they can help you too. I think about you, J., lots! I sometimes worry about you at night when I am supposed to be sleeping. Write to me soon; I really like your letters. Love T.
Appendix M: A New Ethical System for the Next Millennium

26-Nov-94 [Facilitated by Ca.; T. eleven years old.]
Dear T., First I want to say that the first chapter of your book really was fascinating. I am working on a master's thesis with my father. Much of what we are discussing is pertinent to the themes in your first chapter: the importance of joy and its relationship to suffering; the need to awaken the soul of people; the phenomenological approach to understanding how people learn; and really the need for a new ethical system for the next millenium. I will write more to you about this after discussing more with my father. I also want to say your . . . chapter helped me deal with some insecurities . . .

Thanks for sharing my letter with different people. I really am not ready for actual television yet. I want to be a bit older, I think. But don't think I'm not appreciating your interest . . . Bye now, your friend, T.
Appendix N: Evil and Free Will

[Facilitated by Ca.; T. twelve years old.]

I want to write about the bombing in Oklahoma City. It is very hard for me to understand how something like that could happen. Here in Canada we don't have a fetish about guns and bombs. How can someone do such an evil act? If there is a Supreme Being how can he allow something like that to happen? I think that the answer can be found in our free will. The Creator gave us free will so our lives would be meaningful. We have the ability to create or to destroy. We can create a beautiful work of art or make a real mess. Without the gift of free will we would only be able to color between the lines.

by T. J.
Appendix O: I Know I Have Free Will

04-Nov-94 [Facilitated by Ca.; T. eleven years old.]
Dear Mr. S., "I'd still like a medical expert to answer whether this has actually occurred in a paralysed-from-birth human."

My name is T. I am eleven. I can really answer that question for you. I have Cerebral Palsy. I had no conscious control over my body when I was born and it didn't develop until I was four. But I have very early memories and can remember making choices about feelings and beliefs and ideas much younger than that.

As to free will, as someone who has nearly died, and gone through the Hamlet dilemma (To be or not to be) I know I have free will. Just as I know that I have a personal relationship with the transcendental. But then I am a mystic. Yours truly, T. J.
Appendix P: The New Jerusalem at Camelot

[Facilitated by L.; typed by L.; all editing by T.; T. ten years old.]

Golgonooza is the name William Blake gave to his Utopia or New Jerusalem. Christ held his last supper at a round table in old Jerusalem. Camelot is the name King Arthur gave to the city he designed to hold his round table. The connection between these three things is the Zodiac. A very strange statement you are probably thinking but I genuinely can explain the connection. The way to connect these statements is to visualize the spiritual forms of their symbolic contents. The reality behind the forms is that they are literally the same.

The first coming of Christ was a very special time in the history of the world. The reason he came to the earth was to establish the actual rules for a new society. The society would be ruled by the spiritual world. Golgonooza was William Blake's name for this new society that Christ wished to establish on the earth. Blake believed that Christ indicated a new faculty for mankind, the power of imagination. Through actually using this power mankind could build Golgonooza. The root of the word, Golgonooza, comes from a Greek word meaning "the human skull." This proves that Blake's Golgonooza was inside his human skull and born with his imagination. This also shows that utopia is a spiritual and imaginative responsibility mankind has received from Christ.

The second coming of Christ will bring the City of God to earth and control people's behaviors by utopian ideals. I think Blake was really anticipating this event when he wrote the poem, "The New Jerusalem." The connection between the round table and the New Jerusalem is the giant Albion. Probably I should explain this connection more thoroughly. The knights of the round table were King Arthur's decision-making body for establishing a utopian society at Camelot. The round table attempts to re-establish the rites of the last supper at Camelot. This is really why King Arthur and the knights go on their quest for the Holy Grail, the cup used by Christ at the last supper to transform wine into his blood. Certainly the shapes of the round table and the table of the last supper were taken from the circle of the zodiac. The twelve disciples and the twelve most important knights of the round table represent the twelve types of human beings represented by the signs of the zodiac. The death of King Arthur finds him sleeping in a glass cave awaiting his call back to
life to restore Camelot in England. The giant Albion in Blake's personal mythology also represents the rising of the once and future king to bring the utopian society represented by Blake's New Jerusalem.

The Zodiac is a miniature version of the cosmos. The twelve individuals represented by the signs are the twelve aspects of the divine personality. King Arthur and the giant Albion are really the same divine figure as Christ. So the relationship between these figures is their common representation of the divine on earth ruling a utopian society.

This paragraph is about my own thoughts regarding Christ and the round table. I am now going to explain the connection between the Zodiac and Christ. Actually the two are the same. The Zodiac represents Christ divided by twelve. Christ must be regarded as having twelve divisions in his divine personality. Did Christ really come to save the earth from man's sins? No. I really feel that a spiritual analysis of the zodiac reveals that Christ came to unify the human personality. The real spiritual analysis shows that King Arthur was the same figure trying to unify the human personality at Camelot. And the giant Albion in Blake's mythology represents the same "human form divine." The same figure appears again in twentieth century literature as the Finnegan of James Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*. Utopia means a state that unifies the human personality. A utopia needs to unify every human quality that arises in the community.

The real connection between Christ and the Zodiac is established by the paragraph above. Probably I will now explain further about the giant Albion's connection with the risen Christ. The giant Albion represents the human form divine and that means the twelve signs reconciled in one body. The Christ is risen only because he represents all the signs. Furthermore Christ is only fully risen when a utopian society is established on the earth. Therefore, a utopian society needs to include all the aspects of the human condition to be truly utopian.

The real author of the utopian society at Camelot is Merlin. Merlin, a powerful magician, is the representative of the spiritual world who determines the divine king. Merlin's education of the boy Arthur actually goes through every sign of the Zodiac. When Arthur takes the sword from the stone and becomes the divine king, he proves that he has reconciled the twelve aspects of humanity. Since Arthur already has every aspect of the human condition within himself, he easily attracts the special knights who represent those qualities, just as Christ easily attracts the disciples. Finally the quest for the Holy Grail represents the attempt by King Arthur and his knights to establish the identity between the round table and
Christ's last supper.

St. Augustine wrote about the City of God and contrasted it to the City of Man. The City of God is an identical city to Blake's New Jerusalem. The definition of utopia used by St. Augustine refers to making the city of man an exact copy of the City of God. Therefore a real utopia is the New Jerusalem established on earth. The Book of Revelation refers to Jerusalem as the City of God and that is the city that Christ will establish after his second coming. King Arthur will also come a second time and re-establish Camelot as the City of God. The first Camelot was modelled on the City of God but at best it was only the city of man copied from the City of God.

There are really two definitions of utopia here then: the real City of God, the heavenly Jerusalem established on earth; and a copy of the heavenly city—in reality a better version of the city of man. This defines the difference between the first Camelot and the second Camelot of the once and future king, Arthur.

The New Jerusalem is a city of twelve gates. They correspond actually with the disciples, the twelve major knights of the round table, the signs of the Zodiac, and the twelve tribes of Israel who represent the twelve types of human beings. How is the real utopia different from the false utopia of the city of man? The real utopia, actually called the New Jerusalem, has no night and day because the illumination comes directly from God. The symbolic meaning of this absence of night and day is the absence of evil. Until the twelve aspects of the human form divine are combined in the New Jerusalem, or Golgonooza as Blake said, there can only be the false utopia of the better city of man, governed by a few of the signs but not all in harmony. Blake said, "I shall not cease from mental fight, nor shall my sword sleep in my hand, till we have built Jerusalem", meaning that his imagination is building Golgonooza within his own human skull. The illumination of the New Jerusalem, which has no night or day, comes from the human imagination or vision, and that is God-given.

Likely the divine king is the most important clue to understanding utopia. The divine king contains the ideas of the giant Albion, the risen Christ, and King Arthur in one. The education of King Arthur shows that the divine king fulfilled Blake's desire to build Golgonooza within his own skull. Really having built this internal Golgonooza he sets about to establish the social utopia in the land that is identical to himself. Now it becomes very obvious that the divine king is receiving the inspiration for utopia from above. The blueprint is in the heavens and that is really the Zodiac. The king must be open to the heavenly inspiration to bring the will
of God to earth. The Golgonooza that Blake spoke of is really the artist acting as the modern version of the divine king. The actual utopia is the divine vision brought to earth.

The very last thing I would like to point out about the Zodiac is that the twelve signs together represent a complete personality when living a full life. The real truth is that a person living a full life can actually build Golgonooza by becoming a complete personality able to experience the world through imagination as laid out by Blake who said, "The human imagination is the risen Christ." And so Arthur's return is really going to happen when humanity gains the faculty of imagination and then the round table will actually govern the earth.
Appendix Q: The Revenge Themes in *Hamlet* and *The Tempest* Regarded as Evolutionary

[When T. wrote the following essay he was eleven years old. He completed his final editing exactly a year before his death. The essay was the culmination of months of study, which started in the autumn and continued through Christmas and into the spring. He watched the video tapes of the two plays several times each and requested that I read sections of both plays to him. He questioned me about all the possible interpretations that I might be able to tell him from memory. In addition, he requested information from his internet sources. Ca. and T. and I had an energetic discussion about Aristotle's view of tragedy after a person on the internet suggested that Shakespeare was purely an Aristotelian; T.'s personal "refutation" of that idea appears in the essay. He asked me to read certain texts and to report their contents to him, to read certain essays about poetics onto audio tape for him, and to look up certain materials on seventeenth century Rosicrucianism and read them to him. As usual, he piqued my interest and I started noticing materials that appeared to have relevance to T.'s efforts, but as usual he declared, at a certain point, that he had all the information he needed and that I should stop trying to influence his thinking. I facilitated the entire essay over a period of approximately a month; then I typed it onto a laptop computer. Its current form represents T.'s own efforts at editing. He made the final judgements regarding every aspect of the essay.]

I am involved in a type of research that is essentially new to Shakespeare studies. The method is quite simple but the results are astonishing. I will explain the methodology as I reveal my findings and, beginning with the conclusion, I will retrace the steps that led me to my main thesis: Shakespeare was an initiate of a very deep wisdom tradition that worked together with Rosicrucian thought to solve the riddle of human spiritual evolution on this planet. My essential conclusion is that *The Tempest* establishes for humankind the law of forgiveness that *Hamlet* failed to realize fully in his lifetime. The way I will show this to be true involves an analysis of the revenge themes in *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*.

In reading the two plays in succession, first *Hamlet* then *The Tempest*, certain spirit-based symbols emerge. These I will reveal in the
course of this essay. The symbols of the first play, *Hamlet*, are overlayed by the symbols of *The Tempest*. The result is a grand vision of Shakespeare's thought world that gives me spiritual access to his life history. From this imaginative vision I am able to deduce the sources of his intuitions and inspirations regarding the future of humankind on the planet earth. Astonishing as my conclusions may seem, they form a great coherency in my imagination and that is my main test of real truth. In essence I am imagining a life for Shakespeare that is consistent with the wisdom he reveals in his plays.

The Shakespearean criticism of the past saw *Hamlet* as a tragic hero in the Aristotelian manner. A tragic flaw of Procrastination is imputed to *Hamlet*, as is an act of hubris when he decides not to send his uncle's soul to heaven. The pity and fear occur when *Hamlet* is plotted against by Laertes and Claudius and the catharsis occurs when the death of the young *Hamlet* follows the deaths of the Queen and Laertes and Claudius. Aristotle's poetics, however, emerged from a pagan religious tradition into modern thought. Shakespeare was not perpetuating this particular tradition.

Shakespeare revealed his initiate status progressively. When he was young he visited with the witches in the hills around Stratford. When he was a young man he understood the medicine of the local doctors. They were able to solve complex medical problems by consulting the stars, and their knowledge of herbology supplied them with precisely the correct remedy for the patient.

When Shakespeare was almost ready to journey to London he met a man who initiated him into the Siriun Mysteries. Shakespeare's love of the actual countryside led him on many rambles through the Greenwood or Sherwood Forest (the name for any patch of virgin forest surviving in England to Shakespeare's day). It was more than chance that led to his meeting with an old man in a hood. Will Shakespeare never doubted that he had met Merlin, freed from his prison inside an ancient oak by Will's very presence in the wood. Their relationship lasted for seven years, ending shortly before Will's departure for London.

When he arrived in London, William Shakespeare, the young actor, made the acquaintance of many actors, poets, and playwrights who soon revealed to him their acquaintance with the works of Plato and the Renaissance Neo-Platonists from Italy. They also were aware of a certain teaching that later was styled "Rosicrucian Thought". When Shakespeare realized that many of the ideas were similar to those in the Siriun Mysteries he began to inquire about who was the source of these ideas. He
soon discovered that a certain "John Dee" was known in Elizabeth's court as a great initiate. Soon Shakespeare approached Dee and impressed the older man with his knowledge. Dee introduced Shakespeare to several important persons in the court and soon Shakespeare had a patron. At the same time he met Richard Burbage and presented him with a scheme for getting rich: build a theatre and present a long series of plays based on well known plots from history, the classics, Italian literature (and Shakespeare's own imagination) which would attract several types of viewer at the same time.

Shakespeare suddenly got enough money for the theatre without revealing his source. It is mysterious to this day. However, Burbage, being aware of the intellectual ferment of the day, the love of the common people for sensational violence, the love of the English speaking people for word play and poetic verse, and the speculations of the large number of spiritually advanced men and women who surrounded Elizabeth in her court (shrewd business man that he was), decided to rely on Shakespeare to make good on his promise to entertain the city of London. A partnership was born that would alter the history of the world during the next four hundred years, and will continue to do so in the far distant future, because Shakespeare encoded in his plays important clues to the spiritual unfolding of a new form of society which will eventually solve the problems currently threatening the earth.

William Shakespeare began with a rehearsal of everything that the poets and playwrights of his time believed was true. He retold the works of earlier authors in ways that revealed the essential knowledge of the Renaissance. When he realized that some of the early plays were getting to be repetitious he began experimenting with Sirion thought. So by the time he wrote Hamlet he abandoned any pretense of keeping in line with Renaissance Neo-Platonism and gave the world the first Sirion drama. Sirion themes figured in all of his later plays, and finally in The Tempest he revealed the complete Sirion mysteries.

Hamlet reveals an essentially Sirion myth. The old king is killed by his evil brother, who subsequently marries the queen. The young prince, the queen's son, is visited by the old King's ghost and charged with revenging his death. The revenge is completed and the son reigns in the old king's stead. That's really a Sirion myth, wherein the old king is Osiris, the Queen is Isis, the uncle is the evil god Set, and the prince is the young Horus. This Egyptian retelling of a Sirion myth is essentially the plot Shakespeare chose for Hamlet. Really, the embellishments that Shakespeare supplies reveal the extent to which he was able to tell his
audience that the problem with renaissance thought was that it attempted to recapitulate Aristotle's insights about the drama.

Hamlet is revenging his father's death, at least that is what everybody thinks, after procrastinating through most of the play, and finally getting the energy to follow through after witnessing his mother's death; in fact, it is not Hamlet's revenging his father's death that is the point that Shakespeare wants to make but Hamlet's abandoning that revenge to place himself in God's hands. He does this by saying to Horatio, "Readiness is all..." and he proves he is not an evil man by offering to exchange forgiveness with Laertes and then by letting Laertes continue to plot Hamlet's death. When finally Claudius dies at Hamlet's hand, the guilt does not fall on Hamlet because Claudius is really taken by God for his crimes against heaven. This happens in answer to Claudius' prayer for forgiveness. God's answer to the prayers of Claudius and Hamlet is to cleanse the kingdom of the old blood feud, and its entire history of guilt, by using Hamlet and Claudius as the agents of his will. The Siriun Mysteries taught Shakespeare that prayers are always answered; in this instance Hamlet's prayer for revenge is answered in Claudius' prayer for forgiveness. This is no facile irony on Shakespeare's part. The two prayers combined to present God with the solution: an end to ancestral guilt.

The guilt that Hamlet takes to his grave, that remains unpalatable to even Shakespeare, is the death of Ophelia. She is the innocent victim of her love for Hamlet. The fact that she carries his child before he kills her father and then goes to England is easily proved. Examining the herbs she collects in her madness and carefully reading the verses she recites to her brother prove that she aborted the fetus before drowning herself. The sacrifice of innocents is a recurring theme in revenge stories throughout history. The Siriun mysteries really foresaw a day when innocents need no longer be sacrificed to the bloody handed ghosts of the guilty. When Hamlet declares to Horatio that he should "draw his breath in pain" to tell Hamlet's story, that gives us reason for reassurance that the ghosts of the innocents, Ophelia and her unborn child, will not return greedy for revenge because Horatio's conscience will intervene on their behalf.

Note: (When Horatio really agrees to tell Hamlet's story he takes responsibility for forgiving Hamlet, for forgiving the entire royal family of Denmark, for forgiving Ophelia's family, and so by extension forgiving the wrongs of the entire race including the judgements of the great judges of the Bible who responded to crimes in kind).

Shakespeare was an initiate. A simple proof of this statement
resides in the fact that the drama, Hamlet, shows a profound evolution beyond the drama MacBeth. MacBeth shows the reestablishment of a divine king at the end when the evil usurper MacBeth is dethroned by Malcolm, the rightful inheritor of Duncan's throne. The ending of Hamlet is essentially different from this formula. Hamlet realizes that he is dying and says the election lights on Fortinbras, thinking that will reestablish order in the kingdom. However, this ironically will not happen. The installation of Fortinbras as the King of Denmark duplicates the problem rather than solving it as Fortinbras is receiving the same ancient burden of guilt as young Hamlet because their fathers attempted to unsurp each other's kingdoms. In fact, it was not even the whole kingdoms they were wagering their lives against: Old Fortinbras was killed by Old Hamlet for a small portion of the Norwegian kingdom. It really makes no difference that Fortinbras didn't have to revenge his father; the intention was to murder Hamlet not to eulogize him. It is not by accident that Fortinbras marches right into the Danish Court accompanied by armed soldiers! Properly Fortinbras should have forgiven the Hamlet family and returned peacefully to Norway, as, properly, Hamlet should have told Fortinbras to go home and advised Horatio to reign in the kingdom as the enlightened one receiving the blessing of God as indicated by the fact that Horatio is essentially Horus, the risen one.

Note: Horatio = Horus, the reconstituted Osiris who is appointed by Isis, the queen of heaven. His job is to reign over the human race and establish the new world order and to assure that the human race takes its next step in spiritual evolution. Centuries in advance of Christ, Horus was spreading the essential message of forgiveness of one's enemies.

Prospero, in The Tempest continues the story of Horus. If Prospero represents anyone in Shakespeare's personal mythology, it is Horatio in middle and old age. Horatio to me, and I think to Shakespeare, represents the refined, scholarly, spiritually advanced aspect of Hamlet. The tendencies shown by Hamlet and Horatio prior to the murder of the elder Hamlet are the same tendencies shown by Prospero prior to his eviction from Milan by his own evil brother Antonio.

Both Hamlet and Prospero actually went away from their duties and neglected their kingdoms in favour of retirement and study; the results were that Hamlet's father was murdered and the rulership of Milan was usurped by Antonio. The ideal of a Rosicrucian was to participate fully in life: retirement to the study was deemed a fault; deeds as well as faith were required of the developing human being.
Note: Prospero = Old Hamlet + (Hamlet + Horatio), revealing that Prospero is Osiris + Horus combined until Prospero confers an initiation upon Ferdinand. In the play, Antonio is Set. And Miranda is Isis reincarnated in better form.

Shakespeare understood the Rosicrucian ideal very well. He was familiar with many recipients of the Rosicrucian initiation; in fact they were his close friends. Though it was a secret society that had not yet declared itself publicly the name Rosicrucian was actually already in use. Because Shakespeare recognized many similar motifs in Rosicrucian thought with those of the Siriun mysteries which he recognized from his previous initiation, he was followed by a select audience of mystics who eagerly awaited the Rosicrucian solution to the Hamlet dilemma which would confirm for them that Shakespeare was a Rosicrucian initiate. They were not ungratified to say the least, but the full Siriun import of Shakespeare's Prospero's forgiveness of his evil brother Antonio will not be fully comprehended even in this century.

Prospero, in fact, is an extremely complex figure. Not only is he the murdered king but he is also the avenging son. In addition he represents the father of the Isis figure. In fact, he represents the trinity. As such he redeems the god of the old testament, while advancing the son's doctrine of forgiveness. When Alonzo realizes that his son Ferdinand is alive he weeps and says that he is really sorry that Prospero was set adrift. When Antonio realizes that Prospero is forgiving him, he undergoes an abrupt conversion. When Stephano and Trinculo are forgiven they are thinking, "This guy is stupid not to kill us." There were three types of souls in the world according to the Siriun mysteries: immature, advanced, and initiated. Stephano and Trinculo are immature; they live only for the moment and immerse themselves in drink. Antonio is advanced; he is able to recognize Prospero's generosity. Alonso is initiated; he recognizes that Prospero's forgiveness is Christlike. If Alonzo represents initiated consciousness, however, what is Prospero's level of initiation? He is a step above anyone else in Shakespeare's plays. His consciousness is truly angelic in nature and, therefore, in his highest moments, he reaches to a comprehension of the second person of the trinity. In other words, his Christ has been born within the Rose of his heart, an eight petalled rose representing the fact that Prospero, Shakespeare's surrogate, has undergone the true Siriun initiation.

Prospero is actually better than Hamlet senior because he does not demand revenge. Prospero is also better that Hamlet junior because he does not seek revenge. And finally, he is better than Horatio because he
decides to confer the initiation on Ferdinand. Rather than turning toward the past as Horatio does in telling Hamlet's story aright, he arranges that Ferdinand and Miranda marry and institute a Utopian kingdom which unites Milan and Naples. Instead of two dead teenage lovers in a family tomb as Shakespeare shows us at the end of Romeo and Juliet, Prospero creates the conditions necessary for the return of a divine society on earth: the marriage of opposites as represented by the son of Naples and the daughter of Milan. William Shakespeare redeemed the past by revisiting the major issues in his earlier plays and revealing the complete Sirius mystery for the future of the earth. Miranda will become the mother of the divine king, a Christ figure who will return the earth to its correct evolutionary path by making the Christ's message of forgiveness the only law. When the human heart flowers and the rose shows its eight petals, the evil forces of the earth as represented by Richard III, MacBeth, Iago, Claudius, Set will be redeemed and Humanity will again enter the golden age where many human beings will be saved from the sacrifice of innocents as revealed most horribly in the deaths of Ophelia and her unborn child.

Hamlet is really an important play because Shakespeare bares the essential Sirius myth that has stood behind his earlier histories and tragedies. Shakespeare reveals that essentially the past needs to be redeemed. His plan is to redeem his own previous work, but in Hamlet he can do little more than clean the slate and suggest that the remnant of humanity represented by Horatio that has both studied and acted (faith and deeds) will survive the cleaning of the slate to tell the story aright. When Prospero forgives his actual usurper we are witnessing the transformation of Set by Osiris and Horus and the marriage of Horus (the resurrected Osiris) to his own mother Isis. This is an intensely symbolic marriage. What it means is that the human race is refathering itself and, significantly enough, the father in The Tempest is the son of the redeemed Set. Do we need to remind ourselves how closely related Osiris, Set, and Horus really are? So incest symbolically represents the new age arising from the ashes of the old.

We need to understand that Shakespeare is not implying that incest existed between Prospero and Miranda. The fact is that the incest theme was predominant in the ancient Sirius mythologies. When Osiris is castrated by Set, his penis is never found, yet Isis manages to get herself pregnant by the corpse of Osiris. The result is the birth of Horus (the resurrected Osiris, representing the lost phallic power of the god). The Freudian response to this obvious self-refathering motif is that every
child wants to castrate his father and impregnate his mother, thus becoming omnipotent. The problem with this analysis is that it really misses the point which really emphatically is that Horus is the risen one, the result of an immaculate conception; the spiritual reality of such self-fathering is apparent to anyone who has risen from the ashes of an old life of revenge seeking to the new life of forgiveness that prepares one for the new world order of the reign of the spirit.

William Shakespeare got too much too soon concerning the Siriun Mysteries. His initiation was completed before his trip to London. He arrived there fully aware of his initiate status. He got involved with Rosicrucianism in spite of himself. When sitting in the Mermaid Tavern he was approached by a certain man named Jonson (a name which indicates initiation by baptism) and given a signal that he recognized instantly: the swansong—the mantram taught to initiates of the swan degree in the Siriun mysteries. Shakespeare responded with a Swansong that was more sophisticated than Jonson had ever heard before. "Where did you study?" Jonson asked. Shakespeare said, "Avon." Then Jonson said, "My swan of Avon, who was your master?" Shakespeare responded, "The Hermit of Avon, who some called Merlin." "Welcome brother," said Jonson, "We'll drink deep ere you depart from this Tavern."

William Shakespeare really departed the earth as the greatest Siriun initiate to ever walk upon the earth in human form. His requiem was sung by Jonson, the swan song of the swan of Avon, in that great poem "To the Memory of My Beloved Master William Shakespeare" where Jonson remarks that Shakespeare was "the soul of the age", though "he was not of an age but for all time," having returned to the heavens as a "constellation" containing the star of poets which "rages" and "influences" the "stage" of the earth plain. Its obvious to us now that this star that rages and influences is the binary star, Sirius.
Appendix R: Publishing My Novel

I have a plan to write a novel and have it published before I am thirteen. I realize that this is really an ambitious plan. I really believe in aiming for the stars. I first thought about writing a novel while reading a novel by Charles Dickens called *David Copperfield*. I really enjoyed experiencing the world of someone else's imagination. I really loved the idea of creating my own imaginary world to share with others.

Another reason I decided to write a novel was because I became interested in the life of William Shakespeare. I have always really loved Shakespeare's plays and poetry and I started feeling like I really knew him from his words. I found that there was little written about Shakespeare's childhood. I decided to fill in the missing years with my imagination.

Once I started really thinking about writing a novel about Shakespeare's childhood, the idea of getting the novel published became more and more exciting. So I decided to make it my goal to write a novel about Shakespeare's childhood and get it published! Now I had to learn about Shakespeare's England, about whatever is known about Shakespeare's life, and increase my understanding about Shakespeare's personality. I decided to fill in the missing years with my imagination.

Now that I have decided to publish my novel, I needed to find out information about how to get a novel published. I found that it is suggested that a literary agent is a useful person to know. A literary agent will try to find a publisher to publish your novel; negotiate a contract with the publisher; and help you make a master plan for your career. Publishers are more interested in writers who plan to write many novels and are committed to writing. They also like novelists who write in the same genre (type of novel) because they can build an audience. My
novel will be a historical fantasy for young adults. That type of novel interests me, so I will have a master plan for writing more novels like that.

A literary agent is also important so that an inexperienced writer doesn't get taken advantage of. Most writers don't know how to negotiate a contract and would get emotionally involved and there would be hard feelings. That would make the working relationship between editor and writer difficult. A literary agent would be able to negotiate a contract and there would be no hard feelings.

So my master plan is to finish my novel by the beginning of next summer (so I can get my Dad to help me edit it over the summer), and then find a list of literary agents who deal in young adult literature, and then send them letters about myself and my novel, asking if they would be interested in reading it. Really I think literary agents will be interested in reading a novel by a handicapped genius boy.
Appendix S: My Meeting with Stephen Hawking

[Facilitated by Ca. and L.; typed by Ca.; all editing by T.; T. ten years old.]

On Tuesday June 29, 1993, I went to hear Stephen Hawking speak. My father, L., and my Mom, and my foster mother, Ca., came with me. I was really excited about hearing Stephen Hawking and maybe even meeting him. Stephen Hawking is my hero. He is an inspiration to me. When I read his book, *A Brief History of Time*, for the first time in my life I encountered ideas that were too big for me to swallow in one bite. I have been really interested in Quantum Physics and cosmology ever since. When I learned that Stephen Hawking was coming to Vancouver I was very happy. My father and I got tickets for the reception that followed the lecture.

The lecture was really fascinating. Professor Hawking spoke about the probability of life existing elsewhere in the Universe. I really enjoyed the lecture but disagreed with some of his ideas. I especially found the idea of mechanical life hard to accept. I believe the definition of life must include some concept of the spiritual world. However, his discussion of the way life may have arisen and the process of evolution was really interesting. Professor Hawking has a wonderful sense of humor and his lecture was very witty.

After the lecture Professor Hawking answered some questions from the audience. I got my Mom to write out a question for me which she gave to the usher to take to the stage. Unfortunately there wasn’t time for Professor Hawking to answer all the questions but my question was similar to another question he received. My question was about entropy and the eventual death of the universe and whether this could be balanced by creation of matter from the spiritual world.

In my opinion his answer about the steady state universe was really inadequate. A steady state universe is really a big bang universe with a minimal creation happening after the big bang. But I would like to postulate a continuous creation from the spiritual world to counteract the entropy. However, I really was a bit disappointed that I never heard Dr. Hawking’s answer to my question. We waited until the usher came to help us get to the reception. And so L. wheeled me up the ramps and to the elevator. The excitement was a bit too much for L. He really was silent when we got to the reception. I will admit that I was excited too. The prospect of meeting the famous scientist was really very compelling and I
was determined to speak to him before going home. The problem was that the reception was very crowded and very smokey [sic].

L. did not want to risk taking me into that big crowd. He is overly protective about my lungs and wanted to avoid congestion. I teased him about overprotectiveness but I was afraid that Stephen Hawking would ignore me in that big crowd. So I told L. to wait a few minutes before going into the reception. Luckily the reception usher told us that Stephen Hawking would pass that very spot in a few minutes. That really confirmed my suspicion that going into the reception was a bad idea. L. waited nervously and so did I.

Soon a man with a walkie-talkie approached and the number twenty-three squawked out loud. That was really a code meaning that a famous scientist was coming around the corner instantly.

Well, I was flabbergasted and L. was really a bit too silent for my comfort. L. has a habit of being too silent when he is really in awe of someone's intelligence. I was afraid that he would ruin my opportunity to speak to Stephen Hawking. Fortunately, by accident L. had positioned my little blue wheelchair between Stephen Hawking's gigantic electric wheelchair and the lift to the reception floor.

Something made L. break his silence when a bald man said, "Does the boy want to talk to Stephen Hawking?"

L. answered, "That would make him extremely happy."

The man said, "What is the boy's name?"

L. said "T." in a way that made the bald man think, "Teak." And so I was introduced to Stephen Hawking as an East Indian tree and not as a handicapped boy. But actually L. corrected the man.

The real truth is I don't remember my exact words. I only said about five sentences, but I really babbled and babbled until Dr. Hawking said, "Hello." I told him he really inspired me with his courage. Likely, he said, "Thank you," as I babbled some more.

The bald man said, "That is enough, now," and Stephen Hawking looked very tired. I could understand this because I am physically handicapped too. Every afternoon I take a short nap to recoup my energy. I thought, "Likely Stephen Hawking is the same." L. wheeled me a short distance away while Stephen Hawking entered the reception. I thought, "How will he cope with all the noise and the smoke and all those tall people around his chair?" I felt sad for the great cosmologist as he disappeared into the crowd. Even a famous handicapped genius needs normalization, if normalization means adulation.

I thought about that while L. pushed me to the elevator. He chatted
with me and the nice usher who imitated me by calling my father "L." We arrived at the elevator and waited while a delivery man unloaded boxes of liquor bottles. Likely the reception would continue after Stephen Hawking left. Then a nice Mr. M. from the CBC emerged from the elevator with his lovely producer. I babbled away to Mr. M. about meeting Stephen Hawking. He asked me to write something about the meeting and this is it, making me the author of a self referential system. So Godel's proof applies to my current words.

We finally reached the main floor. I really wanted to get home fast because Mom and Ca. would be waiting to hear about my actual meeting with the great man. L. was really nervous about getting to meet Stephen Hawking so he loaded me into the car and almost ran over a motorcycle behind him while getting into the road. Then he drove right down the street and into a cul de sac. Then he had to go down a one way lane backwards. When he realized he was going against the flow of traffic he decided to reverse the car and back into a lot to get turned around. I laughed at him. He always gets so nervous in the car, especially when driving downtown. He actually had to go several blocks in the wrong direction to get to a street that let him turn left. Really I was appalled that we were getting farther from home all the time but L. kept on saying, "Okay T., we'll be going in the right direction soon." Soon was not the right word. Eventually we got to the Lion's Gate Bridge. Nervous L. really drove slowly over the bridge and angry motorists honked at him from behind. I was actually very embarrassed.

We got home before Mom and Ca. I was worried about them being out so late at night. They were a bit later than we thought and were they ever happy to see us home and happy to be discussing the evening. They were astonished that I had actually cornered Stephen Hawking and babbled at him for so long. They laughed and laughed at bad L.'s actual bad driving. I told them the whole story and then when a boy was eventually exhausted L. helped me get to bed. L. was too excited to sleep and kept me awake all night by thinking about the evening and my meeting with Stephen Hawking.
Appendix T: Poems Are Direct Thoughts

26-Mar-93 [Facilitated by Ca.; T. almost ten.]
J., I want you to understand that poems are direct thoughts. Boys who live in their heads for a long time before they can actually talk start talking in pure thoughts. Thoughts are images and metaphors and symbols. Thoughts are poetry. Lu. and J. and D. are talking in pure thought. I can understand them because I used to talk that way too. But my Dad is an actual English teacher and he helped me learn to talk in English. J. and Lu. probably are not talking about what is really bothering them because they probably don't have the words or because words are powerful magic and can make fears real. Say hello to J. Your friend, T.
Appendix U: Rockets

[Rocketed by T.'s grade two teaching assistant; typed in capital letters directly by T.; T. almost eight years old.]

Rockets are vehicles that move into space. They are propelled by engines that burn liquid oxygen fuel. They can lift different kinds of payloads into space. Like satellites and telescopes and space capsules. They help to put a man into space. They are comprised of three stages. The first stage is called the booster stage. It is the stage that contains the main engines for lifting the rocket into space. The second stage is called the secondary booster. The second stage contains a smaller rocket engine than the first stage. It helps get the rocket through the earth's atmosphere into outer space. The third stage contains the payload of the rocket. It may be a space capsule that contains men called astronauts. It may be a weather satellite that relays information about the weather back to earth to help us predict the weather.

Rockets help to carry valuable equipment for scientific research into space. They also carry nuclear weapons into space in times of war.

Rockets began back in the days of ancient China. They were used to carry fireworks into the sky. In the Second World War Germany built V-1 and V-2 rockets that carried TNT explosives. They were launched against England. This was the first time rockets were fired in war. The Germans had developed an engine that could lift a rocket into space but the war ended before they were able to fire it.

After the war Americans used German rockets to help them carry more powerful weapons into the atmosphere. But the Russians were the first to launch a rocket into space. In 1957 the Russians launched the first satellite into space called Sputnik. It was the beginning of the space race. The Americans tried to catch up to the Russians so they formed NASA to develop the American space program. However the Russians were ahead of the Americans and were able to put a rocket ship into space carrying a man. His name was Yuri Ghergan [sic] and he was the first man in space. The Americans followed with their own manned space launch. John Glenn was the first American in space.

In the next few years both the Russians and the Americans launched numerous rockets. However, it was the Americans that were able to launch a spacecraft for the moon journey. The Apollo mission to the moon
carried three American astronauts to the moon. The first man to land on the moon was Neil Armstrong. He stepped onto the moon saying one small step for man one giant step for mankind. It was an historic moment for humanity. The Americans brought back sample rocks from their journey. The rocks were very much rocks found on earth [sic]. They were similar to ordinary earth rocks. They had some of the same characteristics of rocks found on earth. They were the first rocks from another planet to be brought back to earth. They will remain a monument to man's first journey into space.

After the manned journeys to the moon were completed the next big development in spacecraft was the shuttle. It was the first reusable [sic] spaceship. The shuttle used large fuel tanks that came off during launch and were picked up to be used again. The shuttle was able to carry different payloads into space. Some of the cargo carried included satellites telescopes and military projects. The space shuttle can also pick up old satellites in space and bring them back to earth for repair. The space shuttle uses a long flexible arm that was made in Canada for launching and picking up satellites. The Canada arm is our contribution to the American space effort. After the space shuttle has completed its mission it returns to earth and lands like an airplane on a special runway in California. It is then loaded onto a Boeing airliner and flown back to Florida and is readied for its next mission. There was one major problem with the shuttles. The rocket engine seals leaked. During the launch of the spaceship Columbia the seals failed and the spaceship exploded after takeoff. All members of the crew were killed. After the accident the space program was halted. The rocket seals had to be redesigned and tested before another shuttle could be launched. In time new seals were developed and the shuttle program began again.

In the future I see mankind travelling far into space. It will be a period of exciting discoveries and new ideas. In time mankind will populate new worlds in distant galaxies. In the future rockets will travel faster than the speed of light. For now we can only dream. In time those dreams will become reality. I hope that some day I will be one of the fortunate few who have been up in space. It would really mean alot [sic] to me.
Appendix V: Copernicus: The Man

[Facilitated by L. and Ca.; typed by Ca.; quotations from Copernicus', *De Revolutionibus*, chosen by T.; T. nine and a half years old.]

I am going to write a paper about Nicholas Copernicus (1473-1543). I will first discuss Copernicus' life history. I then will explore the philosophical implications of Copernicus' major discovery: that the sun is the center of the solar system and the earth orbits the sun. Incidentally, I will not write about all the bits and pieces of Copernicus' life but instead I will write about the big happenings that reveal his mission on this earth.

The most interesting facts about Copernicus' life are that he was a Canon of the Church, and he was also an astronomer and a professor of mathematics. He also was an artist and a philosopher. He studied Canon Law and medicine in Universities in Poland and Italy. I think Copernicus was a very good example of a Renaissance Man.

Astronomy, Astrology and medicine were probably very closely connected in the Renaissance. Astrology was an indication of God's design for helping mankind to find the proper herbs and medicines for healing sick people. Copernicus studied Astrology because he was a medical doctor who desired to understand God's natural medicines. Therefore Copernicus became interested in the imperfections seen in the heavens by astronomers throughout the ages.

The Ptolemaic astronomers observed certain imperfections in the movements of the planets over a period of many centuries. They were forced to postulate many circles within circles to explain these retrograde motions of the planets. Copernicus became interested in these phenomena and thought that a heliocentric solar system with a moving earth would solve the problem:

"And I maintain that it is easier to admit this, than to let the mind be distracted by an almost endless multitude of circles, which those people are obliged to do who place the earth in the center of the universe. . . . If all this is difficult and almost incomprehensible or against the belief of many people, we shall, God willing, make it clearer than the sun itself at least to those who know mathematics."

The reason that Copernicus followed up his heliocentric theory was to reconcile a perfect God with imperfect motions in the heavens. A perfect God would need perfect circular motions in the heavens to
communicate his healing messages to mankind. Copernicus' interest in astronomy, therefore, was his effort to understand God's relation to mankind and mankind's purpose on the earth. Personally I am excited about the scholar's quest for understanding the true nature of the cosmos in order to understand God.

Copernicus was a Neo-Platonist who believed God's perfection is reflected in the mathematical system used to describe the cosmos. He believed the sun was the only heavenly body perfect enough to be the center of God's universe:

"But in the midst of all dwells the sun. For who, in this most beautiful temple, could place this lamp in another or better place than that which it can at the same time illuminate the whole? Which some not unsuitably call the light of the universe, the soul or the ruler. Trismegistus calls it the visible God, the Electra of Sophocles [calls it] the all-seeing. So indeed the sun, sitting on the royal throne, steers the revolving family of stars."

The mathematical system was Copernicus' contribution to posterity. Erasmus Reinhold (1511-1553) used Copernicus' system to compute more accurate astronomical tables. Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) was inspired by the purity of Copernicus' Neo-Platonic mathematical harmonies to develop his laws of orbital motion and discover elliptical orbits. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) was inspired by Copernicus' vision to explore the heavens with his telescope. Isaac Newton (1642-1727) discovered the dynamic laws which put Copernicus' cosmos in motion. With Newton's contributions Copernicus' vision was complete.

The Copernican Revolution was an example of a paradigm shift: a change in worldview. Albert Einstein (1879-1955) later caused a paradigm shift by his theory of relativity using mathematics to express his cosmic vision. He had the precedent of the paradigm shift instigated by Copernicus. Stephen Hawking is also using mathematical astronomy to change the way we view the cosmos.

In conclusion I believe Copernicus' mission on earth was to express and understand the perfection of God's cosmos through the beauty and purity of mathematics. We are fortunate that there have been men who followed Copernicus who could appreciate his vision, and by expanding on it, change the way we all view the universe.
Appendix W: Multicultural Celebrations in British Columbia

[Facilitated by L.; hand written by M.; T. nine years old.]

I am writing about multicultural festivals and celebrations. First I will probably write about Indian festivals in B.C. Secondly I will probably talk about Celtic festivals because I am partly Scottish and I have a Scottish name. Thirdly I will talk about Carribbean festivals in Vancouver in the summertime. Finally I want to talk about Ukrainian festivals at Christmas and Easter because my ancestors are also Ukrainian.

*Kwakiutl Winter Dance*

I am now going to tell about the winter dances and potlatch ceremonies of the Kwakiutl Indians of West Coast B.C. Potlatch and winter dances take place simultaneously. A boy is initiated into *hamatsa* society by being in the winter dances. The society is created from a myth about the Cannibal at the Northern Edge of the World and very likely the boy has escaped from the cannibal and his helping spirits. The boy returns to his family and his father celebrates by giving gifts to guests. This is the potlatch ceremony. The winter dance shows the boy escaping from various spirits belonging to the cannibal. Now I am wondering if the cannibal is death because freezing is very probably a real fear for Indians in winter.

*Celtic Festival: Hallowe'en*

Now I will tell about Hallowe'en, a Celtic festival in the fall of the year. The Celts were probably thinking that the fall was the time of year when spirits from the heavens were beginning to reappear on the earth. The Celts probably thought that a costume was a good reliable defense against spirits that were evil. A costume would represent a good spirit who would probably protect a Celtic person from actual spirit harm. There were so many bonfires at hallowe'en because a bonfire would help a Celtic person be less frightened of evil spirits. So Hallowe'en was a special festival for the Celts at the Fall of the year.

*Caribbean Days*

In July and August Caribbean Days take place in Vancouver. The Caribbean people work all year long to make brightly colored and highly imaginative costumes. Then the first Saturday in August a parade takes place in which all the costumes are worn by the people. The parade starts at 9:59 because the Caribbean people are casual about time probably.
There is always lots of music provided by the combos and the steel drum bands. The boys and girls often wear simple costumes based on a snowflake or a leaf. When you go to Caribbean Days prepare to have fun. 

_Ukrainian Christmas and Easter_

A Ukrainian festival that is very much enjoyed by everyone is the Ukrainian Christmas festival. Ukrainian Christmas has a meal that has twelve dishes, one for every disciple of Jesus Christ. The meal is a vegetarian meal with fish instead of meat and the favorite fish is salmon. Yes, a salmon and vegetables is probably a very special feast. There is also a festival at Easter time for Ukrainian people. This festival features eggs that are beautifully decorated and given as gifts to symbolize regeneration at springtime. Ukrainian festivals are very beautiful because Ukrainian costumes are generally beautiful. There is dancing and music and very likely singing too. My Granny and Grampa are really knowledgeable about Ukrainian festivals but my Mom helped me understand this account.
Appendix X: My Hospital Experience

[Facilitated and typed by Ca.; T. almost nine years old.]

Last Jan. 6 [1992] I was admitted to Lion's Gate Hospital with pneumonia. I was in emergency for hours. My Mom stayed with me for part of the time. My foster mom Ca. stayed by my side the whole time.

Lots of people came and looked at me and asked Ca. the same questions over and over again. Ca. stayed with me all night but I wouldn't let her sleep because I needed her to make sure nothing was done to me that my Mom wouldn't approve of.

I was in Lion's Gate for three days. She only left me when my Dad was there. One night I was having trouble breathing. A nurse gave me ventilation, which didn't help because the problem wasn't that I was wheezy, it was my stomach. I had so much gas it was making it hard for me to breathe. Ca. got up and checked my stomach. She sat beside me and gave me a tummy massage until I felt better.

I got much worse on Wednesday. I was trying to cough but the stuff in my lungs was too thick. A very smart nurse named Anne started giving me steam and suctioning my throat and that worked for a while. Then I couldn't breathe at all. Ca. got the nurse and told her something was wrong although the monitor said I was fine. The nurse got the doctor. Ca. phoned my Dad and he came right away and helped me relax and breathe. The doctor phoned Children's Hospital and they sent an ambulance. I was very very frightened but my Mom came and she made me feel safe. Ca. took me to my lucky place, an imaginary land we share. Dad recited poetry, which kept my mind off what I was experiencing.

The Children's Hospital people were very calm and reassuring. They had monitors that showed how I was really doing. I was in serious trouble. The doctors decided to put me on a respirator. They put me to sleep and I don't remember anything else until I woke up in the intensive care unit listening to Ca. singing me Pirate Ships, my favorite lullaby.

My Dad came every night to read to me. My Mom came and fussed over me and made me feel loved. Ca. was there every day. She helped me cough and sleep and breathe on my own again. She is my best friend and I love her very very much.

The nurses always told me what they were doing and I really appreciated that. The doctors were very good but they said scary things in
front of me. They said that I would keep getting sick again and again. They said my parents would have to decide whether to put me on a respirator for the rest of my life or let me die. Ca. was there when I was frightened and told me everything would be all right. She helped me to make a plan for getting well and staying well. We worked very hard and eventually they moved me to a quieter and less scary ward.

Four days later I was well enough to go back to Lion's Gate. I rode in an ambulance with my Mom. It was fun except I got car sick. Mom was worried because I was green and because I cried when I knew I was really going to stay at Lion's Gate and not have to go back to ICU. Ca. took me to my lucky place and helped me get over being car sick.

I stayed at Lion's Gate four more days. When I was strong enough Dr. W. said I could go home. I was so happy to be back at Ca.'s house in my own bed.

I think the doctors at ICU probably saved my life and I want to thank them very much. I also want to thank all of the nurses who took such good care of me. I especially want to thank all the people who thought positive thoughts to me while I was sick. But most of all I want to thank my Mom and Dad and Ca. for giving me love and support when I really needed it.
Appendix Y: Paragraphs on Sonnets

[Facilitated by L.; typed by Ca.; T. going on ten years old.]

The following paragraphs are all concerning the English Sonnet. The only sonnet which is not written by Shakespeare is the final one which is by Rupert Brooke. The way I have chosen to analyse these sonnets depends on the Neoplatonic philosophy of the Renaissance. I also use my own understanding to comment on the poems. The final paragraph is a partially serious look at a sonnet from the period of the First World War.

*Sonnet Seven*

Shakespeare states that his young friend probably should get married and have a son. I think Shakespeare is comparing the young man to the heavenly sun. The first quatrain talks about the sun in the early morning rising from the East. Probably Shakespeare is actually talking about his young friend. The same way that people admire the sunrise, people also admire Shakespeare's young friend. The second quatrain talks about the sun at noon. I think Shakespeare is foretelling the young friend's future. All his admirers still think he is really special. The final quatrain is really a vision of the friend's distant future. In these lines Shakespeare foretells a time when friends will forget the young man. The couplet states that the only way the young friend can preserve his youthful beauty is to get a son.

*Sonnet One Hundred and Thirty*

Shakespeare is speaking to his mistress in this sonnet. He finds that his mistress's beauty is really not like the sun. Her lips are not like coral. I believe that Shakespeare was actually praising his mistress by saying bad things about her. Though a woman may be a beautiful lady, she is not necessarily a beautiful spirit. So Shakespeare denies the physical beauty of his mistress but actually mentions that she is as rare as any beauty described by other sonneteers. Shakespeare is reminding his readers that the spirit is really more beautiful than the body in Neoplatonic Philosophy and that the spirit is closer to God.

*Sonnet Eighteen*

Shakespeare is addressing his lady again in this sonnet. Shakespeare is not actually comparing her to a summer's day because a summer's day does not last forever. The idea that Shakespeare is trying to express is that his love is an eternal and unchanging love. The reason that
Shakespeare is loving his mistress so much is that he is actually loving her spirit. The spirit never changes though the body will age and death will come. I think that Shakespeare sees the sun and the seasons as constantly changing but love never changes if it is true. The couplet is a very interesting statement by Shakespeare. The real meaning of this final statement is that Shakespeare is inspired by his lady and therefore his sonnets are immortal. The Renaissance Neoplatonists would say that the spirit level is an immortal level so a spirit love is an immortal love.

Sonnet One Hundred and Sixteen

This sonnet really shows Shakespeare's understanding of the Platonic theme of love. Shakespeare is speaking about the nature of a Platonic Love relationship. The real love relationship consists of the marriage of true minds. By true minds Shakespeare means minds that are really together in the spirit world. He states that a love that changes with changing outer looks and passing time is not a real love. Another idea Shakespeare reveals about love is that it is a star that guides the spirits of the lovers through the outer world. Lastly the edge of doom to which love bears the spirits of the lovers is the real end of the world so the lovers continue to love even after their physical deaths. Plato realized that love is the way to enter the spirit world without fear. Shakespeare realizes that if Plato was wrong then Shakespeare's own sonnets are wrong too.

Sonnet Twenty-Seven

When I am feeling lonely because my mother is far away I really think about her when I am supposed to be sleeping. The reason I do not sleep is because I try to contact my mother telepathically and tell her how much I love her. A weary body is not able to sleep when an active mind is actually contacting a loved one. Shakespeare really believed this because he believed Plato's assertion that spirits can commune with each other at a distance in the love relationship. The reason I say this is that Shakespeare is seeing the shadow of his beloved while he is not able to sleep. The beloved's appearance makes the blackness of night disappear and beauty shine all around. When I see my mother's image all golden in the light I realize Shakespeare is talking about and the night is beauteous. As Shakespeare's reader I can identify with the feelings he communicates through his experience of love.

"The Soldier," by Rupert Brooke

This poem is about a soldier who dies at Skyros in the middle of the first world war who has really a funny attitude about England. He seems to feel that England is the greatest spot on earth. He says, "There is some
corner of a foreign field that is forever England," meaning that because he is buried there a little piece of England will always remain there. Likely he doesn't believe that his body will decompose and enter into the dirt like every other body. He believes also that his dust is really special because he was raised in England. He thinks his English upbringing was a bit like being in Eden, "washed by English rivers and blessed by suns of home . . . hearts at peace under an English heaven." In contrast to this is William Blake's belief that England was a dirty, spiritually deserted place where a New Jerusalem needed to be built, not an Eden. The poet actually thinks his heartbeat was a pulse in God's mind but that is ridiculous because everyone is a bit of God's mind not just an English soldier. The thing I can't understand is how a gullible public could think it was a good poem when it is so badly written. The only excuse for this type of poem is patriotism and that is not a poetic criterion for judgement.

The preceding paragraphs are in the order of ascending spirituality. The final paragraph, however, demonstrates the difference between a highly spiritual sonnet and a sonnet that really misses the point spiritually. The reason I include it is to show by contrast how highly spiritual a writer Shakespeare is.
Appendix Z: Facilitated Communication

Dear J., I am T. a nine [almost ten] year old boy who actually writes using F.C. [facilitated communication]. My Dad, L., is actually holding my arm now while I dictate this letter to Ca., my foster mom. L. is my actual best interpreter because he understands the way I think best. But Ca., A. (my T.A.) and K. (my speech therapist) also can help me talk quite well. I have been talking this way for a long time now. That is actually four years I think. At first I was really slow but I am getting faster all the time. My spelling boards were huge at first and they were in alphabetical order. Gradually we made smaller alphabetical boards and I got a wrist splint to make facilitation easier. Now I type on a regular sized keyboard. Then my Dad realized that I was able to really communicate when L. H., a teacher at the . . . Neurological Centre, showed Dad that I could read and write. Very smart Dad always read to me and told me stories and other interesting things, before anyone realized I could communicate. Then he actually started holding my arm and we discovered that I could write very good letters and paragraphs. But Ca., my foster mom, has been the best at helping me realize that if I tell her what is happening in my body then we can figure out plans to help the pain go away. I always thought the pain was actually my whole self. It was very hard to tell where the pain actually was. So Ca. and I had to actually explore my body in my thoughts; this is by guided visualization and relaxation techniques so that my mind could identify the area of my body that actually hurt. The reason I am telling you this is that F.C. is not the total answer to a handicapped boy being able to tell what things are happening in his body. Also if talking is so exciting that he doesn't want to stop, a handicapped boy will forget about communicating pain in order to continue talking. I could sit for many hours feeling pain but really wanting to talk more because it is special to me to finally talk.

Now I will tell how I learned to talk as fast as normal children. My Dad and Ca., and A. somewhat, are able to interpret my words from the first letter now. They really understand my vocabulary, my habitual sentence structures, and the order of words I usually choose. So they can pretty often guess the really correct word. If they say a word that means really the same thing then I let them say the alternate word, but if they say a word that changes my communication, I stop them by saying, "N," for "no" or vocalizing a protest. I then say, "Concentrate L." or "Concentrate
Ca." or tease A. in some other way and then they say a better word. I think it is really wonderful to be able to talk so quickly because I can actually have conversations that sound normal and I can also tease and joke and have lots of verbal fun.

If you have any questions to ask me I will gladly write to you again. L., my father, is a teacher. He is going to write a paper about my language abilities for his master's degree. He is really knowledgeable about these things too and so is Ca. I will say bye now. Hope I am helping you understand. T.
Appendix AA: Haikus

[Facilitated by L.; T. eleven years old.]

Haiku Chain

Before T. awakened
light of the sun shone brightly.
The ferns are shade plants.

Visions of green grass.
The light reflects and dazzles.
Green and black are one.

Really a boy T.
forgets to remind L.
that L. is late.

L. is reading
to naughty T. in the sun.
L. is really teased.

House by the river.
Braking sound of many trucks
Drowns actual river song.

Rainy Day Haikus

The rain stops falling
outside good T.'s window.
So L. is visiting.

Wet leaves in the window
are staring at my scoliosis.
When autumn comes
a straighter spine.
Appendix BB: A Sample of T.'s Poems

[All poems, unless otherwise noted, facilitated by L.; T. various ages.]

My Dad
[Facilitated by Ca.; T. seven years old.]

My Dad is smart
My Dad is kind
He understands
What is on my mind
He tells me things
That help me feel
Calm and serene
And really real
I love my Dad
I think he is great
He will be my hero
Even when I am eight
Love T.

Music About My Mom
[Facilitated by Ca.; T. seven years old.]

I would like to write a poem
About my mother and how this music is like her
It is really dancing-bright
It makes me feel my mother's kindness
Sometimes it seems sad
Sometimes it seems happy
It makes me feel really everlasting love
Sometimes it seems playful
Sometimes it seems serious
It is really wonderful
And so is my Mom
A Christmas Friendship Poem 1991
[T. eight years old.]

Friends need now to visit,
Visit friends on Christmas Day,
Open gifts and entertain
Feast and festive fun and play.

T.'s Christmas Message 1993
[T. ten years old.]

At Christmas time we need to remember
that all the children need joy in their lives.
Joy at Christmas time
and all through the year.
Children who Know Joy
can find the Joy in the world
and help heal the world
of pain and sadness.
Children who know only pain and sadness
will bring more pain and sadness
into the world as they grow.
All people everywhere need to bring
joy to all the children of the world.
Then we will truly have
"Peace on earth,
goodwill toward men,
women and children."

The Babe
[T. ten years old.]

Good men came to see the babe
in the manger where he lay,
and good moms come to realize
their boys and girls are really wise,
so now their Christ is born within
and, rejoicing, sings his voice again.
Christmas Teasing
[T. ten years old.]

Christmas approaches quietly this year;
No jingling of bells from tiny reindeer,
No Grannies and Grampas and guests in the home,
Just Mitsy and Gally and Daniel alone.
We're going to Granny's for supper this year
And L. has promised no more than three beers
And C. is not whining about his gameboy
And genius T.'s wishing everyone joy.
Mom is happy because she's not cooking,
And wearing a dress, she's so good looking
That elves and a boy's L. are really forgetting
To steal her chocolate and get her to fretting.
So what can I say to conclude this verse
But, "Give me a song and let me rehearse,
Let me practice really raising my voice
and the whole darn family will help me rejoice!"

T.'s Christmas 1994
[T. eleven years old.]

Shakespeare thought Christmas
came but once a year.
But T. declares two Christmases
this year:
One in T.'s heart
and another on the Calendar.

This Christmas I am wishing all the children of the world
a loving and happy home; the freedom to be who they are
meant to be; and the support they need to achieve their
dreams. And Peace in the Universe, Good Will toward All
Living Creatures.
A Palatable Poem for Ca.
[T. eleven years old.]

Ca. is a palatable person always.
Ca is palatable because
she's a quaintly quaintly quaintly
palatable Ca.
Quaintly Ca. is palatable.
Quaintly Ca. when she teases a boy.
Lastly Ca. quaintly teases a boy
who thinks she is palatable.
    signed T.

The Rhyme of Protection
[T. twelve years old.]

Cosmic forces come together
and protect us from invaders,
assemble quickly in the valley,
run along the mountain tops,
lakes and rivers, streams and creek beds;

Stellar forces rise in flowers,
mushrooms spring from barren ground,
trees and grasses round the country
raise your cries rejecting harm.

Ancient giant reassemble,
rising tall above the plains,
hold our dwellings in protection,
plant your foothold in the farmsteads,
seat yourself within our charm.

Teasing Ode to King Arthur
[T. twelve years old.]

Well really King Arthur
Why is your table so round?
Why is Queen Gwinevere running around
with Lancelot?
Where is the Fisher King?
And why is your beard so grey?
Where's Merlin when you need him anyway?
And is there really a giant around
to resurrect a once and future kingship?

*King Arthur Returns*
[T. twelve years old.]

Arthur's in Avalon
riding on the waves.
He sleeps
in crystal shade.
In some way returning
to a town called Camelot,
he wakes when Celtic men and women
remember to pray
assiduously
for the real earth.

*To A Small Person*
[Facilitated by Ca.; T. ten years old.]

I wish you a wonderful life.
Much joy and happiness.
I wish you a peaceful world
with clean air and green places.
I wish you people to love who love you.
I wish you the joy of learning
and discovering the world around you.
And most of all, I wish you
to become the best you that you can be.
Appendix CC: T. Wants a New School

[Facilitated by L.; typed by L.; all editing by T.; T. ten and one-half years old.]

Cast

T. a handicapped boy who really wants a new school.

T.'s Spirit a gifted and imaginative individual concealed beneath the surface of T.'s handicap.

The Children Tommy, Gordie, Suzy, Hanna, Sharon--two boys and three girls. They are part of T.'s reading and writing group.

Mrs. Figure the principal of the school who comes every day to reassure the teacher that T. is going to be sleeping soon.

Mrs. Pointer T.'s classroom teacher.

Reana a beautiful young woman who really thinks that T. is an intelligent boy.

The Voice of T.'s Father really saying T.'s words.

The scene is in the classroom. It is 10:30 in the morning, one September. The classroom is decorated with silly drawings by grade 2 students. There is an alphabet around the top of the wall, small and large printed letters. A bulletin board on wheels rolls in and out of the scene to show the poems that are being posted there during the writing class. Mrs. Pointer actually reads the poems aloud and really exaggerates the pronunciation of the words. A slight, blond, handicapped boy is wheeled into the classroom by his teacher's aide.

Reana: T., are you awake this morning? Mrs. Pointer says we are really
going to write an interesting type of poem today. (T. actually nods his head and smiles. Reana realizes that T. is happy about writing poetry.) T. you really like writing poetry. Ca. told me you write beautiful poems about your Mom. (T. nods and smiles again and giggles.)

Mrs. Pointer enters. She is a plump and happy woman of thirty-five wearing a brown shirt with a blue sweater.

Mrs. Pointer: Now class, I'm really excited about today's writing project. We are going to write a wonderful poem about a cat today. We should think about words that we always use to describe cats. Really, Tommy, what words do you like to use when you are talking about a cat? (She waits while Tommy thinks.) Well Tommy, when you touch a cat what do you feel?

Tommy: (hesitates then says) Fur.

Mrs. Pointer: Good Tommy, but what does the fur feel like to you?

Tommy: Sort of bad.

Mrs. Pointer: Really Tommy, bad?

Tommy: That's right. I'm allergic to cat fur.

Mrs. Pointer: That's really too bad, Tommy. Can anybody else think of a word?

Suzy: Soft, and really a bit too soft for me because I really get a funny feeling when I pet a kitten.

Mrs. Pointer: (She speaks very slowly.) Now T., what feeling do you get?

T.'s aide takes T.'s arm and helps him spell a word on his spelling board, then she says the word out loud.

Reana: (Saying T.'s words) Warm.

Mrs. Figure enters now.
Mrs. Figure: Well, T.'s really enjoying this writing class this morning, Mrs. Pointer. (a whisper) Well T. is really a bit more lively than I've ever seen him before. How is that going to work out for you in math today when T. wants a bit more stimulating work.

Mrs. Pointer: Mrs. Figure, T. always enjoys the writing class. He's actually going to answer a question now. T., what do you feel when you rub a cat's fur? (Reana takes T.'s arm and waits a long time for T. to move his arm to answer the question. Finally, after many seconds of waiting, T. begins to spell his answer.)

Reana: (Saying T.'s words) Well, I never actually felt a cat's fur.

Mrs. Pointer: But T., you said warm a moment ago.

(T. writes his next answer quickly.)

Reana: (Saying T.'s words) Mrs. Pointer, I was referring to my actual emotions.

(Mrs. Pointer is a bit embarrassed and Mrs. Figure looks at Reana strangely.)

Mrs. Pointer: What do you feel like when a cat touches your skin? Sharon?

Sharon: Really good, because I like to pet my cat, Fuzzy.

Mrs. Pointer: No, no, Sharon, I mean how does the cat feel?

Sharon: The cat feels better than I do because he purrs.

Mrs. Pointer: That is an interesting answer Sharon. But I wanted to ask if really the class understands my question.

(T. gets really excited now. Reana takes T.'s arm but he is so excited that he gets really spastic.)

The scene goes to tableau. Enter T.'s real spirit, identically dressed. He
runs around the stage excitedly saying: Mrs. Pointer! Mrs. Pointer! You’re really asking the wrong question. What you really want us to say is how to describe the touching experience. "Feel" has more than one meaning. We are talking about our emotions, not our tactile "feelings." But then T.'s spirit disappears behind a curtain and the actors start moving again.

Mrs. Pointer: What do I really mean by 'feel', Hanna?

Hanna: That means feelings, Mrs. Pointer:

Mrs. Pointer: No, that means touching.

Mrs. Figure: Well, T. was thinking a bit wrongly, Mrs. Pointer because he doesn't need to touch a cat to realize it feels soft. T., will you answer a question for me? (They wait a moment while T. responds.)

Reana: Mrs. Figure you are going to ask me if I answered the last question myself.

Mrs. Figure: Miss Fashion, would you see me at lunchtime please? (She whispers to Mrs. Pointer:) When T. goes to sleep, send Miss Fashion to see me. (Exit Mrs. Figure)

The curtains close quickly. The scene rotates ninety degrees behind the closed curtains while T.'s spirit dances in front of the black curtains. The dance reveals his happiness about having a really good tease to make to his father about Mrs. Figure. T. to choose a Mozart piece for the dance.

T.'s father's voice: (Speaking T.'s words slowly and clearly) Dad, I was really being teased by Mrs. Figure today. She really thought I was being a bad boy for letting Reana answer her question for me. She sent Reana to the office to punish me. I was really feeling awful about that so I decided to relax and go to sleep. But really I was listening to everything that happened for the rest of the day. Reana returned and told me in a whisper that Mrs. Figure thought I was really a bad boy for letting her answer my question.

The curtain opens. The children are listening to Mrs. Pointer reading one of the group poems they wrote.
Mrs. Pointer: Good cats
Soft cats
Friendly cats
Are purring
In our laps.

The children are sitting and looking a bit bored. T. has bowed his head and seems to be sleeping. Mrs. Pointer thinks he is not listening as she reads another poem:

Good cats are soft
furry
and so sleek
that I want a cat
in my bed at night.

Mrs. Pointer: Hanna, that's so beautiful! I want to say, children, that Hanna's poem is a good description of what I call a descriptive poem.

T.'s spirit emerges and says the following lines:

Cats think they are really proud
licking themselves and preening:
vain creatures wanting praise
in adjectives that tell their lies
to children too interested in emotion to realise.

T.'s spirit returns to his body. Tableau returns to normal action. Mrs. Pointer reads another child's poem.

Good cats are too busy
licking their paws
to see me coming
and I step on their tails.

Mrs. Pointer reads this in a silly shocked voice.

Mrs. Pointer: Tommy, that is not nice. Now Tommy, you wouldn't really step on a cat's tail, would you?
Tommy: Mrs. Pointer, I am always stepping on our cat’s tail.

Mrs. Pointer: Tommy, return to your seat and put your head down and think about the pain you are causing that cat. T., are you going to share your poem? (T. raises his head. T.’s aide helps T. push a button on his real voice. T.’s poem is spoken by the word syntesizer.)

Cats think they are really proud
licking themselves and preening:
vain creatures wanting praise
in adjectives that tell their lies
to children too interested in emotion to realize.

Mrs. Pointer: T. that’s a bit too long I think for the paper we are using.

(T. writes a message to Reana.)

Reana: T. really wants a bigger piece of paper, Mrs. Pointer:

Mrs. Pointer: T., we are going to have to get this straight. Everyone’s paper is going to have to be the same.

(T. writes another message to Reana.)

Reana: T. wants to go home now, Mrs. Pointer.

Mrs. Pointer: (thinks a bit) Maybe we can print a bit smaller this time.

T. writes again to Reana.

Reana: T. really wants a big piece of paper to write a long poem about his mother, Mrs. Pointer:

Mrs. Pointer: Now T., you will have to write that poem at home. Today we are writing about good cats. Now T. maybe if you edit that long good cat poem I will let you print smaller than the other children, but that’s enough differences for today.

(T. lowers his head and appears to be going back to sleep. Reana wheels T.)
to the rear of the classroom. Reana wants to call Ca. and say that T. is unhappy at school today. She takes T.'s arm and watches as he spells out the following sentence:

Forget about calling Ca., Reana. I really want to go to a boy's Mom and Dad's house. Reana realizes that T. wants to talk to his Dad. The scene never changes but a conversation between T. and his father is heard.

The Father's Voice: T., why are you so unhappy today?

T.: I really want to go to a different school now.


T.: They really think I'm mentally handicapped here. Mrs. Figure wants Reana to stop interpreting for me because she thinks Reana is really saying the words, and not T. And Mrs. Pointer thinks I am writing too many words in my poem. And remember when they promised more stimulating Math. Well, I never get to do anything but grade three Math. They really want to hold me back and prove that I am mentally handicapped. Get me away from this school now!

The Father's Voice: Well T., that's not going to be easy. They think you are appropriately placed in that school and fathers are not listened to by teachers because they see so few fathers in schools these days. And mothers are never listened to because they usually are considered crazy. So really T., who am I going to talk to, to make them understand this?

Teague: Really Dad, I will write a letter to a superintendent and tell him I want a really better school.

The Father's Voice: T., it's very important to say the right things when you write to a superintendent. The superintendent wants to hear about your real needs T., not about your actual self pity. So write as plainly as possible and say this school is not meeting your needs.

Now T. dictates a letter, an eloquent and moving letter.

Dear Superintendent:
I am a student in Grade 3 at Waldon school. The principal and my teacher always tell me I will get a good education here. But I really think I am
missing something in my studies. Mathematics is my favorite subject at school but I am denied the opportunity to learn any more math than a grade 3 student, even though I am able to do algebra at home. I am denied the right to read Shakespeare even though he has been my favorite poet since I was a baby. I am denied the right to analyze Mozart's music even though I am always listening to Mozart at home. My father is really a good teacher. He understands that I am really a bright boy but the principal and my teacher think my father is insane when he tries to explain that I am needing stimulation. My family accepts the fact that I am gifted in the same way that they accept the fact that I am physically handicapped. My foster mother also accepts these facts and so does K., my speech therapist. They support my wishes to be placed in a better school where my gifts will be accepted and my family's feelings will be respected. I understand that you are always saying that a child has a right to an appropriate education. I hope you will realize that I need an appropriate education too.

Sincerely,
T.

The Father's Voice: That's good T. I will say the same thing.

T. returns to his body. He is sitting with his head down and Reana really thinks he should go home.

Reana: T., should I phone your Mom and Dad, or Ca.?

T.: Phone Mom and Dad and say I need to talk to L.

Enter Mrs. Figure.

Mrs. Figure: Now T. you are sleeping again in class.

T.'s arm moves. Reana says T.'s words aloud:

Reana: Go away Mrs. Figure I am concentrating on my letter to the superintendent. My father is going to send me to a new school because I am really unhappy here. I am tired of all this shit! I am not coming here again.

Mrs. Figure: Miss F. come to my office immediately. You will be lucky if
you still have a job in the morning.

Reana: No, Mrs. Figure I have to take T. to see his father.

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Appendix DD: T.'s Life Box: September 17, 1991

[Facilitated and typed by Ca.; T. eight years old.]

The five objects that I want to put in my life box are:
1. Picture of my Dad
2. Tape of Mozart
3. Book of Shakespeare
4. Computer disk
5. Picture of Ca. and me.

1. My Dad is the most important person in my life. He understands me better than anyone. He talks to me when I am worried or unhappy. He challenges me to be the best that I can be. I love my Dad very very much.

2. I really love the music of Mozart. His music sounds like the music of the stars. Cosmic music. It is the most perfect music ever composed. He was really really smart when he was a little boy like me.

3. I really love Shakespeare. He is my favorite writer. I love his poetry and his plays. My favorite plays are A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Tempest. I really admire Shakespeare's use of words. I love to play with words too.

4. Computers are my interface with the world. They allow me to talk, write, and play. Before I could use computers I was locked in a world by myself. Computers set me free.

5. Ca. is very important to me too. Ca. is my foster mother. She took me to live with her when my family could no longer care for me. She loves me and understands me and has opened the world to me. Ca. was the person who first helped me to really talk. I love Ca. very much.

Each of these five things symbolizes something or someone very important to me. I could think of many more things but they would need a box as big as the school.
Appendix EE: I Am Going to Be So Cool

04-Apr-94 [Facilitated by Ca.; T. almost eleven.]
Dear J., I am really happy to write to you again. J., I am really needing to
tell you some exciting news. I am finally using a switch! Ca. is helping
me learn to control my head movements and turn a switch off and on. I am
going to be able to use my switch to do math independently with my
computer really soon. I am getting a really new fancy wheelchair in May
and it will be really comfortable and really cool looking. I am getting new
glasses soon too. These glasses darken like sunglasses. My Mom gave me
a black leather jacket. With my new wheelchair and my new glasses and
my new black leather jacket I am going to be the coolest boy around.
That's right, I am going to be so cool.

J., I am working really hard these days to be strong and healthy. I
really want to live a long, long time because I have so much to do. There
is so much I want to learn and many people who need me. My Ca. loves me
and really needs me to be her foster boy. That's right, I used to think that
I needed my Ca. but she didn't need me. I thought really I was a burden to
my Ca. But really, I discovered that the best place for my Ca. to be is
living with me. My Ca. needs me to be really happy. My L. needs me to
really help him with his master's thesis. Really, without me these
grownups would actually stop learning new things. And I have lots to
teach the world. I am going to be an important teacher.

Well J., I hope you write soon. Maybe you could help me with my
mission? I think you will really understand this better than anyone. It is
really important that you stay in this world and don't get drawn into the
spiritual world. The spiritual world is really comforting, but this world
needs me. Your friend, T.