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In-Sight People

Editor-in-Chief

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Scott Douglas Jacobsen

Athabasca University; University of California, Irvine

Scott Douglas Jacobsen founded *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* and *In-Sight Publishing*. He authored/co-authored some **e-books**, free or low-cost. If you want to contact Scott: Scott.D.Jacobsen@Gmail.com, Scott.Jacobsen@TrustedClothes.Com, Scott@ConatusNews.Com, scott.jacobsen@probc.ca, Scott@Karmik.Ca.

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He was a **Francisco Ayala Scholar** at the UCI **Ethics Center**, Member of the **Psychometric Society** Graduate Student Committee, **Special Advisor** and **Writer** for ECOSOC at NWMUN, Writer for **TransplantFirstAcademy** and **ProActive Path**, Member of **AT-CURA Psychology Lab**, Contributor for a student policy review, Vice President of Outreach for the **Almas Jiwani Foundation**, worked with Manahel Thabet on numerous initiatives, Student Member of the Ad-Hoc Executive Compensation Review Committee for the **Athabasca University Student Union**, Volunteer and Writer for **British Columbia Psychological Association**, Community Member of the KPU Choir (even performed with them alongside the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra), Delegate at **Harvard World MUN**, NWMUN, UBC MUN, and Long Beach Intercollegiate MUN, and Writer and Member of the Communications Committee for **The PIPE UP Network**.

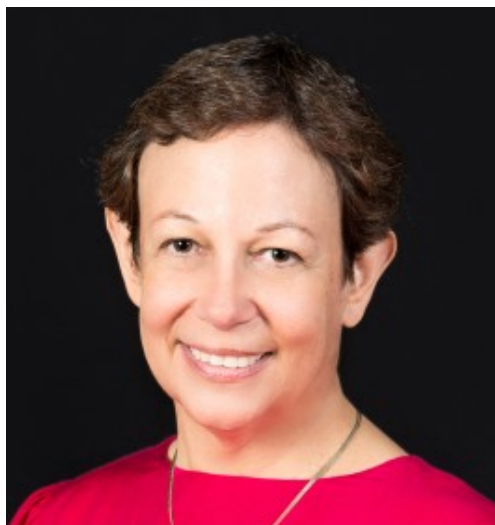
He works on books with **Richard G. Rosner** entitled *Tweets to the Universe: Volume III, Cognitive Thrift: Volume I, Cognitive Thrift: Volume II, A Short Guide to the Future, Advice to Gifted and Talented Youth, The Long Road to Science*, and *How to Think Like a Genius*, another with Professor Sven van de Wetering and Richard G. Rosner called *Evidence-Based Social Organization: A Plague of Evidence*, another book with Professors Wayne Podrouzek and Sven van de Wetering entitled *On Academic Freedom*, another entitled *Women of the Academy* with the UCI Ethics Center, and three books entitled *Female Academics: Volume II, Conversations on Cognitive Science* (with interviewee recommendations from Dr. Daniel Bernstein), and *The Giga Society Interviews* (with interviewee recommendations from Paul Coijmans) and *On Belief and Work* alone.

He published in **American Enterprise Institute**, **Annaborgia**, **Conatus News**, **Earth Skin & Eden**, **Fresh Start Recovery Centre**, **Gordon Neighbourhood House**, **Huffington Post**, **In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal**, **Jolly Dragons**, **Kwantlen Polytechnic University Psychology Department**, **La Petite Mort**, **Learning Analytics Research Group**, **Lifespan Cognition Psychology Lab**, **Lost in Samara**, **Marijuana Party of Canada**, **MomMandy**, **Noesis: The Journal of the Mega Society**, **Piece of Mind**, **Production Mode**, **Synapse**, **TeenFinancial**, **The Peak**, **The Ubyyssey**, **The Voice Magazine**, **Transformative Dialogues**, **Treasure Box Kids**, **Trusted Clothes**.

Advisory Board

Interview views do not equate to positions of Advisory Board members.

Advisory Board listing alphabetized by first name and relevant hyperlinks active.



Professor Adele Diamond, PhD, FRSC

Tier 1 Canada Research Chair Professor, Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, University of British Columbia; Fellow, Royal Society of Canada; Fellow, Society of Experimental Psychologists

Adele Diamond is the Canada Research Chair Professor of Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience at the **University of British Columbia** in Vancouver. She is a member of the **Royal Society of Canada** and was recently recognized as one the 15 most influential neuroscientists in the world today.

Prof. Diamond is at the forefront of research on ‘executive functions’ and on the brain’s prefrontal cortex on which they depend. Executive functions include ‘thinking outside the box’ (cognitive flexibility), mentally relating ideas and facts (working memory), and giving considered responses rather than impulsive ones, resisting temptations and staying focused (inhibitory control, including selective attention). Prof. Diamond has made discoveries that have improved treatment for two different medical disorders and discoveries that have impacted education, improving the lives of millions of children. Her work has shown that executive functions can be improved at any age, even in the very young. Recently she has turned her attention to the possible roles of traditional activities, such as music and dance, in improving executive functions, academic outcomes, and mental health.

In looking for practical ways to help children develop healthy executive functions, and thus help more children thrive, Prof. Diamond takes a markedly different perspective from mainstream education in hypothesizing that focusing exclusively on training cognitive skills is less efficient, and ultimately less successful, than also addressing students’ social, emotional, and physical needs. She hypothesizes that besides training the skills of interest, it’s important to support those skills by lessening things that impair them (like stress or loneliness) and enhancing things that support them (such as joy and good health). Adele Diamond was educated at **Swarthmore** (B.A., Phi Beta Kappa), **Harvard** (Ph.D.), and **Yale Medical School**(postdoc). Her many awards include an honorary doctorate (Honoris Causa) from **Ben-Gurion University**, the Bronfenbrenner Award for Lifetime Contributions to Developmental Psychology in the Service of Science and Society, named a “Woman of Distinction” by the YWCA, and named one of the “2000 Outstanding Women of the 20th Century.”



Dr. Aubrey de Grey

Chief Science Officer & Co-Founder, SENS Research Foundation; Editor-In-Chief, Rejuvenation Research

Dr. Aubrey de Grey is a biomedical gerontologist based in Cambridge, UK and Mountain View, California, USA, and is the Chief Science Officer of **SENS Research Foundation**, a California-based 501(c) (3) charity dedicated to combating the aging process. He is also Editor-in-Chief of ***Rejuvenation Research***, the world's highest-impact peer-reviewed journal focused on intervention in aging.

He received his BA and Ph.D. from the **University of Cambridge** in 1985 and 2000 respectively. His research interests encompass the characterization of all the accumulating and eventually pathogenic molecular and cellular side-effects of metabolism ("damage") that constitute mammalian aging and the design of interventions to repair and/or obviate that damage. Dr. de Grey is a Fellow of both the **Gerontological Society of America** and the **American Aging Association**, and sits on the editorial and scientific advisory boards of numerous journals and organisations.



Professor Azra Raza, M.D.

Columbia University, Medicine, Professor; Myelodysplastic Syndrome Center, Director

Dr. Azra Raza is Professor of Medicine and Director of the MDS Center at Columbia University in New York, NY. She started her research in Myelodysplastic Syndromes (MDS) in 1982 and moved to Rush University, Chicago, Illinois in 1992, where she was the Charles Arthur Weaver Professor in Oncology and Director, Division of Myeloid Diseases.

The MDS program, along with a Tissue Repository containing more than 60,000 samples from MDS and acute leukemia patients was successfully relocated to Columbia University in 2010. Before moving to New York, Dr. Raza was the Chief of Hematology Oncology and the Gladys Smith Martin Professor of Oncology at the University of Massachusetts.

She has published the results of her laboratory research and clinical trials in prestigious, peer reviewed journals such as The New England Journal of Medicine, Nature, Molecular Cell, Blood, PNAS, Cancer, Cancer Research, British Journal of Hematology, Leukemia, Leukemia Research. She is also the co-author of *GHALIB: Epistemologies of Elegance*, a book on the works of the famous Urdu poet. Dr. Raza has mentored hundreds of medical students, residents, oncology fellows, doctoral and post-doctoral students in the last three decades.

She serves on numerous National and International panels as a reviewer, consultant and advisor and is the recipient of a number of awards including The First Lifetime Achievement Award from APPNA, Award in Academic Excellence twice (2007 and 2010) from Dogana, and Woman of the Year Award from Safeer e Pakistan, CA and The Hope Award in Cancer Research 2012 (shared with the Nobel Laureate Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn).

Dr. Raza has been named as one of the *100 Women Who Matter* by Newsweek Pakistan in March 2012. In 2015, Dr. Raza was a member of the Founder Group at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, designing *Breakthrough Developments in Science and Technology* with President Bill Clinton. On December 1, 2015, Dr. Raza was part of a core group of cancer researchers who met with Vice President Joe Biden to discuss the Cancer Moonshot initiative.



Professor Cristina Atance

Associate Professor, School of Psychology, University of Ottawa; Principal Investigator, Childhood Cognition and Learning Laboratory; Editorial Board Member, Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology

Professor Cristina Atance earned a B.Sc. (Honours) in Psychology at the **University of Toronto** in 1996 and Ph.D. in Psychology at the **University of Waterloo** in 2001. She was then a Post-Doctoral Research Associate from 2001-2003 at the Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle. Her research interests lie in cognitive development, and more specifically, future thinking, planning, and theory of mind (ToM) in young children.

She is the Principal Investigator for the **Childhood Cognition and Learning Laboratory** and an Editorial Board Member for the **Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology**. *Dr. Atance's research has been funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), and by the Government of Ontario in the form of an Early Researcher Award in 2008.*



Dr. Daniel Bernstein

Tier 2 Canada Research Chair, Lifespan Cognition; Principle Investigator, Lifespan Cognition Lab; Instructor, Psychology, Kwantlen Polytechnic University; Inaugural Member, Royal Society of Canada's College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists

Dr. Daniel M Bernstein works as the **Tier 2 Canada Research Chair in Lifespan Cognition** for the Psychology department of **Kwantlen Polytechnic University**. He is the principal investigator for the **Lifespan Cognition Lab**. Dr. Bernstein earned his Bachelor of Arts at the **University of California, Berkeley**, Master's at **Brock University**, PhD at **Simon Fraser University**, and did Post-Doctoral work at the **University of Washington**. His research interests lie in "belief and memory; developmental metacognition; hindsight bias; mild head injury; sleep and dreams."



Dr. Diane Purvey

Dean, Arts, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Dr. Diane Purvey is the Dean of Arts at **Kwantlen Polytechnic University**. She is the co-editor of **Child and Family Welfare in British Columbia: A History** (Detselig Press) and, with John Belshaw, the co-author of **Private Grief, Public Mourning: The Rise of the Roadside Shrine in British Columbia** (Anvil) as well as **Vancouver Noir, 1930-1960** (Anvil). Her research interests include the history of deinstitutionalization as part of a Canada-wide project and educational leadership internationally. She is a contributor to ***Vancouver Confidential*** (Anvil). A homegrown Vancouverite, Diane attended the **University of British Columbia** (B.A., Ph.D.) and the **University of Victoria** (M.A.) and for several decades taught history in various BC colleges and universities.



Dr. Evangelos Katsioulis, M.D., M.Sc., M.A., Ph.D.

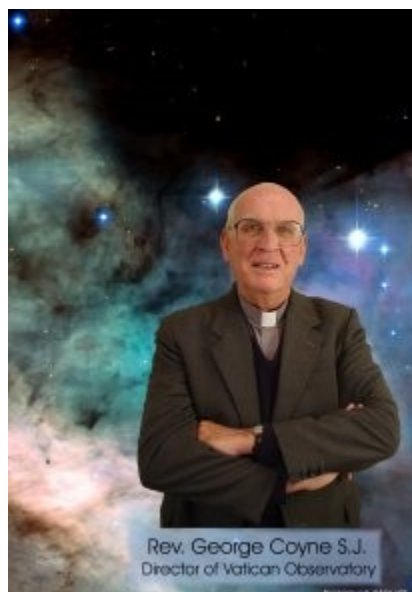
Dr. Evangelos Katsioulis, M.D., M.Sc., M.A., Ph.D., works as a consultant psychiatrist and psychotherapist through online psychotherapy and counseling for **Psycall**. He earned an M.D., Medical Doctor Diploma (2000), M.Sc., Medical Research Technology (2003), M.A., Philosophy (2012), and Ph.D., Psychopharmacology (2015).

Dr. Katsioulis earned the **best performance in the Cerebrals international contest (2009)**, **best performance in the Cerebrals NVCP-R international contest (2003)**, **best performance in physics for the national final exams in Greece (1993)**, and **third place in the Maths national contest in Thessaloniki, Greece (1989)**.

Dr. Katsioulis scored some of the highest intelligence test scores (SD16) on international record with IQ scores of 205 on the NVCP-R [Rasch equated raw 49/54] in 2002, 196 on the Qoymans Multiple Choice #3 [ceiling] in 2003, 192 on the NVCP-E [Rasch equated raw 35/40] in 2002, 186 on the NVCP-R [Fluid Intelligence Index Score] in 2002, 183 on the NVCP-E [Fluid Intelligence Index Score] in 2002, 183 on the Cattell Culture Fair III A+B [ceiling-1] in 2003, 180+ on the Bonnardel BLS4 – 2T [ceiling] in 2003, and 180+ on the WAIS-R [extrapolated full scale] in 2002.

Subsequently, Dr. Katsioulis remains a member in **over 60 high IQ societies**. In addition, he is the president and founder of **Anadeixi Academy of Abilities Assessment** and **World Intelligence Network (WIN)**, and **OLYMPIQ, HELLIQ, CIVIQ, GRIQ, QIQ, IQID, GREEK** high IQ societies.

Dr. Katsioulis writes **articles, novels, and quotes** including screenplays – **ELLHNAS.com (2008)** and **TI PEI (2009)**. Also, he contributed to the web advertisement-management of **NAMANIC.com** and the **web development of Charing Cross Scheme in Psychiatry (2006)**, **Charing Cross & St Mary's Membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists (2006)**, and **Aristotle University of Thessaloniki – School of Medicine – General Biology Laboratory (2012)**. He lives in Thessaloniki, Macedonia, Greece.



Rev. Dr. George V. Coyne, S.J.

Emeritus Director and President, Vatican Observatory Foundation; McDevitt Chair, Religious Philosophy, Le Moyne College

Fr. George V. Coyne, S.J., born January 19, 1933, in Baltimore, Maryland, completed his bachelor's degree in mathematics and his licentiate in philosophy at **Fordham University** in 1958. He obtained his doctorate in astronomy from **Georgetown University** in 1962. After several decades on the faculty at the **University of Arizona** (UA), Coyne became Director of the **Vatican Observatory** (VO) in 1978. He became the founding director of the **VO Foundation** (VOF) in 1986. In 1980 he established the **VO Research Group** in Tucson, AZ. During his time as Director he founded the VO Summer Schools, which over the years have introduced more than 300 students from more than 60 countries to professional astrophysics.



J.J. Middleway

Member, Order of Bards Ovates and Druids (OBOD); Member, Mankind Project – (MKP UK)

JJ Middleway is a Druid member of OBOD, where he served for seventeen years as tutor/mentor. He is a Celebrant, delivering ceremonies to mark Birth, Marriage and Death (Naming, Handfasting and Parting), across the full spectrum of society. His ritual and ceremonial work encompasses marking the eight seasonal festivals of the 'Wheel of the Year' and is focused on a deep reverence for the Earth along with a laugh and a smile.

He developed and leads regular sessions of Enchanting the Void; a Western form of devotional chanting, geared toward the honoring and healing of the Land. He is an 'Elder' of several communities across UK and Europe, as well as leading singing groups and teaching extensively. His earlier claims to fame, were being born and brought up in a neighboring street to Ozzy Osbourne, of playing maracas with The Incredible String Band and of sleeping through two thirds of Jimi Hendrix's last ever live concert.



Dr. Jonathan Wai

Research Scientist, Duke University Talent Identification Program; Visiting Researcher, Case Western Reserve University

Wai is a research scientist at the **Duke University Talent Identification Program** and a visiting researcher at **Case Western Reserve University**. He did his postdoctoral work at **Duke University**, holds a doctorate from **Vanderbilt University**, and graduated from **Claremont McKenna College**. He studies the development of talent and its impact on society. His interests focus on the many factors that contribute to the development of expertise in education, occupation, and innovation. Additionally, he is interested in policy and connecting his work with the larger global conversation.

Wai's academic work has appeared in *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *Policy Insights From The Behavioral And Brain Sciences*, *Intelligence*, *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, *Journal of Advanced Academics*, *Gifted Child Quarterly*, and *Frontiers in Psychology: Developmental*. His work has started international conversations, and has been discussed in ***The New York Times***, ***The Wall Street Journal***, ***The Washington Post***, ***CNBC***, ***Financial Times***, ***The Economist***, ***Scientific American***, ***Wired***, ***Education Week***, ***Nature***, ***Science***, and many others worldwide.

His public writing has appeared in ***Psychology Today***, ***Los Angeles Times***, ***Forbes***, ***National Review***, ***Education Week***, ***NPR***, ***Quartz***, ***Business Insider***, ***TechCrunch***, ***The World Economic Forum***, and others where his ideas have reached millions. Wai has been profiled in ***Rotman Magazine***, ***Forbes***, ***Times Educational Supplement***, and ***WSJ Marketwatch***. His academic papers have won multiple international ***Mensa Awards for Research Excellence*** and he has served on the board of directors of the **MATHCOUNTS Foundation**. He lives with his wife, son, and cat.



Professor Kirsten Johnson, M.D., M.P.H.

CEO, Humanitarian U; Program Director, Humanitarian Studies Initiative (HSI), McGill University; Assistant Faculty Member, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Harvard University; Director, Canadian Consortium for Humanitarian Training (CCHT); Emergency Medicine Physician, McGill University; Assistant Professor, Family Medicine, McGill University; Board Member, International Humanitarian Studies Association

Dr. Kirsten Johnson practices Emergency Medicine at **McGill University's** Health Centres, Esthetic Medicine at Julien & Marin Dental Clinic and is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Family Medicine at **McGill University** in Montreal, Canada. She is Program Director of the McGill **Humanitarian Studies Initiative (HSI)**, Director of the **Canadian Consortium for Humanitarian Training (CCHT)** and President of the Humanitarian Training Initiative (HTI).

Dr. Johnson's research has focused on genocide, child combatants, sexual gender-based violence and conflict-related mental health and psychosocial support. She is involved in humanitarian professionalization, working on the development of competencies for training, education and certification of humanitarian responders globally. In 2010, Dr. Johnson was awarded the Segal Centre's *Janusz Korczak* award for her work on protecting the rights of children in conflict and the *Award of Excellence* for her work in global health by the **College of Family Physicians of Canada**. She was recognized as one of **Canada's Top 40 Under 40** in 2011.



Marissa Torres Langseth, B.S.N., R.N., M.S.N., ANP-BC (retired)

Founder and Emeritus Chairperson, Humanist Alliance Philippines, International; Founder and Founding Chairperson, Philippine Atheists and Agnostics Society (PATAS); Creator, HAPI-SHADE (Secular Humanist Advocacy Development Education)

Langseth is the Founder and Emeritus Chairperson to and is an avid philanthropist to HAPI (**Humanist Alliance Philippines, International**), the Founder and Founding Chairperson of Philippine Atheists and Agnostics Society, the Creator of HAPI-SHADE (Secular Humanist Advocacy Development Education), a pioneer in SEC-registered and non-religious societies in the Philippines, a trailblazer in promoting education and community outreach in selected areas to promote humanism and critical thinking in the Philippines, was responsible for the very first atheist convention in South East Asia in 2012 (PATAS convention in Bayview, Manila, Philippines) and HAPI international affiliations with IHEU and FBBN, and the Creator of HAPI humanist curriculum.

Langseth graduated *Cum Laude* with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of San Carlos in Cebu, Philippines, graduated from Lehman College (CUNY) in Bronx NY with a Masters in Adult Health Nursing where she wrote a thesis about Domestic Violence, graduated with a GPA 4.0 at College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, NY and has a Post-Master's Certificate for Adult Nurse Practitioner while also having prescriptive privileges and Board Certification.

In previous posts, she was an Adult Nurse Practitioner for UNH(United Health Group)/Evercare (1999-2015), an Adjunct Professor at Queensboro Community College (2005-2006), a Certified Emergency Room Nurse at Lincoln Hospital, Bronx, NY (1993-1999), a Nursing Care Coordinator/Supervisor (1990-1993), a Registered Nurse in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (1985-1989), a Territorial Manager for Carlo Erba (1980-1985).

Her **personal blog** since 2009 has been against the tyranny of the Philippine government and fraudulent banking practices, which has evolved into a page to vent frustrations around non-religious activism. She as Admin for Atheist Against Pseudoscientific Nonsense since 2016, a Member of the American Humanist Association since 2011, and a Member of IHEU since 2015.

She is featured in the books ***Godless Grace: How Nonbelievers Make the World Safer, Personal Paths to Humanism, From Superstition to Reason, An Interview with Marissa Torres Langseth, B.S/N., M.S.N., and No Outside Intelligence.***



Professor Maryanne Garry

Professor, Psychology, Victoria University of Wellington; Deputy Dean, Faculty of Graduate Research, Victoria University of Wellington

Dr. Maryanne Garry is a Professor in Psychology at **Victoria University**, and the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Research. For nearly 20 years, she has studied a puzzle of memory: how is that otherwise intelligent, rational people can remember things they never really saw, or experiences they never really had?

Professor Garry's interests in applying science to the law predate her interest in memory research or even in psychological science. Her undergraduate degrees are in Forensic Science and Chemistry. Professor Garry received her PhD in 1993 from the **University of Connecticut**, and did postdoctoral research at the **University of Washington** under the direction of **Professor Elizabeth Loftus**, the world's foremost researcher on human memory distortions.



Paul Cooijmans

Administrator, Giga Society; Administrator, The Glia Society

Paul Cooijmans founded **GliaWebNews**, **Young and intelligent?**, **Order of Thoth**, **Giga Society**, **Order of Imhotep**, **The Glia Society**, and **The Grail Society**. His main high-IQ societies remain **Giga Society** and **The Glia Society**. Both devoted to the high-IQ world. **Giga Society** remains the world's most exclusive high-IQ society with a theoretical cutoff of one in a billion individuals. **The Glia Society**, founded in 1997, is a "forum for the intelligent" to "encourage and facilitate research related to high mental ability."

Cooijmans earned credentials, two bachelor degrees, in composition and in guitar from Brabants Conservatorium. His interests lie in human "evolution, eugenics, exact sciences (theoretical physics, cosmology, artificial intelligence)." He continues administration of numerous societies, such as the aforementioned, to compose musical works for online consumption, to publish intelligence tests and associated statistics, and to write and publish on topics of interest to him.

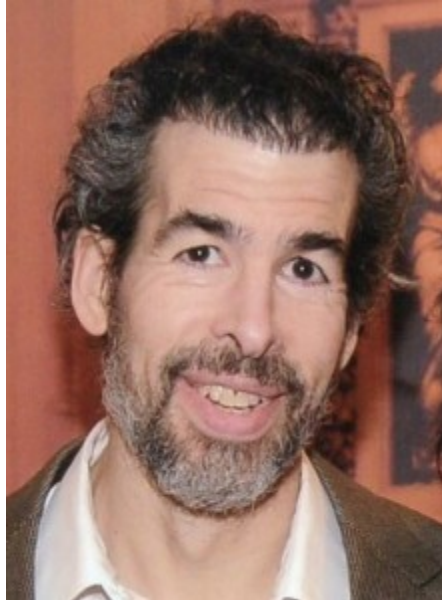


Paul Krassner

Founder, Editor, and Contributor, The Realist

Paul Krassner published *The Realist* (1958-2001), but when People magazine labeled him “father of the underground press,” he immediately demanded a paternity test. And when Life magazine published a favorable article about him, the FBI sent a poison-pen letter to the editor calling Krassner “a raving, unconfined nut.” “The FBI was right,” **George Carlin** responded. “This man is dangerous — and funny, and necessary.” While abortion was illegal, Krassner ran an underground referral service, and as an antiwar activist, he became a co-founder of the Yippies (Youth International Party).

Krassner’s one-person show won an award from the L.A. Weekly. He received an **ACLU** (*Upton Sinclair*) Award for dedication to freedom expression. At the Cannabis Cup in Amsterdam, he was inducted into the **Counterculture Hall of Fame** — “my ambition,” he claims, “since I was three years old.” He won a *Playboy Award* for satire and a Feminist Party and in 2010 the Oakland branch of the writers’ organization PEN honored him with their *Lifetime Achievement Award*. “I’m very happy to receive this award,” he concluded in his acceptance speech, “and even happier that it wasn’t posthumous.”



Richard G. Rosner

Member, The Giga Society; Member, The Mega Society

Rick Rosner has written for *Remote Control*, *Crank Yankers*, *The Man Show*, *The Emmy Awards*, *The Grammy Awards*, and *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* He has also worked as a stripper, a bouncer, a roller-skating waiter, and a nude model. In a TV commercial, Domino's Pizza named him the World's Smartest Man.

He was also named Best Bouncer in the Denver Area by *Westwood Magazine*. He has received eight Writer's Guild Award and Emmy nominations and was named **2013 North American Genius of the Year** by The World Genius Registry. He lives in Los Angeles, California with his wife and daughter.



Dr. Sally Satel, M.D.

Lecturer, Medicine, Yale University; W.H. Brady Fellow, American Enterprise Institute

Dr. Sally Satel is a resident scholar at AEI and the staff psychiatrist at a local methadone clinic in D.C. Dr. Satel was an assistant professor of psychiatry at Yale University from 1988 to 1993 and remains a lecturer at Yale. From 1993 to 1994 she was a Robert Wood Johnson policy fellow with the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. She has written widely in academic journals on topics in psychiatry and medicine, and has published articles on cultural aspects of medicine and science in numerous magazines and journals. She has testified before Congress on veterans' issues, mental health policy, drug courts, and health disparities.

Dr. Satel is author of *Drug Treatment: The Case for Coercion* (AEI Press, 1999), and *PC, M.D.: How Political Correctness Is Corrupting Medicine* (Basic Books, 2001). She is coauthor of *One Nation under Therapy* (St. Martin's Press, 2005), co-author of *The Health Disparity Myth* (AEI Press, 2006), and editor of *When Altruism Isn't Enough: The Case for Compensating Kidney Donors* (AEI Press, 2009).

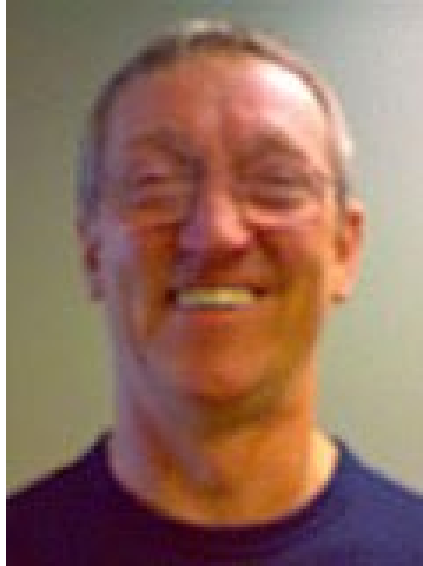
Her recent book, co-authored with Emory psychologist Scott Lilienfeld is *Brainwashed: The Seductive Appeal of Mindless Neuroscience* (Basic, 2013). *Brainwashed* was a finalist for the 2013 *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize in Science.



Professor Sven van de Wetering

Head/Professor, Psychology, University of the Fraser Valley

Dr. Sven van de Wetering works as an Instructor for the Psychology Department of **University of the Fraser Valley**. Dr. van de Wetering earned his BSc in Biology at **The University of British Columbia**, and Bachelors of Arts, Master of Arts, and PhD in Psychology from **Simon Fraser University**. His research interest lies in “conservation psychology, lay conceptions of evil, relationships between personality variables and political attitudes.”



Professor Wayne Podrouzek

Instructor, Psychology, Kwantlen Polytechnic University; Associate Professor, Psychology, University of the Fraser Valley

Dr. Wayne Podrouzek works as an Instructor for the Psychology Department of **University of the Fraser Valley** and instructor in the Psychology Department of **Kwantlen Polytechnic University**. Dr. Podrouzek earned his a Bachelor of Arts in Child Studies and a Bachelor of Science (Honours) from **Mount Saint Vincent University**, a Master of Arts from **Simon Fraser University**, and Ph.D. from **Simon Fraser University** under Dr. Bruce Whittlesea.

Previous Advisory Board Members

Dr. Manahel Thabet

Dr. Hawa Abdi, M.D.

Hawa Abdi Foundation, Founder; Nobel Peace Prize Nominee, 2012

Dr. David Froc

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Psychology, Instructor

Dr. Cory Pedersen

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Psychology, Instructor

Dr. Kyle Matsuba

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Psychology, Instructor

Aislinn Hunter, PhD Candidate

University of Edinburgh, Creative Writing

Dr. Zoe Dennison

University of the Fraser Valley, Psychology, Instructor

Dr. Carla MacLean

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Psychology, Instructor

Dr. Robert McDonald

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Psychology, Instructor

Dr. Mazen Guirguis

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Philosophy, Instructor

Dr. Arthur Bailey

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Modern Languages, Instructor

Dr. Betty Anne Buirs

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, English, Instructor

Professor Elizabeth Loftus

University of California, Irvine Criminology, Law and Society & Psychology and Social Behaviour, Professor

Dr. Betty Rideout

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Psychology, Instructor

Professor Glen Bodner

University of Calgary, Psychology, Professor

Dr. Wayne Fenske

Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Philosophy, Instructor

Overview

In-Sight Publishing began fall, 2014. It publishes ebooks, for free and charge, and operates in independent and public interests rather than for private gains, and is committed to publishing, in innovative ways, ways of cultural, community, educational, moral, personal, and social value that are often deemed insufficiently profitable. It operates inside and outside of the bounds of non-profit/not-for-profit. *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* began fall, 2012. It publishes interviews, articles, and issues. It operates inside the bounds of non-profit/not-for-profit. It equates to the first independent interview-based journal in the world. All informal statuses.

Open, General Acknowledgement and Appreciation

In-Sight Publishing and *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* exist because of three identifiable sectors of support: academics, contributors, and readers. Therefore, all time and effort does have identifiable people, groups, and organizations. Each earned acknowledgement and appreciation for single or continuous, individual or group, contribution in the construction of *In-Sight Publishing* and *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*. Many of them without mention of name contributed time and effort to the production of the journal. Some with provision of interviewee recommendations, connection to the interviewee, assistance in social media, social networks, and academic circles, photography or portraits, time for considered and comprehensive responses to questions, and assertive, constructive, and positive feedback too. Finally, and greatest, readers give the most support. For every person, group, and organization involved in this project, we express deepest gratitude to all types of direct or indirect assistance from every side for contributions to this initiative. Your effort, interest, and time support independent publishing purposed for the encouragement of academic freedom, creativity, diverse voices, free speech, and independent thought.

Design and Development

- *Phase 1*, August 1, 2012: foundation with “Independent Interview-Based Undergraduate Journal” status.
- *Phase 2*, January 1, 2013: production capacity increased with “Tri-Annual” status.
- *Phase 3*, January 1, 2014: stricture removal, both implied and actual, based on “Undergraduate” status through cessation of “Independent Interview-Based Undergraduate Journal” status and instantiation of “Independent Interview-Based Journal” status.
- *Phase 4*, January 1, 2014: increased presence through incorporation of social media.
- *Phase 5*, September 1, 2014: creation of *In-Sight Publishing*, and inclusion of reference styles in American Psychological Association (APA, 6th Edition, 2010) and Modern Language Association (MLA, 7th Edition, 2009).
- *Phase 6*, January 1, 2015: inclusion of footnotes and bibliographic references in full PDF issues, and Chicago/Turabian (16th Edition) and Harvard reference styles, and creation of the ebooks section for the first stages of construction of *In-Sight Publishing*.
- *Phase 7*, January 1, 2015: incorporation of American Psychological Association (APA, 6th Edition, 2010), Chicago/Turabian (16th Edition), Harvard, and Modern Language Association (MLA, 7th Edition, 2009) reference styles in website interview publications.
- *Phase 8*, April 1, 2015: creation of “Academic” and “Casual” sections for ebook publications. “Academic” includes footnotes, bibliographic references, and reference styles. “Casual” does not include footnotes, bibliographic references, and reference styles.

- *Phase 9*, May 1, 2015: inclusion of footnotes and bibliographic references in website interview publications.
- *Phase 10*, July 1, 2015: incorporation of common reference styles such as American Medical Association (AMA), American Psychological Association (APA, 6th Edition, 2010), Brazilian National Standards (ABNT), Chicago/Turabian Author-Date (16th Edition), Chicago/Turabian (16th Edition), Harvard, Harvard (Australian), Modern Language Association (MLA, 7th Edition, 2009), and Vancouver/ICMJE reference styles in website interview publications in addition to one complete list of 27 reference styles (manual insertion without access dates)
- *Phase 11*, August 22, 2015: article website layout refinement: article title, biography, abstract, keywords, common reference style listing, article title, bibliography/references/reference list, footnotes, appendix 1: complete reference style listing – if any, other appendices including tables, figures, and images, and license and copyright. Updates to *Copyright*, *General Philosophy*, *In-Sight Publishing: Overview*, *Journal Overview: Section B*, and *License*.
- *Phase 12*, September 1, 2015: previous *Letter of Appreciation* appreciations moved to *Acknowledgements and Appreciation*. Major appreciations remain in *Letter of Appreciation*. In addition, the refinement of interview layout on the website: interview title, interviewee image/photograph/portrait/sketch, abstract, keywords, common reference style listing, interview title, bibliography/references/reference listing, footnotes, appendix 1: complete reference style listing, and license and copyright; refinement to interviews in full issues: interview title, interviewee image/photograph/portrait/sketch, contents, abstract, keywords, common reference style listing, interview title, bibliography/references/reference listing, appendix 1: complete reference style listing – if any, other appendices including tables, figures, and images, and license and copyright. Footnotes for each page remain in their respective page. An update to ebook inside cover with respect to mandate and copyright. All informal statuses.
- *Phase 13*, September 22, 2015: revision to format of the online publications, introduction of appendices for photographs, transformation of bibliography/references/reference list into bibliography, removal of common reference style listing, and introduction of citation style listing in place of complete reference style listing.
- *Phase 14*, November 1, 2015: Amazon purchase transition with total proceeds to co-authors and *In-Sight Publishing* and *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*; EBSCO contract signed by Scott Douglas Jacobsen and EBSCO to proliferate *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* for formal institution distribution from the P.D.F. issues.
- *Phase 15*, January 1, 2016: EBSCO co-sign completion with over 150 entries at the time; officiation of the *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* with continued information status of *In-Sight Publishing*.
- *Phase 16*, February 1, 2016: In-Sight Publishing “academic” books have consistent “casual” counterparts; “academic” will be free on the website to encourage independent thought with footnotes and bibliographic references for personal research, and casual will be for charge with half of interview funds given to the interviewee (and the other half to *In-Sight Publishing* efforts towards cultural, community, educational, moral, personal, and social value); some e-books will not include the delineation between “academic” and “casual.”
- *Phase 17*, May 1, 2016: Update and refine contents for Amazon Kindle products for In-Sight Publishing.
- *Phase 18*, September 18, 2016: attain and maintain 18 member Advisory Board with 1 Editor-in-Chief for the individual interview publications, free and low-cost e-books, and full journal issues.
- *Phase 19*, November 1, 2016: develop and implement early stages of novel venue for solo and collaborative article publications and interview publications in both academic and casual formats outside of the journal through In-Sight Publishing as hyperlinks compatible with P.D.F., Kindle, and iBooks.
- *Phase 19*, November 1, 2016: develop and implement early stages of novel venue for solo and collaborative article publications and interview publications in both academic and casual formats outside of the journal through In-Sight Publishing as hyperlinks compatible with P.D.F., Kindle, and iBooks.
- *Phase 20*, November 1, 2017: expand the range and variety of front cover options of ebooks for more aesthetic appeal.

- Phase 21, February 1, 2018: experiment with individual, unique book cover designs.
- Phase 22, March 1, 2018: continuation with the previous phase, as this worked.
- Phase 23, April 15, 2018: updates to the In-Sight Publishing *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* archives at the University of California, Irvine (UCI) Interdisciplinary Center for the Scientific Study of Ethics and Morality (Ethics Center) Vaughn Archives (Bettye Vaughn): <https://www.ethicscenter.uci.edu/vaughn.php>.
- Phase 24, June 7, 2018: beginnings of more journals with *Ghana's 5%* and *In Context*.
- Phase 25, June 8, 2018: beginnings of *Apostasia*.
- Phase 26, June 11, 2018: beginnings of *Indigenous Middle East*.
- Phase 27, June 12, 2018: construction of team for *Ghana's 5%*.
- Phase 28, June 24, 2018: construction of team for *Indigenous Middle East*.
- Phase 29, June 18, 2018: beginnings of *Canadian Islamic Theology Journal*.
- Phase 30, September 8, 2018: start publications of *Indigenous Middle East* and *In Context*.
- Phase 31, September 13, 2018: construction of team for *Canadian Islamic Theology Journal*.
- Phase 32, October 21, 2018: beginnings of *African Freethinker*.
- Phase 33, November 1, 2018: start publications of *African Freethinker* and *Ghana's 5%*.
- Phase 34, November 3, 2018: construction of national editorial teams for *African Freethinker*.
- Phase 35, December 1, 2018: add years sections in Ebooks tab.
- Phase 36, January 1, 2019: increase of the available chronologies on the website.

Near future phases will incorporate donations, paid ebooks, and ebook listings. Far future phases will develop from re-design and transformations of *In-Sight Publishing* and *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*.

Journal Overview

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal exists as the first international independent interview-based journal. Submissions remain international and interdisciplinary for interviews, articles, and others. Individual publications throughout the year: January 1 to May 1; May 1 to September 1; September 1 to January 1, and so on. Each publication on the 1, 8, 15, and 22 of the month. Tri-annual full issue publications on “Spring,” “Summer,” and “Winter”: January 1, May 1, and September 1, respectively.

General Philosophy

Where imperatives, utility, and virtues interrelate, and where accuracy/authenticity implicates honesty, credibility implicates integrity, fairness/balance implicates justice, and news judgment implicates prudence, honesty, integrity, justice, and prudence converge on the ethical utility in the moral imperative of truth. Truth necessitates honesty, integrity, justice, and prudence. Academic freedom permits the possibility of truth; academic freedom necessitates destitution of dogma or obfuscation. An ability to question anything, pursue implications, and express these implications in spite of harbored biases and fear of backlash. All without alteration or omission to discover knowledge. *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* aims to attain academic freedom through its core interview format.

Format, Overview

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal formatted by subjects or ideas per issue. Each issue divides into interviews (A), submissions (B), and responses (C).

Sections ‘A’, ‘B’, and ‘C’

- Issue titles implicate format, e.g. “Issue 1, Subject: Psychology,” “Issue 2, Idea: Epistemology,” and so on. Interview, essay, and response sections segmented by issue content. Interviews specified by “A”; submissions specified by “B”; responses specified by “C”, e.g. “Issue 1.A, Subject: Psychology,” “Issue 2.B, Idea: Arts,” “Issue 2.C, Idea: Arts.”

Subject Issues

- Interview sections contain *only* experts from *one* discipline with emphasis on *a subject*, e.g. “Psychology,” and so on. Submission sections contain *only* experts from *one* discipline with

emphasis on *a subject*, e.g. “Psychology,” and so on. Contribution exceptions permitted with sufficient reason sent to the Editor-in-Chief.

Idea Issues

- Interview sections contain *many* experts from *many* disciplines with emphasis on *an idea*, e.g. *Women in Academia, Outliers and Outsiders*, and so on. Submission sections contain *many* experts from *many* disciplines with emphasis on *an idea*, e.g. *Women in Academia, Outliers and Outsiders*, and so on. Contribution exceptions permitted with sufficient reason sent to the Editor-in-Chief.

Frequency

- Individual publications throughout the year: January 1 to May 1; May 1 to September 1; September 1 to January 1, and so on. Each publication on the 1, 8, 15, and 22 of the month. Tri-annual full issues publications on “Spring,” “Summer,” and “Winter”: January 1, May 1, and September 1, respectively. Frequency dependent upon material quantity and completion dates. **Multiple delayed completions will accelerate the publication rate until issue fulfillment.**

Interview Guidelines (‘Section A’)

An overview of the interview process for this section. Interview submissions not accepted from external sources.

Research

- Preliminary research required for interview solicitation. If interview consent obtained from interviewee, **a typical, but not absolute, minimum of one to four weeks** for comprehensive research. This includes purchasing, acquiring, and processing articles, audio-visual material, books, interviews, social media material, and their respective synthesis to produce questions.

Consent

- Interviewees either provide written or verbal consent based on an interview request. Written or verbal consent relate to the interviewee having the power to deny/accept the interview, and for final decision of publication as a single interview on the website or in the full issue publication with all other issue-interviews in PDF and on the website. It remains casual in consent. See *Copyright* for information on ownership of publications.

Conducting

- Interview form depends on interviewee preference: email via *Microsoft Word* or *Open Office* file, in person, phone call, question set, or Skype. Most prefer question sets in email via *Microsoft Word* or *Open Office*. Most questions mix standardized and specialized formats. Standardized for consistency of journal format. Specialized for relevant-to-interview questions. All questions have design to elicit in-depth and full responses from interviewees.

Editing Stage One

- Editing consists of the interviewees original interview with minimal editing to keep the intended meaning and message of the interviewees intact, even where certain answers may contain controversial or ‘politically incorrect’ statements, opinions, or information.

Editing Stage Two

- Interviewer sends draft back to the interviewee to confirm the originally intended meaning and message seem sustained to the satisfaction of the interviewee. If the interviewee requires any further alterations, omissions, or edits, the interviewer repeats the cycle of edit to confirmation of accuracy of message and meaning to re-edit until the interviewee evaluates the final version of the interview as sufficiently accurate to their intended meaning and message. Any major editing consists of corrections to grammatical and/or spelling errors. This editing aims to optimize the correspondence

between the interview and the interviewees intended message and meaning to the satisfaction of the interviewee.

Submission Guidelines (Section ‘B’)

Material

- Contributor status access restricted to undergraduate students, graduate students, instructors, professors, and experts. Each submission considered on appropriateness of grammar and style, comprehensiveness, coherence, and originality of content.

Scope

- Depending on the issue, the accepted submissions consists of articles, book reviews, commentaries, poetry, prose, and art.

Submission

- It must not have publication or pending publication elsewhere. For exceptions, sufficient reason should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief along with the material. For written scholarly material, it must be in 12-point font, Garamond, double-spaced, and with APA or MLA formatting. Length of material ranges from 2,000 to 7,500 words. Material should be sent to the following:
 - Scott.D.Jacobsen@Gmail.com

Response Guidelines (Section ‘C’)

Responses to interviews (‘A’) or essays (‘B’) must have the following format:

Material

- Preferable for respondents to have experience or expertise in area relevant to interview or essay content.

Scope

- Response material should relate to current or prior issue on specific points in one essay or article.

Submission

- Responses must have the following format: APA format, Garamond, 12-point font, double-spaced, citation of interviewee and each ‘Question-and-Answer’ section of response (maximum of 5), and reference list of relevant articles, books, prior interviews, watching of video material, reading of social media material in APA. Length of material should range from 500-1,000 words; exceptions will have consideration with appropriate reasons provided to the Editor-in-Chief. Material should be sent to the following:
 - Scott.D.Jacobsen@Gmail.com

Research Ethics

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal does not answer a research question. Interviews hold total control over final published responses for as accurate a representation as possible of an interviewee as possible. Hence, zero mandatory ethics board consent necessitated by its operation. Monetary detachment removes constraint by an institution or individual for published content, despite academic positions or alma maters for the Editor-in-Chief and Advisory Board. Please see *Internal and External Funding* for monetary information.

Internal and External Funding

Scott D. Jacobsen provides complete internal funding *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*. All internal funding includes purchasing of articles, books, chapters, prior interviews, video material, social media material, and all marketing efforts of *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal*. In the case of external monetary funding, only monetary funding not restricting academic freedom for *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* will have consideration. **At this time, *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* operates with internal funding from Scott Douglas Jacobsen with the addition of one website renewal donation from Richard G. Rosner.**

Attachments

Attachments means constraints or restraints through functioning out of institutions or groups. For instance, an institution or group would consist of a university, an agency, a think-tank, and/or an interest group of some form. *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* functions autonomous from any institution or group. This provides total freedom of content for consistency with principles of operation for academic freedom.

Advertising Policy

All advertising for the journal exists as open-access for any individual. See 'Open Access' for more information.

Open Access

In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal exists as open access for online contents, where any content *In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal* becomes accessible for **reading or downloading** to any interested individual/group.

Letter of Appreciation

Outsiders and Outliers continues into its fifteenth issue. I extend appreciation to the following: Dr. Adele Diamond, Ph.D., FRSC; Dr. Aubrey de Grey; Professor Azra Raza, M.D.; Professor Christina Atance; Dr. Daniel Bernstein; Dr. Diane Purvey; Dr. Evangelos Katsioulis, M.D., M.Sc., M.A., Ph.D.; Rev. Dr. George V. Coyne; J.J. Middleway; Professor Kirsten Johnson, M.D., M.P.H.; Marissa Torres Langseth; Dr. Maryanne Garry; Paul Cooijmans; Paul Krassner; Richard G. Rosner; Dr. Sally Satel, M.D.; Dr. Sven van de Wetering; Dr. Wayne Podrouzek; the previous Advisory Board members; and to the interviewees – Imam Soharwardy, Joseph Emmanuel Yaba, Stacey Piercey, Yasmine Mohammed, John Collins, Ruth Henrich, Erik Haereid, Rick Rosner, and Graham Powell.

Also, I express gratitude and respect for the Athabasca University, Simon Fraser University, The University of British Columbia, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, University of California, Irvine, Fort Langley Library, and Surrey Public Library librarians. The people unseen, often, count the most. I appreciate all assistance in collaboration necessary for required sufficient comprehension of new disciplines, research, and interviewees involved in this project coinciding with improvisatory and comprehensive feedback in the past and into the present.

Once more, thank you for the implied love to make the connection.

Scott D. Jacobsen
Founder, In-Sight Publishing

Issue 19.A, Idea: Outliers & Outsiders (Part Fifteen)

An Interview with Imam Soharwardy on Creationism, Evolution, and Islam



Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Sufi Imam Syed Soharwardy is the Founder of the Islamic Supreme Council of Canada and the Founder of the Muslims Against Terrorism. He discusses: opening on creationism, evolution, and Islam; science and Islam; Christian young earth creationism; cosmology and textual analysis; *Jinn*; and Sufi Islam.

Keywords: Islam, Islamic Supreme Council of Canada, Jinn, Muslim, Muslims Against Terrorism, Sufi, Syed Soharwardy, young earth creationism.

An Interview with Sufi Imam Syed Soharwardy on Creationism, Evolution, and Islam: Founder, Islamic Supreme Council of Canada; Founder, Muslims Against Terrorism[1],[2],[3]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Let's talk creationism, evolution, and Islam.

Imam Soharwardy: It is the difference between the modern theory of evolution and Islamic Sufi theology. This is what we believe Islam is all about. It is an interpretation of some scholars of Islam over the past 14 centuries and in this last century or two.

There are new sects. They refer to new interpretations. Creation: Islam says there is the first

point of creation. Science calls it Big Bang. We believe it, too. So, there was a big bang. It all started from a small, tiny particle.

It does not conflict with the teachings of Islam. But after that, once that big bang or starting point of creation, there is evolution. Evolution is the new transformation and creation of new species via Almighty Allah, into new shapes and forms.

But we also believe humans are not people from apes. We do not believe that. Science also rejected that theory. That human came from them. But we definitely believe everything that has started; they began as creations from Almighty God.

That's what we call God. But the creation of things or species, or various types of the creation of God evolved from a point. That is what Sufiism gives. It is a beautiful description.

That the starting point is Almighty God Himself. He started God from this one big bang, and then it evolved into many, many millions and countless forms of God or species. If you reverse your creation process back to the original point, then that's what it is all about.

It is what Sufis call going back to Almighty God. You will return to Him. This is what the Holy *Quran* says. The "return to Him" means that we will not exist and He will still exist. God will still exist. He is the starting point and the end of all creation.

But He Himself does not have any beginning or end.

2. Jacobsen: That's interesting. The only stated that would not necessarily be within the mainstream biologists of all religious and non-religious stripes is, basically, human beings are another branch of an animal within the Great Primates.

We share a common ancestry with chimpanzees, gorillas, and bonobos, and other primates. That would be the only thing. In terms of the statement, 'Human beings did not come from apes.'

It would be insofar as a Sufi understanding, or as an Islamic, as you noted more general understanding, would take it. In terms of creation from a point and so on, none of that would contradict the modern scientific understanding in any way.

Soharwardy: We believe humans are a separate species. The animals, the fish, and all kinds of living things; they are separate creations of God. But if you go back in a reverse cycle from now until the beginning of creation, you will see they started from one single point.

God is the Creator. God is the one point. That is the Big Bang.

3. Jacobsen: In North America, this tends to come more from the Christian community. They have various institutes. They have arks. They build creationism museums. Often, they will more likely take a young earth creationist view of the world.

It comes from Bishop James Ussher, who argued the world was about 6,000 years old. Of course, the estimates can range from 6,000-to-10,000-years-old in Young Earth Creationism.

Also, this can come from some other areas of the world, where Islam is more dominant than Christianity. For instance, one individual is Harun Yahya or Adnan Oktar who wrote *The Atlas of Creation* (2006).

So, what would be a proper understanding, insofar as you have it, of Islam to talk to those who may have more of a young earth creationist view of the world: Christian or Islam?

Soharwardy: I think this 5,000, 6,000, or 10,000, in terms of the teachings of the *Bible*, can look at Noah living to 950 years old. [Laughing] So, those who say a few thousand years old Earth. It is from the point of view of scripture an incorrect theory.

In the Holy *Quran*, there is no contradiction with the *Quran* or the Islamic theology, or what the Prophet said (PBUH).

Before Adam came to the planet Earth, there was life on the planet. There were trees. There were animals. Good existed for millions, millions, and millions of years. But we definitely believe the Earth is very, very old – millions of years.

Those who say 6,000, 10,000; it is in direct contradiction from my reading. It is not correct. It has to read millions of years.

4. Jacobsen: In terms of the Islamic cosmology with theological implications, what are some of the details other than creation from a point that comes from textual analysis of the *Quran* and the *Hadith*?

Soharwardy: According to some of the Sufis, though no exact numbers, and other smaller sects, there are 18,000 galaxies. But this is some scholars' opinion or their observation. But the *Quran* counts of countless millions of galaxies.

That Allah says this is My own creation. Not my own galaxy but countless galaxies. Some, in Islamic theology, believe 18,000 galaxies, though.

5. Jacobsen: Also, for those who do not know, what are *Jinn* within Islamic theology? What other entities are mentioned as well?

Soharwardy: There are two kinds of creations. Through the *Quran* and the *Bible*, there are angels. There are *Jinns*. The *Al-Malaa'ikah* are made of light. They are not visible to us. *Jinns* are made of fire. They are also not visible to humans.

Jinns live in the world. There are good *jinn* and bad *jinn* just like human beings [Laughing]. One is called Lucifer or *Iblis* in Islam. It is the same thing. He was a *Jinni* made of a fire, not an angel. He lived among angels and was in the image of God before humans.

6. Jacobsen: If someone is Sufi Muslim, or if someone is Muslim generally, how would they perceive *Jinn*, *Al-Malaa'ikah*, or *Iblis* influencing their daily lives?

Soharwardy: Jinn, we Muslim, based on the Holy *Quran*, believe in Jinn based on a whole chapter in the Holy *Quran* called *Surah Jinn*. It mentions in the Holy *Quran* that Satan, Lucifer, or *Iblis* was a *Jinn*. So, we believe these exist.

However, as with most stories in the Western world, or the Eastern world, we do not believe that those stories are wholly real; they are fiction. Islamic belief

is a human, a righteous human being – not every human being, of course – is stronger than any *Jinn*.

That is why humans are higher in respect and honour in the sight of God than even of the angels.

7. Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Imam Soharwardy.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Founder, Islamic Supreme Council of Canada; Founder, Muslims Against Terrorism.

[2] Individual Publication Date: January 1, 2019: <http://www.insightjournal.com/soharwardy>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://insightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

[3] Image Credit: Imam Syed Soharwardy.

An Interview with Joseph Emmanuel Yaba on Youth Sustainable Development in Africa

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Joseph Emmanuel Yaba is the CEO of Youth Initiative for Sustainable Human Development in Africa (YiSHDA). He discusses: background; sustainability; the reason for the focus on the young; building human capacity for young people; providing a bigger net of support; feedback; difficulties in the midst of the work of YiSHDA; and moving into 2019.

Keywords: Africa, CEO, Joseph Emmanuel Yaba, sustainability, Youth Initiative for Sustainable Human Development in Africa (YiSHDA).

An Interview with Joseph Emmanuel Yaba on Youth Sustainable Development in Africa: CEO, Youth Initiative for Sustainable Human Development in Africa (YiSHDA)[1]·[2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Let us simply start on some of the background for you.

Joseph Emmanuel Yaba: Thank you very much. My story proves that every young person can succeed and help others get there. I was not born with a silver spoon and I grew up in a home where I was taught that the best service one can give is service to humanity and that influenced my decision and calling into the civil society sector and has also impacted my work.

2. Jacobsen: In terms of sustainability, why is this such a particularly important goal or objective currently?

Yaba: For sustainability, we believe that the best form of sustainability is building the human capacity. There is a need to build human capacity, to continue

to advocate for policies and programs that will impact positively in the society. Sustainability is key because it enables us to build tomorrow's leader today so that they can meet the needs of the present without compromising the future.

3. Jacobsen: Is that the reason for the focus on the young as well?

Yaba: Yes, because there is a need for young people to be empowered and to harness their potential. For sustainable development to be achieved, young people need to be at the center of sustainable development and to be prepared also to work across all the thematic areas of sustainability and value creation.

As I said, human capacity is the best form of sustainability. Yes, we can build infrastructure. But it

will, in time, go away, which is why human capacity is the most important. It is important for young people to take on leadership positions and to be part of the value creation.

4. Jacobsen: When you are trying to build the human capacity of young people, how are you going about doing that?

Yaba: We have carved a niche for ourselves in the areas of design and implementation of programs, especially in the areas of economic empowerment as our key special area. When people are empowered economically, they will be able to build a sustainable livelihood for themselves, families and the immediate community.

We have also carved a niche in governance and civic engagement. There is a need for young people to get into governance and work on accountability and transparency. Young people need to question why things are not working and how they should work.

We have also identified health and environmental sustainability. Our organization builds the human capacity through the above thematic areas.

5. Jacobsen: With this global emphasis or this emphasis on humanity, how does this provide a bigger net of not only support within a specific country or region, but also within the general populace and potential investors and supporters?

Yaba: Of course, Sustainable Development Goals is the center now, it is what the world is pursuing now. Our programs and projects have been designed to also aim at achieving the bigger goals, which is the SDGs. It is what the world leaders have set aside to achieve by 2030 and it is our collective responsibility to work towards its attainment.

It is not only the SDGs we are targeting. We are also targeting the African Union Agenda 2063. We are not just implementing on the smaller scale; we are also looking at the bigger picture. We call it working and acting locally but also making a global impact.

6. Jacobsen: What has been the feedback from people around the program involved in it, directly or indirectly?

Yaba: The feedback has been amazing. Of course, we have one or two challenges, but we are always committed regardless of the challenge. We are very much committed as an organization; we are very optimistic and very encouraged with the feedback from most of the beneficiaries.

It would be important to note that through our programs and activities we have impacted cumulatively a total of 20,000 young people. These

are young people who are currently empowered, who have found something worthwhile. They are currently doing well in most of the fields that they have found themselves. We have track records of success with the young people who have been in the programs.

We have success stories and are still optimistic about still attaining more success stories.

7. Jacobsen: In terms of the difficulties, what have they been? How have you overcome them?

Yaba: As an organization, the number one challenge has always been the issue of funding. But we are not discouraged by the funding issue that we do not get too often. We still go ahead and make sure that we squeeze resources because we must keep the activities and programs running and maintained.

Regardless of our challenges, our organization takes pride in having young people who have tremendous skills. We use our skills to break our barriers. We use our skills as young people to push ahead. We take responsibility for our actions, for our beneficiaries and partner organization. We never let things weigh us down. We still go ahead to make sure we achieve our goals and our aims.

8. Jacobsen: Looking into 2019, what are some of the targeted objectives now?

Yaba: 2019 is a year of expansion and growth and leveraging on some of our success stories and to work on some of our programs as well. We are trying to see how we can explore better opportunities, leverage partnerships, leverage collaborations more; no organization or nobody is an island.

We all need collaboration. We all need assistance. To us, 2019 will be a year where we will expand and leverage on some of our success stories while, at the same time, looking for even better opportunities and also to achieve better results in terms of working on some of our programs and to getting into more community schools as well.

9. Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Joseph.

Yaba: Thank you very much, Scott, and thank you for the opportunity.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] CEO, Youth Initiative for Sustainable Human Development in Africa (YiSHDA).

[2] Individual Publication Date: January 8, 2019: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/yaba>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

An Interview with Stacey Piercey on the Transgender Canadian Citizens, the Media, and Health Concerns (Part Three)



Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Stacey Piercey is the Co-Chair of the Ministry of Status of Women Sub-Committee of Human Rights for CFUW FCFDU and Vice Chair of the National Women's Liberal Commission for the Liberal Party of Canada. She discusses: opinions about the transgender citizens in Canada by some of the media and some movements; the impacts on transgender youth in Canada in hearing neutral and curiosity-driven news; the impact on transgender youth in Canada in hearing mean-spirited news; moving into 2020 for acceptance of

the transgender community; help for transgender individuals moving into the 2020s; and transgender health issues being addressed and respected.

Keywords: Co-Chair, Liberal Party of Canada, Ministry of Status of Women, Stacey Piercey, Vice Chair.

An Interview with Stacey Piercey on the Transgender Canadian Citizens, the Media, and Health Concerns: Co-Chair – Ministry of Status of Women Sub-Committee of Human Rights, CFUW FCFDU; Vice Chair National Women's Liberal Commission at Liberal Party of Canada | Parti libéral du Canada (Part Three)[1]:[2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: In the public conversation now, we can observe a wide variety of reactionary, not movements but, outspoken individuals or small coalitions with platforms on the moderate fringe expressing opinions on the transgender community varying degrees of veracity. With or without mentioning individuals or small coalitions, what tend to be the modern expressed opinions coming from them?

Piercey: I see significantly less negativity in the media as I did years ago. Everyday life is pleasant for the most part. There have been changes for the better as of late. I do hear, and it is seldom, a message from those who have concerns, and from those who have an issue with transgender people. It is often one of fear of the unknown or a resistance to change.

They are seldom transgender or are affected by the fact someone transitioned genders. I think you should always be your best self, let alone be afraid to be yourself. I find most people are friendly and efforts are made to be accommodating. Many have gone through the transition process with the knowledge gained. I believe everyone heard about the problems that we encountered, from all the transgender advocates the last several years. It is important to note. This is not a priority in most people's lives. It was, for a time, in mine.

2. Jacobsen: What seems like the impact on the lives of the young in the transgender community who see or hear the more benign, inquiring, and curiosity-driven opinions expressed in the public sphere?

Piercey: The generation of younger transgender adults that I do encounter. Most have healthy lives; some are open about being transgender, some are not. It isn't that big of a deal. People are not bound as much by gender roles as I was growing up in the seventies. I changed with the times. I honestly don't think about gender that much.

I do see more positive media regarding transgender people. That was missing for me to have good role models when I started. There are shows, celebrities, and stories with happy endings now. It is not all

doom and gloom. I see other transgender people when I am about town, not often, but you do notice when you get served by or pass each other on the street.

3. Jacobsen: What seems like the impact on the lives of the young in the transgender community who see or hear the more aggressive, judgmental, and denialist opinions expressed in the public sphere?

Piercey: It is terrible, I don't understand why anyone would want to scare or hurt anybody. This kind of rhetoric does tremendous harm. Once you start believing another person's opinion of you, you lost who you are, your identity or individuality. Imagine living with being judged all the time, discriminated against or harassed. That is not a life and shouldn't be tolerated by anybody. There is no room for hate. There is no argument if transgender is real or acceptable. It is. Now it is time to help transgender people integrate into everyday society not fight with them.

4. Jacobsen: Moving forward into the 2020s, what would best help the public acceptance of the transgender community?

Piercey: Education is vital. It isn't difficult to be kind to others. People are people. I never saw transgender people as different. For me, it would have helped to move through the system much quicker. I lost years in comparison back then. My problems are behind me now. I transitioned, and I have a normal life. I get to contribute back to society. The public accepts me. I can take care of myself. I am independent. That is what was important on my journey. I am now on to the next step. Life as a woman, problem solved. That is what the public needs to hear to help acceptance.

5. Jacobsen: Moving forward into the 2020s, what would best help the transition of the trans individuals within the transgender community in coordination with their medical provider?

Piercey: Supports should be in place. Your doctor is one aspect of your life, what about housing, employment, poverty and other issues faced. This is

about productive lives and providing the help needed for these individuals to move forward. There are unique challenges that are to be addressed and can no longer be dismissed or misunderstood. Removing the need for advocacy will improve lives.

When opportunities are available for services provided such as surgeries, counselling or other requirements, then you will see less of urgency in the community. Transitioning at an older age, may be rare in the future. It will be diagnosed and monitored earlier. Then like most health decisions, they are made by families or the individual. People may never know about a prolonged period of transitioning, dealing with a stigma or being outside of the system.

6. Jacobsen: What medical and other options are becoming better, more precise, safer, and so on, for the transgender community? Typically, as technology gets better and wider spread, it becomes cheaper and comes with fewer complications.

Piercey: Access to the current medical system will be profound. Forget about new technologies. Transgender health issues are now being addressed and respected. We are all going to learn from each other and over time improve the delivery of services. That is a start.

The excuses of the past about the costs and lack of adequate professionals available with expertise in transgender health will eventually be solved. Most transgender surgeries are the same procedures performed for other reasons. It is not necessary to

label transgender health as different. With social acceptance, we can get back to helping people become healthy. If a surgery can help you, and doctors do it all the time, why not help people. Transgender people shouldn't have to wait five to ten years to get a surgery that others can get in six months for a different reason in a government hospital.

In the past to have my gender change recognized I had to go through the government medical system, and I did. If you went out of the country or had it done by an uncertified medical profession your application to change gender could be rejected. Today, you can change your gender on your identification by filling out a form. The government shouldn't make life harder for anybody. If someone is living as the opposite sex than they were born in, they get to have a valid id. It is undeniably essential to have proper identification. Changes like this are all relatively new and will help over time.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Co-Chair – Ministry of Status of Women Sub-Committee of Human Rights, CFUW FCFDU; Vice Chair National Women's Liberal Commission at Liberal Party of Canada | Parti libéral du Canada; Mentor, Canadian Association for Business Economics.

[2] Individual Publication Date: January 15, 2019: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/piercey-three>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Interview with Terri Hope on Humanism

January 22, 2019

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Abstract

Terri Hope is the Founder and Leader of the Grey Bruce Humanists and a former Humanist Officiant. She discusses: personal background; family and community reactions to a non-belief in God; being on the board of Humanist Canada; women in community; equal representation; the main attraction for women humanists; things to keep in mind for the secular community; the veracity of traditional arguments for God; upcoming events; demographics; humanists as atheists; kinds of atheists; fun conversations; humanism and humanitarianism; humanism and feminism; gender gap in humanism; #MeToo; substantive forms of behavior; science and ethics in humanism; and final feelings and thoughts.

Keywords: Grey Bruce Humanists, Humanism, humanist officiant, Terri Hope.

Interview with Terri Hope on Humanism: Founder and Leader, Grey Bruce Humanists; Former Humanist Officiant[1][2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

This is a relatively accurate transcription and edit of the text, but not completely.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What is personal background?

Terri Hope: I grew up with some of the practices and important values of Judaism, like education and family, but not super religious. I went to Hebrew school. By the time I was in late high school, I did not get religion. I did not understand how that could work. Then I became more interested in other things.

I had a God belief still, for a while. But then, I had to accept that I do not believe in God.

2. Jacobsen: Did family or community react when you announced this lack of belief or the belief in the non-God?

Hope: In high school, I do not think that I announced this belief. I was not as passionate about those things. I did not do any of that stuff. Besides, I moved away, from New York to Canada at age 21. I was married then. My husband was not religious either.

He was not from a religious tradition. It was not until after a while that we became somewhat interested. I did not know that there was such a thing; that there were people who talked the way I did. Then later, my husband became interested too.

We were both involved with the Humanist Association of Toronto and then on the board of Humanist Canada. In Ontario, we started up here with humanism. I did not expect anyone here. Because it is a traditional town.

3. Jacobsen: When were you working on the board Humanist Canada and orienting towards leadership within the humanist community?

Hope: I wanted a place at the table when religious groups said one thing or another. I was not much of an activist. I had a young family. I did other things as well. I was doing it for participation and for some sense of community rather than activism work.

It was for the community. I do not know if younger people with families are interested in those things because of their other responsibilities. My children are grown and have lives of their own now.

4. Jacobsen: In some of the non-religious community and noted for a long time about the religious community, women tend to have less of a say, at the table where it counts. What was it like in the earlier years coming into the humanist community?

Hope: That is true. There were fewer women. It was more men who were very serious. We tried to offer a wider range of things to do. We had groups of people visiting others who could not come for one reason or another. We tried to have movie nights.

We tried to widen the range from serious discussion groups. Now, I do not think this is a problem. Right now, we have an equal number.

5. Jacobsen: Was this a conscious effort or not?

Hope: Interesting, at one point, we talked about it. How can we get more women involved? I think adding more options to what we did not, maybe, changing the subject a little bit. There was a conscious effort to attract more women.

Because the serious and heavy topics tended to attract more women. But now, maybe because of our age and what we were involved with before, we must involve more young people. But young people may not be as interested in joining something.

We do not have things for kids. We do not attract younger people, for sure.

6. Jacobsen: What do you find as the main attraction for different women humanists now?

Hope: Women want an opportunity to get out and talk about very interesting topics that women who are out of university are not talking about as often now. They want to share food and seeing the same people across time. They want to share and learn different and interesting things.

It is very much the affiliation and community sense. It is to learn new things. When you are no longer in university and no longer need to be available to

children all the time, it is wonderful to be involved with people and talk about a variety of topics and to read books. It does attract women for those reasons.

7. Jacobsen: In a secular community, what are some of the things people must keep in mind?

Hope: Lots of things, building it up here, I started with people here. I was a non-religious officiant. I asked them if they wanted to participate in a group. We do not try to convert people or encourage membership.

When someone was here one time, people who were sitting around the living room and saying, "Sure, we can try. We can find people in the area and see if they want to give it a try." Over the years, between 10 and 30 people are coming out to meetings, other things to keep in mind.

One of them is the non-proselytization. I like to keep it totally open. Anyone is welcome. However, if they are coming to convert us or to present their personal religious view, that really does not work because our purpose is to have people talking comfortably with one another and to not worry that they will step on someone's toes.

What I do, if I know someone has religious beliefs, because I have no interest in converting them if they have found what works for them, I speak with them about what our meetings are about. If they want to see come, great! If they want to see what we are about, then stay on the list and see what we are up to.

If they want to continue, fabulous, it is those kinds of things that we need to be sure that our members are comfortable, because it is a place where you can be an agnostic or an atheist, or say something that is not favorable about religion and then not have to feel as if you're insulting or not demeaning some else who finds that important or as something positive in their life.

That is important to me. There are humanists who are very stalwart about it. Religion is idiocy. We need to let people know it. I am not that. But then there are others who are questioning, "I am not too sure." Then there is this whole spiritual thing, "I am spiritual but not religion." I do not know what it means. It could mean crystals or some vague sense.

But they can come. Those people do not come to think God is directing everything. Do I know whether there is a God or not? Of course not, I am assuming because I have not had any experience. Science says, "The things we don't know, we don't know." That is okay.

8. Jacobsen: What do you think of these traditional arguments in religions for the veracity of some intervening God?

Hope: I would probably say, "I am happy for you. That you have found that experience of a reality of a God. But that has never happened to me." That is probably what I would say. If they say, "God cured her cancer." I would say, "I would rather trust doctors and scientists than faith." Usually, I say, "That's good for you."

I am probably only different with children. When you teach your child and do not allow science into the classroom, and if you teach the faith in the church as though it were fact, that, I have a problem with.

9. Jacobsen: Since you are coming into your 12th/13th year for Grey Bruce Humanists, what are some events upcoming that we can look forward to? That come humanist or secular groups could replicate where they are at.

Hope: We have those three types of programs. We have a lot of volunteers and diverse programs. We have our roster of speakers coming up through the year. Anything from elder abuse to Gretta Vosper and being an atheist minister.

We have environmental ethics or medical ethics. We have different topics throughout the year with speakers. They can come to the library on the first Wednesday of every month. The third thing that we offer, every third month or so, is a community get together. We go to a restaurant and then have a get-together, a social. It is purely social.

We donate books or magazines to the library. We make donations. It is mostly local organizations rather than Doctors Without Borders. People, at this point, can look forward to a program. We have a lot to work with here.

10. Jacobsen: In terms of the demographics for Grey Bruce Humanists, does this population tends towards the more educated and progressive?

Hope: Yes, it tends towards the educated. People who love discussing things and ethics, and politics. I think there are some who may not have a lot of formal education. But most of them do, though. They look forward to an opportunity to discuss stuff.

We do not have many people without formal education. It is an older population as well. Those who are not consumed with kids or school as parents. Our demographics do manage Grey Bruce as Grey Bruce is an older population.

We have no programs to recruit people. We really do not want to do it. Considering, it is not a city We do

not need to get bigger and bigger. We are happy to have the members that find out about us. We are happy for people who find out about us through the Facebook page. We get some members through that.

But we do not work hard to get members.

11. Jacobsen: Do most humanists identify as atheists?

Hope: We have never discussed it. But I would say, "Yes." Atheism, the word has such a bad rap. It does mean no god. It is saying, "I know there's no god." Fine! A lot of people are comfortable with that. I would rather say, "Yes, I am an atheist, because there is no god in my life."

But if I were to learn later in my life that there was some overpowering force, then, maybe, I would change. I would tend to say, "No, that would not happen. It is mythology." I can say, "I am an atheist," but I do not go around to other people and say, "I am an atheist. I am a nonbeliever."

I fear that it turns people off immediately when I say, "I am atheist." I do not want to destroy the conversation before we get into it. So, that is just me, though. Other people say, "I am an agnostic," which makes sense. That I do not know. Most humanists identify as atheists, probably.

That would be a good meeting and conversation. It would be very interesting. Thanks! [Laughing]

12. Jacobsen: It also raises a question, "What kind of atheist, to what extent?"

Hope: That would be the question. Are you an atheist that says, "There is no god"? Or do you say, "I have no evidence of there being a God?" I guess [Laughing]. It would be interesting to ask people where they are coming from. Most of us, the vast majority, have come from or grown up in a religion.

I know in Toronto. There were people who had atheist parents. But most of us have not.

13. Jacobsen: If we look at the history of science, every generation harbors a set of findings and theories to fit those findings together. But, at some point, those findings and theories with the evidence hit a certain scope or level of fidelity, based on the framework or the level of evidence.

It is those edges and level of fidelity that we find the fun conversations. Where do you see the fun conversations?

Hope: Oh yes, absolutely, I would love to dig into that. I do not know. I maybe do not know enough science to get deeply into that subject. I tend to say, "I don't know," and then live with the "I don't

know.” Or I would choose to find a scientist on that subject that I respect and who has spent many years studying the subject and then go with them on it, rather than make a statement on my own.

My husband may have some different things to say about it. There are some interesting questions about science.

14. Jacobsen: Do humanists tend to be more interested in humanitarian efforts?

Hope: I would say, “Yes.” Remember, not all members identify as humanists, I do. Are they interested in compassion, giving, and sharing? I would say, “Yes.” Most of them tend to be more left of center or interested in the legislation guarding poor people, immigrants, refugees. We do have a few conservative new members.

You will find some of the conservative new members are atheists and not humanists. Rob Buckman was part of a “Can you be good without God?” presentation. It was with pastors, priests, and rabbis, and Bob was a humanist.

Someone from the Evangelical Right said, “Stalin was an atheist.” But Rob Buckman said, “But he was not a humanist” [Laughing].

Jacobsen: Most Germans in the 1940s were Christian, the vast majority.

Hope: Oh sure!

Jacobsen: It amounts to saying, “There is no true German Christian,” or no true Scotsman. It amounts to a logical fallacy in the assertion.

Hope: It is interesting how we define ourselves in so many ways. How we mesh politically, because of how we define humanism, we are interested in animal rights. But our vegan members would say, “We are not interested enough as we eat meat.” So, you have a lot of acceptable ways to be a humanist.

15. Jacobsen: Given the present politics with a sprinkling or a peppering of conservatives, do most humanists ally with feminist viewpoints, policy recommendations, and so on?

Hope: We have several members who would not call themselves feminists and who become annoyed with some of the MeToo stuff. The majority, particularly the women, are aware of those issues and would identify with it.

We are talking about caring. We are talking about compassion. We are talking about equity. We are talking about kindness. So, how do you treat a woman or a refugee, anyone struggling? If you are a humanist, you care about those things.

If you do not care about those things, you may be an atheist, but you may not be a humanist.

16. Jacobsen: What is the explanatory gap or filter for the gender-based split between humanism and feminism? Men are far less likely to be than women.

Hope: Yes, I think experience or the typically privileged groups have not experienced what it feels like to be a female in our culture. Some have gone to fabulous heights and others are trapped in male domination. More women are thinking about these issues.

If women come together and talk about what happened to them, and feeling about them, they can talk about things. They can say, “I can’t believe that we actually put up with that.” Men have not experienced that. Tonight, we will be having a meeting talking about the “Baby it’s cold outside” phenomenon or the Christmas card of the man with the tape over the family member’s mouths. He is saying how peaceful Christmas comes from this.

So many things that are “ha, ha, ha,” funny are not now. We are talking more about it. We are not accepting being treated as a lesser being. It is talking about it. Those of us who are older are. What accounts for the gap between men and women, and they are older, they are probably used to a world of comfort and not having been used to not walking around in a position of power.

They do not see their endemic privilege. Of course, white people have the same issue. I am a white person. Do we recognize our privilege as white people? We should! Because that is a very big issue. Any black person can talk to you about what it means to walk the streets as a black person, and how different that is.

If we have not experienced something, then the more likely we are to hold onto our privilege. It may go unrecognized.

17. Jacobsen: If we look to the earlier portion of that response, the #MeToo phenomenon starting from Tarana Burke in 2006. The statistics are only 8%, which is relatively high even in the other ranges given in terms of false claims [ed. False rape claims at 8%]. There, yes, may be the *Rolling Stone* case.

Hope: I do not think there is any question about there being false claims. But there are far more women who have never made claims about what has happened to them than ones who have made claims and are making false claims.

The ones who are out for some money and to get some guy back. I am sure that they happen. But just as women claim who have been sexually abused, I am sure there is a false memory. But is that the highest percentage? No, I do not think so.

Jacobsen: I would go back to two basic sources. One is the FBI with only 12.5 to 1 being false claims. Then the World Health Organization having 1/3 women having sexual or physical violence in their lifetime.

Hope: Oh, my heavens, it goes so much further than that. In my own case, a friend's father; in my own case, a man got into my car and starts fondled my legs. Neither of them really hurts me, but they did scare the living daylights out of me.

They never really hurt me. I never went after them. If this happened today, I would be at the police station. My mother would never. I would say millions of women. When women get together, they talk about those things. They never report it.

Not trivial things too, because they did not damage us for life, but they did affect us. [Laughing] There is a feeling of entitlement. We have not studied male sexuality to really understand male sexuality and, particularly, young men. [Laughing] Well, no we have plenty of examples of them too.

But we do not want to do that. Because we do not want to pretend, we are them. Because we are not! My husband and I have been married for 50 years. [Laughing] So, it is not like I am anti-male. But they have their bit. The endless, endless examples of male privilege and feeling of privilege as an entitlement. Yes, absolutely!

Do all men acknowledge it, I do not think so? Not all, some do.

18. Jacobsen: Does the acknowledgment come in the more substantive form of behavior or only in the signifiers of words?

Hope: It would be saying, "You know, we're not all bad. He went overboard." I do not know. In the humanist group, it will be different. On *Fox News*, it will be different. I thought that when I saw Donald Trump make his statement about grabbing women that that would be it. I thought he would be finished.

When he made fun of the person with Cerebral Palsy, I thought, "He's finished." But he was not. What is the evidence? In our groups, the evidence of that would be a little more speaking out, "Come one, you're going too far with that."

Some strong women would say, "You can say that. But this is what happened to me."

19. Jacobsen: Given the linkage of science and evidence with ethics in humanism, how can this new wave of information that may be novel to many, many men of women's experiences in general with men in their lives create or inform new ethic and behavior question in humanist groups?

Hope: You start introducing this in elementary school. Being kind to people, being considerate of people and not just girls and women, all people should be treated respectfully and fairly. You start that in elementary school.

Boys start growing up understanding their own proclivities. I can say. Males are programmed to spread the seed from the time that they are 16. They will be looking for opportunities. Girls need to understand that. Boys need to understand that and need to fulfill those needs that are not assaulting girls.

That is a really, big question. I think it has a lot to do with education, teachers, and parents. Parents sometimes do not know as they do not have a glimpse of that. It is going to be a generational thing to start, right now, with little kids. It is to treat all people well.

I mean, the same technique used with teaching kids about handling people who are different than you: the other. Gay people who are very often teased in school. That should never be tolerated. No teacher should tolerate it if he or she hears it. But it was.

So, it is all part, to me, of learning to be a decent human being.

20. Jacobsen: Any final feelings or thoughts in conclusion based on the conversation today?

Hope: I wish there was more of it. If there were more discussions like this in the mainstream, if we had a place at the table in the media more and could help people understand where we are coming from, it is not to destroy their history of Christianity and whatever traditions.

It is not to destroy their whole way of life, but to introduce and to induce a more compassionate future. But it does not sell.

Jacobsen: People want magic in the same way they want easy answers, ethically, scientifically, and otherwise.

Hope: Yeah, I guess you are right. I can see how fun it would be to believe in magic. But somehow, I do not have that gene. I think 7% of us are like this. It should start very early. It is harder. You lose out on

certain things. But I do not believe for any of that stuff and do not see any evidence for it.

So, what can I do about that?

Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Terri.

Hope: [Laughing] You're very welcome.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Founder and Leader, Grey Bruce Humanists; Former Humanist Officiant.

[2] Individual Publication Date: January 22, 2019: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/hope>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Interview with Yasmine Mohammed on Choosing Apostasy, Endorsing Ex- Muslims, and Living in Freedom (Part One)

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Abstract

Yasmine Mohammed is an Author and the Founder of Free Hearts, Free Minds. She discusses: family background; the tone of growing up; being a Muslim girl; people who stop believing in Islam; emotions of having no one to go to; building a new community or finding a new one; going about doing so; and being forced into marriage.

Keywords: FHFM, Islam, Ex-Muslim, Yasmine Mohammed.

Interview with Yasmine Mohammed on Choosing Apostasy, Endorsing Ex-Muslims, and Living in Freedom: Founder, Free Hearts, Free Minds (Part One)[1]·[2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

This interview was conducted in early 2018.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, to begin, was there a family background in both religion and irreligion or simply religion?

Yasmine Mohammed: Wow, that is a good question. No one has ever asked me that before! There was a family background in both, but I never knew my dad. My parents divorced when I was about 2-years-old.

I saw him a few times up until I was probably about eight, but only little visits. So, I never had that father-daughter relationship with him. After that, I never saw him or had any contact with him at all.

But I knew that he was not Muslim. I knew he was not religious. I knew he was not a practicing Muslim. I knew that he did not identify as a Muslim. So, some Muslims, they identify as a Muslim, but they do not practice!

But, even he was like, "No, I do not like all that garbage." But he was not the influence in my life, my mom was the influence in my life because she is the one who raised me.

She raised me to believe that my dad was evil and he is going to burn in hell. So, if we were being bad, she would threaten us with "I am going to send you to go

live with your father,” which was the worst thing because she was going to send us to live with a non-believer.

2. Jacobsen: I want to freeze frame on the tone there, the emotional tone. You described that as the worst thing: to be with your father, not because of your father, but because he would burn in hell.

Is this a common theme that you hear in conversations with friends and others growing up? Not if non-Muslims will burn in hell, but if a threat is either tacit, or explicit, as per your mother’s statement about your father that they will burn in hell – as a threat to keep kids in line, for instance.

Mohammed: It is not a threat. It is the best way to describe it. For somebody who did not live in that world, it is when you are little. Your parents say that Santa is not going to bring you any presents.

If you believe in Santa Claus, and if you would think that you are being bad, he is not going to bring you presents. It was like that, but much worse. It was that, but it was not real. You felt it as real. Your parents thought it was real too.

So, Santa Claus is not a good parallel because parents know that they are joking, but it was these stories about what would happen to you in the grave. The punishments on the Day of Judgment. Punishments that would happen for eternity.

We are not told threats or stories. They were absolute. They were definite. These things would happen to you. It is the default. It was going to happen to you and only if you were able to do something amazing and wonderful and serve God in an over the top way would you be able to protect yourself from that.

So it is the opposite of Christianity, which has forgiveness and your people are inherently good. If they do something wrong, then they can ask for forgiveness. However, for Muslims, it is the opposite.

3. Jacobsen: As a girl and an adolescent young woman growing up in a Muslim family, what was the experience of that for you? Did you notice differences in treatment between boys and girls?

Mohammed: So, there is a difference in treatment. Islam is a religion by men for men. It is created by men for men, so it is male-centered. The female’s rule is simply to serve men, so even as a child you are raised this way.

I have a video that I shared on my Facebook, recently, with a girl who is probably a seven or eight-

year-old. She is wearing a *niqab*. Then they show her cooking and bringing drinks on a tray to serve her brother and cleaning the kitchen.

The song that is being sung is, while she is doing all this, about how wonderful she is and how she is going to go to heaven because she is such a good girl. That is how we were raised. Your whole purpose is to be a good wife one day. That is how you serve Allah.

That is the best person you could possibly be. It is to be able to serve your husband and make him happy and make babies, make more Muslims. Those kids have to be religious.

4. Jacobsen: What happens to people in the family if they stop believing in Islam?

Mohammed: I do not have any experiences of knowing anybody that has stopped believing, so I did not when I stopped believing. It is a long story. I separated myself completely from my family, from my community, from everybody because I knew the punishment for leaving Islam was death.

So, I severed all ties. I suspect that probably other people have done that too. That is why you never hear about them in the community. There is no talk about this person that left the religion.

They do not exist, so a common thing you will hear from many ex-Muslims is “I was the only one.” Then they say something like, “Me too!” I thought that I was the only one because you are raised to think that it does not happen.

It is not possible. You are raised to feel it is an identity. It is who you are, so you cannot ever decide to be non-Muslim because it is who you are. So, now that I am open, I meet many ex-Muslims all the time from all over the world. A lot of them have similar stories to mine, where they had to cut ties with their family, their friends, and everything else.

They came out and then they were ostracized and had to cut ties anyways. At the end of the day, it is a negative experience. Ali Rizvi is one of the only people that told his parents that he was not going to be Muslim anymore.

They said, “That is okay. We still love you.” I was like, “What?!” But it is mostly because they were extremely nominal Muslims anyway. They were Muslim by culture, by heritage. They are not practicing.

So, it is not that big a deal. It is a small step. My family was hardcore. So, I was more like a Mormon. He was more of a universalist. A Unitarian or something, it is not that big of a deal for him, but it is a big deal for my family.

5. Jacobsen: If there is an identity that is implicated from a young age, and you are leaving that behind when you stop believing it yourself, but you have no one to go to, what are some of the emotions and feelings that come up?

Mohammed: These are such good questions. That was one of the hardest parts of leaving the religion. It is re-discovering and re-building who I am from the ground-up. I was always told who I was, what to think, how to act, what to say, and what to wear.

Everything is outlined in your life: how you eat, how to drink, how you go to the bathroom, how you eat, how you put on shoes, how you cut your toenails, and so on. Literally, the stuff of your life is outlined for you, so when you walk away from that it is not cold turkey. It is weird. It takes time.

It is scary. However, I did a lot of reading in those days faked it until I made it. This is who I want to be. These are the values for me. In the beginning, it was doing the opposite of what I was taught, to be honest.

If I was not sure by default, I would do the opposite. Then I would take some time to think about it. It was weird. It was one of the hardest parts of leaving Islam.

6. Jacobsen: That sounds like a reaction from an interview with the Temple of Satan, a chapter leader and spokesperson, Michelle Short and Stewart “Stu” De Haan, respectively.

They noted different branches including the Church of Satan, the Temple of Satan, and the general category of the Theistic Satanist. They noted that the Theistic Satanists are not what they are, and almost impossible, because they amount to an opposing reaction to Christianity.

They are Christianity inverted rather than something non-supernaturalist and that takes Satan as a metaphor. So, even in a different context, I see a similar development there.

Even if you have those emotions coming up, of fear and others, which is an ancient emotion evolutionarily, what becomes of you when you are trying to build a new community or at least find a community?

Mohammed: My case was different because I had a daughter. I had a baby when I ran away, so I did not have time to do much soul searching. I had to get my shit together as quickly as possible because I had to raise her.

So, when I was talking about doing a lot of reading back then, I was in university. Anytime, I could take an elective. I would take child psychology or

something. I wanted to make sure that I raised my daughter in the right way.

7. Jacobsen: With those associated motions, how do you go about building or finding a community?

Mohammed: So, building or finding a community did not happen, I did not find or build a community. I lived a double life. I do not think I ever replaced that community that I lost, or even if it can be replaced.

That is a thing that a lot of ex-religious are missing. that social community connection. That tribal part is comforting and dangerous because you always have ‘the other.’ But I did not find a replacement for it.

It was scary. I was lonely, but I figured it out step by step. I do not have a good answer for that.

8. Jacobsen: You gave a completely appropriate answer as far as I am concerned, because you described the personal context. You ran away with a child. You needed to get your “shit together” as fast as possible. It is reasonable.

But there is a gap. Your father not being in the picture. Your mother said, “I am going to send you to his house and he is going to hell.” All of the sudden, you are leaving the community and escaping with your child.

What is the gap? What is in-between there?

Mohammed: That is a big gap. So, my mom has been trying to force me into marriage after marriage, ever since I finished high school. There is no option of going to college or anything.

But I did not want to get married, so I kept on sabotaging it.

So, I would not get married. She kept on getting new people and different people. Eventually, there was this one guy, she was adamant about him.

She said, “I am kicking you out to the street if you do not marry this guy. I am done with you. I am tired of you. You are marrying him, whether you like it or not.” So, these are the days before Facebook, Twitter, and e-mail. So, I had no connection to my friends that I went to high school with.

I lost all the connections because I had been in Egypt for two years. That was another issue. We went to Egypt to visit as a family. Then she left me there because she wanted me to be fixed. She wanted to leave me in a Muslim Society, so I could stop being so Western.

I did not know that I was going to be staying there for two years. So, one day I woke up and my family was gone. In those two years, I had lost contact. My

friends all started traveling Europe and going to university.

Anyway, they were not living at home anymore, so I had no way of contacting them. When she forced me to marry this guy, I did not think I had much choice anyway. What was I going to do? Even if I did find a friend, I had not spoken to them in two years.

So, I eventually gave in, married the guy, and got pregnant almost immediately. I did not realize until later into the marriage that he was an Al-Qaeda member because I was contacted by CSIS, who is the Canadian CIA.

They contacted me when my mom had an emergency. She started bleeding from her nose. She was coughing up blood at the same time. So, I called 911 for an ambulance. I went with her to the hospital.

Up until that moment, I had never been away. I had never been alone without my mom or him. That was the first time. CSIS, they swept into the scene. They were there, so they have been monitoring him and trying to get to me for some time.

This was the opportunity they finally got. So, when my mom was with the doctor, they came into the waiting room. Then they asked me to go into a private room together. We talked about it. They told me. He was a member of Al-Qaeda.

They started asking me about Osama bin Laden. None of these things sounded familiar to me because it was pre 9/11, so I had no idea. None of it sounded familiar to me. I knew that he had been in Afghanistan because he always talked about Peshawar.

How much he wanted to be back there, he loved it. I knew that he might have been involved in some *ji*had-ist activity, but it is not like he ever talked to me about it. My role was to cook, clean, and get raped. There was no actual relationship there.

So, once I realized who he was and what he was a part of, they told me that he was in Canada to be part of something. They did not know what, but there was something brewing and he was part of the network.

It turns out it was for 9/11. However, that is when I decided I needed to get out of this relationship, get away from this man and get my daughter out of this life because I realized I did not want my daughter to live the same life.

Everything was repeating itself. I was condemning her to live the same life. She is what propelled me to have the courage to get out. It was a two-step process: I had to get away from him and then I had to get away from my mother.

Because my mom, she is the same ideology as him. The only difference is that she is a woman and he is a man. She would throw things at me, but she is not as physically scary. So, I got away from him.

Then I got away from my mom eventually. That is when I started university because I am lucky enough to be living in Canada. I am able to get student loans and start my life. That is when I took a History of Religion course.

In that course, it is when I learned that this divine text that was supposedly the word of God. That was so poetic and perfect. I find out it is plagiarized, from Christianity and Judaism and Pagan stories before that.

It took away all of the divinity. All of the respect that I ever had for it. It was a joke. I was happy to learn because people talk about the sadness that they felt when they realized they have been lied to all these years.

I felt anger that I was lied to. However, initially, my first reaction, "I am so glad I do not have to follow this shit anymore," because I was only doing it because I was so scared. I have been scared from a young age.

I was terrified about what would happen to me if I did not do what I was supposed to do and say what I was supposed to say and wear what I was supposed to wear, etc. So, I only did that stuff out of complete fear.

So, it is the *Wizard of Oz* once you lift the curtain. You find out that there is nothing to fear. I was elated. However, that is cognitively right. I understood logically that this was not right, but I still had all of this fear that was programmed into me.

It took me a long time to stop thinking about it, to stop worrying about it, to stop questioning myself, "What if I am wrong?" I had to own it. That took a long time. A lot of ex-Muslims that flipped. They went straight, as soon as they found out it was lies.

They went straight into outright blasphemy, bringing in the Quran. However, I did not have the need to do that. Even now, I did not find the need to do that.

I wanted to be free. I wanted to free myself. So, that History of Religion course. That was an elective. I took it because the professor was Lebanese, so I assumed he would be Muslim. So, I thought this would be an easy course because it is all about Islam.

I went to Islamic schools my whole my life. My mom was a student at a university in Medina. I am going to ace this course. It turns out he was a Lebanese

Christian, but because he was a Lebanese Christian. He knew so much about my experience.

He understood Arab Muslims because he was raised in that society. Not only that, he did not have any of the apologetics that a regular Canadian professor would have had because he was Arab.

He did not care. He would say what he needed to say. He would talk with honesty about all of the issues with the religions. So, I was lucky to have taken that course. It changed my life.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Author; Founder, Free Hearts, Free Minds.

[2] Individual Publication Date: February 1, 2019: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/mohammed>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Interview with Yasmine Mohammed on Islam, Self-Ownership, and Free Speech and Expression (Part Two)

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Yasmine Mohammed is an Author and the Founder of Free Hearts, Free Minds. She discusses: CSIS and personal life; religious history and its influence on her via education; a rising tide of ex-Muslim community and activism; current work; and current teaching.

Keywords: FHFM, Islam, Ex-Muslim, Yasmine Mohammed.

Interview with Yasmine Mohammed on Islam, Self-Ownership, and Free Speech and Expression: Author; Founder, Free Hearts, Free Minds (Part Two)[1][2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

This interview was conducted in early 2018.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: I want to pause and touch upon some themes discussed so far. One, you started with a phrase in the earliest part that “Islam is a religion by men for men.” That might be a direct quote.

Then you mentioned scared, then you mentioned feared, but then you mentioned also, intervention into your life from external forces of benevolence including CSIS or the Canadian Secret Intelligence Service.

It, in some ways, seems to energize and say, “I can get out of this,” to get away from the husband and your mother who had their own different forms of abuse if I can say. However, when it comes to a course, so it is the primal response of fear.

Then it is followed by you wanting to be free. That is another word you used, of that release and so

you left. Then it was becoming more intellectual, which was the world religion or History of Religion course with the Lebanese professor.

First, it was instinct, then it was intellectual. My suspicion is that the next stage then would be working through a lot more of the emotional stuff?

Yasmine Mohammed: Definitely. So, on everything, I did not mention something that adds to those themes. I wanted to get away from that house and get away from him, but I was really scared. Then I found out I was pregnant *again*.

Then, I was depressed because I felt that I had lost my opportunity. I was disappointed in myself that I did not leave as quickly as I could because now here I was pregnant again. So, I started accepting that this was my life.

I was not going to be a single mom with two kids. I will never survive. I have a high school education, so this is it. I sealed my fate because I was not courageous enough to leave. Then when I went to my first doctor appointment, it turns out the baby did not have a heartbeat, so it is what they called a missed miscarriage.

So, I had to go in for a DNC – which is a procedure to get the baby out. When I did the DNC, I had general anesthesia. The nurse told me you have a young baby. You are going to be groggy and stuff, so we are going to need you to go with somebody that can help you with your little baby when you go home.

Then I said, “Good, I will go to my mom.” Because obviously, he is not going to help me with our kids. So, I said to him, “Can I go stay with my mom for a few days?” He said, “Sure, no problem.”

When I talk about getting away from him and getting away from my mom, that was the last time I ever saw him. I realized this was my opportunity to get out. I was not going to miss it. So when I went to my mom’s after the DNC, she got up the next morning and went to work.

She is the head of the Islamic Studies department at the local Islamic school. I took my kid, sorted through the yellow pages and found a lawyer, a female lawyer because she would be more empathetic with my struggle.

Having to go out all in black gloves everything, with a baby, I only realize now how ridiculous. I remember them reacting strongly, but I only now understand why. I walked into the office that day and I said, “I need to leave quickly. I have to get back before my mom gets back.”

I took the bus. This was in the days before the Skytrain. As soon as possible, I needed a restraining order, full custody, and a divorce. You cannot call the house. You cannot send any letters.

You cannot contact me, so any information you have to ask for it now because I will never be able to see you again. They said, “Done, it is fine. Do not even worry about it. Everything is okay. Do you need to get back?”

I was like, “No, no, no, I am fine.” I had no idea how dire the whole situation was. I went back and waited. For those few days, I did not know. I had no idea what I had started was going to work then, a couple days later he came.

My mom was living in an apartment building. There was security, so you had to get buzzed. I heard him

downstairs screaming in Arabic, “Give me back my wife,” all this stuff.

Jacobsen: “Give me back my wife,” those two terms, “me” and “my,” are terms of being property.

Mohammed: Without a doubt, totally.

Jacobsen: He thought he owned you.

Mohammed: That is what he was angry about. He was angry that I had some agency to make my own decisions.

Jacobsen: You saw these videos of men getting mad about losing their car or their prized guns.

Mohammed: Same thing.

Jacobsen: I interrupted, please.

Mohammed: So, this guy, he is six foot four, Egyptian, dark haired, dark skinned, yelling in Arabic at the building. So, it did not take long for people to call the cops. There is some guy screaming at the building.

I was so afraid someone would leave. Then he would be able to slip, but nobody did. Then the cops came and told him this is your restraining order. You are not allowed to come near the building anymore.

They told me that we can tell him that he cannot come to this building, but we cannot restrict him out in the world. All we can say is that he cannot go within a certain number of meters, in the places you are going to be in, but that does not protect you if you happened to be in the mall and he happened to be there.

So, I stayed in the house. I was not about to risk bumping into him somewhere. I stayed in the house all the way until CSIS contacted me again. They brought me a picture of him behind bars in Egypt and asked if that was him.

I said, “That was him.” I started to get my college loans and started to go to university. So, it was not until I knew he was not going to come and get me and my daughter.

Jacobsen: So, then more positive emotions probably come into your life and assuming your child’s life as well.

Mohammed: So, at this point, my mom was so upset and so angry at me because she did not want me to go to school. She wants to get me into another marriage, married quickly. So, she is telling me how hard it is going to be a single mom.

She is trying, pushing all of these men on me because she wants to grab the opportunity. I did not care. None of that mattered. It was not the first time around. The first time around I was scared and nervous, and her threats meant something to me.

This time around I was like, “Throw me out in the streets, please, I want nothing to do with you. I would love that.” So, I knew I was all on my own anyway. She went to visit my sister in Florida. That is when I grabbed my daughter and packed the bags.

I left her house. So, it was all happy days. I did not care. Nothing was going to bring me down, I was not sad or upset or even worried about the potential idea that my mom would not approve about what I was doing.

I do not care, but all this time I was still Muslim. I was still asking Allah for guidance to escape my mom. I do not know how to explain it. It did not even cross my mind that that belief could be wrong. It was absolute truth, like talking about: does the Sun rise in the morning? Of course, it does.

The Sun is not something you talk about. It was obvious. So, I did not take that history course a couple of years later. It is amazing that I did not question religion. It was him. I was my mom. I did not connect the dots.

Then after I stopped believing in Islam anymore, I was free to criticize Islam. When you are raised, you are not allowed to ever question. You are raised that Muslims can do bad things, but Islam is perfect, Allah is perfect, and Muhammad is perfect.

So, you do not even criticize it. I remember being a young child and finding out he was 50 something and raped a 9-year-old girl. I was like “How are we supposed to revere this? How is he a perfect man?” My mom got so angry at me because who was I?

Some kid questioning the Prophet of Allah. He was so much more than me. I could not possibly understand how divine he is. She made me feel that I could never question anything after that. She tore me down. I was at a young age. I was young when I learned that.

So, questioning is not encouraged. It is punished and that keeps on happening until you finally stop questioning. Punished so the idea that this could be the fault of the religion was not going to enter my mind.

Of course, now, the line between everything that happened to me and this scripture it is clear as day. There is evidence that everything that happened to

me in the way it says to do this. My mom was a good follower.

She believed in this stuff. One thing I did not tell you is that she was raised in a secular household in Egypt. She was not even raised religious, so what happened is she was married to my dad who was agnostic.

It was fine because she did not care about religion. It was not until he left her with three children that she was looking for something. She is in Canada. So, she is looking for her community support, so she found a mosque, the local mosque, and she jumped into it.

She was a born-again Muslim. She found some guy at the mosque who was already married, but who offered to take her in as her second wife and that is what she did.

Jacobsen: Is this in BC, Canada?

Mohammed: Yes, this is in British Columbia, Canada.

Jacobsen: Bountiful BC has many aspects.

Mohammed: Yes, that is right.

2. Jacobsen: It is that old phrase: “variations of a theme.” You mentioned Ali Rizvi. He and Armin are the somewhat more prominent names in the ex-Muslim community now.

In Britain, one of the more prominent is Maryam Namazie, associated with the Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain. So, there is a rising tide. When did you become part of that wave?

Mohammed: It was in the now infamous episode of the Bill Maher show when he had Ben Affleck and Sam Harris. So, that was the catalyst for me because after the episode aired the next day my Facebook was covered with people praising Ben Affleck, and how awesome he was for shutting down that racist Sam Harris.

I was like – *hold on a minute, everything* Sam Harris said was spot on. How are you guys happy about Ben Affleck? He basically had a hissy fit. He was incoherent. What is going on in this world? Have you all gone mad? So, I had to speak up.

So, it made me speak up. I started to discover things and got a face-full. I discovered the whole global secular humanist movement. I did not even hear the term ex-Muslim. I did not know it existed. At this point, I had even been identifying myself as an atheist for over a decade.

So, all that stuff was behind me. There were a lot of people that knew me that would not have known that I had been a Muslim. Even if my non-belief had

never come up because I did not want it to, I wanted to leave that world behind. I want to push it down as far as possible.

3. Jacobsen: So, what is your current work that you are doing now?

Mohammed: So, I have a few irons in the fire. Everything that takes up most of my time is the podcast that I am doing with Ali Rizvi, Faisal Saeed Al Mutar, and Armin Navabi, the *Secular Jihadist*. So, we booked Maajid Nawaz, so that is awesome.

We are going to have him on soon. We are trying to get some bigger names, so I contacted Ben Shapiro and Tommy Robinson. We are trying to get some different sides of the political spectrum, speaking to each other and trying to bridge that gap.

We will see. We will see how things turn out. If you have ever listened to our podcast, we are not aligning in thought, so it makes it difficult to get guests sometimes because they know some of us.

But they do not know others or they had a bad experience with one of us or something like that. So, when there are four of us, we have to find a guest that is with all the four of us. Sometimes, that is hard to do, so that has taken up a lot of my time.

Also, involved in a documentary, which the whole focus is to talk about the Left-Islamist alliance and try to separate those two because our thinking is that if the liberals or if the Left wing Americans, especially atheists, understood that they were supporting a religion and not a people, they would automatically get rid of that alliance that is going on there.

So, it is heartening to see things this morning. There was an article in the *New York Times* of all places. It said that the hypocritical leftists are willing to give Muslim extremists a pass and this has a lot to do with Maajid Nawaz suing the SPLC (Southern Poverty Law Center).

So, it is showing that this alliance between the Muslim and the Left-wing is not a good thing. For the Muslim Extremist or the Left wing, it is not a good thing for the average Muslim. So, we will see how that turns out.

That documentary is still in its beginning stages. I am involved in speaking at the Ayaan Hirsi Ali campus tour. So, what that means, we are trying to get a bunch of students from different universities across the U.S., not Canada yet but we are hoping to exit to Canada soon, (we have different politics in our two countries, we have different needs), but the purpose of the campus tour is to get people who are part of

the secular groups in their universities to come to listen to us speak.

It is going to be me, and Ali and Aisha, Aisha is Ali's wife. There will be shared platforms with a bunch of people and then the students will take what they learned from us. Then spread that into their home universities.

They can also invite us to come to speak at their universities too. Ex-Muslims of North America are doing the exact same thing. They are doing a campus tour, except theirs are only ex- Muslims. The Ayaan Hirsi Ali Foundation is for secular-minded people, so it is more much inclusive.

So, I might get involved in the Ex-Muslims of North American one. I might not. I am not sure because I am also teaching full time in September. I do not have any classes scheduled on Friday so we will see how things turn out.

What else am I doing? I am going to be in Ohio this summer speaking at a CFI conference. I am also going to be speaking in Portland in September. I am going to be sharing the stage with Dave Rubin and Steve Simpson.

We are going to be speaking about free speech. We are going to go around talking about free speech with her, not with her obviously, with her foundation.

This is an exciting program because I watched him onstage. I went when he was in LA. I got a chance to watch Dave Rubin, and Colin Moriarty was on stage with him and Steve too. Then I also watched a video with Faisal and Dave and Steve.

So, it is exciting to watch it and then get to be a part of it. Colin Moriarty, if you do not know him, he is the guy who tweeted. It was No Women Work Day or something like that and he tweeted: "ah Day of Silence" or "ah! finally silence." Which come on, is funny!

So, his girlfriend laughs. He thought, "This is not going to be a problem." He did not realize. The whole world, everything, blew up in his face. He lost his jobs. His friends turned on him. It was a bomb that blew up. You'd think that he tweeted something horrible. So, he is a great person to talk about free speech.

Jacobsen: It is the digital era. In America, where probably the freest speech has been won or the right to, the privilege to, free expression and speech have been won to the greatest extent.

With the digital era, people can disperse the single worst thing about you in one sentence, which, by definition, most often will be out of context. So, for

instance, if he is talking with his wife privately and he tells that joke, they both laugh. It is a bonding thing.

Then it is on Twitter. It is part of a Twitter compilation of thoughts: “I am having coffee today,” “look at this big guy,” “look at that guy wearing spandex in the middle of the day,” “oh, it is ‘No Women Work Day’... so no more complaining.”

But now it’s broadcast so not only the easily offended but those that *want* to be offended can be, they can find a reason for it or people can deliver the reason to them.

Mohammed: It is shocking. He broke down in tears with his conversation talking with Dave Rubin. That is how bad it was. His life fell apart over a tweet, so silly. Honest to God, I did laugh at it. It was funny. I am a woman. I am not offended by it.

It is hilarious. I get over it. However, you said people *want* to be offended.

4. Jacobsen: It is almost, not the lowest common denominator but, something close to it, where the variables being counted are those with the thinnest skin who then determine discourse.

That is the problem, so it is one of those new communications technologies. With all of its benefits, it is one of the negatives. So, you are teaching at a university in the Fall, in September. What will you be teaching?

Mohammed: So, I teach different things in different places. At the University of Victoria, I teach teachers how to teach. So, it is because I have an education background, most university professors are knowledgeable in the field and are experts in what they research, what they teach, but do not necessarily have any pedagogy or any education experience understanding of how to teach the stuff that they know.

That is where I come in. I do that at UVic. I do this at Camosun College as well. However, that is half of my job. The other half is teaching in the arts and humanities. So, I teach mostly academic English writing, boring research skills, but, sometimes, I get to teach literature and more fun things.

Most of the time, it is research skills and academic writing. Those basic courses for the second year on how to write an essay, what is citing your source, and so on.

Jacobsen: All of the foundational stuff.

Mohammed: That is right.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Author; Founder, Free Hearts, Free Minds.

[2] Individual Publication Date: February 8, 2019: <http://www.insightjournal.com/mohammed-two>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://insightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Interview with Yasmine Mohammed on Religion, Fundamentalist, and Denominations of the Left (Part Three)

February 15, 2019

Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Yasmine Mohammed is an Author and the Founder of Free Hearts, Free Minds. She discusses: Dave Rubin and Colin Moriarty; splits of the Left; concerns for Canada; religions plagiarizing from one another; and demographics, rights, and what to do with fundamental beliefs.

Keywords: FHFM, Islam, Ex-Muslim, Yasmine Mohammed.

Interview with Yasmine Mohammed on Religion, Fundamentalist, and Denominations of the Left: Author; Founder, Free Hearts, Free Minds (Part Three)[1]·[2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

This interview was conducted in early 2018.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: So, what are going to be the topics thematically across them that you will be discussing when you are going to be on stage with people like Dave Rubin and Colin Moriarty?

Yasmine Mohammed: That topic for that speaking tour is all free speech, is all going to be about free speech. So, for someone like me who's coming, as you said, America has won the privilege to speak freely more than any other country.

There is self-censoring with things like Islamophobia and whatever. What is missing, it is for them to be around them. They are focused so much on themselves. A lot of navel gazing going on in the U.S. You would not believe it.

You have the internet. You do not even have any excuse. We are all connected. However, there are so many other parts in the world where people would literally be killed either by the authorities – in Saudi Arabia, you are considered terrorist by the government if you speak out against Islam – or, in countries like Pakistan, where the people in the public will kill you.

You heard about Marshal Khan. He is a university student.

Jacobsen: Yes.

Mohammed: He asked the question, “So if Adam and Eve were the only two humans, does that mean we are all children of incest?” Which is a basic question, I remember asking that as a child. But, “How dare he ask such a question!”

That was so offensive enough for the people that were living in his dorm with him. They stormed his room, broke down his door, attacked him, took him out to the middle of the quad, and beat him to death.

Hundreds of students, that is what happens in those countries. So, when we talk about free speech and people here do not understand the value of it, they do not understand – you said the privilege – they do not understand people have died for us to be able to speak our mind.

I know what it feels like not to be able to speak my mind in my own house. I cannot even have the thoughts in my own head. Anybody that grew up in a repressively religious household would understand what I am saying.

I remember hearing a girl who escaped from North Korea. They are taught that the bugs and the birds, the mice, everybody, reports back to the fearless leader whenever they see them doing anything.

They are also told that he can read their minds, as we are told that God can read your mind. So, you are even afraid to have the thoughts in your own head. I speak to ex-Muslims all the time that are writing to me, then deleting their accounts.

I cannot even respond to them, but they need to get it. They need to say how they feel. They want somebody to hear them because they can never express their opinions on these matters. People born and raised in some areas of the West so removed from the struggle that they do not understand the privilege that they have and then they squander it.

Ayaan Hirsi Ali said, “They spit on freedom because they do not know what it is to not have freedom.” Another said something that was so poignant and perfect. She said, “It is if you have a third generation kid from a wealthy family, where the person that earned the wealth was three generations ago.”

So, you are talking about Paris Hilton or Paris Hilton’s kids. They have no idea what it means to live hand to mouth. They have no idea what it means to work for their money. They have no concept. They cannot have any concept.

So, that is what it feels like when you are talking to some people in the West sometimes about these freedoms and privileges. Those freedoms and privileges that they have. They do not see these reams of privileges. They find reasons to complain. They bitch about mansplaining and manspreading.

How do you – for shame, how do you even consider that feminism when there are women getting their clitorises cut off? There are children, little girls, in

China that are being killed. However, your focus is on ridiculous teeny tiny things.

They do not broaden. They do not go around because they are too busy looking at each other. Everyone wants to be oppressed in the States these days. The cool thing to do, right? I would love to give you all of my oppression points.

I would love to trade lives with you and to not have all of this shit to overcome. I would love to. These people want some reason to say, “I am a victim.” You do not understand how lucky you are and instead of appreciating what you have. You are looking for some reasons to claim some victimhood.

Look at Linda Sarsour, talking about how Muslims in American today, because of Islamophobia, they have it worse than the black slaves in the U.S. did!

Jacobsen: That is a stretch.

Mohammed: So, anyway, I could go on and on about this.

2. Jacobsen: To simplify, I want to reflect on both perspectives. One the one hand, you have people concerned about livelihood, wellbeing, so either they are going to be killed or destroyed in some manner, possibly some body parts might disappear.

On the other hand, you have highly developed nations with most of these privileges and rights established. The concerns then become local, prosocial, and limited to their context, where things that would be of mild annoyance. Do not explain: I do not need to have things explained to me that are obvious, or the mansplaining example.

Given the context that people are coming from, they are both valid at the same time. There is legitimacy. You make change relative to your context, but the lack of, at least, awareness of what is going on in other countries, is important and that is the major issue.

Mohammed: Maybe, I should make myself clear. It is important to make myself clear. I am not belittling. Obviously, there is no such thing as a utopia. As human beings, we only grow as we progress. We are always going to have to make things better because that is what we should be doing.

So, yes, let’s always try to make things better, let’s always try to improve our situation, our society, etc., we always have to make things better. My problem is that when those people that are talking about manspreading and mansplaining are standing in the way and prohibiting people that are trying to work on women that are in worst situations.

So, for example, the Far-Left in America. They can be defined by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC), the Linda Sarsours, the Far-Left, the Hillarys – not always – or the Hillary corner, but that group of people are the same people that will call Ayaan Hirsi Ali an anti-Muslim extremist.

They will shut her down. She was not able to go to Australia and give her talk there because she was called a white supremacist.

Jacobsen: What was the reason given?

Mohammed: Because she is a Nazi. It is a series of slurs. They throw those at a black woman from Somalia, who is a 'white supremacist' now. If you say something, if you do not follow the narrative of the Left, therefore, you are a Nazi, white supremacist, Alt-Right bigot, etc.

Jacobsen: It is this branch on the Left.

Mohammed: It is this branch on the Left. However, what I am talking about, if those people on the Left were busy fixing their problems and did not stand in the way of other people fixing their problems, we would be okay.

But instead, when you have somebody talking about women going to prison for being raped in the UAE, the responses from people on the Left are "Now, you are going to be the savior. You are a white man. You do not care about Muslim women." What?

When they do that thing they are taking the attention away from the woman that is shining a light on this problem, I was born and raised in that world and nobody cared. Nobody cared for so many generations.

It is people in Africa and Asia who are drinking dirty water. Water in our toilets are cleaner than what they have to drink. Nobody gives a shit. Nobody cares because our water is clean, right? That is the way the Islam problem was for so many generations.

Nobody over here cared because it was over there, so it does not affect us. I understand that we cannot solve all of the world's problems. Obviously, what is happening in North Korea, let it happen over there, we do not care because it is not affecting our daily lives.

However, Islam now is affecting our day to day lives. Islam affects my life as much as it affects your life. So, for the people who are in the Muslim world who are me, they are glad that somebody pays attention.

They are elated when they see Richard Dawkins writing about the atrocities of Islam. They are happy when they see Maajid Nawaz talking about what

Sharia law dictates. They are excited that Adam Princely gives a shit, worries about the fact that ninety-percent of them are victims of FGM.

They are like "Yes, finally, somebody is paying attention." Then you have these Left-leaning liberals come in and saying, "Shoo! That is Islamophobia. Does not talk about that." You are relegating these people back all of these generations with everyone ignoring them and not caring about the problems that they are having.

Jacobsen: How do they feel when they have that happen?

Mohammed: A hundred-percent betrayed. So betrayed, you would not believe. They are liberals like you and I. So, imagine being in that country, there, everything is about the Muslim world in a general sense because there are over fifty countries there.

If you look at Canada, which is a bad example, let's look at the USA, most of America is liberal. However, there is a belt of staunchly conservative people but most people are for Western liberal enlightenment values, right?

In the Muslim world, you have to flip that around. In the Muslim world, your majority are staunch conservatives. You have a belt. They do not usually live together. they are usually fractured and hidden all over the place.

This belt is the open-minded liberal secular-leaning people like you and me. Muslims are not atheists, are not Christians. It is irrelevant. I do not care about what their religion is or what their religion is not.

The point is that they believe in liberal values. They believe in human rights. We have that in common. So, those people over there that cannot even speak to each other because if they speak to each other their neighbors might tell their cops on them.

They all end up in prison for terrorism. That person stuck in that world is trying to speak up. They are being silenced by somebody in the West, in a free country, who should be their ally. When you are a liberal person, where do you look?

When you are a liberal in the Middle East or in the Muslim world, where do you look for allies? Liberals or moderates in the West. "Those are the people that will support me." Instead, what do you find, those people are telling you to shut up because you are racist and you are a bigot and you are an Islamophobic.

It is the ultimate betrayal and treachery. I cannot explain to you how bad that feels for them. We are

supporting the Right-wing conservative Muslims. Even Obama, Obama was friendly with the Muslim Brotherhood, right? How?

They are a terrorist organization deemed by Egypt, deemed by Saudi Arabia, deemed by terrorists. If Saudi Arabia is deeming this organization a terrorist organization, they are probably a terrorist organization. Right? So, then, you got Bernie Sanders who is the most Left-wing person possible in the United States congratulating Linda Sarsour.

Sanders is calling her progress. That is what we have. We have the Left-wing, the conservative Muslims. The Left-wing, the conservative Christians would never be aligning: never.

Jacobsen: They have been perpetual enemies.

Mohammed: Perpetual, they should be perpetual enemies with conservative Muslims as well. They should be aligning with liberal Muslims, but they are doing the opposite. They are supporting conservative Muslims. They are ignoring the liberal Muslims.

Jacobsen: As you are noting even with a scattered population, you have seen the same statistics. You probably know more than I do about this stuff. But, in Saudi Arabia, 5% are atheist. They are not a bloc. They are not organized, obviously.

Mohammed: No. No, they cannot even speak to each other. We had Hana Ahmed on our third episode. She said she lived in Saudi Arabia as an atheist for five years without ever speaking a word to anybody about the fact that she was an atheist.

So, she would be one of the people filling in that hole, saying, "I am an Atheist, but that is it." Five years of being an atheist and never being able to express that. That is how everybody is over there. They cannot say anything. They have Twitter – they have anonymous Twitter; that is what they have. How do Twitter and Facebook act? Shut them down.

3. Jacobsen: What are your concerns in Canada, where the things arise, for instance, such as blasphemy?

Mohammed: Scott! You are getting the blood boiling today.

Jacobsen: You are going to Vegas soon!

Mohammed: Right, I will relax there, in front of the pool. I was not surprised M103 passed. I was born and raised here. I understand my people. It was unanimously passed in Ontario, so that was a bit of a surprise.

The federal one, there was a little bit of pushback. However, for it to pass unanimously in the Ontario

Provincial Court, I was surprised because I did not think it was to that extent. That there is to pushback. I do not understand it.

I have discussions from people of the BC Humanist Association, which are supposed to be humanists. People that are clear. They understand, without a shadow of a doubt, that we should not have Christianity in schools, for example.

That we should not have blasphemy. It is not a law, but it is on its way there. If this motion were about 'Christianophobia,' BC Humanist Association for one would be up in arms.

These are the people that are fighting against Trinity Western University, rightly so for their LGBT garbage. However, when it comes to Muslims and Islam, all of a sudden their minds do not work. All of a sudden they cannot treat this religion the same as that religion.

All of a sudden they cannot see that a conservative Christian is no different than a conservative Muslim. These are socially conservative people and we should be standing in the way, of either of these people, allowing their values into the public sphere.

4. Jacobsen: One is an Arabic version of the other anyway, right? In terms of the text, it is plagiarized. It is the same thing.

Mohammed: Same thing!

Jacobsen: It is plagiarized.

Mohammed: That is right. It is plagiarized. We would never take a woman in an Amish bonnet and put a Nike swoosh on it or put her on the cover of *Elle Magazine* or *Vogue* or *Playboy*. It is absolutely ridiculous!

How do they not that it is exactly the same thing? What it is, it is bigotry.

Jacobsen: It is successful marketing. There is a separation of ideas and people in one, and not in the other.

Mohammed: Yes, I do not even know how it is successful marketing to be honest because if you look at the statistics. You will find that less than half of one-percent of Muslim women wear the *hijab*. One-percent of Muslim in the U.S., let's say half of them are women, less than fifty-percent of American Muslim women wear *hijab*

So, it is a small minority of people wearing *hijab*, of Americans wearing *hijabs*. So, it is stupid for you to spend that money, putting *hijabs* in all your magazines and putting that Nike swoosh on it and all

that stuff. There is no revenue that is going to come to you from this. It is virtue signaling.

That is the only thing you are going to get.

Jacobsen: Also, there is a market for it too. So, a company that does that. That aims to target virtue signification, signifiers. There is a population of reactionaries that go, “Oh, they are socially conscious!”

Mohammed: Nike, they are so nice and non-racist. However, my frustration is, what it is? It is exactly this. It is when Richard Spencer said: “Hail Trump.” Everybody lost their mind, rightfully so, but when Linda Sarsour talks about a *jihad* on Trump everybody it is: “Ah, do not worry about it, it is a word. Meh, nothing.”

“Hail” is a word too, but these are trigger words. These are words that have meaning. These are words that have history. These are words that have caused significant damage. Why they can only see that word when it is in German and how wrong it is to be using that but they cannot see that when a word is in Arabic is being used, all of a sudden they belittle it.

That is the thing. Shadi Hamid wrote a book called *Islamic Exceptionalism*. Shadi Hamid by the

way works for the Brookings Institute, is paid by Qatar, so you can know where the money is coming from. He supports the Muslim Brotherhood blatantly.

This is a man is from Egypt, so a man from Egypt supporting the Muslim Brotherhood. I do not even know what to tell you. It is someone from Afghanistan supporting the Taliban. The Brotherhood has wreaked so much havoc in Egypt for generations.

Everybody hates them. Everybody has a family member that was killed by them or tortured by them. It is not far removed for Egyptians as it is for the rest of the world today – if things will change, if we do not change course.

So, Shadi Hamid wrote a book called *Islamic Exceptionalism* and in it he is talking about how Islam must be treated differently than all other religions. I was like “fuck you,” but you know what: he is absolutely correct. That is what is happening.

What Muhammad wanted, what the Quran wanted, what Islam wants, which is nobody criticizes the religion, it gets treated with a different set of rules than all other religions. It is superior to all other religions. Muslims are superior to all other people.

All of that is happening. It is happening. Freethinking educated people in the West are doing exactly that. When Hamid says there is a *fatwa* on his head for

writing a book, what do we do? Do we condemn the people that are trying to kill this man for writing this book? No, we do not.

When the *Charlie Hebdo* people got killed for drawing cartoons what did the Left say, they say, “They were being disrespectful. They shouldn’t have been doing that. That was not nice.”

We are self-imposing the blasphemy laws. We are doing exactly what Mohammed wants. We are following it. This is his decree. We are accepting this. We are not Muslim. We do not need to. There are no laws keeping us in place. There are blasphemy laws over there keeping them in place, over here we are free.

But we are choosing not to, out of fear. I do not know, or out of fear or out of indifference, out of naivety. We think, “Ah, those black savages, what harm can they do. The Christians, however, they are scary.”

“The Christians, however, we have to be afraid of them and we have to keep them out our schools and out of our public sphere.” No, you keep the Christians out, and the Muslims out too. It is the exact same thing.

In fact, Christians do not have powerful, rich, filthy rich theocracies behind them, pushing their agenda. So, if we are going to look at it on a global level, Muslims are the bigger threat than Christians. What do we have? The Vatican City, right?

There is no Saudi Arabia. There is no Qatar. Look at this guy making alliances, look at Trump with his Muslim Ban, blah blah blah. What does he do? He goes over there and kisses their butts. These guys are not new at this, but they do see this is the other thing too. Scott, sorry to go on so many tangents, but I have so much to say.

Jacobsen: It is fine.

Mohammed: In the West, we think in four-year spurts. This is the problem. We think in four-year spurts. Our governments only think about getting re-elected or they think about their turn and after that, they give no fucks.

Over there, they can make literally – they have made – hundred-year plans because they are theocracies. They can do that. If you look at the hundred-year plan of the Muslim Brotherhood, you will find that they are doing exceptionally.

All of the boxes are being ticked. Everything that they promised us they would do, step by step, they’re not even hiding it. Everybody, you can go online.

You can read their plan. It is all unfolding beautifully and perfectly.

In the 1950s, Anwar Sadat who was the president of Egypt was approached by the Muslim Brotherhood and they told him, “You need to make sure every woman in your country wears the *hijab*,” and he laughed at them.

The men in parliament were laughing and one man yells out, “Make him wear it.”

But look at Egypt now, they have succeeded. We were laughing at them too. That is the thing. We also scoffed at this dumb uneducated jihadist. They are never going to be able to do it here...look at Turkey! Turkey scoffed at them too.

In 2014, the pride parade was so full that the streets were packed with people, in 2017 being hit with tear gas. Nobody is allowed to march in the pride parade. So, many fits of rage, I have so much to say. They have switched the country.

They are not new to this process. They have done it so much. They did it throughout the Muslim world. They did it in Egypt. They did it in Iraq. They did it in Syria. They did in Libya. They have done it in Afghanistan. They have done it across the whole side of the planet.

Now, they are moving into Turkey. It is following the movements of the Ottoman Empire. So, what happens: remember all of that area that the Muslims had control over, The Ottoman Empire. When they lost, they lost control of the Ottoman Empire. At that point, they had to recede back into the Middle East again.

They sat together in Egypt. They said, “We need to reconvene. We need to realign. We cannot get our land back again through the sword the way we did the last time because the world has changed.”

By now, it is the 1820s. You cannot go with a sword chopping off heads anymore. So, “We have to find a different way to go about getting back our empire. How can we do that?” They decided at that point that they were going to get back their empire by using their government.

Their policies, they use the policies based on the good nature, basically, of the Europeans and the North Americans against themselves. They are going to use democracy and diplomacy against itself. It has worked like a fucking charm.

Then they have people like Tariq Ramadan, who is the grandson of Hassan al-Bana who started the Muslim Brotherhood. People like him were basically

the seedlings. He was cultivated, born, and raised in the West.

He understands how to speak to Westerners. He understands how Westerners think. He was the perfect first one. There are so many like him now and Linda Sarsour is another one. She knows how to speak to Americans.

She is all, “Oh, we are all oppressed together. Black people, yay! I am one of you. Native Americans, I am one of you. White men, ugh!” She knows how to get them riled up. She knows how to speak to them in a language that they are going to respond to.

Exactly Tariq Ramadan, the country, the people, the way they think. She got herself in the fucking White House – that is how good they are. Do not forget the millions of dollars that are coming at them from these theocracies in the Middle East.

So, they have a lot of support. They have a lot of brains behind them. They have a lot of policy makers and they have a lot of thinkers. They are not novices at this, by the time they arrive. They have all of the practiced wisdom in the Muslim World.

They made some mistakes. They learned from their mistakes. They kept going. They did a good track record over there. The internet is full of pictures. If you compare Libya in the 50s, Libya today. Iran in the 50s, Iran today. Afghanistan in the 50s, Afghanistan today. any Muslim country you can think of, Google what it used to look like before and what it looks like now.

The 60s, 70s, every country is a different time because by the time they get to them and by the time they infiltrate them. It depends. A country like the Maldives because it is small: fifteen years. Fifteen years from a secular nation to an Islamic nation. Fifteen, that is all it took.

So, every country depending on how resistant the people are, depending on the number of the population, depending on all sorts of different factors, there is a different amount of time in each country, but they were gaining experience.

Experience, experience, experience. Now, they come into Turkey. Turkey is fucked. Now, it is *every thing*. They are getting their Ottoman Empire back again. They already infiltrated. It is too late, honest to God. If you heard the podcast with Douglas Murray and Sam Harris, but Germany forget it, gone. Sweden, gone.

France might have a chance. They could pull back. So, many areas of Europe. It is too late. You opened your doors. You did not check papers. You let people

in by the millions and now your country has changed. You cannot get it back again.

Sweden has announced that they are shutting down their music festivals because too many women are getting raped. They cannot control it. Whenever they have a music festival, an inordinate number of women are being raped everywhere.

They say, "Fine shut down the music festival." Then, what happened? One performer said, "Hey, why do not we have gender segregated music festivals?" And what everybody said, "That sounds great!"

So, now, we have gender segregated festivals in Sweden. What is next? Put a woman in a Burka, so she does not get raped? It is literally everything that they want is happening. Because we have oceans, we have borders over at North America and South America, we are still protected somewhat.

We still get to choose who we bring in. Europe, they have no choice. People walk across. So, we can still be, but we have to get it right. We are not getting it right. Our mindset still hasn't changed. Even in Europe, even in Germany, they should be the most alert.

They are still fighting it. They are still saying, "No, it is racism." There was a woman that was raped. She would not say the ethnicity of the men that raped her because she did not want to come off as racist, so she said he was German. I can send you a link to this.

She did not want to say that he was a refugee. Then she went home after the rape kit, given the police officer's false information about her rapist. Then she went home and her friend told her, "If you do not say the truth, this man is going to go off and rape another woman. That is going to be on your head."

So, she went back to the police station and she told the truth. There was another case, with a man in Sweden this time, a man that was raped by his Somalian refugee that he kept in his house. He came to live in his house.

The man raped him and he did not want to press charges because he did not want the man to be sent back to Somalia again. That is how deep this white guilt is. It is insane. I had another story in my head. It went away.

But there are so many of them right. Then the UK, you heard of Rotterdam rape cases, thousands of girls. When you have a chance please listen to the Douglas Murray and Sam Harris podcast that they, what happened in Rotterdam, this is in the UK – many different areas of the UK not one but – this was

in Rotterdam the first time that they discovered it. Thousands of girls were going missing.

The families were saying, "Those Muslims are kidnapping our children." They were like, "That is racist." Then some of the girls were escaping. They were coming and telling the police, "I was chained to a bed. I was gang raped daily."

These are children right. These are from ten to sixteen, seventeen. These are the age groups of the girls that they were raping. They go to the police officers. They say, "This is what is happening to me."

The police officers say, "No, that is racist" They never told the public because they did not want to come off as racist. By the time this story finally broke, thousands of girls were victims of gang rapes.

Then, what happened with Bill Cosby and any other situation? Once one story breaks, all the other cities – all across the UK, stories breaking everywhere. My god, we have a rape gang here too...we have a gang rape here too.

The country is littered with these rape gangs, okay? You are allowing your daughter to be raped rather than being called racist. That is the position we are in. That is how badly, how psychotically, people do not want to be called racist, Islamophobic, or a bigot.

I am like, "Who cares? Who the fuck cares if you have a choice of somebody calling you bad words, or this person being honored killed, this person getting their clitoris cut off, this person being gang raped? Which one is worse?"

The same thing is happening in Sweden. Same thing, they are selling their girls to be raped this is what I was going to tell you. In Sweden, you are not allowed to mention the race of the perpetrator when you are explaining to the police who was the criminal, any eye witness.

You are not allowed to mention race because then it comes off as racist. Have you ever heard anything so stupid in your life?

5. Jacobsen: I heard worse. However, that is absurd, though. If you are dealing with a crime you want, not necessarily demographics, but characteristics for a profile.

Mohammed: ...description...

Jacobsen: Maybe, it saves money on ink when they are doing a sketch and printing it, but other than this...

Mohammed: How is that helpful to reduce crime, when you do not even know who the people are that

are causing the crimes. How are you going to catch people when you do not know what they look like?

Jacobsen: Yes, and to relate this to our context in British Columbia, what are our issues? Some of them might be “God” in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Another one might be if you are to critique religion, especially the dominant one.

Seven out of 10 people are Christian roughly – four out of ten Catholic, three out of ten Protestant. If you were to critique either of those, it is not, “We are going to completely socially shun you. We will kick you out of the house.”

Mohammed: It is not nice. I would not make fun of people’s belief.

Jacobsen: So, it is a completely different context. There is a spectrum there, but along the spectrum of secular tolerant liberalized freedom. For a country, compared to many of the instances you been describing, they can be countries as theocracies.

For the society, sub-cultures, or sub-enclaves within, for instance, various European countries, or the inverse in some of those theocracies where, for want of a better term, there are pockets of Canada.

People scattered all over the place. They hold those liberal values. You do not talk about the supernatural to those who are secular to some degree, whether agnostic, atheist, or whatever else have you, but they cannot think about it. It is not permitted.

A lot of these issues as you are noting, as you are going from topic to topic, it seems like something

with the individual tragic stories, individual rape cases, or even large cases with thousands of adolescent girls or younger, undergoing sexual assault of various forms.

These are related issues that have consequences on real people’s lives. What my sense from what you are telling me, it is (a) that is happening but (b), even more so, it is the indifference or denial that is ongoing.

Mohammed: Protection even, even if you are going to be indifferent and denial that it goes back, I grew up with indifference and denial. That was my whole life. I am used to that. However, on things that are changed, you are preventing criticism.

You are protecting these group of people that are oppressing. So, when you shut-down Maajid Nawaz and others, you are shutting down the receptors. You are shutting down the people that are trying to say, “Help us.” You are saying “Shhh, you are an Islamophobic person. You are an anti-Muslim, bigot.”

So, that is even worse than indifferent. Be indifferent fine, leave us alone, let people fight for their rights, but do not stand in the way and prevent them. Or do not support the people that are suppressing us including the Muslim Brotherhood.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Author; Founder, Free Hearts, Free Minds.

[2] Individual Publication Date: February 15, 2019: <http://www.insightjournal.com/mohammed-three>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://insightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Interview with Yasmine Mohammed on Shutting Down Speech, Secular Activism, and Cherished Ideologies (Part Four)

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Abstract

Yasmine Mohammed is an Author and the Founder of Free Hearts, Free Minds. She discusses: shutting down speech; secular activism; and cherished ideologies.

Keywords: FHFM, Islam, Ex-Muslim, Yasmine Mohammed.

Interview with Yasmine Mohammed on Religion, Fundamentalism, and Denominations of the Left (Part Four)[1][2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

This interview was conducted in early 2018.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Some of the individuals, it is not a pervasive phenomenon, but it is individuals who typically would be the centrist or center-right. They cannot be in a platform, for instance.

They are given a platform that is revoked, or they shut it down. There is at least a modicum of truth there that is not being allowed to be said. That someone is succeeding in winning in not being said.

Yasmine Mohammed: Because the narrative is being disrupted, the narrative is minorities are beautiful. People that need to be protected. That is it.

If you say anything other than that, you are a racist bigot and Islamophobic, Nazi, blah blah blah.

Jacobsen: Even the value, it is a good value: tolerance and protection of the vulnerable.

Mohammed: It is. This is what I am saying. If liberals understood what they were doing, they would not be doing it. The problem is they do not understand what they are doing. They do not realize that they are supporting.

They think they are supporting a minority and an oppressed group, but they are not. They are supporting the oppressors. When you support the conservatives, the powerful rich theocracies, when

you support Saudi Arabia and the Muslim Brotherhood; they are not being oppressed.

It is the women and the LGBT community, the atheists, and all of these people that are under those people that are being oppressed. It is ridiculous.

Jacobsen: It is also an image thing. We allow it as a culture, not a single person, but as a general phenomenon, so we were talking about fifteen, twenty minutes ago, about the Muslim Brotherhood.

You were saying their century-long plan. They are checking off most of their boxes. Their ‘centennial imperial strategy’ that then becomes a message. Their success sends with us sends a message to them. That we are sufficiently indifferent. That we are going to do your dirty work for you.

Mohammed: It is working beautifully. Another one of their plans. I watched it happen. So, it is an old strategy, divide and conquer. So, old, it has been done. You will think that we would see it a mile away.

When the Black Lives Matter thing happens, I was thinking, “No, there it is. The next line in the strategy. The divide and conquer here it is, it is happening.” But it did not take, everybody was thinking, “My God, civil war is going to happen, black versus white.”

It did not happen, but what ended up happening instead is the Right vs. Left. That is working like a charm. So, if you look back at the media that was pushing things, remember those little videos all the time the *AG+* and *Vice* and *Vox* and whatever pushing all of the white guilt, pushing all of the Black Lives Matter stuff too, those media like *AG+*.

What is that? It is *Al Jazeera* who is funding all of this propaganda that is going through to the millennials and tugging at their heartstrings playing exactly they said they would. What do you have in Germany? People holding up signs, “Refugees welcome.”

Little kids with sandwiches and bottles of water being given to the refugees as they are walking in. They are using the good nature of these people against themselves they are using the white guilt. They are using the guilt of the Germans, especially, because they have a lot of guilt.

Germany was so easy to take over because German people they want too self-flagellate. They want to somehow repent from their past sins, so this is how they help to achieve it. So, they understand all of this.

They know all of this. They get how Western minds work. They understand history. They understand and it is a joke. It is a joke. It is so easy. Taking over Egypt, that is hard. That was their first job. They succeeded because Egyptians are hardcore.

Arabs, in general, they are not in the West. There is no grey area. This is about Arab people. They are black or white. You are in or out: yes-no. If they are going to be a Muslim, they are going to be a hardcore Muslim.

They are going to fly a plane into a building, no problem. That is the way they are so it was difficult to change those minds because they are not open-minded, grey area, wishy-washy people, but they succeeded with the more difficult task.

The West, the mindset of the Liberal values, Enlightenment values, Western values, this idea of equality and all of that stuff. That is easy. There is a thing that they say where they laugh at Jesus because it is mostly a Christian mindset over here.

They laugh. They say things, “Turn the other cheek, so I can chop off your head.” Muslims think of this as Western people. This is all a weakness. The fact that everybody is so good. Help your neighbor, all of this hippy Christian stuff – that is hilarious to them. They are like, “You guys are no problem...”

We are proving them right. Especially if you look at Canada, how we bend over? Someone wants a Bible study in a classroom. We say, “Absolutely not, get the Lord’s Prayer out.” But I want to have a Friday worship and have a congregation: “No problem, of course, absolutely: here is an empty classroom you can use. Oh no worries, nobody is going to keep an eye on what you are saying or what you are doing.”

When I start to think about it, it is quite depressing. It makes me feel I want to move to South America.

Jacobsen: The first case is removing a religious murmuring, statement, or prayer from a public setting. People paying public tax money for that are right. Many of them will probably be non-Catholic, at least, so that is a secular thing.

That is the appropriate thing to do within our values.

Mohammed: Yes, it is.

Jacobsen: But then to allow the others are against that value. It is not that it makes me uncomfortable. It is a violation of a standard, not a norm, but of a standard that is set, that is derivative from the values that we hold.

Mohammed: We need to be unapologetic about our values. We have come to this doubt of progress, not easily. We had to fight for it. People have lost their lives for it. People have suffered for us to enjoy this. Why are we allowing the past to come back and haunt us again?

Jacobsen: Also, religion is young. There is tribal get together. Those are super old, but some religions are four thousand or six thousand years old, tops. This is especially important for things that are new: women's rights and human rights.

They have barely existed in robust present form for a century or two. This is a particular risk we have been emphasizing. We have had two millennia to fourteen hundred years. How have they been for women? Maybe, a mild argument can be that for the time they were some progressive things, maybe, but not for now.

Mohammed: 6th century.

Jacobsen: Right but now my feeling based on rough knowledge on things is that women's rights are new and, therefore, fragile, the intervention of this worldview is destabilizing to them.

Mohammed: Totally, and what you are saying is so true, that is what makes me nervous because they are so much hardened and experiences and set. They are in a better position than we are. Christianity in the West anyway. It is being castrated. It is not going to, but Islam is not.

Islam is young and verdant, strong and successful, and rich and powerful, politically and economically. It is a real threat and, as you said, our values are fragile and new compared to their values. However, we are always being killed. We never had power, still do not have power.

In only in the past five years, I have been comfortable saying publicly, "I am an atheist." I have only been comfortable in using that word after even five years. That estimate is probably being generous.

So, for years, I said I was Agnostic or I said, "I am not religious." You begin to use euphemisms because you do not want people to think that you are some evil hellion that is going to eat their baby. That is Canada, so imagine areas conservative the U.S. or the Muslim world.

Obviously, how much worse it is for an atheist over there, Atheism is considered terrorism in Saudi Arabia now. That is what it is deemed.

2. Jacobsen: So, if we take a conclusive look at the extensive discussion we had over the last few hours, and if we look at the situation, not through

the lens of religion, and religion's contents and countries, what do you see as the future of secularism and religious activism in general?

Mohammed: So, secularism or irreligious people, you were saying. We are scattered all over the place. We are not supporting each other. We haven't felt the need toglom on to each other. Somehow, we need to form a political party.

But in the same way that religious people have a central authority: let's say that Catholics, they have the Pope in the Vatican City. Muslims they have Saudi Arabia. They got Mecca, Medina. We are important. We are relevant.

We are a significant number, what we have to say is valuable and important. This is the first time in history that we can say it publicly, in some areas of the world. We can say it publicly and not be beheaded for it.

It is not blasphemy. It is okay. We can finally have a show of strength and if we are able to do that, if we are able to somehow get together and be something, then we will be able to support all of the secular liberal people in the rest of the world, in the areas of the world where they cannot speak up lest they are killed.

So, at least, they will know that there is some central authority that is willing to help them in some way or to support them in some way or at least to know that we exist and that we can be the change we want to see in the world.

We are complaining that liberals have betrayed us because they are not supporting the liberals in these minority groups, in the Muslim world. We can be that instead. We are saying that liberals are treating Christianity in a sum, differently.

They are, atheists can come forward and say, "Fuck all of your religions, we are not going to treat you any differently. We have CFI. We have the American Atheist Association." We have this, but it is not good enough.

We need something big and strong and loud and united. I do not know how that is going to happen, but that is what we need.

Jacobsen: We need a Judean People's Front.

Mohammed: I do not even want to say a political party because it is not a specific country. We are humanist.

Jacobsen: It is long term thinking than political thinking is.

Mohammed: It is long term thinking than political thinking, absolutely. So, what is it going to take? Do we need to – somebody was saying we should – all move to Greenland?

Jacobsen: Iceland is number one.

Mohammed: So, maybe, Iceland can be our new Mecca for humanists or something like that.

Jacobsen: Tops the ranking, it has for years for equality for men and women. A study came out saying that 100% of people under 25 said that they do not believe that the world was created by Creator or divine architect.

Mohammed: So, maybe, that is what we need. Maybe, we need Iceland too, but that is what we need in the short term. What we need to do is we need to support people who have our ideas, we should support people based on their ideas, not their identity. That is what we need.

That is the short term solution. It boggles the mind how many liberals will jump down the throat of anybody that says anything about Christianity, but if somebody says something about Islam it is defended. That is the problem, that is what needs to stop.

We need to stop. We need to be able to differentiate between Islam and Muslims as liberals. We should be supporting minorities. Yes, we should be supporting oppressed people. Yes, people are human beings and not religions.

That, maybe, the problem is that they think Islam is a culture. They think Muslims are a people. Muslims are not people. There are hundreds of countries. It is saying Catholics are a people. There are Italian Catholics. There are Filipino Catholics. There are Mexican Catholics.

They are all over the world, different Catholics. They do not speak the same language. They do not eat the same food. They do not have the same conditions. They are not the same people. They are different ethnic groups. They are different cultures. They share a religion.

Islam is the same thing. If you are going to support Mexicans or you are going to support Italians or you are going to support Filipinos, then that is fine, wonderful, dandy, do that, but do not support Catholicism.

They do not understand the parallels are perfectly clear. It is there, but maybe it is because the issue is that I am born and raised in this stuff. I was born and raised in Canada, but in a Muslim household of Arab culture.

3. Jacobsen: But you also hear the Platonic argument too. Whenever something bad happens within a person's cherished ideology or worldview plus practice, or suggested practice, they go, "That is not the real [fill in the blank]."

It is Platonic. I do not care about that. How are the people that believe that stuff in general acting? Most are acting decently. However, what is going on?

Mohammed: Communists can say the same thing, right? How many millions of people have to die before you say, "Maybe, this ideology is not so great"?

Jacobsen: Also, some preachers do it to put all burden of responsibility of belief on the follower, which is a beautiful way of doing it, where "You are not praying sincerely enough" or "You do not have the best belief in the faith and so on..."

Mohammed: So, because I was born in a Western world but in a Muslim household, I am able to see the distinction so clearly, but somebody who is American or Canadian and has had no interaction or understanding about the Muslim world or about Islam, or about Muslims.

It is all so foreign. It is also intricate and confusing. So, you can understand how they confuse the religion with the culture, with the people. All of that. They do not get that there are Pakistani Muslims and Egyptian Muslims, Indonesian Muslims. Maybe, they need to understand the difference between people and religion.

4. Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Yasmine.

Mohammed: No problem, Scott.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Author; Founder, Free Hearts, Free Minds.

[2] Individual Publication Date: February 22, 2019: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/mohammed-four>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

Interview with Stacey Piercey on Fundamental Human Rights and the Transgender Community (Part Four)



Interviewer: Scott Douglas Jacobsen

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Abstract

Stacey Piercey is the Co-Chair of the Ministry of Status of Women Sub-Committee of Human Rights for CFUW FCFDU and Vice Chair of the National Women's Liberal Commission for the Liberal Party of Canada. She discusses: fundamental rights and freedoms; implementation of fundamental rights and freedoms; the sources of violations of fundamental rights and freedoms; prominent transgender community individuals; real-life impacts of fundamental rights and freedoms denials; expediting the acknowledgment

and instantiation of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of trans individuals and the transgender community around the world; and the regions progressing and regressing.

Keywords: Co-Chair, Liberal Party of Canada, Ministry of Status of Women, Stacey Piercey, Vice Chair.

Interview with Stacey Piercey on Fundamental Human Rights and the Transgender Community: Co-Chair – Ministry of Status of Women Sub-Committee of Human Rights, CFUW FCFDU; Vice Chair National Women’s Liberal Commission at Liberal Party of Canada | Parti libéral du Canada (Part Three)[1][2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: In terms of the rights arguments, what are the fundamental human rights and freedoms trans individuals and the transgender community deserve as human beings?

Stacey Piercey: I have heard all the reasons over the years as to why I should not have any special privileges as a transgender person. At the time when I began my transition, I didn’t want a handout; I needed a hand up to have equal access and opportunity. I suffered being on the outside of society. It was traumatic to know that I was no longer a human.

I did earn my right to be a woman and the respect that comes with my new gender. It is the law too. The courts can now decide on the concept of what is “gender identity and expression.” When I had to re-establish myself, it was difficult, especially when faced with outright discrimination. I heard the word “no” everywhere I went for years. Then the human rights movement started in Canada because there were many of us with similar problems. We were in a system that was unable to deal with a change in gender. It was a legal nightmare, and legislation was needed.

The government at the time wasn’t ready for me. I had complicated problems. I had issues in establishing my identity, and that held me back. I was in a situation where I was incredibly vulnerable, and people were able to take advantage of me. Today’s standards did not exist five years ago, let alone ten or twenty. I should have received help. Institutions that respect fundamental human rights should welcome us, correct past wrongs, and apologize. We all need to move on. I want to see transgender people in my community. My quality of life depends on the human rights that other people grant me as a transgender individual. I prefer to be equal.

2. Jacobsen: What does the implementation of these fundamental rights and freedoms imply for the wider global culture, especially in terms of their current treatment of trans individuals and the transgender community?

Piercey: When the government here introduced and implemented transgender human rights, it did send a

message of hope to all those who live in fear due to gender identity and expression. They know in Canada, I am considered an equal citizen with protections under the law. The concept has created a ripple effect around the world and, it sure has inspired transgender people to strive for and obtain similar rights in other places.

I believe countries that pursue inclusion policies are acknowledging a problem in society and are attempting to fix it so that all citizens feel safe to live their lives. As more transgender people come out and establish themselves these communities will thrive. I am always discovering new terminologies, identities and concepts as of late. It will take time to see our contribution to society. I know that I do bring a different perspective to the conversation. I find that nations which are progressive can introduce transgender right with ease. Our constitution, here in Canada, allows for human rights protections of groups. We are people. It was a big deal to add those few words to a piece of paper. It was an easy legal step and a problematic political accomplishment at the same time.

3. Jacobsen: What seems like the central set of sources for the violations of the fundamental rights and freedoms of trans individuals and the transgender community?

Piercey: I will speak from my experience. One violation that I deal with is sexism. It is so strange to watch it happening to me. I treat everyone the same. Then I get dismissed sometimes by men, and women do it too. It is never that I am transgender anymore as it is now a grotesquely overpriced bill, an excuse that doesn’t make sense or someone who pretends they don’t know me.

I get discrimination because I am LGBTQ. I see myself as a straight woman. I don’t get that one at all, yet it happens, and that makes me go to a pride parade. I do have great empathy towards others who are stigmatized or suffer to no fault of their own. To have a normal life and to think of retirement would be nice again.

Another form I see is fear of human rights violations, as it makes people nervous. This I when it isn’t about

helping the individual solve a problem as it is more about not violating someone's human rights. Professionals have no excuse as they are trained to do their job respectfully and cannot legally isolate you because they disagree with your gender identity or expression. It is usually an error in judgement, inadequate training and not malicious. I spotted this fight or flight reaction when I had to say, that the problem is, I am transgender.

4. Jacobsen: Who are some prominent trans individuals who truly set the framework of the modern discussion around trans rights and inclusion of the transgender community into the mainstream cultures?

Piercey: There are many prominent transgender individuals in all aspect of society. I refuse to name anybody. I have a soft spot for all those I met in person. I call them all my brothers and sisters and others. They are leaders in their fields and their communities too. They have all fought their own battles, I have gotten to know many of them well over the years, and they are like family to me.

Here in Canada, it was each one of us that contributed to this human rights fight. It wasn't a heroic battle. It was about individuals standing up and saying this was wrong. Enough of being taking advantage of because we are transgender. I decided I couldn't live in fear and I stepped out of the closet. My friends and I all supported each other, and I was never alone.

5. Jacobsen: What are the real-life impacts of the denial of fundamental rights and freedoms of trans individuals in countries around the world?

Piercey: It isn't a difficult concept to have respect for others. Transgender people are easy targets because they are a vulnerable segment of the population. I wouldn't travel to a place or work where people are not respected. I don't believe I am alone in thinking this way. Nobody is comfortable supporting oppression of fundamental rights and freedoms. Transgender people are the preverbal canary in the coal mine for human rights around the globe. That is where Canada has had an impact on other countries. We are sharing our message of human rights. They know our story about what has happened here. They are watching and learning this new way of saying yes and resolving issues. Transgender people are out and very proud to be Canadian. They are influencing change in society.

6. Jacobsen: At the level of the United Nations and human rights organizations, and international non-governmental organizations, what could be done to expedite the acknowledgment and

instantiation of the fundamental human rights and freedoms of trans individuals and the transgender community around the world?

Piercey: There are declarations by international organizations that call for fundamental human rights. Governments are changing the laws of their countries to accommodate these protections. Corporations are implementing policies, processes and procedures into everyday operations. I often see now medical advancements, legal victories and the establishment of social supports. Remember there was no infrastructure a few years ago, transgender people were in legal limbo, and nobody had to do a thing; as being neither male or female, could at any time, be used against you. It wasn't easy, let me tell you.

As a new group of recognized people, we are currently having a conversation about the problems we all had and are now trying to fix them. I have learned more being outside of the transgender community as of late, and I bring that back with me every time I drop back in. It is nice to be accepted so openly by other groups as well.

I think it is exciting times and can't wait to see how this all unfolds. I do know that you will never solve every problem or grant everyone the same freedom that I currently enjoy. I believe education is vital. This world is getting smaller, and we are becoming one community. That is the future I plan to be a part of as a transgender person.

7. Jacobsen: In terms of fundamental rights and freedoms, what regions are progressing? Why? What nations are regressing? Why?

Piercey: I can say that some nations are receiving more media attention due to legal battles, policy debates and integration issues because of their transgender citizens. I think Canada is a leading example in comparison to some conservative-minded governments. Those tend to struggle more with human rights, valuing social policy and understanding inequality.

I know the younger generation that I met have less of a problem with gender identity or expression than what I remember from growing up. I recently read that twenty percent of the population now identifies as LGBTQ. That is double from what I ever heard. It blew my mind for a few minutes. I expect significant change in the years to come, and I am not worried about it. You can't stop progress.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Co-Chair – Ministry of Status of Women Sub-Committee of Human Rights, CFUW FCFDU; Vice Chair National Women's Liberal Commission at

Liberal Party of Canada | Parti libéral du Canada;
Mentor, Canadian Association for Business
Economics.

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Interview with John Collins on William Marrion Branham (Part One)

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Abstract

John Collins is an Author, and the Webmaster of Seek The Truth. He discusses: William Marrion Branham and his influence; Branham being considered a fraud and cult leader or cult-like leader; ways in which cults or cult-like groups grow; followers of “The Message” extricating or removing themselves from it; and ways to help those individuals or groups trapped in it.

Keywords: author, Christianity, faith healing, John Collins, Seek The Truth, The Message, webmaster, William Marrion Branham.

An Interview with John Collins on William Marrion Branham: Author & Webmaster, Seek The Truth (Part One)[1][2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: We talked before. Let’s reboot the context, in brief, who was William Marrion Branham? Why was he influential?

John Collins: Yes, thank you for having me back again! It’s good to go a bit deeper than we did last time, and I think expanding upon the context we had before will be beneficial. So much information has surfaced since our last conversation that a reboot will help open the door to many topics that are virtually unexplored.

William Marrion Branham was an American “faith healer” recognized for his participation in the Post-World War II Healing Revival that began in the mid-1940s and lasted through the 1950s. It is believed by some that he initiated the revival when his “gift of healing” led to a series of revivals in mid-1946 and that his healing campaigns spawned the modern Charismatic movement.^[1] Understanding *why* he was

influential requires an in-depth look into the mechanics of *how* he was influential. Specifically, it requires an examination of the stage persona that Branham created to influence a nation during an extremely vulnerable time in American history, as well as an examination of the historical timeline of events that created the perfect storm.

Remember, it was a time of fear and unrest. The Second World War had ended, and many people feared that a third was just around the corner. With the Second Red Scare and McCarthyism spreading, and the thought of widespread communist infiltration of America was very frightening. ^[2] Trust was a scarce commodity. The Revivalists offered a break from the mental strain of these fears, even if only for a few hours of an evening or weekend. From farmers to stock brokers, working class to executives of large corporations, the revivals attracted a very diverse

crowd and participation in the revivals was extremely high. They were more than simply religious meetings; a revival was entertaining and therapeutic, offering a quick release of pressure for those who were about to explode. Branham was not the only revivalist to preach sermons with themes and titles such as “Letting off the Pressure”. Revivals with soothing themes were much needed during this time of distress and were highly popular.^[iii]

The stage persona that William Branham created for his revival campaigns was specifically designed to appeal to the senses of those who needed a release. He claimed to be a simple man who spent a large part of his childhood hunting and fishing in the hills of Kentucky^[iv], which would have resonated with many people in the rural areas his revivals and marketing material targeted. His usage of Southern slang words^[v] and stories of a Huckleberry-Finn-lifestyle^[vi] would have reinforced that feeling among his Southern crowds while appealing to the inner-child of even the most refined members of his crowd from the Northern States.

Towards the end of 1945, William Branham renamed his church from “Pentecostal Tabernacle” to “Branham Tabernacle”^[vii] and integrated a new theme into his stage persona by claiming to be a Baptist minister newly interested in the Pentecostal experience.^[viii] On the heels of a series of healing revivals in spring of that same year,^[ix] Branham began claiming to have been recently given his “gift of healing” during an “angelic visitation”^[x], and created a heartbreaking story describing the events leading up to the “angel”. This alteration was so successful that Branham would continue to use it for the remainder of his career, only adjusting the stage persona slightly to fit the timeline and fully separate this version from the previous iterations. It is a stage persona that has been immortalized through the hundreds of his recorded sermons from 1947 to 1965^[xi] and propagated through the reproduction efforts of Voice of God Recordings in Jeffersonville, Indiana^[xii].

Whether it was a predetermined strategy or a skill that would be developed over time, large portions of Branham’s speeches would be focused upon molding this stage persona into a loveable, trustworthy figure that most Americans could relate to. When he told of tragic events he endured during his many “life stories”, his description of those events was formatted in such a way that a majority of his crowd could both relate with and emotionally connect. At the same time, he approached them from a religious platform of “inter-evangelical”^[xiii] or “inter-denominational”^[xiv], removing any element of

skepticism or critical analysis of his doctrine or symbology. Listeners had every reason to trust him, very little reason to question him, and no reason to doubt him. As a result, Branham’s influence was widespread, and his legacy is largely comprised of historical accounts that he himself created for use in his meetings.

2. Jacobsen: Why is he widely considered fraud and leader of a, at least, cult-like movement, which still exists today?

Collins: I cannot speak as to why others may view him as a fraud, but I can speak about the reaction myself and some of my associates have shared as historical information started surfacing that placed many aspects of this religion and stage persona into question. The religious movement as it exists today has been declared to be a destructive cult by both religious^[xv] and non-religious^[xvi] groups, and when a former member first encounters critical information, it is often followed by waves of emotion.

There are numerous sects and sub-sects of the “Message”, the religious following of William Marrion Branham.^[xvii] There are also sects of Pentecostalism and other religious cult followings who place value on the doctrines that Branham introduced or re-introduced.^[xviii] Yet in all of their various forms, almost every sect has theology that requires William Branham to be a focal point. In the more extreme sects, Branham’s stage persona has actually embedded itself into fundamental, core doctrines^[xix], and leaders of those sects preach apocalyptic theology that is fully dependent upon William Branham as a means to escape Armageddon^[xx].

As I slowly uncovered information^[xxi] separating the “William Branham” used as a basis for core doctrine from the historical “William Branham”, and slowly began to distinguish the difference between the elements used for the creation of the stage persona and real life, the word “fraud” would have been tame compared to the other words racing through my mind. Not only was I unaware that previous, much different versions of his stage persona existed^[xxii], I felt as though I had been manipulated into my religious beliefs through deception. This feeling was exacerbated by the leaders of the movement who had access to this information for decades yet continued to preach doctrines dependent upon the final adjustments to the stage persona while concealing information concerning the earlier iterations.

Once the emotions lifted, curiosity drove me into a research project that would last for several years. I had to know whether or not William Branham could accurately be considered a fraud. With information quickly becoming available that offered glimpses into his past and seeing a much different version of history than had been available to us in the movement, I knew that it was quite possible that his intentions were good – regardless of the destructive nature of their outcome. Was he a fraud? Or was he simply a good man with a passion for helping people during a difficult time in American history?

Our conversation will be unique, as it is the first time that I've had the opportunity to explore these questions in public, and the historical data used to form my opinion is virtually unpublished.

3. Jacobsen: What are the ways in which cults, cult-like groups, and others, can be created, maintained, and even grown over time? What are the tricks of their trade? How is Branhamism a case in point – in Canada, in Australia, in the United States of America, and elsewhere?

Collins: I recently have had the opportunity to work with former members of another Pentecostal cult that has a strong presence in the United States, Mexico, several countries in Africa, and more. If I were to describe the structural composition of this religious movement to former members of William Branham's "Message" cult following without mentioning its leader or doctrine, those who escaped Branham's movement would instantly assume that I was referring to the "Message". Yet at the same time, former members of both groups contacted me after watching episodes of "Leah Remini: Scientology and the Aftermath", describing similarities they had identified with the inner workings of Scientology and the cults from which they escaped. Each time a destructive cult makes headlines in the news after a destructive episode or exposure, members and former members of other cults often notice similarities.

This is a much different experience for current members of a cult as it is for former. Current members of cults, having been trained to place an unhealthy amount of focus upon their leader, notice the unhealthy level of interest members of the cult making headlines have in their leader. They experience cognitive dissonance as they try to reconcile the conflicting emotions as they realize their situation is so similar and begin suppressing any troubling similarities while taking mental note of the list of any positive attributes of their own cult leader.

Former members, especially those who recently escaped, are more sensitive to the destructive

qualities. Like the general population who have never experienced a religious cult, they recognize the harm in placing unhealthy levels of reverence, importance, and power in the leader of the movement, but also recognize deeper observations such as similarities in the creation and control of the group they escaped and the group they are observing.

I find it both fascinating and disturbing that the same scenarios can be applied to the creation, maintenance, and growth of destructive cults. Many cult leaders have emerged after having either experienced or observed the formation and design of other cult followings. Rev. Jim Jones of Peoples Temple, whose cult following ended in mass suicide at Jonestown, Guyana, was a member of William Branham's "Message" cult^[xxiii] during the time the "Message" was more closely aligned with the "Latter Rain" sect of Pentecostalism. Branham, whose campaign team was comprised of former members from Rev. John Alexander Dowie's "Zion City" cult, appears to have used many of Dowie's ideas and theology, including a claim to be the return of "Elijah the prophet" from the Old Testament. Before starting his own cult following and claiming to be another return of "Elijah", Rev. Charles Fox Parham purposefully observed both Dowie and Rev. Frank Sandford, who also claimed to be the return of "Elijah".^[xxiv] Each of these cult leaders, though only loosely connected, share many similarities in the creation and establishment, maintenance and control, and spreading of their religious movements. All created their religious movements with an open-door policy, claiming participation with other denominations while slowly attracting members out of them. Over time and as their cults were being established, cooperation was slowly replaced with distaste or even hostility towards the outside groups. The two-way open door effectively transitioned into a one-way partially-closed door, and the isolationist mindset was established. Though many different religious cult followings have vastly different origins and beliefs, in their core formation, some level of this transition must occur for them to become destructive.

Once a group of people has placed an unusual amount of control and reverence to a single individual or single group of individuals, i.e. the cult leader(s), and the following has started to become convinced that the leader(s) have supernatural abilities greater than other humans both inside or outside their group, it is difficult to maintain. The leaders of these movements are, as we know, normal human beings, and are subject to all of the types of problems that exist in humanity. Not only must they ensure that their followers continue believing in their "gifts" and their "elevated" status, they must prevent

the group from critically examining all aspects of their lifestyle. The group must conform, but they must also be controlled to prevent widespread critical analysis.

Religious cults often manipulate or control behavior patterns, from dress code to entertainment.^[xxv] In movies and in television, similar stereotypical clothing is used to depict a cult, and viewers generally agree that they “look like a cult”. This is a direct result of creators noticing similarities in the dress code and behavior of religious movements in the news, and their contrast from other members of society. For people in these groups, it provides a quick-and-easy way to identify members from non-members, but for the leaders, it shifts a great deal of focus away from themselves and onto those who do not conform.

Cult leaders must also limit the amount of information that is available to the group and control the information that has been made available.^[xxvi] Leaders who claim to be “prophets” must only allow information about “prophecies” that appear to have been accurate, while concealing or controlling the perception of information available for “prophecies” that were not accurate.^[xxvii] Healers must avoid letting the group learn of those who continued to suffer or die after being “healed”, those claiming benevolence must conceal their personal finances, and all must conceal or control information that humanizes themselves or their ministries. This type of control is not limited to external sources. Every group contains a very diverse set of members, many of which have very curious and analytical minds. Thoughts and emotions must also be manipulated and controlled to prevent those minds from questioning and exploring to prevent widespread demotivation.^[xxviii]

The difficulty in continuing this type of control leads to the outreach programs we see in Branhamism and other religious cult followings. It is far more effort to maintain this level of manipulation in cities or even countries of origin. Access to critical information is easily available for local members yet almost non-existent for those on distant shores. Many religious cults turn to global outreach to grow their following rather than local campaigns to attract new members.

Thankfully, the information age has leveled the playing field. The digitalization of media archives and social network interaction has managed to bring even the most distant parts of the world together, and the sharing of information has led to mass exodus or implosion of many destructive groups.

4. Jacobsen: How can questioning followers of ‘The Message’ begin to help themselves become extricated from it?

Collins: It is very difficult leaving a destructive cult following, whether it is the “Message” (in its many various forms and leadership) or other. For many former members, the negative effects were felt for several years.^[xxix] Ironically, the easiest way for most people to break free from these groups is to heed the advice of the cult leaders: Study the group’s information! If you are in the “Message”, study the “Message”. Study the works, history, and legacy of William Branham. If you are in Scientology, study Scientology! Study the works, history, and legacy of L. Ron Hubbard. Don’t limit yourself to study only the filtered information that the cult has promoted or manipulated, study everything from praise to critical analysis.

A member of one of our support groups recently commented, “It’s funny how we study the ‘Message’ more now that we left than when we were in it!” It is true; many former members find themselves digging through mounds of information to try and piece together the artifacts that explain the last several years or decades of being controlled and manipulated. At the same time, it is very therapeutic. Learning how and why a cult leader created and maintained their following is important but understanding how it directly affected your psychological makeup demystifies the manipulation and control. It brings release.

5. Jacobsen: How can external agencies, groups, and individuals help those trapped in it?

Collins: There is a huge need for resources of all kinds. There are as many as 5,000 cults in the United States alone^[xxx], and very little information is available for most of them. Sadly, a great deal of information exists for groups that have tragically ended in mass suicide^[xxxi] but was almost non-existent leading up to their destructive event. Many similar groups, with similar structures and conditions have the same potential outcome, and unfortunately will not be critically examined until their climax.

Counseling is both exhaustive and costly, and many who want to escape or have escaped cannot afford the added expense. Most of their surplus income and even retirement funds have been given to the cult leaders. In many cases, the cult was also their primary source of income. After leaving, former members are starting over in all aspects of life, spiritually, mentally, and financially.

In some parts of the world, former members are clinically diagnosed as having Group Dependence

Disorder and are treated for symptoms ranging from significant personal and family impairment to professional and social impairment.^[xxxii] In North America, however, these groups are classified generically in the category of “religion”, and the traumatic issues cult escapees face are dismissed incorrectly as simply a “bad experience with a poor choice in religion.” It is critical that cult psychology training be required learning for psychologists and counselors, and that resources are available for those already active in their profession.

There is a wide variety of areas in which those wishing to assist in the escape of cult members could assist, from spreading awareness and assisting in educating cult members to contributing towards the much-needed counseling after their escape. Those wishing to do so can contact us on our website, <http://www.seekvethetruth.com>.

Appendix I: Footnotes

- [1] Author; Webmaster, Seek The Truth.
- [2] Individual Publication Date: March 8, 2019: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/collins-one>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.
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- [iv] Branham, William. 1951, July 22. Life Story. “We were raised in the mountains of Kentucky”
- [v] Branham, William. 1954, Aug 29. I Will Restore, Saith the Lord. “I’m just a Kentucky corn-cracker, with my words of, “hit, hain’t, tote, fetch, carry.”
- [vi] Branham, William. 1955, Jan 17. How the Angel Came to Me, and His Commission. “Where I used to trap when I was a boy, had a trap line through there, and go up there and fish and stay all night. Just a little old dilapidated cabin sitting over there, been in there for years.”
- [vii] First newspaper announcement of “Branham Tabernacle: 1945, Oct 13. Church Listings. Jeffersonville Evening News. Example listing as “Pentecostal Tabernacle”: Rev. Branham to Leave for Summer. 1940, Apr 29. Jeffersonville Evening News.
- [viii] Branham, William. 1951, July 22. Life Story. “When it come mine I said, ‘Billy Branham, evangelist, Jeffersonville, Indiana,’”
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- [xxi] The Message: The Series. A Historical Look into William Branham’s “Message”. Accessed 2019, Feb 3 from <http://william-branham.org>
- [xxii] Example: Branham, William. 1945. I Was Not Disobedient to the Heavenly Vision. (Branham’s “gift of healing” came by vision in 1945, as opposed to his later stage persona which claimed the “gift” came during an “angelic visitation in 1946: Branham, William. 1954, Aug 9. The Manifestation of Thy Resurrection to the People of this Day. The very day

that Israel was declared a nation again for the first time for twenty-five hundred years, that same night the Angel of the Lord sent me out to pray for the sick, the very same time, May the 6th, 1946, the Lord Jesus did that”

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[xxiv] Collins, John. 2017. Jim Jones – The Malachi 4 Elijah Prophecy. Dark Mystery Publications.

[xxv] Hassan, Steven. 1988. Combating Cult Mind Control.

[xxvi] Steven Hassan’s BITE Model. Accessed 2019, Feb 3 from <https://freedomofmind.com/bite-model>.

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[xxx] Clark, Charles S. Cults in America. Accessed 2019, Feb 3 from <http://library.cqpress.com/cqresearcher/document.php?id=cqresrre1993050700>

[xxxi] Example: Alternative Considerations of Jonestown & Peoples Temple Search this website. Accessed 2019, Feb 3 from <https://jonestown.sdsu.edu>

[xxxii] Jansà, Josep, M.D., Perlado, Miguel, PhD. Cults Viewed from a Socio-Addictive Perspective. Accessed 2019, Feb 3 from http://www.ais-info.org/application/uploaded/cults_viewed_from_a_socio-addictive_perspective.pdf

An Interview with John Collins on Branhamism and Abuse (Part Two)

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Abstract

John Collins is an Author, and the Webmaster of Seek The Truth. He discusses: severe forms of abuse in the William Marrion Branham “The Message” community; the different abuse tactics used on men and women to keep them in line; the social control tactics; the lack of critical thinking and critical theology in the “The Message” church of the late William Marrion Branham; and the tragic cases of abuse, and heartwarming ones of those who got out.

Keywords: author, Christianity, faith healing, John Collins, Seek The Truth, The Message, webmaster, William Marrion Branham.

An Interview with John Collins on Branhamism and Abuse (Part Two)[1][2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: If we are looking at the severe forms of abuse, what are the main ones within community to keep members in line?

John Collins: This is a difficult question to adequately summarize in one single conversation. The “Message” cult following of William Branham has repeatedly evolved and branched after multiple iterations of core doctrine, creating very different sects in multiple regions of multiple countries around the world, and each sect created from each branch in each region of each country has varying levels of abuse. It would be like asking which forms of abuse have been used in the Catholic Church in the past seventy-five years; even with the recent allegations and convictions of abuse in the Catholic Church, each instance of abuse cannot represent the Catholic community as a whole and the sum of all abuse cannot represent the views of the religion. Yet the

abuse exists, and in many cases, the predators are protected and will abuse again.

In the United States, the most extreme example of abuse in the “Message” that has been documented happened at a cult commune in Prescott, Arizona, that William Branham called “Goshen” (Referring to the land given to the Hebrews by the Biblical pharaoh of Joseph).^[i] Members of the commune ranging in ages from children to adult were emotionally, physically, and sexually abused as a means to control the group.^[ii] Leaders of the commune would ostracize people from the community and separate families. Children were forced to march around the compound military-style and were physically beaten if they fell out of line. Some children were sexually abused by Branham’s close associate Leo Mercer, others burned with fire so they would “know what hell felt like”. Parents were instructed to perform acts of abuse upon children or each other, while leaders of

the commune acted as a “witness” to emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. The problem was so widespread that the courts were forced to delicately question cult members in areas of sexual and physical abuse, incest, and homosexuality.

Undeniably, the worst documented cases of abuse happened at Colonia Dignidad in the Maule Region of Chile under the leadership of “Message” pastor Paul Shaefer.^[iii] Shaefer preached against “sins of the flesh”, often segregated men and women, and practiced enforced celibacy as religious atonement. Those who did not comply were brutally beaten.^[iv] Members of the commune were monitored by armed guard in a military-style compound. After a child escaped and alerted authorities, an investigation led government officials to secret underground chambers where cult members were tortured by electric shock.^[v]

When asked about abuse as a means to control, former members of the “Message” have different opinions. Many who experienced abuse have the opinion that their abusers were not aligned with the views of other members of the “Message”, and though abusive to enforce cult doctrine, should be excluded. Others argue that in many cases, leaders of the cult protected and enabled their abusers. Since William Branham himself praised physical abuse^[vi], members of the cult often turn a blind eye to predators in positions ranging from leaders^[vii] to lay members. Only in the cases where a “Message” cult pastor is exposed after having brainwashed and raped women of the church^[viii] under the guise of “spiritual husbandry”^[ix] is the abuse as a means to control beyond question.

At the same time, many former members overlook the more obvious forms of abuse. Having spent years and sometimes decades suffering through emotional abuse from figures in authority, they become so familiar with its effects that patterns of abuse turn into a normal part of life. It is not uncommon for members to be persuaded to ostracize friends or family members who question cult doctrine, or to be emasculated from the pulpit for not adhering to cult rules. Often, this persuasion is reinforced using Branham’s praise of corporal punishment for women and children. When it is put into action in the homes of parishioners, emotional abuse is followed by physical and even sexual. Branham praised those who brutally beat unclothed victims to the point of swelling and mutilation of skin^[x], and the worst cases of abuse involve stripping females and both shaming and severely beating them.^{[xi] [xii]}

Though the nature and severity of the abuse widely differs between cult churches, there appears to be a

common theme. Former members who attended churches led by elders who used Branham’s statements to support emotional and physical abuse seem to have noticed more victims than those who attended churches that avoided those statements. Said one former “Message” member: “Most kids I know including myself were physically abused, all in the name of ‘spare the rod and spoil the child’ (A statement Branham frequently made in his sermons to support corporal punishment). Interestingly, similar patterns appear in testimony from former members who attended “home church” – gathering in homes to listen to Branham’s recorded sermons from 1947-1965 – or who frequently listened to those recordings during the week between services. In a majority of cases described by former members, the abuse was designed to enforce cult rules and doctrine.

2. Jacobsen: How do these tactics differ for men and women?

Collins: Any strategy used to manipulate or control members of a cult that differ between genders is directly related to the way in which gender roles are defined. This is true whether we are discussing William Branham’s “Message” cult based on Pentecostalism, Warren Jeff’s FLDS cult based on Mormonism, or any other religious cult displaying obvious differences in gender roles. The difference in tactics becomes more noticeable in religious groups whose definition of gender roles differs from society, especially when the cult’s definition of gender roles is based upon cult doctrine.

Gender roles in the “Message” have been defined very similarly to that of Christian Fundamentalism during the 1940’s, 50’s, and 60’s. William Branham encouraged the men to be the sole provider for the family unit, the women to be the family cook^[xiii], and preached heavily against women who had any ambitions of a career.^[xiv] Men are permitted to vote on political decisions, while women are strictly forbidden.^[xv] Men keep up with current fashions, for the most part, while women are not allowed.^[xvi]

Men are publicly shamed from the pulpit to enforce the control of their spouse,^[xvii] inciting men to punish wives who do not adhere to the rules while denigrating women by insinuating they are property to be controlled. If wives disobey cult rules, Branham instructed men to beat them with boards.^[xviii] Those who follow Branham’s advice begin a pattern of emotional and physical abuse that in many cases becomes more brutal over time.”^[xix]

Many doctrinal teachings in the “Message” are specifically designed to manipulate women through emotional abuse. Branham taught his followers to

believe that the female part of the human race was designed by Satan, and that Satan was still making adjustments to the design. [xx] He taught that women were designed specifically to deceive, by her beauty, and that the female human was designed to have less morals than females of all other animals. [xxi] According to Branham, women would eventually be the cause of the destruction of the United States. [xxii] Women are emotionally manipulated to suppress their natural desire to be beautiful, to learn, to achieve, and to succeed. This suppression of thoughts, feelings, emotions, and ambition is so painful that it pushes some women into depression and suicidal thoughts. [xxiii]

3. Jacobsen: Why do these social control tactics differ in these ways?

Collins: The methods used to manipulate, influence, and control members of any religious cult differs between gender roles, especially within cults that originated before the Women's Rights movement of the 1960's having doctrine opposed to change. Outside a destructive cult, the lines separating gender roles have shifted significantly over the past fifty years. In cults based on Christian Fundamentalism of the United States, these lines do not move at the same pace, and sometimes not at all.

In the "Message" cult following of William Branham, the core teaching has been preserved through time by audio sermons recorded prior to Branham's death in 1965. Though some sects of the cult have deviated from the core doctrine, a majority continue to preach and practice the views and opinions of a Christian Fundamentalist preacher fighting against the rapid pace of change in the 1940's, 50's, and 60's. These recordings, without the central figure, have immortalized the cult leader, and the recordings themselves have become the central figure of the cult. As a result, the fight against change continues – even though the "change" has already taken place – and far more difficult to enforce or even fully understand in modern culture.

Many churches that follow Branham's teachings consider William Branham to be their "pastor"...

...listen to the recordings, and replay Branham's fight against cultural change every Wednesday and twice on Sunday. Those who do not play the tapes structure their sermons to match Branham's agenda from the recordings, continuing the battle against gender equality [xxiv] and Civil Rights. [xxv] The typical sermon in a "Message" cult church will contain many references to the recordings, using

direct quotes from William Branham to express Branham's misogynistic views, and use similar patterns of emotional abuse to further enforce the cult's views.

According to Branham, women were specifically designed by Satan for sex:

"But she is designed to be a sex act, and no other animal is designed like that. No other creature on the earth is designed like that."

– Branham, 1965, Feb 21. "Marriage and Divorce"

Under Branham's doctrinal teaching, men are trained to believe that women were a "only a scrap", made to deceive the men:

"Only a piece, scrap, made of a man, to deceive him by; God made it, right here has proved it. That's what she was made for."

– Branham, 1965, Feb 21. "Marriage and Divorce"

Some cult pastors claim that these doctrines only apply to women who do not adhere to the cult's female dress code, carefully avoiding some of Branham's statements about the Creation Story. But when combined with Branham's statements supporting or promoting the physical abuse of women and children, it is a recipe for disaster.

4. Jacobsen: How does the lack of internal support for critical thinking and, in fact, critical theology provide a ripe basis for the members of the community to be taken advantage of, throughout life?

Collins: The most unusual conversation I've had with a "Message" believer was when I began identifying several newspaper articles confirming William Branham's 1907 birth year. One of the core beliefs in the "Message" was that the year 1909 was "spiritually significant", and that the stars and planets aligned to announce William Branham's birth. William Branham often described how the year 1909 was spiritually significant, and the majority of cult followers celebrate his birthdate as April 6, 1909. [xxvi] This was the date Branham used on the marriage license to his second wife, Meda. [xxvii]

Yet according to the 1920 Census [xxviii], William Branham's parents listed his age as 12, placing his birth year in 1907, and newspaper articles I found confirmed the dates listed in the 1920 Census. [xxix] As it turned out, William Branham also used the year 1907 as a "supernatural sign" while speaking to the followers of deceased cult leader John Alexander Dowie in Zion City, IL. [xxx] Making matters even more confusing,

William Branham listed his birth year as 1908 on his marriage license to his first wife, Hope.^[xxxii]

To the follower of William Branham, I said, “William Branham could not have been born in all three years, 1907, 1908, and 1909. And if 1907 was ‘supernaturally’ significant because of his birth, then 1909 could not be ‘supernaturally’ significant because of his birth.”

His response surprised me: “I don’t understand it, brother, but I believe every word the ‘prophet’ spoke”.

When followers are manipulated into disabling critical thought, they open the door to critical problems. Not only are they allowing themselves to be influenced into believing things they would not ordinarily believe, they are allowing themselves to be persuaded into doing things they would not ordinarily do. While some might argue that abusive personalities would have abused other members of the cult without the emotional abuse Branham used in his sermons or the statements that he made promoting emotional and physical abuse, disabling critical examination of the sermons while giving ultimate authority to Branham’s words turns every statement into an order or action that must be carried out. It is *how* those orders are carried out that can be debated by members, and unfortunately, the abusive personalities carry them out in literal form. In the extreme cases, they have been combined with Branham’s misogynistic statements and have resulted in sexual abuse.

The problem, of course, is that this danger does not end after escaping the cult. Many escape Branham’s “leadership”, seeking to replace him with another “leader”, and find themselves trading one cult for another. Others, unaware that manipulative personalities exist in all walks of life, find themselves taken advantage of at home, in the workplace, on the streets, or even in new churches by other members. Though the non-cult situations are far less extreme, they could have been prevented simply by applying critical thought.

5. Jacobsen: What have been some – without names – more tragic cases of those who were hurt within community? What are some more heartening ones where people got out and started healthy lives outside of the myopic worldview of the purported “Message”?

Collins: For many years, current and former members of the “Message” were largely unaware of the abuse that existed in the cult. There were rumors, obviously, that spread whenever an elder or leader of a cult church stepped down due to sexual misconduct,

but for the most part, leaders of the “Message” have been largely successful in suppressing information regarding abuse.

Beyond the horrific cases I’ve already mentioned, the abuse is seldom talked about even by former members. Victims who speak out are often further victimized, and some of them have reconciled with their predators or abusers. To speak out would be to re-open wounds that are in the process of healing and expose others whose victims believe the abuse has ended. The predators and abusers were also victims of the cult, manipulated in ways that are difficult for anyone to understand, and some former members have sympathy for both the abuser and the abused.

It wasn’t until recently that former members began speaking publicly about their abuse in the “Message” cult. A former member with a passion to help the victims setup a website, Casting Pearls Project (<http://castingpearlsproject.com>), and began publishing testimonies by former members who had escaped the abuse and reclaimed their lives. This led to several others stepping forward, both publicly and in private, allowing those outside the cult to catch a personal glimpse into what it was like to be an abused female in the “Message”.

On the website, there are stories describing nine-year-old girls that were psychologically, physically, and sexually abused for years.^[xxxiii] Multiple women were often forced to strip their clothes off to be shamed or molested while fully nude.^[xxxiii] Some were brutalized while nude, one of which was beaten with a Louisville Slugger baseball bat.^[xxxiv] In one case, a child was murdered by a sexual predator whose crimes had been covered up.^[xxxv] The testimonies given by former members are horrific. It would be impossible to rate them as to which are less tragic, and which are more. Each victim, each form of abuse, carries just as much weight when one former member reaches out to help another. For them, *their* pain was the worst.

The beauty of the Casting Pearls Project is that there are happy new beginnings. Each person will carry a burden for a lifetime but have been able to start healthy lives. One is an author who is actively helping other victims as a volunteer speaker in the Arizona Department of Corrections for the Impact of Crime on its Victims Classes (ICVC), discussing the murder of children, the impact of child abuse on children, and the impact of domestic violence on women.^[xxxvi] Women, who were trained from birth to believe that women should not enter the workforce, have started successful careers.^[xxxvii] Some have found new and healthy

churches to attend.[xxxviii] while others will never trust religion again.[xxxix]

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Author; Webmaster, Seek The Truth.

[2] Individual Publication Date: March 15, 2019: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/collins-two>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

[i] Branham, William. 1964, May 31. The Oddball. "And to come here this morning and look, this fine little Jerusalem setting out here, little, what I called, it Goshen, I believe, when we come over this morning. Remember, Goshen was one of the places that they worshipped, one of the first places the tent was pitched."

[ii] People vs Keith Thomas Loker. 44 CAL. 4TH 691, 188 P.3D 580, 80 CAL. RPTR. 3D 630. Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from <https://scocal.stanford.edu/opinion/people-v-loker-33137#opinion>

[iii] Ellrodt, Oliver. Brown, Stephen. Insight: German sect victims seek escape from Chilean nightmare past. "Schaefer followed the teachings of American preacher William M. Branham, one of the founders of the "faith healing" movement in the 1940s and '50s. Born in a log cabin in Kentucky, Branham said he had been visited by angels and attracted tens of thousands of followers with sermons that advocated a strict adherence to the Bible, a woman's duty to obey her husband and apocalyptic visions, such as Los Angeles sinking beneath the ocean." Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-germany-chile-sect-idUSBRE8480MN20120509>

[iv] Ellrodt, Brown. "Former members of the sect say that Schaefer preached against "sins of the flesh." He also segregated men and women, they say, subjecting all but a few to enforced celibacy. Anyone who disobeyed was brutally punished, often by Schaefer personally."

[v] Collns, John. Colonia Dignidad and Jonestown. Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from https://jonestown.sdsu.edu/?page_id=67352

[vi] Example: Branham, William. 1958, Mar 24. Hear Ye Him. "Now, you can take some of these little two-by-fours if you want to, but that's what God said. That's what Christ said. Now, that's the truth. Oh, God be merciful. What must the great Holy Spirit think when He comes before the Father? You say, "Why you picking on us women?" All right, men, here you are. Any man that'll let his wife smoke cigarettes and wear them kind of clothes, shows what

he's made out of. He's not very much of a man. That's exactly right. True. He don't love her or he'd take a board and blister her with it." Accessed 2019, Feb 26

from <http://seekyethetruth.com/Branham/resources-deep-abuse.aspx>

[vii] G. Sarah. Brain Hurt. "It was very difficult as well to attend a church when you knew the pastor had been convicted of sexually molesting a young girl. He went to prison, yet, when he was released he didn't want to give up his church. If that wasn't bad enough, just a few years later, this same man was caught in another country with a prostitute in his hotel room shower. Still to this day he has a church following." Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/brain-hurt>

[viii] Example: Chikafa-Chipiro, Rosemary. Discouraging women, Christianity and security: The framing of women in the Gumbura case in Zimbabwean media. Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from <https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/kMIYBeS8G7jwRU5CEbdz/full>

[ix] William Branham Pastor Convicted of Rape and Pornography. Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eq0NYcr194o>

[x] Branham, William. 1956, July 28. Making the Valley Full of Ditches. "She'd beat her till she'd be so full of welts, you couldn't get the clothes over the top of them. That's what needs to be done tonight."

[xi] Example: A. Anna-Lisa. Turning Pain Into Power. "The abuse included the most degrading forms of humiliation. I was locked in a basement cellar for hours or even days, naked, with no food. I was forced to walk around my home completing chores, not a stitch of clothing on my body. I was coerced into performing various exercise routines, naked, my parents laughing while they picked apart and ridiculed my body. My legs were scarred from where my mother grabbed me and dug her nails into me. Handprints and nail marks were left on my face after being slapped or pinched on the nose and drug wherever I was wanted. Punishments also included beatings with a belt and a Louisville Slugger, the resulting welts impossible to describe." Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/turning-pain-into-power>.

[xii] Example: Layton, Martha. Psalm 147:3. "We started listening to Message tapes. I believe the Message pushed him over the edge. I was beaten, thrown out naked into the streets, choked, and almost killed." Accessed 2019, Feb 26

from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/psalm-147%3A3>

[xiii] Branham, William. 1956, Oct 3. Painted-Face Jezebel. "listen, sister dear, God made you for one place, the kitchen. When you get out of there, you're out of His will. Remember that. Women was made to be a helpmate at the house. She never was made for office work. And it's caused more disgrace and divorces and things."

[xiv] Branham, William. 1957, Oct 6. Questions and Answers on Hebrews #3. "Our nation has come so little until they've even taken the jobs away from the man, and put women out here in these places, till ninety percent of them, nearly, are prostitutes. And talk about men being gone, sure, it's because they got women out there in their jobs. And they got so low-down till they put women as peace officers on the street. That's a disgrace to any nation!"

[xv] Branham, William. 1960, Nov 13. Condemnation by Representation. "It shall also...has been an evil thing done in this country, they have permitted women to vote. This is a woman's nation, and she will pollute this nation as Eve did Eden."

[xvi] Branham, William. 1960, Feb 21. Hearing, Recognizing, Acting on the Word of God. "Morals, there's no moral to it no more. Women, dressing evil; come through television, all kinds of impersonations of evil people of Hollywood, all kinds of stuff, fashions."

[xvii] Example: Branham, William. 1954, May 9. The Invasion of the United States. "You say, 'Well, the women.' Yes, and you men that'll permit your wives to do that, that shows what you're made out of."

[xviii] Branham, William. 1958, Mar 24. Hear Ye Him. "All right, men, here you are. Any man that'll let his wife smoke cigarettes and wear them kind of clothes, shows what he's made out of. He's not very much of a man. That's exactly right. True. He don't love her or he'd take a board and blister her with it."

[xix] Example: Lefler, Joyce A. From Miracle to Murder. Accessed 2019, Feb 27 from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/from-miracle-to-murder>

[xx] Branham, William. 1965, Feb 21. Marriage and Divorce. "But in the human race, it's the woman that's pretty, not the man; if he is, there is something wrong, there is crossed-up seed somewhere. Originally it's that way. Why, why was it done? To deceive by. Her designer, Satan, is still working on her, too, in these last days."

[xxi] Branham, William. 1965, Feb 21. Marriage and Divorce. "Notice, there is nothing designed to stoop so low, or be filthy, but a woman. A dog can't do it, a hog can't do it, a bird can't do it. No animal is immoral, nor it can be, for it is not designed so it can be. A female hog can't be immoral, a female dog can't be immoral, a female bird can't be immoral. A woman is the only thing can do it. 116 Now you see where Satan went?"

[xxii] Branham, William. 1960, Nov 13. Condemnation by Representation. "Women, given the right to vote, elected President-elect Kennedy, was the woman's vote, the wrong man; which will finally lead to full control, of the Catholic church, in United States. Then the bomb comes that explodes her."

[xxiii] Example: H, Jennifer. Unwanted. Accessed 2019, Feb 27 from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/unwanted>

[xxiv] Branham, William. 1965, Feb 21. Marriage and Divorce. "Only a piece, scrap, made of a man, to deceive him by; God made it, right here has proved it. That's what she was made for."

[xxv] Example discussing Integration: Branham, William. 1963, Jun 28. O Lord, Just Once More. "He makes white man, black man, red man. We should never cross that up. It becomes a hybrid. And anything hybrid cannot re-breed itself. You are ruining the race of people. There is some things about a colored man that a white man don't even possess them traits. A white man is always stewing and worrying; a colored man is satisfied in the state he is in, so they don't need those things."

[xxvi] A Special Day. Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from https://branham.org/en/articles/442017_ASpecialDay

[xxvii] 1941, Oct 23. Marriage License: William Branham and Meda Broy

[xxviii] 1920, Jan 20. Fourteenth Census of the United States.

[xxix] Example confirming William Branham's age on the 1920 Census: 1924, Jun Mar 21. Hospital Bill Rendered. Courier Journal. "William Branham, 16 years old"

[xxx] Branham, William. 1951, Sept 29. Our Hope is in God. "How Doctor Dowie, in his death, prophesied that I would come to that city forty years from the time that he died. Not knowing nothing about it, he died on one day, and I was borned on the next. And forty years to the day I entered the city, not knowing nothing about it."

[xxxii] 1934, June 22. Marriage License: William Branham and Hope Brumbach

[xxxiii] Lefler, Joyce A. From Miracle to Murder. “No one listened to me while my ex-husband psychologically, physically, and sexually abused her over the years that followed.” Accessed 2019, Feb 27 from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/from-miracle-to-murder>

[xxxiii] Example: Layton, Martha. Psalm 147:3. “He told us that God had a special message for us. He told us that God wanted us to get naked and pray in a circle together. We proceeded to strip off our clothes and then the lights were turned out. I know I was only four, but I felt a sense of embarrassment having to strip off in front of my dad and brother. As we begin to pray my brother decided to touch me sexually for the very first time.”

[xxxiv] Example: A. Anna-Lisa. Turning Pain into Power. “I was coerced into performing various exercise routines, naked, my parents laughing while they picked apart and ridiculed my body. My legs were scarred from where my mother grabbed me and dug her nails into me. Handprints and nail marks were left on my face after being slapped or pinched on the nose and drug wherever I was wanted. Punishments also included beatings with a belt and a Louisville Slugger, the resulting welts impossible to describe.” Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/turning-pain-into-power>.

[xxxv] Lefler, Joyce A. From Miracle to Murder. “Thanks to two police detectives and a state prosecutor, Adam’s case was finally solved. It was discovered that the coroner had been wrong in the timing and cause of Adam’s death. If there had been a thorough investigation in 1983, the year Adam

died, it would have been discovered that Eugene, the babysitter, had a history of domestic violence and vile behavior towards children. He abused his first wife and tried to strangle and sexually molest their son. Eugene sexually molested his second wife’s daughter from her first marriage and then sexually molested the two daughters they had together. Maybe Eugene’s family was aware of his history but didn’t inform me. I was an easy target. The “Message” hadn’t prepared me to think or speak for myself or to question authority.” Accessed 2019, Feb 27 from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/from-miracle-to-murder>

[xxxvi] Lefler, Joyce A

[xxxvii] Example: A. Anna-Lisa. Turning Pain Into Power. “Fast forward 8 years later: I am 29 and absolutely the most confident I have ever been. I am a single mother with a career that is taking off and will take me places I NEVER imagined I deserved.” Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/turning-pain-into-power>.

[xxxviii] Example: Jennifer H. Unwanted. “After leaving the Message, my husband and I joined a church that was the opposite of the Message. Here we found sound Biblical doctrine, love, and the Celebrate Recovery program.” Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/unwanted>

[xxxix] Example: Christine H. Breaking the Chains. “I will NEVER trust a religion again. I now rely only on a true God that loves me unconditionally. Broken and scarred, I am still worthy!” Accessed 2019, Feb 26 from <https://castingpearlsproject.com/breaking-the-chains>

An Interview with Ruth Henrich on Individualism, Women's Rights, and Morgentaler

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Abstract

Ruth Henrich is the Treasurer of Humanist Canada and a Humanist Officiant. She discusses: personal origins; North American culture and the individualism emphasis; early life choices and trajectory; reasoning and intuitiveness and influence on postsecondary education; significant secular advancement in Canada over time; the rhetoric coming through the media, the dog whistling, the religious fundamentalist, the anti-science movements often grounded in fundamentalist faiths; hopes and fears; concision in the mainstream media; finding Humanist Canada; tasks and responsibilities as the Treasurer for Humanist Canada; input into policy; concerns about reactionary forces; anti-science and anti-human rights sources in Canada; its legal context; evidence-based sexual education curricula; the Morgentaler Scholarship; concerns of women and girls; medical ethics and "do no harm"; concluding thoughts; and shout outs to other organizations.

Keywords: Canada, Humanism, Humanist Canada, Media, Morgentaler, Ruth Henrich, Science.

An Interview with Ruth Henrich on Individualism, Women's Rights, and Morgentaler^{[1][2]}

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: What is your origin story?

Ruth Henrich: [Laughing] it starts with, I am a twin.

Jacobsen: Really?

Henrich: Yes, who would have thought it? We are not identical in personality. She is more right brain. I am more left brain. We were classified earlier in a study as mirror image twins.

Jacobsen: What does that mean?

Henrich: It means that when we were in the womb one side was stronger than the other. In that, it means that we are identical. If I look in the mirror, I see my sister.

Jacobsen: Does this impact neurological development as well?

Henrich: Yes.

Jacobsen: Does this impact the different trajectories of interests?

Henrich: Yes, very much so, she is very artistic. We call her the “oblivious one” [Laughing]. I am the more logical and intuitive one. So yes, it did have a bearing on how we developed as people. But it is also another thing trying to be an individual when you are a twin.

It can be very difficult to find yourself as an individual instead of always being a twin.

2. Jacobsen: Is it difficult in North American culture where we emphasize the individual?

Henrich: I would think so. I would think this has a bearing on things. You dab. You learn. I learned that moving out of the same city did a great deal for my development and interests. It did not feel like I was held back in any way, in terms of what the expectations were – because everyone knew who we were.

3. Jacobsen: At that time in Canadian history, women were limited consciously via culture. How did this impact early life and trajectories of where you could go, could not go, could do, could not do?

Henrich: I think it was more about freedom of choice growing up in the 60s and then teen years being in the 70s, where you are very cognizant of what is going on around you. There is sexual freedom. That had more to do with informing me about what possibilities there were as opposed to anything within the family structure.

As kids, we were never told that we could do anything that we wanted. I was a wife very early. I was a mother very early. It was to get out of that situation, which was very stupid. When you are a teenager, you do not think about it.

When I got into my 20s, it meant a lot to me to be able to make choices and what choices I was making, even just choices as to how many children was I going to have. A choice to go into the workforce. It did make a difference, culturally, as opposed to the family thing.

4. Jacobsen: In terms of being on someone high in reasoning and intuitive traits, how did this impact efforts at postsecondary education?

Henrich: It took me quite a while. I had attempted postsecondary education on 2 or 3 various times. I found that I had too many different family pressures, where I could not give school the time that it needed the first time.

The second time, I was probably in my late 20s or early 30s. I went to York University for a while. I found that my interest level was not what I thought

was going to take my career further, in terms of interest level in English Literature.

At that time, I found money to be an issue. I did stick with it the third time. I completed my culinary arts certification at George Brown. I finished in 2004. It was later in my life that I completed the certification.

5. Jacobsen: As you have seen more of Canadian culture develop and adapt over time, we still have developments, even recently, into 2018 with the repeal of the Blasphemy Law. It leads to some obvious questions. With some time to reflect, what do you notice as some of the more significant secular advancement of the country over time?

Henrich: There are times when I think secular advancement has taken a backseat to special interest religious groups. I have seen things go backward instead of going forward when it comes to our governance.

I would say in the 80s or 90s when there seemed to be more perceived freedoms as an individual. There was a lot of things happening with the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. There was a lot happening in terms of the Canadian government. There was more happening in terms of separation of Church and State.

It is interesting because, at that point in time, I was in my 30s and 40s. As an individual, you realize that things are bigger than what is going on in your own life. You begin to pay attention. We saw a lot of advancement. A lot of it had to do with technology. Technology has taken us into a secular world, as it is bigger than any of us. I think this has been the impetus to allow us to think and be for ourselves; whereas, before, it is do as I say and not as I do.

We are going to bring all of these advancements forward. But there will be so many things to hold people back. I think that technology has opened people up to degrees of freedom that they didn't think were possible.

6. Jacobsen: With some of the rhetoric coming through the media, the dog whistling, the religious fundamentalist, the anti-science movements often grounded in fundamentalist faiths, was the language, the rhetoric, and the tricks used by people in the media coming from that angle less obvious back in the day or, maybe, more taken for granted as the water of the culture?

Henrich: Yes, I think things were taken as part of the culture. This is just the way it is, unless, you're going to start protesting over each and every little thing. The fundamentalist rhetoric wasn't something that became part of the lexicon. I am finding now, with

the social media, the cultural influence through media is different, more immediate.

Those things didn't seem that important before has definitely changed. I anticipate what it will be in the future. How are those changes from the 70s, 80s, 90s, and 2000s, and into the second decade of the 2000s going to come about now? What will they be in 2030?

My grandchildren will be coming of age when this stuff is going to be prevalent. There will be a point in time when they are in charge. That is really where I think we are going to see leaps and bounds. There is going to be so much change.

7. Jacobsen: What about the mirror of that, to reflect this to the earlier part of the conversation? The positive, from our perspective, is the next generation with humanistic values as explicit values rather than something that bubbles around. But the inverse of the image of that is reactionary forces not liking it.

We have seen some of this in this country. We have seen this below the border. We have also seen this in characters like Bolsonaro. What do you feel less hope for and more fear for, on that angle?

Henrich: My biggest fear in all of that is that the rhetoric and attitudes are going to become more prevalent. That "consciousness" – that's the wrong word – or that rhetoric, the hate stuff, and the racism; we have to get so far past that.

I don't know how we can do that if we cannot bring people into thinking that we are all in this together as opposed to people thinking that we are all so very different that we can't get along. I am fearful of what is happening in our world and North America – to bring it closer to home.

Where is the Reason? Where are the logical minds? Will we have enough academics and freethinkers to change minds? Or are they going to be drowned out? My fear is that we are going to be drowned out. I think that we have to be thinking together about what our purposes are.

Instead of having fractured groups within the secular and humanist organizations, that is where we really need to come together; our talking points have to be more succinct. They need to be more prevalent. They need to be more forceful.

8. Jacobsen: Noam Chomsky notes in the media. That "concision" is the term within the mainstream media system. We make people say things in only a couple of sentences. Then you can

keep them within the beltway. Anything outside of it; it requires further justification, because it goes outside of the beltway. We're swimming upstream in a sense.

Henrich: Yes.

Jacobsen: It makes the job much harder. But if you look at the progressive change in the country, they have often been humanists, along the lines of human rights and women's rights.

Henrich: Yes.

9. Jacobsen: So, how did you find Humanist Canada?

Henrich: It was a circuitous route. Here in Grey and Bruce Counties, it is a fairly conservative – if this gets out publicly – backwards area.

Jacobsen: Backwards in what way?

Henrich: People thump their Bibles without knowing what is in them. It is repeating what everyone else has heard without thinking of the ramifications. It is always the "us against them" and a lot of uneducated or undereducated people.

Jacobsen: These are the people getting mad about virtue signalling while themselves using the oldest forms of Western virtue signalling.

Henrich: [Laughing] exactly, I found this disconnect. If you are in this area, if you are not being married by a religious official, then you cannot get married here. I thought that I would do something about it. I looked into becoming a marriage commissioner, which is a whole other story.

When the thing came around, they said, "This is a good idea," but they did not have a vetting process for who would conduct these marriages. It was at that point that I began to seek out if there was something else out there.

That is when I reached out to Humanist Canada. I like what I heard. It synced with my values and what I was thinking and how I lived my life. Then I found they had an officiant program. I became licensed throughout the Ontario Humanist Society prior to coming over to Humanist Canada.

The reason I did that was that I could get there faster. It didn't end up that way. I found with Ontario Humanist Society and Humanist Canada that there were some philosophical differences between the two organizations; only later finding out about the fracturing of Ontario Humanist Society doing their own thing from Humanist Canada.

That is how I found Humanist Canada. I found something that actually worked for me. In the process, I found the Grey Bruce Humanists. We do social things together. We have really dynamic meetings once per month.

They now have a discussion group going on. I am finding that I wasn't alone in what I was searching for; that there are other people in my area who are now starting to advocate more for what we think is possible.

10. Jacobsen: Now, in your role as treasurer in Humanist Canada, what are the tasks and responsibilities coming along with it?

Henrich: [Laughing] I make sure the bills get paid. I look after all the bookkeeping. I also do contract management and financial management. I am an active member of the board. I also have input into policy.

11. Jacobsen: If you're looking at policy, how does your input play out?

Henrich: In terms of making policy, it comes down to what is our strategic plan and is this within the strategic plan. It is about developing a plan, as we're developing the new strategic plan.

I also make sure the money is being spent properly. So, we have the money to undertake those projects. My goal as treasurer is making sure any fundraising that we're doing does not go against any CRA regulations or that it does not impede our charitable status.

Jacobsen: How important is the charitable status to the general operation, functioning, scope, and outreach of Humanist Canada?

Henrich: I think it is incredibly important that we have a charitable status. It gives credibility to our aims and the public give more when they get something in return for their giving. It is being able to substantiate what people spend their money on. That is important to people.

12. Jacobsen: Moving into 2019, what are the concerns with – let's call them – reactionary forces, typically, standing against things humanists, traditionally, stand for, including human rights, science, reproductive health rights for women, and concerns of the more marginalized within society?

Henrich: One of our concerns is going to be: are we attracting members? It is the members that finance all of the things that we are trying to do. It is trying to get our message out. That we do look at things from a

human rights perspective and are all about choice, personal choice.

Our main concern as an organization is reaching out to the general public. When I was looking for an organization it was difficult to find. As an organization, we need to ramp this up. We need to let people know what we are doing and why we are doing it.

It is about getting the message out.

13. Jacobsen: Within the history of this country right into the present, what tend to be the main sources of anti-science and anti-human rights?

Henrich: Religion, and the evangelicals, those are one of the biggest sources standing in the way. They can't do anything that flies in the face of religious virtue or however they are going to term it. Those are our big obstacles.

14. Jacobsen: How is this played out in a legal context?

Henrich: Let's take an example, the BC Humanists have tried twice to become an organization to license officiants. It is being able to marry people because that is a legal state. They have been denied twice because they are not a religious body.

It is that religious body in the context of the law that is the problem, which is what we need to overcome. When it comes to that sort of thing, there are so many instances of religiosity being part of the law and having protections; those are the things that we need to go after, to get them repealed.

Because humanists, agnostics, secularists, and atheists are now being discriminated against; it comes down to discrimination under the law.

15. Jacobsen: For the younger generations, not only the non-religious and the religious, in general for their health and wellness, what are your concerns with regards to updates and refinements based on evidence of sexual education curricula throughout the country?

Henrich: Oh wow, we had this conversation with family over the dinner table when celebrating together. It is paramount that we have a curriculum that teaches our children. It is not just about sex. It is not just about gender.

It is so much bigger than that. It is what becomes the norm in society. It is how do people face those types of things. It is taking into account that there are so many groups that have a special interest in this; it is being able to be informed and having our children informed.

We can't leave that kind of thing up to parents, because parents will provide what they think is appropriate. But there is so much, again coming back to the technology and what is available information to our children.

That they need to get the right information and need to make decisions for themselves, which means providing information. That means parents must stand behind the information. I think that is paramount. If we do not do something that is logical in the teaching, we will be in a for a lot of social problems, because we will be going back to the substandard social norms of before.

That is a real problem.

Jacobsen: Those prior norms mean higher teen pregnancy rates and higher STI/STD rates based on simply not being given proper, updated, modernized, evidence-based information from adults.

Henrich: Absolutely, you can anticipate higher levels of sexual predatorships. It is probably the wrong word for it. But there will be more of it. You are going to be seeing more prostitution and more forced prostitution. It will keep happening at a younger and younger age.

We need to equip the children; we, as parents, need to back up the information. As the parents, we are the ones who are teaching how to advance in our world, and what is accepted and what is not accepted. It is taking that stuff out in Ontario that is scary.

It is very scary.

Jacobsen: Given the down the road potential damage to the lives of some non-trivial amount of youth who do not get this information in high school, could this amount to a certain form of criminal negligence.

Henrich: Wow! You know what...

Jacobsen: Sorry to interrupt. But if you look at the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, it speaks to the best interests of the child. This could, in a way, be looked at as a regression against the best interests of the child.

Henrich: Yes! Yes, absolutely, would it be criminal? Could it be criminal? Wow, what a question, when you consider the laws, and such, that have been undertaken because they are not in the best interests of the child, it will not be in the best interests of our children to not provide them with information, in my estimation.

Whether or not it will be, that will be up to our legislators, but as Humanist Canada, should we be taking that on as something that we can something about? Perhaps, that needs to be a broader discussion.

16. Jacobsen: What is the Morgentaler Scholarship?

Henrich: It is a partnership with Ontario Coalition of Abortion Clinics. Henry Morgentaler was our first president and was a driving force and women's reproductive rights advocate. This scholarship will enable medical students to further their advancement in the study of women's reproductive health and choice.

It can be anything from obstetrics to gynecology, but it goes beyond that. It has to do with infant mortality. It has to do with women-to-women relations, puberty, adulthood, menopause. It is something that needs to be more prevalent and thought about; women are not a general collective.

There are so many things that have to do with how women are viewed within the medical community. I think this scholarship can help with this. We must change our perspective. We must change how women are perceived in the medical profession.

17. Jacobsen: In your opinion, in a qualitative, reflective, retrospective opinion based on the conversations you have had with women in your life, what are some of the nuanced concerns that women and girls have about the treatment in the medical community? That simply are talked about in the community.

Not necessarily out of conscious negligence but simply missing it.

Henrich: It is access. It is someone who knows what you are asking and know what you are experiencing. It is access without being demeaned. Access without judgment.

18. Jacobsen: What would be an alteration of that within medical ethics of "do no harm" in the Hippocratic Oath with further emphasis on access and on non-demeaning treatment?

Henrich: There must be more training within the medical community itself, at the university level. It has to do with removing your own bias. If you are going to be a medical professional and are going to be taking that oath, then you can identify your bias as yours.

That is becoming a huge problem, not just in women's health. Not only, how do we live? But also, how do we die? It must permeate down to the

university level and in what they are being trained in. it is more than just ethics.

19. Jacobsen: Any concluding thoughts?

Henrich: I am looking forward to what we will accomplish in the next decade. We have dynamic people. And I want to be a part of that! [Laughing]

20. Jacobsen: Any shout outs to affiliates or other organizations?

Henrich: There is the Edmonton Humanists. There is the BC Humanists. There is the Winnipeg Humanists. There is a number in Ontario. SOFREE out of Kitchener, Waterloo, and Guelph. There is the Grey Bruce Humanists. We need more local groups, more groups in the Maritimes, in Nunavut, in the Northwest Territories, and so on. We need it coast-to-coast.

If we can get local people doing humanistic things in local ways, then we are here to help.

21. Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Ruth.

Henrich: You're welcome. My pleasure, Scott.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Treasurer, Humanist Canada.

[2] Individual Publication Date: March 22, 2019: <http://www.insightjournal.com/henrich>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://insightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

An Interview with John Collins on the Theology of “The Message” and William Marrion Branham (Part Three)

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Abstract

John Collins is an Author, and the Webmaster of Seek The Truth. He discusses: false claims and lies of William Marrion Branham; central false claims by Branham about Christianity; the central false claims by Branham about the role of men and women within the church; the central false claims about the nature of the world and the nature of Christ by Branham (compared to mainstream interpretations of the Bible and the narrative of the life of Christ); the main lies by Branham to the followers of The Message; the peripheral but noteworthy false claims by Branham made about the Bible; the peripheral but noteworthy false claims by Branham made about Christianity; the peripheral but noteworthy false claims by Branham made about the nature of the world and the nature of Christ by Branham (compared to mainstream interpretations of the Bible and the narrative of the life of Christ); the peripheral but noteworthy lies by Branham to the followers of The Message; and the single false claim or lie that tends to be the most powerful in deconverting members from the cult or cult-like community.

Keywords: Christianity, faith healing, John Collins, Seek The Truth, The Message, webmaster, William Marrion Branham.

An Interview with John Collins on the Theology of “The Message” and William Marrion Branham (Part Three)[1][2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Let’s talk about specific instances of false claims and lies by the late William Marrion Branham. What have been

the central false claims by Branham about the Bible?

John Collins: For any who have never spent any significant time learning or indoctrinated in the

theology of William Branham's "Message" cult theology, it would sound very strange to review Branham's false claims about the Bible. To the casual listeners of his sermons, those who are familiar with the Bible and its teachings, William Branham's theology is only *slightly* off in many cases. The casual listener might recognize erroneous statements but would be unfamiliar with the doctrinal positions built upon those same errors.

I differ with some of my colleagues in their opinion of the nature of these errors. Some who are both familiar with Christian theology and Branham's errors are of the opinion that Branham was simply an uneducated man who did not understand the Biblical text and made some false claims that are in three categories: trivial mistakes, unorthodox doctrine based solely upon his religious affiliation, and in later years, destructive doctrine. My research has painted a much different picture. His early communication skills, as both a speaker and a writer, suggest that he was educated much more than his latest iteration of stage persona described. His religious doctrine and affiliation are far more fluid than most are aware, as are his doctrinal positions. And the errors that some might consider trivial are the building blocks that were used to eventually lift himself into position as the central figure of a destructive cult that has been the tree from which several other destructive cult branches were created. There definitely appears to have been strategy and purpose behind even these false claims.

For example, William Branham falsely claimed that the Biblical stories of Enoch and Noah intersected^[i], and that Enoch lived *five hundred years* until the days of Noah^[ii]. To the casual listener, this is a simple mistake. The Bible states that Enoch was taken by God after *365 years* and is very clear on the timeline from Enoch to Noah. According to Genesis chapter 5, Enoch fathered Methuselah at age 252, Methuselah fathered Lamech at age 187, and Lamech fathered Noah at age 182 – placing Noah's birth approximately seventy years *after* Enoch left the earth.

Those who are familiar with Branham's indoctrination strategy, however, recognize this "simple mistake" as one of the primary building blocks for a destructive cult. Branham used this "mistake" to claim that Noah symbolically represented mainstream Christianity, while Enoch symbolically represented the "Bride", which he considered to be his "Message" cult.^[iii] This parallel was used by Branham to later claim that mainstream Christianity must suffer while his cult would escape unharmed before the End of Days.

2. Jacobsen: What have been the central false claims by Branham about Christianity?

Collins: During the formation of the "Message" cult, as William Branham was establishing a group of followers from which to recruit, most of Branham's claims about Christianity were general observations that could seemingly be verified by a large population of the Christian community. His claims against mainstream Christianity were mostly limited to statements against cold, formal religion^[iv], hypocrisy^[v], and complacency^[vi]; claims that many of his listeners could easily recognize. He rarely spoke against the Christian denominations of faith, as many attendees to his highly advertised revival meetings were from mainstream Christianity. Instead, he promoted his campaigns as "inter-evangelical"^[vii] and "inter-denominational"^[viii], showing support for the overall non-Catholic Christian community. His sermons contained an inviting, all-are-welcome theme of unity.^[ix]

During this time, Branham tailored the theology in his sermons to match the beliefs of the majority of people in his revivals and appeared to have understood what he preached. In a prayer while standing before a Trinitarian crowd in Erie, PA, Branham asked the "Third Person of the Trinity", the "Holy Spirit" to come.^[x] In New York, NY, he announced that he had accepted the Trinity.^[xi] In Saskatoon, SK, he attempted to unite Oneness Pentecostalism with Trinitarianism, explaining that Trinitarians believed in One God, and that Oneness theology was mistakenly missing the distinction between the Father and the Son.^[xii] Yet Branham is mistakenly remembered by most religious historians as a Oneness Pentecostal.^[xiii]

When speaking before non-Trinitarian crowds, however, Branham would reject Trinitarianism, claiming that he believed in three "dispensations" of God instead of three "Persons".^[xiv] While doing so, he often implied that Trinitarian Christians believed in "three gods".^[xv] Over the years, Branham's doctrine continued to display signs of destructive theology, causing even his closest affiliations to sever ties.^[xvi] Invitations to speak before Trinitarian churches would decrease, leaving his anti-Trinitarian statements the more popular doctrine among his diminishing population of listeners. As a result, his false claims comparing Trinitarianism to polytheism would eventually become a fundamental part of "Message" theology.

Branham's false claim that denominational Trinitarians believe in "three gods" is the central core to several trails of very destructive theology, each trail another false claim that is built upon that false

idea. From this claim, he linked mainstream Christianity to the Serpent in the Garden of Eden^[xvii]. He claimed that the Bible prohibited baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which was common among his Oneness Pentecostal peers, but took it a step further by claiming Protestantism would eventually merge with the Catholic Church^[xviii] to begin the battle of Armageddon^[xix].

3. Jacobsen: What have been the central false claims by Branham about the role of men and women within the church?

Collins: William Branham's church organization theology, commonly referred to as "Church Order Doctrine", was the basis for the organization, structure, and governance of his religious cult. Within this theology Branham established the hierarchy and rank of his cult pyramid, placing himself as the central figure while positioning key individuals as watchers over the ranks as is commonly done among many destructive cults. This hierarchy had no position for women, which was common among Christian Fundamentalism at the time. Branham's Creation theology was uncommon, however, as he claimed that women were designed by Satan to deceive men.^[xx] Therefore, instead of placing women at the bottom of the pyramid in the cult structure, he appears to have demoted women to a lesser position than even the rank-and-file cult member.

The Bible describes multiple women in leadership positions. Deborah, a female prophetess, was the fourth judge and leader of Israel.^[xxi] Junia was an apostle, praised by the Apostle Paul.^[xxii] Paul describes Phoebe's role as a deacon^[xxiii], and evidence suggests that Pheobe may have also done the work of an evangelist.^[xxiv] ^[xxv] Priscilla^[xxvi] ^[xxvii], Mary,^[xxviii] Chloe^[xxix], and others^[xxx] ministered or served from their homes. William Branham falsely claimed that the Bible forbade women from participating in these roles, carefully avoiding these particular passages when describing his church organization.^[xxxi]

Branham claimed governance of the church body was authoritative rather than servant leadership. According to Branham, even the deacons of the cult churches had roles of authority, and he described their role as that of "police officers".^[xxxii] This is vastly different from the role of the deacon in mainstream Christianity. The word "deacon" is derived from the Greek word *diákonos* (*διάκονος*)^[xxxiii], which meant "servant".

4. Jacobsen: What have been the central false claims about the nature of the world and the nature of Christ by Branham (compared to mainstream interpretations of the Bible and the narrative of the life of Christ)?

Collins: William Branham made several extra-biblical claims about Jesus Christ as he compared Christ's days on earth to his own. According to Branham, eighty-six percent of Christ's ministry was focused upon "divine healing".^[xxxiv] Rather than an eternally-existing Person of the Godhead, Branham taught that Christ was the archangel Michael from Jude 1:9 in the Bible.^[xxxv] Similar to many ancient mythologies, Branham taught a version of Christianity wherein both the good deity and evil deity were equal. According to Branham, Satan was once equal in power to God.^[xxxvi]

As a result, Branham's doctrine over-emphasized the forces of evil, under-emphasized the forces of good, and drew attention to himself as the rising "spiritual" champion. The worldview his extra-biblical claims created was very disturbing, one he considered to be "Satan's Eden".^[xxxvii] As the cult's destructive nature began to progress towards doomsday predictions,^[xxxviii] Branham's opinion of the world further declined while his claims about himself grew more egotistical. After convincing his followers that he was the return of "Elijah the prophet", Branham began to claim that the "Elijah" of today was "Jesus Christ" in the form of a prophet.^[xxxix] Branham's central false claim about the nature of Christ was that he, himself, was the Christ. He was very strategic in how these claims were made; building blocks of doctrine were spread across several sermons, and one must be fully indoctrinated to understand or believe all of his claims about himself.

Mainstream interpretations of the world and nature of Christ are literally reversed. Most people in mainstream Christianity believe Jesus to be eternally God,^[xl] and believe any person claiming to be Jesus Christ to be an inspired voice of Satan.^[xli] If you examine the core, fundamental elements of mainstream Christianity and Branham's "Message" cult doctrine, the two appear to be direct opposites.

5. Jacobsen: What have been the main lies by Branham to the followers of The Message?

Collins: Similar to the strategy of introducing a biblical error into the doctrine, growing acceptance, and building tiers of other doctrinal errors upon it, Branham's stage persona was created by introducing a series of factual errors. Each error appears to be minor when examined alone, but when examined as a collection, one factual error is fully dependent upon

another. Yet they are equally as important. All factual errors appear to serve the purpose of giving his stage persona “supernatural” and authoritative characteristics.

At its core, the “Message” belief system has been based upon the idea that William Branham was the reincarnation of the “spirit” of the prophet Elijah from the Old Testament^[xlii], and that a series of life-changing “supernatural” events were all part of “God’s plan” to lift William Branham into power as the “prophet messenger” sent to condemn the world and announce the return of Jesus Christ. The factual errors surrounding these events, however, are significant when considering their importance to the “Message”. If these elements of Branham’s stage persona are not true, then Branham’s importance in Church history is diminished to nothing more than a religious grifter.

Branham claimed to have been a Baptist minister^[xliii] who ignored the “Pentecostal calling”^[xliv], and claimed that as a result, God killed his father, brother, first wife, and daughter during the time of the 1937 flood of the Ohio River.^[xlv] He also claimed that as a result of these two events, several “supernatural” events took place redirecting him back into “God’s plan”, which his cult believes (based upon his doctrine) was to become the final “messenger” before the destruction of the world.

Many people influenced by Branham’s “Message” cult theology are surprised to learn that many of the details in these claims are either inaccurate or fabricated for the sake of molding his stage persona. When Branham first started his church in Jeffersonville, Indiana, he inherited a Pentecostal congregation from his mentor: Pentecostal minister and Ku Klux Klan leader Rev. Roy E. Davis.^{[xlvi] [xlvii] [xlviii]} The 1936 deed, plat map, and newspaper advertisements were for the “Billie Branham Pentecostal Tabernacle”^[xlix] instead of “Baptist Church”, and he had been affiliated with the Pentecostal faith as early as 1928.^{[l] [li]} His wife was diagnosed with the disease that led to her death in January 1936^[lii], and she died long after the 1937 flood subsided. When one takes the time to examine the historical data concerning each claim, it is evident a majority of claims regarding himself and the events surrounding his ministry were both creations of his own imagination and accounts containing many incorrect details.

6. Jacobsen: What have been the peripheral but noteworthy false claims by Branham made about the Bible?

Collins: There are too many peripheral claims to examine in one conversation, however there is one peripheral claim that is significant when considering the creation of the cult structure. William Branham claimed that the Bible text describes a timeline of succession of prophets, one “major prophet” per “age”^[liii], each described as the human through which came salvation, and without which came destruction.^[liv] He often used symbology to compare this scenario to present times, suggesting that he was the “prophet” for this “age” while other evangelists of the era who were claiming prophecy would lead “their people” to destruction.^[lv] In doing so, Branham changes the Biblical narrative such that it makes the role of Biblical prophets authoritative rather than supportive and creates dependencies on human leadership rather than divine. Branham’s theology concerning Biblical prophets described that of the central figure of a cult, and once indoctrinated with these false claims, his followers use these them to defend Branham’s authoritative leadership.

If one simply searches for ‘Cyrus’ and ‘Darius’ in the Old Testament, it is evident that the Biblical narrative describes multiple major and minor prophets that were alive and active at the same time. Major prophets Jeremiah, Daniel, and Ezekiel were prophesying at the same time minor prophets Obediah, Habbakuk were prophesying, and the only theological distinction between a “major” and a “minor” prophet is the number of pages available to us in the Bible canon.^[lvi]

So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian

Daniel 6:28

In the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah, the Lord moved the heart of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation throughout his realm and also to put it in writing:

2 Chronicles 36:22

Are you wiser than Daniel? Is no secret hidden from you?

Ezekiel 28:3

7. Jacobsen: What have been the peripheral but noteworthy false claims by Branham made about Christianity?

Collins: Branham’s peripheral claims about Christianity were typically statements that appear to have been made in an attempt to create a distaste in mainstream Christianity. Inaccurate statements can be found through Branham’s recorded sermons

ranging from modern theology to ancient Church history. When examined as a whole, the combination of false claims promotes his notion that Protestantism would eventually merge into Catholicism leaving only his “Message” cult as the single body of “Christians” that will stand against the Roman Catholic Church – which he claimed to be inspired by Satan.^[lvii] Chronologically speaking, this trail of reasoning begins with his inaccurate description of the First Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.)

In Branham’s version of history, the Council gathered to force Trinitarianism upon the body of Christians, introducing the notion of Pagan polytheism into Church doctrine.^[lviii] This, he claimed, was Satan’s disguising himself in the form of Christian religion to later deceive those who did not accept “their prophet for the age” (himself). Many people influenced with Branham’s theology are surprised to learn that the intentions of the Nicene Council were almost the exact opposite; they organized to prevent the influence of Arianism, which many claimed to be the influence of Greek mythology (polytheism) into Christianity.^[lix]

Arius, from which the Arianism doctrine originated, believed Jesus Christ to be a creature distinct from God the Father, and therefore subordinate to Him. He believed that God the Father existed eternally, but that the Son did not. According to Arius, John 3:16’s description of “God’s only begotten Son” was to be interpreted literally; that God literally fathered a subordinate Son. He believed that the Holy Spirit was not part of the Godhead, rejecting the Trinitarian views for a form of Dualism, or two gods. According to Christian historians, Arius’ theology was quite popular. So much so that the notion of a “God of our God”^[lx] was seen as a threat to the existence of Christianity. A council of Christian bishops met in the Bithynian city of Nicaea to squash the quickly growing sect. After much debate, they declared that there was only One God, and that Arius’ notion of two Gods was heretical. This resulted in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, and ultimately the preservation of Christian monotheism in the form of Trinitarianism.^[lxi]

It is interesting that William Branham used false claims about the Nicene Council and Nicene Creed to support the Oneness Pentecostalism theology he is remembered for preaching, because Branham himself was not beholden to any specific belief concerning the Christian Godhead. Depending upon his audience, Branham preached Modalism^[lxii], Arianism^[lxiii], and Trinitarianism.^[lxiv]

8. Jacobsen: What have been the peripheral but noteworthy false claims by Branham made

about the nature of the world and the nature of Christ by Branham (compared to mainstream interpretations of the Bible and the narrative of the life of Christ)?

Collins: The “Gospel”, in its simplest form, is the idea that God walked among man, in human flesh, to offer Himself as a sacrifice to take the place of the sins of the world.^[lxv] In Oneness Pentecostalism William Branham is almost universally remembered as preaching, there is no distinction between God the Father or God the Son; Oneness theology believes simply that “God” died on the cross for the transgression.^[lxvi] Trinitarian theologians also believe that “God” died on the cross for the transgression, but that Jesus Christ is one third, or one Person, in a triune Godhead.^[lxvii]

In most cases, William Branham agreed with either the Oneness^[lxviii] or the Trinitarian^[lxix] theological view. To specific crowds however, Branham deviated from both of these theological views to claim that God left Jesus shortly before the crucifixion, and that Jesus was a mortal human at the time of his death.^[lxx] Most ministers in mainstream Christianity would argue that the death of a mortal on a cross would be simply that: the death of a mortal on a cross. God offering Himself as a sacrifice in human flesh has significant meaning to most Christians.^[lxxi]

9. Jacobsen: What have been the peripheral but noteworthy lies by Branham to the followers of The Message?

Collins: When I first started my research, a minister who had recently left the “Message” presented me with a list of questions that he had accumulated during his years promoting William Branham and his ministry. The list was several pages long. When I first examined the list, I discounted a majority of the issues raised because they seemed insignificant. “Is it true that John the Baptist only had – six converts?” “Are UFO’s really investigating angels of judgment?” “Is Capernaum, today at the bottom of the sea?” The full list, including many of William Branham’s quotes raising the questions, can be viewed on my website at seekyethetruth.com/Branham/resources-deep-questions.aspx.

Over time, and as my understanding of the research material increased, I realized that these were not insignificant questions. Yes, they were peripheral to Branham’s fundamental doctrine, but each question about each false statement made by William Branham was detrimental to the structural integrity of the cult’s theology. Some of the points listed were

not even specifically questioning William Branham; they were questioning statements made by William Branham during times Branham claimed that God was speaking through him – they were allegedly statements *made by God Himself!*

Branham's claim that the city of Capernaum lies beneath the sea, for instance, seems to be a simple error in geographical and historical knowledge when taken at face value. This statement was made, however, as Branham claimed to be "prophesying" condemnation for the city of Los Angeles.^[lxxii] ^[lxxiii] The "Voice" claimed that the cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, and Capernaum lie at the bottom of the sea, and that Los Angeles would suffer the same fate unless the people of the city repented.

This is significant, because the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah have yet to be discovered. Only a divine voice could know that the cities were in the depths of the sea, if this is actually the case. Capernaum, on the other hand, has never been submerged, and is a famous site for tourists to visit locations where the Apostles held meetings. The city lay in ruins from about the third century to 1839 when it was discovered by a visiting scholar. Recent excavations have identified St. Peter's home, where Jesus would have visited.^[lxxiv]

10. Jacobsen: Of all the false claims and lies by Branham, what single false claim or lie tends to be the most powerful in deconverting members from the cult or cult-like community?

Collins: I wish that I could say that one single area of research could lead to the awakening of those under the undue influence of this or any destructive cult. I wish that I could create one single document or brochure describing the issue and why it is false, providing all of the many resources available to allow members to examine the false claim for themselves. The sad truth is that this is not how it works. There is a reason why the term "brainwashing" is used by some people to describe this process; those subjected to this type of manipulation over long periods of time are unable to follow logic or reason concerning the cult, its leader, or its history.

Of the hundreds of issues identified with William Branham's claims, there are several undeniable, critical flaws. Each false claim is either related to, supported by, or supporting another false claim, opening the door to circular reasoning. Members cannot reject one claim while supporting another, because each claim has been inter-connected in their mind. Should any single issue be identified to the programmed mind, it is quickly absorbed, devalued, and forgotten through cognitive dissonance.

A member who has fully immersed themselves into a cult has formed a new identity, and that identity is constructed from a blend of both cult doctrine and personal experience. The de-conversion of any victim of this type of mind control requires great effort and much patience. The cult identity that has formed must be separated from the true, authentic self, and this process is an appeal to the human buried deep inside the identity – not a debate with the outer shell of the cult identity over false claims. Sure, the claims must be examined, but it is unlikely that a single claim will unravel the cocoon spun by cult indoctrination. The authentic self must first be seeking for answers, and that authentic self must still retain enough sanity to comprehend the questions.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Author; Webmaster, Seek The Truth.

[2] Individual Publication Date: April 1, 2019: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/collins-three>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

[i] Branham, William. 1956, Jan 15. The Junction of Time. "There was Noah and Enoch, preaching, at the same time."

[ii] Branham, William. 1963, March 18. The First Seal. "Enoch typed the Bride. Enoch! Noah went over, through the Bride...went over, through the tribulation period, and suffered, and become a drunk, and died. But Enoch walked before God, for five hundred years, and had a testimony, "he pleased God," with rapturing faith; and just started walking right out, and went up through the skies, and went Home without even tasting death; never died, at all."

[iii] Branham, William. 1964, Aug 2. The Future Home of the Heavenly Bridegroom and the Earthly Bride. "Yet, Noah was a type of the remnant that's carried over, not the translated bunch. Enoch, one man, went in the Rapture before the flood came, showing that the Church does not go into the tribulation or anything around it. Enoch was translated, one man. Oh, the church may be a number; but the Bride is going to be a very small group that'll make up the Bride. Now, the church may be a great number; but, the Bride, you see, compare eight with one. Eight times less, will be the Bride, than the church."

[iv] Branham, William. 1950, Jan 15. Believeest Thou This? "That's what's the matter with down in these countries now, and all around over the world. We got too many old cold formal churches, having a form of godliness and denying the power thereof."

[v] Branham, William. 1954, Oct 3. The Word Became Flesh. "And I said, 'That's not true representation of Christianity.' I said, 'That's a form of hypocrisy.'"

[vi] Branham, William. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages. Ch9. "You can express this any way you want, and it all adds up to the fact that the church is complacent."

[vii] Branham, William. 1948, Apr. The Voice of Healing: An Inter-Evangelical Publication of the Branham Healing Campaigns.

[viii] Branham, William. 1951, May 5. My Commission. "But coming into Divine healing services, I make it a inter-evangelical, just a interdenominational for everybody."

[ix] Example: Branham, William. 1961, Apr 25. The Godhead Explained. "He said, 'You know what we're going to do?' Said, 'We're drawing a little ring, and drawing you right out of our circle.' 'Then,' I said, 'I'm going to draw another one, and draw you right back in again.' I said, 'You can't draw me out, 'cause I love you. See, you just can't do it.'"

[x] Branham, William. 1951, July 29. The Resurrection of Lazarus. "And may the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, come in now, the Promise, the Comforter, that You said You would send. "

[xi] Branham, William. 1951, Sept 29. Our Hope is in God. "Then suffered under Pontius Pilate, crucified, died, buried, rose the third day, setting at the right hand of God the Father, making intercessions now for we who've accepted the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity"

[xii] Branham, William. 1957, May 19. Hear Ye Him. "Trinity, they don't believe there's three Gods. That is heathenism. And the Oneness don't believe that Christ was His Own daddy. So, what would that be? See? But you both believe the same thing."

[xiii] What Is Branhamism. Accessed 2019, Mar 1 from <https://www.gotquestions.org/Branhamism.html>

[xiv] Branham, William. 1959, Aug 23. Palmerworm, Locust, Cankerworm, Caterpillar. "You say, 'The blessed holy trinity.' Find me the word 'trinity' anywhere in the pages of God's Bible. It's a man-made scheme, an old dirty church rag wrapped around, to take the place of the sap Line of God's Holy Spirit. No such a thing. There's no such a thing. You find it and come to me. You're duty bound to do it, as a Christian, if you find it. It's not in God's Holy Writings. And the 'Father, Son, and Holy Ghost' is

hatched out of hell, there's no such a thing as three Gods. Now, I believe in the Fatherhood of God. I believe in the Sonship of God. I believe in the Holy Ghost dispensation of God. But It's the same God in every dispensation, not three Gods."

[xv] Branham, William. 1958, May 8. The Expectations. "There's no three Gods. There's only one God, three offices of the same God. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit don't mean three Gods. If we've got three Gods, we're heathens. See? Like the Jew says, 'Which one of them is your God?' There's no three Gods. There's one God in three offices of the same God: the Fatherhood, and the Sonship. This is the Holy Spirit dispensation."

[xvi] Example: Barnes III, Roscoe. Why Ern Baxter Left the Ministry of William Branham. Accessed from <http://ffbosworth.strikingly.com/blog/why-ern-baxter-left-the-ministry-of-william-branham>. "Baxter said that in Branham's case, faith was 'becoming a metaphysical thing – it was becoming a form of Couism.' In other words, he seemed to teach, 'If I keep repeating day by day that I'm getting better and better' – it was a kind of metaphysical positivism," Baxter explained. He noted: "This bothered me and I saw it was an 'out' to accommodate people who weren't getting healed. 'There must have been something wrong with their faith.' And so that disturbed me."

[xvii] Branham, William. 1958, Sept 28. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit. "Then, then, in here they lost it, went into a Catholic denomination; come out in a Lutheran denomination, come out in a Wesley denomination, then they're going right into the Pentecostal then. But, just before the end time, the Seed is almost gone from the earth. It's waded out, the Seed of the righteous. The seed of the serpent is just accumulating faster and faster and faster, getting ready for this atomic age, to be destroyed."

[xviii] Branham, William. 1962, Dec 16. The Falling Apart of the World. "It's another Babylon that must fall. Peace on earth? A false messiah! An anti-christ in its teaching. How you going to throw these denominations together when they won't even... They can't even agree with one another now when they broke up in little systems like that, how about all joining together and getting over there? Yes. See, it's a false setup. It's all done to throw Protestantism into Romanism. A false, anti-christ teaching."

[xix] Branham, William. 1961, Aug 8. Thy House. "Now, the Bible predicts that in the last days that He will trap Catholicism, Romanism, and all those things, and them—communism, and all of them together in the valleys of Megiddo there, until there

will be such a slaughter amongst them, until the blood will flow to a horse's bit"

[xx] Branham, William. 1965, Feb 21. Marriage and Divorce. "But in the human race, it's the woman that's pretty, not the man; if he is, there is something wrong, there is crossed-up seed somewhere. Originally it's that way. Why, why was it done? To deceive by. Her designer, Satan, is still working on her, too, in these last days."

[xxi] Judges 4:4. "And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time."

[xxii] Romans 16:7. "Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me."

[xxiii] Romans 16:1-2. "commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea;

that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well."

[xxiv] Phoebe: Deacon of the Church in Cenchrea. Accessed 2019, Mar 10 from <https://margmowczko.com/was-phoebe-a-deacon-of-the-church-in-cenchrea-part-1/>

[xxv] Women Church Leaders in the New Testament. Accessed 2019, Mar 10 from <https://margmowczko.com/new-testament-women-church-leaders/>

[xxvi] 1 Corinthians 16:19. "The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house."

[xxvii] Romans 16:3-5. "Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; also greet the church that is in their house."

[xxviii] Acts 12:12. "And when he realized this, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John who was also called Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying."

[xxix] 1 Corinthians 1:1. "For I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you."

[xxx] Women Church Leaders in the New Testament. Accessed 2019, Mar 10 from <https://margmowczko.com/new-testament-women-church-leaders/>

[xxxi] Example: Branham, 1965. Feb 21. "Marriage and Divorce". "They make her pastors, evangelists, when the Bible completely forbids it. And the Bible said, "as also saith the Law," making it run in continuity, the whole thing."

[xxxii] Branham, William. 1963, Dec 26. Church Order. "A policeman (or the deacon) is a military police to the army, courtesy, but yet with authority. See? You know what a military police is, is actually, if he carries out his rights, I think he's just like a chaplain. You see? It's courtesy and everything, but yet he has an authority. See, you must mind him. See, he puts... These rookies get out there and get drunk, why, he puts them in their place. And so is the deacon to put them in their place. 133 Now, remember, the deacon is a policeman, and a deacon's office is actually more strict than most any office in the church."

[xxxiii] "deacon". The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (4th ed.). Bartleby. 2000.

[xxxiv] Branham, William. 1964, March 18. "Jesus used about eighty-six percent of His ministry was upon Divine healing, that He might attract the attention of the people, then explain what His purpose was there. And, that's the same thing, we're trying to continue His ministry in the best way that we know how, believing that He still remains the same yesterday, today, and forever."

[xxxv] Branham, William. 1955, July 9. Beginning And Ending Of The Gentile Dispensation. "And at that time, Michael shall stand, the great prince." Michael was Christ, of course, Who fought the Angelic wars in Heaven, with the devil. Satan and Michael fought together, or fought against each other, rather."

[xxxvi] Branham, William. 1965, Feb 21. Marriage and Divorce. "Did you know Satan was co-equal with God one day? Sure was, all but a creator; he was everything, stood at the right hand of God, in the Heavens, the great leading Cherubim."

[xxxvii] Branham, William. 1965, August 29. "Satan's Eden".

[xxxviii] The Basics: William Branham's Doomsday Predictions. Accessed Mar 10 from <http://seekyethetruth.com/Branham/resource-s-basics-doomsday.aspx>

[xxxix] Branham, William. 1965, Nov 27. Trying to Do God A Service Without it Being God's Will. "But the Elijah of this day is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is to come according to Matthew the seventeen-... Luke 17:30, is, the Son of man is to reveal Himself among

His people. Not a man, God! But it'll come through a prophet."

[xli] Ham, Jeremy. Is Jesus All-Powerful and Eternal. Accessed 2019, Mar 10 from <https://answersingenesis.org/answers/biblical-authority-devotional/is-jesus-all-powerful-and-eternal/>

[xlii] How can one recognize a false Christ?. Accessed 2019, Mar 10 from <https://www.bibleinfo.com/en/questions/how-can-one-recognize-false-christ>

[xliii] Elijah Has Already Come. Accessed 2019, Mar 14 from https://branham.org/articles/20130520_ElijahHasAlreadyCome. "God does not play with words, as we are rightly taught by the Prophet Elijah for our day, Brother William Marrion Branham."

[xliv] Branham, William. 1949, July 18. I Was Not Disobedient to the Heavenly Vision. "When I was a minister, a Baptist preacher in my church for twelve years, I never even received one red penny of salary."

[xlv] Branham, William. 1951, April 15. Life Story. "She said, "Today she might have something to eat, and tomorrow she might not have nothing to eat." But brother, I come to find out what she called "trash" was "the cream of the crop." And bless my heart...?... And said, "You mean to tell me that you'd take..." Said... And Hope started crying. And she said, "Mother..." She said, "I—I—I want to go with him." And she said, "Very well, Hope. If you go, your mother will go in a grave heartbroken. That's all." And then Hope started crying. 80 And—and there, friends, is where my sorrows started. I listened to my mother-in-law in the stead of God. He was giving me the opportunity. And there this gift would've been manifested long time ago, if I'd just went ahead and done what God told me to do."

[xlv] Branham, William. 1955, June 26. My Life Story. "Now, from here, listen. I listened to my mother-in-law instead of God, and forsaken the church, and went on back with the Baptist people. Right away, plagues hit my home. My wife took sick; my father died on my arm; my brother was killed. And everything happened just in a few days. A great flood hit the country and washed away the homes. My wife was in the hospital. And I was out on a rescue with my boat."

[xlv] Davis, Roy. 1950, Oct. Wm. Branham's First Pastor. Voice of Healing. "I am the minister who received Brother Branham into the first Pentecostal assembly he ever frequented. I baptized him, and was his pastor for some two years. I also preached his

ordination sermon, and signed his ordination certificate, and heard him preach his first sermon."

[xlvii] Being Fingerprinted. 1961, Apr 7. Shreveport Times. "Being fingerprinted at the city police station is R. E. Davis (center), self-described leader of the Ku Klux Klan who was arrested by city police and questioned here today."

[xlviii] Deep Study: Roy E. Davis, Imperial Wizard of the Original Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Accessed 2019, Mar 14 from <http://seekyethetruth.com/branham/resources-deep-davis.aspx>

[xlix] 1936, Nov 9. Warranty Deed, Lot 16, Block 4, Ingram & Reads Subdivision to E.A. Seward, George DeArk, Frank Weber, Trustees of the Billie Branham Pentecostal Tabernacle Church

[l] Davis Revival in North Nashville Not Union Affair. 1928, Sept 9. The Tennessean.

[li] Branham describes Nashville Parthenon where Davis' Revival was held: Branham, William. 1962, Sept 9. In His Presence. "One day down in Memphis, Tennessee, or one...I don't think it was in Memphis. It was one of the places there. I was with Brother Davis and was having a—a revival. It might have been Memphis. And we was, went to a coliseum, and they had in there, not a coliseum, it was kind of an art gallery, and they had the—the great statues that they had got from different parts of the earth, of different, Hercules and so forth, and great artists had painted."

[lii] Certificate of Death: Hope Branham. 1937, July 21. "Date of onset: 1-1936"

[liii] Example: Branham, William. 1951, Sept 29. Our Hope is in God. "There never was in the age, any two major prophets on the earth at one time. There were many minor prophets, but there were one major prophet."

[liv] Branham, William. 1963, Jun 28. A Greater Than Solomon Is Here. "God always in every age dealt with man through signs, because He is supernatural. And where supernatural God is, there is bound to be supernatural things going on. Then we find, in the days of Noah, those who believed his message and come in, was saved, and those that rejected his message perished. He give them a sign of building an ark. In the days of Moses, God's speaking through human lips could call flies, fleas, frogs, close the heavens, make it dark, by a prophet that was thoroughly a vindicated. Those who believed and come out of Egypt, across the dividing line of the Red Sea, was saved. Those who was on the other side, perished."

[lv] Example: Branham, William. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages. “And people will go to them, and bear with them, and support them, and believe them, not knowing it is the way of death. Yes, the land is full of carnal impersonators. In that last day they will try to imitate that prophet-messenger.”

[lvi] Austin-Lett. Major and Minor Prophets. Accessed 2019, Mar 14 from https://www.biblewise.com/bible_study/questions/major-minor-prophets.php

[lvii] Branham, William. An Exposition of the Seven Church Ages. Ch 6. “This chapter shows the power of the Roman Catholic Church and what she will do through organization. Remember this is the false vine. Let it name the Name of the Lord, it does so only in a lie. Its headship is not of the Lord but of Satan.”

[lviii] Branham, William. 1961, Jan 8. Revelation, Chapter Four #3. “‘Trinitarianism is of the devil!’ I say that THUS SAITH THE LORD! Look where it come from. It come from the Nicene Council when the Catholic church become in rulership. The word ‘trinity’ is not even mentioned in the entire Book of the Bible. And as far as three Gods, that’s from hell.”

[lix] Nelson, Ryan. 2018, Sept 14. What Was the Council of Nicaea?. Accessed 2019, Mar 14 from <https://overviewbible.com/council-of-nicaea/>

[lx] Heather and Matthews. Goths in the Fourth Century. p. 143.

[lxi] Arius. New World Encyclopedia. Accessed 2019, Mar 14 from <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Arius>

[lxii] Branham, William. 1956, April 20. When Their Eyes Were Opened. “The same was God the Father, leading Moses, called God the Father, the three dispensations, Fatherhood, Sonship, and Holy Ghost. See? It’s just three offices of the same self God.”

[lxiii] Branham, William. 1957, June 30. Thirsting For Life. “And they use the word of eternal sonship of God. The word don’t even make sense to me. The word ‘eternal’ means ‘eternity, which had no begin or has no end.’ And ‘son’ means ‘had a beginning.’ So how could it... It could be a eternal Godship, but never an eternal sonship. A son is one that’s begotten of. So it had a beginning.”

[lxiv] Branham, William. 1952, July 13. God Testifying of His Gifts. “Then Jesus Christ comes into His Church, to His people, to manifest Himself out through the people, while He, Himself, is setting at the right hand of the Father, sending back the Holy

Spirit, the third Person of the trinity, to live in human beings, to work through them, to show the same works that He did in the beginning, making Him, “the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

[lxv] What is the Gospel. Accessed from <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/what-is-the-gospel/>

[lxvi] Slick, Matt. What is Oneness Pentecostal Theology. Accessed 2019, Mar 14 from <https://carm.org/oneness-pentecostal-theology>

[lxvii] Our Triune God. Accessed 2019, Mar 14 from <https://www.gtv.org/library/articles/A215/our-triune-god>

[lxviii] Example: Branham, William. 1965, August 1. God of This Evil Age. “And then, if that be so, the whole Godhead bodily shaped up in the Person of Jesus Christ. And then when Jesus died at the cross, I died with Him, for I was in Him then; for He was the fullness of the Word, manifested, knowing that we would be manifested later.”

[lxix] Example: Branham, William. 1950, July 16. Believeest Thou This. “I believe He was a God-man. He was more than a man. He was the Divine One that God sent from out of heaven. Yes, sir. I know He cried like a man when He was dying at the cross, mid rendering rocks and darkening skies, my Saviour bowed His head and died. That’s right. He was a man when He was dying. But when He rose on the third day, He proved He was God. That’s right. God was in His Son. He raised Him up. He was Divine.”

[lxx] Branham, William. 1965, April 18. It Is the Rising of the Sun. “The Spirit left Him, in the Garden of Gethsemane. He had to die, a man.”

[lxxi] Example: Graham, Billy. 2016, March 24. Did God Abandon Jesus on the Cross? Billy Graham Answers. Accessed 2019, Feb 13 from <https://billygraham.org/story/did-god-abandon-jesus-on-the-cross-billy-graham-answers>

[lxxii] Branham, William. 1965, April 29. The Choosing of a Bride. “Oh, Capernaum,” said Jesus, “thou who exalted into heaven, will be brought down into hell. For, if the mighty works had been done in Sodom and Gomorrah, it’d have been standing to this day.” And Sodom, Gomorrah lays in the bottom of the Dead Sea. And Capernaum is in the bottom of the sea. 231 Thou city, who claims to be the city of the Angels, who has exalted yourself into heaven, and sent all the dirty, filthy things of fashions and things, till even the foreign countries come here to pick up our filth and send it away, to your fine churches and steeples, and so forth, the way you do. Remember,

one day you'll be laying in the bottom of the sea, your great honeycomb under you right now. The wrath of God is belching right beneath you. How much longer He will hold this sandbar hanging out over that? When, that ocean out yonder, a mile deep, will slide in there, plumb back to the Salton Sea. It'll be worse than the last day of Pompeii. Repent, Los Angeles."

[lxxiii] Branham, William. 1965, July 11. Ashamed. "And while in there, Something struck me, and I didn't know nothing for about thirty minutes. There was a prophecy went out. First thing I remember,

Brother Mosley and Billy, I was out on the street, walking. And It said, "Thou Capernaum, which calls yourself by the name of the Angels," that's Los Angeles, city of angels, see, the angels, "which are exalted into heaven, will be brought down into hell. For, if the mighty works had been done in Sodom, that's been done in you, it would have been standing till this day." And that was all unconsciously, to me. See?"

[lxxiv] Capernaum. Accessed 2019, March 13 from <https://www.seetheholyland.net/capernaum>

Ask A Genius (or Two): Conversation with Erik Haereid and Rick Rosner on Existence, Mathematics, and Philosophy (Part Five)

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Abstract

Rick Rosner and I conduct a conversational series entitled Ask A Genius on a variety of subjects through In-Sight Publishing on the personal and professional website for Rick. Rick exists on the World Genius Directory listing as the world's second highest IQ at 192 based on several ultra-high IQ tests scores developed by independent psychometricians. Erik Haereid earned a score at 185, on the N-VRA80. Both scores on a standard deviation of 15. A sigma of ~6.13 for Rick – a general intelligence rarity of 1 in 2,314,980,850 – and ~5.67 for Erik – a general intelligence rarity of 1 in 136,975,305. Of course, if a higher general intelligence score, then the greater the variability in, and margin of error in, the general intelligence scores because of the greater rarity in the population. This amounts to a joint interview or conversation with Erik Haereid, Rick Rosner, and myself.

Keywords: America, Erik Haereid, Norway, Rick Rosner, Scott Douglas Jacobsen.

Ask A Genius (or Two): Conversation with Erik Haereid and Rick Rosner on Existence, Mathematics, Philosophy (Part Five)[1].[2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: How do philosophy and mathematics mix with one another? How do philosophy and mathematics not mix with one another? What insights into reality emerge from philosophy and not mathematics, or from mathematics and not from philosophy? Or do these seem inextricably linked to one another?

Traditionally, philosophy breaks into several disciplines: ethics, aesthetics, epistemology, metaphysics, and so on. Do some of these distinct fields seem unnecessary in philosophy? In that, some sub-disciplines in philosophy seem already explained within others.

Also, what seems like the limits of mathematics and philosophy in providing some fundamental

explanation about the world? In that, the rules and principles of mathematics remain non-fundamental.

Same with the purported big questions of philosophy. They remain important. They give insights, even a sense of grandeur about existence. However, they fail, at least at present, for a complete explanation about the world – assuming such a thing exists in principle.

Erik Haereid: Mathematics is an abstract, logical, cognitive tool based on numerical symbols, based on some assumptions, axioms that we agree on. Whether the assumptions are proper or not is a philosophical issue. Mathematics is about structures and exact relations.

Philosophy is some logical investigation into what's true and false, and what's right and wrong. It's a compass in life. We use it trying to finish our mental map. It's a cognitive tool that helps us directing our lives more proper, as we see it, than lives that are lived in the present and based on pure intuition and urges.

Philosophy and mathematics go hand in hand thus that we begin with some philosophical inquiries, then we put some mathematics to those thoughts, then we make new philosophical inquiries and so on. An example is the Big Bang theory. It's reasonable that there many years ago were as many ideas of the Universe, what was outside the human perceptions when watching the sky at day and night, as there were humans. That is, basic for philosophizing is our fantasy; thoughts and emotions in a mental soup based on our genes and experiences. The yellow light we saw at day time on the sky, and we thought were god's candle or whatever, became through philosophy, mathematics, and science to a massive spherical plasma object consisting of such as hydrogen and helium.

Einstein philosophized through his experimental thoughts about how the Universe could function and look like, and he had, for instance, Newton's work in his mind. He got some ideas, like that space is curved and cause gravity, which were reasonably for him, and he put mathematics to it. He also philosophized over that the three-dimensional space and time were not independent, but one four-dimensional phenomenon (spacetime). That kind of philosophy and related mathematics created new thoughts about how the Universe looked like, and what was beyond our perceptions.

Who could think of the Universe as a 13-14-billion-year-old highly dense little object exploding into a vast mess of matter and energy, impossible to

imagine, thousand years ago? It was the philosophy and mathematics that dug the ditch. And still are. Because we don't know what's beyond the Big Bang. And probably, if we look to for instance Gödel's incompleteness theorems, we will never know. At least never get the whole picture.

Let's say we could explain the Universe; find some formulas that explained everything (determinism). Then we could explain, prove (based on some axiomatic, logical framework), every statement we had. There wouldn't be any statements that couldn't be proved. But according to Gödel, within any axiomatic, logical framework there are statements that cannot be proved and therefore human can never prove a deterministic Universe even though the Universe is deterministic.

But since we are curious, and maybe naive, we still dig. And then we make new and more fantasies, restrict it into some logical, philosophical frame of thoughts, put some mathematics, even more strict relations and order, to it, call them theories and try to prove them. The final act is to observe it; experience that the empirical observations are in accordance with the philosophy and mathematics. Then it's true, in our understanding of truth. When we have revealed the truth, we don't need to philosophize about it any more. Of course that's not completely true, because we don't believe in our perceptions, and/or we don't know what they are (what is a thought?). So we will continue philosophizing over that, until we get tired and give up, or get mad.

A harmonic alternation between fantasies (chaos), philosophy (order), mathematics (detailed and more order, relations) and empirical experiences (perceptual truth) is the track here.

Humans tend to try to see the surface of the three-/four-dimensional space we are confined in, from the outside. But there is no surface. What is "no surface?" And so on. The only possibility is to make fantasies about it, philosophize about it, create some mathematical formulas to it, but it's confined within our perceptions and abstract images. Our desire for knowing exceeds our possible limits of knowledge. Maybe this drive is crucial for human's evolution

AI and technology, build on better abilities, amplifiers, processors and storage possibilities than we have, could be fruitful for human evolution. We have to respect our limitations, like we do when we make cars, planes, telephones and binoculars. And I think we also do.

I also think we should extend our mind and cognitive abilities to its limit. It's rewarding when mathematicians (and other scientists) find new

solutions, invent new concepts or numbers (like when introducing irrational numbers, and later complex numbers).

We need philosophy as long as we don't know everything we want to know, independent of which philosophical field we talk about. In this context a single philosophical discipline's existence is a function of if we still see it proper to try to answer more questions about these topics.

When I know how trees grow, through photosynthesis, and am satisfied with that answer, I don't need philosophizing about trees and growth anymore. It fulfills my needs. But that's subjective, because the process, any process, has no end in the human mind. There are always questions to ask, even when we know "everything" about that topic.

If you see a tree, you can see it as timber to build houses, as a plant that grow and live through photosynthesis, as an imaginary picture of the phylogenetic development, as a family tree, as a nightmare, as beautiful, as a wish, as an oxygen producer, as a producer of apples and fruits, as x times heavier and higher than a human, etc. To discover all these angles and views is the aim of philosophy, in all areas and with everything we have any real perception or imaginary idea of.

To understand is beauty. We have to respect that we will never understand everything, and at the same time respect that there are always new things to learn. It's about a balance. It's like building a monument, like an enormous cathedral or tower; it takes hundreds, thousands, millions of years, but by putting one brick systematically on top of another we know that we each day get closer to the product; by creating time through successive events we experience that we can reach our goal. And until we know how to live forever, we reproduce and let our children continue the job.

What's the final point? Maybe to reveal a global truth. To reach the very end, where the illuminated revelation is right in front of us. Is this what life is about? Or is it just an uncorrelated mess, with seemingly none or few relations, no goal, a nihilistic travel through emptiness? Shall we reduce life to simple, cynical social maneuvers that suck all the beauty out of it? I choose not to reduce humans to a harsh evolution process, because it's meaningless, it's messy and violent, and it's logical in the simplest way. This makes me religious even though I don't believe in God. This also elevates my experience of life.

It's complicated to see the beauty in everything, and on that road we limit us to exclude what we have not

understood yet. But still we unconsciously work towards that goal, because we know on an unconscious level that we need to see everything that exists in relation to each other.

In general we philosophize about everything and anything, and related to math about such as black holes and singularity, how to express the primes in a formula, multiple universes, artificial superintelligence, and how to travel and meet the aliens somewhere in the Andromeda Galaxy. Dreaming about travelling to the Moon was one thing, philosophizing about it another and the next step, and then calculating how to do it and doing it the final steps.

Obviously, as we can see when we are at AI's kickoff, the human brain has many limitations concerning perceiving, storing and processing data. The black boxes are mentioned, and our lack of knowledge of what is going on there even though we have created these devices.

One of the blessings by being a child was the large quantity of fantasies. In books, stories told, dreams, what we saw in the nature we yet didn't restrict to pure science (Some trees grew into heaven, didn't they?).

Inventions are made by grown up "children". There is one person now and then through history that revealed something important, that made his/her fantasy becomes real; like that we can talk to each other from one side of the world to the other, or travel in space. The impossible became possible. This is an ongoing process which we all are a part of all the time.

Maybe our search for objectivity and truth, a real Universe, has something to do with us, our mind more than it's about if the Universe is objective or subjective. Of course, how is it possible to travel in a subjective Universe? Who are you if my mind is the only mind? How can I interact with something else if this is a part of me?

It's convenient to look at it as me and the surroundings, as different entities, subject and object, because that's how we experience it naturally. But when we go into it, philosophizing, exploring it with our thoughts and logic, it could be that everything "else" is sort of an unconscious part of ourselves. "We" are not confined in our body.

We just don't experience it like that, because we are not aware of it. But by putting it into a thought, we can think of it as a possibility, or just a fantasy. When you travel or do things, I do it, but as during surgery and anesthesia. It's a matter of consciousness and

not. Or several levels of consciousness; I am not aware that I think your thoughts.

Don't misunderstand this; it sounds narcissistic. But it's not, it's a philosophical inquiry. If the person thinks he/she is God, then he/she tries to control all other's cognition, acts, behavior. But we don't control each other's thoughts and behavior. It's in this context the philosophical inquiry is done.

Maybe we are tricked by the fact that we experience that something is outside our own control, and therefore experience it as what we call objectivity. If I can't remember that I wrote that sentence or did that thing, how can I then claim that it's my act? How can I be certain of that *me* is confined within "my" body, "my" senses, "my" emotions and thoughts, "my" free will? It could happen that I am something else than I experience that I am, even *everything*. This is about how we identify ourselves, and what kind of responsibility we take.

Let's say that we all are the same. If everyone and everything are a part of you and you are a part of everything and everyone, then all the interactions are a part of us and we are not limited to our bodies. Subject is object. When you speak to me, even though I can't imagine or sense that this spoken sentence came from myself, I have no control over it, I don't know where it came from within what I define as "me", I have to think, from this point of view, that your voice is my voice. It could be a voice from my unconscious part, like my autonomic nervous system.

It's not the chaos that is beautiful, but our adaptation to it in the sense of understanding and accepting the volatility in the surroundings, the magnitude of the Universe and life. This is what make logical practices like math and philosophy beautiful; they are tools evolving our understanding, abstract and not, and revealing that life is more than we have ever thought of before.

We talk a lot about what technology can do for us in the future, and obviously we need some kind of cognitive and emotional amplifiers to be what we want to be.

Inventions like social media, internet, shows creativity and that we are capable of doing almost what we want to. I am sure that evolution has its right pace, also related to technology.

[Ed. Further commentary]

We humans have the ability to think we are something we are not; we have the ability to believe we are gods and devils, for instance, that we are everything and nothing, abstractions or concrete manifestations different from which we really are,

and base our existence on that false identity. The advantage of this feature is that we can create great ideas that can be converted into practical use. The downside is that we kill each other; become more destructive than necessary. Great ideas are also created by people that are self-aware, so let's stick with this.

I am in favor of self-awareness, to use a word that is not sufficient and do not cover what I mean; but that's the best word I came up with. It's about knowing that you are an entity, existence, and who you are, as best you possible can achieve that self-awareness through all your identity-changes through your life. It's a continuous struggle. And it's the best way to live your life, if you ask me; for you and the society. It's a state of contemplation, and maybe the Buddhist monks are the best achievers of that state, I don't know. We in the western cultures are not very good at it, though.

When we discuss ontological, epistemological, ethical or aesthetical issues, I choose to start with this: We have to know *that* we are and approximately *who* we are; for real, not as abstract or false features. If not, we are driven into insanity.

When I discuss whether ideas exist or not, I have to profoundly feel that I am the entity that thinks of and discuss this problem with myself or others. If not, I get lost.

If abstraction exists per se, beyond our abilities to think abstract, is a function of what concepts we so far in evolution have developed and defined, and which logical inference and irrational beliefs we have established (knowledge). Proofs of for instance abstractions' existence are based on our, humans, innate abilities and learned knowledge. The core is how we humans define *proof*. And this is about feelings, experiences, profound feeling of and so on; the core inside us (i.e. self-awareness), which is irrational as such.

It's possible to disagree about anything and everything, even though one wizard claims his or her right (like it seems I do here; I underline that this is my experience), and even "proves" it. Bottom line is that it ends here; reality, existence, truth cannot be proved as anything else than that we experience it and call it "truth, reality" and so on. Something is difficult to contradict as real, though, like physical events that "everyone" sees and experience. The closest we get to reality is therefore our experience of it. Do you see what I mean?

I think we have to see knowledge as a human phenomenon, a mental ability that helps advanced organisms like us to provide better identities and

lives. Humans should focus more on what is real and not, and what is me and what is someone and something else; who are we, and how shall we capture a sense of that?

It's not about living all life in contemplation, but to evolve the ability to slow down the chaotic lives when needed, and find that inner peace or understanding of whom one is; a meditation skill.

We all change identities every minute, every day, all life, and it's a struggle knowing who we are on this bumpy travel. And since humans have these complex mental abilities, we also have the ability to dissociate, create several personalities, thinking we are something we are not and make a mess for ourselves and each other. I don't say that I think we would be angels if we all had this continuously inner contact with who we are, but I guess we certainly would have been nicer and lived better lives and also chose the right path; because we would have the inner knowledge and wisdom of "here I am, and that is who I am just now". Then the future would be easier regardless obstacles we met on the road.

So, if there is one certain achievable knowledge, it is the knowledge of who we are. No one can take that inner experience away from anybody (even though we try and succeed...). But we have to believe in it; it's not proved mathematically or a result from a syllogism. It's an experience. It's beyond thoughts and emotions, which are tools to gain that inner knowledge and wisdom.

If you want to be rich or a king, go for it, but the point is to experience and achieve an inner peace about who you are on that road. It's not about restraining our lives, on the contrary, but about achieving goals through self-awareness. Do you see what I mean? I don't believe in piety in the strictest meaning of the word, because that's a wrong approach to inner peace. I am more in favor of hedonism, but with that extra ability to always know who you really are, and not the narcissistic or ascending self.

Maybe I am a bit off-road concerning the topic in this thread, but when we talk about philosophy and what kind of mindful activities humans should strive for in the future, I have to mention this which I strongly believe in. We can ask ontological and epistemological questions about reality, existence and knowledge, and questions about what is beautiful and not, and what is good and not, but anyway we end up with ourselves. That kind of self-awareness is the key to evolve on every other area we deal with. Being human is not only to gain knowledge but also wisdom, and that is to know when enough is enough.

Because we tend to blend our abstractions of who we are with who we really are, also because other people, the culture, plant ideas in our mind about who we are and should be, we build a distance between our perception of who we think we are and who we really are. This creates chaos in our minds and in the culture; socially.

It's the culture, family, friends, activities and your surroundings that function as mirrors, that make you be self-aware or not. If this culture make you believe that you are something else than you really are, then you go out searching for someone and something that mirrors the real you, that make you find yourself, until you find it; because we all have that inner profound wisdom about whom we are, all the time. We just need help; mirrors that lead us towards it.

Self-awareness is also about understanding ones limitations. If you are far away from knowing who you are, you are not capable of capturing your possibilities. It's like a child's growth: The child develops best when its parents function as mirrors for that child; sees it as it is. Then the child is open-minded for strangers and differences, curious about it, and is driven towards new phenomenon. It changes identity every second. And because its parents sees it whatever what (not accept everything it does, though), it will continue being self-aware. It's a process through life. When we get older other people function as mirrors, the culture does, and the same rules exists. When we are not seen as we are, when we cannot see ourselves in a film, a book or in a neighbor, we get lost in our minds and develop other and alternative pictures of who we are than we really are. When the culture contains many such individuals and features, then it gets messy.

One of my points is that we become xenophobic and hateful against each other when we abstract from our true self. And the contrary; friendly and inviting when we know who we are. Then ethics is to build a community and culture which embrace values that enhance each individual's self-awareness. A culture that motivates everyone to be something one impossibly can be is an unethical culture, and the opposite. It's not about restriction, but a consciousness about whom we are and who we can be. The sky's the limit in our mind, but not in real life. And I think that is crucial to understand, and making good citizens; people that know how to treat each other with respect and good. And even though it sounds imprisoning, it works opposite; you will actually achieve more in life when you are aware of this. Self-confidence is a product of being self-aware.

You can create a justice system that controls people's actions until a degree, but the basic problems are still

the same; the system does not prevent violence. That's because it's still unfair; no such system embraces everyone. The thing, if you ask me, is not to prevent violence and make good citizens by telling people who they are and should be, but letting them be who they are. Then our natural social collisions will make us adapt properly. I think this is a path to more empathy and understanding, as I said before: Egoism is altruism. This is what I mean by that. I don't say this will prevent violence completely, not at all. But it is, in my opinion, the best way to achieve cultures where all live their best lives and that is inside the acceptable for almost everyone. Statistically spoken the expected value, the average, of life quality could be the same but the standard deviation much less. There would be shorter distance between the extremities. We (**think**) we need more rules and limitations and governmental institutions because we are less in contact with whom we really are, and more in contact with an abstract, false identity; that's my point.

About aesthetics: The idea with art is to elevate us, bring us into the contact I speak about, to our true self. So the idea of aesthetics, say art, is to bring us closer to mutual love and respect, understanding and behavior that we all can accept.

It's about making the right picture, mirroring ourselves. I think it's not a question if, let's say in painting, impressionism is better for us than expressionism, or if that abstract art is better than figurative art, but what that piece of painting and sculpture does with us; like the book we read. I read novels that enhance my feelings of being, existing. It's like travelling and being aware of that. And as with esthetics, it's not possible to draw general and absolute rules. It's individual.

When that is said it's obvious that some with knowledge about paintings can help people to see things in the painting, and through that new insight evolve and appreciate that piece of art. Like in architecture, where you can look at a building and feel that it's ugly until the architect wizard tell you about the details, the reasons; why, where, how. Then it becomes beautiful, as the zoologist thinks when he watches tarantulas.

Should we draw a painting and write a novel as beautiful as possible, far from reality, to enhance our good feelings that we get when we watch beautiful things; idealizing? Or should we paint and describe reality, with the chaotic mix of ugliness and beauty, reflecting our real emotions in our real lives?

If everything in a culture is about creating idealistic, always beautiful art and social installations, we get

lost in our hopes and wishes, in our abstractions and thoughts about how we want our lives to be. If we don't create any counterpoise to this, we will probably evolve abstract selves and huge distance to our true selves, and without the opportunity to evolve our true selves as we wish. To gain the optimal evolution we have to create idealistic art and art reflecting reality.

Being a true romantic, as an example, is not about being bohemian or poet, but being bohemian in the weekends, so to speak. Hedonism is a spare time phenomenon. It's about having this inner switch turning you self on and off. A naturalist, a person that embraces things as they are, has also to turn his and her romantic-switch on now and then. Art is not about destruction, but about making us understand that no one survives if life is pure destructive. We have to see, to internalize, that there are good as well. If we don't, it's not because of our existence but because of our culture, art, communications and perceptions of life. It's an illusion that reality is pure destructive. And it's an illusion that it's pure good.

[Ed., further additions]

We can divide reality into a concrete and an abstract world, where the abstractions meet the concretions now and then. It is "impossible" to claim that something created or perceived in the abstract world don't have the opportunity to appear in the concrete world, such as time travels. We don't know the range of the concrete possibilities that lie in our abstractions. We profit from distinguishing between our abstract and concrete identities. The abstractions as phenomenon are far ahead of us, far beyond, but at the same time provide us vast amounts of opportunities in the concrete world.

Example quantum physics: The fact that two particles can function completely synchronized on different physical places, with no concrete relation, is an example of changes in our perception of reality based on evolved abstractions (math). When I say that we must be aware of our limitations, I mean strive for being self-aware, and not that we shall not endeavor and evolve through our abstractions; including convert from abstract concepts to real experiences like time travels. Abstractions are about aspiring, setting goals, and respect that we reach them when and if we do.

The very first grounds for anything is "because it is like that". Axioms are established because we feel and experience that this is right, and not because it's a logical context that leads to the axioms. My point is that all explanations, all mathematics and philosophy

are based on an irrational, emotionalized elastic floor that we never can get under or beyond.

Math is about developing numerical logical coherences, formulas, based on some basic rules, axioms that we agree in. When we bump into problems that involve lack of concepts and definitions, we create them. That's the advantage by abstractions; it's quite easy to expand and evolve. When mathematicians stop developing concerning formulas containing strange numbers that they until then did not have defined in their number system, they invent new number concepts and symbols (i.e. from natural to rational, rational to irrational and further to complex numbers). They adapt to their abstract needs by expanding their abstract world. Even though complex numbers (square root of negative numbers) seem illogical and incomprehensible by first glimpse, based on traditional mathematical rules, it's about amplifying the system by thinking beyond what the mind think is possible.

In logical, abstract activities we have the possibility to achieve new coherences and correlations, after developing new abstract concepts, definitions and symbols and the logical rules we attend to, that we possibly couldn't within the frame of concepts and symbols we are captured into at that time.

It becomes a kind of abstract nanotechnology; we distort basic structures, and create new concepts, definitions and logical rules that we accept.

An intriguing thought: Maybe the prime numbers are math's enigma to mankind; we have to reveal the formula explaining the primes to understand what life is about; what is meaningful and not. If I was a zoologist I would probably have found another example, though. But maybe it's impossible to find that formula concerning the prime numbers without expanding into new mathematical concepts.

Maybe rhythm, logic, coherences actually is about developing concepts and symbols, enlarging our abstract world more than trying to gain control over the already existing abstractions we know of. That is, every lack of rhythm and understanding is a lack of new concepts, lack of abstract expansion. If that's so, it's not about what we want and not want, but how we can achieve that expanded wisdom.

Rick Rosner: *I agree with Eric that our philosophizing about the nature of the world has been recently constrained in the last hundred years by our finally having a first overall picture of the structure of the universe.*

Although, I would say that our first conclusions, including the Big Bang, are likely not going to turn out to be as right as we currently think they are. But until a hundred years ago, we didn't even know there were other galaxies.

It was less than a hundred years ago that the expansion of the universe was discovered. A hundred years ago, we didn't know that stars ran on fusion. That's less than ninety years ago. There was no way we would be even anywhere close to right in philosophizing about the universe because we had a very incomplete picture.

Our picture is still well short of, in our current philosophies and science, the overall structure and behavior of the universe; it is still off in the weeds. But it is closer to correct than ever before because we have more observational evidence than ever before, and it is not even a gradual incremental increase in accuracy.

It is an explosive increase in understanding over the past 100 years. We had Newton's universal gravitation, which itself was a huge step and then we had the relativities but they were brand new.

So, anyway we're living in a new era of philosophy and science on the largest scales and philosophy can be considered for science on the largest possible scale with an observational foundation for the first time ever.

Ten thousand years of trying to imagine the universe with some explosive steps towards understanding from time to time going from an earth-centered universe to a sun-centered universe, the discovery of the elements and all that stuff, but we've only gotten the tools for any observation and information based global philosophizing in the past few generations.

And this coincides with the idea that what science is supposed to do is boil everything down to a single general set of principles or a single theory; unification in general. Let's see how many things we can put under a single umbrella.

We wouldn't get arguments from many scientists if you said that biology and chemistry are at their most fundamental levels just physics. And they need to have some quibble saying there are emergent principles in biology and chemistry that you'd have a hard time predicting from physics. So, you can't do away with biology and chemistry.

Then if you came back and said, "Yes but all the physical interactions from which these emergent phenomena arise, that's still all physics." They might have to grudgingly say, "Yeah." You could argue that evolution is a unifying principle of life on earth.

Now still, you can take it all back on physics, but evolution is the framework that encompasses all that and gives you a philosophical structure for understanding what's going on. Evolution is still subject to severe revision.

It wasn't until the 60's and 70's when Stephen Jay Gould came on with punctuated equilibrium. Before that most people and still, most people have the idea that evolution, if they believe in it at all, is this gradual thing that cuts along with occasional mutations being helpful and being integrated into net of life.

Whereas punctuated equilibrium says the species generally go on without changing much for tens and even hundreds of thousands or even millions of years until special circumstances permit for rapid change in evolution on change in a few hundred, a few thousand, or a couple ten thousand years based on either a changing environment or a small segment of a population being isolated.

If you were to graph somehow one finch changing into another finch, it wouldn't be a gradual transformation of one finch into the other. Instead, it would be finch A going along for fifteen thousand, twenty-five, or fifty-five thousand years and then all of a sudden part of that finch population, something happens to it; it gets isolated or the weather changes or some crap happens and then within fifteen hundred years finch B emerges.

But anyway, that's a recent addition to evolutionary theory and then epigenetics is probably even more recent, not that I can even talk about that in any decent terms but I think epigenetics is like Lamarckism that isn't wrong.

Lamarckism is the idea that an organism's life history is somehow incorporated into what it passes on genetically with the standard example being that if a giraffe has to reach higher and higher to get to stuff on trees that reaching is somehow going to be incorporated, it is going to be passed on to its kids because the giraffe had to be so reachy all its life.

It wants to have longer necks, which survive better and pass on their long neck genes. So, it is not individual experience changing, it is the better-adapted creatures pass on their genes and if this happens in enough increments; if there's a niche for longer-necked creatures, then longer-necked creatures are going to have more life success.

That is, they'll get more food. They'll be able to get laid better because they are healthier than the short-necked giraffes. So, the long-necked giraffes will

have more descendants than the short-necked giraffes.

What I think epigenetics says, I should probably read the Wikipedia article so I'm not wrong, is that our genome; it has a bunch of junk genes. The genes that are expressed to make us and operate us are like in a teamwork with all the genes we have.

Most of the genes are right along those that have just been passed along because there's no reason for them to be knocked out across several billion years of evolution. But some of these genes can be turned on based on life experience, so you do have an options package based on your life experience because you have all these templates to express other stuff if you run into the right circumstances.

I'm not sure that this means that these will be passed on based on your life experience, except that there will be bias if you survive better because your genes have been turned on. But anyway, that's a whole new area of genetics that would've surprised the shit out of Darwin; he didn't even know we had genes.

We have the bias towards unification looking for overall principles in philosophy, in math, in science and this unifying philosophy is generally successful. You've got the deductive principle and the inductive principle.

I don't know which is which, but like one is looking to generalize and the other is you're looking to specialize; take general principles and make new inventions from what you know. And science has had huge amounts of success going in both directions.

You're going to make a bunch of money going from the general to the specific and they are making these stuff, but you're going to get tenure and by going from this specific to the general.

I agree with most of what he says. It reminds me of three possible future paths for science which we talked about, which is:

- 1) We complete science and know everything.*
- 2) We complete science without knowing everything because there are things beyond what we can know.*
- 3) Science proceeds to acquire a more and more complete picture of the universe but never reaching 100% completeness. There's always more to know.*

That seems the most reasonable path that we'll render with AI, big data. So, our descendants and the things and people that will come after us will find all sorts of relationships in the world that we had no idea existed, probably don't even have the mental capacity to process.

But it is still part of the ongoing but never complete process of understanding the world. Eric also talks about the importance of beauty and emotion and it used to be a stereotype when presenting robots in science fiction that they would be emotionless.

They would make dispassionate judgments just based on algorithms. Some of these judgments would be horrifying. The Terminator series with this cold logic tells the robots to eradicate the humans.

I think you can't operate in the world effectively without assigning values to events and things and ideas and link to those values or emotions feeling good when positive things happen and bad when negative things happen and feeling good when you see something that appeals to your sense of aesthetics.

I think that the beings that come after us with much larger information processing capacity will continue to have emotions but emotions that will probably be even deeper than our own. If you can say something like our emotions are deeper than a dog's emotions because our emotions are informed from more angles and based on more information, very few dogs write poetry and I think it makes sense to extrapolate from that that the beings who come after us with their bigger brains will have emotional structures that are bigger and deeper still.

The half robots of the year 2115 will feel deeply and have relationships among themselves and other beings that are as intricate and feeling and reflecting of values as our own and more so. Emotions and values are part of the toolkit that let you operate in the world. They are not for fun.

We as evolved beings; our emotions and values are largely evolved. Love is a cultural overlay; the feelings of love and the idea of love is a cultural overlay on our evolved drives to reproduce and to care for our offspring.

Future emotions and future values will have some of those same structures. People in the future may feel things strongly and the more stoic people of the future may feel emotions as being frippery but, in general, emotions help you navigate the world and help order emerge into the world.

They are a necessary part of conscious life and consciousness itself is probably a near necessary part of increasing order in the world. The point of view now is that everything boils down to physics. If you take biology apart everything happens because of physics, chemistry; because of physics.

So, all the more complicated sciences boil down to complicated instances of the simplest most basic

science. I would say that similarly some of the complicated ideas of philosophy may be seen as boiling down to the more basic principles that might be found in math and in physics or even more basic than that in the principles of existence.

The consequence of this scientific program for the past few centuries has been to search for and boil everything down to essential principles and when you can't do that you look for more macro explanations and overarching systems of values and beliefs.

But those overarching systems are subject to being boiled down to more essential principles as those principles are discovered and expanded upon. The current dominant belief of our time is scientism. The belief in science is the dominant and most dynamic belief system of our time.

Humans and human society and the universe itself has been increasingly subject to scientific analysis and most scientifically educated people believe that we are the entirely biological products of billions of years of evolution rather than being imbued with certain magical properties by God.

Now, that doesn't mean that values have to be discarded, instead, we have to discover values within the more scientific framework and there is a lazy default form of science that says everything is random and nothing means anything but that is a misunderstanding of what goes on in an information-based universe.

It is hard to pull a bunch of values from a purely scientific point of view but you can pull some values and then you can build upon those like one value you can pull is that increasing order seems to be good, given how we fit into the world and the desires we've evolved to have.

If you can pull out that you want the preservation of order unless it is corrosive dictatorial preservation of order that's at the expense of other values. You can pull out the golden rule because we know from personal experience that we want certain things and we can assume that other beings share many of the same things, the same desires we have.

And from the preference for order and from the golden rule you can build more complicated philosophies.

Even though we're building not from benevolent God, His goodness, the magic property of consciousness and souls and all, you can still build from basic principles out to an entire philosophy, which will be helpful and necessary when we start to have to deal with the ethics of the new existences; new beings that we will bring into existence via AI

and also the future humans and their future multiplicitious forms and their augmentation and the new relationships among augmented humans and AI and the whole mess that's going to coming in the next century.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Erik Haereid: “About my writing: Most of my journalistic work I did in the pre-Internet-period (80s, 90s), and the articles I have saved are, at best, aged in a box somewhere in the cellar. Maybe I can find some of it, but I don’t think that’s that interesting.

Most of my written work, including crime short stories in A-Magasinet (Aftenposten (one of the main newspapers in Norway, as Nettavisen is)), a second place (runner up) in a nationwide writing contest in 1985 arranged by Aftenposten, and several articles in different newspapers, magazines and so on in the 1980s and early 1990s, is not published online, as far as I can see. This was a decade and less before the Internet, so a lot of this is only on paper.

From the last decade, where I used more time doing other stuff than writing, for instance work, to mention is my book from 2011, the IQ-blog and some other stuff I don’t think is interesting here.

I keep my personal interests quite private. To you, I can mention that I play golf, read a lot, like debating, and 30-40 years and even more kilos ago I was quite sporty, and competed in cross country skiing among other things (I did my military duty in His Majesty The King’s Guard (Drilltroppen)). I have been asked from a couple in the high IQ societies, if I know Magnus Carlsen. The answer is no, I don’t :)”

Haereid has interviewed In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal Advisory Board Member **Dr. Evangelos Katsioulis**, some select articles include topics on AI in What will happen when the ASI (Artificial superintelligence) evolves; Utopia or Dystopia? (Norwegian), on IQ-measures in 180 i IQ kan være det samme som 150, and on the Norwegian pension system (Norwegian). His book on the winner/loser-society model based on social psychology published in 2011 (Nasjonalbiblioteket), which does have a summary review here.

Erik lives in Larkollen, Norway. He was born in Oslo, Norway, in 1963. He speaks Danish, English, and Norwegian. He is Actuary, Author, Consultant, Entrepreneur, and Statistician. He is the owner of, chairman of, and consultant at Nordic Insurance Administration.

He was the Academic Director (1998-2000) of insurance at the BI Norwegian Business School

(1998-2000) in Sandvika, Baerum, Manager (1997-1998) of business insurance, life insurance, and pensions and formerly Actuary (1996-1997) at Nordea in Oslo Area, Norway, a self-employed Actuary Consultant (1996-1997), an Insurance Broker (1995-1996) at Assurance Centeret, Actuary (1991-1995) at Alfa Livsforsikring, novice Actuary (1987-1990) at UNI Forsikring, and a Journalist at Norsk Pressedivisjon.

He earned an M.Sc. in Statistics and Actuarial Sciences from 1990-1991 and a Bachelor’s degree from 1984 to 1986/87 from the University of Oslo. He did some environmental volunteerism with Norges Naturvernforbund (Norwegian Society for the Conservation of Nature), where he was an activist, freelance journalist and arranged ‘Sykkeldagen i Oslo’ twice (1989 and 1990) as well as environmental issues lectures.

He has industry experience in accounting, insurance, and insurance as a broker. He writes in his IQ-blog the online newspaper *Nettavisen*. He has personal interests in history, philosophy, reading, social psychology, and writing.

He is a member of many high-IQ societies including 4G, Catholique, Civique, ELITE, GenerIQ, Glin, Grand, HELLIQ, HRIQ, Intruellect, ISI-S, ISPE, KSTHIQ, MENSA, MilenijaNOUS, OLYMPIQ, Real, sPIqr, STHIQ, Tetra, This, Ultima, VeNuS, and WGD.

Rick G. Rosner: “According to semi-reputable sources, Rick Rosner has the world’s second-highest IQ. He earned 12 years of college credit in less than a year and graduated with the equivalent of 8 majors. He has received 8 *Writers Guild Award* and *Emmy* nominations, and was named *2013 North American Genius of the Year* by The World Genius Registry.

He has written for *Remote Control*, *Crank Yankers*, *The Man Show*, *The Emmys*, *The Grammys*, and *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*. He worked as a bouncer, a nude art model, a roller-skating waiter, and a stripper. In a television commercial, Domino’s Pizza named him the “World’s Smartest Man.” The commercial was taken off the air after Subway sandwiches issued a cease-and-desist. He was named “Best Bouncer” in the Denver Area, Colorado, by *Westwood Magazine*.

Rosner spent much of the late Disco Era as an undercover high school student. In addition, he spent 25 years as a bar bouncer and American fake ID-catcher, and 25+ years as a stripper, and nearly 30 years as a writer for more than 2,500 hours of network television. He came in second or lost on *Jeopardy!*, sued *Who Wants to Be a*

Millionaire over a flawed question and lost the lawsuit. He won one game and lost one game on *Are You Smarter Than a Drunk Person?* (He was drunk). Finally, he spent 37+ years working on a time invariant variation of the Big Bang Theory.

Currently, Rosner sits tweeting in a bathrobe (winter) or a towel (summer). He lives in Los Angeles, California with his wife, dog, and goldfish. He and

his wife have a daughter. You can send him money or questions at [**LanceversusRick@Gmail.Com**](mailto:LanceversusRick@Gmail.Com), or a direct message via [**Twitter**](#), or find him on [**LinkedIn**](#), or see him on [**YouTube**](#).”

[2] Individual Publication Date: April 8, 2019: [**http://www.in-sightjournal.com/haereid-rosner-five**](http://www.in-sightjournal.com/haereid-rosner-five); Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: [**https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/**](https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/).

An Interview with Graham Powell on Gifted and Talented Life & Publications (Part One)

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Abstract

His Lordship of Roscelines, Graham Powell earned the “best mark ever given for acting during his” B.A. (Hons.) degree in “Drama and Theatre Studies at Middlesex University in 1990” and the “Best Dissertation Prize” for an M.A. in Human Resource Management from the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England in 1994. Powell is an Honorary Member of STHIQ Society, Former President of sPIqr Society, Vice President of Atlantiq Society, and a member of British Mensa, IHIQS, Ingenium, Mysterium, High Potentials Society, Elateneos, Milenija, Logiq, and Epida. He is the Full-Time Co-Editor of WIN ONE (WIN-ON-line Edition) since 2010 or nearly a decade. He represents World Intelligence Network Italia. He is the Public Relations Co-Supervisor, Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, and a Member of the European Council for High Ability. He discusses: background, pivotal moments, and educational attainments; becoming a member of the high-IQ community; becoming the main editor for World Intelligence Network ONLINE Editions (WIN ONE), formerly Genius To Genius Manifest (G2G); tasks and responsibilities; developments in his tenure right into the present; and the most read articles.

Keywords: editor, Genius To Genius Manifest, geophysics, Graham Powell, IQ, World Intelligence Network, WIN ONE.

An Interview with Graham Powell on Gifted and Talented Life & Publications (Part One)[1]-[2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: In terms of the background, what is it? What are the pivotal moments and educational attainments forming you?

Graham Powell: What an intriguing question, Scott. My first thought is that the immediate aftermath of my birth was especially significant as my mother suffered from depression and I was looked after by my grandparents while my mother spent months in hospital. This meant that I did not get baptised –

though my brother and sister were. I later went to Sunday School with my brother, yet my foremost memory is of coming home to help my father rebuild the garage. We were clearly sent to Sunday School to be out of the way as my father did the vast amount of cement mixing, then the two of us did the more intricate jobs. We worked very much around the house and I learnt carpentry and other building skills from age four. We always worked with the end result in mind and little else, my father also being a

perfectionist. I remember him shouting at me to keep things still as he laboured to fit everything together. He shouted at me one time because I was not supposed to move, despite him falling over. I had to keep the post straight! Perhaps it helped induce in me an autotelic personality type, something prevalent to this day as I do my daily duties. I also developed an early life with a more philosophical outlook than a religious one. Life has never involved earning money as a main goal.

My mother volunteered as a Saint John's Ambulance nurse and I read all the books she had on it, gaining an excellent knowledge of first aid and anatomy. It was about this time that she told me about when the doctor performed the post-natal checks and commented on how well co-ordinated I was. I think this influenced my father giving me football training in the field next to our house, sport featuring heavily in my youth. I learnt to play football equally with either foot and was very good at heading the ball, even though I was only average height when young.

At Primary School I was popular, and meeting various teachers clearly forged my mental and physical development. Mrs. Bert took us for creative writing and I emerged as a poet. I was often asked to write poems because my schoolmates knew Mrs. Bert would like them and give us 'House Points'. On one occasion, she gave Haxted House four points for a poem about a giant bird landing and befriending a poet, so we won the House Competition for that term. Mr. Apps, the science and PE teacher at Middle School, also liked me, my prowess at football suddenly being eclipsed by my exceptional ability at cross country running. Bernard Apps became my trainer and I ended up representing my county at the sport.

At Senior School I broke the school record for 800 metres and was one of the few victors in my House that day. Indeed, I became something of a 'hero' within Grants House, though I was shy and in no way ardent in pursuing such adulation.

By age 15 I had added cycling to my sporting repertoire, my father rekindling his youthful enthusiasm for the sport. It was a significant time, in hindsight, because during those three years I met people who are now well-known in their fields, one person in cycling itself, another in politics. Knowing them during more humble times helps keep me grounded.

I also went into the Sixth Form, but was disillusioned by the experience as we seemed to be persecuted for being the 'Punk Year', so different from any previous academic group at the school. Just before the first

year exams, I had an accident on my bicycle and ended up in hospital, the week spent there influencing my choice to leave school and emerge into the working world. Overall, I was tired of being with teenagers who just seemed so infantile, though maybe their bravado and confidence in social situations also jarred, my struggle through that period being mainly one involving extreme introversion. Most of the times I just didn't want to speak.

I left school and immediately got a job in geophysics, my rise in that area being quite phenomenal. I developed as a communicator and within three years became proficient in social situations. My new confidence made me want to self actualize, the way of doing this coming via two means: a journey around Europe and a return to academia. I eagerly arranged both.

My ten-week hitch-hiking tour of Europe made me realise that I was exceptionally bright and able to communicate across the continent, even if many languages were known minimally by me. I also developed amazing endurance and could walk for many kilometres each day, if required. I carried most of the kit which my work colleague and I had, which was also an ego-blow to that colleague, so much so that he became jealous and resentful – even violent. Towards the end of the tenth week away, we separated and I went straight back home to Surrey, England, from northern Luxembourg. It took 27 hours!

Shortly after my return, I decided to go to college and my aim was to attend university. I met Dorothy Humphrey, a 53-year-old English teacher from Glasgow. I owe her an immeasurable debt in life for taking what was, in essence, a kindling love of my language and transforming it into a raging fire of desire for it. This has never left me and I know it never will.

About this time, I also joined a theatrical group and my love of acting supplemented my studies in language and literature. Several in the drama group said how brilliant I was and after a few years of saving, I applied and was accepted onto the Drama and Theatre Studies course at Middlesex University. I learnt many new aspects to drama and theatre and I am happy to say that I am still in contact with many from that course. It was an incredibly stimulating, creative and rewarding time in every respect!

My post-graduate desire to fuse personal development with creativity and innovation made me take an MA in International Human Resource Management. At the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, I won the academic prize for Best Dissertation.

Disappointingly, however, I never got a job within that specific area. Instead, after a few years of retail management, I qualified as a teacher and until recently taught English both in England and abroad. The last few years have seen me develop as an English teacher at university, then advise C.E.O.s and civil servants on how to present themselves, plus create and innovate within their respective areas of competence and responsibility. It's merges many aspects to my career, which I enjoy.

2. Jacobsen: How did the high-IQ community become part of life? How did you find it, in other words?

Powell: At East Surrey College (where I met Dorothy Humphrey) I made friends with a man who had recently finished a relationship with a member of British Mensa. He was convinced that I would be able to join, so he encouraged me to apply. After finishing college (which drained me of all my financial resources) I resumed work for a while and became a paid-up member of Mensa in January 1987. My interest in the high IQ community really expanded, however, when I got the internet connected within my home in Sardinia. That was 20 years after joining Mensa and by 2009 I had joined a few on-line societies. None of them were in the World Intelligence Network, but, in 2010, I saw a message from Dr. Evangelos Katsioulis, the founder of the WIN, about translating the WIN site into Italian. I volunteered to do that, and, just as I was about to finish the translation, more societies joined the WIN and I was suddenly a member.

3. Jacobsen: How did you become the main editor for World Intelligence Network Online Editions (WIN ONE), formerly Genius To Genius Manifest (G2G)?

Powell: Immediately after finishing the voluntary translation work, Evangelos invited me to resurrect the WIN ONE, which had not been published for over three years at that point, and I took up the editorship, advertising for contributions. They came in rapidly, even a paper in Italian, which I translated. My first WIN ONE was as big as all the previous editions put together, so I was obviously pleased about that.

4. Jacobsen: What tasks and responsibilities come with the position?

Powell: The editor not only advertises for contributions; the role also involves checking each contribution for accuracy, decency and appropriateness – though I must admit that these aspects have never been imposed to refuse publishing anything. The editor collates the content and,

especially, corrects the texts, many being written by people whose mother tongue is not English. The editor augments the content, introduces each part and improves the readability of each article, putting in subtitles (for example) or dividing the content into sections. This is all done whilst liaising with the original writer. The last few magazines have seen me contribute a major percentage of the content, especially the puzzles. The editor also decides on the style of the magazine and most of the covers have been designed by me during my tenure.

5. Jacobsen: What have been the main developments of WIN ONE in personal tenure?

Powell: The main development from the WIN ONE has been the WIN Books Project, the first “WIntelligence Books” publication coming out earlier this year as a Kindle book. “The Ingenious Time Machine” is an expression of the talents and ideas within the World Intelligence Network and it took four years to develop and publish the volume. The physical copy of this book should be made available later this year, or at least, that is my goal.

I am also about to publish the WIN ONE more often, though discussions with new collaborators are going ahead now, so I can't give away too many details... Maybe we can talk again in a few months' time, Scott... I'd certainly like that.

It has been via my WIN ONE activities that I have made friends and a few times this has evolved into inviting contributors to conferences and meetings, mainly in Dubai and London. It is a personal dream to invite to members to Malta at some point in the not too distant future... Promoting this will be a development within the pages of the WIN ONE. I think the WIN ONE will evolve to be a vehicle for getting people together. Face to face meetings seem more popular in the High IQ World these days, not the production of long, written articles.

6. Jacobsen: What have been the most read articles? Why?

Powell: Though specific data is not available to affirm which articles have been the most read, I can give personal feedback on what you ask. Most people seem to like the philosophical articles, especially the ones by Paul Edgeworth, whose brilliant analyses of philosophers and aspects to their work, such as Aristotle's writing on contemplation, Cartesian Motion and Heidegger's Dasein, have been appreciated very much. I know this because readers have contacted me about them. I also appreciate Paul's work and my own writing has sometimes, serendipitously, evolved to be akin to Paul's explorations. Rich Stocks' writing about practical

philosophy has been praised too, something I am pleased to have contributed to as well, his work being a commentary on current events in America and the dialectical implications of them, to crudely summarise some of the work he has done. The poetry published in the WIN ONE is popular too. Much of it is also an expression of the zeitgeist prevalent today, which is satisfying to experience.

Above all, Scott, I thank you for your questions and hope that you have gained much from our exchange. I certainly have.

7. Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Graham.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Editor, WIN ONE; Text Editor, Leonardo (AtlantIQ Society); Joint Public Relations Officer, World Intelligence Network; Vice President, AtlantIQ Society.

[2] Individual Publication Date: April 15, 2019: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/powell-one>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

An Interview with Graham Powell on WIN ONE, Contributors, and Selection (Part Two)

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Abstract

His Lordship of Roscelines, Graham Powell, earned the “best mark ever given for acting during his” B.A. (Hons.) degree in “Drama and Theatre Studies at Middlesex University in 1990” and the “Best Dissertation Prize” for an M.A. in Human Resource Management from the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England in 1994. Powell is an Honorary Member of STHIQ Society, Former President of sPIqr Society, Vice President of Atlantiq Society, and a member of British Mensa, IHIQS, Ingenium, Mysterium, High Potentials Society, Elateneos, Milenija, Logiq, and Epida. He is the Full-Time Co-Editor of WIN ONE (WIN-ON-line Edition) since 2010 or nearly a decade. He represents World Intelligence Network Italia. He is the Public Relations Co-Supervisor, Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, and a Member of the European Council for High Ability. He discusses: the current trajectory of WIN ONE; prolific contributors to WIN ONE; differentiation of gifted and talented, and not, content; striking poems; soliciting material; selection processes; and determination of an aspect of mind behind produced content.

Keywords: content, contributors, editor, Graham Powell, IQ, WIN ONE, World Intelligence Network.

An Interview with Graham Powell on WIN ONE, Contributors, and Selection (Part Two)[1][2]

Please see the footnotes, bibliography, and citation style listing after the interview.

1. Scott Douglas Jacobsen: Now, with the current trajectory of WIN ONE, what will be the plans for 2019/2020?

Graham Powell: I am about to collaborate with Krystal Volney, a long-time member of the WIN, on the production of the WIN ONE. Some ideas that are proposed include getting experts from outside the WIN to contribute, the magazine up to now consisting exclusively of material from WIN members. This will involve Evangelos Katsioulis too, the WIN being his creation, and it will need his approval. As hinted at earlier in this interview, I think

the WIN ONE will express the results of one-to-one meetings and the results of discussions. Projects will also be relayed. I wish that real life problems be addressed by members and that active participation from WIN members will be encouraged. The high IQ network of societies is large; but the solitary nature of high IQ people in general, as the protagonists for change at the WIN see matters, means that encouraging participation is to be increased.

2. Jacobsen: Who have been prolific contributors to WIN ONE?

Powell: Aside from my own contributions, which have been substantial, the main contributors over the years have been Paul Edgeworth, Marco Ripà, Phil Elauria, Claus-Dieter Volko, Gwyneth Wesley Rolph and Krystal Volney. Paul Edgeworth has been the most prolific contributor over the entire time that I have been the WIN ONE editor.

3. Jacobsen: What seems to differentiate the content produced by the High-IQ community and the non-gifted & talented community?

Powell: The philosophical nature of the contributions, especially ones which question the role of people in society, or papers which attempt to apply complex mathematical or linguistic theories to societal problems (or existential states) all seem to distinguish the contributions from high IQ individuals from non-gifted people, though, as a person from a professional, didactic background, I wish to point out that talents are multifarious and not limited to the ones which can be expressed in a magazine. It is another reason I want the WIN ONE to evolve and attempt to communicate more widely, gaining insights and contributions from those outside what is labelled “The High IQ Community”.

4. Jacobsen: What poems struck a chord with you?

Powell: I delight in reading the poems by Therese Waneck, one of the few high IQ poets I currently rate very highly. Her poems are short, yet gems at capturing moments of emotive intensity.

“Child Carries the Lullaby”, “Umbrella Clown” and “Educated Mime” spring to mind, each one appearing in the WINtelligence Book “The Ingenious Time Machine”. Obviously, my own poems strike a chord, that’s largely why I wrote them, the most endearing being “As promised, a soldier’s love visits in the rain”, “The Physics of Love” and “Reflections on Time and Darkness”.

5. Jacobsen: What are the main pathways for garnering or soliciting material for WIN ONE?

Powell: Most contributors have become friends over the years and I message them individually. They usually respond favourably. I also put adverts in the Facebook groups and on the WIN website. I hope this interview also inspires people to approach me. In the past, the conferences I have attended and the meetings in real life have also spurred people to write for the WIN ONE.

6. Jacobsen: In the process of accepting or rejecting material, aside from formal processes, there is, as an editor, an intuitive, even emotive, selection process within the framework or bounds

of the criteria for submissions. Can you explain some of this non-verbal, or pre-verbal, selection process happening alongside regular choosing of content, please?

Powell: The G2G Manifest and the first WIN ONE were in existence prior to me becoming the editor, so people were aware of the content that had been accepted up to the beginning of my tenure. Firstly, I skim the proposed contributions and note my emotive response to them, as well as my cognitive appreciation of what is expressed. As said previously, I have never rejected a contribution, though sometimes the work has been modified in collaboration with the author. Most authors have trusted my judgement on the presentation and ease of reading that is necessary because even the most intelligent and diligent of reader needs guidance in order to get through an in-depth, complex series of concepts. It is also a question of what I would call ‘the greyness’ of a text, the addition of some illustrations or graphics making the experience for the reader more pleasurable. This is an intuitive reaction to the work that is submitted. I see the editor as a guide throughout the magazine and someone who eases the transition from one part of the magazine to the next. The overall style and look of the magazine should be appealing, and it is the same for a teacher as each lesson proceeds. Like any good lesson, or, indeed, novel, the ending should be clear, plus satisfying. It is also a tradition regarding the WIN magazine that the date of publication follows some kind of a sequence, this also influencing the arrangement and presentation of the content. International Pi Day dominated one edition, for example; another had prime numbers as the date... quirkiness seems to appeal to the High IQ community.

7. Jacobsen: In terms of written content, could one, theoretically or actually, differentiate the content produced by someone at 2-sigma, 3-sigma, 4-sigma, 5-sigma, and 6-sigma above the norm – without prior knowledge of the individual’s general intelligence score?

Powell: Within a high IQ group, this was proffered as a discussion piece a few days ago. My initial reaction was that a precise identification of IQ would not be possible based solely on written content, mainly due to the complexities and varieties of language being diverse and non verifiable diachronically, nor upon transcribing from one language to another – I.E., many people write in a second or even third language, or they demand that their original text be translated. This mediates their expressiveness in terms of complexity, lucidity and

profundity. Placing the individual within a sigma level, as you query, however, is possible, in fact, most of the time I already know that information regarding a contributor. So, in other words, based on my experience, could someone make a shrewd assessment of another based on their written contribution? Well, yes, I think they could.

8. Jacobsen: Thank you for the opportunity and your time, Graham.

Appendix I: Footnotes

[1] Editor, WIN ONE; Text Editor, Leonardo (AtlantIQ Society); Joint Public Relations Officer, World Intelligence Network; Vice President, AtlantIQ Society.

[2] Individual Publication Date: April 22, 2019: <http://www.in-sightjournal.com/powell-two>; Full Issue Publication Date: May 1, 2019: <https://in-sightjournal.com/insight-issues/>.

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