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*'Me and my Shadow' Reinterpreted:
Collectivism Applied to Individualism
as a Stereoscopic Overlay Producing
an Illusion of Reality*

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Abstract: *Because no human being ever chose to be born, every human being is dependent upon at least one other human being, after the moment of conception until they reach a non-specifiable age of individual survivability. But that phase may not last until it collides with the involuntary boundary line called death. Individualism is therefore (at best) a fleeting possibility to be acquired during a non-impaired period of human life, and its construct thus voids any legitimate claim to it as a "natural" birthright. Most accurately, individualism may be explained in terms of "penumbras" and "emanations" once employed by U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas in writing the 1965 majority Opinion for Griswold v. Connecticut, (381 U.S. 479). Its 1973 maternal companion in Roe v. Wade (410 U.S. 113) presents a conundrum to dissenters, because their opposition requires atheists to concur that only a "god" has the power to give and take life. Clearly, the planned and unplanned fruits of conception belie a deistic source of life-giving power - while converse biological foes; planetary instability; national Armed Forces; terrorist warriors and self-motivated killers belie supernatural means as causation for the termination of human life. However, self-sustaining sectors within humanity continue to strive towards the idealism of individualism, which in reality only an immortal and almighty entity could possess bio-power, in Foucault's terminology, thus has both a natural and supra-natural source.*

When Frank Sinatra and a plethora of other individual singers, each proclaimed that "it was my way" in which they "traveled each and every highway", they were obviously relating a fiction. Without collectivist collaboration from Paul Anka (who penned those lyrics with Sinatra in mind),⁶ there would have been no road for 'Old Blue Eyes' to travel within the duration of that song. Although Sinatra also became known as 'The Chairman' after he started a record company, he lived his life according to the whims of other people in a collectivist entertainment industry, and yet he was a uniquely individualistic human being within that setting.

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⁶ *How Sinatra did it My Way* – *Guardian Online*, Thursday 5 July 2007, at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2007/jul/05/popandrock1> [Accessed: June 28, 2012]

Similarly, human beings are not self-contained individual entities, each one is the sum total of a biological and social process that begins when a male gamete⁷ travels along a human highway to fuse with one of less than approximately 400,000 stockpiled female gametes.⁸ As a joint undertaking these gametes create a zygote⁹ which is incapable of independent thought, let alone independent activity. While millions of male gametes are continuously manufactured after puberty, potentially pregnable female gametes come pre-loaded into a fully-functioning birth mother. This means that one half of each zygote began life in a grandmother.¹⁰

After passing the blastocyst phase, a zygote becomes an embryo implanted in the wall of a uterus. If everything goes according to plan, procedure, schematics and labor, it will develop into a fetus that is connected via an umbilical cord to an interfacing placenta that is attached to the uterine wall of the mother's womb. Approximately nine months later, both fetus and placenta reach the stage where they are usually expelled into the world by a natural process.

Each new human being is created when a male injects a gamete into a female where it mates with another gamete preloaded by her mother. This event marks the beginning of a collective enterprise that does not end when the infant human being is severed from its umbilical cord, because a newborn baby is incapable of independently sustaining continued existence. Therefore a question arises as to when the option of 'independence' is attained, because it is only when that stage is reached, that individualism as opposed to collectivism, can become an option. A secondary additional question is thus posed as to how long that state of independence can be maintained?

Is Anyone Ever "Born Free"?

Because the process of human reproduction is naturally a joint undertaking, its resulting offspring presents an unnatural question of ownership: especially during the latter phase prior to birth. In the USA this has prompted artificial legal questions which are centered upon a right to privacy by the female host of the developing zygote that becomes a fetus. In 1965, U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas became creative by referring to "penumbras" and "emanations" of a right to privacy by a mother, when he authored the majority Opinion in *Griswold v. Connecticut*, (381 U.S. 479). This finding led to the 1973 Opinion in

⁷ A name introduced by Gregor Johann Mendel (1822 – 1884); father of genetic 'Mendelian inheritance'.

⁸ At birth a female has between one and two million potential gametes or precursor egg cells stored in follicles within her ovaries, but through atresia they decline in number until approximately 400,000 remain at puberty. This stockpile declines at the rate of about 1,000 per month, but of these only one is released into a fallopian tube for potential rendezvous with a male gamete ("Reproductive System").

⁹ A male gamete and a female gamete each contain half the information required to create a zygote. A zygote becomes a traveling blastocyst for approximately five days before attaching to a uterus as an embryo, where during a period of gestation defined in months to maturity, it is known as a fetus ("Fetal Development").

¹⁰ Your mother's mother.

Roe v. Wade (410 U.S. 113) that a mother has a right to terminate her pregnancy, although that right is not absolute in the USA, because it comes with legal caveats. These restrictions place artificially restrictive definitions upon the mother's right to control the affairs of her own body during pregnancy. In the USA, not only the father of the new life, but the entire compass of a sovereign jurisdiction can artificially claim a legal interest in what is developing within that mother's womb. The laws of Nature would suggest that a mother can do whatever she chooses with her body, but the artificial configurations of collectivist society create psychological imperatives for her to heed legal restrictions created by others.

These factors all find common cause in the question of: *Whose zygote is it?* In the USA, in addition to the interests of the father, the legal representatives of an entire population sometimes claim an interest in the mother's pregnancy. When the State intervenes it often does so "in the interests of the child", as if the collective voice of the sovereign State has an all-knowing and superior knowledge of what the zygote-fetus-baby would answer if asked what it wanted.

Nature and its laws have no part in the artificial 'public interest' as represented by a sovereign legal power, because Nature's Law merely demands the interaction of a male and female to create additional life. Whether that interaction is forced or the result of a voluntary enterprise, the effect of a fertile male gamete mating with a fertile female gamete will result in a zygote, and given time it will then develop into a fetus. But until the moment of birth it is not a baby that has the potential for life as a distinct human being separate from its two parents. Not until many years have passed from newborn to biological maturity will that new life be capable of sustaining itself. It is therefore not only a captive during this period, but prior to its creation it never had the right to refuse to be born. It is a biological fact laid down by Nature that no human being was ever 'freeborn'¹¹ at birth.

The God Factor

When the door to superstitious religious belief is opened to allow in discussion of the unscientific mythology of 'virgin birth', it collides with the laws of Nature. This mythology claims that another entity of non-human extraction once fused with a human female gamete to create a zygote which became a fetus that was born as a baby, and that baby was thus partly supra-natural and partly human. In the context of this 'unnatural' third party, the collective voices of its advocates often demand to be heard as well, and their collective yet confusing views often attempt to influence the voice of the sovereign State, which also demands to be heard.

But when these religious communities intervene they are claiming to speak not for Nature and its laws, but for the voice of a god, although the religious community has no consensus as to what 'god' is, and they have no consensus as to what other human beings had in their minds when they penned words in many books purporting to represent 'god'. This is not to overlook the fact that a sovereign State will often turn to its medical branch for advice about the sanity of any human being who is claiming to be the voice of "god" who is speaking in real time.

¹¹ Born as a free person, not as a slave or serf: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/freeborn>

It all then becomes a circus that gets away from the basic fact that a fertile male gamete can impregnate a fertile female gamete and produce a zygote without permission from a sovereign State, a religious community, or anyone else. Another song's lyrics declare that: "*It takes two, baby. Me and you, just takes two.*"¹²

(M)other Nature

When textual explanations are invented about the origin of Nature, some theists identify Nature as a 'Creator God', while others go farther and ascribe to this ethereal entity a male gender who they address as 'Heavenly Father'. Others ascribe a female gender to Nature which allows them to refer to 'Mother Nature'. The purpose of these strange identifications seems to be for the purpose of giving Nature a personality, an individuality that can be viewed as the origin of the human family, without having to address the questions about the 'Heavenly Mother' who produced human offspring for the 'Heavenly Father', or where 'Father Nature' fits within the secular family framework of a 'Mother Nature'.

The reason for the invention of this process of name identification is for the purpose of building a basis for self-styled representation by human beings who embark upon building organizations in the name of their named entity. By representing something ethereal, the spokespersons for their various organizations have created power bases which seem to represent everything that exists or has existed, or will exist. It leads to the presentation of extremely arrogant, self-important and self-righteous public presentation for collectivist absorption.

Comedian George Carlin performed an original routine on stage when he tackled the question of plastic bags and Nature.¹³ Carlin scorned the conservationists who try to preserve a Planet that was here before they arrived, and which has experienced far worse than the human race. He posed a tongue-in-cheek possibility that Nature created human beings because a) it desired to add plastics to the infrastructure of this Planet, and b) it was incapable of producing plastics by any other means.

Yet those who would turn the 'preservation' of Nature¹⁴ which they did not create, into a sacred collectivist duty that they attempt to impose upon humanity; is as insolent as the intrusion that religious ideologues use in the name of a 'Creator God' to intervene collectively into the individual lives of human beings. Whatever the cause of Nature, it is neither the invention nor the product of human ingenuity. 'Nature' is a name ascribed to the natural state that existed before the first human being ever set foot on this Planet.

Collectivism

Because it is a physical impossibility for anyone to live life solely "their way" from zygote to grave; or cradle to grave, or even toddler to grave, it becomes

¹² *It takes two*. See lyrics at: <http://www.lyricsdepot.com/marvin-gaye/it-takes-two.html>

¹³ George Carlin *Saving the Planet*, see Online at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7W33HRc1A6c> [Accessed: June 28, 2012]

¹⁴ An Inconvenient Truth, 2006, see Online reference at: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0497116/> [Accessed: June 28, 2012]

extremely difficult to determine at what point during a human lifespan independence becomes a possibility. There is obviously a point in time where a matured fully-functioning human being can physically reject collectivist control when they do not require any direct assistance to thrive on their own. What is not foreseen is the possibility that due to lack of liquid, food, shelter, or incapacity arising from malfunctions within the human body; it will again become necessary to have assistance from other human beings. Once that stage is reached, collectivism takes over before the grave is reached, and the sovereign State, egged on by religious communities, often exercise interference to the full extent of their means in order to prevent suicide from becoming an option.

When Martin Luther King exclaimed “Thank God Almighty, we are free at last”,¹⁵ Erich Fromm had already penned *Escape from Freedom* two decades earlier. Fromm claimed that the last thing human beings really want is freedom *per se* and that in medieval society:

...a person was not free in the modern sense, neither was he alone and isolated. ...and thus life had a meaning... One was born into a certain economic position which guaranteed a livelihood determined by tradition, just as it carried economic obligations to those higher in the social hierarchy. (34)

However, Fromm’s “social hierarchy” is an abstract artificial creation; because Nature does not create hierarchies *per se*. Nature creates gametes that mate with each other to begin the process of creating individual human beings. Nurture is required by Nature to successfully develop a human being, but that nurture does not naturally require a hierarchical structure that is based upon economics. There is a pull towards collectivism caused by the adult biological desire to mate, and naturally that process is not individualistic.

While Fromm painted a picture of organized society grounded in the past, King was trying to flee from a wrongful past that some social hierarchies had created. Therefore, while it is not true to say that economic social hierarchies are necessarily desirable, but on the other hand, a collectivist society that is based upon acknowledging the laws of Nature can be very advantageous to individuals when family units create a working collectivist society that assists the individuals within it.

Individualism

The freedom that Martin Luther King sought is freedom to enjoy the universal rights that the U.S. Declaration of Independence defines as ‘unalienable’, and among them is liberty.¹⁶ No human being can enjoy their freedom within an economic hierarchy which has enslaved them, and enslavement is an unnatural state

¹⁵ *I Have a Dream* speech, August 28, 1963, by Martin Luther King as cited Online at: <http://history1900s.about.com/od/martinlutherkingjr/a/mlkquotes.htm> [Accessed: June 28, 2012]

¹⁶ Read text Online at: http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html [Accessed: June 28, 2012]

of affairs since no two human beings can claim to ‘ownership’ of the human population. It can be argued that the mythology of ‘Adam and Eve’ is an attempt to create a chain of ownership, a social hierarchy to which all subscribing believers in that story are bound. But in reality, such a ‘genetic’ hierarchy is socially impossible since all human beings are born to die within a relatively short but uniform period of time, and therefore no originating couple exists on this planet who can claim original ownership.

Therefore the laws of Nature determine two basic things for every human being who thrives into a healthy adult phase of life. The first is a need to procreate by coupling with another human being, with or without reproduction taking place. That drive is primordial and inherent in all healthy human specimens. The second is the need for each healthy human being to separate themselves in order to find individuality that comes from a state of freedom.

However, human beings are more than body structures; because each human head contains a control center whose electro-chemical interactions provide motor information. Within that brain is an aspect which defines human individuality which is popularly known as personality.¹⁷ It may arise from interacting instructions, but its process remains an ethereal quality that poses questions which remain unanswered at the present time. It is from these actions that human personality is manifest, but the muses which arrive in the mind to create works of art can only be appreciated by others when they are translated into speech by vocal chords, or they reduced to imagery by appendages such as hands.

Ethereal concepts are translated for storage in the biological section of the brain called memory. When biological defects impair human memory, the personality of individuality that is manifest by human beings simply fades away. It disappears even though other bodily functions may continue to operate with a degree of normality. But until ethereal thoughts are translated into a physical format via sound or image, they remain ‘off line’ to access by any other human being. In

¹⁷ According to Stephen Hawking: “I regard the brain as a computer which will stop working when its components fail. There is no heaven or afterlife for broken down computers; that is a fairy story for people afraid of the dark.” The human brain does process information that is translated into activity, and it is this latter activity which has been damaged in Hawking's personal situation. However, his mind still functions in an extremely creative manner. It is the mind rather than the brain that creates the personality of human beings and up until this moment in time, no one has been able to replicate the mind artificially. Until that event occurs Hawking seems to be comparing apples with oranges in a vain attempt to classify them both as tangible fruits and make their differences disappear. But while the brain may be tangible, it is the intangible element of the mind that has always led human beings to believe (because they cannot understand the process), that there is indeed something more to human existence than human beings are capable of fathoming with their brain. On the other hand, to leap into retrograde, anti-scientific thinking, and believe in a ‘heaven’ that is up there, or ‘hell’ that is down there, is equally absurd. However, dismissal of these primitive aspects of man-made religion does not make the ‘God factor’ disappear (Hawking).

this inner state dwells the habitat of each human being. Absence of physical captivity or psychological abuse, the individual personality is translated into sound and vision for other human beings to interact with, and thus an 'I' becomes a 'we'.

In the final scenes of his novel *Nineteen-Eighty-Four*, George Orwell went to great lengths in trying to show that the ethereal quality of a human being can be erased.¹⁸ But if this erasure is similar to the computer analogy which Steven Hawking used to explain the non-biological workings of the brain, then the human mind is still in existence, but off-line. It awaits a super programmer to restore its 'hard drive' to operational capability. This is where the 'god factor' enters the picture, because this is where most religions hold to a belief that an 'Ultimate Causational Entity' that knows all, and sees all, would have the ability to read that crashed mind, and perhaps restore its functioning ability.¹⁹

Looking through the pages of history various names leap out because they represent human beings whose individuality has led the masses to follow in all of the fields of human endeavor. In a sense it is a confirmation of John Calvin's idea that a few have been selected to lead the majority in a form of social hierarchy before the first pages were written: sans his ideological interpretation of why this is so. Although every human being must have collectivist support to thrive, a few human beings have an inbuilt desire to break free of their support systems. Many claim to have this need, but in reality they merely manifest their ersatz individualism by conforming to others. Few are true individualists, and society acknowledges their rarity when they surface in all walks of life. Some manifestations are deemed to be positive and creative, and some negative and destructive.

Stereoscopic Reinterpretations

The Victorian stereoscope deceived human brains into believing that two slightly distorted images were really one and the same in order to produce the illusion of a three-dimensional reality. In contrast it is as though the masses look through one frame and see a world as it is, while the individuals who break-out from the masses are looking through a second frame which layers a prospective world view on top of the standard view that is seen by everyone else.

In *Back to Methuselah*, George Bernard Shaw wrote "You see things; and you say 'Why?' But I dream things that never were; and I say 'Why not?'"²⁰ Senator Bobby Kennedy revised those words for a speech of his own when he asked: "Some men see things as they are and say, why; I dream things that never

¹⁸ "Reality exists in the human mind, and nowhere else. Not in the individual mind, which can make mistakes, and in any case soon perishes: only in the mind of the Party, which is collective and immortal. Whatever the Party holds to be the truth, is truth" (261), and, "The past was alterable. The past never had been altered" (290).

¹⁹ A reference to prolonged comas that have not been medically induced or terminated.

²⁰ George Bernard Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*, act I, Selected Plays with Prefaces, vol. 2, p. 7 (1949). The serpent says these words to Eve; cited Online at:

<http://www.bartleby.com/73/465.html> [Accessed: June 29, 2012]

were and say, why not.”²¹ A Texas entrepreneur known to the authors was once asked why no one had thought of placing a U.S. top forty commercial radio station on a ship, and then anchoring it off the coast of the United Kingdom during the Nineteen Sixties in order to get around the stifling non-commercial monopoly enjoyed by the BBC up until that time. He said that he had no explanation. It was another example of an individual seeing something that the masses could not, and yet his action revolutionized British sound broadcasting at the time.²²

Human freedom is a passing phase because no human being has ever been born free, yet some appear to have been programmed to become free to think and to act. This is not true of the majority of human beings on this Planet who live as though they have been born into an incarcerated social hierarchy as followers of the few. A few individuals awake to an understanding of their own potential and then orientate their lives to advancing human civilization, while others engage in retarding it. This is not a tale about personal achievement such as a sporting record which in the long run will not affect the lives of others. It is about cerebral thoughts that are translated into actions which direct the course of civilization.

At best we can dream of our own moment of individualism, if we have been handed the ability to stereoscopically see opportunities and possibilities, which apparently, the majority cannot.²³

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²¹ Senator Robert F. Kennedy used these words during his 1968 presidential campaign, and his brother Senator Edward M. Kennedy cited these words during the eulogy for his brother, as reported in the *The New York Times*, June 9, 1968, p. 56. See Online at: <http://www.bartleby.com/73/465.html> [Accessed: June 29, 2012]

²² Don Pierson: *London My Hometown*; Gilder, Eric. 2003. *Mass Media Moments in the United Kingdom, the USSR and the USA*. Sibiu: “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu Press, p. 69 *supra*.

²³ This mystery has been noted by psychologist George A. Kelly via his explanation of the “elaborative choice” construct. When faced with a challenge to his or her construct system, a person has the choice of either expanding his or her construct system to better deal with future change (at the price of perhaps growing incoherence of the whole construct system), or restricting and solidifying his or her existing construct system, at the risk of not being able to adapt to future social/environmental change. As stated by Lee Sechrest:

A dichotomy is posed by the separate notions of extending and defining the system. It seems that these are alternative possibilities, and there is not an exact way of specifying whether extension nor definition will occur at any given time. However, in his discussion of constriction versus dilation Kelly implies that extension should probably occur when the person is most confident, when he has been generally successful in his anticipations. Definitive choices would be more likely in instances in which the construction system seemed to be in need of repair. (221)

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