



Gratia Eruitionis

Azusa Pacific University | Honors Program

Volume Two

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It is a pleasure to present to you a collection of three award-winning essays. Included here are the top three winners of the first Azusa Pacific University Honors Paper Competition on the occasion of the 17th annual Common Day of Learning. Inspired by a similar competition she experienced as an undergraduate student, Dr. Jennifer Walsh, our director of the one-day all-campus conference we call Common Day of Learning, created this opportunity for Honors students to pursue a small monetary prize and recognition for their hard work. I am thankful to her for her leadership in this area; this journal is a testimony to her commitment to encourage emerging scholars to publish their work.

Founded by Dr. Carole Lambert and now directed by Dr. Vicky Bowden, Azusa Pacific University's Honors Program has challenged and cultivated scholars for more than 17 years. With this publication, we hope to share with a wider audience some of the remarkable scholarship at this institution.

These three undergraduate authors were chosen by a faculty review committee from a pool of excellent papers. They have distinguished themselves in their fields through their studies, resulting in the presentation of this research and writing. I wholeheartedly congratulate Ms. Tamara Moellenberg, Mr. Tyler Stover, and Mr. Luke Spink on this accomplishment.

I hope that you find these readings insightful and thought provoking. We commend our promising scholars and thank the dedicated Honors faculty for their part in the educational process.

Diane J. Guido, Ph.D.
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs

**Deconstructing Humbert's Mind:
Decentering Human "Consciousness"
in Nabokov's *Lolita***

Holly Bream[†]

[†]Tamara Moellenberg is a senior English and Philosophy double major. She would like to thank Dr. Chris Noble for his patience and guidance through the extensive brainstorming, drafting, and editing of this paper. His wisdom and instruction is highly valued and appreciated. She would also like to thank her fellow students and the many outstanding professors in the APU English Department for their support.

Immediately after its publication in 1958, *Lolita* sparked much debate in the sphere of literary criticism as to the nature of the two main characters, Humbert Humbert and Dolores Haze. Some critics sympathized with H.H.'s point of view, validating his lust and legitimizing his dismissal of Lolita's behavior as snobbish and petty. Others took on the opposing argument, proclaiming the novel to be a documentation of child abuse and railing against its exploitation of Lolita by declaring that such a work, with its positive portrayal of such a villain, ought never to have been published (Vickers, 49). Both opinions, in insisting upon aligning with an extreme perspective, missed the richness and depth of the novel's complexity. *Lolita* was never meant to be Vladimir Nabokov's moral commentary on life (Connolly, 197). Rather, the work artistically establishes binary oppositions such as love versus lust, fate versus spontaneity, and access to freedom via consciousness versus confinement to captivity by consciousness, before conscientiously deconstructing the preferred centers of Western metaphysics. The argument to be had is not one of morality, but one which carefully analyzes the novel's use of deconstructive strategy to mimic the way that individuals perceive reality.

Nabokov is often quoted for describing "reality" as "an infinite succession of steps, levels of perception, false bottoms, and hence unquenchable, unattainable." One "can get nearer and nearer...to reality" but "[it is] hopeless" to attempt to "know everything" (*Strong Opinions*, 11). Nabokov's works illustrate principles of deconstruction through the intentional ambiguity of the messages' delivery. *Lolita* takes multiple binary operations and inverts their hierarchies, as nonchalantly as a pre-pubescent nymphet would dangle her legs on either side of a bicycle. The play introduced through this constant flipping of binary oppositions allows the text to explore such questions as: What is consciousness? What is freedom? Why does consciousness lead to greater freedom? In what manner is this achieved? Is it possible to separate consciousness, defined in this paper as "awareness of awareness," from unawareness, or freedom from imprisonment, or is it possible that these concepts are dependent upon their opposite for survival in the realm of human rationality? The text invites exploration of the binary opposition of consciousness as freedom versus consciousness as imprisonment, purposefully leaving room for interpretation, so that through the ambivalent treatment of the binary opposition, the legitimacy of the opposition itself is challenged.

Although he never meant for his deconstructive methodologies to be immortalized as central tenets of a literary theory, Jacques Derrida challenged the Western assumptions of the metaphysics of presence in such a revolutionary way that his reversal of the binary operation of absence/presence serves as an exemplary model for a deconstructive strategy (Bressler, 100). When presence is displaced from its privileged position, the transcendental signified is lost. As a consequence, human knowledge and self-identity become referential, based solely on context and the inherent play of *différance* within the text (Bressler, 109). The idea that a text can have a decidable, final meaning becomes obsolete and is replaced with the understanding that a text can have a limitless number of possible interpretations. All understandings of consciousness and of freedom are possible, probable, and legitimate. Texts no longer passively rely on presence but interactively play with meaning in a way that is illusive, dynamic, and transitory. This strategy of reversing the hierarchy in order to challenge the very existence of the binary opposition can be applied in much the same way to challenge the legitimacy of the binary opposition of human consciousness as freedom/human consciousness as imprisonment in *Lolita*.

Surprisingly, despite the many Western centers blatantly disassembled by *Lolita*, one that seems secure upon first glance in its position as a center is human consciousness. The text hails consciousness as the ultimate granter of freedom. While openly playing with the trace between or outside of the binary oppositions of love and lust, reality and mirage, or spontaneity and fate, the text seems to avoid an overt challenge to the Western assumption that the self becomes more fully human through awareness of itself, as awareness is a prerequisite for choice and freedom. The reader has "immediate access to Humbert's mind," which is itself "a triumph of the imagination" (Boyd, 234). At any given moment, H. H.'s mind is branched into many streams of awareness which run alongside each other, sometimes competing against each other and sometimes complementing one another. "The tenderness of the senses," the rawness of his passion, and "the inordinate riches of [his] consciousness" give Humbert the human dignity he yearns to assert despite his being a self-proclaimed rapist and murderer (Boyd, 234).

The implied sun pulsated in the supplied poplars; we were fantastically and divinely alone; I watched her, rosy, gold-dusted, beyond the veil

of my controlled delight, unaware of it, alien to it, and the sun was on her lips, and her lips were apparently still forming the words of the Carmen barmen ditty that no longer reached my consciousness. Everything was now ready. The nerves of pleasure had been laid bare. The corpuscles of Krauze were entering the phase of frenzy. The least pressure would suffice to set all paradise loose. I had ceased to be Humbert the Hound, the sad-eyed degenerate cur clasping the boot that would presently kick him away. I was above the tribulations of ridicule, beyond the possibilities of retribution. In my self-made seraglio, I was a radiant and robust Turk, deliberately, in the full consciousness of his freedom, postponing the movement of actually enjoying the youngest and frailest of his slaves (*Lolita*, 62).

The text heralds the manifold awareness of Humbert, the “full consciousness of his freedom,” as a great prize, elevating his humanity by exalting his mind (*Lolita*, 62). In this heightened state of awareness, the bliss of freedom is achieved.

The converse is mentioned in passing. In order for Humbert to attain his freedom, he must subjugate Lolita. The pattern of his obsession with her necessitates her imprisonment within his consciousness. This establishes the binary opposition of consciousness as unlocking freedom versus consciousness as imprisoning the mind (Boyd, 235). Humbert’s myriad references to Lolita as his “pet,” his “slave-child,” and “mine, mine, mine” underscore Humbert’s claim to her (*Lolita*, 103, 123, 163, 166). In demanding sexual favors from her whenever he feels his lust must be satisfied, through controlling with whom and where she spends time, and in dictating what she wears, he exploits her vulnerability in order to realize his dream of full ownership of Lolita the nymphet. The text privileges consciousness as freedom while acknowledging that it cannot exist without consciousness as imprisonment. This ambiguous treatment of the binary opens the door for the displacement of consciousness as freedom from the top of the hierarchy. Occupation of the privileged position of a binary as a Western center carries the risk of being redesignated to the underprivileged position at a moment’s notice (Wolfreys, 57).

Every so often, H.H.’s consciousness must abruptly come to terms with the chasm he recognizes between the Lolita of his mind and the flesh and blood Dolores of reality who is struggling to piece together some semblance of a childhood. During these moments, H.H.’s consciousness,

although freeing him to a higher level of awareness, is not preferred but is painfully uncomfortable. Consciousness cannot help but lead to cognitive dissonance, which upsets the binary of consciousness as freedom/ consciousness as imprisonment to draw attention to the negative aspects of a liberating awareness. While reflecting upon his memory, which serves as a guide to his consciousness, Humbert recalls that his delight in ownership of Lolita was most perfect when “the vision was out of reach, with no possibility of attainment to spoil it by awareness of an appended taboo. . . indeed, it may well be that the very attraction immaturity has for me lies not so much in the limpidity of pure young forbidden fairy child beauty as in the security of a situation where infinite perfections fill the gap between the little given and the great promised – the great rosegray never-to-be-had” (*Lolita*, 266). It is this elusive quality about Lolita which arouses Humbert and drives him forward to seek his conquest. Although he can appropriate every minute detail of Dolores’ life, Lolita, as he imagines her, can only exist in his dream world, where he chases after her until the day that he dies (Parker, 75). Humbert seems to be aware of this at times. In the beginning of his relationship with Lolita, he admits that “what [he] had madly possessed was not she, but my own creation, another, fanciful Lolita – perhaps, more real than Lolita; overlapping, encasing her; floating between me and her, and having no will, no consciousness – indeed, no life of her own” (*Lolita*, 64). Although a tangible, warm, “down-to-brown-earth lass” sits upon his lap, it is not Dolores whom Humbert uses to satiate his desire, but Lolita, a figment of his hyperactive and rich imagination (Boyd, 247). His consciousness frees him to pursue the bliss that exists at the outer limits of possibility, but capture of this bliss can only take place in his mind. Humbert seemingly forgets this key point throughout the majority of the time he spends with Lolita, until just before he loses her to his alter ego, Clare Quilty.

I perceived all at once with a sickening qualm how much she had changed since I first met her two years ago. Or had this happened during those last two weeks?... Surely that was an exploded myth. She sat right in the focus of my incandescent anger. The fog of all lust had been swept away leaving nothing but this dreadful lucidity. Oh, she had changed! Her complexion was now that of any vulgar untidy highschool girl... Its smooth tender bloom had been so lovely in former days, so bright with tears, when I used to roll, in play, her

tousled head on my knee. A coarse flush had now replaced that innocent fluorescence... She kept her wide-set eyes, clouded-glass gray and slightly bloodshot, fixed upon me, and I saw the stealthy thought showing through them (*Lolita*, 206).

As he examines her physical development, his consciousness shifts from an introverted focus on the reality constructed inside his own mind to an awareness of that reality; he recognizes the reality that Dolores exists apart from him, outside his mind, as her own person. While Lolita the fanciful nymphet may be ensnared in the depths of his fancy, Dolores the girl-child has been developing into a teenage girl with thoughts of her own. This ambiguity leaves room for play in the text. A reversal of the hierarchy is possible. Consciousness as imprisonment can assume privilege over consciousness as freedom because consciousness as freedom does not always liberate to greater pleasure but can liberate to tortuous realizations which potentially imprison the tortured mind. An inversion of the binary operation has the power to call into question the authority the operation assumes as an accepted relationship between a Western philosophical center and its opposite.

The binary opposition begins to unravel as it is undermined through a decentering of the privileged position, a process that simultaneously suggests that more questions be examined. Logocentrism, in establishing consciousness and freedom as absolute centers of reality, identifies transcendental signified references with which to construct an ultimate reality. The supplementation of subconsciousness reinforces the supremacy of consciousness, just as imprisonment works to supplement freedom (Bressler, 109). In other words, although consciousness and freedom are preferred terms and assume privilege as centers of Western thought, they cannot exist without unawareness and imprisonment to foil them. An acknowledgement of the structure's legitimacy, however, can never be granted until the "meaning" of its component parts is elucidated. Within the binary opposition of consciousness as freedom versus consciousness as imprisonment lie two subcategories of binary operations.

In the same way that the displacement of consciousness as freedom from its privileged position functions to invert the binary of consciousness as freedom/consciousness as imprisonment, the substitution of awareness in its occupation of the privileged position by unawareness serves to challenge the legitimacy of the binary operation of awareness/unaware-

ness. Lolita's childish naiveté inverts the binary opposition to privilege unawareness over consciousness. By nature, she is oblivious to the diabolic motivations directing H.H's sexual needs. She is still exploring the world as a developing child, caught up in her own fantasies, lacking the mental faculties required to be able to comprehend the monstrosity of Humbert's actions (Connolly, 195).

On especially tropical afternoons, in the sticky closeness of the siesta, I liked the cool feel of armchair leather against my massive nakedness as I held her in my lap. There she would be, a typical kid picking her nose while engrossed in the lighter sections of a newspaper, as indifferent to my ecstasy as if it were something she had sat upon, a shoe, a doll, the handle of a tennis racket, and was too indolent to remove. . . she never doubted the reality of place, time and circumstance alleged to match the publicity pictures of naked-thighed beauties; and she was curiously fascinated by the photographs of local brides, some in full wedding apparel, holding bouquets and wearing glasses (*Lolita*, 167).

As she sits on Humbert's knee, her own aloofness to the nakedness that he is so conscious of functions to protect her. She is unaware of the lustfulness of his thoughts or the vulgar spirit behind his actions, and so is enveloped in blissful ignorance. The ambiguity of this passage flips for an instant the binary of awareness versus unawareness. Here, thanks to her obliviousness, Lolita is safe. Unawareness is preferred. If she were aware of everything that Humbert is conscious of, her youth and innocence would vaporize and the independence of her spirit would be sapped. She would lose the dignity of her humanity just as Humbert finds his through consciousness. This contradiction hints at the trace that upsets the balance of consciousness, or "awareness of awareness," as preferred to unawareness. Not only does her unawareness cushion her from Humbert's grasp, but it awakens him to the jarring realization that he can never truly have her. In his memory Humbert can still recall, "vibrating all along my optic nerve, visions of Lo. . . at a ski lodge. . . floating away from me, celestial and solitary, in an ethereal chairlift, up and up, to a glittering summit" where she is out of his reach (*Lolita*, 162). Through her blanket of unawareness she becomes "unquenchable, unattainable" (*Strong Opinions*, 11). Humbert cannot own her because she is not aware that he wants to own her.

Just as the text plays with the binary operation of consciousness versus unawareness, it also upsets the binary opposition of freedom versus imprisonment. Humbert explains that the relationship he had with Dolores was limited by quarrels and checks regarding the appropriateness of his lust for her. The restrictive nature of their relationship set up constraints which imprisoned them, but they were constraints that Humbert accepted without reservation.

I do not intend to convey the impression that I did not manage to be happy. Reader must understand that in the possession and thrall of a nymphet the enchanted traveler stands, as it were, *beyond happiness*. For there is no other bliss on earth comparable to that of fondling a nymphet. It is *hors concours*, that bliss, it belongs to another class, another plane of sensitivity. Despite our tiffs, despite her nastiness, despite all the fuss and faces she made, and the vulgarity, and the danger, and the horrible hopelessness of it all, I still dwelled deep in my elected paradise – a paradise whose skies were the color of hell-flames – but still a paradise (*Lolita*, 168).

Humbert has created a prison of a paradise made from “bars of obsession,” erected by walls of anger, disgust, danger, and hopelessness, which he prefers to the freedom he could embrace by walking away from his fantasy (Connolly, 194). He eagerly chooses this imprisonment, electing to be bound by its limitations rather than seeking relief from the torture and confusion it generates.

Sometimes...while Lolita would be haphazardly preparing her homework, sucking a pencil, lolling sideways in an easy chair with both legs over its arm, I would shed all my pedagogic restraint, dismiss all our quarrels, forget all my masculine pride – and literally crawl on my knees to your chair, my Lolita! (*Lolita*, 194)

Just as his imagined Lolita is held captive in Humbert’s mind, so Humbert is held captive by his own imaginings. He grovels at her feet out of surrender to his self-made prison. Once again, the text introduces play which defies the legitimacy of the binary opposition. As an independent being free to make his own decisions, H.H. opts to reject unadulterated freedom. Instead, he imprisons himself through chasing after his captive

Lolita, who only exists in his mind as a shadow of the real, developing and ever-changing Dolores, who in “reality” is protected from his monstrosity through her unawareness.

He freely chooses imprisonment and through this choice is freed to bliss, to a state “*beyond happiness*” (*Lolita*, 168). The reversal of the binary opposition not only dismantles freedom as a center, but challenges the assertion that a binary ought to exist in the first place. If Humbert is freely choosing this imprisonment, is it truly imprisonment? His freedom frequently imprisons him through the trappings of his own desires. In the midst of his imprisonment, he experiences the true freedom of paradise and release from restraint. If freedom can entrap, and entrapment can liberate, on what grounds can one declare that freedom and imprisonment are mutually exclusive? At the end of their journey, Humbert is “more devastated than braced with the satisfaction of [his] passion, and [Lolita is] glowing with health,” although she “sobs in the night – every night, every night – the moment [Humbert] feign[s] sleep” (*Lolita*, 177–78). Despite freely abandoning himself to the imprisonment of his own fantasy, he cannot find the satisfaction for which he was searching. Although Dolores’ humanity is safe from the subjugation of Humbert’s perverse dream of possessing her because of her lack of awareness, her mental stability is pushed to its limits as she sobs every night to relieve her despair. Although she physically exists outside of Humbert’s mind and therefore escapes his grasp, and although she shields her independent thoughts from him despite his efforts to appropriate them, the sexual and emotional abuse she endures threatens to collapse her emotional fragility into a prison of hopelessness (Connolly, 196). The trace has now reinverted the binary opposition. Humbert’s freedom is imprisonment is unsatisfying freedom, and Lolita’s imprisonment is freedom is a prison of despair.

The text of *Lolita* is layered with multiple interpretations of interpretation. Each time it is reread, it is reinterpreted, and can be reinterpreted an infinite number of times. Ultimately, its meaning is undecidable. The reversal of the binary opposition of consciousness as freedom versus consciousness as imprisonment reveals a new way of understanding life, and in playing with the binary operation, its very existence is called into question. A chain of signifieds can be explored by reinverting the opposition to continue the process of delegitimizing the center’s establishment. Through questioning the final meaning of human consciousness as the source of freedom, the component parts of the center lose legitimacy and

the existence of the center is challenged. Who can say what consciousness is, or if it is preferred? What is freedom, and is it mutually exclusive from imprisonment? The authority of the existence of the binary opposition of consciousness as freedom/consciousness as imprisonment thus becomes an “exploded myth,” just like the Lolita of H.H.’s fancy (*Lolita*, 206). The task of deconstruction, however, is to act as a tireless vigilante against all claims to final possession of truth. To accept this as a stoppage point would be to claim possession over *Lolita* just as Humbert claimed possession over Dolores. While the true moral message of *Lolita* may not be discernible, its usefulness as a tool for struggling with how to view “reality” cannot be underestimated.

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Happiness: Plato, Epictetus, and Psychotherapy

Robert Hake[†]

[†]Tyler Stover is a senior Business Economics major.

Abstract

Throughout history, various philosophers have composed theories of happiness, some of which continue to shape our views of happiness today, including our approaches to psychology. This paper focuses on Plato, the great Greek philosopher, and Epictetus, the 1st century Roman stoic, their approaches to the good life, and the impact on modern psychotherapy. Plato's view of the soul, its means for optimal functioning, and opinion of the role of emotion offer interesting parallels to Freudian psychoanalysis. Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) and the relatively newly developed Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) hearken to Epictetus' method for attaining a flourishing, happy life. Each philosopher has stark differences in opinion from the other, as do the different forms of psychotherapy. Understanding the interrelatedness of the inspiring philosophy and the resulting therapeutic methodology elucidates differences and clarifies our understanding of all parts involved.

This paper will examine the definitions of and means to attaining happiness as defined by Plato, and Epictetus. I will investigate what happiness *is* to each philosopher and to us as 21st century Americans. I will then explain and contrast what each philosopher would call us to do in order to live most happily. I will explore how these philosophers have impacted modern quests for happiness, especially in the field of psychotherapy. Finally, we will examine the potential for integration of these ideas with Christianity.

The happiness to which each of these philosophers refers is the Greek conception of *eudaimonia*. *Eudaimonia* “means not merely subjective contentment, or rest of desire, but also real blessedness, the state of possessing the objective good for man. It is contentment, but contentment in the true good.”¹ “*Eudaimonia* is usually translated as happiness or well-being, but it has some of the same connotations as ‘success’, since in addition to living well it includes doing well.”² Our current understanding usually has the connotation of a fleeting emotion of pleasure, but the definition we are working with goes beyond this. *Eudaimonia* is not dependent on luck

¹ Kreeft, P. (Ed.), *A Summa of the Summa: The Essential Passages of St. Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologica Edited and Explained for Beginners*, (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1990), 349.

² Blackburn, Simon (Ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 127.

and happenstance.³ It is the ultimate end of life, and it is the *telos* of all ancient Greek philosophy.⁴ It is something toward which we strive.⁵ In the remainder of this paper, when I refer to “happiness,” I will be referring to *eudaimonia*, unless otherwise stated.

Historically, various philosophers have taken different positions on the role of emotion in the quest for happiness. Plato suggests that one must take charge of emotions, alter them, and arrange them in the proper way. A just action, therefore, would have proper emotion behind it.⁶ In other words, a person should not simply do good; he must feel like doing good and then do it. The Stoics, such as Epictetus, viewed emotions as irrational judgments to which we should remain indifferent. For the Stoics, “All vice and all suffering is then irrational, and the good life requires the rooting out of all desires and attachments.”⁷ Thus, we see a major point of contention between the emotion-harnessing Plato and the emotionally indifferent Epictetus.

Plato

In the *Republic*, Plato says that a person attains happiness by being just. “A just person is happy, and an unjust one wretched.”⁸ Plato discovers what justice is in the individual by first ascertaining what justice is in the *polis*, or city. In the city, justice occurs when each person in the city fulfills his function (that for which he is best suited), and does not go below or beyond this function, but meets this role perfectly. There are necessarily three classes in every city: the rulers, the military, and the producers. These three classes are parallel to the three parts of the individual soul: the rational, the spirited, and the appetitive. The rational part is in charge of reason, wisdom, and governing. The spirited part governs courage, fear, and pride. The appetitive part is in charge of visceral needs such as food, sex, money, etc. The rational part of the soul must regulate the other two pieces of the soul, and these three parts must work in harmony with one

³ Kreeft, 350.

⁴ Blackburn, 127.

⁵ Kreeft, 350.

⁶ de Sousa, Ronald, “Emotion”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2008 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/emotion/>>.

⁷ de Sousa.

⁸ Plato, *Republic*, G.M.A. Grube, trans., (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1992), 31.

another in order to have proper function and flourishing.⁹

Thus, “One who is just does not allow any part of himself to do the work of another part or allow the various classes within him to meddle with each other. He regulates well what is really his own and rules himself. He puts himself in order, is his own friend, and harmonizes the three parts of himself like three limiting notes in a musical scale.”¹⁰ He seeks moderation and harmony both within and without, and always acts in accordance with this.

The opposite of the just man, the completely unjust man or the tyrant, is enslaved to his appetites and has no control over himself or his actions. This savage appetitive part of the soul “doesn’t shrink from trying to have sex with a mother, as it supposes, or with anyone else at all, whether man, god, or beast. It will commit any foul murder, and there is no food it refuses to eat. In a word, it omits no act of folly or shamelessness.”¹¹ This nightmarish force rules the totally unjust man, and he loses all control of himself. This man has no true happiness—he is wretched. He has a piece of appetitive pleasure, but this does not compare with the pleasure and happiness the opposite man, the just man, receives.

The just man receives the maximum amount of pleasure, and pleasures of the truest sort, so he is the happiest. The unjust man only receives the basest appetitive pleasures, and in an unhealthy amount. The other two parts of his soul are buried. Thus, Plato says, “So a tyrant is three times three times removed from true pleasure.”¹² If we invoke Plato’s cave analogy, the unjust man is like the man who lives in the cave and only sees reflected shadows. He does not venture into the sunlight to experience the higher forms of beauty, pleasure, the good, or truth.¹³

The just man obtains the proper amount of appetitive pleasures, the proper amount of spirited pleasures, and the proper amount of rational pleasures. He is the only one who is able to experience the full spectrum of enjoyment. The rational pleasures are of the highest sort—they transcend the physical world. This is the only thing that can bring about the happiest state. Plato, through rather odd calculations concludes, “Then, turning it the other way around, if someone wants to say how far a king’s

⁹ Plato, 112-118.

¹⁰ Plato, 119.

¹¹ Plato, 242.

¹² Plato, 259.

¹³ Plato, 186-191.

pleasure is from a tyrant’s, he’ll find, if he completes the calculation, that a king lives seven hundred and twenty-nine times more pleasantly than a tyrant and that a tyrant is the same number of times more wretched.”¹⁴

Plato has proved his point that the just man lives most happily. We attain internal justice through the proper arrangement and harmony of our souls, through self-control, and through exercising our rationality. The philosopher embodies this sort of person, because only he can use his rationality to see and experience higher forms of goodness. A man becomes a philosopher through proper education. Thus, through education leading out of the proverbial cave toward the true good, a person can obtain happiness.¹⁵

Epictetus

Epictetus, the 1st century Roman stoic, has a different conception of how a man should best attain happiness. He states that most of the Universe is ruled by unchangeable fate, and that if we wish this to not be the case, we are wishing for the impossible and are bound for disappointment and despair. Instead, we should desire to have happen what happens, and only seek control over that which we can control. We can be happy if we desire what is and act in accordance with our goals.

In the opening lines of the *Handbook*, Epictetus states, “Some things are up to us and some things are not up to us.”¹⁶ He continues, “Our opinions are up to us, and our impulses, desires, aversions—in short, whatever is our own doing. Our bodies are not up to us, nor are our possessions, our reputations, or our public offices, or, that is, whatever is our own doing.”¹⁷ If a man strives to have control over his body, possessions, reputation, and the like, he will inevitably realize that he does not have control and become upset. Already, we see that this is quite unlike Plato, who suggests that we gain control over all aspects of our selves.

Thus, Epictetus says, “What upsets people is not things themselves but their judgments about the things.”¹⁸ We have control over our judgments

¹⁴ Plato, 259.

¹⁵ Plato, 190.

¹⁶ Epictetus, *The Handbook of Epictetus*, Nicholas P. White, trans., (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983), 11.

¹⁷ Epictetus, 11.

¹⁸ Epictetus, 13.

about things, but we do not have control over the things themselves. This is why we can follow his next piece of advice, “Do not seek to have events happen as you want them to, but instead want them to happen as they do happen, so your life will go well.”¹⁹ For example, death in and of itself is not awful, but when somebody close to us dies, we judge it to be a catastrophe. If we change our judgment, we can still be happy. “Never say about anything, ‘I have lost it,’ but instead, ‘I have given it back.’ Did your child die? It was given back.”²⁰ It was given back to the cosmos that controls everything. Our possessions are not ours; they belong to the cosmos.

We cannot even be pious unless we change our judgments. Epictetus calls us to “detach the good and the bad from what is not up to us and attach it exclusively to what is up to us, because if you think that any of what is not up to us is good or bad, then when you fail to get what you want and fall into what you do not want, you will be bound to blame and hate those who cause this.”²¹ Those that cause this are the gods. We will be much happier if we recognize that the cosmos is essentially a good place, and we can only recognize this if we relinquish the desire of things that are not up to us.

About those things that are up to us, Epictetus gives advice on how to shape them in a way that is conducive to our happiness. As I have discussed, we must change our judgments and desire to have happen what happens, and not desire that which we cannot control. Epictetus says, “Set up right now a certain character and pattern for yourself which you will preserve when you are by yourself and when you are with people.” A man must act in harmony with these goals at all times, regardless of external circumstances. “Pay attention...so as not to harm your ruling principle. And if we are on guard about this in every action, we shall set about it more securely.”²² If a man has altered his judgments and desires appropriately and he acts in accordance with his ruling principle and his goals, he will surely be happy.

¹⁹ Epictetus, 13.

²⁰ Epictetus, 14.

²¹ Epictetus, 21.

²² Epictetus, 22.

²³ Epictetus, 25.

Plato's Impact on Freudian Psychoanalysis

Plato's impact on psychology is immeasurable, but certain Platonic concepts are quite clear in contemporary psychotherapy. Sigmund Freud clearly adopted and altered many of Plato's ideas. Perhaps the most evident example is Freud's conception of the soul. Freud divided the soul into three parts: the ego, superego, and the id.²⁴ These correspond with Plato's tripartite soul: rational, spirited, and appetitive, respectively. For Freud, the ego (or “I”) is the conscious rational self that governs the other parts. The superego (“super-me”) dictates how the person should feel about certain thoughts or actions. Similar to the appetitive, the id (or “it”) seeks visceral satisfaction and pleasure.²⁵ Like Plato, Freud says that happiness comes through the proper harmony of these three parts. The goal of psychoanalysis is a sort of *eudaimonia* happiness, and the means to this goal is finding a harmony between the different parts of the soul in which each part fulfills its proper function. Freud's means to this harmony varies rather drastically from Plato's.

The psychodynamic school, including Freud and his followers, emphasizes the importance of the unconscious: that part of the mind of which we have no immediate awareness.²⁶ Unconscious thoughts and processes are the cause of much neurosis and psychological disturbance. In order to be happy, we must make the unconscious conscious by delving into our minds. While Plato would probably not agree with this approach, this idea of searching the mind owes its origin to Plato. Plato says that there are forms that exist within the recesses of our mind.²⁷ We have simply forgotten them, and if we bring these unconscious ideas into the forefront of our mind, we will be happy. There is a key difference here: for Freud, the unconscious thoughts are debauched and problem causing; for Plato, the unconscious thoughts will bring happiness. For Freud, it is the unconscious struggles that cause neuroses. The existence of the unconscious and the idea of delving into the mind, however, are quite similar.

Freud's method of finding harmony in the soul is different from Plato's ideal hierarchical structuring of the soul. In Freudian psychoanalysis, the

²⁴ Schultz, D.P. and Schultz, S.E., *A History of Modern Psychology: Ninth Edition*, (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2008).

²⁵ Schultz & Schultz.

²⁶ Schultz & Schultz.

²⁷ Plato.

therapist helps the patient to discover his unconscious struggles through dream interpretation and free association. These deep-seated, unresolved, repressed childhood conflicts and fears form the root of current problems. Bringing these unconscious thoughts into conscious awareness allows the patient to reconcile the struggles and experience catharsis, or the purging of the problematic struggles.²⁸

Plato holds that the rational part of the soul can be the guide and director of the energy of the spirited and appetitive parts toward proper, productive ends. In the same sort of manner, Freud introduces the concept of sublimation, the direction of the id energy toward proper means. Psychoanalysts have argued that Mother Teresa's acts of loving, bathing, and feeding the poor in Calcutta were a sublimation of her sexual motivation.

Epictetus' Impact on Cognitive Behavior Therapy and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

Epictetus' thoughts on happiness arguably hold the greatest weight in contemporary psychotherapeutic approaches. Albert Ellis, one of the founders of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), pays tribute to Epictetus as the inspiration of his theories.²⁹ He quotes Epictetus, "What upsets people is not things themselves but their judgments about the things."³⁰ This is perhaps the clearest statement of the fundamental belief of CBT. It is not a man's child's death itself that makes him depressed, but his judgments about this event. Ellis "says that we largely *can* control our emotional destiny."³¹ CBT "is based on an underlying theoretical rationale that an individual's affect and behavior are largely determined by the way in which he structures the world... His cognitions (verbal or pictorial 'events' in his stream of consciousness) are based on attitudes or assumptions."³² While CBT makes no mention of fate, the implicit idea is that most things are out of our control. CBT calls us to rational thinking. It assumes an interface between emotions and thoughts: they affect each other. Since it is rather difficult to control our emotions directly, if we

learn to control our thoughts and judgments, our emotions will follow suit.³³ Under the CBT approach, if we correct our illogical judgments and cultivate logical, rational thinking, we will be happier. Thus, CBT does not call people to permanently disregard emotions, but to exercise Stoic rationality regarding undesirable emotions.

CBT also focuses on behavior. This behavioral component, in part, has been adopted from Epictetus. Epictetus writes, "Set up right now a certain character and pattern for yourself which you will preserve when you are by yourself and when you are with people."³⁴ Thus, CBT clients are encouraged to engage in activities even if they do not feel like doing them. These activities should aid in the goal of therapy. For example, if a person suffers from social phobia, the therapist will help him set a goal of doing social things, and the client will act in accordance with this goal. Thus, through changing our judgments and our actions, we can be happy.³⁵ Plato would think it quite ridiculous to perform actions without emotion or with the wrong emotion. For Epictetus, however, relying on emotions to dictate action means allowing an irrational force to dictate life. CBT seems to take the Epictetian approach, but says that proper emotion will eventually follow performing proper actions.

Epictetus also has influenced Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), an approach developed by Steven Hayes beginning in the mid-1980's.³⁶ It has gained increased popularity in recent years. It developed out of CBT and behaviorally oriented modalities, but has certain key differences. In many ways, it is a much sharper split from Platonic ideas than CBT. CBT, in a certain respect, still argues that we use reason to hem in unnecessary emotionality and bring it under rational control, which in certain respects could be construed as a Platonic idea. ACT, however, calls for a bifurcation of emotion and reason, not a hierarchical harmony. ACT assumes that most psychological disturbances come through attempts to regulate our emotions.³⁷ An ACT therapist would say that emotions are not up to us, nor are some of our immediate thoughts. These things can

²⁸ Schultz & Schutz.

²⁹ Ellis, Albert, *New Directions for Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy: Overcoming Destructive Beliefs, Feelings, and Behaviors*, (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 2001).

³⁰ Epictetus.

³¹ Ellis, 14.

³² Beck, Aaron, *Cognitive Therapy of Depression*, (New York: Guilford Press, 1979), 3.

³³ Beck.

³⁴ Epictetus.

³⁵ Barlow, David, *Anxiety and Its Disorders: The Nature and Treatment of Anxiety and Panic, Second Edition*, (New York: Guilford Press, 2002).

³⁶ Hayes, Steven, *Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: An Experiential Approach to Behavior Change*, (New York: Guilford Press, 1999).

³⁷ Hayes, 72.

be conditioned without our conscious awareness.

Because these things cannot be controlled by us, we should accept and experience them.³⁸ Like Epictetus, an ACT therapist would say that we should desire what *is*, and these emotions and thoughts *are*, seemingly without our control. “When we simply accept the fact that a thought is a thought, and a feeling is a feeling, a wide array of response options immediately becomes available.”³⁹ Epictetus says something quite similar: “From the start, then, work on saying to each harsh appearance, ‘You are an appearance, and not at all the thing that has the appearance.’”⁴⁰ The word appearance used here is *phantasia*, or impression, which is the “immediate experience of sense or feeling.”⁴¹ In other words, the person would be saying, “You are simply a thought, and you do not necessarily bear any objective truth about reality.”

In ACT, therefore, emotions and some thoughts are other things over which we do not have control. We do, however, have control over our judgments about them. If we accept that pain in life is inevitable, we will be happier. ACT seems to be returning to a more broad understanding of happiness. It criticizes other therapies for trying to make people eternally in the state of fleeting emotive happiness, which is an ideal that is impossible to reach.⁴² Instead, in the eyes of ACT, true flourishing happiness includes the experience of the full range of emotions. In an Epictetian sense, we should desire to experience what the cosmos would have us experience. Plato and Aquinas would reject the notion that we have no control over thoughts and emotions. To them, it would be irrational to allow emotions and thoughts to do whatever they want, accept them indifferently and reject that they reflect any objective truth about reality.

Plato and Epictetus have shaped major aspects of our understanding of happiness, as seen by their continued impact on psychotherapy. Plato introduced justice, function, and the tripartite soul. His influence is seen in Freudian psychoanalysis. Epictetus taught us to desire what is, and reminded us of our limited control and of the importance of controlling our judgments about things. His argument carries strong force in

Cognitive Behavior Therapy and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy.

We are left with a question: In philosophy and psychotherapy, will we adopt the ideas of Plato and Freud that state that the proper harmony of the tripartite soul brings optimal flourishing, or, like the Stoics and behaviorists, adopt the philosophy that states that true happiness comes from the forsaking of the whims of emotionality?

The integration of philosophy and psychology is useful; philosophy allows us to examine the origins of psychological theories and assumptions. For thousands of years, psychology was enmeshed within philosophy—separation only began in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. As we have seen, the reintegration of the two helps elucidate core assumptions, some of which have been at odds for thousands of years.

³⁸ Hayes, 77.

³⁹ Hayes, 73.

⁴⁰ Epictetus.

⁴¹ Epictetus.

⁴² Hayes, 77.

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A Modern Cinderella From the Brothers Grimm

Jennifer Kemp[†]

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Abstract

The story of Cinderella is one of the most beloved fairy tales of all time. While numerous adaptations of the story have graced the silver screen, many Americans are unfamiliar with the original version by the Brothers Grimm. This essay describes the reasons why the Grimms' version of the classic tale would appeal to modern viewers much more than the more well-known Disney version. It covers elements of the story such as its use of violence, its portrayal of men, its feminist characteristics, and its realistic ending. Disney differs greatly from the Grimms in how it deals with these points, and so is a much more decade-specific film. A film based on the Grimms' version would likely receive much acclaim from a modern audience.

The story of Cinderella has been told for thousands of years. The version most well-known to Americans today is the one portrayed in Disney's 1950 animated film, *Cinderella*. Thus, this film is usually the primary source for modern audience's impressions of Cinderella. However, the Brothers Grimm wrote a rendition of the tale long before Disney. Their story, if made into a film today, would draw much more popularity from viewers than Disney's. It would appeal to a modern audience because of its violence, treatment of male characters, feminist female characters, and bittersweet ending.

One way the Brothers Grimm would appeal to modern society more effectively than Disney is with their use of violence. Disney's *Cinderella* has an extremely small supply of violence, and focuses more on the positive aspects of the story—Cinderella's sweet attitude, the mice's helpfulness, the fairy godmother's plan, etc. This might gain a child's approval, but it certainly will not win a film an Academy Award. Not only does senseless violence pervade the horror movies popular with teens today, but also an artistic and dramatic use of violence gains positive reviews in many acclaimed films. Think of the movies that won "Best Picture" during the 2000s, titles like *Gladiator*, *The Departed*, and *Slumdog Millionaire*. These films contain strong violence that adds dramatic effect to their plots. In the same way, the Grimm brothers judiciously place violence in their story to add depth. Disney's stepsisters are comical and his stepmother is cynical, but the Grimms' stepfamily is savagely devious. To achieve their wicked schemes, they are willing to cut off their own body parts. Their fate—losing their eyes to doves' beaks—reflects their actions in life. It is a violent

justice that stares viewers in the face. This is not Disney's sugared screenplay, where the antagonists conveniently disappear. They endure until the end, sharply contrasting Cinderella's happiness at her wedding.

The second way the Grimms' *Cinderella* appeals to modern viewers is in its disdain for cliché fairytale men. The men in the story—the father and the prince—are surprisingly weak and unintelligent. Cinderella's father gives his wife and stepdaughters complete control of Cinderella's life. ". . . The two sisters did everything imaginable to make her [Cinderella] miserable. They ridiculed her and threw peas and lentils into the ashes so that she would have to sit down in the ashes and pick them out. In the evening, when she was completely exhausted from work, she didn't have a bed but had to lie down next to the hearth in ashes. She always looked so dusty and dirty that people started to call her Cinderella" (Grimm 6). Where is her father during all this? Apparently present, for in the next sentence he offers to give the daughters whatever they ask for when he goes to the fair (Grimm 6). He brings Cinderella only the twig she asks for, but brings her sisters all the luxurious gifts they request (Grimm 6). Later, he suspects Cinderella's presence at the ball, but never even deigns to speak with her about it (Grimm 8). The father demonstrates nothing but distance and lack of interest toward his daughter in the entire story. This negative father figure is something prevalent in modern society. Where Disney's father character disappears at the beginning of the tale, the one in Grimms' version is a constant, negative figure, adding tension and depth throughout the story. The prince also demonstrates a debunked stereotype in the Grimms' story. He is a picture of empty-headed shallowness who has nothing to say when he's with Cinderella except, "She is my partner." Her beauty dumbfounds him, and he dances away three nights with her. However, he cannot remember her face one day later, for he twice fails to distinguish her from her stepsisters. He needs doves to tell him when he chooses the wrong sisters, and even then he turns to their feet, rather than faces, for confirmation. After discovering the first sister's trickery, he neglects to pay attention as the second sister tries on the shoe, thus allowing her to commit the exact same deceit. He only notices when the doves again point out the truth. "When he looked down at her foot, he saw blood spurting from it and staining her white stockings completely red. . . 'She's not the true bride either,' he said" (Grimm 9); keen observation, prince charming. Much like the bumbling, hormone-driven men in films and sitcoms today, the prince cares only about beauty and has little

common sense. In Disney's version, the grand duke commits the foolish mistakes when testing the shoe, rather than the prince. The Grimm brothers, however, place all of the emphasis on the prince, demonstrating his stupidity and lack of observation.

Another way the Grimms' *Cinderella* seems ahead of its time, is in its feministic treatment of women. Throughout the story, power comes from women. The stepsisters do their best to make Cinderella's life miserable, and, as previously mentioned, have their stepfather wrapped around their fingers. They have none of Disney's comical awkwardness or ugliness, but are conniving beauties whose hearts are "foul and black" (Grimm 6). Willing to cripple themselves for a chance at riches, they are forces to be reckoned with. Their mother is even more diabolical. She says she will let Cinderella come to the ball, provided she completes a seemingly impossible task. When Cinderella succeeds, the stepmother ignores her previous promises and simply forbids her from coming, ridiculing her appearance to add insult to injury. Later, she suggests that her daughters maim their feet, telling them, "Once you're queen, you won't need to go on foot any more" (Grimm 9). Disney's stepfamily is less dangerous and more humorous than that in the Grimms' version. Modern audiences desire villains worthy of respect—those who are resourceful and cunning—rather than impotent caricatures. In the same way, modern viewers want protagonists with valid merit, not simple beauty. Disney's Cinderella does nothing to better her situation, but achieves happiness only through the magical help of her mice friends and fairy godmother. The Grimms' Cinderella seeks out what she wants. Not only does she have shining morality and an impressive work ethic, but she also takes responsibility for her own fate. When the stepmother offers her a challenge, she calls to the doves she knows can help her. When the stepmother refuses to let her go to the festival, she runs straight to her magical hazel tree and goes anyway. When she deems it necessary to leave the festival, she flees, ignoring the prince's protests. Disney's Cinderella is bound by her godmother's time restraints, but the Grimms' heroine decides to leave of her own accord. She is assertive and honest, intelligent and resourceful. Modern viewers expect this amount of intelligence from their heroines. Disney calls his female villains the "mean old stepmother" and "mean" stepsisters, and labels his heroine as simply, "sweet and pretty" (Grant 3-4). The Brothers Grimm show the true wickedness of their villains, contrasted with their heroine's stalwart

acceptance of her mother's challenge to always be "good" (Grimm 5). Their story contains strong, intuitive female characters that are in no way dominated by their male counterparts, and this appeals to modern viewers much more than bland, helpless women.

With a wedding as its finale, the Grimms' story might tempt readers to think of it as another cliché fairytale. On the contrary, the Grimms' incorporation of violence and their portrayal of the prince at the end of their *Cinderella* gives a bittersweet ending to their tale. As Cinderella finally tries on the glass slipper, her crippled stepsisters and distraught stepmother look on. She leaves the house blissful, but their blood follows her. At the wedding, birds peck out the stepsisters' eyes before and after the ceremony. It is as if Cinderella cannot escape her past—she cannot have a truly happy ending. This type of ending draws in modern audiences. They want realism, not idealism. In this age of science and reason, a cynical spirit has fallen over the film industry, and dark comedies gain heavy followings. Cinderella's inability to shed her old life neatly causes the audience to wonder if her prize will even make her happy. Does her prince solve her problems? As previously discussed, the prince shows little intelligence (or even common sense) throughout the story. In the end, Cinderella arrives at her wedding not only haunted by her relatives, but also faced with a marriage to a less-than-charming prince. Or perhaps, he is charming, but simple. Either way, is that what our kindhearted, resourceful heroine dreamt of? Modern audiences will be able to decide for themselves how happy the fairytale's ending truly is. The Grimms' story in film form would easily make its viewers think on a much deeper level than Disney's version.

Disney's *Cinderella* is beloved by thousands of children, but it could hardly compete for an Oscar. A film adaptation of the Grimms' version of the story would appeal to viewers much more than the simplistic animated classic. Its violence would intensify and mature its plot. Also, it would break down the stereotypical roles of fairytale father and prince. Its female characters would cunningly carry out their plans independent of men. The ending of the film would leave viewers with much more than a "happily ever after." It would make them reevaluate their ideas of a happy ending, and realize the repercussions of the antagonists' villainy. All in all, the film would appeal to modern viewers in a way Disney's *Cinderella* never could. The Western World's original Cinderella-story offers much more to modern viewers than the one made less than sixty years ago.

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