Multiple Faces of Evil:

Our Human Response

During the week of January 31st Viterbo College engaged in a public examination of evil. This all college humanities symposium included a variety of presentation but college faculty, students, community members, and administrators. The first six papers were presented as a panel that opened a weeklong symposium entitled, The Multiple Faces of Evil: A Human Response. The final paper in this section was presented the following evening in a separate event that addressed «The local responses to evil. «

The panel for the opening event was preceded by a reader's theater presentation given by member of the department s of Theater and Musical Theater (Kevin Schieep, Ben Huber, Mary Leonard, Susan Rush, Sean Saladino, Carol Rhodes and Brenda Cetera). The cuttings were from: «Fire in the Mirror» by Anna Deavere Smith, «Angels in America» by Tony Kustner, «God's Country» by Steven Dietz, «The Vagina Monologues» by Eve Ensler, «Apocalypse Now» by Francis Ford Coppola, «I Never Saw Another Butterfly» by Ellwood Derr, «The Diary of Ann Frank» by Francis Goodrich and Albert Hackett. This opening presentation was entitled «Evil.»

stephanie Brower

The general title of the panel presentations was «Evil's Presence Across Disciplines. « Each panelist presented their paper in the order published. Immediately following the faculty papers there was another reader's theater presentation by the theater department with cuttings from «After the Fall» by Arthur Miller, «Where The Music Comes From» By Lee Hoiby, and «The Diary of Ann Frank» by Francis Goodrich and Albert Hachett. The closing presentation was called «Good.» The event closed with a short question and answer period.

Evil in Literature

Lyon D. Evans

Nearly 200 years ago, the German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel wrote that the highest and purest expression of a culture's values and world-view are embodied in its philosophy, its religion, and its art. A corollary of this view is that much as the world's civilizations have offered different answers to enduring existential questions, so too have these civilizations' philosophies, religions, and artworks addressed these questions in different and often antithetical ways. It should come as no surprise, then, that questions we are addressing here today - what is evil? Why is there evil? How can evil be ameliorated or even abolished?, or if evil is an inescapable aspect of the human condition, why is this the case? - have yielded not a single answer, but a plethora of answers throughout human history, from one civilization and age to another.

Although the civilizations of the East, particularly those of China, Japan, and India, have addressed the nature of evil in original and important ways, it is our own civilization and culture, the culture of the West, that I want to talk about and focus on today. Our civilization begins with the Greeks of the ninth to fifth centuries B.C.E. and with those foundational landmarks of the Western literary imagination, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey;* the dramas of Asechylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; and the so-called Old Comedy of Aristophanes. What stands out for me in this extraordinary body of work is the pervasiveness and persistence of what Nietzsche in the latter half of the nineteenth century termed the Greeks' tragic sense of life, generated and sustained by what might be termed an adversarial relationship between the immortal gods and mortal human beings, a tension between the aspirations of men and women - even, and particularly, the greatest and noblest of them, like Hector, Achilles, Oedipus, Antigone - and the limitations on human life mandated by mortality and finitude itself. It is out of this tragic, irresolvable tension between gods and men, and in the context of the heroic but ultimately futile human striving for an unattainable perfection on earth, that the evil of this world is generated and manifest in the Greek literary imagination.

It is true, as Nietzsche observed, that Greek philosophy, which supplanted Greek literature as the vital center of Hellenic culture in the waning days of the Athenian Golden Age, sought to overcome this tragic sense of life, and to ameliorate or even abolish the presence of evil, by philosophic reflection and rational thought. Plato, in particular, went so far as to envision an ideal human society and state in his Republic in which evil would be brought under control and for all practical purposes abolished. In the subsequent encounter between the Greco-Roman civilizations of the West and the emergent Judao-Christian culture of the the Near East, however, it was not the rationalism of Plato and Aristotle but the tragic view of life expressed by the earlier Greek poets and dramatists that appealed most powerfully to the Hellenistic and Christian civilization of the Mediterranean world, and later to the Christian civilization of Northern Europe, enthralled as they were by the Old Testament account of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and the corollary doctrine of Original Sin.

We can see the persistence of this tragic sense of life expressed in an unlikely quarter: the great epic of the Middle Ages, Dante's *Divine Comedy.* To be sure, because the *Commedia* dramatizes the poet's journey from Hell through Purgatory to Heaven - a passage from and triumph over sin and death in the poet's radiant and culminating apprehension of God in Heaven - a tragic sense of life in the *Commedia is* not immediately apparent. When we consider the biographical and historical context and background, however, a somewhat darker and more somber picture emerges. Italy in the 14th century was riven by invasions, wars, cruelty, corruption; Dante himself was banished from his beloved Florence following a coup *d'etat* and he spent the rest of his life in unhappy exile. Ironically, had Dante not been banished, the *Commedia* most likely would not have been written. The imprint of Dante's personal suffering, and his pessimism and despair over the political and moral decay of Florence and Italy, are dramatically if dismally evident all through the *Inferno.* Although the rogues' gallery of knaves and criminals, who together constitute a cross-section of the worst of fourteenth century Italy, are of course punished in Hell - often most cruelly and harshly, from our modern, supposedly more «civilized» point of view - an implicit lesson of the *Commedia is* that that only in the afterlife can evil and sin be effectively punished, purged, transcended; in the fallen world below, this vale of tears, Dante implies, suffering and sin are an ineradicable part of the human condition and evil, like the poor, will always be with us.

Two centuries later, the optimistic faith of Greek philosophy (in dramatic contrast to the pessimism of Greek literature) reappears in the emerging self-confidence of the Italian Renaissance: in the paintings, notebooks and startling inventions (including the airplane and the submarine) of Leonardo, the frescoed ceilings and monumental sculpture of Michelangelo, the luminous treatises of Neo-Platonist philosophers such as Pico della Mirandola of the Florentine Academy, who, in his extraordinary «Oration on the Dignity of Man,» asserts that humans have a dual nature - an immortal soul inhabiting a mortal body - and a free will that allows humans to fulfill their Godlike potentialities, rise on what was termed the Great Chain of Being, approach the perfection of God, and perhaps even achieve the kingdom of God on Earth. Contrariwise, however, Pico warned, in a bow to the pessimism of an earlier era, humans also have the free will to indulge and yield to their lower, animal natures, descend on the Great Chain of Being, cut themselves off from God, and plunge the human world into the morass of barbarism, suffering and evil described so memorably by Dante two centuries earlier.

Although one finds the optimistic hopes of Pico and other humanists expressed in literary texts of the Italian and Northern European Renaissance, for example, in Castiglione's *Courtier,* which describes the education of the ideal Renaissance prince, and in the rollicking and bawdy *Gargantua and Pantagruel,* in which the 16th century Frenchman Rabelais chronicles and celebrates the myriad pleasures of life on earth, it is the darker underside of Pico's Renaissance Humanism, its cautionary and somber stress on the antithetical and dual nature of man, that dominates what are arguably the supreme literary masterpieces of the European Renaissance, the tragedies of Shakespeare and the *Don Quixote de la Mancha of* Cervantes. Thus that single most intriguing and influential character in all of Western literature, Hamlet, responds to the moral corruption in Denmark by proclaiming, like the ideal Renaissance courtier he was educated to be, but with an underlying bitterness and despair uncharacteristic of Renaissance humanism and optimism, «The time is out of joint, O cursed spite, that ever I was born to set it right»: words which, except for the «O cursed spite,» the chivalrous Don Quixote himself might have uttered. By the end of the play, however, Hamlet, like the sorrowful man of La Mancha, has learned that the

world is resistant to reformation, let alone to perfection - that suffering, injustice and evil are the irrefragable lot of humans on earth, that the most and the best one can do is endure the evil of the world with stoic fortitude and resignation, and hope for the best.

In an even more frightening and pessimistic repudiation of Renaissance humanism and optimism, Shakespeare in his greatest tragedy, *King Lear,* depicts a world in which all honor and goodness have been banished or extinguished as the unnatural daughters Goneril and Regan and the monstrous son Edmond, in their ruthless pursuit of power, revenge, and hatred, descend ever lower on the Great Chain of Being. Laments the hideously and unjustly blinded Gloucester, in an unforgettable expression of the darkest possible view of the presence of evil in human affairs, «As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods,/ They kill us for their sport.» As terrifying as is Gloucester's suggestion that the gods themselves are evil, however, even more appalling is Edmond's assertion that there are no gods at all, that human life resembles the nightmare world of Thomas Hobbes' «state of nature,» characterized by the warfare of all against all, in which human life can be nothing more or other than nasty, brutish, and short.

In its terrifying vision of the triumph of evil, *King Lear* goes further than any other literary work before or since in depicting the destructive capacities of unleashed «lower» human nature to create a Hell on earth. Much as Alfred North Whitehead once quipped that the history of Western philosophy consists of footnotes to Plato, so, it seems to me, does the history of evil in the past 400 years - actual, historical evil as well as its literary representations - consists largely of footnotes to *King Lear.* From the sub-human Yahoos of Swift's *Gulliver's Travels,* to the monomaniacal Captain Ahab in his self-centered, fatally destructive pursuit of the White Whale, to the nihilistic revolutionaries of Dosteyvsky's *Possessed,* who terrifyingly confirm Ivan Karamazov's warning that «If God is dead, everything is permitted,» to the nightmare visions of our own time - Stalinist oppression in Orwell and Solzhenitsyn, Nazi horrors in Michel Tourier's *The Ogre* and D. M. Thomas' *The White Hotel,* the terrorist bombers and schoolyard killers of real life - Shakespeare in *King Lear* foresaw them all. «The worst is not,» grimly observes a suffering Edgar, «so long as we can say, `This is the worst.»'

Paradoxically, however, while *King Lear* and other productions of the literary imagination depict a world of suffering and evil matched or exceeded only by the suffering and evil of the world itself, it is also to literature that we can turn to find a way beyond the omnipresent reality of evil, a route upward from the lower depths toward a reaffirmation of the human spirit, a fulfillment, however tentative and qualified, of that boundless optimism expressed by Pico della Mirandola in his «Oration on the Dignity of Man» more than 500 years ago. In classic works by Rabelais, Cervantes, Melville, Dickens, Tolstoy, Jane Austen, and Shakespeare himself, as well as by other timeless masters and mistresses of the Great Art of Telling the Truth, not only is the resilience of the human spirit asserted and affirmed; but the very existence of these works, testimony to the reality of Art as a product and a production, a category of human experience and consciousness, is itself an affirmation, a triumph over mortality and finitude, a rebuttal to the pessimism and despair to which one may succumb on inspecting the catalog of evil and corruption we call human history . As the great literary critic Northrop Frye observed, literature, in mirroring and expressing the world itself, gives us the entire range of human experience and possibility, from Hell to Heaven and back again. Or, as Shakespeare's Prospero movingly proclaims in *The Tempest,*

Shakespeare's farewell to theater, and to me the grandest and most beautiful celebration of life in all its paradoxes and and contradictions in world literature: «We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little life is rounded with a sleep.»

Whence Human Evil?

Larry D. Hardwood

E xhibitions of human evil are not occasions of great human happiness, certainly not for the victims, but neither for the human perpetrators of evil against humans. By this I mean that the perpetrators of evil are not smiling satisfied contented persons living out their dreams; instead they are often wreaking their vengeance for dreams and happiness failed and unrealized. They are also of course responding with evil to evils done to them. Thus evil often begins as a response to something missed, something denied.

The propensity toward evil is often fueled by a sense of having been done wrong or having missed something which was one's goal or something that was one's due. If this is one of the origins of human evil, that is, from a frustration arising from a deprivation, then one would therefore expect to see the fruition of evil among the older sectors of the population. Children as a whole are playful and cheerful; adults as a whole are much less so. A lifetime of experience makes many adults dour or bitter, some of them pessimists, and some of them haters. Within the last few years, however, we have begun to see more children in the ranks of retaliating adults - one thinks of the school shootings. I shall refer to this as evil resulting from nurture or lack thereof. It is not only nature that abhors a vacuum, but also human nature. Evildoers have missed something they needed, and consequently they go out into the world without it, while the world will pay for that omission. Neither the world, nor they, will be happy.

On the other hand, a comparison of the unequal demeanor between children and adults concerning evil and happiness may appear in actuality to be the reverse of what I have said. That is, children, though playful and cheerful, are oftentimes noticeable for their cruel behavior toward a playmate or peer, whereas adults generally acclimate to the need-of a civilized (though this oftentimes means only concealing) behavior in a civilized culture or world, and pace in check such propensities when they mature. On the other hand, the deprivations incurred in childhood can fester and bring forth the evil of the adult. On either account, however, there is the need for nurturing a human nature that expresses itself as a desire for human flourishing.

Frustrations of sufficient magnitude arising out of deprivations are almost certain to produce repercussions. At this point it is helpful to distinguish between two origins of moral evil. There is what I will call the initial evil act - one kind - which provokes the second kind - evil as a response to the initial

evil act. One might be able to contend, at least generally, that in the second kind of evil, human evil has the most potential in the lower economic classes, simply because it is here that dreams find harder fulfillment, indeed life is harder here, and thus there are much greater depriving obstacles to realization. If resentment and despair stem from realizations unrealized, dreams denied, deprivations, rights unrecognized, then that same resentment and despair can be looked upon as the breeding ground for responses to evil, the second kind of evil.

Whatever the truth in such an analysis about class differences, it is also the case that not a few from the upper classes do not enjoy the contented happiness of their acquired or fulfilled realizations, but remain essentially unhappy. The evil they can wreak can be noticeably more, because they are often very powerful people. The prior class needed more physical resources at some level; this class has them, but needs something else. Those with financial riches or material wealth are not infrequently gigantic specimens of unhappiness. Such a state, however, may not be immediately noticeable for the simple reason that many such folk lead lives of quiet desperation.

What is the difference between these two worlds as it concerns happiness and the propensity to evil, and is there any common denominator? The difference is that when material and basic needs - like freedom, like basic human rights - are unmet, then such oppression is apt to breed reactions and revolution as a response to such conditions. On the other hand, when the needs of the upper classes are not satisfied with their material plenty, evil can arise in the search for something more, or simply for more. To be noticed in this comparison is that the strength of one is the weakness of the other. That is, as a generalization, comparative spiritual strength is often noticeable among the poor and the oppressed, and oftentimes noticeably absent among the higher classes, which may mock at it, or attempt to use it for their own selfish gain. In other words, the materially poor and oppressed are oftentimes spiritually rich, the materially prosperous are oftentimes spiritually poor. There is a tradition in the West that noting this difference, makes the mistake of drawing the deduction that this comparison shows that religion belongs to the ignorant and weak, the needy, but is a dispensable item for the smart and the strong.

Deprivations exists among all humans, and beyond class boundaries and prompts us to ask for a definition of happiness, but postponing this for a moment, I want to draw attention to what I have said thus far.

Notice that presently we are asking about happiness, whereas we started asking about the origin of human evil. My notion therefore is that evil does not and cannot have its origin in happiness, but rather in unhappiness, or specifically in a missed or anticipated happiness that is never realized. Happiness has primacy of place in the human life, but if deprived of place, evil has opportunity. Granted, unhappiness may be the result of completely unrealistic expectations about life. Evil however arises as a response to a deprivation of desired happiness in humans, and its cure presumably would be in the restoration of the desired happiness. Unhappiness, however, can culminate in evil responses to evil, as it tries to work back toward happiness by a path of evil. Evil multiplies itself greater than rabbit populations, simply because an act of evil many times generates another, and then another, act of evil. Like begets like. Unhappiness need not culminate in evil however. What if evil should be met with goodness?

What then is happiness? There are problems in even raising this question in our culture, and particularly so in secular culture. One is a relativism that can refuse to give any general definition to that question for fear that any answer is an attempt at imperialism, statism, or godism. In this scenario, happiness for you may be misery for me. The golden rule is a rule therefore meant to be broken, because I may not desire what you desire for yourself. In my view, the individual members of the human species, however different, are not so disparate that no such generalization will cover them, for if it does not we need to relinquish the thought that we all are really of the same species. There is another difficulty. The refusal to venture toward at least a general definition of happiness oftentimes shows itself - though somewhat later - as a refusal to define evil. In such a context, evil is just as subjective as is happiness with regard to persons. The consequences of this view are enormous: what is evil is relative, and as such we who do not share the mindset cannot judge it. Their evil is their evil, just as their happiness is their happiness. Having said that evil arises out of non-happiness, I shall have to offer at least a loose definition of happiness. Happiness I would contend arises in and is expedited in the giving of the self beyond the self, not in taking; in making for freedom, not bondage; illicit taking provokes evil, and the grossest illicit taking provokes the grossest evil as retaliation. This is another way, again, of saying that evil provokes evil. In the presence of evil or human wrongdoing, evil can only too easily reproduce itself.

Our reactions to human evil provoke two responses - and they are telling, and though at first sight they appear contradictory I think they in part confirm what I have been saying. Those reactions are anger, but at the same time pity. Of course we have anger toward a murderer, but we also have pity. Of course the person is to be held responsible for such an act - as they should - but we have pity at some level and some of the time at least because we recognize that evil acts are indication that evil-doers have missed something. Evildoers take something that does not belong to them, but they do that because they have need of something.

Here is the paradox, however: in the illicit taking from another of evil-doing, evil-doers are without something they are groping to have or to find, in the goodness of giving, we have something we seek to give. But one cannot give what one does not have, therefore, giving presupposes having. But having what? Having a belief that recognizes the importance of treating other people as if they were you, but specifically something other than yourself. The answer to the question of whence happiness in a generalized sense then is that you give of yourself, which you do because you have something to give. You give of yourself, whereas evil takes the selves of others for itself. This is why C. S. Lewis in a masterful depiction of evil in his *Screwtape Letters* compares evil to a being that consumes everything and everybody for self. This self cannot endure the thought that something should exist, though not for it, and finds incomprehensible the notion that we exist for others.

To give is to get. This is surely the meaning of Christ's teaching that in saving our life we shall lose it, in losing it we shall save it. In the practice of following such teaching, we need not fear for ourselves, for we do not empty ourselves as givers, we do not become poorer, rather we are replenished and make ourselves rich and others richer. We find ourselves in presenting a self that we share with other selves. Evildoers seek to appease their unhappiness by taking, not by giving. This in turn generates other evil that good has to overcome.

In our contemporary world evil is often portrayed as liberating, as cool, for with evil, fences are pulled down, and we are freed of our previous enclosure or prison. As the SW television ad has it: there are no boundaries. But this is an extension of the self for the self. On the contrary, evil is everything but liberating. In reality evil is confining, whereas goodness is not. Evil is more like a cage in which the preoccupation with self molds itself as a prison that only the self is allowed to occupy, for no evil deed, true to form, has as itis intent to share with another. Real liberation would be an escape from self-absorption, but self-absorption is oftentimes the result of attempting to compensate for dreams denied. There is no beatific smile on the face of evil, however, but at best only a repulsive grin, because this self is miserably bound only to itself, and has no thought of others without reference to itself. God saves us from our worst selves in order that we might permit our true selves to emerge. Those true selves will have realized that we can give because somebody first gave to us. Goodness perpetuates goodness; evil perpetuates evil. The most difficult case, therefore, but the most needful, is when goodness places evil in check, and giving pause to evil, causes evil to examine itself. This may give goodness its time to work.

Evil in Science

Marry Hassinger

When one initially thinks about the topic of science and evil, perhaps the most immediate images that come to mind are movie depictions of crazed scientists who test their unthinkable ideas on innocent victims in the pursuit of power or wealth. They ultimately meet with failure and good overcomes evil ... at least in the movie. But what about real science as opposed to science fiction? Several of the themes that emerge include misconduct and fraud in science, science in the service of the military, and finally, the conscience of the scientist.

The era of modern science began in the seventeenth century. The philosophy that science would make possible a man-made Garden of Eden was promoted by Francis Bacon, a writer and hilosopher of the time. He proposed that umans begin to look beyond the life of the soul, and instead look to the natural world outside themselves, in their search for meaning. Bacon had the intuition that out of the knowledge of nature could pour the instruments of good or evil. «Through the premature hurry of the understanding,» he cautioned, «great dangers may be apprehended ... against which we ought even now to prepare.» In Bacon's day, humans knew little about the natural world and suffered disease, plagues, hunger, and physical discomfort for this lack of knowledge. Today, the problem is different, for humans have much scientific knowledge, but face the task of applying it for good rather than evil - and knowing the difference.

MISCONDUCT AND FRAUD IN SCIENCE

What constitutes scientific misconduct or fraud? A scientist who does sloppy experimental work, deliberately cheats, or who falsifies, leaves out, invents or lies about research data is guilty of misconduct

or criminal deception. It is fraudulent for a scientist to use false data to secure a job, to prove that public funds have been properly used, or to try to convince the public or grantors that a certain procedure, material , or drug, is safe.

One should not assume that fraud in science is rare or occurs only in the competitive high stakes venture of modern science. There actually is much evidence suggesting that some of the most famous historical figures in science committed some type of fraud - including Galileo, Newton, and Mendel. Why might a scientist commit fraud?

Scientists are human, and may be tempted by power or fortune just as any other individual. Modern science is a professional career and with it come ambitions and competition. Measures of «success» include high paying jobs; the number of articles published in the scientific literature; the number of research grants awarded; to be the first with a new discovery; or winning the Nobel Prize. Another factor is the difficulty in obtaining money to do research. Modern science requires larger and larger sums of money to conduct. Government agencies are the main source of research funds for academic and medical research. Funding is tight, competition is stiff, and past productivity is used a basis for granting new awards. These pressures and demands push scientists to everything from sloppy research to complete fraud, especially in the biological and medical sciences - unfortunately where fraud is more likely to affect public welfare directly.

What are some examples of cutting corners to outright fraud in science that exemplify evil? One historical example in the twentieth century is that of T.D. Lysenko, a pseudo-scientist who came to prominence in the field of genetics in Russia during the early 1930's. Lysenko actually knew very little plant physiology and genetics, but he and his supporters gained recognition of their ideas by distortion of data, slander, false accusations, and false promises. Western scientists could not reproduce any of his work, but Russian leaders bought into his ideas and allowed him to basically wipe out a well-developed field of Russian genetics for 35 years. The most important Russian geneticists of the time were removed from their posts and many were arrested, placed in concentration camps, exiled, or executed. Some died in prisons of malnutrition. Also, Lysenko's work was supposed to address the problem of the Soviet Union's inability to raise enough grain to meet the basic food needs of the country. However, because his claims were completely false, the shortage of grain in Russia continued to be problematic for three decades and many Soviet citizens suffered as a result.

There are many examples of fraud and misconduct in US science: tobacco scientists who covered up data on the addictive effects of nicotine and the negative impacts of smoking on health; government scientists who disputed reports of the negative effects of pesticides on the environment; or government scientists who minimized data that reflected harmful effects of radiation exposure to radioactive fallout in nuclear bomb testing.

A recent example of misconduct turned evil is that of Penn State's Institute for Human Gene Therapy. In January, 2000, the Food and Drug Administration halted all human gene therapy experi-

ments being conducted by James Wilson, a researcher in the Institute. The FDA found numerous violations of federal research regulations and shortcomings in the protection of human subjects. These violations had resulted in the death of an 18-year-old Arizona man being treated in the program run by Wilson. The $25 million annual budget of the Institute is linked to biotechnology companies, and it is purported that Wilson had a potentially large financial stake in the outcome of some of his gene therapy studies.

These examples show that scientific misconduct and fraud can have negative, often horrendous impact on individuals and societies as a whole.

SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF THE MILITARY

One purpose to understanding nature is to devise practical ways to use nature for human purposes. This endeavor is called technology, and the devices developed are technological «tools». Weapons, military vehicles and surveillance equipment are examples of technological devices, and clearly scientists have a role in their development.

The potential of using scientific knowledge to aid in human conflict has been recognized for centuries. Scientific and engineering inventions such as catapults, gunpowder, TNT, chemical weapons, and guided missiles have contributed significantly to the business of war at various points in history. And it seems that scientists worked with the military somewhat unhampered by questions of moral responsibility - until the twentieth century.

It is hard to believe now, but in 1914, the London Times stated in an editorial that «no civilized nation would bomb open cities from the air.» Ernest Rutherford, a major figure in atomic physics of the early twentieth century, held the view that no practical applications would come from the understanding of nuclear energy. Yet only 31 years later, the U.S. dropped nuclear bombs on two defenseless, heavily populated cities in Japan - Hiroshima and Nagasaki - resulting in mass destruction of the cities, the loss of thousands of lives, great personal injury and suffering, horrible disfigurement, permanent psychological and physical disabilities, birth defects, and long term chronic health problems for thousands exposed to radiation.

Without a doubt, the development and use of nuclear weapons has given scientists and societies the greatest moral dilemma ever faced. Scientist Leo Szilard wrote the patent for the concept of the «chain reaction» and filed it in 1934. He knew of its implications for creating an atomic bomb, and wanted to keep the patent secret in order to prevent science from being misused. But he wrote a letter to Roosevelt in 1939, as WWII escalated, and stated « nuclear energy is here - what do you want scientists to do about it?» Roosevelt's answer was to mobilize hundreds of scientists, led by J. Robert Oppenheimer, to develop the first atomic bombs. After the first use of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in 1945, someone said to Szilard, «it is the tragedy of scientists that their discoveries are used for destruction.» Szilard replied, « It is not the tragedy of scientists, it is the tragedy of mankind.»

The atomic bomb, according to Jacob Bronowski, changed the scale of our «indifference to man». Perhaps for the first time, scientists began to look beyond the simple motivation of doing science for the sheer beauty and fascination of seeing something work. They asked themselves, why are we scientists? For whose benefit do we work? What is the full measure of our moral and social responsibility?

Norbert Wiener, an atomic bomb scientist, reflected the thoughts of many scientists when he wrote in 1946, «that to provide scientific information is not necessarily an innocent act, and may entail the gravest consequences ... the interchange of ideas, one of the greatest traditions of science, must of course receive certain limitations when the scientist becomes an arbiter of life and death.»

After W.W.II, Oppenheimer himself was less than eager to work on development of the hydrogen bomb, a bomb ten times more powerful than the atomic bomb. Ultimately, it cost him his security clearance with the Atomic Energy Commission and his prestige as a scientist. During the hearings in which his clearance was revoked, Oppenheimer was questioned by the Commission about the intellectual and moral dilemmas faced by scientists of the time. Oppenheimer stated at the time «It isn't the fault of the physicists that brilliant ideas always lead to bombs nowadays. As long as that is the case, one can have a scientific enthusiasm for a thing and, at the same time, as a human being, one can regard it with horror.»

Oppenheimer, in his final statement to the board, summarized the post WWII feelings of many scientists:

> I ask myself whether we, the physicists, have not sometimes given too great, too indiscriminate loyalty to our governments, against our better judgement.... We have spent years of our lives in developing ever sweeter means of destruction, we have been doing the work of the military, and I feel it in my very bones that this was wrong ... I will never work on war projects again. We have been doing the work of the Devil, and now we must return to our real tasks.

Today, among scientists, research that will benefit the military is not as «honorable» as it was prior to World War II. For example, the controversies between scientists concerning military research were debated at conferences and in journals during the Vietnam era. Here is a sampling of how far apart scientists were in their opinions:

One scientist wrote in a letter to the editor of a scientific journal that «scientists who consistently use their skills in the service of killing men - should not be asked to meetings, and should not be allowed to publish their results. They could be free to do their work, but I think we have a right and a duty not to acknowledge them as fellow members of the scientific community.»

In an opposing view, another scientist states «Throughout the ages, wars were won by superior weapons. In modern war, technology based on science plays a bigger factor than ever before in the

history of mankind. Capable scientists are, therefore, the most precious asset which a nation possesses to give it superiority over its enemies... no scientist is morally justified ... to deny his services to the nation of which he forms a part...»

THE CONSCIENCE OF THE SCIENTIST

You may wonder how any scientist finds it in himself/herself to «do the work of the devil» as Oppenheimer suggested. Science has often been criticized as being too objective and impersonal and scientists as arrogant and selfish. Although all science and all scientists cannot be characterized this way, these factors certainly have contributed to the existence of evil in science.

Regarding the impersonal, Abraham Maslow, a psychologist, wrote of the «desacralization» of science, that is, «science and everything scientific can be and often is used as a tool in the service of a distorted, narrowed, humorless, de-emotionalized, and desanctified world-view. Desacralization is used as a defense against being flooded by emotion, especially the emotions of reverence ...and sorrow... it is used to keep something at arm's length.» In medical school, Maslow experienced the amputation of a woman's breast by an electrical scalpel while the surgeon made careless and casual comments about the object and his cutting. The breast was finally tossed through the air onto a counter where it landed, in the words of Maslow «with a plop.... It had changed from a sacred object to a discarded lump of fat.» Maslow continues: «There were... no tears, prayers, or rituals of any kind ... this was all handled in a technological fashion - emotionless, calm, even with a slight tinge of swagger.» Maslow's desacralization idea perhaps explains the ability of Nazi scientists to perform horrible experiment on human subjects with cold efficiency and objectivity, or today's engineers to build better and more effective anti-person-nel weapons.

Regarding the selfishness, many scientists' attitude continues to be that there is no choice but to proceed with scientific work, which promises to be challenging but irresistible because of its potential for success. Predicting something elaborate and getting it to come together and actually work is often described by scientists as «technically sweet.» Atomic bombs were viewed this way, and one «technically sweet» idea that scientists are having trouble resisting today is that of cloning humans.

However, responsible scientists recognize that they are not exempt from the ethical and moral shaping of their work. The questions they ask include the following. If an idea is theoretically possible, should it be pursued regardless of its potential for evil use? Should they withhold knowledge if they consider that there is a great risk that it will be misused? Is it possible for scientists or anyone to predict the potential for misuse of a discovery or invention? What guidelines should be used to decide if the probabilities for misuse are greater than those for useful application? Who should be blamed if unpredicted evil consequences of a scientist's work take place? There are no easy answers, but the general consensus is that scientists must be aware of the questions and at least attempt to answer them.

A science historian, Loren Graham, writes: «They must not only try to judge what can be done on the basis of their work but what, in all probability, will be done in view of the existing social forces.» He continues: «As a hypothetical case, assume that I am a scientist in Nazi Germany and that I have just discovered Tay-Sachs disease, a disorder with genetic causes that is more common among Jews than other groups of the population. Whether I should publish my research, and to whom I should send reprints (Hitler?) become moral acts, not because of values inherent in my scientific work, but because of the possible impact in that particular political setting of this purely scientific finding.»

One way that scientists have found to approach these issues is to form organizations dedicated to the study and public discussion of complex scientific issues. For example, Pugwash was formed in post World War II to look at arms control and currently monitors and discusses issues such as chemical and biological weapons, landmines, and environmental and health issues related to science.

SOME CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Given the experience of the twentieth century and the rise in moral consciousness of the scientist, is science less likely to cause evil in the future?

First, many believe it is necessary for human beings to develop a much greater understanding of themselves before the evil uses of science and technology disappear. In other words, psychology and the study of human societies have not kept pace with the advancements of natural science. Our ability as a species to invent and use technology far exceeds our ability to control and deal with its possible downsides. Abraham Maslow summarized this idea with a frightening thought: «atom bombs ... given into the charge of individuals and societies ... who are psychologically and socially primitive.»

Second, every scientific theory, every research study, and every technological innovation exists in a social and political setting. The value impacts of these combinations are complex. Economic and social forces quickly lead to the exploitation of science and technology discoveries. Thus, who is actually responsible for negative exploitation of scientific discoveries?

Brownoski wrote «to fancy that somehow we may shelve the responsibility for making the decisions of our society by passing it on to a few scientists armored with special magic» is ridiculous. He felt that the use of science by society should «require as much devotion and understanding as the work scientists have put forth towards its discovery». Yet, studies show that as a society, we are increasing in scientific illiteracy. And people who have no understanding of technology are unlikely to make good decisions about whether to support its development or about how to use it wisely. With many major political decisions involving technological issues (nuclear energy and nuclear war, environmental issues such as global warming and ecosystem destruction, biotechnology and bioengineering) all individuals need to pay greater attention to, and strive for better understanding of, science and its applications.

Scientists and societies should reflect on Francis Bacon's original vision of science knowledge, and perhaps allow another of Bacon's writings to guide future science endeavors: «I would address one general admonishment to all: that they consider what are the true ends of knowledge, and that they seek it not either for pleasure of mind, or for contention, or for superiority to others, or for profit, or fame, or power, or any of these inferior things; but for the benefit and use of life; and that they perfect and govern it in charity.»

Faces of Evil

Ward Jones

Throughout this session we have heard and learned about various «potential evils» in the world that surrounds us. To focus a little more, I would like to ask the question, What are some of the scientific faces of evil that will confront scientists in the new millennium? This is by no means a complete list of «potential evils»; however, I will discuss several specific topics that we frequently read or hear about through scientific and non-scientific forms of communication.

First, let me use one of Hollywood's contemporary notions of human cloning to talk about this very important issue. In the movie Multiplicity, starring Michael Keaton and Andie MacDowell, Mr. Keaton (Doug) portrays a person who works in the construction business. As the movie opens, Doug is overseeing the reconstruction of a cement driveway only to find out that the wrong driveway was reconstructed. Throughout the next several minutes Doug has what I would consider one the worst work days in history, where everything seems to «unravel» before his eyes. His frustration culminates into an emotional eruption when he attempts to repair a water pipe at the Gemini Institute. As one may expect in the movies, the very geneticist that has developed the technology to clone humans works at this institute. The geneticist observes Doug's expression of frustration and he later approaches Doug offering him help. The dialog between Doug and the geneticist is quoted below as it unfolds in the movie.

Geneticist: I can help you. Doug: Help me how?

Geneticist: Change your life.

Doug: What is it you guys do around here?

Geneticist: We make miracles.

Doug: Sure! .... (yeah right)

At this point the movie progresses to the point where Doug is describing his «lack of time» to the geneticist and some of the dialogue before Doug is cloned follows:

Doug: What do you do?

Geneticist: I told you I make miracles, I create time, I make clones.

Doug: OK....... (yeah right)

Geneticist: I'm a geneticist .... (I started cloning viruses, then earthworms, then chimps and well ..... he cloned himself)

Naturally, Doug decides to clone himself. Immediately following the cloning of Doug there is an interesting dialogue between the geneticist, Doug and his clone.

Clone: Is that it? (pointing to Doug)

Geneticist: No, you're it.

Doug: What do I feed it?

One must understand that cloning humans does not mean we can Xerox them resulting in a clone of the same genetic make-up at the same age with the same memories; however, we can still use this example to examine human cloning. Although the movie is intended to be humorous, what does this dialogue between Doug and the geneticist indicate? If you stop and listen to what is said, is the geneticist implying that he is ... God, Allah, Buddha? After almost no thought, Doug decides to clone himself so he will have more time to do more important things with his life. Once Doug's clone was created, I found the initial interaction between Doug and his clone very interesting. Both felt the other was the clone. Only the number two behind the clone's ear identified Doug's clone. Doug asked the scientist, «What do I feed IT?» What is Doug implying? Is his clone an IT? Is his clone human? Does his clone have a soul?

Where does cloning fit in the world? Allow me to digress and ask the question about cloning sheep or cattle. We have witnessed the true cloning of sheep. Is this form of cloning acceptable? Cloning sheep may allow us to produce more wool and cloning cattle may allow us to produce more beef and milk. However, we must remember that creating a herd of genetically identical cattle means that the herd possesses no appreciable genetic diversity. Thus, the entire herd will be resistant to and susceptible to the same diseases meaning that a single disease could wipe-out the entire herd. As you can see there may be some positive and negative aspects to cloning cattle or sheep.

Let's take it a step further. Is cloning humans acceptable? Cloning humans is no more technically difficult than cloning sheep; however, the ethical and moral issues surrounding human cloning are certainly more serious. What would be the result of cloning humans? If we cloned Mother Theresa would her clone be «her»? The antithesis, if we cloned Adolph Hitler, would his clone be «him»? In both cases, I would have to say no. What defines a person? Is a person simply a collection of genes? Or, is there more to the story? If we clone someone, they may appear the same, but their personality may be completely different. As the movie Multiplicity continues, it becomes obvious that the multiple clones of

Doug are in fact individuals and in the end I felt that the implication was that human cloning wasn't such a good idea. I personally cannot think of a single reason that we should clone humans. Remember, not everyone will agree with me, so the possibility of human cloning exists.

So far, we have discussed the obvious or overt potential for evil in science. What about insidious or unseen evil? Another «hot» topic in both the scientific literature and non-scientific literature is the «sequencing of the human genome.» Essentially, scientists are working very hard to sequence the entire human genome. Just recently, Celera Genomics announced that they have «compiled DNA sequence covering 90% of the human genome which includes an estimated 97% of all human genes.» Reading further into the press release, I found that «Celera's gene discovery team has identified several thousand new genes that potentially play key roles in cell communication and regulation. ...» Of interest, Celera intends to file provisional patent applications on «medically relevant gene discoveries.» They have also «implemented a non-exclusive licensing program to make the intellectual property available to Celera database subscribers.»

I have used the above quotes to indicate how close we really are to sequencing the entire human genome and to trigger intellectual thought about what this really means. Who owns the human genome? Do I own it? Do you own it? Or, does everyone own it? Is there really any intellectual «property» when discussing the human genome? Should all 6 billion people of the world have free access to the human genetic sequence? What are the rights of the those who sequenced the human genome? As you can see, there are more questions than answers.

How can we use the genetic information? There are many ways that we can use this information in a positive way. Understanding the human genome will allow us to treat various genetic diseases. For example, we currently have somewhat of an understanding regarding the genetic anomalies associated with Cystic Fibrosis and Muscular Dystrophy. This is an area of intense research involving the use of gene therapy to treat and possibly «cure» these genetic diseases. Many of you may remember the «boy in the bubble» (David) who suffered from a genetic immune deficiency. Using gene therapy, treatment of his disease is possible. What about less noble uses of this type of information? How many of you are football fans? What if I decided that I wanted to have a child that would some day play for the Green Bay Packers? Would it be acceptable to manipulate the genes to ensure that my child is tall enough and heavy enough to succeed in the National Football League? Let's take it a step further, if I can do this then why not create people for specific tasks? Some would be soldiers, some teachers, some politicians, some scientists, etc. etc. Sounds a bit like an ant colony! In all seriousness, where do we stop? Recall that genetically selecting for particular physical attributes has, in a round-about-way, been attempted several times in the last 100 years. Is eradicating an ethnic group any different than creating an ethnic group? As you can see, we may start with great intentions, but we sometimes end up somewhere that we do not want to be.

In conclusion, how do we confront these issues? I believe that most scientists are ethical and moral people. What about those that are not? How should we address regulating science? Should we allow scientists to rule themselves? Or, should we ask for government intervention? These are very difficult

questions that will face us all in the new millennium. How can you get involved? Certainly thinking about and discussing these issues is a good first step. However, I challenge you to take it a step further. Maybe writing a letter to the editor of your local newspaper or writing a letter to your congressperson would be an excellent «second» step. Don't be afraid to get involved. In the end, you will probably have more questions than answers, so as not to disappoint you, allow me to leave you these last two questions to thoughtfully ponder. Are we on the threshold of obtaining the most significant and powerful scientific knowledge in the history of humankind? If so, how do we deal with it?

Hannah Arendt on Evil . . .with support from Social Psychology

Richard E. Morehouse

How do we explain events that are inexplicably evil? How could the holocaust occur in a country often thought to be at the pinnacle of civilized Europe? How did the philosophical ideas of Marx, a thinker solidly within the intellectual tradition of the West, end in the gulags of Stalinist Soviet Union? How can one explain the apparent civility and placid nature of a man who oversaw the murder of perhaps hundreds of thousands of people?

Hannah Arendt examines these questions as a German Jewish philosopher born before the First World War - as a philosopher and political theorist who studied with some of the greatest thinkers in 20th century philosophy: Heidegger, Husserl, and Jaspers. Very briefly, Arendt makes a case first for what she calls radical evil, and within the framework of radical evil writes about one of the perpetrators of that evil whom she ironically labels «banal.» The ideas of radical evil and the banality of evil for Arendt stand together. In fact, the way to understand Eichmann's behavior is within the context of the radical evil of Nazi Germany.

Arendt understands radical evil as coming from the total destruction of what she calls the human condition. Arendt's human condition is a non-essentialist human condition: one based on the twin principles of equality and distinction that she calls plurality. Because humans are equal, communication is possible. Because we are distinct, communication is necessary. How does human plurality connect with the death camps? Arendt argues that point of totalitarianism is the destruction not of individuals, or even a race of people, but rather totalitarian destruction is about the destruction of the human spirit - the destruction of human action, human spontaneity, and free will.

I will explore Arendt's view of radical evil in some detail. And within the context of the radical evil of totalitarianism, Arendt's understanding of Eichmann as an example of the «banality of evil» will be examined.

Hannah Arendt wrote on evil in several books and articles over a long period of time. The two that deal most directly with evil are *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and *Eichmann in Jerusalem.* It is a difficult task to sort out and to get right her ideas on the topic. It is an almost impossible task to do in 15 minutes. But I will do my best to at least highlight some of her thoughts, with as little distortion as possible[1].

A little more background on Arendt is in order as it relates to her thoughts on the topic of evil. Arendt was born in the early part of this century (1906) and died in the in the USA in 1975. She studied philosophy in Germany immediately after the First World War with Heideggar, Husserl, and Jaspers. Her dissertation was on the concept of Love in Augustine. As a German Jew, she fled the Nazi government in the 1930s, first moving to Paris and later to the USA. She is most widely known for her reporting on the trial of Adolph Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961. Arendt reported on the Eichmann trial for the *New Yorker.* These *New Yorker* articles were eventually published in a book called *Eichmann in Jerusalem.* It is in Arendt's coverage of the Eichmann trial that she coins the term «banality of evil,» and is all most of us know about her writing on the topic.

This phrase has become one of our everyday expressions of evil - without much thought on its meaning beyond its surface, common sense meaning that evil can in some sense be ordinary. It is the deeper sense of banality of evil as developed by Arendt that will be explored today. The question many people asked at the time of the Eichmann trial was «How could anyone write about banality of evil while looking in the face of a mass murderer?» Arendt was sitting in the courtroom and looking directly at that face, the face of Adolph Eichmann. So what can this statement mean in the context of the holocaust? One step toward understanding this type of evil is Arendt's citation from Eichmann's statements at the trial in Jerusalem. Eichmann states that he worried about his role in killing Jews and others until he was confronted with a group of his betters at the Wanesse conference. This meeting was attended by leading figures in Germany including not only military men and members of the Nazi party, but also important civil servants and others not directly connected to either the party or the military. Arendt writes:

> *Although he had been doing his best right along to help with the Final Solution, he had still harbored some doubts about «such a bloody solution through violence, «and these doubts had been dispelled. «Here now, during this conference (the Wanesse Conference, January, 1942), the most prominent people had spoken, the Popes of the Third Reich. « Now he could see with his own eyes and hear with his own ears that not only Hitler, but also Heydrick ... not just the SS or the Party, but the elite of the good old Civil Service were vying and fighting with each other to take the lead in these «bloody» matters. «At this mome7it, I sensed a kind of Pontius Pilate feeling, for 1 felt free of all guilt. « Who was he to judge? Who was he «to have [his] own thoughts in this matter»?* (Villa, 1999, p. 48, citing Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem).*

What makes Eichmann's evil banal is that there is «no voice from the other side to arouse his conscience.» Arendt sees Eichmann as a person who is thoughtless regarding his role in the killing of Jews. Eichmann was instead concerned about his social role; he was concerned about how he fit into the structure of government of which he was a part. She further sees this thoughtlessness as

related to his inability to see another position. He could not see that he might have a role in the German government/military that might, for moral reasons, go against the ruling establishment.

Arendt's questions (Who was he to judge? Who was he to have [his] own thoughts in this matter?) are questions that are relevant to us today as we examine our role in the world. The question for me (and I think, for Arendt) is how do we keep our thoughts on issues of good and evil if those around us all seem to agree that what we might think of as evil is seen as benign by the rest of the world?

Social Psychology research offers many studies that examine how the opinions and behaviors of others affect our belief, our judgment and our action. These studies support the premise that what we see with our own eyes, and what we hear with our own ears, may be reinterpreted if it disagrees with what others report to be true.

Let's look at three of these studies: one conducted by Solomon Ash (1955), another (perhaps the most widely known of the three) conducted by Stanley Milgram (1963), and a final study conducted by Philip Zimbardo and his colleagues (1973). Solomon Ash published his study in the *Scientific American* entitled «Opinion and Social Pressure.» Ash writes in the introduction that his research is important for the following reasons.

> *How, and to what extent, do social forces constrain people's opinions and attitudes? This question is especially pertinent in our day. The same epoch that has witnessed the unprecedented technological extensions of communication has also brought into existence the deliberate manipulation of opinion the «engineering of consent. « There are many good reasons why, as citizens and social scientist, we should be concerned with the study of the ways in which human beings form their opinions and the role that social conditions play* (In Readings About the Social Animal, 1999. p. 19).

Eichmann's statement at his trial in Jerusalem about how he reconciled his complicity in the murder of innocent human beings in the camps is certainly high on my list of reasons for examining conforming behavior.

Ash conducted a simple straightforward experiment. He presents his subjects with a single vertical line. He then presents three vertical lines of varying lengths, one of which matches the line on the previous card. The subject is asked to identify the line closest to the original line. There are other people in the room and they all state their choice before the subject states his choice. Unknown to the subject all the other persons in the room are accomplices of the experimenter. All the accomplices misidentify the line - all choosing the same wrong line. Thirty-one per cent of the subjects agreed with the accomplices and stated that the matching line was in fact a line that did not match the original. An important difference was found when there was just one person who identified the line correctly or even misidentified an alternate line. If one of the accomplices also gave any different answer from the majority of persons in the room, the rate of conformity to the wrong answer dropped by one- third.

Ash's research sheds some light on Eichmann's behavior. However, it remains quite easy for us to see ourselves as members of the almost 70 per cent who did not go along with the majority and against our better judgment. Stanley Milgram's 1963 study may give us pause to reevaluate our strength to resist pressure to conform. Milgram's experiment grew directly out of his efforts to understand the holocaust. As he states:

> *It has been reliably established that from 1933 to 1945 millions of innocent persons were systemati-cally slaughtered on command. Gas chambers were built, death camps were guarded, and daily quotas of corpses were produced with the same efficiency as the manufacturing of appliances. These inhumane poli-cies may have originated in the mind of a single person, but they could not be carried out on a massive scale if a very large number* of *persons had not obeyed orders* (Milgram in Aronson, p.32).

Briefly, Milgram, a Yale psychologist, invited people to participate in an experiment that he thought would examine the role of punishment in learning. Again there is an accomplice. The accomplice in this experiment plays the role of the learner, and the subject is asked to perform the task of the teacher. To ensure that the subject does not catch on to the experimenter's real purpose (the study of obedience or compliance) the experimenter has each person draw slips of paper from a hat. He tells them that one slip of paper says teacher and the other learner. In fact, both say teachers, and the accomplice states that his slip of paper has the word learner on it. The accom-plice sits behind a glass window and is hooked up to what looks like electrodes connected to a box that the subject is given. The gauge the subject has in front of him has four switches, each with an incremental setting of 15 volts each. The switches are labeled Slight Shock, Moderate Shock, Ex-treme Intense Shock, and Danger: Severe Shock. Two levels after the Danger switch were simply marked XXX. The subject is informed that he is to shock the learner (accomplice) if the learner gets a wrong answer and to increase the shock with each successive wrong answer. If he hesitates the experimenter says one of four prompts: (1) Please continue, (2) The experiment requires that you continue, (3) It is absolutely essential that you continue, or (4) You have no choice, you must go on. The subjects were paid in advance and told that they could quit at any time.

Of the 40 subjects in the original experiment, no subject stopped below 300 volts. Five sub-jects refused to obey beyond 300 volts. Twenty-six subjects obeyed to the end of the experiment, despite the protests of the learner (accomplice). Milgram provided two statements from subjects who refused to continue:

> *[0124] 1 think he's trying to communicate, he's knocking ... Well it's not fair to shock the guy ... these are terrific volts. I don't think this is very humane ... Oh, I can't go on with this, no, this isn't right. It's a hell of an experiment. The guy is suffering in there. No, I don't want to go on. This is crazy.*

And

> *[0123] He's banging in there. I'm. gonna chicken out. I'd like to continue, but I can't do that to a man ... I'm sorry I can't do that to a man. I'll hurt his heart. You take your check ... No really, I couldn't do it.*

The third experiment was· conducted by Haney, Banks and Zimbardo and published in 1973. I will make the description of this study even briefer. Stanford undergraduates volunteered to be in a mock prison experiment. An ad was placed in a local paper and people were required and screened to fit a stable personality profile. They were paid to participate in the experiment. Half of the group was assigned at random to be guards of prisoners. Those assigned to be prisoners were arrested by the local police and taken to the basement of a building at Stanford University and placed in a makeshift jail. The bottom line of the experiment was that it had to be stopped early as the «guards,» with no prompting from the experimenters, acted too cruelly to the «prisoners» for the experiment to continue.

All of these experiments were conducted in a democratic society that places a high value on individual responsibility and initiative. Eichmann's evil, however, was committed in Nazi Germany - a considerably less free society. To return to Arendt's «banality of evil,» it is important to place Eichmann within the context of Nazi Germany and what Arendt calls «radical evil.» One of the points that Arendt makes in *On Totalitarianism is* that Nazi Germany and Communist Russia were shaped by ideologies that limited and eventually eliminated the possibility for many people to reason about issues of good and evil. She argues that race and history (in Germany and Russia respectively) served as ends in themselves. When individual lives are regarded as ends to the inevitable purity of the race, arguments about who should be saved in terms of racial purity and the inevitable march of history became thoughtless actions. The actions one might take against a person or a group of persons inevitably flow from the ideology (racial purity or the march of history) and require no thought at all.

The reason no thought is required is that the Nazi regime and Stalinism have as their basic premise, not the control of people, but the creation of a single mind and single «man» to replace human plurality. Human plurality as mentioned above is central to Arendt political philosophy. She sees humans as inserted into «web of human history.» As participants in this web of meaning, we are agents who engage in action, but we cannot control the eventual outcome of our action as action (in Arendt's framework) takes place in public. Arendt argues that Nazi Germany and Stalinist Soviet Union destroyed or at least attempt to destroy all public places - that is, those spaces where human discourse can occur between people who are both equal and distinct.

With the elimination of human action within public spaces where people meet as distinct equals, there is little chance for individuals to seek their own counsel, to think for themselves, because ironically we often think for ourselves best when we think aloud in public. The same mechanistic worldview that destroyed public spaces, also treated all member of the nations as potential executors or victims. In Stalinist Russia or Nazi Germany, one might be executor today and a victim tomorrow. And as Shirley Jackson points out so powerfully in «The Lottery,» it is almost impossible to protest against evil if you do not know when you will be a victim or an executor.

Villa argues in *Politic, Philosophy, Terror. Essays on the Thoughts of Hannah Ardent,* that:

[u]nlike authoritarianism, tyrannical, or despotic regimes, totalitarianism relies funda-mentally on terror - not only as a means, but as a kind of end in itself. It hoped to achieve what no form ofgovernment had ever dreamt of attempting - the complete elimination of the very space between individuals and (thus) their capacity for independent action. The goal, in other words, was not simply the monopolization of *public power (as in tyranny or one party dictatorships) but the actual creation of «One Man of Gigantic Dimensions, « of a world without plurality and the differences of perspective born of it* (Villa, pp. 198-9, 1999).

The desire to create a non-human world, a world where human beings are things, comes from a new and profound type of hubris - the hubris of the perfectibility of the human species. Arendt, in response to a letter from Karl Jaspers[2] who queried about the distance of our society from God, re-sponded that the evil found in the tototalitanan regimes of Hitler and Stalin was not even thought of in the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments teach us about the evils relating to selfishness. The radical evil of the Camps and the Gulags was a new type of evil. Yet we know that the greatest of evil, or radical evil, has nothing to do any more with such humanly understood motives [those motives arising out of the many forms of selfishness]. What radical evil really is I do not know but it seems to me it somehow has to do with the following phenomenon: making human beings as human beings super-fluous (not using them as means to an end, which leaves their essence as humans untouched and im-pinges only on their human dignity; rather making them superfluous as human beings). This happens as soon as all unpredictability - which, in human beings is the equivalent of spontaneity - is eliminated. All this in turn arises from - or better, goes along with - the delusion of the omnipotence (not simply with the lust for power) of an individual man. If an individual man qua man were omnipotent, then there is in fact no reason why men should exist as all (Hannah Arendt-Karl Jaspers correspondence (1926-1969 as cited in Villa, 1999, pp. 32-33).

With this perspective on radical evil, we can now go back and look at the «banality of evil.» The Adolph Eichmann sitting at trial in Jerusalem is by most accounts intelligent, educated, and knowledge-able. Arendt reports that he is able to correctly state and explain Kant's Categorical Imperative. This is not a typical picture of a person who would oversee mass murder. He is a person who appears to under-stand right from wrong. How can we reconcile this information? And even more challenging, how can Eichmann's acts be considered banal?

One possible explanation for Eichmann's behavior is that he lost his ability to think for himself because he did not have anyone to talk with, any place to express his thoughts freely among equals. With all of his «betters» speaking loudly with one voice, Eichmann found himself, like Ash's subjects, going along with the group, like Milgram's «teachers» following the orders of the authority figures, like Zimbardo's «prison guards», conforming to the vision of the prisoner as less than human. Eichmann's acts are banal because he did not think, he only followed orders. Quoting from Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem,* Villa states:

«As Eichmann told it, the most potent factor in the soothing of his own conscience was the simple fact that he could see no one, no one at all, who was actually against the Final Solution» (p. 114). Thus it

was that Eichmann could honestly claim, despite the incredulity of the prosecution (at his trial), that «there were no voices from the outside to arouse his conscience» once it had been set at ease by the unanimous agreement of his social betters. Eichmann, according to Arendt, «did not close his ears to the voice of conscience, as the judgment has it, not because he had none, but because his conscience spoke with a `respectable voice,' with the voice of respectable society around him.» (Villa, p. 48),

While Arendt's point is not to lessen Eichmann's responsibility for his behavior, she is concerned with understanding the processes that allow an ordinary, intelligent person to become a mass murderer. I think the lesson is that an ordinary person can contribute to great evil when few opportunities are available to think aloud about moral issues. Would we be able to stand against the opinions of our «betters» even in the face of profound evil? When do we begin to take a stand?

While I do not have answers to those questions Villa warns:

> The «new type of criminal» represented by Eichmann is neither a party fanatic nor an indoctrinated robot. Rather, he is the individual who participates willingly in the activities of a criminal regime, while viewing himself as insulated from any and all responsibility for his actions under the law. Through such self-deception (and the «remoteness from reality» it promotes), an individual can successfully avoid ever confronting the question of the morality of his actions. As the case of Eichmann amply demonstrates, where «a law is a law»-where, in other words, thoughtlessness reigns - the faculties of judgment and moral imagination atrophy and then disappear
>
> (p. 52).

What we can do for one another is to engage in discussions in public spaces so that we can bring our opinions, our «doxa» as the Greeks called opinion, to the presence of others. Arendt argues that we are most often unaware of our opinions, of our perspective in our common world. Our opinions need to be worked out, need to be drawn out in the presence of others so that the consequences of those opinions can be examined more fully. As we deliver our opinion in public, we become aware of our unique perspectives and thus the perspectives of others. Unless we claim our voices in public we risk, to paraphrase Arendt, the possibility of becoming an unthinking Everyman, who has been the greatest criminal of the twentieth century.

NOTES

1. This paper will address three closely related issues regarding evil using three of Arendt's works *(The Origins of Totalitarianism, 1951; The Human Condition, 1956; Eichmann in Jerusalem, 1963).* Many of my insights on Arendt's views on evil also come from Dana Villa's *Politics, Philosophy, Tenor: Fasays on the Thoughts of Hannah Arendt, 1999).*

2. Jaspers wrote his letter as a comment on some issues Arendt raised in *On Totalitarianism.*

Evil: A Community Response

Chief Edward N. Kondraciq

During the course of my studies at Marquette University, I had the opportunity to study the poems and major prose of John Milton, including *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained.* It was Milton who said, «It was from out of the rind of one apple tasted, that the knowledge of good and evil, as two twins cleaving together, leaped forth into the world.»[1]

Criminologists, on the other hand, make the distinction between acts mala *prohibits* and acts *mala in se.* Acts which are defined as *mala prohibits* refer to those that are bad because they have been prohibited by society. That is, such acts as traffic violations, gambling, and the violation of various municipal ordinances, as an example.

On the other hand, acts *mala in se* are acts bad in themselves, forbidden behaviors for which there is a wide-scale consensus in the mores for prohibition. These are universal and morally reprehensible acts such as murder, rape, assault, and the like.[2] No one needs to consult a State Statute Book to know that violence against one's neighbor is inherently wrong. From a law enforcement perspective, I would suggest that these acts are evil in themselves or, most certainly, the manifestation of evil in our society.

During the course of my 35 years or so in policing, we have seen a proliferation of such crimes, coupled with a certain concupiscence or lust for pleasure that knows no bounds. New forms of crime not heard of twenty years ago are becoming commonplace, including workplace violence, drugs, hardcore internet pornography, telephone sex, high tech prostitution and gambling, and school violence are just a few examples of the changing crime picture in our communities across the country - and I ask you - mala *in se* or mala *prohibits?*

The media, the police, and elected officials are touting the recent drop in major crime in the United States. We, in La Crosse, have seen a significant drop in major crime; however, there are some disturbing trends, especially as they pertain to our nation's youth and families, that simply cannot be overlooked.

From 1987 to 1994, the total annual number of murders committed by juveniles, that is people under the age of 18, doubled in our country. For every two young people murdered in 1996, one youth committed suicide. In 1997, about six juveniles were killed daily in the United States. [3] Is this still another manifestation of systemic evil in our community?

A recent study of those violent incidents occurring in our classrooms provides us with a profile of what researchers are now referring to as «the classroom avenger.»

Researchers have discovered that:

- explicit or covert anger and hostility were prevailing emotions in the family.
- parents and children engaged in power struggles and battles over control.
- discipline is overly harsh and applied inconsistently.
- covert vandalism, cunning dishonesty, and excessive secretiveness are common features.

There is a striking resemblance between the episodes of workplace violence and classroom violence which seems indicative of a human or societal problem.[4] In both workplace and school violence, the most frequent motive is revenge - *mala in se* or *mala prohibits?*

The proliferation of serious crime, along with the emergence of new crime types, all against the backdrop of serious drug and alcohol abuse, is having a profound effect on both law enforcement and upon the communities we serve. Policing in a democracy requires high levels of integrity if it is to be acceptable to the people. The men and women who police the streets of our country are faced with opportunities for misconduct, corruption, and the abuse of power as never before.[5]

It is not uncommon for police officers to face serious moral choices. For example, illegal drug commerce will readily engage in bribery in order to assure distribution. Our society has become highly materialistic and a large number of individuals have difficulty in choosing right from wrong.

Let me refer back to John Milton. He writes, «He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasure, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true war-faring Christian.»[6]

The Supreme Court has recognized through various court decisions that the police are placed in the precarious position of «being in the competitive enterprise of ferreting out crime.» The competition, of course, is that of the criminal element.[7] Recent cases in New York and Los Angeles are clear indications of the temptations and opportunities to alter evidence, bias police reports, and to resort to excessive force.

This, then, is the challenge - that of maintaining integrity and public trust in an environment where some people seem all too eager to look the other way. The need for continuous re-enforcement of ethics and integrity in policing was recently identified by the President of the International Association of Chiefs of Police as the number one challenge facing our police today. He suggested, and I strongly agree, that we must advance police service in this country as a calling.[8]

Call it God's work if you will, but the men and women who police the streets of our nation are faced with dealing with the problems of broken families, a breakdown in neighborhoods, a breakdown in the work ethic, along with social, psychological and economic conditions seemingly beyond their control.

Modern police departments are seeing the need to articulate their mission and value statements so that every member of the agency might clearly understand the high ideals and commitment of law enforcement. We must teach ethics just as assuredly as we require firearms training.

Most police officers will never be faced with the ultimate life or death decision in the use of deadly force; likewise, most police officers will not be faced with an ultimate moral decision. However, when a young officer discovers a large amount of money seemingly discarded by a drug dealer in his efforts to avoid apprehension, the officer must know the right thing to do!

We heard that even Adolph Eichman was able to rationalize the holocaust because so many others seemingly found it acceptable. I am personally opposed to the concept of the thin blue line which results in a «we and them» type of mentality. The police must be a part of, and not apart from, the community we serve.

The last two decades have resulted in the emergence of a new philosophy of policing referred to as community policing. Community policing recognizes that police officers are much more than ticket and report writers, and that they can play a significant role as community leaders and problem solvers. Police departments across the country are engaging in community organizing and collaborative efforts in order to provide for extended family relationships and to serve as role models for young people, instilling values and an appreciation for the difference between right and wrong, or good and evil, if you will.

The seemingly overwhelming challenge to law enforcement has resulted in a new term these days referred to as «compassion fatigue» which can be deadly. Compassion fatigue refers to a very specific and dangerous syndrome.[9]

People in the helping professions who hear stories of pain and suffering can become psychologically traumatized and unable to maintain healthy boundaries between themselves and their community.

Our police officers are faced with the most gruesome and heart-wrenching of human circumstances. They are necessarily aware of the explicit details in the ever-increasing incidents of domestic violence and the physical and sexual abuse of children in our community. The recent incidents of a father shooting his wife and himself to death in front of their ten children, Thursday's incident of a woman stabbing her young boyfriend in the throat, or the recent local headlines and story of a father who is able to put his 3-year-old son in a plastic bag allowing him to suffocate, are cases all too familiar to our officers.

Ironically, both Jeffrey Dahmer and Jessie Anderson were brutally beaten to death by a fellow inmate in the Portage Correctional Facility located a mere 80 miles from here. I was a Milwaukee police officer when members of that department discovered Jeffrey Dahmer and the evidence of all his crimes. At about the same time, another young father, Jesse Anderson, took his wife to dinner and later to a theater, and, upon returning to their car located in a dark parking lot, he suddenly stabbed her to death and then stabbed himself in an effort to give the appearance of a murder/robbery in order to obtain insurance money to support his affluent lifestyle.

It is not my intent to alarm; incidents of these types are all too frequent and well known. However, they are a clear indication of the depth and presence of evil in society.

The incidents of suicide, abuse, and neglect, like all evil, become so cumulative that they can threaten the health and well-being of our officers. Yesterday, we were told that evil begets evil.

Last year, 68 police officers were killed in the line of duty. During that same time period, more than 3 50 police officers committed suicide.»

Far too many of our police officers having personally experienced the multiple faces of evil are carrying vivid pictures of these experiences in their minds. As a police administrator, I must be cognizant of the need for constant training, for counseling opportunities, improved recruitment and selection procedures, and the need to vary assignments so that no one officer is unduly exposed to the forces of crime and evil in our society. [11]

Yesterday, we heard about both primary and secondary evil. Primary evil being of the sort I have just described, with secondary evil belonging to those in positions of significant influence in our society. I believe we should be concerned when our nation's leaders debate the very definition of what «is» is.

At Marquette University, we were told that there existed a fundamental law of non-contradiction; that is, «either it is or it isn't, but that it cannot be and not be at the same time.» All that is necessary for evil to prevail in our society is that good people do nothing. We, as individuals, must take a stance against such political corruption, crime, and the forces of evil.

We are truly blessed here in La Crosse with the presence of Viterbo College and the new criminal justice major. I believe that the theology and philosophy background being provided is essential to succeeding in policing today. As I interview police applicants, they will tell me that their desire is to work with people and to make a positive difference. By focusing on the positive, these young people can avoid becoming cynical and can avoid the trappings of evil.

I am pleased at recent trends in policing which are providing our officers with an opportunity to make a positive difference as role models and in working with parents and families in summer youth

programs and in the classroom. Good can overcome evil, and I am confident that young people entering law enforcement can make a positive difference and, therefore, we must ask - «Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.»

NOTES

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2. Frank E. Hagen, *Introduction to Criminology,* Second Edition, Nelson-Hall Inc., Chicago, 1991.

3. *juvenile Offenders and Victims 1999 National Report,* National Center for Juvenile Justice, September 1999.

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5. *Police Integrity, Public Service With Honor, U.S.* Department of Justice, January 1997.

6. John Milton. *Complete Poems and Major Prose,* Edited by Merritt Y. Hughes, Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1983.

7. June 19, 1961 Amp vs. Ohio, U.S. Supreme Court.

8. Police Chief David Walchak's speech at Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Convention, Milwaukee, WI.

9. Article in Minneapolis newspaper *For Helpers,* «Compassion Fatigue Can Be Deadly,» by Syl Jones, Journalist, Minnetonka, MN.

10. Ibid.

11. Edward J. Tully. Misconduct, Corruption, Abuse of Power: What Can the Chief Do? *Beretta USA Leadership Bulletin,* December 1997.

Address correspondence to:

Lyon Evans, English Department

Larry Harwood, Philosophy Department

Mary Hassinger, Chemistry Department

Ward Jones, Biology Department

Richard Morehouse, Psychology Department *all at*

Viterbo College

815 South 9th Street

La Crosse, WI 54601

City of La Crosse

400 La Crosse Street

La Crosse, Wl 54601