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Sustainability Mindset:
Practical Implications of an Existential Analysis of
Freedom, Flourishing, and Ecological Interdependence

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By

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An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
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Abstract

Sustainability Mindset:
Practical Implications of an Existential Analysis of
Freedom, Flourishing, and Ecological Interdependence

By Betty J. Woodman

The vibrant field of sustainability is as much about potentiality as it is about repair and restoration of human culture and the natural world. This project examines conditions promoting social and environmental flourishing, including sustainable forms of creative power versus power relations of domination or conformity. It particularly considers the systemic effects of collective mindset, or paradigm, which threaten to erode the goods derived from innovative research and technology. Values, along with power relations associated with hierarchies of masculinities and femininities, affect organizational dynamics and decision-making processes. While multidisciplinary research links social values and gender with domination and environmental degradation, these findings have not yet overcome blindness of connections between gender culture and sustainability.

I propose two innovative applications of existential analysis to illuminate these connections: a research method and an educational approach. Drawing upon fields ranging from deep ecology and existentialist philosophy to critical race and gender theory, I adapt existential analysis to investigate the influence of power relations on decision-making processes and environmental outcomes. The pleasurable, life-affirming eroticism of the new model of sustainability ethics developed here promises to motivate system transformation. The erotic self approaches the blindness of bad faith, illuminates the significance of connections between gender and race, and offers an innovative approach to education and sustainable leadership development.

Over the course of this research project, I developed college courses and high school workshops based upon this adapted form of existential analysis. I further apply existential analysis for sustainable leadership development and consider the solidarity-building potential of the environmental justice movement. These programs intend to cultivate sustainability professionals who are savvy about the dynamics and effects of power relations. The project breaks new practical ground, offering for the first time an application of existential analysis for educational praxis. Through two new applications of existential analysis, I develop a model of sustainability ethics, an erotic conception of self with the power to motivate transformation, and practical approaches to promote awareness of connections between gender culture and sustainability. These findings contribute to the fields of sustainability ethics and decision-making, leadership studies, bullying programs, peace studies, and sustainability education.

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Sustainability Mindset:

**Practical Implications of an Existential Analysis of
Freedom, Flourishing, and Ecological Interdependence**

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Sustainability Mindset: Practical Implications of an Existential Analysis of Freedom, Flourishing, and Ecological Interdependence

Chapter One: Introduction

> "One of the great challenges today is to save the planet from further ecological devastation which violates both the enlightened self-interest of humans and non-humans, and decreases the potential of joyful existence for all."[1]
>
> ~ *Arne Naess, "Self-Realization: An Ecological Approach to Being in the World"*

Sustainability, for the purposes of this dissertation, represents the study of potentiality. This discussion of sustainability considers the conditions enabling social and environmental flourishing, including sustainable forms of creative power versus power relations of domination or conformity. Over the past several decades, sustainability has emerged as a significant category of study. The term is used in different contexts with varying meanings and is associated with problems ranging from climate change and natural resource concerns to social justice and violence. Many scholars address either environmental or social interests: the natural sciences address environmental and ecological issues; the disciplines of the social sciences, humanities, economics, and business examine topics associated with social oppressions, institutions, leadership, and environmental justice. Sustainability concerns also motivate philosophical discussion of ethics and values, as well as study of the integration of social and environmental problems.

The discussion of ethics further considers the question of power and the ways power relations affect decision-making processes and environmental outcomes, from oil spills to the dumping of toxic wastewater. While financial factors and miscalculations affect decisions, personal motivations on the part of decision-makers and management

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[1]Arne Naess, "Self-Realization: An Ecological Approach to Being in the World" in *Deep Ecology for the 21st Century*, edited by George Sessions (Boston: Shambhala, 1995), 226.

teams also play a role.[2] These motivations may not be immediately apparent. For instance, systems governed by fiduciary responsibility not only reinforce desires for personal advantage or greed but also mask these motives. Personal motivations also include desires to appear invulnerable, decisive, in-control, or tough while seeking approval of peers or higher-ups. Reinforcement of these postures by peer-group culture reveals a second system working alongside or as a subset of the corporate profitability system: gender culture. The gender system promotes a hierarchy of masculinities, femininities, and values in the workplace, which affects power relations, organizational dynamics, and decision-making processes.

This dissertation investigates the usefulness of existential analysis as a method for illuminating connections between gender culture and sustainability. Given the priority of confronting oppression, violence, and environmental degradation, reluctance to more widely acknowledge and address established connections between gender and domination suggests a form of blindness, grounded in the everydayness of gender culture. This chapter will map out the purpose and organization of this dissertation by providing a statement of the problem, scope of the approach, overview of the project, and summary of the dissertation chapters.

Statement of the Problem

The research of multidisciplinary scholars connects gender ideology and culture with domination, violence, and environmental degradation. These scholars include gender scholars, anthropologists, religious and peace studies scholars, sociologists, and

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[2]The tenor of political discussions of environmental topics provides another example. Disparagement of climate change or other environmental issues contributes to a contentious social debate within which many individuals do not seriously weigh the scientific data. A lack of concern for facts suggests conformity to promoted views rather than commitment to good faith debate or thoughtful conversation.

eco-feminists.[3]   The research is well-established; my purpose here is not to argue for these connections.   Rather my intention is to address apparent resistance to the conclusions and significance of this research as well as to provoke a needed conversation about the harms of gender culture. There is apparently something sufficiently threatening or discomforting about the discussion of gender to make people avoid or dismiss it rather than seriously engage in conversations of related harms. Thus, the task of "illuminating connections between gender culture and sustainability" depends upon transcending resistance or blindness in order to promote general awareness of established connections. A study of this blindness or resistance requires an analytical method equipped to consider irrational, social psychological influences on behavior and motivation.

        The project argues for the need for differing forms of analyses within an investigation of sustainability. Sustainability theorists rely upon adaptive management and large scale systems analyses that examine the interrelated workings of components of integrative human-natural systems. These analyses clarify the ways in which aspects of a complex system work together, contributing information about predicted effects of actions or combinations of actions as input to rational decision-making processes.   There is also, however, a need for complementary analyses aimed at assessing the social

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[3] See Iris Marion Young, *Inclusion and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Iris Marion Young, "Is Male Gender Identity the Cause of Male Domination," in *Feminist Social Thought.* Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997); Ingeborg Breines, Robert Connell, and Ingrid Elde, eds., *Male Roles, Masculinities, and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective* (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2000); R. W. Connell, "Arms and the Man: The Question of Peace," in *The Men and The Boys* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmitdt. "Hegemonic Masculinity," in *Gender & Society,* Vol 19, No. 6, December 2005; Robert W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Robert W. Connell, "Masculinities and Globalization," in *Men and Masculinities,* Vol. 1, No. 1, July 1998; R.W. Connell, *Gender and Power: Society, the Person, and Sexual Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987); Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988); Tony Jenkins & Betty A. Reardon, "Gender and peace: towards a gender inclusive, holistic perspective," in *Handbook of peace and conflict studies.* Edited by Charles Webel and Johan Galtung (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2007); Betty A. Reardon, *Sexism and the War System* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996); Pauline Johnson, *Feminism as Radical Humanism* (St. Leonards, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1994); Rudolph P. Byrd and Beverly Guy-Sheftall, eds, *Traps: African American Men on Gender and Sexuality* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001); Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1993); Signe Howell and Roy Willis, eds. *Societies at Peace* (New York: Routledge, 1989); Gimbutas, Marija. *The Civilization of the Goddess: The World of Old Europe.* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1991); Riane Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future.* San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988; Riane Eisler, *The Chalice and the Blade in Chinese Culture* (Beijing: China Social Sciences Publishing House, 1995); and many others.

contexts and related power relations that affect decision-making processes. With this in mind, I propose two innovative applications of existential analysis: a research method for analysis of unsustainable social behavior and an educational approach. Through these applications, I develop and articulate a new model of sustainability ethics, an erotic conception of self with the power to motivate transformation, and practical approaches to promote awareness of unexamined assumptions.

Scope of the Approach

This project is interdisciplinary and draws from the disciplines of existentialist philosophy, environmental studies -- which encompasses deep ecology and systems thinking -- religious studies, and gender studies. The philosophies of deep ecology, existentialism, and systems theory emphasize interconnection and thereby encourage interdisciplinary approaches to an analysis of sustainability. The project also relies upon aspects of these disciplines to develop and articulate a new model of sustainability ethics.

Existentialism is a philosophy of freedom and thus upholds possibilities of transformation. Existentialism is also closely aligned with the philosophy of deep ecology, sharing themes of interconnection, interdependence, and respect for diversity, as well as interest in potentiality and self-realization. Arne Naess introduced the philosophy of deep ecology to distinguish the importance of broad problem-solving approaches and differentiate them from more narrowly focused approaches associated with "shallow" ecology. Naess describes this broader view:

> The essence of deep ecology is to ask deeper questions. The adjective 'deep' stresses that we ask why and how, where others do not. For instance, ecology as a science does not ask what kind of a society would be the best for maintaining a particular ecosystem – that is considered a question for value theory, for politics,

for ethics. As long as ecologists keep narrowly to their science, they do not ask such questions.[4]

Together these philosophies provide an appealing framework for analysis of sustainability problems. Deep ecology contributes to the greening of existentialism through its emphasis on the natural world; existentialism adds to sustainability discussions an illumination of freedom and ethical responsibility to act in the world.

Existential analysis is a method of analysis which arises from the field of existentialist philosophy, which suggests a systems approach to investigate social experiences. The method involves life-history narratives that consider the social and historical context of experience. My approach emphasizes the significance of freedom, as well as the role of power relations in decision-making processes and outcomes. I draw upon the philosophies of existentialism and deep ecology to define and conceptualize sustainable and unsustainable forms of power. I view sustainable forms of power as those that uphold freedom. They include power-to as vitality, creativity, and generosity as well as power-with as transformative power or solidarity, embodied within theories of nonviolence and environmental activism. Within this framework, domination (power-over) and conformity (power-from) represent unsustainable power relations. "Unsustainable outcomes," referred to throughout this project, are those associated with violence to the freedom of self, other, or nature. "Unsustainable behaviors" reflect dominating, conforming, or apathetic attitudes that both stem from and give rise to limitations of freedom. I apply these conceptions of power to the contemporary situation within the context of sustainability ethics.

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[4] Arne Naess, "Interview with Arne Naess," in *Deep Ecology*, Bill Devall and George Sessions (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith Publisher, 1985), 74.

Ethical perspectives of sustainability consider social and environmental interests. Sustainability analyses study conditions that encourage the flourishing of individuals, communities, and the natural world, as well as those that lead to destructive or disastrous outcomes. The Brundtland Report defines sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[5] The Brundtland definition encompasses what are generally referred to as the "Three E's": 1) Ecology/ Environment; 2) Economy; and 3) Equity/equality. This view of sustainability extends concerns about natural resources to those of social justice and economic or structural factors.

Many ethical theorists position questions of sustainability and sustainable development within the context of intergenerational equity and therefore long-term decision-making.[6] This longer view in turn raises questions of values, including distinctions between subjective, instrumental, and intrinsic value, as well as speculation about whether we might predict what future generations will value, sparking debate concerning the extent and nature of our obligation to the future.[7] Ethical discussions further consider these views of values within the context of subjective versus objective theories as well as anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric environmental ethics. All these conversations lead to thoughtful consideration of wellbeing, potentiality, and flourishing. Descriptions of wellbeing involve humanity, the natural world, and the possibility of holding human and natural flourishing together as a good and an end.

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[5]"Our Common Future," in *United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 43.
[6] See Bill Hopwood, Mary Mellor, and Geoff O'Brien, "Sustainable Development: Mapping Different Approaches" in *Sustainable Development,* Vol 13, Issue 1 (John Wiley & Sons, 2005), 38-52.
[7]See also John O'Neill, Alan Holland, and Andrew Light, *Environmental Values* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

For the most part, ethical discussions address themselves to possibilities associated with rational decision-making and bracket the discussion of irrational influences on decision making. However, such a separation of entangled rational and irrational aspects of behavior reflects a dualistic approach. Ironically, it is dualistic thinking that allows for the perception of separation between humanity and nature and thus the evolution of "othering" and the domination of nature, as we will discuss further. Can we realistically analyze possibilities for sustainability relying upon assumptions and approaches that in-themselves give rise to unsustainable outcomes?

The difficulty of holding together multidisciplinary factors in very large systems analyses may warrant setting aside certain aspects of the problem – such as considerations of desire, motivation, and power relations -- at least temporarily. If so, these bracketed topics may be investigated separately with the findings later integrated with rational analyses. This dissertation examines the influence of desire, motivation, and power relations on decision-making processes. It approaches this topic from the perspective of a philosophy of sustainability concerned with social-psychological motivations of behavior.

The approach considers the systems nature of social behavior. Systems theory emphasizes the interconnection of parts within an integrative system as well as the relations between structure and behavior. Since a system organizes interconnected parts and reliably produces behavior based on its configuration, systems theory clarifies that the same outside event could cause different results in different systems. Further, systems thinking predicts that if foundational conditions of a given situation are not addressed, solutions will invariably be short-term rather than lasting, with the structure of

the system reliably reproducing historical outcomes.[8] If today we overlook or neglect to address these conditions as sustainability measures are investigated and implemented, these factors will threaten to erode or undo the benefits and goods derived from innovative research, technology, and solutions. David Orr illustrates this point through the example of climate change. He warns:

> Dig deep enough and the "problem" of climate is not reducible to the standard categories of technology and economics. It is not merely a problem awaiting solution by one technological fix or another. It is, rather, embedded in a larger matrix; a symptom of something deeper. Were we to "solve" the "problem" of climate change, our manner of thinking and being in the world would bring down other curses and nightmares now waiting in the wings.[9]

In *Environmental Culture: The Ecological Crisis of Reason,* Val Plumwood similarly argues that the crucial problem we confront is cultural rather than technological in nature:

> The problem is not primarily about more knowledge or technology; it is about developing an environmental culture that values and fully acknowledges the non-human sphere and our dependency on it, and is able to make good decisions about how we live and impact on the non-human world.[10]

Cultural ways of being reflect a social system that consistently reinforces particular decisions. The term "mindset" is used throughout this project in the sense of a social paradigm that reflects dominant cultural beliefs and ideologies within a particular social-historical context.[11]   I use the term "sustainability mindset" to describe a mindset that recognizes the principle of interconnection and promotes creative forms of power. A sustainable mindset depends upon general self-awareness of motivations for decisions and expressions of power as the first step to encouraging the potentiality of individuals, society, and the larger human-natural world system. By way of contrast an unsustainable,

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[8]See Donella Meadows, *Thinking in Systems: A Primer* (White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008).
[9] David W. Orr, "Sustainability Ethics," in *Sustainability Ethics: 5 Questions.* Edited by Ryne Raffaelle, Wade Robinson, and Evan Selinger (Denmark: Automatic Press, 2010), 187.
[10] Val Plumwood, *Environmental Culture: The ecological crisis of reason.* New York: Routledge, 2002), 3.
[11] While such a collective attitude does not capture the rich diversity of subsidiary opinions and differences, it may reflect the general tenor of a period as well as prevailing social pressures.

or dominator, mindset, is associated with power relations of oppression, domination, conformity, and apathy. These world views are freedom constrained or resigned, jeopardizing the ability to sustain viable and flourishing relations with others and the natural world.

When asked about the most important topics for sustainability theorists to investigate, William Shutkin stresses the importance of mindset:

> To the extent that sustainability requires a change in mind-set, and that sustainability threats such as global warming require that we act sooner rather than later, we need to better understand how to change people's minds and behaviors at scale and efficiently. This is not only the province of behavioralists, but marketers and public policy makers.[12]

A shift in cultural ways of thinking depends upon clarifying the ways they are anchored by institutions, beliefs, and norms. Too few recognize the merits of this endeavor as well as the role of mindset in influencing sustainability outcomes. The quickness to dismiss the topic suggests "blindness," or denial. Naess alludes to such a blindness when he suggests that many are cut off from their intuitions:

> They must also find others who feel the same and form circles of friends who give one another confidence and support in living in a way that the majority find ridiculous, naive, stupid and simplistic. But in order to do that, one must already have enough self-confidence to follow one's intuition - a quality very much lacking in broad sections of the populace. Most people follow the trends and advertisements and become philosophical and ethical cripples.[13]

This dissertation will focus upon the effects of contemporary mindset on possibilities for social and environmental sustainability, as well as the lack of attention to the merits of this discussion.

Overview of the Project

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[12] William Shutkin, "Sustainability Ethics," in *Sustainability Ethics: 5 Questions.* Edited by Ryne Raffaelle, Wade Robinson, and Evan Selinger. (Denmark: Automatic Press, 2010), 232.
[13] Naess, "Interview," 75.

A shift in mindset depends upon awareness of unsustainable aspects of current mindsets and the ways they are reproduced. It also depends upon an educational approach that anticipates possible resistance or reluctance to engage in this study in order to effectively bring unquestioned assumptions and associated questions to light for a sizable population. This project investigates the usefulness of existential analysis as a research method for an analysis of sustainability as well as an educational approach promoting collective self-awareness. Sustainability theorists recommend sustainability education programs that build upon core ecological knowledge to further address the development of planning, systems, and critical thinking skills, as well as provide service learning experiences. This project suggests an additional dimension of sustainability education in order to meaningfully address the effects of a systemic unsustainable mindset. Namely, it argues for the inclusion of education about social psychology as well as a philosophy of belief that explores unexamined assumptions.

The term "existential psychoanalysis" was coined by Jean-Paul Sartre. Sartre introduces existential psychoanalysis in *Being and Nothingness* in 1943 as a philosophical approach to examine states of consciousness and freedom. He further develops the concept in *Existential Psychoanalysis* in 1953 and *Search for a Method* in 1963. Sartre shares Sigmund Freud's interest in human behavior and psychology but departs from Freud's view of a relatively inaccessible "unconscious." Sartre challenges divisions between conscious and unconscious mind, claiming that contents of the "unconscious" can be brought to awareness through reflection, such as through existential psychoanalysis. Existential psychoanalysis reflects the tenets of existentialist philosophy – including freedom, responsibility, and meaning.

Initially introduced as a philosophical concept by Sartre, existential psychoanalysis was later explored by psychoanalysts beginning in the 50s and 60s, notably by Ludwig Binswanger, who shares the existentialists' commitment to experience, meaning, and freedom. Binswanger devotes careful attention to the role of social relations in individual psychology. His attention to mutuality in his theory of intersubjectivity resonates with de Beauvoir's philosophical delineation of generosity as the basis of authentic relations. Additional analysts who studied or practiced existential psychoanalysis include Viktor Frankl, Jacques Lacan, R.D. Laing, Paul Tillich, and Rollo May, among others. One of the more well-known practitioners and current advocates of existential analysis is British analyst Emmy van Deurzen, founder of the Society of Existential Analysis, and founder of and professor at the School of Psychotherapy and Counseling at Regent's College in London.[14] Existential psychoanalysis is also referred to as existential psychotherapy, existential therapy, or existential analysis and is utilized in clinical settings as a differing or complementary approach to psychotherapy. Existential analysis has been predominantly utilized on an individual basis as a form of psychotherapy.

Existential analysis may also serve as a research method. Sartre's exploration of the etiology of hate in *Anti-Semite and Jew* provides a precedent. In addition, de Beauvoir's best known work, *The Second Sex,* relies on existential psychoanalysis as a research method.[15] Raewyn Connell cites de Beauvoir's existential psychoanalysis of the lived experience of women as an example reflecting the potential value of the method:

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[14] Existential analysis is not widely utilized within the United States today.

[15] I argue that existential analysis represents an underutilized, yet promising, humanities-based systems method. These two examples demonstrate the effectiveness of the approach. Sartre's application will be further described in Chapter Three. De Beauvoir tackles a more comprehensive application in *The Second Sex*, which examines the situation of "woman" through a phenomenological study of gender. In a complex analysis of the entanglement of sexuality, biological realities associated with childbirth and nursing, social

> It was Simone de Beauvoir who applied existential psychoanalysis directly to gender in *The Second Sex.* Her best-known argument showed woman being constituted as 'other' to the male subject. But the book also included a series of essays on different types of femininity which gave a much more active place to the women's desires. Existential psychoanalysis allowed her to move beyond the static typologies familiar in psychology. Gender emerged in her treatment as an evolving engagement with situations and social structures. Different gender forms are different ways of life rather than fixed character types.[16]

De Beauvoir's application of existential analysis suggests a method for assessing the interplay between individual experience, social structure, historical context and behavior.

In this project, I develop a specific form of existential analysis to serve as a research method to investigate social conditions that constrain or foster sustainable relations.[17] I apply existential analysis to an investigation of sustainability through an interdisciplinary study of critical social theories addressing social norms and contexts, such as childrearing practices; gender ideology and socialization; social experience related to race; and religion.[18] The form of existential analysis I develop here resembles a social narrative or directed cultural anthropology of sorts, which is concerned with the question of sustainable culture and utilizes an existentialist model of authenticity and power relations to structure analysis of the various categories.[19] I also apply existential analysis as an educational approach as a method to foster reflection and critical analysis of sustainability issues. The approach anticipates possible resistance or denial that constrains individuals from acknowledging and grappling with issues of urgent

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position, class, age, cultural expectations, and other factors, she considers the effects of life situations and experiences on authenticity, bad faith, and freedom. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew.* Translated by George J. Becker and with an introduction by Michael Walzer (New York: Schocken Books, 1995); Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex (*New York: Random House, Inc., 1989).

[16] R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 18.

[17] Existential analysis represents a philosophical approach to investigates bad faith, or unrecognized assumptions, which are not readily available to conscious awareness ("forgotten") but may be recognized (or remembered) through reflection. An existential analysis of sustainability assesses authenticity (balance between facticity and transcendence) and freedom within the context of numerous categories of contemporary social life-history as a process to consider conditions encouraging sustainable behavior, social relations, and human-natural world relations.

[18] The content of the courses I developed on this approach included investigation of childrearing practices; gender ideology and socialization; educational approaches; social experience related to race, class, sexuality, and nationality; media and the arts; as well as social and political factors encouraging authoritarianism and conformity.

[19] The theoretical foundations for this model will be taken up in Chapter Three and the analysis itself will be developed in Chapter Four.

importance. These applications of existential analysis extend beyond an exclusively

individual clinical orientation; the first serves as a research method to interrogate social

conditions and emerging contexts, and the second provides a way to bring limiting

cultural assumptions and beliefs to light within a group setting.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter One introduces the project, which investigates the usefulness of

existential analysis as a method for illuminating connections between gender culture and

sustainability. The chapter portrays the difficulty of illuminating connections between

gender, domination, and violence -- which have been established through

multidisciplinary research -- given apparent social resistance to considering these

linkages or the topic of gender in general. I propose two innovative applications of

existential analysis: 1) a research method for analysis of unsustainable social behavior;

and 2) an educational approach that strives to overcome blindness or resistance to

acknowledging conditions associated with unsustainable social behavior. Both

applications seek to promote awareness of connections between gender culture and

sustainability. The chapter also describes the research problem, scope of this approach,

definitions of terms, background information, and organization of the various chapters.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The review of literature in Chapter Two addresses relevant scholarship from three

fields with which this interdisciplinary project intersects and to which the project findings

apply. These fields are: 1) sustainability ethics; 2) existential analysis; and 3)

sustainability education. The chapter provides historical and contemporary perspectives

of each of these fields and positions project contributions to these areas. The existential

analysis of this project represents an interdisciplinary, humanities-based systems

approach that complements existing rational systems analyses by investigating power

relations that affect decision-making and implementation outcomes. In addition, the

application of existential analysis as an educational method suggests group educational

approaches to the field of clinical existential analysis. Finally, this project contributes an

additional dimension of sustainability education, which builds upon critical systems

thinking skills to strengthen knowledge of motivation, meaning, and power relations.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Foundations

Chapter Three provides theoretical foundations for the method of existential

analysis as well as a new model of sustainability ethics that is developed and articulated

throughout this project. These foundations support the application of existential analysis

in Chapter Four, systems analysis in Chapter Five, and educational approach in Chapter

Six. I first connect existential analysis with the field of sustainability ethics by

identifying resonances between existentialism and the philosophy of deep ecology. I then

draw upon these philosophies to conceptualize sustainable forms of power and

unsustainable power relations. Further, I construct an "existential lens," which is later

utilized for the project's existential analysis of power relations. I devise the lens by

integrating theoretical aspects of existentialism and religious studies models. It draws

first upon Jean-Paul Sartre's descriptions of power relations -- including authenticity, bad

faith, sadism, and masochism. Rene Girard's explications of mimetic conformity and

scapegoating further concretize these dynamics within a group context. Finally, de

Beauvoir's notion of generosity, Cynthia's Willett's parental gaze, and Rebecca Adams's

conception of love offer important corrections to the possibilities of power relations

proposed by Sartre and Girard. The use of this lens within existential analysis offers a

new way of looking at power relations across categories of social experience as the basis

for meaningful comparative analysis. Lastly, the chapter relies upon aspects of

existentialism, deep ecology, religious studies, and environmental political philosophy to

establish a foundation for the model of sustainability ethics derived throughout this

project.

Chapter Four: Sustainability Analysis

Chapter Four applies existential analysis to the investigation of social

sustainability issues. I develop and apply an existentialist framework for the purpose of

sustainability analysis. This interdisciplinary comparative analysis examines four major

fields of critical social theory: 1) childrearing practices; 2) gender socialization,

including intersectional and global considerations; 3) racism, building upon and

intersecting with critical theory of childrearing and gender socialization; and 4) religion,

considering the influence of dominant social values on religious teachings. Findings of

this comparative existential analysis provide theoretical support for the inclusion of

authenticity and generosity as sustainable values within this new model of sustainability

ethics.

Chapter Five: Systems View

Chapter Five provides a systems analysis of the larger social system. The chapter

first maps out the history, structure, and resilience of the contemporary gender system in

order to distinguish systemic resistance to transformation. It then goes on to demonstrate

the ways that the social categories investigated in the preceding analysis reflect the values

and dynamics of the larger system. This systems analysis connects gender culture with possibilities for authenticity and generosity, finding that contemporary gender culture does not reflect or support an ethic of sustainability. It is part of my thesis that the bad faith of gender culture obscures this fact. Moreover, transformation depends upon addressing the larger gender system and its ideologies in addition to any particular issues, or subsystems; the findings and common themes identified through existential analysis reflect expressions of system mindset through the particularities of differing subsystems. What I call here the eroticism of sustainability ethics -- namely its relational, communal, and embodied character -- offers strategies for system transformation that preserve the freedom of all parties. The erotic self approaches the blindness of bad faith, illuminates the significance of connections between gender and race, and offers a new innovative approach to education and sustainable leadership development, which is taken up in the following chapter.

Chapter Six: Practical Applications of Existential Analysis

Chapter Six applies existential analysis as an educational approach. Over the course of this entire research program, I have developed college courses and high school workshops on the basis of an adapted form of existential analysis. This educational method offers a means to promote awareness of unquestioned assumptions associated with unsustainable mindsets. The chapter describes these courses and the effectiveness of this method in encouraging reflection and awareness of the connections described throughout this project. Finally, the chapter further applies this new model for sustainable leadership workshops. Chapter Six breaks new practical ground since it offers for the first time an application of existential analysis for educational praxis.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions

Chapter Seven summarizes the project, reports research findings, describes contributions to a number of disciplinary fields, notes limitations of the project, and identifies future directions for research. Through two new innovative applications of existential analysis, I derive a model of sustainability ethics, an erotic conception of self, and practical approaches to promoting awareness of connections between gender culture, freedom, flourishing, and sustainability. The project contributes to the fields of sustainability ethics and decision-making, existential analysis, and sustainability education and is also relevant to leadership studies, bullying, and peace education.

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This research primarily aims to develop theoretical approaches and models rather than establish conclusive quantitative data. Some preliminary data concerning the use of existential analytical approaches in college and high school classrooms is available, however: college students in three semester-long courses provided written responses; and school administrators of an alternative high school workshop conducted an assessment by administering pre-and post-tests and soliciting written feedback through qualitative feedback forms. This limited data suggests the effectiveness of existential analysis as an educational approach to encourage reflection and consideration of freedom, limitations to freedom, unexamined assumptions, and self-limiting beliefs. As a result, this project may provide a foundation for a follow-up program designed to measure the effectiveness of applied existential analysis as an educational approach. Variations of this program may be applicable for sustainability education programs coupled with engaged/service-learning curricula; peace-justice studies programs; student and/or

"teach-the-teacher" bullying prevention programs; and sustainable leadership and management education. Additional possibilities include programs addressing gender and sexuality violence or high school graduation rates. Possible locations for these programs include college and high school classrooms; alternative schools; leadership education and training for business and community organizations; and employer-based educational programs.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Sustainability is an emerging interdisciplinary field, and as such it holds an ambiguous position within the academic disciplines and in relation to the field of ethics. Sustainability studies are often aligned with environmental studies and the sciences -- perhaps because the concerns initially evolved from environmental topics -- although there are important distinctions between the fields. Sustainability theorists are concerned with the ways social norms and values affect human culture and the natural world, including their influence on the emergence of various social ills and environmental problems.[1] Sustainability concerns thus motivate philosophical discussion of ethics and values, as well as closer study of the integration of social and environmental interests.

This review of literature addresses relevant scholarship from three fields with which this interdisciplinary project intersects and to which the project findings apply. These fields are: 1) sustainability ethics; 2) clinical applications of existential analysis; and 3) sustainability education. The chapter provides historical and contemporary perspectives of each of these fields as a way to position project contributions to these areas. The existential analysis of this project represents an interdisciplinary systems approach that complements existing rational systems analyses by investigating power relations that affect decision-making and implementation outcomes. The project thus has bearing on the field of sustainability ethics in the areas of sustainability planning and systems analysis, as well as the philosophy of sustainability. In addition, the application of existential analysis as an educational method suggests group educational approaches to

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[1]The chapter addresses the research of these scholars. For instance, see John O'Neill, Alan Holland, and Andrew Light, *Environmental Values* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Robert Bullard, ed, *The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2005); Carolyn Merchant, *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World* (London: Routledge, Chapman, & Hall, 1992); Ryne Raffaelle, Wade Robison, Evan Selinger, eds, *Sustainability Ethics: 5 Questions* (USA: Automatic Press, 2010).

the field of clinical existential analysis. Finally, this project contributes an additional

dimension of sustainability education, which builds upon critical systems thinking skills

to strengthen knowledge of motivation, meaning, and power relations. The chapter begins

here with a brief historical review that sketches the evolution of sustainability ethics from

its beginnings within the environmental movement, for contextual purposes.[2]

Sustainability Ethics: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives.

The roots of the environmental movement may be traced to the work of two of its

earliest pioneers: Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson. Leopold's and Carson's

contributions build upon an appreciation of nature fostered by the earlier

transcendentalists, notably Henry David Thoreau and Ralph Waldo Emerson, as well as

the pioneering work of John Muir, who worked to protect and preserve large tracts of

wilderness as national parks in the late nineteenth century. Through his work in forestry,

Leopold came to recognize the importance of balance in nature; he was the first to make

visible the harms associated with unlimited hunting of predators. In his memorable "land

ethic" essay, Leopold frames human interactions with the environment in ethical terms:

> All ethics so far evolved rest upon a single premise: that the individual is a
> member of a community of interdependent parts. His instincts prompt him to
> compete for his place in that community, but his ethics prompt him also to co-
> operate (perhaps in order that there may be a place to compete for). The land ethic
> simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants,
> and animals, or collectively: the land.[3]

Leopold positions environmental concerns within an ethical framework by extending the

meaning of community to encompass the environment. Leopold's articulation of the land

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[2]A significant amount of literature exists in the general field of sustainability ethics, but because this literature covers a broad spectrum of subject areas, mostly unrelated to the specific topic of irrational influences on decision-making, no attempt will be made to review this literature in detail. Rather, this chapter examines related aspects of the literature that have bearing on this topic.
[3] Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949), 239.

ethic, his most notable contribution to the field, serves as a marker in the evolution of

environmental ethics.

Rachel Carson's groundbreaking book on pesticides, *Silent Spring*, took up these

concerns and jump-started the environmental movement. Released in 1962, Carson's

book awoke a generation to the harms of the increasing presence of chemicals in the

environment, focusing particularly on DDT. In the first chapter, Carson begins with a

story of a possible future:

> There was once a town in the heart of America where all life seemed to live in
> harmony with its surroundings… Then a strange blight crept over the area and
> everything began to change… There was a strange stillness. The birds, for
> example – where had they gone?... No witchcraft, no enemy action had silenced
> the rebirth of new life in this stricken world. The people had done it themselves.[4]

Written beautifully and accessibly, Carson's book quickly became an international best-

seller, serving as a worldwide wake-up call concerning the importance of ecological

issues and sparking the environmental movement. *Silent Spring* stands as a vibrant

example of the potential of effective public scholarship to motivate political action.

Moreover, the intensive, prolonged, and vicious attacks on Carson -- mobilized by the

chemical industry after the release of her book -- and the solidarity and resolve of large

numbers of people who had been awakened to environmental dangers, represent differing

forms of power and may together be instructive for our current-day dilemmas.

A decade later, Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess further shaped the ethical

discussion of environmentalism with his introduction of deep ecology. In his 1973

article, "The Shallow and the Deep: Long-Range Ecology Movements," Naess

distinguishes "deep ecology" from "shallow ecology," which is primarily concerned with

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[4] Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2002), 3.

pollution and resource depletion.[5] Naess embraces a "relational, total-field image" of

reality, stepping away from mechanistic views of "man-in-environment." His philosophy

of deep ecology rests on the reality of interconnection and interdependency, leading to

ethical stances stemming from a biospherical egalitarianism that upholds diversity,

symbiosis, and complexity.

Naess sets forth two primary norms: self-realization and biocentric equality. Self-

realization is associated with realizing potentiality, with "self" referring to an extended

sense of self that includes humanity and the natural world. Self-realization then

represents a form of productive, creative power. Naess's second norm, biocentric

equality, affirms the equality of all living things and their place within the total whole.

Bill Devall and George Sessions describe the connection between biocentric equality and

self-realization, noting that "the intuition of biocentric equality is that all things in the

biosphere have an equal right to live and blossom and to reach their own individual forms

of unfolding and self-realization within the larger Self-realization."[6] Naess' philosophy

of deep ecology embraces the flourishing of the whole Self as well as the individual self,

presenting a powerful ethical challenge to assumptions about humanity's right to use

natural resources solely for human purposes.[7]

Devall and Sessions contrast the tenets of deep ecology with the current

worldview of technical-industrial societies, which view humanity as separate from

nature:

> The view of humans as separate and superior to the rest of Nature is only part of
> larger cultural patterns. For thousands of years, Western culture has become
> increasingly obsessed with the idea of dominance: with dominance of humans

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[5] Arne Næss,'"The Shallow and the Deep: Long-Range Ecology Movements," in Inquiry 16 (1973): 95-100.
[6] Bill Devall & George Sessions, *Deep Ecology* (Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 1985), 67.
[7] See Arne Naess, "Self-Realization: An Ecological Approach to Being in the World," in *Deep Ecology for the 21st Century*, edited by George Sessions (Boston: Shambhala, 1995).

over nonhuman Nature, masculine over the feminine, wealthy and powerful over the poor, with the dominance of the West over non-Western cultures. Deep ecological consciousness allows us to see through these erroneous and dangerous illusions.[8]

These deep ecological perspectives connect the domination of nature by humanity with an attitude of domination associated with the oppressions of social groups, all founded upon inauthentic perceptions of disconnection, separation, and othering. The core philosophy of deep ecology, with its emphasis on interconnection and interdependence, upholds the relationship between social and environmental oppressions. Naess, for instance, specifically calls for an anti-class posture that acknowledges exploitation and oppression. Over the years, however, scholars of social ecology have critiqued the deep ecological movement for concentrating primarily on environmental concerns and devoting less attention to the inherent relationship between social justice and environmental issues.[9]

Sustainability concerns, including awareness of environmental injustice, emerged in the 1980s, crystallizing as the contemporary sustainability movement with the 1987 Brundtland Commission Report, which linked social justice, economic policy, and environmental sustainability. The Brundtland Report, issued by the United Nations Brundtland Commission, identifies three areas of priority, generally referred to as the three E's: ecology/environment, economy, and equity.   The report further defines sustainable development as that which meets "the needs of the present without

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[8] Devall & Sessions, 66.
[9] See Murray Bookchin, "Social Ecology versus Deep Ecology: A Challenge for the Ecology Movement," in *Green Perspectives: Newsletter of the Green Program Project*, nos. 4-5 (summer 1987).

compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[10]   This basic framework serves as a springboard for the evolving field of sustainability ethics.

Contemporary ethical debates pertaining to sustainable development address questions of equity, measurement, the priority of various initiatives and approaches, and decision-making.[11]   Bill Hopwood, Mary Mellor, and Geoff O'Brien describe several perspectives of equity: inter-generational equity, intra-generational equity, and interspecies equity. Questions of measurement factor into the future-oriented discussions of intergenerational equity. Proponents of "weak sustainability" advocate preserving capital, assuming that future technological advances will offset natural resource depletion; proponents of "strong sustainability" are concerned with preserving the balance of natural resources for future generations. These differing perspectives spark further questions about whether economic measurement can account for less tangible goods, such as "well-being." Intra-generational equity concerns consider equity among social groups -- social justice issues -- or between industrialized and developing areas of the world within a global economy. The question of equity also prompts evaluation of interspecies equity; some, particularly from the deep ecology camp, suggest that the Brundtland definitions and other ethical debates maintain an anthropocentric bias.[12] Discussions of equity also intersect with deep ecological perspectives of interconnection; eco-feminist scholars emphasize crucial relationships between dualist thinking, hierarchy, authoritarianism, and environmental degradation.[13]

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[10] Brundtland Report: "Our Common Future," *United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 43.

[11] See Bill Hopwood, Mary Mellor, and Geoff O'Brien, "Sustainable Development: Mapping Different Approaches" in *Sustainable Development,* Vol 13, Issue 1 (John Wiley & Sons, 2005), 38-52.

[12] Cormac Cullinan's "Wild Law" refers to laws regulating human behavior in order to preserve the long-term interests of the human-natural world community. See Cormac Cullinan, *Wild Law: A Manifesto for Earth Justice* (Totnes, Devon: Green Books, 2003).

[13] See Joanna Macy, *World as Lover, World as Self* (Berkeley: Parallax, 1991); Merchant, 1992.

These various ethical perspectives concerning sustainability encourage vigorous social debate. Suggested approaches range from minor reforms, with business and government seen as primary drivers of sustainability, to more significant policy and lifestyle reforms, including those that encourage new technologies addressing environmental problems and focus profits in areas of environmental needs. Environmental ethicists advocate the promotion of environmentally-friendly cultural values.[14] Other scholars call for total transformation of the current economic and political system, arguing that environmental problems are rooted in current social structure and drawing attention to the ways that institutions have reinforced hierarchical and authoritarian forms of power.

These choices bring the question of decision-making to the forefront. Upon what basis could we prioritize among multiple competing demands? What actions or combinations of actions will yield the best results? Problems of sustainability are inherently complex, given the number of associated variables, demands, and consequences. An analysis of sustainability depends upon large-scale systems analyses that bring together these multiple variables and competing demands. Donella Meadows describes the ways systems thinking approaches are utilized to assess the dynamics and effects of unsustainable social systems; she also acknowledges the difficulty of shifting social systems:

> Social systems are the external manifestations of cultural thinking patterns and of profound human needs, emotions, strengths, and weaknesses. Changing them is not as simple as saying "now all change," or of trusting that he who knows the good shall do the good.[15]

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[14] See O'Neill, Holland, and Light.

[15] Donella Meadows, *Thinking in Systems: A Primer* (White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008), 167.

Elements of a system may be studied and evaluated without recognizing that the elements

are part of a larger system that interconnects them in order to accomplish a purpose. The

interconnections and relationships between the elements, along with the function of the

overall system, are key to understanding system behavior. When piecemeal analyses or

solutions are attempted without fully acknowledging that these approaches address

elements of a larger system, the approaches may be jeopardized, ultimately producing

unintended consequences or ineffectual results. Meadows explains that "the system, to a

large extent, causes its own behavior! An outside event may unleash that behavior, but

the same outside event applied to a different system is likely to produce a different

result."[16]

Systems analysis thus offers a clearer picture of the overall dynamics of a

complex assemblage of components or subsystems, particularly distinguishing

relationships between the elements. Meadows, however, warns of unrealistic

expectations concerning the types of results attainable from systems thinking:

> People who are raised in the industrial world and who get enthused about systems thinking are likely to make a terrible mistake. They are likely to assume that here, in systems analysis, in interconnection and complication, in the power of the computer, here at last, is the key to prediction and control. This mistake is likely because the mind-set of the industrial world assumes that there is a key to prediction and control.[17]

Systems analysis, however, does provide valuable information about the workings of a

particular system, which may be used to interact effectively with the system. The

knowledge gained from systems analysis provides a basis for thinking about various

approaches, such as designing for intrinsic responsibility or "solving for pattern."

Meadows describes the nature of intrinsic responsibility by offering the example of a

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[16]Ibid., 2.
[17]Ibid., 166.

manufacturing plant taking water from and returning its wastewater to a river: when the in-take for the company's water supply is positioned downstream from where its wastewater is released, the system has been designed for intrinsic responsibility. Another benefit of systems analysis is an enhanced ability to approach solutions considering Wendell Berry's notion of "solving-for-pattern"; to solve for pattern is to devise solutions that address many aspects of a problem or related problems simultaneously.[18] Systems analysis thus provides insight into the nature and complexity of problems as well as potential solutions.

Systems theory is utilized to study sustainable development questions through systems analyses of not only ecosystems and social systems but also integrative human-natural systems. Several examples of dynamic adaptive management models that extend beyond environmental ecosystem analysis to consider human-natural systems are detailed in: 1) *Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Human and Natural Systems,* edited by Lance H. Gunderson and C.S. Holling; 2) *Compass and Gyroscope: Integrating Science and Politics for the Environment,* by Kai Lee, and 3) *Sustainability: A Philosophy of Adaptive Ecosystem Management,* by Bryan Norton. Gunderson and Holling, et al, examine systems resilience and adaptive change cycles in order to consider and predict conditions of systems transformation. The authors introduce their theoretical framework, panarchy, which considers interconnections between natural and social systems. This framework builds upon adaptive change processes associated with ecosystem management to consider economic and sociological models. Their approach examines similarities and differences between ecological, economic, and social models in

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[18] See Wendell Berry, "Solving for Pattern," in *The Gift of Good Land: Further Essays Cultural & Agricultural* (North Point Press, 1981).

order to provide insight into interactions, movement, and change within the larger, integrative social-ecosystem. Lee also grounds his theoretical framework for sustainable development in adaptive change management of natural systems, extending his analysis to encompass political and cognitive psychological considerations. Lee's approach applies adaptive management processes to policy development through social learning, an iterative pragmatic trial-and-error process. Lee's integrative ecosystem and policy analysis intends to provide an approach for policy development over time.

These two analyses, which extend ecological models to consider economic-social and political-psychological factors, provide insight into complex dynamics of integrated human-natural systems for the purposes of decision-making and effective management. While both approaches are grounded in the scholarship of adaptive management, they extend beyond a natural eco-systems framework to consider social models within larger natural-human system analyses. Neither of these systems analyses, however, duplicates the purpose of this project. The focus here is on social-psychological influences on power relations and decision-making, which often thwart good-faith attempts at rational analysis and implementation.

Norton's dynamic analysis of integrative human-natural systems further addresses social values. His book, *Sustainability: A Philosophy of Adaptive Ecosystem Management,* provides a systems analysis of sustainability that considers ethics, values, economics, environmental science, ecology, and politics within an analytic philosophical framework. Norton's aim is to develop rational aids to decision-making for the purpose of gaining agreement from multiple parties on strategies for addressing environmental problems. His approach relies on environmental pragmatism and adaptive management;

he advocates adopting practical, workable applications, assuming that the best solutions

will emerge over time, while relying on an iterative process that redirects actions with the

accumulation of additional data.

Norton's research does not directly address social psychological factors

associated with power dynamics. Near the end of his essay, "A Reply to my Critics," he

summarizes his response to a graduate student, who asked about the effect of power

relations on his analysis:

> I have consciously steered clear of one aspect of policy formation and
> management: the role of political and economic power relationships, which often
> limit attempts to achieve a rational environmental policy. The reader should be
> assured that I am well aware of this confounding variable that affects official
> decisions so pervasively. To deal with that aspect, however, would have led to a
> different – and even longer book. What I have tried to do is to discuss a rational
> process that is possible – but hardly guaranteed… This book concerns both policy
> and management, and it sets out to provide as seamless as possible a connection
> among these separable aspects of what must become an integrative process. But
> the book examines a process that presupposes good faith and a cooperative spirit
> on the part of participants.[19]

Norton clarifies the conditions of his analysis, namely to explore possibilities associated

with decision-making processes that assume the good faith of all parties. He

subsequently asks: "Can careful attention to process, once one assumes good will, trust,

and commitment, lead to better integration of science into the pursuit of social values? I

hope so."[20] For the sake of limiting an already complex analysis, Norton distinguishes

the aims of rational analysis from those of a complementary analysis that might explore

social-psychological factors associated with irrational influences on decision-making.

While Norton's "normative sustainability" embraces the dynamic systems theory

employed by strong sustainability theorists, it also emphasizes the significance of social

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[19] Bryan G. Norton, *Sustainability: A Philosophy of Adaptive Ecosystem Management* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), xiv-xv.
[20] Bryan G. Norton, "A Reply to My Critics," in *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* (Vol 20, No 4, August 2007), 404.

values. As he explores linkages between science and social values, Norton argues that a shift in values is necessary to "get to sustainability." Normative sustainability applies an adaptive management process to communal negotiation of value as an approach to sustainability. Community discussion, Norton suggests, is necessary to bring current values to the surface in order to assess and reconsider them; he recommends an inclusive democratic process that involves all stakeholders in the deliberation of community goals and values. To a certain degree, then, Norton addresses irrational influences as he grapples with the import of values and inclusive community participation; commitment to values as an approach to sustainability rests upon acknowledgement of the ways that collective values motivate communal behavior.

Thus Norton provides a philosophical systems framework clarifying rational aids to decision-making, while setting aside the effects of power relations. At the same time, he proposes a collaborative democratic deliberative process to consider community values and goals, which begins the process of addressing the effects of power relations. Interestingly, Norton's inclusive decision-making approach may strengthen community solidarity, a possible corrective to oppression or resignation, although his theoretical analysis does not model or predict these factors.

Power relations not only affect decision-making about current environmental problems but may also represent the effects of attitudes that have contributed to the development of the problems in the first place. This point may be particularly articulated

through the issue of environmental justice, which links the oppressive power relations

that ground social injustice with environmental problems.[21]

The environmental justice movement connects power, domination, and the

environment in particularly vivid ways. The movement addresses the reality that lower

income and minority populations bear a disproportionate burden of harms associated with

environmental hazards in neighborhood communities and employment opportunities. In

an essay on the environmental justice movement that probes complexities associated with

political and community relations, David Pellow, Adam Weinberg, and Allan Shnaiberg

begin with a description of the problem:

> Over the last three decades a growing number of scholars, activists, and policy
> makers in the United States have begun to pay attention to the distributive impacts
> of environmental pollution across dimensions of class and race. The predominant
> finding to emerge from this research is that environmental racism exists.
> Environmental racism occurs when the poor and people of color bear the brunt of
> the nation's pollution problem.[22]

Although the issue applies largely to minority communities affected by toxic pollutants

and facilities within urban environments, it also applies to poor rural communities, such

as Appalachian communities affected by mountaintop removal mining.

Environmental injustice within the U.S. occurs within a larger context of global

environmental concerns, with developing versus industrial nations bearing the

disproportionate burden of environmental hazards.   Robert Bullard, founder of the Clark

Atlanta Environmental Justice Center, points to the global nature of the issue, noting that

"activists understand that what happens to disenfranchised people in the United States

and elsewhere in the developed North also affects people of color, indigenous peoples,

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[21] By advocating a process that involves communities in democratic deliberation of goals and values, Norton begins the process of addressing the effects of unsustainable power relations. This project, however, is primarily concerned with understanding the development of unsustainable power relations.
[22] David N. Pellow, Adam Weinberg, and Allan Schnaiberg, "The Environmental Justice Movement: Equitable Allocation of the Costs and Benefits of Environmental management outcomes," in *Social Justice Research*, Vol. 14, No. 4, December 2001.

and poor people in the developing South."[23] The environmental justice movement thus represents a compelling intra-generational and transnational issue of equity; it reflects a social justice issue associated with race and class within the United States and also illuminates inequities in the distribution of environmental harms between industrial and developing nations.

The environmental justice issue, emerging from the intersection of social injustice and environmental degradation, presents an opportunity to note a significant connection: social realities facilitating the emergence of environmental injustice share common underpinnings with factors allowing environmental degradation and social oppressions to arise independently. The philosophy of deep ecology reveals the illusion of separation that allows for othering, domination and, thus, the fundamental interrelationship between social oppressions and the domination of nature.

The contemporary literature on sustainability ethics addresses decision-making, equity, values, and social justice. The environmental justice movement focuses appropriately on rectifying inequities associated with the unjust burden on minority populations. Sustainability problems, including environmental injustice, generally require short-term, focused action to "clean-up" environmental problems and address current harms. Also needed, however, are analyses of social system dynamics that faithfully reproduce unsustainable behavior patterns, threatening to erode short-term gains. While environmental scholars explore theoretical systems frameworks for sustainability analysis and decision-making, less attention is devoted to addressing irrational influences on decision-making. Norton, as mentioned, brackets the discussion

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[23] Robert D. Bullard, *The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution*, Edited by Robert D. Bullard, With Foreword by Congresswoman Maxine Waters (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2005), 17.

of power relations, concentrating on an analysis that assumes "good faith and cooperative spirit on the part of participants."

This project picks up where cooperation leaves off, considering a complementary analysis that examines factors associated with the emergence of oppression, conformity, and apathy. The analysis considers the relationship between social values, conditioning, and social mindset, as well as sustainable forms of leadership and management. Specifically, this project applies existential analysis as an alternative form of systems analysis to investigate the effect of power relations on decision-making and outcomes.

Existential Psychoanalysis

The term "existential analysis" is used in a number of ways throughout this project. I apply existential analysis as a research method for an analysis of sustainability and also as an educational approach designed to promote awareness of unexamined assumptions. However, the term also refers to the field of clinical existential analysis, which is alternatively called existential therapy, existential psychoanalysis, or existential psychotherapy. The research of this project intersects with and contributes to this field in the following ways.

First, clinical existential analysis offers a philosophical framework for analysis and mediation that is interested in the interplay between social and psychological factors, meaning, and the frustration of meaning-seeking desires into inauthentic forms of power. While the primary application of existential analysis has been as a clinical approach to individual therapy -- employed by psychoanalysts as an alternative form of analysis -- these topics are also pertinent to social analyses of power and decision-making processes. I apply existential analysis as an interdisciplinary, humanities-based systems approach to complement existing rational systems analyses by investigating power relations that

affect decision-making and implementation outcomes. While Sartre and de Beauvoir utilize existential analysis to organize their investigations in *Anti-Semite and Jew* and *The Second Sex,* respectively, the method represents a relatively unknown and, I argue, underutilized form of analysis, perhaps due to long-standing preferences for purely rational analytical tools.[24] This project applies existential analysis to a systematic investigation of contemporary social norms and contexts as a way to assess conditions favoring sustainable outcomes.

Second, existential psychotherapy suggests intriguing possibilities for the application of existential analysis as an educational approach, particularly as it addresses existential blindness of relations between prevailing paradigms, mindsets, values, and power. Existential psychotherapy provides an approach to reveal motivation, limitation, and potentiality with individual patients in a clinical setting; therapists do not extend the application of existential analysis to a group setting nor do they consider its use as a basis for an educational program. In this project, I draw upon the tenets of existentialism and existential therapy to develop an existential analytical approach to education. This application suggests group educational methods for the field of clinical existential analysis. In particular, the project contributes an additional dimension of sustainability education, which builds upon critical thinking skills to strengthen knowledge of motivation, meaning, and power relations. This section of the literature review describes and positions the field of clinical existential analysis for this dissertation.

From the time Ludwig Binswanger pioneered its use within the psychoanalytic setting in the 1950s, existential psychoanalysis has been employed by numerous

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[24] See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew.* Translated by George J. Becker and with an introduction by Michael Walzer (New York: Schocken Books, 1995); also Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1989).

psychotherapists and existential psychologists, including Viktor Frankl, Rollo May, and

Emmy van Deurzen, among others.[25] Existential analysis provides a philosophical

approach to analysis that considers the individual within his or her situation, as well as

the relevance of meaning to human motivation and behavior. Given its attention to the

human condition, philosophy, van Deurzen suggests, offers a useful framework for

analysis:

> Philosophy, before it became taken over by the scientific discourse, concerned itself with the understanding of the human predicament for the purpose of more effective and better informed living. Such forms of concrete and applied philosophy have become more rare as specialisms have taken over. Philosophy's commitment to have a broad understanding of life and put this at the service of the public has worn very thin over the centuries. Existential philosophy, in its applied form, marks the revival of this tradition. [26]

A proponent of applied existential psychotherapy, Van Deurzen notes the increasing

interest in philosophical applications:

> A frank movement within philosophy itself has arisen, which tries to find concrete applications of the philosophical method. The philosophical practitioners working in this way generally apply a phenomenological description of the situation to be explored and a dialectical method of questioning and investigation of the relevant issues.[27]

Van Deurzen applies philosophical methods to analysis, employing and teaching the use

of an applied existential approach. [28] This approach is particularly valuable since it takes

into account social-relational as well as psychological factors and thus offers appreciation

of the contextual situation.

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[25] Jean-Paul Sartre first introduced existential psychoanalysis as a philosophical approach in *Being and Nothingness*. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness.* Translated and with an introduction by Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1984).
[26] Emmy Van Deurzan, *Everyday Mysteries: Existential Dimensions of Psychotherapy* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 131.
[27] Ibid., 132.
[28] Van Deurzen employs and teaches the use of an applied existential approach in her roles as founder of the Society of Existential Analysis and as founder and professor of the School of Psychotherapy and Counseling at Regent's college in London.

Existentialist philosophy and existentialist approaches to therapy are founded

upon non-dual notions of interconnection. This sense of interconnection applies to

conceptions of the human being as subject or object, as Rollo May describes:

> The very essence of this [existential] approach is that it seeks to analyze and
> portray the human being – whether in art or literature or philosophy or
> psychology – on a level which undercuts the old dilemma of materialism versus
> idealism. Existentialism, in short, is the endeavor to understand man by cutting
> below the cleavage between subject and object which has bedeviled Western
> thought and science since shortly after the Renaissance.[29]

May's allusion to a unity connecting subject and object invokes Naess's relational field

description of deep ecology. Existentialism, like deep ecology, also resonates with

Eastern philosophy and spirituality, as May notes:

> Both [Eastern philosophies and existentialism] would insist that the Western
> absorption in conquering and gaining power over nature has resulted not only in
> the estrangement of man from nature but also indirectly in the estrangement of
> man from himself. The basic reason for these similarities is that Eastern thought
> never suffered the radical split between subject and object that has characterized
> Western thought, and this dichotomy is exactly what existentialism seeks to
> overcome.[30]

This view attributes the "estrangement of man from nature" to dualistic ways of thinking,

which enable othering and domination. This perspective is significant to analyses of

power relations, particularly those concerned with the emergence of domination,

oppression, conformity, and "power over nature." According to this explanation,

anything more than temporary resolution of oppressive situations, whether social

oppressions or environmental degradation, depends upon transformation of the dualistic

ways of thinking that underpin notions of separation.

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[29]Rollo May, *The Discovery of Being: Writings in Existential Psychology* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1994), 49. May continues: "The existential way of understanding human beings has some illustrious progenitors in Western history, such as Socrates in his dialogues, Augustine in his depth-psychological analyses of the self, Pascal in his struggle to find a place for the 'heart's reasons which the reason knows not of.' But it arose specifically just over a hundred years ago in Kierkegaard's violent protest against the reigning rationalism of this day, Hegel's 'totalitarianism of reason,' to use Maritain's phrase. 'Truth exists,' wrote Kierkegaard,' only as the individual himself produces it in action.'"Ibid., 49.
[30]Ibid., 59.

The separation that allows for the domination of nature is further implicated in the "estrangement of man from himself," or the emergence of existential blindness or denial. Referring to the human being, May asks: "What goes on that he chooses or is forced to choose to block off from his awareness something which he knows, and on another level *knows that he knows*?"[31] May describes "being" as an individual's "pattern of potentialities" and suggests that the person's relation with his or her potentialities is the question that guides analysis:

> Existential therapists see the conflict more basically in the area of the patient's acceptance or rejection of his own potentialities. We need to keep in mind the question: What keeps the patient from accepting in freedom his potentialities? This may involve bourgeois morality, but it also involves a lot more: it leads immediately to the existential question of the person's freedom… To repress is precisely to make one's self unaware of freedom. [32]

Existential psychotherapy addresses an existential blindness that arises as the individual is estranged from the self, what psychoanalysis might alternatively consider "denial" within the realm of the unconscious. In a collective sense, blindness becomes a self-destructive mindset that limits the potentiality of the larger human-natural world system. While clinical existential analysis explores this blindness, resistance, or denial on an individual level, this project considers existential denial at the collective level. In particular, the project investigates the ways denial is reified through cultural institutions and norms and thus persists as "conventional wisdom" founded upon unexamined assumptions. Resistance to a serious social discussion of gender presents an example of denial. Research studies linking the harmful effects of contemporary gender culture to collective well-being and thus the common good have not proven sufficient for

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[31] Ibid., 17.
[32] Ibid., 155.

overcoming reluctance to engage the topic of gender in the public square. Productive

gender discussion depends upon transcending denial of its merits.

The dualist ways of thinking that give rise to denial as "estrangement of man from

himself" further constrain approaches to addressing blindness. Here existentialism's

commitment to interconnection necessitates multidisciplinary investigations of

experience. For instance, van Deurzen finds that addressing contextual factors is as

significant for psychotherapy as it is for illuminating sustainability problems:

> The technocratic era and its psychological ally of willed cognitive unemotional
> control is misfiring. With an overpopulated, polluted planet, we need to learn to
> take a close look at the processes of which we are a part and to which we owe our
> living. In the same way in which technocrats need to take heed of the eco-system
> into which their efforts are inserted, in psychology and psychotherapy we need to
> heed the ontological context of human existence. Adhering to simplistic, single-
> level explanations will simply not do.[33]

External factors are particularly relevant to psychology and psychoanalysis, van Deurzen

emphasizes, noting social and cultural influences on the individual:

> The externalistic view of the mind is usually ignored by therapists who tend to
> focus on the concept of an internal world. Nevertheless, they cannot deny that
> many of the structures of meaning that we function within are social ones, or
> cultural ones.[34]

Van Deurzen not only draws attention to the influence of the social cultural context on

individual structures of meaning but she and other existential psychotherapists also pay

close attention to the general inseparability of the individual and the culture.[35] For

instance, acknowledging the mutually constituting relationship between individual and

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[33] Van Deurzan, 96.

[34] Ibid., 215.

[35] Of our relational nature, Van Deurzan writes, "The only thing that is relatively certain is that we are not free-standing units and that we are not definite and unchanging in ourselves. In order for us to continue to be alive we have to let ourselves be moved by the energies and patterns of attraction and repulsion in which we are inserted and to which we are connected. We are nothing in our own right: we only come to life in as far as we allow the play of elements through us. In some ways we are nothing but the sounding board of the forces of creation; yet the sound we make or that we resonate with has itself some small effect on those forces. One of the fundamental premises of an existential approach to psychotherapy is this admission of people's contextual and relational quality. It accepts the prime importance of a recognition of the way in which we are always connected to an external world, invariably going outside of ourselves to that which is of importance to us at the moment." Ibid., 96.

culture, May asks: "is it not an illusion therefore, and much too simple, to speak of the culture over against the individual in such fashion and make it our whipping boy?"[36] Rather than separate analyses, our human situation calls for an integrated social psychology as the basis of an applied form of therapy as well as a research approach to investigate the generational reconstitution of relational patterns. While existential therapists consider such a social psychology for the purposes of individual analysis, this project brings appreciation of the interplay between social and psychological to social analysis. The focus here is on social-psychological influences on power relations and decision-making, which often thwart good-faith attempts at rational analysis and implementation; this investigation is taken up within an existential analysis of critical social theories.

Finally, in addition to social psychological and relational considerations, existential analysis is concerned with meaning. Binswanger's contributions to the field of existential psychoanalysis include his theory of inter-subjectivity and attention to meaning in therapy. The individual's relations to self and others are at the core of what it means to be human for Binswanger, who views these relations as essential to understanding human experience. His theory of intersubjectivity rests on a conception of mutuality drawn from Heidegger's "being-with"; an authentic encounter is based on equality, mutuality, and reciprocity. Binswanger's work not only affirms the importance of relational considerations within existential psychoanalysis but also puts meaning -- the individual's interpretation of meaning -- at the center. Rather than relying on the therapist's interpretive lens, Binswanger emphasizes the importance of eliciting the patient's view concerning the meaning of symptoms. Van Deurzan notes Binswanger's

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[36] May, 16.

well-known "ability to bring out the personal and positive search for meaning and transformation through what seems, on the surface, like mental illness and disorder."[37]

This concern with meaning forms the basis for Viktor Frankl's practice of existential therapy, which he calls logotherapy. With its name derived from the Greek word "logos," or meaning, Frankl's approach centers on what he calls the "will to meaning." Will to meaning provides a context within which "will to power" and "will to pleasure" arise. Will-to-meaning, the primary motivation, shapes these derivative impulses, with will-to-power as means and will-to-pleasure as effect.[38]

Frankl, a psychotherapist, psychiatrist, and Holocaust survivor, views all experience, including suffering, as a framework for interpretation of meaning, claiming that "*meaning is what is meant,* be it by a person who asks me a question, or by a situation which, too, implies a question and calls for an answer."[39] Rather than an overarching meaning to life, the individual encounters and finds meaning through the process of living. Frankl calls this self-transcendence, noting that "man is reaching out for, and actually reaching, finally attaining, the world – a world, that is, which is replete with other beings to encounter, and meanings to fulfill."[40] Moreover, it is this quality of self-transcendence that actually distinguishes human beings. Frankl observes that "the

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[37] Van Deurzen, 148.

[38] Frankl describes his view of meaning and values: "The logotherapist is neither a moralist nor an intellectual. His work is based on empirical, i.e., phenomenological, analyses, and a phenomenological analysis of the simple man in the street's experience of the valuing process shows that one can find meaning in life by creating a work or doing a deed or by experiencing goodness, truth, and beauty, by experiencing nature and culture; or, last but not least, by encountering another unique being in the very uniqueness of this human being- in other words, by loving him. However, the noblest appreciation of meaning is reserved to those people who, deprived of the opportunity to find meaning in a deed, in a work, or in love, by the very attitude which they choose to this predicament, rise above it and grow beyond themselves. What matters is the stand they take - a stand which allows for transmuting their predicament into achievement, triumph, and heroism. If one prefers in this context to speak of values, he may discern three chief groups of values. I have classified them in terms of creative, experiential and attitudinal values. This sequence reflects the three principal ways in which man can find meaning in life. The first is what *he gives* to the world in terms of his creations; the second is what *he takes* from the world in terms of encounters and experiences; and the third is *the stand he takes* to his predicament in case he must face a fate which he cannot change. This is why life never ceases to hold a meaning, for even a person who is deprived of both creative and experiential values is still challenged by a meaning to fulfill, that is, by the meaning inherent in the right, in an upright way of suffering." Viktor E. Frankl, *The Will to Meaning: Foundations and Applications of Logotherapy.* Expanded Edition, with a new afterword by the author (New York: Penguin Books, 1988), 69-70.

[39] Ibid., 62.

[40] Ibid., 31.

essentially self-transcendent quality of human existence renders man *a being reaching out beyond himself.* "[41]

Contemporary motivation theory overlooks the relevance of self-transcendence, according to Frankl.[42] This lack of attention to meaning and self-transcendence hampers attempts to analyze behavior or motivation, which may be particularly troubling at this moment with current times marked by meaninglessness, inertia, and apathy:

> Today more than ever the despair over the apparent meaninglessness of life has become an urgent and topical issues on a worldwide scale. Our industrial society is out to satisfy each and every need, and our consumer society even creates some needs in order to satisfy them. The most important need, however, the basic need for meaning, remains – more often than not – ignored and neglected.[43]

Frankl explores what he calls the existential vacuum, or "frustration of the will to meaning," considering contributing factors, including the loosening of stringent religious and social codes and the rise of a consumerist, materialist culture, among others. Although the diminishing influence of restrictive, social-cultural systems increases personal freedom, Frankl argues that freedom must be combined with intentional endeavors in order to fully develop, claiming that "freedom threatens to degenerate into mere arbitrariness unless it is lived in terms of responsibleness."[44] The existential vacuum prompts inauthentic expressions of power as conformism or totalitarianism. In the first case, individuals abdicate existential choice to go along with others' wishes, seeking the comfort of being members of the group; in the second case, they follow

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[41] Ibid.,8. He also notes: "Existence is not only intentional but also transcendent. Self-transcendence is the essence of existence. Being human is directed to something other than itself."Ibid., 50. Frankl claims that "human beings are transcending themselves toward meanings which are something other than themselves, which are more than mere expressions of their selves, more than mere projections of these selves." Ibid., 60.

[42]Frankl explains that "self-transcendence, which logotherapy considers the essence of human existence, has been totally left out of the picture of man that underlies the current motivation theories." Ibid., 162. Therapists devote significant attention to self-actualization, on the other hand, although Frankl argues that self-actualization, like will to power and will to pleasure, misses the essential motivation: "Self-actualization is not man's ultimate destination. It is not even his primary intention. Self-actualization, if made an end in itself, contradicts the self-transcendent quality of human existence. Like happiness, self-actualization is an effect, the effect of meaning fulfillment. Only to the extent to which man fulfills a meaning out there in the world, does he fulfill himself. Ibid., 38.

[43] Ibid., 167.

[44]Ibid., 49.

orders, obediently doing what is expected. This project applies this appreciation of meaning, motivation, and power relations for an analysis of cultural paradigms and behavior.

Given a widespread sense of meaninglessness that leads to apathy and conformity, Frankl asks "how can we come to grips with the ills and ailments of our time, which are grounded in a frustration of the will to meaning, unless we adopt a view of man that focuses on the will to meaning as his motivation."[45] Conscience, for Frankl, must guide decisions as the individual grapples with freedom and "responsibleness" to find meaning in life experience. Frankl's conception of conscience, which he distinguishes from "pseudomorality," reflects the "core of being" and is associated with the integrity of the individual. He recommends educational programs designed to encourage the development of conscience:

> In an age such as ours, that is to say, in an age of the existential vacuum, the foremost task of education, instead of being satisfied with transmitting traditions and knowledge, is to refine that capacity which allows man to find unique meanings. Today education cannot afford to proceed along the lines of tradition, but must elicit the ability to make independent and authentic decisions…. A lively and vivid conscience is also the only thing that enables man to resist the effects of the existential vacuum, namely conformism and totalitarianism."[46]

The intention is to avoid or address the "existential vacuum" of meaninglessness, which leads to contemporary social problems associated with conformism and totalitarianism.[47] Frankl calls here for educational approaches that investigate meaning and cultivate conscience in order to offer insight into the roots of motivations and power relations; this

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[45] Ibid.,163.
[46] Ibid., 64.
[47] Van Deurzan explains that "existential thinking throughout the history of mankind has arisen in reaction to dogmatic and pedantic attempts at controlling human destiny. People like Socrates or Jesus of Nazareth can be seen as existential thinkers who set themselves against the brutality and bigotry of their respective cultures of sophists and Pharisees. More recently philosophers such as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche set themselves against the dominance of the rationalism of their era. They reacted in particular to the philosophy of Hegel, which alleged his potential for explaining all mysteries in one final, ultimate system. Husserl similarly devised the phenomenological method as a protest and alternative to scientific investigation." Van Deurzan, 3.

call has yet to be answered. An intention of this project is to apply existential analysis not only for the research of social conditions but also as an educational method grounded in the philosophy and ethic of sustainability conceptualized through this research.

Existential analysis offers a model for interdisciplinary analysis that brings together reason and emotion, social and psychological factors, and the consideration of meaning, potentiality, and creativity, including the frustration of meaning-seeking desires into conformism or totalitarianism. These aspects of existential psychoanalysis are pertinent to analyses of power and decision-making. An appealing aspect of the method is its attention to the influence of reason, emotion, and meaning on human behavior, motivation, and power relations.

An "estrangement of man from himself," according to May, follows from Western ideas of separation that underpin the "estrangement of man from nature" and the mastery of nature. Existential blindness frustrates attempts to recognize and transcend an unsustainable mindset or paradigm that links the domination of nature and human social oppressions. The integrated social psychology of existential psychotherapy suggests a research approach to investigate the constitution of relational patterns and mindset, as well as an educational approach that encourages reflection and the development of conscience.

Sustainability Education

The topic of sustainability education has attracted the attention of leaders in the field. Proposals concerning sustainability education extend core environmental education to include the development of interdisciplinary, systems, planning, and critical thinking skills, as well as real-life experience and application through service learning and project-

based coursework. The research of this dissertation contributes an additional dimension

of sustainability education, which builds upon critical systems thinking skills to

strengthen knowledge of motivation, meaning, and power relations. This section

summarizes directions in the field of sustainability education by describing the

recommendations of David Orr, William Shutkin, Stephen Sterling, and Betsy Taylor,

among others.

Environmental education programs have emerged over the past few decades on

college campuses worldwide. These programs attract high caliber scholars with

ecological and policy expertise and provide quality education concerning environmental

subjects to an increasing number of students. Despite this success, some sustainability

professionals express concern that the larger impact of environmental education has

fallen short of original objectives. Stephen Sterling, for instance, notes a less-than-hoped

for impact on public understanding, support, and action concerning sustainability

problems:

> I came to see that the early assumption, shared by most people in environmental
> education, was a simplistic and deterministic one: that if people learnt about
> environmental issues, their behavior would change. Not only does it not work,
> but too much environmental knowledge (particularly relating to the various global
> crises) can be disempowering, without a deeper and broader learning process
> taking place.[48]

Sterling argues that information about environmental problems can be overwhelming,

discouraging participation and action. Daniel Einstein and David Eagan also make note

of this sense of discouragement as they describe their experiences with environmental

studies courses at the University of Wisconsin. Despite a student population of over

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[48] Stephen Sterling, *Sustainable Education: Re-visioning Learning and Change* (Bristol: Green Books, 2001), 18.

40,000 students, Einstein estimates that less than seventy students actively engage with environmental issues:

> Einstein attributes the relatively small number of committed student environmental activists to a profound sense of despair and powerlessness prevalent among students. As a teaching assistant, he received many course evaluations from students who wrote that they were depressed to learn that environmental problems were so bad that they didn't think they could do anything to solve them. Perversely, classes intended to expose students to useful information about the environment were leaving them paralyzed by the scope of the problem.[49]

However, the magnitude of environmental issues might also motivate constructive action rather than necessarily lead to discouragement and inertia. Orr emphasizes that "the study of environmental problems is an exercise in despair unless it is regarded as only a preface to the study, design, and implementation of solutions."[50] Project-based course work provides students with the opportunity to apply environmental knowledge:

> To fight this sense of hopelessness and despair, Einstein provides students with the opportunity, the contacts, and the supervision necessary to bring about positive environmental change on campus. Eagan's view of the student despair problem is that university courses tend to educate "only from the neck up," or, as David Orr puts it, they teach facts but not applied research and action. Einstein's and Eagan's work attempts to correct this by requiring students to see how environmental issues work out in real settings.[51]

Service learning not only provides a way to motivate students as they tackle specific environmental problems but also stimulates thinking about solutions and action toward desired goals. Service learning thus provides many benefits; Orr adds that "experience in

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[49] Daniel Einstein and David Eagan, "Students Swap Protests for Practical Work Building an Ecologically Sustainable Campus," in *Eco-Pioneers: Practical Visionaries Solving Today's Environmental Problems.* Edited by Steve Lerner and with a foreword by Jonathan Lash (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1998), 254.

[50] David Orr, *Ecological Literacy: Education and the Transition to a Postmodern World* (Albany: State University of New York, 1992), 94.

[51] Daniel Einstein and David Eagan, 254-255.

the natural world is both an essential part of understanding the environment, and conducive to good thinking."[52]

The study of sustainability problems also requires interdisciplinary analysis of complex systems. Shutkin, who concentrates on environmental policy and sustainable development, is concerned not only with shifting the public mindset concerning sustainability, as mentioned in Chapter 1, but also with ensuring that sustainability professionals have the large-scale planning and implementation skills necessary to effectively address current situations:

> We need to devise teaching and other methods that help develop the cognitive and intellectual capabilities necessary to understand, conceptualize and execute sustainability strategies effectively, such as life-cycle assessment, long-term planning, and eco-industrial development. These are strategies that require a nimble yet expansive mind-set and a new class of what I would call 'sustainability professionals.'[53]

The development of these professional skills, bolstered through appreciation of theoretical systems frameworks that address adaptive management processes as well as ecological, economic, policy, and social models, represents an important step in the advancement of the field. These skills build upon a foundation of core environmental and sustainability knowledge, relying on interdisciplinary and systems thinking approaches to analyze current problems as well as devise and implement solutions.

Current trends toward skills training in education, however, threaten systems thinking course offerings and approaches, which are necessary to address the complex nature of sustainability problems. Sustainability theorists lament that the current preoccupation on skills training encourages managerial approaches to education,

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[52] Orr, 91.
[53] William Shutkin, "Sustainability Ethics," in *Sustainability Ethics: 5 Questions.* Edited by Ryne Raffaelle, Wade Robinson, and Evan Selinger (Denmark: Automatic Press, 2010), 232.

detracting from a needed emphasis on interdisciplinary, whole systems thinking. Sterling

advocates shifting educational approaches away from serving the immediate needs of a

technocratic society to a "deeper and broader" form of education intended to foster a

more sustainable culture:

> We need a changed educational paradigm, one that addresses and indicates
> positive directions beyond these crises, one that "takes us into the depth of
> things." This is what I term "sustainable education," a change of educational
> culture which both develops and embodies the theory and practice of
> sustainability in a way which is critically aware. This would be a transformative
> paradigm that values, sustains and realizes human potential in relation to the need
> to attain and sustain social, economic and ecological wellbeing, recognizing that
> they are deeply interdependent. [54]

Such an educational approach fosters an appreciation for the complexity of the larger

human–natural system, with its interrelated ecological, economic, political, and social

realities, as well as the critical thinking skills needed to address related analyses.

Orr maps an approach for environmental and sustainability education through his

discussion of ecological literacy. Ecological literacy suggests an ability to think broadly

about sustainability issues, drawing on critical thinking skills to consider interdisciplinary

perspectives in addition to substantial knowledge of environmental topics. Education for

ecological literacy also encourages appreciation for historical and social analyses of

power, stimulates motivation, responsibility, and empowerment, and builds skills through

experience with the natural world.[55] The study of historical and social analyses of power

represents a necessary component of this broader approach to sustainability education,

Orr claims, because of the insight it offers into current unsustainable situations:

> To comprehend the idea of controlling nature, one must fathom the sources of the
> urge to power and the paradox of rational means harnessed to insane ends…
> Ecological literacy, then, requires a thorough understanding of the ways in which

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[54] Sterling, 22.
[55] Orr describes that, "environmental issues are complex and cannot be understood through a single discipline or department."Orr, 90.

people and whole societies have become destructive. The ecologically literate person will appreciate something of how social structures, religion, science, politics, technology, patriarchy, culture, agriculture, and human cussedness combine as causes of our predicament.[56]

The discussion of power leads naturally to consideration of empowerment -- motivation, meaning, and commitment to sustainability issues. Orr recommends a participatory, democratic environment in the classroom:

The radical distinctions typically drawn between teacher and student, between the school and the community, and those between areas of knowledge, are dissolved. Real learning is participatory and experiential, not just didactic. The flow can be two ways between teachers, who best function as facilitators, and students who are expected to be active agents in defining what is learned and how.[57]

Such a participatory, democratic approach to education involves students, motivating responsibility and action concerning their education and commitment to sustainability. This sense of responsibility is extended naturally through service learning and community-based projects outside the classroom.

Orr's attention to power relations and democratic approaches in the classroom echoes current themes in peace education literature. Given the relationship between social and environmental sustainability, a convergence between the directions of these fields is not surprising. In addition to critical pedagogy and democratic learning approaches, peace education scholarship addresses the topic of care and respect in the classroom as well as specific knowledge concerning peace and violence. Nel Noddings draws on the philosophy of education pioneer John Dewey to emphasize the larger goal of educating a democratic populace equipped to grapple with current challenges:

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[56] Ibid., 93. Further, Orr comments, "A genuinely liberal education will produce whole persons with intellectual breadth, able to think at right angles to their major field; practical persons able to act competently; and persons of deep commitment, willing to roll up their sleeves and join the struggle to build a humane and sustainable world. They will not be merely well-read. Rather, they will be ecologically literate citizens able to distinguish health from its opposite and to live accordingly. Above all, they will make themselves relevant to the crisis of our age, which in its various manifestations is about the care, nurturing, and enhancement of life." Ibid., 108.
[57] Ibid., 91.

> Today's schools are increasingly authoritarian -- characterized by coercion and control… Too many of us have forgotten what John Dewey told us so clearly: To maintain democracy, we must allow our children to participate democratically in the activities designed to educate them.[58]

Further, the tenor of alternative, non-authoritarian modes of education is deliberately caring as well as democratic and respectful, according to these scholars. Ron Miller invokes Riane Eisler's conception of partnership education to explore this idea.[59] Peace education, Miller explains, depends upon a process of learning that is integrated throughout the educational setting rather than one that adds topical modules to an otherwise unchanged curriculum:

> Partnership education must involve a partnership process of learning, a more respectful and caring relationship between teachers and learners, as well as between peers – both adults and children. Without this essential element, bringing peace education into schools as an isolated unit of curriculum is self-defeating.[60]

Peace educators emphasize the importance of cultivating empathetic, critical thinking skills, building on the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, Parker Palmer, and bell hooks, among others. Like Noddings, Miller questions the goals and approach of our current educational system, also framing his comments within the context of Dewey's educational philosophy:

> The way *education* has been understood for many centuries, as the transmission of a shared social reality, is obsolete and inadequate for addressing the severe challenges of our time. As John Dewey observed more than a century ago, the challenges of modernity ought to cause us to radically rethink the purpose and process of education. To sustain a democratic culture in the face of rapid change and extreme conflict, he argued, requires the cultivation of critical, not merely technical, intelligence. Rather than instilling obedience and conformity, education for modern times must enable individuals to think deeply and creatively, and to work collaboratively as students and citizens to alter social practices that hinder their freedom or welfare. Education, he asserted, cannot simply look to the past

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[58] Nel Noddings, "Foreword," in *Educating for a Culture of Peace*, edited by Riane Eisler and Ron Miller, foreword by Nel Noddings (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2004), 3.
[59] See Riane Eisler, "Education for a Culture of Peace," in *Educating for a Culture of Peace*.
[60] Ron Miller, "Introduction," in *Educating for a Culture of Peace*.Miller, 9.

but must be responsive to the pressing issues and dilemmas of a changing world. An education that is relevant to our time cannot simply aim for *transmission*, but must support cultural *reconstruction* or *transformation.*" [61]

Different forms of education and skills are necessary to support the project of cultural transformation, Miller argues. Recommendations from sustainability and peace theorists emphasize educational approaches that specifically encourage the critical thinking skills, motivation, and commitment needed to pursue solutions for current sustainability problems.

The dissolution of "radical distinctions," mentioned earlier by Orr, includes those not only between teacher and student but also between the school and the community. Service-learning projects involve students outside the classroom in projects within the community; the question of social capacity prompts consideration of ways to foster whole-systems thinking and environmental knowledge more widely within the larger community. Sterling, for instance, connects less-than-hoped for environmental outcomes with social commitment, suggesting a need to more fully involve the larger community:

> Many practitioners in environmental education are disappointed at its relative lack of impact over the last decades. But we have to recognize that its values, theory and practice are affected, influenced and constrained by the systems within which it is embedded, these being the broader educational system, and in turn, this within the larger social system. [62]

Community members, like students in environmental classrooms, may find the enormity of environmental problems overwhelming, particularly in the absence of apparent means to take action; efforts to spark community engagement, which bring to mind Norton's recommendations concerning communal negotiation of values, may be most effective

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[61] Ibid., 2.
[62] Sterling, 31. Sterling also notes: "If 'education for sustainable development' becomes assimilated within a mainstream which otherwise remains unaffected, we shall have achieved little… Education is not about realizing production but realizing potential, not building competitive league tables but building human and social capacity." Ibid.,18.

when approached constructively. Betsy Taylor, for instance, warns that many may find

perceptions of seemingly insurmountable environmental problems discouraging:

> While political leaders play to the public's desire for easy fixes,
> environmentalists err in the opposite direction, provoking undue distress by
> constantly describing ecological devastation and human suffering. People turn
> away from these overwhelmingly negative messages.[63]

Approaches that involve community members in environmental projects, however,

provide the opportunity to overcome inertia through tangible action. Shutkin describes

an emerging civic environmental movement, which extends beyond policy and legal

measures to galvanize the support and involvement of community members:

> Civic environmental strategies take different forms: urban agriculture and
> brownfields redevelopment; transit-based development and waterfront restoration;
> conservation-based development and rural land preservation; suburban open space
> protection, smart growth planning, and indicators of sustainability. These
> strategies suggest a realignment of environmental protection strategies away from
> a purely law-based, law-driven, and professional model to one in which a diverse
> group of citizens, environmentalists, government officials, and businesspeople
> collectively become the experts and implementers.[64]

These community discussions should ensure the democratic participation of the entire

community, Shutkin stresses. The involvement of lower-income and communities of

color in environmental decision-making is particularly necessary because of the

disproportionate environmental harms suffered by these communities. Currently,

however, too little attention is devoted to sustainability problems in general, and many or

most people remain in denial about their reality and seriousness, according to Taylor. For

these reasons, she proposes innovative approaches to increase the level of community

participation:

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[63]Betsy Taylor, *Sustainable Planet: Solutions for the 21st Century.* Edited by Juliet Schor and Betsy Taylor (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003), 237.

[64]William A. Shutkin, *The Land That Could Be: Environmentalism and Democracy in the Twenty-First Century.* Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2000), 238.

> Sustainability proponents need a noncommercial vehicle for news, feature stories, and family entertainment. Universities, public schools, nonprofit groups, and private companies should pool resources to purchase and launch a national cable channel devoted to commercial-free programming for a better world.[65]

Overall, these perspectives suggest bi-directional approaches to engagement that involve students outside the classroom within the community and educational approaches that extend beyond the classroom to include the larger community.

Sustainability educators call for "deeper" approaches to education, bringing to mind Naess's distinction between deep and shallow ecology.[66] This deeper education prioritizes interdisciplinary, whole systems thinking skills within democratic, experientially-based classrooms. Like sustainability scholars, peace educators also draw attention to the need for critical thinking approaches, further stressing the importance of caring relationships within the classroom and critical pedagogical approaches that address dehumanizing and dominating attitudes.

This project suggests an additional dimension of sustainability education, which builds upon critical, systems thinking skills to strengthen knowledge of motivation, meaning, and power relations.[67] This component addresses a social psychology of domination: a philosophy of belief that considers the psychological effects of sociological conditioning, including the internalization of unsustainable assumptions and beliefs. Existentialist philosophy and existential analysis provide an effective framework for learning of this sort, offering a certain distance from the effects of conditioning on individuals and social groups. The process of existential analysis resembles a directed cultural anthropology or social narrative, which is concerned here with the question of

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[65] Taylor, 240.
[66] See Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep."
[67] Existential blindness or denial resists acknowledgement of the relevance of power relations to sustainability topics.

sustainable culture. Existential analysis utilizes an existentialist model of authenticity

and its consideration of freedom and power relations to structure an interdisciplinary

analysis of numerous categories of social life history.[68]   This educational approach

encourages individuals to reflect on existing cultural patterns, mindsets, and power

relations, the ways they have developed, and their relationship to sustainable or

unsustainable outcomes. In addition, as it steps through multi-disciplinary research, this

learning process affords students the opportunity to consider and reflect upon the

formation of their own assumptions and beliefs.[69]

Existential psychotherapy offers a precedent for what might be viewed as an

individual educational project. In the clinical setting, existential analysis promotes

insight concerning limitation of potentiality by exploring social-psychological realities

and consideration of meaning. The discussion of meaning, Frankl argues, must be also

addressed within our current education system:

> The main manifestations of existential frustration – boredom and apathy – have
> become a challenge to education as well as to psychiatry. In an age of the
> existential vacuum, we have said, education must not confine itself to, and content
> itself with, transmitting traditions and knowledge, but rather it must refine man's
> capacity to find those unique meanings which are not affected by the crumbling of
> universal values. This human capacity to find meaning hidden in unique
> situations is conscience. Thus education must equip man with the means to find
> meanings. Instead, education often adds to the existential vacuum. The students'
> sense of emptiness and meaninglessness is reinforced by the way in which
> scientific findings are presented to them, by the reductionist way, that is. The
> students are exposed to an indoctrination along the lines of a mechanistic theory
> of man plus a relativistic philosophy of life.[70]

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[68] These categories may include childrearing practices; gender ideology and socialization; social experience related to race, class, sexuality, and nationality; educational approaches; media and the arts; as well as contemporary social norms, values, and political contexts encouraging authoritarianism, conformity, and/or apathy.

[69] The approach anticipates possible resistance, denial, or blindness that inhibits recognition of cultural assumptions and beliefs within an uplifting existentialist context that affirms individual and collective freedom.

[70] Frankl, 85.

Frankl's reflections raise the question of how to "equip man with the means to find meanings."

The existential analytical approach explored here promotes "deeper," reflective awareness of the social conditions influencing the development of sustainable versus unsustainable power relations. This approach examines interdisciplinary research concerning power dynamics -- with attention to the relations between oppression, violence, and environmental degradation -- as well as motivation, including desire for advantage, fear of vulnerability, and how they translate into behavior and power relations. The process, by stepping through common categories of situated social life experience, encourages reflection, self-awareness, and "conscience," critical to decision-making.

Finally, existential analysis relies on deep ecological perspectives of interconnection and interdependency that illuminate the ideologies of separation and othering that underpin social oppressions and the domination of nature. As they describe the philosophy of self-realization, Devall and Sessions note that "a nurturing, non-dominating society can help in the 'real work' of becoming a whole person. The 'real work' can be summarized symbolically as the realization of 'self-in-Self' where 'Self' stands for organic wholeness."[71] An ethic of sustainability, grounded upon deep ecological principles of interconnection as "self-in-Self," offers a secular moral basis upon which to explore meaning and conscience within educational programs, as well as within sustainable leadership models applicable to business and community organization.

Reflections on this Project

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[71] Devall & Sessions, 67.

This literature review provides information in the areas of sustainability ethics, existential analysis, and sustainable education that is related to the topic of this dissertation. Dynamic systems analyses have been applied to the topic of sustainability, although less attention has been devoted to the topic of power relations and irrational influences on decision-making, which is the focus of this project. Val Plumwood, in her discussion of the contemporary ecological crisis, argues that our options for analysis need not rely only on rational approaches but may also draw on our knowledge of history, psychology, and social context:

> We should not be persuaded to think of decisions as the dilemmas of stripped-down actors in rational choice scenarios, prisoners of the 'purely rational,' abstract constructs assumed to know nothing of the social forces and past trajectory which have produced their problems. Our capacity to gain insight from understanding our social context, to learn from self-critical perspectives on the past and to allow for our own limitations of vision, is still one of our best hopes for creative change and survival.[72]

Existential analysis offers an alternative approach to sustainability analysis, situated within the continental philosophical tradition.[73] In particular, existential analysis provides a framework for critical analysis of social-psychological factors associated with behavior, motivation, and power relations that, along with economic and political realities, influence our pursuit of workable participatory democracy.

"Meaning is what is meant," Frankl suggests, "be it by a person who asks me a question, or by a situation which, too, implies a question and calls for an answer."[74] We face a global ecological crisis that serves as a mirror, reflecting back our ways of thinking, perceiving, behaving: our unsustainable mindset. We glance at looming disasters and continue down our mad, self-destructive path. This sounds like psychosis

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[72] Val Plumwood, *Environmental Culture: The ecological crisis of reason* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 10.
[73] Donnella Meadows claims that, "living successfully in a world of systems requires our full humanity – our rationality, our ability to sort out truth from falsehood, our intuition, our compassion, our vision, and our morality."Meadows, 170.
[74] Frankl, 62.

or denial. When we encounter individuals who are evidently self-destructive, we say

they are in denial; they resist what they most need to know.

     Much has been written about power, motivation, and meaning. Through

multidisciplinary scholarship, connections have been made between social attitudes,

values, gender, violence, and environmental degradation. Yet we avoid, resist, or reject

the meaning of this research, apparently preferring to stand immobilized in front of

catastrophe, blind, mute, in denial, or to blithely carry on with our self-destructive

behavior. This is big existential denial. This project relies on existential analysis as a

method to assess interdisciplinary research about power as a means to approach this

existential blindness.

Chapter Three: Theoretical Foundations

The vibrant, growing field of sustainability is as much about potentiality and flourishing as it is about repair and restoration of human culture and the natural world. As a philosophy of freedom and engagement, existentialism offers a vital context within which to analyze current situations and consider possible futures. Existentialist philosophy shares themes with the philosophy of deep ecology, including interconnection, interdependence, and respect for diversity, as well as interest in potentiality and self-realization. Within an ethical framework shaped by these philosophies, I conceptualize sustainable forms of power, which provide a basis upon which to assess power relations. Chapter Three provides theoretical foundations for the method of existential analysis and a new model of sustainability ethics that is developed and articulated throughout this project. These foundations support the application of existential analysis in Chapter Four, systems analysis in Chapter Five, and educational approach in Chapter Six.

To begin with, I first connect existential analysis with the field of sustainability ethics by identifying resonances between existentialism and the philosophy of deep ecology. I then draw upon these philosophies to conceptualize sustainable forms of power and unsustainable power relations. Further, I construct an "existential lens," which is utilized in subsequent chapters for the project's existential analysis of power relations. I devise the lens by integrating theoretical aspects of existentialism and religious studies models. It draws first upon Jean-Paul Sartre's descriptions of power relations, including authenticity, bad faith, sadism, and masochism. Rene Girard's explications of mimetic conformity and scapegoating further concretize these dynamics

for the group context. Finally, de Beauvoir's notion of generosity, Cynthia's Willett's

parental gaze, and Rebecca Adams's conception of love offer important corrections to the

possibilities of power relations proposed by Sartre and Girard. The use of this lens within

existential analysis offers a new way of looking at power relations across categories of

critical social theory as the basis for meaningful comparative analysis. Finally, the

chapter relies upon aspects of existentialism, deep ecology, religious studies, and

environmental political philosophy to establish a foundation for the new model of

sustainability ethics derived throughout this project.

Existentialism

Existentialism is concerned with grasping existence in its entirety.[1] Like deep

ecology, existentialism upholds interconnection and interdependence versus dualist

ideologies.[2] For instance, the philosophy of deep ecology connects social and

environmental interests, while existentialism embraces a synthesis of rationality and

emotion. Moreover, just as deep ecology stresses the significance of diversity and

differentiation within an interconnected whole, existentialism considers the unique

individual within the larger social and historical context.[3] Finally, deep ecological views

of self-realization as the pursuit of potentiality mirror existentialist descriptions of

creativity, generosity, and authenticity.[4] These productive forms of power may be

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[1] See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness.* Translated and with an introduction by Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1984); Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science.* Translated, with Commentary, by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1974); Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008).

[2] Emmy Van Deurzen observes: "A person cannot be an island – and even an island would still have seas lapping at its strands and birds and sea creatures visiting from other parts. We are never but an aspect, an element, a part of a wider context. We are one of the channels through which life flows. We are a vessel through which life manifests. As such we are always in relation, always in context, always connected to what is around us, always defined by what we associate with. Relationship is essential to our very survival and inspires everything we are and do." Emmy van Deurzan, *Everyday Mysteries: Existential Dimensions of Psychotherapy* (New York:Routledge, 1997), 95.

[3] See Arne Naess, "Self Realization", in *Deep Ecology for the Twenty-first Century*. Edited by George Sessions (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1995); Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science.*

[4] See Naess; Nietzsche; Simone de Beauvoir, *The Ethics of Ambiguity.* Translated from the French by Bernard Frechtman (New York: Kensington Publishing Corp., 1976); Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*.

contrasted with unsustainable power relations that constrain freedom and potentiality.[5] I

argue that the philosophies of deep ecology and existentialism together present a

compelling foundation for a philosophy of sustainability, a new model of sustainability

ethics, and analysis of sustainability. Deep ecology contributes to the greening of

existentialism through its emphasis on the natural world; existentialism adds to

sustainability discussions an illumination of freedom, authentic awareness, and ethical

responsibility to act in the world.

Existentialism emerged in the 19th century with the work of Soren Kierkegaard,

who is retrospectively regarded as the first existentialist philosopher.[6] The philosophy's

attention to subjective human experience, passion, and meaning offers a productive

context for social psychological investigation of motivation and behavior. Existentialist

commitment to creativity and power is apparent through the writings of its leading

figures, including Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre,

Simone de Beauvoir, and Albert Camus, among others.[7]

Existentialism's ardent defense of freedom is vividly conveyed through

Nietzsche's description of the "death of God." This concept symbolizes the questioning

and rejection of traditional absolutes and moralities as governing rules of life and

behavior.[8] The "death of God," Nietzsche claims, is a disorienting event. Initially

individuals may feel alone and "forlorn" in the face of apparent meaninglessness. This

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[5] Existentialist notions of authenticity, bad faith, and related concepts provide categories of analysis with which to consider unsustainable power relations.

[6] See Charles Guignon and Derk Pereboom, eds, *Existentialism: Basic Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1995).

[7] See Guignon and Pereboom.

[8] In the aftermath of the "death of God," we are left to struggle alone with our choices. This struggle, Nietzsche explains, gives rise to a sense of anguish: "The madman sprang into their midst and transfixed them with his gaze. 'Where has God gone?' he cried, 'I'll tell you where! We've killed him you and I! … What were we doing when we unchained this Earth from its sun? Now where is it going? Where are we moving? Away from all suns? Aren't we falling constantly? … God is dead! God remains dead! And wehave killed him!" Nietzsche, "The Gay Science," in *Existentialism: Basic Writings*, Edited by Charles Guignon & Derk Pereboom (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1995), 134.

description of anguish anticipates Sartre's discussion of freedom: Sartre clarifies that "everything is permissible if God does not exist, and as a result man is forlorn, because neither within him nor without does he find anything to cling to."[9] These views, however, overlook the significance of this alternate perspective: the possibility of freedom. While the death of God leaves a vacuum, or the "nothingness" suggested by the title of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness,* this nothingness allows for the possibility of creativity and freedom. Nietzsche, for instance, finds the prospect invigorating:

> Are we perhaps still too concerned with the *immediate consequences* of this event? After all, these immediate consequences, its consequences for *us*, are, contrary to what one might expect, not at all sad and gloomy, but rather like a new kind of light that is hard to describe, a new kind of happiness… At last our ships may set out again, set out towards every danger. Every daring act of the knower is allowed again. The sea, *our* sea lies open there again; maybe there was never before such an 'open sea.'[10]

This existentialist metaphor distinguishes our responsibility for freedom. Sartre claims that "*existence precedes essence"* or that we become what we choose to make of ourselves.[11] Freedom applies equally to choice of action and character. Nietzsche suggests an artistic, creative approach:

> One thing is needful. – 'Giving style' to one's character – a great and rare art! It is practiced by those who survey everything that their nature offers in the way of strengths and weaknesses, and then fit them all into an artistic plan, until each thing appears as art and reason, and even the weakness charms the eye. Here a great mass of second nature has been added, there a piece of first nature has been removed – in both cases, through long practice and daily work.[12]

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[9] Sartre, 274.

[10] Nietzsche, "The Gay Science," 41.

[11] Sartre writes that "man is nothing else but what he makes of himself." Jean-Paul Sartre, "The Humanism of Existentialism," in *Existentialism: Basic Writings,* Edited by Charles Guignon and Derk Pereboom (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1995), 271. Moreover, we are left with the question of how and what to choose. Nietzsche posits a thought experiment, "the eternal recurrence of the same," through which he explores the notion that anything that has ever happened will repeat itself ad infinitum. Rather than a fatalistic doctrine, the "eternal recurrence of the same" emphasizes the importance of the choices we make about our lives, challenging us to consider what we would choose if we knew we would live this moment and this life again and again. Nietzsche exclaims: "The question in each and every thing, 'Do you will this once more and countless time more?" would lie as the heaviest weight upon your acts! Or how benevolent would you have to become toward yourself and toward life in order to long for nothing more ardently than for this ultimate eternal sanction and seal?" Nietzsche, "The Gay Science," 140.

[12] Ibid, 136.

The barometer for choice becomes our desire and the meaning we seek through desire; the discussion of freedom thereby leads to consideration of desire and meaning. Nietzsche's conception of the "death of God" conveys a loosening of dogmatic religious and social forces, which frees creativity as a form of spiritual insight and expression.

Existentialist thinkers, beginning with Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, have persistently called attention to the meaning-seeking, passionate dimension of human nature. Van Deurzen, for instance, stresses the significance of spirit and emotion to existential analysis:

> I, myself, ended up in this neck of the ideological woods [existential analysis], because it seemed to be the only approach that combined rationality with passion. It appealed as much to my intellect as to my longing for something beyond the ordinary and trivial. The rationalistic alternatives… are not open to people's experience of the call of the sacred and to their secret longings, which are behind much of their so-called irrational behaviour.[13]

This existentialist concern with spirit and meaning also reflects ecological articulations of interconnection and consciousness.[14] Devall and Sessions explain that a spiritual worldview naturally follows from the philosophy of deep ecology, observing that "the search for deep ecological consciousness is the search for a more objective consciousness

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[13] Van Duerzen elaborates: "The existential view is one that allows one to explore and investigate, and it is therefore eminently attractive to post-scientific man in search of new meaning. Psychoanalysis and Marxism were also good candidates to fill the twentieth-century meaning vacuum, the former by focusing the person on the self in order to replete the emptiness, the latter by focusing on the socio-political dimension. Existential exploration addresses a more spiritual dimension of insecurity as it is directly about the finding of meaning... It addresses moral issues head on and it allows people to come to grips with meaning." Van Deurzen, 124.

[14] Contemporary scientific research findings concerning consciousness reflect the sense of underlying interconnection explored by environmental philosophers, existentialists, and religious scholars. Scientific descriptions of consciousness increasingly resemble philosophical descriptions of *being* and *nothingness*, of the being that emerges from and yet remains part of nothingness. Erwin Schrodinger observes that "the 'real world around us' and 'we ourselves,' i.e., our minds, are made up of the same building material, the two consist of the same bricks, as it were, only arranged in a different order – sense perceptions, memory images, imagination, thought. It needs, of course, some reflexion, but one easily falls in with the fact that matter is composed of these elements and nothing else. Moreover, imagination and thought take an increasingly important part (as against crude sense-perception), as science, knowledge of nature, progresses" Erwin Schrodinger, *Nature and the Greeks* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1945), 91. Robert Jahn, director of the thirty-year Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research Laboratory project investigating consciousness, compares recent research of connections between thought and materiality with Arthur Schopenhauer's claim that "the intellect and matter are correlatives, in other words, the one exists only for the other; both stand and fall together; the one is only the other's reflex. They are in fact really one and the same thing, considered from two opposite points of view." Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation: Volume 2* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1966), 15-16. Consciousness is thus positioned as the ground of all being. Quantum physics further describes building blocks of matter as possibilities of consciousness, integrating freedom and human nature within a physics of possibility. See also Robert G. Jahn and Brenda J. Dunne, *Margins of Reality: The Role of Consciousness in the Physical World* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1987).

and state of being."[15] Their reflections upon the deep ecological consciousness that

connects material and spiritual aspects of reality resemble some teachings of religious

scholars. Walter Wink, for instance, claims that successful attempts to transform social

institutions depend upon appreciation of their spiritual form:

> Any attempt to transform a social system without addressing both its spirituality
> and its outer forms is doomed to failure. Only by confronting the spirituality of
> an institution and its concretions can the total entity be transformed, and that
> requires a kind of spiritual discernment and praxis that the materialistic ethos in
> which we live knows nothing about.[16]

In this regard, existentialist, religious studies and ecological scholars advocate integrative

approaches to analysis and action. These perspectives also clear up misunderstandings of

existentialism that link it with atheism. What is true is that there is no consensus of

religious affiliation among existentialist philosophers.[17] With its high esteem for

creativity, meaning, and passion, existentialism is a philosophy imbued with spiritual

sensibility.[18] Moreover, existentialism's lack of affiliation with any particular religion,

even as it upholds the search for meaning and the development of conscience, offers

needed flexibility in grappling with moral concerns that affect us all: this philosophy has

no need to supplant individual religious practices or beliefs. An ethic of sustainability

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[15] This quotation is drawn from the following longer passage: "Going beyond a narrowly materialist scientific understanding of reality, the spiritual and the material aspects of reality fuse together. While the leading intellectuals of the dominant worldview have tended to view religion as 'just superstition,' and have looked upon ancient spiritual practice and enlightenment, such as found in Zen Buddhism, as essentially subjective, the search for deep ecological consciousness is the search for a more objective consciousness and state of being." Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology* (Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 1985), 66. Further, ecological consciousness extends the meaning of community to encompass all being within the natural world; Devall and Sessions observe that "spiritual growth, or unfolding, begins when we cease to understand or see ourselves as isolated and narrow competing egos and begin to identify with other humans from our family and friends to, eventually, our species. But the deep ecology sense of self requires a further maturity and growth, an identification which goes beyond humanity to include the nonhuman world." Devall and Sessions, 67.
[16] Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 10.
[17] For instance, Kierkegaard, the "father" of existentialism, was a Christian existentialist philosopher. Sartre identified himself as an atheist (although his philosophy intersects with deep ecological interconnection). Further, Christian and Buddhist thought find common ground in existentialist and deep ecological views of interconnection and the relational/communal nature of interdependence and affiliation. See Guignon and Pereboom.
[18] Existentialism provides an appealing mid-ground between purely religious and purely secular approaches. Purely religious approaches may not in all cases safeguard against exclusionary beliefs and practices, the rationale behind separation of church and state. On the other hand, purely secular approaches may not adequately consider the human search for meaning and its role in human behavior, holistic perspectives concerning interconnected aspects of human experience, or possibilities of transcendence. Existentialism, however, provides a framework of thought that embraces interdisciplinary perspectives, upon which specific religious views or beliefs may rest.

that arises from ecological and existentialist principles of interconnection offers a religiously neutral ethical platform that encourages greater emphasis on fraternity and the common good within religious and public life.

Existentialism, then, is a philosophy of freedom and engagement that challenges individuals to choose and act in the world. Resting on the premise that "existence precedes essence," it provides responsibility for choices to the individual, allowing for the possibility of change and encouraging creativity. Moreover, it is a philosophy that embraces emotion, as well as aestheticism as embodied philosophical expression.[19] Many existentialist philosophers explore their ideas through plays, novels, and literature in addition to philosophical works.[20] These various methods reflect the creative nature of the philosophy. Although existentialism encourages individual creativity and responsibility, it is more than an individualistic philosophy. The freedom of the Self involves the freedom of the Other. An "ethic of freedom" that preserves the freedom of Self and Other depends upon an investigation of relations with others as well as historical and social constraints to freedom.

Thus existentialism offers a useful framework for analysis of sustainability. Its emphasis on underlying unity encourages non-dual views of humanity and natural reality. In addition, it suggests an interdisciplinary method that I adapt and develop here as a systems approach to study rational and irrational aspects of human nature and behavior. Such an approach allows for analysis of social psychological factors related to human motivation: an existential integration of rationality-oriented analysis, reflected in the Cartesian supposition, "I think, therefore I am," with its emotional complement, which

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[19] Aestheticism itself reflects a synthesis of in-itself and for-itself.
[20] For instance, see Sartre, *Being and Nothingness;* Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New York: New Directions, 2007); Jean-Paul Sartre, *No Exit and Three Other Plays* (New York: Vintage, 1989).

may be summed up, "I feel, therefore I do." Existentialism represents an ecological philosophy that considers the individual and community situated within a particular social-historical context as well as within the larger human-natural world. Above all, a philosophy of sustainability shaped by deep ecology and existentialism is concerned with the meaning of our situation and insists upon the possibility of transformation.

Sustainable Forms of Power

The study of sustainability may be viewed as a study of potentiality and of the conditions enabling social and environmental flourishing. Interest in potentiality prompts consideration of distinctions between sustainable forms of power and unsustainable power relations. I draw upon the philosophies of existentialism and deep ecology to define and conceptualize sustainable and unsustainable forms of power. Commitment to interconnection clarifies linkages between dualistic views and issues of freedom, domination, and environmental degradation.

To begin with, I first offer a number of preliminary definitions, which I then further conceptualize. I take sustainable forms of power to be those that preserve and uphold freedom. They include power-to as vitality, creativity, and generosity as well as power-with as transformative power or solidarity.[21] I further view domination (power-over) and conformity (power-from) as unsustainable power relations. "Unsustainable outcomes," referred to throughout this project, are those associated with violence to the freedom of self, other, or nature. "Unsustainable behaviors" reflect dominating, conforming, or apathetic attitudes that both stem from and give rise to limitations of freedom.

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[21] Theories of nonviolence and environmental activism represent examples of "power-with."

My conceptualization of sustainable forms of power resonates with aspects of the writings of existentialist and environmental philosophers, notably Sartre, de Beauvoir, Nietzsche, and Naess. Relevant forms of power range from generous relations with others, which depend upon the authenticity of participants, to a productive sense of power that impresses itself upon the world. Authenticity, for Sartre, involves the expression of freedom within given constraints. Sartre's meaning of authenticity rests upon his philosophical explanations of freedom and consciousness; he explores being in relation to the nothingness that presents the possibility of freedom.[22] Sartre claims that human consciousness causes the move from being to non-being -- "Man is the being through whom nothingness comes to the world" -- and that this capability of consciousness is its source of freedom:

> Man's relation with being is that he can modify it… Descartes following the Stoics has given a name to this possibility which human reality has to secrete a nothingness that isolates it – it is *freedom.*[23]

Following Hegel, Sartre refers to two entangled aspects of being, the in-itself and for-itself. The in-itself of human *being* is associated with the givenness of existence as being-in-the world, the *facticity* of specific qualities and situated histories. Consciousness extends beyond factical being-in-itself, however, because of its awareness of itself as consciousness.[24] The For-itself is the reflective aspect of being that is aware of itself as consciousness, as well as of itself as *transcendence*, its possibility of transcending itself as being-in-itself. The For-itself not only presents the means of

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[22] Sartre describes nothingness as a state of non-being encompassed by being: "Being is prior to nothingness and establishes the ground for it. By this we must understand not only that being has a logical precedence over nothingness but also that it is from being that nothingness derives concretely its efficacy. This is what we mean when we say that *nothingness haunts being… Non-being exists only on the surface of being."* Sartre, Jean-Paul, *Being and Nothingness,* 49.

[23] Ibid., 59, 60.

[24] Sartre explains that "consciousness is a being such that in its being, its being is in question in so far as this being implies a being other than itself." Ibid, 24.

manifesting intentions, but also reveals and assigns meaning to the objects of consciousness.[25]

Identity as a process of always becoming is fueled by the insatiable desires of the for-itself. However, this synthetic connection of in-itself and for-itself, which forms a "hiatus at the very core of the idea of being," is unstable, never resolving into an ultimate unity.[26] Freedom arises from the uncollapsible distance between in-itself and for-itself that presents the possibility of becoming other than what we are. Moreover, given that this tension exists within the structure of consciousness, humans are "*condemned to be free*." Sartre claims that "man does not exist *first* in order to be free *subsequently*; there is no difference between the being of man and his *being-free*."[27] While "existence precedes essence," our capacity for freedom underlies existence itself. Our option, according to Sartre, is to live in the tension between in-itself and for-itself with awareness and passion.

Authenticity exists when the tension between in-itself and for-itself is temporarily resolved through an integration of the aspects of consciousness, Sartre claims. It depends upon an awareness of both the facticity of the in-itself -- what actually *is* in relation to being in the world -- and the transcendent quality of the for-itself -- the possibility of surpassing being-in-itself. Authenticity, then, represents a balance between embracing facticity (or the In-Itself) -- that about us that is fixed, such as our bodies, history, past

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[25] These "radically distinct modes of being" are inevitably entangled with one another, each giving rise to the other. Sartre muses: "The for-itself without the in-itself is a kind of abstraction; it could not exist any more than a color could exist without form or a sound without pitch and without timber. A consciousness which would be consciousness of nothing would be an absolute nothing. But if consciousness is bound to the in-itself by an internal relation, doesn't this mean that it is articulated with the in-itself so as to constitute a totality, and is it not this totality which would be given the name being or reality?" Ibid., 790. What is this "internal relation" connecting the in-itself and for-itself, given that the in-itself contains within it the for-itself? Sartre maintains that the for-itself provides the connection: "The for-itself and the In-itself are reunited by a synthetic connection which is nothing other than the For-itself itself. The For-itself, in fact, is nothing but the pure nihilation of the In-itself; it is like a hole in being at the heart of Being." Ibid., 785.
[26] Ibid., 790.
[27] Ibid., 60.

experiences, and constraints -- and transcendence (or the For-Itself) --our freedom and capability to choose and create. The authentic state is achieved through acknowledgement of the real (versus assumed or perceived) constraints of the in-itself as well as of the freedom to choose within these constraints, a tenuous balance.

Sartre's authenticity represents a balanced state of being that does not seek to dominate nor blindly conform, introducing the discussion of social relations. De Beauvoir emphasizes relational forms of authenticity. [28] De Beauvoir's notion of "generosity" links authenticity with mutuality while her "appeal" calls for action in the world.[29] Generosity provides a relational sense of authenticity that preserves the freedom of Self and Other;[30] de Beauvoir anticipates Binswanger's theory of inter-subjectivity, emphasizing generosity and reciprocity as integral qualities of authentic relationship.[31] De Beauvoir suggests the possibility of engaging the other through an "appeal" that respects the freedom of the other while at the same time distinguishing individual and social constraints.

Nietzsche and Naess, on the other hand, describe generative forms of power that engage the potentialities of the self. Nietzsche's philosophy celebrates a vital sense of creative power that impresses itself on the world. As mentioned earlier, Nietzsche suggests an artistic approach to the fashioning of one's life and one's character, claiming,

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[28] Heidegger also suggests a relational form of authenticity. Heidegger associates authenticity with "being-in-the-world," emphasizing the individual's engagement with the social totality. See Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008). Our "being-in-the-world" is associated with care, understood in the sense of reaching out to engage with the world. Heidegger further describes disclosure and *aletheia,* which may be viewed as expressions of productive power. World disclosure, for Heidegger, involves disclosure of the given world as well as of additional contexts of meaning, which are related to possibilities associated with transcendence. Heidegger's conceptualization of *aletheia,* associated with world disclosure, reflects a state of revealing truth even as it is obscured in "everydayness." Like de Beauvoir's generous appeal, Heidegger's care as engagement with the world establishes possibilities for solidarity.

[29] See Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex (*New York: Random House, Inc., 1989); de Beauvoir, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*.

[30] De Beauvoir rejects Hegelian views of violence as the primordial ground of nature, associated with his one-way recognition by the other as the basis for the development of self-consciousness.

[31] See van Deurzen. Also, these notions may be applied to human relations with nature as well as social relations.

"One thing is needful. – 'Giving style' to one's character – a great and rare art![32] For Nietzsche, joy and desire serve as barometers for the deliberation of choices and cultivation of authentic self-expression. His vigorous defense of individual self expression and engagement with the world, however, is not to be understood as an exclusively self-oriented preoccupation but as a call to acknowledge and empower individual passions, desires, and intuitions, even in the face of structured realities that deny or constrain their expression.[33]

Naess introduces the notion of "self-realization" within his discussions of the philosophy of deep ecology.[34] Self-realization is associated with potentiality, flourishing, and connection with the larger natural world. "'Realizing inherent potentialities,'" Naess explains, "is one of the good, less-than-ten-word, clarifications of 'self-realization.'"[35] Invoking Nietzsche's sense of joyful creativity, Naess relates that "self-realization involves experiences of the infinitely rich joyful aspect of reality."[36] Fulfilling one's unique potentiality, then, allows for the "deepening" of the self:

> The meaning of life, and the joy we experience in living, is increased through increased self-realization; that is, through the fulfillment of potentials each of us has, but which are never exactly the same for any two living beings. Whatever the differences between beings, nevertheless, increased self-realization implies a broadening and deepening of the self.[37]

Naess's ideas of self-realization as growth toward potentiality are linked with his views of maturity. Self-realization guides the maturity of the self beyond an individual or

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[32] Nietzsche, 136.

[33] Van Deurzen expresses a similar sentiment about the value of authentic self-cultivation, claiming that, "In the same way in which we do violence to the earth, we often do violence to our own bodies… many of us are so preoccupied with attempting to approximate somebody else's blueprint that we fail to be true to our own and, tragically, fail to learn the art of playing our own instrument… Harmony can only be achieved if everyone is committed to making music on their particular instrument in the best possible way… The art is to discover what talents one has been given and to make the most of what one is, rather than try to be what one is not." Van Deurzan, 107.

[34] See Naess.

[35] Naess, 229. Moreover, a sense of thriving, over and above simply surviving, is significant to the meaning of self-realization; Naess explains that, "survival is only a necessary condition, not a sufficient condition of self-realization." Ibid., 230.

[36] Ibid., 237.

[37] Ibid., 226.

socially-related focus to a sense of belonging and place within one's relationship with the

natural world:

> The maturity of the self has been considered to develop through three stages: from ego to social self (comprising the ego), and from social self to a metaphysical self (comprising the social self). But in this conception of the maturity of the self, Nature is largely left out. Our immediate environment… and the identification with nonhuman living beings are largely ignored. Therefore, I tentatively introduce… the concept of ecological self. We may be said to be in, and of, Nature from the very beginning of our selves. Society and human relationships are important, but our self is much richer in its constitutive relationships. These relationships are not only those we have with other humans and the human community.[38]

Self-realization connects self with Self; the notion of the ecological self provides a

relational sense of identity rooted within the larger natural world.

Thus my conceptualization of sustainable forms of power resonates with the

philosophies of existentialist and environmental philosophers. Nietzsche celebrates the

power of creativity in the sense of joyfully expressing one's (empowered) will, while

Naess introduces "self-realization," associated with the potentiality of the human-natural

world. Sartre's notion of authenticity provides the opportunity for authentic relations; de

Beauvoir's generous appeal establishes possibilities for solidarity. Overall, sustainable

forms of power are associated with generous ways of being, as well as a vitality that

encourages the flourishing of "self" and "Self." The category of sustainability itself may

be viewed as the collective self-realization of individual, humanity, and natural world.

Unsustainable Power Relations

The method of existential analysis I am concerned to develop in this project offers

a way to assess social conditions for insight into sources of bad faith, which leads to

unsustainable power relations expressed as domination, conformity, apathy, and

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[38] Ibid., 226.

environmental degradation. I construct an existential "lens" for my application of existential analysis by integrating theoretical aspects of existentialism and religious studies models. In the next chapter, I apply this lens -- which includes notions of authenticity, bad faith, sadism, masochism, mimetic conformity, scapegoating, generosity, and love -- as a yardstick for analysis of various areas of critical social theory, namely, childrearing, gender, race, and religion. This lens thus represents a philosophical model of power relations for use within an adapted form of existential analysis. In the following sections, I establish the theoretical foundations for this lens, relying upon the philosophies of Sartre, Girard, de Beauvoir, Cynthia Willett, and Rebecca Adams.[39]

Founded upon an existentialist appreciation of freedom, this lens integrates consideration of threats to freedom posed by social experience and the ways that internalized constraints to freedom lead eventually to unsustainable power relations. I take the maturity of authenticity as the underlying basis for sustainable relations and identify bad faith as the conditioned state that jeopardizes relations. According to this new model, bad faith leads to Sartre's sadism and masochism or, from an alternative subjective perspective, Girard's scapegoating and mimetic conformity. I draw upon the philosophies of de Beauvoir, Willett, and Adams to counter these threats; their compelling theoretical correctives reposition this model to uphold prospects for sustainable relations, overlooked or underemphasized by Sartre and Girard.

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[39] This project relies upon these theorists because their philosophies productively contribute to the social psychological framework of existential analysis and to the systems approach developed and employed here, although other theorists, such as Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault, contribute significantly to analyses of violence and power. For instance, Arendt distinguishes power, strength, authority, force, and violence in *On Violence*. Her thesis is that a lack of power or a sense of losing power motivates violence as a means to maintain power. While Arendt analyzes the political situation, this project is primarily interested in social dynamics underlying social psychological causes, as well as blindness concerning these causes, rather than analysis of the political situation per se. See Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (Fort Washington, PA: Harvest Book Company, 1970). Foucault illuminates the shaping and policing of human behavior through norms of appropriate behavior. His attention to the monitoring, watchful eye of society and its control through systems of power and knowledge demonstrates the ways social institutions structure behavior, with discipline representing a form of power. This project, however, is concerned with investigating social psychological factors associated with the emergence of domination or conformity through existential and systems analyses of critical social theories, including theories of childrearing, gender, race, and religion. See Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*. Translated by Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon, 1977).

Sustainable forms of power, which uphold freedom, stand in contrast to an oppressive sense of power that is associated with violence to the freedom of self, others, and nature. As introduced earlier, unsustainable forms of power are those that limit the potentiality of individuals, community, and the natural world. I further conceptualize unsustainable power relations by drawing from the philosophies of Sartre and Girard, which provide theoretical foundations for this new model of sustainability analysis.

Sartre introduces authenticity as a form of wisdom that recognizes existential freedom as well as actual constraints to that freedom, as described earlier. However, Sartre claims that individuals most often fall into a state of bad faith, which he portrays as a form of self-deception. This mode of deception or lying is differentiated from lying to another, which involves knowingly hiding the truth, since bad faith is the case of a lie that occurs within a single consciousness. Sartre explains that, "the one who practices bad faith is hiding a displeasing truth or presenting as truth a pleasing untruth. Bad faith then has in appearance the structure of falsehood. Only what changes everything is the fact that in bad faith it is from myself that I am hiding the truth."[40] Bad faith results from a denial of one of the aspects of consciousness -- a denial of transcendence or facticity -- or from confusing aspects of facticity and transcendence. A denial of transcendence is associated with preoccupation with being-in-itself, denying the possibility of transcending what *is*; a denial of facticity aligns with absolute freedom, denying what *is,* the real factors or contextual situations constraining freedom.

Attitudes of bad faith affect relations with others. Sartre introduces the concepts of sadism and masochism as expressions of bad faith and further defines them through discussions of the failure of desire in *Being and Nothingness* and bigotry in *Anti-Semite*

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[40]Sartre, *Being and Nothinginess*, 89.

in Jew.[41] Sadism and masochism follow from bad faith. Bad faith -- or the dis-

integration of in-itself and for-itself -- motivates the individual to appropriate or become

absorbed by the freedom of the other as a way to restore this balance and ground the in-

itself, comprised of being-in-itself and being-for-itself.[42] Sartre's philosophical

discussion defines the sadist as one who desires to appropriate, and the masochist as one

who desires to become absorbed by, the freedom of the Other. Both seek to resolve the

experience of bad faith and regain a foundation for "being" in the absence of their

authentic selfhood. To approach another in bad faith thus jeopardizes the possibility of

an authentic interaction, which depends upon preservation of the freedom of both self and

Other; at the same time inauthentic interactions foster bad faith.[43] This model of power

relations is depicted in Figure 1, below.
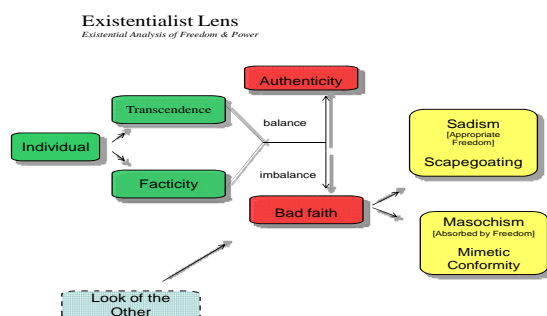
Figure 1: Existential Analysis: Unsustainable Power Relations

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[41]In his later and unfinished *Notebook for an Ethics,* Sartre projects attitudes of bad faith within a group context as "oppression" and "resignation." See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Notebooks for an Ethics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew.* Translated by George J. Becker and with an introduction by Michael Walzer (New York: Schocken Books, 1995); Sartre, *Being and Nothingness.*

[42]Could one seek to appropriate the other's freedom even when one is not acting from a place of bad faith? What of the case of what we might call "meddling," where one seeks to impose one's will on the other, or involve oneself with the other, apparently for the benefit of the other or on the pretense of the other's best interest. Meddling becomes violence to the freedom of the other when one persists in attempts to "help" or interfere after being rebuffed. De Beauvoir's "appeal" would not fall into the category of violence as long as the persuasion or appeal respects the freedom of the other. The situation is less clear when meddling involves an inauthentic other expressing bad faith through submission or conformity, e.g., powerless, helpless behavior. In this case, the danger is that acquiescence to meddling may be read as desire for the meddling. These situations require careful responsibility to ensure respect for the freedom of the other, in order to avoid violence and preserve the possibility of an authentic relation.

[43]Attempts to interact with the Other provide a basis upon which to integrate the For-itself with the In-itself in order to satisfy a desire for Being. Sartre associates the specific desires of the For-itself, including human interaction, with a fundamental desire for Being, as Hazel Barnes describes in the introduction to *Being and Nothingness,* "Moreover just as consciousness is the revelation of a particular object on the ground of the revelation of all of Being (as the world), so the For-itself exists its specific desires on the ground of a fundamental desire of Being. Each individual desire, however trivial, has meaning only in connection with one's fundamental relation to Being." Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* xxxii.

Sartre's description of the love relationship illustrates an inauthentic interaction with the Other. Sartre maintains a pessimistic view of the possibilities of sexual relationship, assuming inevitable bad faith on the part of the partners and thus projecting the devolution of desire into sadism or masochism, neither of which is able to yield the object of desire. On one hand, the masochist seeks to be assimilated by the Other's freedom as a way to found an integrated in-itself, comprised of being-in-itself and being-for-itself. On the other hand, the sadist attempts to appropriate the freedom of the Other because of bad faith as "anxiety in the face of the Other."[44] However to approach the Other as an objectified being, Sartre explains, precludes the possibility of attaining the freedom of the Other, "who has only images in his head of the sadist assaulting him."[45] Sartre connects a will to dominate, or spirit of domination, with desire for power (over) and sadism, and compares the sadist with a tyrant or dominator. Sartre's terms also apply to contemporary discussions of bullying or what we might call "toxic" styles of management. Sadism or domination (power-over) never attains its aim since it possesses no possibility of being freely seen by the other. Unresolved bad faith and desires for domination thus lead to persistent -- often addictive -- expressions of oppression.

Sartre clarifies his notions of sadism and masochism through a discussion of bigotry in *Anti-Semite and Jew*. This more complicated discussion of bad faith addresses group dynamics; it is also applicable to contemporary examples of objectification, oppression, internalized oppression, and environmental politics. The lens developed throughout this chapter captures the more dimensional sense of these existentialist

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[44] Sartre observes that "it is often said that this is done through the will to dominate or thirst for power. But this explanation is either vague or absurd. It is the will to dominate which should be explained first. This can not be prior to sadism as its foundation, for in the same way and on the same plane as sadism, it is born from anxiety in the face of the Other." Ibid., 523.

[45] Sartre explains that "what the sadist seeks to appropriate is in actuality the transcendent freedom of the victim. But this freedom remains on principle out of reach. And the more the sadist persists in treating the other as an instrument, the more this freedom escapes him… But since the sadist's goal is to recover his being-for-others, he misses it on principle, for the only Other with whom he has to do is the Other in the world who has only 'images in his head' of the sadist assaulting him." Ibid, 525.

categories, which is provided within this consideration of the group context. Here Sartre

relies on subject positions he calls "anti-Semite" and "Jew" rather than simply "sadist" or

"masochist." He uses these subject positions to demonstrate the ways that different forms

of bad faith are expressed by the same subject as well as the ways one's social situation

shapes the expression of bad faith. Sartre approaches the topic of anti-Semitism in post

World War II France by relying upon his philosophical categories to structure an

existential analysis of factors fostering the development of hatred. He considers the

effects of social factors such as economic situation, notions of homeland, and class

background on the development of bad faith, considering the ways these factors

contribute to states of insecurity.

Sartre investigates the motivations and behaviors of the "anti-Semite" and

"inauthentic Jew." Like the sadist, the anti-Semite's oppressive attitude toward the Jew is

grounded in a fear of liberty, change, and responsibility:

> We are now in a position to understand the anti-Semite. He is a man who is
> afraid. Not of the Jews, to be sure, but of himself, of his own consciousness, of
> his liberty, of his instincts, of his responsibilities, of solitariness, of change, of
> society, and of the world – of everything except the Jews.[46]

While the anti-Semite's bigotry is focused on the Jew, Sartre points out that this need not

be the case: "If the Jew did not exist, the anti-Semite would invent him."[47] It is the

oppressor's denial of transcendence and discomfort with its responsibility, which

involves uncertainty, ambiguity, and change, that underlies his or her passionate

renunciation of the oppressed. Thus, attempts to resolve this particular situation by

addressing apparently problematic issues often have little hope of success; other

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[46] Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, 53.
[47] Ibid.,13.

criticisms will quickly follow. In this case, the issue is not located with the

transgressions of the oppressed but the bad faith or attitude of the oppressor.

Fear of freedom or change fosters desires to suppress insecurities or hide them

from others and oneself. Bad faith leads to rigidity and a disinclination to change; Sartre

portrays the anti-Semite as clinging to being-in-itself, "attracted by the durability of a

stone."[48] Bad faith also leads to a desire to dominate the freedom of the Other in an ill-

fated attempt to attain a sense of freedom for oneself. Sartre describes the attitude of the

"anti-Semite," which is also applicable to a bully, batterer, or toxic manager:

> He has chosen also to be terrifying. People are afraid of irritating him. No one knows to what lengths the aberrations of his passion will carry him – but he knows, for this passion is not provoked by something external. He has it well in hand; it is obedient to his will: now he lets go the reins and now he pulls back on them.[49]

Insecurity also motivates a desire to associate with like-minded allies who will not

threaten self-perceptions or opinions.[50] Thus, the "anti-Semite" also desires membership

in the community of anti-Semites, as Sartre explains:

> They make themselves into an echo, a murmur, and, without thinking of evil – without thinking of anything – they go about repeating learned formulas which give them the right of entry to certain drawing rooms… It seems to all these featherbrains that by repeating with eager emulation the statement that the Jew is harmful to the country they are performing a rite of initiation which admits them to the fireside of social warmth and energy. In this sense anti-Semitism has kept something of the nature of human sacrifice.[51]

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[48] Sartre asks, "How can one choose to reason falsely? It is because of a longing for impenetrability. The rational man groans as he gropes for the truth; he knows that his reasoning is no more than tentative, that other considerations may supervene to cast doubt on it. He never sees very clearly where he is going; he is "open"; he may even appear to be hesitant. But there are people who are attracted by the durability of a stone. They wish to be massive and impenetrable; they wish not to change." Ibid., 18.

[49] Ibid., 20.

[50] Dynamics of domination also affect followers and bystanders, encouraging their (passive) participation in the disparagement of a rejected group of others. Individuals desiring acceptance by the community of anti-Semites face potential marginalization or exclusion for not adhering to bigoted attitudes and behaviors and are welcomed back to warmth and security of the community upon demonstrated conformity with the group perspective. The example of bigotry and oppression demonstrates the manifestation of collective and shared insecurities and fears, reinforced through the camaraderie of community, which becomes focused on a group of individuals versus a single individual through the emergence of group stereotypes.

[51] Ibid., 51-52.

The anti-Semite aligns with others in a common bigotry that serves to alleviate fear or insecurity as it fosters a sense of superiority in relation to a group of others.[52] Moreover, Sartre not only delineates oppressive, sadistic attitudes *between* the community of "anti-Semites" and the "Jews" but also suggests distinctions *within* the community of anti-Semites. Bad faith underpins the behavior of sadistically-inclined anti-Semite community leaders as well as masochistic, conforming group members.[53] Thus, the "anti-Semites" behave both sadistically and masochistically -- sadistically in their objectification and oppression of the "Jew" and masochistically in their conformity to the norms of the community of anti-Semites. In addition, within the community of anti-Semites, bad faith may be expressed sadistically -- on the part of group leaders toward followers -- and masochistically -- on the part of those who conform and align with the group leaders and members.

This analysis also offers insight into the effects of the oppressive social situation on members of oppressed groups. Objectifying pressures encourage several forms of bad faith. First, these pressures encourage some to deny their situation. When members of an oppressed group deny the facticity of their group membership, this bad faith may lead to the objectification (a sadistic attitude) of fellow group members: internalized oppression.[54] Oppressive pressures may also encourage a denial of transcendence, Sartre

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[52]Fear intensifies a natural desire for acceptance and inclusion within a community as a way to minimize the possibility of one's own rejection.

[53] Sartre describes the anti-Semite who masochistically aligns with the freedom of the group and perhaps the group leader: "This man fears every kind of solitariness, that of the genius as much as that of the murderer; he is the man of the crowd. However small his statures, he takes every precaution to make it smaller, lest he stand out from the herd and find himself face to face with himself. He has made himself an anti-Semite because that is something one cannot be alone. The phrase, "I hate the Jews," is one that is uttered in chorus; in pronouncing it, one attaches himself to a tradition and to a community."Ibid., 22.

[54] Sartre describes the behavior of the "inauthentic Jew" as he or she distances him/herself from stereotypical traits: "The Jew who encounters another Jew in the drawing room of a Christian is a little like a Frenchman who meets a compatriot abroad. Yet the Frenchman derives pleasure from asserting to the world that he is a Frenchman, whereas the Jew, even if he were the only Israelite in a non-Jewish company, would force himself not to feel that he was a Jew. When there is another Jew with him, he feels himself endangered before the others, and he who a moment before could not even see the ethnic characteristics of his son or his nephew now looks at his coreligionist with the eyes of an anti-Semite, spying out with a mixture of fear and fatalism the objective signs of their

claims, as in the case where an oppressed person accepts the limitations of objectification, adopting a conforming "masochism" in relation to oppressors.[55] Here he refers to the bad faith of what he calls "inauthentic Jews." "They have allowed themselves to be poisoned by the stereotype that others have of them," Sartre explains, "and they live in fear that their acts will correspond to this stereotype."[56] Some may strive to continually prove themselves by modifying behaviors, not recognizing that the anti-Semites' oppression will not cease upon any specific change in Jewish behavior; these oppressive behavior patterns stem from the anti-Semites' bad faith. Thus, according to Sartre the attitude of the "inauthentic Jew" may be "sadistic" toward other Jewish people and/or "masochistic" toward oppressors.

Sartre suggests that the "inauthentic Jew" may become authentic by assuming his or her situation. However, authenticity here is in itself unlikely to affect the bad faith of the "anti-Semite," leaving the oppressive situation unresolved; the freedom of the "authentic Jew" remains constrained by the given social reality. Sartre's solution of authenticity does not in itself provide a social or political resolution to oppressive situation, although it offers a basis for solidarity and thus suggests possibilities for engaging with and transforming the social-political situation.[57]

This discussion of Sartre's philosophy provides contextual definitions of his existentialist notions of bad faith, authenticity, sadism, and masochism. These categories

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common origin. He is so afraid of the discoveries the Christians are going to make that he hastens to give them warning, he becomes himself an anti-Semite by impatience and for the sake of the others."Ibid., 102.

[55] Sartre explains that "masochism is the desire to have oneself treated as an object. Humiliated, despised, or simply neglected, the masochist has the joy of seeing himself moved, handled, utilized like a thing. This complete abdication attracts certain Jews, weary of the struggle against their impalpable Jewishness, always disowned and tormented yet always renascent. They fail to see that authenticity manifests itself in revolt, and is not to be achieved merely by the admission that they are Jews." Ibid., 107.

[56] Ibid., 95.

[57] Consideration of possibilities for authentic social relations leads to a political discussion. Iris Young, for instance, suggests a democratic approach relying on a politics of difference, which allows the inclusion of perspectives from differently situated parties: "Inclusion of and attention to socially differentiated positions in democratic discussion tends to correct biases and situate the partial perspective of participants in debate." Iris Young, *Inclusion and Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 116.

contribute to an analytical framework with which we may usefully evaluate situations that apply pressure to freedom or facticity. This framework concentrates particularly on social conditions that encourage the denial of an aspect of self, on the one hand, or the denial of possibility or freedom, on the other hand. While his analyses of sadism and masochism apply to both individual and group situations, Sartre places the focus of these analyses on the members of a group rather than the collective as a group itself.[58] René Girard makes a major contribution to this model through his explorations of mimesis and scapegoating, which firmly position these dynamics within a group context.

Girard's theory of mimetic desire and scapegoating offers insight into the imitative aspect of human nature and its relationship to domination, particularly the mimetic aspect of social group behavior and conformity. Girard proposes a far-reaching theory concerning the roots of social violence and the origins of religion. Girard's mimetic theory explores connections between culture, religion, and violence, which he develops through three keystone texts: *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*; *Violence and the Sacred*; and *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World* and elaborates upon through later writings, including *I See Satan Fall like Lightening*.[59] Girard's mimetic theory is founded on his view of desire as mimetic, or imitative, a concept he introduces in *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*. He further develops mimetic theory in *Violence and the Sacred*, projecting the evolution of *mimetic desire* to *mimetic rivalry* and *scapegoating*, and locating scapegoating at the origins of sacrifice and religion. In *Things Hidden,* Girard explores cultural, philosophical, scientific, and religious perspectives. It is here

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[58] Later in *Notebooks for an Ethics*, which remain unfinished at the time of his death, Sartre more explicitly extends sadism to oppression and masochism to resignation. See Sartre, *Notebooks for an Ethics*.

[59] Rene Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965); *Violence and the Sacred* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979); *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World.* Translated by Stephen Bann & Michael Metteer (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1978); *I See Satan Fall like Lightening* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001).

that he turns to an examination of Christianity, which he claims uniquely reveals the scapegoat mechanism through the example of the crucifixion and resurrection: God takes the side of the victim while refraining from vengeful retaliation against the persecutors. Girard's theory of mimesis and scapegoating intends to illuminate violence through the perspective of the victim.

Desire, for Girard, is not an instinctual or innate drive but rather arises mimetically from cultural and social interaction as we imitate others: we want what others want. Girard defines the desire for the possession of an object *acquisitive desire*, which develops mimetically, mediated by others' desire for the same object. He distinguishes between the desire for the possession of an object and desire for a transcendent state, referring to the latter as *metaphysical desire*. Girard elaborates on acquisitive mimesis through his depiction of the subject, model, and object in relation to each other. Since the subject's desire for the object is mediated by the other's desire for the object, when the model and subject are at a distance from each other, that is, when desire is *externally mediated*, the likelihood that mimetic desire will escalate into mimetic rivalry and violence is reduced. On the other hand, when the subject and model are in close proximity, an *internally mediated* desire threatens to erupt in rivalry and violence. For this reason, Girard associates a lack of differentiation among rivals with the potential for violence. Moreover, Girard also claims that as rivalry for an object escalates, mimetic desire becomes less acquisitive and more metaphysical, with the object itself becoming less important as desire evolves into, for instance, a desire for status and recognition.

Widespread mimetic rivalry contributes to increasing tension and unrest within the social group, conditioning the emergence of the scapegoat mechanism. Joining

together in persecution of an innocent scapegoat serves to reestablish unity among community members. In order for the scapegoating mechanism to present an effective remedy for social violence, the perpetrators must be unaware of the innocence of the victim, according to Girard. The renewed harmony in the aftermath of scapegoating propels the scapegoat him- or herself to the status of the sacred. Thus, the collective targeting of a scapegoat, arising from mimetic rivalry and conflict, is the process by which a society restores order.[60]

Girard proposes a theory of religion, claiming that the scapegoating mechanism underlies the origins of 'primitive' religion, grounding the practice of sacrifice and conceptions of the sacred. "Violence is the heart and secret soul of the sacred," Girard claims.[61] Girard also refers to religious myths constructed from the perspective of the persecutor rather than the scapegoat, the use of ritual rites to symbolize and diffuse the potential violence of scapegoating, and the taboos that function to socially inhibit behaviors stemming from mimetic rivalry. Girard suggests religious conversion as the answer to scapegoating violence, because it enables individuals to give up mimetic desire through a radical change in perception that reveals the dynamics.

Girard's portrayal of mimetic desire and scapegoating draws attention to the dynamics of group behavior. How could his perspective of scapegoating violence further

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[60]Girard's view of scapegoating violence aligns with Thomas Hobbes' description of universal social conflict, which, for Hobbes, stems inevitably from human nature. Because of his pessimistic view of human nature as inherently violent, Hobbes does not explore alternatives to reducing violence, but rather maintains the necessity of external social mechanisms of restraint and control. While Girard concurs with Hobbes's portrayal of widespread social strife, he claims that communities actually resolve tension and violence through the scapegoating mechanism. Girard's perspective also differs from that of Sigmund Freud, who locates the primal conflict with the Oedipal complex and the murder of the father. For Girard, mimetic rivalry and violence arises more generally, extending beyond this single case. Moreover, Girard's thesis that desire is the desire for what the other desires causes him to question Hegel's underlying assumption of desire as the desire for recognition from another, famously portrayed through his master-slave dialectic. See Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan: With Selected Variants from the Latin Edition of 1668,* edited, with introduction and notes, by Edwin Curley (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Group, 1994); Sigmund Freud, An Outline of Psycho-Analysis, Translated and Edited by James Strachey With a Biographical Introduction by Peter Gay (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989); and G. W. Hegel, *Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit,* with foreword by J. N. Findlay and translated by A.V. Miller, (New York: Oxford University Press,1979).

[61] Rene Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* , 31

distinguish among scapegoaters? Does his theory suggest that levels of violence within different communities would be comparable to each other, that individuals within communities share the same degree of enthusiasm for scapegoating, or that all persecutors are unaware of the innocence of the victims? Research findings suggest that not all persecutors are similarly motivated in collective scapegoating endeavors. Mark Jeurgensmeyer's cross-cultural analysis of terrorism, for instance, identifies varying levels of violent inclinations between communities and also suggests alternative motivations.[62]

Girard's explanation for varying levels of violence is associated with the distance between subject and model, with external mediation less likely to trigger violence. For this reason, Girard claims that a lack of differentiation between subject and model, which collapses the distance between them, contributes to an increasing likelihood of rivalry and violence.[63] While Girard views the erosion of differentiation as the impetus for rivalry and violence, other scholars, such as Juergensmeyer in his study of terrorism, claim that violence stems from confrontation with difference. Juergensmeyer's description of the violence of religious terrorists toward a separate group indicates a concern with eliminating the difference that threatens belief systems and ways of life, rather than an attempt to restore community harmony disrupted by increasing rivalry and violence. How do we make sense of these differing explanations?

The situation of terrorism shares common ground with social oppressions, including racism and homophobia, as well as the example of domestic violence. In terms of domestic violence, for instance, while there are cases, assuredly, of jealousy-motivated

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[62] See Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence.* Updated edition with a new preface (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

[63] Girard's suggestion presents a disturbing consideration. Would this claim suggest that democratic structures are fundamentally more unstable than authoritarian regimes and hierarchal class structures?

violence between rivals for the same partner, this does not exhaust the scenarios.[64]

Violence against a partner may arise even in the absence of an apparent rival and without

an apparent connection to the restoration of communal harmony. Girard's subject-model-

object framework may be useful to consider here. The violent partner desires the partner

as object in herself (as love object), as the symbolic representation of the expression of

domination (mediated by a model of invincible and in-control masculinity), as well as

eventual scapegoat (upon whom to discharge a projected fear of abandonment or

vulnerability). Desire for the partner appears both acquisitive and metaphysical,

presenting the question of whether the metaphysical has necessarily evolved from the

acquisitive. Social oppressions, including racism and homophobia, also present

situations where the desire for the "object" is both desire for an expression of domination

or superiority and eventual scapegoat upon which to project fear of vulnerability.[65]

However, in cases of oppression, domestic violence, and terrorism, the "objects" are

distinguished as eventual scapegoats because of their difference, suggesting an "othering"

related to objectification, rather than social rivalry in general. Also, oppression or

violence can occur without the necessity of scapegoating as a way to diffuse hostility

between rivals and restore community harmony; the pure expression of domination

appears to serve as a motive as well.

Girard's example of children fighting over a toy provides an opportunity to

explore whether a metaphysical, externally mediated desire might prompt rivalry with the

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[64] Oystein Holter observes: "Another theme, common in rape as well as male-violence studies, is 'authoritarianism,' often through male-male relations. Studies of male violence among Christian groups, for example, have shown this, and also how a neo-patriarchal sense of masculinity may be erected on a 'lay fundamentalist' basis (Lungren, 1985). The ideology here is not only one of 'I hit her because she is mine' but also often 'I hit her because she needed it.'" Oystein Gullvag Holter, "Masculinities in context: on peace issues and patriarchal orders," in *Male Roles, Masculinities, and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective.* Edited by Ingeborg Breines, Robert Connell, and Ingrid Eide (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2000), 75.

[65] The case of domestic violence is a little different from the others; the desire for the "object" in this case includes the desire for the possession of this object in itself in addition to desire as an expression of domination and eventual scapegoat. Could this convergence of motivations contribute insight into the seemingly addictive nature of desire apparent in many cases of domestic violence?

same degree of likelihood as an internally mediated desire. Girard utilizes this example

to illustrate rivalry arising from internally mediated acquisitive desire. While Girard's

theory provides a persuasive account of competition for an object, could there be other

motivations underlying the desire for the object? Even at very young ages, children are

exposed to external influences, including cartoons and other media, as well as the model

and experience of their parents' behaviors.[66] As an alternative to competing for an

object, could some children be mimetically imitating a dominant way of being? Is it

possible that some of the children never really cared about the object itself, or that the

object itself was secondary? Moreover, are there some among this group observing the

fighting, not participating but also not intervening? Are there silent ones concerned about

becoming a target themselves by intervening? Could relative social power or status be an

issue as well?

Considered together, Girard's and Sartre's theories portray a synergistic set of

motivations associated with unsustainable power relations. Sartre's model offers a

framework to distinguish motivations among differently situated individuals and groups,

such as bully, follower, bystander, and target or, in the case of social oppressions,

between and within socially dominant and marginalized groups. Girard's theory provides

appreciation for the mimetic nature of group dynamics. His explication of mimesis

underscores human susceptibility to social influences as it distinguishes scapegoating and

conformity to group norms. Girard's analysis also suggests a sadistic-masochistic

dynamic associated with group behavior; the group is sadistic in its collective targeting of

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[66] In *For Your Own Good*, Alice Miller discusses "poisonous pedagogy," describing the effects of rigid childrearing practices on children who eventually "split off" and "project" onto others emotions suppressed in childhood. Miller suggests two trajectories of projection: Hitler, who discharged his suppressed emotion externally onto a people and nation, and a drug addict, who directed violence inwardly, engaging in self-destructive behavior.[66] Miller's analysis establishes a basis for considering differences among children's behaviors. See Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good. With a new preface by the author (*New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002).

the scapegoat, while individual participants are masochistic in terms of their conformity to group mindset. Sartre's and Girard's theories contribute theoretical conceptions of unsustainable power relations to the philosophical model and lens constructed here for the purpose of sustainability analysis; the first stage of this model is portrayed in the earlier Figure 1. What does the more "sustainable" version of these power relations look like? While Sartre defines authenticity, its application within a relational or group setting lacks specificity.

Sustainable Power Relations

The philosophies of de Beauvoir, Willett, and Adams question assumptions concerning the inevitability of domination and thereby refocus attention on social factors conditioning power relations. De Beauvoir's notions of generosity, Willett's articulation of the parental gaze, and Adams's conception of love arise from non-dualist perspectives on human nature. Their thought thus builds upon deep ecological principles of interconnection and interdependence. These philosophies dovetail with those of Sartre and Girard, offering an important corrective to the possibilities of power relations proposed by Sartre and Girard. The works of de Beauvoir and Willett offer significant new possibilities for thinking about power relations through their introduction of and attention to the importance of generosity, and Adams's thesis stresses the powerful generative potential of "good mimesis."

De Beauvoir introduces her conceptions of *generosity* and the *appeal* in *The Ethics of Ambiguity* and further develops both notions in *The Second Sex*.[67] Concerned with the persistence of social conditions constraining the freedom of individuals and groups, de Beauvoir turns to the question of individual and collective responsibility; her

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[67] See de Beauvoir, *The Ethics of Ambiguity;* de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex.*

considerations of *situated freedom* and *generosity* give rise to her notion of the appeal --

seeking to enlist others in my project. Dependent upon the presence of others able to

hear and take up my project, the appeal rests upon de Beauvoir's conception of

generosity and seeks transformative possibilities associated with political solidarity.[68]

Generosity, for de Beauvoir, represents a moral value associated with the

preservation of the freedom of both Self and Other as a necessary condition underpinning

non-objectifying authentic relations. De Beauvoir considers the situated nature of

freedom: our freedom is *ambiguous* because we are free, and our freedom is constrained,

but not determined, by our situation. Our freedom, moreover, is related to the freedom of

others: my freedom is constrained in the face of the constrained freedom of the Other,

and my freedom affects the possibilities of the Other's freedom. An ethic of freedom

suggests an ethical responsibility to affirm and preserve the freedom of self and other.

An appeal for the other to take up my project provides a non-objectifying way to promote

the freedom of self and other.   Thus, de Beauvoir's consideration of mutual generosity

provides the basis for an "appeal" as an authentic approach to social relations and action

in the world.[69]

In a sense, the project of *The Second Sex,* which provides an existentialist-

phenomenological account of the situated experience of women, may be viewed as de

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[68] See de Beauvoir, *The Ethics of Ambiguity.*

[69] De Beauvoir's conception of the *appeal* provides a concrete example of Sartre's notion of force. De Beauvoir shared with Sartre, with whom she worked throughout her life, an interest in social and historical factors influencing the perpetuation of oppressive systems that reinforce bad faith. In his unpublished *Notebooks for an Ethics,* Sartre extends his existentialist categories of sadism and masochism to the collective situation, introducing the notions of *oppression* and *resignation*, which represent attitudes of bad faith, or now *alienation* considered collectively.   A resigned attitude toward alienation is inconsistent with an ethic of freedom, since for Sartre, remaining in resignation not only restricts one to a constrained freedom but also allows the perpetuation of oppressive orders. Sartre considers alternative responses to oppression, which presents violence to the freedom of others, that are not violent themselves. Seeking an alternative to approaching the alienated and oppressive Other, he distinguishes between *force* and *violence,* suggesting the use of force within a spirit of generosity in order to preserve freedom. Force, as part of ethical resistance intended to preserve freedom, does not limit the freedom of the oppressor; rather, the oppressor's freedom is diminished in the face of the limited freedom of the oppressed.   The distinction between force and violence, however, remains rather puzzling in the unfinished *Notebooks*; it is questionable whether Sartre satisfactorily clarifies this distinction. De Beauvoir's notion of the "appeal," however, provides an alternative to Sartre's "force." See Sartre, *Notebooks* and de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex.*

Beauvoir's appeal, I suggest. When de Beauvoir claims that, "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman,"[70] she applies the existential notion that "existence precedes essence" to a group identity, drawing attention to the social construction of gender. She sums up the social situation confronting woman and constraining her freedom, observing that "She is defined and differentiated with reference to man as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute – she is the Other."[71]

Further, de Beauvoir's analysis of the particular situation of women prompts her to more closely scrutinize non-objectifying measures of preserving freedom in the face of oppression, strengthening her commitment to generosity and the appeal.[72] Attempting to make sense of the long history of woman as Other in philosophy, religion, and cultural practice, de Beauvoir recognizes that women, unlike other groups that have been historically oppressed, have a limited ability to unite in solidarity against an oppressive force because of the essential bond between women and men:

> The bond that unites her to her oppressor is not comparable to any other. The division of the sexes is a biological fact, not an event in human history. Male and female stand opposed within a primordial Mitsein, and woman has not broken it. The couple is a fundamental unity with its two halves riveted together, and the cleavage of society along the line of sex is impossible. Here is to be found the basic trait of woman: she is the Other in a totality of which the two components are necessary to one another.[73]

The unique situation of women, who live among their "oppressors" in communities of fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons, precludes the use of violence to the other, historically utilized by other oppressed groups to "fight to the death" for their freedom.

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[70] de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, 267.
[71] Ibid., xxviii.
[72] At the end of *Ethics of Ambiguity*, de Beauvoir is still troubled by the suggestion that violence, as objectification, may still be necessary in order to preserve the freedom of the self.
[73] Ibid., xxxi.

Thus, de Beauvoir rejects the inevitably hostile encounter portrayed by Hegel in his master-slave dialectic, which suggests inherent violence through its dependence upon a one-way recognition by the other as the basis for the development of self-consciousness.[74] Rather, she argues for the possibility of encountering a respected equal in a moment of mutual recognition through a generosity that seeks recognition not through denying the freedom of, or objectifying, the other, but through preserving the subjectivity (freedom) of Self and Other. To more fully explore possibilities associated with generosity, de Beauvoir returns to the erotic encounter described earlier by Sartre.

For Sartre, being-for-others invariably involves objectification. The "look" of the other transforms my project from one of being for myself to one of being for others. So, I am either for Self or for Others as subject or object. For Sartre, the special case of love, which resembles a mutual masochism (freely choosing to preserve the freedom of the Other), is the most likely way freedom of both self and other can be preserved. Desire arises from the body in situation, but presents a means of objectifying the other (in response) when the Other "looks" at me. Desire ultimately fails, according to Sartre, because of the entanglement of consciousness and facticity, which prevents the for-itself solely to found my being.

Departing from Sartre's perspective, de Beauvoir does not privilege love over sex or other encounters. In fact, exploring the dangers of love to women, she concludes that if a woman views love itself as a path to subjectivity because of the limited alternatives presented by her compromised social and economic position, she may fall susceptible to the trap of masochism, forgoing expectation of the Other's acknowledgment and

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[74] De Beauvoir rejects Hegelian views of violence as the primordial ground of nature, associated with his one-way recognition by the other as the basis for the development of self-consciousness.

preservation of her subjectivity. Erotic generosity, however, allows the possibility of preserving the freedom of both self and other. Questioning Sartre's assertion that I am either for Self or for Others, de Beauvoir claims that in the sexual encounter the individual is at once subject and object; she asserts that "the erotic experience is one that most poignantly discloses to human beings the ambiguity of their condition; in it they are aware of themselves as flesh and as spirit, as the other and as subject."[75] Generosity preserves the freedom of both parties to an encounter despite similarities or differences between them:

> Alterity has no longer a hostile implication, and indeed this sense of the union of really separate bodies is what gives its emotional character to the sexual act; and it is the more overwhelming as the two beings, who together in passion deny and assert their boundaries, are similar and yet unlike.[76]

Following Maurice Merleau Ponty, Beauvoir stresses that the generosity possible between Self and Other in the erotic encounter is also a possibility lying at the core of relations with others in general.[77]

This more generous possibility is reflected in Cynthia Willett's example of parent-child relations as an alternative non-objectifying mode of recognition. Willett describes the limited perspective of the Western autonomous subject in her book, *Maternal Ethics and Other Slave Moralities,* and provides a different, relational view through parental eyes:

> For modern philosophers such as Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Sartre, and Foucault sensory experience focuses around the objectifying gaze of the autonomous subject. This gaze is not without an economic policy. On the contrary, the excretions of the masculinized subject of European modernity territorialize the world into propertied objects of definition and control, leaving the subject more or

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[75] De Beauvoir, *The Second Sex,* 401.

[76] Ibid., 402.

[77] See Maurice Merleau Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2004). Rosalyn Diprose probes connections between generosity, domination, and gender inequities in *Corporeal Generosity: On Giving with Nietzsche, Merleau-Ponty, and Levinas* (Albany, NY: SUNY, 2002).

less powerful but alone. The gaze prepares for predation, not sociality, or rather, prepares for male bonding in the chase. But the engrossed absorption of parental eyes need not be the same as the objectifying gaze of the predator. The absorbed eyes of the father or mother do not aim to control an object but seek to gain a feel for the child.[78]

Willett illuminates the relevance and implications of an embodied, relational subject, versus the historical Western philosophical subject, to a non-dual, holistic basis for ethics:

> Hegel repeats the mainline of the Western philosophical tradition when he argues that freedom requires the purging or restraining of erotic and embodied dimensions of the self in favor of a fundamentally stoic conception of reason… I conclude that the social eroticism of the nurturer-child relationship establishes the basis for an ethics that goes beyond the altruism-egoism dichotomy as well as the gender stereotypes that this dichotomy sustains in European cultures."[79]

This discussion links dualist assumptions underlying Western ethical philosophy with ends, such as gender stereotypes and ideology or othering as racism and homophobia.

Adams's discussion of genuine love resonates with de Beauvoir's and Willett's consideration of mutual generosity. Adams explores alternative possibilities associated with Girard's framework, positioning "loving" or "creative" mimesis as the primordial ground of mimetic desire. In her essay "Loving Mimesis," Adams addresses Girard's theory of scapegoating and mimetic rivalry, departing from some interpretations of Girardian theory that project the inevitability of mimetic rivalry and violence.[80] Although Girard maintains that mimetic desire does not necessarily lead to violence, Adams perceives that the theory neglects to fully develop "good mimesis" and frequently conflates mimetic desire itself with the negative mimetic desire associated with mimetic rivalry and conflict. Because of this, Adams suggests, the theory as it stands scapegoats

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[78] Cynthia Willett, *Maternal Ethics and other Slave Moralities (*New York: Routledge, 1995), 34.
[79] Ibid, 6,7.
[80] See Rebecca Adams. "Loving Mimesis," in *Violence Renounced*, Edited by William Swartley (Telford, PA: Pandora Press, 2000).

positive mimetic desire.[81]   Distinguishing mimetic desire from the projection of mimetic

desire into a violent trajectory, Adams extends Girard's theory to what she claims is its

logical conclusion, positing "loving mimesis" as the ground from which "good"

(peaceful) or "bad" (rivalrous) desires arise. Adams's distinction raises the question of

inevitability and thus freedom.

Adams claims that objectification of others underpins domination and suggests an

alternative relation with the other associated with a desire for the other as subject, which

may be then imitated as a desire for one's own subjectivity. She asks: "What happens if

the object desired by the mediator is the subjectivity of the proto-subject?"[82] For Adams,

the essential ground of "loving mimesis" allows for non-objectifying recognition as the

ground for an authentic relation, less a dialectic than a "single, unified dynamic of

intersubjectivity which has generative power."[83] Adams's argument here resonates with

de Beauvoir's discussion of generosity as well as Willett's discussion of a social bond

between parent and infant. She explains that "subjects need not be conceived as

emerging out of an inevitably violent opposition and exclusion but could be understood

as the creative product of the dynamic of loving mimesis itself."[84] Adams further

portrays loving or creative mimesis as "genuine love" aligned with an authentic will to

power in the sense of empowerment:

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[81] Adams further argues that through this predominant emphasis on mimetic rivalry and scapegoating, the theory itself is scapegoating not only mimetic desire -- by assuming that it is inevitably "bad" -- but also "everything human": "The way Girard currently conceives a nonviolent religious orientation and social reality logically entails insisting on absolute difference between human love and divine love, between human reality and divine revelation, then scapegoating everything human." Adams, 286.

[82] Rebecca Adams. "Creative or 'Loving' Mimesis Revisited," in Colloquium on Violence and Religion, online PDF (http://web.ustpaul.uottawa.ca/covr2006/conferencePapers.htm, 2006), 22. Adams considers alternative models of triangular desire, that of the coquette and a colonization model, both involving the subject as a split subject-object. In the coquette model, the coquette desires her/his self as an object, mediating the mimetic desire of the suitor. However, as Adams points out, the coquette (whom she portrays as female, for ease) could only desire herself as an object if she had imitated another model's desire for herself as object. The coquette model is linked to the colonization model, which also portrays the subject as a split subject-object. This model illustrates the violence of objectification, as well as the conception of internalized oppression, where the subject internalizes a perception of self as object.

[83] Adams, "Creative of 'Loving' Mimesis Revisited," 292.

[84] Rebecca Adams. "Loving Mimesis," 295.

> Theologically, I believe this new paradigm of mimetic desire describes genuine love, not as still conceived from within a split system of representation as mere nonviolence, a set of prescriptive ethics, or self-renunciation, but love conceived as a truly creative, revolutionary force. The concept of creative mimetic desire puts ethics (love) and power back together. Unlike Nietzsche, who tried definitively to take them apart and who rejected Christianity in the process, I claim that this paradigm makes possible a more adequate interpretation of true power as the will to intersubjective creative love of Self *and* Other.[85]

Genuine love thus presents a creative form of power, which offers a foundation for sustainable power relations as solidarity in relationship. Adams affirms the non-dual nature of genuine love, observing that "I think we are on the brink of coming to terms with things that some feminist theologians, for instance, have been saying for many years, about the fundamental sin or source of violence being dualistic patterns of thinking themselves."[86] Adams further suggests connections between religious theory and poststructuralist, postmodernist, and continental philosophical discussions of desire, which she claims are worthy of closer scrutiny:

> My intent has always been to develop this alternative non-theologically dependant treatment of the same argument for an entirely different audience, linking my account of mimetic theory with feminist and poststructuralist treatment of desire, ethics, the Other, the economy of the gift, and what French feminist philosophers and psychoanalytic critics, working within a gendered symbolic framework, call "feminine" desire or the "Mother." Creative mimetic desire as I understand it then is another, highly fruitful way of talking about excess Desire for the Other (and simultaneously the self), in ways that help clarify certain problems in postmodern-poststructuralist discussion of desire and the decentered self. I remain convinced that profound and mutually-beneficial connections remain to be explored between what I have named "loving" mimesis of "Creative" mimesis and other poststructuralist/continental philosophical parallel accounts of desire, especially as a basis for ethics and applied action in the world.[87]

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[85] Adams, "Creative or 'Loving' Mimesis Revisited," 24. Adams' reference to Nietzsche here resonates with an observation by Willett: "While both Douglass and Nietzsche challenge the asceticism of the European tradition and aim to reattach the self to the body and its drives, they interpret the body and its drives very differently. The warrior self projected by the Nietzschean narratives breaks free from one type of asceticism, the asceticism of rational duty, only to lapse into another asceticism, namely, the asociality of the will to power. On the other hand, the agonistic self projected by the Douglass narratives attune the self as will to power – or will to empowerment – to the goals of a larger social narrative. This larger social narrative reverberates with the resources of self that trace back to the social eroticism of the nurture-child relation and reinvoke the origin of ethics in music and dance." Willett, 104.
[86] Adams, "Creative or 'Loving' Mimesis Revisited," 2.
[87] Ibid., 4.

Adams's reconstruction of mimetic theory enables a broader view of human behavior and motivation and further illuminates prospects for sustainable power relations; her thesis has implications for ethics, peacemaking, and ecological action in the world.

De Beauvoir's generosity, Willett's relational parental eyes, and Adams's genuine love reflect possibilities for non-objectifying mutual recognition of embodied subjects. These theorists question assumptions concerning the inevitability of objectification, domination, and violence, and redirect attention to social factors conditioning unsustainable relations. Generosity and love present possibilities of sustainable power relations for inclusion within the existentialist lens developed here. Figure 2 depicts this lens, which now integrates notions of bad faith, sadism, masochism, mimetic conformity, authenticity, generosity and love within a new framework to be applied to the phenomenological investigation and sustainability analysis in the following chapter.[88]
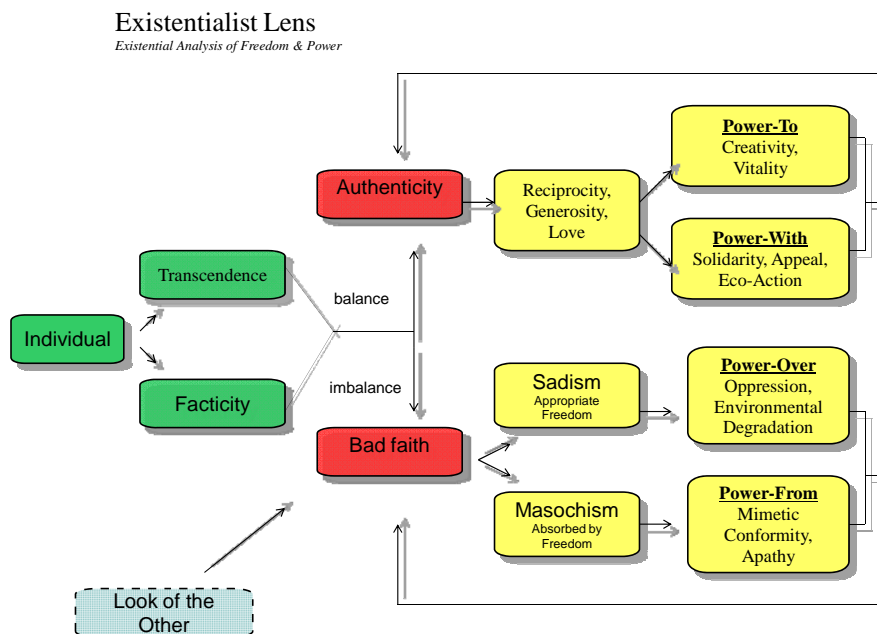
Figure 2. Existentialist Lens: Existential Analysis of Freedom and Power

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[88]The conceptions of bad faith and authenticity, which reflect denial or integration of aspects of facticity and transcendence, provide useful measures to begin the comparative analysis of critical social theories.

Foundations for an Ethic of Sustainability

Generosity, love, and relational ethics not only represent sustainable forms of

power and contribute to the formation of this existential lens but also introduce a

discussion of ethics. De Beauvoir, Willett, and Adams share non-dual perspectives of

human nature, which build upon the principles of interconnection and interdependence.

These ideas thereby resonate with the philosophies of deep ecology and existentialism

and thus with the philosophy of sustainability developed here. Generosity, the "appeal,"

and genuine love suggest promising bases for ethical approaches to sustainable action in

the world.

Generosity, love, and relational ethics, however, are associated with private

sphere values, virtues, and activities. The historical division between public and private

spheres, with citizenship traditionally associated with public sphere activity, suggests

challenges to realizable political action grounded upon an ethics informed by private

sphere values. Generosity, love, and the relational parental gaze, however, reflect

qualities that are prioritized as essential virtues within Andrew Dobson's articulation of

ecological citizenship, which spans public and private spheres and is therefore absolutely

essential for my analysis.

Dobson considers citizenship in light of transnational environmental concerns,

sketching a post-cosmopolitan form of citizenship that upholds the virtues of care and

compassion, which are minimized or neglected within historical conceptualizations of

virtue ethics. Dobson introduces the notion of ecological citizenship in his book,

Citizenship and the Environment. This third form of citizenship is offered as an

alternative to classic liberal notions of citizenship, founded on individual autonomy and freedom, and civic republicanism with its commitment to service for the greater good.

The current ecological crisis, Dobson argues, demands a form of citizenship that transcends public and private spheres. With liberal and republican articulations defining citizenship within the public sphere, private sphere activities – including personal choices critical to ecological activism -- are excluded from political discussion. Dobson credits globalism and feminism with paving the way for the consideration of ecological citizenship:[89]

> Feminist analyses of citizenship have led to reconsiderations of virtue, of the reassertion of citizen-citizen relations as well as citizen-state relations, and of the sources and nature of citizenship obligations. Together, themes in globalization and feminism point towards a third citizenship that cannot be politically or discursively contained in either liberal or civic republican forms. While globalization and feminism provide the context for post-cosmopolitan citizenship, there is a phenomenon that gives rise to its most precise articulation – environmental politics.[90]

Ecological citizenship is shaped by individual choices and collective action originating within the private sphere, including energy consumption and conservation, recycling, composting, and so forth. Dobson notes the grounding of ecological citizenship in private sphere life:

> Ecological citizenship is an encumbered citizenship, far removed, on one level at least, from gendered civic republicanism and its contemporary manifestations… Ecological citizenship, in contrast, is *all about* everyday living.[91]

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[89] The transnational nature of environmental issues demands global solutions that transcend nation-state boundaries. While decision making of nation-states traditionally focuses on notions of "belongingness" concerning effects to the state, environmentalists argue for consideration of the range and scope of "affectedness" in decision making. Such a shift is predicated on the promotion of an ethics of interconnection that recognizes the effect of action beyond oneself or one's community within the larger global community. Notions of citizenship, however, may be in themselves problematic when considering issues transcending the boundaries of historical nation-states.

[90] Andrew Dobson, *Citizenship and the Environment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 33.

[91] Ibid., 138.

Behavior in the private sphere affects public sphere awareness; when considered collectively, these actions underscore the extent to which, to echo a feminist slogan, the personal becomes the political.

On the other hand, this post-cosmopolitan citizenship, anchored in the private sphere domain of friendship and family relationships, shares with civic republicanism both a commitment to service and an emphasis on virtue. Dobson argues that virtues necessary for environmental justice extend those traditionally associated with citizenship and virtue ethics to include care and compassion, with care for the environment motivating political action in the public sphere:

> The private realm is a crucial site of citizenship activity for post-cosmopolitan citizenship. This is so for two reasons. First, private acts can have public implications in ways that can be related to the category of citizenship. And second, some of the virtues of which we spoke in the previous section - care and compassion in particular, with their unconditional and non-reciprocal character- are characteristic of ideal-typical versions of private realm relationships.[92]

Dobson is joined by other environmental scholars; James Connelly, for instance, argues similarly for the eco-virtues of care and compassion. The environmental crisis requires, according to Dobson, that virtues of care and compassion, which are traditionally aligned with the private sphere, be emphasized in such a way that they impinge on public sphere activities and responsibilities. In order to achieve this, Dobson draws attention to the gendered nature of the virtue of care, claiming that "caring is at present generally a gendered activity, and its politicization would involve de-gendering it: to reclaim it as a citizenly, rather than a gendered, virtue."[93] Dobson's recommendation is consistent with Carol Gilligan's findings and recommendations concerning the gendering of moral virtues, which will be further discussed in Chapter Five.

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[92] Ibid., 135.
[93] Ibid., 65.

Sherilyn MacGregor further claims that environmental or ecological citizenship must address the gendered nature of the private sphere, with special attention to communal responsibilities and freedoms.[94] MacGregor expresses concern about lingering liberal notions of autonomous individuality, given that the conditions originally linking women with the private sphere -- articulated by Carol Pateman in her explication of the implicit sexual contract underlying social contract theory -- involve family and childcare responsibilities.[95]

Thus, environmental philosophers draw attention to relational values that have been deemphasized by virtue of the abstraction of rationality from embodiment. Dobson summarizes:

> The principal characteristics of post-cosmopolitan citizenship are the non-reciprocal nature of the obligations associated with it, the non-territorial yet material nature of its sense of political space, its recognition that this political space should include the private as well as the public realm, and, relatedly, its focus on virtue and its determination to countenance the possibility of 'private' virtues being virtues of citizenship.[96]

This attention to dualistic notions of human nature, public and private spheres of human social life, and citizenship lead consequently to consideration of the gendered nature of values associated with these divisions.

Dobson's environmental political philosophy reinforces the relational philosophies of de Beauvoir, Willett, and Adams in the promotion of care and compassion as ethical values. The significance of these values also follows from non-

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[94] See Sherilyn MacGregor, "No Sustainability without Justice: A Feminist Critique of Environmental Citizenship," in *Environmental Citizenship*, edited by Andrew Dobson and Derek Bell (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2006).

[95] See Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988). MacGregor adds a further cautionary note concerning the emerging picture of environmental citizenship, perceiving an urgent need to break down male/female associations with public/private spheres so as not to further unduly burden women with the demands associated with the greening of the private sphere.

[96] Dobson claims that "the principal characteristics of post-cosmopolitan citizenship are the non-reciprocal nature of the obligations associated with it, the non-territorial yet material nature of its sense of political space, its recognition that this political space should include the private as well as the public realm, and, relatedly, its focus on virtue and its determination to countenance the possibility of 'private' virtues being virtues of citizenship." Dobson, 82.

dual perspectives of deep ecology. A "deep" ethic of sustainability, I suggest, embodies

holistic interconnection and a synthesis of values including care and compassion as well

as justice. This ethic is governed by self-interest, beauty, and meaning, promoting an

embodied, sensual experience of life and sustainable expressions of power that encourage

the flourishing of individuals, communities, and the natural world. Because of its

collective self-interest, this ethic is creative and inspiring rather than moralizing, ascetic,

or self-denying. Joanna Macy, in her essay "The Ecological Self," describes the

effortlessness of such an ethic:

> Virtue is not required for the emergence of the ecological self! This shift in
> identification is essential to our survival at this point in our history precisely
> because it can serve in lieu of ethics and morality. Moralizing is ineffective;
> sermons seldom hinder us from pursuing our self-interest as we construe it.
> Hence the need to be more enlightened about what our real self-interest is. It
> would not occur to me, for example, to exhort you to refrain from sawing off your
> leg. That would not occur to me or to you, because your leg is part of you. Well,
> so are the trees in the Amazon Basin, they are our external lungs. We are just
> beginning to wake up to that, gradually discovering that the world is our body.[97]

Acknowledgement of interconnection and interdependency affects perspectives of social

and environmental situations, Meadows suggests, with implications for systems analysis

of sustainability. She observes that "the real system is interconnected. No part of the

human race is separate either from other human beings or from the global ecosystem."[98]

While this ethic is governed by self-interest, it is also associated with joy, beauty, and

pleasure, according to Naess:

> In environmental affairs, perhaps we should try primarily to influence people
> towards performing beautiful acts. We should work on their inclinations rather
> than their morality. Unhappily, the extensive moralizing within
> environmentalism has given the public the false impression that we primarily ask
> them to sacrifice, to show more responsibility, more concern, better morality. As I

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[97]Joanna Macy, "The Ecological Self: Postmodern Ground for Right Action," in *Worldviews, Religion, and the Environment.* Edited by Richard Foltz (Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth, 2003), 445.
[98]Donella Meadows, *Thinking in Systems: A Primer* (White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008), 184.

see it, we need to emphasize the immense variety of sources of joy which are available to people through an increased sensitivity towards the richness and diversity of life, and the landscapes of free nature. We can all contribute to this individually, but it is also a question of local and global politics."[99]

An ethic of sustainability is also associated with "deeper" ways of living, such as those associated with the "slow food" movement and more balanced, pleasurable lifestyles. The slow food movement, for instance, arose in response to the fast food movement, which is characterized by drive-through lanes, eating on the run, and mass-prepared, generally unhealthy food. By way of contrast, the slow food movement promotes eating as a balanced lifestyle. The preparation of natural, nutritious, and delicious food, combined with a leisurely dinner hour spent with friends or family, provides a relaxed, enjoyable experience. Sustainable lifestyles are sensual in the sense of phenomenological lived experience, resonating with the smell, taste, sound, feeling, and experience of life.

In her essay, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," Audre Lorde suggests that a more superficial, "pornographic" way of living keeps one powerless; embracing a passionate, meaningful, "erotic" approach to life, on the other hand, presents the path to reclaiming power. Although Lorde's distinctions between the erotic and pornographic are ostensibly tied to meditations on female sexuality, her description of the erotic provides a metaphor for claiming power, authenticity, agency, and wholeness – applicable to women, men, and their pursuits in general. Suppression of the erotic, Lorde claims, constrains hope and belief in self, limiting freedom, while reawakening to the erotic offers a path to power:

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[99] Naess, 236.

> In touch with the erotic, I become less willing to accept powerlessness, or those other supplied states of being which are not native to me, such as resignation, despair, self-effacement, depression, self-denial.[100]

Moreover, the erotic, according to Lorde, guides insight and understanding:

> Beyond the superficial, the considered phrase, 'It feels right to me,' acknowledges the strength of the erotic into a true knowledge, for what that means is the first and most powerful guiding light toward any understanding. And understanding is a handmaiden which can only wait upon, or clarify, that knowledge, deeply born. The erotic is the nurturer or nursemaid of all our deepest knowledge.[101]

The erotic and the call of the sacred inspire creativity as they guide choices, empowering vital sustainable forms of power-to and power-with.

Deep ecological principles of interconnection and interdependence along with ecological values of care, compassion, and justice provide the foundation for a new model of sustainability ethics developed and articulated throughout this project. An ethic of sustainability provides a basis upon which to explore meaning and conscience within educational programs, as well as within sustainable leadership models applicable to business and community organization. An experience of life that cultivates wholeness and self-awareness, I argue, diminishes the likelihood of unsustainable power relations.

Conclusion

The philosophies of existentialism and deep ecology offer a promising context for a new philosophy and ethic of sustainability. This philosophy and ethic draw upon the natural common ground of existentialism and deep ecology to build upon principles of interconnection and interdependence. Recognition of the essential interdependence of the human-natural world system, for instance, cultivates an authentic regard for vulnerability

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[100] Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," in *Sister Outsider* (Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1984), 58.
[101] Ibid., 56.

as well as care and compassion for self and other. Existentialism's analysis of freedom and responsibility further motivates creativity, collaborative action, and transformation.

A lack of awareness of contributing factors to our current dilemmas presents a significant challenge. In *Environmental Culture: The Ecological Crisis of Reason,* Plumwood argues that the key problem we confront is not technological but rather cultural in nature:

> The problem is not primarily about more knowledge or technology; it is about developing an environmental culture that values and fully acknowledges the non-human sphere and our dependency on it, and is able to make good decisions about how we live and impact on the non-human world.[102]

A culture with the ability to make good decisions takes into account the influence of power relations on decision-making processes. The method of existential analysis, I claim, offers a powerful way to investigate social conditions for insight into oppression and environmental degradation. For the purpose of such an analysis of sustainability, I have constructed here a philosophical model of power relations as an "existentialist lens." This lens integrates aspects of existentialism and religious studies theories, including notions of bad faith, sadism, masochism, mimetic conformity, scapegoating, authenticity, generosity, and love. My use of this lens within existential analysis offers a new way of looking at power relations across categories of social experience as the basis for meaningful comparative analysis.

Plumwood argues that an "ecological crisis of reason" reflects blindspots that cloud our ability to perceive and address the problems confronting us:

> The hypothesis I am recommending here is that dominant forms of reason – economic, political, scientific and ethical/prudential – are failing us because they are subject to a systematic pattern of distortions and illusions in which they are historically embedded and which they are unable to see or reflect upon. These

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[102] Val Plumwood, *Environmental Culture: The ecological crisis of reason* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 3.

blindspots especially affect the way we understand our relationships to nature and to one another.[103]

In the next chapter I investigate these blindspots by applying existential analysis to four categories of critical social theory, namely, childrearing, gender, racism, and religion. Through this analysis, I also further develop the new model of sustainability ethics introduced here.[104]

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[103] Ibid., 16.

[104] Today we resist the necessary changes to promote equity and environmental flourishing, as Betsy Taylor notes: "There are solutions that will see us through to a safer, more ecologically and socially harmonious future. The challenge is primarily political. The dominant forces and leaders in our society, along with many average citizens, are resisting the necessary changes, for a myriad of reasons." Betsy Taylor, *Sustainable Planet: Solutions for the 21st Century.* Edited by Juliet Schor and Betsy Taylor (Boston: Beacon Press, 2003), 233.

Chapter Four: Existential Sustainability Analysis

"Emotional blindness produces 'barriers in the mind'… Early denied traumas become encoded in the brain, and even though they no longer pose a threat, they continue to be an insidious hazard. Barriers in the mind stunt our capacity to learn from new information, to put it to good use, and to shed old, outdated programs… If we deny the wounds inflicted on us, we will inflict those same wounds on the next generation. Unless, that is, we make a decision in favor of knowledge… Only if we fear the confrontation with our own histories will we need to have power over others and cling to it with all our might. And if we do that it is because we feel too weak to be true to ourselves and our own feelings."[1]

~ Alice Miller, *The Truth Will Set You Free*

In this chapter, I adapt existential analysis for the purpose of an investigation of sustainability. This analysis examines irrational influences on decision-making processes, including the effects of desire, motivation, and power relations. I apply the existentialist framework developed in the previous chapter to four major fields of critical social theory: 1) childrearing practices; 2) gender socialization, including intersectional and global considerations; 3) racism, building upon and intersecting with critical theory of childrearing and gender socialization; and 4) religion, considering the influence of dominant social values on religious teachings.[2]

This adapted form of existential analysis represents a humanities-based, systems method that approaches social and psychological factors for insight into power relations and their influences on decision-making, social dynamics, and environmental outcomes. The method is founded upon Sartre's notion of existential analysis, which he introduces in *Being and Nothingness.* Sartre links existential psychoanalysis to his conception of authenticity, claiming that "existential psychoanalysis is going to reveal to man the real goal of his pursuit, which is being as a synthetic fusion of the in-itself with the for-itself;

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[1] Alice Miller, *The Truth Will Set You Free: Overcoming Emotional Blindness and Finding Your True Adult Self.* Translated by Andrew Jenkins (New York: Basic Books, 2001), xiv, 188, 193.

[2] These four areas represent significant aspects of our contemporary social order. Additional areas worthy of further analysis include class, nationality, global issues of nation and state, ethnicity, and cultural /media pressures.

existential psychoanalysis is going to acquaint man with his passion."[3] The method

examines a synthesis of facticity and transcendence that upholds the "for-itself," which is

associated with awareness, passion, meaning, and motivation.[4]

Bad faith arises from the disjuncture between in-itself and for-itself; bad faith

represents self-deception. Sartre distinguishes bad faith from psychoanalytic views of

repression, challenging the notion of a relatively inaccessible "unconscious" as the source

of drives and motivations underlying irrational behavior.[5] Rather, Sartre insists that bad

faith can be brought to awareness through reflection, and he introduces existential

analysis for this purpose.[6] R.W. Connell describes Sartre's concern about the adequacy

of Freudian theories of the unconscious:

> Sartre saw 'empirical psychoanalysis,' as he called the Freudian school, as too
> mechanical, taking one possible form of life (determined by sexual desire) for the
> condition of all lives. Sartre outlined a striking alternative which he called
> "existential psychoanalysis." He replaced the concept of the unconscious with an
> argument about the different ways our self-knowledge is organized. The
> "mystery in broad daylight" could be unraveled by tracking back down the life-
> history to establish the primary commitments through which a person's life had
> been constituted.[7]

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[3] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness.* Translated and with an introduction by Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1984), 797.

[4] Sartre refers to the method as "moral description": "It follows that the various tasks of the for-itself can be made the object of an existential psychoanalysis, for they all aim at producing the missing synthesis of consciousness and being in the form of value or self-cause. Thus existential psychoanalysis is *moral description,* for it releases to us the ethical meaning of various human projects." Ibid., 796.

[5] Van Deurzen connects the consciousness-unconsciousness duality with cultural and disciplinary divisions: "The division of the mind into consciousness and the unconscious is a typical manifestation of a more scientific, technological outlook on the same issues that were previously dealt with from human or religious perspectives." Emmy Van Deurzen, *Everyday Mysteries: Existential Dimensions of Psychotherapy* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 205.

[6] Van Deurzen describes Sartre's claim: "Sartre, of course, argued against the idea of repression by showing that the idea of a censor requires the process of decision making that implies a consciousness of sorts… As discussed above, Sartre preferred to speak of bad faith or self-deception. He considered 'repression' as an aspect of consciousness rather than relegating it to the dark unknown of an unconscious. But Sartre only covered part of the problem of unconsciousness by this device. He was unable to account for many of the phenomena described as manifestations of bad faith. Yet his considerations of Freud's contributions carry truth. What he put his finger on is the possibility that Freud's account is causally inverted. Instead of considering that something is repressed because it cannot be consciously faced, it may be that we simply prefer to describe those things as unconscious which we want to disclaim… the concept of repression itself can be replaced with that of avoidance, in the sense that the things I cannot tolerate to focus my conscious attention on I prefer to avoid… In every instance, it involves a process of not facing up to what is, and it is this that is referred to as being in bad faith." Ibid., 209.

[7] R.W.Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 18.

The view of bad faith or denial as a derivative state of consciousness increases the

priority of investigating the possible sources of its development and perpetuation and to

bring them to awareness.[8] Existential analysis considers the interplay between

psychological experience and social-historical context. In particular, the process

specifies the investigation of life-history as a project that connects behavior with various

experiences and social conditions, as Connell explains:

> The philosophical argument in *Search for a Method* by Jean-Paul Sartre helps
> explain this paradox. A life-history is a project, a unification of practice through
> time… The project that is documented in a life-history story is itself the relation
> between the social conditions that determine practice and the future social world
> that practice brings into being. That is to say, life-history method always
> concerns the making of social life through time. It is literally history.[9]

Thus, existential analysis relies upon phenomenological assessment of life experience to

increase awareness of factors contributing to bad faith.[10]

I structure this analysis of this chapter by first establishing a framework that relies

upon existentialist categories of states of consciousness and behavior patterns as

evaluation criteria. I then apply this "existentialist lens" to an interdisciplinary textual

analysis of critical social theories. The method involves examining the facticity and

transcendence, in-itself and for-itself, encouraged or denied in various social situations in

order to reveal bad faith. In this way, the model provides a lens through which to

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[8] Girard's theory of scapegoating is similarly located in the realm of the social-psychological, holding that desire is not instinctual or innate but mediated by social and cultural influences. See Rene Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2005).

[9] The paradox Connell refers to is that life-histories reflect both subjectivity and collective social processes. Connell, 89. Erich Fromm observes that the field of social psychology links social structure, practice, and behavior: "Man is not only made by history – history is made by man. The solution of this seeming contradiction constitutes the field of social psychology. Its task is to show not only how passions, desires, anxieties change and develop as a result of the social process, but also how man's energies thus shaped into specific forms in their turn become productive forces, molding the social process." Erich H. Fromm, *Escape From Freedom* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1969), 12.

[10] Herbert Spiegelberg describes benefits of phenomenology in *Doing Phenomenology*: "I would like to make one more suggestion to bolster the confidence in the subjective approach of phenomenology… What else can we do but first record our direct experiences as completely as possible and then see what others in the face of the same phenomena have to report?… In this sense, all objective experience is really intersubjective experience, i.e., a selection from subjective experiences. This makes subjective experience even more indispensable… There is then no escape from subjectivity. The only cure for subjectivistic subjectivity is more and better subjectivity, more discriminating subjectivity, and more self-critical subjectivity, which will show the very limits of subjectivity." Herbert Spiegelberg, *Doing Phenomenology* (Martinus Nijhoff/The Hague, 1975), 78.

examine factors that contribute to the development of bad faith.[11] Through its

examination of the synthesis of facticity and transcendence, this method illuminates bad

faith and thus foundations for power relations of oppression or resignation.

Figure 3, "Freedom and Power through an Existentialist Lens," conceptually

conveys the themes and terms of analysis. The figure details the existentialist model of

freedom and power that represents the core analytical theme. The chart depicts facticity,

transcendence, authenticity, and bad faith. It also portrays connections between

authenticity and generosity, as well as the trajectory of bad faith into sadism-oppression

and masochism-resignation, which further constrains the freedom and authenticity of

individuals and social groups.
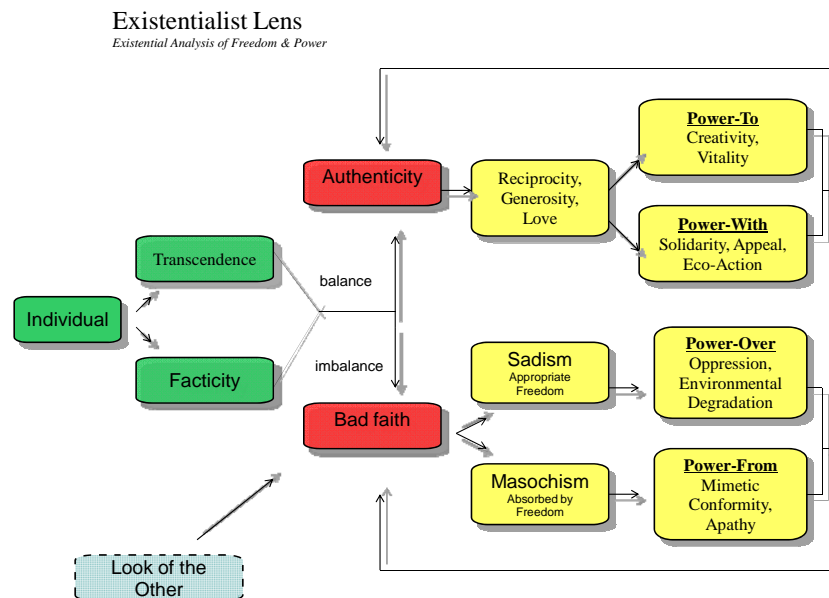
Figure 3. Existentialist Lens

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[11]As described in Chapter Three "bad faith" underpins oppressive, conforming or apathetic behavior, according to this existential model. The denial of one's freedom leads to the desire to attain freedom either through appropriating freedom from others (sadism) or by conforming or aligning with those perceived as more powerful (masochism). These "sadistic" and "masochistic" behaviors contribute to the evolution of social conditions that further limit individual freedom (oppression and resignation). This core theme addresses identity through discussions of freedom, choice, and responsibility, as well as consideration of influences limiting individual freedom and thereby recognition of alternative choices.

Chapter Four applies this core existentialist model to four categories of analysis in an investigation of factors and conditions encouraging the development of bad faith. These categories include: 1) developmental factors associated with childrearing practices; 2) gender, including socialization, ideology, roles, norms, and intersectional masculinities and femininities; 2) race, considering the development of oppression and derivative identities; and 4) religion, particularly the influence of social values on church teachings. Common factors and dynamics associated with these areas of social experience contribute to the development of bad faith. This template allows for the conceptualization of topics within the framework of the entire analysis.

This existentialist model offers a number of benefits. To begin with, the framework and neutral philosophical categories of existential analysis approach blindness by establishing a distance from which to more productively question, analyze, and bring to awareness the effects of varying social and individual experience. In addition, the emphasis is on the big picture rather than on intensive analyses of each of the social situations addressed.[12] This analysis of research findings affords the opportunity to compare and contrast, noting common themes emerging across multiple disciplines. What is of significance here is not necessarily the disciplinary findings themselves, which may or may not reflect new discoveries. The overall perspective afforded by this comparative analysis distinguishes common patterns and dynamics while also offering insight into their cumulative and mutually reinforcing effects. Existential analysis, as a comparative textual analysis of multi-disciplinary research, provides an integrative view of oppressions and thus illuminates their essential relatedness.

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[12] This approach also offers a framework for more detailed analysis of these social situations and others within a future project.

Bad faith is systematically encouraged through shared social practices, pressures, and experiences. The transformation of unsustainable behaviors and situations depends upon an understanding of their roots and underlying causes. How do states of bad faith get set up? What combinations of social conditions, pressures, and individual experiences encourage a denial of an aspect of self?

Existential Analysis of Childrearing

Bad faith and patterns of sadism or masochism are often established during childhood. The analysis thus begins with an examination of childrearing practices. The childrearing research of Alice Miller and the authoritarian personality project of the Frankfurt School theorists shed light upon linkages between family and social life. Miller's theory of splitting-off and projecting and the Frankfurt School's study of authoritarianism and conformity resonate with Girard's portrayals of scapegoating as well as Sartre's existentialist categories and descriptions. Miller and the Frankfurt School theorists highlight harms associated with the suppression of emotion, which represents a form of Sartre's bad faith.

Miller's psychoanalytical research addresses childrearing practices. In *For Your Own Good*, she relates the damaging effects of rigid childrearing, or what she calls "poisonous pedagogy." Pedagogy, Miller claims, serves the needs of parents or the larger social structure rather than those of the child. Childrearing practices that aim to mold the child suppress the natural spontaneity, exuberance, and curiosity of the child. Moreover, the experience of rigid childrearing engenders feelings of vulnerability. This experience, along with further punishment for expressing emotions, establishes deep-seated associations between vulnerability and weakness, shame, and humiliation.

The child is unable to quash emotional reactions to life experiences, of course. He or she comes to view emotional aspects of the self as evidence of weakness, "splits off" the devalued emotions or undesirable aspects of the self, and "projects" them onto others. Miller describes two trajectories for "splitting off and projecting" behaviors. She finds that some children scapegoat others to varying degrees, while others internalize feelings of shame or unworthiness:

> Disassociated from the original cause, their feelings of anger, helplessness, despair, longing, anxiety, and pain will find expression in destructive acts against others (criminal behavior, mass murder) or against themselves (drug addiction, alcoholism, prostitution, psychic disorders, suicide).[13]

Miller contrasts these differing forms of projection through her discussion of Adolf Hitler, who discharged his suppressed emotion externally onto a people and nation, and the well documented case of a drug addict, "Christiane," who engaged in self-destructive behaviors.[14] In the first case individuals project undesired aspects of themselves onto others, whom they then scapegoat. Individual desires to split off and project suggests a psychological motivation for group-based scapegoating, as Miller observes:

> Since every ideology provides a scapegoat outside the confines of its own splendid group, the weak and scorned child who is part of the total self but has been split off and never acknowledged can now be openly scorned and assailed in this scapegoat.[15]

Other individuals harm themselves through addictions, internalized oppression, or conformity. Miller illustrates this situation by describing the self-destructive behaviors of Christiane, a young drug addict:

> Eventually, all the child's bottled-up rage at being humiliated, deprived of respect, misunderstood, and left alone is turned against herself in the form of addiction. As time goes by, Christiane does to herself what her father had done to her earlier:

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[13] Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002), 283.

[14] Contexts and combinations of factors explain different responses to apparently similar events. For instance, gender norms to varying degrees inhibit external projection among girls while encouraging it among boys.

[15] Ibid., 86.

> she systematically destroys her self-respect, manipulates her feelings with the use of drugs, condemns herself to speechlessness (this highly articulate child!) and isolation, and in the end ruins body as well as soul.[16]

Childrearing practices that prioritize rigid obedience not only teach children to disregard their intuitions and emotional responses but also lead them to split off and project undesired responses or feelings of vulnerability.

A projected-upon child eventually becomes a parent. Childrearing offers an opportunity to split off devalued traits and project them onto children, planting the seeds for a generational cycle of bad faith:

> The pedagogical conviction that one must bring a child into line from the outset has its origin in the need to split off the disquieting parts of the inner self and project them onto an available object. The child's great plasticity, flexibility, defenselessness, and availability make it the ideal object for this projection.[17]

According to Miller's theory, the motivation for "sadistic" parental behavior is not a particular incident involving the child, although such an incident often serves as justification for "discipline." As with Sartre's "anti-Semite," the real motivation for abusive (sadistic) behavior is the parent's mindset, situation, unresolved fears or insecurities, or desire to deny vulnerabilities: in existentialist terms, bad faith. Miller's example of a parent waking a sleeping child illustrates this point:

> It is fathers such as this who are likely to drag their sleeping child out of bed if they cannot come to terms with a mood (perhaps having just felt insignificant and insecure on some social occasion) and beat the child in order to restore their narcissistic equilibrium.[18]

Children are unlikely to condemn their parents for abusive or poor treatment; they love their parents and desire approval, even in the face of abuse. The experience of both fear and love, Miller explains, makes it difficult for children to identify abuse:

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[16] Ibid., 113.
[17] Ibid., 91.
[18] Ibid., 162.

>Children, unlike concentration-camp inmates, are confronted by a tormenter they love, not one they hate, and this tragic complication will have a devastating influence on their entire subsequent life.[19]

As adults, those formerly abused as children may be least likely to criticize their parents, often idealizing their childhoods and parents. Some adamantly defend "spanking" or insist that they deserved harsh discipline because of their behavior. Although these responses may be understandable, dismissal of the significance of painful childrearing practices inhibits possibilities for addressing or interrupting this generational cycle and its far-reaching social consequences.

Individual reluctance to criticize the childrearing practices of one's own parents mirrors a collective tendency to dismiss the topic.[20] "Poisonous pedagogy," however, affects the entire culture. Although not all children are physically abused, all are affected, whether from the experience of shaming, humiliation, or emotional abuse within home or school environments or by virtue of living within a culture that condones the harsh treatment of small children. The universality of these childrearing practices contributes to the difficulty of discerning their detrimental effects.

Moreover, the quickness with which the words of children are dismissed, even when their accounts are the most plausible in a given situation, mirrors widespread inclinations to disregard or blame the most vulnerable parties (blame the victim). These dismissals themselves reflect a splitting off and projecting process, Miller claims. She describes longstanding clinical and social practices of minimizing the testimony of

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[19] Ibid., 118.

[20] Miller observes that "loving parents in particular should want to find out what they are unconsciously doing to their children. If they simply avoid the subject and instead point to their parental love, then they are not really concerned about their children's well-being but rather are painstakingly trying to keep a clear conscience." Ibid., 271.

children, suggesting that biases against the testimony of children are associated with our blindness or denial of what happened to us.[21]

The research findings of Frankfurt School critical theorists support Miller's account of the harms of rigid childrearing. In the aftermath of World War II, the Institute for Social Research of the University of Frankfurt in Germany -- known informally as The Frankfurt School -- pursued interdisciplinary research projects, drawing upon philosophical, sociological, psychological, historical, and economic scholarship and research methods.[22] The Frankfurt School examined social conditions underlying authoritarianism or anti-democratic sentiment within comprehensive assessments of family and social life. Their analyses consider childhood, family, educational, cultural, and media influences and in these ways investigate possible sources of bad faith.

The authoritarian personality project represents one of their large-scale projects. Theodor Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford report the conclusions of this research project in *The Authoritarian Personality*.*[23]* The

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[21]Miller offers the example of several biographers of Hitler. Despite evidence of the abuses Hitler suffered as a child, Miller describes the disinclination of several of Hitler's biographers' to consider the testimonies of child witnesses who incriminated parental behaviors: "It is characteristic of biographers that they have difficulty identifying with the child and quite unconsciously minimize mistreatment by the parents." Ibid., 153. Miller's work itself is supportive of the existential analytical approach of this project. Miller finds sufficient evidence of harms inflicted through childhood experiences to account for projection without relying on an aggressive or death instinct: "The example of Hitler's childhood allows us to study the genesis of a hatred whose consequences caused the suffering of millions. The nature of this destructive hatred has long been familiar to psychoanalysts, but psychoanalysis will be of little help as long as it interprets this hatred as an expression of the death instinct. The followers of Melanie Klein, who in spite of their very accurate description of infantile hatred still define it as innate (instinctual) and not reactive, are no exception… We must leave the familiar territory of drive theory and address the question of what takes place in a child who is humiliated and demeaned by his parents on the one hand and on the other is commanded to respect and love those who treat him in this fashion and under no circumstances to give expression to his suffering… If psychoanalysis could only free itself of its stubborn belief in the death instinct, it would be able to begin to answer the question of why wars occur, on the basis of material available on early childhood conditioning. Unfortunately, however, most psychoanalysts are not interested in what parents did to their children, leaving this question to family therapists. Since the latter in turn do not work with transference but concentrate primarily on modifying interactions among family members, they seldom gain the access to events of early childhood possible in a thoroughgoing analysis." Ibid., 144-145.
[22]During the Nazi period, the scholars of the Institute for Social Research were exiled first to Paris and then to the United States, where they resituated themselves within the graduate school of The New School for Social Research ("University in Exile") and Columbia University in New York City. The Frankfurt School approaches social analysis through critical theory. Critical theory examines relations between individuals within the social context, as well as combinations of factors contributing to the development of social and political realities. Differentiated from traditional theoretical approaches that rely on a system of hypotheses that are continually tested through empirical research, critical theory employs a flexible analytical approach where theory is continually developed and refined during the social research process. See Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).
[23] Max Horkheimer describes the purposes and implications of the study: "This is a book about social discrimination. But its purpose is not simply to add a few more empirical findings to an already extensive body of information. The central theme of the work is a

scholars link anti-democratic sentiment with prejudice, ethnocentrism, superiority, domination, destructiveness, and authoritarianism.[24] They chose to particularly examine ethnocentrism versus prejudice because its meaning is better suited to the purposes of their study: "Prejudice is commonly regarded as a feeling of dislike against a specific group; ethnocentrism, on the other hand, refers to a relatively consistent frame of mind concerning 'aliens' generally."[25] The ethnocentrist carves the world into in-groups and out-groups, projecting superior or hostile attitudes towards outgroups.[26]

The authoritarian project found a significant relationship between rigid childrearing and ethnocentric inclinations. The methodology of the research involved questionnaires and interviews. Responses were assigned values and tallied in order to quantitatively assess the results. "High-scorers" reflect high levels of ethnocentrism, according to these measurements.[27] The study links ethnocentric perspectives and behaviors to a "complex network of attitudes within, and relating to, the family."[28]

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relatively new concept – the rise of an 'anthropological' species we call the authoritarian type of man… This book approaches the problem with the means of socio-psychological research... In the history of civilization there have been not a few instances when mass delusions were healed not by focused propaganda but, in the final analysis, because scholars, with their unobtrusive yet insistent work habits, studied what lay at the root of the delusion. Their intellectual contribution, operating within the framework of the development of society as a whole, was decisively effective." Max Horkheimer, "Preface," in *The Authoritarian Personality*, by T. W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford, in collaboration with Betty Aron, Maria Hertz Levinson, and William Morrow (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1982), xi.

[24]The authors observe that "one of the most clearly antidemocratic forms of social ideology is prejudice and within this context anti-Semitism provides a fruitful starting point for a social psychological study." T.W. Adorno, et al, 57.

[25] Ibid., 102. They explain further that "ethnocentrism refers to group relations generally; it has to do not only with numerous groups toward which the individual has hostile opinions and attitudes but, equally important, with groups toward which he is positively disposed. A theory of ethnocentrism offers a starting point for the understanding of the psychological aspect of group relations." Ibid., 102.

[26] The authors further distinguish varying intensities of ethnocentric attitudes by delineating between openly antidemocratic and pseudodemocratic ideas. They explain that "an idea may be considered openly antidemocratic when it refers to active hatred, or to violence which has the direct aim of wiping out a minority group or of putting it in a permanently subordinate position. A pseudodemocratic idea, on the other hand, is one in which hostility toward a group is somewhat tempered and disguised by means of a compromise with democratic ideals." Ibid., 60. Openly antidemocratic and pseudodemocratic individuals are susceptible to "anti-democratic propaganda," which fosters increasing levels of prejudice in the social body. The potentially fascistic individual, according to these theorists, is "particularly susceptible to anti-democratic propaganda." Ibid., 1. They explain that "the research to be reported in this volume was guided by the following major hypothesis: that the political, economic, and social convictions of an individual often form a broad and coherent pattern, as if bound together by a 'mentality' or 'spirit,' and that this pattern is an expression of deep-lying trends in his personality. The major concern was with the potentially fascistic individual, one whose structure is such as to render him particularly susceptible to anti-democratic propaganda." Ibid., 1.

[27] See Ibid., 11-27, for a summary of the research methodology.

[28]Ibid., 256.

Ethnocentrists, according to these findings, most frequently come from authoritarian

childhood homes marked by rigid discipline:

> Prejudiced subjects tend to report a relatively harsh and more threatening type of
> home discipline which was experienced as arbitrary by the child. Related to this is
> a tendency apparent in families of prejudiced subjects to base interrelationships
> on rather clearly defined roles of dominance and submission in contradistinction
> to equalitarian policies. In consequence, the images of the parents seem to
> acquire for the child a forbidding or at least a distant quality. Family relationships
> are characterized by fearful subservience to the demands of the parents and by an
> early suppression of impulses not acceptable to them.[29]

In these families adherence to established roles is prioritized over the "exchange of free-

flowing affection"; the authoritarian home "induces a relative lack of mutuality in the

area of emotion."[30]   Like Miller, the Frankfurt theorists find that unwanted feelings or

behaviors are "split-off" and, in these cases, "redirected against weaker outgroups":

> Since the values of the parents are outside the child's scope, yet are rigorously
> imposed upon him, conduct not in conformity with the behavior, or with the
> behavioral façade, required by the parents has to be rendered ego-alien and "split
> off" from the rest of the personality, with a resultant loss of integration. Much of
> the submission to parental authority in the prejudiced subject seems to be induced
> by impatience on the part of the parents and by the child's fear of displeasing
> them. It is in the area of social and political attitudes that the suppressed yet
> unmodified impulses find one of their distorted outlets and emerge with particular
> intensity. In particular, moral indignation first experienced in the attitude of one's
> parents toward oneself is being redirected against weaker outgroups.[31]

Moreover, authoritarian homes promote both conformity and destructiveness, including

pronounced inclinations to scapegoat weaker individuals or groups:

> We often find in our high-scoring subjects both overconformity and underlying
> destructiveness toward established authority, customs, and institutions... The
> orientation toward power and the contempt for the allegedly inferior and weak,
> found in our typical prejudiced subjects, must likewise be considered as having
> been taken over from the parents' attitude toward the child. The fact that his
> helplessness as a child was exploited by the parents and that he was forced into
> submission must have reinforced any existing anti-weakness attitude. Prejudiced

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[29]Ibid., 256.
[30]Ibid., 258.
[31]Ibid., 257.

individuals thus tend to display 'negative identification' with the weak along with their positive though superficial identification with the strong.[32]

In this context, scapegoating behavior reflects conformity to group beliefs or obedience to the directives of a revered authoritarian figure. According to the study, the desire to conform results from diminished reliance on one's own thought and deliberation:

> Conformity is one of the major expressions of lack of an internal focus in the high scorer. One of the outstanding characteristics to be found in both the conservatively inclined, as well as in the delinquent subvariety of the high scorer, is the adoption of conventional values and rules. High scorers generally seem to need external support – whether this be offered by authorities or by public opinion – in order to find some assurance concerning what is right and what is wrong.[33]

These findings associate authoritarian and conforming behavior with rigid or punitive childrearing practices.

On the other hand, low scores on these scales, which reflect tolerant, democratic inclinations, were linked with family harmony and more egalitarian home environments. Affection marks these childhood experiences. The scholars observe that "there is, on the whole, more affection, or more unconditional affection, in the families of unprejudiced subjects."[34] Parents in these home environments provide greater levels of support to children, demand lower levels of obedience, and are more forgiving of socially unaccepted behavior.[35] The study demonstrates that children in more democratic homes more often question authority, including that of their parents.

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[32] Ibid., 259. The authors continue: "This orientation toward the strong is often expressed in conscious identification with the more powerful parent." Ibid., 259. Within patriarchal families, this figure is often male. This point foreshadows the gender analysis in the following section, which demonstrates the ways bad faith inculcated through childrearing becomes gendered.
[33] Ibid., 270.
[34] Ibid., 260.
[35] Ibid., 259. An interesting finding involves the differing behaviors of children in their interactions with parents. On one hand, the study finds that children raised with rigid childrearing practices in authoritarian homes will often glorify their parents: "This kind of dependence on the parents, the wish to be taken care of by them, coupled with the fear ensuing from the same general pattern, seems firmly to establish the self-negating submission to parents just described. There are, however, certain cues which seem to indicate the presence, at the same time, of underlying resentment against, and feelings of victimization by, the parents… Resentment, be it open or disguised, may readily be understood in view of the strong parental pressures to enforce 'good' behavior together with the meagerness of the rewards offered. As a reaction against the underlying hostility, there is often rigid glorification and idealization of the parents. The artificiality of this attitude may be recognized from the description of the parents in exaggerated, superlative (and at the same time stereotypical and externalized) terms." Ibid., 258. On the other hand, children from the more democratic households are freer to

In addition to family structure, the Frankfurt School theorists consider other childhood pressures, including those associated with peer group relations, cultural influences, and education. In *The Dialectic of Enlightenment,* Max Horkheimer and Adorno characterize the early life of the mind as "infinitely fragile" and vulnerable to crippling through the experience of fear, leading to what they call "stupidity":

> Stupidity is a scar… every partial stupidity of a man denotes a spot where the play of stirring muscles was thwarted instead of encouraged… Such scars lead to deformities. They can build hard and able characters; they can breed stupidity – as a symptom of pathological deficiency, of blindness and impotency, if they are quiescent; in the form of malice, spite, and fanaticism, if they produce a cancer within. The coercion suffered turns good will into bad. And not only tabooed questioning but forbidden mimicry, forbidden tears, and forbidden rashness in play can leave such scars.[36]

"Stupidity" is portrayed as a scar linked to early adverse or painful experiences. This scar represents another illustration of bad faith, which leads to sadistic or masochistic behaviors, such as impotency, malice, fanaticism, and so forth. Where parents and caregivers leave off, peer pressure picks up, strengthening desires for conformity. Horkheimer notes that "the process may be particularly drastic if obedience is enforced less by an individual than by groups – by other children on the playground and in school."[37] Educational systems discourage critical thinking when they privilege rote memorization over learning approaches that inspire love of the material. Erich Fromm,

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disagree with their parents: "Since the unprejudiced subjects on the whole received more love and feel more basically secure in relation to their parents, they more easily express disagreement with them without fear of retaliation or of a complete loss of love… unprejudiced subjects often succeed in attaining a considerable degree of independence from their parents, and of freedom in making their own decisions. Ibid., 260. They further explain that the more democratic subjects were able to express dissatisfaction or rebellion against people closer to the source of their dissatisfaction; they provide the example of a man rebelling against his father: "Since hostility toward the parents, when present, tends to be more open [in the case of unprejudiced subjects], it often takes the form of rebellion against other authorities or, more generally, against objects nearer to the original objects of aggression than are the really, or presumable, weak which serve as favorite objects of aggression in the case of the prejudiced. It is often in this form that the unprejudiced man expresses his hostility against his father." Ibid., 260.

[36] Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment.* Translated by John Cumming (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 2002), 257.

[37] Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc., 2003), 110. Horkheimer further claims that repressed emotions and drives present opportunities for exploitation: "Hitler appealed to the unconscious in his audience by hinting that he could forge a power in whose name the ban on repressed nature would be lifted. Rational persuasion can never be as effective, because it is not congenial to the repressed primitive urges of a superficially civilized people. Nor can democracy hope to emulate totalitarian propaganda, unless it undertakes to compromise the democratic way of life by stimulating destructive unconscious forces." Ibid., 120.

another member of the Frankfurt School, observes that "the same distortion happens to original thinking as happens to feelings and emotions. From the very start of education, original thinking is discouraged and ready-made thoughts are put into people's heads."[38]

These childhood pressures are reinforced through general cultural influences. Fromm observes that "realization of the self" is dependent upon the integration of "emotional and intellectual potentialities."[39] Western intellectual culture, however, has long privileged the intellectual aspect of human nature over the emotional, with harmful consequences for intellectual development as well. Fromm asks:

> What is realization of the self? Idealistic philosophers have believed that self-realization can be achieved by intellectual insight alone. They have insisted upon splitting human personality, so that man's nature may be suppressed and guarded by his reason. The result of this split, however, has been that not only the emotional life of man but also his intellectual faculties have been crippled.[40]

Furthermore, Fromm claims that social and cultural values reinforce this suppression:

> In our society emotions in general are discouraged. While there can be no doubt that any creative thinking – as well as any other creative activity – is inseparably linked with emotion, it has become an ideal to think and to live without emotions. To be 'emotional' has become synonymous with being unsound or unbalanced. By the acceptance of this standard the individual has become greatly weakened, his thinking is impoverished and flattened.[41]

Horkheimer and Adorno claim that what they call the "culture industry" promotes a suppression of emotion and creative thinking. Freedom is constrained by the restriction of available choices, they argue, including unsubstantial product differentiation and

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[38]Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994), 246.

[39]Fromm writes, "We believe that the realization of the self is accomplished not only by an act of thinking but also by the realization of man's total personality, by the active expression of his emotional and intellectual potentialities. These potentialities are present in everybody; they become real only to the extent to which they are expressed. In other words, positive freedom consists in the spontaneous activity of the total, integrated personality."Ibid., 257.

[40] Ibid., 256. Fromm's point here resonates with observations from Miller, who underscores dangers associated with overreliance on reason as one aspect of personality: "As recently as the Third Reich, not to mention countless times before that, we have seen that reason constitutes only a small part of the human being, and not the dominant part, at that. All it took was a Fuhrer's madness and several million well-raised Germans to extinguish the lives of countless innocent human beings in the space of a few short years. If we do not do everything we can to understand the roots of this hatred, even the most elaborate strategic agreements will not save us." Miller,144.

[41]Fromm, 244.

limited forms of entertainment. The pervasive influence of the culture industry --

including movies based on "ready-made clichés," imitative versus original artwork and

music, and unimaginative language -- erodes independent thought while thwarting

consideration of resistance. While apparently offering diversion from everyday work and

cares, Horkheimer and Adorno claim that entertainment facilitates the development of

unthinking natures:

> Pleasure always means not to think about anything, to forget suffering even where
> it is shown. Basically it is helplessness. It is flight; not, as is asserted, flight from
> a wretched reality, but from the last remaining thought of resistance.[42]

Thus, these theorists trace the ways that childhood experience suppresses emotions and

creative thinking as well as the ways educational and cultural influences reinforce these

effects. Their research thus illuminates sources of bad faith.

Theory predicts that bad faith will lead to domination (power-over) or conformity

(power-from). The research findings of the Frankfurt School project the suppression of

emotion and creative thinking into two trajectories: "authoritarianism" or "conformity."

On one hand, self-doubt and insecurity foster the cultivation of what Fromm

characterizes as "automaton conformity":

> The individual ceases to be himself; he adopts entirely the kind of personality
> offered to him by cultural patterns; and he therefore becomes exactly as all others
> are and as they expect him to be… The person who gives up his individual self
> and becomes an automaton, identical with millions of other automatons around

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[42] Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, "The Culture Industry," in Dialectic of Enlightenment, 144. The pressure on individuality is reinforced by a comprehensive conditioning process whereby "everyone is enclosed at an early age in a system of churches, clubs, professional associ ations, and other such concerns, which constitute the most sensitive instrument of social control." Ibid., 149. Those who resist are rendered powerless: outcasts have limited access to the system of production and are often marginalized by their outsider status. Unaware of the domination exerted by the culture industry, members of society unfailingly support the system that inhibits their individuality and autonomy: "The individual who supported society bore its disfiguring mark; seemingly free, he was actually the product of its economic and social apparatus." Ibid., 155. Horkheimer and Adorno's portrayals delineate several heightened threats to individuality: 1) a less visible source of power, stemming from a ubiquitous and faceless culture industry rather than associated with a visible ruling power, 2) reduced need for specialization; rather than contributing an important function to the social group, the individual is increasingly rendered replaceable, and 3) formidable barriers to smaller companies or individuals who wish to challenge the system, presented by the emergence of large combines that develop in part due to the interconnected nature of economics and the culture industry.

> him, need not feel alone and anxious anymore. But the price he pays, however, is high; it is the loss of his self.[43]

As one conforms, one loses oneself, increasing the necessity to conform: "The loss of the self has increased the necessity to conform, for it results in a profound doubt of one's own identity."[44] Widespread conformity contributes to what Fromm describes as "pseudo willing": we think we decide, but we are really conforming to suggestions provided to us.[45] Horkheimer observes that conformity and authoritarianism, like masochism and sadism, arise together:

> These people willingly embrace or force themselves to accept the rule of the stronger as the eternal norm. Their whole life is a continuous effort to suppress and abase nature, inwardly or outwardly, and to identify themselves with its more powerful surrogates – the race, fatherland, leader, cliques, and tradition.[46]

On the other hand, the suppression of emotion is also associated with the emergence of authoritarian traits. Social pressures intensifying anxiety increase underlying insecurity as bad faith, propelling authoritarian behavior. Fromm delineates three sadistic tendencies:

> One is to make others dependent on oneself and to have absolute and unrestricted power over them… Another consists of the impulse… to exploit them, to use them, to steal from them… This desire can refer to material things as well as to immaterial ones, such as the emotional or intellectual qualities a person has to offer. A third kind of sadistic tendency is the wish to make others suffer or to see them suffer. This suffering can be physical, but more often it is mental suffering. Its aim is to hurt actively, to humiliate, embarrass others, or to see them in embarrassing and humiliating situations.[47]

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[43]Fromm, 184.
[44] Ibid., 253.
[45] Automaton mentality leads to increased social passivity, as gradually, Fromm suggests, "a wide range of spontaneous emotions are suppressed and replaced by pseudo feeling." Ibid., 243.
[46] Horkheimer,.113.
[47] Fromm, 143.

Although the sadist exerts considerable influence over others, Fromm describes the need of the sadist for the objects of his or her sadism. The sense of strength and power sought by the sadist requires the presence of the other to dominate.

The theories put forward by Miller and the Frankfurt School theorists link rigid childrearing practices with the development of domination or conformity.[48] This existential analysis of childrearing practices links Sartre's descriptions of bad faith, sadism, and masochism, Girard's portrayal of scapegoating, Miller's conceptions of splitting off and projecting, and the Frankfurt School theorists' descriptions of authoritarianism and conformity. Findings from the research of Miller and the critical theorists thus demonstrate harmful effects of the suppression of emotion, which represents a form of bad faith associated with the denial of an aspect of nature.[49] The existentialist model predicts that bad faith will be expressed as sadistic or masochistic behavior; the two trajectories predicted by Miller based on the experience of painful childrearing practices mirror the critical theorists' findings concerning authoritarianism and conformity within their authoritarian research project. Miller locates the source of this "bad faith" with the suppression of emotion inculcated through childrearing while the critical theorists consider educational and cultural influences as well as family dynamics.

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[48]Douglas Fry's research of contemporary peaceful cultures supports these findings. Fry notes a connection between levels of social harmony and childrearing practices: "Turning to child rearing, in peaceful societies, such as the Paliyan, Rotuma, La Paz Zapotec, Mardu, Semai, and Norway, children are rarely punished physically. The rarity of physical punishment in peaceful societies suggests a specific recommendation for reducing aggression in such contexts as the United States, for as Straus (2001) points out on the basis of empirical findings, both witnessing and receiving corporal punishment as a child increases the probability of engaging in physical aggression as an adult. La Paz parents prefer verbal alternatives to corporal punishment; they discuss, explain, and teach. Children in La Paz turn out obedient and respectful. This observation argues against the validity of the aggression-accepting adage still expressed in the United States, 'Spare the rod and spoil the child.'"Douglas Fry, "Conclusion: Learning from Peaceful Societies," in *Keeping the Peace: Conflict Resolution and Peaceful Societies Around the World,* edited by Graham Kemp & Douglas P. Fry (New York: Routledge, 2004), 202.

[49]Like Miller's work, the critical theorists' work is itself aligned with the existential analytical approach of this project. Fromm stresses the significance of social interaction to human development:"We believe that man is primarily a social being, and not, as Freud assumes, primarily self-sufficient and only secondarily in need of others in order to satisfy his instinctual needs. In this sense, we believe that individual psychology is fundamentally social psychology or, in Sullivan's terms, the psychology of interpersonal relationships; the key problem of psychology is that of the particular kind of relatedness of the individual toward the world, not that of satisfaction or frustration of single instinctual desires." Fromm, 288.

This analysis of childhood identifies rigid childrearing and the suppression of emotion as sources of bad faith associated with the emergence of dominant and conforming inclinations, which are reflected in mimetic conforming or scapegoating behaviors.

Gender

Gender culture motivates, reinforces, and shapes the expression of bad faith. Here I apply existential analysis to critical social theories of gender as a way to assess additional sources of bad faith. These gender theories address gender culture, intersectional dynamics, and global effects, with the category of gender culture encompassing ideology, status, and socialization. Gender culture not only amplifies the suppression of emotion and denial of vulnerability set up through rigid childrearing practices. It also encourages bad faith through dualistic gender ideologies, collapses identity with gender identity, and provides gendered scripts for socially tolerated expressions of bad faith, thereby diminishing recognition of their harmful individual and collective effects. Finally, gender ideology and status influence prevailing social values, constraining access to sustainable values of care and compassion.

William Pollack, who directs the *Listening to Boys Voices* project at Harvard University, describes decades of research on male gender socialization. A "Boys' Code," according to Pollack, prescribes ways of acting that restrict the expression of emotion or vulnerability, with humiliation and shame used to police boys who deviate from socially defined gender behavior:

> The use of shame to "control" boys is pervasive… Little boys are made to feel shame over and over, in the midst of growing up, through what I call society's shame-hardening process. The idea is that a boy needs to be disciplined, toughened up, made to act like a "real man," be independent, keep the emotions in check. A boy is told that "big boys don't cry," that he shouldn't be "a mama's boy." If these things aren't said directly, these messages dominate in subtle ways

in how boys are treated – and therefore how boys come to think of themselves. Shame is at the heart of how others behave toward boys on our playing fields, in schoolrooms, summer camps, and in our homes.[50]

The experience of shame molds boys' behaviors as well as perceptions about the nature of male identity, with long-term consequences. Pollack notes that "by placing a boy in this gender straitjacket, society is limiting his emotional range and his ability to think and behave as freely and openly as he could, to succeed in the ever-changing world in which we live."[51] Boys live "semi-inauthentic lives," according to Pollack, because of their need to suppress important aspects of themselves.[52] Bell hooks echoes Pollack's comments in her discussion of masculinity in *The Will to Change.* Hooks portrays male gender socialization as an experience of violence inflicted on men by a patriarchal social system:

> The first act of violence that patriarchy demands of males is not violence toward women. Instead patriarchy demands of all males that they engage in acts of psychic self-mutilation, that they kill off the emotional parts of themselves. If an individual is not successful in emotionally crippling himself, he can count on patriarchal men to enact rituals of power that will assault his self-esteem.[53]

At the same time, men are misled about the benefits of patriarchy, hooks claims. She includes violence, depression, isolation, loneliness, and alienation among the damaging effects of sexism and patriarchy on men. Even many apparently successful men feel

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[50] William Pollack, *Real Boys* (New York: Random House, 1998), 12.

[51] Ibid., xxii. Pollack describes the "hardening" of boys: "I believe that boys, feeling ashamed of their vulnerability, mask their emotions and ultimately their true selves. This unnecessary disconnection – from family and then from self – causes many boys to feel alone, helpless, and fearful. And yet society's prevailing myths about boys do not leave room for such emotions, and so the boy feels he is not measuring up. He has no way to talk about his perceived failure; he feels ashamed, but he can't talk about his shame either. Over time, his sensitivity is submerged almost without thinking, until he loses touch with it himself. And so a boy has been 'hardened,' just as society thinks he should be." Ibid., xxii.

[52] Pollack explains that "the boys we care for, much like the girls we cherish, often seem to feel they must live semi-inauthentic lives, lives that conceal much of their true selves and feelings, and studies show they do so in order to fit in and be loved. The boys I see – in the "Listening to Boys' Voices' study, in schools, and in private practice – often are hiding not only a wide range of their feelings but also some of their creativity and originality, showing in effect only a handful of primary colors rather than a broad spectrum of colors and hues of the self." Ibid., 7.

[53] Hooks, *The Will the Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2004), 66. This self-mutilation sacrifices emotional aspects of the self. Hooks offers a definition of patriarchy: "Patriarchy is a political social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence… Both our parents believe in patriarchy; they had been taught patriarchal thinking through religion. At church they had learned that God created man to rule the world and everything in it and that it was the work of women to help men perform these tasks, to obey, and to always assume a subordinate role in relation to a powerful man. They were taught that God was male." Ibid., 18.

empty and unsatisfied as they compulsively strive for more and greater success, and hooks suggests that narrow definitions of masculinity limit this expression of dissatisfaction:

> The patriarchal manhood that was supposed to satisfy does not. And by the time this awareness emerges, most patriarchal men are isolated and alienated; they cannot go back and reclaim a past happiness or joy, nor can they go forward. To go forward they would need to repudiate the patriarchal thinking that their identity has been based on. Rage is the easy way back to a realm of feeling. It can serve as the perfect cover, masking feelings of fear and failure.[54]

The larger community of boys and men enforce this ideology. Pierre Bourdieu claims that "like honor - or shame, its reverse side, which we know, in contrast to guilt, is felt before others – manliness must be validated by other men, in its reality as actual or potential violence, and certified by recognition of membership in the group of 'real men.'"[55] Gender conditioning thus serves to discourage the expression of emotions other than anger and encourage pretenses of invulnerability among boys and men.

Female gender socialization also promotes bad faith. Bourdieu draws attention to the subtle and pervasive nature of what he calls "collective expectations," which discourage women from particular behaviors:

> 'Collective expectations,' positive or negative, through the subjective expectations that they impose, tend to inscribe themselves in bodies in the form of permanent dispositions. Thus, by virtue of the universal law of the adjustment of expectations to chances, aspirations to possibilities, prolonged and invisibly diminished experience that is sexually characterized through and through tends, by discouraging it, to undermine even the inclination to perform acts that are not expected of women – without them even being denied to them… This is a magnificent evocation, made possible by comparison, of the kind of reverse or negative Pygmalion effect that is exerted so early and so continuously on women that it ends up being completely unnoticed.[56]

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[54] Ibid., 73. She adds: "Men who win on patriarchal terms end up losing in terms of their substantive quality of life. They choose patriarchal manhood over loving connection, first foregoing self-love and then the love they could give and receive that would connect them to others."Ibid., 72.

[55] Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 52.

[56] Ibid., 61. As an example, Bourdieu observes that the delineation of occupations based on gender reinforces and perpetuates stereotypical ideas of gender appropriate behavior: "The essentially social logic of what is called 'vocation' has the effect of producing these kinds of harmonious encounters between dispositions and positions in which the victims of symbolic domination can

Gender status plays into socialization as well. Gender socialization not only provides

non-holistic, bad faith roles and identities for both men and women but at the same time

also establishes and reinforces a hierarchy of social values, with feminine identity linked

to devalued traits. Bourdieu explains that social expectation also functions as a

'pessimistic self-fulfilling prophesy' with a powerful ability to affect self-perceptions:

> The androcentric view is thus continuously legitimated by the very practices that
> it determines. Because their dispositions are the product of embodiment of the
> *negative prejudice* against the female that is instituted in the order of things,
> women cannot but constantly confirm this prejudice. The logic is that of the
> curse, in the strong sense of a pessimistic self-fulfilling prophecy calling for its
> own validation and bringing about what it foretells.[39]

A social system that privileges the masculine encourages the objectification of women.[57]

 Collective expectations encourage resignation to objectification, which represents the

bad faith of denied freedom.   Thus, gender socialization relies upon both mimesis and

pain-reward dynamics to encourage boys and girls in the assumption of cultural norms of

masculinity and femininity.

Gender culture builds upon the experience of rigid childrearing by intensifying

needs to suppress emotions and deny vulnerability, especially among boys. Both social

practices are rooted in power-over mentalities.[58] Gender socialization, like childrearing

practices, is transmitted generationally, with parents generally unaware of their need to

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felicitously (in both senses) perform the subaltern or subordinate tasks that are assigned to their virtues of submission, gentleness, docility, devotion, and self-denial." Ibid., 57.

[57] De Beauvoir claims that "He is the Subject, he is the Absolute – she is the Other." Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1989), xxviii.

[58] Miller describes a conversation with a colleague about pedagogy. Following her claim that "all pedagogy is superfluous as long as children are provided with a dependable person in early childhood, can use this person… and need not fear losing him or her or being abandoned if they express their feelings," her colleague responds, "Now I wonder if what is called pedagogy may not be simply a question of power, and if we shouldn't be speaking and writing much more about hidden power struggles instead of racking our brains about finding better methods of childrearing." Miller further claims that "since one's use and abuse of power over others usually have the function of holding one's own feelings of helplessness in check –which means the exercise of power is often unconsciously motivated – rational arguments can do nothing to impede this process." Miller, 277- 278.

split off and project onto children traits they learned to devalue during their own

childhoods. Hooks draws attention to the significance of power in childrearing practices:

> The most common forms of patriarchal violence are those that take place in the
> home between patriarchal parents and children. The point of such violence is
> usually to reinforce a dominator model, in which the authority figure is deemed
> ruler over those without power and given the right to maintain that rule through
> practices of subjugation, subordination, and submission. Keeping males and
> females from telling the truth about what happens to them in families is one way
> patriarchal culture is maintained.[59]

The use of violence in the home to "reinforce a dominator model" mirrors relations

between men. For instance, some men model dominant male identity in their interactions

with sons and younger boys within the community. Adorno, et al, associate "softer"

emotional values with women as they explain power dynamics within the family and

their relation to larger social structure. [60] This research relates a more holistic

construction of identity with "low-scoring" individuals, with scoring linked to levels of

prejudice and anti-democratic, non-egalitarian tendencies:

> Since the typical low-scoring man more readily accepts his own femininity than
> the high scorer, and the low-scoring woman her masculine strivings, one
> important source of hidden aggression toward the opposite sex – and toward other
> people generally, as it seems – is reduced.[61]

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[59] Hooks, 24.

[60] The authoritarian personality project finds that "this orientation toward the strong is often expressed in conscious identification with the more powerful parent. Above all, the men among our prejudiced subjects tend to report having a 'stern and distant' father who seems to have been domineering within the family. It is this type of father who elicits in his son tendencies toward passive submission, as well as the ideal of aggressive and rugged masculinity and a compensatory   striving for independence. Furthermore, the son's inadequate relation to his mother prevents him from adopting more of the 'softer' values." Adorno, et al, 259.

[61] Ibid., 263. The Frankfurt theorists further illuminate findings associated with gender roles and behaviors: "The role of the woman, as seen by the high-scoring man, is one of passivity and subservience. She is an object of solicitude on the part of the man. The hierarchical idea involved corresponds to the well-known conventional cliché and at the same time offers the high-scoring man the much-needed opportunity of asserting his superiority. There is, however, ample evidence that the high-scoring man wants to be on the receiving end in his relation to women; from them he wants material benefits and support more than he wants pure affection, for it would be difficult for him to accept the latter. There is relatively little genuine affective involvement in his non-marital sex relations, and of his wife he tends to require the conventional prerequisites of a good housewife. On the whole, sex is for him in the service of status, be this masculine status as achieved by pointing toward conquests, or be it social status as achieved by marrying the 'right kind' of woman. Low-scoring men, on the other hand, tend to look primarily for companionship, friendship, and sensuality in their relations to the other sex. They are able openly to take and to give nurturance and succorance in their relations with women." Ibid., 271. They continue: "The extremely unprejudiced woman likewise looks primarily for mutual interests and affection in her choice of a mate. As the low-scoring man shows greater readiness than does the high scorer to accept feminine features in himself, so the low-scoring woman tends not to repress but rather to accept and to sublimate her masculine tendencies by pursuing so-called masculine interests and activities. Though this often leads to open competition with and envy of, men, there is at the same time more understanding and more genuine liking for them... The high-scoring woman, on the other hand, clings to a self-image of conventional femininity define by subservience to, and adulation of, men. At the same time there is evidence of an exploitive and hostile attitude toward men, expressed only indirectly in the interviews and shown quite directly in the stories of the Thematic Apperception Test… One way in

Gender ideology and status factor into family dynamics, from childrearing and

socialization to the relationship between parents.

Furthermore, theory predicts and research confirms connections between the bad

faith of suppressed emotion and the emergence of dominant interpersonal and social

relations. For instance, boys may split off and project feelings of vulnerability or

unworthiness onto individuals perceived as "weaker" from both a physical and social

power standpoint, such as female partners, other women, or vulnerable men.[62] The

culturally devalued position of women provides a socially accepted channel for the

projection of bad faith as dominant behavior. The Frankfurt theorists note relations with

women in particular:

> The prejudiced man has more possibilities available to him to compensate for
> underlying weaknesses. He may do so by demonstrating his independence or by
> implicit or explicit assertion of his superiority over women.[63]

This model also predicts that women become particular targets for this projection because

of the way they symbolically represent vulnerability according to cultural gender norms.

Evelin Gerda Lindner describes this phenomenon in her discussion of genocide:

> In all militaristic cultures, where the male is trained to be tough and fearless when
> facing death in battle, he may resent women because they remind him of desires
> that he deems unmale or female: for example, his desires to be cared for, to be
> emotional, or to be weak. In all such cases, women will be in danger of receiving
> hostility rather than protection from 'their' males.[64]

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which such a negative attitude is manifested is in her exaggerated demands on men as providers; another is the living out of her thwarted ambitions through the medium of the man. Again it may be that it is the general cultural plight of the woman that finds an exaggerated release in the high-scoring woman; indeed, low-scoring women seem by no means untouched by the difficult situation imposed upon them by our civilization. But whereas the high-scoring woman tends to give preference to the ideal of a restricted rather than a vaguely defined role for women, the low-scoring woman is more apt to take on the conflict and to face it openly." Ibid., 272.

[62] The suppression of emotion reflected in Miller's observation of Nazi leaders mirrors social pressures on men to conform to norms concerning masculinity: "Schooling oneself to be senselessly hard requires that all signs of weakness in oneself (including emotionalism, tears, pity, sympathy for oneself and others, and feelings of helplessness, fear, and despair) be suppressed 'without mercy.'" Miller, 80.

[63] Adorno, et al, 259.

[64] Evelin Gerda Lindner, "Gendercide and Humiliation in Honor and Human-Rights Societies," in *Gendercide and Genocide*, edited by Adam Jones (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2004), 46. Pierre Bourdieu links the humiliation inflicted by men on other men with devaluation of the feminine: "It can be understood that from this point of view, which links sexuality and power, the worse

Although sadistic inclinations are readily channeled into socially tolerated expressions of gender dominance, they are not exclusively directed at women. Sadistic inclinations predispose individuals to project onto others in general. Oystein Holter's explanation of the psychology of killing, for instance, invokes Miller's portrayals of splitting off and projection:

> There is a psychological level where an *inner* killing is going on through external terror. One interpretation is that the male hysteric has to kill himself again and again, following the masculine line of 'acting out.' He kills some of himself, or averts something in himself, through the death of others.[65]

The bad faith of non-caring becomes an aspect of identity through gender socialization, and this bad faith then obscures the recognition of connections between gender and violence. Holter further links gender culture with the larger social structure and state:

> Gender cultures that remain mainly peaceful in most circumstances can, in some contexts, be mobilized as parts of an aggressive policy, usually by being linked to other forms of oppression… A nation with some private-life violence and battering can become a violent, battering state. Gender culture and social structure can be linked in a particularly negative way.[66]

Gender provides an effective way to encode and transmit bad faith as latent potentiality for domination or conformity. The desensitizing nature of a ubiquitous gender culture translates into toleration of bad faith as sexism, enabling the eventual eruption of bad faith as domination and violence.

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humiliation for a man is to be turned into a woman." Bourdieu, 22. The Frankfurt School theorists observe that "the prejudiced man has more possibilities available to him to compensate for underlying weaknesses. He may do so by demonstrating his independence or by implicit or explicit assertion of his superiority over women." Adorno, et al, 259.

[65] Oystein Gullvag Holter, "A Theory of Gendercide," in *Gendercide and Genocide*. Edited by Adam Jones (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2004), 81. Moreover, the association of noncaring roles with masculinity, Holter explains, has disturbing and widespread consequences: "Genocides have many causes, but a common element is dehumanization, an extreme practice of noncaring and treating other people as things... An important perspective is to examine the noncaring aspect of men's situation, and how this is made into something that men can identify with, define as masculine, and feel proud of. In times of war, this sense of masculinity is brought out and used as a hammer against the enemy." Ibid., 84-85. Holter's research on genocide links particular constructions of masculinity with predispositions for violence. The modern nuclear family, with gender roles separating men from the care of children and other household members, is a relatively new phenomenon which, Holter claims, encourages "a more annihilative, uncaring, and emotionally empty form of masculinity." Ibid., 72. Holter: "The noncaring of men – 'breadwinner' masculinity and its converse, homemaker femininity – are still often presented as eternal and natural institutions. Their historical origin is more recent than most people realize. Early- and pre-modern male roles and masculine forms generally combined authoritarian relations with caring relations. Men's lives were less separated from those of children (and other groups in need of care), since people of various ages often worked together, and so looking after others was more of a common responsibility." Ibid., 84.

[66] Ibid., 63.

Thus, within contexts that connect vulnerability to shame, humiliation, or powerlessness -- such as those associated with rigid childrearing -- the experience of vulnerability sets up bad faith. While experiences of childhood vulnerability are themselves not necessarily gendered, gender culture intensifies desires to suppress emotion and deny vulnerability, especially among boys, while also offering gender specific templates into which to channel the expression of bad faith. Generally, undesired aspects of self are split off and projected onto others considered weaker or more vulnerable. Men, for instance, may project onto women or lower-status men, women onto lower-status women or other vulnerable groups, and men and women may both project onto children. In this way, studying non-integrative ways of constructing identity offers insight into the power dynamics of intersectional oppressions.

Kimberlé Crenshaw originally introduced the term "intersectionality" as a means to analyze oppressions for feminist discussions of intersections between race, class, and gender.[67] Bell hooks also addresses the intersectionality of race, class, gender, and sexuality in her discussion of identity development, particularly noting the threat of internalized sexism and racism to possibilities of solidarity among women.[68] Men's studies' scholars apply this lens of intersectionality to the discussion of masculinities across race, sexuality, and class. This analysis illuminates the intersectional ways that gender construction contributes to and simultaneously masks the development of bad faith.

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[67]See Kimberlé Crenshaw, "*Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence against Women of Color*," in *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement,* edited by Kimberlé Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, et al. (New York: The New Press, 1995).
[68] See bell hooks, "Sisterhood: Political Solidarity between Woman," in *Feminist Social Thought*, edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997).

Connell observes that the authoritarian behaviors described by the Frankfurt

School theorists may be linked to the norms of a form of masculinity:

> Reich lacked the appreciation of feminism that illuminated Adler's work. So he did not treat masculinity itself as a problem. Nor did the Frankfurt School theorists of the next two decades, who picked up Reich's idea of character analysis, his concern with authoritarianism and his project of reconciling Marx with Freud. In the work of Max Horkheimer, Erich Fromm and Theodor Adorno, 'authoritarianism' gradually emerged as a distinct character type – or, if looked at with feminist eyes, a type of masculinity.[69]

Rather than treating masculinity as a monolithic category, Connell and other men's

studies scholars describe the study of hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities.[70]

This study delineates differing masculinities within a hierarchical model, which is

founded upon hierarchy between men and women within patriarchy.[71] Men's studies

scholarship relies upon cross-cultural and historical analyses, which demonstrate a wide

variety of gender relations and forms of masculinity, to establish that masculinity and

femininity are not fixed categories but rather change in varying cultural and historical

contexts.[72] This discussion also clarifies that the current gender system disadvantages

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[69] R. W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 17.

[70] The field of the critical study of men and masculinities emerged in the wake of the women's liberation movement and is viewed as complementary to feminist studies. The discipline is influenced by feminist scholarship, the gay liberation movement, and anthropological research of cross-cultural gender differences. Men's studies scholars embrace feminist descriptions of patriarchy as the structured form of men's domination over women, view men's studies, along with women's studies, as the study of patriarchy, and moreover view gender as essential to any discussion of power and social structure. Other men's movements emerged in the wake of the women's liberation movement as well, many of which were organized in support of feminism and aimed at the minimization of violence against women, such as Michael Kaufman's nationwide White Ribbon Campaign in Canada. However, scholars of the critical study of men and masculinities express reservations concerning some men's movements, including the promise keepers and million man march, as well as the "mythopoetic" movement, which by appealing to the "deep masculine" as a way of 'healing' men, only reifies and reconstitutes problematic gender divisions. Also of concern are the men's movements associated with militant forms of masculinity that draw from socially marginalized groups such as working class men while primarily benefiting more powerful men. Hostile to women and women's concerns, these groups aim to strengthen male authority. See Michael Kimmel and Michael Kaufman, "Weekend Warriors: The New Men's Movement," in *Theorizing Masculinities,* edited by Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994). See also Connell, *Masculinities;* R.W. Connell, *Gender and Power: Society, the Person, and Sexual Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987).

[71] R.W. Connell notes, "'Hegemonic masculinity' is not a fixed character type, always and everywhere the same. It is, rather, the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position always contestable." Connell, *Masculinities*, 76.

[72] Connell explains that "it is clear from the new social research as a whole that there is no one pattern of masculinity that is found everywhere. We need to speak of 'masculinities,' not masculinity. Different cultures, and different periods of history, construct gender differently." R.W. Connell, *The Men and The Boys* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 10. Connell also draws attention to the relevance of investigating gender identity development from the perspective of relations, not only between men and women, but also between men and other men: "Masculinity and femininity are inherently relational concepts, which have meaning in relation to each other, as a social demarcation and a cultural opposition. This holds regardless of the changing content of the demarcation in different societies and periods of history. Masculinity as an object of knowledge is always masculinity-in-relation. To

most men, benefiting only a minority of hegemonic men at the top of a male pecking order.

The authoritarianism described by the Frankfurt School theorists represents current hegemonic masculinity. Connell explains that the current hegemonic or dominant form of masculinity within patriarchy is an aggressive, toxic form of masculinity:

> Hegemonic masculinity can be defined as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women.[73]

Hegemonic masculinity describes a categorical position rather than necessarily a type of man; men may assume hegemonic masculinity in some contexts and distance themselves from it in others. Complicit masculinity is defined as the form of masculinity associated with men who do not themselves exhibit traits of hegemonic masculinity but yet benefit from the patriarchal order by virtue of being a member of the group of men and aligned with hegemonic men.[74] Masculinity further intersects with race, class, and sexuality. Harry Brod describes the intersection of cultural notions of masculinity with Jewish traditions in his essay, "Some Thoughts on Some Histories of Some Masculinities: Jews and Other Others":

> Pressures on Jewish men to be 'one of the boys' on the terms of the hegemonic culture lead them to deny their own cultural traditions and seek power viv-a-vis other men and vis-à-vis 'their' women by seeking to conform to dominant norms. On the other hand, as a nonhegemonic 'culture of resistance' to hegemonic norms, Jewish culture has an interest in fostering cross-gender alliances within the culture against the dominant culture. There are indeed strong egalitarian strains in Jewish

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put the point in another and perhaps clearer way, it is gender relations that constitute a coherent object of knowledge for science." Connell, *Masculinities,* 44.

[73]Ibid., 77.

[74] Connell and James Messerschmidt observe this dynamic and its contribution to the perpetuation of less observable forms of domination: "Men who received the benefits of patriarchy without enacting a strong version of masculine dominance could be regarded as showing a complicit masculinity. It was in relation to this group, and to compliance among heterosexual women, that the concept of hegemony was most powerful. Hegemony did not mean violence, although it could be supported by force; it meant ascendancy achieved through culture, institutions, and persuasion." R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," in *Gender & Society,* Vol. 19, No. 6, December 2005, 832.

traditions, in addition to its strong patriarchal strains. Thus Jewish men face conflicting pressures for and against egalitarian relations with Jewish women and for and against Jewish as opposed to dominant non-Jewish forms of masculinity.[75]

Hegemonic pressures on Jewish men to conform to social norms of masculinity threaten the prospects for Jewish men and women to unite in solidarity as a minority community.[76] Mairtin Mac an Ghaill provides another example of relations between masculinities in his essay, "The Making of Black English Masculinities," describing the tensions between Afro-Caribbean high school students and the dominant masculine culture within a British high school:

> In their cultural dissociation from mainstream society the Rasta Heads developed a positive subcultural association, central to which was a process of Africanization, which underpinned their resistance to state authoritarianism. Of particular significance was the ideological influence of Rastafari in building a black cultural nationalism. They were aware of the historical contradictions of black masculinity as a subordinated masculinity, with the denial of the patriarchal privileges of power, control, and authority that are ascribed to the white male role. Their adoption of hypermasculine codes of contestation and resistance may be read as attempts to challenge current white institutional practices that they see as attempting to 'emasculate them.'[77]

This hypermasculine challenge serves to reify the ideology of the larger social group, a system of domination that objectifies and subjugates the Other – in this case, the Rasta Heads themselves. Finally, Connell observes that homophobia reveals the underpinning of the structure of hierarchical relations between men and the nature of this gender model:

> Oppression positions homosexual masculinities at the bottom of a gender hierarchy among men… hence from the point of view of hegemonic masculinity, gayness is easily assimilated to femininity. And hence – in the view of some gay theorists – the ferocity of homophobic attacks.[78]

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[75] Harry Brod, "Some Thoughts on Some Histories of Some Masculinities: Jews and Other Others," in *Theorizing Masculinities,*Edited by Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (Thousand Oaks,CA: Sage Publications, Inc, 1994), 92.

[76] Hooks notes a similar pressure within the African American community, which I will take up in the following section on race.

[77]Mairtin Mac an Ghaill, "The Making of Black English Masculinities," in *Theorizing Masculinities*, 188.

[78] Connell, *Masculinities*, 78.

The oppression of gay men by other men is related to this contemporary gender system. By demonstrating differing forms of masculine identity, the gay liberation movement contributed to the evolution of conceptions of hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities.[79] These examples illuminate tensions between masculinities as well as the construction of masculinities in opposition or response to hegemonic masculinity.[80]

Resistance to the idea of connections between gender culture and dominance may stem from its implicit criticism of hegemonic masculinity. Because of the extent to which norms of masculinity and femininity define one's sense of self, this criticism might be perceived as a personal attack threatening identity. Hegemonic masculinity, however, is neither the only form of masculinity nor essentially related to male bodies. The good news is that since gender ideologies are socially constructed categories, we may change them.

Meanwhile, global pressures promote the bad faith of gender culture on a large scale. Connell's discussion of "transnational business masculinity" considers a fundamental entanglement of gender, power structures, and domination within a global context. Connell draws attention to the increasing influence of Western multi-national corporations within the emerging global economy given that the predominant corporate culture embodies a hegemonic masculinity of domination. These corporations are

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[79] Connell writes that "striking differences exist, for instance, in the relations of homosexual practice to dominant forms of masculinity. Some societies treat homosexual practices as a regular part of the making of masculinity; others regard homosexuality as incompatible with true masculinity." R.W. Connell, *The Men and The Boys*, 10.

[80] The study of masculinities rests upon decades of social-scientific research, including studies addressing psychoanalytical factors, role theory, and social constructionism, considered from sociological, anthropological, historical, and media studies perspectives. Connell describes ethnographic methods and findings: "We might think of this as the 'ethnographic moment' in masculinity research, in which the specific and the local is in focus. To say this is not to suggest the work lacks awareness of broader issues – Moodie's research on South African mining or instance, is a classic study of the interplay of race, class, and gender structures. Nor is ethnography, in the strict sense of anthropological field observation, its only method. Life-history studies are almost as common, and there are even some broad statistical surveys, especially in Europe… There is, nevertheless, in most of this work a focus on the construction of masculinity in a specific setting, a concern to document and explain the particular patterns to be found in a definite locale." Ibid., 9.

influential not only in economic spheres, Connell observes, but also within the social

power structures of the communities and states within which they operate:

> The hegemonic form of masculinity in the new world order, I would argue, is the masculinity of the business executives who operate in global markets, and the political executives and military leaderships who constantly deal with them. I call this 'transnational business masculinity,' and I think that understanding it will be important for the future of peace strategies. There is little research as yet on this pattern of masculinity, but we can get some indications from its reflections in management literature and from local studies of the masculinity of business elites. On these indications, transnational business masculinity seems to be marked by increasing egocentrism, very conditional loyalties (even to the corporation), and a declining sense of responsibility for others.[81]

Globalization has its roots in colonization, which often displaced indigenous patterns of

gender relations and social mores with a more aggressive masculine hegemony. Connell

describes research by Robert Morrel about colonization in Natal, published in *From Boys

to Gentlemen: settler masculinity in colonial Natal, 1880-1920.* [82] The establishment of

authority and control by the British colonizers in Natal was supported by a rigid social

structure, extending to and reinforced by religious and social institutions, the military,

families, and schools. The colonizing pressures in Natal contributed to the emergence of

a more toxic form of masculinity. The masculine power structure was perpetuated

through the school experiences of young boys, which were characterized by strict

discipline, participation in highly competitive sports, and mandatory military drills. As

British colonizers returned home, they brought with them an embodied socialization

reflecting this autocratic and dominant form of masculinity, which in turn affected social

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[81] Robert Connell, "Arms and the man: using the new research on masculinity to understand violence and promote peace in the contemporary world," in *Male Roles, Masculinities, and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective,* edited by Ingeborg Breines, Robert Connell, and Ingrid Eide (UNESCO Publishing, 2000), 26. Connell links transnational business masculinity to peace strategies; the concept applies equally to global sustainability considerations. For instance, his allusions to "conditional loyalties" and "declining sense of responsibility for others" applies also to subaltern populations employed when it suits corporate interests and readily terminated for a more profitable alternative.
[82] See Robert Morrell. *From Boys to Gentlemen: settler masculinity in colonial Natal*, 1880-1920. (Uitgewers: Unisa Press, 2002).

gender mores in Britain itself.   In this way, colonization affected the cultural norms of the colonizing as well as the colonized countries.

The global marketplace is encouraging an ongoing evolution of a global gender order. Connell, who traces the violence associated with the history of globalization, asks: "What of the latest stage, the contemporary system of global markets dominated by the trilateral powers of the 'North?'"[83] It would seem that the end of colonial rule and the cold war would be associated with lower levels of militarization, he suggests. However, transnational business masculinity serves to support and enable patriarchal ideology on a global level, even though it may seemingly reflect less visible or overtly violent forms of dominant power. Connell observes linkages between masculinities encouraged by new patriarchal local powers and the violence of ethnic conflict, although "many have been surprised by the emergence of ethnic conflict as a major factor in 'successor states' in former communist regions or in the post-colonial world."[84] Moreover, the globalization of the international arms trade represents an additional threat, given the relationship between weapons and violent masculinities:

> The interweaving of masculinity dynamics with other social forces is very clear in one of the main contemporary threats to peace, the international arms trade. The gender meaning of weapons is familiar and has deep historical roots. Fernback speaks of the 'masculine specialization in violence' that can be traced from the first armies in the first urban societies. Still the gender meaning must be constantly regenerated and reproduced. A study by Gibson shows the way this is accomplished. Gibson traces the emergence of a hypermasculine cult of weaponry in 'paramilitary culture' in the United States, the cult of the 'new war' developed in the period since the US defeat in Vietnam.[85]

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[83] Connell, *The Men and the Boys*, 220.
[84] Connell explains that, "At the receiving end of this violence, and of the display of metropolitan financial power through the restructuring agendas of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank,we see another pattern of the relation between masculinities and violence. Many have been surprised by the emergence of ethnic conflict as a major factor in 'successor states' in former communist regions, or in the post-colonial world. Given the importance of patriarchy in state legitimation, it is relatively easy to ground a new state on patriarchal local powers. Ethnicity is constituted in large measure through gender relations. The notion of extended 'kinship' is central to the rhetoric of ethnicity – 'our kith and kin' in the old language of British racism." Ibid., 221.
[85] Ibid., 222.

The hegemonic masculinity of the global marketplace further affects environmental concerns. Relations between a "global mindset" influenced by transnational business masculinity and international decision-making processes becomes increasingly relevant given the non-territorial nature of environmental degradation, climate change, and the associated need for collective global action.

Thus, contemporary gender socialization promotes widespread bad faith. The dualistic nature of gender ideology discourages holistic, erotic constructions of identity. Moreover, gender socialization and childrearing practices intersect with and mutually reinforce each other. This discussion of gender mirrors the earlier discussion of the effects of rigid childrearing. Pollack's idea of a gender straitjacket, for instance, reflects Sartre's ideas of bad faith, and his Boy Code is entangled with Miller's poisonous pedagogy. Gender scholarship further portrays the ways that denial of an aspect of self, such as emotion, leads to dominance or conformity, whether to gender norms or the social group. The analysis highlights the fact that scapegoating is directed toward those perceived as "weaker." Given ideological connections between vulnerability and femininity, gender culture offers up women as ready scapegoats for authoritarian projecting. The domination of widespread bad faith, however, does not exclusively affect women. Existentialist theory predicts that widespread bad faith will produce social domination, and the research supports these theoretical predictions.

Furthermore, the discussion of hegemonic masculinity and masculinities highlights the ways that gender is constructed along the lines of race, class, and sexuality, producing a pecking order among men that benefits a minority of men. By virtue of gender status, qualities associated with masculinity, particularly hegemonic masculinity,

shape the priority of general social values, which in turn normalize behavior patterns. Thus, the bad faith of constructed male gender identity -- which suppresses care and compassion as well as acknowledgement of vulnerability -- affects the general social tenor or mindset, increasing prospects of domination and violence. Transnational business masculinity transmits the bad faith of gender culture within a global business context, contributing to the solidification of a global gender order.

This analysis suggests that our socially-reinforced distaste for vulnerability underpins the resistance that keeps us from grappling with the problem we most to need to examine; we are caught in a gendered systems trap. Connell's observation that the Frankfurt School descriptions of authoritarianism resemble a form of masculinity suggests that gender norms obscure authoritarian inclinations. Uncritical acceptance of contemporary gender culture allows these tendencies to be tolerated as harmless expressions of gender behavior, enabling them to persist as latent violence waiting to erupt during times of social or personal crisis.

Race

An existential social analysis of race builds upon and intersects with critical theories of childrearing and gender, further shaping the discussion of power relations. This analysis considers the influence of social conditions associated with difference, othering, discrimination, and oppression; effects of objectification on race relations; and intersections with childrearing, family relationships, and gender socialization. The project primarily examines relationships between minority African American and majority white populations, the ways dominant cultural values encourage bad faith in

each group, and the ways that this bad faith leads to unsustainable expressions of power relations.[86]

I apply the existentialist lens to the situation of race in the United States, investigating the development of bad faith, effects of dominant cultural values, and possibilities for the transcendence of deeply rooted bad faith. In particular, I explore racist social context, childrearing, family dynamics, and patriarchal socialization as possible factors encouraging the development of bad faith. The analysis further examines the expression of bad faith as "sadism" or "masochism," whether through dominant racial attitudes or domination, violence, depression, conformity, powerlessness, or apathy. The category of violence here includes violence against others of different races, black-on-black violence, and violence against women. Finally, I consider possible transformative paths associated with the environmental justice movement.

In *Race Matters,* Cornel West notes the shortcomings of American ideals through his discussion of race within the U.S. cultural context:

> To engage in a serious discussion of race in America, we must begin not with the problems of black people but with the flaws of American society – flaws rooted in historic inequalities and longstanding cultural stereotypes.[87]

American democracy was founded on notions of liberty and justice for all but in reality rests upon notions of difference that underlie perceptions of "us" and "them." These ideas, West claims, not only jeopardize the possibilities of democracy but also place an unfair burden on some to do the work for all:

> As long as black people are viewed as a "them," the burden falls on blacks to do all the "cultural" and "moral" work necessary for healthy race relations. The

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[86]This analysis may also be applicable to the situation of other majority-minority group relations, particularly those within dominator models of social structure, although the specifics will differ based on varying historical, social and cultural factors.
[87] Cornel West, *Race Matters*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 6.

implication is that only certain Americans can define what it means to be American – and the rest must simply "fit in."[88]

The appearance of difference provides a basis for "othering" and hierarchy, with bad faith expressed through dominant, superior, racist, sexist, or homophobic attitudes towards the other. According to existentialist theory, dominant attitudes represent attempts to appropriate or regain previously denied freedom. This model holds that previously developed bad faith is the primary issue -- whether it develops through previous childrearing or other experiences -- with particular social contexts providing avenues for its sadistic expression as dominance, superiority, or violence. For instance, Sartre describes the racism of the anti-Semite, claiming that "if the Jew did not exist, the anti-Semite would invent him."[89] These unsustainable expressions of power relations demand attention: othering and racial hierarchy threaten the notion of a democratic union. West warns that the success of our experiment in democracy depends upon our ability to resolve disparities and hierarchies. We will succeed or fail together, as one nation, indivisible and interdependent.

Frantz Fanon takes up the topic of objectification within a philosophical discussion of race in *Black Skin, White Masks.* Fanon's discussion addresses his experience in Antilles, although his existentialist observations about the effects of othering and objectification are relevant here. Fanon draws attention to the similarities

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[88] Ibid., 6. The discussion of the different treatment of Others extends to additional groups within the United States throughout its history: "A candid examination of race matters takes us to the core of the crisis of American democracy. And the degree to which race matters in the plight and predicament of fellow citizens is a crucial measure of whether we can keep alive the best of this democratic experiment we call America. Needless to say, this fragile experiment began by taking for granted the ugly conquest of Amerindians and Mexicans, the exclusion of women, the subordination of European working-class men and the closeting of homosexuals. These realities made many of the words of the revolutionary Declaration of Independence ring a bit hollow. Yet the enslavement of Africans – over 20 percent of the population – served as the linchpin of American democracy; that is, the much-heralded stability and continuity of American democracy was predicated upon black oppression and degradation." Ibid., 156.
[89] Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew.* Translated by George J. Becker with an introduction by Michael Walzer (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), 13.

between oppressions despite distinctions between various groups, cultural dynamics, and their social-historical contexts:

> All forms of exploitation resemble one another… All forms of exploitation are identical because all of them are applied against the same "object": man. When one tries to examine the structure of this or that form of exploitation from an abstract point of view, one simply turns one's back on the major, basic problem, which is that of restoring man to his proper place.[90]

Fanon's portrayal of objectification resonates with Sartre's existentialist categories, depicted through his descriptions of the "anti-Semite" and "Jew." While various situations encourage and reinforce the expression of bad faith in different ways, a general pattern emerges. Recognition of this pattern strengthens awareness of the relatedness of oppressions, including the exploitation of the natural world.

Existentialist theory positions objectification within the context of violence to the freedom of the Other.[91] Prompted by the "look of the Other," objectification constrains an individual by his or her facticity.[92] Fanon explains that, at times, individuals may accept the limits imposed by the Other's view:

> I was responsible at the same time for my body, for my race, for my ancestors… On that day, completely dislocated, unable to be abroad with the other, the white man, who unmercifully imprisoned me, I took myself far off from my own presence, far indeed, and made myself an object… I wanted to be a man, nothing but a man. Some identified me with ancestors of mine who had been enslaved or lynched: I decided to accept this.[93]

This description resembles Sartre's portrayal of the "inauthentic Jew," who, weary of continual struggle, denies the possibility of transcendence and its associated claim of

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[90] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skins, White Masks*, (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 88.

[91] Fanon describes the othering of objectification, based on his experiences in Antilles: "I came into the world imbued with the will to find a meaning in things, my spirit filled with the desire to attain to the source of the world, and then I found that I was an object in the midst of objects. Sealed into that crushing objecthood, I turned beseechingly to others. Their attention was a liberation, running over my body suddenly abraded into nonbeing, endowing me once more with an agility that I thought I had lost, and by taking me out of the world, restoring me to it. But just as I reached the other side, I stumbled, and the movements, the attitudes, the glances of the other fixed me there, in the sense in which a chemical solution is fixed by a dye." Ibid., 109.

[92] Sartre describes the ways that the "look of the Other" freezes the self in a view for the other. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*. Translated and with an introduction by Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1984), 347-348.

[93] Fanon, 113.

subjectivity. The relentless nature of objectifying pressures may lead to fatigue or

despair, Fanon observes, discouraging even the most courageous and determined:

> Nevertheless with all my strength I refuse to accept that amputation. I feel in myself a soul as immense as the world, truly a soul as deep as the deepest of rivers, my chest has the power to expand without limit. I am a master and I am advised to adopt the humility of the cripple. Yesterday, awakening to the world, I saw the sky turn upon itself utterly and wholly. I wanted to rise, but the disemboweled silence fell back upon me, its wings paralyzed. Without responsibility, straddling Nothingness and Infinity, I began to weep.[94]

Authenticity related to the resistance of objectification, however, is not sufficient to

address exploitation within a racist social context. Like all systems, an oppressive social

system functions in ways that perpetuates itself.

The dynamics of various social subsystems reinforce each other and serve to

strengthen cultural ideologies. For instance, individuals in bad faith -- encouraged

through previous experiences, such as childrearing or gender socialization -- may seek

freedom and power through a sense of superiority. The scorned, humiliated child, Miller

explains, finds a scapegoat in the form of an Other.[95] Fanon describes the ways that

cultural storytelling, myths, and media serve to define "others":

> In every society, in every collectivity, exists – must exist – a channel, an outlet through which the forces accumulated in the form of aggression can be released… The Tarzan stories, the sagas of twelve-year-old explorers, the adventures of Mickey Mouse, and all those 'comic books' serve actually as a release for collective aggression.[96]

Scapegoats are identified based on difference, whether this difference is race, nationality,

sex, or sexuality. The identification of "others" then offers a focal point for the latent

sadism of dominant group members while simultaneously fostering the masochism of

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[94] Ibid., 140.

[95] See Miller.

[96] Fanon, 145. This analysis challenges the notion that aggression must necessarily be "released" as described here, whether through scapegoating or other means.

minority group members. Fanon describes the way that comic books serve to identify

others for a readership of children:

> In the Antilles – and there is every reason to think that the situation is the same in
> the other colonies – these same magazines are devoured by the local children. In
> the magazines the Wolf, the Devil, the Evil Spirit, the Bad Man, the Savage are
> always symbolized by Negroes or Indians; since there is always identification
> with the victor, the little Negro, quite as easily as the little white boy, becomes an
> explorer, an adventurer, a missionary 'who faces the danger of being eaten by the
> wicked Negroes.'[97]

These images, promoted through childhood media, encourage two results. On one hand,

the media images provide white children with scapegoats distinguishable by the color of

skin upon whom they may project bad faith in the form of superiority or other sadistic

expression. On the other hand, as they read the same comic books, children of a minority

group internalize messages of objectification and vilification, which may intensify or

direct the expression of bad faith. In all cases, bad faith may reflect a sadistic or

masochistic tenor, expressed as superiority, domination, violence, internalized

oppression, or conformity.[98]

Cultural influences, such as those portrayed above through the example of

childhood media, reinforce bad faith and offer specific avenues for its expression. Social

subsystems or areas of shared life experience reflect common cultural ideologies, thereby

reinforcing a comprehensive message:

> With the exception of a few misfits within the closed environment, we can say
> that every neurosis, every abnormal manifestation, every affective erethism in an
> Antillean is the product of his cultural situation. In other words, there is a

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[97] Ibid., 146. Cynthia Willett links scapegoating with dualistic and disembodying cultural ideology: "It is not an accident that
European conceptions of the self sustain a politics of oppression in the name of freedom. Not understanding the intellectual and erotic
energy of spirit, white culture severs the rational Self from nature and sociality and then alternately projects the mythologies of the
savage or the Sambo upon the unknown Other. The purge of the total outcast and the torment of the liminal Other will continue until
white culture learns to cultivate the social resources of the lived body and acknowledges its desire for the desire of the Other; until,
that is, white culture discovers what Douglass knew, 'the veriest freedom.'" Cynthia Willett, *Maternal Ethics and Other Slave
Moralities* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 174.

[98] Internalized oppression and/or conformity may develop from intensified feelings of unworthiness or inadequacy. This discussion
mirrors Sartre's discussion of the effects of anti-Semitism. See Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew.*

constellation of postulates, a series of propositions that slowly and subtly – with the help of books, newspapers, schools and their texts, advertisements, films, radio – work their way into one's mind and shape one's view of the world of the group to which one belongs. In the Antilles that view of the world is white because no black voice exists.[99]

These cultural pressures serve to discourage authenticity by encouraging the expression of bad faith as a masochistic attitude. Fanon describes the motivation for some variations of conforming behavior:

When the Negro makes contact with the white world, a certain sensitizing action takes place. If his psychic structure is weak, one observes a collapse of the ego. The black man stops behaving as an actional person. The goal of his behavior will be The Other (in the guise of the white man), for The Other alone can give him worth. That is on the ethical level: self-esteem.[100]

Fanon's portrayal here reflects the expression of bad faith as "masochistic" or "mimetic" conformity. The objectifying gaze of the Other may intensify bad faith previously encouraged through childhood experiences, gender socialization, or racist social context. Individuals may alternatively refuse bad faith through a claim of authenticity. [101] Authenticity, which acknowledges interconnection and interdependence, provides a foundation for solidarity with others. Fanon emphasizes the common nature of oppressions:

If the question of practical solidarity with a given past ever arose for me, it did so only to the extent to which I was committed to myself and to my neighbor to fight for all my life and with all my strength so that never again would a people on the earth be subjugated. It was not the black world that laid down my course of conduct. My black skin is not the wrapping of specific values.[102]

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[99] Fanon, 152.

[100] Ibid., 154. Fanon explains that "the Antillean has recognized himself as Negro, but, by virtue of an ethical transit, he also feels (collective unconscious) that one is a Negro to the degree to which one is wicked, sloppy, malicious, instinctual. Everything that is the opposite of these Negro modes of behavior is white." Ibid., 192.

[101] Fanon observes that " those Negroes and white men will be disalienated who refuse to let themselves be sealed away in the materialized Tower of the Past. For many other Negroes, in other ways, disalienation will come into being through their refusal to accept the present as definitive. I am a man, and what I have to recapture is the whole past of the world. I am not responsible solely for the revolt in Santo Domingo. Every time a man has contributed to the victory of the dignity of the spirit, every time a man has said no to an attempt to subjugate his fellows, I have felt solidarity with his act." Ibid., 226.

[102] Ibid., 227. Fanon asks: "Was my freedom not given to me then in order to build the world of the *You?* At the conclusion of this study, I want the world to recognize, with me, the open door of every consciousness." Ibid., 232.

Thus, Fanon illuminates the philosophical dimension of objectification and oppression, suggesting a universal nature of core dynamics. Solidarity as power-with stands upon this common ground against the objectification of peoples, thereby promoting potentiality through the defense and preservation of collective freedom.

Bell hooks picks up this discussion of freedom within her study of race and masculinity in *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity*. Hooks addresses violence as well as possibilities for the transformation of oppressive systems. Her discussion first illuminates conditions underlying the emergence of unsustainable power relations. These conditions include racism, childrearing practices, and gender socialization, which promote patriarchal values associated with domination. These situations reflect social pressures encouraging the development of bad faith, which in turn leads to violence toward others or self in the forms of domination, conformity, depression, suicide, powerlessness, or apathy.

To begin with, hooks notes that "most black men who work in our nation make low wages and do not receive rewards for enduring racialized humiliation in the workplace."[103] She describes the limited freedom associated with the social position of many black males, linking this limitation to patriarchal social structure:

> Black males often exist in a prison of the mind unable to find their way out. In patriarchal culture, all males learn a role that restricts and confines. When race and class enter the picture, along with patriarchy, then black males endure the worst impositions of gendered masculine patriarchal identity.[104]

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[103] Bell hooks, *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 24. Hooks elaborates: "In today's world, most upwardly mobile educated black males from privileged class backgrounds share with their poor and underclass counterparts an obsession with money as the marker of successful manhood… Making money is even more important to these men because they too, like black male workers before them, must still submit to the whims of whites… Since the plantation does not exist anymore, the everyday work world becomes the location where that dominance can be enacted and reenacted again and again. In this way work in the United States continues to be stressful and more often than not demoralizing for most black males." Ibid., 24.
[104] Ibid., xii.

This limited freedom represents bad faith as denial of transcendence. The experience of

racism provides continual pressures encouraging objectification. Like Sartre in his

analysis of anti-Semitism in post WWII France and Fanon through his description of

racism in Antilles, hooks addresses the pressures of objectification:

> Many black males explain their decision to become the "beast" as surrender to
> realities they cannot change. And if you are going to be seen as a beast you may
> as well act like one. Young black males, particularly underclass males, often
> derive a sense of satisfaction from being able to create fear in others, particularly
> in white folks.[105]

In existentialist terms, objectification here fosters bad faith in the form of identification

with facticity coupled with denial of the possibility of transcendence. In this case, "beast-

like" behavior is masochistic in terms of conformity to expectations but also sadistic

through its adoption of a violent role provided by the objectifying Other. Moreover,

hooks observes the power of ever-present media influences to encourage these roles:

> Contrary to the notion that black males are lured by the streets, mass media in
> patriarchal culture has already prepared them to seek themselves in the streets, to
> find their manhood in the streets, by the time they are six years old. Propaganda
> works best when the male mind is young and not yet schooled in the art of critical
> thinking. Few studies examine the link between black male fascination with
> gangsta culture and early childhood consumption of unchecked television and
> movies that glamorize brute patriarchal maleness… Gangsta culture is the essence
> of patriarchal masculinity. Popular culture tells young black males that only the
> predator will survive.[106]

These media images thus encourage sadistic expressions of bad faith. The objectifying

gaze of the larger culture offers up violent roles, and male gender socialization, which

affects all males within society, reinforces the messages.

Bad faith leads to sadistic or masochistic behavior patterns that may become

practiced aspects of identity. Hooks observes that "black boys who are repeatedly

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[105]Ibid., 49.
[106]Ibid., 27.

subjected to humiliations, shaming, embarrassments, or random punishments by grown-ups learn that they can relieve this pain by repression and dissociation. Acting out violently is another way to take control of the pain."[107] As an alternative to violence, hooks explains that "addiction is often seen as a way to find sanctuary, a way out of the feelings of powerlessness."[108] Rage may provide a socially-acceptable mask for feelings of despair, depression, or powerlessness.[109] Attempts to dominate or appropriate the freedom of the other, whether outside or inside the home, also reflect expressions of bad faith.

How can we unravel and make sense of interlocking dynamics and sources of oppression? Existential analysis examines the ways that experiences of racism, rigid childrearing practices, and gender socialization within the black community foster the development of bad faith. Childrearing practices and family dynamics encourage the denial of vulnerability and suppression of emotion, as Miller describes. Hooks identifies an added motivation for rigid or harsh childrearing practices within black families: the desire to toughen up children in preparation for the larger, racist world and its harms. She explains:

> Even before mass media get a chokehold on the black male psyche, most black boys are conditioned to be victims by emotional abuse, experienced at home and at school. Oftentimes the patriarchal socialization that insists boys should not express emotions or have emotional caretaking is most viciously and ruthlessly implicated in the early childhood socialization of black boys. The image of emasculated and castrated black males is so embedded in the cultural imagination that many black parents feel it is crucial to train boys to be 'tough.'[110]

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[107] Ibid., 95.

[108] Ibid., 96.

[109] Hooks explains that "rage is the perfect cover-up for depression. Black males who feel powerless, who feel as though they are not able to bring any level of meaningful purpose to their lives, are often depressed. That depression may be the outcome of unreconciled grief. In mourning for the self that has not come into being, sad about repeated failure and ongoing loss, depressed black men fade into the background in our society." Ibid., 97. Hooks also clarifies that "the chronically angry black male is living in an emotional prison. Fear-based, he is isolated and terrified. In patriarchal culture his anger may be seen as 'manly,' so it becomes the perfect cover-up so that no one, not even himself, can know the extent of the pain he feels." Ibid., 96.

[110] Ibid., 86. Hooks elaborates: "Undoubtedly white boys, across all classes, are damaged by patriarchal socialization, yet that damage is intensified in the experience of black boys precisely because these boys face a situation of double jeopardy. It is not just society's

The research on childrearing and family dynamics described earlier underscores long-term effects associated with splitting off and projecting, authoritarianism, conformity, and ethnocentrism. Hooks emphasizes the significance of childrearing to the self-perceptions of black males:

> There is often so much attention given the concrete material manifestations of the impact of racism and other forms of social oppression on black males that the psychological impact of early childhood abandonment is not highlighted. Yet the powerlessness that many black males feel in childhood continues into adulthood.[111]

Although pressing concerns about racism often overshadow this information and awareness, these childrearing practices encourage life-long feelings of powerlessness or unworthiness, which reflect a state of bad faith associated with a limitation of freedom.[112]

Hooks reinforces Miller's points about the idealization or romanticization of childhood experiences and parents despite the experience of rigid childrearing:

> To defend ourselves against the reality that our parents were often a mixed bag of affirming support on some occasions and shaming on the other, we tend to focus solely on the good. Many of us were goaded by verbal abuse to achieve and suffer from inner feelings of worthlessness and inadequacy despite our successes… Often when adult black folks recall childhood memories they idealize the past and their parents.[113]

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investment in patriarchal masculinity that demands that black boys be socialized away from feeling and action; they must also bear the weight of a psychohistory that represents black males as castrated, ineffectual, irresponsible and not real men. It is as if black parents, cross-class, believe they can right the wrongs of history by imposing onto black boys a more brutal indoctrination into patriarchal thinking." Ibid., 88.

[111] Ibid., 95. "Many womanizing black males have experienced traumatic sexual abuse in childhood. It scars them for life. And when they receive the message from the culture that real men should be able to endure abuse as a rite of passage and emerge with their sexual agency intact, there is not cultural space for them to articulate that they were sexually abused, that they are damaged and in need of sexual healing. Therapist John Bradshaw identifies emotional abuse as the most common form of child abuse, which in many cases lays the foundation for physical and sexual abuse. He contends that 'emotional abuse includes the shaming of all emotions, name calling and labeling, judgments and sadistic teaching." Ibid.,80.

[112] Hooks refers to the significance of violence versus the presence of the father: "When black pundits, whether political figures or intellectuals, talk about the black family, they too seem to buy into the romantic myth that if only there was a black man in the house life would be perfect. Like children who know no better, they refuse to accept the evidence that there are plenty of homes where fathers are present, fathers who are so busy acting out, being controlling, being abusive, that home is hell, and children in those homes spend lots of time wishing the father would go away. The father-hunger these children feel is as intense as the father-hunger children in fatherless homes feel. Patriarchal fathers are not the answer to healing the wounds in black family life. Ultimately it is more important the black children have loving homes than homes where men are present." Ibid., 102.

[113] Ibid.,123. Hooks draws attention to the words of John Bradshaw as he notes that "all parents who have not worked through their own childhood trauma will reenact it on their own children." Ibid., 109.

The reluctance of individuals to acknowledge the harms of their upbringing underscores the challenge associated with interrupting these system dynamics, which are generationally recreated between family members who love each other yet remain blinded to the harms they perpetuate. Self-reflection and self awareness, involving recognition of the larger cultural patterns at play, represent paths toward disrupting these cycles.[114]

In addition to the experience of racist objectification and rigid childrearing practices, another source of bad faith is gender socialization. In particular, the norms and values of the larger culture, which hold that an essential aspect of male identity is dominance, shape the desire for subjectivity and recognition. Hooks, echoing Pollack's description of the Boy Code, explains that male gender socialization produces dominant behaviors and attitudes through rituals of shaming and humiliation:

> Young black males, like all boys in patriarchal culture, learn early that manhood is synonymous with the domination and control over others, that simply by being male they are in a position of authority that gives them the right to assert their will over others, to use coercion and/or violence to gain and maintain power. Black boys who do not want to be dominant are subjected to forms of psychological terrorism as a means of forcing them to embody patriarchal thinking. Shaming and rituals of disregard, of constant humiliation, are the tactics deployed to break the boy's spirit.[115]

However, limitations imposed through racial hierarchies block the expression of dominance encouraged through patriarchal male gender socialization.[116] In existentialist terms, this combination of influences intensifies states of bad faith. Hooks notes the predicable consequences of these pressures:

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[114] Hooks refers to those who seek to blame others for their problems, claiming that "scapegoating is a diversionary tactic. It allows the scapegoater to avoid the issues they must confront if they are to assume responsibility for their lives." Ibid., 85. Scapegoating, whether by an individual or community, raises the question of authenticity. Rather than inevitable, scapegoating is a sign of bad faith. It temporarily relieves and siphons-off tension without rectifying underlying bad faith, which would enable growth toward wholeness (in the case of either an individual or community). In this way, it allows bad faith to persevere, only to inevitably erupt in the future.
[115] Ibid., 88.
[116] These socialization processes serve to reproduce patriarchal culture of domination by collapsing male identity with a dominator mindset.

> If black males are socialized from birth to embrace the notion that their manhood will be determined by whether or not they can dominate and control others and yet the political system they live within (imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy) prevents most of them from having access to socially acceptable positions of power and dominance, then they will claim their patriarchal manhood through socially unacceptable channels. They will enact rituals of blood, of patriarchal manhood, by using violence to dominate and control.[117]

In this case bad faith that is developed through racial and gender experience leads to violence and domination. Theory predicts -- and research confirms -- that those in bad faith will likely vent sadistic behaviors generally. This is because the expression of domination, or "power-over," fulfills an "irrational" underlying need of bad faith. It is distinguished from a rational decision, such as a choice to engage in a particular endeavor or mission (whether or not one might debate the merits of the choice). Hooks describes the relevance of sexism to intimate partner violence, black-on-black violence, and homicide:

> Whatever the roots of black male rage, it is sexist thinking and practice that teaches them that it is acceptable to express that rage violently. Black male abuse of black females, both psychological and physical, is similarly present in black male relationships with each other. Black-on-black homicide is one of the leading causes of death in black life. [118]

The connections between gender and domination described in the previous section of this chapter are evident in the discussion here. Existential analysis also clarifies, and research again confirms, that women become particular, although not exclusive, targets because of the way they symbolically represent vulnerability as well as emotions, according to

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[117] Ibid., 57.

[118] Ibid., 62. Hooks quotes Kevin Powell who connects fear with violence: "I, like most black men I know, have spent much of my life living in fear. Fear of white racism, fear of the circumstances that gave birth to me, fear of walking out my door wondering what humiliation will be mine today. Fear of black women – of their mouths, of their bodies, of their attitudes, of their hurts, of their fear of us black men. I felt fragile, as fragile as a bird with clipped wings, that day my ex-girlfriend steeped up her game and spoke back to men. Nothing in my world, nothing in my self-definition, prepared me for dealing with a woman as an equal. My world said women were inferior, that they must, at all costs, be put in their place, and my instant reaction was to do that." Ibid., 56. Hooks notes that "much black male violence is directed toward females. Sexism and the assumption of the male right to dominate serve as the catalyst for this violence." Ibid., 56.

patriarchal gender ideology and norms. Hooks notes that a significant amount of violence is directed toward women:

> Misogynist rap music and the white male dominated patriarchal infrastructure that produces it encourages male contempt and disregard for females. It is the plantation economy, where black males labor in the field of gender and come out ready to defend their patriarchal manhood by all manner of violence against women and men whom they perceive to be weak and like women.[119]

The development of bad faith through rigid childrearing or male gender socialization encourages the "splitting-off" of feelings of vulnerability that are then projected onto targets perceived as more vulnerable or "weaker."

This collusion between rap artists and producers draws attention to a thought-provoking reality concerning the scapegoating of black masculinity. Black masculinity, hooks explains, has modeled itself upon the example of white patriarchal masculinity, adopting the patriarchal values of the larger dominant culture:

> Yet fearful or not, it has really been mainstream white culture that both requires and rewards black men for acting like brutal psychopaths… Cultures of domination, like the United States, are founded on the principle that violence is necessary for the maintenance of the status quo. Orlando Patterson emphasizes that long before any young black male acts violent he is born into a culture that condones violence as a means of social control that identifies patriarchal masculinity by the will to do violence. Showing aggression is the simplest way to assert patriarchal manhood. Men of all classes know this.[120]

Although "men of all classes know this," white male culture nonetheless scapegoats black male culture. At the same time, however, black male culture adopts the dominant social values that foster its own oppression, notwithstanding the warning from Audre

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[119] Ibid., 62. Domination includes patriarchal sex, according to hooks: "Those black males who wanted to let the world know that they were engaged in the patriarchal sex that centralized fucking could do so by spreading their seed and making babies." Ibid.,71.
[120] Ibid., 49.

Lorde that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house."[121] Hooks notes

this contradiction:

> By projecting onto black males the trait of unchecked primitive violence, white-supremacist culture makes it appear that black men embody a brutal patriarchal maleness that white men and women (and everyone else) must arm themselves to repress. Sadly and strangely, individual black males have allowed themselves to become poster boys of brute patriarchal manhood and its concomitant woman-hating.[122]

Unfortunately, black men suffer both from the experience of male gender socialization

that mandates the suppression of their emotional responses and from a racist cultural

context that scapegoats them for embracing patriarchal values and ideology.[123] This

analysis painfully demonstrates the harms of contemporary gender socialization for black

men. Hooks writes that "today it should be obvious to any thinker and writer speaking

about black males that the primary genocidal threat, the force that endangers black male

life, is patriarchal masculinity."[124]

This analysis suggests paths toward transforming situations of domination

(power-over) and conformity (power-from). These involve cultivating possibilities

associated with power-to, as vitality and creativity, and power-with, as solidarity. These

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[121] Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider* (Berkeley: Crossing Press, 1984), 112. This passage, which Lorde uses to chide white feminists for marginalizing women of color within the feminist movement, serves as a call to stand against all oppression. She also argues that "divide and conquer must become define and empower." Ibid.,112.

[122] Hooks, 51. Hooks provides the example of the Nicole Brown Simpson murder trial: "White patriarchy is just as misogynist as black patriarchy and offers death as the price all women must pay if they get out of their place. Pretending to seek justice for Nicole Simpson, imperialist white-supremacist patriarchy simply cannibalized her mutilated dead body to feast on black male flesh." Hooks, 61. Hooks elaborates that "male violence is a central problem in our society. Black male violence simply mirrors the styles and habits of white male violence. It is not unique. What is unique to black male experience is the way in which acting violently often gets both attention and praise from the dominant culture. Even as it is being condemned black male violence is often deified. As Orlando Patterson suggests, as long as white males can deflect attention from their own brutal violence onto black males, black boys and men will receive contradictory messages about what is manly, about what is acceptable." Ibid.,66.

[123] Hooks: "It would be all too easy to blame these black males for their uncritical embrace of patriarchy even as they were so critical of The Man, yet they were and remain, even in death, victims of sexist socialization." Ibid., 55.

[124] Ibid., xiv. Patriarchal values also promote homophobia, which further divides the African American community. Rudolph Byrd observes that "the uncritical acceptance of orthodox conceptions of gender and sexuality and the attending practice of emasculating forms of masculinity are our new traps. They are, to conjure another familiar image in African American folklore, the new tar baby to which we have been stuck for far too long. Many African American men have been uncritical in our acceptance of certain male and heterosexual privileges. This lack of a deeper political consciousness, this failure to critique and contest apparently widely held assumptions that foster the growth of the traps of sexism and homophobia have produced injuries, both psychic and physical, among those of us who are not only excluded from the attainment of these privileges, but who also recognize that these privileges are potential traps." Rudolph P. Byrd, "The Tradition of John: A Mode of Black Masculinity," in *Traps: African American Men on Gender and Sex,* edited by Rudolph P. Byrd and Beverly Guy-Sheftall (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 20.

possibilities involve the development of individual capabilities, interests, and passions, as well as opportunities to proactively work together in solidarity. Given the systems nature of oppression, individual authenticity is unlikely to materially affect the behavior of an oppressor in any long-lasting way. For this reason, programs and initiatives undertaken for individual development must also be paired with opportunities for solidarity in participation with social movements.[125]

The Civil Rights movement, Martin Luther King Jr's and Coretta Scott King's Beloved Community, and Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition demonstrate sustainable values and sustainable expressions of power as vitality and solidarity. In addition other leaders, such as the Dalai Lama, challenge dominant social ideologies and values by promoting non-dominator values of compassion, care, and empathy -- values also upheld through emerging conceptions of ecological citizenship. Hooks explains that "the real agency and power of black liberation struggle was felt when black male leaders dared to turn away from primitive models of patriarchal violence and warfare toward a politics of cultural transformation rooted in love."[126] Beverly Guy-Sheftall argues for the far-reaching potential achievable by addressing gender issues. She writes that "rejecting the traps of patriarchy, sexism, and homophobia, African Americans might continue our

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[125]Hooks describes the need for individual development programs: "Mass-based literacy programs, especially ones that would target unemployed black males, which link learning to the development of critical thinking, are needed to rectify the failure of early schooling… Progressive schooling of black males can become a norm only as we begin to take their education seriously, restoring the link between learning and liberation." hooks, 45.

[126]Ibid., 65. Hooks elaborates: "Contrary to the vision of black men who advocated black power, there is no freedom to be found in any dominator model of human relationships. As long as the will to dominate is there, the context for violence is there also." Ibid., 66. Hooks also explains that African men brought to the United States as slaves had to be taught patriarchal masculinity: "When we read annals of history, the autobiographical writings of free and enslaved black men, it is revealed that initially black males did not see themselves as sharing the same standpoint as white men about the nature of masculinity. Transplanted African men, even those coming from communities where sex roles shaped the division of labor, where the status of men was different and most times higher than that of women, had to be taught to equate their higher status as men with the right to dominate women, they had to be taught patriarchal masculinity. They had to be taught that it was acceptable to use violence to establish patriarchal power." Ibid., 3.

journey toward freedom in racist America and offer new visions and possibilities for this

nation, the world, and generations yet unborn."[127]

The green jobs movement addresses urban redevelopment and environmental

protection, as well as issues of equity. While green jobs programs promote training and

skills development, the relevance of the topic of power relations and equity to

environmental interests suggests an additional component to these programs. Hooks

recommends a program that addresses male violence against men as a crucial step toward

ending male violence:

> Almost all violent black males have been abused as children. Yet they still
> believe that violence is an acceptable way to exert power, to influence a situation,
> to maintain control. Until there is a nationwide program against male violence
> that begins not with an examination of the violence men do to women and
> children but with the violence men do to themselves and other males we will not
> end male violence.[128]

Although hooks does not specify the inclusion of such a program within green jobs

development programs, this may be a worthwhile addition since green jobs programs,

like the environmental justice movement, address the intersection of social and

environmental interests.

Moreover, sustainable expressions of power as vitality, creativity, and

collaboration may be channeled into collective solidarity movements. Hooks describes

an opportunity for black men and women to stand in solidarity against dominant cultural

values:

> Wise progressive black women have understood that any coming together of free,
> whole, decolonized black males and females would constitute a formidable
> challenge to imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy. Historically and
> today, white-supremacist patriarchy has found that the best way to prevent

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[127] Beverly Guy-Sheftall, "Reflections on Black Manhood," in *Traps: African American Men on Gender and Sex,* 347.

[128] Hooks, 63. Hooks: "When we consider the lot of black males in this nation at this critical time, when we face the crisis in black male spirit, we recognize that as intense suffering rends us, breaks our heart, it also breaks us open. In that revealed and exposed vulnerability lies the hope of reconciliation, renewal, and resurrection." Ibid., 161.

solidarity between black females and males is to make it appear that females are getting power while black male power is diminishing.[129]

A weakening of solidarity between men and women within the black community represents effects of divide-and-conquer dynamics that also limit possibilities for inter-group solidarity among all disadvantaged groups. Dynamics that foster "blame the other" attitudes, however the other is distinguished, erode possibilities for solidarity against oppressive perspectives and diminish possibilities of transformation and change.

Environmental justice issues provide a focal point to unite minority men and women in solidarity as they challenge the ideology and values of the dominant patriarchal culture as expressed through environmental injustice and racism. Solidarity concerning environmental justice presents a relatively untapped opportunity: activism of peoples of color is underrepresented within the movement. Further, the environmental justice movement also provides an opportunity for lower income, rural communities and minority urban communities to unite against a common threat; these populations face the greatest dangers from environmental harms. Finally, the environmental justice movement provides a compelling opportunity for men and women of all races and classes to stand in solidarity for transformative values and ethical systems that acknowledge the fundamental interconnection and interdependence of the human family-natural world system.

Religion

Religions promote care and compassion as pro-peace values. However, prevailing social values distort religious meanings and thereby foster the development of bad faith. These social values, which are influenced by gender culture and status,

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[129]Ibid., 135.

privilege socially-defined masculine traits while devaluing care, compassion, and

interdependence. Thus the adoption of prevailing social values and ideologies by

religious institutions claiming to uphold pro-peace values represents a contradiction.

This existential analysis of critical religious theories investigates bad faith by examining

contradictions between religious values and practices, as well as connections between

these contradictions and domination. Walter Wink's theory of the "domination system,"

including his description of a "myth of redemptive violence," depicts ways that

institutionalized pressures reinforce Miller's notions of splitting off and projection and

Girard's theory of scapegoating. These theories also approach social blindness about

seemingly logical connections. James Nelson's view of an erotic sexual theology and

Adams's call for conversion to a new viewpoint suggest ways to address this blindness,

offering holistic paths to transcend religious bad faith.

Religious studies and peace scholars note the example of care and compassion set

by notable peacemakers throughout history. [130] Given Christianity's influence on

Western culture -- the focus of this analysis -- the discussion here considers the example

of Jesus of Nazareth. Walter Wink observes that Jesus promoted and embodied an

integration of masculine and feminine qualities, despite the devalued status of women at

the time. Wink draws attention to the frequency with which Jesus utilizes feminine

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[130]These peacemakers include Lao Tsu, the Buddha, Jesus Christ, Mahatma Ghandi, and Martin Luther King, Jr., among others. See Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992); also Marc Gopin, *Between Eden and Armageddon: The Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). Pro-peace values of care and compassion also represent ecological values. As Dobson points out in his discussion of ecological citizenship, care motivates action on behalf of the environment as well as others. Devall and Sessions extend the meaning of community to encompass all being within the natural world: "Spiritual growth, or unfolding, begins when we cease to understand or see ourselves as isolated and narrow competing egos and begin to identify with other humans from our family and friends to, eventually, our species. But the deep ecology sense of self requires a further maturity and growth, an identification which goes beyond humanity to include the nonhuman world."Devall & Sessions, 67. This sense of interconnection reflects the philosophies of deep ecology and existentialism as well as Eastern spiritual views. Western religious thought also upholds the principle of interconnection as it embraces emotional and spiritual aspects of human nature.

terminology and imagery of God throughout the New Testament, such as his portrayals of

God as a peaceful, non-hierarchical power:

> In parable after parable, Jesus speaks of the 'reigning of God,' using images drawn from farming and women's work. It is not described as coming from on high down to earth; it rises quietly and imperceptibly out of the land. It is established, not by armies and military might, but by an ineluctable process of growth from below, among the common people.[131]

Jesus also challenged conventional mores of the time, setting an example of egalitarian

gender relations. Wink observes that religious practices that condone gender hierarchy or

male authority contradict the message of Jesus:

> Biblical feminism is not only an authentic extension of Jesus' concerns, but has made it possible for us to understand significant aspects of his message for the first time. Now it becomes clear that Jesus treated women as he did, not because he was "gallant" or "nice," but because the restoration of women to their full humanity in partnership with men is integral to the coming of God's egalitarian order.[132]

According to this existentialist model, egalitarian gender relations and unambiguous

religious teachings that promote the value of care and compassion contribute to the

development of Christian authenticity. Despite Jesus' teachings and example, however,

his egalitarian perspective has been largely ignored:

> In respect to the holiness code, the Law, relations with the Gentiles, the Temple, sacrifice, and other issues, the church developed the implications of Jesus' teachings further. In the case of the family and the role of women, however, and all other matters dealing with male supremacy, the church generally softened, compromised, and finally abandoned his position altogether.[133]

The church was influenced by the existing social mores of "the world," according to

Wink, which were powerful enough to distort the message of Jesus within Christianity

itself.

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[131]Wink, 115.

[132] Ibid., 135.

[133] Ibid., 120.

Gender culture continues to contaminate the religious mission by limiting access to pro-

peace values of care and compassion, particularly among men, and fostering gender and

other hierarchies that constrain collective spiritual maturity.

Research finds that the devaluation of pro-peace values within religious

institutions -- through gender ideology and the subordinated status of women, who

represent emotion by virtue of gender ideology -- leads to harmful outcomes. For

instance, scholarship of fundamentalist religions connects gender ideology and the

suppression of emotion with dominance and aggression. To begin with, Mark Muesse

looks at the devaluation of emotions within fundamentalist religions:

> Contemporary hegemonic masculinity displays a marked preference for reason
> over emotion; the same is true of fundamentalism… Most fundamentalists are
> suspicious of the intuitive and affective dimensions of human experience… The
> fundamentalist enchantment with rationality means that emotionality is reserved
> for particular contexts and situations. Emotion must be contained within certain
> boundaries, and unspoken rules or propriety govern emotional expression in
> church.[134]

Oystein Holter further connects fundamentalism with aggression and authoritarianism,

describing the encouragement of a more "aggressive male nature" within some

fundamentalist religions. Religious example and practice, Holter claims, shape the

expression of masculinity:

> When one investigates their social and psychological roots, various
> fundamentalism and authoritarian policies show similar tendencies. Gender
> segregation and noncaring masculinity (father absence) are typical traits, together
> with the political construction of an aggressive "male nature."[135]

Holter's findings concerning the promotion of aggressive natures within some

fundamentalist religions are further supported by Mark Juergensmeyer's research of

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[134] Mark W. Muesse, "Religious Machismo: Masculinity and Fundamentalism," in *Redeeming Men: Religion and Masculinities.* Edited by Stephen B. Boyd, W. Merle Longwood, and Mark W. Muesse (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 91.
[135] Oystein Holter, "A Theory of Gendercide," in *Gendercide and Genocide*, Edited by Adam Jones (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2004), 90.

religiously-based terrorist groups. For instance, Juergensmeyer describes connections

between religious terrorism, gender, and homophobic attitudes:

> What is the connection between these forms of violence, this macho religiosity, and these yearnings for political power? The antipathy toward modern women – the notion of female sexual roles out of place – is one clue. The hatred of homosexuality is another.[136]

These scholars demonstrate similarities between some fundamentalist religions and

hegemonic constructions of masculinity, which model dominance through expressions of

superiority, oppression, judgment, or aggression, all of which depart from the teachings

of Jesus.

Constructions of masculinity that suppress emotion constrain prospects for

peaceful relations, according to Marc Gopin. Within a discussion of religion and

violence, Gopin highlights the crucial importance of feminine qualities:

> It seems to me that there are a series of characteristics that are critical to successful conflict resolution that have been traditionally associated with the feminine in the West. These include the passive quality of listening rather than holding forth, the ability to empathize with all sides, the capacity to help people through their pain, the ability to nurture those who are sick and angry, the willingness to help people out of violence by showing them love, and many more characteristics that are typical of the truly heroic peacemakers of our century. It strikes me as dangerous if these characteristics continue to be seen as strictly female… If we persist as a global culture in identifying these characteristics as exclusively female, then we certainly shall lose the majority of men as peacemakers.[137]

According to Gopin's comments, men are discouraged from more universally embracing

these values because of contemporary gender ideology.[138] Furthermore, this discussion

applies to the environment as well as oppression and violence.   James Nelson connects

masculinity and gender to social violence, racism, and environmental abuse, referring to

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[136] Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence,* Updated edition with a new preface (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 199.
[137] Gopin, 192.
[138]This existential analysis finds that the devalued social status of women and painful male gender socialization processes also discourage men from more readily adopting "feminine" values.

these problems as "sexually transmitted diseases." Nelson recommends that churches

who have taken public stands on sexuality issues extend this discussion to address these

sexually transmitted diseases. For instance, environmental abuse, Nelson claims, reflects

bodily and sexual issues:

> What of our environmental abuse? Though the issues are scientific, technological, political, and economic, they are also deeply bodily and sexual. Let us remember: We are heirs of a powerful and hierarchical sexual dualism that has shaped a pyramid of control and value… The earth is named feminine… Sir Francis Bacon made explicit the connection between women's subordination and nature's… We are now inundated by data about what is happening to the natural environment… Yet it is still so difficult to see nature with wonder, to move beyond self-interest to environmental reverence. Maybe our 'knowing' of the natural world is still largely 'knowing about,' and not the kind suggested by the Hebrew verb that suggested an intimate, erotic, sexual knowledge.[139]

Nelson recommends the adoption of a sexual theology that explicitly considers and

addresses embodiment, connection, and sexuality, explaining that a suppression of

emotion led to the loss of holistic spiritual power and integrity. [140] "Our theologies,"

Nelson writes, "cheapened, devalued, even vilified the erotic and confused it with the

pornographic. We confused self-love with selfishness and egocentricity."[141] Current

forms of masculinities reflect this limited integration, according to Nelson:

> Eros runs counter to the basic social construction of our masculinities… The erotic came to be seen as a contradiction to the manliness that prizes self-sufficiency and rational control of bodily things. We learned to put on masculinity like an old suit of armor- heavy, hot, rusty, stuffy, and inflexible.[142]

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[139]James B. Nelson, "Male Sexuality and the Fragile Planet," in *Redeeming Men: Religion and Masculinities.* Edited by Stephen B. Boyd, W. Merle Longwood, and Mark W. Muesse (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 276.

[140]Nelson explains that "in the complex web of things that have led to our ecological problems, environmental abuse is also a sexually transmitted disease. If we are going to respond effectively to these connections between sexuality and these broader public issues, we need to engage in sexual theology, a theology that takes sexual/bodily experience seriously in conversation with and in the reshaping of our perceptions and categories." Ibid., 276.

[141] Ibid., 278.

[142] Ibid., 279.

In the absence of a proactive sexual theology that addresses embodiment, Nelson fears that Western males are ill-equipped to rectify harms associated with social and environmental domination.[143]

The promotion of a gender hierarchy that privileges men and masculine qualities while linking pro-peace, ecological values of care and compassion with femininity through gender ideology will clearly constrain these values. What prohibits us from recognizing and acting upon the implications of these connections within our religious institutions? What accounts for our resistance? What enforces pornographic constructions of identity that strip out emotional and spiritual knowing?

Walter Wink offers a religious theory of violence predicated on notions of a "Domination System" and "Powers." Wink's Domination System represents a social system under the influence of a dominator mindset, and the "Powers" represent energetic patterns of systems processes.[144] This Domination System, Wink argues, resists our awareness:

> There are structures – economic, political, religious, and only then psychological – that oppress people and resist all attempts to end their oppression. Psychotherapy has often taken the dominator personality and dominator family as normative, and has tried to adjust the client to the Domination Society... The task of exposing the delusional system requires the development of a social psychology of domination.[145]

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[143] Nelson explains that "while social violence, racism, environmental abuse and other social diseases are intimately linked with distorted expressions of masculinity, the antierotic masculinity that white Western males are taught jeopardizes men's capacity to be effective moral agents to undo the damage." Ibid., 278.

[144] The Powers might be alternatively characterized as life energy, will, or spirit. Wink claims that, in themselves, the Powers are good: "The social structures of reality are creations of God. Because they are creatures, they are mortal, limited, responsible to God, and made to serve the humanizing purposes of God in the world." Wink, 66. To more thoroughly grasp the elusive nature of the Powers, Wink suggests a phenomenological investigation: "I prefer to think of the Powers as impersonal entities, though I know of no way to settle the question except dogmatically. It is a natural human tendency to personalize anything that seems to act intentionally. But we are now discovering from computer viruses that certain systemic processes are self-replicating and "contagious," behaving almost willfully even though they are quite impersonal. Generally, I have bracketed the question of the metaphysical status of the Powers, and have instead treated them phenomenologically – that is, I have attempted to describe the experiences that got called "Satan," "demons," "powers," "angels," and the like." Ibid., 8.

[145] Ibid., 102. Wink continues: "Simply criticizing the illegitimacy of the masters can lead to two results, both of them negative. The oppressed may decide to beat the oppressors at their own game, rather than changing the game (hence the espousal of redemptive violence by some early liberation theologians). Or the oppressed may be driven to even deeper alienation… Rather than strengthening them to revolt, the recognition of their weakness may foster self-doubt: if I have been so cowardly and stupid as to put up with such treatment, I deserve what I get. It is my own fault that I am weak."

This theory holds that the Powers have "fallen" and now serve to perpetuate

misrepresentations of reality and possibility. The evils of our day -- "racism, sexism,

political oppression, ecological degradation, militarism, patriarchy, homelessness, and

economic greed" -- are perpetuated by this system of domination.[146] Wink identifies the

"myth of redemptive violence" as the central myth of this system of domination:

> We will discover that the religion of Babylon – one of the world's oldest,
> continuously surviving religions – is thriving as never before in every sector of
> contemporary American life, even in our synagogues and churches. It, and not
> Christianity, is the real religion of America. I will suggest that this myth of
> redemptive violence undergirds American popular culture, civil religion,
> nationalism, and foreign policy, and that it lies coiled like an ancient serpent at the
> root of the system of domination that has characterized human existence since
> well before Babylon ruled supreme… Jesus taught the love of enemies, but
> Babylonian religion taught their extermination.[147]

This myth shapes individual desires, directing mimetic desire away from creativity and

toward rivalry and scapegoating. One of the ways the Domination System perpetuates

itself, Wink explains, is by reinforcing its myth of redemptive violence through

programming for children, such as cartoon television programs and comic books:

> Children identify with the good guy so that they can think of themselves as good.
> This enables them to project onto the bad guy their own repressed anger, violence,
> rebelliousness, or lust, and then vicariously to enjoy their own evil by watching
> the bad guy initially prevail… When the good guy finally wins, viewers are then
> able to reassert control over their own inner tendencies, repress them, and
> reestablish a sense of goodness. Salvation is guaranteed through identification
> with the hero.[148]

An inclination to identify with the "good guy" invokes Miller's discussion of poisonous

pedagogy, as well as Fanon's description of objectifying pressures within media for

children. Through his portrayal of the Domination System, Powers, and the myth of

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[146] Ibid., 9.
[147] Ibid., 13.
[148] Ibid., 19.

redemptive violence, Wink offers a way of looking at a social system of domination that escapes our awareness. Wink also describes the far-reaching effects of the Domination System, which are brought about through our complicity with or conformity to this system -- what he identifies as "sin":

> Original sin can be understood as a powerful name for the refusal or loss of this open system of intersubjective and unconditional relation to God and others by which we are constituted. That is, original sin is a description of the perversion and enslavement of mimetic desire in representation of idolatry, *within which it inevitably leads to violence."[149]*

This understanding of sin portrays a loss of connection with spirit. We are oblivious to this loss of connection, however. The domination system masks its presence and encourages our blindness. We sin, Wink suggests, to the extent that we succumb to the influence of this system of domination and its far-reaching socialization:

> Paradoxically, those in the grip of the cultural trance woven over us by the Domination System are usually unaware of the full depth of their soul-sickness. It is only after we experience liberation from primary socialization to the world-system that we realize how terribly we have violated our authentic personhood – and how violated we have been. For we are not just sinners, but the sinned against. We not only have defected from higher values, but we have been trained, schooled, cajoled, and bullied into defecting from them by the combined onslaught of much that goes to make up our world. In part, our sin is that we acquiesced in this socialization.[150]

Sin, as described here, resembles a state of bad faith. Like bad faith, this conception of sin also possesses an element of denial or lack of awareness. A striking testament to the depth of collective bad faith lies with the way many religious institutions assume this system of domination.

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[149] Ibid., 299.
[150] Ibid., 73.

The blindness of bad faith, or sin, increases the difficulty of transcending it or the system of domination that perpetuates it. Rebecca Adams's clarification of sin conveys the way we are trapped by it:

> Theologies that tend to reduce sin to guilt and individual moral agency overlook the genesis and consequences of sin as a cultural system that enmeshes people, often against their will, in violent social and ideological structures.[151]

Adams argues that we may interrupt a downward descent into rivalry, scapegoating, and violence. Her vision of "loving mimesis" represents a conception of mimetic desire that encompasses the possibility of "good" and "bad" desires. The encouragement of creative desires, Adams suggests, depends upon clarifying the nature of our blindness so as to envision the "kingdom" present among us:

> Jesus says that the kingdom is among us, and it is now, for those who have 'eyes to see and ears to hear' in a new way. This change of perspective involves a type of conversion, but not a conversion away from mimetic desire or to a sacred which is wholly Other. Rather, it is the conversion to a new viewpoint which recognizes the already existing reality of the deeply intersubjective, interdependent, and unfolding nature of human relationships and life.[152]

In this context, transcendence or transformation depends upon self-awareness and recognition.[153] To address the far-reaching effects of the Domination System requires first exposing and comprehending the magnitude of its influence. Wink claims:

> Vision heals. Mere awareness of the state from which we are fallen is not enough to effect systemic change, but it is its indispensable precondition. Apocalyptic (unveiling) is always a protest against domination. Liberation from negative socialization and internalized oppression is a never-completed task in the

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[151] Rebecca Adams, "Loving Mimesis," in *Violence Renounced*, edited by William Swartley (Telford, PA: Pandora Press, 2000), 288. Wink argues that the gospel offers possibilities of transcending this system of domination, not on a personal level but through transforming the world itself: "The gospel is not a message of personal salvation from the world, but message of a world transfigured, right down to its basic structures. Redemption means actually being liberated from the oppression of the Powers, being forgiven for one's own sin and for complicity with the Powers, and being engaged in liberating the Powers themselves from their bondage to idolatry." Wink 82-3.

[152] Adams, 299. Adams' call for "conversion to a new viewpoint" is supported by Wink, who elaborates that "people do need to be 'reborn' from their primary socialization in an alienated and alienating system… and take on the radical values of God's nonviolent commonwealth." Wink, 75.

[153] Miller observes that "our capacity to resist has nothing to do with our intelligence but with the degree of access to our true self." Miller, 43.

discernment of spirits. To exercise this discernment, we need eyes that see the invisible.[154]

To see the invisible is to see the domination system and to see the way contemporary gender system constrains access to sustainable values.

Holter stresses the urgency of our situation: "There is a problem, mainly, of creating a peace culture, without which humanity will not survive. Men as well as masculinity (as a cross-sex capability) are parts of this problem."[155] And further, Connell asks:

> Do we socialize women for a culture of peace (to be caring, sharing, moderate, flexible and communicative) and men for a culture of violence and war (to be tough, over-decisive, forceful and aggressive)? If this is the case, then how can we best change these patterns?[156]

We may reframe a version of these questions specifically for religious institutions: Since gender culture suppresses pro-peace, sustainable values, could the religious institution successfully implement its mission of peace without directly addressing gender culture and its effects within the Church? If not, how can we best motivate this recognition?

Conclusion

This existential analysis finds common themes across four areas of critical social theory. These themes link the suppression of emotion and the denial of vulnerability with unsustainable power relations of domination and conformity. The research in these areas thus supports theoretical predictions that project bad faith into sadistic (power-over) or masochistic (power-from) trajectories. Multidisciplinary research findings also

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[154] Ibid., 103.
[155] Holter, 79.
[156] Robert W. Connell, "Arms and the man: using the new research on masculinity to understand violence and promote peace in the contemporary world," in *Male Roles, Masculinities, and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective,* Edited by Ingeborg Breines, Robert Connell, and Ingrid Elde (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2000), 15.

illuminate the ways dynamics and behavior patterns encouraged in each of these areas reinforce the others.

The scholarship of childrearing practices demonstrates harmful effects of rigid child training, including splitting off and projection, as well as increased tendencies for authoritarianism, ethnocentrism, domination, and conformity. Splitting off and projecting and authoritarianism and conformity mirror existentialist conceptions of sadism and masochism as well as scapegoating and mimetic conformity. Gender socialization processes further shape, naturalize, and mask these effects by virtue of normalized gender ideologies that serve to suppress emotion as well as acceptance of vulnerability. The given nature of gender culture and life-long socialization processes serve to collapse gender identity with identity, diminishing awareness of these processes. Further, existential social analysis of race demonstrates ways that racist social context along with rigid childrearing and gender socialization affect oppressions and race relations.

Bad faith -- however it develops, whether from childrearing, gender socialization, racial or other experience -- motivates desire for power-over, expressed as domination, superiority, scapegoating, or internalized oppression directed at other members of one's social group. It also motivates power-from as conformity to norms of the social group or resignation to a constrained sense of identity. Gender lies hidden in the heart of race relations even as its role as enforcer of dualistic ideologies and bad faith constitutes and reinforces oppression. Hegemonic masculinity subordinates black masculinity to white masculinity and then scapegoats black masculinity for adopting the social values of the larger patriarchal culture. These patriarchal social values, which are adopted even by

many negatively affected by their promotion of dualistic thinking, hierarchy, and oppression, also distort religious teachings and meaning. These contaminated teachings then serve to reinforce and reproduce these values. Gender culture, which privileges notions of rationality and autonomy over embodiment and relational interdependence, shapes overall social values, constraining access to ecological values of care and compassion generally, although particularly among men.

Major enculturation practices thus promote widespread bad faith. The comprehensive view afforded by this interdisciplinary comparative analysis offers the opportunity to more clearly perceive the common patterns among social situations.[157] When these issues are considered and addressed separately, however, the magnitude of the influence of the larger system ideology may be unrecognized, even as the dynamics within these areas reinforce each other. Overall, gender emerges as a special category of analysis because of the way gender culture devalues the emotions, vulnerability, and thereby sustainable values of care, compassion, and affiliation. Recognition of connections between devaluation of emotion, denial of vulnerability, and the emergence of authoritarianism and conformity focuses renewed attention upon the relations between gender, social structure, and unsustainable expressions of power through the domination of others and nature.

The findings of this existential analysis contribute to the new model of sustainability ethics introduced in the previous chapter. These findings provide

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[157] Scholars of childrearing, gender, race, and religion note the way that scapegoating is directed toward socially "weaker," less advantaged, or vulnerable individuals or outgroups. These processes serve to offer up individuals or categories of people as ready scapegoats, as in the cases of racism, sexism, homophobia, or biases against people based on religion, nationality, or level of ability. Because of their natural vulnerability, children are common targets for splitting off and projecting, whether at home or school; smaller children on the playground may be at greater risk. Women and girls are also common targets because of the connection between feminine gender ideology and dependency or vulnerability. Finally, the prevalence of homophobic bullying in schools – whether or not it is associated with a child's actual sexual orientation -- is significant because of the way it clarifies the gendered nature of bullying.

theoretical support for the inclusion of authenticity and generosity as sustainable values

within this ethic. The suppression of emotion represents bad faith as denial of an aspect

of self as well as denial of freedom. In addition, given that our human finitude defines us

as essentially vulnerable beings, the denial of vulnerability is inauthentic.[158] This denial

also neglects our mutual need for each other as communal and relational beings. The bad

faith of both suppressed emotion and denied vulnerability promotes the development of

unsustainable expressions of power as domination and conformity, according to both

theory and multidisciplinary research. Authenticity, however, upholds the expression of

ecological values and affiliation. Authenticity also fosters sustainable forms of power,

which include vitality, creativity, and generosity on an individual level and solidarity,

collaboration, nonviolent appeals, and transformation on the collective level.[159] Thus,

the authentic embrace of emotion and vulnerability represents a condition of

sustainability.

The suppression of emotions and denial of vulnerability not only limit access to

ecological values and encourage unsustainable power relations of domination and

conformity but also diminish self-awareness of motivations. Bad faith by definition

reflects denial, blindness, and resistance to the awareness of denial as well as the

possibility of choosing differently. Authenticity, by way of contrast, represents a state of

self-awareness that acknowledges facticity and freedom. This self-awareness allows for

thoughtful reflection upon meaning and motivation, as well as freedom from blind

adherence to addictive behavior patterns. Authenticity is valued within this new model of

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[158] Moreover, postures of invulnerable autonomy foster human hubris concerning the separation of the human body from its environs, a denial of interdependence allowing for the dominance of nature.

[159] Authenticity embodies holistic synthesis of rationality and emotion within an integration of facticity and freedom, strengthens, rather than suppresses, expressions of care and compassion, and thereby motivates sustainable forms of power and action that enable system transformation. Authenticity also transcends blindness concerning motivations, enabling growing awareness of self, potentiality, and meaning. The utilization of existential analysis as a research method to investigate sustainable social conditions thus provides theoretical appreciation of authenticity as a sustainable value within an ethic of sustainability.

sustainability ethics not only because of its preservation of freedom but also for its awareness of choice and transformation as possibilities of freedom.

Authenticity, however, is threatened by oppressive power relations with others. Generosity, with its commitment to the freedom of self and others, enables and strengthens prospects for authenticity. In this way, authenticity and generosity together represent conditions of sustainability. This analysis thus broadens this new model of sustainability ethics to include authenticity and generosity -- along with care, compassion, and justice -- as sustainable values within a deep ecological context that upholds principles of interconnection and interdependence.

The four areas of social experience analyzed in this chapter represent subsystems of the larger social system. The common themes uncovered by the analysis -- suppression of emotion and denial of vulnerability -- reflect the cultural mindset or paradigm. The institutions of the larger social system reflect and reproduce these cultural attitudes. Plumwood calls for a "new kind of culture":

> In its fullest meaning, developing environmental culture involves a systematic resolution of the nature/culture and reason/nature dualisms that split mind from body, reason from emotion, across their many domains of cultural influence. The ecological crisis requires from us a new kind of culture because a major factor in its development has been the rationalist culture and the associated human/nature dualism characteristic of the West.[160]

Plumwood claims that the emergence of an environmental culture depends upon the collapse of historical dualisms, including the split between rationality and emotion, which enables a cultural devaluation of the emotions. Chapter Five provides a systems view of the contemporary social system in order to increase appreciation for the resilience of our current mindset.

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[160] Plumwood, 4.

Chapter Five: Systems View

If a factory is torn down but the rationality which produced it is left standing, then that rationality will simply produce another factory. If a revolution destroys a systematic government, but the systematic patterns of thought that produced that government are left intact, then those patterns will repeat themselves in the succeeding government. There's so much talk about the system. And so little understanding.[1]

~ Robert Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*

A social system is comprised of interrelated subsystems, which are connected by

its overarching mindset or paradigm. Childrearing, gender, race, and religion -- the

topics of analysis here -- represent subsystems of the larger social system. The common

sources of bad faith identified through existential analysis in the previous chapter,

namely, the suppression of emotions and denial of vulnerability, are derivative effects of

prevailing social values. Gender emerges as a special category of study given the ways

gender culture encodes and devalues emotions, vulnerability, and thereby sustainable

values of care, compassion, and affiliation. Moreover, the bad faith of gender culture is

entrenched in the structure of social life itself, including the reasoning processes that

ensure its perpetuation. Plumwood argues that the current ecological crisis is related to

this stripped-down form of reason:

> The ecological crisis we face then is both a crisis of the dominant culture and a crisis of reason, or rather, a crisis of the culture of reason or of what the dominant global culture has made of reason… It is not reason itself that is the problem, I believe, but rather arrogant and insensitive forms of it that have evolved in the framework of rationalism and its dominant narrative of reason's mastery of the opposing sphere of nature and disengagement from nature's contaminating elements of emotion, attachment, and embodiment.[2]

The larger social system is thus gendered, and its social values influence subsystem

dynamics.

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[1] Robert M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* (New York: Bantam, 1984), 88. I am grateful to Donella Meadows for drawing attention to this quote by selecting it for the introduction to *Systems Thinking*.
[2] Val Plumwood, *Environmental Culture: The Ecological Crisis of Reason* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 5.

Theory predicts and research confirms that the bad faith of gender culture leads to dominance of the self, other, and nature. According to masculinities and gender scholars, the current system disadvantages the vast majority of men and women, privileging a minority of hegemonic men (and only in a short-term, non-dimensional view) at the top of a hierarchical pecking order of men and women based on race, class, income, nationality, and sexuality.[3] Tony Jenkins and Betty Reardon argue that "patriarchy is an 'equal opportunity' destroyer of both women and men."[4] This system also negatively affects the natural world. In their chapter, "Gender and peace: towards a gender inclusive, holistic perspective," Jenkins and Reardon link gender with peace, security, and ecological harms, considering the usefulness of gender as a framework for "systematic inquiry into the possibilities for the transformation of the present violent world order."[5] This transformation, they argue, depends upon addressing patriarchy:

> We also ask whether such a transformation is possible without recognizing, dismantling and forswearing various institutions and habits of patriarchy that we perceive as integral to the present global culture of violence, a major factor affecting such problems as denial of human rights, economic inequity, ecological deterioration and armed conflict.[6]

Jenkins and Reardon thus portray the far-reaching effects of patriarchy, which include oppression, violence, and environmental degradation.[7]

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[3] See particularly R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); also R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," in *Gender & Society*, Vol 19, No. 6, December 2005.

[4] Tony Jenkins & Betty A. Reardon, "Gender and peace: towards a gender inclusive, holistic perspective," in *Handbook of peace and conflict studies.* Edited by Charles Webel and Johan Galtung (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2007), 220.

[5] Ibid., 209.

[6] Ibid., 209. They elaborate: "Because of this cross-cutting character [not only a cross-cutting issue affecting most problems and areas of concern to peace knowledge but also one possible core of a holistic study of the central problematic of violence] and the universality of gender concerns, might not gender also serve as an organizing concept around which to build studies not only of gender equality and peace, but as the potential core of a systematic inquiry into the possibilities for the transformation of the present violent world order? We also ask whether such a transformation is possible without recognizing, dismantling and forswearing various institutions and habits of patriarchy that we perceive as integral to the present global culture of violence, a major factor affecting such problems as denial of human rights, economic inequity, ecological deterioration and armed conflict." Ibid., 209.

[7] Many scholars, along with Jenkins and Reardon, research connections between gender, peace, and violence. See also J. Goldstein, *War and Gender* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); B. Easlea, *Fathering the Unthinkable: Masculinity, Scientists and the Arms Race* (London: Pluto Press, 1983); Gerd Johansen-Latham, *Patriarchal Violence – An Attack on Human Security* (Stockholm: Government Offices of Sweden, 2005); R.W. Connell, *The Men and the Boys* (Berkeley: University of California Press,

The bad faith of gender culture, however, resists self-awareness. Although some gender and peace scholars acknowledge the harms of patriarchal culture, these harms are not widely recognized or conceded by the general public. Jenkins and Reardon describe the efforts of these scholars to account for the negative effects of patriarchy in contemporary theorizing:

> Others began to take a more systems-based view, suggesting that the international power- based system itself was the major impediment to justice and peace, bringing the question of alternatives and system change into classroom inquiries and to the design of research projects. The questions that formed this inquiry lead to theorizing the links among these forms of exclusions, the economic and political oppressions they rationalized and the institution of war, and, ultimately, to a more systematic analysis of patriarchy and its hold on so many social and institutional systems from school curricula, to church hierarchy, to the corporate world, governmental structures, and the security establishment.[8]

Multiple subsystems reinforce each other in ways that obscure their collective bad faith. In order to distinguish resistance to addressing the topic of gender in the public square, this chapter analyzes contemporary gender culture from a systems perspective. I begin with a discussion of systems thinking, which I subsequently apply to the gender system in the following sections. The chapter maps out the history, structure, and resilience of the contemporary gender system, noting the effects of gender-washing and bullying, and explores possibilities of system transformation.

Systems Thinking

Human culture produces systems that structure social life; these systems also shape our attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions. Once created, these systems take on the appearance of permanent institutions, and because of their established nature we may forget that we have devised them and can therefore alter or replace them. A system is

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2000); I. Breines, R.W. Connell, and I. Eide, eds, *Male Roles, Masculinities, and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective* (Paris: UNESCO, 2000); among others.
[8]Jenkins & Reardon, 218.

comprised of subsystems and components governed by its overall purpose and associated operating rules. Joel Bakan, in *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power,* examines the structure of a corporate "system."[9] The primary operative rule of this system mandates fiduciary responsibility; the corporation is programmed to maximize shareholder profitability. The corporate structure efficiently maximizes profitability even when it conflicts with other desirable objectives, such as health or safety. When this system leads to unfortunate consequences, such as exploitation of natural resources or human rights abuses, we may adjust the system's rules in some way, usually through regulation. In a similar way, we have devised a gender system based on gender ideologies that divide human traits between the sexes, which we reinforce through gender socialization, status, and the normalization of gender roles and behavior patterns. We may choose to modify this system when it does not serve our best interests, such as for instance, if it leads to the promotion of general social values that are destructive to humanity and the natural world.

The effects of a system depend upon its structure rather than the good nature or moral perspectives of individuals within the system, unless these individuals modify the system to support these moral perspectives. For instance, a corporation may employ individuals who have concerns about the moral consequences of particular actions. However, if these concerns do not translate into a restructuring of the system -- if these individuals do not change the rules to specifically accommodate these concerns along with the imperative to maximize profit -- the "system" or its agents will simply remove these individuals and replace them with others who will maximize profits. "As we try to imagine restructured rules and what our behavior would be under them," Meadows

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[9] See Joel Bakan, *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power* (New York: Free Press, 2004).

explains, "we come to understand the power of rules. They are high leverage points. Power over the rules is real power."[10] The rules of the system govern its behavior and related outcomes.

The first step to modifying a system is to recognize that we are operating within a system and that this system structures our social reality. A social system limits visibility to its existence, however, as well as the possibility of its transformation. "An important function of almost every system," Meadows emphasizes, "is to ensure its own perpetuation."[11] A collective blindness of the ways our social system shapes beliefs and of our role as architects and sustainers of the system serves its survival and perpetuation. Gunderson et al ask:

> Why do intelligent, knowledgeable people organized in sophisticated societies degrade their life-support systems to the point of ecological and economic disaster? And how can such catastrophic degradation be prevented?[12]

Good questions. An ethic of sustainability, which reflects the collective self-interest of the interdependent whole, emphasizes our responsibility to promote general awareness about the workings of a social system that threatens our interests and perhaps our survival. The given nature of a social system, however, obscures or resists this awareness. This nature reflects an aspect of system resilience.

Resilience, according to Meadows, is "a measure of a system's ability to survive and persist within a variable environment."[13] Brian Walker and David Salt provide a

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[10]Donella Meadows, *Thinking in Systems: A Primer* (White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008), 158. This discussion prompts the challenging consideration of how we might measure a goal of well-being or flourishing. Meadows offers a thought-provoking quotation from Robert Kennedy concerning the gross national product and how it is unable to reflect important aspects of our lives: "The gross national product does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wit nor our courage, neither our wisdom nor our learning, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country, it measures everything in short, except that which makes life worthwhile." Ibid., 139.

[11]Ibid., 15.

[12]Ralf Yorque, Brian Walker, C.S. Holling, Lance H. Gunderson, Carl Folke, Stephen R. Carpenter, and Wililam A. Broch, "Toward an Integrative Synthesis," in *Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Human and Natural Systems.* Edited by Lance H. Gunderson and C. S. Holling (Washington D.C.: Island Press, 2002), 437.

similar definition: "the ability of a system to absorb disturbance and still retain its basic function and structure."[14] Assessments of the strength of threatened ecological or social systems take into consideration their natural resilience. Walker and Salt explain that resilience also perpetuates undesirable states:

> Resilience in and of itself is of course not necessarily desirable. A social-ecological system in an undesirable state (such as a depleted fishery, a salinized landscape, or a murky lake system) may also exhibit high resilience and resist all efforts of managers to move the system out of that state. Think also of social states like Franco's Fascist regime in Spain. His dictatorship was remarkably resilient; it lasted from 1936 until 1975, despite sweeping worldwide changes.[15]

This situation, "a social-ecological system in an undesirable state," applies to the current state of the human-natural world system, which is shaped by patriarchy and its promotion of domination. The resilience of the gender system constrains recognition of its relationship to social and environmental sustainability.

In their book *Resilience Thinking*, Walker and Salt devise a resilience framework to aid development of management processes that strengthen the resilience of ecological and social systems. Walker and Salt apply their resilience framework to the study of decision-making processes that are flawed because of "misunderstanding" or the "application of inappropriate models of how the world works."[16] "Misunderstanding," along with "necessity" and "greed," leads to undesired, unsustainable outcomes, according to Walker and Salt. The second category, "necessity," reflects situations where groups develop resources in an unsustainable way in order to meet basic survival needs. Sustainability theorists will resolve these problems, Walker and Salt claim, only after

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[13] Meadows, 76.
[14] Brian Walker and David Salt, *Resilience Thinking: Sustaining Ecosystems and People in a Changing World.* Foreword by Walter V. Reid (Washington: Island Press, 2006), 1.
[15] Ibid., 37.
[16] Ibid., 4.

addressing the other two areas. They bracket the third category, returning to it briefly in

the conclusion of the book as part of a discussion of the philosophy of resilience:

> A resilience framework doesn't directly address the problems of greed and the willful consumption of resources. However, a world that embraces the resilience-based themes that we have just outlined goes a long way toward countering many of the problems associated with greed and corruption.[17]

This project addresses this area. Greed and willful consumption of resources represent

irrational influences on decision-making processes, and this category may be broadened

to include dominant power relations.[18] Walker and Salt allude to power relations as they

further discuss the history of greed:

> Human behavior is shaped strongly by drives from our evolutionary past (competition, territory, and power) without which we would not be here as a species or as the cultures we now have. Such evolutionary antecedents made sense when the human population was small and the world was seemingly endless but this is no longer the case. In today's world such behavior has begun to turn on us and will deprive future generations of the opportunities we enjoy.[19]

This existential analysis offers an alternative explanation for the emergence of greed.

Greed, willful excessive consumption, and domination represent bad faith that constrains

the freedom of the other. These behaviors may aim specifically for power-over or may

influence decision-making through short-sighted desires to satisfy ego-based needs at the

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[17]Ibid., 149. Walker and Salt describe the ways that more widespread adoption of a "resilience framework" reduces the possibilities of "bad behavior." Identifying the secondary effects of actions leads to general awareness, "making it harder for exploiters to hide the consequences of their greed. In a similar way, because a resilient world sustains diversity and keeps future options open, it makes it harder to justify the conversion of all diversity into single-option solutions that ignore the value of diversity. Greed often leads to a denial of ecological variability in order to profit from short-term development. A resilient world embraces ecological variability rather than attempting to control it and would resist such developments. A resilient world possesses tight feedbacks, invests in its social capital, and possesses overlapping levels of governance. Cheaters have less space in which to operate and will find that greedy behavior is quickly penalized, often on multiple levels." Ibid., 149. They continue: "A resilience-based approach would not only deal with the drivers of resource decline associated with the 'wrong-model' view of the world, it would also help in resolving the difficult problems associated with drivers of greed and poverty. We are aware that this will be a gradual process involving a shift in societal ethics (which itself will involve tipping point changes). But it is not a naïve outlook. Many people recognize the need. Many already think this way. A framework like resilience thinking will only increase the likelihood of such a shift." Ibid., 150.

[18] Dominant relations may reflect expressions of bad faith with short-term ego payoffs but socially and ecologically undesirable effects.

[19]Ibid., 5. They elaborate: "In many cases, however, resource degradation is imply the result of humankind's insatiable desire to produce and consume, leading to willful short-term greed and corruption with no heed for the future. Some suggest this is just the way humans evolved – in a world without limits where success was based on maximizing your return. Human behavior is shaped strongly by drives from our evolutionary past (competition, territory, and power) without which we would not be here as a species or as the cultures we now have. Such evolutionary antecedents made sense when the human population was small and the world was seemingly endless but this is no longer the case. In today's world such behavior has begun to turn on us and will deprive future generations of the opportunities we enjoy." Ibid., 5.

expense of others or nature. Furthermore, they are predicted outcomes of the contemporary gender system. Greed, then, is a product of a social system that demonstrates unwanted resilience.

The resilience of subsystems strengthens overall system resilience. The preceding existential analysis identifies common themes from an investigation of power within subsystems of childrearing, gender conditioning, race, and religion. These common themes -- suppression of eco-values and denial of vulnerability -- contribute to the bad faith underpinning dominant behavior and are connected by gender culture. The apparently unrelated nature of these subsystems produces a reinforcing effect that strengthens overall system resilience.

Moreover, combinations of dynamics add to the complexity of systems analysis. As an example, destructive behaviors of toxic or dominant individuals may come together with the economic (or other) priorities of the organizational system in such a way that their harmful nature is not immediately apprehended. Although toxic individuals may have disproportionate and negative effects on the social body and decision outcomes, a system programmed with short-term rules or other priorities may allow unwanted longer term effects on the social body or environment. Short-term, ego-based needs and desires may be privileged over longer-term, collective interests. The gender system, particularly in conjunction with economic systems, reinforces individualistic, vulnerability-minimizing attitudes (bad faith) rather than acknowledgement of ecological and social interdependence. "One of the most frustrating aspects of systems," Meadows clarifies, "is that the purposes of subunits may add up to an overall behavior that no one wants… Systems can be nested within systems.

Therefore, there can be purposes within purposes."[20] Perhaps in addition, the harmful

effects of subsystem dynamics may not be readily apparent -- and thus tolerated -- until

their contributions to unwanted cumulative system behaviors become disastrously visible.

Cultivation of the bad faith of patriarchy occurs through many subsystems that

reinforce the values of the larger social system. Meadows explains that a society's

paradigm -- the collective mindset described here -- represents common assumptions

about the world:

> The shared idea in the minds of society, the great big unstated assumptions,
> constitute that society's paradigm, or deepest set of beliefs about how the world
> works. These beliefs are unstated because it is unnecessary to state them –
> everyone already knows them. Money measures something real and has real
> meaning; therefore, people who are paid less are literally worth less. Growth is
> good. Nature is a stock of resources to be converted to human purposes.[21]

Or in the terms of this discussion, autonomous strength, invulnerable independence, and

dominance are admired, while relational caring or peace suggests vulnerability and

weakness. The bad faith of dominance, which is given form through hegemonic

masculinity, shapes our collective mindset, social values, and institutions. Once

established, institutions and collective social expectations influence the development of

identity and behaviors that in turn perpetuate this system, as Bourdieu explains:

> Far from asserting that the structures of domination are ahistorical, I shall try to
> establish that they are the product of an incessant (and therefore historical) labor
> of reproduction, to which singular agents (including men, with weapons such as
> physical violence and symbolic violence) and institutions – families, the church,
> the educational system, the state – contribute.[22]

Conventional wisdom, beliefs, and mores within numerous areas of social life

holographically reflect and reinforce the bad faith of dominance, whether through

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[20] Meadows, 15.
[21] Ibid., 163.
[22] Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 34.

political and religious views (myth of redemptive violence), gender norms (expectations

of gender behavior and performance), childrearing practices, or racial bad faith.

Bourdieu notes the remarkable effectiveness of this "labor of reproduction":

> I have always been astonished… that the established order, with its relations of domination, its rights and prerogatives, privileges and injustices, ultimately perpetuates itself so easily, apart from a few historical accidents, and that the most intolerable conditions of existence can so often be perceived as acceptable and even natural.[23]

As he calls attention to the role of institutions in the reproduction of collective beliefs and

expectations, Bourdieu particularly notes the persistence of gender domination:

> I have also seen masculine domination, and the way it is imposed and suffered, as the prime example of this paradoxical submission, an effect of what I call symbolic violence, a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims, exerted for the most part through the purely symbolic channels of communication and cognition (more precisely, misrecognition), recognition, or even feeling.[24]

The social psychological nature of gender dynamics contributes to blindness of their

existence and harms. A blindness also extends to the social paradigm or mindset that

shapes human-natural world relations as well as social dynamics. The overlooked gender

system itself operates within a larger human-natural world system, founded upon

dualistic ideologies that provide a basis for othering, objectification, hierarchy, and

domination.

A worldview founded upon an original dualism separating humanity from nature

affects attitudes toward and policies concerning the natural world. The industrial age

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[23] Ibid., 1.

[24] Ibid., 1. Bourdieu's full quote is worth revisiting here in its entirety: "I have always been astonished by what might be called the paradox of doxa – the fact that the order of the world as we find it, with its one-way streets and its no-entry signs, whether literal or figurative, its obligations and its penalties, is broadly respected; that there are not more transgressions and subversions, contraventions and 'follies'..; or, still more surprisingly, that the established order, with its relations of domination, its rights and prerogatives, privileges and injustices, ultimately perpetuates itself so easily, apart from a few historical accidents, and that the most intolerable conditions of existence can so often be perceived as acceptable and even natural. And I have also seen masculine domination, and the way it is imposed and suffered, as the prime example of this paradoxical submission, an effect of what I call symbolic violence, a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims, exerted for the most part through the purely symbolic channels of communication and cognition (more precisely, misrecognition), recognition, or even feeling."

further reinforced a view of reality in the form of a machine, Carolyn Merchant observes,

with humans playing the role of operator of the machine. This mechanical perspective

normalizes the notions of order, power (in the sense of power-over), and the domination

of nature.[25] It also fosters ego-based ideologies that shape the evolution of ethical and

economic systems and environmental management practices.[26] However, eco-centric

versus ego-centric ethical systems, Merchant argues, provide the traction necessary to

grapple effectively with environmental challenges:

> From an environmental point of view, the egocentric ethic that legitimates *laissez faire* capitalism has a number of limitations. Because egocentric ethics are based on the assumption that the individual good is the highest good, the collective behavior of human groups or business corporations is not a legitimate subject of investigation. Second, because it includes the assumption that humans are 'by nature' competitive and capitalism is the 'natural' form of economics, ecological effects are external to human economics and cannot be adjudicated… the problem of internalizing ecological externalities was addressed through the development of eco-centric ethics.[27]

Eco-centric ethics emerge from a broad worldview anchored upon deep ecological

principles of interconnection. Merchant's radical ecology links social oppressions with

the domination of nature. She argues that notions of separation from nature underpin the

emergence of human oppressions based on race, class, gender, and difference. For this

reason, Merchant prioritizes egalitarian relations for the philosophy of deep ecology and

emphasizes the significance of freedom in the evolution of social structure:

> Deepest ecology is both feminist and egalitarian. It offers a vision of a society that is truly free. It recognizes that nature is a social construction that changes over time. People have the power to construct nature as a free, autonomous subject, not a dominated object – a nature that is an equal partner with equal women and men… Nature as equal partner can be healed.[28]

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[25]Merchant explains that "the mechanical framework with its associated values of power and control sanctioned the management of both nature and society." Carolyn Merchant, *Radical Ecology: The Search for a Livable World* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 55.

[26]Merchant warns that the use of systems analyses as management tools may reinforce mechanistic assumptions. The use of systems thinking here is for the purpose of education and awareness versus management per se; investigation of the interdisciplinary, multi-variable and resilient nature of systems illuminates inhibitors to system transformation. See Merchant.

[27]Ibid., 70.

[28]Ibid., 107.

Prevailing social values reflect gender culture. Thus the devaluation of ecological values of care and compassion is linked to gender ideology and status.[29] Because of this, the necessary transformation of values to support a more sustainable culture depends upon a transformation of current gender culture, ideology, status, and socialization.

Evolution and Resilience of System Mindset

Approaches to system transformation depend upon knowledge of the system's functions, rules, and inner workings, as well as the ways it demonstrates resilience.[30] Systems analysis of the contemporary gender system begins with critical theory that addresses the roots of the current gender order and ideology. A history of the gender order considers gender deconstruction projects from past decades that have disengaged gender from bodies, allowing the recognition of gender's inherent nature as social structure. Feminist scholarship illuminates the development of gender difference and differing moral values associated with gender ideology, as well as the significance of inequitable gender status and its association with the devaluation of the feminine within patriarchal social systems.[31]

How did an alignment of human traits and values occur along gender lines? Nancy Chodorow provides a psychoanalytic analysis of the development of gender

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[29] Plumwood claims that the emergence of an environmental culture depends upon the collapse of historical dualisms, including the split between rationality and emotion, which allows for a cultural devaluation of the emotions: "In its fullest meaning, developing environmental culture involves a systematic resolution of the nature/culture and reason/nature dualisms that split mind from body, reason from emotion, across their many domains of cultural influence. The ecological crisis requires from us a new kind of culture because a major factor in its development has been the rationalist culture and the associated human/nature dualism characteristic of the west." Plumwood, 4.

[30] Meadows describes the process of working with systems, with relevance to the study of subsystems and their interactions: "The trick, as with all the behavioral possibilities of complex systems, is to recognize what structures contain what latent behaviors, and what conditions release those behaviors – and, where possible, to arrange the structures and conditions to reduce the probability of destructive behaviors and to encourage the possibility of beneficial ones." Meadows, 72.

[31] This scholarship addresses research that will be covered in the following pages, including the work of Nancy Chodorow, with her psychoanalytic account of the development of gender difference; Carol Gillian on the development of differing gendered moral virtues; and Luce Irigaray and Iris Young, with their discussions of "othering" and patriarchy, among other scholars. Also of note, although not addressed here, are Anne Fausto-Sterling's insights concerning sex/gender, nature/nurture, and real/constructed dualities. See Ann Fausto-Sterling, *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality. (*New York: Basic Books, 2000).

difference that suggests gender difference is defined relationally.[32] Critical of Freud for

neglecting to investigate the roots of feelings associated with the oedipal conflict by more

closely examining the preoedipal years, Chodorow relies upon the psychological premise

of individuation or differentiation, occurring in opposition to the primary caregiver, to

provide a non-biologically based theory of gender difference.[33] According to Chodorow,

young boys separate from their mothers in order to establish their gender identity. Social

pressures encourage this separation as does the mother herself, in part because of the

mother's investment in gender difference.[34] Masculine identity, then, develops in

opposition to femininity.[35] Moreover, since women are most often responsible for

childrearing, qualities associated with caregiving are linked to the mother, or women in

general; masculinity, as a claim of not-woman, becomes a claim of not-nurturing. Of

particular interest here, Chodorow argues that the effects of these social choices influence

the development of general cultural values:

> It [psychological salience of difference for men] has also become intertwined with
> and has helped to produce more general cultural notions, particularly, that
> individualism, separateness, and distance from others are desirable and requisite
> to autonomy and human fulfillment.[36]

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[32] See Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

[33] In his summary of the history of gender research, Connell relates that Karen Horney criticized Freud on similar grounds. Connell, "Psychoanalysis on Masculinity," in *Theorizing Masculinity: Research on Men and Masculinities.* Edited by Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman, eds. (London: Sage Publications, Inc., 1994).

[34] In "Woman as Metaphor," Eva Feder Kittay finds that Chodorow's psychoanalytic analysis answers Beauvoir's question about why women have not in turn constituted men as other. Eva Feder Kittay, "Woman as Metaphor," in *Feminist Social Thought.* Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997).

[35] Another example of the development of identity in opposition is found in Maria Lugones' descriptions of the *arrogant perceiver*. Lugones, in her essay "Playfulness, 'World'-Travelling, and Loving Perception," describes that arrogantly perceiving the other presents a barrier to understanding among women traveling between 'worlds.' Lugones admits that the notion of arrogant perceiver was cultivated by her own experience with her mother; she became aware of herself as an arrogant perceiver and her unwillingness to align herself with her mother because of her mother's devalued status. Lugones' perception of her mother's devalued status not only affected her relationship with her mother, but also encouraged her rejection of a certain form of identity. See Maria Lugones, "Playfulness, 'World'- Travelling, and Loving Perception," in *Feminist Social Thought.* Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997), 147-159.

[36] Nancy Julia Chodorow, "Gender, Relation, and Difference in Psychoanalytic Perspective," in *Feminist Social Thought.* Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997), 18.

Chodorow's analysis not only provides an explanation for cultural choice of gender ideology but also links individuation and current childrearing practices to the high value contemporary society places on individualism, autonomy, and separation.

Other feminist scholars, however, including Iris Young and de Beauvoir, place greater emphasis on the devalued social status of women -- readily apparent within many households, social and religious communities -- as a significant influence encouraging young boys in their rejection of feminine traits. Although Young does not disagree with Chodorow's explanation of the development of gender difference, she distinguishes between gender differentiation and male domination, and charges Chodorow with not thoroughly considering the devalued social status of women nor the role of the father during the formative years of childhood:

> Chodorow's theory of the development of gender personalities exhibits a curious lack of reference to male power… On those earlier accounts [Firestone, Rubin, Mitchell], which follow Freud more closely than Chodorow does, the boy gives up his attachment to his mother in exchange for the promise that one day he can accede to the power of the father. Thus, when the boy despises the mother and gives up identification with her, he does so not simply because he is uncertain about who he is, but because he despises her powerlessness. For the girl, on the other hand, the discovery that she lacks the phallus as does her mother is a discovery that she belongs to the class of the powerless. Penis envy is her desire to belong to the class of the powerful… This emphasis [by Chodorow] on the relations of mothering, however, leads her to ignore the power of the father in accounting for gender personality. In her account, the father is primarily an absence, not a power.[37]

In fairness to Chodorow, she does mention the devalued status of the mother, particularly in relation to the development of a feminine identity, although this may not detract from the essence of Young's argument:

> The difficulties that girls have in establishing a 'feminine' identity do not stem from the inaccessibility and negative definition of this identity, or it assumption

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[37] Iris Marion Young, "Is Male Gender Identity the Cause of Male Domination," in *Feminist Social Thought.* Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997), 29.

by denial (as in the case of boys).   They arise from identification with a negatively valued gender category, and an ambivalently experienced maternal figures, whose mothering and femininity, often conflictual for the mother herself, are accessible, but devalued. Conflicts here arise from questions of relative power, and social and cultural value, even as female identification and the assumption of core gender identity are straightforward.[38]

This discussion of power and social status illuminates the devaluation of qualities associated with women relative to those associated with men within society's hierarchy of social values.

Gender differentiation, then, involves comparative relational social status. Feminist scholars, including de Beauvoir, Eva Feder Kittay, and Luce Irigaray, among others, address the othering -- objectification -- of women. Following de Beauvoir, Irigaray draws attention to the male oriented perspective of Western psychoanalytical and philosophical traditions, whereby men represent the norm and women are constituted as other.[39] Subjectivity is male subjectivity, with women's identity primarily associated with motherhood.[40] Irigaray further views sexual difference as a difference assigned in language rather than associated with biological difference.[41] Exclusion of women from the subject position in Western discourses, Irigaray claims, is related to language and signifiers. For this reason, she stresses sexual difference as a path to claiming subjectivity:

> A machine has no sex. Nature, on the other hand, always has a sex…There is a physiological and morphological complementarity between the sexes. Why deny

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[38] Nancy Julia Chodorow, "Gender, Relation, and Difference in Psychoanalytic Perspective," in *Feminist Social Thought,* Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997), 16.

[39] Beauvoir claimed, "He [Man] is the Subject, he is the Absolute – she is the Other." Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1989), xxviii.

[40] Irigaray writes extensively about the mother-daughter relationship. She exclaims, "What I wanted from you, Mother, was this: that in giving me life, you still remain alive." Irigaray, "And the One Doesn't Stir Without the Other," in *Feminist Social Thought.* Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997), 326.

[41] Luce Irigaray is a former student of Jacques Lacan. While Lacan's theories of language, image, and the (fixed) Symbolic order deviate from Freud's oedipal complex, Lacan reinstates the phallus, ostensibly as a purely symbolic category. This is a concern for Irigary, given its virtual collapse into a male-centered perspective. Irigaray challenges Lacan's view of the Symbolic order as fixed, particularly given its use of the phallus as a male signifier, insisting rather that symbolism and language systems shift upon power relationships.

it? This complementarity should be lived in such a way as to facilitate growth. But in our becoming there has been no sexual difference established on the level of the *subject*.[42]

For Irigaray, the claim of sexual difference challenges and disrupts the assumption of the male as norm, calling for the inclusion of women in Western discourses. Although other scholars, including Chodorow, criticize Irigaray on the grounds that emphasizing difference only reinforces essentialist perspectives of gender, Irigaray's supporters defend her use of strategic essentialism as a method of interrogation and challenge. Chodorow's point, however, draws attention to the often-confused distinction between the categories of sexual difference and constructed gender ideology.[43]

Finally, Carol Gilligan's research concerning moral values reveals their gendered nature. Men, according to the study, articulate the ideal of 'justice,' consistent with Western ethical traditions of rationality, while women emphasize questions of "care," associated with responsibility and relationships. Gilligan links these differences to differing social situations and experiences, relating that "in the different voice of women lies the truth of an ethic of care, the tie between relationship and responsibility, and the origins of aggression in the failure of connection."[44] Such a gendered division of moral values, Gilligan claims, represents an imbalance of human nature:

These stereotypes reflect a conception of adulthood that is itself out of balance, favoring the separateness of the individual self over its connection to others and

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[42] Luce Irigaray, "The Female Gender," presented at "The Other and Thinking About Difference" Conference in Rotterdam, November 14, 1985, 107. Irigaray follows de Beauvoir on this point: "There will always be certain differences between man and woman; her eroticism, and therefore her sexual world, have a special form of their own and therefore cannot fail to engender a sensuality, a sensitivity, of a special nature. This means that her relations to her own body, to that of the male, to the child, will never be identical with those the male bears to his own body, to that of the female, and to the child; those who make much of 'equality in difference' could not with good grace refuse to grant me the possible existence of differences in equality." De Beauvoir, 731.

[43] The debt feminist philosophy owes Simone de Beauvoir is substantial. De Beauvoir anticipates Irigaray's claim of sexual difference, and othering; Young's explanation of penis envy as power envy; Chodorow's description of boys' individuation from mothers as caregivers; and Gilligan's description of gendered moral values. See Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*. This reality does not diminish the contributions of these feminist scholars, who illuminate and distinguish these ideas.

[44] Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice (*Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 173.

leaning more toward an autonomous life of work than toward the interdependence of love care.[45]

The higher social status of men and masculinity reduces the priority of care and affiliation. Gilligan argues that a more comprehensive expression of human moral virtue depends upon social norms that value care and relational experience as highly as rationality and autonomy.

Resilience

A number of social dynamics reinforce the contemporary gender system. These include confusion or debate about gender's function as social structure; socialization processes that link identity with gender identity; and blindness concerning the links between unsustainable behavior and gender culture.[46]

To begin with, the gender system obscures its role as social structure. Despite extensive scholarship distinguishing between gender and sex, gender is widely confused with sexual or biological difference.[47] Research distinguishes between biologically-based differences such as those associated with childbirth and nursing -- or practico-inert, as Sartre calls it -- and socially-constructed gender categories (Sartre's seriality) that sustain social practices and performances of gender. In addition, cross-historical and cross-cultural research demonstrates variability in gender ideology, roles, norms, and

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[45] Carol Gilligan, "In a Different Voice: Women's Conceptions of Self and Morality," in *Feminist Social Thought*. Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997), 550.

[46] Factors that constrain recognition of the workings of the gender system specifically include bad faith, expressed as domination and conformity; a gender-washing process that associates denial of vulnerability with identity; and prevailing social values and mindsets that emerge as the result of masculine privilege and social status. Further, the everydayness of gender culture both reflects and perpetuates self-deception. This denial obscures the reality of current gender structure as a collective choice, its connection with social and environmental harms, and the possibility of choosing an alternative ideology or social situation.

[47] See R.W. Connell, "Arms and the Man," in *Male Roles, Masculinities, and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective*. Edited by I. Breines, R.W. Connell, and I. Eide (Paris: UNESCO, 2000).

behavior.[48] Connell describes research, for instance, that contradicts often cited

associations between testosterone and male aggression:

> Careful examination of the evidence shows that this biological essentialism is not
> credible. Testosterone levels for instance, far from being a clear cut source of
> dominance and aggression in society, are as likely to be the consequence of social
> relations (Kemper 1990). Cross-cultural studies of masculinities (e.g. Cornwall &
> Lindisfarne 1994) reveal a diversity that is impossible to reconcile with a
> biologically fixed master pattern of masculinity.[49]

This research undermines popular notions that men are naturally more violent than

women or that rape and male violence are inevitable.

Bourdieu offers an alternative explanation for gender difference, suggesting a

"circular causality" whereby socially constructed differences are arbitrarily attributed to

biological differences. In *Masculine Domination*, Bourdieu challenges the perception of

"natural" gender difference, arguing that rather than a causal relationship between

biological differences and gender definitions, sexual difference has been used as a

foundation to support an arbitrary construction of gender:

> The biological appearances and the very real effects that have been produced in
> bodies and minds by a long collective labour or socialization of the biological and
> biologicization of the social combine to reverse the relationship between causes
> and effects and to make a naturalized social construction ('genders' as sexually
> characterized habitus) appear as the grounding in nature of the arbitrary division

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[48] Holter relates a history of shifting cultural perspectives concerning masculinity, warfare, and aggression, explaining that "gender differs from sex. It is a changing social construction that often operates without anyone announcing its presence; it does not walk around carrying a sign." Oystein Gullvag Holter, "A Theory of Gendercide," in *Gendercide and Genocide*. Edited by Adam Jones (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2004), 66. As an example, Holter draws attention to the ways that colonization has affected norms of masculinity, such as the way that Native American norms of 'warrior' masculinity shifted to adopt European ideals of masculinity: "The development of dominant masculinity as a semi-militarized role can be understood only in view of long-term global aggression. Many cultures became masculinized in negative ways through their contact with the Europeans. Native North American hunter-gatherer cultures, for example, had long emphasized manliness in the figure of the warrior. Now, however, the aggression was no longer symbolic or limited but emerged as the only means of survival, with the victims increasingly forced to fight according to the premises of their oppressors, by adopting 'white' notions of manliness and gender. Since the colonizing power in this and other ways also acted indirectly *within* the culture under attack, the latter not only lost the wars but also ended up with long-term social trauma." Ibid., 69.

[49] R.W. Connell, *The Men and the Boys* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 215. Connell continues: "When we speak statistically of 'men' having higher rates of violence than women, we must not slide to the inference that therefore all men are violent. Almost all soldiers are men, but most men are not soldiers. Though most killers are men, most men never kill or even commit assault. Though an appalling number of men do rape, most men do not. It is a fact of great importance, both theoretically and practically, that there are many non-violent men in the world. This too needs explanation, and must be considered in a strategy of peace." Ibid., 215.

which underlies both reality and the representation of reality and which sometimes imposes itself even on scientific research.[50]

Bourdieu's analysis indicates the difficulty of discerning differences given the normative effect of social construction and the subtle nature of processes that perpetuate underlying beliefs and expectations. As an example, he points to intuition, a quality often associated with women:

> What is called 'female intuition,' a particular form of the special lucidity of the dominated, is, even in our own world, inseparable from the objective and subjective submissiveness which encourages or constrains the attentiveness and vigilance needed to anticipate desires or avoid unpleasantness… Women are more sensitive than men to non-verbal cues (especially tone) and are better at identifying an emotion represented non-verbally and decoding the implicit content of a dialogue.[51]

As another example, young girls, gravitating to socially defined ideas of femininity, willingly choose to adopt clothing styles, behaviors, and mannerisms that align them with the world of women and femininity. This choice, Bourdieu points out, may have unrecognized limiting consequences:

> This symbolic confinement is secured practically by their clothing which… has the effect not only of masking the body but on continuously calling it to order… without ever needing to prescribe or proscribe anything explicitly… either because it constrains movement in various ways, like high heels or the bag which constantly encumbers the hands, and above all the skirt which prevents or hinders certain activities (running, various ways of sitting, etc.), or because it allows them only at the cost of constant precautions, as with young women who constantly pull at a too-short skirt, use their forearms to cover a plunging neckline or have to perform acrobatics to pick up an object while keeping their legs together.[52]

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[50] Bourdieu, 3.

[51] Ibid., 31.

[52] Ibid., 28. Bourdieu further describes the ways that women may be encouraged to resort to certain behavior patterns: "This virtual denial of their existence often forces them to resort to the weapons of the weak, which confirm the stereotypes – an outburst that is inevitably seen as an unjustified whim or as an exhibition that is immediately defined as hysterical." Ibid., 59. Moreover, women are often separated based on race, religion, ethnicity, employment, motherhood, or marriage status; these division obscure the ways they collectively experience limitation of liberties, thereby strengthening the likely preservation of the hierarchical gendered system. Following de Beauvoir (as noted in Chapter 3), Bourdieu observes that: "Despite the specific experiences which bring them together (such as the small change of domination received in the countless, often subliminal, wounds inflicted by the masculine order), women remain *separated from each other* by economic and cultural differences which affect, among other things, their objective and subjective ways of undergoing and suffering masculine domination – without, however, canceling out all that is linked to the diminution of symbolic capital entailed by being a woman." Ibid., 93.

At the same time, the desire to be accepted within the gendered community influences

male behavior, as Bourdieu describes, referring here to male gender socialization:

> What is called 'courage' is thus often rooted in a kind of cowardice: one has only
> to think of all the situations in which, to make men kill, torture or rape, the will to
> dominate, exploit or oppress has relied on the 'manly' fear of being excluded
> from the world of 'men' without weakness, those who are sometimes called
> 'tough' because they are tough on their own suffering and more especially on that
> of others – the assassins, torturers and 'hit men' of all dictatorships and all 'total
> institutions', even the most ordinary ones, such as prisons, barracks or boarding
> schools – but also the new 'hatchet men' of modern management, glorified by
> neoliberal hagiography, who, themselves often subject to ordeals of physical
> courage, manifest their virility by sacking their superfluous employees.[53]

Expectations about gender difference thus shape behaviors and roles, which in turn serve

to support the assumptions underlying norms, customs, and institutions. "Gender then,"

Connell summarizes, "is a linking concept. It is about the linking of other fields of social

practice to the nodal practices of engendering, childbirth and parenting."[54]

Gender-washing

The function of gender as a linking process is not readily apparent because of

gender socialization processes that collapse gender identity with identity. This collapse is

significant since it explains resistance to discussions of gender culture on the part of large

numbers of men and women. The process of gender socialization -- particularly male

gender socialization, which extends throughout the life cycle by virtue of contemporary

male culture -- represses evidence or acknowledgement of vulnerability, often painfully.

The suppression of emotion -- encouraged through rigid childrearing pressures and

further shaped by gender socialization and oppressive social situations -- is related to this

"denial of vulnerability," which I argue represents a special case of Sartre's bad faith or

self-deception. A denial of vulnerability is an essentially inauthentic human attitude

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[53]Ibid., 52.
[54] Connell, *Gender and Power* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 140.

given human finitude and the reality of social interdependence. This denial promotes

anxiety, fear, or insecurity, which intensifies desires to appropriate freedom either

through exerting power over others or conforming. While vulnerability is aligned with

"feminine" qualities because of its association with embodiment and communal nature,

cultural norms further reinforce the association between vulnerability and femininity

through social practices that privilege the "masculine" and thereby naturalize the

dependency of the "feminine."

The last chapter addressed the relationship between gender socialization and bad

faith; here I emphasize the powerful ability of this process to produce pervasive

conformity to gender norms. We might refer to the process of linking gender identity

with a denial of vulnerability as gender-washing. This process operates through pain-

reward cycles like those of indoctrination processes. [55] Authority figures inflict physical

or emotional pain for deviation from expected behavior, creating wounds subsequently

appeased through a bonding process, which involves approval for revised behavior and

reaffirmation of the norm offender within the particular or symbolic male community.

Individuals who promote the gender code include parents, family members, teachers,

coaches, and peers. Even as it is denied as a result of this process, an essential need and

desire for belonging enables the effectiveness of the process. By virtue of masculine

privilege, valorization of invulnerable autonomy emerges as a dominant paradigm for

social values. This analysis stresses the role of a denial of vulnerability to the emergence

of a mindset of domination, the ways anxieties concerning this denial are buried beneath

facades of resolute confidence, autonomy, and dominance, and connections between this

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[55]See Margaret Thaler Singer and Janja Lalich, *Cults in Our Midst: The Hidden Menace in Our Everyday Lives (*San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1995); Lenore E. Walker, *The Battered Woman* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1979); Paul Wilkinson, *Terrorism Versus Democracy: The Liberal State Response* (Portland: Frank Cass Publishers, 2001).   The dynamics of gender-washing are not entirely dissimilar from those of a batterer in his or her control of a partner or a cult in its programming of followers.

denial and violence. With bad faith reflecting denial or blindness, the depth of this bad faith represents a source of resistance to system change.

Bullying

Gender-washing represents an example of sado-masochism. The process sadistically oppresses the freedom of the other while encouraging masochistic conformity. Another example of this sadistic-masochistic dynamic is bullying, which further serves as an extreme form of gender-washing. Bullying not only provides an outlet for sadistic expression of bad faith but also sets an example for bystanders, encouraging them to conform to the will of the bullies. Conformity, "following," and self-destructive behaviors represent alternative expressions of bad faith as masochism; individuals regain a sense of denied freedom through following or associating with more powerful others.

The toughness and dominance of bullying behavior reflect "boy culture." That girls and women increasingly participate in bullying activity should not obscure its connection with gender culture; the higher status of boy culture within school social environments contributes to the emergence of the dominant school values. The frequently homophobic tenor of school bullying further affirms its connection with gender culture.[56] This philosophical theory predicts an association between bullying and homophobia as well as a link between bullying and dating/domestic violence: the splitting off and projecting behaviors of sadistic bad faith target (socially) weaker or more vulnerable students.[57] These students may be smaller boys (or those less aligned with hegemonic constructions of masculinity), girls, or members of a more vulnerable

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[56] See R.W. Connell, *The Men and the Boys.*

[57] This dynamic also explains why the intensity or frequency of violence in cases of domestic violence increases with a woman's vulnerability during pregnancy. See Lenore Walker, *The Battered Woman.*

group. Finally, bullying is also an issue in the workplace. Workplace bullying satisfies short-term, ego-based needs for dominance. Moreover, toxic managers who seek positions of "power-over" within management hierarchies may exert disproportionate influence within the organization. Bullies express bad faith as power-over within a system that may not flag the potential longer-term effects of bullying behaviors on the social group or the effects of their decisions on the natural world.[58]

Not only boys within school environments or men within patriarchal cultures exhibit dominant behaviors, however. A culture that privileges the masculine will eventually encourage increasing numbers of women seeking higher status to adopt more highly valued masculine qualities. As the culture relaxes restraints on women's behaviors (positive, in terms of equitable status), women become freer to behave according to the dominant "male" model. Men, on the other hand, are less likely to similarly adopt cross-gender "feminine" qualities because of the lesser social status of these qualities as well as their experience of rigid, often brutal gender conditioning.

Current events are demonstrating this trajectory. While domination and violence are most closely connected with current male gender ideology, we hear more and more about female bullying and violence within Western middle and high school settings.[59] In addition, corporate culture pressures women rising within the ranks to increasingly adopt hegemonic male models of power, diminishing the possibility that they might, as some had hoped, shift the culture through the introduction of alternate models. Hooks observes this trend with misgivings:

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[58]For examples, see Charles Haddad with Arlene Weintraub and Brian Grow, "HealthSouth's Rapid Descent: Too Good to be True." *Business Week,* April 14, 2003, pp. 70-72; Dean Foust, "Missing the Red Flags," *Business Week,* April 14, 2003, p.72; Diane L. Coutu, "Sense and Reliability: A Conversation with Celebrated Psychologist Karl E. Weick." *Harvard Business Review,* April 2003, pp. 84-90.
[59] See Michelle Anthony and Reyna Linder, *Little Girls Can Be Mean* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2010); Justin Patchin and Sameer Hinduja, *Bullying Beyond the Schoolyard* (Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press, 2008); Cheryl Dellasega and Charisse Nixon, *Girl Wars* (New York: Fireside, 2003).

> More than ever before in our nation's history, females are encouraged to assume the patriarchal mask and bury their emotional selves as deeply as their male counterparts do. Females embrace this paradigm because they feel it is better to be a dominator than to be dominated. However, this is a perverse vision of gender equality that offers women equal access to the house of the dead. In that house, there will be no love.[60]

These trends not only affirm non-biologically based explanations of dominant behavior but also suggest a disturbing trajectory that may further obscure the instrumental dynamics.[61] In a sense, analysis of current gender ideology and status offers a window for apprehending connections between identity development, social values, and unsustainable behavior (dominance, conformity) that in another social "system" may or may not be exclusively related to gender development and practice.

Widespread bad faith, combined with a dominant cultural ideology privileging rationality over emotion, encourages dominance – or the pursuit of freedom through appropriation of another's freedom (power-over vs. power-to or with). Within a rationality-privileging, vulnerability-denying social context, dominance -- versus compliance – reflects a higher-status, more socially powerful expression of bad faith, with "powerful" used here in the limited sense of power-over. In existentialist terms, sadism, versus masochism, becomes the preferred expression of preexisting bad faith. Bad faith, then, is the core dynamic, with social pressures influencing its expression as domination or conformity.[62]

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[60]Bell hooks, *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2004), 184.

[61]Hooks questions assumptions that women are naturally less violent than men: "Feminist idealization of motherhood made it extremely difficult to call attention to maternal sadism, to the violence women enact with children, especially with boys. And yet we know that whether it is consequence of power dynamics in dominator culture or simply a reflection of rage, women are shockingly violent toward children. This fact should lead everyone to question any theory of gender differences that suggests that women are less violent than men. In patriarchal culture women are as violent as men toward the groups that they have power over and can dominate freely; usually that group is children or weaker females. Like its male counterpart, much female violence toward children takes the form of emotional abuse, especially verbal abuse and shaming, hence it is difficult to document. Maternal sadism must be studied, however, if we are to understand the roots of adult male violence toward women." Ibid., 63.

[62] The existence of underlying bad faith explains how an apparently peaceful situation (or a seemingly well-adjusted individual) may represent a latent potentiality for violence, which may erupt in the face of social (or personal) crisis.

The issue becomes what we collectively choose to value and our awareness of this choice. This situation emphasizes the necessity of transforming hegemonic masculinity and gender ideology as well as gender status. There are encouraging trends. Gender norms have evolved over the past decades, particularly for women, with women freer to more into non-traditional occupations and otherwise break from limiting gender roles. More feminist men are involved with child-care and demonstrating nontraditional gender behavior than in previous generations. However, these trends do not yet represent the mainstream nor does it appear that men are adopting other-gender values at the same rate as women. For instance, despite these shifts, many men still experience rigid male gender socialization to deny vulnerability according to the norms of hegemonic masculinity; the policing of gender norms is apparent on schoolyards, sports fields, golf clubs, and business arenas.[63] Moreover, during this same period, violent video games marketed primarily to young men and boys and increasingly violent pornography that portrays a brutal degradation of women continue to link male identity with dominance and aggression. The increasing availability and promotion of violent video games and violent pornography is chilling, particularly when considered in the context of systems resilience.[64] Once set up, bad faith, according to existentialist theory, will be expressed as dominance or conformity; possible scapegoats and avenues for the expression of

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[63]The more rigid gender straitjacketing of men in contemporary Western culture is suggested by the relative freedom men or women have concerning dress. As an example, men generally encounter harsher repercussions within mainstream culture for wearing "feminine" clothing than do women for wearing traditional male clothing, such as camouflage or hiking boots. Gender-queer or transgender performance challenges gender boundaries.

[64] Delay between an event and the effects of that event. Meadows: "The systems zoo has already demonstrated how important delays in feedback are to the behavior of systems. Changing the length of a delay may utterly change behavior. Delays are often sensitive leverage points for policy, if they can be made shorter or longer." Meadows, 104. Dines claims that "We are in the midst of a massive social experiment, only the laboratory here is our world and the effects will be played out on people who never agreed to participate. The architects of the experiment are the pornographers, a group of (mostly) men who are out to maximize their profits: to create markets, find products that sell, invest in R&D, and develop long-term business plans. In short, and as this book will show, they are businessmen from start to finish, not innovators committed to our sexual freedom." Gail Dines, *Pornland: How Porn Has Hijacked our Sexuality* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2011), x. Meadows notes that "system behavior is particularly sensitive to the goals of feedback loops. If the goals - the indicators of satisfaction of the rules- are defined inaccurately or incompletely, the system may obediently work to produce a result that is not really intended or wanted." Meadows, 140.

dominance, superiority, or violence are offered up by media representations and social attitudes – such as violence toward or degradation of women portrayed in violent pornography and video games or the denigration of homosexuality by some religious institutions.[65]

This analysis demonstrates the particular intractability of gender as a method of encoding bad faith and denial. Although we encode and transmit bad faith and denial through established social attitudes of superiority that limit collective potentiality -- reflected as racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, and so forth -- gender presents a powerful means of transmitting bad faith as denial of vulnerability. It accomplishes this by virtue of inauthentic, dualistic perspectives that split human nature into two gendered categories, align vulnerability and emotion with the feminine, and collapse gender identity with identity through cradle-to-grave socialization processes. Since the category of gender cuts across all racial, cultural, class, religious, ethnic, and national groups, it significantly influences the structure of human social life.

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[65] The brutality of these violent images is sobering. In his book, On *Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society,* Lt. Col. David Grossman describes the ways that violent imagery has been utilized by the military to overcome natural reluctance to kill others. Grossman is concerned with the ways that video games utilize similar programs, serving to effectively desensitize large numbers of (mostly) boys and young men to violence and killing.(A current game awards points for killing a prostitute, a bystander.) Lt. Col. David Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2009). Pornography has also become increasingly violent, according to Dines: "When I talk about 'porn,' I am referring mainly to 'gonzo' - that genre which is all over the Internet and is today one of the biggest moneymakers for the industry - which depicts hard-core, body-punishing sex in which women are demeaned and debased." Dines, xi. Dines further explains that "what they [porn producers] will admit is that porn is becoming more extreme, and their success depends on finding some new, edgy sex act that will draw in users always on the lookout for that extra bit of sexual charge. Not one of the men I talk to seems particularly interested in how these new extremes will be played out on real women's bodies, bodies that are already being pushed to the brink of their physical limits." Ibid., xvi. She is joined in her concern by numerous researchers, such as Robert Jensen. See Robert Jensen, *Getting Off: Pornography and the End of Masculinity* (Cambridge: South End Press, 2007). Moreover, social tolerance of sexism and misogyny suggest violent expressions of social bad faith in terms of violence against women; Bob Herbert observes that "Back in the fall of 2006, a fiend invaded an Amish schoolhouse in rural Pennsylvania, separated the girls from the boys, and then shot 10 of the girls, killing five. I wrote, at the time, that there would have been thunderous outrage if someone had separated potential victims by race or religion and then shot, say, only the blacks, or only the whites, or only the Jews. But if you shoot only the girls or only the women — not so much of an uproar… We have become so accustomed to living in a society saturated with misogyny that the barbaric treatment of women and girls has come to be more or less expected. We profess to being shocked at one or another of these outlandish crimes, but the shock wears off quickly in an environment in which the rape, murder and humiliation of females is not only a staple of the news, but an important cornerstone of the nation's entertainment… The mainstream culture is filled with the most gruesome forms of misogyny, and pornography is now a multibillion-dollar industry - much of it controlled by mainstream U.S. corporations." Bob Herbert, "Women at Risk, *The New York Times,* August 7, 2009.

To say that sexism is particularly intractable is not the same as to suggest that sexism is a foundational oppression. According to this philosophical analysis, all oppressions, as well as environmental degradation, may be traced back to dualistic notions of separation that allow for othering and domination. Gender ideology, however, is particularly far-reaching; it divides the human population in half and extends across all human social groups.[66] In addition, gender culture reinforces assumptions in an everyday way, serving to perpetuate a mindset of domination. Connell argues that consideration of gender is essential to any discussion of power and social structure:

> To understand gender, then, we must constantly go beyond gender. The same applies in reverse. We cannot understand class, race or global inequality without constantly moving towards gender. Gender relations are a major component of social structure as a whole, and gender politics are among the main determinants of our collective fate.[67]

Dualist perspectives of human nature reflect the "estrangement of man from himself," which follows the estrangement of man from nature.[68] These views limit our collective potentiality and blind us to possibilities of transformation. The strength of the encoding of existential blindness through the carrier of gender is also reflected in general social discomfort, avoidance, or lukewarm engagement with discussions of feminism or peace studies. These discussions challenge the status quo, and popular opinion casts them as less worthy of serious consideration.

Thus, despite compelling research from multidisciplinary scholars linking gender ideology, social values, and domination, public discussions of the common good infrequently address these connections. Given the priority of confronting domination -- ranging from school bullying or family violence to oppressions and environmental

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[66]Cultural gender ideology, a choice, also does not reflect multiple gender-sex realities. See Ann Fausto Sterling, *Sexing the Body.* My criticism of gender ideology intends to emphasize its nature as collective social choice.

[67] R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 76.

[68] See Rollo May, *The Discovery of Being: Writings in Existential Psychology* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1994).

degradation -- a reluctance to more widely acknowledge and address these connections suggests a form of blindness, grounded in the everydayness of gender practice.

System Transformation

How do we address this blindness? How can we illuminate the harmful effects of gender culture on men, women, and nature? The new model of sustainability ethics developed throughout this project offers insight into sustainable forms of power and transformation.[69]

The common themes that emerge from critical analysis of childrearing, gender, race, and religion -- devaluation of feminine-linked traits as well the denial of vulnerability -- reflect social values, assumptions, and beliefs fostered by the larger social system. A systems thinking approach to consideration of the larger social system provides appreciation for its history, structure, and resilience. This analysis particularly illuminates the persistence of social ideologies that gender emotions as well as general social values that diminish feminine-identified values relative to masculine-identified values by virtue of gender status inequities. This gender system fosters the emergence of widespread bad faith associated with constrained access to care, compassion, and acknowledgement of interdependence and affiliation, which reduce possibilities for authenticity and generosity. The findings of the existential analysis of the previous chapter provide theoretical support for the inclusion of authenticity and generosity as sustainable values within an ethic of sustainability. This systems analysis further connects possibilities for authenticity and generosity with contemporary gender culture.

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[69] The study of systems suggests approaches to transformation that rely upon understanding system dynamics and various connections between subsystems, as Meadows clarifies: "The future can't be predicted, but it can be envisioned and brought lovingly into being. Systems can't be controlled, but they can be designed and redesigned. We can't surge forward with certainty into a world of no surprises, but we can expect surprises and learn from them and even profit from them. We can't impose our will on a system. We can listen to what the system tells us and discover how its properties and our values can work together to bring forth something much better than could ever be produced by our will alone." Meadows, 169.

In particular, the bad faith of gender culture threatens prospects for authenticity and generosity -- sustainable values within this new model of sustainability ethics -- and thereby sustainable forms of power and action in the world.

An obstacle to transformation is the suppression of emotions and denial of vulnerability; this bad faith is transmitted generationally through social system structure. Since bad faith represents denial or blindness, how can we free ourselves from it? Bad faith, I suggest, may also be viewed as a lack of "faith." Faith, in this sense, affirms freedom and the possibilities of choice and transformation. The fears of an isolated, emotionally undeveloped, rational self strengthen bad faith, or "lack of faith," which in turn fosters desires for dominance or acceptance through conformity. These behaviors, however, do not address or resolve underlying bad faith, and they become addictive.[70] Temporary satisfaction of this addiction offers a particular pleasure. Only an eroticism that promises the greater pleasure of vitality and affiliation has the power to attract, persuade, and awaken. Appreciation of the life-affirming nature of eroticism exposes the pornographic pleasure derived from addiction for what it is: fleeting, superficial, and ultimately unsatisfying.

The persistence of patriarchal social systems is often attributed to the reluctance of those in power to give up power. This analysis provides an alternate explanation.

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[70] Meadows presents addiction as a form of bounded rationality, which represents rational short-term (ego-based) choice based on the limited perspective of a constrained situation and view; instances of bounded rationality, however, may together lead to undesired or unforeseen outcomes. She explains that "many people understand the addictive properties of alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, sugar, and heroin. Not everyone recognizes that addiction can appear in larger systems and in other guises -- such as the dependence of industry on government subsidy, the reliance of farmers on fertilizers, the addiction of Western economies to cheap oil or weapons manufacturers to government contracts. This trap is known by many names: addiction, dependence, shifting the burden to the intervener." Ibid., 131. She continues, noting that "the trouble is that the states created by interventions don't last. The intoxication wears off… Then the original problem reappears, since nothing has been done to solve it at its root cause. So the intervener applies more of the 'solution,' disguising the real state of the system again, and thereby failing to act on the problem… If the intervention is a drug, you become addicted. The more you are sucked into an addictive action, the more you are sucked into it again. One definition of addiction used in Alcoholics Anonymous is repeating the same stupid behavior over and over and over, and somehow expecting different results. Addiction is finding a quick and dirty solution to the symptom of the problem, which prevents or distracts one from the harder and longer-term task of solving the real problem." Ibid., 133. A view of gender performances, dominance, and conformity as addictive behaviors (reinforced by system dynamics, with short term payoffs) offers insight into the persistence of contemporary gender social structure.

While there is a certain pleasure associated with behaviors that appear to temporarily ameliorate bad faith, resistance is ultimately founded upon a desire to avoid (deny) the core topic of gender so as to keep associated fear and pain hidden away. For instance, many boys adopt masks of invulnerability or toughness because past penalties for apparent vulnerability have been painful, according to male gender socialization research presented in the last chapter.[71] The deeply entrenched nature of gender culture within various categories of life experience compounds the difficulty of recognizing harms associated with current gender ideology. Gender culture, for instance, shapes general social values, which perpetuate the myth of redemptive violence described by Wink. Gender also lies hidden in the heart of race relations; hegemonic masculinity subordinates black masculinity to white masculinity and then scapegoates black masculinity for adopting the social values of the larger patriarchal culture. These realities affect prospects for system transformation.[72] Contemporary gender culture does not reflect or support an ethic of sustainability, and the bad faith of gender culture obscures this fact.

Judgment or condemnation is likely to only intensify bad faith. What I call the eroticism of sustainability ethics, namely, its relational, communal, and embodied character, offers strategies for transforming bad faith, or lack of faith, by preserving the freedom of all parties. I introduce here the notion of erotic self, which arises from this philosophy and ethic of sustainability. Authentic, generous, and self aware, the erotic self accepts the vulnerability of self and others, welcoming communal affiliation.[73] Affiliation recognizes interdependence, while conformity feigns invulnerability, denying

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[71] One might think of violent male hazing or perhaps male rape in the military. A predictable response is denial, shutting emotions down, and adopting a mask of toughness.

[72] Transcendence of unsustainable situations depends upon a shift in gender ideology, a shift in gender status, or both. Existentialist theory upholds a shift in gender ideology in order to encourage authentic formation of consciousness with access to full range of humanity, including eco-values of care and compassion.

[73] From the erotic perspective, all are vulnerable and strong, as well as interdependent and differentiated.

facticity and denying freedom. Generosity furnishes the communal warmth that is also sought by conformity but without sacrificing the self.[74] Authenticity strengthens faith or belief in possibility, and generosity bolsters prospects for authenticity. Thus, the erotic self is "faithful," upholding freedom and possibilities for the transformation of self, others, and social and human-natural world relations. An authentic willingness to accept the vulnerability of self and others strengthens prospects for collaborative approaches to transformation.

The erotic self draws upon ecological and existentialist ideals. This notion of self may be compared with and distinguished from the ecological self that emerges from the philosophy of deep ecology. Arne Naess introduces his conception of the ecological self in his essay, "Self-Realization: An Ecological Approach to Being in the World."[75] The ecological self reflects the tenets of deep ecology: interconnected, interdependent, and respectful of diversity and differentiation. The maturity of the self reflects a growth process that extends beyond ego, social self, and metaphysical self to further embrace the larger natural world. Thus, the ecological self recognizes its connection to and place within the collective Self, which includes nature. The interconnected nature of the ecological self gives rise to a morality that reflects self-interest and joy rather than self-denying asceticism. Naess alludes to possibilities associated with clarifying this distinction:

> The extensive moralizing within environmentalism has given the public the false impression that we primarily ask them to sacrifice, to show more responsibility, more concern, better morality. As I see it, we need to emphasize the immense variety of sources of joy which are available to people through an increased

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[74] Community not conformity.
[75] See Arne Naess, "Self-Realization: An Ecological Approach to Being in the World," in *Deep Ecology for the Twenty-first Century*, Edited by George Sessions (Boston: Shambhala, 1995).

sensitivity towards the richness and diversity of life, and the landscapes of free nature.[76]

Our connection with the world allows "identification" with nature, which naturally engenders empathy.[77] Further, individual growth -- associated with the deepening and broadening of ourselves -- itself contributes to the potentiality of the larger Self.

Naess links self-realization with the fulfillment of potentiality. Joy, he claims, is connected with both. How are we to understand the meaning of potentiality or self-realization? Naess may be most clear about what self-realization is not: an "ego-trip." "The 'ego-trip' interpretation of the potentialities of humans," he explains, "presupposes a major underestimation of the richness and broadness of our potentialities."[78] He directs us back to ourselves, while acknowledging likely pitfalls: "The concept of self-realization, as dependent upon insight into our own potentialities, makes it easy to see the possibilities of ignorance and misunderstanding in terms of what these potentialities are."[79] Ignorance and misunderstanding concerning our potentialities reflect existentialist bad faith. The traps of bad faith lead to unsustainable expressions of power -- domination, conformity, apathy -- in our relations with others, which clearly diminish the "potentiality," well-being, or flourishing of the greater Self. Certainly then, a process of self-reflection that includes consideration of sources of misunderstanding, assumptions and beliefs that limit our clear perception -- a process similar to that undertaken within clinical existential analysis -- aids recognition of our "potentialities."

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[76]Ibid., 236.
[77]Naess explains that "the ecological self of a person is that with which this person identifies. This key sentence (rather than a definition) about the self shifts the burden of clarification from the term 'self' to that of 'identification,' or rather 'process of identification.'"Ibid., 227.
[78]Ibid., 230.
[79]Ibid., 230.

A description of what self-realization is not, however, does not precisely pin down what self-realization is and leaves us with a rather vague impression of the concept. Naess's writings about self-realization and the development of potentials suggest a sense of predetermination, analogous to the potentiality of the acorn to become the oak. For humans, evaluation of potentiality on a species, rather than individual, level leads to consideration of human capacities of mind, thought, self-consciousness, and free will. We have the ability to shape our collective possibilities through imagination. We may also choose what is meaningful to us. An alternative interpretation of Naess's writings is that the "deepening and broadening" process of self-realization is the end in itself. The endeavor of learning and increasing self-awareness represents a growth process that provides joy and satisfaction. This alternative, like the last, leads again to freedom; we choose topics of interest to us as well as the direction of our attention. In either case, awareness of our freedom awards us the responsibility for it; consciousness of freedom becomes an aspect of facticity, engendering responsibility. The notion of erotic self developed here, therefore, assumes an existentialist responsibility for freedom. This distinction has implications concerning questions of transformation, as will be portrayed through the following example.

Naess applies the concept of ecological identity to a discussion of the resettlement of people from the arctic coast of Norway. For various economic and social purposes, Naess explains, the Norwegian government resettled people from remote areas on the arctic coast to inland towns. The relocated people experienced a loss of identity as a result of these moves. He explains:

> If people are relocated, or rather, transplanted from a steep mountainous place to the plains below, they also realize (but too late) that their home-place was a part

of themselves and that they *identified* with features of that place. The way of life in the tiny locality, with the intensity of social relations there, has formed their personhood.[80]

Ecological identity reflects a wide set of associations, including the formation of identity through an integration of place and self. The move of these people disrupts this sense of identity. Certainly, entertaining such a move warrants careful attention to and respectful consideration of the loss or disruption of identity. However, this identity ought not to in itself preclude the option of moving.

In existentialist terms, place represents an aspect of facticity, as part of being. To preserve facticity-in-time precludes the possibility of freedom. This point is significant to the consideration of social transformation or the transcendence of past belief systems. Social history, cultural beliefs, and individual assumptions also represent aspects of facticity. Freedom presents the possibility of deliberate action, transformation, transcendence, or, in the case of Norwegian arctic coast dwellers, moving. The exercise of freedom will invariably affect future facticity. The responsibility of freedom involves deliberation of how choices affect future possibilities for authenticity.

This explicit consideration of freedom represents a distinction between the ecological self and the erotic self. Naess summarizes practical benefits of his notion of ecological self:

> What is the practical importance of this conception of a wide and deep ecological self? When we attempt to defend Nature in our rich industrial societies, the argument of our opponents is often that we are doing it to secure beauty, recreation, and other non-vital interests for ourselves. Our position is strengthened if, after honest reflection, we find that the destruction of nature (and our place) threatens us in our innermost self.[81]

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[80] Ibid., 231.

[81] Ibid., 232. Further, Naess also writes, "Through the wider Self every living being is intimately connected, and from this intimacy follows the capacity of identification and, as a natural consequence, the practice of non-violence." Ibid., 233. Freedom and responsibility are necessary to ensure sustainable action as well as state of mind.

These and other discussions and decision-making processes should explicitly address the question of freedom, I argue, by analyzing the ways that our choices affect current and future possibilities. Assessments of *threats to our innermost selves* may be inadequate if they do not interrogate the authenticity of a given situation. An analysis of freedom, such as the existential analyses of this project, offers a barometer with which to assess these situations.

The ecological self is founded upon an interconnected sense of being, of self-in-Self. This foundation is shared by the erotic self. In addition, the ecological self and erotic self both suggest a joyful, life affirming, rather than self-denying, basis for morality. Naess describes the joy associated with "deepening and broadening" the self; existentialist philosophers celebrate the joy and passion of creativity. The notion of empathy, engendered through ecological identification, resonates with existentialist generosity. The ecological self contributes to the erotic self a broad view of interconnection that encompasses relations with nature and the significance of place. In this way, the ecological self also suggests a spiritual sense of interconnected Self or All. The notion of erotic self extends beyond the ecological self to assume freedom, choice, and responsibility for action as the means for transformation.[82] The erotic self represents

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[82] The erotic self suggests a basis for an erotic subject within political/citizenship contexts. The erotic self, situated within an integrated, interdependent conception of community, is relational and embodied versus independent and autonomous. The interdependent nature of the erotic subject brings to mind Martha Fineman's articulation of the "vulnerable" subject. Embodied, the vulnerable subject bears the risks of injury, disability, or sickness. This concept reflects different life cycle stages, including the vulnerability of childhood and old age, as well as possibilities of injury during the prime years of life. Fineman describes effects of this alternate conceptualization of the subject: "I argue that the 'vulnerable subject' must replace the autonomous and independent subject asserted in the liberal tradition. Far more representative of actual lived experience and the human condition, the vulnerable subject should be at the center of our political and theoretical endeavors. The vision of the state that would emerge in such an engagement would be both more responsible to and responsible for the vulnerable subject, a reimagining that is essential if we are to attain a more equal society than currently exists in the United States." Martha Fineman, "The Vulnerable Subject: Anchoring Equality in the Human Condition," in the *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism*, 2008, 2. A conceptualization of erotic subject also engages negative, positive, and social freedom. Cynthia Willett describes social freedom as "'*freedom of*' belonging to cooperative communities" as a claim for solidarity. Willett suggests that the notion of social freedom introduces dimensions of freedom that are overlooked in current rights discourses but necessary to incorporate in order to grasp freedom in its fullest sense: "Liberal rights to individual privacy apart from claims to both equality and solidarity do not in the long-run guarantee freedom or encompass the full range of its meaning, at least not if this term is to name our ultimate political and social aim. Freedom without equality is domination and either or both without solidarity fails to generate the networks of care that sustain social harmony." Cynthia Willett, *Irony in the*

an appeal to transcend bad faith through the embodiment of joy, fulfillment, and meaning, which powerfully inspire imagination and motivation for transformative action.

Productive intervention to change system rules depends upon awareness of assumptions generated by the system. The erotic self powerfully engages bad faith through an appeal that preserves the freedom of all parties.[83] From the subject position of sustainability ethics and ecological models of citizenship, the erotic self furnishes the imagination with visions of joy and prospects for democratic participation. The erotic self embraces its responsibility for freedom and action-in-the-world within a context of ecological interconnection, as self-in-Self. The aim of the erotic self is not authenticity or self-realization but the "flourishing" of the human-natural world.

Conclusion

This systems analysis connects gender culture with possibilities for authenticity and generosity, finding that contemporary gender culture does not reflect or support an ethic of sustainability. It is part of my thesis that the bad faith of gender culture obscures

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Age of Empire (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 124. The discussion of social rights encourages a shift in focus from the autonomous rights-bearing individual to an individual situated within the larger social context, a subject position relevant to considerations of environmental justice and sustainability. In addition, environmental concerns push the conception of third generation rights toward a global context, given non-local effects of pollution and other environmental hazards. The freedom for individuals to live in harmonious social communities and the freedom from fear of harm from toxic pollutants or other environmental harms give rise to "rights of collective well-being." The discussion of social freedom, with its commitment to the welfare of the community, provides a framework with which to consider the harmful effects of pollution, resource depletion or global warming and further suggests a collective moral responsibility to address environmental justice issues, social oppressions, and gender inequities.

[83] Generous relations present possibilities for relationships ranging from parent-child and teacher-student relationships to intimate partnerships and business leadership and management. Generosity does not require equivalent roles and responsibilities but upholds respect for the freedom of self and others. As an example, the teacher-student relationship resembles a writer-reader relationship explored by Sartre. The freedom of both reader and writer may be preserved, according to Sartre, despite the apparent constraints of the situation. Though the writer delineates the terrain to be explored and the reader seemingly follows the freedom of the writer, both may choose to preserve the freedom of self and other. The writer may avoid bad faith by respecting the freedom of the reader; the reader may also avoid bad faith by critically engaging with the material, concurring with the writer's perspective or choosing an alternative interpretation. See Sartre, "What is Literature," in *Jean-Paul Sartre: Basic Writings*. Edited by Stephen Priest (New York: Routledge, 2001). The teacher-student relationship offers this promise as well. While the teacher sets the parameters for the learning experience -- choosing texts, readings, course themes, and structuring the learning situation -- everyone in the classroom confronts opportunities for discovery through critical engagement with new materials and perspectives. This example also applies to the situation of managers and employees or parents and children. More generous workplace relations prioritize leadership concerned with the development of collective employee potentiality -- within constraints and given parameters -- over command-and-control styles of management; similarly, generous childrearing respects the freedom and needs of the child within constraints associated with parental responsibility to protect and guide. Generous relations uphold the value of respect and freedom given the actual constraints of the situation rather than the needs or impulses of the teacher, manager, or parent, such as a need or desire for control, which is itself cultivated through unsustainable forms of power. These situations require thoughtful consideration and care to assess the reality of facticity, the actual versus perceived limits, boundaries, and constraints of the situation.

this fact. The findings and common themes identified through existential analysis reflect expressions of system mindset through the particularities of differing subsystems. For this reason, transformation depends upon addressing the larger gender system and its ideologies in addition to any particular issues, or subsystems. The ethic of sustainability further developed within this chapter -- which reflects the collective self-interest of the interdependent whole -- emphasizes our responsibility to promote general awareness about the workings of a social system that threatens our interests and perhaps our survival. What I call here the eroticism of sustainability ethics – namely, its relational, communal, and embodied character -- offers strategies for system transformation that preserve the freedom of all parties. The erotic self approaches the blindness of bad faith, illuminates the significance of connections between gender and race, and offers a new innovative approach to education and sustainable leadership development, which is taken up in the following chapter.

> Naess reflects upon the possibilities of transformative action and healing:
>
> We certainly need to hear about our ethical shortcomings from time to time, but we change more easily through encouragement and through a deepened perception of reality and our own self. That is, a deepened realism. How can that be brought about? The question needs to be treated in another paper! It is more a question of community therapy than community science: a question of healing our relations to the widest community –   that of all living beings.[84]

During the course of this research project, I have devised and implemented an educational offering that steps up to this challenge. In the following chapter, I present and evaluate the results of this program.

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[84] Naess, 236.

Chapter Six: Practical Engagements

"That people too often cannot see the workings of society or their own role within it is due not only to a social control that does not tell the truth but to a 'blindness' that is rooted in their own psychology. Although it cannot be claimed that psychological insight is any guarantee of insight into society, there is ample evidence that people who have the greatest difficult in facing themselves are the least able to see the way the world is made. Resistance to self-insight and resistance to social facts are contrived, most essentially, of the same stuff."

~ Adorno, et al, *The Authoritarian Personality*[1]

Over the course of this entire research program, I developed college courses and high school workshops on the basis of an adapted form of existential analysis. These courses investigate identity development and social oppressions. The approach relies upon systematic investigation of areas of critical social theory in order to foster awareness of unquestioned assumptions. These analyses demonstrate interconnections between oppressions. The structure and content of the courses foster class discussions of bullying, racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, and nationalism, as well as leadership and management styles, global business models, post-colonial theory, and environmental harms. This chapter describes the effectiveness of the approach in encouraging reflection and awareness of unexamined assumptions from the perspective of student attitudes concerning gender. The course is neither explicitly nor solely about gender, however. A different analysis of the course could equally emphasize other oppressions or dynamics, such as racism, homophobia, bullying, or sustainable leadership. Given the findings of the preceding existential and system analyses, gender is a particularly appropriate choice here.[2]

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[1]Adorno, T.W. Else Frenkel-Brunswick, Daniel J. Levinson, R. Nevitt Sanford. *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1993), 480.

[2] The chapter summarizes experiences associated with the development and delivery of a college course on identity, "Politics of Identity: Cultural Theories of Freedom and Power," as well as a related high school workshop, "Think it Real: A Philosophy of Freedom and Power." The course provides an interdisciplinary study of identity, which is framed within an uplifting existentialist context that affirms individual and collective freedom; it relies on existential social analysis as a method to consider the social-relational nature of developmental constraints to human freedom. While the course explores possible factors giving rise to

Men's and women's studies scholars argue that gender studies offer insight into alternative approaches for peacebuilding and sustainability efforts. The recognition that masculinity is not a fixed category but varies with differing social and historical contexts clarifies that norms of masculinity may change. Various forms of masculinity reflect differing levels of resistance to change, with the contemporary form of hegemonic masculinity most resistant. Moreover, pervasive social and institutional pressures that reinforce norms of masculinity contribute to the difficulty of men's change on an individual level. Change, however, is necessary. Connell claims that "an agenda for peace must expect to face opposition in depth, and will need to think of ways of dealing with it, including ways of making change attractive to significant groups of men."[3]

The pleasurable, life-affirming basis for sustainability ethics offers an "appeal" to transcend resistance to gender discussion as well as blindness in general. An educational program based on the method of existential analysis offers an approach to bad faith or blindness. Such a program promotes self-awareness by identifying sources of bad faith and their relations to various forms of power, including domination, conformity, and apathy. This learning approach reflects the eroticism of sustainability ethics by embodying the principles and values of the new model developed throughout the project. This chapter documents the effectiveness of the method in this regard, particularly noting the receptivity of male college and high school students to discussions concerning the harms of gender socialization. In addition, as a component of bullying programs or

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unsustainable social relations, its existential analytical structure also encourages self-reflection and introspection. Within class discussions, students apply course materials and themes to current issues, including bullying and clique dynamics in middle and high school; susceptibility to peer pressure; school shootings; gender norms; sexulity; race relations; social effects of devaluing creativity and the arts; and pressures arising from media representations (*culture industry)* to conform to certain images.

[3] Robert W. Connell, "Arms and the man: using the new research on masculinity to understand violence and promote peace in the contemporary world," in *Male Roles, Masculinities, and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective.* Edited by Ingeborg Breines, Ingeborg, Robert Connell, and Ingrid Elde (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2000), 29.

sustainability education, a similarly structured course presents a means to not only promote awareness of unquestioned assumptions but also motivate commitment and action concerning systems transformation. Finally, based on the experience of this educational application, the chapter further applies existential analysis for sustainable leadership education and development. Chapter Six breaks new practical ground since it offers for the first time an application of existential analysis for educational praxis.

Existential Analysis as an Educational Approach

This chapter describes my discovery of an effective course approach to engage college and high school students in discussions concerning the harms of current gender socialization. These insights were gleaned from my experiences developing and teaching an interdisciplinary college course on identity, "Politics of Identity: Cultural Theories of Freedom and Power," as well as a related alternative high school workshop, "Think It Real: A Philosophy of Freedom and Power." Although not explicitly set out as an objective, the structure of the course and its existentialist learning approach have together proven to productively engage young men and women in animated gender discussions.

The course intends to encourage reflection through philosophical consideration of identity construction and social values. It is grounded in the life-philosophy of existentialism, which emphasizes freedom, creativity, individual and social responsibility, and the joy available from an artistic approach to the design of one's life. It also relies upon existential analysis as a method to consider constraints to freedom. Existential analysis provides a method for interrogating life-history, and its ecological nature emphasizes the social, relational nature of developmental constraints to human freedom.

While the course explores possible factors giving rise to unsustainable social relations, its existential analytical structure also encourages self reflection, introspection, and animated classroom discussions concerning the interconnection of social oppressions; these discussions include candid dialogues concerning the harms of current gender culture. The receptivity of male students to these discussions is striking, particularly in light of their relatively low participation in gender courses.[4] Perhaps the approach is effective because it: 1) positions gender within the broader topic of identity and begins with a big picture view; 2) considers gender as one of several topics within an interdisciplinary analysis of authenticity; 3) makes it fun!; 4) makes it safe (positive, nonjudgmental); and 5) links discussion to desirable outcomes (freedom and power). Further, interactions between male and female students during gender discussions suggest benefits of co-ed gender education, as well as of utilizing male and female teachers of male and female students as part of a comprehensive educational strategy aimed at illuminating social blindness concerning the harms of gender culture. While the approach is appropriate for either single-sex or coed classrooms, the remarkable interactions between male and female students as they examine gender together suggest that a coed approach to gender education offers a rare and powerful opportunity for collaboration, construction discussion, and brainstorming.

This chapter provides details about the logic, content, and structure of the course after introducing course demographics and the benefits of its approach. I first provide an introduction to some of the concepts in order to describe the findings, with the philosophical underpinnings of the course considered in more detail later in the paper.

[4]There may be a variety of reasons for the relatively low participation of men in gender courses. Many young men may not appreciate their (latent?) interest in these topics (a consequence of gender socialization) and/or they may not be drawn to offerings in women's studies departments or those associated with sexuality (predictable consequences of gender culture).

Variations of this course and approach may be appropriate and relevant not only for college and high school classrooms but also sustainability studies curricula, sustainable leadership workshops, student and "teach-the-teacher" bullying prevention programs and in the design of violence, peace, and justice studies curricula.

The Course Specifics

This analysis is based on my experiences developing and teaching the course on identity mentioned earlier, which evolved from my research interests concerning sustainable social behavior. The course was taught annually from 2006–2009 at Emory University. Feedback from my college students led me to develop a two-day workshop for an alternative high-school based on the themes of this college course. The workshop was provided in 2008 to a small group of students at Crossroads Second Chance High School in Roswell, Georgia.

Most often, the student population has been evenly divided between male and female students. Although the course substantially addresses gender, the title of the course refers to identity rather than gender, and the course is offered through an interdisciplinary department.[5] Since the course satisfies an upper-level writing requirement, most of the students are seniors or juniors. Given the writing-intensive nature of the course, the class size is limited to twenty students.

The overwhelmingly positive responses of both male and female students suggest the usefulness of an existential analytical approach. The three iterations of the college course and the high school workshop have all received very high marks and enthusiastic written comments. College students not only recommend that this information (and approach) be provided to high school students -- the impetus for my alternative high-

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[5] The Institute of the Liberal Arts at Emory University

school workshop -- but also repeatedly suggest that this course be required for all college students. In addition, after taking the workshop, alternative high school students requested a follow-on after-school program based on these themes.[6]

Findings

The course provides an interdisciplinary study of identity, which is framed within an uplifting existentialist context that affirms individual and collective freedom. As an optimistic philosophy of freedom and hope, existentialism provides responsibility for choices to the individual, allowing for the possibility of change and encouraging creativity. With freedom often constrained by internalized assumptions as well as external pressures, the recognition of our responsibility for clear-sightedness and choice can lead to a freeing sense of awakening and power. Moreover, existentialism is a philosophy that embraces emotion as well as aestheticism as embodied philosophical expression[7]; many existentialist philosophers explore their ideas through plays, novels, and literature in addition to purely philosophical works. These various methods reflect the philosophy itself, celebratory and creative.

These existentialist themes also shape the teaching methods of the course. Halfway through the first iteration of the course, the students -- inspired by the example of existentialist philosophers -- proposed that they create and perform an end-of-semester play. The play provided a tremendous way to summarize and demonstrate the semester's materials. More importantly, it inspired the interest and creativity of all students as they brainstormed together, and they produced a high-energy, smart, funny play.[8] Impromptu class mini-debates and skits, seminar-style student involvement, opportunities for group

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[6] Such a program might well align with current interests of the education system, including bullying, teen depression and suicide (male and female), and high-school graduation rates.
[7] Embodied philosophical expression synthesizing in-itself and for-itself.
[8] All students had speaking parts.

collaboration, and group presentations also encouraged lively class participation throughout the semester.

With its emphases on freedom and power, the course is particularly interested in tracing the development of (unsustainable) oppressive and conforming behavior, which it endeavors to do through an interdisciplinary, existential analysis of identity construction. Existential analysis presents a method for tracking down possible sources of inauthentic behavior through an investigation of common categories of life experience, including developmental (e.g., childhood, gender), social, and political pressures affecting identity construction. The course is organized by first establishing a philosophical model of freedom and power that serves as a template for this existential analysis. This model essentially explicates the way an unbalanced sense of self (e.g., denying freedom) leads to inauthentic power relations (in the sense of power-over and conformity), ultimately limiting the freedom and power (in the sense of power-to and power-with) of all involved. This "existential lens" provides a frame not only for an examination of developmental and social pressures throughout the life history but also for follow-on discussions of domination, oppression, and social structure.[9]

Thus, the course begins with the theoretical, which serves to establish distance (from eventual gender discussions), and then progresses to specific applications of theory (e.g., gender socialization as a process encouraging inauthentic behavior). Although some approaches to research and education reverse this order, in this case the structure allows for gender discussions to follow and build upon appealing discussions of freedom and power, avoiding unproductive resistance to the topic. The effects of the suppression of creativity, emotion, freedom, and original thought are considered throughout, and the

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[9] This will be explained in more detail later in the chapter.

course implicitly (initially) and explicitly (eventually) implicates gender culture in this suppression. Overall, a significant component of the course is devoted to considering the ways that gender culture influences identity, social structure, and cultural values.

Male students' receptivity to these discussions is striking. Gender discussions are most often located within gender or women's studies classrooms, which disproportionately attract female students. Since this course is aligned with the topic of identity rather than gender, male students (who generally comprise 50% of my classes) may not have realized they were signing up for gender discussions. Once enrolled in the course, however, and given an opportunity to by-pass lingering discomfort (one that allows them, for instance, to avoid compromising themselves in front of similarly socialized classmates), young men enthusiastically explore gender through their papers, animated class discussions, and the final play at the end of the semester.[10]

More than simply open to the discussion, many of the young men appear almost "hungry" for the opportunity to contribute examples from their own or observed experiences. Often these young men are those who might be least expected to so readily embrace this material. As an example, school administrators at Crossroads Second Chance High School had warned me of the likely possibility of students disrupting or leaving classes, mentioning a young man in particular. Freedom and power are appealing topics, though, perhaps particularly for high school students.[11] On the second day of the

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[10] Discussions of freedom, power, possibility, and transcendence appear to themselves encourage creative, enthusiastic participation.

[11] Although the materials included relatively dense philosophical quotes along with film clips illustrating their meanings, the students actively participated, speculating on applicability to their own lives through discussions of peer pressure and high school dynamics. Students' comments include: "I like the part about boys' development"; "I never really stop to think about the deeper meaning of things or the view others have on myself"; "I know now that it's okay to be different and have different outlook on life and can benefit from learning this"; "I know more information on how to do what I like"; "I'd like more philosophy. Eye opening things on self development"; "It broadened my horizons about how you can change your life"; "I learned a lot of helpful lessons that I would apply in my everyday life"; "I learned different ways to recognize and improve myself"; "Makes me question things"; "It made me think as in it opened my eyes"; "I couldn't sleep last night thinking about this workshop and who I am"; "'How am I not myself?' Good question, wow"; "Real life"; "It gets you thinking about the things you like best"; "It gets you thinking about how you want to live your life"; "I like the idea of seeing your life as an artistic creation," etc.

workshop, this young man arrived in class (early) wanting to talk about the handout

packet. The packet had been provided the day before as optional reading and included

philosophical quotes as well as material about male and female gender socialization.

This young man read the packet from cover-to-cover and was captivated by the sections

on boys' gender socialization.

Another example is the college student whose demeanor on the first day

suggested that he (and his buddy) might very well drop the course after a good look at the

syllabus. When they didn't, and as the course approached more explicit gender

discussion, I anticipated the possibility of various (overt or subtle) expressions of

resistance. There were none. Instead these young men proactively participated with their

classmates; it became apparent that they had been members of a dominant high school

group (with some discomfort). Ultimately both of these young men chose to write

powerful final papers on the social harms of male gender socialization. While I was

already optimistic about the potential of this approach, the reactions of these (deeply

gender-socialized) young men further impressed upon me the power of these ideas, as

well as the latent desire for this education.

Another compelling observation concerns the ways men and women interact in

this conversation. The existentialist model of the course provides the distance necessary

to get beyond the gendered Other to the system that constructs the gendered Other. The

young men and women "talk to each other" in these class discussions, explaining and

filling in details from observed experience about nuances and challenges of gender

socialization. An unanticipated finding is that young men appear to particularly

appreciate the opportunity for young women to read along with them about painful

realities associated with male gender socialization, which has received minimal social attention to date. Further, after finishing the male gender socialization readings and discussion -- which also address hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities and the ways they intersect with race, class, and sexuality -- we turn to female gender socialization. Fully engaged with the gender conversation at this point, the young men participate thoughtfully in discussions of female gender socialization and experience, as well as considerations of sexuality and race. It occurs to me that a significant benefit of coed gender education (men and women reading about gender together) is that it opens up a context where, on one hand, women are enabled to more clearly perceive the gender system that molds men to be disrespectful of, or quietly superior to, things "feminine," including women themselves, and at the same time, men recognize this acknowledgment and are thereby able to forgo defensiveness related to feeling personally criticized or blamed.

The students' appreciation of the gender content of the course is further evident in their end-of-semester plays. While beautifully capturing the perspectives of all scholars studied, the plays -- which are student-developed -- devote significant attention to gender themes. The students have fun with the ideas and the approach, expressing a sense of liberatory exhilaration as they playfully caricaturize gender norms and the ways they continue to shape the worlds within which we live.[12]

My experiences with this course allow me to more fully appreciate benefits of existentialist learning methods. The approach encourages student engagement in the classroom as well as with the course material. Further, as the course wound its way

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[12]The students' plays are immensely enjoyable to watch (it's difficult to stop laughing!). Every time I watch one of these plays, I also find myself moved: the plays provide powerful commentary about destructive social legacies, and the students' collaborative interactions possess an almost healing quality.

through common categories of life experience, it simultaneously provided a template for personal self-analysis. Although this was not necessarily intended nor addressed directly in class -- the purpose of the course is to provide an academic study of identity that particularly explores limitations to individual and collective freedom -- it occurs to me that the opportunity for self-reflection and discovery may contribute to student enthusiasm for this course.

Finally, this class experience offers a promising foundation for an inter-gender empathy that allows for enthusiastic, collaborative brainstorming of constructive actions rather than tired, ultimately futile responses associated with blaming or defensiveness in the face of the Other. Moreover, the students' collective attention to the problematic effects of gender culture -- and their recognition of their roots in the gender system rather than each other -- suggest the usefulness of a coed approach to gender education.[13] While single-sex education may have its place, a co-educational approach is ultimately necessary as part of a cohesive educational strategy aimed at illuminating blindness concerning the harmful social effects of gender socialization.[14]

Course Logic

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[13] Connell also advocates for co-ed education, claiming that "for men, the democratic remaking of gender practices requires persistent engagement with women, not the separatism-for-men which is strong in current masculinity politics. This is notably true in education and youth work." Connell, "Arms and the man," 31.

[14] The inter-gender empathy observed between students during coed gender discussions suggests related benefits associated with utilizing both male and female teachers of male and female students. Many advocate for single-sex teacher-student arrangements, and clearly there are benefits associated with positive role models. The danger, of course, is that separation of men and women during the educational process retains the possibility of re-inscribing many of the commitments to difference (re-inscribing bad faith caricatures of Self and Other, devoid of freedom) that have allowed rigid gender ideologies and inauthentic, dysfunctional social values based on hierarchical privileging to emerge and flourish. This concern also translates to the single-sex teaching situation, underscoring the importance of male and female teachers upholding appreciation of the gender system as harmful to all. In addition to benefits associated with the co-ed classroom, perhaps it may be beneficial to also consider the ways that cross-sex teaching (men of women, women of men, as well as cross-gender and considerations of sexuality) may tap into the power of inter-gender empathy. For instance, a male teacher who upholds deep respect for the abilities and dignity of young women (without superiority) may offer powerful affirmation. In addition, a female teacher, who acknowledges male realities in the context of the collective harms of gender system (without blaming), may be less likely (than many male counterparts) to encounter wariness or armor. And, there may be ways that coed gender education could be team-taught in a compelling fashion by men and women, particularly with an educational model like this one, which emphasizes the relatively invisible underlying system that quietly (or not so quietly?) stamps out the gendered Other. With conscious consideration, any or all of these approaches may be useful. Given that teachers are grounded in an approach anchored in the harms of our gender socialization and gender culture to all, differing social positions may factor into thoughtful educational approaches to gender discussions.

The following sections provide more specific detail about the content and existential analytical method of the course, as well as additional information about the sequence of topics, which may also have been a factor in young men's receptivity to gender discussions. The *Course Logic* section is divided into three subsections: 1) Existentialism (which provides conceptual information); 2) Existential Lens (a frame for the remainder of the course); and 3) Existential Analysis (the method of interdisciplinary investigation of identity). The third section of this summary, *Existential Analysis,* is further comprised of three sections: 1) Childhood; 2) Gender; and 3) Social and Political Factors. These three categories represent the structure of this paper, with its emphasis on male responses to the course approach, versus the actual structure of the course. The course itself includes specific sections on race, sexuality, class, nationalism, and social institutions in addition to childhood, gender, and social and political factors.

The course begins with a brief overview and introduction to existentialism, particularly attending to the pertinent terms and concepts grounding this discussion of identity. These concepts include existentialist perspectives of freedom, choice, authenticity, bad faith, and responsibility. This introduction is followed by a description of Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialist model of freedom and power.[15] Basically Sartre argues that inauthentic states of consciousness (he uses the term "bad faith"), which result from denial of one's freedom or alternatively of aspects of reality, lead to either coercion or conformity ("oppression/sadism" or "resignation/masochism"). This model then serves as an "existential lens" through which to investigate possible sources of bad faith. This "existential lens" provides a non-specific template, which then needs to be

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[15] See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness.* Translated and with an introduction by Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1984).

appropriately applied and understood in the context of particulars. The distance afforded by first considering the theoretical allows for initial appreciation of power dynamics prior to considering specific situations, contexts, and identities.

What are possible sources of inauthentic states of consciousness? Relying on existential analysis -- based on Sartre's conception of existential psychoanalysis -- as a method, the course steps through an interdisciplinary investigation of influences.[16] Here the analysis considers psychological, sociological, critical theorist, and political perspectives of major aspects of life experience: childhood, gender, sexuality, race, class, and nationality, as well as considerations associated with education and the culture industry. Thus, the course relies on the method of existential analysis to structure an interdisciplinary study of identity construction that includes an investigation of limitations to freedom throughout the life history.

The term "eco-existential analysis" may emphasize the social, relational nature of this analysis. The term is derived from Jean-Paul Sartre's conception of existential psychoanalysis and deep ecological principles of interconnection and interdependence.[17] Although existentialism has been (mis)perceived at times as an individualistic philosophy, this analysis attends to the social nature of behavior, addressing the freedom, choice, and responsibility borne by the (socially constructed) individual in relation with others.[18] The inherently ecological aspect of the method indicates that authenticity, bad faith, and blindness rest upon a relational-communal (interdependent) sense of human nature. This relational nature gives rise to desires for belonging, which allow for the effectiveness of social-psychological pressures coaxing inauthentic states. Finally, while

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[16] See ibid.
[17] See Sartre; Bill Devall & George Sessions, *Deep Ecology* (Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 1985).
[18] Or "socially influenced."

the analysis seriously weighs the powerful nature of social-psychological behavior

processes associated with social construction, it also upholds the ever-present possibility

of transcendence -- choosing differently-- which is contingent on self- and social-

awareness and authenticity.

Existentialism

The semester begins with an introduction to philosophical perspectives of

identity. Most often, there are few, if any, philosophy majors among my students, who

represent majors across the college, from the natural and social sciences, pre-med, pre-

law, and humanities to the business school. Moreover, very few have ever taken

philosophy courses or have been exposed to existentialist philosophy. Nonetheless,

students are enthusiastic about this approach, and many express appreciation through

their final course evaluations for the opportunity to learn about these perspectives.[19]

The writings of Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, Friedrich Nietzsche, and

Martin Heidegger provide a foundation for discussions of existentialist notions of

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[19] Following are a few representative comments about the existentialist grounding of the course, from non-majors. A significant take-away from this course is that gender discussions are well received within a larger analysis of identity and freedom: "I think this particular course and particular syllabus for IDS213 should be universal and required for all majors"; "All the readings were amazing and really illustrated exactly where and how our freedom is limited and how these oppressions are connected"; "Wonderful evaluation of existentialism. Taught me new ways to relate the topic to identity and politics, wonderfully enlightening"; "The readings were more in-depth and the old adage of personal responsibility versus societal or structural access was explored very much. We were given more power to conduct our own explorations"; "The existential philosophy, specifically Sartre's model of existence, was a new concept for me. It prompted me to reflect on my "subconscious" ways of thinking and assumptions"; "The course introduced me to so many new ideas about life through learning about various philosophers and writers. It has helped me to figure out what I want to do when I graduate"; "The readings were all extremely valuable. They incorporated a spectrum of scholars and disciplines in such a way that was both so informative and so insightful. I particularly loved the child development section"; "It made me want to do an existential psychoanalysis of my own life"; "I learned so much about existentialism and found the philosophy to be very interesting and extensive --Loved it!"; "Existential Philosophy = the bomb"; "It was all new, engaging, and interesting. Very thought provoking class"; "I hadn't studied existentialism in depth before and really really liked the topic"; "The Sartre readings really got me thinking about the construction of my identity"; "All of the readings introduced me to new ideas and challenged my thinking. It gave me a new perspective on identity besides a biology view that I'm used to from my major"; "The collection of materials in the course worked very well together. The readings on "Being and Nothingness" were very challenging conceptually, but once understood they provided a great medium for discussion about the rest of the topics in the course. The videos also were important in allowing us some real-life examples of the material"; "I Heart Huckabees was informative in connecting everything together. The readings from Sartre were difficult/challenging to read but helpful as a foundation. The readings from diverse perspectives and thinkers introduced new ideas and ways of thinking to me"; "The movies and readings were very relevant to the overall class topic of existentialism. "I Heart Huckabees" was a great example of how existentialist ideas can be applied to real life"; "The readings and movies were of vital importance to the course. Everything fit in perfectly and the movies helped to explain difficult concepts in the readings"; "All the readings were very valuable and informative, Sartre was challenging but helpful. Miller, Fromm, and the gender readings were all very interesting. I have never taken a philosophy course so it all challenged my thinking -- Loved the course!"; "All of the readings and film clips tied into the course very nicely. The movie, I Heart Huckabees, and the books Bird by Bird and other readings by Sartre, Pollack, and Miller all helped to make concepts clear. I've never learned about existentialism before this class so I'm glad I took it."

creativity, freedom, authenticity, and responsibility.[20] As a philosophy of existence,

existentialism is concerned with notions of "being" and "being-in-the-world," focusing

on the real experience and problems of everyday life. Sartre asserts that "existence

precedes essence," emphasizing human freedom: first we exist, and then we decide who

we are and who we will become.[21] Freedom assigns us the responsibility for our choices

but, since freedom allows for creativity, this is a joyful sense of responsibility.

Nietzsche exuberantly proclaims: "We, however, want to become who we are – the new,

the unique, the incomparable, those who give themselves the law, those who create

themselves!"[22] The course is thus grounded in an empowering sense of identity

associated with freedom, passion, and creativity.

Sartre's claim that we have the choice of what we do with our lives -- that

"existence precedes essence" -- does not deny the reality of individual differences.

Rather it emphasizes our choice about what we do with our particular capabilities. We

have freedom within constraints (use our gifts or not; how we deal with the cards we've

been dealt). Sartre's definition of authenticity represents this balance between facticity

(that which is fixed or given) and transcendence (our freedom, ability to choose, change,

and create). Authenticity is associated with the full expression of creative power, a

balanced state of being that embraces freedom and the responsibility for exercising

freedom, while acknowledging real, versus assumed, constraints to freedom.

The distinction between real and assumed constraints to freedom is important. If

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[20] See Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*; Jean-Paul Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew.* Translated by George J. Becker and with an introduction by Michael Walzer (New York: Schocken Books, 1995); Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1989); Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science.* Translated, with Commentary by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1974); Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, A Translation of Sein und Zeit by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. (New York: Harper and Row, 1962).
[21] Sartre, Jean-Paul. "The Humanism of Existentialism," in *Existentialism: Basic Writings,* Edited by Charles Guignon and Derk Pereboom (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1995), 270.
[22] Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science.* Translated, with Commentary, by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, Inc., 1974), 266.

we are unclear about abilities, interests, and strengths, or the possible choices available,

we are afflicted with what Sartre calls "bad faith," an inauthentic state.[23] An unfortunate

past experience (public speaking, a failure, another's judgment, oppressive beliefs, etc)

may also encourage a denial of (or lack of belief in) an aspect of self. Denials of

freedom lead to the adoption of masks -- rigid, practiced ways of being in the world.

Sartre uses the example of a waiter, who embodies waiter-ly traits, to illustrate the

example of adopting a persona as an identity and the extent to which we may identify

with our masks.[24]

Throughout the course, philosophical discussions and readings are reinforced with

short film clips to illustrate the points. During the overview of existentialism, students

watch a few film clips from "Waking Life," which entertainingly underscore teaching

points about identity --it's what you do with the crayons in your crayon box (crayons

representing facticity) -- and provide philosophical commentary (an animated

representation of philosopher Robert Solomon on passion and responsibility).[25] Several

classes later, clips from "I Heart Huckabees" encourage discussion about authenticity and

bad faith. Introductory scenes of the "existentialist detectives" contribute enjoyable

commentary to the introduction of existential analysis as a course method, and a scene --

"How am I not Myself?" -- conveys a sense of mask-wearing, aligned with Sartre's

description of the waiter.[26]

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[23] To complicate the discussion of identity, freedom, and power, students take an online Myers-Briggs test and the follow-on class encourages discussion about interests, preferences, and choices.

[24] "We are so accustomed to wearing a disguise before others that eventually we are unable to recognize ourselves." Francois, Duc de la Rochefoucauld. Also, Nietzsche (1974) claims: "But the fact that you listen to this and that judgment as the voice of conscience – that you perceive something as right, in other words – may be caused by the fact that you have never reflected on yourself, and are blindly accepting what has been designated as right to you since childhood." Nietzsche, 264.

[25] *Waking Life,* Scenes 1-3. S1: *Dream is Destiny*; S2: *Anchors Aweigh* (crayons); S3: *Life Lessons* (passion, responsibility).

[26] *I Heart Huckabees.* S1-3; S20: *"How am I not myself?"* Jude Law delivers the line, "How am I not myself?" (which made it into two class plays); Lily Tomlin and Dustin Hoffman play the existentialist detectives.

Bad faith, this inauthentic sense of self and one's real possibilities, not only gets in the way of full self expression -- Oscar Wilde laments, "One's real life is often the life that one does not lead" -- but also, according to Sartre, establishes the foundation for the emergence of oppression and resignation.[27] At this point, the conversation of authenticity is extended beyond an individual sense to consideration of relations with Others.

The Existential Lens

Bad faith, or an inauthentic denial of freedom, can be triggered through relations with Others. Sartre describes a man crouched in a hallway, peering intently through a keyhole, his attention focused on what he is observing through the keyhole.[28] Suddenly the man hears a footstep in the hallway behind him, and instantly the picture in his mind's eye shifts from what has been observed through the keyhole to the image of himself, crouched in the hallway peering through the keyhole. The "Look" of the Other can be an impetus for an inauthentic state (although we may resist), freezing us into a static being, devoid of freedom.

Here the course turns to Jean-Paul Sartre's model of inauthentic social relations. For Sartre, inauthentic selfhood (a denial of one's freedom or a denial of the reality of a situation) leads to oppressive or resigned behavior and inauthentic social relations. In the case of "oppression" or "sadism," the desire to attain freedom (denied by the individual) leads to attempts to "appropriate" it from others. In the second case, of "resignation" or "masochism," the desire for freedom leads to conforming behavior as the attempt to attain (inauthentic) power by aligning with those perceived as more powerful. Emmy van

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[27] Oscar Wilde, *L'Envoi.* 1882.
[28] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness.*

Deurzan suggests, "We may try to make up for our lack of security by chasing power and dominance over others, or otherwise by submitting to them, in search of ultimate approval. There again, we find that both these attitudes backfire and lead to discontents."[29] Oppression and/or resignation then substantiate social contexts further limiting freedom. Finally, inauthentic dysfunction -- individual and social -- not only constrains freedom but also in itself inherently represents a blindness concerning the ways authentic power is inhibited or thwarted.

Students next read Sartre's *Anti-Semite and Jew*, which provides examples of oppression (sadism) and resignation (masochism).[30] While this exploration of anti-Semitism in post World War II France provides a concrete application of Sartre's theoretical terms and model (in a relatively quick read), for students the example remains removed from contemporary U.S. issues. This distance provides an opportunity for students to more clearly understand the relations and dynamics -- Sartre identifies a number of players and their motivations – without yet considering the particularities of topics closer to home, such as gender socialization. Invariably at this juncture, a number of (but not all) students begin to apply this model to dynamics associated with other situations, specifically racism, sexism, and homophobia within contemporary U.S. culture.

After the introduction of Sartre's model and the classroom discussion of *Anti-Semite and Jew,* a film clip from *Meet the Parents* provides an upbeat illustration of the players in the oppression-resignation (coercion-conformity) group power dynamic

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[29] Emmy Van Deurzan, *Everyday Mysteries: Existential Dimensions of Psychotherapy* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 127.
[30] See Sartre, *Anti-Semite and Jew.*

drama.[31] Early in the movie, Greg, his soon-to-be-fiancé Pam, and her parents Jack and Dina stand together just inside the front door and engage in conversation about cats and dogs, which provides a quick look at the four players in a controlling situation. In the cat lover/hater discussion, Jack symbolically represents the controlling person; Greg, the focus of his control; Dina (Jack's wife), with her inaudible aside about being a dog person, is on Jack's team, going along although she doesn't always agree; and Pam represents the bystander, studiously looking off into space, not getting involved in the exchange between her father and boyfriend. The four represent placeholder categories, less extreme than their representative roles could be, but shown here as a light-hearted way to demonstrate the categories. These players are comparable to those participating in school bullying dynamics (also dysfunctional business and organizational dynamics): The primary bully (coercive leader); the bully group members (conforming group members/followers); the targeted person(s); and the bystanders.

The philosophical readings of Sartre's theory, his book, *Anti-Semite and Jew*, the clips from *Meet the Parents*, and the example of bullying encourage a phenomenal class discussion, which students extend to high school bullying, teen suicide, and school shootings. An interesting aspect of this class discussion is the way students proactively explore opportunities for solidarity-based action. Realization that the bullies (bully group leaders, tyrannical leaders) are a minority of any group – clarified through this breakdown of players -- suggests opportunities for solidarity, given awareness and recognition of the dynamics.

Existential Analysis

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[31] *Meet the Parents*, S3.

The preceding readings and discussions have established an understanding of this existentialist model or lens – essentially a philosophical explication of how bad faith (or inauthenticity, imbalance, denial of freedom) leads to oppressive or conforming behavior. With the model in place, the course turns to an interdisciplinary investigation of possible sources of inauthentic behavior and social relations, assessing individual and group dynamics associated with common life-experiences. The course material is broken into three major sub-themes exploring various pressures coaxing bad faith: 1) developmental factors, including the effects of rigid childrearing practices and gender socialization; 2) social factors, including analyses of race, class, and sexuality, as well as cultural and historical influences on social structure; and 3) political considerations, encompassing perspectives of the critical theorists (Frankfurt School) concerning the emergence of fascist versus democratic inclinations, as well as cultural and media pressures, tensions between family and state, and issues of nation, state, and nationality. A chart, "The Existential Lens," is attached. This chart provides a pictorial summary of the course structure, illustrating the existentialist model of freedom and power representing the core course theme. From left to right, the flow chart depicts the individual, facticity, transcendence, authenticity, and bad faith, as well as the trajectory of bad faith into sadism-oppression and masochism-resignation, affecting the liberty of individuals as well as social groups. The bottom half of the page is divided into three sections depicting the three course sub-themes, all of which tie back to the core existentialist theme. From left to right, the sections list texts and materials addressing: 1) individual/developmental, 2) social, and 3) political factors associated with the development of bad faith.

The lens of existentialist theory serves as a touchstone to draw the interdisciplinary explorations of the course together. Specifically, each of the three subsequent modules of the course links with the framework established in the introductory module addressing existentialism and the "existential lens." The analysis illuminates common themes running through the course materials, as well as similarities and parallels between micro and macro situations. These include: 1) the case of individual bad faith and social bad faith; 2) individual blindness and social blindness; 3) democratic versus authoritarian dynamics in the home/family and those in the larger political/national context; 4) psychoanalytic views of "splitting off" and "projecting" prompted through rigid childrearing practices, the ways these inclinations mirror Sartre's conceptions of sadism and masochism, and the ways their effects are further shaped and overlooked by virtue of gender socialization; 5) the suppression of emotions and feelings of vulnerability (constraining freedom, creativity, and original thought) through pedagogy, which is amplified through the process of male gender socialization and affirmed by (patriarchal) social values; and 6) the ways all of the above are related to superiority/ domination and internalized oppression associated with oppressive social conditions.

Childhood

The developmental module -- the first of the three major subthemes -- begins with a psychoanalytical analysis of childhood and childrearing.[32] Alice Miller discusses the harmful effects of what she calls "poisonous pedagogy" in her book, For *Your Own*

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[32]With its emphasis on freedom, existential analysis favors attention to experiences that have shaped states of consciousness and behavior over reflection on innate destructive drives.

Good.[33] A child psychoanalyst, Miller describes the effects of rigid childrearing practices

on children who eventually "split off" and "project" onto others emotions suppressed in

childhood; "splitting-off" and "projection" resemble Sartre's model of authenticity, bad-

faith, sadism, and masochism.

According to Miller, pedagogy is harmful for the child since it does not simply

involve actions undertaken for the child's welfare but rather to serve the needs of the

parents, caregivers, or the larger social structure. She claims that suppression of the

natural spontaneity, exuberance, and curiosity of the child -- through childrearing

practices that strive to mold the child into obedience -- leads to the child's need to "split

off" traits of the self deemed inappropriate, unappealing, or undesirable by parents or

authority figures. Miller's descriptions here resemble Sartre's bad faith, as denial:

> The memory of the body underlies the mystery of the compulsion to repeat,
> especially the compulsion of so many adults to repeat with their own children
> what they endured very early in life but do not recall. We are reluctant to
> acknowledge that the memory of our bodies, along with our emotional
> experience, is not controlled by our consciousness, our mind. We have no control
> over the way this memory operates. But accepting the sheer existence of these
> phenomena can help us to guard against their effects.[34]

Suppression of these memories leads to splitting off and projection. As the individual

grows into adulthood, he or she "projects" them onto others leading to either targeting-

out (aligned with Sartre's sadism) or more masochistic conformity:

> The lessons of violence learned at this time are not easy to dissolve. Children
> must deny the pain in order to survive, but this strategy leads them, as grown-ups,
> to the emotional blindness responsible for the absurd attitude they act upon as
> parents and educators. The denial of violence endured leads to violence directed
> toward others or oneself.[35]

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[33] See Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good.* With a new preface by the author (New York: The Noonday Press, 1990).
[34] Miller, ix.
[35] Ibid., x.

 Miller suggests two trajectories of projection: Hitler, who discharged his suppressed

emotion externally onto a people and nation, and a drug addict, who directed violence

inwardly, engaging in self-destructive behavior. Another clip from *I Heart Huckabees*

this time illustrates the ways that the effects of family dynamics in childhood often

remain unacknowledged.

During class discussions and in their writings, students initially distance

themselves from these ideas, projecting their applicability to the extreme cases (child

abuse) rather than to conventional childrearing "wisdom" and practice.   Their resistance

to apply these ideas more widely (as well as some students' defense of the need for rigid

childrearing, even harsh treatment of small children) seems related to an understandable

desire to protect their parents and families from criticism or to refrain from directly

criticizing them. Miller, however, claims that these dynamics are pervasive, embedded in

the fabric of our culture:

> Today, I think, the important boundary lies not between those who were once
> mistreated and those who were not; rather, I see it as dividing unconscious victims
> from conscious survivors. Because most of us were victims of the 'educational'
> violence that is –unfortunately – still held in high esteem in too many parts of the
> world, the United States included.[36]

Students latch onto the school system as an entry point to more closely scrutinize the

dynamics, although Miller does not necessarily tie her use of "educational" to the

educational school system. Eventually, their complaints about rigid and punitive school-

disciplinary approaches, including the use of shame and humiliation (and tangential

discussions of over-medicating children), give way to a growing recognition of the

universality of the pressures. Their "a-ha" moments are related to eventually seeing the

inter-generational, cultural nature of the process: as members of the culture, everyone --

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[36]Ibid., xiv.

including the students' parents (and their parents' parents, back generations) -- to some

degree inevitably experiences the effects of rigid childrearing, whether directly through

physical or emotional punishment (abuse, spanking, humiliation, or shame) or through

the social effects of a collective commitment to childrearing pedagogy.

Miller's descriptions of the effects of rigid childrearing align with Frankfurt

School theorists' descriptions of authoritarian (versus democratic) family practices,

which are further studied in the national/political module of the course.[37] In both cases,

family patterns are highlighted as potential sources for the development of bad faith.

Describing her own experience, Miller relates that, "the price I had to pay for what many

people call 'good upbringing' was that for a long time I was separated from my true

feelings, from myself."[38]

Gender

The topic of gender is introduced after the philosophy and child development

readings. This allows the gender discussion to be grounded in the context of an

empowering sense of identity and gender socialization to be considered as one of many

possible sources of inauthentic identity and behavior. The gender discussion itself starts

with male gender socialization, followed by female gender socialization, both offered as

examples of the transmission and reification of widespread bad faith.   This sequence is

deliberate, intended to promote a productive class discussion and learning experience by

minimizing potential defensiveness about and resistance to the topic of gender. With

harms to women widely acknowledged, this defensiveness and resistance not only

represent effects of male gender socialization but also seem to reflect an unarticulated

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[37] See Adorno et al.
[38] Miller, x.

ambiguity about what to do on an individual level about issues that originate within the larger cultural system. The introductory readings on male gender socialization powerfully compel the attention of male (and female) students in the classroom, vividly demonstrating the relevance of gender discussion to young men's lives.

While there are many great texts about male gender socialization available, students begin by reading psychologist William Pollack's *Real Boys*.[39] The primary reason for this choice is that Pollack's approach and descriptions fit particularly well with the framework of this course: portrayals of painful aspects of male gender socialization – particularly reliance on shame -- provide insight to conditions promoting the development of inauthentic states of bad faith. In addition, since the book is intended for a general audience, the writing style is easily accessible, a benefit in terms of quickly getting the attention of students who may be unfamiliar with (or potentially resistant to) these ideas. Descriptions of the painful humiliation that can be associated with male gender socialization are powerful, and both male and female students recognize and empathize with Pollack's young subjects. Following this discussion, students either read or discuss research addressing hegemonic masculinity, male caregiving, fundamentalism/religious terrorism, and gender socialization from scholars including R.W. Connell; Connell/James Messerschmidt; Oystein Holter; Mark Juergensmeyer; and Michael Kimmel.[40]

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[39] See William Pollack, *Real Boys: Rescuing our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood* (New York: Random House, 1998).

[40] R.W. Connell, "Psychoanalysis on Masculinity," in *Theorizing Masculinity: Research on Men and Masculinities.* Edited by Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (London: Sage Publications, Inc., 1994; Robert W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); R.W. Connell, *The Men and the Boys* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, Hegemonic Masculinity," in *Gender & Society,* Vol 19, No. 6, December 2005; Oystein Gullvag Holter, "Masculinities in context: on peace issues and patriarchal orders," in *Male Roles, Masculinities, and Violence: A Culture of Peace Perspective.* Edited by Ingeborg Breines, Robert Connell, and Ingrid Eide (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2000); Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence.* Updated edition with a new preface. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Jackson Katz, *The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and How All Men Can Help* (Naperville, Illinois: Sourcebooks, 2006); Michael Kimmel, *Guyland: The Perilous World Where Boys Become Men* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008). In particular, students read R.W. Connell, "Psychoanalysis on Masculinity" (1994). This reading is further

Pollack's descriptions of the "Boy Code" demonstrate social pressures coaxing

bad faith as a denial/fear of vulnerability in the face of the Other, particularly the Other as

the larger community of boys and men. Students quickly connect Sartre's ideas of bad

faith and Miller's description of "splitting-off" with Pollack's description of the mask of

masculine bravado, described here:

> Many of the boys I see today are like Adam, living behind a mask of masculine bravado that hides the genuine self to conform to our society's expectations; they feel it is necessary to cut themselves off from any feelings that society teaches them are unacceptable for men and boys – fear, uncertainty, feelings of loneliness and need.[41]

Moreover, this "mask" possesses the unconscious quality of the denial associated with

Sartre's bad faith:

> Boys learn to wear the mask so skillfully – in fact, they don't even know they're doing it – that it can be difficult to detect what is really going on when they are suffering at school, when their friendships are not working out, when they are being bullied, becoming depressed, even dangerously so, to the point of feeling suicidal.[42]

And, just as Sartre projects inauthentic individuality to inauthentic power relations and

Miller describes an external "projection" of feelings split off from the self, Pollack

associates the emergence of violence with an earlier underlying disconnection:

> Violence is the most visible and disturbing end result of the process that begins when a boy is pushed into the adult world too early and without sufficient love and support. He becomes seriously disconnected, retreats behind the mask, and expresses the only 'acceptable' male emotion – anger. When a boy's anger grows too great, it may erupt as violence: violence against himself, violence against others, violence against society. Violence, therefore, is the final link in a chain that begins with disconnection.[43]

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addressed in the subsequent module on political/national influences because of its connections to the thought of the Frankfurt School theorists. In future iterations of this class, I intend to also include references to Jackson Katz's *The Macho Paradox* (2006).
[41] Pollack, 5.
[42] Ibid., 5.
[43] Ibid., 338.

At this point in the course, students are fully engaged with the material.[44] They draw out connections between rigid childrearing, male gender socialization, and philosophical perspectives of power relations in class discussions and in their papers; the model provides footing to approach phenomenological experience in an analytic manner.

After the discussion of male gender socialization, the course turns to the socialization of girls and women, beginning with Mary Pipher's *Reviving Ophelia*.[45] Pipher's discussions of gender socialization build upon the philosophical foundation of the course, particularly on the consideration of authenticity and the ways that gender socialization promotes inauthentic identity. Pipher compares Miller's descriptions of childrearing to social pressures associated with gender conditioning, noting:

> Alice Miller wrote of the pressures on some young children to deny their true selves and assume false selves to please their parents. *Reviving Ophelia* suggests that adolescent girls experience a similar pressure to split into true and false selves, but his time the pressure comes not from parents but from the culture. Adolescence is when girls experience social pressure to put aside their authentic selves and to display only a small portion of their gifts.[46]

For Pipher, "intelligent resistance," which is based on awareness and recognition of the shaping influences of the culture, provides an avenue to reclaim authentic individuality:

> Once girls understand the effects of the culture on their lives, they can fight back. They learn that they have conscious choices to make and ultimate responsibility for those choices. Intelligent resistance keeps the true self alive.[47]

This discussion is followed by excerpts from Simone de Beavuoir's *The Second Sex*, as well as discussions of the work of Iris Young, Carol Gilligan, and Nancy

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[44]These discussions occur at about week 7 of a 14 week semester.

[45] See Mary Pipher, *Reviving Ophelia* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1994).

[46]Pipher, 22. Relying on an existentialist sense of identity reminiscent of previous course readings, Pipher muses: "We answer Freud's patronizing question, "What do women want?" Each woman wants something different and particular and yet each woman wants the same thing – to be who she truly is, to become who she can become." Ibid., 26.

[47] Ibid., 44.

Chodorow.[48] De Beauvoir's text reinforces the existentialist framework of the course,

illuminating the ways that gender roles and socialization contribute to the development of

bad faith. de Beauvoir, who partnered with Sartre in life and work, describes the ways

that the Look objectifies Woman as Other ("He is Subject; she is Other"), as well as the

way society assigns each sex its own bad faith role. To illustrate these ideas, students

watch another film clip from *I Heart Huckabees*, this one addressing pressures on the

Huckabees model to conform to a highly sexualized way of being, as well as several clips

from *Merchants of Cool* that illuminate culture industry pressures on young men and

women (portrayals of "mooks" and "midriffs").[49]

Throughout the male and female gender discussions, the energy level in the

classroom is palpable. The students are charged-up, "getting" how their individual and

collective power has been limited, and beginning to sense how they might take it back

through an intoxicating sense of (existentialist!) freedom. In addition, the class

discussion is characterized by mutual respect and empathy. It wasn't until the second

time I taught this class that it fully registered with me how appreciative the young men

were that young women were reading about male gender socialization along with them.

Finally, the sequence of topics likely encouraged young men's proactive engagement

with discussions of female gender socialization.

An existentialist approach that addresses gender as a subset of an empowering

discussion of identity has brought male and female students to the table where they are

then able to fully engage with gender issues. Gradually, the sense of an underlying

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[48] See de Beauvoir; Iris Marion Young, "Is Male Gender Identity the Cause of Male Domination," in *Feminist Social Thought.* Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997); Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982); Nancy Julia Chodorow, "Gender, Relation, and Difference in Psychoanalytic Perspective," in *Feminist Social Thought.* Edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers (New York: Routledge, 1997).
[49] The film *Mean Girls* is discussed briefly but not watched. The *Merchants of Cool* clips are actually shown later in the course, during discussions of media influences and the culture industry, within the larger social context of the political/national module.

system molding behavior and identity -- a sort of science-fictional, cultural machine -- emerges. The seeds of this perception are apparent during the childrearing discussion earlier in the course. As students recognize the intergenerational, cultural nature of rigid or harsh childrearing processes, whether physical or emotional -- and that their parents and families are as much affected as they are -- they appear more inclined to acknowledge and grapple with the produced realities. Here, it's as if male and female students are able to (at least momentarily) step away from their gender identities to appraise the cultural gender machine that stamps out gender identity.[50] Moreover, this perspective illuminates ways that the everydayness of gender practice obscures the perpetuation of inauthentic identity giving rise to unsustainable social relations.

Emotion

The effects of the suppression of emotion, creativity, and original thought are considered throughout the course. The suppression of devalued emotions and feelings of vulnerability are first discussed in the child development readings. Subsequent gender readings consider the ways this devaluation is amplified and channeled through gender socialization processes. Later, the roles of social values, media influences, and educational pedagogies in the suppression of emotion, creativity, and original thought are explored. This suppression, reinforced on many fronts, contributes to the development of inauthentic individuality and social relations, prohibiting the possibility of the existential synthesis of rationality and passion associated with an authentic state.

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[50]Perhaps like a children's play-dough machine that shapes play-dough according to various pre-set molds. While this may seem a bit overdetermined, it is worthwhile to note the longevity of our gender system (thousands of years) as it reproduces constructed gender norms and behavior generationally. An existentialist analysis of gender hopes to draw attention to the power of transcendence rooted in human freedom, dependent upon awareness and collective action.

After the gender discussions, students read Audre Lorde's essay, "Uses of the Erotic: the Erotic as Power."[51] This essay extends the discussion of the suppression of emotion to considerations of its effects, particularly in relation to power, while simultaneously introducing the topic of sexuality. For Lorde, a more superficial, "pornographic" way of living keeps one powerless; embracing a passionate, meaningful, "erotic" approach to life presents the path to reclaiming power. Although Lorde's descriptions of the erotic and pornographic are ostensibly tied to meditations on female sexuality, her descriptions of the erotic also provide a metaphor for claiming power, authenticity, agency, and wholeness – applicable to women, men, and their pursuits in general. Lorde's discussion also foreshadows later readings by Erich Fromm, who is concerned about widespread suppression of "spontaneity" encouraged through social perspectives and educational approaches privileging rationality over passion.[52] While brief, this essay is beautifully written, and students perceive it as a powerful portrayal of authentic power.

Social & Political Factors

Class discussions of hegemonic and non-hegemonic masculinities and their intersections with sexuality, race, and class illuminate the hierarchies that exist among men. Hegemonic masculinity is in a hierarchical relationship with other masculinities, resting upon an oppositional relation to femininity, with homosexual masculinities at the bottom of the hierarchy. The distinctions between various masculinities emphasize that a minority of men benefit from hegemonic status within the masculine hierarchy.[53] These

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[51] See Audre Lorde, "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," in *Sister Outsider* (Freedom, CA: Crossing Press, 1984).

[52] See Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1994).

[53] Closer examination of the relations between masculinities reveals tensions and pressures; masculinity intersects with race, class, and sexuality. As an example, Harry Brod (1994) describes the intersection of cultural notions of masculinity with Jewish traditions: "Pressures on Jewish men to be 'one of the boys' on the terms of the hegemonic culture lead them to deny their own cultural traditions

discussions introduce additional categories of social experience -- sexuality, race, and

class -- as possible sources of bad faith.

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Brod describes the intersection of cultural notions of masculinity with Jewish traditions:

> Pressures on Jewish men to be 'one of the boys' on the terms of the hegemonic culture lead them to deny their own cultural traditions and seek power viv-a-vis other men and vis-à-vis 'their' women by seeking to conform to dominant norms. On the other hand, as a nonhegemonic 'culture of resistance' to hegemonic norms, Jewish culture has an interest in fostering cross-gender alliances within the culture against the dominant culture. There are indeed strong egalitarian strains in Jewish traditions, in addition to its strong patriarchal strains. Thus Jewish men face conflicting pressures for and against egalitarian relations with Jewish women and for and against Jewish as opposed to dominant non-Jewish forms of masculinity.[54]

Mairtin Mac an Ghaill provides another example, describing tensions between Afro-

Caribbean high school students and the dominant masculine culture within a British high

school:

> In their cultural dissociation from mainstream society the Rasta Heads developed a positive subcultural association, central to which was a process of Africanization, which underpinned their resistance to state authoritarianism. Of particular significance was the ideological influence of Rastafari in building a black cultural nationalism. They were aware of the historical contradictions of black masculinity as a subordinated masculinity, with the denial of the patriarchal

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[54] Harry Brod, "Some Thoughts on Some Histories of Some Masculinities: Jews and Other Others," in *Theorizing Masculinity: Research on Men and Masculinities* (Edited by Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (London: Sage Publications, Inc., 1994), 92.

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The Frankfurt School's research concerning the authoritarian family echoes Miller's arguments about rigid childrearing and links family dynamics with the political structure of the community.   In the aftermath of WWII, critical theorists' concerns with the emergence of authoritarianism in the social group led to their examination of social psychological factors underlying dominating inclinations. Their research findings link the *authoritarian* character with rigid, punitive childrearing, and the *democratic* character with family harmony and more egalitarian home relationships.[57] Moreover, the conclusions of their interdisciplinary research of the culture associate the widespread suppression of emotion and creativity with both authoritarian and conforming impulses within the social group. Additional social commentaries from scholars including Iris Marion Young and R.W. Connell address not only connections between gender construction and social violence but also the institutionalization of oppressive

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[55] Mairtin Mac an Ghaill, "The Making of Black English Masculinities," in *Theorizing Masculinities*, 188.
[56] Robert W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 78.
[57] See Adorno, et al.

structures.[58] Finally, sociologist Pierre Bourdieu asserts that, once established, patterns of domination become difficult to disrupt.[59] He describes the generational perpetuation of social institutions and mores, providing insight into how systems of domination shape perspectives, assumptions, and behaviors that in turn perpetuate social systems.

So, existential analysis of authenticity and bad faith connects childrearing, gender socialization, sexuality, race, class, and political factors. While the course represents an academic exploration of factors giving rise to inauthentic social relations, it also by its nature encourages personal (versus in-class) self-reflection, providing a template for existential analysis illuminating unacknowledged constraints to freedom. The academic material is supplemented with film clips to emphasize or clarify course concepts. In addition to those previously mentioned, additional clips from *Waking Life, Mississippi Masala, The Corporation, The PEAR Proposition*, and *Mars, Venus, or Planet Earth* draw out teaching points; by the end of the course, the class has watched *I Heart Huckabees* in its entirety. Within class discussions, students further connect course materials and themes to contemporary issues, including bullying and clique dynamics in middle and high school; teen suicide; school shootings; susceptibility to peer pressure; gender norms and violence; sexual orientation; homophobia; social effects of devaluing creativity and the arts (school funding cuts, etc); and the pressures arising from media representations and the culture industry to conform to certain images.

Concluding Thoughts

The overwhelmingly positive responses from students about this course are gratifying. While I am glad to have designed a thought-provoking and well-received

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[58] See Iris Marion Young, *Inclusion and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); R.W. Connell, "Arms and the Man: The Question of Peace," in *The Men and The Boys* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
[59] See Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).

course, I am even more encouraged by the promise of this approach to motivate male and female attention to pressing gender concerns.

The experience of this course suggests that the topic of identity and the method of existential analysis provide effective learning approaches for gender education, perhaps particularly for coed gender education. First, discussions of freedom, power, and blocks to freedom and power offer an appealing context within which to address gender topics. Existentialism provides an empowering sense of identity, associated with freedom, passion, and creativity, and in addition, existentialist learning methods encourage self-reflection while emphasizing ever-present possibilities for change and transcendence. Further, an existential analytical approach may contribute to the receptivity of male students to gender discussions. The structure of the course -- establishing a theoretical model and then using this model as a lens to explore numerous sources of inauthenticity -- offers a non-threatening entry point to the discussion of gender, with an initial distance that serves to minimize possible (socially constructed) resistance to gender discussion.

The uplifting, positive interactions between young men and women in these classes as they discussed gender socialization impressed me enormously. While I was interested in providing a map to illuminate the depth of our social bad faith, I had not fully anticipated either the hunger of young men to discuss gender or young men's and women's interest in the (rare) opportunity to discuss gender together in an academic setting. The experience of this course suggests that the biggest challenge may be attracting students, particularly male students, to the gender conversation. Once provided with the material, however, both male and female students respond with high levels of interest and proactive engagement.

Heartened by these enthusiastic student responses, I am hopeful about the prospects of an educational program centered on identity and power that addresses our blindness concerning harmful effects of current gender culture. Admittedly, it's a daunting endeavor. We generationally reproduce gender, collapsing identity with gender identity. Gender culture is reinforced at every turn. Our language, expressions, manner of interacting -- from executive suites, manufacturing shop floors, and golf clubs to high school sports fields -- reflect an ubiquitous sexism that perpetuates gender stereotypes and ideology, while reinforcing a hierarchy and pecking order among men. Attempts to rectify any of this by directly calling it out are ineffectual; typical responses dismiss the comments or attitudes as "harmless." For this reason, the most promising avenue to move beyond this might be one that positions considerations of gender within appealing discussions of freedom and power.

Through this analysis, I have begun the process of developing an instructor guide for the course, an endeavor I would like to continue and complete.[60] The success of both the college course and alternative high school workshop suggest an educational model for a seminar, workshop, or program. While appropriate for either single-sex or coed classrooms, the remarkable interactions between male and female students as they examine gender together suggests that a coed approach offers a rare and powerful opportunity for collaborative, constructive discussion and brainstorming.[61] Miller

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[60] The delivery of the course has been labor intensive (though a "labor of love"), but it need not be necessarily quite so time-consuming. Because of my enthusiasm about the implications associated with students really getting this material (which I believe is the case, wonderfully, with very nearly every student who has taken this course), I design writing assignments not only as a place to explore various ideas and themes but also with the thought of creating a space for individual communication with each student. Following the example of so many professors and teachers, I purposively strive to draw students out through thorough responses to writing assignments -- commenting on their ideas, asking what they mean by this, what they think of that, where this idea leads, and so forth.

[61] Coed discussions appear to work best with close to a 50/50 male/female ratio.

reminds us that "we can choose knowledge and awareness over compulsion and fear."[62] The ability to choose differently, though, depends upon a collective awakening to the harms associated with our gender culture, a daunting challenge given the way gender culture is endlessly perpetuated through the everydayness of gender practice.

Additional Educational & Leadership Applications

The application of existential analysis as an educational approach offers a method of discovery and self-reflection aimed at increasing self-awareness. Moreover, this course sparked many student discussions of school bullying, as described; it also presents a foundation for the development of a bullying program aimed at increasing self-awareness of students, teachers, or both. In addition to courses addressing identity development, the approach provides a basis for sustainability courses that illuminate connections between social and environmental interests -- links between peace, violence, sustainability, and environmental degradation -- as they step through a process that promotes reflection and awareness of unexamined assumptions.[63] Although a semester course limits the depth that can be devoted to each of the topics, the encompassing, birds-eye view of interlocking oppressions clarifies the significance of domination to sustainability issues. This approach suggests a program comprised of a series of courses within an integrated curriculum. Within such a curriculum, a survey course would first provide overview information of power relations, interconnected oppressions, and sustainability, with follow-on courses relying on a common analytical template to explore a particular topic in more detail.[64] This philosophically-grounded form of sustainability

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[62] Miller, xi.

[63] Future versions of the course could be extended to also address disability and religious topics, as well as to more rigorously investigate specific environmental problems.

[64] For instance, a possible course, *Ecological Identity: Postmodern Ground of Social and Environmental Sustainability,* might address connections between social and environmental sustainability, consider relations between social values and identity, and involve

education offers a practical application of existential analysis, which aims to cultivate

sustainability professionals who are savvy about the reality, dynamics, and effects of

power relations.

This application further suggests a model of sustainable leadership education and

analysis for business and community organizations. The ethic of sustainability developed

throughout this project provides a basis for a philosophy of sustainable leadership, which

upholds self-awareness, suggests approaches to leadership education, and offers tools for

analyses of power relations. The application of existential analysis as a framework for

sustainable leadership education relies upon reflection as a means to promote greater

recognition of unexamined assumptions and motivations.[65] Concerned with potentiality,

this approach offers insight into irrational influences upon decision-making, including

self-limiting beliefs that affect the ways people make decisions.[66] The discussion

positions democratic leadership styles, which promote creativity, vitality, collaboration,

and innovative organizational culture (power-to, power-with), as alternatives to more

autocratic, "command-and-control" forms of management.[67] Moreover, this philosophy

is grounded in principles of interconnection and thereby reaffirms the significance of

context. An interconnected, "ecological" approach to leadership considers departmental

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students in community service-learning projects. The framework would be grounded on existentialist conceptions of freedom and responsibility, along with deep ecological views of interconnection; this structure would provide a basis for philosophical analysis of ecological citizenship and identity, as well as investigation of environmental and social sustainability. A service-learning component would involve students in the design and delivery of classes or workshops on sustainable identity to local high school students, possibly built around a school community garden project.

[65] Contemporary strategic leadership consulting approaches stress self-awareness of strengths. This analysis further emphasizes the need for self-awareness of motivation as well as of individual and organizational relationships with power (power to, with, from, over). This discussion of power augments existing leadership education. Within the Denison Culture Assessment, for instance, this sustainable leadership analysis builds upon and extends the discussion of empowerment, team orientation, and capacity development located in the bottom left quadrant of the culture assessment. See Denison Culture Survey: http://www.denisonconsulting.com/products/cultureProducts/surveyOrgCulture.aspx.

See also Center for Creative Leadership, 360 by Design: http://www.ccl.org/leadership/assessments/design360Overview.aspx.

[66] Education about systems and organizational dynamics also develops awareness of organizational culture and the ways that superior attitudes and critical or judgmental views lead to the discouragement or disempowerment of individuals within the group, which in turn limits the effectiveness of the organization.

[67] Discussions of organizational power dynamics rest upon considerations of freedom and sustainable values of authenticity and generosity.

functions in light of the interrelated functions of the entire organization, extends analyses beyond the organization to the larger inclusive network of customers, suppliers, and partners, and further broadens the foundations of analyses to include local and global communities, all situated with the larger human-natural world system.

This philosophy also offers an existential analytical tool for clarifying the influence of power dynamics on decision-making processes. These power analyses investigate particularities of organizational structure, culture, values, departmental relationships, decision history, and decision-making processes. These assessments complement existing rational systems analyses by distinguishing power-related influences on policy and decision-making within integrative planning systems.[68] Education about systems and organizational dynamics also develops awareness of organizational culture and the ways that superior attitudes and critical or judgmental views may lead to discouragement or eventual disempowerment of individuals within the group, limiting in turn the potentiality and effectiveness of the organization.

Further, existential analysis offers an approach to training that may be utilized as the basis for offerings designed to improve the success rate of implementation outcomes. Offerings include leadership training, sustainable decision-making workshops, decision-making task force protocols, and implementation planning workshops. These modules may be tailored based upon findings of power assessments and structured in a number of phases, such as: 1) initial planning sessions; 2) midstream assessment and strategy

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[68] This project raises thought-provoking questions about possible points of intersection with prospect theory. Daniel Kahneman's psychological theories about non-rational decision-making processes consider the effects of intuition, framing, pattern recognition, and anchoring on human reasoning processes. Kahneman's theories have been applied to areas ranging from economic behavior to medicine. See Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2011). An intriguing future project would explore possible connections between Kahneman's psychological analyses of decision-making and this dissertation's attention to power dynamics, with particular attention to gender implications. This comparative analysis might also include Frankfurt School social psychological research of ethnocentrism and prejudice. The project would further consider the integration of non-rational decision-making analyses with current adaptive management and human-natural systems analyses.

sessions; and 3) implementation planning. In a sense, this education represents ongoing transformative education with the goal of minimizing obstructionist behavior by promoting awareness of organizational dynamics. Technical materials and philosophically-grounded information about organization dynamics would supplement these workshops, perhaps within case studies of other situations or implementations. Thus, a philosophy of sustainable leadership promotes self-awareness, creativity, innovation, collaboration, and strengthened relationships within and outside of the organization.

Conclusion

The eroticism of sustainability ethics, namely its relational, communal, and embodied character, offers strategies for system transformation. The educational offerings described and proposed in this chapter reflect this eroticism through their methods and aims. This approach to education, decision-making, and leadership identifies desires and fears within accounts of motivation and power relations.[69] Above all, this approach encourages self-awareness as a way to appreciate the power of creativity, vitality, and collaboration as alternatives to oppressive or conforming forms of power. The quest for individual awareness, collective transformation, and sustainability is a vital, life-affirming, and pleasurable endeavor, which arises from the tenets of feminism and the emerging men's studies movement.

How can we unite together within a movement working toward the vision of a transformed culture? Prospects for transformation may rest upon a shared vision,

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[69] The cultivation of reflection and awareness creates the possibility of integrity and healing. Hooks refers to the masculinity crisis: "Healing the crisis in the hearts of men requires of us all a willingness to face the fact that patriarchal culture has required of men that they be divided souls. We know that there are men who have not succumbed to this demand but that most men have surrendered their capacity to be whole. The quest for integrity is the heroic journey that can heal the masculinity crisis and prepare the hearts of men to give and receive love." Bell hooks, *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love* (New York: Washington Square Press, 2004), 153. Hooks' writings about patriarchal sexuality suggest a future project to explore possibilities of the erotic relationship.

education, and communal political action within a unifying solidarity movement.[70]

Meadows further stresses the importance of addressing paradigms in order to effect

successful systems transformation:

> How do you change paradigms? Thomas Kuhn, who wrote the seminal book
> about the great paradigm shifts of science, has a lot to say about that. You keep
> pointing at the anomalies and failures in the old paradigm. You keep speaking
> and acting, loudly and with assurance, from the new one. You insert people with
> the new paradigm in places of public visibility and power. You don't waste time
> with reactionaries; rather, you work with active change agents and with the vast
> middle ground of people who are open-minded.[71]

To keep pointing successfully at the failures in the old paradigm depends upon first

understanding the nature of the system. Education provides an avenue to overcome the

resistance or denial encouraged through our prevailing paradigm, which obscures

connections between gender culture and domination as well as the possibility of

transformation. Educational offerings may encompass formal education as well as

informal approaches that rely upon the power of cultural stories and myths to shift

mindsets, perhaps conveyed through media and film.[72] Robert Jahn and Brenda Dunne

describe the importance of creating a new *mythos* as a way to assist cultural

transformation:

> To survive periods of major cultural instability it is essential that we be able to
> transcend individual concerns and come together to sustain some nucleus of
> collective vision around which a reborn society may agglomerate… Over the past
> few centuries our Western science has generously provided us with *logos*, the
> fruit of knowledge, but it has failed to offer a suitable *mythos,* the fruit of
> wisdom, to complement it and to infuse it with meaning that can transcend

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[70] The environmental justice movement, for instance, presents the possibility of an inclusive social movement that illuminates the interconnection of social justice and environmental interests.

[71] Donella Meadows,*Thinking in Systems: A Primer*. (White River Junction, Vermont: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008), 164. Meadows's point echoes observations of the Frankfurt School theorists:"Techniques for overcoming resistance, developed mainly in the field of individual psychotherapy, can be improved and adapted for use with groups and even for use on a mass scale. Let it be admitted that such techniques could hardly be effective with the extreme ethnocentrist, but it may be remembered that the majority of the population are not extreme but, in our terminology, "middle."" Adorno, et al, 480.

[72] Meadows submits a sobering perspective: "It is in this space of mastery over paradigms that people throw off addictions, live in constant joy, bring down empires, get locked up or burned at the stake or crucified or shot, and have impacts that last for millennia… The higher the leverage point, the more the system will resist changing it – that's why societies often rub out truly enlightened beings." Meadows, 165.

superficial appearances and counterproductive applications. It is now incumbent upon us to draw on those archetypes to create a new *mythos* that is appropriate to the transformed culture we collectively envision.[73]

Such a *mythos* may reflect the tenor and promise of the erotic self, attracting rather than

compelling our attention, awareness, and imagination.

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[73] Robert G. Jahn and Brenda J. Dunne, *Consciousness and the Source of Reality: The PEAR Odyssey* (Princeton: ICRL Press, 2011), 354.

Chapter Seven: Conclusions

Sustainability represents the study of potentiality and thus the study of conditions enabling social and environmental flourishing. This dissertation investigates the usefulness of existential analysis as a method for illuminating connections between gender culture and sustainability. Given the priority of confronting oppression, violence, and environmental degradation, reluctance to more widely acknowledge and address established connections between gender and domination suggests a form of blindness, grounded in the everydayness of gender culture.

What I've tried to do here is develop something that addresses resistance to these connections, which have been established through multidisciplinary research. This project not only brings together very different fields -- ranging from deep ecology and existentialist philosophy to critical race and gender theory -- in potentially new configurations but also proposes applications that have never before been developed in exactly this fashion. I construct a new way of looking at sustainability in order to develop an ethical model with practical implications for the fields of sustainability ethics, existential analysis, and sustainability education, as well as leadership studies, bullying programs, and peace education. This chapter summarizes the project, reports research findings, describes contributions to a number of disciplinary fields, notes limitations of the project, and identifies future directions for research.

Summary of the Project

In this project, I propose and develop two innovative applications of existential analysis: a research method for analysis of unsustainable social behavior and an educational method. Through these applications, I develop and articulate a new model of

sustainability ethics, an erotic conception of self with the power to motivate transformation, and practical approaches to promote awareness of connections between gender culture, freedom, and sustainability.

To begin with, the project argues for the need for differing forms of analyses within a comprehensive sustainability analysis. Sustainability theorists rely upon adaptive management and large scale systems analyses that examine the interrelated workings of components of integrative human-natural systems. These analyses clarify the ways in which aspects of a complex system work together, contributing information about predicted effects of actions or combinations of actions as input to rational decision-making processes. There is also, however, a need for complementary analyses aimed at assessing the social contexts and related power relations that affect decision-making processes.

With this end in mind, I introduced existential analysis as a relatively unknown, humanities-based systems method, which provides an approach to studying social psychological influences on behavior and motivation. To conduct this analysis of sustainability, I constructed an "existential lens," through which to consider and assess multidisciplinary research of areas of life experience. This lens is derived from existentialist and religious descriptions of power, including bad faith, sadism, masochism, mimetic conformity, scapegoating, oppression, and resignation, as well as authenticity and generosity. This application relies upon existential analysis as a method of interdisciplinary investigation and comparative analysis to assess four major fields of critical social theory -- childrearing, gender, race, and religion.

This comparative critical analysis reveals common themes that span these categories of social experience. The project positions these findings within the context of the larger social system, considering system structure and history as well as resilience and possibilities for transformation. This larger social system represents a significant aspect of facticity as the given world within which these categories of life experience are situated; at the same time, the analysis demonstrates the ways that these subsystems reflect the values and dynamics of the larger system. The common themes uncovered by means of existential analysis represent the expression of collective gender mindset through the particularities of differing subsystems. These findings emphasize the importance of addressing the systemic mindset of the larger system in addition to any given subsystem in order to support transformation or lasting change.

This project also utilizes existential analysis as an educational method. Over the course of this entire research program, I developed college courses and high school workshops on the basis of an adapted form of existential analysis. This dissertation analyzes the effectiveness of this educational approach in generating awareness of the connections described here. In addition, I applied existential analysis for sustainable leadership workshops and considered the potential of the environmental justice movement to bring together inclusive social justice and environmental concerns.

Findings

The evaluation of existential analysis as a research method and an educational approach provides theoretical and practical findings that address blindness to connections between gender culture and sustainability. To begin with, the application of existential analysis as a research method contributes to the development and articulation of a new

model of sustainability ethics. This existential analysis investigates the significance of power to sustainable outcomes, distinctions between sustainable and unsustainable forms of power, and conditions encouraging the expression of each. The findings of the analysis provide theoretical support for the inclusion of authenticity and generosity as sustainable values within an ethic of sustainability and further connect possibilities for authenticity and generosity with contemporary gender culture. Finally, I argue that the notion of erotic self, which arises from the philosophy and ethic of sustainability developed here, offers powerful strategies for transformation.

I first connect existential analysis with the field of sustainability ethics by identifying resonances between existentialism and the philosophy of deep ecology. I then draw upon these philosophies to conceptualize sustainable forms of power, unsustainable power relations, unsustainable behaviors, and unsustainable outcomes. Unsustainable outcomes reflect violence to the freedom of self, other, or nature; unsustainable behaviors represent dominating, conformity, scapegoating, or apathetic attitudes that stem from and give rise to limitations of freedom. Sustainable forms of power preserve and uphold freedom. They include "power-to," as creativity, vitality, making an appeal, and inspired or meaningful action, and "power-with," as solidarity and collective transformative power, including nonviolent collaboration and action within social movements. Unsustainable power relations include "power-over" as domination or oppression, and "power-from" as conformity.

Sustainable forms of power preserve the freedom of self and others, reflecting Sartre's and de Beauvoir's notions of authenticity and de Beauvoir's conceptualization of generosity. Authenticity, according to Sartre and de Beauvoir, is a state that does not

deny freedom or the concrete realities associated with one's situation, a balance between transcendence and facticity. A suppression, inhibition, or denial of human emotional qualities such as care and compassion constitutes a denial of facticity as a form of bad faith. What I call a denial of vulnerability also represents a state of bad faith, given human finitude as well as our communal need for each other. De Beauvoir's conception of generosity moves beyond individualistic views of authenticity to address authentic interactions with others. Generosity reflects an authentic relation that preserves the freedom of all parties. Thus, generous relations with others strengthen prospects for individual authenticity.

I next construct an "existential lens," which is utilized for the project's existential analysis of power relations. This lens is devised by integrating aspects of existentialist and religious studies theories. It draws first upon Sartre's and de Beauvoir's descriptions of authenticity, bad faith, sadism, and masochism, as well as Rene Girard's explications of mimetic conformity and scapegoating, which further concretize these dynamics within a group context. De Beauvoir's notion of generosity, Cynthia's Willett's parental gaze, and Rebecca Adams's conception of love offer important corrections to the possibilities of power relations proposed by Sartre and Girard. The use of this lens within existential analysis offers a new way of looking at power relations across categories of social experience as the basis for meaningful comparative analysis. I apply this existential lens to the investigation of social sustainability issues. This interdisciplinary comparative analysis examines four major fields of critical social theory: 1) childrearing practices; 2) gender socialization, including intersectional and global considerations; 3) racism, building upon and intersecting with critical theory of childrearing and gender

socialization; and 4) religion, considering the influence of dominant social values on religious teachings.[1]

This existential analysis finds common themes throughout the four categories of critical theory: the suppression of emotion and denial of vulnerability.[2] These themes represent states of bad faith, as the denial of an aspect of nature as well as a denial of freedom to choose differently, which in-themselves are associated with blindness or resistance to reconsidering choices or assumptions. Existentialist theory projects the expression of bad faith as sadism and masochism, oppression and resignation, or dominating, scapegoating, and conforming behaviors. This prediction is borne out through multidisciplinary research in the areas of childrearing, gender, race, and religion.

Miller's research of childrearing and childhood finds that rigid childrearing and punitive treatment of children produce harmful social consequences, including the domination of others or self. Childrearing practices lead children to split off undesired traits, including feelings of vulnerability, and project them onto others, whom they then target. The authoritarian personality project of the Frankfurt School theorists reinforces Miller's research. This project connects the structure of the family with the structure of the larger social body. It also identifies effects of family structure upon the larger community, particularly addressing the proliferation of oppressive attitudes and behaviors. "Authoritarian" families, according to this research, employ more rigid childrearing practices than "democratic" families and also discourage the free expression of emotions among family members. The project links the adult expression of

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[1] The existential analysis of race particularly considers interconnections with sexism and childrearing; the analysis of religion notes the effects of contradictions between pro-peace values and actual religious practices on prospects for sustainable outcomes.
[2] The suppression of emotion reflects dualistic ways of thinking, from views separating humanity from the natural world to those dividing human nature into rationality and emotion, and human qualities into gendered categories.

ethnocentric, prejudiced, dominating, superior, and violent inclinations, on one hand, and conformity and tolerance of these attitudes, on the other, with authoritarian childhood home environments. A denial of -- and distain for -- vulnerability reflects existentialist bad faith; existential analysis connects this denial with "poisonous pedagogy" and authoritarian home environments.

Women's and men's studies scholars illuminate gender socialization processes that suppress aspects of human nature, particularly the emotions of care and compassion, as well as acknowledgement of vulnerability. This research demonstrates links between devalued emotions, vulnerability, and female gender identity, as well as the ways that socialization encourages conformity to gender norms or the social group. Bourdieu, hooks, and Holter, among others, further connect male gender socialization with domination. The denial of vulnerability -- or a fear of admitting vulnerability that is incurred through rigid socialization processes -- provides an explanation for the fact that scapegoating is often directed toward those perceived as socially or physically "weaker." Lindner observes that women become particular targets for authoritarian projection because they symbolically represent vulnerability by virtue of gender ideology and norms. The domination and violence that results from widespread bad faith, however, is not directed solely at women. Holter, for instance, connects the "noncaring aspect of men's situation" with violence and warfare. Studies of intersectional masculinities, which consider social positions associated with race, class, and sexuality, demonstrate hierarchies and domination between men as well as women within patriarchy. Due to gender status, hegemonic masculine qualities shape the priority of general social values, which in turn normalize social behavior patterns, such as pretences of invulnerability,

superiority, and domination.[3] These attitudes further influence global dynamics, Connell

suggests, through transmission of "transnational business masculinity."

Existential analysis of racial theory assesses racial tensions and oppression that

serve to promote a denial of vulnerability. Existential analysis first predicts ways that

previous formative experiences and states of bad faith (as denial of freedom) foster

desires for superiority that underpin oppressive social conditions. Existential analysis of

critical race theory further explores the ways that the experience of objectification and

oppression intensifies the need to deny vulnerability or mask its reality, especially when

combined with rigid childrearing and harsh gender socialization. Research connects

these dynamics with violence. Scholars including West, Fanon, and hooks offer insight

into persistent racial tensions as well as increasing levels of violence within African

American communities. Prevailing patriarchal social values demonstrate considerable

traction; these values are widely adopted even by many negatively affected by their

promotion of dualistic thinking, hierarchy, and oppression. Gender lies hidden in the

heart of race relations; hegemonic masculinity subordinates black masculinity to white

masculinity and then scapegoats black masculinity for adopting the social values of the

larger patriarchal culture.

Finally, religious acknowledgement of human fallibility and vulnerability

suggests a promising basis for authenticity and generosity. However, the encroachment

of world values on religious practices distorts religious teachings and meanings. With

religion a subsystem of the larger social system, vigilance is needed to withstand

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[3] As discussed in the previous chapter, these behavior patterns are not universal within a culture but represent common cultural patterns; differing social paradigms encourage different tendencies. For instance, ethnographic studies demonstrate variability in levels of social violence. Despite this variability, more "violent" societies still demonstrate instances of generosity and cooperation and more "peaceful" societies demonstrate instances of aggression, although they more often than not resolve conflict non-violently. See Signe Howell & Roy Willis, eds., *Societies at Peace* (New York: Routledge, 1989).

inauthentic attitudes of invulnerability, dominance, hierarchy, and hubris.[4] Gender

culture shapes social values, which perpetuate the myth of redemptive violence described

by Wink. Social values further contaminate the religious mission by limiting access to

pro-peace values of care and compassion, particularly among men, and fostering human

hierarchies that constrain collective spiritual maturity.

Existential analysis of the critical social theory of childrearing, gender

socialization, and race demonstrates ways that social pressures constrain emotional

expression and foster denial of, and distain for, vulnerability. Critical theory of religion

exposes internal contradictions between core teachings and actual practices of many

religions. These contradictions limit the effectiveness of these religions in terms of

mediating this denial. Across all categories of analysis, gender emerges as a significant

factor by virtue of the gendering of emotions.

This existential analysis thus connects domination, scapegoating, and conformity

with the suppression of emotions -- notably care and compassion -- and denial of

vulnerability. This suppression and denial are *unsustainable.* Care and compassion

represent ecological virtues, prioritized within the literature of ecological citizenship for

their value in motivating attention to pressing environmental and social concerns.

Vulnerability reflects interdependence, a core principle of deep ecology. This

suppression and denial are also *inauthentic.* Both the suppression of emotion and denial

of vulnerability deny aspects of the factical self and constrain access to transcendence.

Existentialist theory further projects these states of bad faith into sadistic and masochistic

behaviors, or unsustainable outcomes associated with domination and conformity, and

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[4] Wink warns of the seduction of the myth of redemptive violence, which is nourished by patriarchal social structure, founded upon duality and domination.

multidisciplinary analyses of critical social theory confirm these theoretical predictions. Authenticity upholds the expression of pro-peace, ecological values and affiliation; the authentic embrace of emotion and vulnerability represents a condition of sustainability.

The suppression of emotions and denial of vulnerability not only limit access to pro-peace, ecological values and further provoke unsustainable behaviors but also diminish awareness of behavior motivation. Bad faith by definition reflects denial and blindness, which resist awareness of the possibility to choose differently. Authenticity, on the other hand, represents a state of self-awareness that acknowledges facticity and freedom. This awareness allows for thoughtful consideration of meaning, one's motivations, and therefore freedom from blind adherence to inauthentic behavior patterns. Authenticity is valued within an ethic of sustainability not only because of its preservation of freedom and emotional expression. It is also valued for its conscious awareness of -- and responsibility for -- choice and transformative action as possibilities of freedom.

Authenticity, however, is threatened by oppressive power relations with others. Generous relations, which depend upon the authenticity of involved parties, strengthen possibilities of individual authenticity through commitment to the freedom of self and others. This existential analysis provides theoretical support for the inclusion of authenticity and generosity as values within this model of sustainability ethics.[5] The sustainable values of this ethic of sustainability thus include ecological and pro-peace values of care, compassion, and justice, as well as existentialist values of authenticity and generosity.

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[5] This model also upholds acknowledgement of vulnerability and affiliation as manifestations of deep ecological principles of interdependence and interconnection.

Finally I conduct a systems analysis of the contemporary gender system to assess the ways that the social categories investigated in the preceding existential analysis reflect the values and dynamics of the larger system. This analysis offers insight into resistance to and blindness of connections between gender culture and sustainability. In particular, the analysis reveals the persistence of both social ideologies that gender emotions and prevailing social values that devalue eco-, pro-peace, "feminine" values relative to masculine values by virtue of gender status inequities. These ideologies and values constrain possibilities for authenticity and generosity. Contemporary gender culture does not reflect or support an ethic of sustainability, and the bad faith of gender culture obscures this fact.

A notion of erotic self reflects the relational, communal, and embodied nature of sustainability ethics. The erotic self upholds freedom and possibilities for the transformation of self, others, and social relations. Authentic willingness to embrace the vulnerability of self and others strengthens prospects of transcending resistance to considerations of gender, including connections between gender and race, childrearing, and religion, which affect prospects for system transformation.

The findings of these existential and systems analyses contribute to this new model of sustainability ethics. They provide theoretical support for the inclusion of existential authenticity and generosity as sustainable values within an ethic of sustainability and further connect these values with gender culture. In addition, these findings illuminate the ethical nature of the erotic self as well as its power to motivate transformation through a sustainable appeal that upholds the freedom of all. The erotic self approaches the blindness of bad faith, illuminates the significance of connections

between gender and race, and offers a new, innovative approach to education and sustainable leadership development.

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The application of existential analysis as an educational approach provides practical findings that address blindness to connections between gender culture and sustainability. Existential analysis was applied to the design of college courses and high school workshops in interdisciplinary offerings that explore the construction of identity. The project further applied existential analysis to the case of sustainable leadership workshops. The application of existential analysis as an educational method suggests group educational approaches to the field of clinical existential analysis, as well as sustainability education. Qualitative evidence demonstrates the effectiveness of this educational approach. This evidence also offers insight into reasons why the course approach was so well received by students, which include its existentialist learning approach and existential analytical course structure.

The courses addressed identity, power, and oppression, among other topics, and were effective in transcending resistance to gender discussions within coed student groups. This conclusion is based upon qualitative assessments derived from student feedback, qualitative testing, and teacher observations. Student feedback on anonymous course evaluations included enthusiastic written comments and extremely high mean averages. In addition, high school personnel administered pre- and post-program tests of the high school workshops, with highly favorable results, and students requested a follow-on after-school program based on these themes. More informally, school

administrators expressed surprise at the level of student engagement with gender topics, as well as the animated and respectful tenor of the discussions.

College student enthusiasm for the courses and workshops is further assessed through their level of engagement with course materials and gender topics. Students demonstrated interest and engagement with the topic of gender through writing responses and papers, as well as through the choice of gender as optional final paper topic by a significant proportion of male and female students. The students' appreciation of the gender content of the course is further evident in their end-of-semester plays. The students designed, developed, and performed these plays. In each of their plays, students emphasized gender, despite the wide range of topics addressed throughout the semester. In addition, the students clearly enjoyed the process of designing and delivering the plays, which provided powerful commentary about destructive social legacies.

Finally, I observed spirited participation by male and female students in discussions and debates concerning gender. In fact, the most animated discussions of the semester for each of these courses were those that addressed gender topics. These co-ed discussions of gender also reflected high levels of mutual empathy and respect. Moreover, during each of the college courses, students initiated in-class discussions about the value of the course topics and approach, suggesting that the course be required for all college students. Their comments particularly addressed gender and bullying, gender and race, gender and sexuality, and gender and dating violence; both male and female students offered comments and suggestions. In each of these courses students also initiated in-class discussions about the potential usefulness of this course and approach

for high school students. These discussions were the impetus for the high school workshop.

The overwhelmingly positive responses of both male and female students to gender discussions -- assessed through their proactive feedback on evaluations and engagement with course materials and activities -- suggest the usefulness of this approach. The receptivity of male students -- who comprised half of the class body -- to these discussions is striking, particularly in light of their relatively low participation in gender courses. Young men enthusiastically explored gender through their papers, animated class discussions, and the final play at the end of the semester. These findings suggest the effectiveness of existential analysis as an educational approach to encourage reflection and consideration of power, freedom, and blindness, as well as the relationship of these topics to gender culture. Although this preliminary data is promising, the effectiveness of this learning approach has not been quantitatively measured. However, the project provides a foundation for a follow-up program designed to measure the effectiveness of existential analysis as an educational approach. Categories of analysis in this follow-up program may be structured based on preliminary insights into why these courses engender receptivity to gender topics and discussion.

The success of the course appears related to both its existentialist learning approach and existential analytical structure. This existentialist learning approach represents an erotic appeal. Existentialism conveys an empowering sense of identity, associated with freedom, passion, and creativity; existentialist learning methods further encourage self-reflection. The approach encourages student engagement in the classroom as well as with the course material. Class mini-debates and skits, seminar-style student

involvement, small group collaboration, group presentations, and the end-of-semester play encourage lively class participation throughout the semester. Moreover, appealing discussions of identity, freedom, power, and possible factors that block freedom and power offer a rich, empowering context for the investigation of interlocking oppressions, including gender, sexuality, race, and class. These topics themselves encourage creative, enthusiastic participation. With freedom constrained by internalized assumptions as well as external pressures, the recognition of our responsibility for clear-sightedness and choice engenders a freeing sense of awakening and power. This conception of "education as erotic appeal" offers an approach to sustainability education that frames discussion of sustainability ethics in the context of potentiality and flourishing versus a self-denying or self-punishing morality that emerges from dualistic thinking.

The existential analytical structure of the course offers a number of benefits in terms of ameliorating resistance to gender discussion. First, this course structure provides a "big picture," interdisciplinary, comparative perspective, which fosters appreciation for the systems nature of particular oppressions as well as interrelationships between oppressions. It offers a non-threatening entry point to the discussion of gender, with an initial distance that serves to minimize socially constructed resistance to gender discussion. And it positions gender within the broader topic of identity, begins with an overall view, and considers gender as one of several topics within an interdisciplinary analysis of authenticity.

During the development of this course, I devised a philosophical model or "lens" with which to organize the course; this lens, also utilized for the existential analysis in Chapter Four, provides a framework and touchstone for course materials. I structured the

courses by first introducing this philosophical model of power relations and then using

this model as a lens to explore numerous sources of inauthentic behavior. The students

learn about existentialism and existential analysis in the early weeks of the semester. The

discussion of identity, freedom, and power then provides a template for investigation and

analysis of childrearing, gender, sexuality, race, class, nationality, and political factors.

This existential analysis explores and considers unacknowledged constraints to freedom,

which originate from a range of social life experiences. The approach provides a big

picture view of interrelated oppressions as well as comparative analysis of

multidisciplinary research addressing each of the specific oppressions directly. It thus

clarifies various ways domination may be expressed through social or environmental

situations and thereby the connections between oppressions.[6] This view also

demonstrates the systems nature of social and environmental issues as well as the

dynamics of the human-natural world system and thus sustainability issues.

Second, the analysis moves from theory to the application of theory. This

deliberate sequence provides a means to clarify unsustainable patterns before examining

the details of specific situations, as well as to reveal common denominators of a variety

of situations and thus the interrelationships between them. The approach relies on neutral

philosophical language, which allows for appreciation of the common philosophical

aspects of diverse oppressions. The use of these neutral philosophical categories and

terms also minimizes potential resistance associated with previously formed attitudes,

assumptions, or biases toward certain issues, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and so

forth; these topics may present varying meanings for individuals depending upon their

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[6] While individuals may be more interested in some topics than others – race, gender, environmental issues, etc -- this approach demonstrates the interrelationship of these problems.

positions in the conversation. This approach, then, allows for reflection upon the construction of these attitudes or biases, reopening the topics for consideration in a new way.

Third, the order of investigation from more to less universal situations increases the possibilities of fostering empathy. After establishing the theoretical model, the social life history begins with experiences related to childhood, building common ground by addressing the most universal of situations first. Since childrearing norms affect everyone, the topic crosses lines of race, gender, sexuality, religion, and class.

Thus, the course begins with the theoretical, which serves to establish distance from eventual gender discussions, and then progresses to specific applications of theory, including gender socialization as a factor encouraging inauthentic behavior. The structure allows for gender discussions to follow from and build upon appealing discussions of freedom and power, as well as constraints to freedom and power, avoiding unproductive resistance to the topic.

An existentialist approach that addresses gender as a subset of an empowering discussion of identity brought male and female students to the table where they were able to engage with gender issues. Further, the students grasped the systems nature of many categories of life experience, particularly childrearing and gender culture. This view, facilitated by the existentialist structure of the course, provided the distance necessary to get beyond the gendered Other to the system that constructs the gendered Other. This perspective allowed students to step away from their gender identities to less defensively examine the cultural gender machine. These discussions illuminate ways that the

everydayness of gender culture both obscures and reinforces the perpetuation of unsustainable social relations.

The experience of this course suggests that the topic of identity and the method of existential analysis provide effective learning approaches for gender education, perhaps particularly for coed gender education. This educational method offers a means to promote awareness of unquestioned assumptions, interrelationships linking social oppressions, and harms of gender culture. Finally, this project suggests an additional dimension of sustainability education, which builds upon critical systems thinking skills to strengthen knowledge of motivation, meaning, and power relations. The findings offer new approaches to foster interdisciplinary systems thinking and democratic participation within sustainability education designed for colleges and high schools, as well as sustainability leadership programs for business and community organizations.

Contributions

The dissertation provides several significant contributions to the fields of sustainability ethics, existential analysis, and sustainability education, as well as leadership studies and peace education. The project offers a humanities-based existential systems method that complements existing rational systems analyses; a new model of sustainability ethics; and educational approaches that address resistance to recognizing and acting upon connections between gender culture and sustainability.

First, this project provides contributions to the field of sustainability ethics in the areas of systems analysis and the philosophy of sustainability. The findings of this sustainability analysis illuminate the significance of non-rational power relations and their effects on behavior and outcomes for the sub-field of sustainability planning and

analysis. These findings demonstrate ways that dynamics within various categories of social experience motivate individuals' behaviors, both in the short term through desires to dominate or conform and in the longer term through identity construction, which internalizes these desires. These social influences also affect individuals' ego-based needs to protect or defend, which are activated in the face of forces that might limit freedom, threaten rejection, or suggest the possibility of constraint or threat. Moreover, the analysis demonstrates the systems nature of these influences, the way they are related to a systemic mindset of domination, and connections between this mindset and contemporary gender culture.

These findings suggest two courses of action. The first represents longer-term social action, focused on addressing inhibitors to more democratic participation. This course of action addresses gender culture, ideologies, and social values. The second course of action distinguishes non-rational, power-related influences on policy and decision-making within integrative planning systems that incorporate power assessments in addition to rational systems analyses. Power analyses offer insight into on-the-ground realities that affect decisions and downstream outcomes. These power assessments rely upon existential analysis to clarify particularities of a given situation that are associated with organizational structure, relations of relevant parties, decision history, and decision-making processes.[7] Existential analysis also offers an approach to education or training that may be utilized as the basis for offerings designed to improve the success rate of implementation outcomes. These offerings include leadership training, sustainable

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[7] In some cases these analyses might also examine the entanglement of economic interests with ego-needs as well as related organizational dynamics, all of which serve to muddy visibility to underlying motivations and instrumental dynamics.

decision-making workshops, decision-making task force protocols, and implementation planning workshops.

This project also contributes to the field of sustainability ethics by distinguishing the philosophy of sustainability. The model of sustainability ethics developed here provides insight into strategies for transformation. This ethic rests upon non-dual, deep ecological principles of interconnection and interdependence, which are supported by the tenets of existentialism. Recognition of interdependence is linked to authentic acceptance of vulnerability within an interconnected human-natural world community. In addition, recognition of interconnection gives rise to a self-interested moral basis for sustainability ethics, which translates into collective interest in the flourishing of all. Thus governed by collective self-interest and potentiality, an ethic of sustainability is creative and inspiring rather than moralizing, ascetic, or self-denying. It reflects an embodied, sensual, erotic experience of life. This ethic cultivates sustainable forms of power that reflect vitality and solidarity as action in the world.

Established research findings that link gender, power, and violence within patriarchal social systems have not been sufficient to overcome persistent blindness of connections between gender culture and sustainability. This philosophy and ethic of sustainability not only support and explain these research findings. The attractive, pleasurable, and life-affirming basis for sustainability ethics also offers an appeal to transcend resistance to gender discussion.

This project further contributes the example of a group form of existential analysis to the field of clinical existential analysis. The field of existential analysis focuses primarily on individual psychoanalytic therapy. In the clinical setting, existential

therapy investigates denial, and questions concerning the individual's relationship with his or her potentialities guide analysis. The process involves study of the interplay between social and psychological factors, meaning, and the frustration of meaning-seeking desires into unsustainable forms of power and behavior.

These topics are also pertinent to analyses of power and decision-making. This project suggests a possible application for existential analysis within a group context as an approach to engage oppression and environmental sustainability, which involve areas of collective denial. In the case of sustainability education, for instance, questions address the potentiality of the human-natural world system. This approach encourages reflection upon the relevance of meaning to human behavior and recognition of relations between collective mindset, social values, and sustainable versus unsustainable expressions of power.

Finally, this research contributes an additional perspective of sustainability education. The project offers an educational philosophy that builds upon critical systems thinking skills to strengthen knowledge of behavior motivation, meaning, power relations, and their relationships to sustainability outcomes. This information may be provided through standalone courses or through modules within courses that address a variety of sustainability topics.[8] These modules may be viewed as forms of "power analysis," which complement education about interdisciplinary systems analysis and planning. The approach encourages reflection upon existing cultural patterns, mindsets, and power relations, the ways they have developed, and their relationship to sustainable or unsustainable behaviors. An aim of this education is the cultivation of sustainability

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[8]These topics include, but are not limited to: systems analysis and planning; sustainability leadership and decision-making; organizational development; sustainability, peace, and justice studies; sustainable development; environmental policy; sustainability ethics; and the philosophy of sustainability.

professionals who are savvy about power relations that influence organizational

dynamics, decision-making, policy, and implementation outcomes.[9]

      This learning approach also affords students and professionals the opportunity to

consider and reflect upon the formation of their own assumptions and beliefs. A social-

psychology of domination provides insight into near universal susceptibility to

conformity, dominating inclinations, and their effects on decision-making and leadership.

In addition, a systems view of gender culture provides an opportunity to recognize

resistance to acknowledging and acting upon connections between gender culture and a

collective mindset encouraging competitive individuality versus communal collaboration,

and its relevance to sustainability concerns. This educational model is relevant for

sustainability education, peace education, and sustainable leadership training.

Limitations of the Project

      Evaluation of the existentialist approach of the courses and workshops described

in this project provides limited qualitative feedback but not conclusive quantitative

assessment of the results. Preliminary data concerning the utilization of existential

analytical approaches in college and high school classrooms includes written responses

from college students in three semester-long course and evaluation of an alternative high

school workshop by school administrators, including pre- and post-tests and written

feedback provided through qualitative feedback forms. In addition, I observed what I

judged to be unusual receptivity to topics of gender and oppression from a co-ed student

body, energetic collaboration between male and female students concerning the topic of

gender, and high level of enthusiasm for the course, activities, and materials. This data

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[9]Education about systems and organizational dynamics also develops awareness of organizational culture and the ways that superior attitudes and critical or judgmental views lead to the discouragement or disempowerment of individuals within the group, which in turn limits the potential and effectiveness of the organization.

suggest the effectiveness of existential analysis as an educational approach to encourage reflection and consideration of freedom, limitations to freedom, and social blindness. Further quantitative and qualitative testing is needed, however, to establish and confirm the usefulness of this approach.

Future Directions

The findings of this dissertation provide the basis for numerous future projects, which may be grouped into three categories. The first category addresses measurement and testing of educational offerings. The second category addresses future research. This category includes research applications of existential systems analyses, existential analysis of additional areas of critical social theory, and research extending the work of this project. The third category includes future research and development of academic and community-based educational programs.

An initial project measures and tests this educational method. The educational offerings described in this dissertation provide a foundation for a follow-up program designed to quantitatively evaluate the effectiveness of existential analysis as an educational approach. Such an evaluation would involve a college course or high school offering, with measurement based on quantitative and qualitative feedback through self-assessment and reporting.[10]

This dissertation research raises thought-provoking questions about possible points of intersection with prospect theory. Daniel Kahneman's psychological theories about non-rational decision-making processes consider the effects of intuition, framing, pattern recognition, anchoring, and so forth on human reasoning processes. An intriguing future project would explore possible connections between Kahneman's psychological

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[10]Crossroads Second Chance High School has indicated a willingness to consider such a project.

analyses of decision-making and this dissertation's attention to power dynamics, with particular attention to gender implications.[11]

This dissertation employs existential analysis as a method of investigation of four major fields of critical social theory. Additional future projects extend this analysis to more fully address alternative categories of social experience, such as leadership, citizenship, political action, and bullying. For instance, an existential analysis of sustainable leadership would analyze the literature of leadership, management, decision-making, organizational theory, and ethics, particularly considering environmental, whistle-blowing, and ethics business cases. Research of sustainable citizenship and political action may further develop the notion of sustainable power by analyzing the literature on political organization, nonviolence, and social movements, concentrating on the environmental justice movement and green jobs programs.[12] In particular, this project suggests directions for environmental justice research that further develop the philosophical foundation for environmental justice as an inclusive social movement, explore practical implications of environmental justice as an engaged form of experiential learning, and consider intersections with green jobs development programs. Moreover, within an analysis of citizenship, a notion of erotic subject may build upon the erotic self to consider the embodied vulnerable subject and social freedom. Such a project would draw from Martha Fineman's conception of the vulnerable subject and Willett's writings on social freedom. Finally, this research approach offers a method for assessing

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[11]Kahneman's theories have been applied to areas ranging from economic behavior to medicine. See Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2011). This comparative analysis might also include Frankfurt School social psychological research of ethnocentrism and prejudice. The project would further consider the integration of non-rational decision-making analyses with current adaptive management and human-natural systems analyses.

[12]A planned future project will also apply this model to the literature of ancient and contemporary peaceful cultures.

educational, psychological, and sociological literature of bullying within school, intimate, family, friend, or work relationships.

The third category of projects includes future research and development of academic and community-based educational programs. This project suggests a program for sustainability education comprised of a series of courses within an integrated curriculum.[13] In addition, research findings from the sustainable leadership project described above would provide a basis for the development of an offering for corporate sustainability officers or businesses. A pilot of such a program may be evaluated in partnership with a local business. Finally, additional community engagement projects based on this existential approach, perhaps including media projects, suggest a means to build bridges of applied ethics between the academy and the larger community.

Reflections on this Project

This dissertation clarifies connections between contemporary gender culture and sustainability and also offers new ways to bring these connections to awareness. Through this project, I demonstrate two innovative applications of existential analysis with practical implications. The application of existential analysis as a research method contributes to the development of a new model of sustainability ethics, which distinguishes sustainable values, sustainable versus unsustainable forms of power, and the conception of an erotic self capable of motivating and engaging transformation. Existential analysis further provides the basis for educational offerings that promote awareness of relations between influences and outcomes, as well as our denial of or resistance to acknowledging these connections. This approach is effective in illuminating

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[13]A survey course would provide overview information of interconnected oppressions and sustainability, as well as connections between social and environmental sustainability. Follow-on courses would explore a particular topic in more detail. An encompassing, birds-eye view of interlocking oppressions within one course clarifies the significance of power to sustainability issues.

connections between decision-making, power relations, and social values that are influenced by gender culture as a component of sustainability education, sustainable leadership education, and transformative or peace education.

In her discussion of the contemporary ecological crisis, Plumwood argues that possibilities for transformative action depend upon our awareness and analysis of social dynamics, observing that "our capacity to gain insight from understanding our social context, to learn from self-critical perspectives on the past and to allow for our own limitations of vision, is still one of our best hopes for creative change and survival."[14] This new model of sustainability ethics and these educational offerings provide theoretical and practical approaches to social analysis and reform. Project findings illuminate obstacles that impede our transition to a more sustainable social context as well as possible remedies. Plumwood emphasizes the importance of a sense of reason that encompasses rationality and embodiment:

> We should not mistake rationalism for reason – rather it is a cult of reason that elevates to extreme supremacy a particular narrow form of reason and correspondingly devalues the contrasted and reduced sphere of nature and embodiment… Reason has been made a vehicle for domination and death; it can and must become a vehicle for liberation and life.[15]

As the subject of sustainability ethics, the erotic self offers a compelling appeal to bad faith through its embodiment of joy, satisfaction, and meaning, which motivates transformative action; the erotic self thus calls forth the flourishing of the human-natural world.

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[14] Val Plumwood, *Environmental Culture: The ecological crisis of reason* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 10.
[15] Ibid., 4.

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