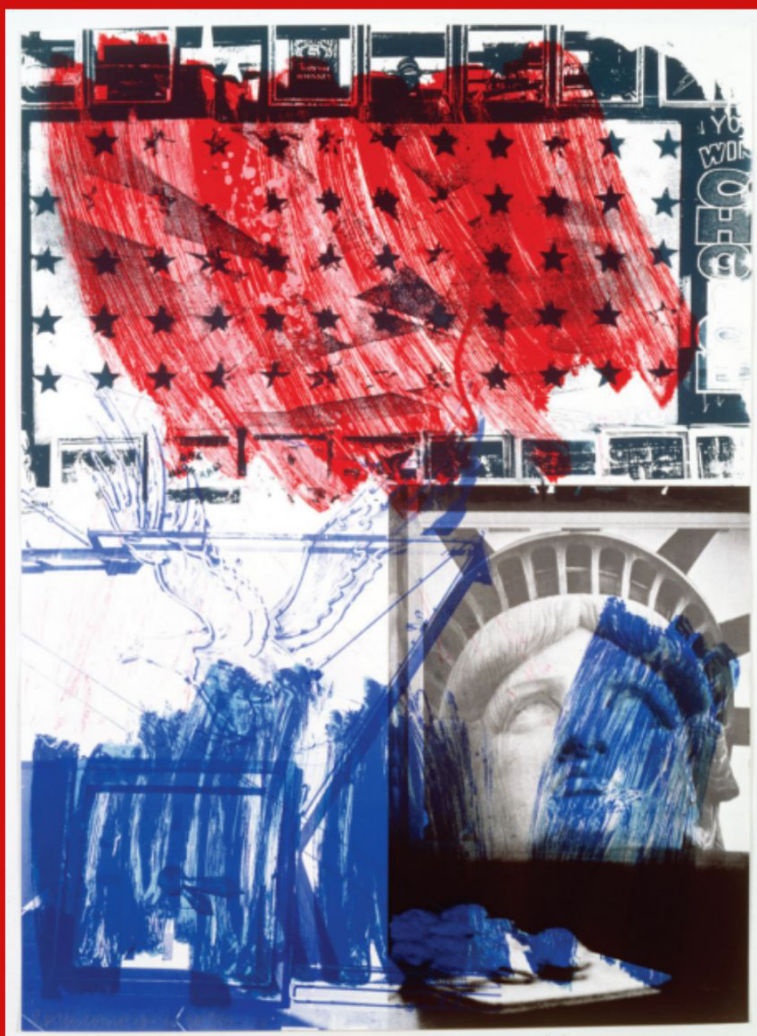


REFLECTIONS ON POLITICS, CULTURE AND SOUL

Papers from the 2016 San Francisco C.G.
Jung Institute Presidency Conference



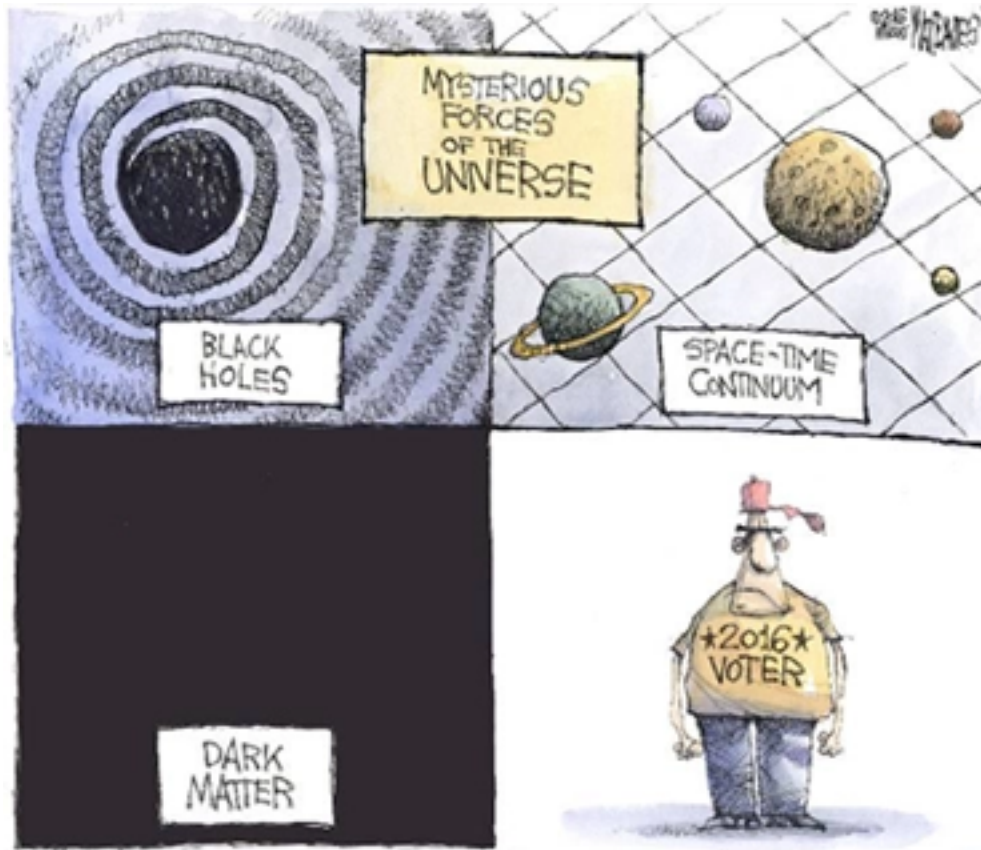
Thomas Singer and Steve Zimmelman, editors

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Introduction to the Papers

by Tom Singer, M.D.



These are the papers from the fifth San Francisco C. G. Jung Institute Presidential election year conference which convened on October 14 and 15, 2016 and which I co-organized with Steve Zimmelman, Chair of the Extended Education Committee. In case your memory is sometimes as porous as mine, in 2000 it was Al Gore vs. George Bush. In 2004, it was John Kerry against George Bush. In 2008, it was Barack Obama against John McCain and in 2012 it was Barack Obama against Mitt Romney. In reviewing the text of the 2008 brochure of our Third Conference when Obama was running against John McCain, I was reminded that the previous 8 years (2000-2008)

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had been marked by the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center, the destruction of New Orleans by Katrina, the invasion of Iraq by the United States, the spreading threat of Islamic fundamentalism, and the near collapse of the world economy at the end of President Bush's second term when his approval rating was at a historic low. By the standards of those eight years between 2000- and the end of 2008, the past eight years with Obama as President seem relatively benign. And yet, no election year in recent memory has been as ugly, insubstantial and terrifying as 2016. Perhaps many of you will remember the infamous Reverend Wright of the 2008 election who may finally be right when he predicted: "the Chickens have come home to roost." But, whether or not the last eight years have been good compared to the previous eight, we are living in what Christopher Hedges has characterized in the title of one of his books as "The Empire of Illusion: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle". The rational mind is challenged in the extreme and we need all the help we can get from those who explore the non rational mind to make some sense out of what is going on.

Everywhere we look, we are confronted with seemingly insoluble, urgent problems that defy rational and humane resolution: climate change, the growing discrepancy between rich and poor, including those who flock to Trump in the hope that his promise for change will halt their downward drift, the influence of money on political and cultural life, the virtual shutdown of Congress, immigration trauma on an unimaginable scale, racism, sexism, consumerism, terrorism, war—to name just a few ingredients in our cauldron of corrosive conflicts. Has the world always been this endangered with every generation imagining itself on the brink? In such times, politics, cultural values and the soul of both individuals and groups get inextricably mixed up with one another and

perhaps at no time is this more highlighted than in the garish glare of the uninterrupted attention during modern American presidential elections.

The seeds for this fifth conference were first planted in a small gathering in Bolinas in 1999. About forty people met at the funky Bolinas Rod and Boat Club over a stormy weekend to discuss what we later called "The Vision Thing" which resulted in a published collection of papers about the interface of myth, politics, and psyche in the world. Some seventeen years later at this conference, we found ourselves talking about many of the same things —though it feels as though the state of the nation and our ability to engage in a substantive discourse have devolved far more than they have evolved. Three of us presenting at this conference, Andrew Samuels, Betty Sue Flowers, and myself, also presented at that original Bolinas meeting and our first Presidency conference—and I can say with certainty that we have solved nothing, but we have not stopped trying to understand what the heck is going on. I hope these papers will be fruitful for all who take the time to read them—if not in solving anything, at least in bringing to light some of the profound issues that effect all of us. The purpose of the conference and these papers is to surprise, engage, trouble, stimulate, challenge, anger, and perhaps even delight at times—and mostly I hope that they contribute in some small way to the development of what Joe Henderson called a "psychological attitude" in matters of politics, psyche and culture. With the help of John Beebe's recent work on cultural attitudes we can think of a "psychological attitude" as a perspective that honors both the inner and outer world of the individual and the community and that combines empathy, integrity, and camaraderie—the ability to relate to and feel with others, the ability to tell the truth, and the ability to build bridges with people of different points of

view. The psychological attitude that we would like to see in ourselves, our fellow citizens and our leaders, recognizes and accepts that in political discourse there is more than one way to go about tending to our common interdependence. A psychological attitude also has a keen awareness of the powerful forces that dwell in the psyche of individuals and groups that would antagonize and divide people if left to their own devices.

CATASTROPHIC CHANGE: CRACKED SOCIAL CONTAINERS AND THE PRECARIOUS BODY POLITIC

Francisco J. González, MD

Psychoanalytic Institute of Northern California

My family had recently immigrated to the United States from Cuba when the president of the United States, John F Kennedy was shot and killed. I remember watching the state funeral on a little black-and-white television set with my mother and younger sister. I was a couple of months short of five years old. This woman, the wife of the president, was American, I understood, and she was different from us. My parents were certainly no fans of JFK, having felt deeply betrayed by him in the Bay of Pigs fiasco, but they were shocked and dismayed by the assassination, and must have been swimming in complexly layered feeling about the tragedy that was unfolding in this new home of theirs. Mostly I remember my mother's empathic grief and respect for the strength and dignity of Jacqueline Kennedy. I watched my mother's face, and she watched Jackie's. Jackie held the hand of little John; my mother held our hands and wept.

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I've come to think of this memory as an emblem of my American patriation, the complexly layered beginning of my becoming a member of these United States. Without the words to formulate it to myself, my young mind was turning over the question: for whom or for what was my mother weeping?



I entered these United States, then, in a time of cataclysm: both within my immigrant family and without, when the social containers of the nation seemed to be fissuring. JFK's assassination was, disturbingly, only one of many in those years, of course.



Despite this turbulence within and without, my main preoccupations then were a child's preoccupations, immediate, close at hand; I was thankfully buffered by the noisy din and easy love of an extended family that did its best to keep the press of adult worries out of the lives of small children. But I remember, many decades later, lying on an analytic couch and trying to describe a diffuse kind of anxiety I didn't have many words for, but unquestionably felt at that time. I was telling my analyst, somewhat jokingly, how I had been afraid of tornados

(we had immigrated to central Texas - there had been a big twister on the news that devastated a town) and, more acutely, of “Communists.”



These Communists, I feared, were going to take me away, or take others away and somehow destroy everything I knew of my world. I did not know what a Communist was, really, nor did I have a sense that — as Winnicott would have it — this fear of breakdown was a fear of something that had already happened. My family fled post-revolutionary Cuba after having first enthusiastically supported Castro, when it became clear to my father that democracy was not going to be the outcome of the struggle. Unwittingly, what I began to construct that day in analysis, the figure that started to form out of this diffuse cloud of anxiety that I had no name for, was a palpable feeling of my subjection to the State. Because of

my family's immigration in my early childhood, I had become precociously aware of this thing that operated on the order of a machine, a great machine of power that cared little for the small lives of individual humans. I could not have put it into words as a child, but that day in analysis I slowly became conscious of an object relationship I had with the State, as real as any I had with the individuals in my life: I felt the cold touch of Regime, and as a kind of terror gripped me, I slowly broke down.

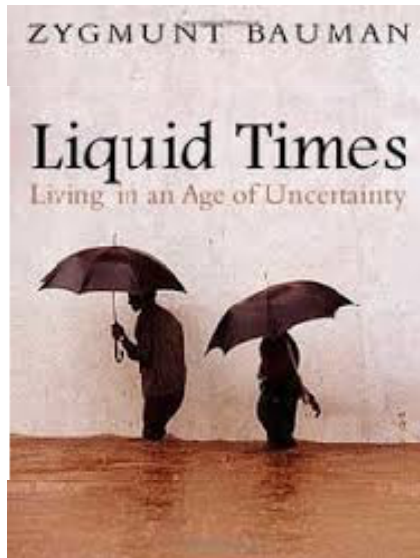
I begin with these reflections in part to position myself in your eyes somehow. To give you a way to begin to localize me. And in part to remind myself and us, that the strange, dark, anxious times of this election cycle are neither new nor all that unique — though, given just how strange, dark, and anxious they are, I also feel I have frequent need of that reminding — not that it soothes all that much. If the early 60s was a time when the social containers as we then knew them were undergoing radical transformations, then today we may feel as if they are melting.

Wilfred Bion, who came of age as a 20-year-old commanding a tank in World War I, elaborated his enigmatic concept of catastrophic change over a lifetime of work. Not to be confused with trauma, catastrophic change is a psychic perturbation at the threshold of growth: the catastrophe can be understood as a rupturing of the container by what it contains, the old skins no longer able to hold the new wine. But the catastrophe is also the refusal of accepting that change is immanent, as inherent in the process of growth as it is painful. Shiva, Christ, or Abraham: the old stories link spiritual growth to destruction. Bion means the concept as a way to describe *intra*-psychic process, and he puts this event on the

order of death, or more often, birth, as a fundamental change of existential state, and therefore on the side of potential growth. But in Bion's ambivalent use of the term, the catastrophe can also be the refusal to that change, the dogged clinging to old forms that simply will not hold, resulting in seismic disruptions to the psyche. In our analytic work we often see and live catastrophic changes, and we count on the resilience of the therapeutic frame and the creativity of a co-constructed process to be the crucible of such disruptive transformation. We have faith that this bigger container can contain and sustain the violent cycling of mental regeneration.

I understand the psychology of this election cycle in the light of this idea of catastrophic change, thought on a social level. The current structures no longer seem to hold: Congress is massively dysfunctional, unable at times even to keep the government open, much less working; the explosion of media rather than promoting a productive debate among a diversity of views has instead resulted in highly curated experience of self-confirmation; in the tsunami of money flooding an election, the funding streams can be impossible to discern. **We** — and just like that, we are already plunged into the heart of an enormous problem: in the flash of that tiny word *we*, an invisible line gets drawn, seemingly obvious, looping some into a sphere of belonging, silently lopping others out, and all the while pretending that its clear to us who is who, that we understand each other — **we**, then, as a collective in this country, are struggling with the difficulty, the refusal, or perhaps the inability to confront the limitations of our existing sociopolitical containers and to find ways to creatively elaborate new forms. Without the elaboration of these forms, the containers crack (as we are seeing

with the Republican party most dramatically, though the fracture lines are also visible in other quarters). The question, then, is not *will* there be change, but *in what way*, how convulsive, at what cost, and to whom?



We live in a time that the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman calls “liquid modernity,” which he characterizes along five lines:

FIRST, social forms, structures and institutions are no longer able or expected to keep their shapes for long — hence “they cannot serve as frames of reference for human actions and long-term life strategies.”

SECOND, power becomes divorced from politics: the power of states to act slips away to the politically uncontrolled global, extraterritorial space, unleashing cataclysmically uncertain and untamable flows. The state then increasingly “out-sources” the functions it previously

performed, leaving these to become “the playground for the notoriously capricious and inherently unpredictable market forces.”

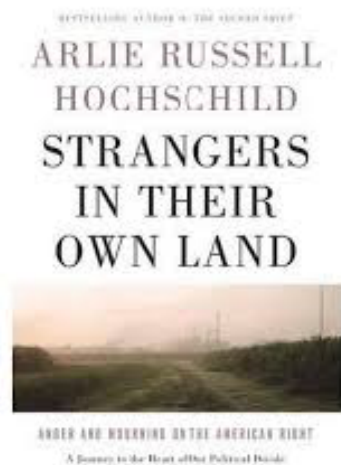
THIRD, the social safety net erodes: there is a withdrawal of state-endorsed insurance against individual failure, which undermines collective action, increasing the risks of sacrificing individual interest for the common good, and spurs individualistic competition.

FOURTH, “long-term thinking, planning and acting [collapses]” which “leads to a splicing of both political history and individual lives into a series of short-term projects and episodes which are in principle infinite, and do not combine into the kinds of projects to which concepts like ‘development,’ ‘maturation,’ ‘career,’ or ‘progress’... could be meaningfully applied.”

and finally, FIFTH “ the responsibility for resolving the quandaries generated by...constantly changing circumstances is shifted onto the shoulders of individuals”

One of the most unsettling problems of liquid modernity, Bauman notes, is the feeling of impotence and haplessness it can give rise to, feelings I have encountered frequently in my patients, friends, and myself in this election. By and large the most vexing problems we face have their roots in *global* flows — if Greece has an economic collapse, chances are you will feel it in Detroit;

industrialization in India raises sea levels in New York; the refugee crisis in Turkey has effects in San Bernardino. For the small-time fisherman in West Ireland, say, — who effectively lost his way of life and livelihood when EU negotiations opened quotas for super-trawlers from Spain and France and international petroleum corporations disrupted the environment and affected the fish stock — that local fisherman has little he can effectively do to effect global change. His relationship to that Big Other, the State, is now further complicated by the State's vassal relationship to the Corporation. In the David and Goliath story of local communities as the settings where Big Capital dumps the remaindered waste of its production, a local fisherman has good reason to feel besieged by an existential demoralization.



In her new book *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*, Arlie Russell Hochschild describes the environmental decimation wreaked upon the Bayou country in Louisiana by a lightly regulated oil industry. Facing the loss of their beloved wetlands — once a rich habitat that supported locals through farming and fishing, and now



a poisoned swamp of dying trees and literally carcinogenic waters — some folks would have chosen to leave, but now can not. Their houses lost value — who, after all, would want to live here? — and so they remain: trapped. Hochschild calls

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them “stay-at-home migrants,” and as she writes: “They had stayed. The environment had left” (p. 49). Everyone she talked with in this region over the course of several years, Hochschild writes, “felt like victims of a frightening loss — or was it theft? — of their cultural home, their place in the world, and their honor” (p. 48). I will get back to Hochschild's important work later, but for now I simply want to illustrate this common feeling of living in liquid modernity: the sense of loss, the frustration of helplessness, the anger it generates, and what I think is the prevailing affect undergirding all of those emotions: namely, free-floating anxiety and fear.

We — and perhaps here I can use that little word with a troubling inclusivity — we are afraid in this country. Some amass gold under the bed and others stockpile food for the coming race war, while school campuses and universities give workshops to faculty on how to manage “lone shooters.” In late August, six terminals of Los Angeles International Airport were evacuated as panicked travelers responded to unconfirmed reports of gunfire on social media, leading to a total shut down of the airport. Two weeks earlier, it was Kennedy International in New York. In neither case was there an actual shooter. Quoted in a NYT story, John Horgan, a professor of global studies and psychology at Georgia State University who specializes in the study of terrorism, put it this way: “I would say that we are in the grip of a moral panic. ... The constant threat perception of being vulnerable to mass violence has seeped into our collective consciousness.”



“Threat perception,” as Horgan puts it, is a fitting term, for as the fear creeps in to the national soul, it does indeed become the very way that we perceive the world. We are enjoined to keep our eyes open for any suspicious activity and to report it immediately. And in a certain way, we do. Armed with personal cameras, nearly everyone is another eyeball for the collective: the eyes multiply and proliferate, never blink, go viral. If in the 1960s the rhythms of the news cycle were marked by the nightly broadcast and the morning paper, today it has become a unending flow, stories layering one upon the other, news outlets continuously recirculating slight modifications, sound-bited and retweeted, so that stories reverberate and echo endlessly.

We are wary of strangers.

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Speaking at the Republican National Convention in July, Newt Gingrich stoked the fires, invoking what he called Trump's speaking the "truth about our national security":



- We are at War.
- We are at War with Radical Islamists.
- They are determined to kill us.
- They are stronger than we admit
- And are greater in number than we admit.

National security thus becomes national insecurity. And this pervasive anxiety haunts every aspect of this election.

The Chapman University Survey of American Fears listed the top three national fears in 2015 as "man-made disasters" (like terrorism), technology, and

the government. “There isn’t a single fear that defines our era,” says sociologist Frank Furedi, author of *Culture of Fear: Risk-Taking and the Morality of Low Expectation*. It’s not that we live in an objectively more fear-driven age, necessarily, but that the fear we harbor has a particularly new quality. “What we have is a more promiscuous, pluralistic form of fearing,” Furedi writes: “The very important implication to this is that while my parents feared together, you and I have a more isolated, private experience. We fear on our own.”(<http://www.utne.com/Politics/Overcoming-American-Fear-Culture-On-Eve-of-New-Presidency?pageid=1#PageContent1>) The neoliberal conditions that shape liquid modernity, atomize collectivity: scattering us to our own devices. The safety nets once provided by career stability, unions, company and civil service pensions, a nationally shared media, religious and ethnic homogeneity, and the like, are eroded and it’s increasingly every man for himself.

Nor is the fear distributed equally...

Molly Ball, writing in the Atlantic in a story titled “Donald Trump and the Politics of Fear” (09/02/16) cites a study by the Public Religion Research Institute & Brookings Institution, documenting that Trump supporters are more worried than the general electorate:

“65 percent of Trump supporters feared being victims of terrorism, versus 51 percent of all Americans. Three-fourths of Trump supporters feared being victims of crime, versus 63 percent overall. Trump supporters also disproportionately feared foreign influence: 83 percent said the American way of life needed to be protected from it, versus 55 percent overall. Two-thirds of Trump supporters also worried that they or a family

member would become unemployed, comparable to 63 percent of non-Trump supporters.” Ball concludes: “Economic anxiety, while widespread in America today, is not a distinguishing characteristic of Trump supporters; other anxieties are.” [Molly Ball, “Donald Trump and the Politics of Fear” *Atlantic* 9/2/16]

(Adapted from PRRI/ Brookings Survey June, 2016)

Fear...	Trump supporters	General electorate
...being victims of terrorism	65%	51%
...being victims of crime	75%	63%
...foreign influence	83%	55%
...becoming unemployed	67%	63%

In an attempt to find a modicum of refuge, the human tendency is to round the wagons. To draw the enchanted circles around a series of *we*’s in the hopes of consolidating a protective solidarity against the threat of *them*. There is safety in numbers, goes the old saying, and no one want to be alone. Donald Moss — a psychoanalyst in New York — edited *Hating in the Third Person Plural*,

which dissects, in detail, the projective mechanisms of the most common attempts we use to get the safety of *we* through the disavowal of others, namely via misogyny, xenophobia, racism, and homophobia. Moss parses the formula in the simplest terms: “identification upwards and dis-identification downwards.” *We* works best as a protective amulet when it can claim superiority over those who are exorcised from the charmed circle. As Ta Nehisi Coates writes:

Hate gives identity. The nigger, the fag, the bitch illuminate the border, illuminate what we ostensibly are not, illuminate the Dream of being white, of being a Man. We name the hated strangers and are thus confirmed in the tribe. (p60)

Constituting the stranger is the way we make ourselves familiar: by pushing difference *outside* we create a false homogeneity *inside*. But in a globalized world this move comes with a doubled peril: most obviously, to those actually exiled to the outside of the charmed circle, whose bodies are made precarious; but as significantly to the tribes constituted by these exclusions, for such tribalism makes precarity the sign of the body politic itself.

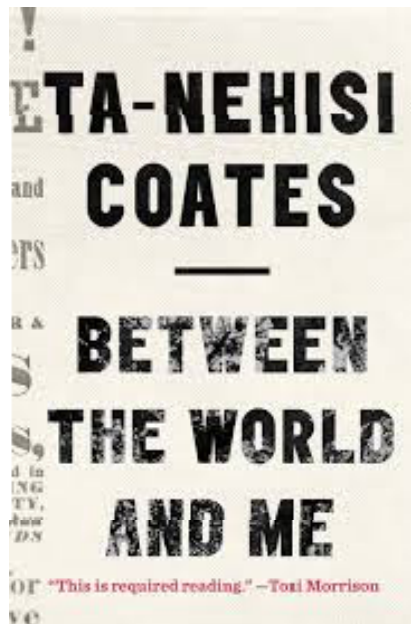
Let’s consider both of these moves more carefully.

Those who are radically othered in the process of creating a fiction of collective unity pay for it — literally with their lives. In this election cycle we have had no shortage of attempts to manufacture strangers. Attempting to parlay national insecurity into votes, Donald Trump has painted Muslims as untrustworthy potential jihadists; he has depicted blacks as derelicts with nothing left to lose, and Mexicans as violent rapists. Building a wall has become

the icon of his plan to keep the dangerous Others out. This iconography does more than make the U.S. a colossal gated community, it also concretizes the means of exclusion and gives it a specific location *on* the border, providing a kind of national fetish that stands for the inherent but less visible mechanisms of exclusion for the supposed strangers *within* our borders. Trump's campaign slogan, *Make America Great Again*, was easily transformed by satirists into *Make America White Again*, humorously underscoring the anxiety of Trump's most ardent supporters, 90% of whom are white.



The primary subject of Coates' bestselling meditation, *Between the World and Me* is the precarity of the black body *within* these supposedly United States.



The American dream is a white dream, he says, and more specifically a dream of being white. Before whites were whites they were something else, Irish or Italian or Eastern European Jews. Blackness is what made these peoples white. In Coates's view, race is the child of racism (and not the other way around). The foundational myth of America as a land of opportunity and upward mobility was constructed on the backs of black slaves, literally by their sweat and blood. The black body, according to Coates, was and continues to be the disposable commodity that fuels American prosperity. And, because extinguishable, the black body lives in a state of perpetual precarity. Ostensibly writing to his son, implicitly writing to us all as children of an American history we prefer to ignore, Coates's book is a fierce lament about how black lives matter and the cost of losing them. These have been the kinds of lives that, all too often, would have fallen into the category of the un-grieveable, as Judith Butler would call it. Those lives that are not collectively mourned because they are seen as mattering less to that collective.

If blacks in the United States can be construed as a kind of implicit outsider, then immigrants are marked as the self-evident stranger. From 2000 to 2012, the foreign-born population of the United States increased by over 30% to almost 41 million people, according to the American Progress Foundation, more than doubling since the 1960s.

(<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/report/2014/10/23/59040/the-facts-on-immigration-today-3/#population>) And immigrants are growing in number. As you can see here, the growth of the Latino and Asian American population dwarfs the growth of whites.

(Adapted from the American Progress Foundation, 2014)

ethnicity	growth 2000-2010
latino	43%
asian	46%
non-hispanic white	5.7%

As the population of Asian and Latino immigrants and their descendants grows, so does the fear of what this portends for American identity. As I have written elsewhere, the immigrant troubles the self-same integrity of the native culture, seeming to say by her very presence, *if I am a foreigner then foreign to what or to whom? Who are you now that I am here? Who are you actually?* The recognition of difference in the other necessarily opens a troubling difference within one's self, however unconsciously.

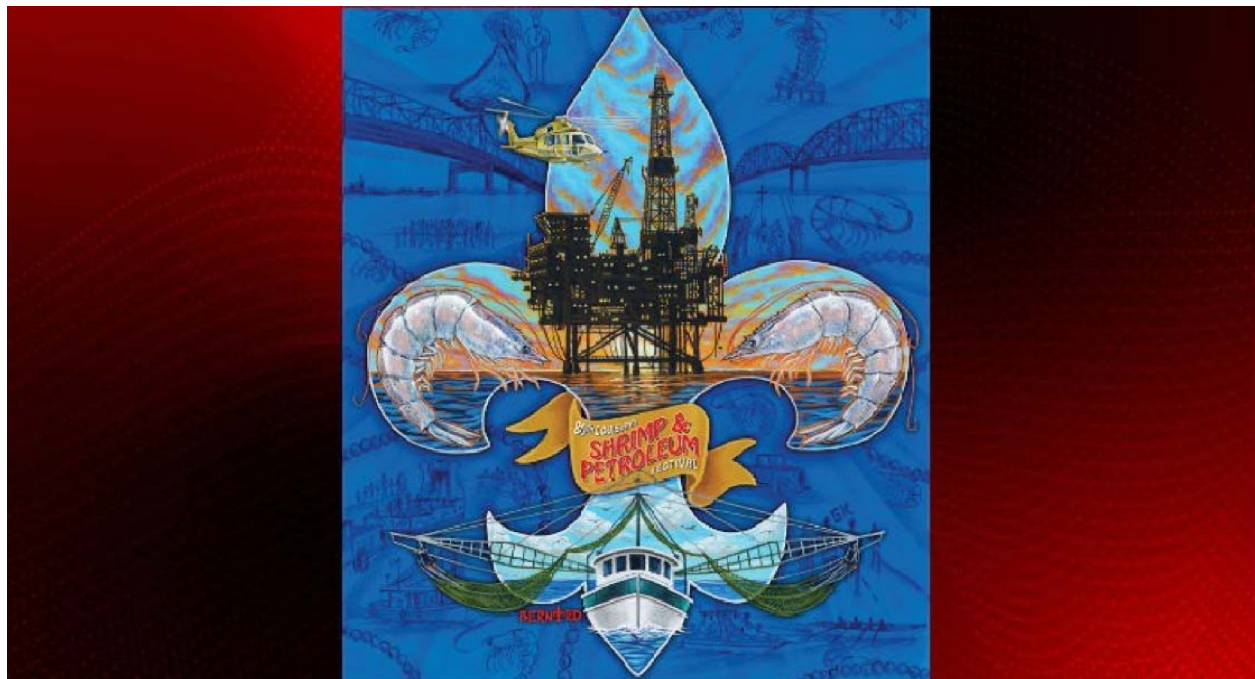
That difference is opening now, and with a vengeance, in the psyche of the American collective. The mythos of America as white nation is dying — whiteness is increasingly recognized as its own identifiable ethnic stereotype, not the generic norm. This constitutes a catastrophic change; and for those living it, the threat to white American identity is visceral, an existential peril.



It has become somewhat commonplace in the circles I travel in this liberal bastion of the Bay Area to speak of these Trump voters as stupid, racist, and uninformed — or to use Hillary Clinton’s ill-chosen term, as “deplorables.” Such moves are largely the symptom of an attempt to construct yet another safety zone, this time to guard against the anxiety many that we on the Left feel. I have had a number of patients lament: how can it possibly be the case that more than

40% of the national electorate would stand with a narcissistic demagogue like Trump, an ostentatious billionaire who could seem to care less for the little man.

Rather than attempting to round the wagons on what she already thinks she knows, Arlie Russell Hochschild, whom I mentioned earlier, took the radical step of trying to cross over what she calls the “empathy wall” to get into the mindset of Tea Party voters in Louisiana.



Using environmental degradation as her “keyhole” subject, Hochschild spent years getting to know home-owners and oil workers, politicians and church ministers, in short the folks who live in Louisiana's highly unregulated petroleum economy, one which has taken a devastating toll on the environment. Through this laborious attempt to find within herself, a self-described Berkeley liberal, the kind of understanding that these hard Right partisans hold about the pernicious effects of big government, Hochschild is able to construct what she calls the “deep

story” of political affiliation. This deep story is one of betrayal and disregard.

Hochschild describes it like this:

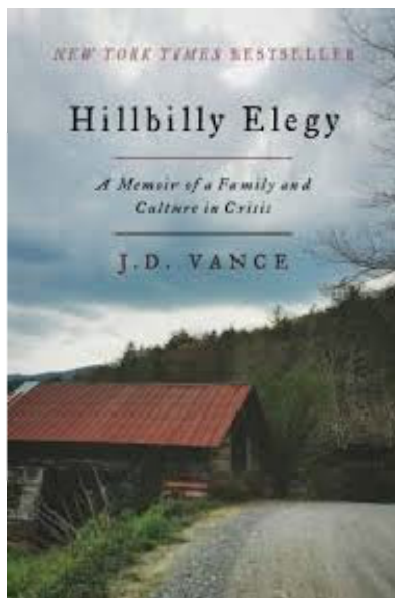


You are patiently standing in a long line leading up a hill, as in a pilgrimage. You are situated in the middle of this line, along with others who are also white, older, Christian, and predominantly male, some with college degrees, some not. ...you’ve waited a long time, worked hard, and the line is barely moving.... In fact, is it moving backward? You haven't gotten a raise in years, and there is no talk of one. Actually if you are short ...a BA, your income has dropped over the last twenty years....Look! You see people *cutting in line ahead of you!* You are following the rules. They aren't. ... How can they just do that? Who are they? Some are black....Women, immigrants, refugees, public sector workers — where will it end? ... It's not fair.

And President Obama: how did *he* rise so high? The biracial son of a low-income single mother becomes president of the most powerful country in the world; you didn't see this coming. And if he's there, what kind of a slouch does his rise make you feel like, you who are supposed to be so much more privileged. ...You may not have the biggest house, but you can certainly be proud of being American. And anyone who criticizes America — well, they're criticizing you. If you can no longer feel pride in

the United States through its president, you'll have to feel American in a new way — by banding with others who feel as strangers in their own land (pp. 136-140)

The very people whose identity was indubitably American before, who never had to question that this was *their* country are now “also being squeezed,” as Hochschild writes, “by greater competition from other groups for an ever-scarcer supply of cultural honor” (p. 143).



J. D. Vance's memoir, *Hillbilly Elegy* has been a NYT Bestseller and is making the rounds on the talk-show radio circuit. Vance grew up in Middleton, Ohio — a Rust Belt town — and Jackson, Kentucky — in the heart of Appalachia — but ended up graduating from Yale Law School. He describes a chaotic childhood, blurred by his mother's addictions and grandfather's alcoholism, and punctuated by frequent violence. In one scene his grandparents savagely trash a store — breaking and throwing merchandise, and threatening the shop owner

with his life — because he had the temerity to chastise their son for playing with an expensive toy he pulled off the shelf. Vance credits the love and steadfastness of these same hillbilly grandparents and a pick-yourself-up-by-the-boot-straps work ethic with his eventual success. He largely steers clear of overt politics in the book, but emphasizes self-reliance, discipline, and hard work, and seems to imply that others — regardless of their histories or race — could spin the same kind of gold he has from this hillbilly hay. I'm sure I have much to disagree with in his Republican leanings, but I also felt he provided me with a way of recognizing this political Other of mine on human grounds, and thereby giving me a way to actually disagree rather than to denigrate and disregard.

This is in keeping with Hochschild's way of thinking politics, and it is not dissimilar to the way therapists think about their patients: namely, with a strong consideration that affect/ emotion matters, and oftentimes much more than content. She finds in her Tea Party subjects not unreasoning stupidity but a profound sense of betrayal, one that becomes ever more amplified in the echo-chambers of contemporary media, helping us to see just how deeply estranged we are from each other in this country.

This election seems, finally, to be deciding itself, if in excruciating painful twists of the national character. While there have been no shortage of bizarre and unpredictable turns in this campaign, it seems extremely unlikely at this point that Trump will win. But a resolution to this unprecedented election cycle will hardly solve the problems of the political psyche we now face.

There is an intimate link between what is expelled to the outside and who we feel ourselves to be on the inside. None of us is immune from this tendency in

the collective to build a safety camp in the interior. Some might expel Black Lives Matter activists or Muslims or immigrant Mexicans and others of us might expel the Kentucky hillbilly or the Louisiana oil-worker or the evangelist white Christian who can't bear to sell gay men a cake for their wedding. What we know as analysts is that there are histories behind these expulsions from our subjective constellations of what we consider *we*.

In an atmosphere of atomization, where the floor seems to liquefy, anxiety rules the day, and we manufacture safety by expelling the other into precarity. The problem is that this construction of safety on the backs of the precarious other creates in itself a precarious body politic, a brittle entity subject to rupture under pressure. And this is indeed what we have been witnessing in this election cycle, most dramatically in the convulsions shaking the Republican Party. The chickens, as they say, are coming home to roost.



The seeds were being planted, perhaps, as early as the time when my family immigrated to the US. The Republican Party's infamous southern strategy may have successfully capitalized on white racial anxieties in the aftermath of civil rights gains and the dismantling of Jim Crow laws, but it did so at a great cost to itself. Some four decades later, Ken Mehlman, elected to the chairmanship of the Republican National Committee in 2005, addressed the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to apologize: "Some Republicans gave up on winning the African-American vote, looking the other way or trying to benefit politically from racial polarization... I am here as Republican chairman to tell you we were wrong."

http://archive.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2005/07/15/gop_ignored_bla

ck vote chairman says/) Robert Kagan, co-founder of the neoconservative Project for the New American Century and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, in a scathing op-ed piece for the Washington Post written in February, cites the Republican party's "wild obstructionism," its "accommodation to and exploitation of bigotry," and its Obama hatred, which he calls "a racially tinged derangement syndrome":

Let's be clear: Trump is no fluke. Nor is he hijacking the Republican Party or the conservative movement, if there is such a thing. He is, rather, the party's creation, its Frankenstein's monster, brought to life by the party, fed by the party and now made strong enough to destroy its maker.

(https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/trump-is-the-gops-frankenstein-monster-now-hes-strong-enough-to-destroy-the-party/2016/02/25/3e443f28-dbc1-11e5-925f-1d10062cc82d_story.html?utm_term=.3ee6aac500d5)



What we have been witnessing in the past couple of weeks is nothing short of this destruction. In a kind of feeding frenzy, the Republican party cannibalized its most promising candidates in the primaries, and has been fretting obsessively with what it has wrought since. For a liberal Democrat like myself, *schadenfreude* has its own intoxicating rewards, and it takes more than a little psychological work on my part to recognize it as the pernicious symptom of my own desire to exile difference. Psychotherapists are left leaning; that hardly makes us immune to the kind of rounding of the wagons and exclusion of otherness I am describing as a defense against the challenges of liquid modernity. It's all too easy to construct a knowing *we* that establishes itself as supposedly obvious, thereby

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preempting dialogue with the opposing side. A gay patient born and raised in the south tells me that it has become impossible to talk politics with mother, who still lives there; it is too painful, there is no way to bridge the gap. He and I glide between the personal pain of this separation and our social malaise as a nation, that we cannot talk with one another. Isolated in our media-amplified echo chambers, we can hear little but ourselves.

It is disturbing, the cold comfort one can find in the eloquence of James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*, whose words, written in 1963, could serve just as well for ours:

Freedom is hard to bear. It can be objected that I am speaking of political freedom in spiritual terms, but the political institutions of any nation are always menaced and are ultimately controlled by the spiritual state of that nation. We are controlled here by our confusion, far more than we know, and the American dream has therefore become something much more closely resembling a nightmare, on the private, domestic, and international levels. Privately, we cannot stand our lives and dare not examine them; domestically, we take no responsibility for (and no pride in) what goes on in our country; and, internationally, for many millions of people, we are an unmitigated disaster.

Perhaps, with a sad smile, we can say it's only human nature: in the unprecedented flux of liquid modernity, when what we thought we could count on seems to melt away, we instinctively turn inwards, afraid of the catastrophic change that will save us from the catastrophe. A great deal is being laid bare in this election, and we are rightly troubled - I only hope we do not seal over this

trouble too quickly, that we have the stamina to keep the questions open. Because doing the hard work of mending the spiritual state of our nation — as Baldwin might put it — might begin with not too readily assuming that *we* actually know who *we* are.



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SO, WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?

PERSONAL AND DEPTH PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES IN ELECTIONS

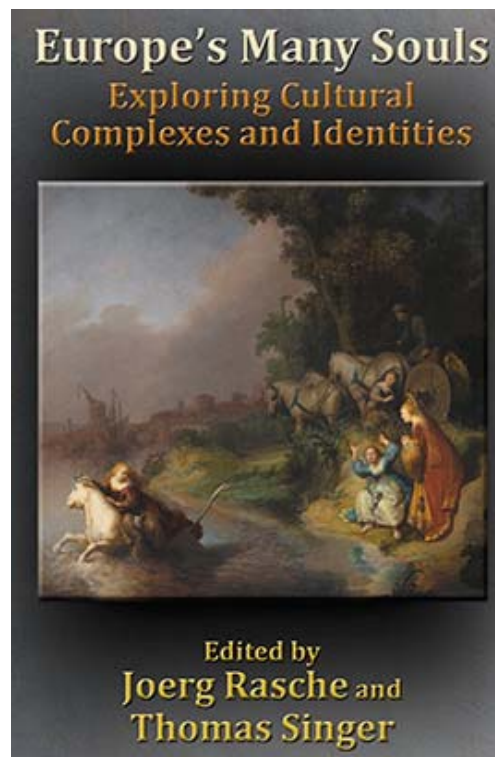
**Andrew Samuels (Society of Analytical Psychology,
London. University of Essex, Colchester, UK)**

OUR CONTEXT

It's not a good idea to give a presentation on politics without some reference to its context. I don't only mean the context of what we can call 'the Trump election', whatever the result, which is on and in everyone's minds, but rather the context of the here-and-now, in this room tonight. Please allow me to do that before moving on to summarise the contents of this presentation.

This is the latest event in a long series. We seek to see how (and if) depth psychology and Jungian analysis can provide understandings of the political events of the day, coupling the spirit of the depths to the spirit of the times. The moving geniuses of this current enterprise have been Steve Zemmelman and Tom Singer and we owe them a huge debt of gratitude which I hope we will express in a moment.

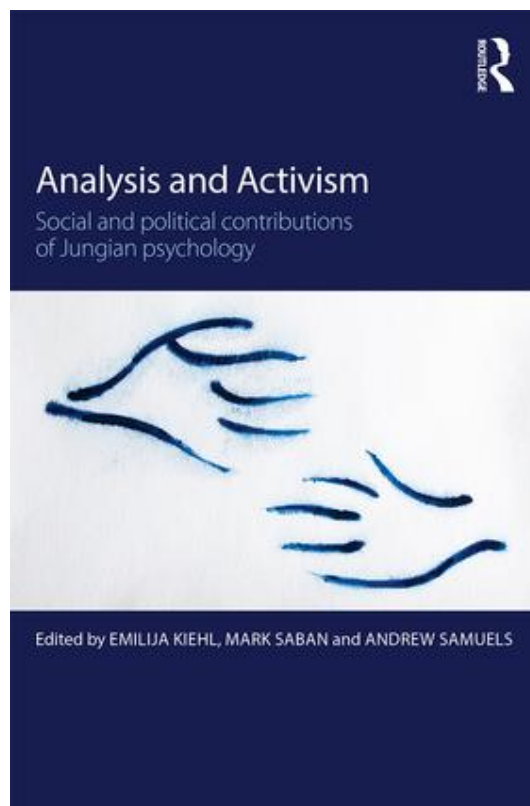
Steve is a new friend. But there's a bit more I want to say about my old friend Tom Singer's contribution to the 'Jung and politics' game over twenty years and more. This role has truly been scene-shifting, whether as a theorist or as an impresario and facilitator. Tom and I have become correspondents, or should that be co-respondents?, agreeing and sparring, as we work out the lines of what he has so felicitously called an 'inner sociology'. He is a credit to the San Francisco Jung Institute. This is just one recent example of his creative output:



There's a slightly wider Jungian context, too – and I want to say something about it, even though I realise that not everyone here is a Jungian analyst, therapist or psychologist.

In 2004, in a keynote at the Barcelona Congress of the International Association for Analytical Psychology, I said that we had witnessed a 'political turn' in Jungian analysis. I believed Jung would have silently approved of this development which has greatly intensified in recent years, given what he wrote in 1946 of 'the analyst's duties as a citizen'.

Here is an example of how today's Jungian analysts are taking up their duties as citizens:



Most of the chapters in this book were written by Jungian analysts who considered that they had additional roles as activists of one kind or another.

To fulfil the civic duties Jung mentioned requires contemporary Jungians to pay empathic attention to our relations with all of our fellow citizens and not just those who seem familiar. We may need to unlearn some (but not all) of the theories we have been taught. And, in an appropriate and relational way, we, in our moment, will find ourselves taking up a certain distance from what Jung, in his moment, wrote about Others.



This is a magnificent image of a bushman hunting. I offer it as a symbol of the desire to make an overdue act of reconciliation towards persons of African heritage and indigenous peoples.

INTRODUCTION

OK – to the talk. Let me summarize it for you. The body of this short presentation divides into two halves.

The first half is a review of some of the many emotional and psychological issues that hover around the concept and the experience of an election, not only this one – the experience and perception of casting and not casting one's vote, of choosing what to do with it.

The second half of the talk stems from me looking at myself in (and sometimes through) the looking glass and, as a result, trying to hold up a second mirror to you who are listening to me. In this second half, we will enter a difficult discussion about political violence. Political violence is the polar opposite of an electoral process, isn't it? Hence, engaging with the fact and the image of political violence can't be avoided.

Naturally, there are some concluding reflections.

Here's the summary of the summary: you can say to people that 'Andrew's talk was on voting and violence!'

Now, let's look at elections.

PART 1 ELECTIONS

VOTING AND THE SOUL

If orgasm marks the physiological end point of sexual intercourse, then voting in an election marks a similar climax to participation in a collective political process. As with orgasm, that isn't the end of the story, there will be

more sex, just as there will be more politics. But, in general terms, when an election is done, it is, for a while, done – right?

No, wrong! Although a referendum is not an election, it is similar in that, for the moment, things are supposed to be settled. Yet, after the Brexit referendum, we saw a fascinating phenomenon in British politics: an appeal for a second referendum because the majority in the first was not deemed large enough to be decisive.

Petition EU Referendum Rules triggering a 2nd EU Referendum

We the undersigned call upon HM Government to implement a rule that if the remain or leave vote is less than 60% based a turnout less than 75% there should be another referendum.

Sign this petition

4,142,679 signatures

Within a few days, more than four million people had signed the petition to Parliament you see referred to here. Amongst the many interpretations offered of this unprecedented happening, the one I preferred was that there are no lengths to which the privileged and the entitled – the elites – will not go to have things their own way.

I was struck by a passage in *The Economist* in mid-August that noted, in the usual sober and magisterial way that ‘Rather than wait four years for another election, [members] of Team Obama suspect many Americans would feel a patriotic duty to thwart what would in their eyes be the world-threatening

policies of President Trump’. I wonder if this is the liberal equivalent of ‘Lock her up, lock her up’.

Bertolt Brecht went to the heart of the matter in 1953 when the people of East Germany rose up against the Communist leadership who were not exactly pleased: ‘Would it not be easier for the government to dissolve the people?’, he wrote.

I have been following the ways in which many of my American friends and colleagues have responded to the unfolding electoral process. They have been using words like ‘disgusting’ to describe the distortions that the power of money and the penetration of the media bring. They use words like ‘terrifying’ and ‘frightening’ to describe the violence of the political *Zeitgeist*. (Their tone is indeed ‘apocalyptic’, to use Richard Stein’s word in his paper to the conference.)

At first, I was dismissive. I found myself wondering what was different this time, and, when I handed in my title, that was where I was at – ‘So, what did you expect?’ Don’t you already know that when money talks, you are condemned to listen? Surely, I thought, my friends and colleagues have known for years and years that there is a systemic problem to consider, and no reason to expect anything else. Actually, I wondered, when was it ever different? Hence: ‘So, what did you expect?’ Thus spoke the Englishman.

I was wrong. I apologise. I got it wrong – for two things are markedly different. The first is the *sheer level and quality of disgust*. And the second is the *sheer level and quality of fear in relation to political violence*.

I’d like to say a few words about disgust. In my book *The Political Psyche* back in 1993, I wrote that ‘political disgust is lurking alongside the shallowness and cruelty of much of modern life; our subjectivity is full of it’. I’ve continued to explore and write about political disgust. The body-rooted emotion and sensation

of disgust is politically diagnostic, for retching and the gag reflex are amongst the most basic of survival mechanisms. Our politics are killing us so we want to vomit them out. (Maybe this will come into Francisco's talk on the body tomorrow.) But what if disgust reaches such a pinnacle of intensity that, rather than aiding survival, it paralyses citizens? Is that where American politics are right now? Has disgust - the evolutionary solution to ingesting something toxic – now itself become the very source of societal poisoning?



This image was chosen to reflect what the same American friends and colleagues have been writing ever more passionately to me. Many of them (not all) are moving in favour of what the psephologists (meaning experts on elections) call 'tactical voting' – in plain language, 'voting with a clothespin on the

nose'. An image like this one of the boy and the knife is relevant whoever wins; it shows what political disgust and fear is like.



I want to ask what this kind of voting does to the psychological state of voter and nation alike? What does it do to people reading this, if it applies to them? (Actually, even if you have voted without the clothespin, you will know people who applied it.) What did it do to them psychologically?

It may help to drill down a bit deeper to see what is going on, from a psychopolitical point of view, in this kind of clothespin voting behaviour.

In a series of writings, culminating in 1919, the founding sociologist Max Weber drew a distinction between two major sets of political values: one he called the ethic of conviction (*Gesinnungsethik*) and the other he named the ethic of responsibility (*Verantwortungsethik*).

Succinctly, an ethics of responsibility – which we may take as inspiring tactical voting via clothespin – is a way to find what will work in practice to reach

one's political goals. Whereas an ethics of conviction is seen by Weber as an expression of the political and social freedom and autonomy of what he – rather unexpectedly – calls 'the soul'.

In Weber's time, a sociologist could freely write of 'the soul'! I don't think my colleagues in the Essex department of sociology, the leading one in the UK, would be so keen on the idea. By the way, I couldn't find any references to Max Weber in Jung's *Collected Works* which means that bringing the opposites of conviction and responsibility together is a job remaining to be done.

So - here's my question: how does clothespin voting bear down on the freedom and autonomy of the soul? We know it can work. You know that you – or many of you – will perform this in a month's time. But how are you and, I add, your clients and patients, your students, your workmates and colleagues, and your families – *how are you affected or damaged by such a course of action?* Can your inauthenticity in a good cause be sequestered and corralled so that there are no long term outcomes? Is the rider so firmly in control of the horse? Can the dykes hold back the rising waters? Can the square peg go in the round hole? Can the political soul survive the distortion of the clothespin and retain any kind of integrity?

Well, I don't know the precise answer and maybe there isn't one and it depends on who you are. It depends to a degree on psychological type, and even on 'political type' - who you are as a citizen, your political history, and what exactly is at stake for you as a political subject. This point is beautifully grasped in the title of Chapter 6 of John Beebe's new book on psychological types: 'The stretch of individual typologies in the formation of cultural attitudes'. Maybe it is individual typology that determines how clothespin voting works for an individual.

Anyway, this is what I am asking: How can you vote with a clothespin on your nose and retain connection to deeper considerations? Maybe one can promise ‘to do better next time’? This would mean, say, voting for Mrs Clinton in November, but promising in public, in what one hopes will seem like a less cataclysmic ‘next time’, an intent exists to vote *as the voter one really is*, and vote (just to give an example) for the Green Party? Even Senator Sanders didn’t go that far when he urged his supporters (in effect) to adhere solely to Weber’s ethic of responsibility and support Mrs Clinton.

That piece of imagining brings the first part, the first ‘V’ of my talk – voting – to a close. Now for the second ‘V’ – violence, political violence.

Part 2: POLITICAL VIOLENCE

The world is frighteningly coloured by the naked is-ness of political violence. It is hard to pick one’s way through its omnipresence. Just recently: Israel/Palestine, Egypt, Ukraine, Nigeria, Turkey, Tunisia, Syria, Paris, Brussels, and many American states. Your election is shot through with violence, isn’t it? Violence against women, minorities, opponents, and other nations.

My worry is that, by raising the problem of political violence, I might be perceived as making an inflated claim, either on my own behalf or on behalf of my profession, of offering to solve, or to salve, our terrifying situation. Yes, this possibility has worried me deeply. But I am not offering such a solution.

What I am trying to do, and I do know it is a tad ambitious, is to probe the psychological limits of political violence. Political violence may be seen as the ultimate expression of passion in politics and as a sign, whether we like it or not,

of an ethics of conviction. But, on the other hand, political violence has the immediate effect of halting whatever conversations might be going on and hence may be judged to be an abject failure of politics.

Yet it is hard completely to divorce politics and political violence. Therefore I feel that a discussion about politics at the time of this particular election that avoids the question of political violence lacks a crucial ingredient.

What can we say about political violence? To answer this has been a preoccupation of mine, a personal journey, for what seems like forever.

The following questions are not at all new ones, and particularly not when asked in overtly political settings. What definitions of political violence are of the most use to us? When, if ever, is violent political behaviour justified in politics? If such violence is sometimes justified, then in what circumstances and carried out by which agents? Is political violence an unexceptional response to oppression and frustration, to class-based economic injustice, to the 99%-1% split, to austerity and neo-liberal conceptions of the market, to billionaire democracy, to racism, and to capitalism? Is political violence justified as 'the last resort'? Or is it always a 'bad thing'? How does political violence compare to war, especially wars claimed to be defensive?

Analysts, therapists and other psychologically minded people are used to digging out subtle root causes and hidden meanings. How could they possibly be so crude as to take sides in a violent social or political dispute, let alone join in? How may they best support other individuals and groups that, for reasons considered sound and pressing, have adopted political violence in pursuit of their ends? Engaging with political violence raises serious problems for people, like

most of us here I should imagine, whose commitment is usually to keeping the peace, preferring voting to violence.

You see, in the world of analysts and therapists, including people who are interested in analysis and therapy, the majority of us seem to have assumed that non-violence is the only conceivable default position in politics.

Gradually – and this is the looking glass part of my talk - over around 40 years of being an analyst, I have come to see that things as apparently laudable as even-handedness and non-violence may also be rather elitist and Olympian perspectives to adopt. They may carry a narcissistic shadow. So I worry about the so-called ‘balanced view’ that some colleagues take towards political situations in which there is perhaps no such balance to be found. Isn’t this our very own ‘analytic violence’?

These problems for analysts and therapists have been addressed incisively by my friend and colleague Renos Papadopoulos (1998):

Whenever we address violence, as mental health professionals, we are bound to locate it in the context of the pathology-health polarity. Violence ... will invariably end up being pathologized; that is, violence will not be associated with health. (p. 457)

I can illustrate some aspects of our problem that Papadopoulos identified by recounting what happened when I asked the members of *five* separate on-line professional discussion lists – activist, scholarly and clinical (Jungian and psychoanalytic) - for assistance in finding literature from their fields that engaged the question of political violence in an open-minded way. To emphasise: these list members were not all clinicians though some were. What I got back was around

thirty references to *non-violence*, passive resistance, and Ghandi. No-one sent me anything on political violence. I was surprised and thoughtful.

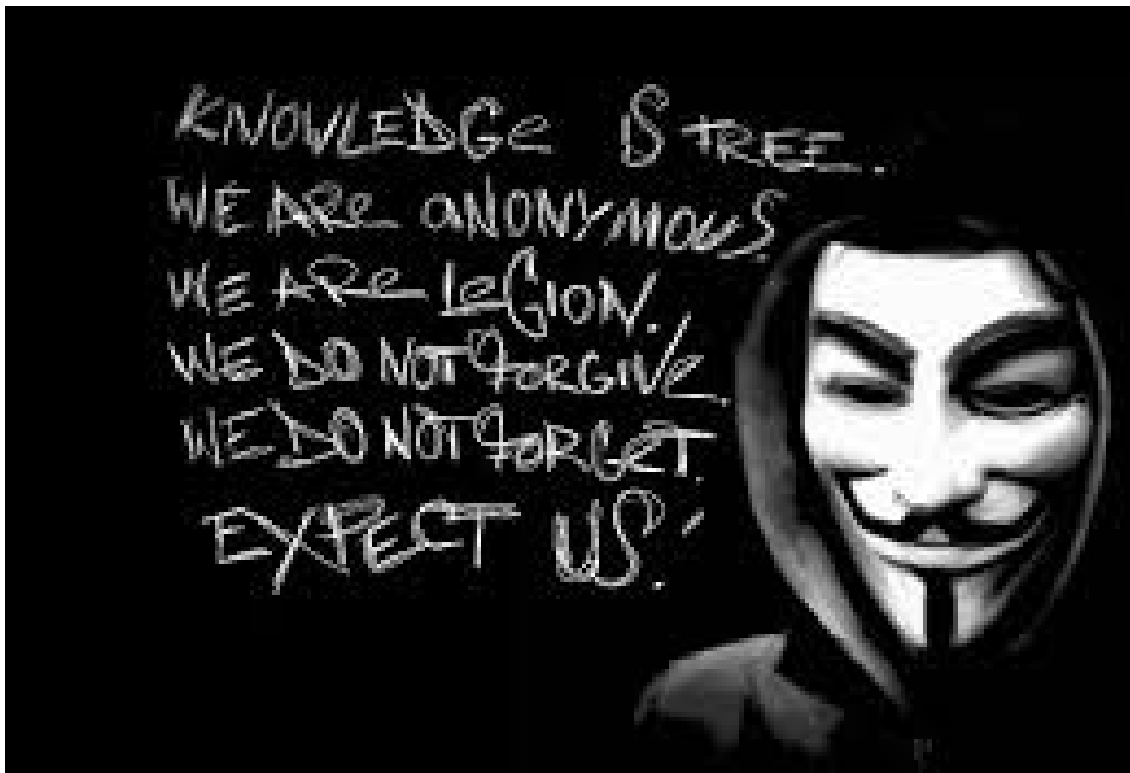


However, over many years reading and re-reading, I have not found the literature in favour of absolute non-violence in politics to be particularly or always convincing, though I respect it and can partly identify with what is being expressed. But I think any kind of Jungian background undermines one's confidence in non-violence. Here I have been massively influenced by the psychological realism of John Beebe's anthology on terror, violence and destruction (2003), James Hillman's book on war (2004), and Luigi Zoja's book on violence (2009). Without resorting to biologism or evolutionary theory, Beebe, Hillman and Zoja's imaginative and scholarly treatments of the topic have made

the unwavering adoption of non-violence as the only possible psychological stance very difficult.

So - I haven't found theories of absolute non-violence helpful.

But neither do I find romantic, artistic and anarchist (or nihilist) glorifications of violence to be of assistance when bringing therapy thinking into an engagement with political violence. Yet I certainly understand what Bakunin meant when he said 'The urge to destroy is a creative urge'.



But, despite the iconic Vendetta mask and the ingenuity of the international Anonymous group of anarchists I don't think this nineteenth century retro romantic violentistic perspective, or its language, works well for us today.

Similarly, important ideas, such as those promoted by Slavoj Žižek and others, concerning the deep and universal presence of state violence, and the internalisations we all make of that, don't help us much when confronted as individuals with the problem of political violence.

To summarise: I have reviewed approaches that I can deeply respect but do not think will help us much in our current hour of need - such as a Gandhian stance of non-violence, or romanticization of political violence by anarchists, or notions of state violence.

What I want to do now is to discuss something that I call the 'Mandela-Ghandi fantasy'. I find this political fantasy to be a troubling sign of a massive psychopolitical problem. Going into it, puts flesh on the bones of our deliberations.

In a nutshell, I have often found that people with relatively little knowledge of the South African situation regard Nelson Mandela as having followed the path of non-violence. Yet, in 1964, at his trial for planning violent revolution and committing sabotage, he stated:

It [is] unrealistic and wrong for African leaders to continue preaching peace and non-violence at a time when the Government met our peaceful demands with force.



The picture shows the freedom salute being given as the convicted (including Mandela) are taken to Robben Island.

Many people who today celebrate South Africa's liberal constitution find it difficult to accept that the carefully and tightly controlled and targeted tactics of the African National Congress's military wing – *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (Spear of the Nation, known as MK) played a significant part in bringing down the Apartheid regime and Mandela to power.

At this point in my talk, I need to confess to my anxieties at the turn it is taking. I imagine you can empathise with what I fear: that I will be badly misunderstood as *advocating* violence, and of departing from the balanced, even-handed and reflective Hippocratic position that a Jungian analyst should take.

The main problem addressed by those who write about political violence in an open-minded way is how to turn the faucet off once it has been turned on. This

question certainly makes me rather agitated. For we certainly can't control the flow of things when violence enters the political picture.

Hannah Arendt put it like this, in a prescient article in the *New York Review of Books* in 1969:

If the goals of political violence are not achieved rapidly, the result will not merely be defeat but the introduction of the practice of violence into the whole body politic. Action is irreversible.

Yet even Hannah Arendt noted that:

Violence, contrary to what its prophets try to tell us, is a much more effective weapon of reformers than of revolutionists.

And she quotes Conor Cruise O'Brien with approval: 'Violence is sometimes needed for the voice of moderation to be heard'.

Indeed, despite her worries over the widespread political violence in the US and Europe in the 1960s, Arendt was ever careful to state and restate that political violence may be conceived of as 'rational'. Political violence is rational. I believe she would agree that sometimes, for anything to really matter, for example for American Black Lives to Matter in 2016, *it takes a riot*. This picture is from the 1960s of course.



But this picture of the New Black Panther Party is from earlier this year, taken in Baton Rouge.



Reflecting on this image, would you say ‘this is democracy’, or ‘is this democracy?’



This is a Jewish sniper in the Warsaw ghetto. If we look around, we see that such examples of ‘rational’ political violence abound and have always done so. Some of the images that move us the most include the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943, and many other examples of national liberation struggles in the past, such as the American War of Independence – and in the present, including that of Palestine today.

Anyhow, in response to the terror of terror which envelops this election, I have found myself writing about political violence. I have greatly appreciated the Jungian analyst Alan Vaughan’s wise response to a first draft of this presentation in which he correctly heard me as suggesting that politics and violence are unavoidably related and their linkage can usefully be considered beyond the existing binary of non-violence and violence.

There is, of course, much more which could be said. I could have talked about the sexualised aspects of political violence, its tendencies towards sado-masochism, its gendered and ethnic variations. There just wasn't time in 40 minutes.

Be that as it may, I hope you will agree that it matters a lot what our attitude to political violence is, it matters a lot how we relate to the idea of political violence, it matters a lot that analysts and therapists join in discussions about political violence. It matters because political violence in all its many forms is perhaps the key collective issue of our times. That is why I decided to take my talk into an election danger zone.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

To reprise: the two main V themes of the presentation have been a questioning of what clothespin voting in an election does to the soul of the citizen, and a call for a nuanced depth psychological exploration of the phenomenon of political violence.

Antonio Gramsci, the Italian activist, writing from prison in the 1920s, famously advocated 'pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will'. Yes, we could certainly pack up in pessimistic despair and stumble home tonight, depressed and broken.

It is sad that many people in many countries feel that they cannot 'make a difference' in today's politics. You hear this from the couch and you hear it from friends and colleagues all the time. They may vote or they may not vote but they

feel impotent whatever they actually do. That's the pessimism.

Here's the optimism: I think these citizens are being way too hard on themselves. True, they become guilty and self-critical when things don't work out as planned. Their idealism and energy goes underground, falling back into the unconscious, self-repressed. Then we pessimists say we are burned out. But isn't it our own wondrous optimistic fire that so consumes us? Are we not better than a pile of ashes? I believe we are.

Indeed, I think millions of citizens who seem to have rejected or become indifferent to politics are, secretly and valuably, as political as you could ever want. They *are* political 'Even if their very souls shrink from the political uproar, the lying propaganda, and the jarring speeches of the demagogues' – as Jung put it in 1946. They are faced with a hell of a challenge – and they can, I am 100% sure, mount a hell of a response. Great nations always can. Great peoples always can rise to the challenge of today's politics, to the challenge of the election and its aftermath: *to live without illusions - and without becoming disillusioned*.

Governments constantly try to improve things in the political world, usually by increasing and very occasionally by redistributing wealth. Or they alter the legislative and constitutional structures or defuse warlike situations. It is *not* that nothing whatsoever is being tried to make things better.

But a materialist approach deriving exclusively from economics, or one that depends solely on altering the structures of the state, will not refresh those parts of the individual citizen that a psychological perspective can reach. There is such disappointment in today's societies that are failing to deliver the spiritual

goods and provide a sense of meaning and purpose.

We can change the clothes, shift the pieces around, but the specter that haunts materialist and constitutional moves in the political world is that they only ruffle the surface. These attempts do not (because, alone, they cannot) bring about the transformations for which the collective political world and the individual political soul so desperately yearn.

Reference

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Andrew Samuels is a Jungian analyst and professor who has worked internationally as a political consultant. He is the founder of Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility (UK), Consultant Editor of *Psychotherapy and Politics International*, and co-editor of *Analysis and Activism: Social and Political Contributions of Jungian Psychology* (2016). Amongst other books, he is the author of *The Political Psyche* (1993), *Politics on the Couch* (2001), *Persons, Passions, Psychotherapy, Politics* (2014), and *A New Therapy for Politics?* (2015).

Politics, Character, and the Socially Mediated Candidate

**Betty S. Flowers, Professor Emeritus,
University of Texas, Austin**

I'm speaking from the perspective of a Jungian-influenced literary critic who agrees with Peter Drucker that "Culture eats strategy for breakfast." First: perhaps a "health warning" should be offered. Listen to what the critics had to say about Trump's 1987 book, *The Art of the Deal*:

"Trump makes one believe for a moment in the American dream again."

[That was the *NY Times* critic.]

"The man has flair . . . It should be read because Trump is one of the Great Characters who help define New York's peculiar urban style."

And I agree with these critiques – not only about the book but about the Trump phenomenon itself. Trump has convinced 40% of Americans to *believe* in him. And “flair” is one way to describe his flamboyant performance of electoral politics.

But there are more colorful cultural critiques than “flair” these days: Hillary has been compared to a witch and Trump to Hitler in spite of the dampening effect of Godwin’s law, which the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines as follows: “A facetious aphorism maintaining that as an online debate increases in length, it becomes inevitable that someone will eventually compare someone or something to Adolf Hitler or the Nazis.”

My former student, Mike Godwin, who originated Godwin’s law, has an addendum for this election. Mike has said, “If you're thoughtful about it and show some real awareness of history, go ahead and refer to Hitler or Nazis when you talk about Trump. Or any other politician.”

Mike – I’m not going to go there.

Policies

When it comes to policies in this election, pundits are flummoxed:

Trump’s policies – policies?

Millennials moving from Bernie Sanders to Trump.

Religious folk voting for Trump.

Republicans voting for Johnson, a libertarian who’s against almost everything traditional Republicans stand for.

Republicans voting for Trump, a party of one who's against almost everything traditional Republicans stand for.

In every case, these aspects of the election are not so much about the policy difference but the policy *indifference*.

So much for policy. Culture eats policy for breakfast.

The relationship between the American public and personae

Persona is a term popularized by Jung, who defined it as “a kind of mask, designed on the one hand to make a definite impression upon others, and on the other to conceal the true nature of the individual.”¹



The idea behind the term is not new. As Hamlet said, “. . . one may smile, and smile, and be a villain.” And it’s not the first time that candidates have pointed out what villains their opponents are. In the election of 1800, Jefferson's camp accused President Adams of having a “hideous hermaphroditical character, which has neither the force and firmness of a man, nor the gentleness and sensibility of a woman.” In return, Adams' men called Vice President Jefferson “a

¹ *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, 1953.

mean-spirited, low-lived fellow, the son of a half-breed Indian squaw, sired by a Virginia mulatto father.”²

But although this election is not the first time that candidates have pointed out what villains their opponents are, it’s the first time this has been done in the context of a general public obsession with creating personae, consciously and deliberately, in order to display them and elicit clicks and likes. Some people seem to be working on persona creation 24/7: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, selfies.

This persona obsession marks a significant shift. A young person will typically spend much more time creating his or her persona then consciously trying to shape his or her character. Can you imagine your typical 20 year-old deciding to embark on a course of “moral perfection,” as Benjamin Franklin did? Franklin created a list of four resolutions, including to “speak all the good I know of every body.”³ Or can you imagine a 16-year old copying out by hand 110 *Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation*? George Washington did. Rule #50: “Be not hasty to believe flying Reports to the Disparagement of any.”

² <http://mentalfloss.com/article/12487/adams-vs-jefferson-birth-negative-campaigning-us> [accessed 11 Oct. 2016]

³ http://www.pbs.org/benfranklin/13_wit_self.html [accessed 11 October 2016]



Character is almost an obsolete word, along with *destiny*, *nobility*, *civility*, *temperance*, *fortitude*, *grace*. It refers to our judgment of stable moral qualities. George Washington, for example, was universally believed to have a good character. One reason we have a republic rather than a democracy is that our founders thought that responsible people (male property owners) would elect men they knew to be of good character to represent the ignorant – the uninformed - masses.

Washington is a good example of a politician who built a persona with the qualities of good character. It's as if the public of his time looked at a person to see if he measured up to a universal standard – a set of admirable qualities. George measured up in spite of his wooden false teeth.

But in a culture of persona-making, we don't judge a politician by a universal standard of character but by how closely we think the persona mirrors

the person underneath the mask. We value not character but *authenticity*. This shift – from character to authenticity – is significant in our culture and is crucial to this election.

For example: The last time I looked at Politifact's Truth-o-Meter, Trump outscored Clinton in every negative category: mostly false 18% to Clinton's 15; False 35 for Trump to 10 for Clinton; and Pants on Fire 18 to Clinton's 2 for a score of 71% on the false side to Clinton's 27%. And yet who is considered the liar? And not just because Trump says so, but because in our persona culture, *Trump is more authentic than Hillary*. If you imagine, for a moment, that they are both liars, then whose persona matches the liar reality? Who says, "I didn't" when everyone can see the YouTube video that says he did? Hillary wears the persona of a competent, righteous truth-teller; Trump shrugs. If character doesn't matter so much, the *authentic* liar is preferred to a *hypocritical* one, no matter what the number of lies might be. *The public wants an authentic persona, not one striving to convey good character.*

All of us are flawed. Any attempt to project perfection will come up against the ability of our fellow humans to sniff out even the slightest incongruity – even one nanobite of persona discontinuity with self will be perceived. In the past, this gap was to our credit. "I may not be perfect, but I'm trying to be." Or, as the poet Robert Browning put it, "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, / Or what's a heaven for?" We might have seen this discontinuity between persona and the person who's trying to be good, but hey – at least he's trying.

Trump isn't trying. He even lies about the lies. We don't perceive any distance between his persona and the self behind the mask. He's *authentic*. We like that because we can *trust* that. What you see is what you get.

This is particularly important to the young people who've grown up with an intimate relationship to the internet. They know that online companies scale their businesses by the non-transparent exploitation of people. It comes with the territory. Politics, by definition, is not a transparent business. We come into contact with it most often at the office – “office politics” is a term we're very familiar with. The dictionary characterizes it as “activities within an organization that are aimed at improving someone's status or position and are typically considered to be devious or divisive.” All politics these days is seen as office politics.

Hillary may be an experienced, astute, hard-working, knowledgeable, smart, and well-intentioned person, who, as a Methodist, would have taken John Wesley's instructions to heart at an early age:

Do all the good you can
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.

She may have followed that injunction all her life. But she's a politician. Trump is not. Who, then, is the more trustworthy? Whose motives are devious?

Performances

What does it take to *create* an authentic persona? And isn't this a contradiction in terms? To *create* authenticity? Here's where a literary critic might have something to offer.

If I am watching a successful play, I experience emotions *as if* what's before me were real. Aristotle says a successful tragedy produces a catharsis: the "purgation of pity and fear." *Catharsis* means *cleansing* in Greek. "A Catharsis is an emotional discharge through which one can achieve a state of moral or spiritual renewal or achieve a state of liberation from anxiety and stress."

An actor creates an emotional state in me – and maybe even a catharsis of my own fear – through using his own vital energy to bring a persona to life. In a really good performance, we don't see the actor behind the character – the actor *is* the character. That's how we experience it.

When I was young, I fell in love with Kirk Douglas. Actually, the character I was really falling in love with was Spartacus, as brought to life by Kirk Douglas. Years later, Kirk Douglas was a member of a seminar I co-moderated, and although he was an intelligent and nice enough man, I'd experienced Spartacus – and people, he was no Spartacus.



It doesn't matter how many lies comes out of Trump's mouth – he *performs* an honest man, one who tells it like it is. And he performs this very, very well. No politically correct hypocrisy from him.

“Whoa,” you might object. “Didn't you just say that Trump's persona is experienced as authentic – that the fact that Trump lies doesn't matter because that's who he is, and we value authenticity over a persona constructed around an unreachable ideal? How can Trump be perceived as an authentic liar and yet be performing honesty? Isn't that a contradiction?”

My response: In this culture, an authentic liar can be performing honesty because we have confused authenticity with truth. If you truly believe you're a good person – and who these days doesn't because after all, “everyone is entitled to their own opinion” – if you truly believe you're a good person and not simply trying to be, I will perceive you as *authentic* because your performance – the fit between your persona and your energy - convinces me, *emotionally*, that you are what you say you are. The objective, judging mind looking to an external basis of truth grounded in facts is missing in action. I'm not looking to see if you fit some ideal of character. I'm not looking to see if you're some George Washington. But are you who you *say* you are? If you say, “I'm not a liar” while it's obvious you're lying, you're actually performing the liar absolutely *authentically*. That is a tight fit between persona and self. That is an honest man. He is performing the truth by telling an obvious lie.

In politics as well as in many other aspects of our collective culture, we are becoming a nation of constructed personae. In the past, we modeled our persona

on an ideal of character; today, we construct our persona and present it as a performance, preferably an entertaining one with visuals.

I was at a conference recently where I heard the following sentence – but to understand it, you need to know that “stack” refers to an aspect of software, something inside the computer that serves a function, that actually does the work.⁴ Here’s the sentence I heard: “Now companies are distinguishing themselves through the interface, not the stack.” In essence, companies are “distinguishing themselves” through the performed presentation – the constructed persona – not the inner workings, not the goods themselves. We are a culture of actors distinguishing ourselves through our interfacebookes.

In his *authentic* performance of honesty, Trump has something else going for him that actors know a lot about – energy. We all have what might be called an aura of energy around us. It’s that indescribable something that creates charisma. Now it’s not just energy per se in the sense of stamina – Hillary was absolutely right to say that “as soon as [Trump] travels to 112 countries and negotiates a peace deal, a cease-fire, a release of dissidents, an opening of new opportunities in nations around the world, or even spends 11 hours testifying in front of a congressional committee, he can talk to me about stamina.” It’s not the amount or strength of the energy that counts here, in this election – it’s the *quality*.

⁴ In computer science, a **stack** is an abstract data type that serves as a collection of elements, with two principal operations: push, which adds an element to the collection, and pop, which removes the most recently added element that was not yet removed. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stack_\(abstract_data_type\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stack_(abstract_data_type)). Accessed 4 Oct. 2016.

The Elizabethan psychologists had a sense of this when they talked about four personality types in terms of humors: the phlegmatic, the melancholic or saturnine, the choleric (associated with the red-headed Mars), and the sanguine. Most of our presidents have been of the sanguine type – FDR, Truman, Ike, Kennedy, Reagan, Clinton. We like that genial sunshine to give us hope.



The only melancholic president I can think of was Abraham Lincoln – and in matching the gravity of the events of his time, with all the death of the Civil War, in retrospect, his melancholia seems a kind of wisdom.



But the spirit of the times now is *angry*. And for that, we want to be matched with a choleric temperament – angry and short-tempered. “You’re fired!” That’s what we want to say to the elites and the politicians and the foreigners and the feminists and the gays and the minorities and everyone else we

can find to blame for the mess we're told we're in. America used to be great. What happened?!!

Trump has another quality of energy that's very helpful to him – the energy of the id. Imagine two actors walking onto the stage: one projects the quality of energy of a parent or superego; the other projects the quality or energy of a child, or id. Which one will rivet our attention? Which one is entertainingly unpredictable? When you go to a playground, do you watch the parents? Of course not. It's the children who are fun to watch. They get the ratings and the likes. Do they have a plan? Of course not. They are in the moment. They are entertaining.

It's no accident that in this culture, leadership classes often take the form of teaching executives improv – being in the moment, being entertaining, responding to your partners and the audience, rolling with the punches, learning – *always* –not to say “yes but” but “yes and.”

In *The Leader's Guide to Lateral Thinking Skills*, Paul Sloane says:

Some people misunderstand improv. . . . It seems that improv is all about being funny. But it is not. Improv is about being spontaneous. It is about being imaginative. It is about taking the unexpected and then doing something unexpected with it. . . . The key is to be open to crazy ideas and building on them. [Building a wall and having Mexico pay for it?] And funnily enough, this is exactly what is needed if we are going to make our enterprises more creative and agile.

I got this quote from an online brochure advertising a course at the UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School called, “Leadership Agility: Using Improv to Build Critical Skills.” The brochure quotes another expert in the field. “Honesty is a key to improv,” notes Bob Kulhan, who has worked with the top business schools and companies in the world. “The focus, concentration and honesty required in improv readily apply to the communication skills required in business,” says Kulhan. And these days, in politics.

According to Tina Fey, there are 4 rules of improv:

- #1: Agree and say “yes.”
- #2. Not only “yes, but “yes and.”
- #3. Make statements.
- #4. There are no mistakes, only opportunities.

She goes on to explain:

As an improviser, I always find it jarring when I meet someone in real life whose first answer is no. “No, we can’t do that.” “No, that’s not in the budget.” “No, I will not hold your hand for a dollar.” [No, you can’t build a wall and expect Mexico to pay for it. – Wait, wait, that wasn’t Tina Fey, that was someone else- Amy Poehler?⁵] What kind of way is that to live?

The second rule of improvisation is not only to say “yes,” but “yes, and.” You are supposed to agree and then add something of your own. As Tina Fey says:

⁵ Amy Poehler played Hillary Clinton on SNL.

If I start a scene with “I can’t believe it’s so hot in here,” and you just say, “Yeah...” we’re kind of at a standstill. But if I say, “I can’t believe it’s so hot in here,” and you say “What did you expect? We’re in hell.” Or if I say, “I can’t believe it’s so hot in here” and you say, “Yes, this can’t be good for the wax figures.” Or if I say, “I can’t believe it’s so hot in here,” and you say, “I told you we shouldn’t have crawled into this dog’s mouth,” now we’re getting somewhere.

See, you never apologize for something – you say “yes and” – and keep going. In improv, that “basket of deplorables” is an opportunity.

John Davidio, Yale psych professor, says psychologists talk about three basic dimensions in the way we perceive people: “warmth, competence, and

activity (agency). His research suggests that politicians do not have to be perceived as competent to be seen as effective at taking action.”⁶

When it comes to energy, I think we’re missing some specific kinds of energy in our politics. To visualize these missing energies, we can think of the energies associated with mythical figures, such as gods and goddesses. We are, for example, missing the practical wisdom associated with Athena.



⁶ NYT 25 Sept. 2016.

And we are missing the twin energies of art and birth, associated with the twins Apollo and Artemis.

I remember the birth of the Voting Rights Act, for example, out of the twin political arts of LBJ and Martin Luther King.



They collaborated, as you can hear for yourself in the telephone recordings of conversations between the two, with King pushing from the outside, and LJB working on the inside. At the end, LBJ stood up before Congress and said, “We shall overcome” – and Martin Luther King wept.

We’re also missing the energy of yearning – Demeter energy, as she searches for her lost daughter.

There’s something about politics that’s so inhospitable to yearning. We have to be so sure of our positions. “It ain’t what you don’t know that gets you into trouble,” the quip goes.



“It’s what you know for sure that just ain’t so.” In Plato’s *Symposium*, the wise woman Diotima says that no one who is ignorant will yearn for wisdom. “For what’s especially difficult about being ignorant is that you are content with yourself, even though you’re neither beautiful and good nor intelligent. If you

don't think you need anything, of course you won't want what you don't think you need."⁷

And, of course, we're missing the Aphrodite energy of love – which almost never enters the political arena because so many arguments are built out of fear. And love casts out fear.

The theologian Paul Tillich defines love as “the drive towards the unity of the separated” and power as “the drive of everything living to realize itself” – individuation. Both are necessary to human life. And we need both energies to thrive.



If I were to look deeper into the energies of these two candidates in a spirit of generosity, I would see the underlying energy of love – the drive towards the unity of the separated – in Hillary's campaign theme, “Stronger Together” and the necessary energy of power – the drive to realize the self – in Trump's theme, “Make America Great Again.” May we have the capacity for both love and individuation and the yearning after wisdom to do together what's best for our great country.

⁷ Trans. with introduction and notes by Alexander Nehamas and Paul Woodruff (Hackett, 1989) p. 49.

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Response to Andrew Samuels and Betty Sue Flowers

Steve Zimmelman, Ph.D.

Both these talks are gems and I feel privileged to be in the company of such creative and ethical minds. I want to thank Andrew and Betty Sue for making the long journey to be with us, and to share their intelligent, challenging, thoughtful, pithy, humorous takes on different but related dimensions of the current situation in the polis.

Where we locate ourselves as individuals within a community of analysts and psychotherapists living in the bubble of a highly educated urban community like the Bay Area is at the core of what I wish to contribute to the discussion as respondent. For myself, coming from a very solid working class background with immigrant grandparents who fled the pogroms of Eastern Europe, a father who worked nights sorting mail in the Brooklyn post office and a mother who worked as a typist in Manhattan, I have been privileged to be able to live out a version of the American dream. I share this snippet of my story because it gives you a sense of where I place myself within the broader narrative of how for so many the promise embedded within the story of working people in this country is drifting

further and further away. I see both Andrew's and Betty Sue's talks as reflective of their respective locations, and as they plumb the depths of individual and collective psyche in this election, I wonder how much they are able to account for the fear and resentment underlying the loss of the myth – and the reality - of working and middle-class America.

Betty Sue points out how we are witnessing a deeply disturbing shift that substitutes persona for character, where image becomes increasingly independent of character. Her analysis of the problem goes further to show how authenticity, normally thought to relate to a universal standard of character, is being redefined as a congruence between the image one wishes to project of him or herself on the one hand and how one performs that image on the other. She argues that there is a confusion of authenticity with truth. She taps into the anger characterizing the spirit of the times, an anger in which she also astutely sees as a necessary, attractive energy of the id. In this light, I want to note Gail Collins observation in yesterday's NYT: "Boring people have never looked better."

Betty Sue makes much of the image, the persona, being bifurcated from character. While I appreciate the truth in this, I also want to interrogate it further. I might try to restate her point as follows: what was previously symbolic (which we can regard at its deepest level in terms Jung described as the best possible description or formulation of a relatively unknown fact) has been deflated and flattened, and made into a mere image, a phrase, a claim to truth with no backing in history, either recent or long past. Similarly, the sociologist and philosopher Jean Baudrillard writes of the "fatal process" in which "there is a

definitive immanence of the image, without any possible transcendent meaning, without any possible dialectic of history” where “the medium enfolds exponentially around itself.”

Betty Sue’s comments suggest how the symbolic core of the nation, such as it has ever been, is in danger of being replaced by thin images colored by claims of greatness and selflessness, characterized by unabashed aims to overpower and dominate the other. We might say that the spirit of the times threatens to obliterate the spirit of the depths. Has this not always been so? Any yet, I would argue and suggest alternatively that in our present circumstance the spirit of the depths is embedded within the image, within the spirit of the times. Words and images reflecting racist, xenophobic, misogynistic attitudes reveal fears of the loss of a paradise – a paradise that never really was but that was held up as the national narrative of our freedom, our democracy, and the mythic guarantee that anyone who is willing to work hard can earn his or her place at the table. As we Jungians know it is myth that tells the story of our collective soul, that tells the deepest truths of who we are. In this way, the words and images in the election campaign that seem so bankrupt also carry within them a greater truth which is, in fact, the spirit of the depths: the fear and pain and anger of the middle class that has been the backbone of the nation, and that sees its own dreams drifting away as the income gap between rich and poor grows ever larger and as the dreams of a middle-class life for oneself and one’s children is increasingly more out of reach. Two weeks ago, the NYT endorsement of Clinton stated in part, “The 2016 campaign has brought to the surface the despair and rage of poor and

middle class Americans who say their government has done little to ease the burdens that recession, technological change, foreign competition and war have heaped on their families.” There is great anger about leaving the mythic paradise, even if it never was, or as Lee Hayes once remarked, “Things ain’t what they used to be, and what’s more they never were.” But that perspective doesn’t seem to penetrate people who are frightened and angry, who see their values and livelihood threatened by a new economy in a new world comprised and even run by people who look different than they do and who might just have a name that sounds middle eastern. The price of consciousness, of eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, is to be barred from paradise, and having to work for one’s bread for the rest of eternity. That is not something most of us would vote for.

Andrew’s talk evokes the soulful dimension in electoral politics. What impact does it have on our core self to vote according to an ethics of responsibility – what he calls “clothespin voting” – or if we follow an ethics of conviction and vote our conscience regardless of the reality on the ground. We have had numerous discussions around our dining room table with our twenty-something daughter who is toying with voting Green because she cannot stomach either major party candidate. Andrew asks poignantly, “how can you vote with a clothespin on your nose and still retain connection to these deeper considerations?” He suggests we might approach this in two stages: voting responsibly in the short run to create a space for the operationalizing of

responsibility ethics in the interim, and setting the stage for voting out of conviction in the long term. All good points.

The second half of Andrew's talk is about violence. I see the connection between the two parts of the talk – voting and violence – reflected in how he breaks through the shibboleth of non-violence as the only plausible response to deplorable conditions. He states, “Political violence may be seen as the ultimate expression of passion in politics and as a sign, whether we like it or not, of an ethics of conviction. But, on the other hand, political violence has the immediate effect of halting whatever conversations might be going on and hence may be judged to be an abject failure of politics.” Andrew brings the shadow of violence to consciousness in a brilliant way that allows it to be regarded in the context of this dark time when there is so much anger and rage - when the threat of violence – or perhaps more correctly violence itself – surrounds us and threatens to engulf the national psyche. But has not the U.S. always been a country of violence, shown not only in the fact that we are gun-crazed but that the country was built on violence, including the attempted genocide of Native Americans, enslavement of African Americans and the war on young black men today, not to leave out the epidemic of violence shown in racial disparities in terms of poverty levels, unemployment rates, educational attainment, and incarceration rates? And I would not want to omit mentioning violence against the planet - the rape of the earth.

I find myself appreciating that Andrew is asking these questions about political violence, and that he asks us to question whether the therapist who in an

unexamined way always advocates non-violence is somehow engaging in a form of analytic violence based in his or her own privilege. Yes, I say, there are some circumstances where violence may be justified. Yet at the same time are we even close to this in the U.S.? And if we are not - which I do not think we are - then I want to ask if this is the right time to be raising this question. With all this violence surging around us, is not asking us to ponder the justification for violence a way of pouring gasoline on the flames? As we know from analysis, timing is everything. Maybe we can get to this exploration later. Right now, in these times, it feels incendiary. On the one hand the fact that there is so much anger and violence all around, perhaps makes it particularly important, even crucial, for us to look at the potential for violence and its justifications. On the other, I can only hope that we approach our differences and glaring inequities through a peaceful democratic process that maintains a commitment to the sanctity of human life and that takes the high road and does not devolve to the lowest threshold. As Andrew said, the main problem with taking political violence seriously is how to turn off the faucet once it is turned on.

As we explore these issues, are we asking ourselves where we are located, trying to remain conscious that we are looking through our own lens, in terms of race, ethnicity, social class, gender, and sexuality? Where do any of us place ourselves? Even asking these questions, making these comments in the ways we are, places us at a particular vantage point colored by our privilege, including that of analysts, psychotherapists, and others. To not realize that we speak from our own perspective, one among many, including that of “the basket of deplorables,”

we risk falling into the abyss of alterity, othering those who are different than us, and, at the same time, standing more isolated from our own shadow.

Both these wonderful talks end with a call to the need to find the soul in the body politic. Betty Sue plaintively asks us to have a capacity for love and individuation, to yearn for wisdom, and to work together for the good of the nation. I love her line, “If I were to look deeper into the energies of these two candidates in a spirit of love and yearning, I would see the underlying energy of love in Hillary’s theme, “Better Together” and the necessary energy of power in our yearning, as a people, to “make America great again.” These words go a long way in holding the tension of the opposites, the image of unity and mutual support on the one hand, the image of power and strength on the other. Andrew comes back from being far out on the limb of exploring political violence to remind us that the transformations needed by the collective political world are inextricably linked to addressing the needs of the individual political soul.

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The Archetype of the Apocalypse

What ultra right Christians, the Islamic State, and Climate Change Deniers Have in Common

by Richard Stein

A couple of years ago, I walked out to the beach with an old friend who was visiting from India; it was a beautiful, warm day in January, right after a storm, and the air was crystal clear and the sea calm. As we sat and watched the waves, I said, "It's too bad you can't have a winter day like this anymore and not think about global warming." He paused, then said, "I wasn't thinking about global warming." After a good laugh, we changed the subject to how great it was for him to be back in California.

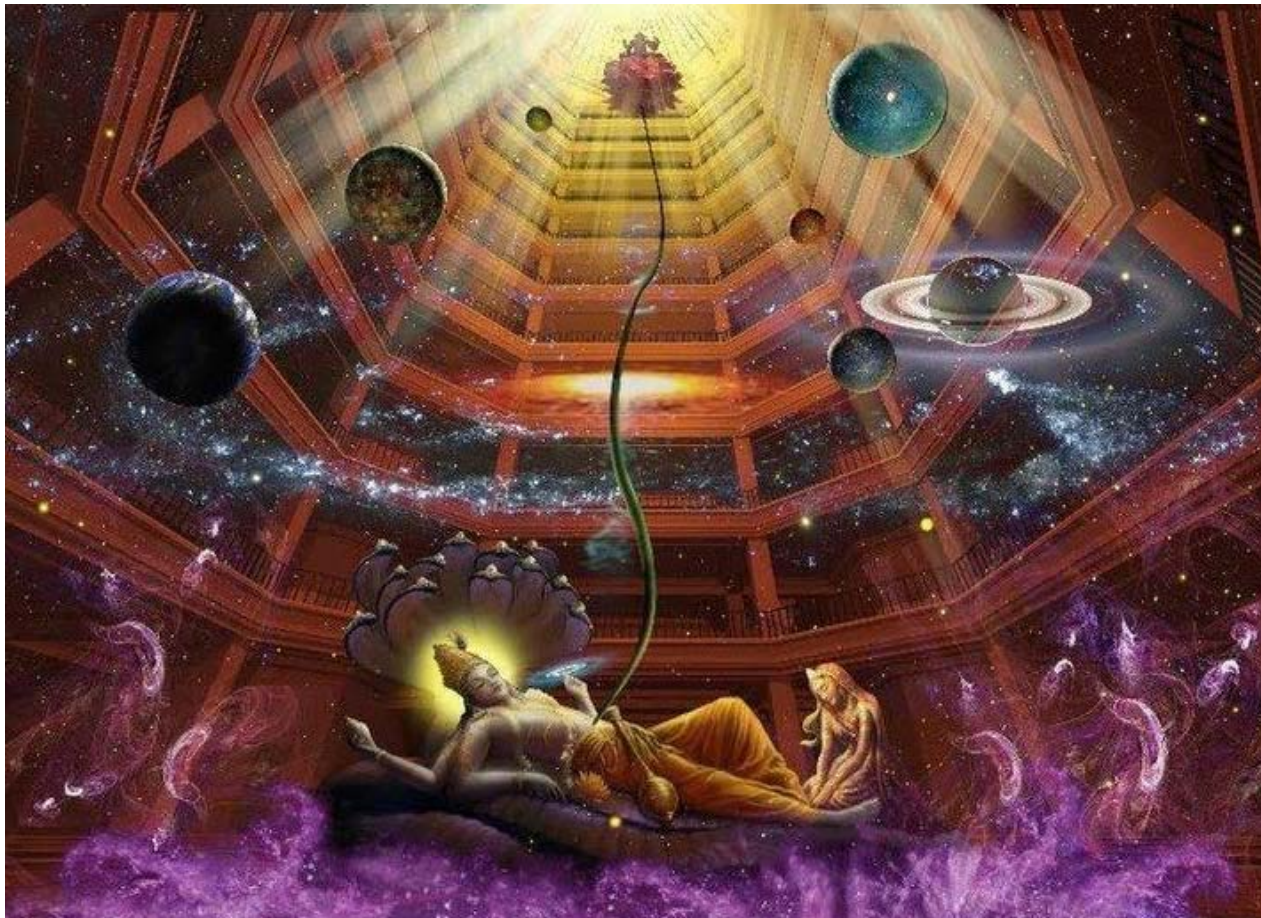
Ever since then, I've taken more careful note of how much we live in a doom and gloom thought machine, about everything from the environment, to the economy, to wars, pollution, and now, of course, the politics of the upcoming election (which seems to have been upcoming for the longest time.) I remember, when I was growing up in the deep South during the Cold war, the nonsensical fire drills to prepare for a nuclear attack. The local air force base in Montgomery was known to be on a Soviet target list, so

the Cuban missile crisis felt viscerally scary, even by today's color coded danger levels; and the fantastical idea that hiding under a wooden desk would somehow prevent me from being burnt to a crisp sowed the first seeds of my mistrust in the government.

In high school, we all read Animal Farm and Brave New World, but 1984 was the first such book to attach a specific date to the coming darkness. The violence of the Civil Rights movement, Viet Nam, and assassinations increased the feeling that we were heading into a time of great destruction. By the time I was in medical school in the late '60's, there was blood in the streets, and we all knew people who'd been sent off to fight in South East Asia. Like many of you must remember, there was something like a collective mood to the late '60's, on the one hand a dire sense of crisis, but on the other a hopeful expectation of renewal and social change. Behind this was the Cold War, with its ominous warnings about Mutual Assured Destruction and Nuclear Winter. It seemed that for the first time, humanity was in a position to destroy itself.

The ancient religions of the Near and Far East had their own mythologies for apocalypse, but it was in the hands of the gods, not the realm of human invention or insanity. In India, Vishnu had created the universe out of his navel, but would, at the end of time, withdraw it back into himself. He was linked with Yama, the god of death, who was known to the Persians as Yima. It is in pre-Islamic Persia that the god of death and destruction, who is also a redeemer to the faithful, takes on the features that will shape the religions of Abraham. Zarathustra believed that Ahura Mazda would overcome his enemy in a final battle, destroy all evil, and restore the order of the cosmos, joining together heaven and earth. This prophecy gave birth to the Messianic idea in Judaism and laid the seeds for the "Second Coming" in Christianity. Over time, with the ascendancy of monotheism in Western culture, the positive dominion of the god-image

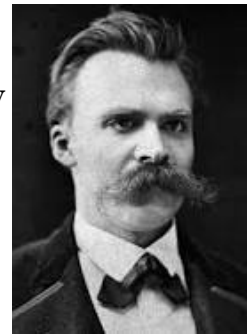
was ensconced in heaven, leaving the split off destructive aspects to the devil and hell. As long as things in the human realm remain stable and relatively tolerable, the god of light is protecting us, but when they go awry for too long, that belief is strained.



As we shall see, the archetype of the apocalypse took different forms in these religions, but the underlying assumption was that it would be up to the gods or God as to if and when this happened. The belief was:

“If God is not going to intervene to save us in time, then He will end time itself.”

Then something in the collective psyche changed. Forces building since the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the ascendancy of science led to the overthrow of this old structure. In Thus Spake Zarathustra, Frederick Nietzsche said publicly what many had been thinking in private. This old god-image was dead. But while his



“atheistic” position has received so much attention, the larger context of his message has often been overlooked. In part 3 of the Prologue, Zarathustra says:

“I conjure you, my brethren, REMAIN TRUE TO THE EARTH, and believe not those who speak unto you of superearthly hopes! Poisoners are they, whether they know it or not.

Despisers of life are they, decaying ones and poisoned ones themselves, of whom the earth is weary: so away with them!

Once blasphemy against God was the greatest blasphemy; but God died, and therewith also those blasphemers. To blaspheme the earth is now the dreadfulest sin...”

The ongoing conflict between religion and science in society shows how epochal were Nietzsche's predictions about the passing of an age; the “despisers of life,” as he calls them, are still around in large numbers. And nothing really exposes this contempt for life on earth more than the religious zeal of organized, apocalyptic groups. In the brief time we have, I want to explore two of today's religious expressions of the Abrahamic apocalypse, and suggest an unconscious connection to a very real apocalyptic threat and anti-scientific belief system that has arisen in our times. The undeniable

reality of climate change raises the specter of a new kind of apocalypse, and the question of how much this is due to human activity. If God is dead, as Nietzsche proclaimed, then the destructive power once attributed to him is now in human hands. But before looking at the current situation, I'd like to review some historical background of the Abrahamic religions and their versions of the archetype of the apocalypse.

The Hebrew Bible

The earliest known Biblical scripture of this type is the Book of Daniel. Written during the Maccabean wars in the second century BCE, the first part of it refers to predictions that were supposed to have been made many centuries earlier but were now coming true. The Hebrew people had faced the flood, the bondage in Egypt, and then the Babylonian exile in the 7th Century BCE. In each case, they were rescued by “the outstretched hand” of God in these moments of crisis. During the time of Daniel, they were faced with persecution and the growing threat of the Assyrian empire. As things got worse, the promise of “the kingdom of God on earth” seemed more remote than ever. The building tensions led to two new forms of religious belief, expressed by the shamans of these desert tribes. The first was an apocalyptic vision of the end of time: if God does not deliver us in time, He will end time and the creation itself. This motif goes back to the Persian prophet Zarathustra more than a thousand years earlier, who is the main character in Nietzsche's literary masterpiece.



Zarathustra (aka Zoroaster in Greek) was born in 628 BCE



The word “apocalypse” in Greek actually means “revelation” in the sense of uncovering. What is revealed in the apocalypse is the voice of God, as spoken through his prophet. In the case of Judaism, it was ascribed to Daniel, while in Christianity it is Jesus Christ. In order to make space, so to speak, for this new teaching, the old one has to be destroyed.

The other emerging form of thought during this historic period was Gnostic. One of the basic beliefs of the early Jewish gnostics was that the god who presided over this creation is not the true god, but a demonic power. The only way out was to be rescued by “the real God” who would send his female counterpart in the form of Sophia to save us. These two streams of prophecy emerged in the century before Jesus, and *it seems quite possible that Jesus’ genius was to synthesize them in a teaching about the inner world. As he said: The Kingdom of God is within.* Obviously this psychologically difficult task did not succeed for the masses who flocked to early Christianity, especially after the new religion was adopted by Constantine of Rome for state purposes. Although variations of both visions were developed since then, outer events in the last century have revitalized them. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1946 led to a new understanding of early gnostic wisdom, at the same time that the explosion of the atomic bomb created fertile soil for the apocalyptic vision to re-emerge with renewed vigor.



Revelations

The Christian belief in the second coming of Christ dates to the early centuries

after Jesus, but the widespread form of it known as “the Rapture” is relatively modern. Beginning in England in the 1830's, it spread to the United States where it became popular in the 20th Century. The earlier version was a raising of the souls of the departed to be reunited with Christ in heaven, but in its later “pre-tribulation” form, the remainder of humanity is left to live through a terrible time on earth. As with much apocalyptic prophecy, it uses past predictions to bolster the belief in future ones, and anticipates a worsening of conditions for the faithful leading up to a final catastrophe.



Certainly the 1870's, when Nietzsche wrote “Zarathustra”, were a frightening and unstable time, with one of the worst economic collapses in Western history (the Panic of 1873). The difficulties which began then led in a generation to the Great War, which ended in catastrophe in 1918. It was in early 1919 that this prophetic vision was given famous literary expression by the poet William Butler Yeats:

The Second Coming

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.
Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.
The Second Coming! Hardly are those words out
When a vast image out of *Spiritus Mundi*
Troubles my sight: somewhere in sands of the desert
A shape with lion body and the head of a man,
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun,
Is moving its slow thighs, while all about it
Reel shadows of the indignant desert birds.
The darkness drops again; but now I know
That twenty centuries of stony sleep
Were vexed to nightmare by a rocking cradle
And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?





**YOU MUST
BE SIN FREE**

**PLEASE REPENT
Take No Chances!**

Otherwise
**YOU WILL BE
LEFT BEHIND!**

The Rapture is Imminent

**You MUST Repent Every Day of Your Sins
You MUST mean it with all your heart!**

- No Sex Outside of Marriage
- No Addictions (smoking, pot, drugs, etc.)
- No Pornography
- No Fighting, Anger, Dissensions or Hatred
- You MUST have forgiven EVERYONE

Do NOT get LEFT BEHIND!

JESUS CHRIST is coming for a **SPOTLESS BRIDE!**

*A Massive
Earthquake / Tsunami
will Likely Precede
the Rapture*

*California & New York
will be Destroyed*

THIS IS IT!

For Special Prayers to Help You and Your Family Prepare, Please Go Here
<http://www.tribulation-now.org/rapture-prayers-for-purification/>

It is no longer shocking to learn that over half of Americans believe that the Rapture is real and will happen soon, and a quarter of those polled expect the return of Jesus by the year 2050. These staggering numbers contributed to the election of George W. Bush as the 43rd president, and have enabled a new and deeply disturbing myth at

the heart of American politics. One of the darker effects has been on US relations to the Middle East. American Evangelicals raise huge amounts of money for Israel, but to what end? They believe firmly in the end of days, and in the Book of Revelations' anticipation that this will arrive at a time when the “holy land” is united as Jewish territory, so it can be the center of the final holy war.



The battlefield will be on the plains of “Har Meggido,” (Hebrew for “strong

mountain,"); this name was translated into the Greek version of the New Testament as Armagheddon. Now in modern Israel, it was an ancient place on the trade route between Egypt and Assyria. In this collective belief, the land is very important, but not in and of itself, much less for the benefit of the people who live on it. This land is simply the place predicted by myth for the final destruction of earthly life. There are four groups run by Evangelical churches for followers to view the future battlefield where Russian tanks from neighboring Arab states will fight the Israeli army. The money raised by these churches and preachers does not go to the Israeli government or even to aid groups, but is solely for the purpose of strengthening and expanding the settlement movement. This serves two purposes: first it helps to expand the Jewish presence into historic areas meant to be part of a unified Israel, and second, this blocks any attempt to find a peaceful two state solution to the conflict. These same groups have enormous lobbying influence in the US Congress. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's 2015 speech to the U.S. Congress, which helped insure his re-election back home, was aimed at this part of the "conservative base" in the U.S. More recently, the US Congress passed the largest military aid package for Israel in history. Of course, the well-being of Israel or the Jews is not the primary concern of these pro-Israeli groups, because the Jews, as non-believers, are damned like the rest of humanity. There is a loop hole however, in that the Jews who accept Jesus at the end of time will go up in the Rapture, while those who don't, like everyone else, will live through the great 'tribulations' and perish. This is even portrayed in grade B rapture films as an Israeli soldier who "sees the light" and is lifted from the battlefield up into heaven.



Har Meggido



The Islamic State

Now we turn to the Islamic counterpart to this Christian apocalyptic myth. The fundamentalist Sunni groups who have spearheaded ISIS have their own version of this belief. As a more recent phenomenon, it is less well known to us in the West, mistakenly equated with Al Qaeda, and taken by some to be the result of American foreign policy blunders of the last and current centuries. Actually the belief system it is based on is much older than the Bible or the Koran, and its aims are far more otherworldly than its predecessor's political goals. Al Qaeda has specific geopolitical aims in this world, such as the expulsion of non-Muslims out of their Holy Land and the annihilation of Israel. What ISIS represents is an apocalyptic force within Islam, based on very literal belief in the early dictates of the Koran, including the establishment of a new Caliphate. But even

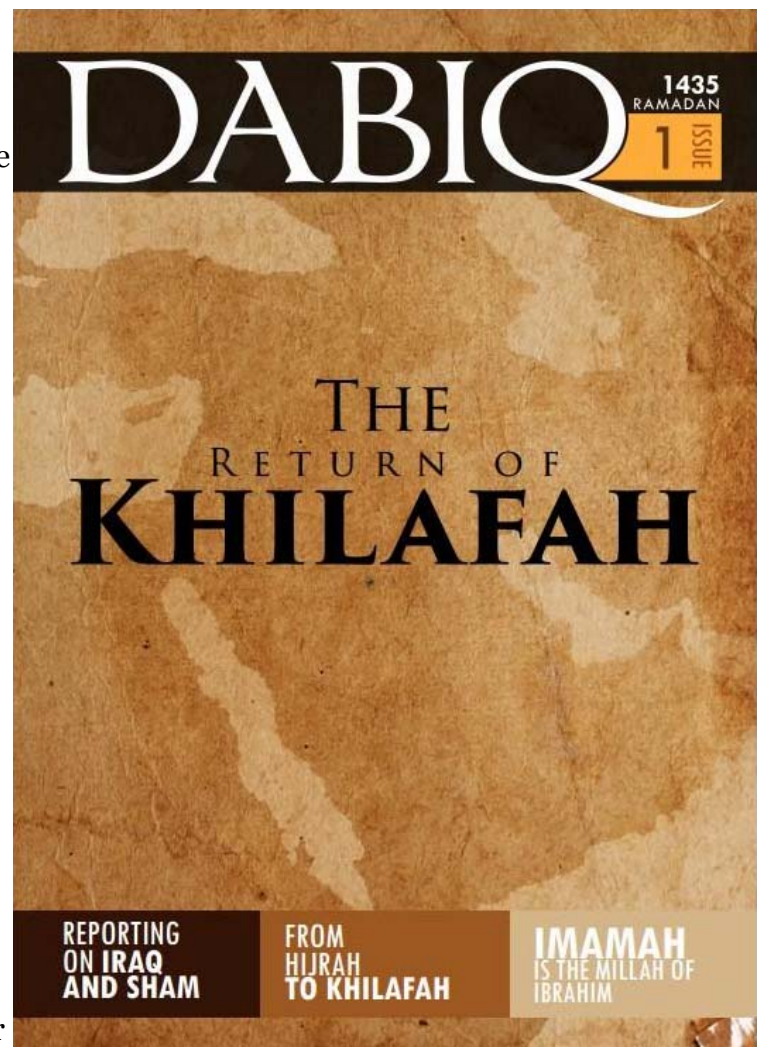
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its goal to reestablish the Caliphate, or Muslim kingdom, is not an end in itself, but rather a means of bringing about the end of time, just like the Christian belief in Armagheddon.

Established in 2011, the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, took advantage of the political chaos and civil wars in Iraq and Syria to claim territory and begin the fulfillment of prophecy. One of its first, and by its own estimation, most important conquests, was taking the otherwise insignificant town of Dabiq (population less than 4000) near the Syrian city of Aleppo. The town was the site of a decisive battle in 1516 between the Ottoman Empire and Mamluk Sultanate, but its real significance to ISIS is that it is the predicted site of an epic battle between Christians and Muslims leading to the end of this world. This makes Dabiq the Islamic version of Armagheddon, and serves the same function in their eschatology. Again, land and place are mere symbols in an otherworldly mystical scheme. (Graeme Wood, [The Atlantic Monthly](#), March 2015).

“Dabiq” is also the name given by ISIS to their

online and print magazine which is used to recruit new followers.



(The day after this lecture was given, ISIS was driven out of Dabiq by Turkish backed Syrian rebels.)

“Islamic Messianic Dreams Shattered as ISIS Defeated in Dabiq”



It seems obvious, looking at these two apocalyptic systems, the Second Coming in Christianity and the Caliphate in Islam, that the wars going on at this moment in the Middle East are driven in part by powerful belief systems which are rooted in the archetype of the apocalypse. Among other things, these wars have a huge impact on the environment. What is the carbon footprint of such a war? When there are such pressing issues as the population explosion, environmental pollution, and climate change, just to name a few, how can we tolerate the waste of resources and damage to each other as well as the ecosystem? This brings me to the enormous apocalyptic issue at stake in the current election (climate change) and how it effects the electorate. There is a tremendous underlying fear, both in those who see the disaster looming and those who deny it by

saying the science is inconclusive.

On the surface these secular denier groups (funded by the Koch brothers among others) insist on an apparently this-world, practical approach to reality. They seem a far cry from the eschatology of the religious thinking I've outlined above. But what they have in common is a fanatical belief in a monocular view of reality, even if it is at odds with their own survival. This does have some things in common with the religious fundamentalists' fantasy of an escape from earthly reality into a spiritual heaven. But what is the God they serve, whether they purport to be atheists or true believers in capitalism? If you think of a god as an archetype, then there must be an image and a dynamic pattern driving this belief system and the behaviors it generates. I suppose that they may expect to be wealthy enough to move to another planet after this one is used up, as in so many science fiction movies. Is this a materialist version of the rapture? If that is the fantasy, then they too are like Nietzsche's blasphemers of the earth, yet the god to whom they pray is neither Christ nor Allah, but money and power. This materialistic belief in the primacy of economic reality has become an abstract article of faith, and one of the drivers of this view of financial progress is consumerism by the general public. By participating in the need to spend, buy, and possess, we all share to some extent the guilt of this blasphemy against the ground of our own being. The irrationality of this stance, that making money justifies the destruction of the earth, is not that different from the sacrifice to the gods of old. Those who believe fervently in it seem as unconcerned about their own health and the future of the planet as the suicide bombers they fear.



As Zarathustra said:

*REMAIN TRUE TO THE EARTH, and believe
not those who speak unto you of superearthy hopes!
Poisoners are they, whether they know it or not.*

Purpose of the Archetype of the Apocalypse

I want to turn now from the destructive aspect of the archetype of the apocalypse to its purposive side. It may sound strange to the Western, scientific ear to pose this anthropomorphic sounding question, but to those of you familiar with Jung's archetypal approach it will make perfect sense to ask: what does it want, so to speak? As portrayed in the Hindu story of Vishnu withdrawing the whole of creation into his sleeping body, the archetype of the apocalypse is driven by a need for the destruction of an outworn paradigm to make way for a new creation. In the present state of affairs, there are many ways to frame the pairs of opposites at play in this epochal change; some speak of globalization vs. tribalism, the end of the patriarchy and the re-emergence of the feminine, whether the machines will save us or rule us, or whether we have come to the end of the road in terms of the power of the human intellect. A century ago, Western culture had to face the failure of the scientific mind to solve humanity's needs. The Great War brought crashing down the fantasy of a world order based on reason and Christian morality. What we can see now, from the other horrors of the twentieth century, is that they were just the beginning. The population explosion, the rise of consumerism, and the dark genius of military technology have added huge stress to an already faltering system. We all live in this "collective atmosphere", from more local cultural complexes driving identity politics to the enormous archetypal energies driving history.

Many years ago, while I was in analysis with Joseph Henderson, I asked him about Jung's rather dark view of humanity and his dire predictions about the future. Henderson said that it was hard for anyone who grew up in Europe at that time, and who lived through the horrors of the two World Wars, to have an optimistic view of the future. Joe spoke of his own childhood visits to San Francisco to see an aunt who lived

here, and how warm and relaxed the people seemed. When he came here again after WW1, the atmosphere was quite different.

This brief exchange turned my thinking to my own childhood experience of the segregated South. Growing up in Montgomery, Alabama in the 1950's and '60's, I was exposed to the complexities of segregation and the Civil rights movement from an early age. The rabbi of our synagogue had befriended Dr. Martin Luther King, who asked him to become his Hebrew teacher. But King had to come in through the back door of the temple to avoid unwanted attention. I was studying for my Bar Mitzvah with Rabbi Atlas and had a great respect for him. When he received national attention for supporting the bus boycott King was leading, it led to the end of his tenure as our rabbi.



Pitted against the civil rights movement was Alabama's four term governor, George Wallace. His racism and rabble rousing were put to rest, so it seemed, after his failed bid in the 1968 presidential election. It is an odd twist of fate that both King and Wallace were shot by assassins. King died a martyr of the Civil Rights movement. Wallace survived and found peace in the Southern Baptist religion; yet his influence on the collective psyche was co-opted by Nixon and a series of other backlash leaders. The

paradox of Wallace's turn to religion points us in the direction of how close and confusing the opposites are in the current political situation. And here we are today, after nearly eight years of a polarized Federal government, led by the first African American president, and facing Wallace's demagoguery in the form of another, perhaps far more dangerous reactionary figure.

The current political climate seems so rife with contradictions and paradoxes that I thought it might be interesting to look at a dream that Jung analyzed in five different places in his collected works. He called it the dream of the Black and White Magicians. It was told to Jung by a young theological student, and centers around the death of an aging king, so it can be seen as the end of an epoch, and the spirit of a virgin which is released from the grave in which he wants to be buried. It begins with the dreamer listening to an old man known as the White Magician, and the story unfolds like a dream within a dream. Jung tells it in the 3rd person.

Dream of the BLACK AND WHITE MAGICIANS

(a)

He was standing in the presence of a handsome old man dressed entirely in black. He knew it was the white magician. This personage had just addressed him at considerable length, but the dreamer could no longer remember what it was about. He had only retained the closing words: "And for this we need the help of the black magician." At that moment the door opened and in came another old man exactly like the first, except that he was dressed in white. He said to the white magician, "I need your advice," but threw a sidelong, questioning look at the dreamer, whereupon the white magician answered: "You can speak freely, he is an innocent." The black

magician then began to relate his story. He had come from a distant land where something extraordinary had happened. The country was ruled by an old king who felt his death near. The king sought out a tomb for himself. For there were in that land a great number of tombs from ancient times, and the king had chosen the finest for himself. According to legend, a virgin had been buried in it. The king caused the tomb to be opened, in order to get it ready for use. But when the bones it contained were exposed to the light of day, they suddenly took on life and changed into a black horse, which at once fled into the desert and there vanished. The black magician had heard of this story and immediately set forth in pursuit of the horse. After a journey of many days, always on the tracks of the horse, he came to the desert and crossed to the other side, where the grasslands began again. There he met the horse grazing, and there also he came upon the find on whose account he now needed the advice of the White Magician. For he had found the lost keys of paradise, and he did not know what to do with them. At this exciting moment the dreamer awoke CW9.1 ¶ 71

This dream is a complex and confusing play of the opposites. The old man dressed in black is the White Magician, while his opposite, dressed in white is the black magician. The young student is the innocent one trying to gain an understanding of the current situation, but only remembers the White Magician's statement that "For this we need the help of the Black Magician." The Black Magician proceeds to tell a story which illuminates the dilemma in a more mythical way. The old King, looking for a peaceful tomb in which to rest, has released the spirit of the virgin, who had been buried there years ago. Arising from her bones, this spirit turns into a black horse which fled into the desert and vanished. The Black Magician pursues the horse but also finds the lost keys of

paradise. Yet he does not know what to do with them, so apparently each of the Magicians needs the help of the other.

In The Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious, Jung discusses this dream in the context of the archetype of the Wise Old Man. He tells us that life inevitably brings us up against the conflict of good and evil, and **“that the unconscious life of the psyche is so inaccessible to our understanding that we can never know what evil may not necessary in order to produce good by enantiodromia, and what good may very possibly lead to evil.”** (CW 9, p. 215) The dream makes this point clearly by having each of the magicians dress in the color opposite their name. And it is the Black Magician who had to open the tomb of the virgin and chase after the horse, which seems like a symbol of the libido lost by the aging king. It is perhaps the resurrection of the lost virgin that is the source of renewal that the meeting of the black and white magicians will bring. Jung concludes his discussion by saying that this moral dilemma is inevitable if one “takes this path to the primordial religious experience.” But how to know which path is the right one. “It is like a still small voice, and it sounds from afar.”



This moral polarization of the opposites, the eternal drama of good and evil, is playing out in the current politics, and not just in the upcoming U.S. elections. It seems, like in the dream of the two magicians, to be the end of an epoch. I find myself pondering the role of this extreme opposition in its relationship to the archetype of the apocalypse. Are we in a time when the opposites have been so polarized, so distant from each other that “the falcon cannot hear the falconer,” that the collective ego-self-axis seems about to snap and the role of compensation in the unconscious has given way to some nightmarish paradox where everything has lost its meaning? The other possibility is that we are going through a collective dark night of the soul, and it is too soon to see what will emerge over time as a transcendent third, a totally new way of being in the world. My own view is that the new paradigm will have to be based on the equality and integration of the female principle. She is the earth mother, the rights of women and girls, a basis of integrity in men, and the divine feminine.

There is no way to accurately predict when an apocalypse will come, or in what form, or whether it will be a peaceful change of consciousness or a massively harsh and violent catastrophe; but there have been great prophets and poets who give us sound advice on how to prepare.

Yeats began to write “The Second Coming” at the end of WW1, in 1919. A year earlier, half way around the world, the Indian poet and yogi, Aurobindo Ghose wrote a prose poem entitled “The Hour of God.” Later known as Sri Aurobindo, his spiritual experiences and writings point in the direction of a new age of human evolution, one acknowledging the divinization of the earth and the centrality of the Divine Mother. I want to end by quoting part of his vision.

The Hour of God

by Sri Aurobindo

(1918)

There are moments when the Spirit moves among men and the breath of the Lord is abroad upon the waters of our being; there are others when it retires and men are left to act in the strength or the weakness of their own egoism.

Unhappy is the man or the nation which, when the divine moment arrives, is found sleeping or unprepared to use it, because the lamp has not been kept trimmed for the welcome and the ears are sealed to the call.

In the hour of God cleanse thy soul of all self-deceit and hypocrisy and vain self-flattering that thou mayst look straight into thy spirit and hear that which summons it. All insincerity of nature, once thy defence against the eye of the Master and the light of the ideal, becomes now a gap in thy armour and invites the blow... But being pure cast aside all fear; for the hour is often terrible, a fire and a whirlwind and a tempest, a treading of the winepress of the wrath of God; but he who can stand up in it on the truth of his purpose is he who shall stand; ...even though he seem to pass on the wings of the wind, he shall return. Nor let worldly prudence whisper too closely in thy ear; for it is the hour of the unexpected...

“I’m the Last Thing Standing Between You and the Apocalypse” Hillary Clinton

(New York Times, Oct. 11, 2016)



After the meeting of the black and the white, comes the Rubedo...

Richard Stein, MD is a psychiatrist and Jungian analyst who has been practicing in San Francisco for 40 years. In addition to his work as a clinician and supervisor, he has been a regular speaker in the public and analytic training programs of The C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco, other Jung centers in the U.S., and elsewhere abroad. His

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teaching and writings include the transference countertransference field, Jung's alchemical discoveries, the intersection of analytical psychology and spiritual practices, and the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo, as well as the archetypal roots of cultural and political reality.

The Racial Shadow of American Politics

Fanny Brewster, Ph.D., M.F.A., LP

Some things have changed since I first wrote the introductory paragraph about my topic for the brochure that announced this conference. As events have unfolded, the shadow of which I speak this afternoon has revealed more of itself - especially with respect to racial issues. What have we learned about our racial selves and shadow that we did not know before Donald Trump became the Republican Party's nominee? How has this learning affected us on a conscious level and what is the unconscious material that remains - waiting to push and shove and eventually to emerge - and demand that we change? How does race in American politics create a tension of opposites? And, finally, where is the third that will come to support a different kind of being and new ways of thinking that will move us to another place where skin color is no longer the primary factor in how we choose to live and how we co-exist with one another?

My family roots are Southern and go back through the generations to my ancestors who arrived in Charleston, South Carolina, aboard a slave ship. During my talk today I will refer to aspects of this Southern life because it has in fact helped create the racial complexes into which I fall. I will weave my personal story, with its resonances of racial complexes, in and out of this talk.

I begin my narrative today with a few thoughts about the shadow. Many, if not all of us have learned about and worked with shadow as a Jungian concept, either as analysts, clients, students, or from having an interest in Jung's work. We think of shadow as Jung first spoke of it: that function of psyche that wants to hide our secrets, embarrassments, and sufferings away from the eyes of others. Shadow is also what enables us to project onto the other. It gives us license to see the failings and faults of those around us (rather than in ourselves) in our various collectives of family, friends and strangers. In the realm of politics, we will be looking today at the shadow of racism in the American psyche. This is particularly challenging because our American racial shadow normally has some trickster energy, and I believe this is especially true in this election where trickster has shown up as an activation of the archetypal, collective energy in which we witness distortions and lies, like my grandmother used to say, "*right in my face without no shame.*" We can't believe our ears! It has been an election of continuous revelation of the deepest parts of our collective racial shadow. I honestly had no idea when this election campaign began that I would feel myself caught so thoroughly in the energy of trickster or that I would come to see so clearly how the American racial shadow as a collective experience tricks us into believing we are separate from one another because of the accident of skin color.

Water: The Source of Life

Several years ago, residents of New Orleans were struck by the tragedy of Katrina. The hurricane and its aftermath became a perfect storm for playing out racism in the context of Southern politics, showing the collective shadow at work. Katrina demonstrated how that most poignant symbol of racism and racial differences in the southern United States, the drinking water fountain with a sign designating *Whites Only*, was still lurking in the shadows of the multiracial, twenty-first century culture of New Orleans.

When we consider the *roots* of Africanist philosophical thinking regarding water and the sacredness attached to these perceptions, the act of not being able to quench one's thirst in such a simple, Goddess-natural way must have been an enormous defeat for the spirit. Many African Americans had long known segregation and discrimination based on race by the time water fountains became popular in public places. Their ancestors working the levees, boats and fields of Louisiana had been denied water many times. To not be able to drink at the same water fountains as whites in the 1940's and 1950's was an accepted part of southern white culture. The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's made discrimination against African Americans in public facilities its initial target – facilities oftentimes paid for at least in part with African American tax dollars.

When Katrina devastated large parts of New Orleans, many African Americans living there were still poor and suffering the effects of racial discrimination, longing to get more of what belonged to them economically as Americans and to have a share of the financial rewards of *being* American. In 2005, there were no more segregated water fountains to be found in New Orleans

but their terrible essence - the shadow of racism - was still very much there. In the days after Katrina, African Americans who attempted to find food and water throughout New Orleans and surrounding areas were attacked and beaten by whites who felt they were “protecting” their homes, food and drinkable water. African Americans who did not escape the flooding by going to another state, or who could not make it to safety in the Superdome, risked losing their lives when they were perceived as thieves by some white citizens of New Orleans.

Skin color has cast a long shadow in America, particularly in the South. The effects of this shadow have been felt not only between whites and blacks but within the African American community itself. In *The Color Complex: The Politics of Skin Color Among African Americans*, the authors write

Class distinctions made on the basis of color were also common among the Creoles, who were of French, Spanish, and African descent. When revolutions rocked the West Indies in the 1790's a wave of Creoles fled to America, settling predominantly in Charleston and lower Louisiana....they brought with them their French Catholic culture, still evident in New Orleans today....Yet it was difficult to emulate—much less penetrate—the Creole population. Their marriages were arranged so that the purity of the bloodline could be maintained. To this day, many Creoles see themselves as separate from other Blacks in America. In general, they resist the one-drop rule of racial identity, preferring a three-tiered system of racial

classification in which they place themselves well above others of African descent.¹ (page 17)

In the rich mix of race, ethnicity and culture in Southern Louisiana one finds the *octoroon* or *mulatto*, both of which had some portion of African black in them which made them not “pure white” and also some white that differentiated them from the “pure bloods” of African American ancestry who had no “mixing” with whites. In addition, Native Americans, the original occupants of Louisiana, were also members of early New Orleans society and mixed with African Americans. These various lineages, mixed together with white settlers of French origin, created the rich mix of New Orleans culture but carried with it a culture of differential privilege based on the hue of skin color. How do African Americans reconcile that they will be thought of as a “better person,” more worthy of help, the lighter their skin color? How does this sense of the *right* of entitlement based on skin color layer itself and continue to intrude, even in the extremis of managing humanitarian relief during an environmental disaster where whether one is treated as worthy of “saving” may be decided based on skin color? This was and still is one of the sorriest reflections of racism in New Orleans. And the idea that lighter skin color makes one have more positive attributes - and therefore rights - than someone of a darker pigment does not only exist in New Orleans. It is difficult to know with certainty but would such a factor have been so prevalent if Katrina had happened in another part of the United States? Is the problem confined to the Deep South or does the shadow of the racial complex fall in a

¹ Russell-Cole, K Wilson, M., and Hall, R. (1992). *The color complex: The politics of skin color among African-Americans*. N.Y.: Random House.

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ubiquitous way over the entire United States? The problem is deeply entrenched. This sense of privilege accorded to lighter skin color, even within the group of African Americans, divided us all the way back to the plantation fields where water was often distributed according to favoritism linked to the fact that lighter skinned African Americans were known to have been fathered by the white overseer or plantation owner.

Is it possible for those who are socially deprived by the economics of racism to overcome environmental disasters such as Katrina without “calling out” the racial aspects of privilege granted to some and not others? How can African Americans influence the “politics of compassion” when they are in effect not even acknowledged as American citizens but as refugees? One of the main arguments proposed by defenders of George Zimmerman is that Trayvon Martin did not *belong* to the housing complex where he was killed. The fact that the murdered teenager was visiting with his father and had a *right* to be there is ignored by Zimmerman’s defenders.

American Racial Complexes in Black and White

In “A Review of the Complex Theory”, Jung writes, “Fear of complexes is a bad signpost, however, because it always points away from the unconscious and back into consciousness. Complexes are something so unpleasant that nobody in his right senses can be persuaded that the motive forces which maintain them could betoken anything good.”² (para. 211). When we consider Jung’s words in relationship to the *racial complex*, we can see how difficult it is to initiate a

² Jung, C.G. 1934/1948. A review of the complex theory. CW 8.

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dialogue with this complex, particularly within the context of the American psyche where race has been such a divisive factor since the founding of the republic and especially in the context of this turbulent presidential election year. In his work on the complex Jung says that the complex is a representative part of our psyche that resides in the unconscious where it is beyond our control. While it has an archetypal core, it develops from both our individual personality and the environment in which we grow up. The psychic nature of the complex defies a strict definition and, like the archetype, can present us with bursts of energy that can swamp the ego's capacity for conscious control. Jung puts it so well when he says of the complexes that we might know we have them but it is more likely that they have us.

Black and white racial complexes have been the focus of African American authors, such as we see in Ralph Ellison's *The Invisible Man* and Richard Wright's *Black Boy*. Both these African American literary classics have as their theme racial inequality and how living in a racially unjust society causes them to suffer. And they both involve the emotionality of main characters attempting to resolve issues of an activated racial complex, where the resolution of the complex cannot come about through knowledge alone. Transformation of the complex requires not only adequate insight and understanding but also a concurrent emotional release. Furthermore, when we address the racial complex from an African American cultural perspective, as illustrated for example in the writings of Ellison and Wright, we can see that it can be manifest in blacks and whites somewhat differently. Jung says that each one has the racial complex of the other—white and black complexes exist as mirror images of one another. This

being so, how does the white complex show itself in African Americans? And how does the black complex show itself in whites?

The idea that African Americans can feel themselves invisible, ignored and even tortured for being African Americans, speaks to what could develop in the African American psyche as a “white complex” within the personal unconscious. This complex, if Jung is correct, goes unrecognized unless brought to life by psychic associations within the depths of the unconscious. When activated, it comes into painful awareness through its grip on the ego. The ego then wrestles to mediate the anxieties aroused by the awakened complex as it struggles to gain control over the impact of emotions pushing through into consciousness. An important question here might be: how does the African American ego mediate the constant threat of racial-inspired violence and death while being vulnerable and open to the intense emotions of the racial complex which must be reconciled to restore psychic balance? This is but one of many questions that must be asked if we truly want to investigate American Jungian psychology and our American political psyche. It and other questions have been dormant a very long time—almost like the complexes themselves, activated only by a psychic “push” to come into consciousness. I would suggest that racial complexes are some of the most “unpleasant” ones in part because their roots are not only in the neurotic suffering of which Jung speaks in defining the activity of an ego that wishes to avoid the painful emotions taken up in the psychological work of seeing and dealing with complexes but, as Wright’s and Ellison’s characters show in their representations of millions of African Americans who have suffered, not only by choosing to face their inner demons, but merely because of their skin color.

Jung states the following in his discussion of the psychic disruption that can be caused by a complex: “An active complex puts us momentarily under a state of duress, of compulsive thinking and acting, for which under certain conditions the only appropriate term would be the judicial concept of diminished responsibility.”³ (para. 200). In turning now to the black complex that Jung believed exists in white Americans, we can see how the racial violence so often projected onto African Americans can be found in whites as well. When Jung speaks of the “state of duress, of compulsive thinking and acting,” I am reminded of the recent death of eight African Americans murdered by Dylan Roof, a twenty-one-year-old white man, while praying in their Charleston, South Carolina church. The killer said he acted out of his “hatred” of African Americans and that he wanted to start a race war. His is considered a hate crime. Might we say that his actions, based on his own words and thoughts, prompted by a black complex under duress, led him to such an act of “diminished responsibility?”

It appears that due to the intensity of racial complexes and the powerful damage that can occur when they are unrecognized and unmitigated, it is crucial to bring our attention to acknowledging the challenges of facing this particular type of complex in our American context. Jung maintained that we can never resolve or remove complexes from our unconscious experiences. So our work as American Jungians is to first acknowledge these challenging factors in our collective psyche and then to integrate the powerful emotions connected with them. When we do not engage this psychological work, we perpetuate the racial conflicts that have existed in American society for centuries. We must further this

³ Jung, C.G. 1934/1948. A review of the complex theory. CW 8.

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discussion and do the work. If American Jungians do not ever even mention the words “*racial complex*,” it is impossible for our community consciousness to increase our own knowledge and understanding of how to add our collective voices to a process of discovery. The complex remains hidden in the shadow.

As we engage in the politics of the 2016 American presidential election, we can perhaps once again see in bold relief the level of racial conflict that was so present in the country in the 1960’s and 1970’s. It is still a challenge to us as Americans to see how racism lives in our consciousness. Yet it is all but impossible to ignore it when, during the course of this election, the nominee of the Republican Party claimed he was being selectively persecuted by a judge of Mexican ancestry for the simple reason that the judge was of Mexican ancestry. Even after a political firestorm erupted because of the inherent racism of Trump’s comments, he refused to retract his statement and held fast to his position that he was being “unfairly” treated by the American-born federal judge.

Yes, Jung could identify these complexes but I’m not so certain we all can see with such clarity. In fact, one of the elements of racism in America is that those of us with white complexes, in this case African Americans, for the most part are like Ralph Ellison’s character - are invisible to whites in the society. When we do become visible, we are *the* problem. This is repeated over and over again— as if it were not for us African Americans, there would be no social or political problems in America. In the throes of the American election primary campaign, we have seen and heard barely concealed racial issues gradually emerge to reach a pitched point of heated discussion. This is as it should be. The American collective is once again bringing into consciousness, from shadow, a

racial complex that exists on both the individual and collective levels. These are the conversations we as Jungian analysts must begin to engage and worry over, and then do the hard work of integration.

The slogan of the Republican Party's nominee has been his call to "*make America great again*." Many have pointed out that these *great* times Trump refers to were times when there was mass oppression of African Americans socially, politically and educationally. Many individuals who voted in the primary elections for the Republican Party nominee were white males, reflecting the almost complete absence of racial diversity within the Republican Party. This continues to be a major problem for them even though their legacy is tied to their most storied leader, Abraham Lincoln, who freed African American slaves.

In his essay "The Psychological Foundation of Belief in Spirits," Jung writes

Certain complexes arise on account of painful or distressing experiences in a person's life, experiences of an emotional nature which leave lasting psychic wounds behind them. A bad experience of this sort often crushes valuable qualities in an individual. All these produce unconscious complexes of a personal nature. A primitive would rightly speak of a loss of soul, because certain portions of psyche have indeed disappeared.⁴ (para 594)

In addressing the last line of the above quote, it might at first be important to note that the recognition of a loss of soul might also be apparent to a *white*

⁴ Jung, C.G. 1919/1948. The psychological foundation of the belief in spirits. CW8.

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person. This example of Jung ‘splitting’ between whites and blacks reinforces the psychological divide of racial opposites within Jungian psychology itself.

Returning to the opening sentence of the above quote, I focus on Jung’s idea of “lasting psychic wounds” and suggest that the aforementioned splitting is a further example of this type of wounding. African Americans, I think, have certainly had a life of “necessary” splitting due to trauma caused by racism. As African American children we learn at an early age the importance of self-identification by skin color. In the South Carolina racially segregated small town in which I spent my formative years, it was a matter of survival to internalize an understanding of social “place” based on Southern racial rules. I learned at an early age that I could only drink at the *Colored Only* water fountain, sit in the top of the *Colored Only* movie theatre balcony and attend the *Colored Only* elementary school. The punishment for breaking these rules could be a severe beating or even death. How does this kind of existence not “crush” the “valuable qualities” of not only individuals but entire generations?

Trump’s Nomination: Our Emergence from the Racial Shadow

Racial infection is a most serious mental and moral problem where the primitive outnumbers the white man. America has this problem only in a relative degree, because the whites far outnumber the coloured. Apparently he can assimilate the primitive influence with little risk to himself. What would

happen if there were a considerable increase in the coloured population is another matter. ⁵ (para. 966)

When Trump first said “We are going to build a wall and Mexico is going to pay for it,” I was surprised, actually shocked. He was speaking about keeping immigrants - illegal or not - out of the United States. Even more surprising, his sentiment was met by an audience that passionately agreed with him! At the time that Barry Goldwater was running for the presidency in 1964, I was still too young to vote. However, I do remember the racial overtones and undertones of his candidacy. Words such as “law and order” served as code for those who still believed in and wished for a return to racial segregation in America.

Jung’s idea of some portion of the American population being at risk to succumbing to an increased “primitive influence,” speaks directly to the shadow part of our society that has grown afraid of the “considerable increase” of which he spoke. We can see that Trump’s rhetoric has found a receptive home. There are millions of Americans who can now vocally express their fear of individuals of color coming to America—be they Muslims or Mexicans. This fear may be fed by a racial complex that has at its core the idea of the supremacy of whiteness. These are Americans who feel themselves disenfranchised not only by the lack of jobs so they can afford the American dream but by their sense of having also been abandoned by the American political system itself. They feel that their voices have been lost and that there is no one in political office who speaks for them. Trump’s silent majority is different and yet eerily like what I remember from

⁵ Jung, C.G. 1930/1968. The complications of American psychology. CW10.

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previous decades. As jobs left the Midwest and so many who lived in this part of America lost employment and then their homes, resentment built. Trump long ago recognized the simmering anger that grew out of this situation and began his own attempt to capitalize on it. For years, he threatened to take leadership through seeking political influence but this did not crystallize outwardly on the national scene until last year. The rise of the Tea Party, the vacuum created by the leadership of the Republican Party, and the fears spiked in response to the presidency of Barack Obama, supported a candidate like Trump who unreservedly proclaimed he could lead Americans towards what looked like a Promised Land by restoring homes and jobs, and making the borders safe. Only he could “make America great again.”

But when Trump first began touting his slogan, “make America great again” I knew he was not speaking to me. I knew I was, for him and his followers, a part of the reason America was no longer great. It did not take long for him to address Mexican Americans as the cause for the lack of “greatness” in America, but it has taken him almost the entire year of his race to arrive at the doorsteps of African Americans, by first claiming an African American man who had attended one of his rallies as “*my* African American,” with all the echoing of slavery and Jim Crow that still exists in the American cultural unconscious and its unacknowledged racial complex. Trump saw nothing wrong with his claiming the African American as *belonging* to him. As other Americans—both black and white - expressed anger and surprise, Trump faced the firestorm generated by the lack of African Americans participating in his election effort, and he began to make sure there were some black faces at his rallies.

As the cries of racism grew louder, Trump began his mission to claim African Americans were supporting him. However, unlike in the days of slavery and Reconstruction when newspapers only told the story of those with power and money from the perspective of American nationalism, the technology of the 20th century has democratized the news so that television broadcasts, newspapers and legal records came to light revealing, for example, Trump's discrimination against African Americans in the New York housing market. The record revealed a pattern of discrimination: African Americans who applied for apartments owned by Trump and his father were turned down, their application forms marked with the letter 'c' indicating *Colored*, while whites who applied for the same apartments they were offered rental contracts. This was not something new as the issue of discrimination in housing has a long history for African Americans. As more of us moved from southern towns in migrations from the 1940's through the 1960's, large urban areas became our homes while whites who had occupied these cities and did not wish to share the city or housing with African Americans began an exodus to the suburbs. The Trump family was the epitome of powerful white real estate developers, the friends of New York bankers who were red-lining New York neighborhoods so that African Americans could not get bank loans to purchase homes. When my father returned from fighting against the Nazis in Europe and helping free the French in Paris, he returned to my mother who had saved all his checks in the hope of purchasing a home in Brooklyn where she had lived when he was overseas during the war. Their dream of home ownership there was never realized and so they returned to South Carolina. There my father built two houses, one for my grandmother and one for my mother. It

was in fact easier for my parent to build homes in their small Southern town with its Jim Crow laws than face the intense discrimination of the New York housing market in the years after the second world war. My parents returned to New York in 1963 to escape the increased Ku Klux Klan presence in South Carolina and to seek better job opportunities. I was born by then and they also wanted more educational opportunities for me in a Northern city. By then, Bedford-Stuyvesant was a thriving African American community in Brooklyn. There was no longer a need to attempt to break into the segregated New York housing market because my father had defeated segregation the only way he knew how – he gained his freedom by building his own home. The hidden aspects of shadow may haunt us but they can also allow us to find those places within ourselves that are positive and encourage energies that enhance life, as my father did in the years after the war. So, at the time Trump was following racial segregation practices in housing to keep African Americans out, my father had found a way into his own private housing with psychological power and self-respect. He didn't need Trump's housing.

This feature of being African American - making do and not needing what white Americans may take for granted, finding alternative ways to survive and have success - has been trashed by Trump. His most recent rant regarding African Americans has been that our cities are full of "bad people, no jobs and crime." His claims paved the way to bring out of mothballs the old call for "law and order." If African Americans streets were that "bad, really bad," then we required a savior – which of course would be Trump. As you might understand, his appeal to white audiences in heavily Republican neighborhoods did nothing

to bring him into the political fold of African American life. In fact, it further alienated him from it. African Americans who have made moderate to vastly improved gains since slavery and Reconstruction did not need a Donald Trump to tell them how badly they were doing and how their streets were overrun with crime. Eventually, the news media began to understand and share the message emerging from the Trump shadow that portrayed African Americans as still only victims. We are victims of crimes *and* we are criminals. And Trump's promise of "jobs, lots of jobs", does not resonate with most African Americans because we know his message is not for us.

In 1989, five teenagers ages 14-16, were taken into custody and accused of raping and beating a white woman in Central Park. They were labeled the "Central Park Five" in the press, interrogated by the police and swiftly convicted of rape and attempted murder. However, in 2002, someone else, a career rapist, confessed to the crime. His DNA was tested and it matched what had been found in the rape victim. Though the five men declared repeatedly that they were not guilty of the crime, a large segment of New York City's white community did not believe them. During their trial, Donald Trump took out a full-page ad in the New York Daily News demanding the death penalty be reinstated. He became the default spokesperson for those who were convinced that the five teenagers were guilty of the sexual assault. After the men were exonerated and given a \$40 million settlement for wrongful conviction in 2012, Trump continued - *even up until three weeks ago* - to claim that the teenagers were guilty. When Trump made his play to take African American votes away from Hillary Clinton by presenting himself at a Black church, more news re-emerged about his public

prosecution of the Central Park Five. He steadfastly maintained his claim that the teenagers (now young men) are guilty and need to be punished for their crime and he attempted to use this discredited narrative to bolster his status as the “law and order” candidate. In this light, when he recently claimed that the police policy of “stop and frisk” should be instituted again in Chicago to help curb crime and violence, we were uncertain if he even cared that the practice had been ruled unconstitutional by the New York State courts. Was he just appealing to his followers because he needed the use of some law and order case to which he could attach himself? In revisiting these racial issues, Trump showed African American voters that he was not a changed man who came to their house of worship to form a sincere alliance but rather a man who had a history of using what was expedient to him for his own purposes. Despite his efforts to appeal to African Americans, the transparency of his self-serving motivation was clear and they have continued to strongly support Hillary Clinton. However, his racist message hits home for white audiences who feel that they have been overlooked by the leaders of American politics, and who fear that their lives are worth so much less because African Americans and others have come to America to take from them. Trump has played the race card in a way that it has not been played since Barry Goldwater. He has stolen the Republican Party, become its nominee, and in so doing has unveiled the darkest part of the American political shadow.

And so, issues of racial inequality and social injustice as aspects of the American political shadow have become highlighted in the glare of Trump’s nomination. Should we, in a sense, be grateful for this revelation that shines a brighter light on our racial shadow and complexes? Perhaps so because it fuels

the imperative to grow. When I first considered my topic for this paper I felt very strongly about doing it on the racial shadow in American politics. At the time, I did not know that so much would have been revealed by the time we met. I had anticipated that the shadow would still be at its darkest point, in the thicket of the alchemical nigredo. I have been wrong and this somehow seems right. I think we are well served by Jung's idea of unconscious movement in the service of psychic development that can produce a deepening of consciousness, and that this is what has been happening in the wake of the nomination of Donald Trump.

Malcolm X understood that intentional segregation was useful for African Americans. He felt that there was power in African Americans creating and building their own social, financial and religious networks away from whites. There was a time when we as African Americans required that solitude of being together so we could strengthen ourselves and build a strong middle class. However, that time past, we grew together and this is part of our collective destiny. Our gains came with the loss of Dr. Martin Luther King, the beatings and deaths of demonstrators in the Civil Rights Movement in southern and northern cities, and the psychological torture of African American parents and their children fighting for integrated schools from St. Augustine, Florida to Boston, Massachusetts. Today, when Trump speaks only to the poverty that still exists in African American communities, he shows his ignorance of the suffering, effort, conscious-raising and physical death that so many of us endured to obtain the successes we have earned in the America political system. When I hear Trump speak about African Americans from a model of deprivation, I know he is informed by the shadow of racism that still only sees defects in us as Americans.

President Barack Obama as a symbol of our Blackness

The message of President Obama's campaign for the presidency was hope and change. He campaigned for the White House in an upbeat, assured manner like any other candidate who belonged to America. He was one of her sons and in his representation of us as Americans, he also claimed the fullness of identity inherent in the words, "African American." Perhaps because of this very factor, Barack Obama's status as president was questioned and undermined from the very start by accusations that he was not born in America and therefore could not legitimately serve as president. Unfortunately, this lie that began during his campaign for the presidency had some staying power throughout his administration, even after he refuted it completely by making his birth certificate part of the public record. This racist attempt to undermine the president was initially led by Donald Trump. He made use of his celebrity status to join with Tea Party members to weaken the incipient power of Obama's message of hope and change. The attempt to declare President Obama an illegitimate president reveals a racial complex at work. The additional stress on the racial complexes of those who cannot bear the idea of a black president was overwhelming as the shadow of racism present in Trump's message goes directly to that unconscious place where some Americans refuse to accept African Americans as legitimate citizens of this country. For some, the White House belongs to whites, and blacks are only allowed there only to work - as they did in the cotton and tobacco fields. The Obama presidency is living proof of the fact that change has come and that the days are over when the descendants of slaves could live and work in America but never be true Americans.

Conclusion

I believe that as a collective we have a need for understanding the inner energies that drive us - complexes, archetypes, and how we are psychically hard-wired. We need patience as we grow into a new and different consciousness regarding skin color differences. Our skin color does not change and we cannot deepen in consciousness by wishing one another away—we are all here to stay, both black and white Americans. Together we must continue the necessary struggle for racial equality in our country—we are all we have and America belongs to all of us.

Fanny Brewster, PhD, MFA is a Jungian analyst and writer practicing in New York City. She is a multi-genre writer who has written about issues at the intersection of Jungian psychology and American culture. *African Americans and Jungian Psychology: Leaving the Shadows* is her latest writing, forthcoming from Routledge Publishing, 2016.

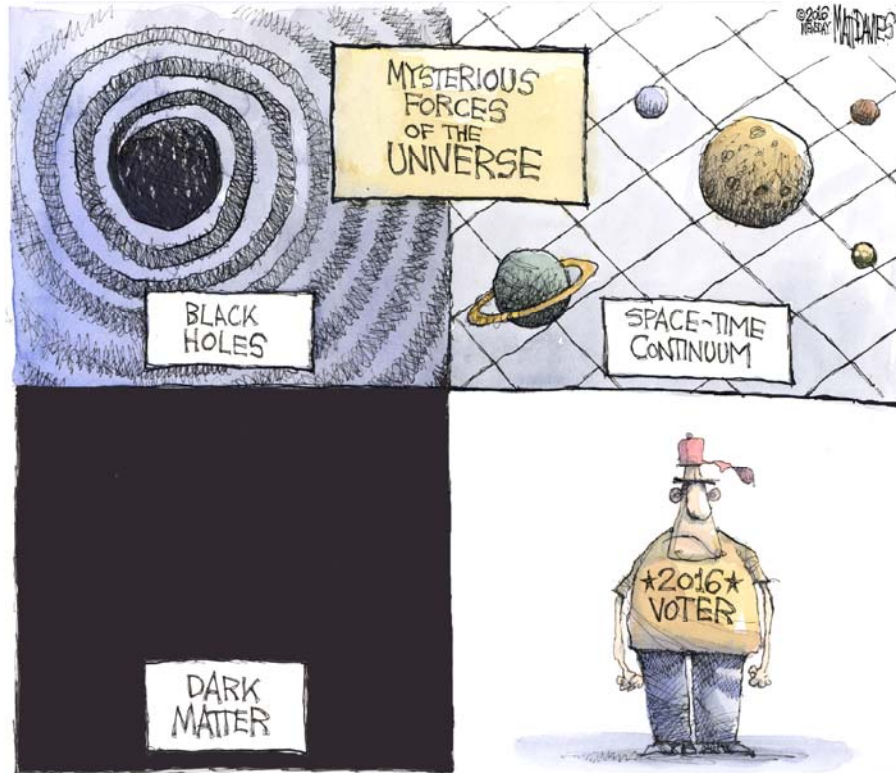


IMAGE 1

On the 2016 Presidential Election, American Culture, and the Soul of America.

Thomas Singer, M.D.

*When small men begin to cast big shadows, it means that the sun
is about to set.*

Lin Yutang, writer and translator. (10 October 1895-1976)

What a trip we have been on this past year!!!!—a roller coaster ride into a black hole that has sucked up too much of our time and energy, altering for many of us the space time continuum. As one of my son's friends' put it: "Trump has been groping the American psyche for a year and a half." It will soon be over and I hope that our lives will be less burdened by the gravitational pull of the "dark matter" of this interminable election.

If, as Marshall McLuhan said, "the media is the message," Donald Trump has taken over the world. Having Trump run for President is like having a terrorist bomb bring down an airplane every day—huge, dire excitement that incites obsessive attention. After dominating daily Google searches for all of 2016, Trump was finally out searched for a few days in late May when Americans frantically Googled "gorilla" because zookeepers at the Cincinnati Zoo shot Harambe, a 17-year-old lowland gorilla when a 4-year-old boy fell into the primate's enclosure.

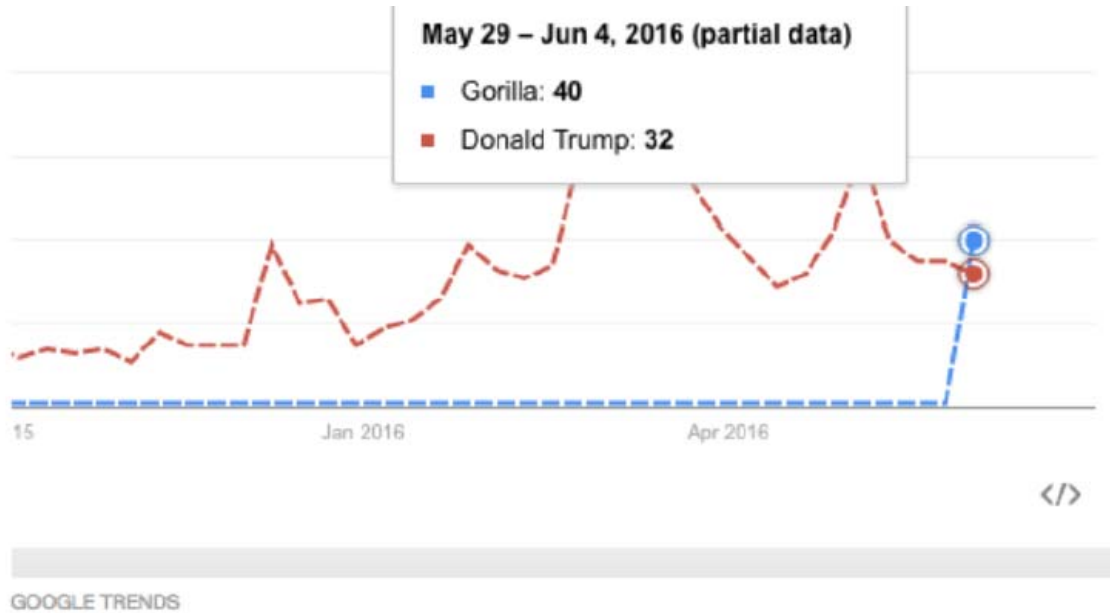


IMAGE 2

Of all the graphs and statistics I have seen during this election cycle, somehow this chart comparing searches for Gorilla vs Trump says more to me about what captures our attention in this country than any other that I have been following. At about that same time in May, one cartoonist put Gorilla and Trump together, perhaps synchronistically.



IMAGE 3

This is the fifth Presidential Conference we have held at the Jung Institute, the first one being in 2000. Previously, I have always urged our speakers to be as objective as possible and not to be too partisan in the hopes that we might find what Joe Henderson called a “psychological attitude” to what the elections were reflecting in the national psyche. As we all know, we live in a progressive bubble in the Bay Area and there happen to be other regions of the country with very different points of view and cultures than those of our own unique hot house.

But you must forgive me this year if I seem to have lost any semblance of wanting to honor both Red and Blue state points of view—although I am very interested in what motivates those who embrace Trump or favor other

conservative points of view. Today I will focus almost exclusively on the Trump phenomenon (as has the media) and try to offer a point of view that reflects a psychological attitude towards what he represents—even though Trump’s staged, squinty eyed “gravitas face” in the debates is not conducive to a “psychological attitude” when a voice inside me screams “Get this Man off the national stage.



IMAGE 4

But I would suggest that all of us in this room are like the famous blind monks who try to describe an elephant that they can’t see with the result that each of them ends up describing a different beast. In our conference, I consider

myself one of the blind monks. With that caveat in mind, my first comments concern who we are as a people and the state of our culture as reflected in our Presidential elections.

I wrote a chapter for *A Clear and Present Danger: Narcissism in the Era of Donald Trump* that was rushed to press by the courageous editors of Chiron Publications. I entitled my chapter “Trump and the American Selfie” but in this talk, I want to begin with some words not just about Trump’s narcissism but about America’s narcissism and our narcissistic injuries as a people as revealed in our Presidential elections.

We have become a “Selfie” culture with all that that suggests. Our preoccupations seem to be more and more self-centered and narcissistic in our consumer driven economy. This is certainly true of Trump as his Selfie Stick has had the longest reach in history and has circled the globe, over and over again, to saturate the planet with his image.



IMAGE 5

But, this preoccupation of a celebrity wanting to endlessly project his or her image with which followers can get close to and identify with is generic to our culture and includes Hillary and her supporters as well as Trump and his fans. Here is Hillary, perched on a little stand, waving and smiling to the backs of a group of excited supporters, all of whom are capturing a Selfie with Hillary.



IMAGE 6

To me, there is something profoundly unnerving about the Selfie invasion of our culture—as if we are all turning into the very Zombies that haunt our collective imagination. The “Selfie” is a weird symbol of who we have become. It is as if we don’t exist unless we have instantaneous images or reflections of ourselves in great places with important people that we can simultaneously post all over the internet. Perhaps, it makes us and the event seem more real and

important. This leads me to the work of Christopher Hedges, a harsh critic of our contemporary culture with whom I find myself in sad agreement about who we have become as a people and as a nation.

In *Empire of Illusion: The End of Literacy and the Triumph of Spectacle*
Hedges writes

“We are a culture that has been denied, or has passively given up, the linguistic and intellectual tools to cope with complexity, to separate illusion from reality. We have traded the printed word for the gleaming image. Public rhetoric is designed to be comprehensible to a ten-year-old child with a sixth grade reading level. Most of us speak at this level, are entertained and think at this level... When a nation becomes unmoored from reality, it retreats into a world of magic. Facts are accepted or discarded according to the dictates of preordained cosmology. The search for truth becomes irrelevant. Our national discourse is dominated by manufactured events, from celebrity gossip to staged showcasing of politicians to elaborate entertainment and athletic spectacles. All are sold to us through the detailed personal narratives of those we watch. Pseudo events, dramatic productions orchestrated by publicists, political machines, television, Hollywood, or advertisers... have the capacity to appear real, even though we know they are staged. They are effective because they can evoke a powerful emotional response which overshadows reality and replaces it with a fictional narrative that often becomes accepted as truth.”

(Hedges, C. (2009). *Empire of illusion: The end of literacy and the triumph of spectacle*. New York: Nation Books.pp. 44, 50)

If our unwillingness and inability to sort out illusion from reality is not

enough in itself, it gets further hopelessly entangled with our cult of celebrity.

Again, from Hedges:

“Celebrity culture plunges us into a moral void. No one has any worth beyond his or her appearance, usefulness, or ability to succeed. The highest achievements in a celebrity culture are wealth, sexual conquest, and fame. It does not matter how these are obtained. These values leave us chasing vapors. They urge us toward a life of narcissistic self-absorption. They tell us that existence is to be centered on the practices and desires of the self (not our Jungian capital “Self”) rather than the common good. The ability to lie and manipulate others is held up as the highest good. The cult of self interest dominates our cultural landscape. This cult has within it the classic traits of the psychopaths: superficial charm, grandiosity, and self-importance; a need for constant stimulation, a penchant for lying, deception and manipulation, and the inability to feel remorse or guilt. It is the misguided belief that personal style and personal advancements, mistaken for individualism, are the same as democratic equality. We have a right, in the cult of the self, to get whatever we desire. We can do anything, even belittle and destroy those around us, including our friends, to make money, to be happy, and to become famous. Once fame and wealth are achieved, they become their own justification, their own morality. How one gets there is irrelevant. Once you get there, those questions are no longer asked.” (Hedges, C. (2009). *Empire of illusion: The end of literacy and the triumph of spectacle*. New York: Nation Books.pp. 32–33)

Hedges is describing a generic kind of celebrity—whether politician, businessman, actor, or athlete (perhaps even psychoanalyst??). And generic celebrity is at the heart of our social, political, and cultural life. Hedges wrote this

in 2009, well before Donald Trump's 2016 campaign for the Presidency and he is describing a dominant cultural attitude or even cultural complex. Hedge's point of view is decidedly negative and one-sided, but it probably describes more accurately what this election has been about than anything else I have come across.

Keeping in mind Hedges' focus on our preference for illusion over reality and our fascination with celebrity, I want to turn back to the question of how Trump has become an irresistible magnet sucking up most of the air in our cultural psyche, both drawing people to him or repelling them from him with such ferocious attraction or repulsion. We must ask ourselves: Is Trump the end product of our culture of narcissism? Is he what we get and perhaps even deserve because he epitomizes the god or gods that we currently worship in our mindless, materialistic, consumerist, hyper-indulged cult of around-the-clock stimulation and entertainment? Again, listen to Hedges:

An image-based culture communicates through narratives, pictures, and pseudo-drama. Scandalous affairs, hurricanes, untimely deaths, train wrecks—these events play well on computer screens and television. International diplomacy, labor union negotiations, and convoluted bailout packages do not yield exciting personal narratives or stimulating images. A governor who patronizes call girls becomes a huge news story. A politician who proposes serious regulatory reform advocating curbing wasteful spending is boring. In an age of images and entertainment, in an age of instant emotional gratification, we neither seek nor want honesty or reality. Reality is complicated. Reality is boring. We are incapable or unwilling to handle its confusion. We ask to be indulged and comforted by clichés, stereotypes, and inspirational

messages that tell us we can be whoever we seek to be, that we live in the greatest country on earth, that we are endowed with superior moral and physical qualities, and that our future will always be glorious and prosperous, either because of our own attributes or our national character or because we are blessed by God. The ability to amplify lies, to repeat them and have surrogates repeat them in endless loops of news cycles, gives lies and mythical narratives the aura of uncontested truth. We become trapped in the linguistic prison of incessant repetition. We are fed words and phrases like “war on terror” or “pro-life” or “change”, and within these narrow parameters, all complex thought, ambiguity, and self-criticism vanish.

(Hedges, C. (2009). *Empire of illusion: The end of literacy and the triumph of spectacle*. New York: Nation Books.p. 49)

Again: why Trump? It seems clear that Trump’s narcissism and his attacks on political correctness dovetail with deep needs in a significant portion of the American population to enhance their own dwindling sense of their place in the world and of America’s place in the world. In that sense, the focus truly shifts from Trump as a single individual to the society in which he has thrived. Trump’s peculiar brand of narcissism is a perfect compensatory mirror for the narcissistic needs and injuries of those who support him. Or, stated in another way, there is a good fit between Trump’s personal narcissism and the narcissism of our culture and the wounded collective Self of many Americans. With this general formulation in mind, I want to analyze how Trump’s candidacy speaks to three highly intertwined parts of a cultural complex in the group psyche of many Americans. This group psyche and its complexes are both a shared experience

among the members of a group and lives inside each member of the group.

- 1. To a woundedness at the core of the American group Self.**
- 2. To the defenses mobilized in the groups that feel wounded who wish to protect themselves and the country against further injury to the shared group Self.**
- 3. To the promise or hope of a cure for the wound.**

1. Wound to the American Group Self

I would first like to address what I perceive as a wound at the core of the American group Self/spirit that is deeply felt by many, especially by those who have neither benefited from nor participated in the relative wellbeing of our nation's prosperity and by others who are relatively well off but keenly aware that our system of government and our way of life are threatened at the core of our collective being. Here is a working definition of the group Self or spirit that I put forth in an earlier paper:

.... the group spirit is akin to what we Jungians might call the Self of the group. The group spirit is the ineffable core beliefs or sense of identity that bind people together. Sports teams have a group spirit and their fans often magically participate in it. Nation states have a group spirit and their citizens often magically and unconsciously participate in it—particularly in times of crisis. Religious faiths have a group spirit, often symbolized by a part human/part divine being. Ethnic groups, gender groups, and racial

groups all have a group spirit that is frequently felt and identified with in a myriad of ways. The group spirit can be symbolized by animals, humans, inanimate objects and, in its most ineffable form, the refusal to symbolize it in imagery at all. The group spirit has many different elements that have come together in a seamless, often wordless and even imageless, non-material whole that is known to its members through a sense of belonging, shared essential beliefs, core historical experiences of loss and revelation, deepest yearnings, and ideals. One can begin to circle around the nature of a group's spirit by asking questions such as:

What is most sacred to the group?

What binds the group's members together?

Singer, T. 2006b. Unconscious forces shaping international conflicts: Archetypal defenses of the group spirit from revolutionary America to confrontation in the Middle East. *The San Francisco Jung Institute Library Journal*, 25(4), 6–28.



IMAGE 7

The group Self is best expressed through a symbolic image, which, in today's United States, often is more like a "brand" that its creators hope will become a "symbol": Because a group's Self has so many pieces, many of which are contradictory, only an authentic symbol has a numinous quality that can contain all the tensions and conflicts. An authentic symbolic image can make a whole of the disparate parts.



IMAGE 8

Many in our country—on the left, right, and in the center—feel the country is in danger and may be beyond hope of being repaired or getting back on the right course. Profoundly divided, our group spirit at this stage in our history is less secure than it has been for some time. This nervousness about our essential well-being is deeply felt both by the progressive left and by the conservative right—those who feel alienated and angered by the current governing leaders

whom they oppose and see as destroying the country, whether the archenemy be Mitch McConnell of the Republicans or Barack Obama of the Democrats. On the right, the threat of terrorism (Muslims), the threat of immigrants (Mexicans), the threat of the global economy (China and international trade agreements), or the threat of our existing governing bodies and leaders (Congress) are seen as leading us to the brink. On the left, the threats to a sense of well-being and security in our national group Self come as the result of the growing disparity in the distribution of wealth and income; the mistreatment of minorities whether those of different races, colors, ethnicities, sexual identities or genders; our power relationships to other countries around the world; and, of course the treatment of the environment itself.

I postulate that these threats are amplified on all sides by an even deeper, less conscious threat that I call ***extinction anxiety***. Extinction anxiety exists both in the personal and group psyche and, at this time in our country, is based on the fear of the loss of white America as some have idealized it, the loss of America's place in the world as we have known it, and ultimately the destruction of the environment and the world itself. One might think of extinction anxiety as the cultural psyche's equivalent of the anxiety about death in the individual. I believe that this extinction anxiety is like a psychic radioactive background that is not just an American phenomenon but dwells in the psychic depths throughout our global society and that it fuels the concerns of people around the world as well as our more particular American concerns—whether we favor Clinton or Trump or neither. This extinction anxiety belongs to all of us in the world—to the collective psyche.

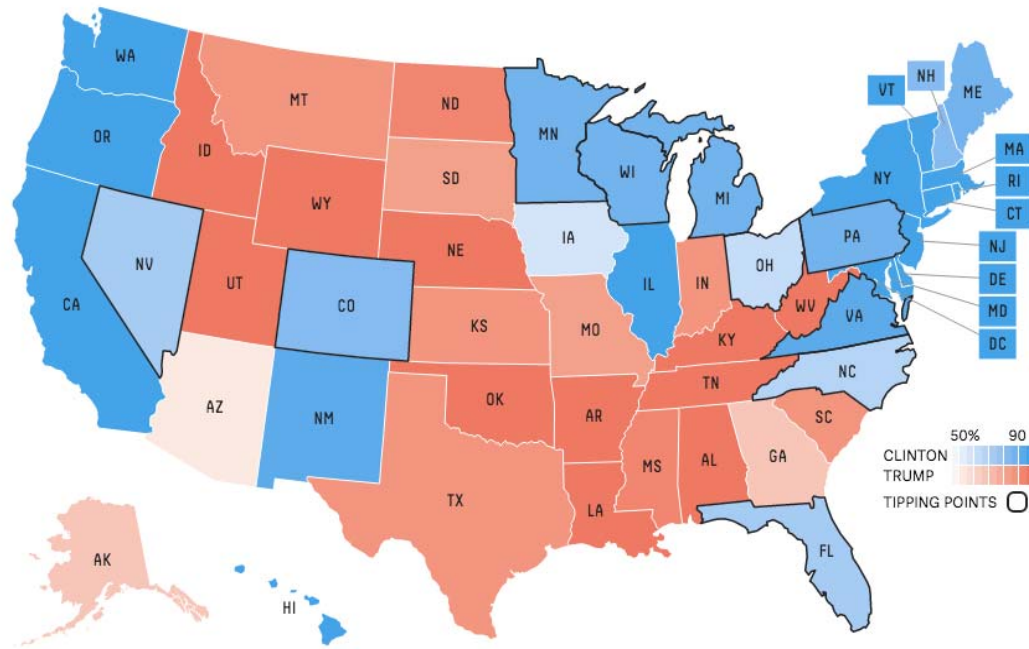


IMAGE 9

One way we might begin to bridge the huge gap between ourselves and those living in the large block of so called Red states in the middle and southern regions of the country or, put another way, one way we might find the capacity for empathy and even a psychological attitude for those who favor Trump is through the pain of our own narcissistic injuries at the level of the Group Self in which our highest ideals for a nation of justice, equality, equal opportunity and freedom have been tarnished. At the level of the Group Self or Spirit of America as it lives inside each of us, we have all been injured and can most easily blame one another for the injury that we feel. Listen carefully to how Joseph Epstein describes the injury to the group Self/spirit of one woman attracted to Trump, how the United States looks to her as mirrored through the nightly television news:

“I had a hint of what might be behind the support for Trump a few

weeks ago when, on one of the major network news shows, I watched a reporter ask a woman at a Trump rally why she was supporting him. A thoroughly respectable-seeming middle-class woman, she replied without hesitation: “I want my country back.” This woman is easily imagined clicking through TV news channels or websites and encountering this montage: Black Lives Matters protesters bullying the latest object of their ire; a lesbian couple kissing at their wedding ceremony; a mother in Chicago weeping over the death of her young daughter, struck by an errant bullet from a gang shootout; a panel earnestly discussing the need for men who identify as women to have access to the public lavatories of their choosing; college students, showing the results of their enfeebling education, railing about imagined psychic injuries caused by their professors or fellow students. I don’t believe that this woman is a racist, or that she yearns for immigrants, gays and other minorities to be suppressed, or even that she truly expects to turn back the clock on social change in the U.S. What she wants is precisely what she says: her country back. What the woman who said she wants her country back really meant was that she couldn’t any longer bear to watch the United States on the descent, hostage to progressivist ideas that bring neither contentment nor satisfaction but instead foster a state of perpetual protest and agitation, anger and tumult. So great is the frustration of Americans who do not believe in these progressivist ideas, who see them as ultimately tearing the country apart, that they are ready to turn, in their near hopelessness, to a man of Donald Trump’s patently low quality.

Epstein, J. (2016, June 10). Why Trumpkins want their country back. Wall Street Journal. Retrieved from <http://www.wsj.com/articles/why-trumpkins-wanttheir-country-back-1465596987>

The Self or group spirit of America is built on more than 300 years of progress, success, achievement, resourcefulness, and ingenuity, accompanied by

almost endless opportunity and good fortune—unless you happen to be black or any other alienated minority. We love and believe in our heroic potential, our freedom and independence, our worship of height and speed, youth, newness, technology, our optimism, and eternal innocence. We have enjoyed the profound resilience of the American spirit, which has shown itself repeatedly through very difficult historical trials, including our Civil War, World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, the Vietnam War, the 9/11 attacks, the Iraq War, the financial collapse in 2008, and other major crises. As a country, we have been blessed in our capacity to transcend loss, failure, and the threat of defeat in the face of crisis time and again, and this has contributed to a positive vision of ourselves that has been fundamentally solid at the core for a long time. Of course, that Self-image is subject to inflation, arrogance, and grandiosity in our belief in our own exceptionalism and our blindness to our causing grave injury to other peoples at home and abroad. Again, this Self-image exists at the level of the group psyche. It is quite possible that Trump's personal inflation, arrogance, and grandiosity represents for about 40% of the voting population a compensatory antidote in our group psyche to a Self-image beginning to suffer severe self-doubt about our ability to navigate a highly uncertain future successfully and the nostalgic longing perfectly articulated in the phrase: "I want my country back."

2. Archetypal Defenses of the Group Self

Second are the defenses mobilized by those feeling this woundedness who wish to protect themselves and their country against further injury to the shared group spirit. A significant number of people in our society feel cut off from what

they believe to be their inherited, natural birthright as American citizens. Those for whom our cherished American group spirit seems endangered are ready to defend themselves—whether the perceived attack is coming from within or outside the country. Although they would not use this language, they are suffering a wound at the level of the group spirit or Self, even as they are also suffering individually. We can think of this as a narcissistic injury at the level of our group Self. I suggest that Trump has somehow intuited that injury and is playing to it, both as a carrier of the renewal of the group spirit and as a defender against those who would do further harm to it—be it terrorists, immigrants, Washingtonian political insiders, the established Republican Party, Obama, and perhaps above all else right now, Hillary Clinton and the Democrats who deserve to be put in jail for violating the law and betraying the country. Three aspects of the current manifestation of archetypal defenses of the group spirit are as follows:

a. Trump's attack on political correctness

Trump's particular political genius in this election cycle has been to launch his campaign with an attack on political correctness, often boiled down to the phrase: "Get em outta here!" Trump's willingness time and again to be politically incorrect has tapped into the shadowy feelings that many have about all the things we are supposed to be compassionate about—ethnic differences, racial differences, color differences, gender differences, religious differences.



IMAGE 10

Trump's strategy has been shrewd: He seems to have sensed that "political correctness" could be the trigger word or phrase that could unleash potent levels of shadow energies that have been accumulating in the cultural unconscious of the group psyche for some time. He rode a huge wave of pent-up resentment, racism, misogyny and hatred unleashed by his attacks on political correctness long enough to crush his Republican opponents and become the Republican nominee for president of the United States. The notion of a trigger word activating a complex goes back to Jung's early word association tests in which certain words detonated powerful emotions contained within personal complexes—such as the mother or father complex. Cultural complexes are also frequently triggered by a collective word association process that takes on a life of its own in the psyche of the group and which can be manipulated by skillful politicians who use specific trigger words to activate the primitive emotions that fuel cultural complexes. Trump is at his best when he is awful.

Trump's willingness to be politically incorrect has become a sign of his "truth-telling" to many. Trump embodies the truth of the shadow side of "political correctness" and that seems to be the primary truth that his core followers care about. Once Trump spoke to their emotional truth, the Trump faithful no longer cared whether he told other truths. Cultural complexes don't need or rely on facts to validate their particular perspective on the world. If it feels right, it must be so. In fact, it is a characteristic of cultural complexes that facts are just about the first thing to go when an individual or group becomes possessed by a complex. A group caught up in a cultural complex has highly selective memory—if any historical memory at all—and only chooses those historical and contemporary facts that validate their pre-existing opinion. In a wild inversion from Trump's seemingly frequent misrepresentation of the truth, people have apparently come to believe that Trump is "telling it like it is" in his attacks on the inept Washington politicians who know nothing about conducting business. As infuriating as it is that facts don't seem to make any difference in Trump's self-presentation (his aides have actually said that we live in a "post-factual" world and that it is "elitist" to insist on facts), it would be a huge mistake to underestimate how successfully he has mobilized the crude underbelly of long-standing American suspicions of people who are different from themselves. What a relief for so many to hear a politician speak their unspoken resentments and express their rage, which they could previously only mutter privately. Trump apparently tapped into the dirty little (or not so little) secret of our loathing of various minorities (even though we may all be minorities now) and especially of recent immigrants. This kind of shadow energy is much more likely to be close to

the surface of consciousness and available for exploitation in a group of people who previously saw themselves as having a solid place in American society and who now find themselves marginalized and drifting downward—both socially and economically—or in a group who never had a chance of making progress toward the American dream. These are often the people who see the recent immigrants to this country as stealing the American dream from them.

b. Unholy marriage of shadow, archetypal defenses of the group Self, and the group Self

What makes Trump's unleashing of the shadow in the American psyche around "political correctness" even more dangerous is that these energies become linked or even identical with what I call archetypal defenses of the group spirit. Here is how I have defined "archetypal defenses of the group spirit":

"This phrase is a mouthful, but its purpose is to offer a precise psychological description of a level of collective emotional life that is deeply responsive to threat—whether the threat is real or simply perceived as real. When this part of the collective psyche is activated, the most primitive psychological forces come alive for the purpose of defending the group and its collective spirit or Self. I capitalize Self because I want to make it clear that it is not just the persona or ego identity of the group that is under attack but something at an even deeper level of the collective psyche which one might think of as the spiritual home or god of the group. The tendency to fall into the grips of an identification with an archetypal defense of the group spirit is universal, and almost every one of us has experienced such a possession at some time in our lives— at

least in one if not many of the primary groups to which we belong simultaneously. The tribal spirit of the clan or of the nation often lies dormant or in the background, but when it is threatened, the defenses mobilized to protect it are ferocious and impersonal. The mobilization of such potent, archaic defenses is fueled by raw collective emotion and rather simplistic, formulaic ideas and/or beliefs. One can think of the more virulent cultural complexes as being fed by a vast underground pool of the collective emotional life. Archetypal defenses of the group spirit are animated by the release of these heightened emotions of groups in distress.... Once a certain level of emotional intensity is achieved in the psyche of the group, archetypal defenses of the group spirit come to the forefront and begin to determine and even dictate how the group will think, feel, react, and behave. These activated archetypal defenses of the group spirit find concrete expression in forms as varied as the unrest of divided populations over the legal status of foreign immigrants in countries around the world, the threatened development of nuclear weapons by nation states such as Iran or [North] Korea, the deployment of suicide bombers by terrorist groups, or the launching of massive military expeditions by world powers.

And, these same kinds of archetypal defenses come alive in all sorts of skirmishes between diverse groups of people, who are not necessarily armed with explosive devices but perceive themselves in a threatened or disadvantaged position in which their most sacred values are in jeopardy—Gays, Blacks, Women, White men, the Christian Right in the United States, Jews around the world, the Muslim Brotherhood throughout the Middle East. The list of groups threatened at the core of their being or at the level of the group Self seems endless.

Singer, T. 2006b. Unconscious forces shaping international conflicts: Archetypal defenses of the group spirit from revolutionary

America to confrontation in the Middle East. The San Francisco Jung Institute Library Journal, 25(4), 6–28.

In this regard, look at the maps prepared by Nate Silver based on how the Red/Blue map of the states would divide if only the votes of men were counted or if only the votes of women were counted. Men alone give Trump an 11% edge in the polls and the red/blue divide of the states would look like this:

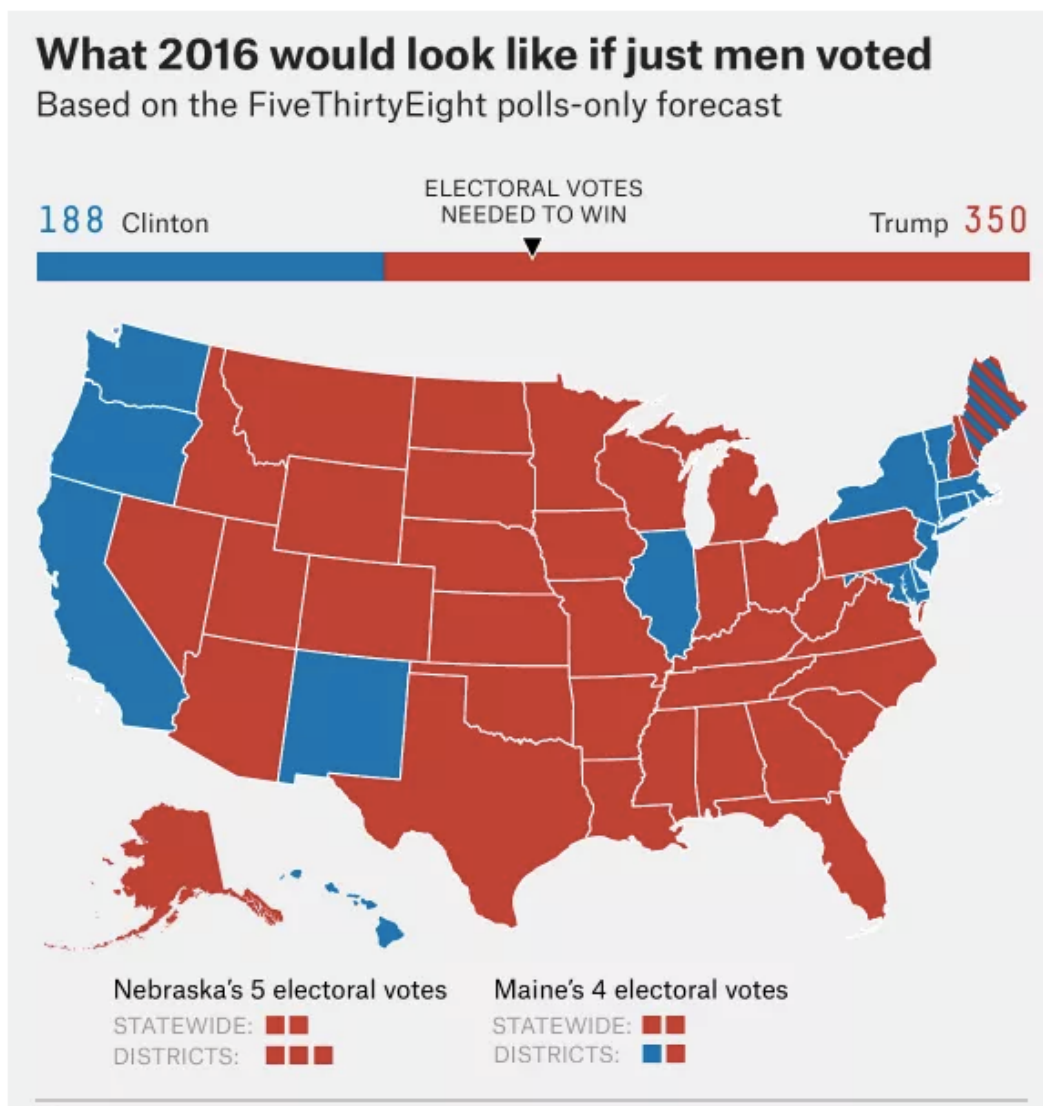


IMAGE 11

Women alone give Clinton a 33% edge in the polls and the Red/Blue divide of the states would shift significantly

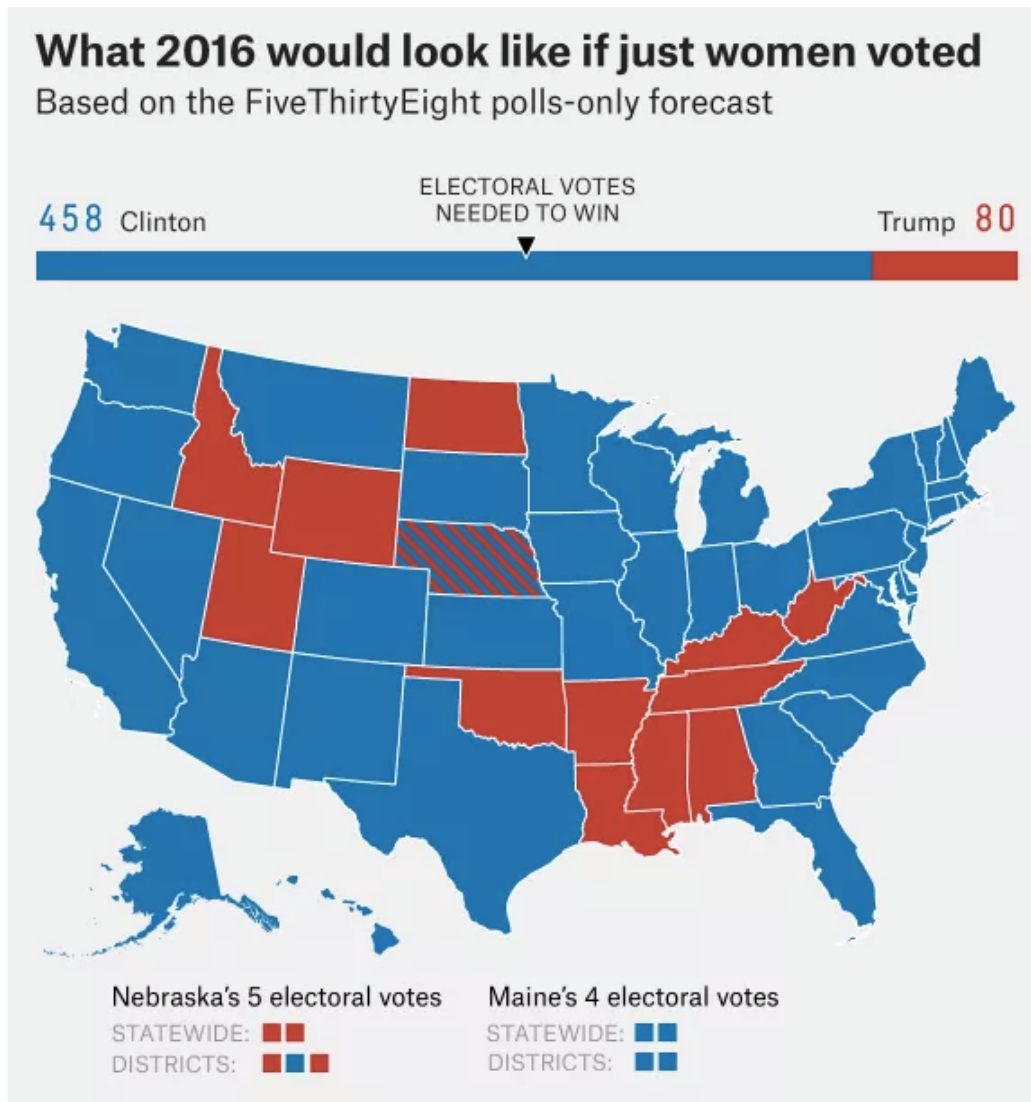


IMAGE 12

From the point of view of the group psyche, Trump has aligned his attack on political correctness with the archetypal defenses of the group spirit. That is why I stress his two foundational mantras: “Get ‘em outta here!” and “Make America Great Again!”—in other words, “Rid the country of all elements that

threaten our sense of Self, and “Make the country white and powerful and rich again.” The first statement speaks for the shadow/ archetypal defense of the group spirit, and the second statement speaks for the repair to group Self. This constellation of group energies/structures puts the shadow very close to the Self, very close to what the group values most about itself and how it protects itself. This gives further license in the unconscious of the group to ride and act out these aggressive, hateful, and violent forces in the collective psyche. What makes Trump’s narcissism so dangerous in its mix of shadow (his attacks on all sorts of groups of people) and Self elements (his self-aggrandizing, inflated sense of himself) is that it plays to the unholy marriage of Self and shadow elements in the collective psyche. Trump’s example gives permission for shadowy thoughts, feelings, and actions to be discharged on behalf of the Self. I think this underlying group dynamic explains the comparison of Trump to Hitler. Evoking an archaic image of the German Self, Hitler mobilized the most shadowy forces in modern history in the so-called service of that Self-image, which centered on the supremacy of the Aryan race—first the Brownshirts, then the Gestapo, SS, and other forces of the Third Reich, including its highly efficient bureaucracy. Trump seems to be toying with the collective shadow, apparently encouraging its acting out in the name of the Self. From the point of view of analytical psychology, when the shadow, the archetypal defenses of the group spirit, and the group Self in any group get so closely aligned, there is great danger of violence, tyranny, and absolutism.

c. Curing the Wounded Self of America: Trump's Selfie and America's Selfie

The third and final component of this intertwined triad of forces in the group psyche is Trump's implicit promise of providing a cure for the wound at the level of the group Self. This is where Trump's narcissism is most prominent and most dangerous. I believe there is an unconscious equation between Trump's inflated sense of himself and the cure for the American group Self that many believe he promises. This equation can be most simply stated as the following: "I am the Greatness to which America may once again aspire. By identifying with how great I am, you can rekindle your wounded American dream and make yourself and America great again." Or even more bluntly, "I have achieved the American dream; I am the American dream; I am the incarnation of the Self that the country aspires to." This, of course, is a massive inflation. Trump identifies his personal being with the Self of America, and it is his source of demagogic appeal to authoritarians and others. He is encouraging those Americans who have lost a foothold in the American dream to place their trust in him as a mirror of their own potential—a potential that he personally has already achieved. If one is able to place themselves in that mindset, one can get a glimpse of Trump's magnetic appeal. Trump himself said many years ago:

"I play to people's fantasies. People may not always think big themselves, but they can still get very excited by those who do. That's why a little hyperbole never hurts. People want to believe that something is the biggest and the greatest and the most spectacular. I call it truthful hyperbole. It's an innocent form of

exaggeration—and a very effective form of promotion.

Fisher, M., & Hobson, W. (2016, May 13). Trump masqueraded as publicist to brag about himself. Washington Post. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/donald-trump-alter-ego-barron/2016/05/12/02ac99ec-16fe-11e6-aa55-670cabef46e0_story.html?hpid=hp_rhp-top-table-main_noname%3Ahomepage%2Fstory

Trump's apparent money, power, fame, and his willingness to shoot from the hip seem to fit with the frustrated yearnings of many Americans. He has managed to catch the projection of a powerful and successful person who, by virtue of his alleged business acumen and ability to negotiate, is able to make things happen for his own betterment—rarely for the betterment of others despite his claims of giving generously to charities and creating untold jobs.

Trump presents himself as the embodiment of a form of the American Dream that, in his singular greatness and achievement, he can personally restore to America's wounded Self-image and to those Americans who have failed to achieve their dreams of greatness. It is almost as if Trump is saying, "My grandiosity is the greatness of America. We can make America great again by following me and then, you, too, can be like me: aggressive, successful, big, powerful, a winner" This has tremendous appeal for many, especially those who, at some level, experience themselves as losers. This is the narcissism of Trump joining with the injured narcissism of those Americans who have seen their chances for well-being and security rapidly slipping away. In that sense, Trump is not only speaking for the shadow; he is also speaking for the Self of America—or,

at least his version of it. His version is the materialistic power version of the American dream—of the big man who has made himself rich and, through his wealth and strength of personality, powerful. He is free to speak his own mind and to pursue, without limits, his own self-aggrandizing goals.

The negative aspects of Trump's narcissism strike those who have been repelled rather than attracted by him as a symbolic mirror of everything negative about America's culture of narcissism. Just as some think that Trump is the embodiment of everything that has made America great in the past and will make us great again, some see Trump as the very embodiment of everything awful that we have become as a nation. Undoubtedly, this is also what many in the rest of the world see as the worst of who we have become. In this view, we can see the shadow of the American "selfie" (not just Trump's) as:

1. A self-promoting brand
2. Arrogant bullies in our conduct of business and other relations
3. Very limited in our capacity for self-reflection
4. Filled with hubris and a lack of humility
5. Self-absorbed with little sensitivity for the needs of others
6. Possessed by greed and consumerism
7. So entitled in our good fortune that we have come to believe this is our natural due

These seven features are core characteristics of the American cultural complex in which the shadow, archetypal defenses of the American Spirit, and the American Self get all mixed up with each other in the most noxious stew and

we find ourselves betraying that very Self or spirit on which the nation and its constitution were founded. And how dreadful to think that Trump's narcissism is a perfect mirror and archetypal embodiment of our national narcissism. And what if it is also a mirror of our own shadowy, personal narcissism to boot? Ultimately, I believe that the Trump phenomenon is less about Trump than it is about us—about who we are as a people. From this perspective, the elephant in the room turns out to be “We the People of the United States.” How terrifying to think that our politics and our lives today have gotten horribly confused with reality TV, social media, computer and cell phone technology, and their infinite capacity to turn reality into illusion, Self into narcissism. And here is a “punch line.” Everything I have said about Trump could be reflected back to me by a Hillary hater and said about Hillary and Bill Clinton. Just as personal complexes obliterate one's ability to be objective when one is caught in a negative personal complex, so too a cultural complex obscures any semblance of objectivity because everything gets reflected through the complex's point of view which is affect laden, repetitious, autonomous, and stereotypically simplistic in its thinking. The complex sees only its own point of view which it endlessly reinforces with “facts” that validate its own memory and narrative. When two cultural complexes lock horns, there is no possibility of dialogue or discourse because the complexes are just having it out. I would argue that this is where we are in our current political environment. A psychological attitude would permit seeing the warring cultural complexes for what they are and permit a “third” point of view that can step outside the complexes and begin a real dialogue. As long as an individual or a group is locked in a cultural complex, this is simply impossible.

Soul in America: Trump as A Perverted Echo of Walt Whitman**“Do I Contradict Myself?”**

As I contemplate how Trump’s narcissism plays to the injured narcissism of America’s group Self, Walt Whitman, the ultimate bard of the American soul comes to mind, as some of Whitman’s words have a strange, disorienting resonance with how Trump presents himself. Several pundits have played with the notion of Donald Trump being some sort of twisted mirror image of Walt Whitman. For instance, Zenpundit sardonically points to the similarity between how Trump behaves and what Whitman says about himself in the lines:

“Do I contradict myself?
Very well then, I contradict myself.
I am large, I contain multitudes.”

Trump is so large and powerful that he doesn’t have to be predictable. He can change his mind if he wants.

“Song of Myself”

In “Song of Myself,” one of Whitman’s most famous poems from *Leaves of Grass*, the poet gets as close to evoking the soul/Self of America as any American has in his visionary lines:

“I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.
I loafe and invite my soul,
I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.

My tongue, every atom of my blood, form'd from this soil, this air,
Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their
parents the same,
I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,
Hoping to cease not till death."
(Section 1)

As Wikipedia notes, Whitman emphasizes an all-powerful "I" in the poem which serves as narrator, who should not be limited to or confused with the person of the historical Walt Whitman. The persona described has transcended the conventional boundaries of self: 'I pass death with the dying, and birth with the new-washed babe ... and am not contained between my hat and boots' (section 7)." Wikipedia Contributors, 2016).

It is easy to imagine Trump also saying "I celebrate myself. I sing myself." Everything Trump says and does seems to be a celebration of himself. We know, intuitively, that Trump's "song of myself" is not the same one that Whitman sings. Trump sings a self-congratulatory song; Whitman sings a Self-affirming song. One song is of and for the whole nation; the other song centers on the triumph of Trump himself and for all those individuals who would appropriate his claim to superiority for themselves.

"I am the poet of the Body and I am the poet of Soul"

In *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman proclaims himself the bard of the American soul when he writes: "I am the poet of the Body and I am the poet of the Soul" (Section 21). Whitman likens the body and soul of America to a blade of grass

whose very existence mirrors the “journey work of the stars” in its immortality. Trump claims himself to be the body and soul of America in the Trump Casinos, the Trump Towers, Trump University, and even Trump steaks—shoddy pretenders to what is best and most soulful in America.

**“I Sound My Barbaric Yawp Over the Roofs
of the World”**

Whitman sings his mystical, transcendent vision of America as he compares himself to the spotted hawk who soars above the sacred land:

“The spotted hawk swoops by and accuses me, he complains
of my gab and my loitering.

I too am not a bit tamed, I too am untranslatable,
I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.”
(Section 52)

Whitman, W. (1973). *Song of myself. Leaves of grass*. New York: W. W. Norton & Co.

Trump echoes these sentiments as he proudly presents himself to the world as “untranslatable.” He, too, shouts his own “barbaric yawp” over the roofs of the world. In Whitman’s imagination, the essence of the American soul is neither civilized nor verbal. The “barbaric yawp” is the fierce “voice” of a soul that is unrestrained and exulting in its self-expression. It gives expression to a primitive enthusiasm in the form of a non-verbal cry from the essential nature of a living being. Allen Ginsberg’s *Howl* and Bob Dylan’s voice, once described as “a coyote caught in barbed wire,” can be considered grandchildren of Whitman’s

“barbaric yawp” of the American soul. So, too, is Jimi Hendrix’s rendition of the “Star Spangled Banner.”

Steven Herrmann, a Jungian with a deep, scholarly interest in Whitman, wrote to me:

“Whitman’s “yawp” is a conscious cry from the Soul of America to make the barbarian in American political democracy conscious! The “barbaric yawp” is Whitman’s call from the depths of the American Soul to awaken the possibility of hope in a brighter future for American democracy....The aim of Whitman’s “barbaric yawp” was to sound a new heroic message of “Happiness,” Hope, and “Nativity” over the roofs of the world, to sound a primal cry which must remain essentially “unsaid” because it rests at the core of the American soul and cannot be found in “any dictionary, utterance, symbol” (Leaves, Section 50). The “barbaric yawp” is a metaphorical utterance for something “untranslatable” from the depths of the American Soul for the emergence of man as a spiritual human being in whom the aims of liberty and equality have been fully realized and in whom the opposites of love and violence, friendship and war, have been unified at a higher political field of order than anything we have formerly seen in America. His “yawp” is an affect state, a spiritual cry of “Joy” and “Happiness” prior to the emergence of language.

(Steven Herrmann, personal communication, January, 2007)”

Trump’s “barbaric yawp” (“Get ‘em outta here!”) may sound tinny in comparison to those who came before him, such as Whitman, Ginsburg, Dylan, Hendrix, and many others who have tapped into a primal energy that is essentially American. At great risk, however, one could too quickly discount the

fact that Trump also has his own instinct for a primal source of American “barbaric” enthusiasm.

I cannot help but wonder if Donald Trump and his inarticulate utterances, which make so many of us cringe, have not been heard by many in America as a modern version of Whitman’s “barbaric yawp” from our country’s “body and soul.” However reluctantly, we have to accept the fact that Trump may speak directly to the American soul of many in our country, just as our more progressive sensibilities can link Barack Obama’s measured oratory to the American soul. Who are we to suppose we know who speaks for the American soul? Who has a legitimate claim on the American soul anyway? Is it possible that Donald Trump has found in his crude utterances a resonance with the American soul that says more to many Americans’ identities and yearnings than many of us can imagine?

Comparing Trump to Whitman may seem sacrilegious to the memory of the great American poet. But there is a logic to such a comparison as Trump is the shadow or dark mirror to the best things in America, sung so eloquently by Whitman. Trump’s “song of myself” is truly a “song of myself.” Whitman sings of what is best in us and Trump’s horrific bluster displays what is worst in us. What is sacred in Whitman’s “barbaric yawp” becomes profane in Trump’s perverted echo of that yawp.

I leave the reader with a question, given that I believe both Whitman and Trump identify themselves with the soul or Self of America. What is the difference between Whitman’s “I celebrate myself, I sing myself” and Trump’s version of that same song in “Make America Great Again”? It is worth grappling

with this question as a way of differentiating that kind of narcissism in which the ego gets inflated and identifies with the Self and its archetypal defenses versus that kind of rare but blessed, overflowing exuberance, integrity, and love in which the ego is connected to but not identified with the Self. What is real about Trump's selfie is the unexpurgated expression of both his own and America's grandiose, narcissistic, misogynistic, racist, materialistic, shadowy abuse of power. What is authentic about Whitman's barbaric yawp as a Self-portrait of America is its life affirming, primitive vitality, which is not to be confused with Trump's cheesy Bronx cheer as an American selfie.

And let's give Walt Whitman the last word about the Soul of America in his haunting and challenging poem:

LONG, TOO LONG AMERICA.

LONG, too long America,
Traveling roads all even and peaceful you learn'd from joys and
prosperity only,
But now, ah now, to learn from crises of anguish, advancing, grap-
pling with direst fate and recoiling not,
And now to conceive and show to the world what your children
en-masse really are,
(For who except myself has yet conceiv'd what your children
en-masse really are?)

Walt Whitman, 1861 from *Drum-Taps*

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