HARVARD UNIVERSITY
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL

A NON-CLINICAL ELECTIVE COURSE CS704.0
OF DIALECTIC SEMINARS ON
“HUMAN VALUES AS THEY RELATE TO MEDICINE”

COURSE SYLLABUS

Prerequisites: Year IV (Senior) standing for Harvard Medical School students.
Offered: Half time, for four weeks, in September, November, February and April.
Student Enrollment: Minimum 6, Maximum 12.
Meeting Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday; 2:00 to 5:00 pm.
Meeting Place: Harvard Medical School.

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http://hms.harvard.edu/humanvalues/
(Requires Adobe Reader Reader Software)
Dear Students:

I have organized and directed annually since 1998, this Non-Clinical Elective, *Dialectic* Seminar Course, of four weeks duration in September, November, February and April, for Year IV (Senior) Harvard Medical School students on the subject matter of “*Human Values As They Relate To Medicine*”. Since the majority of those who took this Course responded very favorably to it, because as they said *Medicine in this form of teaching is appraised Historically, from Philosophical* (see p. 4), *Ethical* and *Esthetic* perspectives rather than exclusively from an Empirical - Scientific outlook, many of them urged me to post it online in the *Harvard Intranet* (“*MyCourses*” accessible by password only) for Harvard Medical students who do not have the time to take this Course when it is offered, and more recently in the *Internet* (accessible by its *website*, <http://hms.harvard.edu/humanvalues/>) for students of other Medical Schools as well, so that they could all benefit from this educational opportunity at their leisure.

Although the eighty-page *Syllabus* of this Course is now available in both the *Harvard Intranet* and the *Internet*, which allows students from Harvard and other Medical Schools to read and to print its document, I strongly urge all those who have the time and are interested in the Topics here discussed, to participate in small groups, in spirited debates among themselves or with their teachers acting as moderators, by employing the truly revolutionary *Socratic method* or *dialectic* (see p. 68) that is based on *dialogue*, which can be intellectually stimulating and emotionally rewarding, rather than by being subjected to the passive *didactic* or *lecture-monologue* approach which with rare exceptions (see p. 6, A. Stevenson quote) is typically uninspiring, even dull. Lastly, it will be gratifying to the Organizer and Director of these Seminars to learn that students who partook in the present interactive discussions were motivated to the point that they will be launching similar teaching sessions with their students in future years.

However very proud I feel of our Harvard Medical School students for wishing to share in a *Spirit of Collegiality* rather than in a self-important manner, with students of other Medical Schools this unique educational adventure, I am somewhat concerned by the possibility that the majority of Medical Courses may soon be offered *online* only. Yet, we hope and trust that the *Teacher - Pupil* relationship which signifies a uniquely noble human bond, will not only survive intact but will be enhanced by the fourth “democratization of knowledge” (the first three being the *spoken, written* and *printed word*) brought about by the *electronic word*, i.e., the *Internet* which could result in broadening, deepening and so enriching the students’ intellectual and moral awareness.

George Th. Diamandopoulos, M.D.,
CS704.0 Course Organizer and Director,
Department of Pathology, Harvard Medical School.

This Course is accessed through its *Website* <http://hms.harvard.edu/humanvalues/> (Requires Adobe Reader Software), by utilizing a *Web browser* like *Safari* (for Mac) or *Internet Explorer, Netscape, Firefox* (for PC), or by employing Internet Search Engines *Google* or *Yahoo*. Improved versions of the 80-page *Course Syllabus* that result from constructive criticisms offered by Students who took this Course and by Colleagues, are uploaded in the *Internet* twice annually, *April 1* and *October 1*, for as long as feasible.
“Our Human Values are by and large an indication of Who we are.”
G. D.

PROLOGUE

Given that the Medical profession confronts daily Life-and-Death concerns and decisions affecting Humans, with the concerns frequently being based on incomplete or inaccurate information, and the decisions often undertaken under pressure and within a limited length of time, the schooling of future physicians demands that they:

a) are rigorously and thoroughly trained in the Science of Medicine, i.e., in the latest and most important aspects of the Preclinical and Clinical Medical Knowledge.

b) are suitably educated in the Art of Medicine, i.e., in Human Values As They Relate To Medicine, particularly in instances in which Ethical Values are in conflict with each other, a situation that may lead to their collision and tragedy. It should be noted parenthetically at this early point in time of these Seminars, that the term Human Values (Lt. Valere - Worth) as currently employed, signifies purely Human Concepts, e.g., ideas - beliefs - convictions - perceptions, that are of exceptional Merit to Humans.

Because the selective pressures for admission to Medical School, and later on during the first two years of Preclinical Courses in Medical School, encourage expertise in the Sciences rather than in the Humanities and the Liberal Arts, the only prospect available to remedy this most regrettable shortcoming, and so enhance Physicians’ qualifications as scientifically knowledgeable and intellectually and culturally aware professionals, is to offer Medical Students the chance to appraise Medicine from both Biomedical Sciences and Human Values perspectives. As the ancient philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) asserted so sensibly in his grand treatise Politics, Book 8,

“It is clear that youths should be instructed in some useful things, but to be always seeking after the useful, does not become free and exalted souls.”

Teaching sessions will be presented in dialectic rather than didactic manner. The Course Director has organized and will moderate the discussion of nine Seminars (see p. 7) during the first three weeks of the Course without imposing his perspective upon the Students. He will then encourage each one of them to organize and moderate a Seminar to be chosen from among twenty-five Thesis versus Antithesis possibilities (see p. 10) during the fourth and last week, in order to give the Students a “hands-on” teaching experience. Undoubtedly, the pedagogical outcome that may sprout out of an effort such as this, will not only depend upon the inspiration that the Teacher could provide, but would also be an articulation of the intellectual and emotional hopes, dreams and aspirations, along with the critical reflections and insights that the Students themselves freely and willingly bring to this mutually rewarding teaching adventure.

It must be emphasized that the chief aim of these Seminars is not to proselytize or convert anyone to what someone else believes in, but to arouse in each Student the longing to critically reflect upon Humanity’s Essential and Eternal Questions, and to try to answer them judiciously. As the foremost ancient philosopher Socrates (469-399 B.C.) affirmed so rightly in his Apology, which was recorded by his pupil Plato (428-348 B.C.),

“An unexamined life is not worth living.”
“The best physician is also a philosopher.”

This is the title of a short work by the Greco-Roman physician Galen of Pergamos (c. 130–200), who is considered second only in importance to the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates of Cos (c. 460-370 B.C.).

Why illuminate these Seminars with a Philosophical Perspective?

“Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions, since no definite answer can, as a rule, be known (*) to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions themselves; because these questions enlarge our conception of what is possible, enrich our intellectual imagination and diminish the dogmatic assurance which closes the mind against speculation; but above all because, through the greatness of the universe which philosophy contemplates, the mind is also rendered great, and becomes capable of that union with the universe which constitutes its highest good.”


Please take notice of the 895-page book “The History of Western Philosophy”, also by Bertrand Russell, first published in 1945, which as described by the Publisher “has been universally acclaimed as the outstanding one-volume work on the subject -- unparalleled in its comprehensiveness, its clarity, its erudition, its grace and wit.” The Organizer and Director of this Course recommends this superb book very strongly.

(*) “ΕΝ ΟΙΔΑ ΟΤΙ ΟΥΔΕΝ ΟΙΔΑ.”

(*) “I know one thing that I know nothing.”

Attributed to the ancient Greek moral philosopher Socrates (469-399 B.C.) by Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers, bk. II, sec. 32. Because of this statement, Socrates has been considered by many to be the “Father of Agnosticism” (see pp. 12, 14, 40, 41).
“ΠΑΝΤΕΣ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΙ ΤΟΥ ΕΙΔΕΝΑΙ ΟΡΕΓΟΝΤΑΙ ΦΥΣΕΙ.”
“All humans by nature desire to know.”
Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), Metaphysics, Book 1.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Quotations from the illustrious Works by the celebrated ancient Greek Tragic Dramatists Aeschylus, Sophocles (*), Euripides (**), which are found in the present Seminars, represent some of the truly great literary achievements of the human mind. They are the outcome of my extensive reading during the past many years of their English translations by the two outstanding Classicists, Philip Vellacott (Aeschylus; Euripides) and E. F. Watling (Sophocles), published by Penguin Classics, for Penguin Books. All other Quotations came chiefly from my reading of the world literature, occasionally from Bartlett’s Familial Quotations, and rarely by means of the Internet, e.g., Albert Einstein, Martin Luther King, Jr., by employing Search Engines Google or Yahoo.

I must point out that most of these notable Quotations exemplify the Western - Occidental Perspective, and extremely few reflect the Eastern - Oriental Outlook as articulated by Indian, Chinese and various other Asian Civilizations and Cultures. This is mainly because my having being born in Greece, acquainted me at an early age with the ancient Hellenic - Greek stance of knowing through experience based on objective sensory perception and rational thinking based on logic, rather than of believing which is inspired by divine revelation or illumination and faith that could be a mystical inner experience which represent the East’s viewpoint. I must further stress that this Western Perspective was what laid the groundwork for the intellectual - political - artistic views of the Western Civilizations and of the Western type of Medicine that is presently taught and practiced in the West and more recently in many parts of the East as well.

I should also state clearly that those Thinkers whose voices predominate in these Seminars, do not belong exclusively to a particular period, i.e., Ancient, or a specific place, i.e., Greece, but instead they do pertain to all Ages and all Nations inasmuch as these Men represent some of our Intellectual Forefathers who reflect the Heritage of all Civilized Humans, hopefully ourselves included. Lastly, I must emphasize that the Quotations that are being offered are to enrich rather than to embellish as ornaments these texts, in hopes that they will inspire and challenge students to read the original literary works from which they were derived for the pure pleasure and delight of it.

Lastly, Man/Men with a capital M, followed by he/they, are terms that are used throughout these texts to denote human being(s) rather than male person(s), in order to avoid keep using the very awkward phraseology of “man or woman”, “he or she”.

G. D.

(*) “I portray men as they should be, but Euripides portrays them as they are.”
Sophocles quoted by Aristotle in his Poetics, ch. 25, 1460b33-34.

(**) “Euripides is the most intensely tragic of all the poets.”
Quoted by Aristotle in his Poetics, ch. 14, 1453a28-30.
A Teacher advising a Student

"You are young, my son,
and as the years go by,
time will change and even reverse,
some of your opinions.
Refrain therefore awhile,
from setting yourself up,
as a judge of the highest matters."

Plato (428-348 B.C.).
Laws, 888.

A Student’s Metamorphosis

“As an ugly little flower bulb
blossoms into a beautiful flower,
and an unsightly caterpillar
becomes a radiant butterfly,
so an inexperienced medical student
matures into an experienced physician,
who alleviates pain and suffering,
prolongs Life, postpones Death.”

G. D.

Few Orators or Lecturers are truly inspiring

“In classical times when Cicero had finished speaking,
the people said, ‘How well he spoke,’
but when Demosthenes had finished speaking,
the people said, ‘Let us march.’”

Quotation attributed to Adlai E. Stevenson II (1900-1965).
SEMINARS ON
“HUMAN VALUES AS THEY RELATE TO MEDICINE”

The following Nine Seminars will be moderated by the Course Organizer and Director during the first three Weeks of the Course.

Directory

 Introductory Remarks.  Pages, 1-10

1st Seminar: “Life versus Death”.  Pages, 11-14
Monday, 2:00-5:00pm.

2nd Seminar: “Killing versus Murder”.  Pages, 15-18
Wednesday, 2:00-5:00pm.

3rd Seminar: “War versus Peace”.  Pages, 19-24
Friday, 2:00-5:00pm.

4th Seminar: “Love versus Hate”.  Pages, 25-34
Monday, 2:00-5:00pm.

5th Seminar: “Truth versus Lie”.  Pages, 35-38
Wednesday, 2:00-5:00pm.

6th Seminar: “Mythos versus Logos”.  Pages, 39-44
Friday, 2:00-5:00pm.

7th Seminar: “Theocracy versus Democracy”.  Pages, 45-48
Monday, 2:00-5:00pm.

8th Seminar: “Rational versus Instinctive”.  Pages, 49-52
Wednesday, 2:00-5:00pm.

9th Seminar: “Happiness versus Unhappiness”.  Pages, 53-58
Friday, 2:00-5:00pm.

Epilogue, Remaining Entries.  Pages, 59-80

These Seminars embody the “Thesis versus Antithesis” dialectic method.

The term *versus* signifies in contrast with and not as opposed to.
EACH STUDENT WILL DISCUSS IN CLASS ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BOOKS, THE THEME OF WHICH RELATES CLOSELY TO A SEMINAR’S TOPIC

   Leo Tolstoy, The Death of Ivan Ilyich.
   The prolonged illness and dying of an unreflective man - a High Court Judge, facing his death alone, lonely, and abandoned by his family and friends, while only his young peasant man-servant shows human compassion, kindness and pity toward him.

   Leo Tolstoy, How Much Land Does a Man Need?
   Whereas a dead Man - a Corpse needs only “six feet from head to heel” of land for his grave, a living Man always greedy and grasping wants much more than what he has, as if he were to live for ever rather than that he will die one day soon.

   Plato, Apology.
   The trial, condemnation and infliction of death on the philosopher Socrates by his fellow citizens of ancient Athens on account of two false charges, i.e., of heresy and of corrupting young men, but in fact because he candidly pursued “the examined life”.

   Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Crime and Punishment.
   Raskolnikov, who is an intelligent destitute student imagines that he is such an extraordinary person that he is above conventional morality. He commits a heinous double crime from which he is eventually redeemed by a woman’s love for him.

   These two books are the most famous treatises on The Art of War. The first is the Eastern point of view of “victory by ingenious deception”. The second, is the Western perspective of “victory by disciplined well trained and well organized citizen-soldiers”.

   Aeschylus, The Persians.
   This tragedy commemorates the dramatic victory of the Greek over the Persian naval forces in the sea battle of Salamis, i.e., the triumph of Democracy over Tyranny, while expressing sympathy for the “enemy’s” suffering and despair caused by the war.

   Euripides, Trojan Women.
   This is another case in world literature in which a great Tragic Dramatist depicts most eloquently the anguish and sufferings of “enemy” civilian noncombatants, women and children, resulting from the horrors of war perpetrated for the sake of conquest.

   Aristophanes, Lysistrata.
   Lysistrata and the other women of ancient Athens and Sparta, disheartened by the cruelty and idiocy of their cities’ ongoing war, band together and start a sex-strike until their husbands agree to stop their warfare and so have a peaceful and loving life.

   Plato, Symposium (Lt.) – Symposium (Gr.).
   The Symposium is a dialectic discussion in ancient Athens by male friends while drinking (Gr. posion) together (Gr. syn) on the nature of human Love: first, the sensual or erotic type, and then the ideal or spiritual kind of Love of truth, of beauty, of virtue.

   Sophocles, Antigone.
   This is a very bitter conflict between two fervently held principles: one, Respect of Secular Laws; the other, Love of Divine Justice, each partly justifiable, each rigidly blind to the merits of the opposite, with their collision leading to tragedy and death.
William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*.
A contrast between the passionate Love of two young people, a mature girl of fourteen and a less mature boy, and the malicious Hate of their respective clans, which leads to the death of the two lovers and the eventual reconciliation of their families.

**5th Seminar: “Truth versus Lie”, Book Discussion.**

Sophocles, *King Oedipus*.
This play which was considered by Aristotle (*Poetics*) to be the highest point of Tragic Art, traces a Man’s search for the “truth about himself”, which leads him from arrogant confidence, to confusion, to fear, finally to despair as he becomes self-aware.

**6th Seminar: “Mythos versus Logos”, Book Discussions.**

Charles Darwin, *The Voyage of the Beagle*.
This is the absorbing account of Darwin’s five-year voyage around the glob on the H.M.S. *Beagle*, while he was amassing biological and geological observations, the insights of which led to his Theory of Evolution - one of the greatest human discoveries.

Ernst Mayr, *What Evolution Is*.
Mayr, who was the foremost Evolutionary Biologists of the 20th century, shows clearly that Evolution is no longer just a Theory, but it is a scientific explanation based on strong factual evidence, although admittedly some details still remain controversial.

Mother Teresa, *Come Be My Light*.
This book is a collection of letters sent by a saintly Catholic nun to her spiritual confessors, which reveal faith-hope-love coexisting with doubt-emptiness-despair, the latter causing profound suffering in the believer for feeling forsaken by God - Christ.

**7th Seminar: “Theocracy versus Democracy”, Book Discussion.**

Italian City-States that inspired the Renaissance and High Culture endorsed the ruthless attaining, retaining and exercising political power while abandoning the strong ethical values that had been sanctioned by Ancient Classical and Christian Morality.

**8th Seminar: “Rational versus Instinctive”, Book Discussions.**

Euripides, *The Bacchae*.
This tragedy considered to be Euripides’ best work, illustrates that although Man must subscribe to the Rational - *Apollonian* part of his nature, he must not ignore his Instinctive - *Dionysian* part, because he will then be horribly destroyed.

Euripides, *Medea*.
This tragedy, also by Euripides, demonstrates clearly that irrational destructive passions of a betrayed wife who inflicts vengeance on her unfaithful husband by killing her children and his new wife, inexorably leads to frightful annihilation of all involved.

**9th Seminar: “Happiness versus Unhappiness”, Book Discussions.**

Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*.
This book has had a profound influence for many centuries on Western moral philosophy, by clarifying the relationship between Goodness and Happiness from theoretical and practical perspectives, and how morality relates to human nature.

Leo Tolstoy, *Family Happiness*.
A young woman married to an older man comes to realize that “the only certain happiness in life is to live for others”, i.e., to love her family, a theme that defies the life of *Ivan Ilyich* whose existence was meaningless because he had lived solely for himself.
During the remaining forth week of the Course, Seminars will be organized and moderated by the Students on Topics to be chosen from among the following 25 “Thesis versus Antithesis” possibilities.

1) “Humility versus Arrogance”
2) “Kindness versus Meanness”
3) “Altruism versus Egoism”
4) “Virtue versus Vice”
5) “Compassion versus Cruelty”
6) “Forgiveness versus Revenge”
7) “Noble versus Base”
8) “Hope versus Despair”
9) “Morality versus Legality”
10) “Impartiality versus Prejudice”
11) “Conviction versus Convenience”
12) “Cooperation versus Confrontation”
13) “Need versus Greed”
14) “Secular versus Spiritual”
15) “Reason versus Faith”
16) “Discovery versus Revelation”
17) “Science versus Religion”
18) “Thinking versus Feeling”
19) “Objective versus Subjective”
20) “Idealism versus Realism”
21) “Pragmatism versus Dogmatism”
22) “Nature versus Nurture”
23) “Chance versus Choice”
24) “Determinism versus Volition”
25) “Causation versus Correlation”

The term *versus* signifies *in contrast with* and not *as opposed to*. 
1st Seminar: “Life versus Death”.
Monday, 2:00-5:00pm.
Readings: Leo Tolstoy, The Death of Ivan Ilyich.
Leo Tolstoy, How Much Land Does a Man Need?

Humans perceived early on natural phenomena by way of their unaided sensory organs, and speculated on the basis of their religious beliefs and long-held convictions about their causes, the majority of which were shown in due course to be erroneous. Whereas many of their subsequent explanations about the Physical and Biological Worlds were proven amazingly accurate (see p. 41), efforts to clarify the nature of Life was judged unattainable until 1953, when the structure of DNA was finally determined.

What is Life?
The answer depends upon the “level of complexity” at which one defines it.

At the “level of least complexity”, i.e., of Biology - Chemistry - Physics, Life is DNA replicating into more DNA; or for some viruses, RNA replicating into more RNA, e.g., poliovirus; or for rare viruses, RNA being reverse-transcribed enzymatically into DNA which in turn is transcribed into RNA, e.g., retroviruses (ALV, MLV, HIV). Thus, the Fundamental Characteristic of Biological Life is: Genome replication usually with but rarely without (e.g., phage) metabolism.

This is true for Humans, Animals, Plants, Microbes (bacteria, fungi, viruses). Are Viruses that can replicate only inside living animal - plant - bacterial cells, and can also be crystallized, e.g., TMV, human poliovirus, rhinovirus, “alive”? Are Prions, i.e., the misfolded infectious proteins that can replicate, “alive”?

At the “level of uppermost complexity”, i.e., of Human Beings, Life is the means by which inanimate matter evolved into animate matter -> human body -> human brain, the latter being manifested as human mind, i.e., brainpower - intelligence - awareness - consciousness - cognition - thinking - reasoning - contemplating - understanding - judging - knowing - remembering - feeling - believing. Are, brain and mind two separate entities - dualism, or two aspects of a single entity - monism?

Hence, Man’s first - most basic Aim in Life is to survive in order to procreate himself, i.e., to bear children who will propagate - perpetuate his family lineage and so contribute to the overall survival of the Human Species, while Man’s second and just as important Goal is to live his Life inquisitively, wisely, ethically, esthetically, kindly, compassionately, by striving:
a) to “decode the physical and biological laws of Nature” as Aristotle attested, because being aware of the truth is better than living with falsehood.
b) to “understand himself and others” as Socrates and Plato advocated, so that he can avoid being in conflict with himself and especially with others.
c) to “attain for himself and help others achieve for themselves”, contentment, fulfillment and happiness (see p. 53) in this paradoxical, even absurd, World.

What is the Meaning or Purpose of Human Life, i.e., Why does Man live?
(This question is based on the presumption that there might be Meaning or Purpose).
For a Monotheist, i.e., a person who believes in the One God and His Divine Meaning or Purpose in the World, it is to worship, honor and venerate Him, and to always endeavor to obey and fulfill His Moral Laws as explained in the Sacred Books of Religions like Judaism and Christianity (the Bible), Islam (the Koran).
Whereas belief in God’s existence can explain the Entire World and the Hereafter, for a person who doubts (Skeptic), does not know about (Agnostic), believes in the nonexistence (Atheist) of God, he may be unable to justify Why Man lives, Hence, for a person who thinks that Life is the evolutionary outcome of “Chance and Necessity”, i.e., an unguided process of random genetic variation and natural selection, rather than one who believes that it is the result of “Intelligent Design”, i.e., that the variety and irreducible complexity of Living Organisms can only be illuminated by the existence of an all-knowing Divine Designer - Creator, can he then infer that there may not be an Ultimate Meaning or Purpose of Human Life? If yes, can a Skeptic, an Agnostic, an Atheist, finding himself in this distressing dilemma, devise a Sense of Meaning or Purpose for himself, both by pursuing a Creatively Productive and a Reflective Personal Life, and also by seeking to help establish together with Kindred Spirits true Brotherhood among all Men?

A Reminder: The statement is made in the U.S. Declaration of Independence [July 4, 1776], that “…. We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; ….” Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826).

What are Physicians’ Principal Objectives for their Patients?
To preserve health; to prevent, treat, cure illness; to alleviate anguish, distress, suffering; to enhance good quality of life; to help patients face their illness and death courageously, and most importantly, “To Do No Harm” (Hippocrates). However, is keeping alive in Assisted Living Communities or in Nursing Homes, elderly people with neurodegenerative diseases or incurable illnesses, a decision to be taken by the physicians responsible, or should they refrain from partaking in these kinds of judgments, since in the absence of a “living will” the Spouse, Children and Siblings are the only ones with the moral authority to decide?

What is Human Death?
“When I am, Death is not; When Death is, I am not.”
Epicurus (341-270 B.C.).

Difficult to define other than to state that it is the final Cessation of Human Life. Although in an individual (indivisible) human being who is cardiorespiratory dead, or brain dead, or a living cadaver, the brain is not accompanied by mind, his viable organs, tissues, cells can “live on” in vitro, or in vivo by being transplanted into suitable patients.

What might be the Consequence of Human Death?
From a “Theistic” Perspective, the Body can die, but the Soul is Immortal.
From a Secular Perspective, the Death of the Body is the Ultimate Extinction.
If Death is not a New Beginning, but it is the End of it All, must we fear this?
Can we know about the “Beyond Death” by way of Faith or through Reason?
Is Faith in a “Life after Death” self-deception, or is it supreme wisdom?
Should it matter to Humans if there is, or there is no, Life after Death?

Can Humans face Death with Calmness, Dignity, Serenity, Equanimity, even Humor?
Can we do this alone, or do we need the Compassion of Fellow Humans?
What is Human Compassion? Is it kindness, tenderness, pity? What else is it?
Can Religious Beliefs or Philosophical Convictions give Support - Comfort to a dying person, or does the “Fear of Death” invariably rule supreme?
Does the imminence of Death confer Intellectual Clarity, or Despair and Gloom?
Is it true that “The brave dies only once, the coward dies a thousand deaths.” Yes? No?
Life **versus** Death

**Homer** (c. 8th century B.C.), the greatest of all Poets, gave a peerless comment about Life **versus** Death in his Epic Poem *Odyssey*, Book 11, Lines 548-553 and 555-558. Translated by Robert Fagles, Viking Press.

Odysseus, while visiting the Ghosts of the Heroes of the Trojan war in Hades - Hell, meets with Achilles’ Ghost:

…. “But you, Achilles,
there’s not a man in the world more blest than you --
there never has been, never will be one.
Time was, when you were alive, we Argives
honored you as a god, and now down here, I see,
you lord it over the dead in all your power.
So grieve no more at dying, great Achilles.”

Achilles, responds as follows:

“No winning words about death to me, shining Odysseus!
By god, I’d rather slave on earth for another man --
some dirt-poor tenant farmer who scrapes to keep alive --
than rule down here over all the breathless dead.”

The oral Storyteller **Aesop** (c. 620-560 B.C.) who was/is much loved in ancient and modern times, by both the young and the old alike, informs us very simply but most beautifully in his Fable “**The Old Man and Death**” that while Life may not be sweet, Death is very bitter.

“A Poor Old Man traveling a long distance with a heavy bundle of firewood on his back grows very tired.
He throws his bundle on the ground and calls upon Death to deliver him from his miserable Life.
Death appears promptly.
'What do you want from me Old Man?'
The Old Man, now Face to Face with Death, tells Him.
'Please help me lift my heavy bundle on my back,
and I will be on my way again.'

Likewise, the Tragic Dramatist **Euripides** (c. 484-407 B.C.), has Princess Iphigenia in his moving Tragedy *Iphigenia in Aulis*, contemplate about Life **versus** Death, as she accepts the inevitability of her pending death by sacrifice to the goddess Artemis.

“To see this sunlight is for us all our dearest love!
Below is nothing; and to wish for death, madness,
Better a life of wretchedness than a noble death.”

“And if Artemis has laid a claim on my body,
Who am I, a mortal, to oppose a god?”
In *Trojan Women*, which is another great tragedy by Euripides, Hecabe - the grieving Queen of Troy who is now captive of the Greek army, argues with her also captive daughter-in-law Andromache, the pros and cons of Life versus Death,

Andromache: “It is over now. Yes, it was terrible; and yet, being dead, she [Polyxena] is more fortunate than I who live.”

Hecabe: “Death and Life are not the same.
Death is Extinction; but in Life there is still Hope.”

Andromache: “To be dead is the same as never to have been born,
And better far than living on in wretchedness.
The dead feel nothing; evil then can cause no pain.
But one who falls from happiness to unhappiness,
Wanders bewildered in a strange and hostile world.”

It was the foremost Moral Philosopher Socrates (469-399 B.C.) who even though “he knew that he knew nothing” (see p. 4, the “Father of Agnosticism”), he offered the most logical answer to the question of personal immortality and its befitting rewards, as relayed by his beloved pupil and Fellow Philosopher Plato (428-348 B.C.) in his *Apology*.

“Death is one of two things.
Either it is annihilation, and the dead have no consciousness of anything, or as we are told, it is a change -- a migration of the soul from this place to another.

Now if there is no consciousness but only a dreamless sleep, death must be a marvelous gain.

If on the other hand death is a removal from here to some other place, and if what we are told is true that all the dead are there, what greater blessing could there be than this .... to join .... heroes of the old days .... who met their death through an unfair trial.”

.... “Now it is time that we were going.
I to die and you to live, but which of us has the happier prospect in unknown to anyone but God.”

The Elizabethan Poet William Shakespeare (1564-1616) offered in his magnificent play *King Richard the Second* [1595-1596], Act III, Sc. ii, a most somber commentary about our only true possession, i.e., our death, in contrast to our ephemeral possessions.

“And nothing can we call our own but death.”

Lastly, people of different temperaments may perceive human life differently.

“Life is a tragedy for those who feel,
but a comedy to those who think.”

Horace Walpole (1717-1797).
2nd Seminar: “Killing versus Murder”.
Wednesday, 2:00-5:00pm.
Readings: Plato, Apology.
Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Crime and Punishment.

Killing of animals for their flesh and organs in primitive and modern societies occurs chiefly for the purpose of securing food and preventing starvation. The killing of animals in ancient times had also taken place as sacrifices to the Gods. The killing and devouring of fellow humans - Cannibalism, of enemy people for ritualistic reasons e.g., the Aztecs in Central America, and of friendly people for food when facing death from extreme starvation, e.g., the Donner Party, has happened. The killing of family members at God’s command has occurred in ancient societies, e.g., Abraham and his readiness to sacrifice his only son Isaac; Agamemnon and his willingness to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia, both of whom were saved in the nick of time from certain death by the intervention of a benevolent God. The silencing by death of the annoying, disapproving voices of citizens, e.g., Socrates, Gandhi, Rev. King by their Societies has occurred often.

Is killing of humans by humans always murder, therefore a crime?

At War: Between soldiers of warring nations? Of civilians of an enemy nation? Of civilians of the same nation, e.g., “ethnic cleansing”, “genocide”? Does it make any difference if killings are: vicious or much less so, at close range or at a distance? Is killing of humans justified in self-defense, in a war fought for national independence but not in a war fought for conquests? Can one nation’s “terrorists” be another nation’s “freedom fighters”? Isn’t true that he who has nothing to live for may have something to die for? Are suicide bombings, preemptive strikes, targeted assassinations, moral?

At Peace: Accidental or premeditated? Are there ever extenuating circumstances? Could a victim have been a victimizer? Does society have the right to impose capital punishment (see p. 16) or long imprisonment (see p. 17) on humans? Does the cruelty of the penalty, e.g., stoning, hanging, beheading, shooting, electrocuting, lethal injection, reveal something about the degree of civilization of a society (see p. 17, Churchill quotation)? Shouldn’t physicians, even under duress, refuse to assist in an execution? Isn’t “honor killing” a vile, despicable act practiced by superstitious, backward peoples?

In Medical Settings: Should physicians be guided by the advice of Hippocrates - “The Father of Medicine”, who firmly affirmed in his “Oath” (see p. 48) that a physician is “to help or at least to do no harm” as exemplified by the physician’s profound respect for and protection of all human life, i.e., “never to prescribe a deadly drug to anyone even if asked, nor to give such advice” (physician-assisted suicide is unacceptable), “neither to give a woman a pessary to procure abortion” (unequivocal protection of the unborn human fetus). Given that from a biological perspective human life begins at conception, i.e. at the moment a zygote is formed, could the 1.3 million legal “on demand” abortions, which have been occurring annually since 1980 in U.S., that prevent “back-alley” illegal abortions, be tolerable but still deplorable to some? Might the destruction of normally conceived living human embryos for their “stem cells” be unethical, whereas utilizing cloned human embryos derived from mature skin cells for the same purpose be ethical?

What should be the punishment for killing, or for murdering, a human being? a) Loathing, Hatred, Revenge, Reprisal, Retaliation, even Death, or b) Understanding, Compassion, Mercy, Forgiveness (see p. 18, A TRUE STORY). What punishment serves Justice best? Is there “Equal Justice Under Law” (Pericles), or is this a ploy a trick, perpetrated by the Strong to deceive the Weak and the Vulnerable?
REASONS FOR OR AGAINST CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Capital Punishment is the judicial infliction of Death on Criminals. It was first sanctioned in early antiquity - “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed” (Genesis 9:6). It was attained by stoning (Ancient Jews); hemlock poisoning (Ancient Greeks); strangling (Ancient Chinese); drowning, crucifixion (Ancient Romans); burning alive at the stake (Medieval Europe); hanging, beheading (England); guillotine (France); hanging, electrocution, lethal injection (U.S.). The Empress Elizabeth was the first to decree the abolition of Capital Punishment or Death Penalty in Czarist Russia. By early 20th Century it had been abolished in a number of European Nation, and by late 20th Century in all European Nations belonging to the European Union. Although 66% of the people in US polled nationally supported the Death Penalty, it was abolished in 14 of the States. Even so, it remains lawful in the other 36, with Texas accounting for 37% (400/1,092) of the executions in all U.S. from 1976 to 2006, and 62% (26/42) in 2007.

Capital Punishment - Death Penalty - Death Sentence is justified because:
   a) it prevents the criminal from repeating his crime.
   b) it deters crime by discouraging would be criminals.
   c) for poor countries, swift execution of a criminal will cost much less than the costs of prolonged imprisonment, which can be brutal and dehumanizing.
   d) a criminal may be too far gone to be rehabilitated, especially in “prison air”.
   e) from the point of societal retribution, criminals deserve to be punished, and their punishment should be commensurate to their crime. Code of Laws by the Babylonian King Hammurabi (c. 1792-1750 B.C.), e.g., “an eye for an eye”, which sanctioned Equal instead of Unequal Injustice, e.g., “two eyes for an eye”.
   f) feelings of vengeance and revenge may be cathartic for a victim’s relatives.
   g) as a rule, a person is condemned to death because of irrefutable evidence.
   h) contrary to ideology, racism plays no role in deciding on a death sentence.

Capital Punishment - Death Penalty - Death Sentence is not justified because:
   a) the effect of deterrence can be better accomplished with life imprisonment.
   b) deterrence by the possibility of death of would be criminals has not been established by reliable empirical evidence with any degree of certainty.
   c) for rich countries like the U.S., the costs incurred from appeals and legal counseling of the person to be executed are much greater than expenses from prolonged imprisonment, which can be merciful and humanizing.
   d) a criminal might become rehabilitated and make something of his/her life.
   e) the death sentence of a criminal like a mass murderer, is definitely inadequate as retribution for the death of many people who are usually innocent victims.
   f) feelings of vengeance and revenge should never justify a death sentence.
   g) a man may be condemned to death because of inadequate or biased evidence.
   h) poverty and race are connected to the imposition of a death sentence.

[Many of these judicial perceptions were retrieved after extensive Internet Searches].

Conclusion: The above apparently logical arguments for or against Capital Punishment seem sensible both singly and collectively. However, since Judges and Jurists could make tragic mistakes in their Verdicts on human guilt or innocence, and also because a Death Sentence followed by its implementation cannot be rectified, Capital Punishment is below human dignity in a Civilized Society and should at long last be abolished.
THE BALLAD OF READING GAOL [1898].

“I never saw a man who looked
With such a wistful eye
Upon that little tent of blue
Which prisoners call the sky. ....
When a voice behind me whispered low,
‘That fellow’s got to swing’.
Yet each man kills the thing he loves,
By each let this be heard,
Some do it with a bitter look,
Some with a flattering word.
The coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword!
It is sweet to dance to violins
When Love and Life are fair:
To dance to flutes, to dance to lutes
is delicate and rare:
But it is not sweet with nimble feet
To dance upon the air! ....
Something was dead in each of us,
and what was dead was Hope.
I know not whether laws be right,
Or whether laws be wrong;
All that we know who lie in gaol
Is that the wall is strong;
And that each day is like a year,
A year whose days are long. ....
The vilest deeds like poison weeds
Bloom well in prison air:
It is only what is good in man
That wastes and withers there.”

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900).

Whereas 200,000 almost all men were prisoners in 1974 in U.S., more than 2,000,000 men and women, 50% of whom were Afro-Americans, were incarcerated in 2004. Likewise, while the U.S. represents 4-5% of the world’s population, it accounts for 25% of its prison population (New York Times). As Winston Churchill had observed, “Treatment of crime and criminals is one of the most unfailing tests of the civilization of any country.”

“Distrust all in whom the impulse to punish is powerful.”

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900).
Thus Spake Zarathustra [1883-1891].

“Prisons are to crime what greenhouses are to plants.”

Austin, Texas, Attorney Harry M. Whittington (1927-).
A TRUE STORY - Justice Tempered with Mercy and Forgiveness.

“To err is human, to forgive divine.”
Alexander Pope (1688-1744).
An Essay on Criticism [1711] II, l. 525.

According to my beloved maternal grandmother Olympia, this incident occurred many years ago in a mountain village in Northern Greece, where people who live there abide by strict moral and social conventions, customs, rules and regulations.

“There were two young boys who had been the best of friends since early childhood. Years later when they were both grown-up men in their early twenties, for reasons that no one of the villagers could ever figured out, they had gotten into a fierce violent argument which caused one of them to kill the other - his best friend unintentionally, by striking him very hard once, on the chest over the heart, with his clenched right fist. Twelve of their villagers acting as Jurors, and taking into account the tragic circumstances that lead to this murder, decided that the ‘killer’ should be punished with twenty years of imprisonment. During this long time of the man’s incarceration, his two sisters who were unable to bear the shame of their brother’s crime, and also because they realized that no good man would ever marry a murderer’s sister, left their parents’ home and their village and moved to a big city thus disappearing into desirable anonymity. A few years later, first the Father and then the Mother of the murderer died ‘of a broken heart’ as the villagers said, although in reality it was because they were crushed by knowing that every man, woman, and even child in the village thought of them as being the ‘murderer’s parents’.

After twenty years of imprisonment, the man having ‘served his time for his crime’ won back his freedom. Since he knew no place other than his village, and also because everything had changed in the world so much during his long absence, he decided to go back home, in hopes that he will not be rejected, and perhaps even accepted by his fellow villagers. But his return did not turn out to be what he had hoped for. Although he was not abused by anyone, ‘no one would shake the hand that killed a man’. The long years in prison however had made him another kind of a person, by his coming to realize that ‘no man has the right to kill another man under any circumstance’. And so he decided to visit the Mother of the friend whom he had killed - the Father had died already, and beg for her forgiveness. He asked the village Priest to find out if his friend’s Mother will allow him to visit her. When she said yes, he paid her a visit with the Priest accompanying him. Although he had expected to find her waiting for him alone, he saw that many of the villagers had also come to witness this gesture of forgiveness like the Chorus of an ancient Greek Tragedy. When finally he faced the Mother while she stood in the large living room of the house, with many of the villagers crowding behind her all in silence and anticipation, he fell to his knees in front of her, kissed her right hand, and asked her for forgiveness. As he had hoped, the Mother of the man he had killed, placed both her hands on his head, and forgave him. She also gave him her blessings, to find at last happiness in life, ‘for he had suffered much’ “.

The happy ending of this story, was that the man now at liberty and forgiven, was free to ask for the hand and be given in marriage the sister of the man he had killed, for she was the girl to whom he had been betrothed before the tragic event, and who had faithfully and devotedly waited for him during these twenty years. My grandmother also said with much conviction that although she had no knowledge of what had transpired later on, she anticipated that their firstborn son was named after the killed friend - now the man’s brother-in-law in spirit, so that finally the name of the dead man would be remembered and so live on in their hearts in love and affection.

G. D.
3rd Seminar: “War versus Peace”.
Friday, 2:00-5:00pm.
Readings: Sun Tzu, The Art of War. 
Machiavelli, The Art of War. 
Aeschylus, The Persians. 
Euripides, Trojan Women. 
Aristophanes, Lysistrata.

“All Nature is War.”
Charles Darwin (1809-1882). 
(See p. 75, Darwin & Huxley quotes).

Physicians volunteer or are drafted into the Armed Forces by nations at war, in order to preserve the health of those who will do the fighting, but mainly to treat those who are injured during the fight. Because of the laudatory ethical principles that have characterized the medical profession throughout human history, Physicians of all civilized nations are expected to offer enemy soldiers the same medical care as what they give to those of their own nations. Undoubtedly, under distressful or calamitous circumstances this ethical approach to treating injured people irrespective of national origin has not always occurred as exemplary and commendably as it should have been. Physicians must however never allow negative, hateful, detestable, abhorrent personal feelings, to influence their professional expectations of themselves. At war and during peace, the stipulations that stem from honoring the “Hippocratic Oath” (see p. 48) should always reign supreme. But a more fundamental responsibility, obligation, or duty that Physicians are required to exercise in a free society is not only to patch-up the bodies of wounded combatants in time of war, but to try also as Citizens to influence national policies so that war can be prevented or at worst be limited in space and time.

In War’s opposing sides, cruelty breeds cruelty, hate breeds hate, depravity breeds depravity, atrocities bring about worse atrocities, and so Man becomes a most vicious beast, for he has much more intelligence and shrewdness than any of the savage animals. Although wars are as a rule planned and declared by older men, usually for religious or secular mythologies, or because of feelings of revenge-reprisal, it is young men and women too who fight in them and are slaughtered. As the historian Herodotus (c. 485-425 B.C.) wrote in his The Histories, “In peace, children bury their parents; while war violates the order of nature and causes parents to bury their children”. Of the lucky ones who survive this living Hell, this abysmal appalling Barbarism, many get injured, mangled, maimed, or crippled, both bodily and emotionally, with little chance for their eventual complete recovery. In addition, these war-caused calamities and sufferings, which can also hurt civilian noncombatants, women (see p. 21, Hecabe) and children, are never emphasized because “In War, Truth is the first Casualty” (quote attributed to Aeschylus). The reign of the Half Truth, or of the Naked Lie may soon follow, along with the deaths of combatants. For Man has always justified his inhumanity to Fellow Men by believing that they are his “evil enemies” whom he must exterminate, although they are complete strangers to himself (see pp. 23-24), never having done him any harm or wrong.

Why do we Humans go to War? Is it because a vindictive God commands us to do so, or do we have it in our nature, in the genes that we have inherited without our consent from our progenitors during the past many millennia, to repeatedly wage war followed by “periods of devastation misnamed Peace” (Tacitus) and that is only in case this becomes expedient? Since War is associated with Death while Peace with Life, does the fact that Humans just like wild and vicious animals choose to fight and die rather than to compromise and live in peace suggest that there is a killing instinct, a “death drive” (Freud) in each one of us, namely to “kill or be killed” (saying by the U.S. Marines)? Or, is
war the result of preserving our boundaries, our turf, or in more contemporary cynical terms, is war the outcome of conflicting economic interests among Men and Nations which is another way of saying that war is the result of human greed, rapacity, even theft, i.e., of not knowing when “enough is enough”? Or, is war as the eminent ancient Greek historian Thucydides (c. 460-400 B.C.) asserted, the outcome of “lust for power arising from ambition .... followed by the violence of parties once engaged in contention”?

Whereas U.S. President Woodrow Wilson declared, “This will be the war to end all wars”, World War II that followed it two decades later was a “total war” in which civilian populations were also targets of military actions, finally causing an estimated human loss of life of seventy-two million people. In addition, many war victories are actually of the “Pyrrhic” type when the victor is destroyed as much as his defeated enemy is, or an indecisive outcome in a limited war may soon lead to guerilla wars or to a war without an end as the “war on terror” appears to have become? But isn’t war against an aggressor, or of liberation, or to defend a moral principle, ever justified even just, provided of course that its conduct is with any luck not excessively cruel (see p. 22, General Sherman quotation), and the struggle is to preserve or regain one’s personal and national freedom and independence (see p. 22, Winston Churchill quotation), rather than to invade, capture and occupy other peoples’ lands, or to seize lands that allegedly were their birthright - patrimony - legacy granted them by divine proclamation?

As a result of these considerations, the very hostile declaration that “All is fair in love and war” cannot be the ideal to follow, since this kind of a relationship between two people emotionally involved with each other will represent a battle for control between the strong - usually the man and the weak - usually the woman when the only outcome that would ultimately matter is who will be the vanquisher and who the vanquished, even though no such victory is worth the heartache that it will certainly bring about. Similarly, in relations between two nations where national (self) interest rules supreme, views based on delusions of grandeur that the conflict is a struggle between “Good and Evil” may lead to the kind of outcome that is associated with terrible costs on life and property, and in the event that one of the opponent nations is much weaker, the situation will usually lead to its inescapable surrender which will cause it to be full of anger, bitterness, resentment and spite that could in the long run turn out to be much worse than open warfare. As a result of these considerations, one is led to the sensible conclusion that it is preferable to accept honorable compromises and see to it that a noble end is achieved by whatever ethical means that can be honestly employed, which would lead to peace rather than to the detestable - despicable - repugnant war.

Is Peace just the absence of war, or it is something more as St. Francis of Assisi (see p. 21) spoke about or the philosopher Spinoza (see p. 21) wrote about? Isn’t it true as William Shakespeare suggested in his Play “Pericles” that there can be no real peace among Men unless there is “peace in Man”, i.e., he is at peace with himself. And he is at peace with himself only when he finally accepts that he is who he is, does not pretend to be someone else, although he ceaselessly strives to become a better person, so that he can be in greater harmony and rapport with his fellow humans who will thus become disposed more favorably toward him. This does not mean that for the sake of not being at war with others, he should be so “fluid” as to take the shape of every “receptacle” that comes by, but rather that he should not be too rigid in his views and beliefs, so that he may retain the chance to improve on account of the influence on him by others who may possess more wisdom, or greater kindness of heart and generosity of spirit. This view is valid not only between individual persons but among nations as well.
War versus Peace

“The way of war is a way of deception.” ....

“Ultimate excellence lies not in winning every battle,
but in defeating the enemy without ever fighting.”

Sun-Tzu (probably 4th century B.C., or earlier).
The Art of War (Ping-fa).

“To kill one person is murder. To kill thousands is foreign policy.”

Moh-Tze (468-376 B.C.).

“Those whom the Gods wish to destroy, they first make mad.”

Attributed to Euripides (c. 484-407 B.C.). Fragment.

Hecabe, the grieving Queen and widow of King Priam of Troy, now a captive of the Greek army laments her losses:

“I mourn for my dead world, my burning town,
My sons, my husband, gone, all gone!
What pride of race, what strength once swelled our royal sails!
Now shrunk to nothing, sunk in mean oblivion!”

Cassandra, King Priam’s and Queen Hecabe’s Daughter, who is also a captive of the Greek army, speaks of war:

“Indeed to avoid war is a wise man’s duty; yet
If war comes, then a hero’s death confers as much
Fame on his city as a coward’s brings infamy.”

Euripides (c. 484-407 B.C.).
The Women of Troy.

“We are mad, not only individually, but nationally.
We check manslaughter and isolate murderers;
but what of war and the much vaunted crime
of slaughtering whole peoples?”

Lucius Seneca (c. 4 B.C. - A.D. 65). Epistles, 95, 30.

“Lord, make me an instrument of Your Peace.
Where there is hatred let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness. light; and where there is sadness, joy.”

Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi (c. 1181-1226).

“Peace in not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind,
a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice.”

Theological-Political Treatise [1670].
“War is Hell.” - “War is Cruelty.” - “War is at best Barbarism.”

General William T. Sherman (1820-1891).
From Letters and Addresses.
Note: The Yale Book of Quotations, reported in 2008 that it was Napoleon, not Sherman who said, “War is Hell”.

In Victory: Magnanimity. In Peace: Good Will.”

Winston Spencer Churchill (1874-1965).
The Gathering Storm [1948].

“I don’t oppose all wars. And I know that in this crowd today, there is no shortage of patriots, or of patriotism.
.... What I am opposed to is a dumb war. What I am opposed to is a rash war.
.... A war based not on reason but on passion, not on principle but on politics.”

Illinois State Senator Barack Obama (1961-).
Anti-war rally in Chicago, Ill., October 2, 2002.

Would Peace finally triumph over War for the Welfare of all Mankind?

“They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

The Book of the Prophet Isaiah 2:4

“For I dipped into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonders that would be ....
Till the war drum throbbed no longer and the battle flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.”

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892).
Locksley Hall [1842].

“We, the people of the United Nations,
determined to save succeeding generations
from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime ..
has brought untold sorrow to mankind,
and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights,
in the dignity and worth of the human person,
in the equal rights of men and women
and of nations large and small.”

Charter of the United Nations [1945].

“All human beings are born free and equal, in dignity and rights.”

Universal Declaration of Human Rights [1948].
Message from Sniper Soldier X

“First, let me introduce myself. My name is X. But this is not my real name. X stands for something Unknown, or Invisible like the X-rays. I use the name X because I want to remain Unknown - Invisible, to those who know me, and like me, and perhaps even love me, and to those who don’t know me, but would hate me, if they knew me.

I am a twenty-five year old man, strong, healthy, full of life and vigor. I joined the Army because a war was going on, although neither I nor most of my friends and relatives understood what it was all about. As a soldier, I could serve my Country, and make some money too. Then I would be able to pursue my University Studies as the rich guys do, without financial problems, interruptions, and postponements. Ever since I was a little boy, I wanted to become a Medical Doctor, a Physician as he is properly called, or a Doc as my folks used to say. I aspired to be a Healer, to cure sick people, and see them be healthy again. This desire inflated my Ego, and made me feel very important when I fantasized that others would need me, look up to me, and respect me.

When I started my stint in the military, I found that it suited me fine. I always gave most eagerly my very best to whatever I was asked to do. At times however I was expected to act like a man whom neither I, nor a good decent person would have admired or respected me for. My superiors often praised me for having done a superb job, no matter what the undertaking I was asked to do happened to be. I am extremely self-disciplined, precise, orderly, neat, and very tidy. Some of my Fellow Soldiers would often annoy me by telling me that I was behaving more like a machine, a robot, than a real person. My answer was always the same. ‘It is not for me to ask Why, but to do what is expected of me, and do it as well as I possibly could’.

One day, my Sergeant told me that the Colonel who was in charge of our Army Unit wanted to talk to me privately, in his office. I am embarrassed to confess that I was very frightened by all this. When the Sergeant saw how alarmed I was, he told me that ‘I had nothing to fear, but on the contrary, I was going to receive some good news that would make me feel very proud of myself’.

And so I visited the Colonel, in his office, at the Headquarters. He was very tall, very athletic, and very manly but not someone I would call handsome. He looked severe, a little rough, and somewhat crude. When he spoke to me he was certainly a man of very few words. He told me that ‘Since I had often demonstrated during the various training exercises that I was a very good marksman, and also because I was a calm rather than an easily excitable person, my Army Superiors had selected me to be trained as a Sniper’.
When I heard the word Sniper, I felt sort of sick, like throwing up. I had been told many frightful stories about the Snipers in our Unit, some of whom, it was said, got to enjoy this kind of sneaky killing. This was certainly the last thing that I would have ever wanted to be. The Colonel having sensed what was going through my head, told me that ‘I should think it over, take my time, there was certainly no rush about it, and then to let him know, in a day or two, what I had decided’.

As I was leaving his office, I could see that a small number of Soldiers, most of whom were known among the rest of us as being members of ‘The Sniper Team’, were waiting for me. They surrounded me, embraced me in a very friendly manner, and congratulated me for my having joined their ‘Elite Group’. I tried to tell them, repeatedly, that I had not decided as yet, but they paid no attention to what I was striving to say so desperately.

Next day, my Sergeant asked me to take a walk with him. He told me that in the Army ‘an order is an order, no matter in what friendly or coarse language it is given’. He then informed me that ‘my training was to start next morning, at five o’clock sharp, with no ifs, ands or buts’. And so, I started my military training as a future Sniper Soldier. I must confess that this experience turned out to be a lot of fun. Although I was one of the new arrivals to the Snipers’ group, they could see that I was the best marksman amongst them all.

Soon enough, my apprenticeship came to an end, and I was posted within a special Snipers’ Unit, to support our Soldiers, in their many dangerous and even death-threatening tasks. My first ‘kill’ was that of an enemy Sniper, as I was told he was. I could see him very clearly through my rifle’s telescopic lens. He was very young, certainly much younger than what I was then. The bullet hit him smack in the head and blew out his brains. I couldn’t believe that it was I who had done this dreadful thing. The bullet that killed this young man killed the good man in me too.

I have had a few more ‘kills’ during the past several months. I always got them in their heads with the same ghastly results, although I no longer get sick in my stomach after the ‘kill’ is over. In fact, I silently celebrate every time that I achieve an accurate hit. But in all fairness to myself, I can truthfully say that I never enjoy doing this abominable act, which feels more like murder to me. I have always wanted to be a Medical Doctor, a Physician, a Healer, yet all that I have become is a heartless, pitiless, remorseless Killer, of young men like me, labeled by some higher-up as ‘evil enemies’. I am much appalled by what has become of me, so quickly, so easily. This is why I decided to speak out now, hoping that you and others, can learn the harsh Truth about Sniper Soldiers like me and others.”

As imagined by G. D.
What Is Human Love?

Since it is extremely difficult to define the intricate emotion of Love, it is sensible to attempt to determine what are the various kinds of Love that are being experienced by Humans, in hopes that some common attributes or characteristics might be revealed.

The most important types of Human Love that can exist singly or jointly are: Maternal Love, which is the universally foremost selfless form; Erotic Heterosexual Love, that is extremely essential since it is responsible for our propagation and hence for the survival of our human species; Parental Love, which is just as critical since it creates the tender nurturing and protective environment for the survival of the helpless newborn infant; Romantic - Passionate Love, that offers an idyllic or poetic dimension to Human Love which makes it stand above and beyond the first three that exist mainly for the sake of human biological survival; Familial Love, of parents for each other and for their children, and of the children for their parents and for their siblings; Platonic Love or True Friendship, which is a strong emotional feeling of attraction between two people of the same or of different gender but one that lacks any erotic or sexual element; Erotic Homosexual Love, between people of the same gender, e.g., Gay Men or Lesbian Women; Divine Love - Christian “Agape” (see p. 28) which is an altruistic noble feeling toward fellow Human beings, even one’s own enemies, that is a reflection of God’s Goodness and Love for Humans and of Humans’ Love for God; Secular - Humanistic Love, which is similar to Divine Love but one based on “belief” in Humanity rather than in Deity; “Love of Jesus” as described by Mother Teresa in her book “Come Be My Light” (see p. 9) of confessions of faith, that characterizes a person, usually a woman, who attains spiritual union with God - Christ. There are also various other kinds of human love, as for example of our professional work, of the country of our birth - patriotism, of the arts, of nature, of animals, and of some other types which may have wicked implications when they are pursued excessively or greedily, as in the case of love of pleasures, of wealth, of fame, of glory, of political power, of oneself - Narcissism.

Beautiful poetry (see p. 27), poetic prose (see p. 28), fictional literature, and scientific treatises, have been sung, spoken and written about the different kinds of Human Love. The main conclusion that one may draw from all this information is that Romantic - Passionate Love is an emotional, sensual feeling, most often beyond rational control, at times self-destructive, and even tragic (see Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, and “A True Story” p. 30). It is preferable therefore at this juncture to abandon pursuing the nature of Human Love in general and of Eros or Passionate Love in particular, and to focus instead on the question of why physicians love their profession so intensely?

It appears that this is mainly the result of two circumstances. First, although Medicine is an inexact Science, the Science of Medicine has its roots in the most currently basic Biomedical Sciences that are both extremely interesting in themselves, and also carry important implications to the prevention, therapy and cure of human diseases. Second, the Art of Medicine that is an equally significant component of Medicine, mainly with regard to Clinical Medicine, which offers practicing physicians the chance to work...
in an environment of kindness, sympathy, empathy, caring and compassion, that are feelings which gratify and delight our human need to be of help to others, especially since these others are patients who are vulnerable because they are ill, and desperately need our medical assistance, care, support and guidance. Still, the main drawback of the fact that physicians love their medical profession so totally, is that it may often consume their normal personal life to the extent that no time or energy is left for other aspects of human existence, such as spending sufficient quality time with loved ones, maintaining an exciting multifaceted social life with friends and associates, and having intellectual and emotional experiences outside Medicine such as reading great books, attending memorable plays, listening to majestic music. Hence, one is forced to conclude that moderation should rule professional activities no matter how strongly they are desired.

What is Human Hate?

Although far fewer comments have been made about the hideous, loathsome, repugnant, vile feeling of Human Hate (see p. 29) in comparison to what has been said about Human Love (see p. 27), Hate exists and flourishes in our contemporary world, not only because the Strong seize much more of the communal wealth than what might be legitimately theirs, but also and principally because the impoverished - destitute Weak are treated by the Strong with much arrogance, conceit and contempt, and are humiliated as if they were hungry animals rather than fellow human beings who must receive a share of what justly belongs to them too.

As we have previously tried to answer the question of why physicians love their medical profession so strongly and deeply, we could now try to answer why physicians may at times have negative feelings and in rare instances may even feel hate toward their profession. The main drawbacks that accompany a medical career, which could cause such gloomy outlook, are relatively few and mostly insignificant. As mentioned already, since Medicine is a “way of life” rather than “just a job”, it can often devour all other aspects of an individual’s personal life. In addition, since most Physicians are compensated quite generously, they may experience envy, jealousy, resentment and even hate from relatives and friends, many of whom are inadequately compensated. However, once the issue of “money earned” is examined more objectively, it becomes apparent that the incomes incurred by physicians are as a rule not extravagant when one takes into account the many years of medical education and training, the great responsibility that Physicians shoulder in making life and death decisions, the long hours of hard and at times dangerous work that they perform almost routinely, and the human pain and suffering to which they are exposed all the time.

In cases in which physicians experience negative feelings toward their patients, they should determine their causes and then try to neutralize them as much as possible, otherwise they will lose their professional medical effectiveness. In instances in which physicians experience negative feelings and even hatred from their patients, they can explain this unwelcome behavior by the fact that sick people especially those who have been bedridden for a long time, can feel unhappy and even miserable because of their illness, rather than by anything that their Doctors did or did not do. Of course, the best way for physicians to nullify this hostile attitude is to show kindness and compassion while avoiding any covert or overt signs of arrogance, egoism, or pretentiousness. In the event that these negative feelings still persist, the physicians should forgive them and continue doing their work, their duty, with much empathy along with detachment since the most important objective in their professional life is to help patients in need.
Love versus Hate

“Greatness wins hate. Unenvied is unenviable.”

Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.). Agamemnon.

“ΕΡΩΣ ΑΝΙΚΑΤΕ ΜΑΧΑΝ”
“Love unconquerable in battle.”

“My way is to share my love, not share my hate.”

Sophocles (c. 496-406 B.C.). Antigone.

Phaedra: “When they say that one is in love, what do they mean by love?”

Nurse: “Oh, my child! it is the sweetest of all things, - yet full of pain.”
... “The whole world was born from love.”

Euripides (c. 484-407 B.C.). Hippolytus.

“For no matter what dull clay we seemed to be before, we are every one of us a poet when we are in love.”

Plato (c. 428-348 B.C.). Symposium [196, e].

“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you.”

St. Matthew the Evangelist (1st Century A.D.).
The Gospel According to St. Matthew, 5:44.

“For stony limits cannot hold love out, and what love can do, that dares love attempt.”

William Shakespeare (1564-1616).
Romeo and Juliet, [II.2.67-68, II.3.62-64].

“The greatest evil is the lack of love and charity, the terrible indifference toward one’s neighbour who lives at the roadside assaulted by exploitation, corruption, poverty and disease.”


“Could human love be a form of voluntary self-enslavement? At rare times, perhaps yes. At most times, certainly not.”

G. D.
Divine Love - Christian “Agape”

13 “1 What if I could speak all languages of humans and of angels? If I did not love others, I would be nothing more than a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

2 What if I could prophesy and understand all secrets and all knowledge? And what if I had faith that moved mountains? I would be nothing, unless I loved others.

3 What if I gave away all that I owned and let myself be burned alive? I would gain nothing, unless I loved others.

4 Love is kind and patient, never jealous, boastful, proud or rude.

5 Love isn’t selfish or quick tempered. It doesn’t keep a record of wrongs that others do.

6 Love rejoices in the truth, but not in evil.

7 Love is always supportive, loyal, hopeful, and trusting.

8 Love never fails!

13 For now there are faith, hope, and love. But of these three, the greatest is love.”

The Holy Bible.
Love versus Hate, as spoken by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

(See also, Martin Luther King, Jr., The Autobiography - I Have A Dream, pp. 31-33)

“Love is the only force capable
of transforming an enemy into a friend.”

“Man must evolve for all human conflict
a method which rejects revenge,
aggression and retaliation.
The foundation of such a method is love.”

“Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it.
Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it.
Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it.”

“Returning violence for violence multiplies violence,
adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars.”

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

“That old law about ‘an eye for an eye’ leaves everyone blind.”

“We have flown the air like birds
and swum the sea like fishes,
but have yet to learn the simple act
of walking the earth like brothers.”

“The ultimate measure of a man, (*)
is not where he stands in moments
of comfort and convenience,
but where he stands at times
of challenge and controversy.”

[The above Quotations by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968),
were derived from the Internet, using search engines Google and Yahoo].

“Hate is too great a burden to bear.”

Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr. (1899-1984).

“Well! There is no clear sign to tell the quality of a man; (*)
Nature and place turn vice and virtue upside down.
I have seen a noble father breed a worthless son,
and good sons come of evil parents; a starved soul housed
in a rich man’s palace, a great heart dressed in rags.”

Euripides (c. 484-407 B.C.).
Electra.
A TRUE STORY - Thanatos (Death) embraces Eros (Love).

I was a quiet boy when I was little. I did not much like playing sports with other boys because they always enjoyed being “rough”, and I did not care to be getting hurt. My greatest pleasure was to sit quietly and listen to what the “grownups” were saying. My grandmother Olympia was the best source of “True Stories” (see p. 18). Another one was our dear housemaid Eleni, a young woman in her early twenties, born and raised in a mountain village on the island of Crete, who could neither read nor write but could tell all kinds of stories about her life while she was growing up there. Most of Eleni’s stories were very moving and very sad, which made her cry very copiously whenever she told them to me. The following is one of them that I still remember very clearly.

“There was a boy and a girl who had become very close friends since when they were in grade school; a shocking development given the fact that the village mores and customs could not tolerated this kind of ‘wicked’ behavior, especially among children in sex-segregated schools. Although when they grew older they became aware of the hopelessness of their circumstances - the girl’s father was a rich land owner; the boy’s father was a poor laborer, they nevertheless could not help but fall in love with each other in a very passionate way, thus becoming the envy and jealousy of the villagers, most of whom had gotten married out of necessity or expediency.

A few days after they had both finished high school, the young man who was still living at home with his parents, for he was unemployed, visited the girl’s family and formally asked her Father for ‘her hand in marriage’. The village rumor had it that the girl’s Father got very angry for having been insulted and dishonored by this destitute but conceited young man, that he actually kicked him out of his house while threatening him with bodily harm and even death. He further forbade his daughter to ever again lay her eyes on him, while he hastily arranged to have her get married to one of his nephews who was much older than her, but had become quite rich.

The young man sent a message with the help of a kindly elderly aunt to the young woman he loved, telling her that their only hope was for them to elope and get married by a Priest at a neighboring village, an outcome that was practiced fairly commonly in Crete. Alas, she refused to accept his sensible solution because as she told his elderly aunt ‘defying her Father’s wishes would have disgraced and dishonored both their families’. Instead, she suggested that given that they were not allowed to get married and live happily together, they should die together by drinking poison that she had purchased already for this purpose. This desperate suggestion was accepted by the young man, and the two hopeless lovers, both in their late teens, committed suicide by drinking the poison in a final embrace of love, affection and devotion.”

This was a very sad Love Story, as told to me by Eleni with much accompanying sobbing, which I vividly remember although more than half a century has gone by. And so, every time I visited my birthplace Greece, I met with dear Eleni and took her out to dinner whenever I could. She had gotten married to an older man from her village whom she did not love and who turned out to be so abusive that she decided to divorcing him, a development that occurred very rarely during those times. She became a Communist in hopes of finding ‘justice in this unjust world’, but her conclusion was that they were all ‘thieves and crooks’ and so she gave them all up. Her unfulfilled wish was ‘to have died when she was very young while embracing the man she truly loved’, like those two young lovers of the story she had told me long ago. But this had not come to pass, and will certainly not happen now so late in her life. Because she had gradually become very religious, she now sincerely believed that ‘after she died, her soul will finally find her true Love in Haven, and the two of them will dwell together in everlasting bliss’.

G. D.
Memorable words spoken by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,pringing from the Biblical - Prophetic - Religious Perspective, and in response to High Expectations based on the American Declaration of Independence (1776), the U.S. Constitution and its 1789 first Ten Amendments or Bill of Rights, and the Emancipation Proclamation.

“I Have A Dream”

“Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves, who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity. But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land.

And so we’ve come here today to dramatize a shameful condition. In a sense, we’ve come to our nation’s capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked “insufficient funds.” But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we’ve come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of Democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God’s children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro’s legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges. But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice: in the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not
seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.

The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. They have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone. And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back.

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, “When will you be satisfied?” We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro’s basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating “For Whites Only.” We can never be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair. I say to you today, my friends: so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed -- we hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal. I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today! I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers. I have a dream today! I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain and the crooked places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together. This is our hope. This is the faith with which I will go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain
of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day, this will be the day when all of God’s children will be able to sing with new meaning: “My country, ’tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim’s pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!” And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous peaks of California. But not only that. Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee. Let freedom ring from every hill and every molehill of Mississippi, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!

And when this happens, when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, “Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last.”

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968), delivered this speech on the steps at the Lincoln Memorial, in Washington D.C., in August 28, 1963.


“What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?”

This statement in the form of a question is attributed to Quintus Septimius Tertullianus or Tertullian (c. 160-220), the first important Roman Christian theologian who tried to articulated the basic distinction between Reason, i.e., Ancient Athens, and Faith, i.e., Ancient Jerusalem.

(Harvard Medical School students B.A., found this quotation by means of the Internet while preparing his Class Seminar presentation on “Reason versus Faith”, at the time he took for Credit this Non-Clinical Elective Course CS704.0, in February 2006.)

Whereas the European intellectual life during the Dark Ages (5-11th Centuries) had been defined predominantly in terms of Faith and Tradition, after the Martin Luther Protestant Reformation (15th Century), the European Renaissance (14-17th Centuries), and particularly during the Age of Reason (late 17th Century) and the Age of Enlightenment (18th Century), the emphasis gradually shifted to Rationalism and Individualism as expressed by men like Voltaire (1694-1778) and Rousseau (1712-1778).

Please compare the “essence” of comments made on pages 31-33 to those on page 34.
“Men ought to know that
from nothing else but the brain,
come joys, delights, laughter, and sports,
sorrows, grieves, despondency, and lamentations.”

Hippocrates (460-370 B.C.).

(It was believed in antiquity that Pythagoras (c. 582-500 B.C.) of Samos was the first who proposed that the thought process was located in the brain and not the heart.)

“ ‘You’, your joys and your sorrows,
your memories and your ambitions,
your sense of personal identity and free will,
are in fact no more than the behavior
of a vast assembly of nerve cells
and their associated molecules.
As Lewis Carroll’s Alice might have phrased it:
‘You are nothing but a pack of Neurons’.”

Francis Crick (1916-2004).
The Astonishing Hypothesis [1994].

(See also p. 77, quotation by Richard Feynman.)
5th Seminar: “Truth versus Lie”.  
Wednesday, 2:00-5:00pm.  
Reading: Sophocles, King Oedipus.

“While both [Plato and truth] are dear, piety requires us to honor truth above our friends.”  
Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), Nicomachean Ethics, bk I, ch 6.

“There is no truth, only perception.”  
Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880).  
“Art is a lie that leads to truth.”  
Pablo Picasso (1881-1973).

Truth (Lt. Veritas) from a General Perspective:

What is the nature of truth? Whereas Divine or God-revealed Truth is absolute, namely one and only and therefore eternal rather than relative to time and culture and thus temporary, scientific or man-discovered truth about some natural phenomenon or process is verifiable and often revisable, and ordinary truth is the outcome of competing versions of perceived reality. Was St. John the Evangelist right when he claimed in his Gospel that only divine “Truth sets Man free (8:32)”? Could it be that scientific truth makes Man a captive - a slave to always be seeking to find truth but never finding it fully? Is divine truth fiction and scientific truth fact, or are they both valiant expressions of the human need to believe or to know, as achieved by different pathways, approaches and methodologies, which quite often are mutually exclusive? Even though in Religion, truth is obtained by divine revelation based on faith - hope (see p. 42), in Science, despite the fact that inspiration, intuition, insight play a decisive role, factual truth is acquired by human sensory perception resulting from appraisal of objective reality and by precise logical thinking with “immense patience in observation, and great boldness in framing hypotheses.” (Bertrand Russell, The History of Western Philosophy, page 528), until something accurate and beneficial to Humans is born out of this effort.

Is Man’s search for the truth about himself mainly by self scrutiny, as of King Oedipus’ (Sophocles, p. 9) hunt for who he was, the result of his passionate, courageous tenacity, while the pursuit for scientific truth is the final outcome of dispassionate, detached, objective evaluation of facts by rational human beings employing observation and logic as their only decisive tools, or is the search for any kind of truth affected by the biases, prejudices and inclinations of whoever does the searching, as well as by the broad intellectual and historical environment or climate in which the search is done? Can our longing for seeking and acquiring scientific truth irrespective of its societal harmful ramification be justified or excused on the basis of assertions like “In science truth is the only end.” (William Whewell, 1794-1866), and “To seek the truth for truth’s sake.” (Franz Boas, 1858-1942), or is this a profoundly shameful and obscene avoidance of our responsibility as moral human beings? Could the lie survive because humans with vested interests in it embrace the lie as the truth and reject the truth as a lie? If that were the case, how can we be sure that the truth we have accepted is genuine rather than a resemblance of it, namely a lie? Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) may have been right when he stated that “We know the truth, not only by the reason, but also by the heart.” which means that we can intuitively feel that something is true while something else is a lie. Lastly, when enough people of good will defend and safeguard the truth, especially by “speaking truth to power” - 1955 Quakers’ Manifesto; (see p. 37, Shakespeare quote) it will be vindicated in due time coming forth as the final victor for the welfare of all Humans.
Truth versus Lie from a Medical Perspective:

“How dreadful knowledge of the truth can be, when there is no help in truth.”

Sophocles, King Oedipus.

Illness can assault children, adults, elderly; it can be somatic, psychosomatic, psychic; it can be acute, subacute, chronic; it can be mild, severe, fatal. Since there are so many different states of illness that can exist singly or in combination with each other, should a physician tell a patient, the whole truth, a half truth (which is no better than a lie), a plain lie; occasionally, always, never, or can the Physician decide on the basis of his/her intelligence and compassion, namely on what is best for the individual patient’s welfare, under the particular circumstances? Is this “verbal relativism” to be abhorred, or is it the ultimate wisdom to be actively pursued? Can a lie be condoned or excused in an extreme situation, e.g., to save one’s life or the life of a loved one, but also in a medical setting in order to avoid discouragement, depression, and even suicide of the ill patient, or are we the enemies of truth whenever and for whatever reason we knowingly lie? If we must tell the truth, can we do it boldly but gently, even to patients who do not wish to hear it, e.g., they are in “psychological denial” because they are afraid that it may crush them? But if as some purists say, no matter how bitter and painful truth may be, it is still the most precious and beautiful of human goods, then falsehood or the lie no matter how well intentioned or scheming it is, it must be the lowest and ugliest of all human evils. Is withholding bad news from a patient who wishes to know, but with whom the physician has made no explicit agreement or vouched no binding contract that the truth will always be told, be equivalent to lying, or can this deceitful behavior be justified or rationalized on the basis of exercising inordinate but sensible human kindness and compassion?

Can lying to a patient ever be encouraged? The answer should be a cautious yes, but only under very special circumstances. Physicians should not allow themselves to tell young children, whose understanding because of their youthful age of their medical situation is very limited, of the extreme seriousness of their illness, e.g., cancer. A child’s parents however should be told the whole truth with much sympathy and empathy, knowing fully well that this tragic knowledge will cause them much anguish and deep grief at the future loss of someone so very young and so dear to them both. The parents, not the physicians, are ultimately the ones who have the moral and legal authority to decide for their minor children. A lie can be condoned but perhaps not encouraged if the patient is very old, suffers from some type of senile dementia, e.g., Alzheimer’s disease, or is dying of a disease that can only be inadequately controlled by palliative therapy. In this case also, the patient’s spouse and children must be informed, although it is clear that the death of an elderly patient will not cause as much distress and pain to them as the death of a young child would do. Lastly, it must be clearly stated that suggestions such as the ones presently offered, can only act as guidelines to all professional people involved with a patient’s medical care, and must always take second place to the wishes and decisions of the adult patient himself or herself and the patient’s close relatives whose pain at the loss of a loved member of their family even though he or she may be very old. Physicians on the other hand, must not become too emotionally involved with their patients’ tragic predicament, since they are the ones who are ultimately responsible for making the tough but correct decisions.
Truth versus Lie

“O cruel hour that brings a bitter truth to light!”

Euripides (c. 484-407 B.C.), The Bacchae.

“ ‘Drunkards and children tell the truth’ - drunkards anyway.”

Ancient Greek Proverb mentioned by Plato (c. 428-348 B.C.) in his Symposium, 217e.

“In Vino Veritas - In Wine Truth.” -- Latin Proverb.

“Any given thing is to me such as it appears to me,
and is to you such as it appears to you.”

Comment made by Protagoras (c. 485-410 B.C.) and cited by Plato (c. 428-348 B.C.) in his Theaetetus, 152a.

“A lie is like a snowball; the longer it is rolled, the larger it gets.”

Martin Luther (1483-1546) Quotation.

“They do abuse the king that flatter him: ....
Whereas reproof, obedient and in order,
fits kings, as they are men, for they may err.”

William Shakespeare (1564-1616).
Pericles [1608-1609].

“He who permits himself to tell a lie once,
finds it much easier to do it a second and a third time,
till at length it becomes habitual;
he tells lies without attending to it,
and truths without the world believing him.
This falsehood of the tongue leads to that of the heart,
and in time depraves all its good dispositions.”

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826).
Letter to Peter Carr [August 19, 1785].

“We are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead,
nor to tolerate any error so long as reason is left free to combat it.”

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826).
Letter to William Roscoe [December 27, 1820].

“That a lie which is half a truth is ever the blackest of lies,
That a lie which is all a lie may be met and fought with outright,
But a lie which is part a truth is a harder matter to fight.”

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892).
The Grandmother [1864], st. 8.
“‘Beauty is truth, truth is beauty.’
   -- that is all ye know on earth, and all you need to know.”

John Keats (1795-1821).
   Ode on a Grecian Urn, st. 4.

“Take the saving lie from the average man,
   and you take his happiness away.”

Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906).
   Hedda Gabler, A Play.

“The ultimate good desired is best reached by free trade in ideas -
   the best test of truth is the power of the thought
to get itself accepted in the competition of the market.”

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. (1841-1935).
   Abrams v. United States, 250 U.S. 616, 630 [1919].

“Convictions are more dangerous enemies of truth than lies.”

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900).
   Human, All Too Human: A Book for Free Spirits.

“Science tells the truth about the world;
   art makes its own worlds.”

Oscar Wild (1854-1900).
   A conversation with Herbert Spencer (1820-1903).

“Them that asks no questions, isn’t told a lie.”

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936).
   A Smuggler’s Song, st. 6.

“The truth is found when men are free to pursue it.”

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945).
   Address at Temple University [February 22, 1936].

“The opposite of a true statement
   is a false statement,
   but the opposite of a profound truth
   is usually another profound truth.”

Neils Bohr (1885-1962).
   Principle of Complementarity.

“You can recognize truth,
   by its beauty and simplicity.”

Richard Feynman (1918-1988).
   The Character of Physical Law.
6th Seminar: “Mythos versus Logos”.
Friday, 2:00-5:00pm.
Ernst Mayr, What Evolution Is.
Mother Teresa, Come Be My Light.

When we study human history of the past three to four millennia, the one most important conclusion that we can safely arrive at, is that Mythos or mythical - fictitious beliefs were gradually but inevitably replaced by Logos or logical thinking. We discover for example that the Priesthood and Intelligentsia of the most civilized nations of antiquity, i.e., Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, India, China, Japan, Mesoamerica, and also Hellas - Greece especially during the Epic or Homeric Times, believed without doubt or hesitation that beneficial and harmful natural phenomena that influenced the daily lives of humans were caused by omnipotent, kind, or vindictive Gods who were beyond human control. This notion of Man’s helplessness in his relation to the Gods or God, suggested in turn that these Divine Forces had to be thanked for the favors and pacified and placated for the disfavors bestowed upon humans, with the appropriate sacrifices, atonement and penance. In contrast to these notions, the early ancient Greek “Natural - Physical Philosophers” like Thales, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, Empedocles, Leucippus, Democritus and others who lived between the 6th and 4th Centuries B.C., many of them in Hellenic Ionia, imagined and taught that “Natural Phenomena have Natural Causes.” and “Gods are the Human Personifications of these Natural Occurrences.”

This uniquely Hellenic - Greek view of Man in his relation to Nature, which was unprecedented in its arrogance and even hubris, was linked to another and much more conceited and egoistical conviction, namely that the Human Mind or “Nous”, solely on its own ability, aptitude and competence could understand Nature through experience based on objective - impartial sensory perception and rational thinking based on logical analysis, rather than by means of religious faith - belief - dogma inspired by divine revelation. These “Pre-Socratic Philosophers” further held the view that when experience and logic acted in unison, they could organize diverse facts into concepts and thoughts that would lead to generalizations called speculations - hypotheses - theories (see p. 35, Bertrand Russell reference) which helped them to comprehend the Natural World. In this manner, the restraints imposed upon Humanity by Superstition and the Fear of the Unknown that had been given the semblance of the Supernatural by those who wanted to protect and perpetuate their religious authority and their hold on political power that was translated into privileges, were finally shattered with the result that ignorance and misunderstanding was gradually replaced by the illumination of understanding.

In a manner similar to that of the “Natural - Physical Philosophers”, the ancient Coan Physician Hippocrates (c. 460-370 B.C.), “The Father of Medicine”, was the first who clearly stated on the basis of his pithy intuition and his experience rooted on medical evidence, that Diseases are Natural Phenomena rendered by Natural Causes, and so the Physician’s first priority is to attempt to understand the true Nature of Human Illness, i.e., what we presently call “Etiology and Pathogenesis of Disease”, by means of critical observation and logical thinking. Once this kind of knowledge could be achieved Hippocrates and his pupils held, it would then be feasible to pursue either a preventive approach, or a curative or palliative path to the therapy of Human Diseases, which would be based on the recognition of natural rather than supernatural etiologies.
This new **Cause - Effect** relationship principle advocated by Hippocrates, which is responsible for his stellar reputation as being the first “Physician-Scientist”, was balanced by another equally important outlook, namely that of the “Art of Medicine”, which is exemplified as kindness and compassion toward the patient, and concern about the fears, anxieties, apprehensions, distress he or she experiences during illness and while contemplating death. This humane approach is also beautifully articulated by the “Hippocratic Oath” (see p. 48), which is based on the “absolute respect of human life” and on “helping without harming”, both of which are the ethical concepts characteristic of the **Doctor - Patient Relationship** that have survived up to the very present.

Whereas the peerless philosopher of antiquity Socrates had asserted that “I know one thing that I know nothing” (see p. 4), a state later defined by Thomas Huxley as being “Agnostic” (see p. 41), both he and his brilliant pupil Plato realized to their chagrin that whereas love for knowledge about Nature was very laudatory, the technical means available to Humans in their times were so limited that this kind of valiant effort, however aggressively pursued, could turn out to be an exercise in futility. Both Socrates and Plato saw on the other hand the urgency and need in finding ways to resolve how Man should conduct himself and interact with his Fellow Men in an **Ethical - Moral** manner, so that his own life, as well as the lives of others, could be happy, peaceful, and inventively productive. Their conclusions were simple and direct, namely that “a Good and Virtuous Man is a Happy Man.” and that an “Elenchic, i.e., Critically Reflective life, is superior to a life of Political Power, Pleasures, Possessions, Fame, Glory, Celebrity.” (see p. 53).

Although Plato’s independently-minded and very intelligent pupil Aristotle who was a native of Stageira in Hellenic Macedonia agreed with this view, he nevertheless challenged his beloved Teacher by asserting that while interest in **Human Values** must be an ongoing and ever enduring preoccupation of all Human beings (he endowed us in fact with the most profound disquisition on Ethics in the form of a book presently known as Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics), efforts to understand **Nature’s Laws and their Exceptions**, even when the resources are extremely limited, should also be relentlessly pursued. This is the reason why Aristotle has rightly been considered during the past more than two millennia to be one of the foremost “Moral Philosophers” like Socrates and Plato, but also as one of the greatest “Natural - Physical Philosophers”, in fact as being the “Father of Science, of Biology, of Logic”. Aristotle in other words held the profound view, that genuine understanding of the physical and biological worlds could be successfully accomplished by means of a truly dispassionate, continuously cumulative correction of available empirical knowledge under the guidance of logical thinking. As a result of this viewpoint, **Contemporary Science** pursues both Deterministic - Newtonian mechanics Laws of Classical Physics, and also Probabilistic - quantum mechanics Laws (inside the “planetary” atom) of Modern Physics, as well as the Laws of Chemistry and of Biology.

Lastly, although **Mythos**, i.e., mythical or faith-based explanations as articulated by **Religious beliefs** (see p. 42, The Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle) was gradually replaced by its alternative **Logos**, i.e., logical - rational thinking as elucidated by the empirical approach of **Science** (see p. 41) was most inevitable, this new awareness that liberated Humanity from ignorance, superstition and inflexible obstinate traditions was shown to be a cruel **Faustian bargain**, which made reflective people realize that we are definitely alone as individuals and as members of the human race in a limitless, chaotic, violent, indifferent and, from a more realistic perspective, pointless and meaningless (see p. 12) Universe where oblivion - nothingness awaits us all (see p. 63, Orhan Pamuk quote).
AN AGNOSTIC SECULAR EMPIRICIST SURVEYS THE WORLD
To Observe --> To Theorize --> To Reason --> To Understand --> To Know
(FROM DEMOCITUS, TO EMBEDOCLES, TO DARWIN, TO THE PRESENT AND BEYOND)

Among the ancient Greek “Natural - Physical Philosophers” (see p. 39), first Anaxagoras (c. 500-428 B.C.), then Leucippus along with his better-known pupil Democritus (c. 460-370 B.C.) held the view that Matter had existed for all Eternity, composed of Atoms, (ATOMA - indivisible [particles], see p. 77) and Void (KENON). Empedocles (c. 495-435 B.C.) at about that time proposed that Nature is ruled by Chance and Necessity instead of by Design and Purpose, processes that have generated diverse and progressively complex Physical Forms which gradually evolved into the PHYSICAL UNIVERSE (see p. 43) controlled by Physical Laws of unknown origin that often display esthetic mathematical pattern (see p. 49).

Although Empedocles first suggested that Living Organisms had evolved from antecedent forms, this view was long rejected in Europe for contradicting the literal interpretation of the Bible. It was Darwin (1809-1882) who offered in 1859 explicit - convincing evidence, subsequently verified by Molecular Biology, that Life’s recent organized complexity arose over time from primeval simplicity by Chance, i.e., Random genetic variation, e.g., mutation, recombination, processes which generated diverse and progressively complex Biological Forms, and also Necessity, i.e., Non-Random natural (and sexual) selection, that resulted in the survival of the better adapted - fittest and the extinction - elimination of the less fit, which brought forth the BIOLOGICAL WORLD including MAN (see p. 44).

Aristarchus (c. 310-230 B.C.) first postulated, Copernicus (1473-1543), Kepler (1571-1630) and Galileo (1564-1642) then established, that the Sun rather than the Earth is the indisputable center of our solar system, modern Astronomy next demonstrated that the Sun is a medium-size Star among the estimated 200 Billion (10^11) Stars which compose our Galaxy that exists among an infinite number of Stars and Galaxies like the neighboring Andromeda Galaxy, and finally current Cosmology suggested that as little as 5% of the Physical Universe is made up of ordinary atomic matter, about 20% of dark matter, and the remaining 75% of antigravitational dark energy that accelerates the expansion of the Universe. Biology on the other hand has verified Darwin’s Theory of Organic Evolution which advocated that Man has emerged from lower forms of life as shown initially by the Fossils’ Record and more recently in combination with the evidence based on Mendelian Inheritance (the two termed “The Modern Evolutionary Synthesis”), as demonstrating overwhelmingly at long last through DNA sequencing technologies (see p. 51, first quotation), that all animal species are related to each other but have developed different characteristics because of transformations through time.

Although these significant discoveries compel us to conclude that we Humans do not possess the Cosmic importance that we had previously arrogated most naively and egocentrically to ourselves, we must nevertheless feel very proud of our Species since the Normal Adult Human Brain with its estimated 100 Billion (10^11) Neurons and their 100 Trillion (10^14) or more Synapses, perceives by means of its Brainpower - Mind the Vastness, Complexity, Beauty and Mystery of the visible and invisible or “dark” Universe. Yet, given the fact that our Human Brain has its anatomical and physiological limitations, i.e., our cerebral powers are finite - restricted, it follows that our mental picture about complex matters such as these should be offered to the scrutiny of our Fellow Humans with modesty and humility rather than pride, arrogance and conceit.
Whereas in ancient Greek philosophy (c. 600 - 300 B.C.) the term “Logos” (Gr.) or “Word” signified Reason, i.e., the Governing or Ordering Principle in the Universe, in early Christian Biblical times twenty centuries ago, St. John the Evangelist employed it as doctrinal Faith in the Divine Absolute - the Source of Everything - the Creator, i.e., God Himself and hence Christ - God Incarnate, a God who also manifested human attributes like Will - Anger - Love - Mercy - Forgiveness, which had traditionally been perceived metaphorically - symbolically. Still, the prevailing contemporary meaning of Logos is that it represents logical concepts in agreement with objective sensory perceptions, in contrast to Mythos that denotes mythical subjective doctrinal beliefs.

“We have no use for theological subtleties. The beliefs we have inherited, as old as time, can not be overthrown by any argument, not by the most inventive ingenuity.”

Euripides (c. 484-407 B.C.).
The Bacchae.

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

The Holy Bible: The Epistle of St. Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews 11:1.

“Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” (which in the Aramaic language means), “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

The Holy Bible, Psalm 22:1 and Matthew 27:46.

“If there be no God--there can be no soul. --If there is no soul then Jesus--You also are not true. --Haven, what emptiness.”

Mother Teresa (1910-1997) during a crisis of her Faith. Come Be My Light.

“For those who believe in God, no explanation is necessary. For those who do not, no explanation is possible.”

John LaFarge (1835-1910), quoted by Thomas Cahill in his Book Desire of the Everlasting Hills, about miraculous medical cures.
The Physical Universe or Cosmos as perceived by Albert Einstein.

"The most incomprehensible thing about the universe is that it is comprehensible."

"Two things inspire me to awe - the starry heavens above and the moral universe within."

"It is a magnificent feeling to recognize the unity of complex phenomena which appear to be things quite apart from the direct visible truth."

"A human being is part of a whole, called by us the 'Universe', a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest - a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circles of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."

"What I see in Nature is a magnificent structure that we can comprehend only very imperfectly, and that must fill a thinking person with a feeling of 'humility'. This is a genuinely religious feeling that has nothing to do with mysticism."

"The finest emotion of which we are capable is the mystic emotion. Herein lies the germ of all art and all true science. Anyone to whom this feeling is alien, who is no longer capable of wonderment and lives in a state of fear is a dead man. To know that what is impenetrable for us really exists and manifests itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty, whose gross forms alone are intelligible to our poor faculties - this knowledge, this feeling ... that is the core of the true religious sentiment. In this sense, and in this sense alone, I rank myself among profoundly religious men."

Above quotations by Albert Einstein (1879-1955), were derived from the Internet using search engines Google and Yahoo.

"All religions, arts and sciences are branches of the same tree. All these aspirations are directed toward ennobling man's life, lifting it from the sphere of mere physical existence and leading the individual toward freedom."

Albert Einstein (1879-1955), Out of my Later Years. Convictions and Beliefs, 4. Moral Decay [1937].
MAN, as perceived by an Ancient Tragic Dramatist.

"Many are the wonders of the world, 
but none is more wonderful than MAN. 
He rides the ocean, 
and takes his way through the deeps, 
through wind-swept valleys of perilous seas, 
that surge and sway. 
He is master of ageless Earth, 
bending her to his own will, 
by the sweat of his brow, 
as year succeeds to year, 
with toil unending of mule and plow. 
He is lord of all things living; 
birds of the air, beasts of the field, 
all creatures of sea and land he takes, 
cunning to capture and ensnare, 
with sleight of hand. 
He hunts the savage beast 
from the upland rocks, 
taming the mountain monarch in his lair, 
teaching the wild horse and the roaming ox, 
his yoke to bear upon their necks. 
He learnt the use of language, 
and the wind-swift motion of thought. 
He established the laws of living together in cities, 
building himself shelter against the rain, 
and wintry weather. 
There is nothing beyond his power. 
His subtlety met all chance. 
He conquered all danger. 
For every ill he has found its remedy, 
save only DEATH."

Sophocles (496-406 B.C.), Antigone, Chorus. 
Combined translation by: 

Versus - In ContrastWith

MAN, as perceived by a Modern Biologist.

"Nothing in Biology makes sense, 
except in the light of evolution."

Theodosius Dobzhansky (1900-1975). 
Since a number of academic physicians pursue careers that will lead them to positions of **Administrative Leadership**, e.g., Deans, Chairpersons, Research Chiefs, those who choose these kinds of careers soon come to realize that the manner by which they exercise their authority among their **Colleagues** and even **Students**, will determine their success or failure. Hence, in order to enhance their chances for success, it is essential to presently attempt to determine what kinds of lessons have been learned by evaluating the various human political systems that have survived the test of time.

**Theocracy** or “**God-mandated Rule**” as the words “Theos” - God, and “Cratos” - Rule indicate, is an immodest, insolent and shameless claim by Men of great arrogance and exceptional strength of resolve, who seize power in a community or a nation in the name or as spokesmen of a **Religious** or a **Secular** (e.g., Communism, Fascism, Nazism) “God”, and then proceed to order, command, control and rule their fellow humans by enforcing their desires and decisions on them, at times with much cruelty and often with the threat of, or with actual, death. This type of “**Rule by One**” or “**Monarchy**”, and the man who rules being called Monarch, Emperor, King, Despot, Tyrant was and still is the oldest and most common form of government by which groups of people that had formed Societies have been ruled from antiquity to the very present. Although this hierarchical way of rule is at times relatively benevolent and may even be harnessed for the public good and the welfare of the weak, in the majority of instances it is very brutal and repressive, since experience has regularly revealed that Man is easily corruptible, i.e., that “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” (Lord Acton).

Repeated attempts made throughout the ages to regulate, reduce and restrain, this one-man type of exercising political power, by replacing the one-man rule with the “**Rule by the Few**” or “**Oligarchy**” who offer themselves as exemplifying some form of nobility, e.g., of family pedigree, of intelligence, of wealth, features that allow them to call themselves “**Aristocracy**” or “**Rule by the Best**” have repeatedly failed since a small Group of Rulers much like a Single Ruler, being egotistical, self-centered, self-indulging and self-serving, never consent to voluntarily share the power they wield with others, although eventually they do become aware of “the limits of political power.” This is the main reason why Rulers in ancient and modern times, have jealously kept all such power in their own hands, while holding back the common people in ignorance and want in order to deprive them of their prerogative to think for themselves and so determine in freedom and liberty their individual and collective future and destiny.

In contrast to “**Rule by One**” or “**Rule by Few**”, “**Democracy**” or “**People’s Rule**” was born in ancient Athens when the law-giver Solon (c. 630-560 B.C.) first reformed the constitution and the judicial courts and constructed the machinery by means of which the conduction of public affairs was in the hands of the **People** - the **Demos**, and then the statesman Cleisthenes (c. 570-507 B.C.) finally established it firmly by the principle of equal rights for all citizens who actively participated in government. It was **Lincoln** (1809-1865) who in his Gettysburg Address (1863) defined Democracy most fittingly as a “**Government of the people, by the people, for the people.”** Although Democracy has many deficiencies (see p. 47, Anacharsis, quoted by Plutarch) and imperfections, it has survived up to the very present after much conflict and opposition, in a large part of
the world, and in as many forms as there are different cultures, chiefly because it is still the best form of government developed by humans, or as Winston Churchill said “It is the least bad of all the systems of government produced out of human experience.”

Accordingly, Secular - Liberal Democracy exemplifies a ceaseless Contest of the persuasive force of virtue of the common People against the coercive power and wicked conduct of the King - Despot. Nevertheless, human freedom must be rigorously limited by self-rule and self-restraint, so that the individual willingly serves the group, i.e., the State, for we have been warned by Plato and by our own experience that even in a Democracy when someone is inspired by excessive ambition in wanting to obtain and hold on to political power, especially absolute power, he will inevitably abuse such power and is therefore unfit to exercise it sensibly and judiciously, and so should be kept away from it as much as possible. However, history has demonstrated that in a Democracy where “the People are King” (Euripides), the Individual Human Mind being left free and independent of capriciously imposed controls, will lead to progress and advancement while eluding stagnation and decline. Although this outcome may bring on a rugged adventuresome individualism of an uninhibited manner, that could result in situations in which unfairness and injustice rule, i.e., when the constitutional rights and civil liberties of social minorities and the weak are suppressed rather than protected by the majority, the possibility of such undesirable developments should not arrest the replacement of Despotism by Democracy, especially when it is achieved from within.

Medical - Professional Considerations:
Physicians have a number of professional “constituencies” that they must attend to Democratically and never Monarchically or Kingly. Whereas the first and foremost is their Patients, the second is their Fellow Physicians, and the third is their Medical Students. What are Physicians’ duties toward their Patients, their Fellow Physicians, their Students to whom they are privileged to teach the “Science and Art of Medicine”? Lastly, what are their expectations of themselves as Physicians and as Human Beings? The answers to these questions were given by Hippocrates in his “Oath” (see p. 48).

Physicians’ Duties Toward their Patients:
“I will prescribe a regimen for the good of my patients according to my ability and my judgment and abstain from offending them or harming them. Never to prescribe a deadly drug to anyone even if I am asked, nor give such advice. Neither will I give a woman a pessary to procure abortion. But I will preserve the purity of my life and my art. In every house where I come I will enter only for the good of my patients, keeping myself far from all intentional injustice and harm, and especially from the aphrodisiac contacts with the bodies of women or of men, whether they be free or slaves. Whatever I see or hear in the exercise of my profession or outside my profession in my communion with men, which ought not to be divulged, not to reveal it but to keep it secret.”

Physicians’ Duties Toward their Fellow Physicians:
“To consider him who taught me this art the equal of my parents; to live in common with him and if necessary to share my goods with him.”

Physicians’ Duties Toward their Medical Students:
“To look upon his children as my own brothers, to teach them this art if they so desire without fee or written contract; to impart to my sons and the sons of him who taught me and the disciples who have enrolled themselves and have agreed to the rules of the profession, but to these alone, the precepts and the instructions.”

Physicians’ Expectations of Themselves as Physicians:
“If I keep this oath faithfully and not violate it, may I enjoy my life and my art, respected by all men and for all times. But if I transgress it or forswear it may the reverse be my lot.”
Human Laws versus Human Justice in a Democracy

Anacharsis was a Scythian who lived at about 600 B.C. He was the son of Gnurus, the king of a nomadic tribe of the Euxine shores, and of a Greek woman.

Although Scythians spoke an Indo-Persian language, Anacharsis was instructed in the Greek language by his mother, because of which he prevailed upon his father to entrust him with a visit to Athens at about 589 B.C. While there, he became acquainted with the legendary Athenian Lawgiver Solon - the “Father of Democracy”, from whom he acquired superior knowledge of the wisdom and learning of Greece, and by whose influence he was introduced to the principal persons and philosophers in Athens. He was the first foreigner who because of his Greek mother received the privilege of Greek citizenship, and it is said that he was initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries. Both Solon and Anacharsis had been judged in antiquity as being two of the “Seven Sages”.

After Anacharsis had resided in Athens for several years, he traveled through different countries in quest of knowledge, and returned home filled with the desire of instructing his countrymen in the laws and religion of the Greeks. The historian Herodotus (c. 485 - c. 425 B.C.) states that his brother Saulius killed him while he was performing a sacrifice to the Greek goddess Cybele, for worshipping Strange Foreign Deities.

According to Plutarch (A.D. 46-120) “Lives, Life of Solon”, Anacharsis laughed at Solon for imagining that “the dishonesty and covetousness of his fellow Greeks could be restrained by Laws, which were like spiders’ webs that, it is true, would catch small flies - the weak and the poor, but be easily broken by the bigger ones - the mighty and the rich, allowing them to escape while at the same time destroying the webs - the Laws.” His simple and forcible mode of expressing himself gave birth to the proverbial “Scythian Eloquence”.

A similar comment was made centuries later:

“Laws are like cobwebs, which may catch small flies, but let wasps and hornets break through.”

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745).
A Critical Essay upon the Faculties of the Mind [1707].

Note: Historical facts about Anacharsis were derived from various Encyclopedias. The Jonathan Swift quotation was located by the Internet search engine Google.

“In a Democracy, the most important office is the office of Citizen.”

Justice Louis Brandeis (1856-1941).

“The Four Freedoms in a Democracy are:
‘Of Speech and Religion, From Want and Fear.’”

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945)
Physician’s “Oath” designed by Hippocrates of Cos (c. 460-370 B.C.)

(Complete Text)

“I swear by Apollo the physician, and Asclpios, and Hygieia, and Panacea, and I call to witness all the gods and all the goddesses, to keep this oath and agreement according to my ability and my judgment. To consider him who taught me this art the equal of my parents; to live in common with him and if necessary to share my goods with him; to look upon his children as my own brothers, to teach them this art if they so desire without fee or written contract; to impart to my sons and the sons of him who taught me and the disciples who have enrolled themselves and have agreed to the rules of the profession, but to these alone, the precepts and the instructions. I will prescribe a regimen for the good of my patients according to my ability and my judgment and abstain from offending them or harming them. Never to prescribe a deadly drug to anyone even if I am asked, nor give such advice. Neither will I give a woman a pessary to procure abortion. But I will preserve the purity of my life and my art. I will not perform an orchietectomy on any man even if he asks me, yet leave this task to the person who occupies himself with this type of work. In every house where I come I will enter only for the good of my patients, keeping myself far from all intentional injustice and harm, and especially from the aphrodisiac contacts with the bodies of women or of men, whether they be free or slaves. Whatever I see or hear in the exercise of my profession or outside my profession in my communion with men, which ought not to be divulged, not to reveal it but to keep it secret. If I keep this oath faithfully and not violate it, may I enjoy my life and my art, respected by all men and for all times. But if I transgress it or forswear it may the reverse be my lot.”

It is obvious that the true essence of the Physician’s “Oath” as articulated by Hippocrates is “to help or at least to do no harm to human beings”, a view exemplified by the physician's profound respect for and protection of all Human Life from its earliest to its latest stages, which is a principle that rises above practical “cost-benefit” analyses.

Many present-day physicians, and many more would-be physicians who will be practicing Medicine in the twenty-first century and beyond, may remark that what Hippocrates declared twenty-five centuries ago is too old-fashioned and therefore most irrelevant for today’s world. Although it is fair to say that human attitudes do change with time, and what was acceptable in the past may no longer be acceptable at present, there are some uniquely human attributes - characteristics that cannot change, i.e., our advanced and often self-reflective intelligence, our ethical vision and goals, our esthetic appreciation and the supreme rule of our secular laws, which are what distinguish intelligent Humans from instinctive Animals. Otherwise, the succinct declaration by the ancient Greek (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle) and the subsequent Western philosophers that:

“Man is a Logical, Ethical, Political - Social Living Being (ΖΩΟΝ - ANIMAL).”

will be replaced by the scientifically accurate but frightfully restrictive assertion that:

“Man is the outward manifestation of his DNA.”

Despite the fact that at the level of Biology - Chemistry - Physics, Life is nucleic acid replicating into more nucleic acid (see p. 11), at the level of Human Beings there is certainly much more to “Life .... to MAN” (see p. 11), especially as Sophocles affirmed (see p. 44) so beautifully and so clearly in his magnificent tragedy Antigone.
8th Seminar: “Rational versus Instinctive”.
Wednesday, 2:00-5:00pm.
Readings: Euripides, The Bacchae.
Euripides, Medea.

As stated already (see p. 39), “Natural - Physical Philosophers” of Antiquity like Thales, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Anaxagoras, Embedocles, Leucippus, Democritus and others, pursued Knowledge about the Physical World to the extent that many of their ideas which were conceived with clarity and lucidity became the foundations of much of what we now call Modern Science, e.g., the atomic theory of matter delineated by Democritus which is the basis of the comparable current atomic theory. Similarly, “Moral Philosophers” of Antiquity like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle laid the foundations of Ethics, which both legitimized and enriched Christian Morality for close to twenty Centuries. These and other “Intellectual Giants”, as well as Artists and even Common People of Antiquity, laid also the foundations of an Esthetic perspective of human life, because they delighted in Beauty in its many and varied forms as perceived by human senses, in a manner that escapes contemporary Man’s grasp, however hard he tries.

They perceived the Universe as being orderly. They called it Cosmos, which in Greek means beautiful, hence the word “cosmetic” for something that beautifies. They created artistic masterpieces, e.g., Temples, Sculptures, and even Household Utensils for their everyday needs, which still look exquisitely beautiful, thus confirming the sensible and wise view that the Esthetic perspective is as important as the Rational and the Ethical outlooks, and that these three strictly autonomous human activities are not mutually exclusive but can easily coexist in harmony. The great Athenian statesman Pericles, as reported by Thucydides (c. 460 - 400 B.C.) in his “History”, proclaimed in his celebrated Funeral Oration which he gave during the first year (431-430 B.C.) of the Peloponnesian War between ancient Athens and Sparta, that “We [Athenians] are lovers of beauty without extravagance, and lovers of wisdom without loss of manly vigor.”

But although ancient philosophers had an esthetic appreciation of the Cosmos, and modern scientists have noted the intrinsic simplicity, beauty and elegance of many of the Laws of Nature (see p. 38, Feynman quote), it must be emphasized that all such “Human Values” can not be taken into account in explaining the true Essence of the Physical World which should be the exclusive domain of objective Scientific inquiry.

While there is still much ugliness, cacophony and disharmony in the modern world that need before long to be addressed, contemporary Man could feel proud of his Esthetic Achievements, in the Practical Arts - Architecture, Engineering, Technology, and in the Fine Arts - Literature, i.e., poetry, drama, prose fiction, and Music, Painting, Sculpture, which he created for his well-being (the Practical Arts) and for his emotional uplifting (the Fine Arts) especially as communicated through the Performing Arts.

Whereas both ancient and modern philosophers realized that the Practice of Rational Thinking, the Exercise of Morality, and the Esthetic Appreciation of Beauty, are features that distinguish Intelligent Humans from Animals, and that they are dependent to a great extent upon Man’s resolve, they also became aware that there are Forces beyond his control no matter how hard he tries to check them. While it appeared reasonable to accept Man’s sorry predicament that he cannot well understand, harness and constrain many of the Natural Forces, e.g., an Earthquake and its aftereffects, it was always more discouraging and disheartening to Man to realize that he was - is unable to
restrain aspects of his own character, such as hate, malice, envy, greed, and worse of all his frequent follies, which singly and collectively worked to his disadvantage. While men in ancient times ascribed these difficulties to Gods or God (“Preordained Fate” they called it), and we presently blame it on our Genes (“Genetic Determinism” we call it) and our overall Environment, the ancient Greek Tragic Dramatists - Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides gave the finest answers to our perplexity as to who is to blame - namely Man himself. It was Homer however, the greatest poet of all times, who gave the peerless response when the Olympian Father-God Zeus - (Lt. Jupiter) tells the other Gods at their Assembly, *Odyssey*, Book 1, Lines 37-40. Translated by Robert Fagles, Viking Press.

> “Ah how shameless -- the way these mortals blame the gods.  
> From us alone, they say, come all the miseries, yes,  
> but they themselves, with their own reckless ways,  
> compound their pains beyond their proper share.”

And so finally, we come to realize that the human tragedy is that irrespective of how hard Man tries to behave in a rational and moral manner, he endlessly battles with his Animal - Instinctive Forces (see p. 51), which quite often are beyond his control. He also becomes aware of the harsh truth that he himself is entirely responsible for his actions that are free, i.e., are not made under coercion or duress, hence he is to be blamed for his sufferings. It is entirely up to Man therefore to exercise his free will - his power to choose, to right his wrongs, in order to prove to himself and to others that he rightly belongs to the species Homo sapiens (Lt.), i.e., Intelligent Humans, who can think rationally, behave morally, admire beauty in its many forms, and just as important can love, laugh, cry, hope. But he must always remember that the Rational - Apollonian component of his nature should coexist in harmony with the Instinctive - Dionysian part, with both of them being exercised in moderation instead of in excess as the dramatist Euripides illustrated so eloquently in his two great tragedies *The Bacchae* and *Medea*.

Despite the fact that in Ancient times their most significant thinkers showed respect toward Religions that were characterized by a strong Moral component, this worthy attitude has more recently been replaced by disrespect, intolerance and even strife. While this outcome is to a degree the result of Science’s discoveries with regard to the non-central place of the Earth in the Physical Universe, and to the Origin of Humans from lower forms of Life (see p. 51, first quotation), it is also the product of Humanity’s ignorance, wishful thinking and self-deception, which time and again breed much superstition, prejudice, bigotry, dogmatism, fanaticism and quite often brutal violence.

In conclusion, it will be wise and prudent of all of us to acknowledge that despite the fact that scientific knowledge is the only kind of understanding that reflects as closely as possible the physical or material reality, there are philosophical, ethical and esthetic Human Values that are outside the concern and competence of Science. Even an Agnostic Secular Empiricist (see p. 41) must admit that most people yearn to believe in a personal God, because this Faith consoles and comforts them with dual hope that is beyond human reason, i.e., that they will survive death by entering eternal life - a life external to time as spiritual beings, as immortal souls, and that in this ethereal world, this Paradise, they will be rewarded for their good deeds during their earthly life while their enemies will be punished for their wicked actions. Lastly, it must be stated clearly that while Religious Beliefs and Scientific Knowledge may be irreconcilable for the few, they can coexist in harmony rather than disharmony for the benefit of the many.
Rational versus Instinctive

Main genomes of humans and chimpanzees are **98.5-98.8%** identical when each one of the **three billion base pairs of DNA** are compared, a finding which suggested that we shared a common ancestor **5 to 6 (probably 5.4) million years ago**. Incidentally, the genomes of men and women differ by **1-2%**, which is the same as the difference between a man and a male chimpanzee or between a woman and a female chimpanzee.


“Reason struggled to subdue passion.”

Euripides (c. 484-407 B.C.).
*Hippolytus.*

“Man is neither angel nor beast; and the misfortune is that he who would act the angel acts the beast.”

Blaise Pascal (1623-1662).
*Pensees [1670]* no. 358.

“It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied.”

John Stuart Mill (1806-1873).
*Utilitarianism [1863]* ch. 2.

“By words man interchanges thoughts, by the forms of art he interchanges feelings, and this with all men, not only of the present time, but also of the past and the future.”

Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910).
*What Is Art? [1898]*.

“Our civilization is still in a middle stage, scarcely beast, in that it is no longer wholly guided by instinct; scarcely human, in that it is not yet wholly guided by reason.”

Theodore Dreiser (1871-1945).
*Sister Carrie [1900]*.

“Too much of the animal disfigures the civilized human being, too much culture makes a sick animal.”

Carl Gustave Jung (1875-1961).
*The Psychology of the Unconscious [1943]*.

“The abstract has no emotional content.”

Cecil Balmond (1943-), *Arup* Architect-Engineer.
If

“If you can keep your head
when all about you men are losing theirs
and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you
but make allowances for their doubting, too.
If you can wait but not be tired of waiting,
or being lied about, don’t deal in lies,
Of being hated, don’t give way to hating,
and yet don’t look too good nor talk too wise,
If you can dream but not make dreams your master,
If you can think and not make thoughts your aim,
If you can meet with triumph and disaster,
and treat those two impostors just the same,
If you can bear to hear the truth you’ve spoken
twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
and stoop and build them up with worn-out tools,
If you can make one heap of all your winnings
and risk it on one turn of pitch and toss,
and lose and start again at your beginnings
and never breathe a word about your loss,
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
to serve your turn long after they are gone,
and to hold on when there is nothing in you
but the will that says to them “hold on,”
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
or walk with kings nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
if all men count with you but none too much,
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
with 60 seconds worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that’s in it,
and which is more, you’ll be a man, my son.”

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936).
Rudyard Kipling Complete Verse.

“How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
to rust unburnish’d, not to shine in use!
as tho’ to breathe were life!” ....

“To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.”

Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892).
Ulysses [1842], lines 22-24; line 70.
9th Seminar: “Happiness versus Unhappiness”.
Friday, 2:00-5:00pm.
Leo Tolstoy, Family Happiness.

Since the only kind of “patient” who is happy to be hospitalized, is the pregnant woman in labor pains who is looking forward to the birth of her child, physicians who are summoned to help patients ill with serious diseases recognize that strong feelings of unhappiness, even misery, are present in both the patients and their loved ones for their unfortunate predicaments. Hence, it is appropriate for all to be aware of what happiness in general might be, and how to help patients overcome their unhappy - miserable state.

Is Happiness found mainly outside of Man?
- a) In pleasures, enjoyments, satisfactions, indulgences, gratifications?
- b) In prosperity, wealth, riches, money, material acquisitions - possessions?
- c) In fame, glory, honors, prestige, celebrity, notoriety?
- d) In attaining, holding on to and exercising political power?

Is Happiness found mainly within Man?
The foremost ancient moral philosophers Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and subsequently the Stoic Philosophers and the Christian Theologians, affirmed that Man is Happy:
1) When he lives by right actions that result from his Innate Virtues (Arêtes), i.e.,
   - a) Goodness, kindness, tolerance, charity, generosity, magnanimity.
   - b) Wisdom, self-knowledge (“know thyself” - a Delphic axiom), understanding.
   - c) Justice (most essential one according to Plato - Republic), fairness, impartiality.
   - d) Moderation, prudent aspirations (“nothing in excess” - another Delphic axiom).
   - e) Contentment, serenity, modesty, humility, equanimity, peace of mind.
   - f) Courage, fortitude, bravery, daring, audacity.
   - g) Love (most essential virtue for Christians) of Man for God and of Man for Man.
2) When he pursues a creatively productive life “in accordance with excellence”. Is it to be found in the Odyssey, i.e., a life-long Journey, or in the Ithaka (see p. 55), i.e., the Destination? If in the Odyssey, is seeking it without finding it sufficient, or does this signify the final human failure since the effort cannot be repeated?
3) When he achieves a contemplative, i.e., a critically reflective existence (see p. 54).
4) When he helps Fellow Humans to realize their Hopes, Dreams and Aspirations.

Or, is Man Happy when, being healthy in body and mind, he safeguards his personal freedom and independence and so preserves his individuality and originality as the historian Thucydides (c. 460-400 B.C.) stated, “The secret of happiness is freedom, and the secret of freedom a brave heart.” Or, when he truthfully loves as the German poet Johann W. von Goethe (1749-1832) declared, “Only the soul that loves is happy.” and the Russian author Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) said, “The only certain happiness in life is to live for others.”

Is our Pursuit of Happiness one of our “Unalienable rights endowed by the Creator.” as affirmed in the U.S. Declaration of Independence [July 4, 1776]? Does our right to pursue happiness assure us that we shall attain it, especially since we may not know what it is?

Is Happiness or Unhappiness a simple matter of how Life is perceived subjectively by a certain person, and not something that is happening objectively to that person? Or is at times Unhappiness - Misery - Misfortune the result of calamitous and deplorable events beyond a person’s control (see p. 56) that can neither be avoided nor evaded?
Contemplation versus Meditation

The Western - Occidental - European - Ancient Greek-Roman, “Contemplation” (*)

“The Aristotelian contemplator is a man who has already acquired knowledge; and what he is contemplating is precisely this knowledge already present in his mind. Contemplation is something like a review or survey of existing knowledge; the contemplator is engaged in the orderly inspection of truths, which he already possesses; his task consists in bringing them forward from the recesses of his mind, and arranging them fittingly in the full light of consciousness. .... In this way, contemplation is a quasi-aesthetic appreciation of knowledge and truth. .... A life of unbroken contemplation is something divine: no man can hope to live it for more than a portion of his time, and many men cannot aspire to it at all.”

versus


“Oriental meditation, if I understand it aright, consists essentially in relaxing one’s intellectual muscles and letting the mind roam at random over the vastness of eternity. Such an exercise is designed, in part at least, to gain new insight or knowledge; and to that extent it differs from the Aristotelian exercise. Moreover, it involves a voluntary surrender of intellectual control, whereas Aristotle clearly thinks of contemplation as a consciously directed activity.”

Statements on “Contemplation” and “Meditation” were presented by Jonathan Barnes, in his Introduction to Aristotle’s book Nicomachean Ethics, pages 38-39, which was translated by J. A. K. Thomson, in Penguin Classics, Penguin Books.

(*) Although it is true that the great majority of adult people are unconcerned about “Contemplation”, i.e., critical reflection, we should strive to remedy this deficiency by encouraging young people like our Students to pursue with resolve “the examined life” (Socrates, in his Apology), which is the only kind of human life that is worth living.

Esthetic versus Scientific

Comment:
“Look, look how beautiful the sunrise is.
Look, look how stunning the sunset is.”

Response:
“The ’looks’ of the sun-rise and of the sun-set are fine human ’esthetic experiences’.
The ’scientific truth’ of the situation is that the Sun never rises and it never sets.
The only physical event occurring is that the Earth is rotating around its own axis.”

G. D.

Please see: p. 38, Feynman quote, and p. 49, 3rd paragraph.
Whether or not we as individuals eventually reach our dreamed of Ithaca or Destination is not as important as having experienced an Odyssey or Journey that fully justifies our Life’s valiant, prolonged, sustained effort.

**I T H A K A**

“As you set out for Ithaka
hope your road is a long one,
full of adventure, full of discovery.
Laistrygonians, Cyclops,
angry Poseidon -- don’t be afraid of them:
you’ll never find things like that on your way
as long as you keep your thoughts raised high,
as long as a rare excitement
stirs your spirit and your body.
Laistrygonians, Cyclops,
wild Poseidon -- you won’t encounter them
unless you bring them along inside your soul,
unless your soul sets them up in front of you.

Hope your road is a long one.
May there be many summer mornings when,
with what pleasure, what joy,
you enter harbors you’re seeing for the first time;
may you stop at Phoenician trading stations
to buy fine things,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
sensual perfume of every kind --
as many sensual perfumes as you can;
and may you visit many Egyptian cities
to learn and go on learning from their scholars.

Keep Ithaka always in your mind.
Arriving there is what you’re destined for.
But don’t hurry the journey at all.
Better if it lasts for years,
so you’re old by the time you reach the island,
wealthy with all you’ve gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaka to make you rich.
Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey.
Without her you wouldn’t have set out.
She has nothing left to give you.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka won’t have fooled you.
Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,
you’ll have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.”

C. P. Cavafy (1863-1933).
Collected Poems.
Translated from Modern Greek by E. Keeley & P. Sherrard.
Edited by George Savidis.
IF THIS IS A MAN, IF THIS IS A WOMAN

“You who live safe,
In your warm houses,
You who find, returning in the evening,
Hot food and friendly faces:
Consider if this is a man,
Who works in the mud,
Who does not know peace,
Who fights for a scrap of bread,
Who dies because of a yes or a no.
Consider if this is a woman,
Without hair and without name,
With no more strength to remember,
Her eyes empty and her womb cold,
Like a frog in winter.
Mediate that this came about:
I commend these words to you.
Carve them in your hearts,
At home, in the street,
Going to bed, rising;
Repeat them to your children,
Or may your house fall apart,
May illness impede you,
May your children turn their faces from you.”


We must never forget, that there were Fellow Human Beings, who did not have the chance to experience their Odyssey, their Ithaka, however modest and humble those would have been. Sadly enough, never to forget can be for some never to forgive.

“I can’t forget, but I will forgive.”
Nelson Mandela (1918-).

In Contrast to Auschwitz:

“I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a Cosmopolitan.”
(ΚΟΣΜΟ ΠΟΛΙΤΗΣ, World Citizen).

Socrates (469-399 B.C.), as reported by Plutarch (A.D. 46-120).

“My country is the World, my countrymen are all Mankind.”

William Lloyd Garrison (1805-1879), Motto of The Liberator [1831].
(Garrison’s Statue and the above striking Quotation can be found in Boston’s Commonwealth Avenue Mall, a little before Exeter Street).

“Nationalism is the last refuge of the scoundrel.”

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), Apophthegm.
Happiness versus Unhappiness

“Call him fortunate,  
whom the end of life,  
finds harbored in tranquility.”

“We lean on sticks -  
in strength not men but children. ....  
In weakness youth and age are one:  
The sap sleeps in the unripe bone,  
as in the withered. ....  
In the gray and brittle years,  
old men must walk,  
three-footed, weak as babes,  
and stray like dreams,  
lost in the light of day.”

Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.).  
Agamemnon.

“No man may hope to spend his life  
untouched by pain and favored to the end.  
Some grieves are with us now; others again  
Time and the Gods will send.”

Aeschylus (525-456 B.C.).  
The Choephori.

“There is no time of life, so happy as the days  
of innocence, before you know what joy or sorrow are.”

Sophocles (495-406 B.C.).  
Ajax.

“Chance rules our lives,  
and the future is all unknown.  
Best live as best we may, from day to day.”

“Show me the man whose happiness was anything  
more than illusion followed by disillusion.”

“None can be called happy,  
until that day when he carries  
his happiness down to the grave in peace.”

Sophocles (495-406 B.C.).  
King Oedipus.
“No man has ever lived out of the reach, of misadventure’s grasping hand.”

Sophocles (495-406 B.C.).
Oedipus at Colonus.

“The strongest mind, can not but break, under misfortune’s blows.”

“What is the life of man?
A thing not fixed for good or evil, fashioned for praise or blame.
Chance raises a man to the heights, chance casts him down, and none can foretell, what will be from what is.”

“Of happiness the crown and chiefest part is wisdom, and to hold the Gods in awe. This is the law that, seeing the stricken heart of pride brought down, we learn when we are old.”

Sophocles (495-406 B.C.).
Antigone.

“You may meet people in every variety of fortune and condition; but happiness in human life is hard to find.”

“How our lives are tossed about this way and that with the shifting gales of fortune and misfortune!”

“For in the end good men receive the reward they deserve; but evil natures beget evil fortune; and to them happiness can never come.”

Euripides (c. 484-407 B.C.).
Ion.

“The man who finds his own wealth and security a cause of pleasure, is a fool. Those forces which control our fortunes are as unpredictable as capering idiots. Happiness does not exist.”

“Good fortune means nothing. Call no man happy till the day he dies.”

Euripides (c. 484-407 B.C.).
The Women of Troy.
“We think too much and feel too little.”

EPILOGUE

This is the END of an intellectual Odyssey or Adventure that we have embarked upon together, in our courageous efforts to elucidate by means of self-reflection and Dialectic interactions “Human Values As They Relate To Medicine”.

If we were to appraise with modesty and humility the outcome of our scholarly labors as illustrated by these Seminars, to some extent objectively but certainly to a much greater extent subjectively, we could state without hesitation or evasion that we were able to articulate our thoughts quite clearly and successfully, but we failed to express our feelings as explicitly as we would have wished, a condition that has often resulted in provocation rather than in persuasion. This outcome has resulted first, from the rational approach as pursued by the ancient Greek Philosophers who advocated Reason over Faith that we have employed in our efforts which is suited for issues of Thinking rather than for matters of Believing or Feeling, and second, from the biased notion by many that the Hatred and Bigotry of the contemporary world is to a large extent caused by Religious Beliefs, whereas on the contrary it has been proven that Love and Peace have always been the core Values of the teachings of all great Religions which have played a central role in social reform and a more equitable human life.

This is why we must now state clearly and unequivocally, that we are acutely aware that in the province of Human Values and the kind of acceptable or unacceptable Human Behavior that results from them, the power of Rational Argument is often not as potent or as effective as Religious Faith and the broadly approved Cultural Norms that the German Philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) had called the “objective spirit”, which by advocating love, mercy, charity, kindness and compassion (the former), or what is appalling, shameful, utterly intolerable and hence forbidden (the latter), encourage ethical, decent, behavior (the former), or restrain bad, evil, wicked conduct (the latter), which in synergistic interaction usually but not always overcome prejudice and encourage justice that result in comforting and aiding the many afflicted. This outcome was amply demonstrated by the struggle for Civil Rights in the U.S., which was wisely guided by the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who believed in Nonviolence and the Love and Brotherhood among all Men (see pp. 31-33), a valiant contest being accurately and beautifully documented in two superb books: “The Autobiography” by Martin Luther King, Jr., and “A Stone of Hope” by David L. Chappell.

Although this is the END of our present Seminars, it can hopefully be a new BEGINNING, which will inspire each one of you who partook in these intellectual encounters, to continue your explorations by yourselves and with Kindred Spirits in trying to understand the True Nature and Innate Dignity of Man, by answering as well as you possibly can some of Humanity’s Essential and Eternal Questions, since as the foremost ancient philosopher Socrates (see p. 3) stated so concisely and candidly:

“An unexamined life is not worth living.”

Good luck to you in your efforts, but just as important, do enjoy doing what you are doing, for as Euripides said so very wisely in his magnificent tragedy The Bacchae:

“He who best enjoys each passing day is truly blest.”
Success versus Failure

“Great things can not be achieved without great effort; only a fool would dream of it.”

Euripides (c. 484-407 B.C.).
Orestes.

Even so, there is always another side to a Man’s Predicament

“You’ve never walked in that man’s shoes
Or saw things through his eyes
Or stood and watched with helpless hands
While the heart inside you dies.”

Hank Williams (1923-1953).
Men With Broken Hearts [1951].

But in a Moral Society, Broken Hearts can at best be prevented or at worst be mended, in order to achieve a more equitable Human Life

“Our law is by definition a codification of morality, much of it grounded in the Judeo-Christian tradition.”

U.S. Senator Barack Obama (1961-).
Citizen-Soldiers *versus* Physicians

Like Citizen-Soldiers who inspired by duty, honor and sacrifice, fight to defend, protect and preserve their personal and national freedom and independence, Physicians moved by human sympathy, empathy and compassion, strive to prevent, treat and cure illness; to alleviate anguish, distress and suffering; to enhance good quality of life, and lastly to help patients face their illness courageously and their pending death with equanimity.

“ΜΟΛΩΝ ΛΑΒΕ”
“Come and get them.”

“No Retreat. No Surrender.”

Spartan King Leonidas’ (540-480 B.C.) forceful warning, to his enemy Persians (upper quote); to his own Soldiers (lower quote).

Spartan mothers or wives gave a departing warrior his shield with the words:

” ‘Η ΤΑΝ ‘Η ΕΠΙ ΤΑΣ”
” With it or upon it.”

Namely, that he should either return victoriously with his shield, or his cremated body will be returned in an urn upon his shield.

“Ο ΞΕΝΕ ΑĠΕΛΛΕΙΝ ΛΑΚΕΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΟΙΣ
ΟΤΙ ΤΗΔΕ ΚΕΙΜΕΘΑ ΤΟΙΣ ΚΕΙΝΩΝ ΡΗΜΑΣΙ ΠΕΙΘΟΜΕΝΟΙ”

“Oh Stranger carry this message to the Lakedemonians (Spartans) that here we lie obedient to their Laws.”

Simonides (c. 556-468 B.C.).
Fragment 92.

Epitaph for the Spartan King Leonidas and his small army of three hundred men, all of whom perished fighting to hold the narrow pass at Thermopylae (see p. 62), against the immense armies of despotic Persia invading Democratic Greece in the year 480 B.C., thus sending a message to future generations about the true meaning of freedom.

“…. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion -- that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain -- that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom -- and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.”

Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865).
*Address at Gettysburg, November 19, 1863.*
Although **Human Life** can be sweet and/or bitter, it is its **Values** that make it **Human** instead of only just **Animal**.

**THERMOPYLAE**

“Honor to those who in the life they lead
define and guard a Thermopylae.
Never betraying what is right,
consistent and just in all they do
but showing pity also, and compassion;
generous when they’re rich,
and when they are poor,
still generous in small ways,
still helping as much as they can;
always speaking the truth,
yet without hating those who lie.

And even more honor is due to them
when they foresee (as many do foresee)
that Ephialtis(*) will turn up in the end,
that the Medes(**) will break trough after all.”

C. P. Cavafy (1863-1933).
*Collected Poems.*
Translated from Modern Greek
by E. Keeley & P. Sherrard.
Edited by George Savidis.

(*) **Ephialtis** was a Malian Greek traitor who motivated by the desire of a reward, guided the Persian soldiers by a mountain goat-path around the narrow pass of Thermopylae which led behind the Greek lines, thus gaining himself for posterity the repute of a villainous - despicable man who betrayed Greece to the invading enemy Persian armies. Since that time, the name Ephialtis has come to mean **Nightmare** in the Greek language.

(**) **Medes** is another name for Persians.

Recommended Books on the three-day battle for the pass at Thermopylae in 480 B.C.

Death is always the Inevitable Final Victor

“Time crumbles things; everything grows old under the power of Time, and is forgotten through the lapse of Time.”

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.)
Physics, Bk 4.

“For all things are born to change and pass away and perish, that others in their turn may come to be.”

Marcus Aurelius (121-180).
Meditations, Bk 12.

CANDLES

“Days to come stand in front of us like a row of burning candles -- golden, warm, and vivid candles. Days past fall behind us, a gloomy line of burnt-out candles; the nearest are still smoking, cold, melted, and bent.
I do not want to look at them: their shape saddens me, and it saddens me to remember their original light.
I look ahead at my burning candles.
I don’t want to turn, don’t want to see, terrified, how quickly that dark line gets longer, how quickly one more dead candle joins another.”

C. P. Cavafy (1863-1933).
Collected Poems.
Translated from Modern Greek by E. Keeley & P. Sherrard.
Edited by George Savidis.

“Before my birth there was infinite time, and after my death, inexhaustible time. I never thought of it before: I’d been living luminously between two eternities of darkness.”

Orhan Pamuk (1952-).
My Name Is Red, page 3.
Translated from Turkish by Erdag M. Goknar.
Beginning *versus* Ending

“I have fought a good fight.  
I have finished my course.  
I have kept the faith.”

St. John the Evangelist (1st Century A.D.).  
The Second Epistle to Timothy, 4:7.

“Things won are done;  
joy’s soul lies in the doing.”

William Shakespeare (1564-1616).  
*Troilus and Cressida* [1601-1603],  
Act I, scene ii, line 310.

“The melancholia of everything completed!”

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844-1900).  
*Beyond God and Evil* [1885-1886], IX, 277.

“Every end is a new beginning.”

A proverb of unknown attribution.
TEACHING

PREREQUISITES FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

The **first** prerequisite for excellence in teaching, is that the teacher possesses **true knowledge**. The teacher will receive the unswerving respect, and admiration of intelligent and demanding students, when he or she is perceived as being at the cutting edge, of a particular kind of human endeavor. Namely, the teacher must be knowledgeable, of the objective facts and of their interconnections, that is to say, of how the facts relate to each other, and to the broader human knowledge. Moreover, the good teacher must be capable, of distilling the essence of the facts from the fictions, so that they can be revealed in their esthetic simplicity, and also, of determining their relative weight, in order for their importance to be ascertained. Intelligent and demanding students, will have additional admiration for their teacher, if he or she is not reluctant to admit ignorance, while at the same time is actively engaged, in pushing back the endless frontiers of human knowledge, by defining the important issues, and raising the answerable questions. Likewise, students will have a special affection, for the teacher who has an historical perspective, namely one who knows how the facts were acquired, and can bring to life the human adventure, the sweat and the tears, of men and women who overcame the failures, the disappointments, and the negative intellectual currents, until they reached their final destination, which we call discovery.

Although possession of true knowledge by the teacher, is very necessary for excellence in teaching, it is by no means a sufficient condition. To accomplish indisputable excellence, a **second** prerequisite is required, namely, that the teacher must have the capacity to **transmit knowledge** to the students, with a high degree of effectiveness. The main elements of effectiveness are: enthusiasm combined with skepticism. - Enthusiasm is contagious, it stimulates in the students a loving and
positive attitude toward new and exciting knowledge.
- Skepticism, on the other hand, encourages the disciplined and disinterested mind, to stay cool, to doubt, to raise questions, and to look at human knowledge in terms of an enigmatic past and an unpredictable future.

The **third** prerequisite for excellence in teaching, is the capacity of the good teacher, to communicate to the students that **teaching is fun**. This can be accomplished by showing a sense of humor, which is entertaining while it is instructive, and by pointing out that the reward in teaching, lies in the act itself, namely that a creatively productive human contact was made. The good teacher will encourage the Students moreover, to anticipate that the best in their lives is yet to come, that they can travel toward distant and wide horizons, strictly of their own free choosing, where unanticipated "surprise", the greatest of human joys, awaits them.

The **fourth** prerequisite relates to the teacher's **inner moral compass** or **moral vision**, or viewed more specifically, **moral courage** and **conviction**. The main elements are: kindness, civility, humility and decency, personal integrity, intellectual honesty, and lack of any pretentiousness, while refraining from embarrassing or humiliating others. These human qualities, teach not by words, but by the force of the personal example, and represent the majesty of the human spirit. They generate the kind of warmth and genuine concern, that bring the students closer to their teacher, while, at the same time, protect them from a "moth and flame" relationship. They help also to erase in students any distorted sense of self importance, while inspiring in them self trust and self confidence.

The **fifth** and perhaps final prerequisite, does not relate to the teacher. It is an expression of **the attitude of the students**, toward their learning experience. No student will achieve excellence, no matter how original and penetrating a mind he or she possesses, without hard work and hard thinking, without commitment and self discipline, without patience, persistence, and perseverance. No student will reach great understanding
of the world at large,
without intellectual curiosity,
without passionate devotion and dedication.
No student will ever succeed,
in changing the world for the better,
without stubborn idealism,
without human passion, as well as compassion.
Of course, no student, no young person,
should contemplate reaching for the stars,
unless he or she is well aware,
of the cost of the venture,
when undertaking the adventure.

But as time goes by, and the student and the teacher
become better aware of their true relationship,
they will both come to realize the simple truth,
that there are no major differences between them,
other than their respective - particular age.
In the final analysis, each one of us,
is both a teacher and a student, a giver and a receiver.
This plain fact is what makes teaching,
such a rewarding experience.
Namely, accepting the opportunity
that we are offered as teachers,
to inspire, arouse and awaken in our students,
a Love for Wisdom or “Philo-Sophia”,
which, like a spark of fire,
can be kindled by them into a flame,
that will be transmitted .... to their students,
and by those .... to theirs,
so that finally, we may hope,
perhaps against all doubts and skepticism,
that something of our very own self,
will live on, at least for a little while,
as a tiny part of the indestructible human spirit.
Then, and only then, we can console ourselves,
and accept with some equanimity and serenity,
that we have not lived, entirely in vain,
in a seemingly pointless and meaningless world.

G. D.

G.D. offered the above comments to his HMS students in 1982,
in response to their honoring him for his ongoing teaching efforts.

The biographical portrayal of Dr. John F. Enders that follows
(see pp. 69-74), appropriately illustrates these comments.
A CLARIFICATION

To the foregoing Thesis “PREREQUISITES FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING”, there is an Antithesis, e.g.,

“The authority of those who profess to teach, is often a positive hindrance to those who desire to learn; they cease to employ their own judgment, and take what they perceive to be the verdict of their chosen Master as settling the question.”

Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.).

which is the opposite or contradiction of the Thesis.

It will be then up to the intelligent person, to reconcile or compromise between this Thesis and its Antithesis, by Logical Analysis of their Pros and Cons, and arrive at a Synthesis of what is most reasonable, which will be a new Thesis, that will in turn have its Antithesis, .... and so on, and so forth.

At times however, a Thesis, e.g., “.... in the image of God made he man.” (Genesis 9:6, King James Version [1611]), versus its Antithesis, e.g., “Man created Gods on the basis of his experience.” (Xenophanes, Fragment 15), might not be reconcilable by Logical Analysis of their Pros and Cons into a Synthesis which will be a new Thesis, because either one or both of the opposing views is/are based on Faith - Belief that is subjective, rather than on Reason that could be objective.

This “Thesis versus Antithesis” approach of discussing and reasoning by means of dialogue as a method of intellectual investigation that seeks to expose false beliefs and elicit the truth, was invented by Zeno of Elea - one of the disciples of Parmenides. It was systematically practiced and further developed by the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates on account of whom it is generally known as the Socratic method or dialectic. The German Philosopher Georg W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) additionally refined it, which is the reason why it is often identified by his name as the Hegelian dialectic.

It must be emphasized however, that the principal defect of dialectic is its strict reliance on logical reasoning at the expense of genuine facts, provided of course that such facts exist and can be verified by empirical scrutiny as being indisputably accurate.
A TEACHER

DR. JOHN F. ENDERS, THE IDEAL TEACHER

“A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.”

Henry Brooks Adams (1838-1918).
The Education of Henry Adams [1907].

It is sad but inevitable that the younger generations of the Harvard Medical School (HMS) Faculty, but much more so of the HMS Students, know very little about the Men and Women who were/are responsible for the stellar reputation of this Professional School. The fault lies not so much with them, but with the older generations of the Faculty who although many of them worked - labored very closely with some of these most illustrious, Physicians, Physician-Scientists, Scientists, and therefore came to know them intimately, both as Academicians and also as Fellow Human Beings, have not troubled themselves to transmit this knowledge to others. One such Scientist was Dr. John F. Enders, who enlightened many young men and women that had apprenticed with him during his long professional career at HMS, not only on “how to pursue biomedical research” but also, and just as important, on “how to pursue the moral life”. If a rare reader of this biographical portrait feels that it sounds more like “Hagiography” by an adoring former pupil, so be it. The fact is that Dr. Enders was a truly Saintly (Gr. Hagios) Man.
John Franklin Enders, Ph.D., was a member of the Department of Bacteriology and Immunology, at Harvard Medical School from 1930 until 1967, when he became University Professor Emeritus, finally retiring in 1977 at the age of eighty. He died September 8, 1985, at the age of eighty-eight.

Dr. Enders was a truly Great Scientist, having made a number of important discoveries (see p. 74, Democritus quotation), three of which he is best remembered for:

i) he succeeded in growing poliomyelitis virus in non-nervous tissue cells in vitro, which led to the development of the Salk and the Sabin vaccines against paralytic poliomyelitis, and for which he shared the Nobel Prize with his two young Research Associates, Dr. Frederick C. Robbins and Dr. Thomas H. Weller.

ii) he was the first to isolate the measles virus, which allowed for the development of the measles vaccine.

iii) he was the first to demonstrated that a virus which is oncogenic in experimental animals can transform human cells in vitro.

Another, and just as important contribution of Dr. Enders, who was affectionately and warmly addressed as “Chief” by the English-speaking or as “Chef” by the French-speaking Research Fellows in his Research Laboratory, was that he trained close to one hundred Physician-Scientists from all over the world, with the majority having come from North America, in the Art and Science of Virological - Biomedical Research. One of them was Dr. Gajdusek who received the Nobel Prize, for his work on Kuru - a fatal Neurodegenerative disease, while most of the others achieved prominent academic positions in prestigious Medical Schools including that of Harvard.

These greatly successful Scientific accomplishments, had profound Human-Clinical implications, that resulted in the almost complete eradication of both Poliomyelitis and Measles from the entire World, were the outcome of Dr. Enders having possessed:

- active but disciplined imagination,
- crystalline judgment,
- personal integrity and intellectual honesty, qualities that allowed him to seek knowledge, reflectively and with disinterested objectivity.

But the brilliance of his creative mind, was always balanced by a passion of his heart, in the form of dedication and devotion to his work, and by the realization of the importance of patience, persistence, and perseverance, in his pursuit of scientific excellence.
But those of us who had the chance to observe him closely,
are mindful of the fact that his being a Great Scientist,
was only a small part of what he was as a Man.
So, I will try to tell you now,
as briefly and as clearly as I possibly can,
what Dr. Enders - the Man, has meant to me,
for I came to know him quite well during my
four years (1963-67) as his Postdoctoral Research Fellow,
and particularly during the subsequent years,
especially after his retirement in 1977,
when I often visited him at his home,
to be warmed by his fellowship,
to be enlightened by his wisdom.

Let me start by saying that
Dr. Enders was a Great Human Being,
a distinctly unique person:
-- first, for who he was,
-- second, for what he did for others,
-- third, for what he expected in return, and
-- lastly, for what he has meant to me, personally.

First, and foremost, Dr. Enders was an extremely kind,
an incredibly gentle and a profoundly charming man,
at peace with himself, and not at war with others.
This was because his mind, his heart, and his body,
lived in complete harmony with each other.
Namely, he thought, he felt, he spoke, and he acted,
in a consistent manner,
which was the result of the balance between:
a brilliant intellect and a strong ethical instinct,
that were always expressed most actively,
as clarity of vision and integrity of character.

Second, and just as important, Dr. Enders believed,
that the door to personal happiness opens outwardly,
and he proved this conviction by offering you,
- courtesy and civility,
- compassion and concern,
- understanding and tolerance.
He taught you, in other words,
by the moral force of his personal example,
that what you give to others,
unselfishly and without an ulterior motive,
is the only thing that you truly possess.
Material possessions, on the other hand, he would say
should be of little value to a sensible person,
because, as Shakespeare had stated long ago
"Nothing you can call your own but Death."
He was also very much aware, that he had neither the wisdom nor the insight, to know what will make another person happy. So, he gave you his advice, without demanding obedience, he gave you a prescription, without offering you a remedy or a cure, which meant that he did not attempt to make you, a prisoner of his own expectations of you. On the contrary, you had to dream your dreams, define your longings, and find the will and stamina, to accomplish their fulfillment and their realization. He would warn you nonetheless, by quoting from the dramatist Euripides, that "To do the wrong deed for the right end, always leads to disaster."

Other times, however, when he was more analytical about Human Values, he would admit with sadness and distress, that quite often, the conflict in human affairs is not between good versus evil, but between two goods of equal but opposing forces, like the conflict beautifully depicted in the tragedy Antigone by the dramatist Sophocles, between King Creon, who stubbornly and doggedly believed in the Supremacy of and Respect for the Secular Laws, no matter how rigid, harsh, or cruel they might be, and his niece Antigone, who just as tenaciously and adamantly believed in the Love of Sacred Justice, which for some is a reflection of Divine Love, namely compassion, charity, mercy, forgiveness. So, choosing between two conflicting Goods, he would say, where there is no prospect for compromise and reconciliation between the opposing individuals or groups, will always lead to human tragedy and disaster.

Dr. Enders was always available in case you needed him, in case you had lost your bearings or had lost your nerve. He would let you know gently but firmly, without patronizing you, and without any condescension, while looking at you with his penetrating blue eyes, - that to admit the possibility of defeat, is, to some extent, to be defeated, - that to feel that the future may no longer be yours, is to live in an irrelevant past, and then, he will paraphrase Winston Churchill who said, "Your darkest hour may be your finest hour."
But the most important advice that he would offer you, when he found you contemplating quitting in your pursuits of scientific truth, was that only serious Illness or Death should make one avoid or evade doing his ultimate duty (see p. 61), i.e., giving up defending his Thermopylae (see p. 62). No one, or nothing, must be allowed to make you surrender, because as Einstein had said, "The important thing in Science is not to stop questioning."

And this made you want, to turn another page in the book of your life, to start another chapter, to go on, to continue, and not to give up, because as Tennyson, one of his favorite English Poets said in his Ulysses:

“How dull it is to pause, to make an end, to rust unburnish’d, not to shine in use! as tho’ to breathe were life!” .... “To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.”

**Third,** Dr. Enders was the kind of a person who, when you had won your battles, and you wanted to thank him for his help and support, he would tell you with genuine humility, that you owed him .... nothing. The victory, however small or large, was yours and yours alone. His own reward was knowing, that you had realized at least one of you dreams, one of your hopes, one of your aspirations. But there was much, much more, work to be done, no time therefore to rest, no time for self praise.

And then he would share with you, a feeling that was always very close to his heart, namely, that the ultimate victory of the reflective person, is not to win wealth, power, prizes, praise, but to win peace with oneself, by taming the enemies within, namely selfishness, envy, hatred, cruelty, greed, so that each one of us, could live nobly and virtuously, as a true human being should aspire to live. Otherwise, he would add, as St. Matthew the Evangelist had said long ago, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul."
Lastly, for someone like myself, who had the privilege and the honor to come to know Dr. Enders, somewhat intimately, although not too intimately, for he was a very private person, I can say without any hesitation, that I will always remember him, for the elegance and grace of his spirit, and the warmth of his heart.

But, as the song laments rather sorrowfully, “He is gone, and the world moves on.” Yet, the glow of his light, which will always remain in the hearts of those of us who knew him and loved him, can be passed on to others, like yourselves who read these somewhat inadequate words, so that a little part of this truly noble man, this supremely civilized and honorable man, can live on, in each one of us, as a beautiful inspiration, as a radiant vision.

In closing, and trusting that I will not appear presumptuous or irreverent to great Teachers of the recent or the remote past, I want to say about Dr. Enders who was my beloved and much adored Teacher, Mentor, Friend, what the philosopher Plato said in his Dialogue Phaedo twenty-five centuries ago about Socrates, who was his beloved and much adored Teacher, Mentor, Friend: “He was the bravest, wisest and most just Man, of all those whom I ever knew in my time.”

G. D.

“I would rather discover a single causal relationship, than become the King of the Persians.”

Democritus (c. 460-370 B.C.). Fragment, 118.
Do Scientific Discoveries influence Philosophical - Moral Convictions?

“ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ ΒΙΟΥ ΚΥΒΕΡΝΙΤΗΣ”

“Philosophy Life’s Guide.”

ΦΒΚ, an American Undergraduate Honorary Society.

“To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live accordingly to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust.”

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862).
Walden [1854], 1, Economy.

“We behold the face of nature bright with gladness, we often see superabundance of food; we do not see, or we forget, that the birds which are idly singing round us mostly live on insects or seeds, and are thus constantly destroying life; or we forget how largely these songsters, or their eggs, or their nestlings, are destroyed by birds and beasts of prey.”

Charles Darwin (1809-1882).
The Origin Of Species, (1859).

“…. We had seen nature doing her daily work, holding the balance impartially between predator and prey. Only in our eyes is nature beautiful and cruel. …. “

Freeman John Dyson (1923-).

“We should not look for social, moral or political inspiration in the workings of Nature.”

Thomas H. Huxley (1825-1895).
Messages from Hippocrates, “The Father of Medicine”.

( ΙΑΣΘΑΙ - to Heal.)
( ΙΑΤΡΟΣ - the Healer.)
( Physician the Healer.)

“The Force of Nature,
and not the Physician,
is the actual Healer.”

Hippocrates (c. 460-370 B.C.).
Quotation from his Writings.

“Life is short. (*)
The Art long.
Opportunity instant.
Experience perilous.
Judgment difficult.”

Hippocrates (c. 460-370 B.C.).
[First] Aphorism.

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Two fundamentally different perspectives:
The Western - Individualistic, “Life is short.” (*)
The Eastern - Collectivistic, “Life is long, it continues, it never ends.”
Creator - Omnipotent God *versus* Atoms *versus* Organic Evolution

“What is God? Everything.”

Pindar (c. 518-438 B.C.), Fragment, 140d.

“I found god in myself
and I loved her / I loved her fiercely.”

A verse from a play quoted in
*Dreams from My Father*, page 206,
by Barack Obama (1961-).

“Sweet exists by convention, bitter by convention,
hot by convention, cold by convention, color by convention,
but in reality there are only atoms (ATOMA) and void (KENON)”

Democritus (c. 460-370 B.C.), Fragment, 125.

Postscript to Democritus’ Atoms

By criteria of probabilistic, i.e., quantum mechanics Physics,
the Rutherford-Bohr or planetary model of the atom suggests
that “Atoms consist mostly of empty space - void.”

“…. the atoms that are in the brain are being replaced:
the ones that were there before have gone away.
…. So what is this mind of ours:
what are these atoms with consciousness?”

Richard Feynman (1918-1988).
*What Do You Care What Other People Think?*
*The Value of Science*, page 244.

“Can someone believe in God the Creator and, at the
same time, in Genetic Variation and Natural Selection
causing Organic Evolution including that of Humans?”

“Whereas the term *believe* is the apt one to employ
in appraising the human concept of God, it can not
be applied to Science, which strives to *know* by way
of objective sensory perception and logical thinking.”

“Yet, those who believe in God the Omnipotent say that
He alone is the One who chooses the kind of Means by
which He achieves His, rather than our, desired Ends.”

G. D.
Man versus Mankind

Question:
“Am I my brother’s keeper?”


Answer:
“If we are not our brother’s keeper, at least let us not be his executioner.”

Attributed to Marlon Brando (1924-2004)

“No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; .... any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; (*) it tolls for thee.”

John Donne (1572-1631).
Devotions uponEmergent Occasions [1624].

Please note parenthetically that:

For Whom the Bell Tolls (*),
is also the title of a book by Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961), about the Spanish Civil War in its full swing in 1937, in which the author examines the themes of war and personal honor. It is considered by many as Hemingway’s best literary creation, and one of the major 20th century novels in American literature.

Please note also:

“Es mejor morir a pie que vivir arrodillado.”

“It is better to die on your feet than to live on your knees.”

General Emiliano Zapata (1879-1919), a leading figure in the Mexican Revolution of 1910, during the war of independence from Spain.
Although it is not presently known and perhaps will never be known, what were the conditions in the distant past that enabled LIFE to originate on planet Earth, it can be clearly stated that it survived because the environment in which it has existed fulfills exacting physical (temperature), chemical (oxygen, nitrogen) and biological constraints. Specifically, planet Earth supports Life effectively since it orbits the blazing Sun at an optimal distance from it, sustains a suitable atmosphere, contains organic - carbon compounds and surface liquid water, prerequisites not present in planets Mercury and Venus or Mars and Jupiter, as a consequence of which Life as we know it can not exist on them. Similarly, the Earth’s seasons which have a profound effect on Life, result from the Earth’s axis being tilted to its orbital plane by an angle of 23.5°, rather than on account of a cause beyond the physical or natural reality, i.e., divine intervention.

If these chance-determined conditions for Life’s survival were not found in planet Earth, then Inanimate Matter -> Animate Matter -> Biological Life -> Human Life -> Human Brain-Mind -> Human Values, i.e., Philosophical - Ethical - Esthetic which are purely Human Concepts that are of great Merit exclusively to Humans could not have occurred, and if this state of affairs were representative of the entire Universe, then as the eminent ancient Greek philosopher Empedocles (c. 495-435 B.C.) stated long ago (see p. 41), Chance and Necessity instead of Design and Purpose rule supreme.

Likewise, the fertilization of a Human ovum by a sperm from among the fifty or more million sperms available in semen at a moment in time, demonstrates clearly the immense importance that Chance plays in this union, which subject to restrictions by the laws of biological Necessity will give birth to a particular person. If another of these sperms had fertilized this ovum at about the same moment in time, it would have given birth to a different person. Even so, for someone who believes in the existence of an Immortal Soul in each Human Being, such somatic differences are more apparent than real, since those who claim to know state that the Soul assigned by the Omnipotent God to a certain person, will determine by God’s Design that person’s Purpose in Life.

Whereas beliefs that are inspired by divine revelation and religious faith are absolute and eternal, and judgments that are grounded on objective sensory perception and logical thinking are verifiable and revisable, it could be concluded that the valiant human effort to reconcile these two antithetical perspectives is an exercise in futility, and hence the formulation of suitable questions rather than the discovering of final answers (see p. 4, Bertrand Russell quote) should be the enduring activity to be favored by inquisitive rational Humans. Nevertheless, it must be pointed out that what may appear as irreconcilable perspectives might be reconcilable (see p. 77, G.D. quote) and so coexist in intellectual harmony and concord rather than in disharmony and discord.

Lastly, since it took 5 to 6 (probably 5.4) million years for Humans to branch off a common Primate Ancestor, and 5 to 6 thousand years for Primitive Societies to take root, it is regrettable but explicable that our enduring reciprocal misanthropic behavior is the outcome of our still being more Animal and less Human, more Instinct and less Reason. Yet, we must hope and trust that our Human Intelligence and Moral Vision will prevail over our Animal Nature, so that finally Civil Societies could form that will bring people together in fellowship toward shared lofty objectives, and so avoid generating crude - rude Multitudes living in distrust of, and in conflict and strife with, each other.

G. D.
These Dialectic Seminars, which represent forty years of my intellectual agons and agonies, are offered gratis by means of the Internet, to all those who wish to explore them for the sake of their enlightenment and delight.

G. D.

“The good deeds that I do for others, are my most precious possessions.”

Olympia P. Mouzenidou (c. 1878-1963).
G. D.’s beloved maternal Grandmother.

THE END