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Articles

Book Reviews

Mikvah, Rain, and the Waters of Dwelling

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I slip into an Azaldúan (Anzaldúa, 1987) dream to find myself descending into the earth, descending like Inanna, like Ishtar. It is difficult to consider the global water crisis as I wade into the mikvah, the womb. This ritual water that connects me to others, to life, to the earth, this mikvah reminds me that I am dwelling here in the north suburbs. No, perhaps it is not so difficult now, to recall how I destroy the water commons around me. I dwell here, where my waste collides with my water, the same water I drink and immerse in. In this ancient tradition, where Jewish women have immersed in mikvahs for generations, to reconnect, to reaffirm, one cannot help but examine, unravel and mourn the global water crisis.

Barbara Kingsolver (2010) walks with her daughter, engaging with the aquatic creatures of her dwelling. I think of my own two little girls and their wonder at and fascination with water. They were, after all, the ones who taught me to appreciate the element. "I really love being in the bath, Mommy," they say innocently. "Are we going to the beach today?" Between watering our plants and running their fingers along the dance of the humidifier's steam, they have shown me how much I take our water for granted.

Our waters of dwelling, the lakes and rivers we adore in our county, flow in and out of our family excursions. But for how long? If no one fights to save the commons, will no one fight to save the water? Ivan Illich (1985) warned us decades ago about this loss of commons related to water: "The city child has no opportunities to come in touch with living water. Water can no more be observed; it can only be imagined, by reflecting on an occasional drop or a humble puddle" (p. 76). We did not listen.

Illichian Dwelling

Dwelling, *Bauen,* or the building we inhabit: this is where we use and abuse water. We are dwelling, remaining, staying in one place (Heidegger, 1971), such romantic language for a place of such hydrocide. Yes, *hydrocide*, the killing of water.

I clean out my gutters, water my plants, rinse my dishes. I dwell in my *Bauen*. But I recall that where I live and dwell is more than where I garage myself, more than where I park my car between work shifts (see Illich 1985, 1992).

Do we utilize our liberty to dwell? Can we open our door long enough to see that our chemicals run into neighbors' yards? *Nachbar, neighbor* in German, or "near dweller" (Heidegger, 1971), loses all meaning on our industrial ears. These are not people who dwell nearby; they merely garage themselves in close proximity to us. It cannot matter to me that I dump salt in the winter or weed killer in the summer, that it all flows to a common watershed; we neighbors are boarding ourselves up for the night only to do our real work elsewhere.

Illich challenges me: "Just tell me how you dwell and I will tell you who you are" (Illich, 1992, p. 55). I can only cringe in embarrassment at my twenty-minute showers, my seventy-year-old plumbing, and the water I steal daily from Lake Michigan. Is this who I am? It is most certainly how I dwell.

Dwelling is "to let daily life write the webs and knots of one's biography into the landscape" (Illich, 1992, p. 55). *How poetic*, I think to myself. *Illich sure had a way of honing in on our society's ailments*. I imagine the Des Plaines River and Old School Forest Preserve weaving themselves into the stanzas of my story. But this public space

rarely comes into contact with human life; we use our living spaces as mere garages, storage units. We travel to work, return home only to sleep and repeat this lifeless cycle. We don't know our landscape and don't care to know our neighbors (see Illich, 1985, p. 10). Like our excrement and toilet water, we easily dismiss our neighbors and dwellings, both as disposable to us as waste.

I have spent far too many years of my life chasing after higher education, moving to wherever the next step in my education took me. It is only now, after finishing my Ph.D. and remaining rooted in one place, that I find myself in a dwelling. My days are filled with the laughter of my kids as we enjoy our dwelling, but at the expense of a full-time salary. "Rootless professors" ignore local watersheds, passing this ambivalence of place on to their students, ever mobile (Zencey, 1996). Must we academics choose between dwellings and careers?

More than a commodity, more than four walls, our dwelling is our sustenance, the air we breathe. Rather than independence and isolation (Chow, 1999), true dwelling can reveal so much more. *Shakan*, the Hebrew verb *to dwell*, develops into *Shekinah*, a name for the divine: She who dwells. Our dwellings hold us, our water, our land, our neighbors; surely we should treat them with the respect of the divine.

I wade deeper into the mikvah, reminding myself of this water in my local dwelling, this water I clean with, cook with, consume, and waste. This is the water I immerse myself in. This is the water of my dwelling.

The Commons and the Commodities

Barbara Kingsolver (2010) claimed that "water is the ultimate commons" (p. 17). This is difficult to swallow, or perhaps just too polluted to swallow. We rarely see our

lake's shoreline; we never canoe down our river. Whatever water we touch is on its way in or out of our plumbing.

Eager to go out for Mexican one night, we dined at Tacos el Norte, the newest chain of Mexican food in our suburb. Just outside the window sat the enchanting water: part fountain, part art. I requested specifically to sit by the window so our kids could watch the water. Water as beauty, as art, never as dwelling. My kids can't play in it. We can't bathe in it. But we can stare at it as we dip our chips into slightly spicy salsa.

And so this element that comprises such a large part of our commons, our what-should-be-public-spaces, becomes private. Corporations flaunt their fountains and the rest of us stare in wonder, only dreaming of what it might be like to skip happily through that water. Not only do we prevent ourselves from dwelling in our public water spaces, but we also insist on sanitizing and enclosing them (see Illich, 1985). The public pool: sanitized, enclosed, off-limits. The local water park: sanitized, enclosed, off-limits. The fountain sculpture in the park: sanitized, enclosed, off-limits.

Hikers along our Des Plaines River are warned to "keep on marked trails" (Lake County Forest Preserves, 2011a). This communal river, where Native Americans once washed, drank, fished, traveled and played, is no longer accessible to people. If we wanted to fish in this river just two-fifths of a mile from our front door, we would need to acquire permits, be sixteen or older and walk further to a designated fishing spot (Lake County Forest Preserves, 2011b). In trying to preserve our local ecology, we have encased it in a protective covering protecting it even from ourselves.

In 1892, Illinois fought to ban private ownership of Lake Michigan's shoreline (Dowie, 2010). However, we now have a shoreline that is rarely accessible in Lake

County and only through a handful of public parks. Most of those public parks require a local parking sticker. Should we expect any better from a society where people are barely tolerated on the streets? "Water once hydrated us, helped our plants grow. It was our commons. Now we privatize it, enclose it, commodify it." (Illich, 2010, p. 68)

Water runs through us, through our dwellings, through our atmosphere, through our land; it gives life and it takes life. Yet, we buy and sell it just as we do everything else in our society. "Unlike oil and coal, water is much more than a commodity: It is the basis of life" (Postel, 2010, p. 19). We buy water that comes into our pipes and into our mouths. We pay to have it removed. We steal it from others and bottle it for sale. Water, water with a *capital* W, because it is a capitalist's dream.

To begin to see water as something other than commodity, we must begin with a respect for water and for others' rights to water (see de Villiers, 1999). Ecuador has begun this process; they are the first country to put water rights in their constitution "so that rivers and forests are not simply property, but maintain their own right to flourish" (Kingsolver, 2010, p. 17). We also can begin to de-commodify water. Collecting rainwater and fighting for our rights to use the local water sources freely are excellent ways to begin.

Homes (2010b) shows us that the global south has a drastically worse quality of water than their northern neighbors. The industrial northern countries causing the most environmental damage have the best quality drinking water. Are we even aware of how we destroy water globally, how our water commons are diminishing? Does the average American ever consider aquifer and groundwater mining, virtual water exports (food and other products), pipeline diversions, deforestation, urban heat islands, climate change and

thus greater evaporation (see Barlow, 2010b, pp. 163-164)? No, we do not bring these conversations to the dinner table. We do not dwell, so we do not care.

When Illich (1992) prophetically claims that the destruction of the commons "paralyzes the art of dwelling" (p. 60), we cannot help hold out our hands for stray droplets of hope. We search for ways to revive the art of dwelling as we engage with our water commons. In re-membering our communities (see Esteva & Prakash, 1998), we revive the autonomy of people in the commons. We can begin to fight legal battles to win back our autonomous rights for water, or we can simply start by collecting our own rainwater. Through this simple step, we can offer a *collective no* to water enclosures (see Esteva & Prakash, 1998).

We take further hope from those who dare to reclaim their water commons. Uruguay, India, and South Africa use grassroots movements to fight privatization of water (Barlow, 2010a). Brazil, Michigan, and Wisconsin are fighting bottled water companies that steal and drain the local water supply (Barlow, 2010c). From groups like Beyond Factory Farming in Canada, to Waterkeepers of North America, to Clean up the World Campaign, to locals fighting for reclamation of Lake Constance in Europe (Barlow, 2010c), to a suburban family refusing to water their lawn, we all can begin to wade reverently into the waters of dwelling once again.

But to do so, we must think beyond competition, privatization and profit, moving beyond our capitalist sensibilities toward "cooperation, sustainability, and public stewardship" (Barlow, 2010c, p. 113). And we have the tools to help us; we have religion, ritual, language, multiple perspectives, common sense, local knowledge and local learning.

Water Reverence: The Tool of Religion

Illich (1985) saw water for what it was, its mundane use as our much-needed element as well as its mystical quality that reflects our *histoire*. "As a vehicle for metaphors, water is a shifting mirror. What it says reflects the fashions of the age; what it seems to reveal and betray hides the stuff that lies beneath" (p. 25). Just like water, religion reflects back to us that which we would prefer to keep hidden. Religious and spiritual responses to water offer a path toward hope, an alternative to further commodification of water. Or as Bill McKibben (2010) hopes, a new spiritual valuation of water might just help us see it as finite, not to be taken for granted (p. 22).

Water rituals have been intertwined with religion throughout human history, just as water has been tied to each of us individually since conception. It "flows though our lives, scribing a line between sacred and profane, life and death. We are doused, dunked, dipped, sprinkled" (Newman & Stanmeyer, 2010). This tradition of infusing water into our most sacred moments should humble us, just as the act of crossing a river or flushing a toilet should.

Our ancestors knew water gave them life and saw bodies of water as places of worship and healing. "It is through our ancient ancestors that we find the first connections of water with the mysteries of life and death; creation and destruction; death and rebirth; health and illness; good and evil; the known and the unknown" (Waterway, 2010, p. 173). Even now we see the dual nature of water. Water gives life and takes it; it purifies and it cleanses (Illich, 1985, p. 27). Surely, then, we can see water as both mundane element and sacred mystery.

Water also becomes a symbolic triad in religious settings. The water trinity awes us as solid, liquid and gas. H_2O contains three atoms, a trinity of matter. The mystery of water continues as it breaks the rules of physics; it becomes lighter as a solid (Waterway, 2010, p. 174).

Me: *So you're saying that water was necessary for life because ice floats?*

Husband: Yeah. If ice didn't float, then the first life on earth would have died. It's because ice floats up to the top of bodies of water that life could begin at the bottom of the oceans.

Me: *Wow, that's pretty amazing when you think about it. I never thought of water that way. I thought water was necessary for life only because we drink it.*

Husband: Well, it's really interesting, you see. If you...

Me: *...Okay, okay that's enough. I just need enough information to write my paper.*

Ice floats; what a divine mystery.

Waterway (2010) describes water rituals from mythology, reminding us—and humbling us—that water was here before us, gave life to us, and gives life to us still. Tibetans place prayer bells on Lake Manosaravar and revere the holy waters of Mount Kailash; the Ijaw tribe on the Niger River believe that water transmits knowledge to people; Sufis use water rituals to pass on knowledge; Christians participate in baptisms, the washing of feet, and the use of holy water; Jews immerse in a mikvah; Japanese Kamikazes will drink from a common bowl before death; Muslims wash their hands before a Koran reading; Daoism teaches that water represents the Dao itself. Hindus

believe that the waters of life bring us the life force itself; the Rameshvaram temple has twenty-two sacred bathing pools for healing and the Ganges River will wash away sins (pp. 176-177). Shinto practices in Japan include a ritual cleansing before worship, a belief that departed spirits return to rivers, and the use of cold spring water for healing. The Taos Pueblo Indians of New Mexico consider the Blue Lake to be the center of the universe that will sustain our well-being; Aboriginal clans in Australia believe that spirits go to a "water place" and so associate spirits with coastal rains, rainbows, the sky, and the cycle of seasons (p. 178).

The Stanmeyer (Newman & Stanmeyer, 2010) photography collection in National Geographic's recent water issue visually shares how many religions value water.[1] The Mayans believe natural wells lead to the underworld; Laotians see the Mekong River as the "mother of waters" and give offerings for the new year; Russian Christians use ice carving to commemorate Christ on Epiphany; healing waters of Lourdes give hope to Christians; Vodou and Christian beliefs combine to honor spirits in a Hatian waterfall (Newman & Stanmeyer, 2010).

So I ponder these mythologies, particularly the stone circles and wood circles of ancient Britain. I ask why these people travelled along a river to a wood circle of life, only to follow that same river back to a stone circle of death. It was water that led them to both life and death.

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[1] See the full photography collection online at http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2010/04/sacred-water/stanmeyer-photography.

Solstice. Acrylic on canvas.

Inspired by the pre-Roman Stonehenge people's solstice rituals, this painting helps me visualize the route along the river. Constructions of stone were associated with the dead; constructions of wood with the living. Durrington Walls, a circle of wood, was linked to Stonehenge, a circle of stone, by the River Avon. Water linked the two ritual places, and the people who built them would walk between the two circles on the solstices (Nova, 2010).

When in modern religions do we have such reverence for our water commons? How often do we consider life and death with the flush of a toilet?

Even without religion in our lives, water is still a mysterious element, experienced physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. We use hot tubs, hot springs, waterfalls, feet washing, hand washing, drinks, and bodies of water in ways not unlike religious experiences (see Waterway, 2010). Water infuses itself into every moment of our lives, sacred or mundane.

Swedish (2008) describes that a traditional interpretation of the Judaic creation story is not sufficient for helping us build a sustainable discourse on the environment. It justifies an assault on nature; humans are given an order from God to conquer and control nature; we psychologically alienate ourselves from nature, unnaturally. Western religion too often places man apart from nature, dominating, controlling and conquering it (Swedish, 2008, p. 146 and Chamberlain, 2008, p. 163). However, when we consider that so many of our holidays and traditions are rooted in natural occurrences, we can retrace our religious steps back to the mystery of the natural world. Many religions bring light into the darkness of the winter solstice; many celebrate fertility in the spring, just as the earth once again becomes fertile. Many religious thinkers are reaching back to their roots, offering more complex views of ecology and placing humans squarely in their natural setting (see Chamberlain, 2008; Bernstein, 2000; Elon et al, 1999 and Waskow, 2000).

Reconstructed or practiced traditionally, religions have the potential to guide us into a more respectful and reverent water ethos. Religious paradigms can challenge other current paradigms (Chamberlain, 2008, p. 58), including the one in which we commodify and destroy water. We also need religion as a "framework of values that can inspire humans as they face one difficulty after another as a result of ecosystem breakdowns and stresses" (Swedish, 2008, 192).

Water Reverence: The Tool of Ritual

Mikvah, literally a *gathering of waters*, reminds us of rituals that ground us in local waters and revives in us a sense of mystery for this element.

Mikvah has long been part of Jewish identity, used from ancient Massada to Soviet Russia (Kaplan, 2007, p. 2), from China to Chicago. Some scholars consider the mikvah even more important that a synagogue (Kaplan, 2007, p. 3). "During the many generations of persecution, Jews build mikvahs in hiding—in underground tunnels, in cellars, under tables, and yes, often literally in closets" (Slonim, 2006, p. 17).

Women use the mikvah after menstruation, after their state of *tumah*. "The main significance of such *Tumah* was that a person in that state was forbidden to enter the grounds of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem" (Kaplan, 2007, p. 10). A woman in this state is unable to bear life and must use the mikvah to once again return to her state of holiness, a vessel of life. "After the mikvah, she is *taharah*, ritually pure. She is returned to her creative potential; she is able to conceive again. In a sense, she becomes godly" (Steinberg, 2006, p. 222).

Yes, perhaps these women too often hear that they are impure, to often feel forced to purify in a mikvah. But a new movement to revive mikvah as a ritual of choice helps to link us back to our water commons. As women wade, step by step, into the tepid, natural water of mikvah, we see rivers, natural flowing waters, as our link back to Eden (Kaplan, 2007, p. 36); we see water as the one thing that existed before creation (Westeimer & Mark, 1995, p. 105); we see how water helps to purify us just as rainwater purifies the earth (Westheimer & Mark, 1995, p. 105).

There is a reason that *mayim*, water, is also used only in the plural in Hebrew, indicating intensity (see Hammer, 2004 and Boman, 1960). Entering the womb of the earth is an intense experience, a religious and fascinating feeling that reminds us of our smallness.

Our bodies are two-thirds water, just as the earth is (Kingsolver, 2010, p. 15), connecting *adam* (mankind) to *adamah* (earth). "The waters around us, the water beneath us, the water within us cries out incessantly, urging us to reconnect" (Slonim, 2007, p. 12).

Miriam. Acrylic and paper

The text on this painting comes from Numbers 12:1: *El na r'fah na la* (Oh God, please heal her). The prayer was from Moses, on behalf of his sister Miriam. Miriam, so often connected with water, humbles us before water. The prayer becomes meaningful in many contexts as we think of "her" as earth, water, and ecology.

So we use ritual, whether mikvah or baptism, whether a bottle of holy water or The Holy Ganges. We use water rituals to find humility, to immerse ourselves in the earth's womb, to root ourselves in our dwellings.

Water Reverence: The Tool of Language

In an age when English is becoming a global language, too often at the expense of dying native languages (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000, and Macedo et al, 2003), we must acknowledge that no one language can ever fully describe all experiences. When we limit ourselves to monolingualism, we limit ourselves to only one way of looking at the world, one way of describing the world. We will never envision a better water ethos without multiple perspectives, and thus, multiple languages. Consider the following two examples in Hebrew:

First, our English word *human* is linguistically disconnected from *earth*. We unconsciously sever these two concepts. Waskow (2000) points out that in Hebrew, the two words are undeniably linked: *Adam*. *Adamah*. Human. Earth. The two are intertwined. In English, we have no equivalent. We never refer to ourselves as *earthlings* or *soilings*; nor do we refer to the earth as *humus*. We have severed all linguistic ties between soil and human. How then, will we remember this crucial relationship without these languages that still make this connection?

Second, our English word *water* does not itself invoke reverence and respect toward the element. In Hebrew, however, water is only ever written in the plural form, as *mayim*. "Water is *mayim*, a word always plural, for water is multiplicity and change" (Hammer, 2004). The plural marker in Hebrew indicates not only plurality, but also intensity (Boman, 1960, pp. 166-167). Another word pluralized for intensity is *Elohim*, a

name of the Divine (Boman, 1960, p. 167). Certainly, these words do not refer to *waters* or *gods*, but to water and divinity as intense forces of nature and sources of life. We have no way of even translating this concept into a single English word or phrase.

The Kogi indigenous tribe of Colombia has a unique linguistic use of *water*. "Their word for water is the same as their word for spirit, and that all of creation was born from 'water thinking'" (Waterway, 2010, p. 180). We use our English word *water* only in one literal sense, thus disconnecting it from so much of our religious, spiritual, communal, and ecological reality.

We have lost so much of our interest in and knowledge of the waters of dwelling, unable to conceive of water beyond our linguistic limits. *Water*: a consolation fluid for when there is no soda. *Water*: the service we are billed for each month. *Water crisis*: a warning to boil our water. Clearly our English word has some limitations.

If we are truly committed to a new water ethos—and in general a more sustainable approach toward living and learning—multilingualism must be a part of our lives. We must stop fooling ourselves into thinking that English monolingualism will suffice. Our limited view of the world through one language will never dig us out of the hole in which we have found ourselves.

Perhaps English, the language of power, will be that which we use to describe to our children how we ignored the spiritual, physical, artistic, and ecological needs that water satisfies. O tal vez vamos a aprender a valorar otras lenguas y otras perspectivas, mientras que todavía tenemos el agua.[2]

Water Reverence: The Tool of Multiple Perspectives

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[2] Or perhaps we will learn to value other language and other cultures while we still have water.

Still sleepwalking in my Anzaldúan dream, I offer a predominantly qualitative approach toward the water issues that we face ecologically, spiritually, educationally, and economically. We need multiple perspectives, multiple ways of looking at the problems. As much as qualitative interpretations, we also need quantitative approaches to open our eyes to the destructive nature of our actions, to look at the indisputable facts that must lead us to a new water ethos. Water is a reflection of our current age (Illich, 1985, p. 25), and so the facts about water reveal our modern era's characteristics.

We often forget that so little of the water on earth is useable; "only about 3.5 percent is freshwater—and two-thirds of that is locked up in glaciers and ice caps" (Postel, 2010, p. 18). Of this water, we are all pumping our reservoirs dry in China, India, the U.S., and many other countries (McKiben, 2010). Bottled water robs local communities of their water source, wastes much water just to create the bottles, then pollutes through landfills (see Louaillier, 2010).

Americans use between 100 and 175 gallons of water a day. Outdoor watering accounts for fifty percent or more of our water use (Postel, 2010). The gallons of water used to produce our foods include 2900 for one quarter-pound hamburger, 2500 for one pound of coffee, and 130 for mixed salad or one pound of wheat (Holmes, 2010a). Buying local food helps cut down on water pollution as well as trading water through food. Eating more vegetarian meals also cuts down on water use.

Prakash (2008) advocates the use of ecological (compost) toilets. We blindly ignore our addiction, our constant flushing that sends our natural fertilizers away. Our modernist minds cannot comprehend a new water ethos that involves our waste being

kept in our dwelling areas; water and waste are piped out only. We cannot conceive of allowing any smells into our homes (see Illich, 1985).

Holmes (2010b) predicts that "by the year 2025 as much as two-thirds of the world will be living with water scarcity or total water deprivation" (p. 118). All over the globe, we are draining aquifers, polluting rivers, draining or damming rivers, overusing household water, drying up wetlands, diverting rivers that should never be diverted and starting wars over this precious resource (see Pearce, 2006). The horrors of what we do to our water are so numerous and so heartbreaking that it pains me to write this. It pains me to do the rewrites. *It's so much easier just to flush my toilet and not think about it.*

What will my children wake up to twenty or thirty years from now? What kind of world will we leave them? I hand my little toddler a cup of water and watch her playfully experiment with the cool and refreshing taste on her little mouth. Will she have any water to drink in her adult years? What new concerns will she have for her own little ones?

Forty years ago, it took a river catching fire, the Cuyahoga River, for us to finally notice what the data already told us (McKibben, 2010). After the droughts, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis and flooding that have devastated so many countries recently, what will it take to make us pay attention to the data?

Water Reverence: The Tool of Common Sense

"The most important liquid in living things is water. Water dissolves the nutrients necessary for life, transports them to the various parts of the body, and then does the precise opposite with the body's wastes" (Kaplan, 2007, p. 63). We underestimate the necessity of water. In fact, Batmanghelidj (2003) advocates that we drink only water, and

drink it many times throughout the day. The consistent intake of water even reverses

debilitating diseases like diabetes.

Drink water. Common sense.

When did we stop listening to our common sense, that our bodies and our land

need water and we should take care of it for that reason?

But water only gives us health when it is sanitary; unsanitary water is becoming a

global issue that affects public health, too often ignored by policy makers and leaders in

poor urban areas (Goldstein & Kickbusch, 1996). Health issues also need to become

central to the new water ethos as we rebuild the commons. In my own local setting, I find

it distressing that so many pharmaceuticals and toiletries are found in local North Shore

waters: antihypertensives, antidepressants, antihistamines, antiseizures (Uberti et al,

2010). We need clean water for our own health and for all life in the ecosystem.

Water should be clean. Common sense.

"You can't take your flower out of the water or it will die."

"But I want it!"

"Okay, you can play with it, but it will die." I watch as she eventually puts it back

in the water.

"Look Mommy, the flower likes the water!"

Plants need water. Common sense.

There is more complexity to this water-as-basic-necessity common sense. Water

exists as both a culturally created need and as an actual need in many ways. First, water is

a need in terms of health. The culturally created need is manifested in the marketing of

bottled water; you cannot be healthy without *our* fresh spring water. With the actual health need, discussed above, we need water to survive and thrive, for the entire ecology.

Second, we have an aesthetic need that is culturally created; we feel we must have non-dwelling beauty space (see Illich, 1985) and the need is only satisfied through sanitized, bleached, untouchable water. In actuality, we do need water as part of our aesthetic life experience. However, this need can be met by walking down to our local river or watching the rain on a quiet afternoon.

Finally, we have a culturally defined religious/spiritual need for water; we believe that we must escape, such as on a vacation, to connect spiritually to water, or we must pay to access meaningful water areas. How is this need met? We pay to go on a beach vacation. We pay to go to a sauna or hot springs. We even pay to go to the mikvah. Our actual need for spiritual waters can occur right outside in our yard, in a walk to the local beach, in the reverence we show each time we shower, in the gratefulness we feel each time we water our plants, and in the stewardship we practice when we wash our dishes.

Water Reverence: The Tool of Local Knowledge

Knowledge of our local water systems need not be limited to the realm of academe. We must begin to tap into local knowledge of the watershed to begin a path toward reverence and stewardship. "People will continue to flush plastics down the toilet, for example, until they understand that their toilets are connected to the waterways" (Outwater, 1996, p. 182).

In understanding rain and the cycle of water throughout the ecosystem, we begin to see the abundance of water that becomes part of our dwellings. Over half the rain that falls on a forest goes directly back into the air through evaporation and transpiration; any

rainwater not evaporated eventually flows into rivers then to seas (Outwater, 1996, p. 55-56), which we are fine with polluting for the good of industrial society.

We passed the Clean Water Act of 1972 to clean up streams by 1985, yet never met that goal. Most programs to help have since been discontinued (Palmer, 2006, p. 186). Pollution comes from runoff farms and pastures among many other industrial sources. "A compliant federal administration in 2005 waived antipollution requirements on the oversized feedlots if the owners simply agreed to 'self-monitor' their levels of waste" (Palmer, 2006, p. 187).

But in response to these devastating setbacks, Palmer (2006) notes several important steps currently in place for conservation. We are limiting dams and natural flows are reinstated by conservation groups. We are also seeing the beginning of "the protection of flood plains and large riverfront corridors as open space" (p. 189). Furthermore, "local activism has exploded" in the form of citizen volunteers, organizers, scientists, activists, educators, communicators, fund-raisers, and soulful leaders (p. 190). Wherever you dwell, you can take part in reviving the water commons. The first step can be learning about your local watershed.

When rootless professors have no idea about local watersheds, they pass this ambivalence of place on to their students, ever mobile (Zencey, 1996). In advocating for a more rooted approach toward living and learning, I describe here my own first steps in learning more about the local watershed. Doman (2010) describes that, "at the most basic level, a watershed encompasses all of the land surface that collects and drains water down to a single exit point" (p. 125). On a large scale, the Mississippi Basin drains 41% of the lower 48 states into the Gulf of Mexico. On a small scale, one's local yard water drains to

the street and eventually to a river. Watersheds underlie all human endeavors. "The health of your watershed depends on collaborative relations between neighbors in your shared basin" (p. 125). Watershed literacy is "a literacy of home, a literacy of place" (p. 126).

In searching for how we as a family might incorporate a better water ethos into our dwelling, we found that we knew very little about our local watershed. The river just two-fifths of a mile from our house, The Des Plaines River, was once the sight of commercialized, bottled mineral water; this water was valued both by Native Americans and White settlers (Libertyville-Mundelein Historical Soceity, 1993). A look at a simple map also revealed that our Des Plaines river flows south through Chicagoland and eventually meets up with the Kankakee River, the river flowing through my birthplace. The water of my dwelling and the water of my youth, all Illinois water, eventually flows to the Mississippi River and to the Gulf of Mexico.

Libertyville water used to come from local wells. It was not until 1976 that the village began using Lake Michigan water. We currently purchase water from The Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency with a few wells functioning only as back-up. The water is treated in four stages before it reaches our home. Nowhere in the 2010 Drinking Water Quality Report are citizens asked to collect rainwater (Village of Libertyville, 2010).

Lake Michigan is lower than it has been in years, yet still we are taking water from it that is not replenished. Why are we not collecting our rainwater?

Chicago's 2011 Blizzard was one of the biggest snowstorms of my lifetime. We waited for weeks as the snow slowly melted, only to find our little river flooded.

Neighbors' back yards became small lakes as tall proud trees along our hiking trail pop out of the bulging waters. My heart jolted in pain every at every flooded site. This poor ecology was not meant to sustain such levels of water. Now, in early 2013, we have no snow, little rain, and still we flush toilets constantly.

Warnings of global warming echo in my ear as my four-year-old kicks ice over the bridge. *Extreme flooding and drought will become the norm.* Will this be the legacy I leave my children and their children? Will they look back and ask: "Why did you do nothing?" How can I look at our local waters—where so many of our neighbors and wildlife find the joys of dwelling—and not see how we are destroying it? How can I not change my habits knowing we are draining Lake Michigan faster than it can be replenished?

Water Reverence: The Tool of Local Learning

"Only education costs the taxpayer more," wrote Illich (1985) of our water costs. (p. 75). Certainly we can educate our children ourselves, just as we can collect rainwater ourselves and compost our waste ourselves. However, many schools are offering hopeful examples of connecting education to local water issues.

In Bolivia's Saint Francis Xavier University we see a grassroots approach toward groundwater management, offering a master's degree program in hydrogeology that addresses local water issues (Moore, 2010). Native Waters, an informal science education program at Montana State University-Bozeman (with help from National Science Foundation), provides Native American elders the opportunity to teach alongside other educators. In this "tribal community planning process," individual communities

determine content for week-long camps in this program (Sachatello-Sawyer & Cohn, 2005).

In public schools, we see students raising money for water sanitation worldwide with H_2O for Life (see Halperin & Whitcraft, 2010). We also see examples of local water issues in the curriculum. Boulder Creek runs through the backyard of Donnelly Elementary School, so 5th graders tackled the issue of the creek being too polluted and too warm. The school developed a scientific six-week study for student inquiry, involving collecting and analyzing data while also connecting to state standards (Bingaman & Bradley Eitel, 2010). Similarly, a Syracuse, New York class of 5th graders studied local watersheds (Endreny, 2007). A Bloomington, Indiana high school science class began community-based projects, including analyzing local plant, soil, and water samples. The students presented their controversial findings in public forums (Hanes & Sadler, 2005). In Washington, sixth grade teachers allowed students to tap into multiple styles of learning as they took samples of local water. Students chose an assessment style and learn community values while also connecting to a local watershed (Meyer, 1997).

Students in California debated development issues in the local watershed (Roman, 2010). High school students in Nebraska helped educate the public and monitor the local watershed. Using the "Adopt-A-Stream Program," students gave presentations to local community groups (Seier & Goedeken, 2005). In the Chesapeake Bay watershed, a school near Beaver Pond created interdisciplinary work that includes parent involvement and local watershed connection (Simms-Smith & Sterling, 2008). Near New York's Finger Lakes, students looked at sustaining the health of local watersheds. Students shared documented observations with the school board and the Water Quality Committee

(Tompkins, 2005). In all these examples, we see how students can contribute to their community through actual scientific research. These interdisciplinary authentic tasks benefit both the student and society (see Zaikowski & Lichtman, 2007).

Outside the institution of schooling, many communities are collectively working to restore the waters of their dwellings. A Scotland community pulled together to restore a local stream. The area faces various "social problems" and the water project opens up new commons for recreation and informal play. Although externally funded, community members took ownership of the project to reclaim their commons (Austin, 2008). Near Lake Titicaca, a Peruvian government agency and teachers of a local school met for a workshop to incorporate lake health into local curriculum. An environmentalist group suggested that all areas of their lifestyles affect the lake's health, including spirituality. Holston (2008) sees this as an example of cross-border collaboration at multiple levels of society, revealing positive results such as lowering pollution.

West Virginia citizens, involved with the Save Our Streams Program, have reduced local pollution in their watershed and stabilized the effects of interstate runoff (Middleton, 2001). The Sister Watersheds project, of São Paulo, Brazil, gives women voice in the public arena. The program involves environmental education, watershed management and community-based organizing (Perkins, 2008). In Iowa's Maquoketa River Basin, local residents partner with state government regulatory agencies and a land-grant state university to clean up the pollution of livestock and industrial agriculture (Zacharakis et al, 2002). May their stories inspire.

***L'Chayim*! To Life! A New Water Ethos**

Many world mythologies connect the afterlife to crossing a body of water: "The water has the power to strip those who cross it of memories that attach them to life" (Illich, 1985, p. 30).[3] Let us find a new water ethos that connects us to life while we are living. The following list is comprised solely of suggestions, of what this new life-affirming water ethos might include:

1. We begin to collect rainwater (and compost our waste). Rural Chinese communities are beginning to solve their own water problems by catching rainwater in cellars, a practice lost some eight hundred years ago (Pearce, 2006, p. 259). "Harvesting the rain was once a worldwide technology on which hundreds of millions of people depended. Every locality had its own systems. Almost everyone did it" (Pearce, 2006, p. 267). Harvesting rain may be the key to renewing the water commons. We can take back and do for ourselves what others want to charge us for. We can work as a community to conserve and respect our commons while utilizing our resources for our basic needs. Pearce (2006) advocates that we must return to ancient ways, such as collecting the rain where it falls.

2. We utilize the spiritual and linguistic resources around us. Clearly an attitude of humility is called for here. Respect, conservation, and stewardship should be built into our paradigm (see Berry, 2006). As Wendell Berry (2002) teaches, we cannot possibly respect and love one another if we do not respect and love the earth. These teachings are common to all religions.

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[3] For a full discussion on water's connection to forgetting, see Illich (1985).

These concepts are also not foreign to most world languages; the more learn each other's languages, the more resources and wisdom we will find to address the water crisis from many perspectives.

For more on a new spiritual water ethos, see Chamberlain's (2008) seven suggestions, including a water identity: "We are water people, born in amniotic water with bodies composed of great amounts of water. We take in water daily. We are nourished with water. We are intimate with water" (p. 172).

3. We work to renew the commons. "Some kind of communal water ethic seems to be the magic ingredient" (Pearce, 2006, p. 266). A new water ethos must involve the restoration of the commons, a reclaiming of our communal dwelling spaces, including our rivers and lakes. Self-imposed limits must be part of reviving the commons (see Kingsolver, 2010). We must place limits on water as commodity, water as private property, and water as a sterile aesthetic wonder. Simple technology is key; we must place limits on the technology we use with water (Pearce, 2006).

4. We view water as a basic human right. Water must be viewed as a basic human right, as advocated by The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 (Pearce, 2006). Every community worldwide deserves access to clean water; we can no longer ignore how our own industrial pollution creates unclean water worldwide. We must also stop ignoring the rights of future humans to clean, accessible water. Our grandchildren and the communities that dwell in our spots after us deserve the same clean water we have.

5. We use interdisciplinary approaches, including the arts. Rather than place the burden of environmental research on the shoulders of scientists alone, we all can play a

part in utilizing our strengths to create better dwelling spaces. Interdisciplinary approaches—including religion, spirituality, multilingualism, scientific/quantitative date, mythology, and arts-based/qualitative work—allow more voices to enter the conversation.

Rev. Cannon Thomas Miller (2010) describes that artists "prompt our imaginations in the contemplation of water" (p. 18). It is only through multi-sensory sources and diverse perspectives that we will begin to find paths toward healthy water commons. Illich (1985) leaves us with the haunting reminder that "the water we seek is the fluid that drenches the inner and outer spaces of the imagination" (p. 24). I conclude this Anzaldúan dream with my own imaginative space, my play *Mar Yam: Bitter Waters.*

MAR YAM, BITTER WATERS

Characters:
Woman 1: Female dressed as if she lived several thousand years ago in the Middle
        East, with cloth wrapped on her head and flowing clothing to stay cool.

Woman 2: Female that looks very similar to Woman 1, but completely modern in
        appearance. She is dressed in comfortable but trendy walking clothing,
        with cell phone and water bottle in hand. The trail has a bench on the side
        for resting hikers. The trail is visibly distanced from the river.

Set:
Stage Right is a desert scene, much like modern day Israel, but set up as in ancient Biblical times. A river divides the set, meandering.
Stage Left is a hiking trail along the river with Midwestern American scenery. This should include lush green trees that would typically grown near lake and rivers north of Chicago.

Woman 1:   (*She enters stage right, hums to herself, walks right up to the water and
               shows visible joy at being so close to the water.*)

Woman 2:   (*Woman 2 enters, stage left, walk on the trail, carrying her water bottle. She gets to the bench and sits. Rests only a moment before her cell phone rings. Both women look startled. Woman 2 answers the call.*)

Laura! How are you? *(pause)*
Oh, no, I'm just going for a walk on the river trail. I can talk. So did you hear about Sarah getting pregnant? *(pause)* Yeah, I can't believe it either. Like three kids isn't enough! *(laughs)*
(pause) I know! So what are you doing?

(conversation continues indistinctly, with "uh huh" and "oh")

Woman 1:   *(Begins peeling a sweet lemon from a basket. Eats a bit of it. Sees a fish in the river and catches it with a sharp stick nearby. Places the fish in her basket.)*

Woman 2:   *(still on cell phone conversation)*
So I need to stop by the grocery store on the way home. Should I pick up some frozen pizzas or maybe a few things from the deli? *(pause)*
Oh, I didn't know that new Chinese place was open! Maybe I'll just see if Ben wants to order in tonight.

Woman 1:   *(bends her head in reverence toward the water)*
Blessed are you, my God, for the waters you provide. With thanks I enter this space and drink of this water.

(cups her hands and gathers water, takes a drink.)

Woman 2:   *(still on phone conversation)*
Oh, sure, that's fine. I'll talk to you tomorrow. *(pause)* Okay, yeah, bye bye.
(drinks loudly from her plastic water bottle, drops cap on the ground and forgets about it.)

Woman 1:   *(still drinking quietly and slowly from her cupped hands).*

Woman 2:   *(Finishes drinking her plastic water and places the plastic bottle on bench, not noticing that it falls to the ground. Jerks up as she hears sticks and leaves moving off stage left.)*

Woman 1:   *(Also hears the noise and jerks her head up, drops her hands)*

Woman 2:   *(with dread)*

A coyote!

(She begins to whimper, gaping. She stands by the bench, frozen, staring off stage left where she heard the noise. She shows no other response than being frozen in fear.)

Woman 1:   *(Stands up tall, arms stretched out far, stomps to make a lot of noise)*

Get out of here! Go back home!

(makes growling noises to scare off the wild animal. Reaches down, picks up a couple small sticks lying nearby and clicks them together loudly)

Woman 2:   *(squinting, looking farther off in the distance)*

Is it gone? What in the world? Why is an animal like that on a walking trail?

(She sits back down on the bench to calm her nerves. Stares blankly at the river for a moment.)

Woman 1:   *(She returns to the spot where she had been drinking, begins to take off some of her layers of desert clothing.)*

Woman 2:   *(cell phone rings loudly, jarringly. BOTH women are startled.)*

Hello? Oh hi Lynn. How are you? How are the wedding plans? *(pause)* Oh good, good! So what's up?

Woman 1:   *(She is fully undressing herself. Actress might want to wear a flesh-colored body suit underneath to avoid nudity on stage.)*

Woman 2:   Oh, the closest mikvah? I'm really not sure. I remember my mom made me do it before *I* got married, but that was back in New York. I don't have any clue where one would be around here.

Woman 1:   *(Walks into the river, lays down to begin fully immersing herself.)*

Woman 2:   *Splashing noise from Woman 1, in a different time and place. Woman 2 looks up, startled, gasps a little.)*

Oh yeah, Lynn, I'm still here. I heard a splash and I'm still just a little jumpy. I think I saw a coyote earlier. *(pause)*
Oh, yeah, I'm fine. It ran away.
So anyway, do you think you'll keep doing the mikvah after your wedding?

Woman 1:   Blessed are You, our Creator of time and space, who has supported us, protected us, and brought us to this moment.

(She immerses herself in the river just for a moment, then emerges, closes eyes to appreciate the moment..)

Woman 2:   Yeah, I think it's totally patriarchal. It's so ridiculous... the idea that a woman is unclean and has to be separated from her husband. This is the 21st Century!

Woman 1:   *(Stands up to get out of the river, begins putting her layers back on.)*

Woman 2:   So have you made plans for the honeymoon?

Woman 1:   *(Gathers dirt in her hands, gently throws a bit to the south, toward audience.)*

Thank you breath of clarity and cleansing.

(Throws a bit of dirt toward the west, stage right.)

Thank you breath of fear and death.

Woman 2:   Uh huh. I've never been to Hawai'i but I'm sure you'll love it.
(Throws a few small pebbles into the river just as she is talking on her cell phone.)

Woman 1:   *(Throws a bit of dirt toward the north, facing away from the audience.)*

Thank you breath of vision, of the unknown.

(Throws a bit of dirt toward the east, toward river, stage left.)

Thank you breath of balance, of new beginnings.[4]

(Begins to fill a few pails with water to bring back to her dwelling.)

Woman 2:   (still on cell phone)

Oh you know what? I lost my water bottle! That reminds me, I need to get more bottled water when I stop at the store. I should probably be going soon, so I can get home before the kids get home from school. *(pause)*

Oh you too! Bye bye!

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[4] The writings of Gershon Winkler (2003) inspired this ritual.

(folds up cell phone and simply walks off stage on the hiking trail, stage left. Her used plastic water bottle is still noticeably laying by the side of the trail.)

Woman 1:   (*Kneels at the river, takes her last pail full of water and states simply):*

Thank you.

(As she is still kneeling, she dips her fingertips in the water one last time, smiles peacefully, then stands. She carries her water pails back to her family, off stage right)

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**Disciplining the Teacher: The Disembodied Professional and
the Decline of Vernacular Wisdom in Teacher Education**

Maylan Dunn-Kenney

The work of Ivan Illich contains frequent reference to the disabling and dominating function of professionals in contemporary society (Illich, 2005; Cayley, 1992). In particular, he criticizes the authority of the professional class to define truth and impose the implications on others. A recent book by Jeff Schmidt (2000) details how and why the people ultimately inducted into professional positions are those willing to support the status quo, thus portraying professionals as agents of the ruling class. He demonstrates that "professional attitude" trumps expertise in credentialing professionals, a process he describes as "soul-battering" for persons entering professional positions. While Schmidt's arguments are framed in terms of a social "system," a term eschewed by Illich (Cayley, 2005), their analyses of professionalism are complementary in many ways. The purpose of this paper is to "cross-fertilize" the work of Illich and Schmidt in order to provide a more detailed and comprehensive look at the social function of professionalism, particularly in education, and how it relates to the preparation of teachers for the public schools.

Theoretical framework

In Illich's philosophy, knowledge is cultural, personal, and embodied, rather than technical or critical. This view of knowledge as grounded in direct experience undergirds this paper and constitutes a standpoint for challenging prevailing myths, such as the idea that technical knowledge is "value neutral." For example, Illich challenged accepted medical practice as follows:

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> They brought the patient to the hospital and, with their newly discovered diagnostic methods, they established a chart. They then treated the chart, they changed its parameters. When the chart was healthy, frequently without looking at the guy –I'm caricaturing, of course – they told him to put on his shoes and go home… (Cayley, 1992, p. 141)

This passage from an interview with Illich demonstrates the use of embodied reality to challenge technical knowledge.

Similarly, Schmidt uses first-hand accounts from graduate students, and analysis of professional examinations, to challenge the supposedly value-neutral use of tests and other induction passages in professional education. While tests based on technical knowledge are supposedly used to screen out the least capable candidates, Schmidt demonstrates that the tests (when they work) actually perform a different function that is more political in nature. Schmidt points to a case in which the true purpose of an examination was revealed when it *failed* to serve its purpose. Three graduate students in physics received low scores on their qualifying exams. Nick, Gary, and David had scores that were very close numerically, with Nick slightly above Gary and David. However, when the faculty reviewed the scores, it was Gary that was advanced and Nick that was denied (along with David). According to one of the professors, Gary had an "extremely important" quality for physicists, "discipline in work and tenacity to stick to problems. Mostly, that is what you learn in the university." As Schmidt explains, the tenacity to doggedly pursue *narrow, assigned* problems, without asking why they are being assigned, better fits the physicist for grant-driven research in the military-industrial-research complex. Nick, on

the other hand, was denied advancement on the grounds that his attitude was not appropriate for a physics career.

> During the months of intensive preparation before the test, Nick studied books, refusing to study the old tests like all the other students. He loved physics and could not bring himself to alienate himself from his subject by adopting the narrow focus of the test. …Nick's general knowledge of physics was greater than Gary's…his quiet refusal to study the old tests was both an act of self-preservation –preservation of the unalienated self –and an act of "civic courage" –where one simply behaves as if the system really is as it says it is or really is as it should be. By studying books, Nick behaved as if the examination that qualifies one to get professional credentials really is a test of one's overall understanding of the subject. (Schmidt, 2000, pp. 157-158)

Thus Nick failed the *actual* test, which was whether or not he could set aside his own curiosity and desire for meaning to pursue a narrow and meaningless task. This is another example of narrowly defined technical knowledge trumping knowledge gained from embodied (and impassioned) experience.

In teacher education in the United States, the use of "objective" testing as a part of the credentialing process has become common. For example, twenty-four states and the District of Columbia are at various stages of implementing the edTPA assessment developed by educators at Stanford and administered by Pearson (http://edtpa.aacte.org/faq#17). Preservice teachers who are being assessed with the edTPA will prepare a work sample and submit it to Pearson for scoring by trained evaluators who do not know the preservice teacher, the university that the preservice teacher attends, or the school context in which the work sample occurred. To perform

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well on the assessment, the preservice teacher should focus on a sufficiently narrow piece of the formal curriculum, called a "learning segment," and use it to demonstrate technical expertise that conforms to the fifteen or so performance rubrics that accompany the assessment instructions. While the technical knowledge being tested may be useful and worthwhile, especially in certain contexts, the focus of the assessment is on technical expertise over embodied knowledge and impassioned teaching, "teacher-child interactions" over relationships, and formal (standardized) curriculum over the curiosity and organic development of children. Passionate teachers, like Nick preparing for his candidacy exams in Physics, may find it difficult to set aside the "unalienated self" that embraces the teaching/learning relationship as a whole human being in order to focus on narrow, assigned tasks.

Unifying concepts of professionalism

Both Illich and Schmidt criticized the role of "the professions" in society. Although their choice of language differs, similar ideas surface from each writer. Illich described professions as "cartels" that control people's everyday lives by means of government-established "techno-fascism" (Illich, 2005). Using educators as an example, he wrote, "Educators, for instance, now tell society what must be learned, and are in a position to write off as valueless what has been learned outside of school" (p. 15). He further criticizes the professions as agents of the elite:

> There is a … distinction between professional power and that of other occupations. Its authority springs from a different source: a guild, a union or a gang forces respect for its interest and rights by strike, blackmail, or overt violence. A profession, like a priesthood, holds power by concession from an elite whose interests it props up. (Illich, 2005, p. 17)

Similarly, Schmidt (2000) criticized the professions as an integral part of a social system that consolidates power in the military-industrial-research complex. He noted that, "What an expert actually does in society is most accurately determined by asking: What is the social function of the expert's *field* of work?" (p. 53) For example, in social terms, the public schools serve to sort people into various employment/income categories, even though individual teachers may operate without such intent. He explains that while almost no one educated in public schools and attending public university rises to the ranks of the elite class, the education-employment system can appear to be a meritocracy by admitting a few (submissive) members of the working class into professional fields. Illich acknowledges this function of schooling as well, describing education as a process that identifies people to be oppressed and persuades those oppressed people to accept their condition as their own fault (Cayley, 1992; Illich, 1971).

While the apparent function of the professional class is to consolidate power and control, the professions publicly claim authority on the grounds of special expertise. Schmidt (2000) offers several cogent arguments against this claim. For example, he describes several examples of non-credentialed and untrained "imposters" successfully employed in a range of professional roles. He points out that an investigation in 1984 revealed that thousands of doctors were practicing in the U.S. on phony credentials and that, "Most of the imposters would never have been exposed by their work as doctors even though they typically worked in situations where medical professionals observed their work daily" (p. 51). Schmidt also asserts that a professional's expert opinion more often serves his or her employer's interests than not. Juries have grown accustomed to expert witnesses that contradict each other, each testifying for the side that has paid for his or her testimony. Schmidt also offers numerous examples of gifted and creative graduate students being "drummed out" of professional schools through induction

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processes that favor people willing to work on narrowly defined "problems" without questioning the overall impact of their research on society.

Schmidt's critique of "professional expertise" complements Illich's description of professional judgment as undemocratic. "Now the heavy arm of the law may reach out when you escape from the care that your surgeon or shrink have decided for you" (Illich, 2005, p. 19). Illich challenges the professional's "secret knowledge" and concludes that the "scientific orthodoxy" of the professions is part of the mystification of professionalism that "turns each profession into the analogue of an established cult" (p. 20).

Professionalism and teacher education

Education policymakers increasingly resort to claims of technical expertise to justify practices in teacher education and induction. In addition, technical means such as standardized credentialing examinations and "dispositional assessments" are increasingly used to select teachers for public school certification. These practices have been championed by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) as stated in a recent policy paper: "NCATE's focus on assessment of teacher candidate performance, since the initiation of its performance based standards in 2000, has been an important impetus in moving teacher preparation to focus on demonstrable evidence of ability to help P-12 students learn" (Cibulka, 2009, p. 3). The increased emphasis on "evidence," on closer examination, bears a remarkable resemblance to Illich's example of a doctor treating a chart rather than a patient. Teacher performance evaluations like the edTPA described earlier, while appearing to be "value neutral," actually favor those candidates willing to focus on narrow problems (a child's ability to select one of four possible answers on a multiple choice question about information that may or may

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not be relevant to the lives of either teacher or child) rather than pay attention to human relationships or the impact of schooling on children and families.

The use of technical means outside human relationships to govern teacher and child has replaced vernacular wisdom about teaching and learning, which has tended to emphasize teachers working with "their hearts, their minds, their eyes, hands, and ears" (Kohl, 2003, p. 157). While the vernacular wisdom about teaching and learning tends to emphasize mutuality, presence, and imagination in classroom invitations to learning, the prevailing use of technical performance emphasizes narrowed focus, coercion of the learner's attention, and conformity to prescribed and scripted interaction. Teacher candidates unwilling to "treat the chart" rather than form relationships with children and families, find themselves on the defensive.

The true purpose of NCATE's emphasis on "evidence" and "performance standards" becomes apparent, however, when a highly imaginative and talented teacher inspires students to the point that they outperform schoolmates on the standardized achievement tests now ubiquitous in public schools. For example, Kohl (2003) tells of a teacher who implemented a rigorous and imaginative curriculum that resulted in his students achieving very high test scores. That teacher was reprimanded and policed until he conformed to the use of the prescribed and scripted Open Court curriculum program adopted by his school.

Many young teachers must now ignore what they know to be true and behave differently than they believe sensible, in order to remain employed as teachers (Kohl, 2003). Perhaps to prepare teachers for this reality, teacher education programs now emphasize assessment, "professional dispositions" (attitude), and conformity in clinical settings (Cibulka, 2009) above imagination, social presence, and intelligence. When this is accomplished, the teacher is

essentially "disembodied," that is, living outside his or her own reality. Illich and Schmidt would probably agree that the "professionalization" of teachers is thus complete, and both offer responses to this state of affairs.

Illich seemed to address the situation of the disembodied teacher when he said, "We cannot be careful enough in refusing to act as splitters or in refusing a split life… And yet, in many circumstances, we cannot avoid acting as economic men of our time, performing certain professions and thus maiming our hearts." (Cayley, 1992, p. 128) Similarly, Schmidt (2000) wrote, "A person's flashy diploma or job title… brings to mind the degree to which the person has been processed by the system, is trusted by the system or is concerned about keeping the system's trust." (p. 276) However, Schmidt argued that abandoning one's professional position would not help society, but actually place a person of conscience in a less powerful position. He argues that professionals should hold onto their positions if they can do so honorably, but act as "radical professionals," defined as people who: 1) think of themselves as radicals first and then as professionals, 2) hold very critical views of their social roles as professionals and of the institutions that employ them, and 3) act politically to make a difference.

Together, Illich and Schmidt might advise teacher educators to stay put and undermine technical control and oppression, by acting as "radical professionals." Schmidt offers 33 concrete suggestions for how to do that. These suggestions are primarily ways of 1) organizing colleagues and/or finding allies; 2) resisting an imposed identity; 3) resisting ideological colonization; and 4)resisting pressure to be loyal to the institution or the profession rather than the public. For teacher educators, these points of resistance are important both in the higher education setting and as we mentor candidates into responsible professional behavior in schools. For example, just

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as teacher educators learn to seek out colleagues who can be allies in faculty meetings, they teach candidates how to identify and form relationships with parents, fellow teachers, and others who are willing to step out of the norm to provide meaningful learning experiences for all children.

There are inspiring examples of resistance by teachers and teacher educators who have "stayed put" and acted as radical professionals. Place-based education practices (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008; Smith & Sobel, 2010) connect children, teachers, and teacher educators with indigenous knowledge, local cultural practices, embodied experience, and community values. Another group of educators (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005) has focused on the richness of learning opportunities for children, families, and teachers when strong webs of relationships reveal the "funds of knowledge" available in local families and communities. Courageous resistance can take many forms.

Schmidt's recommendations for acting as a "radical professional" could support Illichian social values. Put into action, they loosen learning from its mooring in consumer society and open new possibilities for unique learning relationships in de-standardized, de-professionalized, and non-compulsory schools and universities. However, there are differences in emphasis between Illich and Schmidt, if not differences in substance. While both affirm the value of the collective, Schmidt puts more faith in collective action and in instrumental strategies, such as union organizing and some kinds of institutional reform. While Schmidt might see these activities as yielding short-term benefits, he would support them because they strengthen the collective and weaken the power of the system to oppress people. In fact, Schmidt read *Disabling Professions* (Illich, 2005) while writing his book, but found it ultimately less useful

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than Antonio Gramsci's more political approach to undermining system-wide and culturally reinforced oppression (personal communication, Jeff Schmidt, January 19, 2010). Illich, especially nearing the end of his life, saw this kind of instrumental activity as ultimately alienating, but would agree that professionals must disavow any loyalty to the social order. In the final set of interviews that Illich granted (Cayley, 2005), he said,

> We are in a situation in which the disembodiment of the I-Thou relationship has led into a mathematization, an algorithmization... It has seemed to me during the last couple of years that the main service I still can render is to make people accept that we live in such a world. Face it, don't try to humanize the hospital or the school, but always ask, 'What can I do, at this very moment… in which I am? What can I do to … feel free to hear, to sense, to intuit what the other wants from me, would be able to imagine, expects with a sense of surprise, from me at this moment? I think that many people have very reasonably withdrawn from trying to improve the social agencies and organizations for which only twenty years ago they felt responsible. They know that all they can do is to try… to behave an-archically, as human beings who do not act for the sake of the city, but because they have received the ability to respond as a gift from the other. (pp. 222-223)

For teacher educators, weary of accreditation reports and data-driven classroom interactions, the thought of responding to students and colleagues as human beings is like salve to a wounded heart. But if we as teacher educators abandon oppressive technicality, without abandoning our posts, we are stepping into a new place, traveling without insurance. We have no idea where this moment-to-moment, embodied living will take us.

Interestingly, the publication of *Disciplined Minds* led to Jeff Schmidt's dismissal from his position as editor of *Physics Today*. According to executives of the American Institute of Physics, which owns the journal where Schmidt had worked for 19 years, Schmidt was dismissed for working on his book during hours he should have been working for the journal. Schmidt fought the dismissal in the courts, defending his right to free expression, and won a "very favorable" monetary settlement as well as symbolic reinstatement. (A few hours after being reinstated, Schmidt resigned.) Similarly, for those of us who have access to professional privilege, whether to "stay put" and resist or de-professionalize and live more an-archically is a decision that we may have to make over and over as we evaluate our the opportunities for resistance that emerge in our lives.

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Education and the Problem of "The Future"

Peter Dawson Buckland

I want to ask you to consider "the future." We all conceive the future in ways informed by our own experiences, our desires and dreams, our fears and nightmares, and perhaps our readings of utopia from *Ecotopia* or the Book of Revelations. In general, we might suppose that when we conceive "the future," we consider our own futures in the language of individualism[1], our families' futures, and the collective futures of our nation and world. I am here to ask you to start thinking about "the future" as it is defined by example in the dominant consumption-driven neoliberal discourse. "The future" is trouble.

In his book *Toward a History of Needs*, Ivan Illich argued that schools trap children within a compulsory bureaucracy of ever "more subtle and more pervasive social control,"[2] social control akin to an Orwellian dystopia than to those suited to genuine democracy and convivial life. Like Big Brother's hands, Illich argues that school "forms men for something, for the future."[3] In what follows, I will begin to forward an argument that seeks to examine "the future." The paper first examines "the future" as a concept at least nominally controlled by what Wendell Berry calls "the government's economy and the economy's government,"[4] creating what I call the "state's market's schools." Second, it examines how state's market's schools legitimate themselves and

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[1] C.A. Bowers. The Culture of Denial. (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 145-154.
[2] Ivan Illich. *Toward a History of Needs* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1978), 77.
[3] sic, 71.
[4] Wendell Berry. *What Are People For?* (North Point Press, 1990), 164.

existing governmental practices and vice versa, attending particularly to existing educational policy, a publication by the National Center for Education and the Economy, President Barack Obama's and some industrial technocrats' description of the purposes of education, and finally research universities and their stated and unstated purposes. Third, I discuss the once future as the present by exploring human-induced ecocide. Fourth, the paper concludes with a call for convivial reconstruction of schools. Finally, I ask for contributors to a larger project that further explores the history of "the future" and engages in envisioning "our sustainable future(s)."

I. "The future?"

Illich argues that schools' *raison d'etre* is as follows: "The rhetoric of all educational establishments is that they form men for something, for the future."[5] The sentence's last eight words – "they form men for something, for the future" – need to be addressed closely.

What a future can be, neoliberal dominant discourse narrows through control of indefinite and definite articles from "any" or "some futures" to "a future" that is "its future" which through pervasive social control becomes "the future." C.A. Bowers notes that educational systems play part and parcel in this game by playing with futurism in a hope to break away from the past through technological and rational thought that is dominated by liberal (and now neo-liberal) "rational" thought and it supposed "rational" actions to follow[6].

Said in another way, "the future" is for "*the* economy" (as if there were only one) artificially arranged by impersonal and imposing institutions armed with data, analysis,

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[5] Ivan Illich. *Toward a History of Needs* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1978), 77.
[6] C.A. Bowers. *The Culture of Denial*. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press), 34.

and opinion prepared by highly schooled experts at the World Bank, the International

Monetary Fund (IMF), and other dominant globalized institutions. Through homogenized

institutional interfaces schools form students into dependents living under the auspices of

a "pecuniary oligarchy."[7]

Wendell Berry, like Illich, forwards the notion that schooled people are

indoctrinated into "an obscure, cultish faith in 'the future.' We do as we do, we say, 'for

the sake of the future' or 'to make a better future for our children.'"[8] In Berry's writing in

"The Work of Local Culture," we confront "local schools [that] no longer server the local

community; they serve the government's economy and the economy's government."

Berry argues the state and the market are at the center of a technocratic society. The

state's market, then, needs a subsidiary institution replicating its values for its own future.

That future is defined by the technocrats as one of progress in the taken-for-granted

version of technological, economic, and human progress. These versions of progress are

to be understood as evolving and proliferating forms of more, faster, and more

specialized forms of digital, electronic, mechanical, chemical, and biological

technologies, economic growth, and increased access to increasing numbers of human

rights. School is legitimated as a teleological institution that feeds "progress," "a

categorical imperative of world market competition" by and for consumption[9] that moves

us on "a unilinear way of social evolution"[10] Schooling according to policy talk, as we

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[7] John Dewey. *Individualism Old & New* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1962), 54.
[8] Wendell Berry. *What Are People For?* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint Books, 1990), 153-169.
[9] Wolfgang Sachs. "Introduction" in *The Development Dictionary*, ed. Wolfgang Sachs (New York: Zed Books, 1992), 9.
[10] Gustavo Esteva. "Development" in *The Development Dictionary*, ed. Wolfgang Sachs (New York: Zed Books, 1992), 9.

will see, is couched very much in technological and economic growth-oriented terms. Because the state's market (government's economy) needs schools to replicate these skills and values, I will refer to the educational system for the state's market as the "state's market's schools."

Schools for this globalized market competition conscript new believers into the cultish faith of the consuming future. Illich writes, "Education for a consumer society is equivalent to consumer training. The reform of the classroom, the dispersal of the classroom, and the diffusion of the classroom are different ways of shaping consumers of obsolescent commodities." Though overt instruction may skill people to earn income in the consumer society, the desire to consume and be consumed comes from the hidden curriculum.

Illich writes, "The imposition of this hidden curriculum within an educational program distinguishes schooling from other forms of planned education." The hidden curriculum makes education into a series of quantified marketable commodities, "programmed preparation *for* life in the future in the form of packaged, serial instructions produced by schools"[11] manned by people who function *de jure in loco parentis*, thereby protecting children from "bad" knowledge and imbuing them with "good" knowledge. The student, a commodity his or herself, is measured and sorted by grades, test scores, Carnegie Units, credit hours, independent studies, and so on. Then, as Illich notes, "Upon the receipt of a diploma the educational product" – i.e. the credentialed graduate – "acquires a market value"[12] and the status of a tradable commodity.

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[11] Illich, (1973) 59.
[12] Illich, (1973), 125.

To get at the values in this pipeline, let us consider three things. First, we will look at the neoliberal logic of the No Child Left Behind act (NCLB), the most recent version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Second, I note the same logic at work in National Center of Education and the Economy's 2007 *Tough Choices for Tough Times* report. Third, I look at President Obama's first address to Congress, a speech whose logic remains intact in Arne Duncan's educational planning in the Race to the Top.

Larry Cuban writes that a "market-inspired definition of the educational problem"[13] focused on increasing economic growth captivates U.S. school reforms. The logical solution has been to impose standards on schools, students, and teachers by using tests. This has been done in part to prepare students for the future of "the knowledge-based economy," a powerful idea that links knowledge – one of the "state's market's school's" commodities – to jobs which become the rationalization for schooling.

As an example, the National Center for Education and the Economy[14] argues in its *Tough Choices for Tough Times: Executive Summary* that education's purpose is to feed the economy. It posits that "the best way to provide *a real future* for people who need jobs is to provide training that is related to *the economic future* of the region those people live in, for jobs in growth industries" [emphasis mine]. The commission also recommends that the federal government initiate legislation to encourage regional economic "development goals and strategies" that compel education to mold future

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[13] Larry Cuban, US School Reform and Classroom Practice: 1980s-2005. (2005). Accessed on January 20, 2011 from
http://academic.research.microsoft.com/Paper/10000771.aspx
[14] National Center for Education and the Economy. *Tough Choices for Tough Times: Executive Summary*. (2007), 19. Accessed on January 20, 2011 from
http://www.ncee.org/publications/tough-choices-or-tough-times-consortium-publications/

workers for fierce competition in a globalized knowledge-based growth economy. It is clear that "the knowledge" on which this economy is based is a particular kind of knowledge, Recent political talk makes this all rather obvious.

Though President Obama may not be so obviously consumer- or corporately-oriented as former President George Bush, Jr. (Obama has not urged us to shop yet), his first public address on February 24, 2009 dealt with climate change, energy independence, health care, the U.S. schooling system, jobs, joblessness, continued economic power, and America's centrality in the global market. All of the programs that he discussed from the general to the specific were hitched to the alleged need for a growth economy as the keystone to America's greatness. Obama said,

> Now is the time to jump-start job creation, re-start lending, in invest in areas like energy, health care, and education that will *grow our economy,* even as we make hard choices to bring our deficit down. That is what my economic agenda is designed to do, and that is what I'd like to talk to you about tonight.[15]

His logic for increased investment in schooling follows entirely from market considerations and global power.

This agenda aligns very well with the digital technology and business magnates who lobby the Department of Education. In the last few years Bill Gates spoke before congress as the representative of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He argued that the United States must create more science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs to out-compete other economies and ensure that people can, as his foundation states, "live a healthy productive life." On January 19, 2011, the Bill & Melinda Gates

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[15] Barack Obama. *First Address to Congress*. (Washington, D.C.: 2009).

Foundation joined the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation to offer approximately $10 million in funding for the Next Generation Learning Challenges which will "provide investment capital to technologists, institutions, educators, and entrepreneurs to bring promising technology solutions to more students across the K-12 to postsecondary spectrum."[16]

The Gates and Hewletts have joined the Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC). The NGLC created a multi-year initiative "to address the barriers to educational innovation and tap the potential of technology to dramatically improve college readiness and completion in the United States."[17] Combined they want to "support innovators who want to harness the power of technology to help more young people get into and through college, ready to succeed in the workplace. We must accelerate the use of learning tools that hold tremendous promise to help meet this challenge."[18] Like most educational reformers, these technological optimists do not question the underlying purpose of reforming education in an escalating race that plans technological and skill obsolescence.

This logic appears before the House Education and Workforce Committee. For example, on March 3, 2010, the committee convened a hearing titled "Building a Stronger Economy: Spurring Reform and Innovation in American Education." Chairman George Miller (D – Ca.), in recognizing Secretary of Education Arne Duncan stated,

[T]oo many of our students are not reaching their full academic potential through

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[16] Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Next Generation Learning Challenges Seeks Promising Technology Tools That Can Help More U.S. Students Get Ready For College. Retrieved on January 21, 2011 from:
http://www.gatesfoundation.org/press-releases/Pages/next-generation-learning-challenges-announcement-110119.aspx
[17] Next Generation Learning Challenge. About Next Generation. Retrieved on January 21, 2011 from http://nextgenlearning.org/the-program
[18] Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2011.

no fault of their own. They are not being taught to the same rigorous standards as their international peers. They also aren't getting a strong foundation in math, science and other innovative fields. College Presidents tell us that high school graduates aren't ready for college, and business leaders and CEOs tell us they can't find workers who are trained for the jobs for the future.[19]

The ensuing invective against schools follows the same logic as before with particular interest in the "stakeholders"[20] read as corporate and governmental interests. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan addressed multiple issues at the hearing. On one hand he addressed technological literacy for the purposes of citizenship, something that should not be overlooked[21]. However, the literacy of which he speaks, at least at this hearing, calls for no understanding of the ecological, social, or cultural impacts of computer technology.

In these hearings and others we can be assured, questioning whether or to what extent children should now use computers is beyond the pale. Education in the computer society has become education for computers. But as we should suspect, the more digitally technophilic Duncan, the Gates, the Hewletts, and President Obama want people to become, we see fewer questions about the cultural role of computers. How do computers shape or reshape human behavior? What are their effects on the people who must mine

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[19] House Education and the Workforce Committee. Opening Remarks by Chairman George Miller. *Building a Stronger Economy: Spurring Reform and Innovation in American Education*. (Washington, DC: March 3, 2011), 3. Retrieved on January 21, 2011 from http://edworkforce.house.gov/Calendar/List.aspx?EventTypeID=189
[20] Ibid, 4.
[21] House Education and the Workforce Committee. Opening Remarks by Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. *Building a Stronger Economy: Spurring Reform and Innovation in American Education*. (Washington, DC: March 3, 2011), 12. Retrieved on January 21, 2011 from http://edworkforce.house.gov/Calendar/List.aspx?EventTypeID=189

the rare earths that we use to build them? How do they connect people and at what scales? How do they prevent connection? What is the cost, not in dollars and cents, but in soil, trees, water, and human suffering to create a fleet of iBooks for schools across the United States? What is the cost to home economies or local economies of scale?

I am not pretending that there is a full-proof answer to these questions or that a simple Marcusean refusal is necessary[22]. The idealists among us may find solace in Wendell Berry's refusal to buy a computer[23], but most of us are probably more like Andrew Lau who finds his laptop a conundrum in no small part because of how much it pervades his living and the hidden processes that brought the machine to his life. Illich would argue the aforementioned people seek to mold people as tools for industry instead of molding tools for people.[24]

Obama's address of the achievement gap, the high school dropout rate, and the "need" for more post-secondary schooling flow from the same mission. He said, "[D]ropping out of high school is no longer an option. It's not just quitting on yourself; it's quitting on your country. And this country needs and values the talents of every American." Given the context of the speech, the country is a dominant economic superorganism trying to grow and extend its power that uses "talents" instrumentally for national economic values.

Not surprisingly, Obama hopes that parents carry these values into homes. "I speak to you not just as president, but as a father when I say that responsibility for our

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[22] Richard Kahn. (2006). The Educative Potential of Ecological Militancy in an Age of Big Oil: Towards a Marcusean Ecopedagogy. *Policy Futures in Education 4*(1), 31-44.
[23] Wendell Berry. *What Are People For?* (Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint Books, 1990), 170-177.
[24] Ivan Illich. *Deschooling Society*. (New York: Harrow Books, 1970), 76-77.

children's education must begin at home. That is not a Democratic issue or a Republican

issue. That's an American issue." The state's market's needs must permeate the home

and it needs parents to read to children, turn off televisions or video games, and help with

homework not so that parents and children have more secure families, so that children

and parents enjoy time together, or so that children can grow up to be happy capable of

sustaining themselves or their communities. Obama asks parents to do these things for

global knowledge-based competition that is best fueled by post-secondary education. I

will assume that Obama wants these future graduates to attend and excel at the best post-

secondary institutions, research universities.

Before going further, I need to address two objections. First, that I am somehow

opposed to gainful employment and second that I am sniping. On the first count, gainful

employment should be part of convivial life insofar as employment equates to meaningful

work in shared purposes that can be sustained. Perhaps sociopaths and nihilists oppose

work that brings meaning to one's life. This is no nihilistic creed and I hope that no one

could label me sociopathic in any reasonable sense of the word. However, the work

available in our schooled society is work meant for some other place that disconnects one

from one's human-scale local community[25] and extracts resources through industrial

instead of human and humane processes. This is not an attack on jobs or employment,

and certainly not work. This critique calls into question the purposes of education for jobs

because they work against conviviality.

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[25] I note that the term "community" is highly contested. For simplicity, I follow
Wilkinson who intends "community" to mean "a locality, a local society, and a process of
locally oriented collective activities." See: K. P. Wilkinson. *The Community in Rural
America.* (New York: Greenwood Press: 1991), 2.

On the second point, there are those like Robert Fiala[26] who argue that the expressed ideological purpose of the state's market's schools has never been to create a global all-consuming cancer of neoliberal humans. He argues, and I suspect that many others agree, that the major expressed aims of education in the development discourse and among developing nations have emphasized personal and emotional development, national identity, equality, employability, and democracy in that order. I do not argue that those are the expressed aims nor that many of the people expressing those aims are well-intentioned. These expressed aims are subservient to a globalized hidden curriculum.

The neoliberal assumptions in the hidden curriculum, held by core nations, are expressed through the World Trade Organization's (WTO) mission[27]:

> Over the past 60 years, the WTO, which was established in 1995, and its predecessor organization the GATT have helped to create a strong and prosperous international trading system, *thereby contributing to unprecedented global economic growth*." [emphasis mine]

This "unprecedented economic growth" is the near-universal justification. Notice that Obama said nothing about personal and emotional development, national identity separate from market considerations, equality, much less citizenship in a democratic society. Duncan recognized literacy for citizenship but that was a secondary consideration.

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[26] Robert Fiala. Educational Ideology and the School Curriculum. A. Benavot and C. Braslavsky (eds.), *School Knowledge in Comparative and Historical Perspective*, (Dordrecht and London : Springer, 2007) 32.
[27] World Trade Organization. Mission. Retrieved on February 10, 2011 from: http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/wto_dg_stat_e.htm

Derek Bok, former president of Harvard, said, "The modern university is...the central institution in post-industrial society"[28]. Essentially, Bok believes that the modern research university or "super university" has become a primary institution, meaning it is no longer a mere replicator but a driver that generates values and interests, controls, constructs, and disseminates knowledge in and for the globalized system. It is an equal partner to government and corporations. Some might suspect that Bok is engaging in some form of self-aggrandizement when they really are workers in and representatives of secondary institutions who merely replicate the values of the state's market. Primary or secondary, the research university has educated scores of millions people into some form of thinking about reality and has often acted in tandem with the interests and motives of other driving institutions, namely corporate governments.

The number of university-trained people has skyrocketed. The National Center for Education Statistics reports that from 1970 to 2007 Bachelor's degrees earned went from 839,730 to 1,524,092, Master's degrees jumped from 230,509 to 604,607, and Ph.D's from 32,107 to 60,616[29]. Computer science and engineering, business, and "Other fields" that include:

> Agriculture and natural resources; Architecture and related services; Communication, journalism, and related programs; Communications technologies; Family and consumer sciences/human sciences; Health professions and related clinical sciences; Legal professions and studies; Library science;

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[28] Hechinger Institute. *Gathering Momentum: Building the Learning Connection Between Schools and Colleges* (Kansas City, KS; 2002) 21.

[29] National Center for Education Statistics. *Bachelor's, master's, and doctor's degrees conferred by degree-granting institutions, by field of study and year: Selected years, 1970–71 through 2006–07.* Retrieved on February 10, 2011 from: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d08/tables/dt08_274.asp

Military technologies; Parks, recreation, leisure, and fitness studies; Precision

production; Public administration and social services; Security and protective

services; Transportation and materials moving; and Not classified by field of

study.[30]

National Science Teachers Association states that in 2003, the United States, China, and

India churned out over 1,000,000 sub-baccalaureate, baccalaureate, or graduate degrees

in engineering, computer science, or information science and technology 222,235 of these

were the United States, a fact that we should note greatly alleviated the authors' fears

about declining American competitiveness in the global technocracy. In 2005, 27,974

science and engineering doctorates were awarded, breaking the 1998 record of 27,273[31].

The effect of this massive credentialing, schooling, and re-skilling on people's psyches

and on the environment has been enormous.

Regarding our psyche, Marianne Gronemeyer noted about the development

discourse in general, but applicable to this schooling for "the future," that "[e]verything

backward, everything that has not yet been drawn into the whirlpool of the 'general

mobilization' of modernity represents resistance to it and must therefore be brought into

the present in order to become fit for *the future*."[32] [emphasis mine] These words hearken

to Illich's[33] remarks that schooling has become "the sacred cow" whose legitimacy and

good is beyond question: It brings progress in its aim to the future. It seems quite obvious

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[30] Ibid.

[31] National Science Teachers Association. Report Seeks Reality Behind Number of Engineering Graduates. Retrieved on February 3, 2011 from:
http://www.nsta.org/publications/news/story.aspx?id=52016

[32] Marianne Gronemeyer. "Helping" in *The Development Dictionary*, ed. Wolfgang Sachs (New York: Zed Books, 1992), 60.

[33] Illich. (1970), 121.

to the *homo educandus* that more highly schooled people create more progress and more prosperity. Progress and prosperity viewed in the magnanimous light of development blinds us from seeing an incontrovertible truth, that unquestioned and unprecedented economic growth led by beliefs, skills, and actions of college graduates severely disrupts the Earth's physical systems and damages the biosphere on which humans depend. As James Gustav Speth has noted, the "ever-growing world economy…is undermining the planet's ability to sustain life."[34] The chorus in which he sings is too many to list. However, the chord it now sings represents a cacophonous ecological mess.

It is possible that the American college graduate is the most parasitic organism in Earth's history? It is an empirical question but the point should be clear: the state's market's schools have undermined the planet's ecosystems. If we can accept that schools, especially research universities, are as powerful or nearly as powerful as Bok argues, then schooling must be questioned. Even leading educationists have done so without going so far as to question whether it should exist. *The Talloires Declaration* states:

> Universities have a major role in the education, research, policy formation, and information exchange necessary to make these goals possible. Thus, university leaders must initiate and support mobilization of internal and external resources so that their institutions respond to this urgent challenge [to curb the degradation of the natural environment].[35]

The Talloires Declaration, initially signed by nineteen college and university presidents, has been signed by more than 600 college and university leaders. Other signing groups or

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[34] James Gustav Speth. *The Bridge at the Edge of the World*. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 8.
[35] University Leaders for a Sustainable Future. *The Talloires Declaration*. (Talloires, France: 1992), 1.

statements like *Talloires* include the Bologna Charter, The Halifax Declaration, the

Copernicus Charter for Sustainable Development, Second Nature, Association for the

Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), the American College and

University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), and regional groups like the

Pennsylvania Environmental Resource Consortium (PERC) are in essential agreement.

Universities are powerful institutions. It is unlikely that people will jump from the Good

Ship University, though the rest of the biosphere might want us to do this as I show

below.

III. "The future" now

At this point, I must take stock of where we are regarding what was once "the

future." Illich's *Tools for Conviviality* recognized that people's focus on growth market

values necessarily frustrates them because they are severed them from their evolved

natural history, prevents them from convivial work, chokes imagination through

overeducation, hinders meaningful political participation, and educates them into

perpetual obsolescence[36]. It is on the first of these that I will focus. Following Paul

Ehrlich, Illich notes that "overpopulation, excessive affluence, and faulty technology" all

play into "the degradation of the environment [which] is dramatic and highly visible."[37]

Today we find that this degradation, engineered by credentialed graduates, more

terrifying. Earth's human population in 1975, was 4 billion. Today it is 6.8 billion people.

Current estimates project global human population at 9 billion by 2050. Projected

population times unprecedented growth has already caused tens of thousands of square

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[36] Illich, (1973) 47-48.
[37] Illich (1973) 51.

miles of topsoil to run into seas and oceans each year[38], 75,000 additional square miles of

soil are covered by urban sprawl every year[39], an oil industry so unregulated that the cost

of the nearly 206 million gallons of oil and 1.84 million gallons of highly toxic chemical

dispersants poured into the Gulf of Mexico by the British Petroleum – Halliburton –

Deepwater Horizon blowout in 2010[40] could be seen as the cost of doing business, that

global temperatures could rise 5.2 degrees Celsius by 2100[41] under this business as usual

model, that sea levels have been rising on average of 3.1 mm a year since 1993, up from

1.8 mm a year from 1968 to 1993. These rising levels are threatening the livelihoods of

people in the Maldives and Bangladesh[42], and that every day between 32 and 160 species

go extinct according to Conservation International (2008) a rate some biologists estimate

to be 10,000% of the background rate.

If we follow Richard Leakey's argument, humans have initiated and perpetuate the

"sixth extinction" on Earth, the fifth being the event that eclipsed the dinosaurs 65

million years ago[43]. I am most certainly not the first person to make this observation: but

homo economicus and *homo educandus* and the tools for which they live are a slow

asteroid hitting the Earth. *Homo educandus*, simply stated, is an antibiotic: literally

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[38] Stephen Leahy. Peak Soil: The Silent Global Crisis. (Spring 2008). Retrieved on
February 3, 2011 from:
http://www.earthisland.org/journal/index.php/eij/article/peak_soil/
[39] Paul Ehrlich and Ann Ehrlich. *The Dominant Animal: Human Evolution and the
Environment.* (Washington, D.C.: First Island Press, 2009).
[40] Los Angeles Times. "Gulf Oil Spill by the Numbers." *Los Angeles Times.* Retrieved
on February 3, 2011 from: http://articles.latimes.com/2010/sep/18/nation/la-na-
oil-spill-numbers-20100919
[41] David Chandler. "Revised MIT climate model sounds alarm," *TechTalk, 53* (26)
(2009), http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2009/techtalk53-26.pdf
[42] IPCC, 2007.
[43] Richard Leakey and Richard Lewin. *The Sixth Extinction: Patterns of Life and the
Future of Humankind*. (New York: Anchor Books, 1995).

beings that are "anti" – in opposition to – "biota" – life, including their own. I think that

we can no longer label ecocide a "side effect" of education or an "externality" of

economics. They are *collateral damage*. I think that these conditions necessitate, if

possible, radical schooling reconstruction and recalibration for "our sustainable futures."

IV. If any future, then our sustainable future(s)

   Tools for Conviviality weaves a portent akin to E.M. Forester's short story, "The

Machine Stops" or *The Matrix*. He writes that we need to re-establish a balance between

humans and their natural environments.

> Otherwise man will find himself totally enclosed within his artificial creation,
>
> with no exit. Enveloped in a physical, social, and psychological milieu of his own
>
> making, he will make a prisoner in the shell of technology, unable to find again
>
> the ancient milieu to which he has adapted for hundreds of thousands of years.
>
> The ecological balance cannot be re-established unless we recognize again that
>
> only persons have ends and that only persons can work toward them. Machines
>
> only operate ruthlessly to reduce people to the role of impotent allies in their
>
> destructive progress.[44]

The university machine is here to stay. I think that we have to recalibrate them or, as

Illich called it, "invert" them.

   First, there are the masses of the "two-thirds world" now living without the

alleged benefits of the university or the need of development (Esteva, 1992; Esteva and

Prakash, 1998). Many of these people have maintained their commons or resisted

development's and schooling's degradation. I do not mean to invoke some Arcadia nor

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[44] Illich. (1973), 51.

some idea that community – however loosely or tightly defined – can be a real panacea or palliative on the crises of modernity. But we must accept people's and communities' futures as their own and cease inflicting upon them the categorical imperative of the "universal human right" for *access to* education through state market schooling. I think we have to honestly wonder if there is an inverted categorical imperative that people have a universal human right for *exemption from* education through the state market schooling.

Second, we could actually redirect this machine by making it our tool instead of us being its tool, a probiotic instead of an antibiotic. In this vein I call on us to invest in and expand Richard Kahn's (2006; 2010) notion of "ecopedagogy." He wrote (2006),

> Now, simply, we must strive to challenge our old assumptions as educators – even as critical educators – and to build our solidarities and organize a common language and ways of being together more than ever before. This plan for action as I can name it is for a radical ecopedagogy – a term delineating both educational and ethical literacies.

I put forward the possibility that we invest in the development of "educational and ethical literacies" for sustainability as John Ehrenfield describes it: "[T]he possibility that humans and other life will flourish on Earth forever." The logic of this program would be to enable meaningful participation in sustainable future. That means learning to reduce human population, reducing and transforming polluting technologies, and scaling down the scope of our economies to the local and regional. This is higher education for what James Lovelock calls a "sustainable retraction" and not "sustainable development." Formal and informal education, perhaps even schools, freed from the cancerous consumer logic could center itself around what Wendell Berry calls "the work of local

culture" – the cultures of nature in soil, water, and sun, the work of human culture, and the bioregions in which we live – that can develop real ecological literacy that is coupled with practical and theoretical knowledge of place so far described by Greenwood need a citation here, or some discussion of his work. The project must be ongoing and eclectic.

We need, as Moacir Gaodotti (2008) writes, "a political revolution, one that sees the future as a problem to be solved and not as something determined by the 'invisible hand' of the market." This shift must assume limits.

This is all to say that we must ask these three questions. Like Berry (1992), we must ask, "What are people for?" The answer must be, in some humble and manageable way, that people are for themselves in convivial relationship to their cultural, biotic, and geographic places. This should prompt us to ask "What is the planet for?" Is it ours to take for what we want, to mine from shore to shore? Maybe there is a longer view beneath the sun and clouds that we're just one of millions of species and life can abound. Finally, we need to ask, "What is a teacher for?" Currently, I work with teachers for "the future" and think that those teachers are not servants of love for children, families, and communities so much as they are low-grade commodities. Like the narrator in Pink Floyd's "Welcome to the Machine," the state's market's schools have known where they've been and now they will know where their students have been. We have to replace the mechanical metaphors with biotic metaphors and dominating language with cooperative language.

V. A request for shared sustainable future(s)

In conclusion, I want to note the tentativeness of this thinking and writing because it is quite young even if grounded in the work of Illich and the branching tree of education

for sustainability, resilience, and conviviality. I hope that some others might be interested in such an enterprise in counterfoil research. This research should "dramatize the relationship of people to their tools" – including schools – in ways that focus the public on available resrources and the consequences of their use(s) including 'the existence of any trend that threatens one of the major balances on which life depends."[45] The scope of such a project is well beyond an essay and this author's ken. I am inclined to believe it needs to be fleshed out as sets of writing by several authors interested in critically engaging the cancerous effects of the "state's market's schools," most especially from an Illichian perspective for conviviality, an ecopedagogical framework, and/or other critical dialectical perspectives.

I propose at least four things for those of us working in schools of some kind:

1. For those who teach now, invite students to explore learning as it relates to our personal conceptions about "the future" and what that future or those futures can be. These explorations should be led in light of conviviality, possibly addressed through the parameters Illich explores in "The Multiple Balance" in *Tools for Conviviality*. The simple and regular invitation to "know thyself" might be our greatest asset.

2. Perhaps some of us can explore past and current conceptions of "the future" for a special topic in the *International Journal of Ivan Illich Studies*. If any are interested in such an endeavor, it could serve as a seed for the growth of a larger project (see below). It seems that sustainable education or convivialist education must be futurist in some sense.

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[45] Illich (1973), 83.

3. A larger project could emerge about "the future" that could be something like *The Development Dictionary* that piece of counterfoil research into the underlying assumptions of the development discourse. An archaeology of "the future" and its utopian/dystopian ramifications, the plurality of its current convivial and anti-convivial representations and instantiations, and our convivial reconstructions of the term could bring some insight worth pursuing as formal and informal educators.

4. As a parallel project, I wonder what sorts of art for our "futures" we might make. People in solidarity need positive vision for the future. I don't intend this in the least to be akin to proscriptive or dogmatic visions such as the Soviet aesthetic and epistemological doctrine of "socialist realism" or the current American "intelligent design" creationist ontological and epistemological doctrine of "theistic realism;" there is no "convivialist realism" or "ecopedagogical realism." Rather, it is an invitation to an artistic exploration of "futures" that we can share with one another here, our families, and our friends.

To close, I hope that each of us can act in word and deed as people seeking joyful solidarity with one another. In the wake of the current ecological crisis I have been working with people who learn and do in the face of desperate social, cultural, economic, spiritual, and ecological crises before us. However, if we conceive of and enact revolutions for true convivial life in our selves with others in the places where we are being, we will have enacted the revolution that makes the future *ours* in solidarity.

Author's Bio

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loved the woods, people, music, and words. Today he is the Director of Sustainability for

the Kiskiminetas Springs School, a boy's boarding high school in southwest

Pennsylvania. There, he works to bring conviviality to life through good stewardship of

the land and the plants and animals – including the boys, faculty, and staff – to fruition.

Life as Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era
By Melinda Cooper
Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008. 222 pp. ISBN 978-0-295-98791-0

Reviewed by Eric Deibel

Reading *Life as Surplus* by Melinda Cooper is likely to overwhelm even those familiar with critical studies of the interface of the life sciences and capitalism. The book combines a wide range of developments in the life sciences in close association with theoretical observations on some of the basic concepts of political economy. Specifically, Cooper asks poignant questions about the speculative future of the accumulation of capital in relation to life as a technological creation.

She raises such questions with an insistence that has become rare in studies of genetic engineering, recapturing some of the urgency that in the 1980s and 1990s surrounded topics like the patenting of DNA, corporate concentration and the regulation of risks. Most distinctive about her approach is that she is able to retain a critical position while not allowing the biological to be reduced to the economical nor the other way around.

Interestingly, her analysis is focused in great detail on the coalescence of the neoliberal promises of growth without limits and the drive to overcome natural limitations in the life sciences. This is the case, for instance, in the imaginaries that companies and scientists in plant biotechnology like to identify themselves with that feature rich farmers producing food for the people, (bio-)fuel for their cars and even some of their (bio-)medicines. Such promises, however, coincide with a relentless drive to turn life forms into commodities and a relentless exploitation of life on earth.

These topics are very close to Illich's interests. For instance, his reconceptualization of the commodity is closely linked to the use of science and technology. Without too much difficulty, it is possible to consider "Life as Surplus" as an effort to rethink the forms of the commodity for the period following the industrial mode of production that Illich was writing about. This is a point of view, however, that does not easily comprise Illich's notions of alternatives; what kind of tools for conviviality might apply to life as a technological creation? Cooper's analysis does not focus on the potential of alternatives to the subsumption of the life sciences by capital but she is highly creative

in her identification of the internal contradictions of the new biological terrains that are being opened up for commodification and speculation in a period wherein neoliberalism is the dominant political philosophy of the times.

Specifically, she considers the rise of the life sciences as a response to the financial crisis of capitalism. Her description presents the life sciences as directly related to the debt-creation by the U.S. government. Not only did the US. respond to the crisis of its industrial model by abandoning the gold standard and becoming the world's largest debtor; one of the most important ways wherein this was used was the financing of the life sciences.

Such emphasis on debt-creation also situates the life sciences at the core of the on-going renewal of capitalism. The life sciences are, as a promise on the repayment of debt, implicated in the temporality that neoliberalism enforces on the present. Specifically, Cooper argues that "profits will depend on the accumulation of biological futures."[1] Most straightforwardly, this refers to the many kinds of business models in the life sciences that operate on financial speculation. A whole range of measures—patents, start-up companies, venture capital funding, stock markets and so forth—were introduced with the intention of guaranteeing a return on the investments in the life sciences.

In the cases that she analyzes, Cooper shows that "biological, economic and ecological futures" are "intimately entwined" as subjects of speculation.[2] She argues that speculation on value in the life sciences has been encouraged to the point that it has formalized "the prospective value of promise, turning life science speculation into a highly profitable—indeed rational—enterprise."[3]

Specifically, it is not in terms of standardized and mass-produced commodities that the life sciences should be understood in relation to neoliberalism. A familiar topic in this regard is the patenting of DNA. Cooper argues that this implies that it is the very *"principle of generation"* that is

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[1] Melinda Cooper, *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology in the Neoliberal Age* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 24.
[2] Ibid, 20.
[3] Ibid, 28.

to be controlled, (re)production itself, "in all its emergent possibilities."[4] This emergence becomes clearest in her discussion of "tissue engineering" (chapter 4), a process which aims to reconstruct skin and organs by culturing these in vitro from cells for transplantation. What this implies is that skin and organs, in contrast to earlier practices of transplantation (like prosthesis or organs), have a form and substance that continues to transform and remains perpetually variable after the transplantation.

Cooper's point about speculation, patenting, and these tissues is that value is not situated in a particular commodity but in the capturing of the potential of biological processes and reactions themselves. Such a destandardization of the commodity in the life sciences, she argues, indicates a "higher-order mode of production" wherein the production of tangible commodities has been subsumed.[5] Of course tissues are tangible, but as products they exist in a spectrum of variable forms that are expected to live (grow, mutate etc.) for long periods of time. Furthermore, Cooper's interest in such developments in the life sciences also includes the dramatic changes in its object of study. For example, she describes in great detail and insight the "complexity-turn" in theoretical biology and evolutionary theory (chapter 1). When, for instance, studying bacteria or microbes this indicates a kind of evolution that is very different from gradual processes taking thousands of years. These are objects of study that are in a constant state of transformation and show patterns of interaction of limitless complexity. This language of complexity, interactivity and self-organization, she argues, runs parallel to the one that is increasingly being applied in neoliberalism.

Interestingly, Cooper combines her discussion of cases in the life sciences with an examination of markets as self-organizing entities without pre-determined forms and equilibria. She returns to Karl Marx in order to describe the economics of markets wherein production is modeled on the complexity of life forms that are self-organizing, regenerating and continuously in crisis. Cooper's idea about a new model of production is that it operates on a specific kind of invisible

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[4] Ibid, 24.
[5] Ibid, 24.

hand that gets its evolutionary character directly from theories and research in the life sciences. Such a crisis is therefore at once financial and ecological. Cooper explores, for example, the ways wherein such neoliberalism internalizes the very unpredictability of life in the biological turn in US security policy (chapter 2 & 3). Specifically, she observes the extension of the doctrine of preemption to biological threats so that bioterrorism is grouped along with infectious diseases. Such a collapse of health issues into the same category as defense and war operates within the same model: the focus is on the emergence of life forms that are understood as complex, unpredictable and self-organizing.

Accordingly, life at the microbial level becomes a potential threat to society, whether as an act of war or as an infection. In the last chapter, she inverts this notion of emergent life as a threat to national security in her discussion of stem cell science and its sacred status in the ideology of the evangelical right in the US. Therefore, life before birth is threatened along with life that emerges as a threat in security policy. As Cooper sees it, either case is an indicator of life politics that operates in a speculative mode. When fundamentalism imposes its faith in the afterlife on the unborn, this takes place in the context of the realization of the debt of the nation; the speculation on the future of the unborn as coupled to a "politics of nationhood."[6] It is at this point that Cooper's discussion of debt creation comes to its fullest expression. Not only is debt the principle condition that makes the life sciences possible in an accelerating spiral of speculation, the accumulation of biological futures also implies a kind of politics that is "contingent on the realization of a debt that has not yet and may never come to maturity."[7]

Finally, it is a startling moment for the reader when turning the page after reading her final chapter to realize that the book has ended. It suddenly ends with a brief commentary suggesting that the biological future might not belong to the US, that it might fail to capture the profits that were to resolve the debt-crisis of the US industrial model. Especially notable is the absence of any kind of

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[6] Ibid, 171.
[7] Ibid, 170.

discussion on the consequences of the emergent model that she has described, which appears to be nothing short of a disaster whether or not the US manages to capture any profits.

The brevity of her conclusion gives reason to rethink her analysis. Perhaps Cooper ended exactly the way she announced she would, given that she started the book with an insistence on the indeterminacy of the future that is being enabled in the life sciences. However, there is no reason to go from a rejection of linear and final histories to a position that reads like a refusal to face the biological futures and the ways wherein these will refashion the world.

It might be a theoretical matter. As mentioned, Cooper's discussions of the life sciences are rich and exhilarating because she does not privilege either biology or economics. Therefore, in the conclusion she is being consistent when she refrains from privileging either. At the theoretical level, she explains this method as derived from a combination of Marxist concepts like labor, value and accumulation along with Michel Foucault's *The Order of Things,* which is one of his early works on the emergence of science. That Cooper does not end up immobilizing developments in the life sciences by privileging a Marxist critique of political economics is Foucauldian.

Foucault's work is about the very possibility of knowledge. Specifically, Foucault argued that critiques (such as those of Immanuel Kant and Marx) introduced no real discontinuity with and within the epistemological arrangements of Western knowledge of the nineteenth century. The tradition of critical thinking beginning with Kant and continued by Marx was a part of it, relied on it, and had no power to exercise over it. Consequently, Cooper's text, like Foucault's, is a critique of critique and hence there is no point in assuming the position of a critique for a conclusion. She would contradict her own premise if she would end by privileging her critique of the commodity and speculation over the coalescence of knowledge in the life sciences and neoliberal economics.

Indeed, Cooper's emphasis on two fields of knowledge as mutually constitutive is commendable for not oversimplifying the almost inevitable linkage between developments in the life sciences and the Foucauldian idea of biopower. It is not the case that any emphasis on power in

the field of biology qualifies as bio-power in the line of Foucault's work. Cooper's exemplary reading only makes it more regrettable that her analysis unnecessarily grinds to a halt in this "critique of critique". The absence of a more substantial conclusion is unnecessary when reconsidering the way wherein Foucault, in *The Order of Things,* describes the emergence of fields of knowledge; his description is not about different fields of knowledge that interact but is about *natural history* becoming biology, alongside *wealth* becoming economics, and *language* becoming linguistics.

To put it in a single phrase, Foucault argued that over the formation of these fields of knowledge, "pre-critical naïveté holds undivided rule."[8] This sentence is an indication that the viewpoint on the relationship between Foucault and Marx that Cooper explores could also be approached from another angle; her perspective goes to Marx to describe the naiveté that frequently characterizes the high tech speculations about life and nature. Consider how pre-critical the analysis of the accumulation of biological futures already is in Cooper's discussions of "wars on disease," the religious belief in natural rights of the (unborn) person, and the linkage of property to life in neoliberalism. In effect, these topics are evoking the entire repertoire of natural rights theories from the early modern period, like those of Thomas Hobbes (war), John Locke (property) and even Jean Jacques Rousseau, who is always nearby when criticizing the idea that nature needs to be conquered. Naïvetés permeate the futuristic blending of nature, society and capital.

It is only a few short steps from natural law to rejoining Cooper again in her sophisticated discussion of Marx. Marx's critique of such naturalism is indispensable for discussions of life as an object of speculation and a model for neoliberalism. This short step makes a difference in respect of the few strategies for resistance that are mentioned in part one of Cooper's text (activism against pharmaceutical companies and open source in biology). She does not elaborate these further before the last sentence, which opens the possibility of a very "different politics of life, labor, and

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[8] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 320.

resistance."[9] This difference can never amount to much when resistance ends up being juxtaposed to the multiplicity of ways wherein life as a technological resource is being internalized to capital. If the future is indeterminate, as Cooper claims, does it really prescribe giving up on ecological and political problems in the face of the conjoining of the life sciences and neoliberalism?

Cooper's book has a rare sense of urgency that is directly present in her rich discussions of life as an emergent system of valuation, which offers her readers a method that is exemplary. However, this is an urgency without a biological future of its own. Perhaps the point is that the futures that she studies are those that already belong to an alliance of life scientists and neoliberals and will remain so if left to them. In part, this is a question of theoretically reframing the analysis. Illich sets an example here because his work on the commodity at every point includes its limits, its instabilities and the possibilities for resistance and alternatives. Of course, it is a daunting task of having to identify starting points for an alternative within an analysis of the extent wherein life and nature are already technological creations. Yet Cooper's method could easily accommodate a widening of its emphasis on speculation to include those forms that do not belong to or conform with neoliberalism, like the countless examples in popular culture of counterspeculations about genetics. These, also, are often pre-critical, combining ecology and political change in the face of naive ideas about genetics and big business. Ultimately, their inclusion would show a wider range of pre-critical speculations that, along with biological war, eugenics or patents, might show a starting point from where to reorient the critique of the commodification of life towards a future that is open in the sense that it does not belong to either capital or technology by design.

Author's Bio

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[9] Cooper, *Life as Surplus*, 176.

science and technology studies from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam in 2009. His dissertation is titled, "Common Genomes: On Open Source in the Life Sciences and Critical Theory beyond the Patent." He also has written several articles and book chapters on a variety of contemporary topics related to property and genetics. His approach combines science and technology studies with critical and political theory.

On Freedom, Love, and Power
By Jacques Ellul. Ed./trans. Willem H. Vanderburg
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010. 247 pp. ISBN 978-1-4426-1117-7

Reviewed by Ben Kautzer

Though marginalized in certain academic circles, Jacques Ellul (1912-1994) undoubtedly remains one of the most significant social critics of the 20th century. A prolific writer, Ellul produced 48 books and well over 600 articles in which he critiqued the hegemonic power of technology in contemporary society and its corrosive impact on human life, culture, ecology, and religious faith.[1] Fueled by a reductive scientism and undergirded by a mythos of insatiable progress, modernity has inaugurated a seismic shift towards what Ellul calls *la technique*—an unquestioned technical totality that underlies, orients, and mediates all human relationships with others and the environment. As the secular religion of the modern age, *technique*, argues Ellul, has indeed *become* our new environment—the life milieu of humanity.[2]

His iconoclastic work in history, sociology, politics, and theology seeks to call into question the pervasiveness of this technological mindset and its implications for our ability to conceive human flourishing (in both the physical and spiritual sense of the word).[3] It should come as no surprise that Ellul's work provided a foundational point of departure for questions Ivan Illich wrestled with throughout his own life.[4]

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[1] For a helpful overview of Ellul's life and work, see the introduction to this volume by Willem Vanderburg, "Introduction," in Jacques Ellul, *On Freedom, Love, and Power*, comp., ed. and trans. Willem Vanderburg (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), vii-xxi. In addition, a clear synopsis of Ellul's major books can be found in Marva Dawn, "Introduction," in Marva Dawn, ed., *Sources and Trajectories: Eight Early Articles by Jacques Ellul that Set the Stage* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 1-9.
[2] For Ellul's critique of *technique,* see his trilogy: *The Technological Society*, trans. John Wilkinson (New York: Knopf, 1964); *The Technological System,* trans. Joachim Neugroschel (New York: Continuum, 1980); and *The Technological Bluff,* trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990).
[3] Ellul's work has largely followed two fundamental trajectories: philosophy of technology and biblical theology, both of which came to have a lasting impact on Ivan Illich. See David C. Menninger,

On Freedom, Love and Power represents a timely and exciting addition to Ellul's already impressive corpus. In this book, Willem Vanderburg has compiled and edited a previously unpublished series of lectures on Jewish and Christian Scripture given by Ellul in 1974.[5] These lectures explore in great depth some of the most creative and controversial aspects of Ellul's biblical theology. His aim is to recover a fresh reading of Scripture beyond reductive attempts to convert and accommodate Christianity into either a flat religious institution or a series of pre-packaged theological platitudes that can be wielded against the questioning demands of faith. Through careful attentiveness to the historical, linguistic, and symbolic contours of the biblical text itself, Ellul rediscovers the startling vitality of a gospel that is "an anti-morality, an anti-religion, and an anti-metaphysics."[6] For Ellul, these Scriptures rupture the closed systems of our secular age and position the reader before a mysterious world beyond human reckoning. Ellul's willingness to be interrogated, to be called into question by the text, provides an intimate glimpse into his own existential wrestling with what it means to have an authentic religious faith in a world dominated by the "principalities and powers" of *technique*.

Following a fascinating introduction by Vanderburg, *On Freedom, Love, and Power* divides into separate seminars in which Ellul gives a theological commentary on four interconnected books of the Bible: Genesis, Job, Matthew, and John. It should be noted that Ellul did not originally present this material from a podium in a crowded

"Jacques Ellul: A Tempered Profile," *The Review of Politics* 37, no. 2 (1975): 235-246; Alastair Hulbert, "Don Quixote in the Contemporary Global Tragicomedy," in *The Challenges of Ivan Illich: A Collective Reflection*, ed. Lee Hoinacki and Carl Mitcham (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 168-169. On the "iconoclastic" nature of Ellul's writings, see Willem Vanderburg, "The Iconoclasm of Jacques Ellul: A Call to Freedom in Our Age," *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 18, no. 2 (1998), 76-86.

[4] Ivan Illich, "An Address to 'Master Jacques'," *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 14, no. 2 (1994), 65-68.

[5] Vanderburg, a lifelong student of Ellul, is the director of the Centre for Technology and Social Development at the University of Toronto and a significant philosopher and cultural critic in his own right.

[6] Vanderburg, "Introduction," xii; cf. Ellul, *On Freedom, Love, and Power*, 64-68.

lecture hall, but around a dining room table in the company of a few handpicked friends. These talks took place in the context of open conversation and intellectual debate between a teacher and his students. As a result, we don't find a clean or perfectly polished argument at the heart of any one seminar. Instead, each investigation unfolds layer by layer. This should in no way discount the fact that Ellul's book is an incredible achievement. Through close readings, reinterpretations, unanticipated connections, and a subtle underlying murmuring of dialogic exchange, a remarkably coherent analysis of faith, hope, power, and the social and spiritual malaise of western civilization emerges from the splayed threads of discourse. I suggest that it is precisely this honest, convivial, and unguarded context which clears the air of pretense and allows room for profundity of thought. Vanderburg invites us to take a seat at Ellul's table and enter into the intensity of this dynamic conversation.[7]

In the opening section, Ellul tackles the first few chapters of Genesis. In an effort to pry these texts free from their captivity to ideologies of religion, morality, and magic, Ellul argues that Genesis is neither a scientific account of the creation of the world, nor a foundational narrative for the institutionalization of religious law. On the contrary, Genesis contains a nuanced theology of God's relationship to the world as one who enters into history and into a relationship with humanity, raising dust to life and saturating the created order with an irreducible sense of mystery. Leaning heavily on ancient Jewish exegesis and paying careful attention to the metaphorical

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[7] Ivan Illich frequently emphasized the value of rethinking sites of genuine learning beyond the purview of educational institutions. For Illich, gathering around a table for a meal, wine, conversation, and open debate represents the kind of space in which the mutual quest for truth can flourish. In *The Rivers North of the Future: The Testament of Ivan Illich* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2005), he writes, "I wanted to see if it would be possible to create truly, deeply committed human ties on the occasion and by the means of common investigation. And I also wanted to show how the search for truth can be pursued in a unique way around a dining table or over a glass of wine and not in the lecture hall" (148). In many ways, *On Freedom, Love, and Power* offers a performative embodiment of the potential power and vitality of an intellectual exchange born at such a dining room table.

nature of the Hebrew language, Ellul attempts to rethink the relationship of creation

and Darwinism, sin and domination, mythology and the world-making nature of

symbolic narrative. Despite being over 30 years old, Ellul's commentary has a

prophetic edge which will undoubtedly continue to have lasting implications for

contemporary debates over science and religion.[8]

The second section turns to the closing chapters of the book of Job. Here Ellul

brings to the surface deep philosophical and theological questions about life and

death, evil and human suffering, freedom and responsibility. The presence of evil in

our world and our own complicity in its violence can all too readily reduce hope to

despair. Ellul challenges the notion that God watches from a distance the drama of

human misery. He discovers in these texts a divine love that intervenes, pursues,

abides, and prepares human reconciliation. Of course, Ellul knows this matter is

complicated. There is no quick abdication of Job's questions to an anemic theodicy.

"The Bible has always been a book of questions and not one that provides pseudo-

answers to help us feel secure."[9] Yet wrestling in the midst of insecurity, uncertainty,

and the dark night of the soul, Ellul sees the sparks of authentic faith born anew.

In the third seminar, Ellul analyzes Jesus' parables of the Kingdom of Heaven

in the Gospel of Matthew. Drawing a distinction between the "Kingdom of *God*"

(kingship of the Creator, view from eternity, promise and fulfillment) and the

"Kingdom of *Heaven*" (interruption into the present of God's kingly reign in the

person of Jesus), Ellul argues that the revolutionary thrust of the Christian gospel is

not to be found in an institution—whether a church or a secular utopian project—nor

in a juridical moral edifice, but rather in a transformative way of life constituted by

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[8] Indeed, in a recently published essay Vanderburg has already begun to explore the implications of Ellul's exegesis of Genesis on contemporary debates over science and religion. See Willem Vanderburg, "How the Science Versus Religion Debate Has Missed the Point of Genesis 1 and 2: Jacques Ellul (1912-1994)," *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 30, no. 6 (2010), 430-445.
[9] Ellul, *On Freedom, Love, and Power*, 145.

freedom and love, and oriented to the inbreaking reign of God. Throughout this seminar, Ellul traces in these parables five aspects of this Kingdom inaugurated by Jesus: (1) it is not a territory, but a force in action; (2) it is not a self-aggrandizing power, but a hidden power—a kind of subversive weakness; (3) it is not a human construct, but a synergistic fusion of the actions of God and the responsive actions of humanity; (4) it is not a legal or moral code, but a justice shepherded by love; (5) it is not law of this world, but a revelation of freedom diametrically opposed to a human logic of merit, value, and expectation. The recovery of these values highlights the extent to which Christianity has so often subverted its fidelity to its Messiah. Framed in this way, the Kingdom of Heaven overturns the nice and neat religious distinctions that "safely" delineate insiders from outsiders. It names an interruption in the present that calls forth "service, involvement, responsibility, and hope" in the face of modern idols erected before the powers of *technique*.[10]

Finally, Ellul examines in a few dense pages the equally dense prologue to the Gospel of John. Here, he returns to questions raised in the first seminar and analyzes the implications of a Christian reworking of the Genesis account in light of the incarnation of Christ. To round off the narrative flow of the book, Vanderburg offers as a concluding epilogue a summary sketch of Ellul's commentary on the book of Revelation.[11]

Reading this text and meditating on its themes of love and freedom, its emphasis on the centrality of the Christian theology of the incarnation, its sharp critique of the institutionalization of the faith and the subsequent subjugation of

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[10] Ibid, 151.

[11] For a fuller treatment of this material, see Jacques Ellul, *Apocalypse: The Book of Revelation*, trans. George W. Schreiner (New York: Seabury, 1977). Vanderburg, in the "Introduction," indicates that his reason for including this paraphrased section is "because it so beautifully recaps the ultimate love story as the good news in an age in which many are in desperate need of real hope, real faith, and real love" (ix). In this sense, this section gives the book a sense of completeness. However, Vanderburg's summary, on the whole, fails to communicate the same level of passion and depth as Ellul's own voice.

Christianity to the blowing ideologies of power, one cannot help but sense a deep resonance between Ellul and the later writings of Illich. Toward the end of his life, Illich began to articulate a specific religious framework that had come to inform, if not *determine*, the basic unifying trajectory of his life's work. In his final interviews with David Cayley, Illich traces the roots of what he perceived as the malaise of western civilization to the "corruption" of Christianity into a religious ideology and a morality of obligation. Like Ellul, Illich argues that the incarnation—as the pivoting axis of human history—opened up an unprecedented dimension of love, at once subversive, unbounded, and "highly ambiguous because of the way in which it explodes certain universal assumptions about the conditions under which love are possible."[12] Family, race, culture, wealth, and nation no longer concretely demarcate the bounds of the neighbor. Illich maintains that in Christ I am beckoned into a startling freedom to choose whom I will love and where I will love. "And this deeply threatens the traditional basis for ethics, which was always an *ethnos*, an historically given 'we' which precedes any pronunciation of the word 'I'."[13]

Unfortunately, there is a darker side to this story as well. Illich argues that this love and freedom created the possibility of its own corruption and distortion. He writes,

> The opening of this new horizon is also accompanied by a second danger: institutionalization. There is a temptation to try to manage and, eventually, to legislate this new love, to create an institution that will guarantee it, insure it, and protect it by criminalizing its opposite. […] This power is claimed first by the Church and later by the many secular institutions stamped from its mould. Wherever I look for the roots of modernity, I find

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[12] Illich, *The Rivers North of the Future*, 47.
[13] Ibid, 47.

them in the attempts of the churches to institutionalize, legitimate, and

manage Christian vocation.[14]

In other words, the crisis of modernity stems from a certain secularization of an

already corrupted Christianity that Illich names "Christendom".[15]

In 1993, Illich gave a short address in which he acknowledged his gratitude to

"Master Jacques" to whom he writes, "I owe an orientation which has decisively

affected my pilgrimage for forty years."[16] It was from the social and theological

writings of Ellul that Illich derived his fundamental insight linking modernity—

specifically *technique*—to the subversion of Christianity.[17] I would suggest that

Ellul's biblical theology, and the embryonic concepts beginning to take shape

in these seminars, provides a critically important window into Illich's mature

writings.[18]

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[14] Ibid, 47-48.

[15] The significance of Illich's historical thesis locating the origins of modernity in the corruption of Christianity has recently found concrete expression in Charles Taylor's landmark and celebrated study *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 737-744. Taylor takes very seriously the implications of Illich's work for our ability to adequately describe the nature of secularization and the development of western society. For an earlier assessment of Illich's life and writings, see also Taylor's "Forward" to *The Rivers North of the Future: The Testament of Ivan Illich* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 2005), ix-xiv. For a more developed critique of "Christendom" in Ellul, see *The New Demons*, trans. C. Edward Hopkin (New York: Seabury, 1975), 1-17; and *The Subversion of Christianity,* trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).

[16] Illich, "An Address to 'Master Jacques'," 65.

[17] Ibid, 67. "During ten good years after my meeting with Professor Ellul, I concentrated my study principally on that which *la technique* does: What it does to the environment, to social structures, to cultures, to religions. I have also studied the symbolic character or, if you prefer, the 'perverse sacramentality' of institutions purveying education, transport, housing, health care and employment. I have no regrets. The social consequences of domination by *la technique*, making institutions counterproductive, must be understood if one wishes to measure the effects on the specific *hexis* (state) and *praxis* defining the experience of modernity today. It is necessary to face the horrors, in spite of certain knowledge that seeing is beyond the power of our senses. I have successively analyzed the hidden functions of highly accelerated transport, communication channels, prolonged educational treatment, and human garaging. I have been astounded by their symbolic power. That has given me empirical proof that the Ellulian category of *la technique*, which I had originally employed as an analytic tool, also defines a reality engendered by the pursuit of an 'ideology of Christian derivation'."

[18] See Lee Hoinacki, "The Trajectory of Ivan Illich," *Bulletin of Science, Technology & Society* 23, no. 5 (2003), 382-389.

Though rough around the edges, *Freedom, Love, and Power* is surely an important text. Not only does it add depth and nuance to Ellul's approach to the challenges of sustaining authentic faith in a modern technocratic world, but it also illuminates many of the fundamental questions provoked by a fresh encounter with Jewish and Christian Scripture. As Vanderburg observes, "the work of Jacques Ellul, seen as a dialogue between his 'social and historical' and his 'biblical' studies, reunites the 'vertical' and the 'horizontal' dimensions of the revelation. In this way, it could restore the Christian community to its task of being a transformative presence in the world, likened to salt in food or yeast in bread dough."[19] Equally, those interested in exploring the foundations of Illich's religious thought would find no better place to begin than "Master Jacques."

Author's Bio

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[19] Vanderburg, "Introduction," xix.

A tool can grow out of man's control, first to become his master and finally to become his executioner.

Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality, p.84.*

Ivan Illich and the Study of Everyday Life

Engin Atasay

Introduction: Illich and Everydayness

J.J. Rousseau asks; "what good is it to seek our happiness in the opinion of another if we can find it within ourselves?"[1]Do individuals have the agency to seek their own happiness? Where does our agency rest? And more importantly, how do we know when, where and how to forefront our agency? These are just a few fundamental questions about subjectivity that has troubled modern philosophy, partially revoked in Marx's critique of capitalism and the subsequent posthumanist tradition. Illich's work that examines everydayness once again revitalizes these questions within the context of industrial society. With this paper I wish to highlight Illich's insistence on individual and convivial agency that blurs the philosophical boundaries of humanist and posthumanist. I will argue that Illich offers us expansive analytical frameworks for social agency and activism that are embedded in awareness that questions our everyday tools. His creative critique of industrial society and everydayness provokes a critical imagination, which perhaps is Illich's richest legacy and greatest strength as a philosopher, activist and a convivial individual. I read his work as a deliberate attempt to appeal to the agency and the social power of convivial individuals who are intertwined in imaginative processes of agency and creative convivial communities.

Illich's insistence on invoking individual agency is rooted in a cultural project that examines everydayness, i.e. the engagement with tools that impact people's daily lives. In

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[1] Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The First and Second Discourses*, edit. Roger D. Masters, trans. Roger D. and Judith R. Masters, (Boston & New York: Bedford/St.Martin's, 1964), p.64.

essence, happiness for Illich depends on the way people choose to live their everyday life practices. Everydayness and the tools we choose to live our everydayness can either become oppressive if they are not constantly contested or may also allow us to rediscover convivial alternatives. Henri Lefebvre advocates that we must "rediscover everyday life—no longer to neglect and disown it, elude and evade it—but actively to rediscover it while contributing to its transfiguration."[2] Illich is perhaps one of the few scholars who answer the call for examining everydayness. Everydayness is often unquestioned—we live through our most basic practices without giving much thought, using everyday industrial tools—and industrialism capitalizes on such uncritical tendencies by capturing our everyday practices to administer our subjectivities. Therefore, Illich's work insist on commemorating a wakefulness that questions what is seemingly ordinary and re-evaluate our individual engagements with life and the tools we use. Echoing Lefebvre's advocacy for examining everdayness through a critical awareness of the tools we use, Illich urges us to question and rediscover our positionality as subjects in the everyday world we live in and foster sensibilities that can challenge the oppressive everydayness of industrial life.

What distinguishes Illich's work from other critiques of industrial everyday life—as I shall discuss in much detail later in this paper—is that Illich offers us alternatives, tools that can influence power and offer individuals and communal settings the potential for alternative vernacular practices to emerge in culture. I will argue that the wealth of Illich's ideas stem from his insistence on de-institutionalization of social conduct and promotion of convivial tools that allow for the power of individuals to determine their own agency, grounded in an "imaginativeness"[3] that can "become an organized field of social practice" for individuals to begin to design convivial communities. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to introduce Ivan

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[2] Henri Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World.* Trans. Sacha Robinovitch. (New Bruswick and London: Transaction Publishers,1990) p.202.
[3] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), p.31.

Illich into the study of everyday life, arguing that Illich insistence of individual engagement with tools is a call for rediscovering the way we choose to live.

Illich's work and his lifetime commitment to social change receive little recognition and his ideas are often criticized as mere radical critiques of institutions and industrialism. For example, Herbert Gintis offers an extensive critique of Illich's work and criticizes him for lacking a sufficient political strategy for social action by over-relying or romanticizing the individual. Gintis further states that Illich's work corresponds to "a situation of social chaos, but probably not to a serious mass movement toward constructive social change."[4] This paper on the other hand, contrary to the critiques that seek to portray Illich as an apolitical figure, is intended to argue that there is a broader philosophy of radical humanism and philosophy of social change in Illich's work. Illich's concern with human agency rather than with mass political mobilizations does not involuntarily make him a chaos theorist. In fact, as I will argue, Illich's emphasis on the individual psyche and the connection between tools and individuals can significantly contribute to our understanding of the performativity, everyday life and political movements for new commons to emerge and challenge industrialism. A reading of Illich that remains true to his humanist philosophy is bound to see Illich as a cultural worker for democratic social change, and not as an *a*political philosopher who is solely concerned with theoretical critiques of institutionalization. Illich is rather a political activist who offers individuals tools to imagine and produce a world of creativity, communal friendship, equity and ultimately social change that flourishes outside of the confines of pre-determined political territories.

Tools and Everyday Life

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[4] Herbert Gintis, *Toward a Political Economy of Education: A Radical Critiue of Ivan Illich's Deschooling Society*, in: Alan Gratner, Colin Greer and Frank Riessman, edits. *After Deschooling, What?* (New York, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.70.

While bringing Illich into a conversation about the study of everyday life, I predominantly rely upon Illich's valuable text, *Tools for Conviviality*.[5] It is through his work on tools Illich envisions creative individual agency to instantiate possible interstitial spaces of resistance against industrial forms of life that inhibit agency and the prospects for social democracy. Illich broadly characterizes tools as all rationally designed devices—machines, commodities, and institutions—that structure labor and social relations.

> I use the term 'tool' broadly enough to include not only simple hardware such as drills, pots, syringes, brooms, building elements, or motors, and not just large machines like cars or power stations; I also include among tools productive institutions such as factories that produce tangible commodities like corn flakes or electric current, and productive systems for intangible commodities such as those which produce 'education' 'health', 'knowledge', or 'decisions'. I use this term because it allows me to subsume into one category all rationally designed devices.[6]

Illich believes that unless tools stem from the invention and the holistic design of convivial communities, they can grow out of our control and begin to enslave society. Convivial tools ensure that tools serve communally interrelated individuals—convivial commonweals— which encourages a diversity of life styles. The design and energy designated to convivial tools are thus products of democratic relationships between community members. The resulting convivial society for Illich would be "the result of social arrangements that guarantee for each member the most ample and free access to the tools of the community and limit this freedom only in favor of another member's equal freedom."[7]

Illich argues that the potential for convivial commonweals are growing dim as industrial tools that are extensions of industrial forms of life have monopolized and disrupted the communal processes for allocating resources, energy and needs of society. Industrial tools encapsulate individual creativity in structures alien to individuals by allocating experts—

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[5] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973).
[6] Ibid, p.20
[7] Ibid.p.12.

doctors, engineers, technocrats—to dictate decisions on behalf of individuals and society; ultimately reducing social relationships into consumer choices, while creating energy and technology dependencies on which people have no control over. Considering the way we live today and our dependence on industrial forms of life, Illich's critique of industrial tools offers us a way to begin a conversation about our everydayness and how our social fabric is increasingly entangled into processes beyond our control. An Illichian approach questions how much of our everyday life is reproduced by tools, such as cell phones, cars, TVs, medicalization of illnesses and so on. Illich encourages us to re-think ways in which industrial tools dominate and perpetuate their reproduction by becoming irreplaceable through the choices we make. Illich wants to expose the everydayness of industrial tools and their connection to larger institutions to show us how industrial everydayness—in mundane and ordinary hypnotic ways—structure our social relationships, our relationship to nature, and our relationship to ourselves. In the next section, I will come back to the importance of examining everydayness and elaborate on why it needs to be studied and how Illich's work can be used to examine it. For now, I would like to give a brief account of Illich's discontent with industrial tools, which is central for understanding Illich's call for re-examining our relationship with tools.

Illich argues that the use of industrial tools have breached and extended society's limit to produce power and energy beyond its control. The inability of society to have control over industrial tools and the power they yield undermined traditions, ecological systems and individual imagination.[8] The use of industrial tools professionalized and diluted the convivial right of people to choose their own tools and the social relations associated with them. Under industrialism, tools such as transportation, hospitals and schools serve to reproduce industries and specialized monopolies that benefit from the technical economy generated by industrial

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[8] Ivan Illich, *Energy and Equity*, in: Ivan Illich, *Toward a History of Needs*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

tools. Industrial tools embody the rationality of industrial production and hence facilitate the

creation of social relationships that sustain industrialism which disrupts ecological and social

thresholds and creates destruction. Illich further elaborates:

> Most of the power tools now in use favor centralization of control. Industrial
> plants with their highly specialized tools give neither the worker nor most
> engineers a choice over what use will be made of the energy they manage. This is
> equally true, though less evident, of the high-powered consumer tools that
> dominate our society. Most of them, such as cars and air conditioners, are too
> costly to be available on equal basis outside a few superrich societies.[9]

Industrial development constantly violates diverse social and subsistence desires to

attain a convivial and equitable living space. Industrial tools restructure space—urbanization,

transportation, privatization—in order to capitalize and deplete more and more energy from

nature and society, which ultimately corrupts individual and social values and culture by

constructing their desires according to the impersonal principles of industrial mechanisms.

Illich draws our attention to the practical consciousness associated with industrial tools and

how industrial tools can manifest their sensibilities to dictate our personal choices and social

relationships. In other words, people begins to desire and believe in the 'common sense'[10]

associated with tools, e.g. using more science to cure disasters caused by industrial science is

often normalized and praised in developmental debates. The hegemony of private ownership,

continual unlimited growth and the desire for endless consumption shape social subjectivities

and individual action over decisions over tools and the use of resources. The menace of

industrial tools on individual subjectivity is well illustrated by Illich in his take on industrial

transportation:

> Cars create distance. Speedy vehicles of all kinds render space scarce. They drive
> wedges of highways into populated areas, and then extort tolls on the bridge over
> the remoteness between people that was manufactured for their sake. This
> monopoly over land turns space into car fodder. It destroys the environment for

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[9] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.42.
[10] Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci, edited and translated by Q.Hoare and G.Nowell Smith. (London: Lawrence and Wishart,1971).

feet and bicycle. Even if planes and busses could run as nonpolluting, nondepleting public services, their inhuman velocities would degrade man's innate mobility and force him to spend more time for the sake of travel.[11]

Industrial growth without limits, without politically and communally interrelated individuals endangers social relations and the innate unbreakable bond between society and nature.[12] The ownership and use of industrial tools create social inequalities, restricts social practice to industrially determined methods of work and foster exclusionary legal and social apparatuses.

Illich calls attention to this unique form of "bondage" to industrial servitude, which he argues must be questioned separate from wage labor—often regarded by orthodox Marxism as the prime source of social alienation. Illich insists that we must challenge industrialism on grounds of industrial work done in industrial institutional sites (e.g. factory, school, hospital) as well as activities carried out in our everydayness in what he calls "shadow work:"

> It comprises most housework women do in their homes and apartments, the activities connected with shopping, most of the homework of students cramming for exams, the toil expended commuting to and from the job. It includes the stress of forced consumption, the tedious and regimented surrender to therapists, compliance with bureaucrats, the preparation for work to which one is compelled, and many of the activities usually labeled 'family life.'[13]

Illich's critique of industrialism however is not merely a theorizing or outlining a socio-economical interpretation of industrialism but it is rather an answer to an urgent call for practical consciousness in order to resist industrial everydayness. Illich states that his "purpose is to lay down criteria by which the manipulation of people for the sake of their tools can be immediately recognized, and thus to exclude those artifacts and institutions which inevitably extinguish a convivial life."[14] Illich's call for recognition of awareness for alternatives to industrialism is based on the idea of an imaginative process of conviviality.

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[11] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality,* p.52.
[12] Illich's concern for nature and society resonates and perhaps initiates a realm of study investigating the connections between ecoliteracy and social justice. For example see: Chat Bowers, *Educating for Eco-Justice and Community,* (Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2001).
[13] Ivan Illich, *Shadow Work,* (Boston & London: Marian Boyars, 1981), p.100.
[14] Ibid, p.14.

Illich's finds his inspiration for imagining conviviality through his critical reading of industrial society and believes that individuals must strive to overcome the limitations imposed by industrial tools by examining the role the materiality of everyday consciousness and sensibility instantiated by the tools we choose to use.

At this point I'd like to stress a decisive philosophical and political attitude Illich adopts as a cultural worker. Conviviality rests immensely on the imaginative potential of the individual and the everyday use of tools rather than premised on a political mass mobilization or institutional territories of anti-industrial resistance. It is through the individual rediscovery of everyday life and tools, we begin to imagine convivial commonweal alternatives to industrialism, cultivated and vitalized as social challenges to industrial forms of life. This Illichean tendency of forefronting the vitality of individual engagement with tools will become important further in this paper as I will try to illustate the expansiveness of Illich's philosophy, which resonates (and perhaps may contribute to) many of the theoretical tools used by post-humanist philosophy. Such an interesting account is found in Mark Seem's introduction to Deleuze and Guattari's ground breaking work, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Seem points to similar pattern of thought between Illich's and Deleuze and Guattari's projects for social change that calls for radical reversal of the relationships between individuals and machines. A reversal, Seem adds, for both projects "must be governed by a collective political process, and not by professionals and experts. The ultimate answer to neurotic dependencies on professionals is *mutual self-care*"[15]that relies on the agency of a community of convivial individuals.

Convivial Tools and the Negation of Empire

Social systems rely on the conduct of individuals as consumers, producers and practitioners of tools, who take part in creating discourses and the very structures of life.

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[15] Mark Seem, *Introduction* in: Deleuze G. and Guattari, F.*Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, (Penguin Books, 1977), p. xxii.

Thus, it is inconceivable to expect any hegemonic system to maintain its legitimacy on merely economic and political terms without taking part in the production of everyday life. Hegemony requires the exercise and control of power vis-à-vis its subjects, and the margins of economic and political institutional disciplinary space. For instance, Michel Foucault's work traces the liberal processes of government in connection with the development of the "modern sovereign state and the modern autonomous individual [which] co-determine each other's emergence."[16]The drills and rituals that become everyday have significantly become salient for examining power relations in society as we move away from a disciplinary society to a "society of government"[17]that is predominantly concerned in controlling the conduct of individuals.

Power in industrial societies is embedded in the administration of a population in which the everyday practices of its individual subjects gain importance. "This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life which categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize…It is a form of power which makes individuals subjects."[18] Perhaps in the post-humanist era we live in, an era dominated by discourses of empire aimed at capturing our subjectivity, *the significance of Illich's work for convivial society and his reliance on the imaginative potential of the individual in cultivating new commons is more vital than ever.* Today, the power of "empire" is characterized as a "form of power that regulates social life from its interior, following it, interpreting it, absorbing it—every individual embraces and reactivates this power of his or her own accord. Its primary task is to administer life." [19] Our everydayness is then polluted with industrial discourses and apparatuses, colonizing our daily

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[16] Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *Power: Essential Works of Michel Foucault, 1954-1984: Volume Three,* trans. Robert Hurley et al. Ed. James D. Faubion (New York: New Press, 2000), p.191.
[17] Michel Foucault, *Governmentality*, in: Foucault, M., *Power, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984*, Vol. 3 edit. James D. Faubion, (New York: The New Press, 1994), p.219.
[18] Foucault, Michel, *The Subject and Power*, in: Dreyfus, H.L. & Rabinow, P., *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and Hermeneutics,* 2nd. Edition, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983), p.212.
[19] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, (Harvard University Press, 2001), p.24.

conduct from its interior and core through "repetitive [industrial] practices"[20] it imposes upon

the body of individual the desire and ideal image of empire.

Everydayness takes the form of a material and discursive space in which our submission

to industrial tools to perform work and enjoy leisure[21] are economized as we carry them out

without much regard for social justice and nature. Illich points to this colonizing tendency of

everyday work performed:

> Yet increasingly the unpaid self-discipline of shadow work becomes more important than wage labor for further economic growth. In advanced industrial economies these unpaid contributions toward economic growth have become the social locus of the most widespread, the most unchallenged, the most depressing form of discrimination.[22]

A more vivid example Illich provides is of "an ecologist who takes a jet plane to a conference

on protecting the environment from further pollution."[23]Needless to say, Ivan Illich's

emphasis on replacing industrial tools with convivial tools is a call for individuals and

communities who aim to challenge empire and its everydayness. Illich intends to eliminate an

industrial everyday life that underpins empire by re-cognizing to re-learn our relationships

with our everyday tools and ultimately re-building our commonality with society and the

environment. Illich is calling individuals to question and ultimately replace the everyday

industrial tools by cultivating a common that uses convivial tools; tools that stem from

democratic social processes of ownership, design, decision and knowledge of tools.

Conviviality emancipates individuals' imaginative potential by elevating individual

experiences and individuals' communal engagement with life over prescribed mass

generalization. Illich sees individual lived experiences in their everyday life as engagements

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[20] Michel Foucault, The *Political Technology of Individuals*, in: Michel Foucault, *Power, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984*, Vol. 3 edit. James D. Faubion, (New York: The New Press, 1994), p.394.
[21] Henri Lefebvre, *Work and Leisure in Everyday Life*, in: Ben Highmore, edit. *The Everyday Life Reader*, (London & New York: Routledge), 2002.
[22] Ivan Illich, *Shadow Work*, pp.100-101.
[23] Ivan Illich, *Tools of Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973)p.102.

with tools. This pragmatic approach to individualism allows Illich to construct his ideas for conviviality based on the idea that individuals only establish certain engagements with industrial tools and thus have the potential to change their relationship with them.

The study of everyday life is not a theoretical interpretation of a concrete reality but rather a study of *lived* [24] experiences of personal and social relationships. It seeks to analyze life as a fluid and dynamic representation of life as it speaks through tools and users. The study of *lived* materiality of everyday life is where Illich's analysis offers us new ways to transform and change everyday materiality—tools—and our engagement with the industrial forms of everyday life. The idea of everyday life being lived carries in itself a sense of *ambivalence*—living the everyday is "almost the same, but not quite,"[25]—which translates over to the practical consciousness embedded in tools and out engagement with them. Therefore, the communal processes for designing and using tools can, not only create interstitial spaces (or new commons) to maneuver within industrial everydayness, but also serve as sources for alternatives vernacular forms of life and movements against industrial forms of life and knowledge.

In Illich's words, these convivial spaces allow individuals to "relearn to depend on each other rather than on energy slaves...a world in which sound and shared reasoning sets limits to everybody's power to interfere with anybody's equal power to shape the world".[26] Illich suggests that individuals must recognize the ways in which everydayness of industrial forms of life structure their expectations, desires, and daily practical consciousnesses and by doing so seek out "new tools to work with rather than tools that "work" for them. They need technology to make the most of their energy and imagination."[27]Therefore it is only through a

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[24] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1991).
[25] Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, (London & New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 86.
[26] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973)pp.14-15
[27] Ibid, p.10.

critical engagement with everyday life tools that we begin to recognize the form and the need

for instantiating "a convivial and pluralist mode of production."[28]

Convivial Agency: Individuals and Community and Reading Illich as a Cultural

Worker.

The convivial lived experience with tools that stem from the design of vernacular

communities has the potential to transform action from its void mere consumption under

industrialism to lively *performance*; characterized by an endless process of signification

which potentially can generate new experiences and tools that can challenge the industrial

forms of life. Illich argues that industrial everydayness created by industrial tools degrades the

autonomy and the imagination of individuals and communities: "highways, hospital wards,

classrooms, office buildings, apartments, and stores look everywhere the same. Identical tools

also promote the development of the same character types".[29] However, the everyday "while

it may give off a seemly appearance, never manages completely to bracket out the murky

realm of the unconscious. Everyday life becomes the state where the unconscious

performs…but never with its gloves off."[30] In other words, how we interact with everyday

tools defines our everydayness. Illich thus advocates a convivial interaction with tools and the

everydayness they generate. Tools that are part of imaginative processes "enhance eutrapelia

(or graceful playfulness),"[31]which is essentially a call for imagining and re-experiencing our

everyday practical consciousness based on convivial relationships. This process for Illich

requires us to question the everydayness of industrial forms of life, which often goes beyond

the scope of a political project but sets itself as a process of action rather than political

rigidity. Illich asserts:

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[28] Ibid, p.20.
[29] Ibid, p.15.
[30] Ben Highmore, *Questioning Everyday Life*, in: Ben Highmore edit. *The Everyday Life Reader*, (London & New York: Routledge, 2002), p.6.
[31] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973)p. xxv.

> The cultural revolutionary believes that these habits have radically distorted our view of what human beings can have and want. He questions the reality that others take for granted, a reality that, in his view, is the artificial by-product of contemporary institutions, created and reinforced by them in pursuit of their short-term ends.[32]

Illich calls for individuals to become cultural workers and to re-evaluate and take control of their everydayness. Illich is keen on advocating that the transformative potential for an alternative to industrial everydayness is in questioning everydayness and redeeming our individual imaginative potential. "Ivan Illich's call for institutional transformation is the demand for a true cultural revolutionary. It is *revolutionary* because it demands nothing less than the total revision of society, it is *cultural* because it argues that the revolution must begin with the transformation of individual consciousness."[33]

Hence, while reading Illich, we encounter the work of a cultural worker. As Ben Highmore addresses, a cultural worker is someone who strongly emphasizes that "how we experience our bodies, and how our bodies experience the world, cannot simply be adequately described by casting a critical eye over the discourses of the establishment."[34]Industrialism is not a totality that renders individual agency absolute or possible within a political territory. Illich believes that people can acquire the convivial sensibilities and foster transformative change if they can critically assess their practical and communal connection to the everyday tools they use. Industrial tools objectify communities and individuals as commodities and consumers. Convivial tools on the other hand allow individuals to cultivate a convivial community with immanent imaginative opportunities to construct their relationships with their environments while relying on their own creative energies and desires. Illich envisions

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[32] Ivan Illich, *A Constitution for Cultural Revolution*, in: Ivan Illich, *Celebration of Awareness: A Call for Institutional Revolution*, (New York: Pantheon Books), 1970, p.181.

[33] Paul Levine, *Divisions*, Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corp. 1975, in: Raymond Allen Morrow, Carlos Alberto Torres, *Social Theory and Education: a Critique of Theories of Social and Cultural Reproduction*, (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995), p.228.

[34] Ben Highmore, *Questioning Everyday Life*, in: Ben Highmore, edit. *The Everyday Life Reader*, (London & New York: Routledge,2002), p.30.

the convivial society as a process that must be "reconstructed to enlarge the contribution of autonomous individuals"[35] Individuals who appreciate the convivial transformation of their everyday tools and begins to imagine and build convivial communities that further enlarge their creative imaginations and respect for their environment and society.

Illich's vision of a convivial individual who redeems agency by transforming his/her everyday tools echoes Michel de Certeau definition of everyday creativity that resides in bricolage (making-do), which utilizes "everyday rituals, re-uses and functions of the memory through the 'authorities; that make possible (or permit) everyday practices,"[36]Bricolage can provoke conviviality within industrial everydayness, where there is room for individuals to imagine new tools and forms of practice that can challenge industrial forms of life. Conviviality rests upon the idea that the politically diversified and yet interrelated individuals approach daily practice and actual lived experience with convivial bricolage—ambivalent, playful and imaginative tools—that can ultimately alter and challenge institutionalized industrial tools and the empty forms of life they create.

Ivan Illich's work on education and schooling illustrates how bricolage can be a pedagogical convivial tool against industrail schooling. Illich describes the individual who gets education under industrialism as someone who is basically schooled to adopt to the demands of the institution. In *Deschooling Society*, Illich argues:

> The pupil is thereby "schooled" to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. His imagination is "schooled" to accept service in place of value.[37]

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[35] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.10.
[36] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p.xviii.
[37] Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*, (London, New York, San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1971), p.1.

The tool of industrail schooling encapsulated the willingness to learn into the instrumental institutional demands and desires of industrial everydayness which undermines individual agency to live creatively, while eliminating the capacity to imagine convivial forms of life. In *Deschooling Society,* Ivan Illich also argued that a convivial education systems that transcend the institutional territories of schooling, may offer students access to multiplicity of endless educational sources (sources characterized by the specific learning environment), which may help them to define and achieve their own goals. Illich argues that games can allow individuals to playfully conduct formal logical proofs. The element of bricolage found in the games offer students' engagement with content and desire for learning to be a "form of liberating education, since they heighten their awareness" and moreover they "can be organized by the players themselves."[38] In essence bricolage and conviviality captures the power of individual experience and creativity; the power of "practical consciousness" and desire of convivial relationships as opposed to the "official consciousness" of industrialism. It is in 'practical consciousness' that individuals can recapture their convivial playfulness. As Raymond Williams states:

> Practical consciousness is almost always different from official consciousness, and this is not only a matter of relative freedom or control. For practical consciousness is what is actually being lived, and not only what it is thought is being lived.[39]

Practical consciousness associated with convivial tools and the emphasis on the materiality of lived experiences enables individuals to realize that they have the power to enrich the environment in which they live "with the fruits of his or her vision".[40] Illich advocates that society must take back the monopoly of designing and allocating tools from industrial production and begin to reconstruct tools that bring out individuals' playful

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[38] Ibid. p.84.
[39] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*. (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.131.
[40] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.21.

convivial "structure of feeling," a experimental form of everydayness that seeks experimental solutions and tools. As Illich puts it, "imperialist mercenaries can poison or maim but never conquer a people who have chosen to set boundaries to their tools for the sake of conviviality." [41] Illich's reliance on individual agency for fostering conviviality resonates with Raymond Williams' emphasis on individual agency for democratic change. Williams argues that "no mode of production, and therefore no dominant society or order of society, and therefore no dominant culture, in reality exhausts the full range of human practice, human energy, human intention."[42] Williams adds:

> The 'autonomous' self grows within a social process which radically influences it, but the degree of gained autonomy makes possible the observed next stage, in which the individual can help to change or modify the social process that has influenced and is influencing him.[43]

Then 'what is to be done' to re-imagine our contemporary era and cultivate any kind of convivial common is neither a political project for critical consciousness nor a mobilizing campaign for revolution. Instead, we need new convivial tools for imagining new *lived* experiences of 'everyday life', which transcends any given prescription for social change. Ivan Illich's work on convivial tools offer us frameworks for identifying with our everyday tools through playful and immanent processes. It is an open ended process that resists essentializing or institutionalizing our needs. A convivial society is therefore not a fixed end but rather part of an immanent communal process of cultivating a common characterized by bricolage and creative imagination. Convivial tools and convivial communal relationships are not only pre-designated political strategies: conviviality is also about processes that embraces playful tactics that yield not finalized ends results but endless possibilities and imaginations for social change. Hence the notion of tactical processes are significant for conviviality to

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[41] Ibid, p.110.
[42] Raymond Williams, *Base and Superstructure*, in: John Higgins edit. *The Raymond Williams Reader*, (Blackwell Publishers,2001), p.172.
[43] Ibid, p.74.

endure and not become institutionalized into grand-narratives of political territories for the

masses to represent (which only results in reproducing institutionalized form of life). Certeau

explains tactics as:

> "A calculus which cannot count on a 'proper' (a spatial or institutional
> localization), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality.
> The place of the tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself into the
> other's place, fragmentarily, without taking over in its entirety, without being able
> to keep it at a distance".[44]

It is fruitful to understand Illich's insistence on convivial tools as tactics designed to resist

disciplining dynamics of industrialism. As Illich puts it, his work is not intended to

"contribute to an engineering manual for the design of convivial institutions or tools.[45]"

Discipline is evident in institutions, in industrial tools and in everyday life; Illich's work seeks

to discover how the entire world can resist being reduced to the institutional discipline of

industrialism.

A convivial society presents an endless process of becoming: it's found in immanence

that becomes the socially necessary space to redeem individual creativity. It rests on shifting

terrains of individual bricolage; conviviality is a playful everyday loose temporal structure, an

experiement (an *experience* as well as an *experiment*) for individuals who imagine a world

free of the industrial disciplinary forms of life. Only a convivial tool and its use in everyday

practice does not necessitate a specialized compulsory audience or a rationality to socialize

into. For example, a collective art project for learning that allows for individual playfulness

and imagination to flourish, as opposed to K-12 schools with strict institutional guidelines. A

convivial tool is a floating rootless formulation—a "plane of composition"—which is the

opposite of a 'plan of organization'. The experience and experiment of conviviality requires

indeterminacy where "There are no longer any forms or developments of forms; nor are there

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[44] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p.xix.
[45] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.14.

subjects or the formation of subjects. There is no structure, any more than there is genesis."[46]

We find such fluid compositions for tools in Illich's description of the epimethean individual living in a convivial society and the feelings Illich associates with the convivial figures.

The sensibility of epimethean person can be identified through feelings and *experiments* which generate knowledge and practice that instantiates love for people; caring for the earth; sharing traits and tools that enable the fluid practices of a convivial society possible. It is a *celebration*[47] of discovery and rediscovery—an *experiment*—in which individuals join together to *live* their creative powers according to their cultural, environmental and material needs. Illich suggests:

> "We now need a name for those who value hope above expectations. We need a name for those who love people more than products, those who believe that
>
>> No people are uninteresting.
>> Their fate is like the chronicle of planets.
>>
>> Nothing in them is not particular,
>> and planet is dissimilar from planet.
>
> We need a name for those who love the earth on which each can meet the other,
>
>> And if man lived in obscurity
>> making his friends in that obscurity,
>> obscurity is not uninteresting.
>
> We need a name for those who collaborate with their Promethean brother in the lighting of the fire and the shaping of iron, but who do so to enhance their ability to tend and care and wait upon the other, knowing that
>
>> To each his world is private,
>> And in that world one excellent minute.
>> And in that world one tragic minute.
>> These are private.[48]

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[46] Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia,* trans. Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p.266.
[47] Ivan Illich, *Celebration of Awareness: A Call for Institutional Revolution*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p.15.
[48] The three quotations are from "People" from the book Selected Poems by Yevgeny Yevtushenko. Translated and with Introduction by Robin Milner-Gulland and Peter Levi. Published by E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1962, and re-printed with their permission, in: Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*,(Harper & Row Publishers, 1971).

I suggest that these hopeful brothers and sisters be called Epimethean men". [49]

It is in the *obscurity* and in the *particular* we begin to think about convivial everydayness opposing and challenging the everydayness of industrial forms of life. In the Epimethean men we find that convivial society is not a simple transcendent political progression of repression but a rhizomatic process that is always becoming and seeking endless tools and practices that may flourish and branch into convivial forms of life, i.e. an *experiment* that involves desires, ideas, feelings, relationships and the environment. The lived uncertainty of everyday life permits a convivial individual to find it unsettling and yet abundant in joyful energy to create common convivial alternatives. Raymond Williams refers to these sources when he asserts that:

> There will be areas of practice and meaning which, almost by definition from its own limited character, or in its profound deformation, the dominant culture is unable in any real terms to recognize…there are always sources of actual human practice which it neglects or excludes.[50]

There is imminent potential for imagining new convivial commonalities and convivial tools in these exclusions. Eric Fromm refers to these exclusions as possibilities in his introduction to Illich work, Celebration of Awareness. Fromm claims:

> Humanistic radicalism questions all these premises and is not afraid of arriving at ideas and solutions that may sound absurd. I see the great value in the writings of Dr. Illich precisely in the fact that they represent humanistic radicalism in its fullest and most imaginative aspect…showing entirely new possibilities; they make the reader more alive because they open the door that leads out of the prison of routinized, sterile, preconceived notions…help to stimulate energy and hope for a new beginning.[51]

Conclusion

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[49] Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*, (Harper & Row Publishers, 1971), pp.115-116.
[50] Raymond Williams, *Base and Superstructure*, in: John Higgins edit. *The Raymond Williams Reader*, (Blackwell Publishers,2001). p173.
[51] See Eric Fromm's introduction to Ivan Illich, *Celebration of Awareness: A Call for Institutional Revolution*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p.10.

Ivan Illich's work attempts to challenge industrial institutions through transforming individual micro-processes of everyday life and imagining new convivial tools people can choose to live their everyday life. Nevertheless, Illich is not concerned with a description of a political project. Illich initiates questions aimed at jump-starting our imagination for envisioning a world that is not monopolized by industrialism. His analysis of industrial everyday life urges us to re-think contemporary institutions and consider how our reality would be different if we had convivial tools. For instance, Illich urges us to ask how transportation would alter our social relationships if we refused to drive cars. How would cities look like if there were no highways? What new convivial tools will we use and new social and communal relationships will we develop? In other words, how would everyday life look like in a convivial society if we could negate our industrial everydayness?

To answer these questions would be to undermine the open-ended imaginary and playful processes associated with conviviality. However, we can advocate that a convivial society protects the power of "individuals and of communities to choose their own styles of life through effective, small-scale renewal."[52] Industrial specialization makes everyday life an estranged monopolized space, reducing individual activity and creativity to mere consumption. Addiction to progress and 'new' products; more science to treat scientific ailments, more management for better management, enslaves people in an endless destructive race. A convivial society, on the contrary, offers ways to structure its own expectations from science and knowledge, which allows a community to transform its members from "contenders for scarce resources into competitors for abundant promises."[53] In a convivial society knowledge and practices will not be distant and alien to individuals. "Fully industrialized man calls his own principally what has been made for him. He says "my

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[52] Ivan Illich, *Tools of Conviviality* (New York, Evanston, San Francisco and London: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), p.73.
[53] Ibid.p.86

education," "my transportation," "my entertainment," "my health,""[54] which one may argue demonstrates the discourse of industry and its connection to rhetoric and rationality of consumption. Unlike industrial societies where commodities define activities and procedures of practice, in a convivial society all individuals may choose to use their own means and procedures to share their convivial commonalities, procedures and tools. A convivial society does not structure its values systems through industrial commodities, quite the contrary, a convivial community is inherently a continual rejection of any tool/institution that operates on the basis of principles of commodification:

> Only a cultural and institutional revolution which reestablishes man's control over his environment can arrest the violence by which development of institutions is now imposed by a few for their own interest. Maybe Marx has said it better, criticizing Ricardo and his school: "They want production to be limited to 'useful things,' but they forget that the production of too many *useful* things results in too many *useless* people.[55]

One final point needs to be made; Illich's call for a convivial society should not be confused with industrial communism. Illich does not advocate for transforming ownership of industry to new convivial titans of industry. His critique of industrial forms of life demands that convivial societies set limits to industrial growth and seek communal forms of life that are rooted in tradition and not dependent on industrial tools that enslave the individual into an addiction for progress. Illich's call for conviviality is a call for people to take action for social and environmental justice. It is neither a political project for socialism nor a communist guideline; it is a call for a search for communal and cultural autonomy and creativity; it aims to render our everyday life meaningful by eradicating our addiction to industrial routines and tools that degrade our connection to everyday life. Illich urges us to re-evaluate our passive engagement with our tools and everydayness by actively participating in the design and

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[54] ibid.p.90.
[55] Ivan Illich, *Celebration of Awareness: A Call for Institutional Revolution*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), p.189.

management of our technology and needs, which ultimately give us tools to empower cultural

innovation, prioritize communal needs and protect environmental biodiversity.

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Thirteen Ways of Looking at Ivan Illich

Daniel Grego

Ignem veni mittere in terram
et quid volo?
Si iam accensus esset!
St. Luke 12:49

A friend of Ivan Illich's mother once said to her: "Why did you not have seven sons instead of one Ivan? It would be so much simpler for the world."[1]

Prologue

[He] expresses throughout his faith in the capacity of ordinary people to construct

for themselves a world suited to their inner needs, to create and participate in an

advancing culture of liberation in free communities, to discover through their own

thought and engagement the institutional arrangements that can best satisfy their

deeply rooted striving for freedom, justice, compassion and solidarity, at a

particular historical moment.[2]

In the passage above, Noam Chomsky is writing about the anarchist, Rudolf

Rocker, but he might have been writing about Ivan Illich. Illich would have questioned

Chomsky's use of the words "needs," "liberation," and "institutional," but he certainly

had "faith in the capacity of ordinary people" and he certainly believed in "freedom,

justice, compassion and solidarity" (although Illich might have substituted the word

"friendship" for "solidarity"). If having this faith and these beliefs makes one an

anarchist, then Ivan Illich was an anarchist.

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[1] Francine du Plessix Gray. 1970. *Divine Disobedience*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, p. 282.
[2] Noam Chomsky. Preface to Rudolf Rocker. 1989. *Anarcho-Syndicalism: Theory and Practice*. Oakland, CA: AK Press, p. iii.

Apparently, some educators (or educators of educators, or educators of educators of educators…once you start down this road, there is no end) believe that Ivan Illich's thought is best engaged by dismissing it as anarchistic, by which I would guess they mean unhelpful or unrealistic. These educators probably fall into one of two general categories. There are the pragmatists who believe the status quo schooling establishment and structure is here to stay and our task is to make the best of it. And then there are the socialists who imagine themselves enlightened enough to lead the rest of us (who all suffer from "false consciousness") to some better world in which schools, finally freed from the grip of corporate capitalism, will produce new generations of critical thinkers.[3]

Illich's defenders might be tempted to try to refute the charge that he was an anarchist, but, as the old saying goes: "If something walks like a duck…" The problem, as George Woodcock pointed out in his classic study of anarchism, is that:

> To describe the essential theory of anarchism is rather like trying to grapple with Proteus, for the very nature of the libertarian attitude – its rejection of dogma, its deliberate avoidance of rigidly systematic theory, and, above all, its stress on extreme freedom of choice and the primacy of the individual judgment – creates immediately the possibility of a variety of viewpoints inconceivable in a closely dogmatic system.[4]

There are many species of birds dwelling in the canopy of the anarchist rain forest and, if he was nothing else, Ivan Illich was a rare bird. Francine du Plessix Gray wrote about Ivan back in 1970:

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[3] I've noticed that since the fall of the Soviet Union, this second group has toned down its rhetoric. They used to advocate for "The Revolution." Now, their aim is "critical democracy" or "critical consciousness."
[4] George Woodcock. 1962. *Anarchism*. New York: The World Publishing Company, p. 17.

The public image of the mundane, astringent-witted scholar-priest shelters a Promethean variety of men. Illich is both tough and tender, guileful and ingenuous, devout and cynical. He is a flamboyant exhibitionist and profoundly modest. He is as radical in some domains as he is traditional in others. He is an arrogant aristocrat with a militant dedication to the poor. He is as diabolically sarcastic to his critics as he is loyal to his friends…Illich refuses to be categorized, and regales in being controversial.[5]

So, the whole idea of pigeonholing Illich should be questioned. I remember a disagreement between Lee Hoinacki and Barbara Duden, two of Ivan's dearest friends, at a memorial conference for Illich held at Pitzer College in the spring of 2004. Hoinacki advanced his idea that Illich was best understood as an apophatic theologian.[6] But Barbara Duden, at whose home Ivan died on December 2, 2002, passionately responded that there was nothing to gain, and perhaps a great deal to lose, by putting Ivan into a box, any box. A caged bird cannot fly. And I believe to truly understand Illich, you have to be willing to soar with him a while.

I have to confess that when the controversy about whether or not Illich was an anarchist was brought to my attention, I laughed. I wanted to satirize the whole thing. I immediately recalled Hoinacki's and Duden's disagreement, the old joke about the blind men and the elephant, and also a poem by Wallace Stevens called "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird."

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[5] Francine du Plessix Gray. Ibid, p. 282.

[6] *Apophatic* derives from the Greek word for "silent." Karen Armstrong notes: "Greek Christians came to believe that all theology should have an element of silence, paradox and restraint in order to emphasize the ineffability and mystery of God." Karen Armstrong. 1993. *A History of God*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, p. 401. I will discuss the differences between apophatic and kataphatic theology in section XI below.

In what follows, I have used the Stevens poem as a framework to examine the many facets of Ivan Illich. Stevens wrote in a letter to an editor that "Thirteen Ways" "is not meant to be a collection of epigrams or of ideas, but of sensations."[7] My reflections are only impressions and sensations, but that seems appropriate. Not only was Illich interested in the senses as a historian, but, from time to time, he relished being a bit of a sensation himself. At the end, I will return to considerations of Illich's anarchistic tendencies.

At the onset, I want to apologize to Wallace Stevens for taking liberties with his poem and to Henry Louis Gates, Jr., who already adopted this conceit to analyze attitudes toward black men.[8] I also hope Ivan will forgive me. Something tells me he already has.

> Among twenty snowy mountains,
>
> The only moving thing
>
> Was the eye of Ivan Illich.

Ivan Illich gave librarians and bookstore clerks fits. Where do you put his books? His work is not easily categorized. History? Yes, sometimes. Sociology? Perhaps. Education? Well, it depends on how that word is defined.

If I had to pick one label for Illich, I think I would choose philosopher in the original sense of "a lover of wisdom." The mountains may have been snow covered, but Illich's eye was always moving.

Within the Western philosophical tradition, where does he belong? He gave us the answer to this question. In his extended conversation with David Cayley for CBC Radio's *Ideas* program, Illich, reflecting on the influence on his thought of the French

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[7] Holly Stevens, editor. 1981. *Letters of Wallace Stevens*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, p. 251.
[8] Sorry, Skip. Perhaps, one day I'll be able to share a beer with you at the White House and we can work it out.

philosopher, Jacques Maritain, said that Maritain's approach to the texts of St. Thomas Aquinas "laid the Thomistic foundations of my entire perceptual mode."[9]

Illich said this grounding allowed him to be intellectually free to examine not only the Western tradition, but also Asian and Islamic thinkers, as well.

II

I was of three minds,

Like a tree

In which there are three Ivan Illichs.

Illich was often called a cultural critic. His critique of the modern world was so sharp and so penetrating, some people thought of him as a prophet. I can understand that. I often think of his writings as prophetic.

However, Illich was also capable of subjecting his own ideas to ongoing criticism. He tells the story of becoming aware of the "unwanted side effects" the publication of *Deschooling Society* might have caused and of how Norman Cousins allowed him to publish a piece in the *Saturday Review*, which Illich considered "the main criticism" of his book.[10]

It seems that for every critique he offered, there were at least three Illichs perched in a nearby tree.

III

Ivan Illich whirled in the autumn winds.

He was a small part of the pantomime.

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[9] David Cayley. 1992. *Ivan Illich in Conversation*. Concord, Ontario: House of Anansi Press, p. 150.

[10] Ibid, p. 73.

One of Illich's favorite tools was sarcasm. He was a superb satirist. He hoped that with humor – always containing some sharp barbs – he could get people to smile away the certainties within which they lived.

He also believed in the pantomime of "horrified silence."[11] There are some modern obscenities – nuclear weapons, for example – about which he felt the only possible response was to say nothing at all, as long as he could make his horror visible. He tried to avoid apocalyptic randiness in order to protect his heart. He whirled in the autumn winds.

IV

A man and a woman

Are one.

A man and a woman and Ivan Illich

Are one.

"Here we are, you and I, and, I hope, also a third who is Christ." This passage from *De Spirituali Amicitia* by Aelred of Rievaulx was very important to Illich. Creating the occasions for friendship to flourish was central to his life and his life's mission. He told David Cayley:

I have seen it as my task to explore the ways in which the life of the intellect, the disciplined and methodical joint pursuit of clear vision – one could say philosophy in the sense of loving truth – can be so lived that it becomes the occasion for the kindling and growth of *philia*.[12]

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[11] Ibid, p. 129.
[12] Ivan Illich and David Cayley. 2005. *The Rivers North of the Future*. Toronto: House of Anansi Press, p. 148. Illich used the Greek word *philia* "to avoid the funny implications of the word friendship in different modern languages."

In fact, Illich went so far as to say: "My idea was that the search for truth presupposes the growth of *philia*."[13] John McKnight wrote:

> In his later years, Ivan has focused on friendship as the beloved manifestation of our possibility. He has sought to define the conditions that allow, even nurture, this possibility. And we know that these include a place where surprise, mystery, and memory are at the heart of our discovery of each other.[14]

Just as a man and a woman are one, searching for truth, finding oneself in the eyes of one's friends, and Ivan Illich are one.

<div align="center">

V

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> I do not know which to prefer,
>
> The beauty of inflections
>
> Or the beauty of innuendoes,
>
> Ivan Illich whistling
>
> Or just after.

Because Illich was fluent in so many languages (who really knows how many?) and I am not, it is difficult for me to gauge his gifts as a writer. His English prose was often stilted, but he was capable of writing passages of great beauty, especially when he drew upon his deep knowledge of history and mythology. I'm thinking particularly of his lovely essay "Rebirth of Epimethean Man" with which he concluded *Deschooling Society*. That essay ends:

> We now need a name for those who value hope above expectation. We need a name for those who love people more than products…We need a name for those

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[13] Ibid, p. 151.
[14] John L. McKnight. "On Ivan Illich and His Friends" in Lee Hoinacki and Carl Mitcham, editors. 2002. *The Challenges of Ivan Illich*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, pp. 50-51.

who love the earth on which each can meet the other…We need a name for those

who collaborate with their Promethean brother in the lighting of the fire and the

shaping of iron, but who do so to enhance their ability to tend and care and wait

upon the other…I suggest that these hopeful brothers and sisters be called

Epimethean men.[15]

This is beautiful both in its inflections and its innuendoes.

VI

Icicles filled the long window

With barbaric glass.

The shadow of Ivan Illich

Crossed it, to and fro.

The mood

Traced in the shadow

An indecipherable cause.

Ivan Illich refused to be categorized. Quoting the Chilean bilingual poet, Vicente

Huidobro, Illich would say: "Je suis un peu lune et commis voyageur."[16] (I am a bit moon

and a bit traveling salesman.) He was a mestaclocan, a shape-shifter, whose shadow

could only be seen through a glass, darkly.

He was a magician. In 1987, David Cayley tried to interview him as part of CBC

Radio's coverage of a conference in Toronto on orality and literacy.   Cayley

remembered:

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[15] Ivan Illich. 1971. *Deschooling Society*. New York: Harper & Row, pp. 115-116. In the ellipses, Illich inserted excerpts from the poem "People" by Yevgeny Yevtushenko.
[16] Vicente Huidobro. 1925. *Tout a Coup*. Paris: Editions au sans Pareil. The line comes from poem #11.

I recorded the conversation in his room…I had checked the tape recorder before beginning the interview and monitored the recording throughout; but, when I put the tape on again, I discovered that it had nothing on it. Later in the day I approached Illich…He hinted that he had hexed the recording.[17]

For Cayley, this incident reinforced Illich's "magus-like" reputation. He was an indecipherable cause.

VII

O thin men of Haddam,

Why do you imagine golden birds?

Do you not see how Ivan Illich

Walks around the feet

Of the women about you?

One of Illich's early books was called *Celebration of Awareness*.[18] A theme that runs through all of his work is that the institutions that dominate the modern world – schools, hospitals, transportation systems, the economy – all divert our attention away from what really matters: this moment, the person with whom you are conspiring (sharing breath), the light shining through the branches of the birch in the yard, the taste of the wine on your tongue.

Again and again, Illich asks us: "Why do you imagine golden birds when there are women about you?"

VIII

I know noble accents

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[17] David Cayley. 1992. Ibid, p. ix.

[18] Ivan Illich. 1970. *Celebration of Awareness*. New York: Pantheon Books

And lucid, inescapable rhythms;

But I know, too,

That Ivan Illich is involved

In what I know.

Although Illich taught at a number of universities in Europe and the United States, his main teaching tool was not the lecture hall or the classroom, but the convivial table around which he shared food and wine and conversation with his friends. One could find there noble accents and lucid, inescapable rhythms. He took a great deal of pleasure in introducing people to each other in the hope of fostering friendships.

I can only speak for myself here, but I know that for the rest of my life, Ivan will be involved in what I know.

IX

When Ivan Illich flew out of sight,

He marked the edge

Of one of many circles.

Illich wrote his doctoral dissertation on Arnold Toynbee's philosophy of history. At the end of his life, Ivan wrote and spoke mainly as a historian. He said:

I study history in the way a necromancer goes back to the dead…I want – if it's possible at all and always knowing that it's like switching to a dream state – to find the dead again. A good necromancer knows how to make them come to life, but he knows how tempting they are. Therefore, he draws a circle around himself, a magical circle…I want those who are willing to study with me…to

move into the magic circle which is surrounded by the dead who for a moment come alive as shadows, as skeins.[19]

Illich used the perspective of history as a fulcrum to lever his students and readers out of their certainties. One of the many circles whose edge he marked was the magic circle of the dead.

<p style="text-align:center">X</p>

At the sight of Ivan Illich

Flying in a green light,

Even the bawds of euphony

Would cry out sharply.

In modern Western society, someone is always trying to sell you something. The sales pitch is always delivered in dulcet tones and with seductive images. Illich saw these bawds of euphony for what they are: slave traders. He once wrote:

In a consumer society there are inevitably two kinds of slaves: the prisoners of addiction and the prisoners of envy.[20]

Illich flew in a green light. When the hucksters and madams spotted him, they understood the threat of his sharp talons and so would cry out sharply.

<p style="text-align:center">XI</p>

He rode over Connecticut

In a glass coach.

Once, a fear pierced him,

In that he mistook

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[19] David Cayley. Ibid, pp. 238-239.

[20] Ivan Illich. 1973. *Tools for Conviviality*. New York: Harper & Row, pp. 46-47.

The shadow of his equipage

For Ivan Illich.

When it comes to "God-talk" (theology), I think Lee Hoinacki was right to suggest that Illich was in the apophatic tradition. According to Alister McGrath, apophatic theology (or the *via negativa*) "stresses that we cannot use human language to refer to God, who lies beyond such language."[21] (Kataphatic theology, or the *via positiva*, which has been the more common tradition in the West, holds that positive statements about God can be made as long as the limits of human reason are taken into consideration.) Apophatic theologians try to approach the Divine Mystery by pointing out what it is Not.

In discussing Illich's *Deschooling Society*, Hoinacki claims: "Those unfamiliar with the tradition of apophatic theology mistakenly view the book as only about schools."[22] What's he getting at? I think his idea is that by exposing modern blasphemy (for example, the belief embedded in the ideology of schooling that humans can do what God cannot, that is manipulate others for their own salvation), Illich was engaging in the *via negativa*. He was showing us that our systems have become false gods; that we have succumbed to an idolization of our technique.

Traveling along the road with Illich, whether in Connecticut or anywhere else, could be dangerous and fearful for anyone who was trapped in the certainties that dominate modern ways of thinking.

XII

The river is moving.

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[21] Alister E. McGrath. 2007. *Christian Theology: an Introduction, Fourth Edition*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, p. 193.
[22] Lee Hoinacki. "Reading Ivan Illich" in Lee Hoinacki and Carl Mitcham. Ibid, p. 1.

Ivan Illich must be flying.

Illich once said that it was his destiny to be a Christian pilgrim and a wandering Jew. From the time he closed CIDOC in 1976 until his death, he wandered the globe answering the call of his friends. He found his home in their eyes, in the food and wine they shared, and in the conversations around the table that covered an astonishing range of topics and that were conducted in many languages.

These friendly dialogues flowed like a river with Illich soaring overhead. He was always on the lookout – and invited his friends to look with him – for surprise and mystery.

XIII

It was evening all afternoon.

It was snowing

And it was going to snow.

Ivan Illich sat

In the cedar-limbs.

One thing is certain. Ivan Illich was a Christian. In fact, he was a monsignor of the Roman Catholic Church until the day he died.[23] Illich had his problems with the institution, "the church as it," as he called it. He saw the institutional church as the origin of much he detested within modern Western society, summing up his view with the Latin phrase *corruptio optimi quae est pessima* ("the corruption of the best is the worst"). However, Illich remained loyal to "the church as she" for his entire life.

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[23] Illich tried to keep the cleric separate from the public intellectual. However, I think to fully understand Illich, one has to know where he stood, the tradition out of which he came.

I have already mentioned that he attributed the architecture of his thought to his reading of St. Thomas Aquinas. Two passages from the New Testament were also particularly important for Illich: St Matthew 4:1-11 and St. Luke 10:25-37.

The verses from St. Matthew describe Jesus' fast in the desert and his temptation by the Devil. Finding Jesus exhausted and hungry after he had been fasting for forty days and forty nights, the Devil tempts him with three types of power: economic, psychological, and political. Jesus refuses all three. Illich believed that renouncing power was a critical part of The Way that Jesus revealed.

The passage from St. Luke contains the parable of the Good Samaritan. What Illich found so significant in the story was the freedom Jesus advocated to step outside of the traditional boundaries of one's ethnic group and to offer compassion to the other. Given the ethics of the ancient world, the Samaritan did not have any obligation to aid the Jew he found beaten up on the side of the road. Yet, he was moved to help him.[24]

Perched in the cedar-limbs, Ivan Illich watched the snow. It was going to snow and there was nothing he could do about it. The model he accepted was the model of contingency in which God holds the world in His hands. While the flakes were falling, Ivan smiled. He may have been recalling the old Yiddish proverb: If you want to make God laugh, tell Him what your plans are.

Epilogue

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[24] A scholar of political theory would notice in the renunciation of power and this embrace of personal freedom two of the tenets in most versions of anarchism, particularly the Christian anarchism associated with Leo Tolstoy and Dorothy Day. A recent study is Alexandre Christoyannopoulos. 2011. *Christian Anarchism: A Political Commentary on the Gospel*. Exeter, UK: Imprint Academic. The relationship between anarchism and biblical faith was also the subject of Jacques Ellul's *Anarchy and Christianity*, a book with which Illich was almost certainly familiar, probably in the original French edition published in 1988. Illich counted Ellul as one of his teachers. Jacques Ellul. 1991. *Anarchy and Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

So, was Ivan Illich an anarchist? If you qualify that label with the adjective "Christian," I think he was. He certainly came to bring fire to the earth. But, Illich probably would have smiled at this whole discussion. He once told Madhu Suri Prakash that all of his writings could be thought of as a series of footnotes to Mahatma Gandhi's work[25] and Gandhi often called himself an anarchist.[26] But when David Cayley asked Ivan about his friendship with Paul Goodman, an unapologetic anarchist, and whether or not Illich's activities at CIDOC were mistaken because of such associations, he answered: "I never worried for what I was mistaken."[27]

Perhaps, in a hundred years, there will be apophatic Illichian scholars and others who are kataphatic. Some will point out his affinity for silence; others his quest for friendship and conviviality.

Instead of dismissing Illich's critique of modern societies (particularly the institution of compulsory schooling) as anarchistic, we should ask ourselves whether or not Illich was right.[28] Is schooling a lottery that *inevitably* privileges a few, while, for the majority, it promotes a new kind of self-inflicted injustice? Is schooling the mythopoetic ritual of societies committed to progress, which is defined as the pursuit of unlimited

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[25] Personal conversation.

[26] A concise discussion of the "anarchistic facets" of Gandhi's philosophy is in Maia Ramnath. 2011. *Decolonizing Anarchism*. Oakland, CA: AK Press, pp.171-177.

[27] David Cayley. Ibid, p. 202. Robert Graham also noted Illich's relationship with Goodman when introducing Illich's essay "Political Inversion" for the second volume of his history of anarchism. Robert Graham, editor. 2009. *Anarchism: A Documentary History of Libertarian Ideas, Volume Two*. Montreal: Black Rose Books, pp. 441-466. Illich's essay first appeared in Ivan Illich and Etienne Verne. 1976. *Imprisoned in the Global Classroom*. New York: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, pp. 25-56.

[28] In her book, *Anarchism and Education: A Philosophical Perspective*, Judith Suissa views Illich as "part of the anarchist tradition." She qualifies this judgment by saying that Illich's critique "leads to an emphasis on individual autonomy rather than on ideal forms of communality, suggesting possible theoretical tensions with the social-anarchist position." Judith Suissa. 2010. *Anarchism and Education*. Oakland, CA: PM Press, p.153. I think Suissa confuses Illich's refusal to offer prescriptions with a lack of interest in "communality."

production and consumption of goods and services? Does schooling embed in the soul the myths that are necessary to live in a consumer society? Has education become "learning under the assumption of scarcity"?

If, as educators, we are concerned about the ends of economic justice and ecological health, we must try to answer these questions.[29] If we conclude Illich was right, then we should consider using his critique as a guide to imagine other, better possibilities. If others then wish to label us as anarchists, we should smile.

To the pragmatists who ignore Illich because they believe the schooling status quo is here to stay, I can only say I'm happy the abolitionists didn't think that way about slavery, or that Gandhi didn't think that way about British colonial rule, or that leaders of the American civil rights movement didn't think that way about Jim Crow, or…

To the socialists who dismiss Illich as an anarchist, I suggest they consider reading his books again (or for the first time). They may discover the consciousness that is false is their own. Who knows what might happen then?

Daniel Grego

Wild Space Farm

Author's Bio

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[29] Recently, I tried to get environmental educators to take up these questions. Daniel Grego. 2009. "A Critique of Schooling for Conservationists and Eco-theologians" in *Encounter*, Volume 22, No. 4, Winter, pp. 16-20.

www.transcenterforyouth.org.)   One of his major interests is exploring the confluence of the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi, Ivan Illich, and Wendell Berry. He recently contributed essays to *A Whole Which is Greater: Why the Wisconsin "Uprising" Failed* edited by Paul Gilk and David Kast and to *Stay Solid: A Radical Handbook for Youth* edited by Matt Hern. He lives with his wife, choreographer Debra Loewen, the Artistic Director of Wild Space Dance Company (www.wildspacedance.org) on a small farm in the Rock River watershed in Dodge County, Wisconsin.

Agriculture and Food in Crisis: Conflict, Resistance, and Renewal
Edited by Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar
New York City: Monthly Review Press, 2010. 348 pp. ISBN: 978-1-58367-266-6

Reviewed by Liam Hysjulien[1]
University of Tennessee at Knoxville

In *Agriculture and Food in Crisis: Conflict, Resistance, and Renewal*, Fred Magdoff and

Brian Tokar outline the problems facing our current global food system through a critical,

political economic lens. Over the last few months, in many ways mirroring the 2007-2008 global

food crisis, food prices have risen to their highest levels recorded by the Food and Agriculture

Organization (FAO), and prices are predicted to continue increasing over the next decade.[2] As a

myriad of factors ranging from commodity speculation, increased use of biofuels, emerging

meat-based diets in Less Developed Nations (LDNs), and wide-spread crop failures have been

blamed for these price increases,[3] the authors in this volume primarily focus on the subsequent

failure of neoliberalism to construct an equitable world food system future. Instead of a world

food system in which food prices are dictated by an oligarchy of transnational corporations, this

volume stresses the need to understand how contradictions within our current systems are

exacerbating global problems of hunger, farming, and food security. Magdoff and Tokar

conclude their introduction by stating that "[i]f there is one conclusion…it is that 'food for

people, not for profit' should be the underlying principle of a new agrifood system."[4]

In *Medical Nemesis*, Ivan Illich writes that "[t]he coming hunger is a by-product of the

inevitable concentration of industrialized agriculture in rich countries."[5] Illich continues his

critique of industrialized food by stating that "[f]amine will increase until the trend towards

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[1] I would like to thank Raul Clement and Crista Cuccaro for their comments and suggestions on this review.
[2] Caroline Henshaw, "U.N. Says World Vulnerable to Food Crises," *Wall Street Journal*, 7 March 2011.
[3] Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar, *Agriculture and Food in Crisis: Conflict, Resistance, and Renewal* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010).
[4] Ibid, 30.
[5] Ivan Illich, *Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976), 264.

capital-intensive food production by the poor for the rich has been replaced by a new kind of labor-intensive, regional, rural autonomy."[6] For Illich, the shift toward an "industrialized nemesis"[7] by modern society invariantly leads to an ethical bind in which our perceived technological ability to transcend limitations distorts our ability to see the paradoxes in the "price of progress."[8]

Illich's concept of *radical monopoly* provides an area of entry into the contradictions of our currently constructed world food system. For Illich, a radical monopoly emerges when the "industrial production process exercises an exclusive control over the satisfaction of a pressing need, and excludes nonindustrial activities from competition."[9] In situating his concept of radical monopoly within Herbert Marcuse's concept of one-dimensional thinking, Illich contends that the "radical monopoly of institutional over personal values, and faulty technology," limit our ability to see alternative forms of social organization.[10] As a result, Illich finds technological progress to be problematic because it monopolizes perspectives on the world and overemphasizes the need for industrial development over other forms of social organization. Illich contends that unless societies can recognize needs that exist beyond technological progress, people will become "totally enclosed within [their] artificial creation, with no exit."[11] Through Illich's understanding of the paradoxes and limitations of technological development, we see how Magdoff and Tokar's edited collection offers valuable insight demonstrating the need to understand both areas of conflict and resistance within our current world food system.

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[6] Ibid, 265.
[7] Ibid, 262.
[8] Ibid, 265.
[9] Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1973), 52.
[10] Ibid, 50.
[11] Ibid, 51.

In chapter one, Walden Bello and Mara Baviera argue that the 2007-2008 global food crisis was a "perfect storm" in which rapidly increasing food prices, arguably the end to the era of cheap food, led to protests and riots in over thirty countries.[12] While the conditions that led to the 2007-2008 global food crisis are the result of a plethora of different factors, the neoliberal policies throughout the 1980s and 1990s arguably resulted in the "erosion of the capacity of peasant agriculture" throughout the developing world.[13] As a result of these devastating structural adjustments and trade liberalization policies, the current crisis of food is at its core a "centuries-long process of displacement of peasant agriculture by capitalist agriculture."[14] The effect of this agricultural erosion affirms Illich's idea that radical monopoly is implicitly a form of "social control because it is enforced by means of the imposed consumption of a standard product that only large institutions can provide."[15]

In another chapter, Sophia Murphy outlines the intersection between "free trade" policies and the shift from government control toward private ownership food production. Murphy argues that while "[f]ree trade has been a powerful mantra over the last thirty years," the realities of neoliberal policies require further analysis.[16] Under the guise that free trade policies would eventually lead to global food security, the 1996 World Food Summit ushered in a new era of ostensibly cheap food and open markets. Instead, the reality of free trade agriculture was the degradation of domestic agricultural production in LDNs. The removal of import trade tariffs flooded South American, African, and Asian markets with heavily subsidized food from the

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[12] Walden Bello and Mara Baviera, "Food Wars," in *Agriculture and Food in Crisis: Conflict, Resistance, and Renewal*, eds. Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010), 34.
[13] Ibid, 40.
[14] Ibid, 48.
[15] Illich, *Tool for Conviviality*, 53.
[16] Sophia Murphy, "Free Trade in Agriculture: A Bad Idea Whose Time Is Done," in *Agriculture and Food in Crisis: Conflict, Resistance, and Renewal*, eds. Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010), 103.

global North. As Murphy argues, free trade agriculture policies are almost exclusively in line with the interests of industrialized agriculture, ignoring the "interests of the billions of farmers who do not live in that world."[17]

While the first half of Magdoff and Tokar's volume deals with the contradictions and conflicts laden throughout our current agriculture model, the second half of the book focuses on areas of resistance and social change. The chapter by Peter Rosset discusses the need for land reform in creating alternative models for the establishment of global food security. Rosset suggests that global food production can be understood in terms of a dichotomy between industrialized agriculture, on the one hand, and small-scale farmers producing food for "local and national markets."[18] Over the last couple of decades, a coalition of farmers, peasants, and rural workers have banded together to form the global alliance, La Vía Campesina. In addition to promoting rights for landless rural workers, La Vía Campesina has "proposed an alternative policy paradigm called *food sovereignty.*"[19] As one-sixth of the world currently suffers from food insecurity, food sovereignty proposes the radical idea that access to safe, nutritious, and healthy food, along with agricultural land, is a basic human right for all people. As Rosset concludes, the language of food sovereignty rests upon the reality that land reforms are not only necessary for the continuation of rural and peasant communities, but also the foundation for creating social and environmentally viable agricultural practices.

Furthermore, Jules Pretty concludes the volume by discussing the ability of ecological agriculture to feed a growing global population. In the same way in which Illich describes radical

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[17] Ibid, 112.
[18] Peter Rosset, "Fixing Our Global Food System: Food Sovereignty and Redistributive Land Reform," in *Agriculture and Food in Crisis: Conflict, Resistance, and Renewal*, eds. Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010), 190.
[19] Ibid, 191.

monopoly as "reflect[ing] the industrial institutionalization of values,"[20] Pretty posits that great progress in industrialized farming has led to "hundreds of millions of people…hungry and malnourished."[21] For Pretty, along with many of the writers in the volume, the focus rests on changing the future of agriculture toward sustainable and just systems of producing and distributing food. Instead of seeing agriculture and food as merely an industrialized commodity, the future of food resides in a change in agriculture that "clearly benefits poor people and environments in developing countries."[22] Already, as Pretty argues, the current model of global food production is failing to feed the current 6.7 billion people, and a "massive and multifaceted effort" will be needed to solve future problems of hunger, health, and food security.[23]

While Illich's critique of food production focused more on the consequences of global health, as opposed to a critical, political economy analysis of food production, his insight into radical monopoly offers valuable theoretical tools for understanding the contradictions and problems within our current food system. If the future of agriculture depends upon confronting and challenging dominant norms, values, and beliefs, Illich's position that "[r]adical monopoly is generally discovered only when it is too late" seems only too fitting.[24] This volume offers readers valuable insight into areas of conflict and resistance within our global food system. In the end, the analytical tools of Illich offer new areas of inquiry into these current problems, and provide invaluable methods for continued research into the future of food and agriculture.

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[20] Illich, *Tool for Conviviality*, 54.
[21] Jules Pretty, "Can Ecological Agriculture Feed Nine Billion People?" in *Agriculture and Food in Crisis: Conflict, Resistance, and Renewal*, eds. Fred Magdoff and Brian Tokar (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2010), 283.
[22] Ibid, 297.
[23] Ibid, 297.
[24] Illich, *Tool for Conviviality*, 55.

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