

Discourse And Process Theories: Seyla Benhabib and Arnold Mindell
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Introduction

This paper examines the points of agreement and difference between two theorists who address similar themes in very different milieus, coming from different perspectives and disciplines. One of the theorists, Arnold Mindell would call this a bootstrap paper discussing two bootstrap theories.

Seyla Benhabib's stated philosophical project is "to situate reason and the moral self in contexts of gender and community, while insisting of the discursive power of individuals to challenge such situatedness in the name of future identities and communities, and universalistic principles." A critical theorist, Benhabib extends Habermas' discourse theory by reconstituting it phenomenologically through insights gleaned from Hannah Arendt and Carol Gilligan. She intends to capture a pragmatic, yet utopian vision of reflexivity and radical egalitarianism through the moral conversation, and further, she extends the options for the marginalized in challenging their situatedness as mentioned above. She situates discourse theory, "between liberalism and communitarianism, Kantian universalism and Hegelian Sittlichkeit."

Arnold Mindell's is a theory of emergence. His stated psychological goal is "to develop skills and methods for working with the emerging world situation: a planet with five thousand different languages and religions whose inhabitants know more about launching spaceships than about getting along with each other. This form of process psychology is world work - an interdisciplinary method that helps small and large groups of people to live, work and grow together within their environment. The challenge is to develop organizational and conflict resolution so that they reflect democratic principles and are widely applicable. Mindell draws on modern psychology - "the Jungian method of following the unconscious, the Gestalt focus on process, Carl Rogers unconditional support for the individual, the transpersonal focus on the divine, and the systems principles from economics, politics and physics." His primary influences are Jung, physics and the Tao. He too, is interested in extending options for expression of voices left out of the discussion.

Through an imaginary conversation between these theorists, largely using their own words and adding conversational segues, I intend to examine the potential for Benhabib's discourse theory to move into a third potential application by embracing process theory. Some authors have applied Habermas in mediation and dispute resolution contexts. Benhabib extends discourse theory in several ways. In doing so, she validates it in contexts where difference is at issue. By moving human consciousness forward to

include the developing cognitive consciousness of the human child, she valorized issues of “the good life” relegated to a philosophical ghetto in the past in favor of issues of justice. An application of Mindell’s process psychology extends the usefulness of discourse into a much broader context by embracing even broader aspects of consciousness - the unconscious, and by extending language and literacy into a broader range of channels. He moves beyond mediation into open conflictual situations. It is quite possible that these theorists would not agree epistemologically or ontologically. Yet the Benhabib model and Mindell’s process psychology resonate. Stretching the moral conversation to allow inclusivity and utility is my project. Further, I include an addendum, a version of the conversation translated into plain talk. I do this to accomplish a second project, that of making theoretical work accessible to non-theorists. In doing so, I do not wish to indicate that non-theorists are unable to deal with theoretical discourse, but simply to say that they may not wish to do so. In that case, the conversation is available sans jargon.

My format attempts to allow the theorists to explain themselves. The choice of passages and their ordering are certainly subject to challenge and reflect my reading of each writer. The segues are words put in the theorists’ mouths. The characterization of Arny is taken from having watched him in process. I hope that his inimitable style comes through a bit in my characterization. I have only read Seyla Benhabib, and am therefore at a disadvantage in attempting to characterize her. In neither case do I intend to take either theorist with other than the greatest respect and humility. I am actually in awe of each of them and their contributions to their fields. In any case, the segues are myself speaking and are qualified by my readings of the two theorists. It should be kept in mind that this conversational style favors Benhabib’s format, discourse, and does not typify Arny’s process. In order to do so, all participants in the plane would be encouraged to participate and in ways which could only be captured on camera. If a film should be made of this conversation, and I am working intently on a soundtrack, I humbly submit that it would not approach my favorite film, *My Dinner With André*.

My chosen format also gets me off the hook. The “horns of the dilemma” is that my postmodern fragmented self speaks rather convincingly in either voice. Yet in either discourse, I do little justice to the other. In combining the precis and the conversation, each theorist speaks, we listen and decide.

The Conversation

Setting: A long international flight in which two people discover similar values and interests and a few *minor* differences, which would render this conversation very unlikely in any other setting.

Characters:

Seyla Benhabib, Professor of Political Theory in the Government Department and Chair of Social Studies, Harvard University, and Senior Research Associate at The Center for European Studies.

Arnold Mindell, Psychologist, Originator of Process Oriented Psychology, Process Work Center, Portland Oregon.

J.J. Hendricks, presumptuous fly on wall

Amy Mindell, napping, across the aisle from Arny.

Somewhere over the Atlantic:

Seyla is looking professorial and distinguished.

Arny is in his customary black slacks and turtleneck, with a white, full sleeved blouson shirt and a ski cap.

Arny: Seyla, some of my students know your work. Sounds like we have some common interests.

Seyla: I've heard about your conflict resolution seminars in Yugoslavia, pretty remarkable. Well, we're here for fifteen hours, let's talk about what we do and compare notes.

Arny: Sure, Seyla, I like to talk. By the way, I notice that you raise your eyebrows a lot. I like that.

Seyla: Pardon me? I do? (... to herself, Maybe I've made a mistake. This will be a long trip.)

Arny: Yeah, could you do that some more? Yeah, that's great! Shall I do it too? Wow! How do you feel when you do that?

Seyla: I find this approach to discourse very peculiar Arny, is this part of your technique?

Arny: Oh yeah, excuse me Seyla, sometimes I just find what people do is so interesting... It tells me a lot. You know, I guess I don't talk so much with words any

more, I just slipped into the kinesthetic channel. But I try to avoid jargon Seyla, people don't relate to that language. Couldn't we be more down to earth? We'd have a larger audience for what we're saying.... Don't you agree that we need to do more than read textbooks about one another? We need places where we can meet, debate, have it out, get into emotional states and use our awareness. We need a place to dream together, to get into what has been kept unknown. Dreaming means flowing with the unknown river of community. (Fire, 235)

Seyla: Arny, that's very appealing in general terms, but to appeal to theorists and converse with academicians, I'm compelled to use the language of philosophical discourse. My work wouldn't be taken seriously if I didn't. Serious scholars would accuse me of fuzzy feminist thought.

Arny: Fuzzy? What would that be like? Can you notice...

Seyla: Arny, stop that! I can tell you that it wouldn't be pretty, being a fuzzy philosopher.

But lets have a *serious* conversation Arny, if it doesn't work, we can always sue J.J. Hendricks for liable.

Arny: No, that's too adversarial. Let's just get her to come in here. She's a ghost in this conversation. She knows better than that.

Seyla: Did you say a ghost?

Arny: I can see that we'd better start explaining ourselves. Here Seyla, for a start, have my glossary. Amy, (turns to woman across the aisle,) do you have the list of terms? (Amy Mindell hands the list to Arny, who hands Benhabib the list.)

Terms

facilitators - The term facilitators is widely interpreted. Takes in process facilitators, group instructors, executives, politicians, teachers.(Leaders, 5)

co-learner - a facilitator whose job has been taken over by members of a group or organization. (Leaders, 42)

elder - a facilitator who arises from amongst the process group members. (Fire)

Deep democracy - a belief in the *inherent* importance of all parts of ourselves and all the viewpoints of the world around us. Based upon those perennial psychologies and

philosophies that include the global egalitarian approaches to personal problems. The unit of analysis is diffuse - the individual body, feelings, face- to-face interactions, groups, interrelations. (Leaders, 5,6) (Fire, 133)

World work - a non-linear set of tools for dealing with real situations where there are chaos and attack, transformation and conflict. (Leaders, 5) Deals directly with the atmosphere of a group. (Fire, 19)

Time spirits (zeitgeisters) - opposing energies, polarizations and roles, concepts of culture in group fields. (Leaders, 23)

ghosts - unrepresented, unacknowledged parts of a field. (Leaders, 36)

edges - barriers in a group field that mark self identity. Parts of the self are embraced, some disallowed. Edges demarcate and delimit disallowed parts.

Double edges - There are at least two edges in a communication system. (Fire, 208)

privilege - unearned status.

rank - the sum total of a person's privileges - earned or inherited, conscious or unconscious social or personal ability or power arising from culture, community support, personal psychology, economic class and/or spiritual power (Fire, 42, 167) The more rank, the less awareness of its negative effects.(Fire, 49)

consensus - an agreement to address a certain topic or follow a direction for a limited time. (Fire, 41)

hot spot - in a group setting, a moment of attack and defense, flight and fight, ecstasy, apathy, or depression. (Fire, 42)

terrorism - a social process that ranges from small scale to international. Groups and individuals fighting against mainstream power from socially marginal or disenfranchised positions, revenge by means of group processes that cause psychological pain or damage in return for misuse of rank in hopes of establishing equality. (Fire, 90, 91)

imperialism - intentional killing by a nation of privilege that is not at war. The overt or hidden power of national, territorial or economic expansion supported by government attacks coupled with the passivity of that nation's mainstream citizens. (Fire, 90)

abuse - the unfair use of physical, psychological, or social power against others who are unable to defend themselves because they do not have equal physical, psychological or social power. (Fire, 107)

Racism - the use of mainstream power against people who don't have enough social power to defend themselves, a negative value judgment that legitimizes downing and exploiting. Racism is always social abuse. (Fire, 151)

Seyla: Thanks, that helps a bit, but it is difficult to use my terminology without getting into a long discussion of some of the philosophers that I've drawn from and critiqued. If I do that extensively, it becomes a lecture or a book. I draw from Habermas mainly. I want to salvage modernity while developing a phenomenological approach.

Arny: Why, what's good about it? Modernity, that is. Phenomenology is super.

Seyla: Reason and the moral self are under attack from a variety of philosophical critiques. I think they can be defended and made useful even on the basis of gender and community, where they've been under attack. Modernity's legacies are not trivial. They are moral and political universalism, the tenets of which are ideals of universal respect for each human, the moral autonomy of the individual, economic and social justice and equality, democratic participation, civil and personal liberties compatible with justice, and the formation of solidaristic human associations.

Arny: Those are wonderful things. But I work in ways that don't depend on reasonableness. People may try to be reasonable and might be good hearted, and conflict resolution techniques are most effective with rational, intentional people. However, techniques are needed for working with turbulent states where there is no motivation to be reasonable. More and more, times are turbulent.

We have more democracy as a legal institution, but we must not get drunk on our high dreams, Seyla. Issues and problems have changed, but the manner in which we get along has not. Where awareness and consciousness are concerned, even revolutions have only been reforms. They were directed at change in social policy and had too little effect on sustainable community process. (Fire, 226) Nothing less than a revolution in consciousness will change the way we get along together. (Fire, 229)

Seyla: What I'm talking about entails a revolution in consciousness, Arny. I'm not arguing for conventional discourse when I use the word reason. Conventional moralities stop the conversation by identifying insiders and outsiders. Conventionalists have to withdraw from the conversation to sustain their world-view. Only a world-view that can radically question all procedures including its own can create conditions for a moral conversation. My model shifts from a substantialist to a *discursive, intersubjective, communicative concept of rationality*. Truth statements are justified through discourse.

A moral point of view is the *contingent* achievement of an *interactive* form of rationality,

i.e. a moral conversation, exercising the art of “enlarged thinking” and *reversibility of perspectives*, seeking to understand the standpoints of concrete others.

Arny: Define those terms, that sounds good, enlarged thinking.

Seyla: Reversibility requires that we judge from the perspective of others. The model requires (1) that we recognize all beings capable of speech and action to be participants in the moral conversation - the principle of universal respect; (2) each has the same symmetrical rights to various speech acts - the principle of egalitarian reciprocity.

Arny: What would that look like in practice?

Seyla: The steps required to the establishment of the norms of universal moral respect and egalitarian reciprocity can be formalized as follows: A philosophical theory of morality must show wherein the justifiability of moral judgments and/or normative assertions reside. To justify means to show that if you and I argued about a particular moral judgment and a set of normative assertions we could come to a reasonable agreement. A reasonable agreement must be arrived at under conditions, which correspond to our idea of a fair debate. These rules of fair debate can be formulated as “the universal-pragmatic” presuppositions of argumentative speech and these can be stated as a set of procedural rules. These rules represent the moral ideal that we ought to respect each other as beings whose standpoint is worthy of equal consideration and that furthermore We ought to treat each other as concrete human beings whose capacity to express this standpoint we ought to embrace whenever possible, social practices embodying the discursive ideal. (30,31)

Arny: I agree that we need mutual respect and that everyone must be included fairly, but I come at it a different way. I’m worried about that qualifier *capable*. We can’t leave *any* voices out. The world situation is everybody’s task. (Leaders, 6) Everyone is needed to represent reality. (Leaders, 155) Rank is everyone’s problem in a democracy. (Fire, 58) I’m worried about debate too, as a process. But these things, capability and rank, will be taken care of, you know, if we realize that we exist in a field. Knowing we are working within a field will organize the way we deal with turbulence. (Leaders, 30) Group fields permeate the world in which we live. (Leaders, 11) In any group there are always invisible influences, which appear in moods, motivations, group problems, inflations, depressions, illusions, and dreams of members. (Leaders, 13) These are described as shadow energies in physics, the collective unconscious in Jungian psychology, morphogenic magnetic fields in Sheldrake.

Seyla: How can you establish norms of discourse for a field?

Arny: Requirements for process work are simple to describe and hard to carry out. But, I

can say the following.

All parts of the field must be encouraged to express themselves completely.

1. All parts must be identified.
2. We must allow them to speak. (Leaders (33))

Now when I say parts, I don't mean only the members of a group, I also mean the parts of our selves. Outer reality of world work must begin by dealing with inner experiences of it. If a part of our selves is repressed, it will overthrow our personal lives. If voices are neglected in groups or the world, governments are not sustainable. (Leaders, 6,7) Inner work is global work. It is connected to the field in which we live. (Leaders, 139) And sometimes, people aren't reasonable, or even capable because parts are repressed.

But say some more about where you're coming from before I get into whether there is such a thing as being unreasonable or incapable.

Seyla: That may not be a thing we can agree about. But yes, let me go on... About my model, we both use the term process. For example, let me tell you how my idea of discourse differs from the conditions Habermas requires. Habermas' condition (D) states that only those norms can claim to be valid that meet (or could meet) with the approval of all concerned in their capacity as participants in the process. Habermas' theory assumes consensus. I do not. I consider that consent must be treated not as an end-goal, but as a *process* for the co-operative generation of truth or validity. It is not the *result* of the process of moral judgment that counts, but the *process for the attainment* of such judgment. Communicative ethics is the *processual generation* of reasonable agreement about moral principles via an open-ended moral conversation. The emphasis shifts to examine the normative practices and moral relationships within which reasoned agreement as a way of life can flourish and continue. (p. 38) The fairness of moral norms, and the integrity of moral values can only be established through a process of practical argumentation, which allows its participants full equality in initiating and continuing the debate and suggesting new subject matters for conversation. (73)

Arny: Ummmm, there's that word, debate again, but I 'll let it go by for now.

Let me say something about consensus, Seyla, I think it's too simple to say it isn't necessary. We can redefine discourse and also, consensus. My conclusion is very similar to your conclusion; I think that there are stages of agreement in any process. Consensus has at least three phases: it can be a state, a goal, or a kind of awareness. The most common meaning of consensus is that particular state of a group's mind in which everybody agrees. Consensus is that special, *temporary* group condition in which people move unanimously together in a particular direction. But consensus can also be a goal. The unanimous *agreement becomes the prescribed direction*, the end result we seek, where we "should" be going. Such a goal has both advantages and disadvantages. There

is less friction if we can all agree about something. On the other hand, those who do not agree may be marginalized by accusations of disturbing the community. Then making consensus a goal comes into direct opposition with the process of deep democracy. Finally, consensus can be an aspect of awareness. Noticing something invites other group members to share what they notice. World work needs more than the state or goal of consensus. It requires teamwork around the process of awareness. (Fire, 195)

Seyla: Yes, we're close on the continuity and renegotiability of process. Now, to continue to defend reason. I think my model does extend reason to include a whole range of thinking left out by most critical thinkers. For example, take cognitive development and gender.

Arny: O.K., so marginalization is a subject we both care about.

Seyla: Yes, and my model values aspects of human consciousness or experience and brings them into play as factors which support claims to veracity of beliefs. The model recognizes that the subjects of reason are finite, embodied, and fragile, (a human infant, which becomes a self only by learning to interact in a human community.) The embodied embedded human self identity is constructed narratively. A major weakness of cognitive and proceduralist ethical theories has been their reductionist treatment of the emotional and affective bases of moral judgment and conduct. (49) My model unlike earlier rational models, views moral agreements in which the self is not a moral geometrician but an embodied, finite, suffering and emotive being. We are not born rational, but acquire rationality through contingent processes of socialization and identity formation. (50)

Arny: Seyla, we are never rational!

Seyla: Let me finish Arny, the model may not be perfect from your perspective, but I think it is valuable, and I want to defend it.

Arny: Seyla, this is a control issue.

Seyla: Arny, please.

Arny: Umm Hmm, a control issue. I'm calling the process. Linear interaction is a "cooler style. Parties communicate one at a time and stick to the subject. Many cultures and communities, Eastern and western, cosmopolitan and indigenous, prefer linearity. They send those in conflict from the meeting place, hoping for change. Like your conventionalist philosophers, Eurocentric styles in business and government typically ignore, depreciate or punish emotional people. Non-linear interactions are characterized by dialogue that circles instead of proceeding in straight lines. (Fire, 202, 203) Both styles have advantages and disadvantages. Every group needs both. Groups move through style phases. (Fire, 204, 205) I come from an interrupting culture. But, having

said that, go ahead, Seyla.

Seyla: Good point. We could disagree on the conditions of a fair conversation. I can accept your point. As I was saying though, Arny, humans emerge from a network of dependencies. The moral agent is not the autonomous, adult, male head of household transacting with like others in the market-place. Such characterization leads to a distorted view of human moral texture. Reaaally linear! State of nature and the original position abstractions are projections of the male head of household. Moral autonomy can also be seen as growth and change. (51) We develop communicative competence. Capacity for telling right and wrong, judgment, is associated with capacity to think.

Arny: What do you mean by “think?” I notice that you use that word a lot.

Seyla: Well, for example, judgment. Hannah Arendt’s characterization of action through the categories of natality, plurality, and narrativity provides a framework for analyzing judgment not only as a political but as a moral faculty. Moral judgment is what we always already exercise by virtue of being immersed in a network of human relationships that constitute our life together. To withdraw from moral judgment is tantamount to ceasing to interact, to talk and act in the human community.

Arny: Act? Now you’re talking!

Seyla: Very funny! Don’t get too excited. Arendt means by Natality - our insertion into the world through act and deed. Plurality is speech plus living as a distinct and unique being among humans. Together, they are interaction. Narrativity is immersion into the web of human relations - the self is individuated and acts are identified. The wholeness of a self is constituted as a story of a life. (125,6,7)

Arny: That’s closer to my stuff. Don’t you think that storytelling, which is a central healing process among indigenous peoples and should be a healthy part of our lives from childhood? (Fire, 111) But you are still using the word think much too narrowly for me.

Seyla: I’m not finished. About our stories, once actions become part of the world, actions reveal our intentions, and sometimes we do not know what our intentions are or may have been until they have become part of the world. In formulating actions, we project ourselves, our narrative history upon the world and we want to be recognized as the doer of such and such. ...

Arny: Now I can agree with some of that, but I have a substitute for “formulating actions.” Awareness helps us to value all states of development: resolutions, you might call these judgments, I wouldn’t, are just moments in the midst of evolution. Awareness is the power that gives us access to new states of consciousness and as yet unborn parts of ourselves and the world. (Leaders, 73) Momentary problems need not be resolved, but

the most satisfying and successful resolutions come from using awareness. (Leaders, 74)

You mentioned projections. Awareness and process help us deal with projections. Fields exert forces upon things in their midst. They can be felt. (Leaders, 15, 17) They appear in the dreams of individuals and the myths of nations. Fields have no boundaries. Groups depend on shared dreams. They are psychophysical. We are physically, as much like fields and waves as we are bodies and particles. (Leaders, 16,17) Fields evolve and change. They become polarized, form parts, conflict, burst asunder, isolate. (Leaders, 19) Minorities and majorities are *universally* perceived as time spirits with particular characteristics. These may be, but are *not only projections*. The minority-majority conflict is a conflict organized by a field. Time spirits are like figures in dreams and elicit emotions, and constitute other time spirits in groups. They transform. (Leaders, 25) They are feared because of their potential to possess us, ex.mass hysteria, or because we identify the people occupying the role with the time spirit. (Leaders, 26) We are actually none of the parts, with access to all of them. (Leaders, 37) As time spirits transform, they create community. (Leaders, 27)

Seyla: It sounds like we agree on a great deal but have several *rather large* sticking points. My style is somewhat logo-centric for your taste. And, with regard to rational thought and intentionality, we have *very* different ontological frameworks. In spite of that, you are anticipating my concern about diversity, but let me go on.

Intentionality as I understand it, *anticipates* the meaning the past and future may have and will have in the eyes of others. The self is not only an I, but a me, one that is perceived by others, interpreted and judged by others. (129) You might say that this denoted field dynamics, Arny. I wouldn't. According to Kant, the moral law is in all circumstances, a given, therefore, determinant, rather than reflective. (130) I don't agree with that either. Human actions can only be understood with reference to *reasons*. Identification of morally correct actions requires the exercise of *imagination in the articulation of possible narratives and act-depictions* under which our deeds *might* fall; finally the interpretations of one's actions and maxims entail the understanding of the narrative history of the self and others. Arendt saw the process of reasoning as one which anticipates that "even when I am quite alone in my mind, I anticipate communication with others with whom I know I must finally come to some agreement," giving this judgment its specific validity.

And, this enlarged way of thinking cannot function in isolation or solitude: it needs the presence of others in whose place it must think, in whose perspective it must take into consideration, and without whom it never has the opportunity to operate at all. (133) The maxim of enlarged thought enjoins us to view each person as one to whom I owe the moral respect to consider their standpoint. (136)

Arny: Seyla, we agree on the social aspects of thought, but my question is about *where*

we are when we're in our *minds*. No problem with the crowd in our minds. Seyla, there are folks there who we can't even begin to imagine. Where the "there" is, that's what we seem to disagree about. For one thing, the science of matter is becoming united with the study of consciousness. (Leaders, 152) We are living in a universe in which all events are coupled with one another in a symmetrical fashion. Thus we *cannot tell* which events cause one another, only that *connected processes happen to us*. This way of thinking is different than we normally approach life, but it too, leads to an enlarged concept of the self. (Leaders, 140)

For example, our theories use the same descriptors. Our models seem to be coupled. But it's hard to tell how we got to the same place with all of our differences, without the concept of synergy.

Second, we must give attention to states of consciousness we have marginalized because they were unfamiliar. (Fire, 187) So I argue for the marginalized states of consciousness, which your model does not address.

Seyla: My points are important nonetheless, in extending the boundaries and content of my paradigm. Some major theorists, Kohlberg for example, have theorized that the contextuality, narrativity, and specificity of women's moral judgment is a sign of weakness or deficiency. In fact, they are a manifestation of vision and moral maturity that views the self as being immersed in *a network of relationships* with others. The respect for each other's needs and the mutuality of effort to satisfy them sustain moral growth and development. (149) Kohlberg says that these describe *special obligations* to family, friends, and group members, and says that these orientations are not a function of sex. (150) He holds these to more a function of ego than moral development. (151) Kohlberg's conception of the moral domain is based on a strong differentiation between justice and the good life. He says that the personal is not the moral. (153) Habermas makes this same distinction. (183)

But, for feminist theory the sex-gender system (the social-historical symbolic constitution and interpretation of anatomical sex differences) are *the essential way* that social reality is organized, symbolically divided, and lived experientially. This is the grid through which the self develops an embodied identity... the grid through which societies reproduce embodied individuals. You might say that there is a sex-gender field, I prefer grid. The definition of the moral domain traditionally led to the privatization of women's experience and the exclusion of it from a moral point of view. Traditionally, the moral self is viewed as a disembedded and disembodied being, reflecting aspects of male experience. The relevant other is never the sister always the brother. (152)

Arny: I hear you. I have social rank as a white, middle-aged, heterosexual man. But the place I work with this in my model is in my inner work, my awareness. If we do not realize and admit our prejudices at least to ourselves, others will feel them. Unconscious

unprocessed prejudice creates insidious, invisible conflicts. However, if we realize our prejudices, we can enter consciously into conflict with outer events. Only when we know our opinions can we let go of them for a moment and listen to others. (Leaders, 157,8) The purpose of world work is not to elucidate, criticize or fight prejudice. It is to become aware and use power to create community. (Fire, 68) Unconsciousness of rank is a source of irritation in a group. I can see why you're upset with theory as usual. One group is hurt and weakened because its members have been socially oppressed; the other is psychologically weak because its members are blind to their social position. (Fire, 51) Unconscious use of rank shows in a tendency to marginalize the problems of others. (Fire, 64)

Seyla: And these assumptions inform theories. This traditional vision of the self is incompatible with the very criteria of reversibility and universalizability advocated by defenders of universalism. Western moral theories are *substitutionalist*, not universalist. The subjects are always white, male adults, usually professional. (152) In western theory, the state of nature metaphor provides a vision of the autonomous self, a narcissist who sees the world in his own image. The narcissism is destroyed in the presence of others and is felt as a sense of loss. In the social contract, the constitution of political authority, the original narcissism is not transformed but ego boundaries are clearly defined. Jealousy is not eliminated but tamed. Each can keep what is his by the rules of the game. (156) Anxiety that the brother will appropriate one's goods is always there. *Throughout the modern consciousness the relationship to the brother is viewed as the humanizing experience that teaches us to become social responsible adults.* This is a strange world where individuals are grown before they are born. The modern female has no place. Women are simply what men are not. The narcissistic male takes woman to be just like him, only his opposite and defined by lack. (157) He is defined as a public and a private self. These dichotomies are seen as essential to the constitution of the self. (158)

Arny: So there's a ghost in traditional theory. The adult woman! Seyla, the individual self isn't even just not dichotomous. The individual self cannot be differentiated from the community self: they are one spirit. So the network of relationships you mention are ontologically encompassing. Uh-oh, I'm starting to sound like you. But seriously, relationship-healing means getting to the bottom line. (Fire, 166)

Seyla, there's a hitch in changing under your model. Those with power are rarely ready to be *enlightened* about their power. That's why the *search* for clarity is more sustainable than forcing resolutions before everybody is ready. Resolutions are important, but only within the context of increased clarity. (Fire, 137)

Seyla: Arny, "clarity" sounds pretty close to "reasonable" to me. Even in highly rationalized modern societies where most of us are wage-earners and political citizens, the moral issues which preoccupy us most and which touch us the most deeply, derive not from problems of justice in the economy and the polity, but precisely from the quality of

our relations with others in the “spheres of kinship, love, friendship and sex.”(184) The personal domain.

Arny: Seyla, that’s exactly why I invented world work - skills and methods for working with the emerging world situation. Here we are, a planet with five thousand different languages and religions whose inhabitants know more about launching spaceships than about getting along with each other. World work is a form of process psychology - an interdisciplinary method that helps small and large groups of people to live, work and grow together within their environment. But world work requires inner work.

Seyla: As I said before, universalism in morality implies first of all a commitment to the equal worth and dignity of every human being in virtue of his or her humanity; secondly, the dignity of the other as an individual is acknowledged through the respect we show for their needs, interests and views in our concrete moral deliberations. Moral respect is manifested through taking the standpoint of the other into account. Third, universalism implies a commitment to accept as valid, inter-subjective norms and rules of action as generated by practical discourses. (185) Obligations and relations of care are genuinely moral ones, belonging to the center and not the margins of morality.

Arny: Rules of action?

Seyla: I have a feeling we’ll get to that, but I have more to say about gender before we change the topic.

Gender is a *relational* category. It is one that seeks to explain the construction of a certain kind of difference among human beings. Feminist theorists, whether psychoanalytical, postmodern, liberal or critical, are united around the assumption that the constitution of gender is not a natural fact. (191) The construction and interpretation of anatomical difference itself is a social and historical process. ...

Arny nods...

Sexuality itself is a culturally constructed difference.(192) Species specific abilities are gender neutral. Kohlbergian theory claims that the development of “higher” levels of moral reasoning is tied to the opportunities of the self *to assume the different roles in social life*.

Arny: Yes ...

Seyla: We might well expect that in a gendered universe the kinds of roles men and women will assume will be different. Gilligan, however, relying on Nancy Chodorow, objected to Kohlbergian theory at the level of personality patterns, gender specific processes of separation and individuation.(193) The result is a psychosocial model of the

emergence of gender difference. (194)

Arny: On your larger point, I agree with you that justice isn't where it all starts. But in response to your last statement, process work adheres to no personality theory. Personality theories are culture-specific and based on social and cultural ideals, and therefore do not fit all people, places and times. So I agree that specific abilities are gender neutral. Personality theories are culture bound.

As for universalism, *Awareness* may well be a universal. Process work is based on apprehending change, not with fixed structures. (Leaders, 71,72) Problems meant to be solved will present themselves when it is time to work on them. (Leaders, 8) Maybe your theoretical model is a part of that flow. Kohlberg and Habermas are coming to realize some of your points. Maybe our interest in marginalization is part of that flow as well.

I want to say more about the material basis of consciousness, and about switching roles, but I'd like to hear more about how you define the self. I think we have some big differences there.

Seyla: Join the club.

All right Arny, I have to start with the difference between the self and the other. I have to define what I mean by other too. My model of communicative ethics encourages the ability and willingness to take on reflexive role distance in order to take the standpoint of the other involved in a controversy and to reason from their point of view. (74)

Arny: Interesting. Maybe I should comment on this now, rather than waiting. I often encourage people in a process to take the position or role of the other person in a conflict. This ability is akin to the discipline taught in the martial arts. It takes a type of detachment to do this. Like a martial artist, the facilitator uses awareness by noticing her own feelings, switching roles and identities, and moving back and forth so that she is neither attacker nor defender, but both in and out of the tension at the same time. (Leader, 52) My detachment, I think, is a component of your reflexivity. Being detached does not mean disinterest, just the opposite. You have more feeling for everyone in the fight, including your opponents. Being detached only means that the issues are no longer burning ones for you. (Leader, 55)

Seyla: Well, that sounds useful.

Let me be more specific about what I mean by other. It's somewhat complex. Concrete others are understood as unique individuals with certain life histories, dispositions, endowments, needs, and limitations. In order to conduct a moral conversation, individuals do not have to view themselves as "unencumbered selves," it is not necessary to define themselves absent of the ends they cherish or the constitutive attachments which

make them what they are. They are not asked to define themselves in ways, which are radically counterfactual to their everyday identities. (73) Not just issues of justice are part of the moral discussion then, but also issues of the good life, albeit, not an overarching theory, but of varieties of the good life.(74,5) These versions of the good life are part of the condition of plurality and do not necessarily subscribe to a communitarian code of civility nor a single principle of distributive justice (77,78). For Habermas, the public sentiment that is encouraged is not reconciliation and harmony, but rather political agency and efficacy, namely *the sense that we have a say* in the economic, political and civic arrangements that define our lives together, and that what one does makes a difference. This can be achieved without value homogeneity. (81)

Arny: I'd like to say something about where I stand on that. On plurality, awareness of difference is really important when working with conflicts. Permanent conflict resolutions are no more realizable than is ending all headaches with one aspirin. Therefore, a viable world work must show the existence and value of all sides and also allow us the transporting experience of appreciating and living each side as it arises. The feeling that nourishes this experience is more than democracy, more than the hope for peace and conflict resolution. It is a deeper democracy that respects not only each part but also its capacity to make us whole. (Leaders, 150)

Awareness means objective alertness that notices inner experience and outer events but can also lead to emptiness and free, creative action. It means openness to our selves and others and also the temporary capacity to enter into any one of the streams of life. It means remembering ourselves in the midst of chaos, listening to the voices we like, and also experimenting with becoming our seemingly impossible opponents. (Leaders. 152)

Seyla: I don't think that we understand "plurality and the constituting arrangements that define the self" and the "temporary capacity "to remember ourselves in the midst if chaos" as equivalent. Your self seems much more porous and ephemeral than mine. And we assume different contexts.

Arny: I think you're right. But let's keep talking and see if we move closer together or farther apart. It would be interesting to see how we approach the same topics, maybe even arrive at the same place, in spite of serious philosophical differences.

On civility, what you say works for me. We must listen to all the voices, even those we don't like. Hidden mainstream power lies behind the generally unexpressed assumption that oppressed people must dialogue politely to work out their problems. Such mainstream power is often hidden, unconscious, and works pervasively in groups. It is eventually balanced by rebellion. (Fire, 21,22) The mainstream in every country tends to skirt the anger of the oppressed classes. (Fire, 36) World elders know that good manners are straw dogs, empty forms. (Fire, 191)

I agree that harmony is not the main issue. But here's a point of difference. Neither are governmental institutions. There I differ from Habermas. Governmental structures alone will not bring about deep democracy. Only individual awareness can do that, for no system exists without at least subtle hierarchies. (Leaders, 159) Deep democracy isn't just a matter of voting rights and representation in congress. It happens in face-to-face interactions. (Fire, 133) Without awareness of hidden signals, no one notices how many individuals and groups are marginalized and disadvantaged. Laws are meant to protect individuals and groups, but they are almost useless for dealing with *subtle* forms of prejudice and the way powerful people oppress others. World work punishes abuse of power and brings power forward and makes it clear. (Fire, 21)

Seyla: How would it do that in the absence of democratic institutions?

Arny: Here I am sympathetic to your comment that it would take and has taken several books to adequately answer that question. It's a process question. I can recommend several of my books. For now, I'll just say that communications between nations, groups, institutions and individuals requires awareness of double signals. (Fire, 55) We must have the courage to make power visible and stand for it. Then others can accept or combat it, and best of all, awareness will suggest that we can leave our position when others arise who will do it better. (Leaders, 159) So harmony is not nearly so powerful as awareness. (Leaders, 42)

That leads me to mention my dislike of debate. Public abuse goes hand in hand with an adversarial legal system whose goal is to determine who's right and who's wrong instead of how to improve relationships. An adversarial system supports power, supports right and might rather than understanding and *connection* to others. An adversarial system works toward increasing conformity and productivity rather than *compassion*. (Fire, 134) People are silent for a reason. Behind silence is fear of the power of abuse. (Fire, 136) Legal action in adversarial systems exacerbates problems by ignoring the relationship between the criminal and the community. In the new paradigm, crime is a community problem. (Fire, 237)

Seyla: So you are arguing for revolution?

Arny: Not in the usual sense of the word. Where awareness and consciousness are concerned, revolutions have only been reforms. They were directed at change in social policy and had too little effect on sustainable community process. Fire, (226) Nothing less than a revolution in *consciousness* will change the way we get along together. (Fire, 229)

Seyla: Well Arny, in defense of the public arena, the public sphere is the crucial domain of interaction, which mediates between the macropolitical institutions and the private sphere. My model is different from the one you describe, because a radically

proceduralist model of the public sphere has *contingent boundaries redrawn by participants* in the conversation. (43) In the associational view of Arendtian thought, a public space emerges whenever men act in concert together. In this model, public space is *where freedom can appear*. These are sites of power, common action coordinated through speech and persuasion.(93) For moderns, this space is essentially porous, its scope expanded with every new group admitted. No agenda can predefine the topic. The struggle over what gets included is itself political, a struggle for justice and freedom. The struggle between social and political makes no sense in modern society, because the struggle to make something public is a struggle for justice. (94)

Arny: What do you mean by struggle?

Seyla: I'm sure that we mean different things when we envision a fair struggle. But my idea is a stronger version than what most liberal theorists' would find acceptable. Some liberal views would place restrictions on dialogue other than constitutional guarantees.

Arny: Such as those subtle forms of prejudice and the way powerful people oppress others that I mention above?

Seyla: Maybe, but I think I mean more formal restrictions. These are not necessary. Politics is about something other than the neutrality that is the cornerstone of the legal system. Democratic politics challenges, redefines and renegotiates the divisions between the just, the moral, the legal, the private and the public. (97,8.9) Redefining what had previously been private is crucial to the interests of oppressed groups. In the discursive model of Habermas, *the principle of participation* becomes one of the prerequisites of modernity. In each realm, social, personality and culture, in the functioning of institutional life, the formation of stable personalities over time and the continuation of cultural tradition, the reflective effort and contribution of individuals becomes essential. The meaning of participation is shifted toward discursive will formation. (104)

Arny: Seyla, those are high dreams, high dreams. But this is one area in which we probably can't agree. Those dreams have captured you. Your democracy is not deep enough for me. They are good-hearted well-meaning dreams, but in them, tyranny remains a ghost.

Seyla: Well, This is why I teach government and you practice psychology. Our units of analysis and focus for change are radically different, and lead to these differences to some extent. There are emergent theorists in political science. They would hold views closer to yours. I am just not among them. I do think I take a step closer to your view however, in my new model.

But let me explain *traditional* versions of the "other." You did ask, you know, some while back. I have not yet adequately answered. We've stopped to discuss points of difference,

and this is a complex topic. I need to go back to the “generalized” other, a term I borrowed from George Herbert Meade. This is the dominant conception of the self-other relation in contemporary moral theory. It requires us to view each and every individual as a rational being entitled to the same rights and duties we would want to ascribe to ourselves. In assuming this viewpoint, we abstract from the individuality and concrete identity of the other. (158) We *assume* that the other is a concrete individual being *like ourselves* but what constitutes his moral dignity is *what we have in common*. Our relation is governed by the norms of *formal equality and reciprocity*.

The standpoint of the *concrete* other, in contrast, requires us to view each and every rational being as an *individual with a concrete history, identity, and affective-emotive constitution*. We abstract from what constitutes our commonality, and focus on *individuality*. We seek to comprehend the needs of the other, his or her motivations, what she searches for, and what she desires. Our relation to each other is governed by the norms of *equity and complementary reciprocity*. Our differences complement rather than exclude each other. The norms of interaction are norms of friendship, love, and care. The moral categories are responsibility, bonding and sharing. The corresponding moral feelings are love, care, sympathy and solidarity. (159)

Arny: Rational being... rational, rational, rational! You really can't get there from here! Your model seems to be a sort of rational + caring and affiliation variation on a theme. Good hearted, but not transformational. So many of the world's problems are not rational in any sense, Seyla. They are characterized by chaos, the unknown and conflict. But in world work, conflict and moments of chaos are valued because these can quickly create a sense of community and a lasting organization. (Fire, 17) Chaos and turbulence in groups, disorder and disequilibrium are more difficult because they move so far from consensus reality.

Seyla: Well, do they meet the condition of my model that a reasonable argument must be arrived at under the conditions of fair debate?

Arny: No way! You have to be removed from the immediate context to see the dynamic as orderly. Disorder and disequilibrium dealt with in physics within the context of chaos theory, by the science of wholeness. This science sees all things as interconnected and stands opposed to reductionist approaches that attempt to understand events as the sum of causes and effects. (Leaders, 75) Chaos at the edge is unpredictable only from the viewpoint of the original identity. (Leaders, 76) Conflict and chaos are predictable oscillations between definitive patterns, and disorder is a matter of viewpoint. What at first seems chaotic or turbulent is, once given the chance to unfold itself, an exciting new pattern. (Leaders, 77) Process work is based on the assumption that experience is *impermanent and non-absolute*. (Leaders, 71)

But I repeat what I said earlier, we are actually none of the parts, with access to all of

them. (Leaders, 37) We are not, in your words dichotomous, we are not isolated and autonomous, but we are more than embodied, we are part of a field.

Seyla: I'm not sure I like that, Arny. It sounds analogous to what Rawls has articulated with his construct "the veil of ignorance." Let me use that as an example of what I object to in what you are saying. Under the veil of ignorance, the other as different from the self disappears. Differences are not denied, they become irrelevant. Are they human selves at all? We are left with an empty mask, which is everyone and no one. (161) The self is not a thing, *a substrate*, but a *protagonist* in a life's tale. There is no real plurality of perspectives in the Rawlsian original position, but only a definitional identity. This has consequences for the criteria of reversibility and universality necessary for discourse ethics. In the original position, the other disappears. (162) A definition of the self that is restricted to the generalized other becomes incoherent and cannot individuate among selves. (163) There is no moral injunction in the original position to face the "otherness" of the other. How do we know who the others are? All we know is that we are similarly situated. There is symmetry in relations. The assumptions that guide everyday life are not discussed, worked out and worked through in open dialogue with concrete others, they are simply deactivated. So there is the very real danger that the original position can leave all of our prejudices, misunderstandings and hostilities just as they are hidden behind a veil. (167) By contrast, only a moral dialogue that is truly open and reflexive and that does not function with unnecessary epistemic limitations can lead to a mutual understanding of otherness.

I'm not sure that there aren't epistemic limitations in process theory. Neither the concreteness nor the otherness of the concrete other can be known in the absence of the *voice* of the other. The enlarged mentality is not empathy, for empathy may make it difficult to draw boundaries between self and other. (168) To judge rationally is not to judge as if one did not know, but to judge in the light of all available and relevant information. (169) How can there be adequate boundaries and differentiation if one is part of a flow?

Arny: Unreal! We both think the other model hides difference and denies voice! Let me tell you where you are wrong about my model. We'll leave the discussion of morality and ethics for another time.

First, a field is a physical phenomenon rather than a hypothetical construct. What we are questioning, I think is the degree of variation and permeability in psychosocial fields, and the degree of agency of individual parts. Process psychology does not suggest placing "epistemic limitations" on dialogue, just the opposite. To bring all available and relevant information into play is what it is all about. I argue that this information is both wider and deeper than that of the supposed rational self. Voice is sought in a deeper and wider context.

There are boundaries within the field. Edges demarcate and delimit group and individual

self-identities. They may be experienced as resistances. (Leaders, 33) When groups forbid disavowed parts, they become incongruous, rigid, lifeless. Split-off and disallowed parts come out in group gossip. (Leaders, 34) Self-identities do not then disappear, but they become rigid and impermeable, limited, *unaware*. Maybe your problem with definitional identities is that they are lifeless projections of unaware selves.

There are also points of coherence. Modern physics speaks of “attractors” that organize and make sense out of chaos. Attractors predict what type of order will appear in the midst of chaos. Systems tend to balance themselves. But change is not only causal, it is also incomprehensible. (Leaders, 31) Attractors are a tendency to reach equilibrium. Groups have an *inevitable process flow* of antagonism and agreement. Knowing how to intervene in the evolution of the field determines whether the flow is constructive (teamwork,) or destructive (war). This requires *awareness*. (Leaders, 32) Incongruities are signs of a system trying to balance itself. (Leaders, 33) Conflict is our most exciting teacher. (Fire, 17)

Seyla: Let me posit another problem I see. This explanation also worries me in that I also recognize some commonality with the post moderns’ concept of the fractured self. Lyotard argues against “science that legitimizes itself through an explicit appeal to some grand narrative.” He offers new cognitive options such as “*recognition* of the heteromorphous nature of language games,” and the “temporary contract,” as authentic alternatives to supplant permanent institutions in the professional, emotional, sexual, cultural, family and international domains and politics. He replaces the modernist norm of performability, the reduction of fragility, unpredictability and risk through knowledge power and efficiency with a more reconciled view of *society as a bifurcated totality* in which humanity *recognizes and empowers itself*. He accepts Habermas’ purpose of formulating a metadiscourse which is “universally valid for language games,” but eschews Habermas’ argument for consensus. (204,5) I wonder Arny, if process theory is another grand narrative like the postmodern view of the fractured self, lost in language games, but not recognizing it. Postmodernists don’t accept that theirs is another grand narrative. Do process theorists?

Arny: Hey! That was tricky! But....

Seyla: I’m not finished. Modernity has struggled to reconcile internal and external cognitive epistemology by adopting a *representational view*, i.e., searching for an adequate representation of things, objects *external to the self*, through knowledge.

Arny: But ...

Seyla: Yes, the classical episteme presupposes a spectator conception of the knowing self. Critiques of this episteme are first, one which shows that the self “is not master in its own house”, not transparent to itself. Proponents of this are Marx, Freud, Horkheimer,

Habermas, and Arny, - Jung?

Arny: Well yes.

Seyla: The second, critiques the internalized dualistic conception of a world, which split between the world of appearance and the world of essence. In this version, the “concept” imposes homogeneity on a heterogeneous world. (Nietzsche, Heidegger, Adorno, Horkheimer) In the third critique, language replaces the concept or consciousness as the central signifier of meaning. The focus is on the public signifying activities of a collection of subjects. In this epistemology, the bearer of the sign (sentence,) cannot be isolated, there is no private language. The subject is the community of language users. *The subject is replaced by a system of structure of oppositions.* Action becomes agonistics within system games, in which temporary contracts are formed. (DeSaussure, Frege, Wittgenstein) (206, - 9)

I see in this only the endless struggle of local narratives vying with one another for legitimization. I have argued instead, for *a social pragmatic* conception of language, viewed as a form of *speech in action between two human beings* to the polytheism of values, not a monotheism, but *the possibility of open-ended ethical conversation* about matters of justice as well as the good life. (209) A strong post-modernist position is incompatible with and renders incoherent feminism as a theoretical articulation of a social movement.(210,11) A strong version of the death of the subject thesis is not compatible with the goals of feminism. In telling our narratives, we are not mere extensions of our histories, we are author and character at once.

Arny: Whew! Seyla, she wants to know if you want something to drink.

Seyla: Oh. Do you have orange juice? Thank you.

Now, (Seyla downs the juice,) the project of female emancipation would be incomprehensible without agency, autonomy and selfhood, and if the “doer behind the deed “ were eliminated. (214, 15) If the doer behind the deed were eliminated, there could be no accountable participant in the community of discourse and inquiry, the theorist herself. If the speaking and thinking self is replaced by “authorial positions” and if the self becomes the ventriloquist for discourses operating through her or mobilizing her, coherent theorizing becomes impossible. (216)

Arny: Time spirits are not discourses, Seyla. They are part of the field in which people live. People do have choices with the process. The range of choices is deeper and wider than you think. The self is not a ventriloquist, but an active participant in the stream of events, the flow.

But while we are not ventriloquists, we also are not mediators or analyzers, with or

without bodies, masculine or feminine, thinkers or feelers, dead or alive, but in varying degrees and at different times some impossible admixture of all these things. (River's, 7)

Ummm, I like beer nuts!

Seyla: I see. I'm not convinced that the woman does not become a "ghost" in some way in that model. Oh no, now I'm sounding like you, perhaps even fuzzy! But that's obviously not going to be resolved in this discussion. With the linguistic paradigm, it still remains to be told how a human infant can become a speaker of an infinite number of sentences and acquires the competence to become a linguistic being, how every human being can become the initiator of a unique life story, to vary gender codes, to resist hegemonic discourses. A serious interchange between the disciplines of sociolinguistics, social interactionist psychology, socialization theory, psychoanalysis and cultural history is wanting.(217,18)

Arny: Well, here we are. It's a beginning. Awareness, Seyla, awareness!

Seyla: Well Arny, I think the danger is that awareness could be taken as just a recognition of lack of identity.

Post-modernism has produced a retreat from utopia in feminism; in the form of debunking as "essentialist" any attempt to formulate a feminist ethic or aesthetic. But such utopian thinking is a practical-moral imperative, a regulatory principle of hope. Women have much to lose from a retreat from utopia altogether.
(229, 230)

Arny: I hear that this is really important to you Seyla. You don't want those high dreams to be lost. Sounds like an edge you don't want to go over. But Seyla, stop for a minute. What would it be like to retreat? Can you feel that for just a minute? Here, I'll retreat too.

Seyla: (to herself, "Preposterous. Here we go again".)

Arny: exits his seat...

Seyla: taps fingers... five minutes later, Arny returns.... Seyla continues.

I've been thinking while you were gone. To recapture threads of conversations started above, in the post-modern critique of Gilligan's work, post-modernist feminists strive to develop a "decentered" and "fractured" concept of the self in the place of the "connected" or "relational" or "identitary" self, privileged by Gilligan. Young, for example, argues that the connected self "presupposes a state, in which persons will cease to become opaque, other, not understood, and instead becomes fused, mutually sympathetic, understanding of one another as they understand themselves."

Arny: Transformed?

Seyla: Hmmm, maybe. But neither (Benhabib's) concept of the concrete other nor Arendt's concept of the enlarged mentality (which correlate with Gilligan's concept of caring,) must presuppose that there is ever a state of perfect understanding of the other. The dialogic model of ethics envisages a *continuous process of conversation in which understanding, misunderstanding, agreement as well as disagreement are always at work*. The commitment to conversation as the means through which the enlarged mentality is to be attained suggests the infinite revisability and indeterminacy of meaning.

Arny: Which brings us back to a point of agreement, the enlarged mentality is to be attained suggests "the infinite revisability and indeterminacy of meaning." I could have said it myself. But what we mean by conversation is different. My conversation would take into account different forms of communicating. Process science would take into account elements such as the variation of signals experienced by the observer. These would include primary and secondary processes, the conscious and unconscious, channels in which signals manifest, ... (River's, 11-15) And I would encourage mergings of self and other if the stream of events led us there.

Seyla: Let's save that for a later conversation, Arny, they are starting to serve dinner.

Arny: Hey Amy, you're awake! Hungry? This is Seyla.

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fadeout, camera pan plane, zoom out, sound level of airplane noise volume slow increase...

~~~~~  
Comments

For the most part, the two theorists adequately speak for themselves and defend their positions in the conversation. A few meta-comments from the fly, who has been listening intently might add to the analysis. This is not to suggest that the fly is a ventriloquist. The fly is much more, but not entirely, passive and has few control issues. Nonetheless, she might be said to be pulling a few strings.

In terms of universals, it seems obvious that for Arny, awareness would trump Seyla's "respect for each" and "human and moral autonomy," in that for him, it is a necessary condition for achieving the other two conditions. He would value those conditions as goals. I think he would value mutuality over moral autonomy, in that autonomy may not be possible ontologically to the extent that critical theorists might assume. For a process theorist, autonomy would never be free of context and field. Seyla is moving in this

direction through her embracing of narrativity and plurality as constitutive attachments. But for Seyla, attachments are socially generated. The concept of the enlarged self brings these theorists closer together with regard to values, but does not erase ontological differences which dictate enormously different process preferences.

Seyla's concrete other describes an embedded self, constituted, yet agentic. Hers is not the disconnected autonomous modern self. Yet she defends her notion of the self from the fragmentation of the postmodern self. Arny's self is also agentic, when and only when aware. His is part and parcel of the flow of events, and may move with awareness to transform both self and the field of which it is part. For Arny, consciousness and materiality are one, or at least conflated fields. As such, Arny's self is both an articulated part, and an articulating and transformative agent. This self is also modern, but admits of fragmentation in its material and psychological limited awareness. Thus it seems that it is closer to the postmodern ideal. However, Seyla reminds us that postmodernity participates in its own grand narrative. Arny's is a grand narrative.

Arny seems to attribute a systems wisdom to the field. Seyla's reserves consciousness for the individual. Even so, Arny's theory is the more revolutionary of the two. Although Seyla fiercely attributes moral choice to the individual, she assumes that change legitimately comes from within the purview of democratic institutions. Political expression occurs as the social contract expands to include newcomers. The social contract changes but is retained. Arny distrusts the subtle and not so subtle hierarchies in any system, even those purported to be democratic. Though he attributes a system's wisdom to the field, he denies causality. He assumes that real change must come from elders, individuals who are willing to act from awareness and step forward to challenge inequities in any field. Therefore, there is a necessary individual, agentic role in process theory. He is comfortable with the sort of political challenge and conflict that many democratic institutions would not afford, even terrorism, if such terrorism challenges inequitable advantage and use of power. Although Arny does not attribute his process theory to Marxist influence, the model is analogous to Marxist analysis. Arny valorizes the progressive development of movement within the system or field and the transformative consciousness or awareness of oppression held by individuals and groups within the field. At the same time, progressivity, for Arny, is not linear. While groups have an *inevitable process flow* of antagonism and agreement, as do fields in general, Arny plays with physicist Richard Feynman's theory of antimatter which predicts that matter could go backward in time. Feynman's theory explains the behavior of matter when it runs into a magnetic field. Feynman posits that the positron could reverse direction, even traveling backward and then forward in time in time. Arny holds that human personalities, like positrons can split and become incongruous followed by renewed directionality. (Leaders, 136, 137)

I'm sure that there is much, much more to be said about each of these theorists and about the two contrasted. It continues to be of great interest to me. I am interested in concluding

this discussion however incomplete, in order to allow others to join in and take up the conversation. I hope that the ensuing discussion will inform the practicality and applicability of these theories.