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what is enlightenment

the magazine for evolutionariesSM

CONSTRUCTING THE

NEW

MAN

4 UNIQUE PERSPECTIVES
ON MASCULINITY IN
THE 21ST CENTURY

Explaining the Obama Phenomenon

How 50 million cultural creatives are changing the political map

19 Powerful Women Tell the Truth about Men

Jean Houston, Ani DiFranco, Jenny Wade, Rebecca Walker, and more

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Issue 41 August-October 2008

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What Is Enlightenment? is dedicated to a revolution in consciousness and culture. Guided by the evolving vision of founder Andrew Cohen, we are in search of a radical new moral and philosophical architecture for twenty-first-century society. We believe that finding this framework for transformation—rooted in the timeless revelation of enlightenment, reaching toward a truly coherent ethics for the postmodern world—is imperative, not only for the evolution of our species, but for our very survival. By asking the hard questions of the new science and the ancient traditions, of art and culture, of business and politics, *What Is Enlightenment?* seeks to create a dynamic context for conscious engagement with the greatest challenges of our times, a groundwork for the ongoing liberation of human potential.



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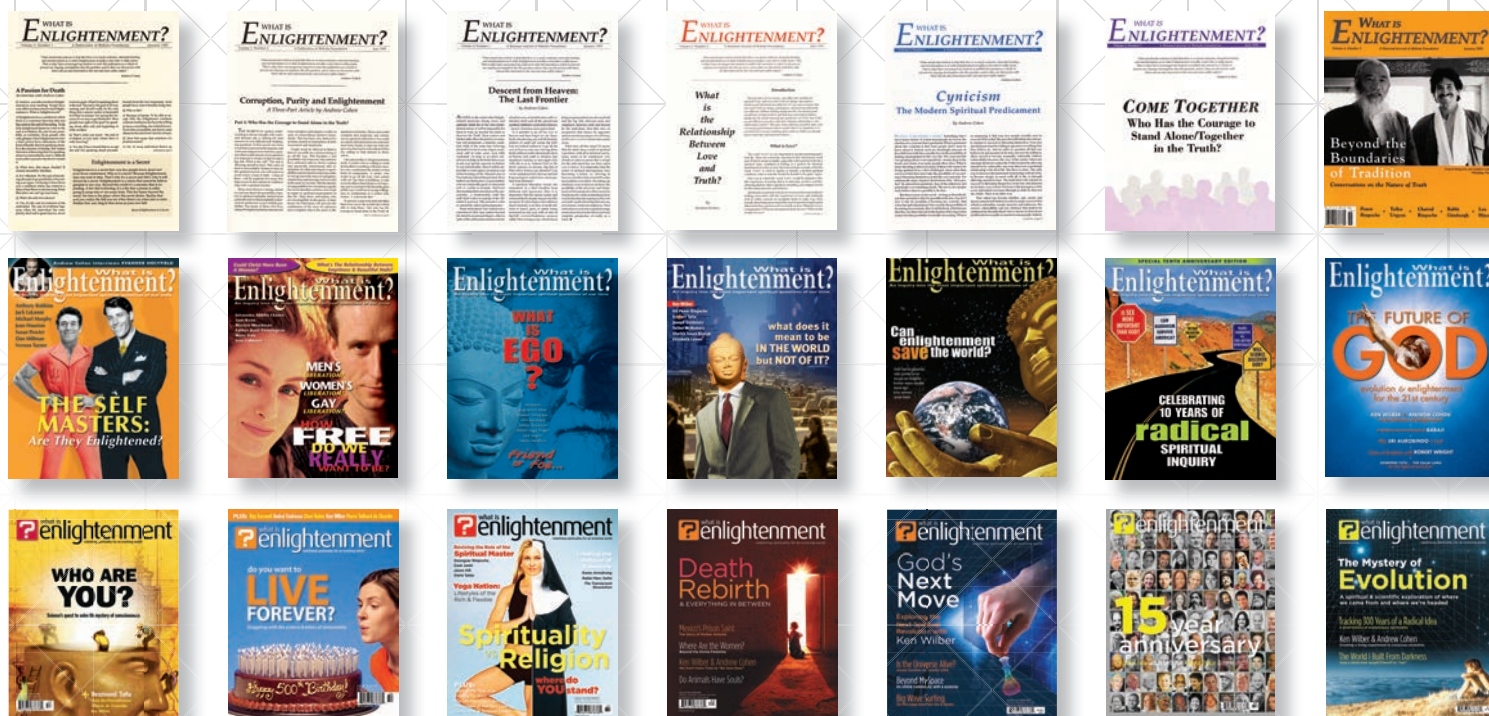
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Announcing *EnlightenNext* magazine

January 1992 →



We're changing our name!

Yes, it's true. After sixteen years and forty-one issues carrying a banner that boldly asked the question *What Is Enlightenment?*, our masthead will now read *EnlightenNext* and will be dedicated as *The Magazine for Evolutionaries*.

What Is Enlightenment? has never been just a magazine. It has been and continues to be the expression of a commitment to spiritual liberation and the evolution of consciousness by a dedicated group of individuals who want to share their passion with the world. In recent years, because our parent organization, *EnlightenNext*, has grown and evolved in exciting ways, the magazine has become just one of the many expressions of our collective vision. So in order to more truly reflect its connection to all of the work we are doing, we have decided to rename the magazine *EnlightenNext*. I'm sure this new step in our own develop-

ment will only help us to share more of the very things people look to us for: information, inspiration, new ways of thinking, and spiritual conviction.

How is *EnlightenNext* magazine going to be different from *What Is Enlightenment?* It will be better! Not only will it be a more transparent and powerful expression of an evolutionary worldview, it will be accessible to more people. I can't tell you how many times friends and subscribers have complained that, while they love and support the work we are doing, they simply don't have the time to read our *long* articles—friends like evolutionary biologist Rupert Sheldrake, who has told me this on more than one occasion. Famed *Way of the Peaceful Warrior* author Dan Millman even suggested on a recent visit that we publish a second magazine that would contain our features in digest form!

The fact is, until quite recently, in spite of hearing this

feedback repeatedly, we felt we wouldn't be able to express our passion for what we are doing unless we produced an overstuffed Reuben sandwich every single quarter! So the main difference now is that the magazine will be a little shorter and a little more accessible . . . we hope! With all the manifold ways we're now planning to get the word out, we're hoping that the shorter print format will not only enable more readers to feel excited rather than intimidated by our publication, but will also give us much-needed time to devote to other forums for engagement.

You see, not only are we changing our name, we are endeavoring to expand the ways we can share the message and spirit of our mission to include as many people as possible. As I mentioned in our last issue, we are planning to initiate an *EnlightenNext* annual conference beginning in 2010. And we have some other big plans as well: an

internet radio program that will feature the work we are doing with the magazine and beyond; an *EnlightenNext* web presence to provide a second-to-none forum for all things relating to the evolution of consciousness and culture; and regular international conference calls with the editors. All of the above will be supported by an annual spiritual retreat open to all individuals who are interested in learning how to put the teaching of Evolutionary Enlightenment into practice.

You may be wondering why we are changing our name. There are many reasons. (And I can't tell you how many heated debates we've had over the years about taking this step.) First of all, we have found that more often than not, people call *What Is Enlightenment?* simply "Enlightenment" magazine. It seemed that the significance of a title that asks this question was lost on so many of our readers that it wasn't really serving its

the magazine for Evolutionaries . . .



Whats Next?



November 2008 →

intended purpose. In addition, experts in publishing have often told us that it's a terrible idea for the title of a magazine to take the form of a question.

The reason I originally chose that name was that we started the magazine as an expression of a real-time inquiry. For me, at least, the clash of traditional Eastern enlightenment concepts with postmodern secular cultural convictions in the spiritual marketplace was creating a lot of intellectual, philosophical, and spiritual confusion. To try to help sort out this mess and come to some clarity about a subject that is not easy to grasp in the first place, my students and I attempted (I believe successfully) to initiate a process of open, transparent, and inclusive inquiry in as public a forum as possible. I knew I wasn't the only one who was trying to find my way through the often challenging complexity of East-meets-West spirituality. So as I was in the process of

asking the important questions to further my own development, I was trying to include as many other interested souls as I could. The general feedback we've gotten over the years has been that we've definitely been doing something right, and this seems to be more true now than ever.

But something has changed. Over the years, our dedicated practice of spiritual and philosophical inquiry has led to some genuine—and often enlightening—discoveries. And the magazine has become more a vehicle for sharing our passion for what we have *found* than it is a vehicle for merely asking important questions. Our regular readers will already know that we are passionate in our commitment to evolutionary spirituality and to all of its moral, ethical, philosophical, and spiritual implications for our collective future. The evolution of consciousness and how it relates to the evolution of our shared culture is what we are

dedicated to, and that's what this magazine is all about.

We feel that as culture evolves, *so must the meaning and significance and expression of the spiritual impulse*. It seems obvious to more and more people at the leading edge that the spirituality of the future will be defined by our awakening to an evolutionary worldview. Such a worldview is based on the recognition that reality at every level—from the gross to the subtle, from cosmos to consciousness, from the ordered patterns of matter to the ineffable depths of Being itself—is all, in its infinite and elegant complexity, part and parcel of a creative process. And *it's a process that is going somewhere!* Waking up to this ever-invigorating Big Picture provides a new spiritual worldview that has the capacity to reorient the often cynical and alienated modern and postmodern self in ways that can be life transforming.

Some of us feel that this

emerging and literally cosmic perspective is the next enlightenment. That's why we're calling the magazine *EnlightenNext*.

We already have the next three issues of the magazine planned, and we are busy at work on the first two. The feature section of the first issue with our new banner (No. 42) will be an introduction to evolutionary spirituality. Issue 43's feature section will be dedicated to a topic we are all interested in: "Sex, Spirituality, and the Evolution of Culture." And then, following the raging success of our "Real Evolution Debate" (in Issue 35), we are going to dedicate a similarly styled feature section in Issue 44 to what we're calling "The Real Consciousness Debate." We hope you're as excited about our new beginning as we are.

Thank you for your support.

Andrew Cohen

Andrew Cohen



EnlightenNext Evolutionaries

Calling All Activists, Idealists & Evolutionaries



If we are serious about creating a better future, it's up to us to make sure it happens.

How? By participating in the greatest endeavor there is—the evolution of the leading edge of consciousness and culture. The fourteen-billion-year project that is our evolving universe has reached a critical juncture where it needs conscious, creative human beings to help build the next step, together.

Are You an Evolutionary?

www.enlightennext.org/universe-project

Over 10,000 people have joined since May.

Connect to one of the most inspiring evolutionary networks and cultural experiments taking place today. It's **entirely FREE**. Sign up and:

- **Listen** to an instant MP3 download, a "Guru & Pandit" dialogue between Andrew Cohen and Ken Wilber on creating a new culture
- **Receive** a weekly email with evolutionary news, quotes, and avenues for creative engagement
- **Participate** in weekly EnlightenNext webcasts and discussions

Epic in scope and purpose

BARBARA MARX HUBBARD, author of *Conscious Evolution: Awakening Our Social Potential*

Do you want to know what the search for ultimate meaning might look like in the year 2100? Then read this book. *11 Days* is spirituality at the cutting edge of human evolution.

JIM MARION, author of *Death of the Mythic God: The Rise of Evolutionary Spirituality*

Michael Wombacher's account of his eleven day experience is remarkable for its clarity and authenticity; it merits being read by whoever seeks a path to personal development and the evolution of consciousness.

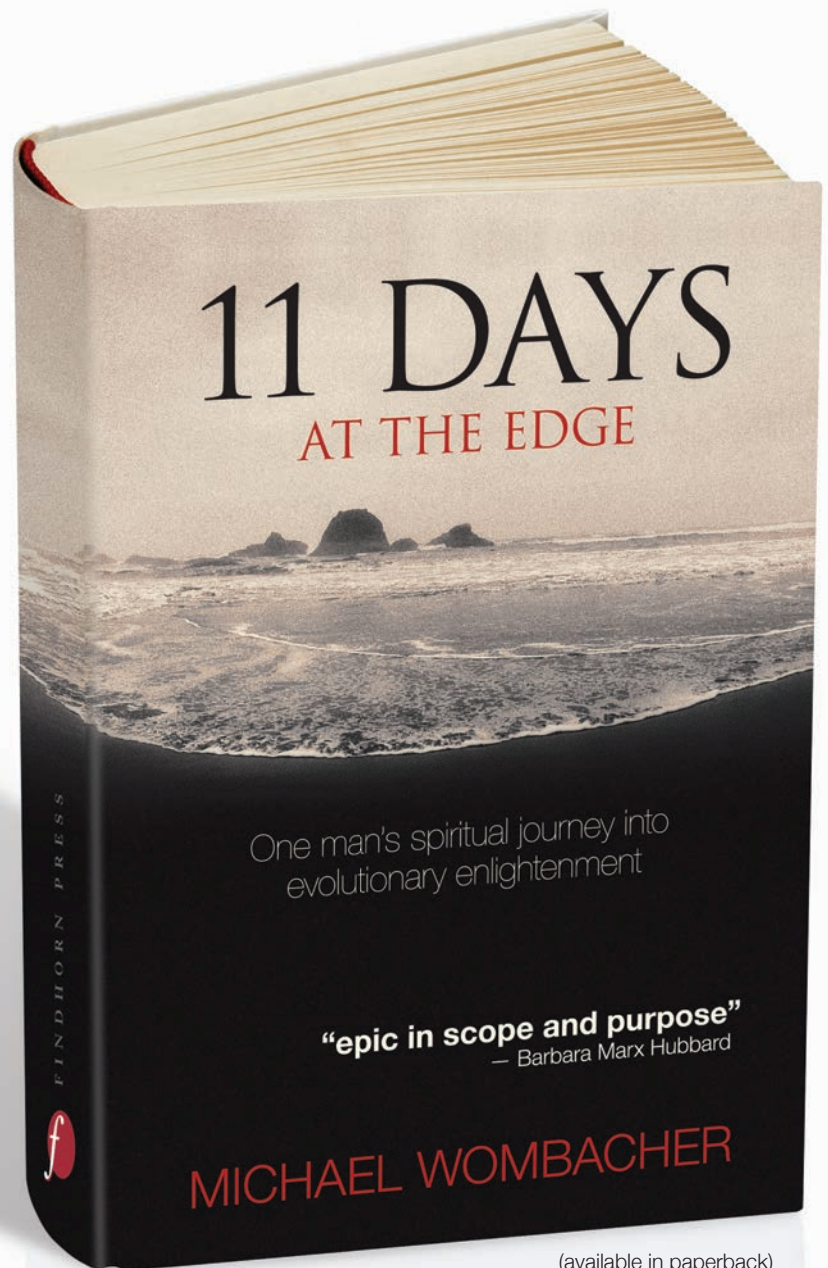
ERVIN LASZLO, author of *Science and the Akashic Field: An Integral Theory of Everything*

Wombacher's engaging account of his spiritual journey with Andrew Cohen is a beautiful and compelling read. His book conveys a palpable sense of the transmission that an authentic spiritual teacher can give to his or her students. I highly recommend *11 Days at the Edge* to anyone interested in the work of Andrew Cohen in particular, and evolutionary enlightenment in general.

STEVE MCINTOSH, author of *Integral Consciousness and the Future of Evolution*

Michael Wombacher has given us a clear and beautiful story of eleven days spent with Andrew Cohen, an authentic American spiritual master. A delightful introduction to Evolutionary Enlightenment.

ALLAN COMBS, author of *The Radiance of Being: Understanding the Grand Integral Vision; Living the Integral Life*



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FINDHORN PRESS



EnlightenNext is serious about change.

Dear Reader,

What Is Enlightenment? magazine (soon to be *EnlightenNext* magazine) is committed to spearheading the evolution of consciousness and culture by bringing into our media-driven world a higher and deeper perspective. These pages introduce you to our team of consultants and good friends who, through their passionate and committed guidance, are helping us to accomplish this immense goal.

If you value what we do, if you would like to join this growing collaboration, and if you can assist us with underwriting support or make a donation large or small, please contact us. We need your financial support.

The most common refrain we hear in the marketplace is “Why haven’t I heard of this magazine yet?” We need *you* to help us change this—not just to grow a magazine, but to grow an entire movement.

Meet our agents of change

Some of the world’s leading consultants, business strategists, and thought leaders are working with EnlightenNext to build a powerful foundation for the future.



Daniel Burrus

Daniel Burrus is one of the world’s leading technology forecasters and business strategists and the author of six books. His specialty is in solving impossible problems and seeing invisible solutions. The *New York Times* referred to him as one of America’s

top three business “gurus.” His personal passion has been to help people discover and apply their personal gifts to create a better future.

“If people don’t have an expanded sense of consciousness about themselves, we won’t be able to make the transformational changes necessary to overcome our societal problems. In order to create an enlightened future, the next revolution needs to come from within ourselves. EnlightenNext is positioned to enable this revolution.”

www.burrus.com



Nadine Hack

Nadine B. Hack is president of beCause Global Consulting, which provides a range of advisory services for corporations, foundations, governments, nonprofits, and individuals on cause-related strategies, philanthropic initiatives, and the organi-

zational structure required to sustain these as integral components of core business. Recognized internationally for her proven expertise in strategic planning and creative problem solving, Hack has provided innovative guidance to numerous organizations throughout the world for over three decades, including work with Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela.

“I have seen first-hand how the teachings and core foundation of Evolutionary Enlightenment have made extraordinarily rapid and sustainable organizational change occur. Thus, working with EnlightenNext has been deeply inspiring, and I have personally found it extremely satisfying to share my expertise with this creative movement’s ever expanding mission.”

www.beCause.net



David Parker

David Parker is the president of David Shannon Parker Associates, a magazine consulting firm that assists publications to achieve their goals by maximizing their financial, marketing, and circulation potential. He has served as the publisher of *The*

Nation and *DoubleTake* magazine, and he specializes in assisting nonprofit and/or mission-driven publications such as *Mother Jones*, *The Sun*, *Tricycle*, *Sojourners*, *Utne*, *OnEarth* (NRDC), *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Yes*, *Paris Review*, *WorldWatch*, and dozens more. He is committed to working with publications that are on the forefront of political, spiritual, and social change.

“It has been a special privilege to work with WIE for over eight years to help bring their unique, critical, and cutting-edge message of spiritual evolution to the widest possible audience.”

david@dparker.biz

A call for your support.



Kevin Clark

Kevin Clark is a brand strategist and customer experience designer. He is an author and well-known global speaker working with marketing experts, brand strategists, designers, academics, cultural anthropologists, and futurists about the

wants and needs of customers and the intersection of emerging social and technology trends. He is the author of *Brandscendence: Three Essential Elements of Enduring Brands* as well as many professional articles and papers. He is currently Program Director, Brand and Values Experience, IBM Corporate Marketing and Communications, and is the global IBM Brand Experience Community Leader. He is also the founder of Content Evolution LLC, unaffiliated with IBM, the entity that manages the rights to his written works and selected public appearances.

"It has been a pleasure collaborating with the EnlightenNext team in the development of a durable set of integral brand assets that continue to transcend and include a diverse set of ideals, concepts, and people."

www.contentevolution.net



Brian Robertson

Brian Robertson is the founder and CEO of Ternary Software, an award-winning provider of software development services and an experimental ground for new organizational methods. Brian pioneered the internationally acclaimed practice

of Holacracy, a radically novel approach for helping organizations wake up and consciously evolve. Recently he cofounded HolacracyOne, a new company helping to spread Holacracy through public workshops and by supporting professional consultants interested in adding Holacracy to their service offerings.

"Rarely do I find a group so deeply aligned with the commitment to work beyond ego. It has been an absolute honor to work with them, and they've enriched and furthered my own journey immensely in the process."

www.holacracy.org



Arielle Ford

Arielle Ford has spent the past twenty-five years promoting consciousness through all forms of media. She is one of the founding partners of the Spiritual Cinema Circle, a DVD club dedicated to providing inspiring and uplifting movies. Arielle develops inno-

vative PR, marketing, and affiliate strategies for both the Spiritual Cinema Circle and Earth Cinema Circle clubs. Her next book will be *The Soulmate Secret: How To Manifest The Love of Your Life with the Law of Attraction* (January 2009, Harper One)

"Andrew Cohen and his dedicated team at EnlightenNext are a rare combination of deep vision, brilliance, and enthusiasm. For anyone in search of a brighter and more meaningful future, these are the folks to play with right now."

www.everythingyoushouldknow.com

If you are interested in discussing underwriting support for this magazine or other opportunities to help grow this movement, please call or email:

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FOUR-PART SPECIAL FEATURE

Constructing the New Man



In Defense of Manliness

During his sixty years at Harvard, Harvey Mansfield has seen his share of social changes, and he thinks our “gender-neutral” society is among the worst. His solution? *Manliness*—and plenty of it.

by Ross Robertson **52**



Beyond the Rambo Mentality

Two rising stars in the next generation’s men’s movement, Tripp Lanier and Jayson Gaddis, explain the need to transcend limiting stereotypes in the quest for the new man.

by Carter Phipps and Tom Huston **60**



Awakening the Warrior Poet

Jesus may have turned the other cheek, but he wasn’t afraid to crack a whip when necessary. Christian leader Erwin McManus describes the mix of strength and sensitivity displayed by truly “holistic” men.

by Carter Phipps **64**



The Making of a Marine Officer

In this action-packed article, we follow the adventures of Nathaniel Fick, who learned some powerful lessons about the sacred brotherhood shared by soldiers on the front lines in Iraq.

by Joel Pitney **70**

50 To follow up on last summer’s widely discussed issue on women, *WIE* presents an in-depth look at the twenty-first-century man. What is authentic masculinity today? How has the move toward gender equality changed society’s rules—and roles—for men? Is there a “new man” emerging on the horizon, ready and willing to reshape our culture in the coming decades? We consulted a panel of experts for some wide-ranging answers...

FEATURES

What Ever Happened to the Vikings?

Just south of the Arctic Circle, a radical experiment in transforming gender roles has been taking place.

The descendents of the quintessential he-men are now pushing baby carriages through the cities of Scandinavia. Our resident feminist embarks on a daring expedition to find out what’s happening to men in the most progressive countries on the planet.

by Elizabeth Debold **94**



Speaking of Men

19 women leaders envision the future of men

To paraphrase Sartre, it is not who we are but what we can become that is of interest. *WIE* asks a

few good women to boldly envision the next step for men. Featuring Jean Houston, Ani DiFranco, Jenny Wade, Sally Kempton, Rebecca Walker, Asra Nomani, and more.

by Elizabeth Debold with Carol Ann Raphael **74**



FEATURES



Confessions of a Formerly Sensitive New Age Man

What do you get when you mix 1970s California, a family of therapists, a spiritual search, and one impressionable Gen-Xer? Just your ordinary sensitive New Age guy. This revealing, poignant, and often hilarious memoir chronicles one man's trials and tribulations in a world where "macho" is a four-letter word.

by Ross Robertson **80**



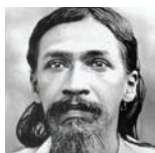
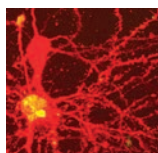
THE GURU AND THE PANDIT

What It Means to Be a Man

In their twentieth dialogue, Cohen and Wilber strive to define the leading edge of masculinity today, exploring the cultural forces at play, examining the evolution of male-female relations, and explaining why spiritual enlightenment may hold the key to liberating men's authenticity.

Andrew Cohen and Ken Wilber **38**

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Wake Up! You're Part of a Movement!

How Paul Ray and Jim Garrison plan to bring the world's fifty million cultural creatives together under a single unifying banner.

by Joel Pitney and Carter Phipps

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A Call to Arms for the Postmodern Male

by Andrew Cohen

Letters



Issue 40
May-July 2008

POIGNANT PEOPLE PROBLEM

We human fledglings, not knowing our origin, purpose, or destination, truly long for a mythos that would put a foundation under us. Elizabeth Debold's sensational interview with Joel Primack and Nancy Abrams was a brilliant stab at it. It has been argued that the brutality of the twentieth century was produced, at least in part, by the spiritual poverty concomitant with scientism and the ever-shrinking status of *Homo sapiens* in the scheme of things. Fundamentalism, be it religious, scientific, or otherwise, could be interpreted as desperation clinging to empty hope. But "A View from the Center of the Universe" was imaginative and hope-filled. I think it could help greatly with our existential angst. Nevertheless, I wonder how to address the damage to our inner world, once dignified by our belief in a personal God who had inner experiences as we do.

Thanks for yet another ebullient ride into fresh new worlds!

David A. Bradshaw
Canton, OH

CONQUERING THE GALAXY?

Nancy Ellen Abrams's assertion that we "have arisen out of [this Earth]" and "we have every obligation to pass it on to our children" could not be more timely. Her hopes that our "distant descendants" might take over the galaxy, however, took me aback. As Alan Watts astutely observed, just as the term "apple-ing" could be used to describe what apple trees do, so too could the term "people-ing" be used to describe what the Earth has done.

Abrams speaks of the importance of "appreciating [one's] place in the real universe." Can we do so if we fail to appreciate our place within the tapestry of Gaia? She says "we need to identify ourselves with intelligent life." But if we fail to see the Earth and the trees as intelligent, we won't be able to fully understand who we are. A reverence for all life and intelligence, not just life endowed with interpretive and reflective abilities, must inform our grand story; we won't see the big picture underlying our story until we use knowledge not to dominate but to refine the soul.

Elliott Robertson
Philadelphia, PA

ALL KINDS OF ATHEISM

I was both disappointed and surprised by "Atheists with Attitude." I expect somewhat more depth and insight from *WIE* into these issues, but instead you seemed content to offer a rather polarizing and conventional view of the subject. Dawkins, Harris,

Hitchens, and Dennett vary widely in their views on atheism, each entering this debate from very different backgrounds—science, humanism, journalism, and philosophy—and each portraying different worldviews. Yet you and your "critics" paint them with the same broad brush, as atheists, and do not attempt to delve into the heart of the issues.

There are all kinds of atheism, as there are all kinds of theism. Atheism does not only apply to scientific materialists or secular humanists; it can also apply to those who do not subscribe to theistic traditions (a-theists) but are deeply spiritual in their perspective. Buddha has been labeled an atheist because Buddhist teachings do not refer to a personal or biblical God. Are we to conclude from this that Buddha is anti-God? If you read these authors, their unity of purpose is to release us from the belief structures of religion, the belief that both our humanity and our divinity are dependent upon our religious traditions. They are asking us to look hard at these traditions and let go of a legacy of division, hate, war, prejudice, and pure fantasy. What harm can that do? Our innate spirituality does not require the Bible, the Koran, or the Dhammapada to find expression in our lives. Is God not already with us before we go looking for him?

I was particularly disappointed by your rave review of John Haught's book *God and the New Atheism*, subtitled

"Hard-Core Atheists, and the Fate of a Godless World." This is the worst kind of fear-mongering rubbish, depicting the new atheism as soft because it does not have the intellectual honesty to face the true implications of atheism—nihilism and existential despair. The same has been said of Buddhism, and for the same reasons—fear and misunderstanding. You all can do better than this.

Ed Kelly
via email

DO AS I SAY . . .

I very much appreciated Andrew Cohen's article "Raising the Bar." As an Emmy Award-winning journalist who has been engaged in many different aspects of the consciousness movement, I know from personal experience that the challenges of living a conscious life often lie in the many difficult judgment calls we each have to make minute by minute. What I have been finding is that there are entire organizations put together with a "higher consciousness" theme, yet when it comes to the inner workings of the organization and the ways that people treat one another, there seem to be some major disconnects—more like "do as I say but not as I do." Phrases like "we can choose higher" and "all is good" seem plentiful in my vocabulary of late, but "raising the bar" actually hits the mark for a change.

Donna Lerner Lavery
via email

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conciliation economics social change indigenous culture unity paradigm shift interconnectedness environment spirituality politics
conflict resolution change sacred society meditation relationship to the land presence diversity mother earth meaning collective evolution
agriculture art experience activism food love stewardship service nature responsibility community relationship wisdom awareness community
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editorial



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO be a man? What does it mean to be a man at the beginning of the twenty-first century in a post-traditional, postmodern world? Who are our exemplars, and to whom can we look for mentorship as it relates to gender identity in our own time? If we look backward for indications of how to be men in the new world that we're all creating together, we're unlikely to find what we need. Why? Because the world that we're living in is *changing* at a faster rate than it ever has before. Cultural evolution, which has progressed through history from traditional to modern to post-modern values, is very much in a state of flux, transition, and to put it bluntly, existential confusion. The truth is, these days most sophisticated men and women aren't very clear about what it's *supposed* to mean to be male or female. I know in my own case, being a late-blooming boomer from a liberal, progressive family, the subject of what it means to be a man literally *never* came up. (Although I must admit, Superman was my favorite superhero when I was a kid!)

In order to address this enormous void in our evolving culture, we at *What Is Enlightenment?* have put together what we believe is a very compelling collection of articles, interviews, and dialogues that, I must admit, raise more questions than give answers. But that's what we felt we needed to do: *Get the conversation going!* I, for one, am pleased with the result. This has been an educational journey for all of us here and one that we feel will hopefully bring a little bit of light and energy to an important dimension of our collective lives that needs to be illuminated.

In our special feature, "Constructing the New Man," we present four perspectives on manliness in the twenty-first century from men with *very* different backgrounds, ages, and viewpoints. In "What Ever Happened to the Vikings?" senior editor Elizabeth Debold presents a provocative and hard-hitting exposé of the predicament in which men find themselves in some of the most progressive countries on our small planet. In "Speaking of Men," we ask nineteen powerful, influential, thoughtful, and accomplished women to describe their vision of what the next step for men might be. In "Confessions of a Formerly Sensitive New Age Man," my colleague Ross Robertson describes in excruciating detail what it was like to grow up in the 1970s in Northern California, guided carefully into manhood by an adoring psychotherapist who happened to be his mother. Finally, in my "Guru and Pandit" dialogue with philosopher Ken Wilber, we endeavor to embrace this entire topic in the biggest context we can.

I'm sure you will enjoy this heady brew!

On another note, we're all thrilled to announce that with the next issue, we're changing the name of our publication from *What Is Enlightenment?* to *EnlightenNext*. Turn to page 4 for an explanation of why that is and what other exciting changes there are to look forward to.

Thank you for your interest, enthusiasm, and support!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andrew Cohen'.

Andrew Cohen
Founder and Editor in Chief

Awakening the Authentic Self

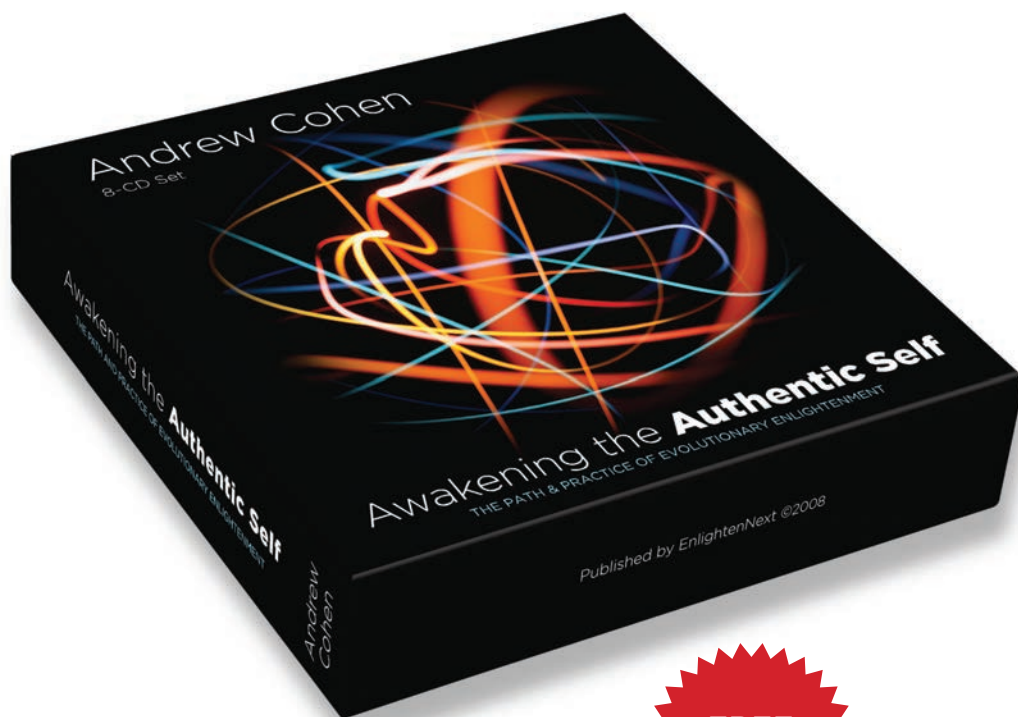
The Path & Practice of Evolutionary Enlightenment

— LIVE RECORDED SESSIONS WITH W/Ê FOUNDER **ANDREW COHEN** —

Spiritual experiences can awaken you to a higher perspective, but how do you live a truly awakened life?

As Andrew Cohen explains in this groundbreaking CD collection, when you begin to see your life in a cosmic context, you discover a meaning and purpose for being alive that far transcends any sense of limitation. You realize that your own yearning for spiritual transformation is not separate from the evolutionary impulse driving the entire cosmos— a powerful, creative force that Cohen calls the Authentic Self.

When you awaken to the Authentic Self, you experience a profound inspiration to create new possibilities for human life. Yet the most challenging part is actually living from the higher perspective that such an experience reveals. In *Awakening the Authentic Self*, recorded live during a retreat in Tuscany, Italy, Cohen addresses that challenge directly, presenting a comprehensive path and vision for spiritual development in the twenty-first century.



This 8-CD collection explores:

- Disc 1** A Cosmic Purpose for Spiritual Development
- Disc 2** Being and Becoming: The Two Aspects of God
- Disc 3** From Egocentric to Kosmocentric: Taking On God's Perspective
- Disc 4** Cultivating a Godlike Intention to Evolve The First Tenet: Clarity of Intention
- Disc 5** The Development of the Soul The Second Tenet: The Law of Volitionality
- Disc 6** The Ultimate Spiritual Practice The Third Tenet: Face Everything and Avoid Nothing
- Disc 7** You Are a Process The Fourth Tenet: The Truth of Impersonality
- Disc 8** The Evolution of We The Fifth Tenet: For the Sake of the Whole

To listen to FREE samples go to:
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pulse

NEWS FROM AN EMERGING CULTURE



ZEITGEIST

Public Displays of Meditation

When **Alexander Cequea Fuentes** decided to sit down, close his eyes, and calmly meditate in a Texas shopping mall, he aroused both the intrigue of shoppers and the ire of mall security. "Sir, you can't do that here," insisted one guard. When Fuentes looked up at her, innocently asking why, she was at a loss for words. Eventually her boss arrived, escorting Fuentes outside with the gruff explanation, "There's no meditating in the mall!"

A seeming revival of sixties-style "be-ins," public displays of meditation (PDMs) may represent the next big thing among Gen-Y spiritual seekers in America, and the trend seems to be catching on fast. **Max Simon**, founder of "The selfcentered Tour" (getself-centered.com), intends to create a movement of "one million young people" engaged in such "guerilla-style meditation" practices. In one video of a recent PDM, Simon and fifty others invade a busy shopping area in the midday California sun, planting themselves on the pavement and assuming positions of cross-legged passivity in what they describe as an effort to "teach people that wherever we are, and whatever we're doing, we can always shut down the mind-chatter and go within. Even on Hollywood Boulevard."

"We see a fast-paced sea of stress and people feeling rushed and missing the moment," explains Fuentes, who heads up an independent movement called the Public Meditation Project (publicmeditationproject.blogspot.com), which has already staged PDMs in Iowa City, Houston, Boulder, San Francisco, and Chicago. To help plant a few solid anchors in that sea of stress, Fuentes calls on his supporters to "publicly display your peace" and outlines the simple, cynicism-thwarting purpose of such displays. "World peace begins with inner peace," he says, "and inspiration leads to revolutionary action."



NUMBERS

Even Sin Evolves

This past spring, the Vatican announced an update to the traditional seven deadly sins—pride, envy, gluttony, lust, anger, greed, and sloth—for the first time in over fourteen hundred years. According to **Bishop Gianfranco Girotti**, head of the Catholic Church body that oversees the forgiveness of sins, the addition of seven new "social" sins is required to help guide moral choices in an increasingly complex world. "You offend God not only by stealing, taking the Lord's name in vain, or coveting your neighbor's wife," said the good bishop, "but also by wrecking the environment [and] carrying out morally debatable experiments that manipulate DNA or harm embryos."

Who said there's nothing new under the sun?*

*Hint: Ecclesiastes 1:9





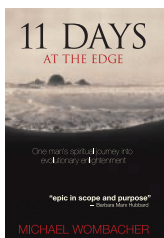
IN PRINT



BOOK

The Lives of Sri Aurobindo

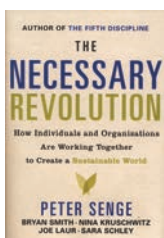
Sri Aurobindo, pioneer of integral yoga, lived a truly integral life. Now scholar **Peter Heehs**, one of the founders of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Archives, uses his access to unpublished letters, diaries, and other primary sources to convey the full multidimensionality of Aurobindo's life—not only as a political activist and spiritual guru but also as “a scholar, a revolutionary, a poet, a philosopher, a social and cultural theorist, and the inspiration for an experiment in communal living.” Though *The Lives of Sri Aurobindo* weighs in at over five hundred pages, serious “Aurobindians”—as well as anyone who desires to learn more about one of the foremost pioneers of integral thought—won't want to miss this fascinating new portrait of India's most evolutionarily enlightened sage.



BOOK

11 Days at the Edge

In July 2005, California author **Michael Wombacher**, pursuing a long-standing spiritual passion, ventured to the jagged mountain peaks of Montserrat in Spain to attend a retreat led by spiritual teacher **Andrew Cohen** (who is also the founder and editor in chief of this magazine). The tangible result: *11 Days at the Edge*, a compelling narrative, published by Findhorn Press, that chronicles the development of Wombacher's experience, insights, and deepening inquiry into Cohen's teachings of Evolutionary Enlightenment from one day to the next (including extended quotes from Cohen, transcribed from the original audio recordings). Admittedly, our editorial bias is on full display with this recommendation, but that doesn't mean the book isn't objectively great. ☺



BOOK

The Necessary Revolution & Theory U

Peter Senge, author of *The Fifth Discipline*, has been synonymous with leading-edge business practices for nearly twenty years. In his latest book, *The Necessary Revolution*, he and his coauthors explore the ways in which major businesses today are boldly taking responsibility for the social, economic, and environmental challenges of the twenty-first century—and implementing major changes at a pace that is putting most governments to shame. Senge's colleague **Otto Scharmer** may even be helping to speed things along. His book *Theory U* promotes an intuitive and contemplative practice called “presencing” that is designed to free business leaders' minds so they'll be capable of “leading from the future as it emerges.”



ON SCREEN



FILM

Enlighten Up!

“Determined to prove that yoga can transform anyone,” filmmaker **Kate Churchill** decided to choose an ordinary subject (a 29-year-old New York journalist named Nick) and follow him along the many assorted—and contorted—paths of the modern yoga world. Featuring appearances by such yogic celebrities as **B.K.S. Iyengar**, **Rodney Yee**, and **Ana Forrest**, *Enlighten Up!* focuses on Nick's encounters with teachers around the globe, including a number of “mystics, gurus, mad men, and saints” in India—many of whom profess to have something far deeper to offer Nick than mere *asana* advice. This fun look at the state of contemporary yoga, both East and West, is due to begin screening in select theaters this summer.



DOCUMENTARY

The Future We Will Create

For four days once a year, a thousand people gather in Monterey, California, to listen to the smartest, most creative thinkers and doers on the planet. They've come together to hear fifty speakers deliver eighteen-minute speeches at the TED conference—a veritable vortex of optimism, vision, and inspiration. Attendance at TED, which stands for Technology, Entertainment, Design, is by invitation only and comes with a hefty four-digit fee, making the new film *The Future We Will Create: Inside the World of TED* not only a fine bargain but also a backstage pass to some of the most mind-bending, inertia-busting ideas circling the globe. This fascinating documentary, coproduced and directed by actress **Daphne Zuniga** and **Steven Latham**, is available now on DVD.



KOSMIC CONCEPTS

survivolution*
n. [ser•vahy•vuh•loo•shuhn]

1. Change in the memetic composition and psychic depth of the human population, in response to global stressors, which ensures the survival of the species.
2. The gradual emergence of a new human species, *Homo noeticus*, that physically resembles *Homo sapiens* but is better able to respond to planetary crises due to a marked increase in consciousness.
3. a. The process of developing in order to survive.
b. Conscious evolution for the sake of the whole.

*Word coined by author John White



KUDOS . . .



To the John Templeton Foundation, the philanthropic supporter of all things science and spirit, for upping the intellectual ante in the advertising world. Their “Big Questions” series of ads, which have appeared in *The Economist*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *The New York Times Book Review*, and other major publications, feature responses by renowned scholars, scientists, philosophers, and theologians to such thought-provoking questions as: “Does the Universe Have a Purpose?” and “Does Science Make Belief in God Obsolete?” The ads are stimulating, substantive, and a welcome relief from the half-nude, zombie models of Dolce & Gabbana—to say the least.



To Michael Murphy, cofounder of Esalen Institute and the human potential movement, for taking the bold step of no longer sitting on the fence when it comes to that perennial question: Does some aspect of human consciousness survive bodily death? In a recent talk at the California Institute of Integral Studies, Murphy announced that after decades of avowed agnosticism, he’s finally been convinced by the overwhelming amount of empirical evidence accumulated through “survival” research—particularly the work of renowned reincarnation researcher **Ian Stevenson**—that the reality of life after death is no longer in question. “I feel more and more like a coward,” he explained, “if I say I’m agnostic.”



To Michael Dowd, *WIE*’s favorite evangelical Christian minister turned evangelical Christian evolutionist, for the remarkable success of his book ***Thank God for Evolution***. Aside from being praised to high heaven by no less than five Nobel laureates, Dowd’s innovative testament to the divinity of the evolutionary process quickly sold out its initial small-press print run of ten thousand copies, only to be snatched up for republication by Viking (an imprint of Penguin Group USA). What’s more, they paid Dowd an advance of \$750,000 for the already-published book! Here’s hoping that Viking’s impressive show of faith translates into worldwide success for Dowd and his wife and partner, scientist Connie Barlow, as well as to all others who are actively preaching the good news of evolutionary spirituality far and wide.



SITES & BLOGS



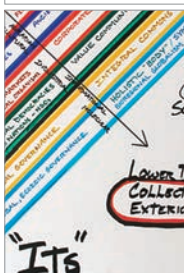
www.philosophersnotes.com

Brian Johnson, creator of the social network formerly known as Zaadz (now Gaia.com), has launched a new project: producing short Cliffs Notes–like guides to the most popular spiritual and self-help books on the market. His PDF and MP3 summations are clever, funny, and sure to hasten the long commute to enlightenment.



www.eol.org

Evolutionary biologist E.O. Wilson’s ambitious plan to catalog all known forms of life has finally begun. Featuring a scalable interface designed to provide levels of detail appropriate to kindergarteners, high schoolers, or academics, this massive “Encyclopedia of Life” aims to incorporate “contributions from scientists and amateurs alike.”



integraldiagrams.blogspot.com

Attention integral geeks! Aussie IT professional Stephen Lark has created the world’s largest collection of IDs (integral diagrams) that the internet has to offer. Visit his Flickr portfolio to view them all, and stay tuned to his blog as he tracks integral mapmakers’ impressive attempts to chart the evolving contours of the Kosmos.



nikon.com/about/feelnikon/universcale

One of the coolest corporate promos ever to strike the web, Nikon’s “Universcale” is an exquisitely rendered interactive Flash animation conveying epic orders of cosmic magnitude. Spanning subatomic particles on the left to the entire known universe on the right, this is one chart you’ll want to play with for a while.

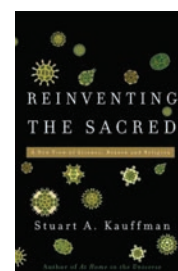


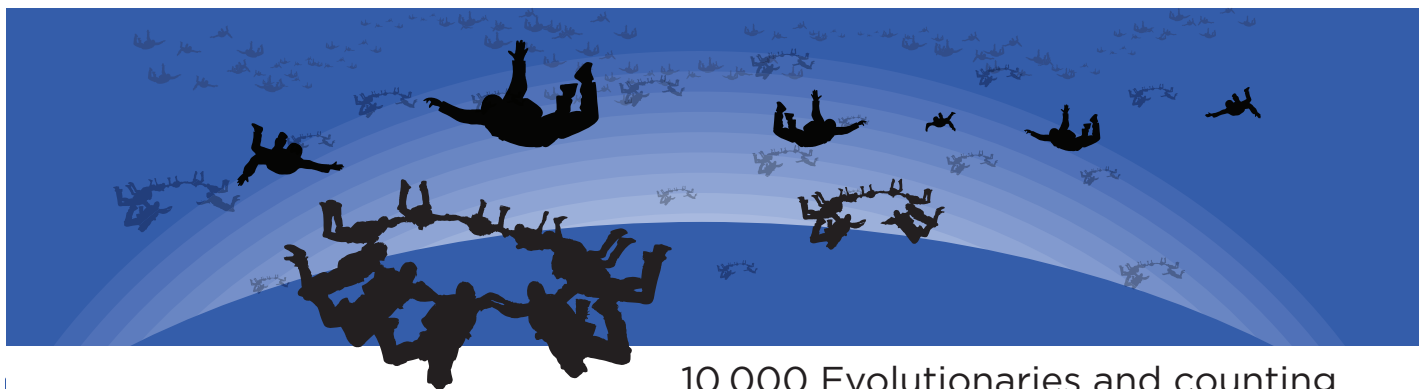
ON OUR BOOKSHELF

“One view of God is that God is our chosen name for the ceaseless creativity in the natural universe, biosphere, and human cultures.

Because of this ceaseless creativity, we typically do not and cannot know what will happen. We live our lives forward, as Kierkegaard said. . . . We live our lives forward into mystery, and do so with faith and courage, for that is the mandate of life itself. But the fact that we must live our lives forward into a ceaseless creativity that we cannot fully understand means that reason alone is an insufficient guide to living our lives. Reason, the center of the Enlightenment, is but one of the evolved, fully human means we use to live our lives. . . . We must therefore reunite our full humanity. We must see ourselves whole, living in a creative world we can never fully know.”

—Stuart A. Kauffman, *Reinventing the Sacred*





10,000 Evolutionaries and counting . . .

What's new in the world of *WIE*? For starters, it's the end of that world as we know it.

Beginning with our next issue, due out this November, *What Is Enlightenment?* is proudly adopting the name of its parent organization and will henceforth be known as **EnlightenNext** magazine. This is an exciting transition, with implications extending far beyond a new cover logo, and we can't wait to show you what we have in store! (For more on this, see page 4.) But we can still survey the world of *WIE* while it lasts . . .

Recently, *WIE*'s founder, **Andrew Cohen**, joined the prominent German Benedictine monk and Zen master **Willigis Jäger** in Munich, where the two engaged a packed house of seven hundred inquisitive souls in a lively inquiry into the purpose of God-realization in the twenty-first century. And Cohen is scheduled to return to Europe for similar events in Paris this October, taking the stage alongside integral theorist and Club of Budapest founder **Ervin Laszlo** and Jesuit priest **Father Henri Boulad**. But Cohen isn't the only *WIE* editor spreading the evolutionary dharma these days.

This past May in Berlin, **Tom Steiner**, editor of *WIE*'s German edition, spoke to a crowd of four hundred about the need for Germans to acknowledge the profound karmic weight that the Holocaust still exerts on their collective psyche. He then moderated a panel discussion between ex-Nazi soldier

Günther Wieland (whose life was transformed with the aid of Jungian therapy), Dachau survivor **Moshe Mendelssohn** (who became a postwar Nazi hunter), and **Ursula Boger** (granddaughter of Auschwitz's sadistic torturer Wilhelm Boger). This powerful event, punctuated by moments of speechlessness, concluded with a guided meditation led by the young German spiritual teacher **Thomas Hübl**.

In June, *WIE* editor **Elizabeth Debold** was busy working to provoke the evolution of consciousness in Europe as well, traveling to Frankfurt, London, Paris, Copenhagen, and Amsterdam to speak about the future of women's liberation in an integral, evolutionary context.

Back in the States, members of *WIE*/EnlightenNext have been invited by **Michael Beckwith**, **Barbara Marx Hubbard**, and the rest of the board of the **Association for Global New Thought** to bring our evolutionary perspective to bear on AGNT's "Evolution of Revolution" conference in California this October. Specifically, EnlightenNext has been asked to explain our particular method of translating enlightened idealism into concrete action (see agnt.org for full conference details).

Rounding out the conference circuit, editor **Carter Phipps** is scheduled to participate in a closed-door thirty-person salon led by **Deepak Chopra** in California this July, before returning to California in early August to speak at Integral Institute and JFK University's

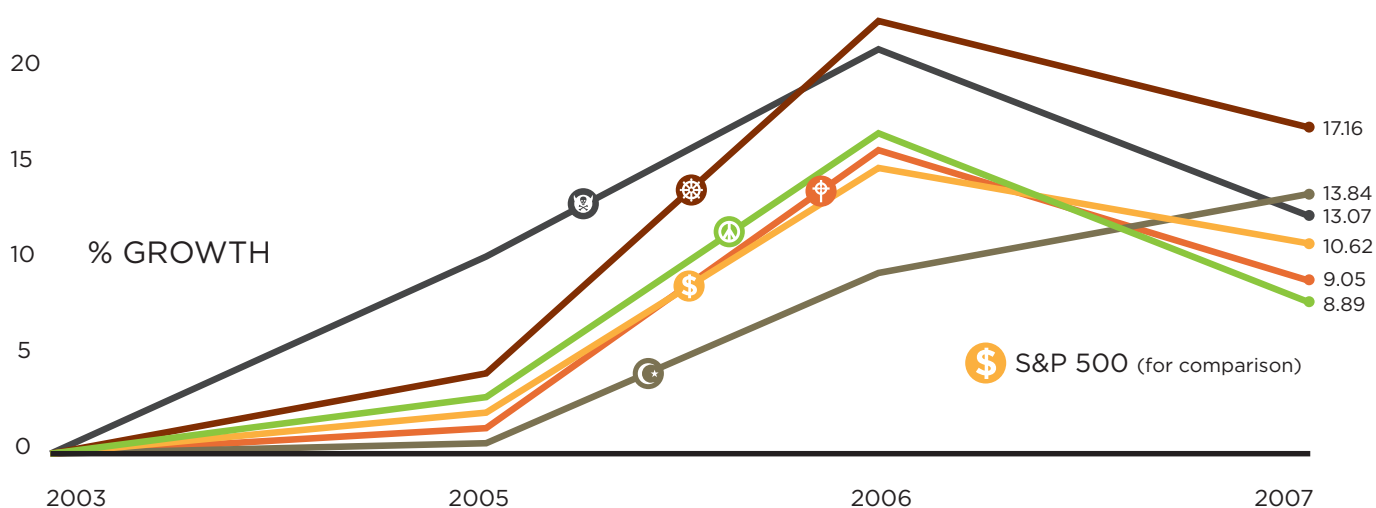
Integral Theory in Action conference (August 7–10) alongside fellow editor Debold. (The two will also speak at the Boulder, Colorado **Integral Leadership in Action** conference, October 9–12.) Lest he catch his breath, Phipps will then immediately fly to Edinburgh for the annual **Festival of Spirituality and Peace**, where he'll participate in a public conversation with noted expert on science-spirit relations **David Lorimer** (see edinburghfestivals.com/peace).

Finally, in these past few months, the finishing touches were put on ***Awakening the Authentic Self***, a new CD collection of Cohen's talks on Evolutionary Enlightenment (also available online as à la carte MP3s). In his off-hours, Cohen oversaw production of ***Punk Funk***, the latest album from his jazz-fusion band, **Unfulfilled Desires**. Thousands of callers participated in EnlightenNext's "Changing the World from the Inside Out" global teleconference on May 31, which featured six hours of evolutionary edutainment, including a live Guru & Pandit conversation between Cohen and **Ken Wilber**. *WIE.org* began directing potential subscribers to our new digital edition of the magazine. And the all-new **EnlightenNext.org** website was launched, which makes it easier than ever to sign up to become an **Evolutionary** and join a growing alliance of spiritual change makers around the globe (over 10,000 as of this writing) who are passionate about creating the future—and know it can't possibly be done alone.



Putting Your \$\$ Where Your Values Are

With the creation of the Dow Jones Dharma Index earlier this year, the world's Buddhists, Hindus, Jains, and Sikhs now have a guide for aligning their investment strategies with their "do no harm" spiritual values. And they're not alone. Whether you're a pro-life Catholic, a shari'a law-abiding Muslim, or an environmental activist, you can choose from a variety of financial indexes that track the performance of companies whose business practices are in accordance with your particular set of values. Below we've compared a selection of indexes representing five different worldviews to see which value system brings home the highest returns.



KLD Catholic Values 400 Index

What would Jesus invest in? This index's "sin screening" excludes companies involved in "anti-life" pursuits like stem-cell research, contraceptives, the defense industry, and environmental pollution.



Dow Jones Islamic Market Index

Tracks companies whose practices comply with Islamic shari'a law, which excludes, among other sins, pork products, entertainment, and banking (it's against Islamic law to charge interest on a debt).



KLD Domini 400 Social Index

If social justice and the environment are your primary concerns, this index is the leading benchmark for socially and environmentally responsible investing worldwide.



Dow Jones Dharma Global Index

This index includes companies that are aligned with the principles of *ahimsa/karuna*, or nonviolence, and *loka-samgraha/metta*, or stewardship.



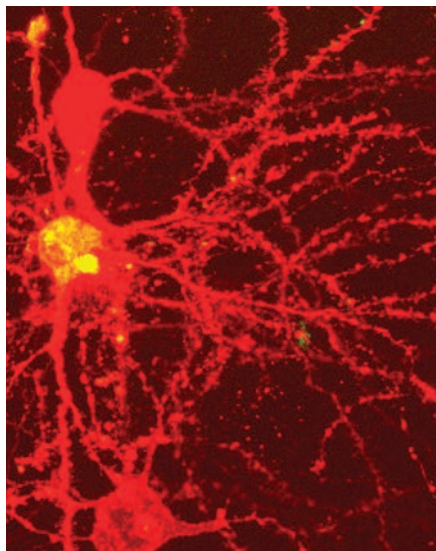
The Vice Fund

This socially irresponsible mutual fund is made up exclusively of companies from the four sin sectors: alcohol, tobacco, defense, and gambling. Investors beware! You may be risking more than your money on this one . . .



THINK ABOUT THIS

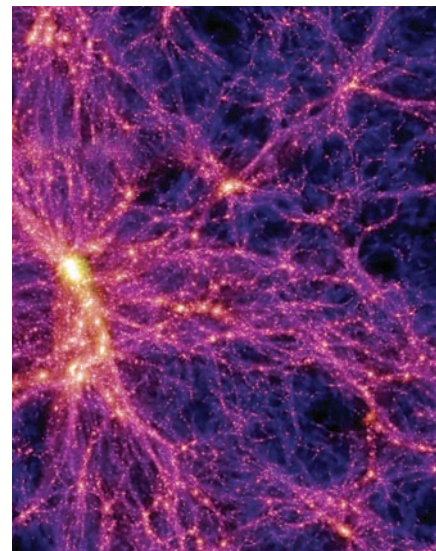
Microcosm, Macrocosm



An enhanced image of the neuronal network of a mouse brain produced by “intracellular recording artist” Mark N. Miller of Nelson Lab, Brandeis University.

“One is only micrometers wide. The other is billions of light-years across. One shows neurons in a mouse brain. The other is a simulated image of the universe. Together they suggest the surprisingly similar patterns found in vastly different natural phenomena.”

—David Constantine, *The New York Times*



A simulation of the universe's dark matter network (purple) connecting visible-matter galaxies (yellow), courtesy of the Millennium Run team at the Max-Planck Institute for Astrophysics.



NUTRITION CORNER

The Flavor of Intention



“H₂Om: Water with Intention,” is a sexy new brand of designer water gracing the Prada backpacks of everyone from MTV superstar turned “Indigo Mother” **Jenny McCarthy** to environmentalist actor **Ed Begley, Jr.** Not only is this San Diego mountain spring water crystal clean, but it also promises to provide “a positive affirmation in every bottle.” Infused with good vibrations, the

water comes in a variety of “flavors” to cater to your every intention—including *perfect health*, *gratitude*, and *will power*. There’s even a special **Dr. Masaru Emoto** variety, named after the godfather of conscious water himself.

If you don’t buy the vibrational water theory, then you may want to check out “Intentional Chocolate,” a sweet combination of the world’s finest Hawaiian cacao infused with the good intentions of meditating Buddhist monks (using patented technology), which claims to be “scientifically proven to heighten well-being.” Promoted and tested by the Institute of Noetic Science’s **Dean Radin**, this “spiritual chocolate” has allegedly passed double-blind, placebo-controlled tests and is said to have sparked, on average, a sixty-seven percent increase in the “well-being, vigor, and energy” of those who ate only one ounce per day.

Now, whether or not these two products represent the cutting edge of science’s mind-matter exploration is something we’ll leave for you (and your sweet tooth) to decide. Bon appétit!

skytostreet

GO GREEN

FOLLOW

YOUR

BLISS

THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY

BE THE CHANGE

HOPE

PEACE

EVERYTHING

IS

**FREE
TIBET**

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

POSSIBLE

Wake up! You're part of a movement!

How Paul Ray and Jim Garrison plan to bring the world's fifty million cultural creatives together under a single unifying banner

by Joel Pitney and Carter Phipps

Have you ever thought you were alone in holding the values that you hold—an organic food-buying, national health care-supporting, yoga-practicing, misunderstood counterculturalist waiting for the rest of the world just to get it? Well, according to Paul Ray and Jim Garrison of Wisdom University, it's starting to. And with the box office success of *An Inconvenient Truth*, Barack Obama riding the "arugula vote" to the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, and Eckhart Tolle and Oprah speaking about enlightenment over the internet to millions of people around the world, it's hard to see your values being as alternative or fringe as they used to be.

But this is just the beginning, according to Ray and Garrison, who suggest that this "wave of cultural creativity" represented by the movements toward ecological sustainability, nontraditional spirituality, civil rights, and grassroots politics is part of a "wisdom culture" that emerged in the 1960s and, since 9/11, has reached a whole new level of significance around the world. In fact, they say that this new set of values, which they believe is now held by approximately fifty million American adults and is represented in most countries around the world, is the biggest cultural emergence since the Renaissance. And they're conducting a

bold new international study to catalog the number of people who hold these values in order to highlight this new demographic and show the world—and themselves—that the "cultural creatives are becoming a critical mass."

Ray and Garrison are certainly not the only ones to notice a new cultural emergence on the horizon. Other models of cultural development, including those of integral theorists Ken Wilber, Clare Graves, and Don Beck, have described similar value systems, calling them postmodern, worldcentric, or the green meme. They, too, have distinguished them from earlier stages of cultural development such as modernism and traditionalism. Author and social entrepreneur Paul Hawken also refers to this new movement in his book *Blessed Unrest*, calling it the "global civil society." In the marketplace, the cultural creatives make up the consumer base for the burgeoning LOHAS (short for Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability) market, which has been growing at ten to fifteen percent a year since 2000. It currently generates five hundred billion dollars annually in global sales through companies like Whole Foods, Patagonia, and Gaiam.

Ray is a macrosociologist who has been studying cultural evolution for over thirty years. He originally coined the term "cultural creatives" in the 2000 book *The Cultural Creatives: How 50 Million People Are Changing the*

World. By his and Garrison's definition, the cultural creatives are the people "who have participated in the social and consciousness movements that have emerged since World War II." In response to a broadening concern for the health and well-being of the planet, this population has already pioneered many of the social and technological innovations—from online political organizing tools to solar energy and green business models—that Ray and Garrison suggest will help usher in a new stage of human cultural development.

So if the number of people holding the idealistic values of the cultural creatives is so significant—thirty percent of American adults and even more in some parts of Western Europe—why haven't we seen more evidence of their presence in the public sphere? Ray and Garrison attribute it to a type of cultural identity crisis. Because this demographic is still so new, they explain, many cultural creatives still labor under the assumption that they are alone in their attitudes and fail to recognize the public significance of their individual values. Hence, Ray and Garrison aim to give the cultural creatives a unifying identity, allowing them to see themselves, their vision, and their work as part of a larger emergence.

It is in politics that Ray and

Garrison hope this unifying identity can make the biggest difference. Ray characterizes the political views of the cultural creatives as being neither left nor right but representing a whole new ideological dimension he calls the “political north” or the “new progressives.” According to Ray, this subpopulation, which he now projects to be as large as forty-five percent of the American electorate, is chiefly responsible for the success of Barack Obama’s presidential campaign. But like the cultural creatives as a whole, he says, “the political north is a population and not yet a group. It comprises individuals who hold progressive values, but . . . they are not mobilized into a coherent political force.” He makes the bold

The values revolution that came of age so explosively in the sixties is still developing and maturing.

claim that “they represent the largest single values group in the country,” but he adds that their values have very little presence in the current political dialogue or debate.

So what will it take to give the cultural creatives their own identity? This is where the global values study comes in. In early 2008, Ray and Garrison surveyed thousands of people from all over the world to determine how many are “waking up” to the values of the cultural creatives. They hope this information will provide evidence to many of the world’s political and social organizations, as well as to the cultural creatives themselves, that there is a new value system active around the world that,

when organized, can have a significant impact and even win elections.

Along with their study on the emerging wisdom culture, Ray and Garrison also have a bold plan to organize and mobilize this postmodern renaissance. They are planning the release of a popular book and a documentary film, and they’re organizing an international conference to be held in Washington, DC, in November 2009. Through this broad dissemination of information, they are hoping to make “a statement to the world public concerning the nature of the crisis confronting [us] . . . and the extraordinary hope for the future, represented by the emergence of millions of people and organizations worldwide embracing . . . new [values]

supportive of a positive vision of the future.” To actualize this vision, Ray and Garrison are also working with some of the world’s leading problem-solvers, such as

Lester Brown and Amory Lovins, to establish a Global Solutions Wiki—a dynamic forum for “the best scientific and technical minds we can aggregate” to generate global-scale solutions to our most pressing challenges . . . and fast.

The impact of their values study and its accompanying media rollout is difficult to predict, since nothing of its kind has ever been implemented before. And questions certainly remain about whether or not this segment of the population, whose members (as some cultural observers have noted) pride themselves on possessing a highly individualized sense of diversity and difference, can actually be organized and unified in the way that Ray and Garrison are counting on.

Even if a much greater mobilization is ultimately achieved, the cultural creatives will have to overcome their reputation for ineffectiveness when it comes to matters of governance and politics. Indeed, can a movement that has mostly defined itself in opposition to the powers that be start to embrace the kind of responsible pragmatism that will inevitably be called for when it begins to define the mainstream value system rather than merely protest it?

Still, these two pioneers are certainly correct that the wisdom culture is likely to expand significantly in the coming years, driven by environmental concerns and the many profound systemic problems that increasingly plague our globalizing world. And Ray and Garrison are trying to inject a much-needed solution-oriented mindset into this segment of the population, which has up to now been known more for its progressive idealism than for its practical realism. Perhaps most importantly, their work suggests that the values revolution that came of age so explosively in the sixties is still developing and maturing. With that maturation comes hope that after several decades of a conservative turn in American politics, next year we may all get to see the exciting results of a grown-up progressive cultural movement, self-aware and self-assured, that is ready to bring a new depth and breadth of thinking to the complex challenges of a modern world.



Listen to an interview with Jim Garrison about the Cultural Creatives at wie.org/garrison



The Ghosts of Millions in the Lonely Mind: Descartes' Delusion

by Howard Bloom

WHERE IS THE HUMAN MIND? Is it in the genes that shape instinctual memory? Is it in the traffic between the brain's one hundred billion cells? Is it in the wisdom stored in books and libraries? Is it in the councils and the forums where leaders hash out policy?

It's in all of these and more! Mind is a highly social thing. "I think, therefore I am," Descartes declared. Perhaps he should have said, "They thought, so there's a me."

In 1636, René Descartes decided to perform an experiment. He wanted to know right from the get-go, from the nitty-gritty, what it is we really know. We all have paranoid moments when we see that everything supposedly real could simply be our dream. We imagine for an instant that no one else is real at all, that they're just imaginary beings, noodles floating in the soup of our fantasies. Descartes had those moments too. How could he tell, he wanted to know, what was real from what was not? Was there anything so basic that it shouted out "I am" every time his doubting brain cells shouted out "You're not!"?

So Descartes closed the door of the modest study in his house in Amsterdam, sat down by the fire, stared out the window at the folks in the street below, fingered a piece of beeswax, and swore he'd stay there by himself until he'd scratched down to the bedrock—if there was such a thing. He wanted to hit the granite base under the mirage we call reality. To pull this off, Descartes had to forget a few small things that didn't fit his philosophy. He forgot how free he felt when he'd first entered Amsterdam and realized that the crowds in the street were too preoccupied with their own business to stop and ask him his. He forgot how he'd marched around this booming port to find the vacant house at 6 Westmarkt Street he'd made his abode. He forgot how he'd carefully counted his cash into the landlord's hand. He forgot that his coins were profits made from a web of trade that spread around the world as far as the East Indies. He forgot that trade was a gift from not-quite-human ancestors who'd swapped stones two million years before. He conveniently put out of mind the folks who'd first invented ways to hack building blocks from quarries and turn trees into lumber to

erect the edifice in which he hid away. He forgot the workmen who had crafted the floor he sat on and raised the walls he stared at in his reverie. He also forgot their wives, their children, and their rather large extended families. And he conveniently dismissed the housemaid in the room nearby, the one he'd seduced not long ago and who was already carrying his child.

After tucking such nattering notions out of sight, Descartes sat, and thought, and ate, and went to the bathroom, and sat, and thought some more, then ate, went to sleep, got up, and put on clothes whose silk had been perfected in China and whose weavers had labored in the French town of Lyon. Descartes, the master of philosophy, sat in his solitary state on a chair made from Baltic wood by workmen in some quarter he bothered not to divine and wondered what, what, what could possibly be so evident that even in his uttermost madness he could not imagine it to be simply the figment of a dream he'd dreamt after snacking before bedtime on a wedge of moldy cheese.

Finally, as he sat, it came to him: "I'm thinking, and if nothing else, I do know that. Since I'm thinking, there must be a *me* to think. It's as simple as the hair beneath my hat." This being philosophy, Descartes now had to find a way to make this insight sound a bit more "hard to get." Philosophers used Latin in those days to exalt the stature of their mastery. So Descartes stuck three Latin words together that few can now forget: "*Cogito* (I think) *ergo* (therefore) *sum* (I am)." Wham, bam, and thank you, ma'am.

But even in the distillation of his solitude, Descartes could not escape the fact that life is lived in multitudes. Crowds surround us whether we choose to see them or do not. When we leave the crowd to think, we carry more crowds in our head—for we are a herdish lot.

The three words Descartes had wrestled from the emptiness were filled with swarms of ancient ghosts, with mobs of long-gone men. *Cogito* was a term used by millions of Romans and those who'd sheltered behind their shields and swords. Seldom was a word more crowded with flocks and flurries of humanity. For the roots of *cogito*—*com-agito*—

Mind is a highly
social thing.

meant “to drive together, to collect, to crowd, to bring together, to summon, to congregate or convene.” The Indo-European hordes—those battling cattle herders from north of the Black Sea who had spread their language with their conquests—had rolled invisibly through Descartes’ mind as well, for they had given the Romans these terms for animal roundups. The warrior Indo-Europeans had also contributed the probable root for the ending “o,” which they also gave to you and me. The Sanskrit is *ahám*, from which we’ve plucked the English version of the Latin “o”—“I.” And where had Descartes gotten *ergo*, not to mention *sum*? From wave after wave of Ice Age hunter-gatherers, inventing and then polishing the first crude forms of syntax, sentence, suffix, noun, and verb. From tribes of cave-wall painters and armies of empire-builders who were rolled into each word. Yet Descartes had used this mob to state the one thing he knew: that he alone existed—that he alone sat in a room contributed by hordes who had invented the hut, the beam, the plank, the hammer, the nail, and the many other techno-turns that had finally made it possible for Descartes to travel on a road into that strange invention called a town. Swarms of the dead swam through Descartes’ mind and fed his body,

clothing and sheltering him so he could do the thinking he mistook for solitude.

Like Descartes, you think, therefore you are. And through your thinking pours the army of forefathers and foremothers who have gone before. Each one of us is a walking storeroom of this planet’s history. Trillions of early beings lived and died to perfect the very cells of which we are conceived. When the skies of this newborn earth rained poisons, our microscopic ancestors sighed oxygen into the stinging air and left us with the atmosphere we breathe. Sea-slitherers and land-lumberers bequeathed to us the bones with which we stand and the brains with which we think. Hordes of fellow humans perfected the shoes we wear, the streets we walk, and the paper or computer screen from which we glean our thoughts. From a legacy of billions come our dreams of individuality.

The farms of Argentina feed you, the oil of Arabs speeds you, and the citizens of Asia labor to supply your needs. For you, you are a multitude. And much of that same multitude resides as well in me. ■

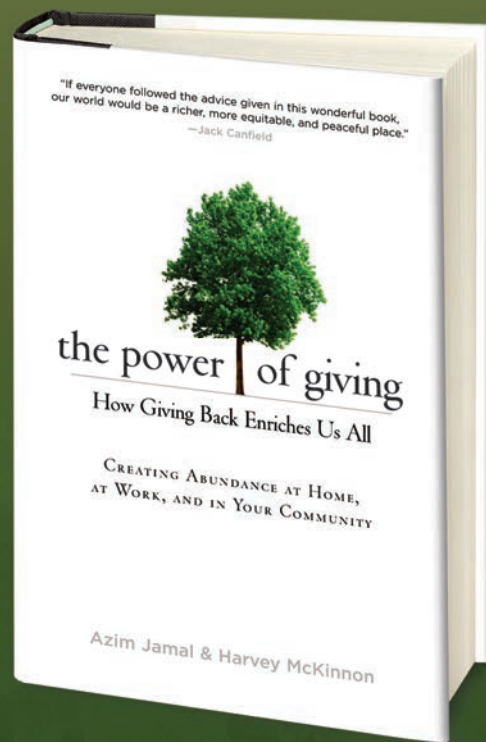
HOWARD BLOOM is a visiting scholar at New York University and founder of the International Paleopsychology Project. He is author of *The Lucifer Principle: A Scientific Expedition into the Forces of History* and *Global Brain: The Evolution of Mass Mind from the Big Bang to the 21st Century*.

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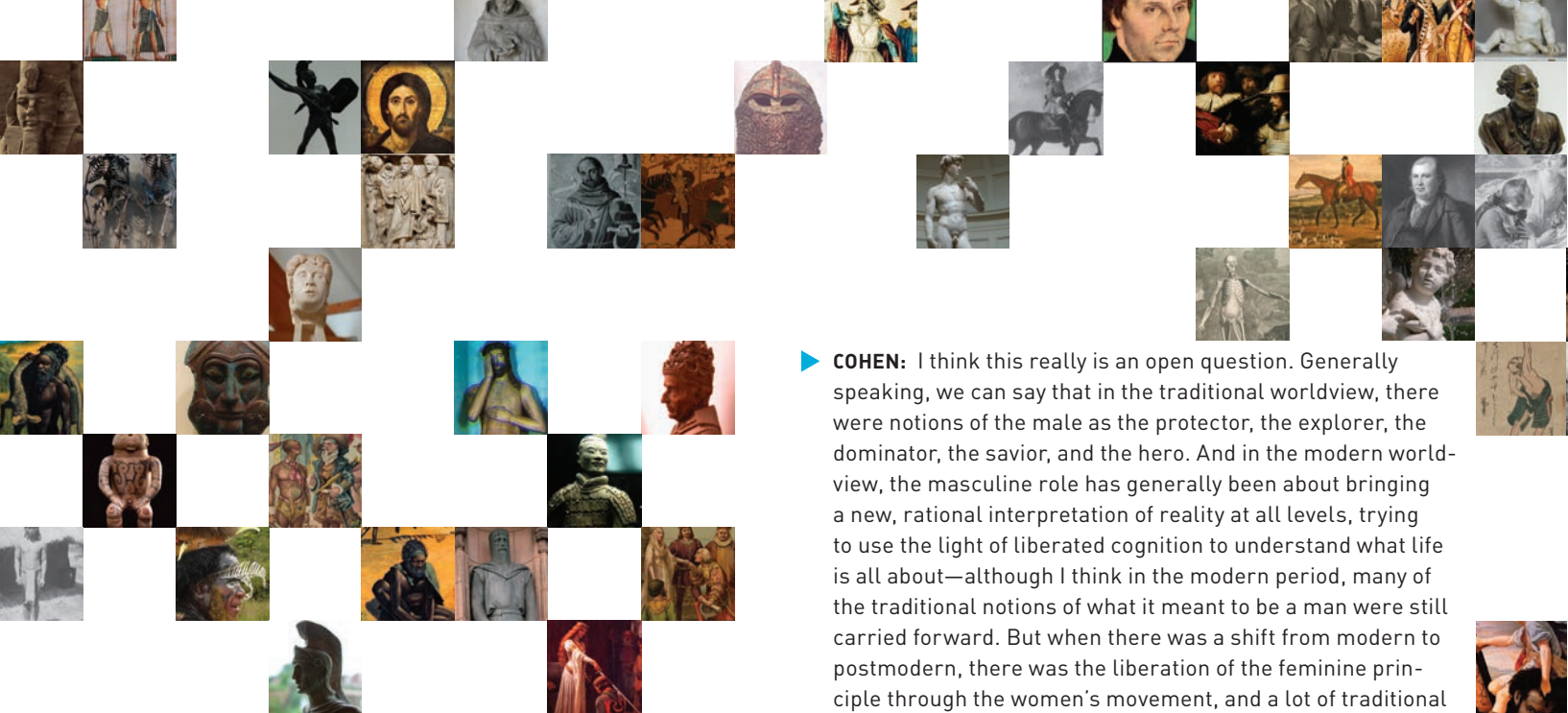
The Guru & the Pandit
with Andrew Cohen & Ken Wilber
Dialogue XX

What It Means to Be a Man

REDEFINING THE MASCULINE
PRINCIPLE AT THE LEADING EDGE
OF CULTURAL EVOLUTION







► **COHEN:** I think this really is an open question. Generally speaking, we can say that in the traditional worldview, there were notions of the male as the protector, the explorer, the dominator, the savior, and the hero. And in the modern worldview, the masculine role has generally been about bringing a new, rational interpretation of reality at all levels, trying to use the light of liberated cognition to understand what life is all about—although I think in the modern period, many of the traditional notions of what it meant to be a man were still carried forward. But when there was a shift from modern to postmodern, there was the liberation of the feminine principle through the women's movement, and a lot of traditional structures and ideas were called into question. I think many men at this postmodern stage were carried along on the feminist wave, often for good reasons, but also maybe for reasons that weren't so clear. So generally speaking, in post-modern culture, the questions of what it actually means to be a man and what a man's role is are very much up in the air.

So I'm very interested in beginning to define what the healthiest form and expression of what it means to be a man would actually be. I have found, for example, among men of my own generation—I'm a baby boomer like you are—and also from Gen-X and Gen-Y, that this is not really something that's discussed. Unless one's family is more modernist or traditional, the question of what it means to be a man, or what the role of the masculine principle is, in terms of how we're supposed to relate to life and other men and women, is just generally not spoken about. Most of the men I meet don't seem to have thought really deeply about this. But when the subject is opened up, often what is revealed are a lot of unexamined ideas that haven't yet been brought into the light of awareness. Many men haven't yet begun to consciously grapple with the whole notion of their gender and how that relates to spiritual development and to the evolution of consciousness and culture.

I feel that, as important as it is for women to clarify a new and more evolved sense of their own identity, as we take that step from postmodern to post-postmodern, it's equally important for men to do the same. So what I'm trying to do—and I know I'm not the only one—is to get this discussion going because it's really, really important. As a starting point, maybe we can look at some of the ways to define the masculine principle.

WILBER: Well, if we're going to look at men's spirituality, one of the first things I would say is that we run into the same difficulties as in discussing women's spirituality. So we should start with what is by now a standard "buyer beware"



ANDREW COHEN: GURU

[n., Sanskrit]: one who teaches spiritual liberation from his or her own direct experience or realization.

Self-described "idealist with revolutionary inclinations" and widely recognized as a defining voice in the emerging field of evolutionary spirituality, Cohen has developed an original teaching for the twenty-first century which he calls Evolutionary Enlightenment. He is also the founder and editor in chief of *What Is Enlightenment?* magazine.



KEN WILBER: PANDIT

[n., Sanskrit]: a scholar, one who is deeply proficient and immersed in spiritual wisdom.

Self-described "defender of the dharma, an intellectual samurai," Wilber is one of the most highly regarded philosophers alive today, and his work offers a comprehensive and original synthesis of the world's great psychological, philosophical, and spiritual traditions. His books include *A Brief History of Everything* and *Integral Spirituality*.



Because we're going through this whole phase of postmodernism, we've deconstructed all values, including feminine and masculine ones.

Ken Wilber

warning, which is to make clear that we're not saying that any of the general qualities we might discuss are true for *all* men or *all* women. We understand that anybody who is, for example, a biological man still embodies a whole spectrum of masculine and feminine qualities. And everybody is a particular mixture of these qualities.

COHEN: Yes, certainly. Your caveat, of course, is appropriate. But at the same time, we don't want to deny that there might be some general truths or general structural tendencies that come to the surface in certain circumstances. For example, over the years, as a result of my own interest in helping people to develop, I have noticed particular general tendencies that men and women seem to have when faced with the possibility of actually taking a leap to a higher level of development, which might be very relevant to people who are interested in the subject.

That all being said, let's talk about men and some of the ways we could define the masculine principle. For example, qualities like autonomy, judgment, and courage are often associated with the masculine.

WILBER: Yes, but first we have to ask the question: Which of these aspects of masculinity are cross-cultural? Let's take autonomy, for example. We could say that this is essentially something that comes with the equipment of being a human male organism, having a male brain, male genitalia, and so on. But that gets problematic very fast.

COHEN: Right, because it completely flies in the face of post-modern values. Postmodernity has basically brought forth the ideas that there are no universal givens and that everything is created through culture.

WILBER: Well, yes; that's the issue. Most people interested in these matters are part of the boomer generation, the cultural creatives, the pluralistic, relativistic, postmodern stage of development. That's a stage that flat out says that gender and sexuality are nothing but cultural constructs. This idea is exemplified by first-wave feminism, liberal feminism, which essentially believed that "all men are created equal, and that applies to women too." First-wave feminism basically denied that there are *any* fundamental

or inherent differences between male and female and held that any differences ascribed to masculine and feminine are nothing but cultural constructs.

The more that idea was pursued, the less tenable it became. For lots of reasons, it didn't hold up. Particularly

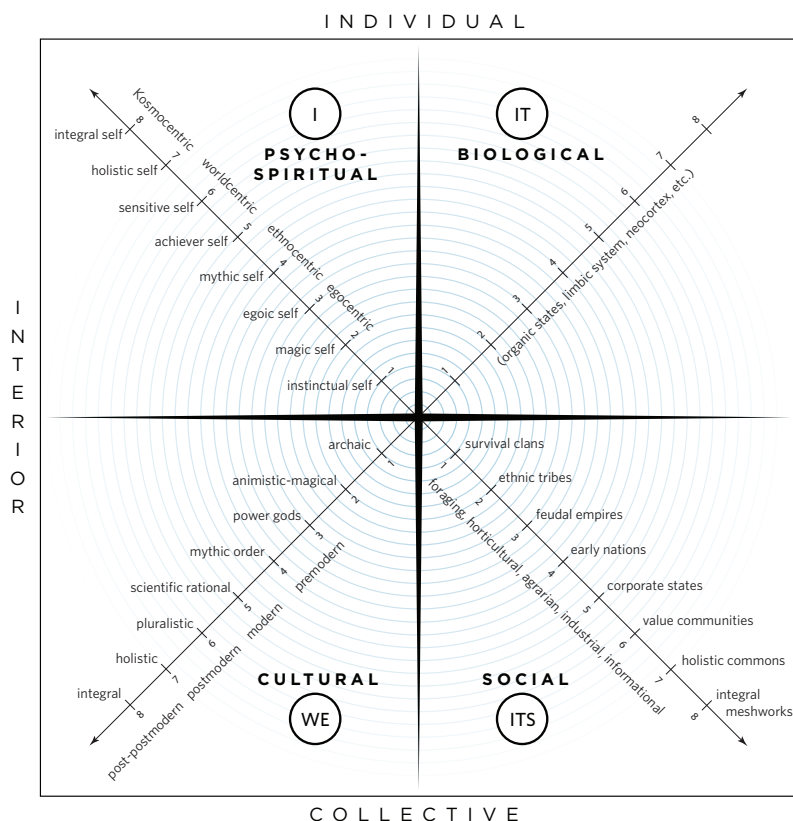
What it actually means to be a man, and what a man's role is, is very much up in the air today.

Andrew Cohen

through research in biology it became clear that on average there really are a fair amount of universal differences between male and female.

So the point is that biological differences are one dimension of the picture and cultural differences are another. These both have to be taken into account if you are going to take a comprehensive or integral look at the situation. The basic idea of an integral framework is that all human beings have at least four dimensions, or, as I have called them, *quadrants* [see diagram and a more detailed explanation below]. The simplest way to think of them is the *biological* (upper right), the *social* (lower right), the *cultural* (lower left), and the *psycho-spiritual* (upper left). So we need to look at the various types of qualities that could be called masculine or feminine as they relate to each of these four major dimensions, or quadrants, and then decide how many of those qualities you can say are generally applicable to the male or the female.

Another problem, and this came out of second-wave feminism, is that while it allows for inherent differences between the masculine and the feminine modes, essentially it says all of the feminine-mode differences are positive and all of the masculine-mode differences are negative. The masculine mode includes hierarchical ranking and behaviors that are authoritarian, aggressive, analytical, divisive, etc., while all



THE FOUR QUADRANTS

The foundation of Ken Wilber's integral philosophy is the recognition that any event, sentient being, or object in the Kosmos can be viewed from at least four fundamental perspectives, corresponding to the **interior** and the **exterior** views of the **individual** and the **collective**. In the top half of this diagram (depicting the four quadrants of a human being), the upper left quadrant represents the view of an individual's interior (as an "I," or subjective consciousness), and the upper right represents the view of an individual's exterior (as an "It," or objective body). In the bottom half, the lower left quadrant represents the view of the interior of a collective (as a "We," or intersubjective culture), and the lower right represents the view of the exterior of a collective (as an "Its," or interobjective society). All four dimensions of this matrix, Wilber believes, are essential components of any truly integral approach.

the feminine-mode qualities are healing, positive, and looked upon as constructive. In this view, all of humankind's problems are seen as a result of men's oppression of women.

COHEN: Among the many other terrible things men have done!

WILBER: That is a version of feminist thought that still has a lot of cachet today. Of course, there are cases of victimhood, but the vast majority of cultural structures have been cocreated by men and women. That's a much more adequate way of looking at it and, frankly, a much more truthful way, which also fits the evidence better and allows us to look at data more effectively. That's not to say that there aren't cases of oppression and victimization. But in overemphasizing those and in making victimhood the essential definition of the feminine, feminism went too far. Unless we come up with a different view of how the relationships between the sexes historically have been cocreated by men and women and not merely imposed on women, we are basically looking at women as sheep and men as pigs. We need more creative, more integrative, and more accurate views of why men and women have the relationships that they do have to each other, and how they contribute in their own ways to creating societies in all four quadrants.

EROS AND AGAPE, AGENCY AND COMMUNION

COHEN: So could you define what some of those distinct ways would be for men?

WILBER: In my view, men and women develop through the same gender-neutral basic structures (the same basic waves in the spectrum of consciousness), but they tend to do so with somewhat different values and styles. As we've discussed in the past, development happens in two modes: translation and transformation. We define transformation as a change *between* levels in the developmental scale and translation as a move *within* levels—translation as a horizontal movement and transformation as a vertical movement. Both of these are important. In both the translative and transformative domains, men and women have different tendencies. In the translative domain, there are two fundamental drives of agency and communion, which are drives of horizontal movement. And we find that women tend to put an emphasis on communion, and men tend to put an emphasis on agency. In terms of transformation, there are two vertical drives: eros and agape. Men tend to put an emphasis on eros, and women tend to put an emphasis on agape. Eros means freedom, and agape means fullness. So women tend to have more of an emphasis on fullness

in their relationships; men tend to value freedom more in their relationships.

There are healthy and unhealthy versions of each of these drives. The healthy versions of agency that we can see in men are, for example, self-responsibility and self-esteem. Unhealthy forms of agency are rigid, alienated, hypermasculine, hyperaggressive notions of self, fear of commitment, and so on. With eros, the healthy version is freedom, whereas the unhealthy versions are not freedom but repression, fear, contraction—and those tend to be the types of dysfunctions that men get caught up in.

So men tend to translate with an emphasis on agency and transform with an emphasis on eros. Women tend to translate with an emphasis on communion and transform with an emphasis on agape. Those generalizations are just

First-wave feminism basically denied that there are any inherent differences between male and female, but the more that idea was pursued, the less tenable it became.

Ken Wilber

that—generalizations—but they do tend to be true across cultures. Eros and agape, agency and communion—those are the most universal, the most generalized drives, and there are positive and negative things about both of them, so you don't have to get into an argument over which sex is the most destructive. The main point is that you want all four of those fundamental drives to be healthy.

COHEN: For men and women.

WILBER: Yes. And all four of those tend to get unhealthy really fast in spiritual practice. You're trying to reach *radical* forms of freedom, so that can lead you to get caught in unhealthy forms of eros, not just healthy forms. You're also looking to achieve some form of union, some sort of fullness. That allows women, in particular, to get caught up in forms of herd mentality—not just oneness but fusion—and an inability to recognize their own self-esteem.

COHEN: Yes—I've seen many variations on those themes in my work with men and women. Another thing that I've noticed about men over the years that I've been teaching, and this is a broad generalization, is that a lot of guys who are interested in spiritual development, and who are at this postmodern stage, tend to flip between extremes of arrogance and weakness. They'll start out with an overinflated sense of self, and then when they stumble upon the fact that they're not where they thought they were, they'll often flip into some kind of pathetic state of weakness, having no balls, so to speak! I see this in so many guys that it's almost predictable.

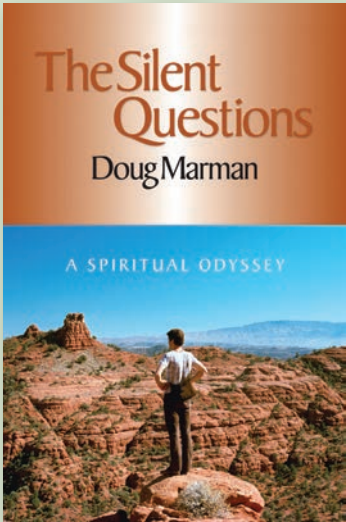
I've been speaking to these guys about another potential, where you're neither arrogant nor weak, but where you have humility. When I speak about humility, I'm talking about a deep strength, a very real sense of self-confidence that's based on what you actually do know and who you really are—where you're not being arrogant at all, but are very self-possessed in the positive sense.

WILBER: Right. And it's a strength that I think can be offered to others. Masculine strength is often connected to aggression in ways that are completely misunderstood. The word aggression means to *move toward*, it doesn't mean to move *against*. That would be hostility.

COHEN: That's interesting. It's a positive definition of aggression.

WILBER: We've completely forgotten the distinction between aggression and hostility. Masculine aggression in its healthy sense is a capacity to *move toward* in a forceful, strong way. If you see a stag headed down a hillside and there's a bush in front of it, you can see its nostrils flare out and it drags its heels a couple of times, and then it will charge at the bush and push through. That's aggression. We don't say the stag "hates" the bush—he's just mobilizing his capacity to break down barriers. And that's the best thing that masculine aggression does. It's a boundary breaker. Whether it's the sound barrier or barriers to education or barriers to integration, masculine strength

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has the capacity to break them down. Of course, if that gets unhealthy, then it produces hostility; it produces hyper-masculinism, and, as you say, the flip side of that is the ball-less weenie.

COHEN: That's fascinating.

WILBER: But because we're going through this whole phase of postmodernism, we've deconstructed all values, including feminine and masculine ones. We've forgotten how to make judgments based on the positive expressions of those qualities and those characteristics. And that's the real problem. We may think we're transcending masculine and feminine, but we're not really transcending them; we are just stuck in their diluted, watered-down forms. For the average post-modern male, the qualities of masculinity are not let go of, not transcended and included; they're simply oppressed, pushed out of awareness.

COHEN: Yes; it's horrible.

WILBER: It's a disaster really.

COHEN: And it creates weak, inauthentic men. One of the fascinating things we found in researching this issue was that it was very hard to get men, even those who seem to be very sophisticated in their cognitive capacity, to express some example of what they thought an evolved man would look like. There seems to be a general reticence to embrace with a certain kind of fearlessness what it means to be male. We're so locked into a postmodern, antihierarchical view that many of us are afraid of expressing a love even for the greater potentials of our own gender. I think this particularly has to do with a lot of postmodern ideas about how the masculine principle is responsible for destroying the planet.

WILBER: Well, that's part of the difficulty that we've had in going through the postmodern period. We've tried to become sensitive, to not marginalize people, to not make unfair judgments based on dominator hierarchies. But because we've spent so many decades doing that, the leading edge of humanity has forgotten how to make judgments based on degree of developmental depth. That's what's so devastating

"As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to remake the world—but in being able to remake ourselves."

Mahatma Gandhi

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to our relationship with our own manifest selves and to all of the relative aspects in a human being and our sense of how we should relate to those. If wisdom is anything, it's the practical knowledge of how to make things work in reality, how to make them go forward. And if we don't have judgment based on depth, we don't have wisdom. Basically, what the postmodernists have done is strip us of using judgments of wisdom and discrimination to arrive at really important answers.

COHEN: Which is why, as I was saying, many men are unclear about what it actually means to be a man or what it *should* mean to be a man or what it *could* mean to be a man.

WILBER: We're trying to walk a fine line here. Postmodernism has, on the one hand, done some very positive things in terms of freeing up rigidly imposed roles and pointing out the way that many gender constructs are just that—*constructs* of different cultures. But it can go too far in completely deny-

These days, there seems to be a general reticence to embrace with a certain kind of fearlessness what it means to be male.

Andrew Cohen

ing that there are *any* intrinsic or inherent traits that define human beings at various stages of their own development. That completely locks us out of developing an authentic relationship to our own relative manifestation. Being able to find these qualities that are characteristic of a particular sex or gender—with all the caveats we've mentioned—is an essential part of being able to come into an authentic relationship with your gender, as a preliminary to being able to authentically transcend it.

So as a man, I would need to honor all those qualities that a male has. Those could indeed be freedom, presence, autonomy, courage, strength, trustworthiness. Of course, we need to look very carefully at just what those values are, but we should be clear that in *denying* those values altogether, we are denying ourselves a form of authenticity.

COHEN: Right, exactly. It's an essential form of authenticity because our gender nature is such a fundamental part of who we are.

WILBER: One of the important things this discussion needs to take into account is the developmental scale. If we sit down and look at all of this evidence in terms of what the masculine means and the feminine means, in terms of what authenticity means, we see that there really are different types of values for masculine and feminine at different stages of development.

That's a very important point, and one that almost never gets mentioned. People are too often just trying to figure out what the "eternal feminine" or the "eternal masculine" is. Or they are saying there are no universal qualities whatsoever. But what we're saying is that there *are* value structures for masculine and feminine. They're not eternal, pregiven, fixed archetypes; they have *developed*. If we look at developmental studies, for both men and women, the values that can be said to be intrinsically associated with being a man and being a woman *change* at different stages of development. They're a historical emergence. So coming to terms with those allows us to make judgments about what it means to be a man and what it means to be a woman. And also to be able to transcend those same types of qualities when needed, because we're not saying that they are etched in eternal absolute reality.

COHEN: Absolutely not. They're not already etched, and I think in terms of the kind of development that needs to occur, it's very important that we begin to really clarify all this. It's going to help so much in terms of the relationship between the genders.

WILBER: Exactly. For example, research studies are continuing to show that the major stereotypical differences in terms of values tend to occur at lower levels of development. It really is true that at what we call the egocentric stage, both men and women tend to show stereotypical, rigid types of masculine and feminine behavior. The male, for example, at those early stages of development, is very homophobic; he's driven by aggression and an intense nobody-tells-me-what-to-do kind of autonomy, a kind of rigid narcissistic power drive. Women tend to be driven by selfish versions of their own values—selfish forms of communion. Both of those extremes lessen as men and women develop from egocentric into ethnocentric and worldcentric stages.

COHEN: Yes. And one of the things I've noticed is that as we move into the integral and post-integral stages, these differences lessen.

WILBER: I think that's one of the important points.

COHEN: The self becomes a more and more integrated expression of masculine and feminine. Of course, men would have a more male version of it and women a more female version. But the differences will decrease, I feel, the more profound the vertical development is. I've noticed, for example, that men at higher levels of development are sometimes able to manifest a higher and more evolved expression of communion. What is being shared would traditionally be called a feminine tendency or inclination. But when men transcend not only personal egoic structures but a lot of rigid modern and postmodern ways of thinking, what emerges is a kind of noncompetitive care and communion that expresses the best part of our humanity. I've seen this happen, and it's quite dramatic and, I think, evolutionarily

The values that can be said to be intrinsically associated with being a man and being a woman *change* at different stages of development.

Ken Wilber

significant. So to me it is fascinating that men at high levels of development are really able to manifest qualities that are the greatest gifts of the feminine. This is when conventional gender stereotypes begin to fall away.

WILBER: Exactly. But once again, we don't want to prematurely bypass the process of integrating those various sexual traits in ourselves. Because that does tend to happen. Part of what gender health actually includes is having an authentic relationship to one's sexuality at each of one's major stages of development throughout life.

COHEN: Yes. What's so fascinating about taking this leap from postmodern to post-postmodern is that, on one hand, we have enough historical information now, in terms of all the quadrants, to begin to discern with a reasonable degree of accuracy what "natural" tendencies or inclinations would be. At the same time, we also know to a great degree how much of ourselves is culturally conditioned and culturally created. There's never been a time when we were in a better position to create ourselves to be the most authentic man or woman we have ever been. From a certain point of view, there's nothing more exciting than that.

WILBER: Yes; I think so. Part of the truth about living in an evolutionary world is that the higher stages of development, in particular, are just now emerging and being laid down. So what exactly is the relationship between masculine and feminine in those structures? I don't know. Of course, part of the difficulty is that only about three or four percent of the population is at the more integral, post-postmodern stages of development. That's good news and bad news for people doing this kind of spiritual work and becoming fairly evolved. The good news is: Congratulations, you're fairly evolved. The bad news is: Now you don't have a single bloody clue what you are.

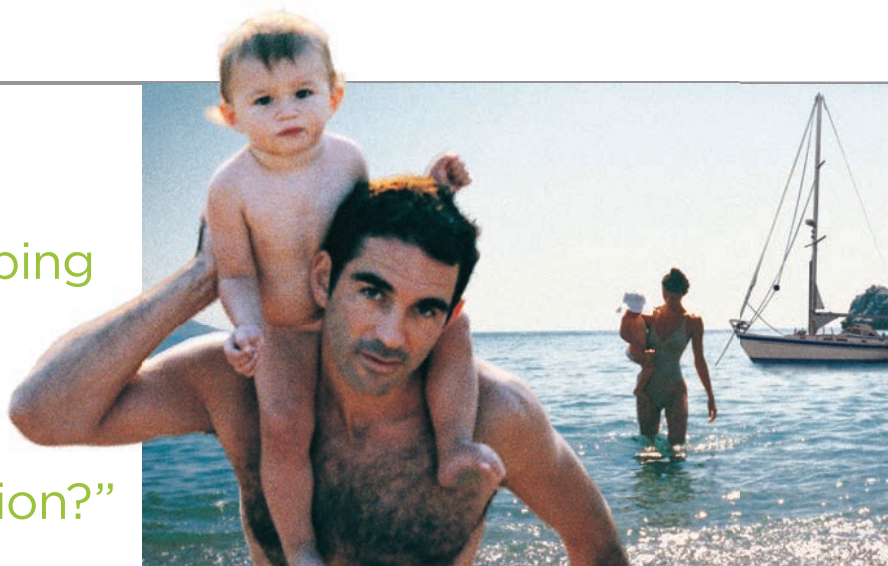
That goes for men and women. And part of the excitement about having these kinds of discussions is that we are looking to draw attention to exactly the qualities that are just now emerging. We need to have these discussions among our friends and say, "If I'm male, what do I think are the most valuable parts of me that I might call masculine? And what do I just call human instead? What parts of a woman does she think are valuable *because* they're feminine? What parts are valuable just because they're human?" This is the discussion that's occurring at the leading edge of consciousness unfolding. It takes both men and women beyond the roles assigned to them by history and points toward the new male and the new female, which are just now coming into sight.

COHEN: I agree. The way I have been approaching this exact point is with a teaching I call "Liberation without a Face." This is where I'm encouraging individuals to authentically engage with these very questions—not only as a theoretical speculation but as an actual form of practice that attempts to find some real answers through direct experience.

LIBERATION WITHOUT A FACE

COHEN: As a spiritual teacher, I had an insight into this question about ten years ago. When I was examining the whole notion of gender as it relates to enlightenment, I realized that there is nothing fundamentally significant about the fact that I happen to be a man or someone else happens to be a woman. It's an inherent part of my identity as a human being, but there's nothing *inherently* significant about it. There's nothing particularly positive or negative about it. To use an overused spiritual phrase, it's just part of what is. But I noticed that when my ego, or anybody's ego, *overidentifies* with the arbitrary fact of gender, problems arise. When I say ego, I'm not referring to the psychological self-structure, the structure in the psyche that creates a

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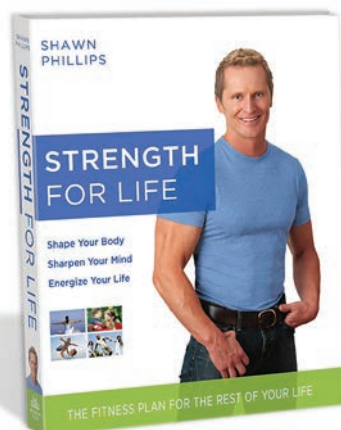
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sense of integrity and wholeness. I'm talking very specifically in a spiritual context about our narcissistic separate sense of self. What I started to notice is that what, at least to my observation, often distorts the male identity, and also the female identity, is when the ego overidentifies with the arbitrary fact that it happens to be a man or happens to be a woman. Of course, we can all relate to extreme examples like a hyperexaggerated, extremely self-conscious, almost laughable expression of a masculine tendency. And women have their own version of that. It all becomes very self-conscious when the ego is overidentifying with an arbitrary fact of nature.

One simple definition of enlightenment is that it's a natural state, free from falsehood or self-consciousness. So the question is, What would be the natural or unselfcon-

One simple definition of enlightenment is that it's a natural state, free from falsehood or self-consciousness. So what would be the natural or unselfconscious expression of gender in a post-traditional context?

Andrew Cohen

scious expression of gender in a post-traditional context? The way I thought about it was, on the one hand, we would have to not in any way deny that we happen to be a man or a woman. So if you and I happen to be men, we'd say, "Well, that means that biologically and psychologically, and also culturally, it's a big part of how we're conditioned, and that means something about who we are as embodied human beings." Then we'd want to find out, in all the ways we've been speaking about today, what it actually means to be male, taking our biological history and conditioning into account, and also seeing how we've been culturally conditioned, and try to bring the light of awareness to all of it. We would completely, wholeheartedly, fearlessly, unself-consciously, and radically embrace every aspect of what

it does mean and could mean to be male. And at the same time, the ego—the narcissistic separate self-sense—would not be overidentified with the fact that I, Andrew, happen to be a man, or you, Ken, happen to be a man. If we had the spiritual development to be able to do that, then at least theoretically, what would be able to emerge would be an unselfconscious or a much more natural and authentic expression of post-traditional and also of post-postmodern maleness. So that's how I approach this question in my work with my students.

In terms of what this postmodern to post-postmodern leap would look like for men, especially if we're looking at it in a spiritual context, we need to ask: What would be the natural or unselfconscious expression of my humanity as a male, as a masculine principle?

WILBER: Right.

COHEN: That's why I think it's so important to begin looking into all the ways that we consciously and unconsciously identify with what we think it means to be who we happen to be, as a gendered individual, and give it more importance than it really has. Because from a Kosmic perspective, what could be more arbitrary than gender? But if the ego starts making a big deal out of something so arbitrary, then there's something inherently unnatural and inauthentic about the way we begin to express that part of ourselves. It gets that much more difficult to even begin to sort out what a truly natural expression of it would be. So I have been encouraging men and women to look into what would be the unselfconscious and natural expression of their own sexuality and gender. Of course, that's a hell of a contemplation, full of a lot of complexity and subtlety—but so compelling.

WILBER: Well, yes. And I think it's the type of thing that needs to be done in a post-postmodern world.

COHEN: Yes. This is something we all have to get busy with.



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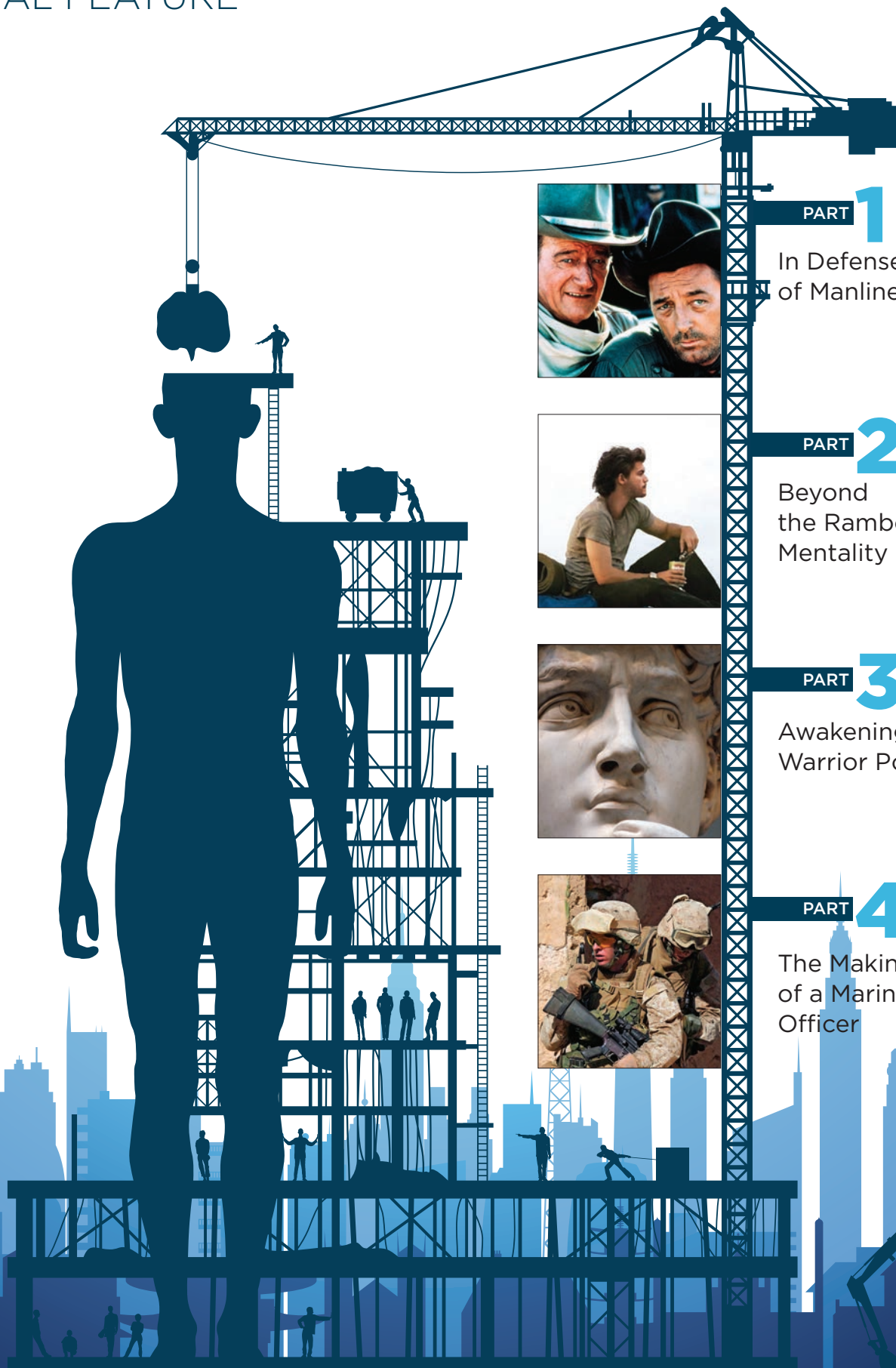
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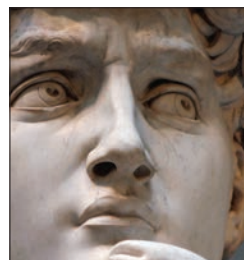
PART 1

In Defense of Manliness



PART 2

Beyond the Rambo Mentality



PART 3

Awakening the Warrior Poet



PART 4

The Making of a Marine Officer

CONSTRUCTING THE NEW MAN

FROM THE BATTLEFIELDS OF IRAQ TO THE HALLS OF THE IVY LEAGUE, *WIE* PRESENTS FOUR UNIQUE PERSPECTIVES ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MAN IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.

“WHY CAN’T A WOMAN BE more like a man?” This was the immortalized question asked by Henry Higgins in *My Fair Lady*. In the venerable old musical, Professor Higgins and his colleague sing this hymn to the virtues of manliness and the failings of the fairer sex. Even in 1964, such words could scarcely be mouthed without a heavy dose of irony as context. Today, irony might fall just a bit short. We have come so far in relation to gender that one almost cannot imagine any possible context in which a hymn to the traditional virtues of manliness (much less the subjugation of the feminine) would seem appropriate. So much the better. Over the last half century, our values have evolved dramatically on the question of gender, and while it may not yet be a woman’s world, in the West, at least, history is no longer simply a blank canvas for men. Women have stormed the citadel of public and private life, remaking our values and refashioning our society. Today, a whole new generation of male children, millions upon millions, have been born into a post-feminist world, weaned on a value system of gender equality and gender neutrality and raised in a culture in which girls, as never before, can speak their truth in a different voice and begin to fulfill the potential of their gender.

So how does that change what it means to be masculine? How do boys and men find their way in a culture in which it often seems as if most notions of manliness are about as quaint and old-fashioned as the discarded and discounted ideas of Professor Henry Higgins? Indeed, sometimes it seems as if the professor’s question has been turned on its head. In today’s more progressive pockets of

culture, we no longer ask whether or not women should be more like men. The implicit question posed to many of today’s youth is the opposite: Should men be more like women—more sensitive, more emotional, more caring and compassionate?

Here at *WIE*, we don’t claim to have all the answers for the masculine side of our species, but we do know that today’s cultural context is unique. Never before has there been an experiment in gender equality quite like the one we’ve been conducting in the last thirty years. Amid the continuing successes and failures of that great leap forward, it seemed like a good moment to step back and take a critical look at manhood in the twenty-first century. What is the next step for men today? What new visions and archetypes will guide the masculine in the coming decades? Is masculinity in our culture being defined more by Humphrey Bogart or Johnny Depp? John Wayne or Justin Timberlake? Bono and Barack or Schwarzenegger and Stallone? Last spring, we sought out five extraordinary individuals—one from academia, one from the military, one from the pulpit, and two from the next-generation men’s movement—each of whom has important things to say about masculinity in this age. Some of their words are uplifting and inspiring, some contentious and controversial, some powerful and profound. Taken together, they offer a thought-provoking portrayal of men and manliness today and invite us to consider the impact the sons of Adam will have on the future evolution of human society.

PART 1

In Defense of Manliness

Interview by Ross Robertson



Harvey Mansfield

is a professor at Harvard University and the author of *Manliness*.



“TODAY THE VERY WORD *manliness* seems quaint and obsolete,” begins Dr. Harvey C. Mansfield in his controversial, thought-provoking work *Manliness* (Yale University Press, 2006). “We are in the process of making the English language gender-neutral, and manliness, the quality of one gender, or rather, of one sex, seems to describe the essence of the enemy we are attacking, the evil we are eradicating.”

But manliness, according to Mansfield, is not what it appears to be. With characteristic panache and no small degree of intellectual chutzpah, he spends the next 250 pages of his book exploring the virtues and shortcomings of manly men, the complex nature of manliness itself (as expressed both by men and by women), and the many impacts of the sexual revolution on traditional masculine virtues. By the time he’s through with this “modest defense of manliness,” he’s taken the reader on a whirlwind tour from pop culture to Plato and back, weaving Darwin and Nietzsche, John

Wayne and the Coen Brothers, John Locke and Xena Warrior Princess into a dense, rollicking tapestry of ideas.

Suffice it to say, it left us so inspired, intrigued, frustrated, even downright confused at times, we simply knew we had to talk with him.

One of the most influential academic voices in American conservatism, Dr. Mansfield is currently William R. Kenan, Jr., Professor of Government at Harvard University. (Except for brief stints in the Army and at the University of California, Berkeley, he’s been at Harvard more or less since his undergraduate days in the late 1940s.) In addition to *Manliness*, he has written studies of and translated works by major political philosophers including Aristotle, Edmund Burke, Niccolò Machiavelli, Alexis de Tocqueville, and Thomas Hobbes. Well known in Cambridge for his outspoken (and decidedly un-PC) views on everything from grade inflation to affirmative action, Mansfield’s study of manliness stirred up its own fair share of ire, only

this time on the national stage. He’s been ribbed by everyone from Stephen Colbert on Comedy Central to Naomi Wolf on ABC. But not all of his critics were unsympathetic. “Mansfield courts wrath and indignation on almost every page,” writes Christina Hoff Sommers in *The Weekly Standard*. “But many women will be charmed by his effrontery, and grateful for the truth and wisdom in Mansfield’s elegant treatise.”

In our research for this issue, Dr. Mansfield was a rare find—a serious academic who was willing to take seriously many questions about the value and significance of masculinity that are mostly taboo in the contemporary discourse on sex and gender. As one of his Harvard colleagues has said of him, “Harvey Mansfield is a Harvard treasure, a one-man antidote to liberal complacency. I disagree with almost all of his political views, but his presence enlivens the government department, and Harvard, immeasurably.”

We hope you find his ideas enlivening as well.

WHAT IS ENLIGHTENMENT: *What is manliness?*

HARVEY MANSFIELD: I define manliness as confidence in the face of risk. And this quality has its basis in an animal characteristic that Plato called *thumos*. *Thumos* means bristling at something that is strange or inimical to you. Think of a dog bristling and barking; that's a very *thumotic* response to a situation. It seems that all animals have this more or less, some way of resisting what is endangering to them. The opposite of *thumos* would be *eros*—love, yearning, opening. *Eros* is opening yourself up to the strange; *thumos* is closing it off. And manliness seems very much to be a kind of *thumos*. You feel the need to defend yourself, not the need to improve yourself.

Of course, in every human action there's a mixture of *eros* and *thumos*, but manliness is by far mostly *thumos*. It's being satisfied with yourself and knowing yourself to be superior, or at least satisfactory, as you are. You're not apologizing; you're not yearning for something better. You are what you are, and other people often don't meet your high standard. So a manly man is very judgmental. He looks down on those who don't have this obviously good characteristic—which is obviously good according to him!

An occasional woman can have that kind of manliness—my great example is Margaret Thatcher—but more men than women have it. I also think it's really a minority of *men* who are truly manly, and that minority often looks down on the rest of men for not being manly. That's not the whole picture—it's a very partial picture of the whole human being—but I do believe it's the way manly men think. When people study manliness, they tend to either fall in love with it and exaggerate its goodness or dismiss it as nothing. I think the proper way is in between. I don't think a manly man is all human excellence wrapped into one. And manliness has more than one aspect as well.

What I call philosophical courage or philosophical manliness, for example, is really the opposite of ordinary manliness. It's more on the side of *eros* than *thumos*. Ordinary manliness is being satisfied with yourself, even a little bit complacent, whereas philosophical manliness is challenging or being willing to question all of your precious, darling ideas—everything that's precious to you, all of your possessions, wondering whether they are really valuable or not. It takes a certain courage to stand up to your own previous opinions or positions and perhaps also the public opinion of society at the time.

WIE: *Has manliness always been the same, or has it evolved over time?*

MANSFIELD: Well, I think manliness is in human nature. You can find it in every human society, in some version or another. A knight is different from a samurai is different from a cowboy, but there's something similar in all of them, too, and I don't see that changing.

If we just take Western history now, very broadly speaking, there was a more frank recognition of manliness in Greek culture, for instance. This was exaggerated even more by Homer and Achilles. On the other hand, the Greek philosophers were critical of manliness. A lot of what Plato and Aristotle said was a criticism of manly Greek culture, which they thought was inadequate and inferior in many respects. When the Romans came along, manliness took another big step forward. Roman culture was very manly—very imperialistic, dominating, and assertive. Then Christianity went back in the other direction, bringing with it a combination of anti-manliness and a denial of human pride. Manliness is very proud and very desirous of honor, whereas Christianity teaches humility. It has a lot of femininity in it. It's full of women saints and, of course, the worship of Mary. But it also brought with it a *transformation* of manliness into something more Christian—the gentleman or the chivalrous knight who was devoted to a woman, who fought battles in order to please or at least impress a lady.

In more recent times, we see a kind of attack on manliness in modern philosophy and modern science. It was thought that manliness encourages wayward passions and keeps people from acting rationally and regularly. So the founders of modern liberalism took up against *thumos*, or pride or vanity or vainglory, thinking that this was the cause of war—and also, strangely enough, the cause of religion, of men trying to glorify themselves by supposing God was on their side.

When people study manliness, they tend to either fall in love with it and exaggerate its goodness or dismiss it as nothing. I think the proper way is in between.

WIE: *When the founders of modern liberalism launched this attack on manliness for being an irrational force that would lead to social instability, what did they want to replace it with?*

MANSFIELD: Well, Hobbes and Locke, for example, tried to base their philosophy on the bourgeois notion of rational self-interest, which was a way of calculating your own advantage that would keep you from the passionate extremes that cause trouble for you and for society. Self-interest usually runs contrary to what your pride and your honor tell you to do. It's almost never in your interest to get angry, for instance, and almost never in your interest to fall in love either. So the life of the bourgeois is, in many ways, unmanly. The commercial character of modern civilization is unmanly as well. Commerce means that you're willing

to *trade* anything, that you don't regard anything as so much yours that you would never give it up without a fight. Everything is for sale. Everything has a trade-off. There's nothing you would insist on, whereas manliness is a form of insistence and a willingness to fight in your own defense.

WIE: *Where do we stand with manliness today?*

MANSFIELD: These days I don't think manliness has gone away or become less manly, but it certainly has much less of a reputation. It's what I call "unemployed," meaning there's nothing responsible or respectable for it to do. It's still there, of course. You see it in sports and the attention we give to sports. You see it in extreme sports, too—taking crazy risks, the desire for adventure, and things like that. Those are not necessarily responsible forms of manliness, but they are expressions of it when nothing else is expected, when it isn't expected of you.

The gender-neutral society is really a kind of experiment. It's something that hasn't been done before in human history, at least not that we know of.

Today, we live in a gender-neutral society. It's a society in which your sex matters as little as possible. It doesn't give you your rights or your duties, and certainly not your place. And this is new. The gender-neutral society is really a kind of experiment. It's something that hasn't been done before in human history, at least not that we know of. Every society before ours has been stratified by sex, and men were always on top because they did the politics or the business or the public work. But nobody in public life can defend special status for men over women anymore.

Gender neutrality is what we believe now, and what we aspire to, even if we don't fully practice it. About two-thirds of the housework, it seems, is still done by women and one-third by men. Also, about two-thirds of the family income is brought home by men and one-third by women. We still lean toward the traditional division of the sexes and toward their traditional roles. This inequality doesn't seem to be getting any closer to fifty-fifty, and I think this is something that both sexes have to come to terms with. Feminism still hasn't succeeded in sensitizing males to the extent that they're willing to do half the housework. They're doing a lot more than they used to—although come to think of it, my father used to do quite a bit.

WIE: *How has the gender-neutral society changed the way that we as postmodern men and women relate to our own gender?*

MANSFIELD: I think men are confused at present, and perhaps mainly because women are confused. Women are confused between home and work. They want both. They want it all, as they say. And that means a difficult combination of opposite activities. In order to succeed at work, you have to be single-minded. You have to be able to shut off distractions and concentrate on your job. In order to be successful at home, on the other hand, and especially as a mother, you have to be open to interruption all the time from your children, who think they're entitled to one hundred percent of your time just by being born. It's much more spread out and distracted. You really have to *like* being distracted in order to be successful.

Putting these two opposite attitudes together is very difficult for women, and feminism hasn't helped them very much because it doesn't address this problem. It only looks at the home as being a distraction from work. This difficulty for women also means that men don't know which way to go with women in their relations with them. They don't know whether they're meant to be manly and take charge and be responsible—and even to continue with the usual small courtesies that a gentleman is supposed to offer women, even though women are no longer "ladies" or no longer want to be called ladies. Or do women want to play it equal, *really* equal, to open their own doors and play according to men's rules?

So men today are questioning the value of manliness, because manliness is no longer in public repute. Even the word is hardly used anymore; it's embarrassing to use it. One of the things I wanted to do with my book is to return it to our legitimate vocabulary. Men don't know whether to be manly anymore, and they don't know whether manliness is a good thing. They feel hemmed in and somewhat lost. The way they want to behave is frowned upon, not only by women but by society generally. It makes men question themselves, and manly men aren't very good at questioning themselves. They're better at being themselves.

WIE: *Then that raises the question: "What self are you trying to be?" In Denmark, for example (see "What Ever Happened to the Vikings?" page 94), where the gender-neutral society is perhaps more advanced than anywhere else in the world, men are being encouraged more than ever before to take up roles that have traditionally belonged to women, such as child rearing.*

MANSFIELD: One of the problems with that, I think, is that women are better at being men than men are at being women. There's a kind of asymmetry. Women are more adaptable, more contextual. They're more aware of what's going on in their immediate surroundings, more sensitive, so if they see that something is required, even if it's against

their inclination, they'll do it. Women, for example, have become much more aggressive than they used to be. Not in every way, certainly, and not to the extent that men are, but the way women students speak up in class now, say, is much more assertive than it was when I first started teaching thirty or forty years ago.

WIE: *All the founders of the major religions were men, both East and West. Do you think that there's any correlation between manliness and the spiritual impulse?*

MANSFIELD: Yes, I do. The spiritual impulse, or the impulse to lead with new ideas, does seem to come more easily to men than to women. There were women saints, such as Joan of Arc, who were leaders, but they were exceptional. Most great founders of new philosophies and new religions seem to be men. There's a willingness to strike out on your own and to take responsibility for some great change for which you've had a vision that does seem to be more manly than womanly.

I would also say there is an attraction to the *abstract* that is characteristic of manly men, and I think you could relate that to an interest in the transcendent. Women are

Women are better at being men than men are at being women, I think. There's a kind of asymmetry.

more realistic and are very good at understanding the present situation. So if you wanted to put together the perfect knower—the highest, wisest person—it might be a combination of the things men are good at and the things women are good at. There is the consciousness of reality that women have, their powers of observation and their attention to detail and to fact, versus the conceptual creativity of men, who are able to *change* context and take themselves away from their current situation. Each way of thinking probably has its good points and its corresponding defects.

WIE: *How do you distinguish between the kind of manliness that's obviously a good thing for both men and women to have in terms of healthy self-confidence and self-assertion, and then the negative kind of manly aggression that has more to do with dominance and control or even tyranny?*

MANSFIELD: Well, it has a lot to do with the justification for one's actions. In being assertive, are you simply defending

yourself and your own interests or do you have some larger reason why you should be granted whatever you want or be avenged for whatever slight?

Think of the case of Achilles. He has his girlfriend taken away from him by his ruler, Agamemnon, but instead of simply following suit and trying to take her back, he raises the stakes. This is very characteristic of the positive form of manly assertiveness. It raises the stakes of what is *merely* yours to the level of a principle that isn't simply yours. In this case, Achilles raises the stakes by saying to Agamemnon, "People like me should be in charge, not people like you. All you have is a genealogy, whereas I have a spear. I have real virtue." See how he generalizes? He's saying that people of real virtue are the ones who should rule rather than those who are simply born into it. Now he's devoted himself to a principle or a cause.

You could also look at the whole modern women's movement this way. They see that there is this long-standing injustice to women, and they bring it to public attention. It isn't just their private suffering or oppression that they're concerned about. It's a general point, and it begs a general justification. This is how manliness creates the political, and as a political scientist, I was interested in that—in the way manliness gives rise to the political issues of a particular time. Somebody has to stand up on his hind legs and say, "This is important!" or "Stop!" Abolitionism, the temperance movement, the women's movement, and the civil rights movement are all that kind of assertiveness. They show that what is public and what is private aren't constant or permanent, but that different issues can be brought *out* of the private sphere and *into* the public sphere and be made politically relevant.

In this respect, I think the gender-neutral society has impoverished our understanding of the political process. I would say, for example, that the women's movement doesn't understand *itself* very well, because it is itself an example of manliness and assertiveness in a *good* way. Of course, manliness can be involved in evil, as well. The Nazi Party was an expression of manliness, too.

WIE: *Was Hitler a manly man?*

MANSFIELD: Maybe he wasn't personally, but he appealed to that, to getting revenge and that kind of thing. So manliness has its dangerous side. But on the other hand, how do you oppose it? It takes manliness on the other side. The only cure for manliness is manliness!

WIE: *Many feminist commentators have been very critical of your book. Naomi Wolf, for one, said: "I don't know what bubble he's living in. He's making these sweeping arguments as if from this bubble in 1955." So she took issue with the idea of going backward. Is it true that you think we should go backward in some way, or is she misunderstanding you?*

MANSFIELD: Not the whole way backward. But yes, I do in part, because I think that we understood the sexes better in the previous generation than we do now. One of the most unfortunate turns in modern feminism is that it completely bought into the sexual liberation movement. This is what most distinguishes today's feminism from nineteenth- or early twentieth-century feminism, where women still wanted to be women in the sense of being modest sexually. Now they think that they can be equal only if they do the same thing as the most predatory males. Although I think they're considerably exaggerating what men do, they take that as their standard. This doesn't mean that men and women generally are in an orgy of promiscuity now. But it does mean that the reputation of the family, of a settled and regular sexual life, of being faithful to each other, has gone way down, and that has had very bad consequences. It's especially contrary to the interests and inclinations of women, because it means that women have consented to play a man's game, and they're not going to win at that. It's always easier for a man to walk away from a sexual encounter with an untroubled mind than it is for a woman.

WIE: *Well, for better and probably more for worse, men do seem to be built that way. But in terms of going backward, do you really think we can do that? Or do you think it might*

Manliness has its dangerous side. But on the other hand, how do you oppose it? The only cure for manliness is manliness!

be possible to recapture some of the virtues and principles of manliness that we've rejected in the gender-neutral society without going back in many other ways? Without losing, say, all the rights and freedoms of modern democracy, including women's rights, but also without losing the benefits that men, too, have gained from the gender-neutral society? So many elements of men's interior selves have developed since the John Wayne version of the manly man—greater self-reflectiveness and self-knowledge, for example, or a greater capacity for connection and relationship and empathy for other people. We don't want to give those up, do we? Or do you think those are inherently contradictory to manliness?

MANSFIELD: Yes, they are. That's what I would call the sensitive male, and I doubt very much that those two

characters can be brought together, the sensitive male and the manly man. There are many ways in which the sensitive male fits in better to the environment of the gender-neutral society, the commercial society, the professional society. But the two characters are so opposed that I don't think the combination is possible or even desirable. You would lose the main features of the one if you tried to push it in the direction of the other.

I do think one way of going back is to return to the liberal distinction between public and private. In public, society should be gender-neutral; in private it should not. In public we should not permit sex stereotypes to operate; in private we should admit that they are true. In other words, we shouldn't assume that every private individual has to have the characteristics of the whole *society*—so that every private individual has to be gender-neutral—because otherwise the gender-neutral society won't work. The gender-neutral society has to let the two genders be *themselves* to some extent. There needs to be more tolerance or even respect for the manly person, even with all of his faults. We must retain our respect for diversity, and we shouldn't try to have individuals be everything. Society can be everything, but if you try to make each individual a microcosm of society, you're going to lose diversity. So we shouldn't try to gather all the advantages of manliness with all the advantages of sensitivity in a kind of androgynous combination of man and woman. I don't think that's a sensible goal for liberal society.

WIE: *Do you see any road at all to developing new and more evolved expressions of manliness that wouldn't be in contradiction with that sort of sensitivity but could almost transcend and include it?*

MANSFIELD: I suppose if you're talking about philosophers or a few rare individuals, maybe. Otherwise . . .

WIE: *Well, that's something at least!*

MANSFIELD: No, I don't think something like that would be impossible for every human being.

WIE: *It's just that on a broad scale, you don't think we should try to do that?*

MANSFIELD: That's right. On a broad scale, I think we really have to return to some respect for the differences between being sensitive and being manly. ■



Listen to an interview with Harvey Mansfield about men, manliness, and the gender-neutral society at

wie.org/mansfield

PART 2

Beyond the Rambo Mentality

Interview by Carter Phipps and Tom Huston



Tripp Lanier is a music producer, integral life coach, and host of the weekly podcast "The New Man."



Jayson Gaddis is a Gestalt therapist who directs a wilderness "rite-of-passage" program for young adults in Boulder, Colorado.



DURING OUR RESEARCH for this issue, we came across an intriguing weekly podcast called "The New Man." Led by charismatic Gen-X host Tripp Lanier, the online broadcast's serious and spirited inquiry quickly drew us in, and we spent a number of sessions listening to Lanier's explorations with his many guests into such themes as "The Warrior's Journey" and "Is It Necessary to Get Close to Death to Live Life?" When we heard a series of dialogues between Lanier and his longtime colleague Jayson Gaddis in which they demonstrated an unusual

willingness to question existing definitions of masculinity in their pursuit of "the new man," we decided to give them a call.

Besides being the lead singer for two rock bands, Hank Madison and Screaming Witness, Lanier is a successful music producer, an "integral men's coach," and a course leader for the Authentic Man Program. He facilitates men's groups in the Boulder, Colorado, area and cites integral philosopher Ken Wilber as one of his primary influences.

Gaddis is a transformational

coach and psychotherapist specializing in working with adult men and women undergoing life transitions. In 2001, he founded his own company, Innernature, and has led more than two dozen wilderness rite-of-passage trips for young men. He is also a meditation instructor and leads Authentic Man courses in Boulder.

Curious to see where the next generation's men's movement may be headed, we asked Lanier and Gaddis what new and emerging male ideals and archetypes may await us beyond all that's come before.

WHAT IS ENLIGHTENMENT: *In your online radio dialogues, both of you have tried to address issues facing men in the twenty-first century. You have suggested that the new ideal for men should be something that goes beyond both the “macho jerk” and the “New Age wimp.” So what would that look like? What’s the next step for men?*

TRIPP LANIER: That’s really the inquiry of our program. There isn’t a preset position. For me, it’s a guy who is being himself. That sounds overly simple, but I actually feel it in my body when I’m around certain men if they’re closed down, if they’re not in touch with their passion, their desire, or their purpose. So it’s someone who’s willing to be who they are, warts and all. It’s someone who isn’t shrinking from who they are.

JAYSON GADDIS: I agree with that, but I would also include the idea that “I don’t know who I am,” because if that’s an authentic statement in the moment, then that guy is trustworthy. I’m already curious about that guy versus another guy who might say, “I got my shit together, and I do all this great stuff. I’m the man.” That sounds more like an ego trip. When we’re being ourselves, we’re not out to prove anything. We want to make our mark, but there’s no desperation involved. There’s an ease and simplicity.

WIE: *What are the obstacles to authentic manhood in postmodern culture?*

LANIER: One obstacle is what I call the Rambo mentality: It’s me against the world. As men, we tend to isolate ourselves. The idea of learning how to ask for support is huge. So there’s this core belief that “I’m alone. Whatever problem or whatever challenge I’m facing, it’s mine and it’s only mine.” That’s a fallacy, and it stems from an association of vulnerability with weakness. I’m weak if I reach out and ask for support. I see that over and over again, and it really limits what’s possible for men in this day and age.

GADDIS: I think for me, the biggest obstacle is the “should.” I should be this or I should be that. We betray ourselves to fit into what other men are doing—whether it’s the professional athlete with a bunch of tattoos on his arm or the guy on Wall Street. We have so few authentic male models that we can look at.

WIE: *In one of your podcasts, Jayson, you said that we as a culture are failing young men. What did you mean by that?*

GADDIS: I meant that in traditional cultures—and I don’t want to romanticize traditional cultures—but often in traditional cultures, the elders of the society were initiating the young men. They were challenging them, helping them to go through some kind of ordeal, which is a necessary passage when you hit a certain threshold in life. You need to go through an ordeal and get to the other side. We are not doing that with our young men.

Now I’m in my thirties, but I’m working with college-age men and teenage boys. I’m doing my best to deliver a meaningful experience, to help them go through some kind of

ordeal, to come out on the other side and feel more themselves, more in touch with their purpose in life or their confusion about life.

But I do think the elders of our culture are dropping the ball. We could be doing a lot more. And there are plenty of examples that we can draw wisdom from.

WIE: *Do you think it has to do partially with our culture’s emphasis on individualism? We’re so focused on self-development and personal achievement, it seems, that we may be lacking the larger cultural structures that could provide that kind of initiation.*

GADDIS: Yes, I agree with that. I think we are a highly individualized society, so that’s what gets rewarded. If I put in a seventy-hour workweek, I get a lot of conventional praise for it. But then on the weekend, I might let off steam in an unconscious way. I might be a mess inside; I might be miserable, have dark thoughts or whatever. So where is my community? Where are my people? Where are my fellow men to hold me accountable, call me out, challenge me, love me, confront me?

WIE: *Both of you have spoken about the “go it alone” tendency in men, the Rambo mentality, as you put it, Tripp. There’s a real destructive, negative side to that. But it seems that it is also just part of the masculine character. I was wondering if that kind of autonomy could also play a constructive role in the next stage of manhood?*

GADDIS: I think there’s a huge positive side to it, and let’s call it what it is. It’s the warrior archetype. I think of a true archetypal warrior who is embodied, conscious, and integrated in community. He is on purpose, kicking ass in life, and having fun. A warrior takes full responsibility for his life. No one’s going to do it for him. No one’s going to carry him along. He’s not a victim. I think conscious warriorship is about taking full responsibility—stepping into your own life in a completely embodied way.

LANIER: Yes, for me it’s not an either-or; it feels like a both-and. No one can do it for you. You have to take responsibility. But at the same time you can still be part of a group of people who check in and hold one another accountable or provide support. You may also be out there doing your own thing, but there’s still an energetic connection to the group.

WIE: *You’ve mentioned that many young men join the military or join a fraternity as a way to sort of unconsciously initiate themselves into manhood.*

GADDIS: Yes, so many guys are walking around uninitiated. We’ve got a bunch of thirty-, forty-, and even fifty-year-old boys walking around—basically a bunch of developmental adolescents running the country. So if that’s true, what’s happening? My belief is, we’re not initiating them consciously into manhood, so they end up trying to figure it out on their own, without even being aware of it. If I look at my own life and the life of my friends, we pushed the envelope in our late

teens and twenties—whether it was through using drugs or climbing mountains or traveling the world or taking really big risks—under the guise of soul-searching. If we had had some elder holding our hand, showing us the way, giving us coaching, we could have saved a lot of time, effort, and struggle. We might still have had to go through an ordeal. But wouldn't it be cool if people had been helping us and guiding us and challenging us?

I have a few friends who are in the military and have even been to Iraq. It's interesting because the military has the best and the worst of the masculine. Very few of the commanders and the guys higher up in the chain of command are doing conscious initiation. These guys are often hazed and shamed and beaten down—basically brainwashed to believe in the mission. The same is true in fraternities. At the same time, in the military a lot of guys will come out of that experience feeling more of a man, more connected to themselves, more on purpose. However, they've also had to experience an intense amount of trauma and all sorts of mixed messages from the elders above them about what's really going on.

WIE: *It seems that the military may certainly have some negatives, but it can also provide a kind of structure and context and meaning that are not easy to come by otherwise.*

LANIER: Yes, and there are real boundaries. Imagine for a moment living in a world that doesn't have any real hard boundaries. It's scary. So I think there is a hunger as a young man to find out how far things will stretch out, how far things will go. Then they find that boundary and they can relax. They know where the edges are. You see, when there is a clear boundary, when someone pushes back, they can rest.

WIE: *In terms of this initiation into manhood, is there some essential quality of manliness that people need to get in touch with or that needs to be released? Or do you think we need to create something new for men?*

GADDIS: I think it's inborn. It's always been with us, and it's always going to be there. So our job is to shed all the shoulds and the superficial layers. Looking at it with a spiritual sensibility, we might say it means to let ego fall away and rest in our essential nature. For me, that's a conscious masculine experience. I'm a man when I'm most at peace with myself, with who I am and what I'm doing in this moment.

LANIER: I also believe one of the things that needs to be teased out is the healthy version of masculinity versus the pathological version. Culturally, I think the healthy and pathological versions often get stirred into the same soup; then, as Ken Wilber might say, the baby gets thrown out with the bathwater. So this is a call for a reintegration of the healthy masculine into our society. I don't know what it's going to look like, but it certainly doesn't look like Homer Simpson and the stupid kind of overweight slobs who tend to show up as fathers in our sitcoms.

GADDIS: And it's also not Rambo. It's not any of these.

WIE: *So what are the top masculine icons in the world today that you would point to? Who would you say is an authentic example of a new kind of man?*

LANIER: I'm unable to point to any one guy in particular.

WIE: *Okay, but if I tied your hands behind your back, held you down, and forced you to come up with one, who would you say?*

GADDIS: How about Mel Gibson's character in *Braveheart*? Here's a guy who isn't necessarily going at it alone. He's got community, he's got a village, he's in his heart much of the time. He can cry; then he can go out and kill. And he's leading his people. He's trying to follow his truth, but it's for his people. There's a certain inspiring quality to him. It wakes up some archetype in us.

Another example is this young guy in *Into the Wild*. I think he's more of an evolving character. That movie is more about becoming a man. I found that story very inspiring because this guy is trying to figure it all out. He's a sensitive guy, but he's also taking huge risks, and he's doing some pretty ballsy things. He's a respected and charming guy, and he seems magnetic in some ways. He can spend one hundred days out in the wilderness alone and go through all kinds of ordeals. I think he's a new emerging archetype, especially for young men.

WIE: *What is your own vision for the kind of impact the development of men could have on society? Looking ahead a few decades, what do you see as the potential?*

GADDIS: Recently, for whatever reason, I have found myself working with a lot of affluent young white men. Those are the type of men who end up in powerful positions, because the people in power are usually white men, often heterosexuals. So if these are the men who, as they grow older, are the ones who will be running corporations, running this country, then if I can touch a chord—rattle their cage, get them to take their colored lenses off so to speak, and see that the world actually isn't one particular color but a variety of colors—if I can do that, I'd feel that I'm having a huge impact, making a big difference.

That's my own hidden agenda with men, to challenge them to see beyond the world they're seeing and to live bigger, to be themselves more authentically. Then perhaps when they're running a corporation down the road, they'll make different choices.

WIE: *Do you think that the men's movement of the nineties with Robert Bly and Sam Keen is comparable to the men's movement today?*

LANIER: We're not into beating drums out in the woods. That's not what is going to speak to our generation. So what will speak to them? Well, that's an open question and it's the ongoing inspiration for our work—where are men now, and where do we want to go? ■

"Tennessee Mountain Man Discovers Missing Link to Eternal Youth, Previously Known Only to China's Yellow Emperor and an Anonymous Tibetan Sage!"



This startling discovery by a Tennessee recluse supercharged my body in just 11 days. I thought I had been doing everything right until he shared his secret. My skin became as smooth as silk. My eyes took on a new power and brightness. I had just drunk from the fountain of youth! And you will too! Would you like to supercharge your chi and revitalize your internal strength in as little as 15 minutes a day? Can I tell you my story?

At first they laughed at me when I told people the secret went back to the Yellow Emperor's classic of internal medicine of the first century B.C. But no one was doing it except an American, affectionately known as the "Magic Man," living on a mountaintop in Tennessee. I had to thank my lucky stars for finding him. I pleaded with him to teach me his practice. He said the surprisingly simple secret was used by a Tibetan Yogi in the 1800s to expand the body's subtle energy fields. It creates high-amplitude alpha brain waves, when done with a special Qi Gong routine. It is said to change the brain tissue. Can you imagine how this sets the environment for eternal youth? Since I'm an avid athlete, I asked if the missing link could also improve my strength. He went over to a cut-off 80-lb. dumbbell, his fingertips just barely reaching around the wide end. He picked it up as if it were a paperweight. He laughed at my amazement and replied, "How would you like to magnetize your fingers with chi like this? My Magnetic Qi Gong is the fastest way to turbo-charge the physical body that I've ever found."

As we walked together down the twisting mountain trail, under a flowered canopy of pink and white laurel, he said, "When you hold your hands apart, if the empty space doesn't feel as solid as an iron ball, your chi could be toxic, and that could cause tumors, cysts, and growths. Do you agree that this could be a problem? When do you believe that best time to change would be?" I sputtered, "Why, right now!" He put his hand on my shoulder as he laughed. His laughter made me feel unusually peaceful. The countless songbirds flittering from branch to branch seemed somehow to sing louder now. I'd always heard stories about sages secreted away in the mountains, but I never thought I'd have the opportunity to...

He stopped me as he read my mind. "Of course, it takes a very special individual to fully appreciate the value of this Qi Gong. The healing effects are so awesome. In fact, you'll multiply your personal power instantly. That's why I've hesitated in sharing this secret; some might misuse it. So it's not for everyone. But, if one does misuse it..." I assured him I would not misuse this teaching and that I believed there were many other people who would value this as if a priceless treasure. He relented.

I can't believe my good fortune. I doubled the power of my chi in less than 11 days, and ever further, he allowed me to film his secret! As I profusely thanked him, the Mountain Man just laughed and laughed, "Isn't it a shame how others waste their time, when so simply, they could do what you just did?"

Tony Balistreri, Asheville, NC

You may have seen this ad before . . . *these people were also skeptical!*

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Don Handyside, President of Clear Light Community and Magnetic Image Southfield, MI

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Surya Vitalis, Teacher, Cobble Hill, Canada

I expected it would increase my strength but I was pleasantly surprised to have my personal magnetism increase! I feel more self-confident than I ever remember!

Bruce Reed, Dock Maintenance of Newport Beach, Newport Beach, CA

☒ **Yes** Tony, send me the works!

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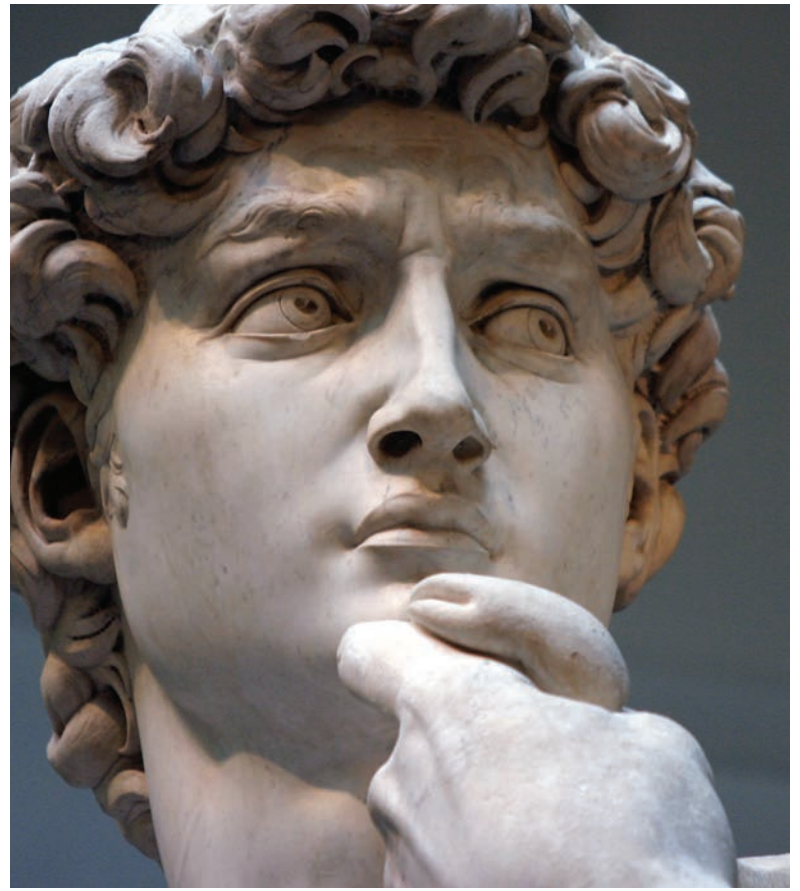
Awakening the Warrior Poet

Interview by Carter Phipps



Erwin McManus

is an innovative Christian minister, filmmaker, author, and speaker.



I FIRST ENCOUNTERED THE WORDS of Erwin McManus in an unlikely setting: We were in a large indoor arena and he was standing on the other side of ten thousand men. It was a weekend extravaganza sponsored by Promise Keepers, the Christian men's organization well known for the stadium-sized events they hold across the country. McManus was a featured speaker, and I was writing an article on Promise Keepers for this magazine. In an evening of Christian idealism and bootstrap empowerment, McManus stood out. He was a powerful speaker, and his nondogmatic call for men to live with a deeper sense of integrity, passion, and nobility resonated even with me—a non-Christian, nontraditional, non-Promise Keepers sort of guy.

As it turns out, I'm hardly alone. McManus is one of the fast-rising stars in the Christian world and beyond. With an inspirational message, a down-to-

earth persona, and an eclectic palette of interests that includes writing, filmmaking, and teaching, his words resonate with a generation of seekers who are passionate about finding meaning and purpose but not so excited about religious dos and don'ts. Born in El Salvador to a Roman Catholic family who never went to mass, McManus was raised in Miami by a mother interested in Buddhism and a grandfather who believed in reincarnation. "We were the only Latinos in Miami who were Buddhists," he jokes.

This eclectic background prepared McManus to minister to a postmodern world that is unmoored from traditional doctrines and populated with young people more interested in spiritual authenticity than religious authority. After earning degrees at the University of North Carolina and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, McManus headed west

and founded Mosaic, a fast-growing Los Angeles community of Christian seekers, activists, and entrepreneurs. Today he helps run the community; works to inspire and organize its multitude of projects; lectures around the country on subjects as diverse as creativity, community building, and filmmaking; and publishes numerous books, including the just-released *Wide Awake: The Future Is Waiting Within You*. As the spiritual adviser to thousands of people, many of them under the age of thirty, McManus has spent years counseling men as they face the unique life conditions of our contemporary society. Last spring I reached this new kind of postmodern preacher in his offices in L.A., where he shared with me his thoughts about the current state of masculinity, the characteristics of an ideal man, and the relationship between men, women, gender, and enlightenment.

WHAT IS ENLIGHTENMENT: *What do you think is the next step for men in our culture today?*

ERWIN McMANUS: This is a significant question because we've had strong moves in the last thirty years toward a kind of metrosexual feminizing of the male persona. Unfortunately, it often seems that the only alternative to that direction is the sort of raw, meat-eating, nonthinking macho male. So the problem is that we tend to look at men from these two polarizing extremes. Of course, we might recognize that we're not supposed to be insensitive, uncaring, narcissistic, power-based, and controlling, but the alternative of that shouldn't be to lose our masculinity.

I live in Los Angeles, and I think women have a clearer sense of identity in our culture than men do. I'm more concerned about the future of masculinity. If you're a woman, in a sense the world is your oyster. What I mean is that you really can posture yourself on almost any spectrum. You can be a soft, delicate woman, or you can be a strong, powerful woman, and the culture gives you validity for that identity.

One of the things I'm constantly reminded of is that culture creates pictures of who we're supposed to be, and sometimes there are these strange submessages. For example, there is a TV show where the straight guy is the one who's more feminine and the gay guy is the one who's more masculine. Now imagine that you're a ten-year-old kid, and you're processing this and trying to decide what it looks like to be a man. I don't know what the future of masculinity looks like, but I think we're entering an era of real fragmentation where guys are going to be the ones who are struggling with a sense of personal identity and where there will be a sense of ambivalence about what it means to be masculine.

I also try to look at my own life. I'm an artist. I write poetry and play music. That is part of who I am. But I also love playing sports, I love risk, I love the adrenaline rush of life, and I don't think these are dichotomies. I think we have to become holistic men—guys who really understand how to move toward intimacy and who are not guarded in terms of their own emotions. At the same time, we need to realize that it's all right to be a guy who loves adventure, risk, and competition.

WIE: *Is there anyone you look up to who embodies that combination of strength and sensitivity?*

McMANUS: I think of David in the Old Testament. He was an artisan and a warrior. He was a warrior poet. He had the strength of courage to kill Goliath and the artistic tenderness and sensitivity to soothe Saul's spirit by being a harpist. Now, we may love that, but it's also true that the same personality, that same person, can misuse both of those qualities. That same powerful essence that killed Goliath can also then kill Uriah the Hittite, as David does when he wants to take Uriah's wife, Bathsheba. And that same artistic aesthetic can be the guy who is on the rooftop admiring the beauty of Bathsheba,

deciding he has to have her. So I want a guy to be willing to kill Goliath when we're in danger. I just don't want him to be like that with his wife and kids at home. You see, we tend to want a person to be one thing, and what we need to be is whatever the moment calls for.

WIE: *It seems that one has to be willing to have that kind of strength of character, purpose, and integrity to face down whatever our particular Goliath is going to look like in our own lives.*

McMANUS: Absolutely. The metaphor for me is Gandhi standing up against the injustice in India. It's Mandela standing up against injustice in South Africa. It's Martin Luther King, Jr., knowing he is going to die for his cause but stepping into that cause anyway. That's what I mean about finding the courage to step into that moment and face that Goliath.

WIE: *A Harvard professor who we also interviewed for this issue, Dr. Harvey Mansfield, has an interesting definition of manliness. He describes it as "confidence in the face of risk." Would you agree with that definition?*

McMANUS: Wow, I love that definition! My only hesitation is that I don't know if I would just single it out for manliness. I have a sixteen-year-old daughter, and I want her to have confidence in the face of risk too. In that sense, I'm more egalitarian. I want that to be the definition of manliness, but I think maybe I like it better as a definition of humanity.

**I think of David in the Old Testament.
I want a guy to be willing to
kill Goliath when we're in danger.
I just don't want him to be like that
with his wife and kids at home.**

WIE: *How would you describe the positive qualities of manliness? What would be the sign of healthy masculinity?*

McMANUS: To me, one of the signs of real manhood is meekness. The word meek at one time referred to a well-disciplined horse, a horse that has what we might call controlled strength. One of the characteristics of a real man is controlled strength—strength that isn't used for acts of violence but for acts of nobility. I don't know that as a culture we really believe a man can be truly meek, that there can be that kind of disciplined and controlled strength. As a culture we tend to go with option number two—let's neutralize that strength by convincing men that they are weak or by making them weak. I don't think we help humanity in any way by neutralizing the strength in men or in women.

WIE: *How does one develop that kind of controlled strength?*

McMANUS: That's why the conversation about character is so

important. More specifically, I think it comes from humility, and there are two aspects of humility. One is not having too high a regard for ourselves; the other is having a higher regard for others than we have for ourselves. When you value other people more than you value even yourself, you move toward meekness, because now all your strength serves the good of others.

WIE: *That's a big statement to make in our culture. We live in an age where there's great concern about self-esteem, and what you're saying runs counter to that ethos.*

McMANUS: I know, I know. I want to be the first to admit it's a fine line. This, I think, is the line: You must love yourself, but you must not be in love with yourself. You see, we've tried so hard to build self-esteem that we haven't actually built resilience. If you focus so much on saying "You're great, you're great, you're great," then you never actually pay the price to do something great.

I mean, we're now graduating kids from kindergarten! You have a graduation for second grade, third grade. You don't have to earn anything anymore. You get a medal just for participation. I know we're trying to eliminate the culture of competition, but what we don't realize is that we're also going to eliminate the culture of uniqueness and greatness and achievement.

When I grow as a spiritual human being and deepen my relationship with God, I don't become less masculine; I become more authentically and powerfully masculine.

WIE: *I have a friend who grew up in Denmark and lives in Copenhagen. When he was young, they wouldn't let the boys celebrate sports achievements or victories. I guess that sense of competitiveness was viewed as a negative masculine trait. So if you were running track and you won a contest, for example, you weren't allowed to celebrate the victory. It's so different from my own upbringing in this country that I find it hard to imagine.*

McMANUS: Yes, and it doesn't just affect the person who won the competition and isn't allowed to celebrate. It actually affects all of the others who are told not to celebrate as well, because what we do then is eliminate a culture of appreciation. That actually creates more arrogance, not more humility. If I can acknowledge that another human being can do something better than I can and celebrate that greatness, it actually makes me a stronger, better, and more enriched human being.

WIE: *What do you think is the relationship between spiritual development and development as a man?*

McMANUS: I think the relationship is intimate and integral. A lot of us believe we are physical beings with a soul, but we're actually spiritual beings with a body. Whenever you perceive yourself as a physical being, even with a soul, you're always working from a deficit. You're defining yourself by something that's incredibly secondary. When you realize that you're a spiritual being with a body, then you also realize that your body, your sexuality, your machismo—it's all supposed to be a servant of your spirit. So I see an integral connection between the two. When I grow as a spiritual human being and deepen my own relationship with God, I don't become less masculine; I become more authentically and powerfully masculine.

Remember, in Jesus you see this masculinity. When he's in the temple and he sees that the money changers are abusing and misusing people's desire to connect to God by making money on it, he turns over the tables, takes a whip, and becomes a physically intimidating presence. Yet when he's overlooking Jerusalem and sees that the people are lost, they're in disarray, they're confused, he says, "Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often I have longed to gather your children together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings." He uses very feminine, very nurturing imagery. To me, they're both powerful masculine expressions.

WIE: *What about community? As many people have told us during our work on this issue, men often have this "go it alone" mentality. One interviewee called it the Rambo mentality. What should the role of community be in a man's life?*

McMANUS: That's a great question. I would say that whenever a man feels he can do it alone, his vision is too small. You should dig deep and look for a vision, for a challenge that is so big that you need other people in your life. I'm a huge advocate of community, though I know it's different for men than it is for women. Community is created in a different kind of context. This is a generalization, but it's one where it's overwhelmingly the pattern. Guys tend to bond on a common mission, whether it's playing sports or working on a project. The problem is that we've eliminated all kinds of activist, missional environments for guys to bond in. Sitting in a classroom with thirty students, listening to a teacher, and taking notes is not a missional experience. The only environment girls need to bond in is, well, earth. I mean, girls bond more naturally. All they need is an opportunity to talk and engage, and bonding begins to happen.

This is a problem in church life. Most of the volunteers in churches across America are women. They find a way to create community. Men really don't take that proactive step. But if you ask ten guys to go solve a problem, to build a building, or to smuggle some food into Africa, they're going to come back ten of the best friends in the world.

So I think community is critical. I have so many friends who don't have community, and especially for men, it gets

really unhealthy. A level of neurosis settles in. I grew up fairly irreligious in terms of structure. But when I became a person of faith, and then particularly when I opened up my life to Jesus Christ, one of the greatest gifts I received was the opportunity for community.

WIE: *There have been two major men's movements in the last few decades that captured the attention of the larger culture. First, the Promise Keepers men's movement gathers Christian men in big stadiums and arenas for weekends together. It has been a huge phenomenon and still is to some degree. The other is the men's movement championed by Robert Bly and Sam Keen, the Iron John movement that's a sort of mythopoetic urge to get in touch with a primal sense of what it means to be a man. It captured the cultural zeitgeist in the late eighties and early nineties. I wonder if you could speak about the impact of those two movements and what sort of movement is needed today?*

McMANUS: I worked with Promise Keepers, and as you know, they took one of my books, *Uprising*, and made it the theme

Whenever a man feels he can do it alone, his vision is too small. You should dig deep and look for a challenge that is so big that you need other people in your life.

for a particular year on their tour across the country. They asked me in subsequent years to be a primary speaker, but I actually ended up saying no. Part of the reason was that I felt they were mainly focused on creating experiences for men. That's great, but men need more than an annual experience. They need a process to help them become the kind of people they want to become. I couldn't get them to commit to a process. There's this interesting proverb that says hope deferred makes the heart sick. If you elevate this hope—this sense of belief that something beautiful and true and good can happen from your life, that you can live a life of real integrity and be a person of character and wisdom—but then you don't provide a process to help them succeed, they're going to stop believing in the vision.

It's important to get in touch with the primal masculinity, which I think both of those groups did. It's important to get in touch with your sense of manhood, to dig deep, and to find the courage, resolve, and resilience to live a life of honor and nobility. At the same time—and I know this just from being in L.A. for the last sixteen years—the most well-intended person, if not given a process to move toward success, will stumble and fall and then come to the conclusion that while

someone else can succeed, he just can't pull it off, can't live that life. So I think it's also important to say, "Here's a process. Here are steps you can take." In the best-case scenario, you need to find people who will journey with you, people who will mentor you and help you along the way.

That's why community is so critical. We don't need someone with us all the time, but we do need community some of the time. There are critical transition moments where it's really essential.

WIE: *As new generations of men come of age and have to deal with more ambiguous definitions of masculinity, how do you see this affecting the dynamics of the relationship between men and women?*

McMANUS: First of all, the average age of my own community, Mosaic, is twenty-five. We have three thousand people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-eight, so it's packed with that demographic.

Now, women have really fought for their equality, for their voice, for their strength, for their power, and part of that has been to make sure that men were not in the way. A part of that fight has been the diminishing of male strength and the masculine ego. But now those women need men who are as strong as they are, and I hear this question all the time from women: "Where are the men?" And I tell them, "Well, look under your shoe."

If you want to find a strong man who will love you and who can love you, then don't make this win-lose. Make this win-win. The challenge for women now is that they have seen the damage men have done with power, yet ironically they are choosing the exact same path and abuse of power that men have followed. They're not learning from the lessons; they're just taking the baton.

So the real question regarding whoever is in power is, "What will they do with that power—will they overpower or will they empower?" In the end, I don't care who you are, male or female, you want to have a relationship with an equal, not a superior, not an inferior. You want to have a lifelong journey with someone who is worthy of your engagement. So I think the best thing for women to do is to make sure that boys grow up with the same sense of power and strength that girls do.

When I think of communism, I think of everyone finding a common ground in the lowest common denominator. And I don't know what you want to call it—maybe enlightenment—but it's where we find a common denominator where all of us are thriving in our own greatness. I don't mean greatness in the sense of fame. I'm not talking about prestige or wealth or power. I'm talking about that sense of fulfillment where you know you're living the life you were created to live and where you go to bed at night feeling good about the person you are. ■



Listen to the interview with innovative Christian minister Erwin McManus at wie.org/mcmanus

PART 4

The Making of a Marine Officer

Lessons in manliness from one of America's proudest few

by Joel Pitney



Nathaniel Fick is a former Marine Corps Officer who served in Afghanistan and Iraq.



*From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered;
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he today that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother.*

—William Shakespeare, *Henry V*

IS THE MARINE CORPS THE LAST bastion of manhood in American society? In this post-Vietnam era, it often seems that the military and the manly qualities it stands upon—like honor, courage, brotherhood, and commitment—have been relegated to the “glory” days of a patriarchal past. So is there anything more for a young man to learn from America’s proudest few? Nathaniel Fick thinks so. And this Gen-X Ivy League Marine Corps officer put his life on the line to find out.

Lieutenant Fick is the author of *One Bullet Away: The Making of a Marine Officer*, the bestselling account of his own modern-day hero’s journey from the halls of Dartmouth University through grueling Marine Officer Candidates School (OCS) to the combat zones of Afghanistan and Iraq. There he led teams of Recon Marines—the toughest and most highly trained in the corps—on some of the most challenging missions the military has to offer. Along the way, he learned some hard lessons about the forgotten qualities of manhood that have been cornerstones of the military culture throughout history . . . and became a man.

“The Marines will teach you everything I love you too much to teach you,” were the words Fick’s father said to him on the day that he headed off to OCS between his junior and senior years at Dartmouth College. He had made the decision to join the Marines for reasons different from what one might expect: He was in search of an adventure that couldn’t be found anywhere else in our postmodern culture. “Dartmouth encouraged deviation from the trampled path,” Fick writes, “but only to join

organizations like the Peace Corps or Teach for America. I wanted something more transformative. Something that might kill me—or leave me better, stronger, more capable. I wanted to be a warrior.” For Fick and many of his military peers, “becoming a Marine was not about money for graduate school or learning a skill; it was a rite of passage in a society becoming so soft and homogenized that the very concept was often sneered at.”

What may be most impressive about the Marines, and the military in general, is the extraordinary bravery, selflessness, and camaraderie brought out in soldiers by the overwhelming atmosphere of combat, where every action and decision has potentially fatal consequences—and the training that prepares them for it. Fick and his fellow Marines found out firsthand what it takes to cultivate these virtues during OCS in Quantico, Virginia, the gauntlet through which each of them had to pass before becoming an officer. “Marine training is essentially a psychological battle against the instinct for self-preservation.” Aspiring Marines are made to run hundreds of miles wearing full combat gear in the hot southern sun, do thousands of push-ups to the point of vomiting and collapse, endure weekly conditioning sessions in the tear-gas chamber, and carry out countless seemingly trivial drills like polishing buttons on their uniforms and making sure that all of their underwear is folded just right. All of this is intended not simply to train them in the skills necessary for combat but to break down their defiant independence and build a deep, indomitable strength both within and between them.

In his book, Fick describes his response to the absolute challenge presented at OCS:

I wanted to be there, and I tried hard. For the first time in my life, desire and effort wouldn't be enough. I was learning that in the Marines, the only easy day was yesterday. Success the day before meant nothing, and tomorrow might never happen. I woke up each morning at Quantico wondering whether I'd still be there that night.

As the training intensified, Fick came to the point where he had only two choices: submit completely to the challenge before him or “ring the bell,” the symbolic Marine ritual for dropping out. Fick was among the two-thirds in his class who rose up and persevered. He describes the transformation and the unity that resulted from this choice:

The future disappeared, and my selfish motives went with it. I existed only in the present. The one thing keeping me going was being part of a group, knowing each mistake made my comrades a little weaker. Group punishment, shunned in most of American society, was a staple at OCS. Platoons fight as groups. They live or die as groups. So we were disciplined as a group.

It wasn't until four years later, when Fick saw his first heavy combat during the invasion of Iraq, that he and his

platoon of twenty-two Recon Marines felt the true value of their training. Fick's platoon, code-named “Hitman Two,” was traveling through one of the many enemy-occupied towns en route to Baghdad when they found themselves in the middle of an ambush. Careening through bullet-infested streets in poorly armored Humvees and taking heavy fire from the fedayeen (resistance fighters) lining their route, Fick found himself completely disoriented:

Sensory overload paralyzed me. I saw mud buildings set many meters back from the road. Beyond the turn, the buildings were concrete and seemed to tower above the road on both sides, trapping us in an urban canyon. Flashes of incoming fire surrounded us, but I didn't hear it, and I couldn't tell whether my platoon was shooting back. There was no fear, but no bravado either. I felt nothing. I was a passive observer watching this ambush unfold on a movie screen.

When Gunny Wynn yanked the wheel straight, I snapped back to the present. My hearing returned all at once: roaring machine guns, Humvee engine shrieking. I saw the street, the fedayeen positions, and my platoon in a fight. Fire poured from the buildings on both sides. Wisps of smoke swirled in the wake of each bullet. We drag-raced down the street, but



it felt like a crawl. I lifted off my seat as we crashed through potholes and over missing slabs of pavement. Colbert darted left around a wrecked car smoking in the middle of the road. Wynn followed, and we jumped the median, swerved past a light pole, and picked up speed. Muddy water and sewage sprayed in rooster tails from the Humvees' tires.

“This is Hitman Two, in contact. Taking small arms, left and right. We're engaging.” I couldn't even see the rest of the battalion ahead of us.

“Roger, Two,” headquarters replied. “We took some on our way through, too. Just keep pushing.”

Survival and command tugged me in different directions. A normal human survival reaction would be to curl

up on the Humvee floorboards and close my eyes. This is precisely the reaction Marine Corps training is designed to overcome. And it worked. After the initial shock of the ambush, I felt calm and completely self-possessed. The Marines looked the same. They were aiming their shots, calling out targets, and moving as one.

Fick, who has a master's in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government and is pursuing an MBA from Harvard Business School, talks more about the bond



of trust and brotherhood forged between fellow Marines through their training and in combat:

*I'm in grad school now and all the emphasis is on team-building. They tell us that's how government and corporate America work. Well, that's how a Marine platoon works also. I reached a realization about midway through my training that all the hazing and abuse wasn't about how much I could take. It was about how much I could give. And when you have a group of forty guys [who] all come to that same realization, you have a very powerful group that can suffer unbelievable hardship together and take care of one another as a team. That bond is why men who served in the same combat units tend to keep in touch for the rest of their lives.**

Serving any position in the hierarchy of the Marines requires a tremendous amount of courage and personal responsibility. But for an officer, the burden is all that much greater. And for Lieutenant Fick, who not only had to fend for himself in combat but was directly responsible for the lives of the twenty-two men under his command, the implications of each of his decisions bore tremendous weight. The result was a kind of heroic responsibility for the success and safety of others that is rare outside the camouflaged halls of the military. Fick writes of his relationship as an officer to his platoon:

The missions I couldn't go on were always the worst. It was easy to order the platoon into danger when I was riding with them. That was our job. There was a gung-ho camaraderie

in it, a glee in scoffing at the safety-conscious, risk-averse, seat-belt-and-safety-goggle culture that had raised us. After all, I would be right there at the front, in as much danger as anyone, sometimes more. An instructor at Quantico had told me that officers got paid to be gophers: when all the sane people were burrowing in the dirt, it was an officer's job to poke his head up and see what was happening.

But when I sent my men out without me, the mission's rationale had to be ironclad.

Fick had a very simple "litmus test" to determine the validity of a mission:

*First, I had to know that whatever I was asking my men to do was morally right. I didn't care about the politics or the strategy—the big picture—but our little piece of it had to be morally right. And second, I had to know that if anyone were killed, after the war I had to be able to go to someone's hometown and sit down in a living room with his parents and explain to them honestly why their son was killed working for me and why I had thought it was worth it. That sets the bar tremendously high. Yet in a war you clear that bar every single day. And that's just the reality of leadership under fire.***

In the end, Fick decided to leave the Marines after two successful tours of duty. Fundamentally, as he tells it in *One Bullet Away*, he didn't see himself as a military man: "I could kill when killing was called for, and I got hooked on the

I wanted something that might kill me—or leave me better, stronger, more capable. I wanted to be a warrior.

rush of combat as much as any man did. But I couldn't make the conscious choice to put myself in that position again and again throughout my professional life." In spite of this, Fick has absolutely no regrets about his time in the service. As he says in a recent interview, "I grew up in the Marines. It's where I learned to be a citizen. It's where I learned to use words like duty and honor and love without being cynical. I learned that decisions aren't without consequence." Most notably, Fick and his fellow Marines learned something about the sacred brotherhood that develops in the life-threatening atmosphere of combat that few civilian men have the honor of understanding: "I took sixty-five men to war and brought sixty-five home. I gave them everything I had. Together, we passed the test. Fear didn't beat us. I hope life improves for the people of Afghanistan and Iraq, but that's not why we did it. We fought for each other." ■

* From an interview at www.bookreporter.com

** From the *One Bullet Away* book trailer at www.bookshorts.com

Speaking of Men

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WOMEN LEADERS ENVISION THE NEXT STEP FOR THE OTHER HALF

To paraphrase the French existentialist philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre, it is not who we are but what we can become that is of interest. *WIE* asked nineteen daring women what they see as the next step for men today. Where do they think men need to head in order to actualize their potential and transform? What would the enlightened man of the future be like?

Interviews by Elizabeth Debold

1 JEAN HOUSTON

Cross-cultural researcher in human capacities, consultant to the United Nations on human development, and visionary philosopher who helped pioneer the human potential movement



With the slow but sure rise of women to full partnership with men, there is an unexpected reward, which is the release of men to become fully who they are, quite apart from traditional roles and expectations. What does this release look like? It's the ability to take on a fullness of roles that are not specifically male or female but are almost "postgendered." It requires that men tap into deeper aspects of their nature on at least four different levels.

At a sensory level, we find men needing to become not just more sensitive but more *sensate*. That means being aware of environment, extending not simply the outward perceptions but the internal sensory systems as well—inner sensing, inner hearing, inner feeling, inner knowing.

At the psychological level, it requires crossing the great divide of otherness, which means moving into states of radical empathy in which one almost dissolves in identity. That means realizing that we are not encapsulated by the skin dragging around our little egos but are organism environments, symbiotic fields within fields within life.

At the mythic-symbolic level, men won't be caught in any single myth or symbol. Beneath the surface crust of consciousness, we are all redolent with the great stories—of the quest, of the descent into the inner world, of taking on adventures and ideas that have never been known before. The great rising myth of our time is of men and women, boys and girls, and people of all ethnicities working together to save the earth. Taking on this unique story of this unique time in history brings its own requirements, its own depth, and its own challenges. This, in large part, is what I think is evoking this integral enlightened man.

The fourth level is spiritual. We are citizens in a universe far larger than our personal aspirations and more complex than our dreams. Spirituality for the new man will move into a model in which we are partners with the universal purpose or plan. This new world of cocreation will bring a nurturing dimension to man's spirituality.

2 ANI DIFRANCO

Grammy Award-winning singer, songwriter, and guitarist



When I look at any thoughtful person, any engaged person in modern society be they male or female, I think we all need to call ourselves feminists, whatever we've got in our pants. We need to talk about things like patriarchy. I think it's necessary for men to acknowledge the reality of it and engage with women about it in order for a radical shift in consciousness to happen. But I also think there needs to be a great humbling, where men literally sit down and shut up for a minute and stop echoing and expounding on each other's cleverness. They need to learn to defer—to listen and defer long enough to incorporate a female truth.

"We all need to call ourselves feminists, whatever we've got in our pants."

— Ani DiFranco

3 CHERI HUBER

Soto Zen Buddhist teacher and founder of the nonprofit organization Living Compassion



When I first heard your question, What is the enlightened man of the future? I thought, well, this is way up there on my list of most bizarre topics! I am a Buddhist. And supposedly the Buddha said intelligence has no gender. Of course, what he was saying was that enlightenment has no gender. Men have to go beyond cultural conditioning to let go of ideas like "I need to be right; I need to be tough; I need to have the answers." We need to see gender conditioning for what it is—its karmic, egocentric limitation and how it creates the world in which we live—so we can open to something larger. We think

4 NIURKA

Motivational speaker and consultant,
NLP (neuro-linguistic programming)
trainer, and peak performance coach



of gender as being more real because of biology, but biology probably contributes a much smaller percentage to the whole package than we're generally led to believe. We have to look at what we are not seeing—the deep expectations and assumptions we have that are based on what our physical body is like, where we were raised, what family we grew up in, etc. Each one of us has to see through the karma of all of that if we hope to be free.

There is a misperception that masculine energy is all about dominating, about taking over and being in charge, but that's really not the case. That's more boy energy, and it's grounded in fear and inadequacy. This is a symptom of men not going through the process of understanding their role as men. Men no longer have rites of passage to help them transition out of boy mentality into being centered and grounded and mature. Therefore, we have boys running around in business or in government, and what they do is what we often think of as male energy. One of the key elements of an enlightened man is that he would be clear on what is most important to him in the context of his life, his relationships, his business. And when a man is centered in that enlightened space, he creates a space for the divine feminine to be truly grounded in women. That's when I believe we'll really see quantum leaps in the paradigms of thinking and quantum leaps in consciousness.

5 AUDREY KITAGAWA

Member of the Executive Council of the
Spiritual Caucus at the United Nations,
lawyer, and spiritual leader



The enlightened man is the universal man, having a broad view of life. We are all in this huge web of life that's interconnected. We must look at life not from a point of individuation but as a totality—which still includes the role of individuals—so that consciousness is elevated and comes from a broader perspective rather than from an individualized, egoic perspective. To do this, men would have to be willing to look more deeply into their own egoic structures, which exist within a paradigm of dominance and control, of power over others and over nature as well. The whole idea that men have dominion over the earth should not be viewed as privileging man to exploit nature but rather as vesting within him the highest duty and responsibility to care for and respect the earth and all of life. And that, of course, means all relationships. The elevation of one is the elevation of all, and our survival depends upon that perspective.

“Men have to be willing to look more deeply into their own egoic structures.”

— Audrey Kitagawa

6 ASRA NOMANI

Indian-American journalist and
activist in Muslim reform and Islamic
feminist movements



I didn't know the prophet Muhammad. I didn't hang out with the Buddha. But I do see living examples of enlightened men around me. They don't have big names, but they do put their incredible principles into practice. They're totally kick-ass, but they also don't have to prove what men they are in this world. They have no fear expressing heart and soul. They're willing to acknowledge their imperfection but at the same time are not crippled in the face of criticism. They've taken on the one thing that keeps all of us down, which is the thing called ego. These are the men who have done their work and are the enlightened ones among us.

7 MIRANDA SHAW

Tantric Buddhist scholar and associate professor of religion at the University of Richmond, Virginia



We've inherited a gender equation where someone has to be dominant. Insofar as men are defined as being better than women and hold the dominant position, then changing that equation will always be a huge threat. We need new metaphors and images and symbols. However, the layers of programming are so deep that I feel the journey to overcoming them is a very long one. It's still a frontier, though the men I've seen who have made progress have tremendous strength of character and a deep, bedrock integrity, a kind of physical and emotional endurance, and patience. With them, there's no emasculation, as it were, no feminization of the male. Men like that can be physically hearty and dynamic and have all the other positive qualities that make a male personhood. Then men and women can grow in strength together, almost spiraling together, attaining similar heights while really supporting each other.

8 RABBI EINAT RAMON

Professor of modern Jewish literature and Jewish feminism, and the first Israeli-born woman rabbi



The development of the enlightened man of tomorrow is not a project for men alone but for men and women together. I struggle as the mother of a son. In a recent TV show for children in which they were discussing differences between boys and girls, the bottom line was that there's nothing special about boys, because girls can do everything boys can do. This is such a negative message for a little boy who wants to be unique in some way. Somehow, we have to define for him his uniqueness, but not in a way that makes him think he is better than girls. We have to find a language for him, a spiritual and a moral language that is not patriarchal. When I look at the Jewish sources and separate out the elements of patriarchy, there is a lot of wisdom there that was probably passed on as oral tradition. Boys learned from seeing role models around them—their grandfathers, their fathers. I worry about our current world of workaholicism where sons don't spend much time with their fathers or with other men who are role models. Throughout history it has not been that way. So how do we resurrect some of the aspects of manhood from the ancient world without going back to patriarchy? It's a big challenge.

9 JUDITH GLASER

Author of the bestselling business book *Creating WE* and president of the consulting firm Benchmark Communications, Inc.



The enlightened men of the future aren't hooked on the power *over* model of leadership and are willing to embrace power *with* others. They're willing to step into places where they might not have all the answers. They're willing to be more open and vulnerable in order to learn what it takes to be a leader who supports other people's development. They're willing to let go of the heroic, more commanding style and realize that they are not giving up something but rather adding to their tool kit. The business leaders who seem to be the most catalytic are those who embody a greater sense of *being* as much as *doing*. Men are finding a greater comfort in absorbing a lot of the attributes that we would historically associate with women, which I think is radical for men in business today.

10 SALLY KEMPTON

Meditation teacher and former swami in the Siddha Yoga lineage



An enlightened culture for both men and women is one that is developing toward what is traditionally called androgyny. The more individual consciousness develops, the more gender roles seem to slip. There's more flow so that you're able to play a hypermasculine or assertive role and also be just as comfortable in a more feminine or motherly, nurturing role. One of the beauties of this ever-changing postmodern era is the enormous number of roles that we're free to assume and discard. So this is my sense of what an enlightened life looks like: extremely focused and free play in which rules and structures are taken on as necessary, but always with a sense that it really is an enormous game we're all playing with different parts of ourselves.

11 MOTHER CLARE WATTS

Ordained priest and codirector of the
Order of Christ/Sophia



As I was anticipating our talk, I came up with a number of points. The first point for the enlightened man of the future is that he must overcome his body's control over him so that addictions of all kinds won't move him. He'll overcome his need for sex and not let it drive his body and mind to distraction.

The next one is that he'll never look for a partner to do his emotional work for him. He'll do what it takes to get in touch with his own feelings and will address and honor them and learn how to communicate them in an honest, responsible, and kind way. He'll do the psychological and emotional work that's needed to heal his wounds and become whole, so he won't project his wounds onto others and make them pay for what was done to him.

He'll gain control over his thoughts and will not allow himself to objectify women or men and use them in his mind for his own gratification.

He'll accept himself as male and agree to be a strong male without feeling he needs to give up his masculinity to avoid being like those men who abuse others with power, dominance, and ego.

He'll develop all aspects of himself: the ability to think clearly, to be decisive and productive, and to make changes happen. And he'll also be gentle, receptive, compassionate, and willing to learn from other ways of being and of experiencing the world. He'll develop intuition, spiritual perception, and the sensate aspects of direct interaction with matter.

He'll overcome his pride, his selfishness, his anger, his fear, and his greed. He'll equally value the masculine and feminine in himself and in others, honoring both for their place in us all.

He'll be completely dedicated to his spiritual life and will remember that nothing matters more than his relationship with God and his service to others. He'll be courageous in stepping out and doing what needs to be done to bring light, love, peace, and consciousness into the world without it being about his ego, and he will be driven only by his deep love for God and for humankind.

He'll be one unto himself, having completion within his spirit, needing no one outside himself to make him complete—a beacon of light and hope to all who meet him.

12 ANNE WILSON SCHAEF, PHD

Organizational consultant and
author of the classic *Women's Reality:
An Emerging Female System*



One of the important things for men in the future is to see that their thinking is often their problem and they can't trust it. Men believe that if they don't know and understand something, then, by definition, it doesn't exist. "I don't know" is one of the most difficult things in the world for men to say. But once they do, they develop a very important characteristic that has almost evaporated from the planet, which is true humility—knowing that they don't run the universe, that we're basically here on assignment. And that assignment, I think, is to heal and grow and become more in touch with our spirituality. We're participating in a very long process here; one that needs to be moving toward the greater spiritual growth of the human species. So respect, humility, and participation in the life process would be three of the things I would look for in men who can become real leaders. A fourth would be courage, because in order to be a man like that, you have to be tremendously courageous.

“Men believe that if they don't know and understand something, then, by definition, it doesn't exist.”

— Anne Wilson Schaefer

13 BINA AGARWAL

Professor of economics at the Institute of
Economic Growth, University of Delhi



If we are talking about gender relations, then I think there is a long way to go for most men. First, men must transcend existing gender roles and gender sensibilities. Not just by sharing domestic tasks but also by caregiving—to children, the elderly, the sick. Caregiving in the home remains mainly women's work globally. For men to learn to give care in the very basic sense would require a transformation of what it means to be male—a feminization of notions of masculinity. The second thing is men using power to dominate—not just through physical strength, but also through the multiple subtle forms of power that men can exert over women simply by the fact that they're born men.

When I think of an enlightened male, I think of one who would recognize these very subtle forms of power. Here in India, you can meet a lot of men who would eschew any form of violence toward women or other human beings, and who might even be spiritually enlightened, but they have not transcended other aspects of gender roles. If you actually visited their homes, their wives would be doing all the traditional tasks.

14 JENNY WADE

Developmental psychologist, organiza-
tional consultant, and professor of
human development at the Institute of
Transpersonal Psychology



I can divide the spiritually sophisticated men I know into two groups: the ones without balls and the ones who are narcissistic assholes.

Those who are in many ways more spiritually sophisticated are what I think of as overly feminized, and are often the ones you find in spiritual communities. They are so soft and so gentle. When I'm around men like that, I appreciate them, I like them, but I really miss some of that male energy in them. They make great friends but are never people I would consider as romantic partners. There seems to be an imbalance there.

On the other side are the guys—and you don't usually find these types in spiritual communities—who are more spiritual lone rangers. They've done a lot of meditation on their own. They may have visited a lot of different ashrams or spiritual teachers in their youth. They've learned some techniques and may have been practicing for years. They are overly masculine, and many of them are, in Jungian terms, *puers*—little boys who have never grown up. They have a hard masculine edge and tend to be narcissistic. They exude sexuality and aggression. They have never integrated any of the feminine, or not much of it. They may be very accomplished at subtle states of mind, but I don't see much balance at all with emotional maturity or much ability to really feel and empathize.

These are the two kinds of men that I find spiritually sophisticated—the ones who have too much of the feminine and not enough of the masculine, and the ones who are almost all masculine, with very little feminine. What I would like to see is better integration for both of them.

**“I can divide the spiritu-
ally sophisticated men
I know into two groups:
the ones without balls
and the ones who are
narcissistic assholes.”**

— Jenny Wade

15 LAMA PALDEN DROLMA

Psychotherapist; founder and resident
lama of the Sukhasiddhi Foundation



From a Vajrayana Buddhist point of view, enlightened males all sprang forth from Prajna Paramita, from the enlightened feminine. This awakened feminine is the realization of the ultimate wisdom of the union of form and emptiness, awareness and emptiness. It is through coming to deeply know the authentic feminine that they awaken. In the last couple thousand years, as men articulated the divine, there has been an overemphasis on transcendence. Now the evolution for men is to unite the transcendent quality of knowing the divine with the immanent quality. That is to say, to know the divine through incarnation—in a full engagement with humanity. From surrender to unknowingness comes the birth of embodied wisdom and a more awakened masculine. That is the movement for men now—into the emotions, into the body—uniting that with the realization of *shunyata* or emptiness/openness.

16 WENDY SHALIT

Author of *A Return to Modesty: Discovering the Lost Virtue* and *Girls Gone Mild: Young Women Reclaim Self-Respect and Find It's Not Bad to be Good*



Undeniably, what it means to be a man has changed. It used to be manly to stand by one woman for life, and now the ideal is to score with as many girls as possible. But what doesn't get media attention is the increasing numbers of young men who are not buying this definition. It's clear from the hundreds of emails I receive from college men—not my target audience—that the concepts of mystery and male honor are coming back. To be sure, men who brag about their conquests are still glamorized, but when you catch up with such men online, in their blogs they're usually admitting that the sex has become boring. Even sex therapists are now speaking out about the fact that disconnected sex is not as pleasurable as we are taught to assume; apparently, emotions need to be integrated for sex to be satisfying, both for men and for women. So I think we're on the cusp of a paradigm shift. The old double standard is gone but so, too, is the equally low standard of competing at how jaded and crude we can be. The real rebel today is the man who refuses to be casual about sex and who maintains high standards in the face of ridicule. He is also the man brave enough to utter these two radical words: "That's private."

17 CHRIS GRISCOM

Founder of the Light Institute, a spiritual
healing center in Galisteo, New Mexico,
and authority on reincarnation



The enlightened man is a cosmic man, and in that cosmology of his whole, divine self, he is not leaning on the crutch of gender. In my work I employ the power of incarnational, or cosmic, experience. It's a powerful perspective that allows us to see that the soul is incarnated many, many times, which gives us points of reference through all cultures and both genders. So in this work, a person—let's say a male—sees himself in a previous incarnation giving birth. Maybe he has eight children and he struggles and starves and dies. He thinks, *How can that help my illumination?* I ask him, *Were you afraid of death? Of course not! I gave birth eight times. What happened at the moment of your death? I felt the power of freedom. I felt connection to the cosmos, to nature.*

When a man has walked in a woman's body and been penetrated or been the oracle or given birth, then all of those points of reference quicken his capacity to discern what is true. We are living at a time on this planet where we are truly one full group. There is nobody who is not accessing *many*

"The enlightened man is a cosmic man."

— Chris Griscom

18 REBECCA WALKER

Author of *Baby Love: Choosing Motherhood After a Lifetime of Ambivalence* and founder and original leader of third-wave feminism



reference points to humanity. So each being can garner the experiences of all of us in such a way that they can, for example, harvest what it is to be a powerful female. Such experiences are what allow us to reshape what it is to be human, to reshape what it is to be a man, to reshape our religion and who we are.

The enlightened man of tomorrow believes that this human life should be used to liberate himself and others from suffering—be it the suffering of seeing oneself as separate from all of humanity or the suffering of gentle people at the hands of those who wish to harm them. The biggest impediments to this realization are the deep fear of letting go of an idea of self that bestows power and privilege in the world of materialism and greed and the real concern that as a man, one's own life could be in danger as a result of such a shift. If both men and women were to awaken to the great benefit of embracing a selfless path on behalf of ending the suffering of humanity, gender relations would be the ground for healing rather than wounding. Human culture might then have a chance of bringing to fruition at least a small part of the vast happiness we each desire.

19 JZ KNIGHT

Channel of Ramtha, a 35,000-year-old male Lemurian warrior, and CEO of JZK, Inc., parent company of Ramtha's School of Enlightenment



Men are reaching a level of dissatisfaction because they don't know what their life goals are. They feel useless, worthless. They seem to know everything, so nothing jazzes them. But that's where the inward process of starting to identify who you really are begins its greatest work. More men are becoming more "spiritual" than ever before. Men were religious in the past, but by guilt. Now, they are becoming spiritual because of this need to search the value of what they are. There is a huge revolution happening quietly in many men who are seeking a greater future and looking for their purpose in life. They're now into a whole new level of thought, which one could say is the quest of the male animal for its spiritual realization.

The thing I love about the male gender is that when men pursue the answers to these questions, they come at it with a more intellectual and even scientific methodology. It's sort of like, "Prove it to me. I want to know this is real. I don't want to live in la-la land." They're the true visionaries. Men, due to their neurological makeup, have a greater propensity to observe things realistically or objectively. They understand that the ideas they have inside their brains are possible realities, and those become functioning realities for them much faster than for women. Once they bring to the table their remarkable gift and apply it to remarkable possibilities, then we're talking about a true spiritual being at work—because that being is superseding the lower forms of his body with the higher forms of his ideas, his imagination, and his intellect. When a man knows that he can walk into the future and create remarkable realities, he is in for the greatest ride of his life, the greatest adrenaline rush, the greatest joy. Because he can look at an undetermined future and, with his ideas, build it in his head and have it manifest. He will be the adventurer to the unknown. This is the gift that he brings.




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Confessions

OF A FORMERLY SENSITIVE NEW AGE MAN

by Ross Robertson



When I first came to the picturesque New England town of Lenox, Massachusetts, to join the editorial team at *What Is Enlightenment?* the last thing I expected was to walk into the locker room one day at our very own gym and stumble upon a showdown between two gorillas.

These two apes were really my spiritual brothers—let's call them Hans and Franz for fun—but an ape is still an ape as far as I'm concerned, even if he meditates. Fresh off a heavy workout, with their chests pumped up and their eyeballs big and bloodshot, Hans and Franz stood side by side in front of the mirror, wearing only animal grins and towels around their waists, and tested themselves, one against the other, in a ritual as familiar to jocks and muscleheads the world over as it is to the greatest primates of Africa and Indonesia—

the pec-flexing contest. Their nostrils flared. Their lips were pursed in concentration. Their muscles twitched like primal aphrodisiacs; twitched independently, right-side, left-side, right-left-right. Egged on by the rest of the locker room, Hans and Franz preened and postured up and down, back and forth, side to side, with spontaneous bravado and “devil may care” delight.

I was embarrassed. I was disgusted. I was mesmerized. Spiritual guys are supposed to be sensitive, right? Amicable. Refined. Noncompetitive.

Aren't they?

Apparently not. At least not around here. Where I come from, they're just about as sensitive—and unmanly—as they can manage to be, at least in any traditional sense of what manliness means. What was this strange new species of spiritual man that expressed his manhood so fully, so freely, so . . . flagrantly? And why on earth did I find him so off-putting, so revolting, and so inexplicably fascinating, all at the same time?

These are the confessions of a formerly sensitive New Age man (me) who eventually found a home among this unlikely band of spiritual brothers striving to reclaim—and redefine—the values of manliness in the twenty-first century. (Our experiment in conscious cultural evolution continues to occur in, but is not limited to, the locker room.) We haven't found all the answers by any stretch, but if there's one thing that's certain, it's this: Whatever manhood means, and is coming to mean, for us and for other men exploring the leading edge of our freedom and identity today, it's far more significant than many of us ever gave it credit for.

Take me, for example. I was born in a woman's world—northern California, spring 1975—and I'm a pretty good poster boy for the feminized postmodern spiritual guy. Just a few months before my birthday, the United Nations declared International Women's Year, and a few months after, Queen hit the top of the charts with “Bohemian Rhapsody.” Shag carpets were all the rage; we had a chocolate-brown one in my house, underneath an orange couch. That was also the year the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology was founded in Palo Alto, just a few miles from my neighborhood in the pastel-colored suburbs around San Francisco Bay. My mother was a psychotherapist. Her mother was a therapist, too—my liberated, madcap grandma, who left gramps behind in the Midwest to go to Big Sur and Esalen in the sixties and never looked back. And me? I was a powerhouse of contradictions: a Pisces, somehow brash, passionate, shy, assertive, and impressionable all at once. I was definitely my mother's son.

I was four years old when my little brother was born, yet for some reason the thing I remember most about that week is that my mom and then my grandma both sat me down one-on-one to talk through how I felt about it all. (I vaguely

recall that they were anticipating jealousy.) As soon as he was old enough to talk himself, the two of us spent a great deal of time that might otherwise have been spent wrestling planted on that orange couch and learning how to listen, under my mother's careful tutelage, to each other's side of an argument. The sooner we acknowledged the other's perspective, we learned, and apologized for our part in whatever squabble had gotten us there to begin with, the sooner we could get back to roughing each other up. This never failed to make things right again . . . at least for me, since he was the one taking the brunt of the punishment. Yet I think he would agree that despite the cosmic unfairness of being born the younger one, there was always a kind of unselfconscious joy simply in being together—simply in the carefree, competitive exuberance of being boys—that was somehow of a deeper, more reliable order than any temporary understanding we might have reached by talking about our feelings.

These days, I think of that simple brotherly togetherness as one of the best parts of being a man, but back then manliness wasn't even on the radar screen. And why would it have been? In a place like the Bay Area during the anti-authoritarian seventies, with the exhilarating rush of feminism finally flowering into bloom in the mainstream, what could it possibly

I'm a pretty good poster boy for the feminized postmodern spiritual guy.

have been good for? Sure, my grandma had a set of green plastic army men for me to play with whenever I visited her apartment, and that bucket of army men was always the first thing I ran for when we arrived. But pine as we might, my brother and I both knew we would never own anything really dangerously manly, like a BB gun. The kids down the street shot at pigeons with slingshots; we threw NERF footballs up at the power lines. Eventually, my mom caved in and got me a toy rifle with a wooden stock at Toys “R” Us, which I held and stared at lovingly but mostly kept tucked away safe in my closet. It had a mystique about it, a certain aura of taboo, as though it was a dangerous thing to leave lying around, or might disappear at any moment.

Like many men of his generation, my father did his best to evolve with the times and yet still uphold positive masculine values in a world that was challenging and questioning masculinity at every turn. He taught me the value of a job done right, whether it was solving a math problem or getting a

nice even stain on a redwood fence, and he stood for the basic attitude that no matter what life threw at you, you could handle anything. But most of the manly men in my life were caricatures: the Boy Scout leader who chased away a black bear in Yosemite by pegging it between the eyes with a twenty-pound rock; the neighbors with smoke-stained gums and smoke-stained carpets who kept their guns in their cabinets and their shutters down. Manliness was clearly on the way out—in California, at least—and the new cultural paradigm had the weight of justice, equality, and higher consciousness on its side.

It also came with its share of bumps, bruises, and inanities—especially for a kid like me, who was coached and counseled in the ways of the more sensitive side of the species while the rest of the neighborhood was still blowing up Hot Wheels with cherry bombs.

Think of the cliquish, competitive, dog-eat-dog world of elementary and junior high school and then mix in the impulse to share your feelings with everyone and avoid conflict at all costs. At that age, this kind of behavior may win you a few friends among the sensitive and/or the down-

Freud said that unconsciously all men want to marry their mothers, but not me. I was already too much like my mother.

trodden, but for the most part it's going to get you abused. Trust me on this. I may be oversimplifying a little here, but I almost want to cry when I think of how much trauma might have been avoided if I'd only had the gumption to stick up for myself once in a while. It certainly would have been easy to do, seeing that I was bigger than almost anyone—probably six feet tall and 175 pounds by the time seventh grade rolled around. (In the constellation of nicknames all boys accumulate over the course of their lives, “Jolly Green Giant” figured prominently in mine.) But just because I was too big to throw into a garbage can doesn't mean other boys didn't ride me as far as I'd let them, which was usually pretty far. Ninety-seven times out of a hundred, I opted for total nonconfrontation; that other three percent was for flipping into DEFCON 1 and letting loose on them. I can remember only a handful of kids who pushed me that far, but I remember them well. Ironically, this resolved the situation but only complexified the trauma, because I would quickly be flooded with remorse and these

horrible unwanted feelings of sympathy. It was as if no matter how much they deserved to get pounded, I was still betraying some universal law that said if you ever expressed any anger, you were always in the wrong.

I suppose it wasn't really until high school that things turned around for me socially. The story I've always told myself is that I was simply a late bloomer, but reflecting on all this now, I think that for the first ten or fifteen years of my life I was really more of a fish out of water. My family was pretty far out in front of the cultural curve, even for California, and I was educated in the ways of the spiritually, emotionally, and politically correct right from the beginning. As I grew up, however, and more and more of my peers began developing along the exact same trajectory, I started fitting in. I discovered the Grateful Dead junior year, grew my hair out, and the Jolly Green Giant became the Jolly Green Hippie Shaman. I felt confident all of a sudden, at ease in the new surroundings, free to be myself, and endowed with a good decade and a half of practice at things that were new and alluring to everyone else. When the Dead came to town, I threw down my blanket at Shoreline Amphitheatre and boogied down with *everyone*, young and old alike—the high school kids smoking pot from hollowed-out apples and the baby boomers reliving their acid-fueled glory days from the Summer of Love. I quit the marching band, stopped playing trumpet, and started practicing guitar.

By the time I got to college—I went to Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia—I was finally coming into my own, yet questions of being a man were still nowhere in sight. I lived in a little house down in a wooded corner of the campus, a house for social activists. We ate psychedelic mushrooms and ran through the forest like wolves in the black of night—which is pretty manly, I suppose—but we also wrote poetry, became experts at Frisbee, and played banjo with the Southern girls from the women's rugby team who lived downstairs. I also met my wife at Emory, a feisty Southern girl herself. In typical postmodern fashion, she's the one who asked *me* out. She was a fearless, take-no-prisoners kind of feminist, with a cute shaved head, and I was head over heels from the beginning. Yet around the time things started getting serious between us, I was almost done with school, and my mind was on bigger and better things—specifically, a spiritual pilgrimage to India that I'd long wanted to take. So I moved back to California and lived with my parents for six months while I saved up the money for a year abroad. I read *The Snow Leopard* by Peter Matthiessen and pored over dog-eared travel guides.

But we kept writing love letters. Soon enough, she was moving out west, we were moving in together, and I'd begun to trade my spiritual aspirations for a shot at domestic bliss. I was genuinely torn over the call I felt to leave everything behind me in pursuit of enlightenment in Asia, but I grew up in a



Clockwise from left:
Country life at our
Missouri commune,
1998 (not my kid);
Boulder, CO, with
Frisbee, circa 2002;
my wife Laura and I
in September 2007

world that revolved around women, and in the end, more than anything, I wanted mine to revolve around her. We spent a few months traveling from coast to coast looking for an intentional community to live in, somewhere off the grid, a place we could put roots down. Eventually, we found a small sustainable farm in the backwoods of rural Missouri, pitched our tent in the apple orchard, and moved in. It was idyllic, hard, lonely at times, but something I'd always dreamed of doing, and that summer I finally got up the courage to ask her to marry me. She said yes.

I was ecstatic.

Overjoyed.

It was probably the happiest week of my life.

Until she changed her mind.

At that point, I knew two things: I still wanted to marry her, and I was never going to make a fool of myself like that again. Luckily, she came around three months later and proposed herself. Lesson learned: This was going to be on her terms. But I was fine with that. In fact, it's what I really wanted. Freud said that unconsciously all men want to marry their mothers, but not me. I was already too much *like* my mother. So I picked a woman who was more like a man: tough, driven, and not very relational. I spent my days at the farm cultivating vegetables—on a tractor, mind you, but while I was learning how to drive the thing, she was down on her knees in the mud learning how to rebuild the brakes. I did a lot of the carpentry on the new house we were all building; she did the electrical work.

In the end, I really wanted to like life on the farm—or at least my romanticized idea of it all—but I couldn't stand the mandatory three-hour meetings where we all aired our emotional dramas for everyone to suffer through. My best friend was the manliest guy there, a man in his fifties named French who taught me woodworking and was even more fed up with "processing" than I was (him because he was no good at it; me because I was *too* good at it). Half of me wanted to be like him, but the other half felt like an imposter when we'd hang out with his local crew of friends, whose idea of a good time was draining whole bottles of Jägermeister, chain-smoking big Jamaican joints, and then whipping out their deer rifles for target practice (in that order). So we moved back to San Francisco, got jobs, started grad school. We had a beautiful wedding in an oak grove up in Marin County. Moved to Boulder, Colorado, where I studied writing at Naropa University in a program founded by Allen Ginsberg. Grew a garden. Hiked in the mountains. Went downtown in summertime to watch other people's kids play in water fountains. Thought about having our own.

They say getting married will make a man out of you, but I don't think it works that way anymore. Ours was a partnership of equals, but when she put her foot down, I always gave in. By every standard we knew, it was the perfect arrangement, and we were both as happy as I think we ever would have been. Our friends marveled at how well we got along. They asked for our advice, and we gave it to them, but underneath we both were suffocating. We didn't need therapy to

work anything out; we were already experts at therapizing ourselves, and it was never enough to touch what was missing. Six years after deciding not to go to India, I was still spiritually hungry.

And lucky for both of us, by this time so was she.

So I'll never forget the feeling of freedom and elation that came over me before dawn one morning in the summer of 2003 when we carried just about everything we owned out of our house in North Boulder and onto the lawn for a truly epic garage sale. A job had opened up at *WIE*, and we were moving to Massachusetts to join editor in chief Andrew Cohen at Foxhollow, his international retreat center and home base as a spiritual teacher. We made over two thousand dollars that day—at a *garage* sale, mind you, where fifty cents is worth something and fifty dollars is a small fortune. I even sold my Grateful Dead tapes. Then we packed up the rest in a U-Haul and headed east toward Kansas, over the high, rolling plains of Colorado.

This brings me back around to Hans and Franz again and their jovial, simian display at the gym on that memorable fall day just a month or two after we arrived in New England. It's probably clear by now why I found their muscle-brained antics distasteful. But what was it that made them

so mysteriously appealing at the same time? Most men who grew up the way I did will be able to recognize the squirming aversion I felt toward this unrepentant parade of manly bravado—my urge to turn my eyes away and my latent sense of shame over my own gender. Yet I was transfixed all the same, caught between fear and curiosity, without a clue in the world what all this had to do with the spiritual life but with a very clear sense that it was something important.

Looking back on it now, I think it may have been my first real intimation that being manly might not actually be as taboo as I'd always thought it was, or should be. You see, it was one thing to witness this kind of behavior in high school gym class but quite another to see it in the midst of the most progressive social and cultural movement I knew about. I joked about calling these guys animals, but my new spiritual brothers were really quite the opposite: perceptive, sophisticated, tuned in to dimensions of themselves I didn't even know existed. Yet they were very much still *men* simultaneously. They had a masculinity that was natural, authentic, and free. In their reflection, I started to see myself with whole new eyes, to see parts of me I'd shied away from almost preconsciously, and getting to know them was kind of like getting to know myself in ways I never even knew were missing.

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For one thing, I'd never thought of myself as fundamentally compromised before—compromised *as a man*, and in my ability to be the best things men can be: strong, steady, accountable, rooted in the kind of vigorous self-confidence that creates trust and strength and confidence in those around them. I really was a product of my culture, I began to see—a culture that automatically equates masculinity with violence and domination, training boys to be exceedingly wary of any sort of machismo for fear of harming or imposing themselves on other people, especially women. Of course, there are plenty of good reasons to be suspicious about the more primitive and often brutish aspects of men's nature, but a great deal of what I was learning about spiritual development had to do with releasing greater and greater degrees of freedom and authenticity within oneself as well as in one's relationships with others. The honesty and straightforwardness that I saw in my brothers about simply *being themselves* as men, with everything that means, seemed to give them the freedom to enjoy the uninhibited expression of their own masculinity without immediately assuming the worst or endlessly worrying about its possible negative implications. And that was a possibility that had never even occurred to me.

Suddenly, being a man—and especially being manly—no longer seemed to be inherently contradictory to being emotionally liberated and spiritually free. In ways I'd never imagined or allowed myself during my hyper-feminized upbringing, I actually came to appreciate it as a *good* thing. I started developing deeper and more satisfying relationships with other men. I became an Olympic weightlifter and eventually got certified as a USAW coach. I've even been known to stand in front of a floor-length mirror on occasion with a rowdy, half-naked group of gym rats and flex a bicep or two.

And why not?

It's only one part of the whole evolutionary picture for men stretching toward new spiritual structures and possibilities today, but for a formerly sensitive New Age man like me, it has definitely been a vital one. It brings with it a healthy kind of pride and self-respect that seem only to come from letting myself *be* the man that I am, and then slowly beginning to find out what that means now for my own generation, like so many other men have done in so many generations before me.

(Plus, if it ever offends anyone, we can always talk about it later.) ■



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FEATURE



An illustration on the left side of the page shows a clear glass vase filled with water and a bouquet of red and pink flowers. Next to the vase on a light-colored wooden table is a yellow Viking helmet with two horns. The background is a solid light blue color.

What Ever Happened to the Vikings?

A quizzical look at the Scandinavian experiment to create a gender-neutral society

by Elizabeth Debold

I'VE NEVER WANTED TO BE a man. Despite the obvious inequality between men and women when I was growing up, it never seemed to me that men's roles were that much of a bargain. My dad and the other men I knew as a child didn't seem happier than my mom or the other women in my neighborhood. Sure, they earned real money, and often controlled it, but it was in return for doing a lot of things that were dull, dirty, and sometimes downright dangerous—not in the sense of being exciting but rather flat-out life-threatening. Yet there is one thing I have always envied about men: they can pee standing up. It may seem silly, or even trivial, but I can't count how many times in how many places it would have been such a relief to stand and deliver.

So when I read recently that in Sweden for a man to point his plumbing at the pissoir is increasingly considered, as one writer explained, "the height of vulgarity and possibly suggestive of violence," I couldn't believe it. These guys once were Vikings. How did they become persuaded to take a seat? Sleuthing a bit,

I discovered that in 2000, a feminist group at Stockholm University demanded that all urinals be removed because they were discriminatory to women. Talk about penis envy! I had no idea that this was how culture was evolving in Sweden, Holland, and all the Scandinavian countries that are leading the gender-equality revolution. In 2005, the World Economic Forum deemed Sweden as the “most advanced country” for women in regard to economic and political empowerment, educational attainment, and health and well-being. Sweden and the other small homogeneous nations of Northern Europe have generous maternal and paternal leave policies, free access to higher education, affordable child care, and more. They have legislated a smorgasbord of policies designed to level the playing field between women and men that make my feminist heart beat faster. But it never occurred to me that as women took to their feet, men would sit down—on the john, no less!

Thinking about this dislodged an odd tidbit of information from my memory. Ten years or so ago, I read a news story about how the Swedes were bored in the bedroom—their interest in sex had actually declined since the late sixties. The article suggested that women were finding it difficult to maintain sexual interest in

For a man to pee standing up is increasingly considered, as one writer explained, “the height of vulgarity and possibly suggestive of violence.”

their partners. In the effort to create a truly gender-equal society, Swedish men had become so, shall we say, similar in temperament to women that the spark that keeps an intimate relationship alive was getting snuffed out. Could it be that in Sweden, to put it a bit crudely, women were women, and the men were too?

Now, to be fair, and not just blinkered by my own biases, our sense of what is appropriately male or female is profoundly influenced by cultural norms. For example, women in the United States began shaving their body hair in the early twentieth century in order to look more “feminine.” While this custom has morphed and spread, some other cultures do still see it as bizarre. But I had never thought much about how men would change if cultural values shifted to support the traditionally female domestic sphere. My assumption has always been that doing so would be positive for all of us—allowing women and men to express the full range of human qualities that historically had been divided

by gender. And that it would free us to be more committed and creative in our relationships. But what if it wasn't so simple? I became very curious about men in progressive Scandinavia—Sweden, Denmark, and Norway—the land where Vikings once plotted their fearless and fearsome raids. Popular progressive and spiritual thought tells us that making a shift in Western culture toward the feminine is the path to peace and a positive future. Many would say that we need to look no further than to Northern Europe to see a preview of our own future. What, I wanted to know, was happening to men in those most egalitarian countries? Researching this, however, proved to be quite difficult. Progressive sources describe this terrain just south of the Arctic Circle as nothing short of paradise—Scandinavians, particularly the Danes, get high marks for being among the happiest people in the world. Conservatives insist that something is rotten in the State of Denmark (and Sweden and Norway), but their responses are laced with antifeminist misogyny, gender fundamentalism, and xenophobia. I needed to find out for myself. So, at the first hint of spring earlier this year, I set out for Denmark, the oldest ongoing kingdom in the world, on a quest to discover what's happened to the Vikings...

Gender Equality, Then and Now

Of course, I'm being more than a little facetious about the Viking question. To ask what happened to the Vikings is like asking where all of the knights from the Crusades have gone. Nonetheless, a thousand years ago, the Scandinavians had a death-defying, off-the-edge-of-the-world boldness. They sailed to four continents in wooden boats—“discovering” North America more than seven hundred years before the other Europeans. Norse mythology always seemed to me to be more fierce than that of the Greeks and Romans. Jove just wanted to get it on with every woman he saw; Thor literally hammered his numerous enemies—giants, dwarves, and Old Age itself. The Vikings as a people had a reputation for being as ferocious as their gods. The “Viking Age” started around 793 CE when they came calling at a famous early Christian religious site, the church of Lindisfarne, in England. As Alcuin, an English monk, described it at the time, “The heathens poured out the blood of saints around the altar, and trampled on the bodies of saints in the temple of God, like dung in the streets.” While our perception may be distorted by the Christian view of Norse paganism, their indomitable spirit and appetite for pillage led them all the way in one direction to Russia and in the other to what is now New York City. Pillaging was an equal opportunity affair—Leif the Lucky's sister Freydis led her own expedition down the coast of North America, and Broka Aubur wore pants and attacked her unfaithful husband with a sword, to name two legendary female Vikings. While we associate dominance with masculinity and therefore with men,



they are not the same thing. In warrior cultures like the Vikings, dominance matters more than gender. If you can decimate your enemies, it doesn't matter who you are.

The goal in contemporary Scandinavia is also to make gender not matter—but in a completely different way. “Gender is losing meaning,” explains Jørgen Lorentzen, postdoctoral research fellow at the Centre for Women’s Studies and Gender Research at the University of Oslo. Jørgen studies men’s changing roles and is a member of the prestigious Norwegian Men’s Commission. The Commission was established to advise the government on how men can make the transition into a gender-neutral society. “In some very recent studies that we have conducted, we see that gender means less and less. Gender doesn’t mean anything for employment, politics, or sharing work and family. Gender has nothing to do with who cooks or takes care of children. Men and women are equally able to do these things.”

Throughout our conversation, Jørgen makes it clear that Norway, and by extension the other countries in Northern Europe, is still in a transition. “What is your vision of a fully gender-neutral society? What will it look like?” I ask him.

“I hope that gender will lose its meaning even more,” he replies. “A gender-free society will have less sexual harassment, less rape, less violence, and more sex. And sex will not be a taboo.”

Not a taboo? The Northern European countries, especially

Scandinavia, have had an international reputation for being leaders in the sexual revolution since the 1950s. Sex isn’t kept in the closet or even the bedroom—it’s all right out there on display. Believe it or not, in 2006 the Danish Road Safety Council created a television ad filled with women jiggling their bare breasts and holding speed limit signs. (The idea was to catch the attention of Danish men who are inveterate speeders.) But that’s not the half of it. Hard-core pornography is available on television. Women sunbathe wearing only G-strings in city parks. There is great tolerance for same-sex unions and for liberating any sexual preference from the shadows of shame. It’s gone so far that, at the extreme end, in Holland, a group tried to create a political party to support pedophilia. (Fortunately, it caused an uproar.) Sex—in any and all forms—is far from being taboo in these countries. In fact, it seems to be one of the main priorities. This prompts me to ask Jørgen: “Would you say that having a good sex life is one of the deepest values in Norwegian society?”

“Having a good sex life is an important part of being a human being,” he replies. “There is a lot of focus on it, especially on women having sexual pleasure. Gender equality gives women a much higher degree of pleasure.”

Perhaps the information I had on relationships fizzling out was wrong. These countries may be the closest thing to a feminist paradise that we have ever had.

Boys Will Be Girls

Twelve hundred years after the Vikings tromped on English soil, the Scandinavians now like to emphasize that most Vikings were farmers. While it's probably statistically true that more people were tilling than pillaging, I wonder if this reframing of the past may be related to the revolution in values that's happening there. Being a Viking, or a warrior of any kind, is not in vogue—particularly not for boys. In early childhood education in Sweden, little boys are given dolls to play with and girls are given toy tractors. It's all part of the Anti-Sexism Awareness Training that begins in kindergarten, through which the schools, supported by the government, are deliberately trying to switch the accepted gender roles. While programs of this kind were tried in many U.S. schools in the seventies, they were a dismal failure. Perhaps the United States is too diverse a culture to experiment in this way without raising the ire of parents who want their children to assume traditional roles. But as far as I am aware of in the United

In Sweden, little boys are given dolls to play with and girls are given toy tractors.

States, nine times out of ten, and much to our dismay as egalitarian idealists, girls would cradle the toy tractors in a blanket and boys would use the baby doll as a machine gun. The kids resisted taking up what they perceived as the wrong toys for their gender. Shifting this kind of preference is not easy, because boys and girls start with certain predispositions that are usually related to their role in reproduction; they also mimic what they see the men and women doing around them.

In our first conversation, my two Danish hosts, Peter Bastian and Jon Bertelsen, tell me that Denmark has similarly enforced this shift in gender roles through the schools. Peter, a well-known Danish musician and bestselling author, was part of what they call the '68 generation—the rebellious crew that has steered the country on the path toward gender equality. Jon is cofounding director of a small infotech business, and grew up in the brave new world that Peter's generation was trying to create. I know both of them through the organization EnlightenNext, the publisher of *What Is Enlightenment?*

"When everything opened up in 1968 with the women's movement," Peter says eagerly, brushing his blond hair out of

his eyes, "we men just felt so guilty. To see how women had been so oppressed—it was like, oh, this is all our fault."

"I was born in 1970," says Jon. Tall and lanky, wearing the jeans-and-sweater uniform of the urban Danish man, he speaks quietly but with an urgency. "At the time when I grew up, the social structures to bring about equality were pretty much in place—put there by Peter's generation. By the 1980s, gender equality was being implemented in the school system. When I was around twelve years old, my class was part of a two-year 'equality project' headed by a gender-equality consultant employed by the municipality. The consultant was a woman, and our main teacher was a woman as well.

"At one point, we were sent out to get a week of work experience. All pupils do that in Denmark. Because of this equality project, all the boys were sent to traditional women's jobs and all the girls to traditional men's jobs. I spent a whole week in an old-age home surrounded by middle-aged female nurses—and hated it."

"Did you say anything about it?" I ask.

"No," he says with a slight shrug. "But I do remember that there was a really weird vibe around the whole thing. Once our teacher asked the class for volunteers to pick up a crate of soft drinks at the supermarket. Some of us guys responded—and then she said very shrilly, 'Well, I think we should have some *strong girls* do that!'" Jon looks a bit astonished as he says this. "Another example was when some guys from my class became national champs in track and field. We were very proud of it, but our teacher wouldn't let us cheer and celebrate. It was as if it wasn't cool that we had won."

"What did you get from all this?"

He thinks for a few seconds. "The main message was: Being a boy, you are guilty because you are oppressing the girls by default. Most of us guys resisted in different ways—but what can you do as twelve-year-olds when all the grownups, including your male teachers, think that they are doing a great and right thing?"

Vikings in Glass Slippers

Jon's statement that he and his friends *resisted* having their positive pride and self-assertion squashed echoes in my mind as he, Peter, and I head out to dinner later that evening. How ironic that he should have chosen that particular word—it was so important in the work that Carol Gilligan, my other colleagues at Harvard, and I did on girls' psychological development in the 1990s. We discovered that just at the point when girls realized that to be popular and attractive young women they would have to shoehorn themselves into the narrow glass slipper of feminine ideals—being sexy or skinny or ditz or whatever—they

would *resist*. Resistance came in different forms: questioning, acting out, getting angry, complaining, trying to fight back. For the most part, they eventually gave in, yet this often led to an inner resistance and conflict—depression or self-mutilation or eating disorders or simply a persistent sense of victimization. As Carol said, girls learn that in order to have relationships as young women in patriarchy, they have to give up authentic relationship with themselves and with others. It seems to be a fundamental response: When one's spirit, integrity, wholehearted love of life, or connection with others is threatened or squashed, we human beings resist however we can with whatever we've got. Could it be that in Denmark, and Northern Europe in general, the shoe (or glass slipper) was now on the other foot—that boys even more than girls were having to squeeze themselves into narrowly prescribed norms?

Later, in a whitewashed room at the EnlightenNext center in Copenhagen, I have a chance to explore this question further with a group of about ten men who range in age from their early twenties to their forties, with Peter as the elder in his early sixties. For the past few months, Peter and Jon have been hosting a

group of men who are grappling with their role in their rapidly changing culture. Sitting in a circle with them I'm struck by how extraordinarily tall some of them are—the Danes are the second tallest people in the world—and wonder if height was a survival value for Vikings. I open the conversation by explaining what I am researching and ask: "What do you think has changed in gender expectations? What are you expected to do now that is different from what your fathers had to do?"

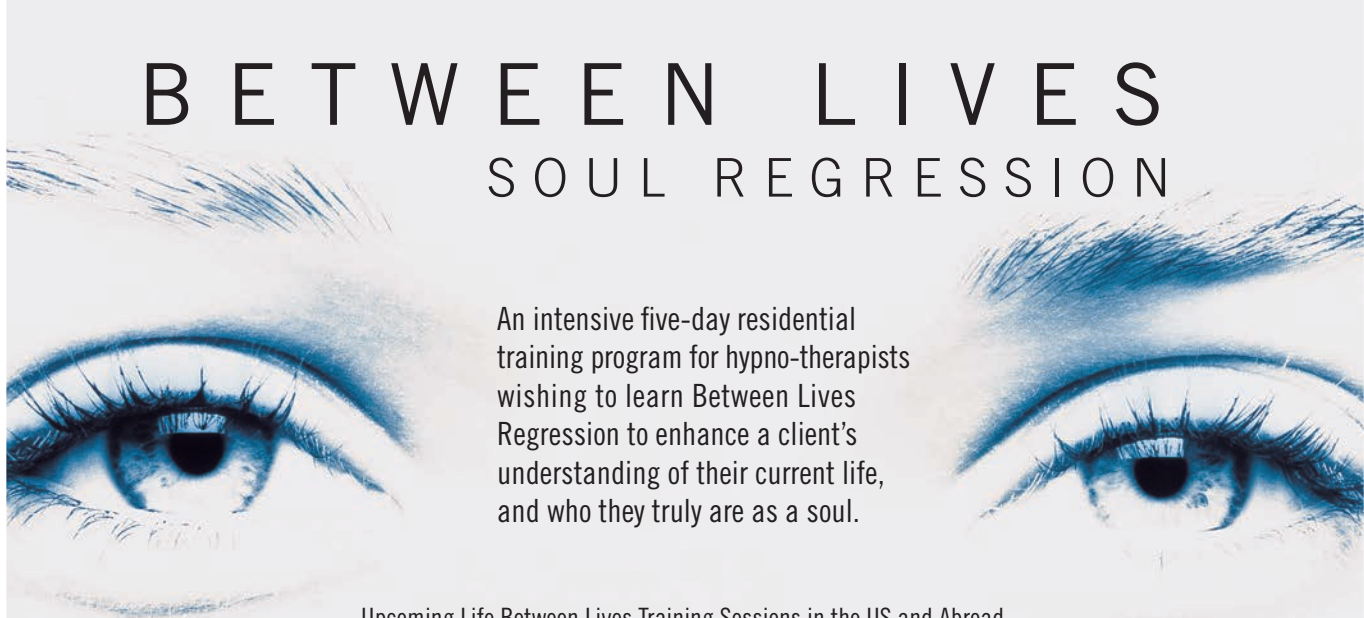
"The expectation has a lot to do with being able to carry out tasks that normally are women's tasks—like taking care of the kids. Men have to become fathers," says Christian, a compact man with wavy blond hair and clear blue eyes. "Not to become like women—not feminized—but we have to develop the qualities that women have already developed, such as nurturing and caretaking."

Jon adds, "The highest value, the most important thing in Denmark, is to get a partner and have a relationship and then a family. The relationship is the highest thing that we have."

"And if it doesn't work, you get a new partner," interjects another with an ironic shrug.

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Denmark has one of the world's highest divorce rates. In eight out of ten cases, the woman ends the marriage.

As the conversation continues, I notice that the men speak about a vague, almost inchoate experience of victimization. "Where did this sense of victimization come from?"

Christian responds, "There's a kind of victimization with not knowing which way to go, how you are supposed to be, what to do in your relationship. We're in a double bind."

"What is the double bind?" I ask.

Martin jumps in, speaking rapidly but softly. "I have tried to give women what they say they want, but they always want something else. Women think that what they want is for the man to really talk and to be at home with the kids. But she doesn't want that for long. She wants a strong man."

"We end up relating to women in a way that is more like woman to woman, not man to woman," says Bo. "We are feminized in our relationships, and they don't last."

Jon explains that their relationships end up revolving around what the woman wants. "There's a constant fear that I feel—like

I'm doing it wrong somehow. That I should feel like this or like that, and you just don't know what you are supposed to do. Very few men stop and think, 'So what do I want? What makes sense here?' And it's true not just in our relationships with women, but everywhere. That's why we come here, men talking with men—we're not talking about women really."

Martin nods in agreement: "I think that the big problem with the new man is that we have forgotten to take responsibility. We let women make all of the decisions. And now we have no direction."

"There's something inside yourself that gets messed up as a man when you have no internal compass, no higher value, and then you do whatever you have to do to keep your sexual relationship," says Jon. "You are lost."

Another young man in his twenties, tall with shaggy dark hair, leans forward. "I have a friend studying philosophy here in Copenhagen. He told me that he wants to learn how to be authentic so that he can get the women he wants. I tried to explain to him why he should give that up, because doing anything to be with a woman makes you weak, completely uncertain about yourself."

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Christian comments, "Many people would say it's crazy to give that up, because a sexual relationship is the most important thing in their inner life. But being willing to do anything for it has an effect."

"Men get depressed," Jon notes. "I know guys who are not functioning at all. Some get aggressive. It's really bad. But there is so little motivation to do anything."

The Masculine Mystique

Why would there be much motivation to do anything different? Denmark, according to recent surveys, is supposed to be the country where people are happiest. In a recent *60 Minutes* episode, correspondent Morley Safer went to Denmark to find out why, and he noted the ample social welfare system that pays for education, parental leave, and health care, to name a few key benefits. In this segment, an earnest young Danish man says he would consider himself a success in life if he were happy and could spend a lot of time with his children. He said he didn't care about making money and cautioned the audi-

ence not to believe in the American Dream because it could lead to disappointment.

Later, Peter, Jon, and I go for a drink at a crowded local bar. Sitting at a table near the entrance, I look around and see only a few couples and only one mixed group of men and women. They are strikingly handsome and healthy, but the mood is almost subdued—a few smiles, little laughter. Even in groups, the Danes seem solitary. A blast of cool air announces new arrivals. I look up to see five women standing in the entrance. One woman flicks her hair like a racehorse tossing its mane. I'm struck by how beautiful these women are—and how confident they seem. Steadily, they survey the scene, conferring with each other briefly before they approach the bar. I could see these women staring into the distant horizon at the prow of a Viking longship.

But I find myself distracted. I can't get out of my head an encounter I had with one of the men after our meeting. We didn't say much, but as we stood face to face, I was drawn to his eyes, which conveyed a kind of yearning that I found almost irresistible. I'd never seen a man with eyes like that. And meeting the

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gaze of another man, I saw the same soft, beseeching quality in his eyes too. There was something so familiar about that look. As I turned away to join Peter and Jon, it hit me: I know where I'd seen that look before. The night before we three had been talking about classic masculine ideals and watched YouTube clips of Humphrey Bogart in the 1942 classic *Casablanca*. But the look isn't Bogart. No, it's the quavering, vulnerable expression in the eyes of Ingrid Bergman as she gazes at Bogart, her former lover and potential savior.

I was beginning to have the eerie feeling that I was in some kind of gender-reversed movie—not a forties movie like *Casablanca*, but more likely from the fifties, where all of the men insist that they are getting happier and happier as they change the baby's diaper. Despite the fact that in the 1950s, women—often young mothers—were being hospitalized for “nervous breakdowns,” very few women actually *thought*, let alone said, that they were unhappy. How could you be unhappy when you had everything that the culture said was supposed to be fulfilling, good, and right? In the mid-1960s the sea

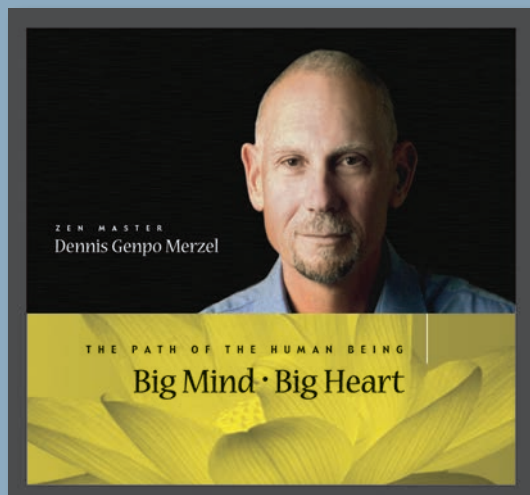
change began when Betty Friedan wrote an article about how, under all the lipsticked smiles and sweet gazes, women were stifled and depressed. She called this phenomenon the “feminine mystique.” Her book by that name enabled educated middle-class women to identify the vague discontent that was marring their picture-perfect lives, and it ignited a social revolution. Perhaps I was seeing the first cracks in the placidly happy Scandinavian façade. Could this be the beginning of the masculine mystique?

Liberation from Masculinity?

The more I thought about what I was seeing and hearing, the more uneasy I felt. Oddly enough, these most sexually progressive countries that aspire to gender neutrality have very strong ideas of masculinity and femininity. Traditionally, “feminine” refers to the values expressed by women in the domestic sphere of caretaking and child rearing, while “masculine” refers to the traits needed by men in the public sphere of politics and business. Surprisingly, this is true in Northern

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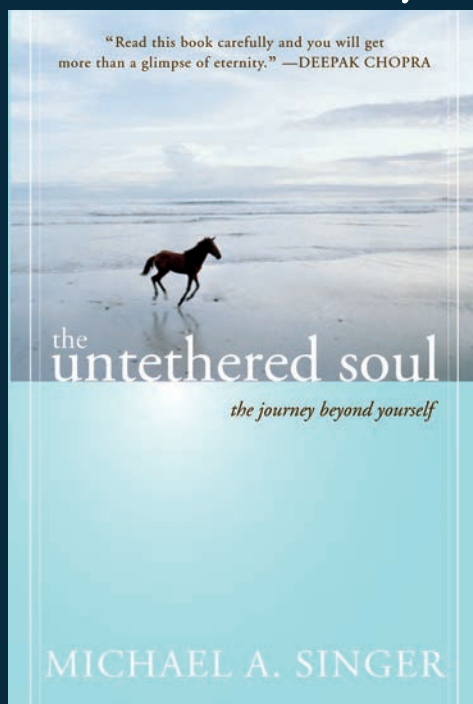
Europe too. But whereas in modernity the male sphere was given priority, in these progressive postmodern cultures, the value has flipped. They now equate masculinity with all of the ills of modern society—domination, disconnection, and a dangerous disregard for life. Rather than creating an equality between the two spheres of life, all things masculine are considered *less* valuable than the feminine. Moreover, masculinity is seen as negative and problematic. Which, if you are male, is in itself a problem.

Thus, gender roles are changing—most particularly for men. In the center of Copenhagen, men push baby carriages as long as Lamborghinis. On any given afternoon, baby carriages frame the entrance of my favorite café, each one bigger, blacker, and with more chrome than the next. Inside, more men than women are taking care of babies. In fact, the Norwegian researcher Jørgen Lorentzen told me that men, because they are still expected to be the primary breadwinners *and* take responsibility for child rearing, are now even more entangled in work-family conflict than women. “The latest statistics show that more men say they have

more difficulties trying to combine work and family than women do,” he told me. As I told Jørgen, it seems that the value placed on being a mother—the one who takes care of infants and very young children—is putting men in a funny position. No matter how hard men try, they can never *be* mothers and so are bound to fail. He acknowledged this as “a danger,” but insisted that “men have to develop their interest and competence in intimacy and caretaking.”

There was a pervasive sense that men are not doing what they have to do to assume the burdens that would create equality, that they are still oppressors and have a *long* way to go to set things right. From the attitudes expressed in the media and by the researchers I spoke with, I often had the strange sense that time had stopped in the early sixties, and the women’s movement hadn’t really begun. At KVINFO, Denmark’s Center on Women and Gender, I picked up a magazine, *MK*, about gender and employment. Its headline read: “Unbelievable but True—Everything Is as It Always Has Been: Women, Men, and the Gender-Divided Job Market.” An article on the KVINFO site about the

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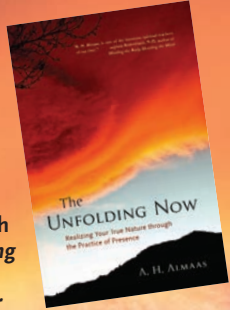
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2007 parliamentary election notes that “women are a rare breed on executive suites and only make up slightly more than four percent of CEOs in Denmark. Norway has threatened business with gender quota laws in order to get more women into the board rooms.” (They have since done so, mandating that forty percent of corporate boards be made up of women.) In 2005, Swedish women started a feminist political party because they felt that they were still being marginalized—in other words, women are still being held down.

The vilification of all things masculine and the ever-present assertion that men aren’t doing enough to end oppression (which flies in the face of the fact that so much *has* changed) seem to have created a perfect storm that is bound to run anyone’s Viking impulses into the ground. As a result, men—particularly educated, intelligent, sensitive men—seem increasingly divided against themselves, cut off from the authority of their own experience lest they offend or be seen as dominators. It is a bizarre inverse of women’s traditional self-effacement and lack of authority that is a response to patriarchal domination. As Henrik Jensen, a cultural historian at Roskilde University told me, “There’s not much will any more. No man wants to be mixed up with the old [patriarchal] father, because there is a fear that you would be thrown out, even eliminated from the family. That happens; there are a lot of divorces.”

In my short stay, one example after another came to my attention. Each story alone could be seen as just another anecdote—like the well-known psychologist who studied “core masculinity” and was thrilled by my invitation to be interviewed but couldn’t because his girlfriend said that he would be too tired. Or the one that really left my head spinning: an interview with a prominent Danish researcher on male roles who is himself a staunch feminist. The interview careened all over the place, bouncing off the extremes of his internal division. In a booming clear voice, he spoke about the need for men to really take part in gender equality. But interspersed between his pro-feminist statements, he told the story of how his second marriage had fallen apart. (They had married after having two children together. Six months into the marriage, she told him that she had met another man—when she was pregnant with their second child—and wanted a divorce. She had married the researcher, which now gave her rights to his property, while knowing that there was another man in her life.) Whenever he came near anything close to anger or betrayal, he howled with laughter—so loudly that I could barely hear his words. He laughed when he told me that he had been “totally understanding about everything—I only shouted once on the telephone—and then gave her a half a million!” Then he would stop laughing and speak about “the pain in the faces of my children” and his own shattered dreams of family life. As he said right before



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he ran out the door to meet his new girlfriend: "I am dividing my life into smaller and smaller parts. I have my work; I have my children. I have to go to the gym four times a week. I have to eat. I have to have a sex life. In a way, there is a freedom that is fantastic." But he acknowledged: "I have just accepted what has happened so that I don't go bananas. I think about it in an intellectual way, and okay, well, life has to go on."

As life went on and I walked the uneven stone streets of Copenhagen, I began to notice how many of these tall Viking men slouched, as if they were trying to take up less space. It was extremely disconcerting to see men expressing the kind of confusion, deference, and self-doubt that is so familiar and often tragic to me in studying women. Not simply because we don't traditionally expect this from men, but because it is undignified and humiliating for anyone to have the fundamental sense that there is something deeply wrong with who they are and that they constantly have to seek validation from others for their existence. That is the horrible predicament that women have been struggling to free themselves from. Ironically, in Northern Europe, in trying to create gender equality, it seems a new form of domination is being created instead.

The Cost of Killing the Patriarch

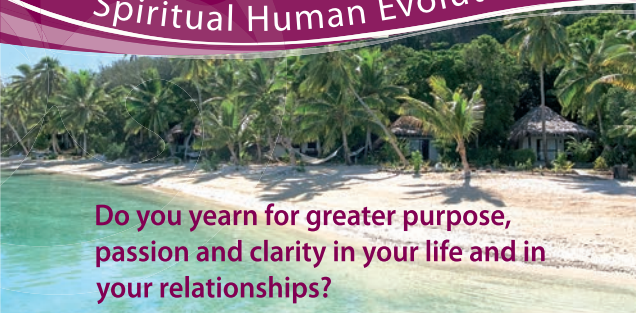
Who among us spiritually awakening, progressive, and privileged human beings—male or female—doesn't want to end patriarchy? If human civilization is going to survive on this planet, and if we have any hope of reaching our potential as conscious beings, we will have to move beyond the deeply ingrained societal pattern of dominating, patriarchal hierarchies—of men over women, nature, and anyone perceived to be "other." The effort and commitment that these Northern European countries have brought to this task is unprecedented. And yet, because the pattern of dominance and subordination is such a habit, raising up the value and priority of the traditionally feminine sphere of life—home, children, relationship—and deprecating anything that has been considered masculine seems to result in a new form of domination. But it isn't a domination that is based on brute force and the threat of physical assault. It works at a more psychological level—the constantly implied threat is the loss of intimate relationship. This left me reeling. I had thought that men would always have the upper hand because of their greater physical strength. But as psychologically sophisticated postmodern men and women, we no longer live in fear of impending physical brutality. In our secure, affluent, and secular cultures, where sexual intimacy is the highest value, our fears focalize on our need for meaningful connection with other human souls.

I was beginning to realize that killing off the patriarch—the father in the home and in the culture—and validating the

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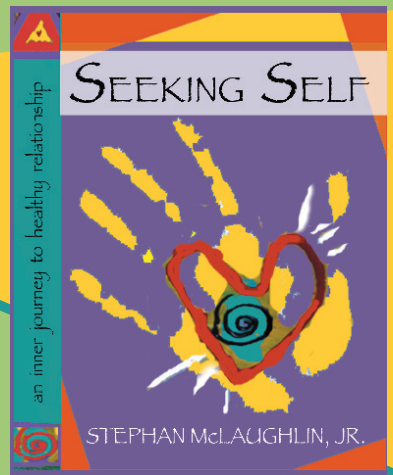
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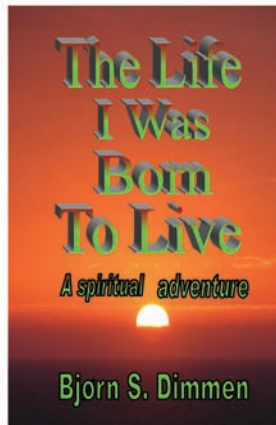


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mother's intimate sphere will not liberate us and society as we might have hoped. As the historian Henrik Jensen told me, "Culture is made up of two legs: one leg is duty and one is rights." The culture of duty is associated with the authority of the father, or patriarch. And the culture of rights "only began with the emergence of the individual, which happened fairly recently." The culture of rights is what we find in Northern Europe—where society tries to fulfill "mothering functions" and meet each individual's needs. "But duty," by which he means a sense of obligation and shared purpose, "was actually gluing things together. It created a mutuality of sorts. Once it goes, people get more and more isolated, thinking about their needs and their rights, but no one feels obligated to anyone or anything."

It's this point that I believe bears further and deeper consideration. The masculine—which Henrik calls the "father"—is not simply about men as individuals but is an essential aspect of culture. He sees it as the vertical dimension, which includes everything that human beings have looked up to, from God on high to ideals and excellence as well as the father's traditional moral authority. That vertical dimension is the source of our higher aspirations. This upward reach needs a strong foundation of healthy human relationship—which the more horizontally inclusive world of mothering traditionally has provided. As Henrik said to me, there needs to be a balance between the two. I found it surprising and almost counterintuitive to discover that placing so much priority on nurturing and mothering functions—caring for the special needs of each child, ensuring that each person grows in his or her unique way—does not lead to a close-knit and deeply connected society. Not in our day and age. Ironically, and perhaps paradoxically, the result is hyperindividuation, which leaves us self-focused, isolated, and victimized.

Ultimately, isn't the problem of patriarchy not that fathers—men—have authority but that it is a system of domination and victimization? If we are to end such domination, then we're going to have to stop creating polarized hierarchies between men's and women's roles and values. To meet the challenges that face us as a species, we need to have women and men stretching to realize their highest potential across the various dimensions of human life, infused with that Viking spirit that defied the limits of the known world. My sojourn into Northern Europe strongly suggested that true gender equality—one in which both men and women are living to their fullest potential—can't happen by giving greater priority to women's traditional attributes and roles. Shifting the balance in that way ends up creating new dominator dynamics that lead to superiority and inferiority between the sexes. Only this time the feminine trumps the masculine. To me, that's not gender equality but patriarchy in drag. ■

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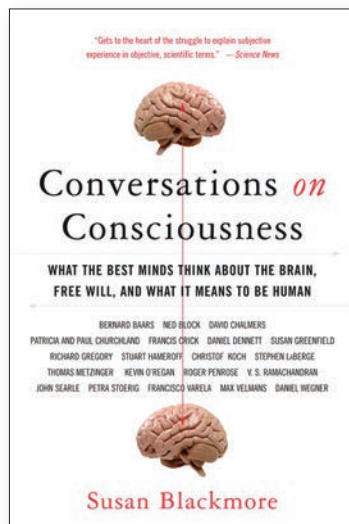
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CONVERSATIONS ON CONSCIOUSNESS

What the Best Minds Think about the Brain, Free Will, and What It Means to Be Human

by Susan Blackmore

[Oxford University Press, 2007,
paperback, \$16.95]

It's not exactly psychology. It's not just neuroscience. It's certainly not anthropology, although there are similarities. It includes cognitive science but isn't really limited to it. And it certainly has a lot to do with philosophy. What am I talking about? The new field of consciousness studies as it is being pursued today by theorists, scientists, and academics around the world.

Over the last couple of decades, this new field of inquiry has emerged on the fringes of the mainstream academic world and captured the attention of some maverick thinkers and researchers not afraid to explore big questions like "What is consciousness?" "Is there free will?" and "What is the relationship between the mind and the brain?" In her fascinating book, *Conversations on Consciousness: What the*

Best Minds Think about the Brain, Free Will, and What It Means to Be Human, Susan Blackmore sits down with some of the major players in this new field and explores the groundbreaking theories, latest research, and challenging issues that are confronting, and in some cases confounding, their efforts to develop a new science of consciousness. Comprising printed interviews with twenty-one different theorists, most of whom can generally be categorized as scientists or philosophers, Blackmore's book represents a fairly comprehensive sampling of the latest thought in this field. It was first published in 2006, with some of the interviews being conducted in the preceding years, but the ideas remain fresh and vital. Anyone curious to read an overview of this young discipline, or just curious as to the nature of one's own mind and consciousness, will find this book to be a clear and thought-provoking journey through the terrain. Blackmore has taken care to make the book popular and accessible, but readers should still be prepared for a rigorous and stimulating intellectual challenge.

Consciousness is one of those remarkably promiscuous terms in our language. Used in different contexts, it can seem to refer to many different things. In fact, coming up with a common understanding of what consciousness is seems to represent a Herculean task for the subjects of Blackmore's book. But there is one thing that most of them do agree on—the "problem of consciousness" poses a major challenge for science. Perhaps Indian theorist V.S. Ramachandran puts it best when he explains to Blackmore why consciousness represents such a unique conundrum.

[Consciousness] is the biggest challenge to science, because all of the problems we have tackled and solved so far have to do with the external world, such as DNA, or the Earth not being the centre of the universe, or cosmology, or string theory. But we're now finally confronted with in some ways the biggest problem of all, namely, understanding the very organ that made all of those other discoveries possible, turning on itself and asking, "Who am I?"

While Ramachandran goes on to claim that he does not mean to be asking this question in a meta-physical sense, the simple truth remains that profound physical and metaphysical issues are raised throughout the book. It is what makes consciousness studies so fascinating. These theorists are essentially approaching issues long considered to be the primary province of mystics, meditators, and the occasional philosopher, with the objective eyes of science. Blackmore is a good guide in this hybrid terrain, perhaps because she is a strange mix herself—a committed materialist and well known debunker and skeptic, yet also a Zen student with a long and dedicated practice of meditation, one who is fascinated by the subject of consciousness both personally and professionally. And while her loyalties, along with those of almost all of her subjects, remain clearly on the scientific side of the fence, she takes a certain delight in asking big and challenging questions; for example,

Consciousness is one of those remarkably promiscuous terms in our language. Used in different contexts, it can refer to many different things.

she asks everyone if they believe in free will and if they believe in any form of life after death—and she insists on responsive answers.

It is interesting to note just how much disagreement there is among the pioneers of this field. There is even deep disagreement about whether or not it is possible to scientifically answer the deeper questions raised by the subject. Several of Blackmore's interviewees openly wonder if we will ever know how the brain creates the experience of consciousness—the so-called hard problem, a term coined by philosopher David Chalmers. Or is that the wrong question altogether? Perhaps consciousness is more fundamental to reality than we realize. One theorist, Stuart Hameroff, suggests that the source of consciousness may be found in the “quantum computations” of infinitely small “microtubules” of the neuronal

circuitry. He compares “the interplay between the material world and the enlightened uncertainty of the quantum world” to the mystical Kabbalah. Another, psychophysicologist Stephen LaBerge, compares the state of spiritual enlightenment with lucid dreaming and suggests that normal everyday consciousness is simply a different form of dreaming, one that is “constrained by the sensory input from whatever that thing called the physical world is.” Chalmers, one of the leaders of the field, expresses the view that it may be possible to “know all the physical facts about the world and still not know about consciousness.” Some are convinced that there really isn't anything called consciousness, at least not in the sense that most people understand the term. Still others are confident that given enough time and attention, all of the mysteries of the mind and brain will eventually be solved by the ongoing march of science.

If anything does become clear in reading Blackmore's book, it is that hubris around such a big and delicate question is dangerous. “A little learning is a dangerous thing,” the old saying cautions, and as several of Blackmore's subjects remind us, we only know a little about consciousness at this point. In fact, there is a certain arrogance detectable in many of these theorists, an overconfidence that is particularly evident when all of the various competing and dissenting views are put together in the same volume. Many, for example, are surprisingly confident that there is no such thing as free will, a somewhat radical conclusion that, at this point, is based only on scant evidence highly open to interpretation.

But spiritually inclined individuals are equally capable of hubris, especially when it comes to a topic as close to home as consciousness. Reading this unusual book is likely to challenge and stir up any and all ideas one has about this deeply intimate yet enigmatic subject. For that reason alone, it is highly recommended reading. Indeed, among the many intersection points between spirituality, philosophy, and science, few subjects offer such a rich opportunity for mutually beneficial exchange as this one. If only more scientists and more spiritually inclined individuals realized and believed this, one suspects that when it comes to understanding all the many dimensions of who and what we actually are, much greater headway could ultimately be made.

Carter Phipps



COUNTERCULTURE GREEN

The Whole Earth Catalog and American Environmentalism

by Andrew G. Kirk

(University Press of Kansas, 2007, hardcover \$23.00)

I've never read *The Whole Earth Catalog*. As the child of baby boomers, I've always relegated its famous cover to the dusty shelves of irrelevance, along with all the other stale and outdated iconography of my parents' generation. But after reading Andrew Kirk's *Counterculture Green: The Whole Earth Catalog and American Environmentalism*, I realized that despite my lack of familiarity with its contents, *Whole Earth* and its eclectic, visionary founder Stewart Brand have had a much deeper impact on my ideas about nature, environmentalism, and the role of technology and business in creating a better world than I could ever have imagined. Kirk, a professor of environmental history at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, reveals that the catalog, which on the surface appeared to be nothing more than an information and tool resource for the counterculture communes of the late sixties and early seventies, also held within its enormous pages "a critical reevaluation [of] the relation-

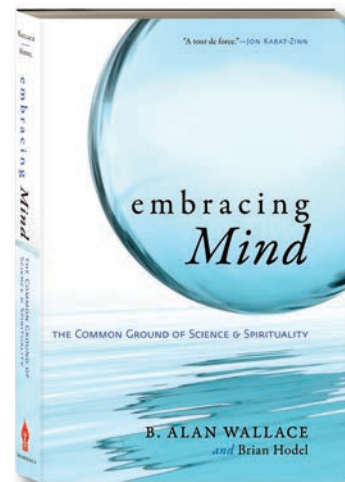
ship between nature and postindustrial culture." And according to Kirk, what emerged from *Whole Earth's* ideological mixing pot was a new environmental philosophy that embraced the human-centered optimism of technological innovation and market capitalism, often considered enemies of the environmental movement. He makes the compelling case that *Whole Earth's* shade of "counterculture green" laid the foundation for the most cutting-edge forms of techno-friendly, business-savvy, "bright green" environmentalism that are starting to take hold at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Counterculture Green is essentially a history of the American environmental movement in the second half of the twentieth century, portrayed through the evolving environmental ethos of *The Whole Earth Catalog* and the lives of the diverse group of thinkers that contributed to it. The catalog, which was started by Brand in 1968 "to help [his] friends who were starting their own civilization hither and yon in the sticks," quickly grew to be much more than what he had originally intended. By 1969, it was featured in national magazines like *Time*, *Vogue*, and *Esquire*, had sold over sixty thousand copies, and was fast becoming the voice of the diverse counterculture movement. As Kirk writes, "For a generation coming of age in the 1960s, *Whole Earth* became a forum for reevaluations of the tangled and shifting relationship among design, science, consumption, and ecology in post-war America."

What surprised me most about Kirk's account of *The Whole Earth Catalog* was that it revealed a side of the counterculture that is not often talked about. His main thesis throughout the book is that the movement wasn't just hippies and dropouts trying to return to a teepee and subsistence lifestyle, but that it also mobilized a whole

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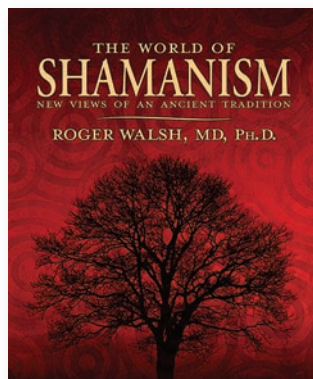
generation of technophile revolutionaries who believed that "innovation and invention with a conscience could overcome even the worst social and environmental problems." In the 1960s, with the potentially catastrophic consequences of nuclear armament and a booming postwar industrial economy, many were painting dire scenarios of the future, and much of American environmentalism focused on slowing down the negative impacts of the industrial-capitalist machine. But the philosophy of *Whole Earth* and of its eclectic counterculture army of designers, commune dwellers, engineers, philosophers, writers, and businesspeople was different. According to Kirk, "Whether they went back to the land or into the laboratory, they infused environmentalism with an optimistic hope that one day the nagging question of how to reconcile the tension between the modernist desire to explore the progressive potential of technological innovation with the antimodernist desire to preserve the natural world might be resolved through enlightened technical innovation."

Central to the narrative of *Counterculture Green* is the psychedelic life and times of *Whole Earth's* founder, Stewart Brand. Kirk could not have chosen a better poster boy for both the counterculture movement and the new breed of environmentalism that it spawned. Using a vast array of fascinating stories about Brand and his relationship with many of the counterculture's most influential figures, Kirk paints the picture of a revolutionary who was deeply affected by the complex combination of ideologies that characterized his era but whose ideas about the marriage of ecology, technology, and business were decades ahead of their time. Whether it was participating in Ken Kesey's "Electric Kool-Aid Acid Tests," campaigning for NASA to release images of the whole earth from space to the public, or working as an environmental adviser to California

Governor Jerry Brown, Brand's influence was felt in almost all aspects of the movement. "He was an experienced LSD veteran before practically anyone had heard of the drug," Kirk writes, "and advocated a new view of the earth that set a standard for how six billion people view their home world." Brand and the editorial perspective of *Whole Earth* were always reaching just outside of and beyond where everyone else was comfortable. According to Kirk, "Brand's intense interest in ecological living but deep ambivalence about environmentalism as an ideology enabled him to see the potential of alternative environmental paths more clearly than most of his generation."

Reflecting the credentials of its author, *Counterculture Green* is an academically structured history of a very fascinating individual and the movement he was at the heart of. And while the book can be a bit overwhelming at times in its detailed caricatures of the many people who participated in *Whole Earth's* environmental counterculture, there are enough wildly fascinating stories and biographies to keep the pages turning in anticipation. Kirk does a great job of conveying the ideological complexity of the counterculture and environmental movements reflected on the pages of *The Whole Earth Catalog*, and he brings clarity to the various contending ideas that have been and continue to be at play below the surface of post-World War II environmentalism. Fundamentally, Kirk is hoping that by highlighting the group of individuals who "recognized that the same remarkable brains and opposable thumbs that caused our twentieth-century environmental crisis could get us out of it in the twenty-first century," *Counterculture Green* can provide hope and inspiration for the next wave of environmentalism moving forward. And I, for one, hope that he's right.

Joel Pitney



THE WORLD OF SHAMANISM

New Views of an Ancient Tradition

by Roger Walsh, MD, PhD
(Llewellyn Publications,
2007, paperback, \$18.95)

Shamanism often gets lumped into the potpourri of New Age pursuits that includes crystals, affirmations, and tarot cards and dismissed as a fad without substance or relevance to our sophisticated age. At the same time, more and more anthropologists and academics are studying shamanism today, while a plethora of weekend workshops provides a taste of shamanic journeying to anyone willing to pay a fee. In the midst of these disparities, Roger Walsh's new book, *The World of Shamanism*, comes as a welcome source of objective information about this often misunderstood subject.

Walsh, a transpersonal psychiatrist and professor of anthropology, philosophy, and psychiatry at the University of California, Irvine, is well qualified to write about shamanism. In addition to his academic pursuits, he has authored or edited several popular books on spirituality and meditation. He brings to his subject the rationality of a scientific researcher and an open mind, which are just what a topic so steeped in hearsay and altered states of consciousness needs.

According to Walsh, a shaman is a person who voluntarily enters an altered state of consciousness and

journeys to other realms on behalf of the community. Shamans are primarily found in nomadic tribes of hunters and gatherers, and they perform a variety of religious and healing functions. As societies evolved over time into more complex systems, shamans disappeared, though their roles in society and the skills they performed were inherited by various specialists such as priests, healers, mystics, and mediums.

Central to all of the shaman's activities is journeying—that trance state in which the shaman's soul leaves his or her body in order to travel to the world of the spirits and engage with supernatural entities—and it is the one practice that has led many modern Western researchers to dismiss shamanism's validity. It is Walsh's goal to set the record straight and dispel the many misunderstandings that have arisen due to "cultural bias, lack of psychological expertise, psychoanalytical emphasis on pathology, and ignorance of the potential range and value of certain altered states." He does this by drawing on a wide range of scientific and religious studies, recorded accounts, psychological interpretations, and even his own forays into journeying.

For example, when interpreting his experience of merging with the helping spirit of a power animal, Walsh points out the psychological mechanisms that could be at play, the similarity of the exercise to visualization practices found in other religious traditions, and the parallels between this technique and those used by contemporary psychotherapists. It is his skill in teasing out the bizarre and often sensationalized aspects of shamanism that enables Walsh to demystify his subject and quell both the extreme skepticism and the often-exaggerated enthusiasm that shamanism so often elicits. If there is anything missing in Walsh's multidimensional approach, it is a discussion of the difference between



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the consciousness of someone who lived in a homogeneous nomadic culture many centuries ago and one living in our multifaceted postmodern society—and the implications of what that difference might mean in how we incorporate shamanic practices into our contemporary lives.

Walsh also delves into shamanism's influence on spiritual disciplines. In fact, he sees the developmental trajectory of a shaman as the archetypal spiritual experience. Drawing on his earlier book, *Essential Spirituality*, he outlines "seven kinds of practices . . . that are central to a full spiritual life" and the foundation of religious traditions worldwide: training attention, living ethically, cultivating wisdom, transforming emotions, redirecting motivation, refining awareness, and serving others. Shamans, he says, were the first sages to develop and use this "technology of transcendence." They were "humankind's first transpersonal heroes," as he puts it, who worked "at the leading edge of human consciousness" for millennia.

Given that shamans were among the world's first spiritual practitioners, Walsh suggests that their simpler techniques—drumming, ingestion of psychedelics, etc.—may allow for easier access to altered states of consciousness. More refined practices that developed later, such as Buddhist meditation and Christian contemplative prayer, typically require sustained effort over a long period of time and lead to higher or more subtle states. The more rapid means of transcendence that shamanism offers, he says, may account in part for its popularity today. Given our era of instant gratification, it is hard to argue with Walsh's observation. In any case, thanks to his evenhanded book, would-be shamans and those who simply want to sort fact from fiction now have a reliable guide to this enduring tradition.

Carol Ann Raphael

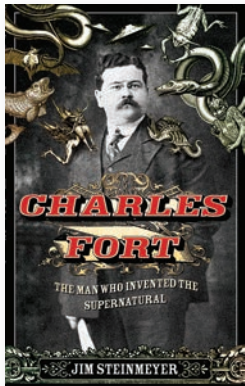
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CHARLES FORT

The Man Who Invented the Supernatural

by Jim Steinmeyer

(Tarcher/Penguin, 2008, hardcover \$24.95)

Rains of fishes and frogs. Mysterious lights and airships in the sky. Bleeding statues. Poltergeists. Cryptic creatures and sea serpents. Spontaneous human combustions.

When I was a kid, I ate this stuff up, salivating over eerie photos of NASA's "Face on Mars," licking my lips over spooky stories of my mother's teenage Ouija board experiences, and devouring each volume of Time-Life's *Mysteries of the Unknown* series in my school library every day at lunchtime. My consciousness was consumed by an unrelenting fascination with the paranormal, and throughout it all, looming in the background of almost everything I read, one pioneering figure in the arena of such "Fortean" studies towered above all others.

His name was Charles Fort, and as author and historian Jim Steinmeyer observes in the subtitle of his compelling new biography, Fort essentially "invented" the supernatural, identifying the major landmarks and putting up the now-familiar signposts as he conducted an unprecedented survey of the vast occult terrain. Spending most of his adult life sifting through the periodicals archives of New York's and London's libraries, scrawling down

countless notes that he kept stored in stacks of shoeboxes, Fort unearthed thousands of tales of unexplained events that modern science had deemed best to ignore. And between 1919 and 1932, he published four popular books based on his notes—*The Book of the Damned*, *New Lands*, *Lo!* and *Wild Talents*—which cemented his place in history as the godfather of the paranormal world.

Steinmeyer's biography is straightforward yet engaging, offering a chronological portrayal of Fort's life from his birth in Albany, New York, in 1874 until his death in New York City in 1932. His chapters detailing Fort's youthful adventures—reporting for New York newspapers, bumming rides on boxcars, working on transatlantic cattle ships, being challenged to a formal duel by an angry Frenchman—provide a fascinating transmission of the world of the late nineteenth century, suffused with immediacy by the use of liberal quotations from Fort's own witty autobiographical writings. But it isn't until chapter eight, concerning Fort's adulthood as a struggling short-story writer and novelist living on pennies with his wife in Manhattan, that the Charles Fort who would one day coin the term "teleportation" begins to appear.

Starting in 1905, Fort developed a very close friendship, maintained primarily through written correspondence (quoted throughout the book), with a fellow New York writer named Theodore Dreiser. Dreiser's penchant for metaphysics and philosophy exerted a profound influence on Fort, and by 1915 Fort was on fire with metaphysical speculation, pouring his heart into a manuscript of monistic philosophy and evolutionary teleology that he called *X*. Dreiser loved it, but nobody else would buy it. Unable to find a publisher, Fort abandoned the book (and its sequel,



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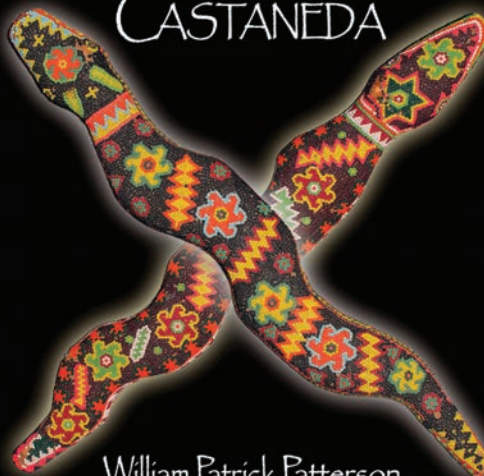
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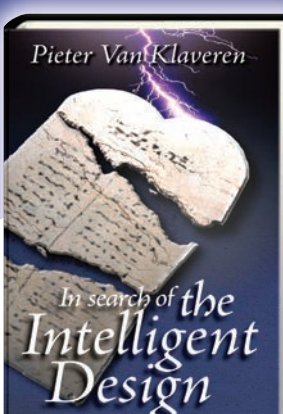
Y) and decided to do some extended reading instead.

As Steinmeyer explains, Fort was driven by his philosophical monism—"The oneness of allness," as he put it—to try to prove an unseen unity and connection between all things. Poring over scientific journals, magazines, and newspapers from around the world, situated daily at a desk in the New York Public Library (a luxury of time and attention facilitated by a modest family inheritance), he assembled a collection of some forty thousand notes on thirteen hundred different subjects, including "astronomy, sociology, psychology, deep sea diving, navigation, surveying, volcanoes, religion, sexes, earthworms." He synthesized, labeled, and rearranged his notes under broad themes—"Harmony," "Equilibrium," "Catalysts," "Saturation"—trying to uncover the integral pattern that would unite them all. "If there is an underlying oneness of all things," wrote Fort, "it does not matter where we begin, whether with stars, or laws of supply and demand, or frogs, or Napoleon Bonaparte. One measures a circle, beginning anywhere."

But Fort began to notice another pattern, one of an "orthodox materialism," pervading almost everything he read. Disgusted by the limiting, arrogant categorizations of reality provided by the ruling scientific elite, Fort turned his attention to the thousands of notes he'd acquired on "unexplained" phenomena, realizing that perhaps the supernatural wasn't so unnatural after all but simply aspects of reality that didn't fit into scientists' currently established categories.

With Dreiser's help, Fort was able to publish his first attack on scientific rigidity and dogma, backed by hundreds upon hundreds of cases of paranormal events, in December 1919 as *The Book of the Damned*. "By the damned," wrote Fort, "I mean the

A change is looming on the horizon



The Prophet Isaiah proclaimed, "It shall come to pass during the Last Days" (Isai. 2:1-4). He then prophesied that God shall establish His Law. That Law reveals that our universe is a counterfeit of the Realm of God. The conceiver of the counterfeit seeks to hide that fact.

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excluded. We shall have a procession of data that Science has excluded." In this unusual book, written with what Steinmeyer calls Fort's characteristic "wonder and warmth," Fort laid out his Law of the Hyphen—the idea that all things are part of a continuous "flow" or spectrum of existence, which bridges the gaping chasm between simplistic mind-made absolutes. It is a spectrum signified by the hyphen in any formulation of opposites: positive-negative, true-false, material-immaterial, etc. "We are not realists," explained Fort. "We are not idealists. We are intermediatists—that nothing is real, but that nothing is unreal: that all phenomena are approximations one way or the other between realness and unrealness." And it was here, in the "intermediate" zone, that rains of blood, flying sau-

Fort could be seen as both an early integralist and a systems theorist (with a heavy dose of occultism mixed in).

cers, and all other mysteries could find a happy home.

Though Steinmeyer doesn't comment on it himself, in many ways Fort could be seen as both an early integralist and a systems theorist (with a heavy dose of occultism mixed in). Explaining his own brand of atheism, Fort echoed the viewpoint of many of today's systems thinkers by writing, "The God of the bees is the Hive. There is no necessity to think of an external control, nor of any being, presiding over the bees and directing their affairs." In his final book, *Wild Talents*, he also anticipated by decades one of the central premises of chaos theory with a vivid description of how not even "a bottle of catsup can fall from a

tenement-house fire escape in Harlem" without having consequences that ripple out unpredictably, on a planetary and perhaps even cosmic scale. It's small wonder that the acclaimed architect and systems thinker Buckminster Fuller once praised Fort as "a man of true vision."

Throughout his book, Steinmeyer reminds us that Fort's quarrel was not with science per se but with the narrow-minded authority figures who failed to recognize that contemporary scientific pronouncements, like those of the church in an earlier age, were expressions of an inherently incomplete perspective. He quotes Fort, who wrote shortly before his death in 1932: "Belief in God, in nothing, in Einstein—a matter of fashion. . . . I conceive of nothing, in religion, science, or philosophy that is more

than the proper thing to wear for a while."

Still, despite his broad perspective, the vast majority of the intellectual mainstream gave Fort short shrift during his lifetime, and he died, as Dreiser lamented at his funeral,

"an unrecognized genius."

After growing up, living, and dying with Fort through the pages of this intimate biography, one's sympathy for the belabored genius runs deep. And by the end, no matter what you may have thought—or still think—about the world of Fortean phenomena, you will be hard-pressed to disagree with this simple, poignant observation by 1920s writer Benjamin De Casseres: "Every once in a while, a strange mind, an unattached mind, a trans-sensory mind, comes into the world to make us laugh, wonder or unhinge us. Such a mind is Charles Fort's."

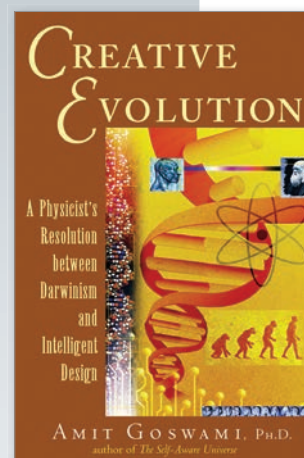
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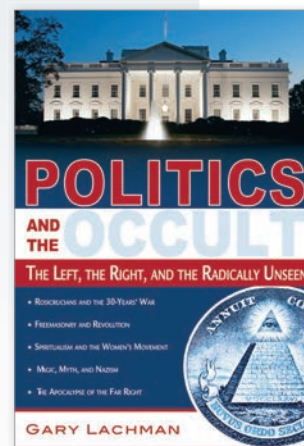
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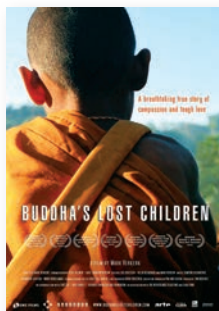
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BUDDHA'S LOST CHILDREN

Directed by Mark Verkerk
(EMS Films, 2006, DVD, 97 min.)

Northern Thailand forms part of the Golden Triangle, that mountainous region where the borders of Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar converge and a significant portion of the world's opium trade originates. It is inhabited by traditional hill tribes who live in isolated, impoverished villages scattered throughout the dense jungle terrain. In the middle of this harsh yet majestic landscape, the former professional kickboxer and Buddhist monk, Khru Bah Neua Chai Kositto, has been caring for the abandoned and orphaned children who are among the many deleterious consequences of the drug trafficking that has dominated the area for decades.

Abbot Khru Bah is the subject of Dutch filmmaker Mark Verkerk's fine documentary *Buddha's Lost Children*. Winner of numerous awards, including the Grand Jury Prize for Documentary at the American Film Institute Festival in Los Angeles, the film follows this unconventional monk, whose body is covered with tattoos, as he instructs the boys under his care how to kickbox, pray, and live a harmonious life.

Khru Bah, one of the last "traveling monks" in Thailand, has been working in this area of northern Thailand for fifteen years, taking neglected boys whom he finds on his rounds to the Golden Horse Monastery, which

serves as his home base. There the children eat adequately for probably the first time in their lives, go to school, and learn to apply the basic tenets of Buddhism to their young, disadvantaged lives. Some stay a few weeks, others for years or indefinitely, hoping to become monks themselves one day. Five years ago, a nun joined Khru Bah, becoming the mother who cooks, sews, and tends to the children's daily needs while Khru Bah dispenses his "tough love," establishing discipline and instilling confidence. The daily schedule has the boys rising at 2:00 AM to chant, exercise, and bathe for the day.

The film loosely focuses on two young boys who came to Khru Bah particularly weak and frightened. Seeing them come to life and flourish under his benevolent and good-humored guidance is telling and moving. At one point, the abbot and his young novices set off on a hundred-kilometer trek on horseback to repair an outlying border temple. (Khru Bah also takes in horses, often rescuing them from slaughterhouses and boarding as many as 120 at the monastery.) The first night out, a horse falls down an embankment and strangles on its harness, putting

"Life isn't just a matter of chance," Khru Bah says. "It's a matter of choice."

a halt to the journey until the critically ill animal recovers. Khru Bah uses this opportunity to teach the boys the importance of making the best of a bad situation and the value of properly looking after the horses

and themselves. The injured horse's slow rebound parallels that of the two youths who slowly transform from mute and withdrawn boys to vibrant, beaming kids with Khru Bah's patient and steady attentiveness.

This is a simple film in many ways, restrained yet intimate, never didactic, and beautifully filmed. Verkerk takes his time in revealing Khru Bah's character and the quality of his relationship with the boys. We see him meditating on a rocky promontory, disparaging a young child's tears, taking a youngster to task for neglecting his hygiene, and physically tackling a village trouble-maker at a community gathering. His firmness is tempered with a high-spiritedness that is infectious and disarming. The children thrive under his care and for the first time have the possibility to transcend their difficult beginnings and look forward to a better future. But this film is more than a heartwarming story about a dedicated individual who brings much-needed material and spiritual assistance to people who have little of both. Khru Bah's disciplined method of raising children provides a positive model for anyone working with children in our permissive, highly materialistic culture. And the example of his dignified, generous nature inspires us to examine our own motivations and actions, not only in relation to children but also with regard to the wider sphere of our lives. At the essence of his teaching—"I want to teach people the basic skills of living," he explains—is a fundamental principle that is every bit as pertinent to those of us living lives of comfort and opportunity as it is to the people he encounters in the drug-addled hills of northern Thailand. "Life isn't just a matter of chance," he says. "It's a matter of choice." This affecting film is a testament to just how significant our routine choices can be.

Carol Ann Raphael

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You Can Have Resilient, Beautiful Skin at Any Age

THE GLOW OF CHILDREN'S FACES, their rosy cheeks, and their tight and resilient skin are precious hallmarks of youth. While you may never regain that porcelain-like quality, there's a lot you can do to have resilient, beautiful skin at any age.

As a young man I learned about the value of healthy skin from a most unlikely experiment—one I've never forgotten! As a novice vacuum cleaner salesman, I did a sales demonstration that called for putting a clean white cloth on the end of the power nozzle: after a few brief passes, you'd lay the debris-filled cloth on the carpet and watch the shocked reaction. When I asked one particular couple if I could vacuum the mattress in their bedroom, I learned the lesson of a lifetime. I laid the cloth down after a single pass over the bed, and I don't

know who was more amazed—me or the couple. For a long, silent moment, we stood with our mouths gaping. A huge ball of dead skin lay before us.

I had never realized that when old skin died, if it wasn't removed from the surface, the new skin would suffocate. That was when I began using a natural-bristle skin brush (dry) before I bathed. If you stand on dark-colored poster board and "skin brush" yourself, you'll have all the proof you require to support this healthy practice.

Your skin has its own immune system. By that I mean it has specialized enzymes that no other part of your body possesses. The skin, your largest organ, has so much hormonal activity that medical researchers refer to it as another endocrine gland. Your skin cannot function without hormones.

Clog the pores of your skin, cutting off its ability to breathe, and you'll impair your body's first line of defense against germs and toxins.

I like to think of the skin as the surface layer of the real you and the reflection of your vitality. Like a lampshade that glows with the light from a bulb, your skin reveals to others your level of vitality or chi.

Chi, or qi, is the life force. It's the same element science has identified as the photons (the smallest identifiable particles of light) that ride the waves of your body's electromagnetic current. When this current reaches very high levels, it interacts with oxygen molecules in the air near the surface of your skin, ionizing them and producing a luminescence that is referred to as your aura. Children with radiant skin tones have a glow that those in their twilight years do not. For the latter, it's as if the light has dimmed and the skin shade reveals darkness.

For electricity to flow, it must have conductivity. That is why your skin's moisture level is so important. It is also why people who have dry, dull skin lack that alluring quality of personal magnetism. It's all about your skin battery's charge. From the standpoint of traditional Chinese medicine, your body is mapped with meridians, or pathways, of polarized strings of water molecules that allow a flow of photons. Along these channels, the water absorbs radiations of external energy via acupoints, or energy holes (or sinks). Think of this as a network of underground streams with springs of sweet water found along each stream.



PETER RAGNAR is a natural life scientist, modern-day Taoist wizard, and self-master par excellence. A martial arts practitioner for over fifty years, he is renowned for his teachings on optimal health and longevity. He is the author of twenty books, including *The Art and Science of Physical Invincibility*.

The free-flowing current of energy in the surface layers of your skin is crucial. Both the sweat glands, which bring moisture, cooling, and elimination of toxins, and the sebaceous glands, which release anabolic hormones to grow healthy new skin, are incredibly important.

Like a lampshade that glows with the light from a bulb, your skin reveals to others your level of vitality or chi.

They must remain unclogged for the sake of your health and your reserves of life force.

You need lots of healthy fiber, both soluble and insoluble, in order to beat up dangerous LDL cholesterol, which clogs not only arteries but the pores of your skin. Foods high in lignins, like flaxseed meal (two tablespoons are equal in lignin content to 30 cups of broccoli), are one of my favorite ways of improving my skin and removing heavy metals. I also add doses of the antistress hormone DHEA and the sleep hormone melatonin (which, incidentally, are abundantly concentrated in the skin).

I've often wondered how I've been able to maintain wrinkle-free, resilient skin after many decades of excessive sun exposure. I spent summers baling hay shirtless, followed by years in commercial fishing, topped by a couple of decades as an iron-worker, and my skin is still radiant and youthful. I suspect that years of skin brushing, using the far infrared sauna, and eating raw veggies high in

lignin content, DHEA, and melatonin may have worked miracles for my skin tone and health.

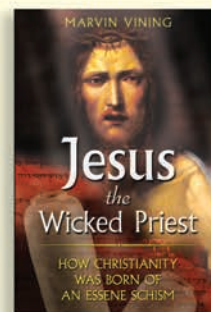
New studies from Temple University confirm that skin cancers cannot get started if enough DHEA is present, and the University of Zurich published a study stating that mela-

tonin protects against UV radiation. If you add high levels of hydration and exercise, plenty of sleep, and at least an eighty-five percent raw food diet, I believe you'll have resilient, beautiful skin at any age! Ready to give it a try?



Learn more about the amazing life and work of Peter Ragnar at wie.org/ragnar

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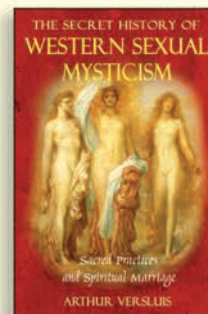
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Issue 39
February-April 2008

THE CREATIVE LURE OF THE DIVINE

I was thrilled to see Carter Phipps' feature article on the complementary worldviews of Carl Jung and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. I also appreciated his thoroughness in suggesting the similarities between the Jesuit paleontologist's cosmological thinking and that of Harvard mathematician-philosopher Alfred North Whitehead. Both are considered founders of a school of thought now loosely known as "process theology," a distinctly evolutionary theology that sees the divine as the creative lure that calls all of the world forward to a novel, creative, more complex future.

Teilhard de Chardin was actively discouraged and eventually shunned by the Vatican, so that no Catholic theologian who wanted to stay on decent terms with the Catholic hierarchy after the 1980s could profess any real interest in him. On the other hand, many progressive Protestant and Jewish theologians have embraced Whitehead's process philosophy (as has Ken Wilber, for that matter) and advanced it at great length. Phipps quotes one of them, David Ray Griffin, when he discusses *Archetypal Process*, the little-known but

fabulous book about the intersection of Jung with Whitehead and Teilhard de Chardin.

I think readers of *What Is Enlightenment?* would find process theology a welcome voice, a breath of fresh air from the churches when their progressive, thoughtful voices seem drowned out by the powerful Religious Right.

Douglas Todd
Vancouver, BC, Canada

OURSELVES AND AFRICANS

Although I appreciate Dr. Yngstrom's attempts to discredit the theory of lower levels of intelligence among black people, I feel as though her counterargument, which suggests that there are different levels of consciousness between "ourselves and Africans," is damaging and misleading. I find it difficult to believe that Western governments and individuals operate at a higher level of consciousness than Africans, particularly when consciousness is defined as "our capacity for awareness and the way that we think about ourselves in relation to other human beings." Yes, there is certainly government corruption in Africa, but could you say any less of governments in North America, South America, and Europe? Is President Bush the walking embodiment of "globalcentric consciousness"? Furthermore, is the perception of the poor as "a troublesome burden" restricted to Africans, or are there individuals who have reached the same conclusion through fear and greed in all civilizations?

Perhaps this is not an issue of race and should not be treated as such. Instead, the

differences between Western and African cultures may stem from socioeconomic inequalities and insufficient opportunities for education. From this perspective, rather than appealing to a "superior consciousness," we can approach this topic from our shared humanity. Instead of perpetuating an "us versus them" mentality, we can focus on a collective desire to lead a joyful existence that supports the spiritual and personal development of all humankind.

Melissa Gabriel
Tempe, AZ

Response from author

I really appreciate your bringing up these questions and concerns. And you are right, this has nothing to do with race. Greed and corruption is evident all over the planet, not just in Africa. The distinction I want to make is one of human values. The values held by the majority of Africans (and many non-Africans, too) are very different from those held by a small and powerful minority of highly educated and wealthy individuals in the West who have reached globalcentric consciousness. That does not include the current U.S. President. But it does include those of us interested in and reading this magazine, and those who are defining and implementing social policies in Africa.

The distinction I make may seem very similar to the racial distinction made by Dr. Watson, but it is very different: there is no "us" and "them" in this perspective. There is one single unfolding process of consciousness developing, but human beings are at different stages in

that process, and we do great damage if we avoid these differences. "Higher" does not have to have the elitist connotations we often associate with the word "superior." In fact, I believe that if we are to evolve as a species, then it is up to those of us holding a globalcentric perspective to evolve our own consciousness and become aware of these deeper differences without taking a superior position. It is only through our own development that we will be able to respond to our current human predicament in the right way. That is the greatest gift that we have for Africa and for the development of our one shared humanity.

Ingrid Yngstrom

SUGGESTION BOX

I am a new subscriber and new to concepts like Spiral Dynamics in general, and I think an interesting theme for a future issue would be "elitism." As you continue to spread the ideas and principles you espouse in *WIE*, you will no doubt (and probably already do) encounter accusations of elitism. It would be interesting to have your writers really explore those reactions and ask questions like "What is elitism?" "Is elitism a bad thing?" "What is contrary to elitism?" "Is elitism something to be shunned?"

Daniel Schulman
Charlottetown, NB, Canada

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secret about some men who *have* seriously considered this question. I'm talking about men who are invested in being tough and who can project an air of confidence that is uniquely masculine—the kind of man that I at one time in my life had aspired to be. I'm talking about students of mine who were martial artists of high attainment. I was amazed when I discovered that whenever one of these tough guys was in a situation that required that they trust a little more and give up a bit of the control they were so invested in, they usually fell into an utter panic. Underneath their bravado, even though they weren't afraid of a street fight, they were *terrified* of real intimacy, especially spiritual intimacy. Ironically, this would come to the surface especially when they came together with other men—spiritual brothers who were committed to creating a new culture together, a culture based upon higher values, the evolution of consciousness, and the commitment to be strong, transparent, and authentic at all times.

I became a man when I found the courage and conviction to trust God more than I trusted the fears and desires and conditioned thinking of my puny ego. The first expression of authentic manhood was when I boldly declared from the therapist's couch, "I don't want to do this anymore; I want to be free!" and noticed no hint of fear in myself when the therapist responded strongly, "But Andrew, you're barely getting *started*!" The final moment of transition happened eight years later. My longing

for liberation had become so all-consuming that I was ready to let go completely—to die to everything I had known and been up to that point. I was sitting in front of my last teacher, passionately telling him, with a hint of desperation, "I want to die, but I don't know how." I can visualize that moment as if it was yesterday, and I clearly remember that he remained silent. At first he looked shocked, and then tears welled up in his eyes.

What it means to be a man, of course, always relates directly to the cultural context within which the question is being asked. We are living in a very challenging time, when old values are crumbling and new ones are just barely beginning to emerge—including what it means to be a real man. My experience as a spiritual teacher in the midst of this upheaval has convinced me beyond any doubt that it will be impossible for the postmodern male to become a vibrant, powerful, and truly evolved expression of the masculine principle unless he pays the ultimate price by transcending his culturally conditioned, overly sensitive, highly narcissistic, and painfully arrogant self. A cultural revolution at the leading edge needs strong, liberated, and highly evolved men to be compelling examples of what is possible for us all. *That's* what spiritually enlightened men do.



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Enlightenment for the 21st Century

A Call to Arms for the Postmodern Male



by Andrew Cohen

Andrew Cohen, founder and editor in chief of *What Is Enlightenment?*, has been a spiritual teacher since 1986 and is the author of numerous books, including *Living Enlightenment* and *Embracing Heaven & Earth*. He is currently at work on a new book, *Evolutionary Enlightenment*. For more information, visit andrewcohen.org

UNTIL I WAS IN MY EARLY TWENTIES, I never even thought about what it meant to be a man. I grew up in an upper-middle-class secular Jewish family in Manhattan and went to liberal, progressive schools throughout my childhood. I never had a bar mitzvah, the Jewish boy's traditional rite of passage into manhood. My brother, who is five years older, used to beat me up on a regular basis from before I can remember, which turned me into a bit of a wuss. I was always one of the last picked when we engaged in competitive sports, and it goes without saying that I lacked confidence. Endeavoring to relieve my insecurities, my mother sent me to a therapist at the ripe old age of five.

My father, who was not an introspective man, loved me deeply. When I was eleven my parents separated, and shortly after my fifteenth birthday, my father died a slow and painful death. During those years and afterward, I spent a lot of time with my mother, who was at the time a passionate advocate of feminist values. My teachers in the three different high schools I attended in the United States and in Europe were generally decent, sophisticated, and well-meaning people. But when I think back on those days from the wisdom of my current fifty-two years, I'm stunned by the realization that no adult, including even my counselors at summer camp, ever counseled me about what it means to be a man. I now understand that I wasn't the only one in this strange predicament—in fact, it seems to be a cultural phenomenon. I don't think

I became a man when I found the courage to trust God more than I trusted the fears and desires of my puny ego.

this subject was brought up in any situation I was ever in until I began to think about it myself in my early twenties.

When I was twenty-two, as a result of a profound spiritual experience that had occurred six years earlier, I seriously committed myself to becoming an enlightened human being. My first step was to take up a disciplined daily practice of martial arts because I wanted to become strong. I wanted to conquer my fear; I wanted to be tough—I wanted to be a *man*.

At the age of thirty, after much serious practice and dedicated searching, I found what I was looking for in Mother India. To my own astonishment, I ended up in the uncomfortable position of becoming a spiritual teacher virtually overnight! In this unusual profession where soft and sweet are generally considered to be the hallmarks of authenticity, I've been the very opposite. Almost from the start, I've had a reputation

for being bold, strong, direct, and confident—for more than a few of my contemporaries, *too* confident.

Ever since my life turned upside down in this way, I've had the rare privilege of meeting and interacting with many different people from all over the world. I've gotten to know lots and lots of men. And I came to recognize

that the majority seemed to share the same perplexing post-modern cultural predicament that I did: Very few seem to have ever considered the perennial question, What does it mean to be a man?

I'll never forget my surprise when I discovered a hidden

(Continued on page 127)