

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE OTHER:
TOWARD A DIALOGICAL CONCEPTION OF THE SELF

by

Donato Tarulli

A thesis

presented to the University of Waterloo

in fulfilment of the

thesis requirement for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Psychology

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2000

© Donato Tarulli, 2000



**National Library
of Canada**

**Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services**

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

**Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada**

**Acquisitions et
services bibliographiques**

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-60571-X

Canada

The University of Waterloo requires the signatures of all persons using or photocopying this thesis. Please sign below, and give address and date.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation seeks to unfold a conception of selfhood that affirms the active, formative role of the other in the demarcation and constitution of the self. Taking the strong position that one is not able to know oneself in any sort of determinate way without the interacting presence of an other, it is argued that the self is a dialogical achievement. In arguing for a dialogical conception of the self, this work draws largely on the writings of Mikhail Bakhtin, the Russian literary theorist, philosopher of language, and preeminent apologist for the wide-ranging significance of dialogue in human existence. Following an Introduction, which considers the central themes and arguments presented herein, Chapter 1 examines aspects of the modern philosophical tradition that are antithetical to the dialogical view put forth by Bakhtin. Among the themes considered in this chapter are the modernist privileging of the epistemic activities of the individual subject, the denial or devalorization of this subject's dependence on the other, and the representational model of language and communication that reinforces this modernist subject's presumed sovereignty and self-sufficiency. Also included in this chapter is a consideration of the modernist assumptions underlying contemporary portrayals of the self, particularly those informed by the Piagetian, structural-developmental framework. Chapter 2 explores the status of Bakhtin's "dialogism" as a general perspective on the nature of knowledge and subjectivity. It is shown that in contrast to modernist conceptions, Bakhtin acknowledges the constitutive significance of social-communicative relations with the other for the subject's perception of the

world and itself. In keeping with this dialogical conception of the subject, this chapter also considers the constitutive importance of language for human subjectivity. Chapter 3 examines Bakhtin's metalinguistic theory of the utterance with a view to highlighting the notion that any individual use of language necessarily implicates the other, and more specifically, the word or discourse of the other. Chapter 4, in turn, considers the more specific implications of Bakhtin's account of the utterance for a dialogical conception of the self. Working from the assumption that the vicissitudes of the self parallel those of the utterance, it is argued that the dialogical self be regarded as an unrepeatable event of meaning which implicates both the previous and anticipated utterances of others. Also included in this chapter is a detailed consideration of the ontological significance of the other's recognition or responsive understanding for the constitution of selfhood. In Chapter 5, critical aspects of the dialogical view are brought further into relief through a comparative analysis of the writings of Bakhtin and George Herbert Mead. This chapter argues that while both theorists espouse a social ontology that stresses the relation between self and other as it defines and manifests itself in human communication, only the Bakhtinian conception of dialogue, and of inner dialogue in particular, recognizes the enduring importance of the otherness of the other for the communicative process of self-formation. Among the more specific features of the Bakhtinian approach to be considered in this regard are its emphasis on difference as an enabling condition for dialogue; its resistance to formulations which see dialogue as a dialectical process that tends progressively toward the

eradication of otherness; its depiction of the self's multiplicity as a non-systemic, aggregate of voices in interaction; and its provision of an account of the internalization process that preserves the sense of the particularity, and hence the otherness, of the voices that populate our inner speech. In an effort to illustrate the methodological and analytic utility of the view presented herein, Chapter 6 offers a dialogical reading of the autobiographical utterances of three children. Upon describing the nature and content of these self-relevant utterances from the vantage point of the structural-developmental framework, they are reconsidered in light of some of the ideas and assumptions associated with the Bakhtinian dialogical perspective. More specifically, the possible social origins of autobiographical discourse are considered, as are the ways in which such discourse betrays an active, "double-voiced" orientation to the other's word. Chapter 7 attempts to move beyond a conception of dialogism simply as an ontological given, that is, as a description of how language invariably operates. It is argued that dialogue, over and above this descriptive dimension, is an ethical ideal for development, one that suggests a particular valorized way of engaging the word of the other. In this regard, the dialogical self emerges as something worthy of advocacy. Finally, in the Conclusion section, dialogism is considered in terms of its potential status as a metatheoretical discourse for developmental psychology, and more specifically as a framework which, by virtue of its reliance on an open sense of time, has particular implications for the way we conceptualize the process of change.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many “others” who helped me to see my way with this project. I am deeply indebted to my advisor, Al Cheyne, for his gifts of time, knowledge, and friendship, and for the constant intellectual stimulation he has provided over the years. Al gave me the freedom and encouragement to undertake this project, and for many years has read and supported my work with dedication. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Kathleen Bloom for her invaluable input and advice on earlier drafts of the thesis—and especially for creating such a warm, collegial atmosphere in which to exchange ideas about the vicissitudes of dialogue and selfhood. I am also very grateful to Fraser Easton for his thoughtful comments on this work, and in particular for helping me become more critically aware of the diverse senses of the dialogical. It is especially meaningful for me to acknowledge my indebtedness to my friends. Over the years, and in all kinds of weather, their emotional support and encouragement has sustained me and made the task of working on this project a very much happier one. Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Nicola and Clorinda, and the rest of my family for their limitless generosity, kindness, and love.

Per mamma e papà.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Toward a Dialogical Self.....	5
The Relevance of Mikhail Bakhtin.....	11
Chapter Overview.....	14
Chapter 1: Monologues of Modernity.....	20
The Monologic “I”.....	21
Descartes and the Cogito.....	21
Locke’s Ideas.....	24
Subjectivity in Kantian Perspective.....	25
Modernity’s Other.....	27
Descartes’ Solitary Knower.....	27
Reason and the Enlightenment Suppression of the Other....	29
Locke’s Disengaged Subject.....	30
Rousseau: Reclaiming Our Natures.....	31
Dare to Know: Kant’s Motto for Enlightenment.....	34
Language and Communication in Modern Perspective.....	36
The Weakness of the Logos.....	38
Alienating Speech.....	39
Modernity and Psychology.....	40
The Piagetian Epistemic Subject.....	41
Language and Self: Received Views.....	48

Chapter 2: Dialogical Epistemology and the Bakhtinian Subject.....	57
Epistemology as Dialogue.....	57
A Phenomenological Grounding for the Dialogical Self.....	63
I-for-Myself and I-for-the-Other.....	68
The Speaking Consciousness.....	78
Chapter 3: The Dialogic Utterance.....	86
The Recovery of Eventness.....	86
Bakhtin’s Metalinguistic Theory of the Utterance.....	94
The Event of Meaning.....	95
The Nature of Context: Derrida and Bakhtin.....	97
Utterance as Dialogue.....	102
The Already Spoken.....	106
Addressivity.....	110
Speech Genres.....	114
The Superaddressee.....	115
Chapter 4: Utterance and Self.....	117
The Dialogical Self as an Unrepeatable Event of Meaning.....	117
The Self and the Already Spoken.....	123
Addressivity and the Self.....	124
Speech Genres and the Self.....	127
The Ontological Significance of the Addressee.....	129
The Value of Recognition.....	132

Of Rage and Impotent Despair.....	134
One Character in Search of an Auditor.....	137
Being Heard.....	142
Talking to Ourselves.....	147
Somebody, Somewhere: Self and Superaddressee.....	149
Chapter 5: Dialogue and Otherness.....	152
Bakhtin and Mead.....	152
Sameness as the Enabling Ground of Dialogue.....	155
The Fate of Difference.....	161
Multiplicity and the Will to System.....	168
Abstraction and the Loss of Voice.....	175
Polyphony and the Self.....	186
Chapter 6: Autobiographical Discourse in Dialogical Perspective.....	192
Three Self-Portraits.....	193
A Structural-Developmental Interpretation.....	195
The Social Origins of Selfhood.....	203
Bakhtin's Discourse Typology.....	210
Single-Voiced Discourse.....	211
Double-Voiced Discourse.....	212
Three Self-Portraits Reconsidered.....	221
Self-Description and Dialogic Complexity.....	236

Chapter 7: Ideological Becoming and the Dialogical Imperative.....	239
Voice, Authenticity, and Dialogue.....	245
Ideological Becoming.....	251
Authoritative Discourse.....	253
Internally Persuasive Discourse.....	257
Assimilation: Bakhtin Versus Piaget.....	260
Overcoming Authoritativeness: Valorizing the Internally Persuasive Word	262
Multiplicity and Otherness.....	264
Play and the Inversion of Authority.....	268
Carnival, Parody, and Laughter.....	269
Conclusion: Open Time, Development, and Dialogism.....	275
How Change Happens.....	276
Conceptions of Human Identity and Individual Development.....	279
Sensing the Past.....	286
The Relation Between Individual and Cultural-Historical Development.....	289
Notes.....	297
References.....	322

INTRODUCTION

A single person, remaining alone with himself, cannot make ends meet even in the deepest and most intimate spheres of his own spiritual life, he cannot manage without another consciousness. One person can never find complete fullness in himself alone.

— Mikhail Bakhtin

This dissertation is about the self, a construct that has inhabited a place within the discourse of academic psychology since the discipline's inception as a science over a century ago.¹ At least since James' (1950a) pioneering work in the area, in which he insisted that the "personal self" be considered "the immediate datum in psychology" (p. 226), the self—along with the multitude of constructs (e.g. self-concept, self-esteem) in which, through hyphenation, it has been implicated—has variously emerged as the source and subject of defensive apologies, as the target of academic derision, or, more recently, as the object of unqualified celebration.² Certainly, recent years have witnessed a dramatic upsurge in the extent of psychological scholarship devoted to the issue of the self and related processes. One group of investigators, for example, estimates that in the period from 1974 to 1993 over 31,000 published articles addressing the subject have appeared in the scholarly psychological literature (Ashmore & Jussim, 1997). The fact that the self appears increasingly as the subject of special symposia and associated proceedings (e.g., Ashmore & Jussim, 1997), as the topic of books and edited volumes (e.g., Snodgrass & Thompson, 1997; Suls, 1993), and as the focus of articles in such major publications as the Annual Review (Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Markus & Wurf, 1987) and the Handbook of

Child Psychology (Harter, 1983, 1998) certainly leaves little doubt that the self has become, in accord with James' initial aspirations, a legitimate and integral concern for psychological scholarship.

Outside the groves of academe, too, and perhaps most conspicuously in popular culture, our fascination with the self proceeds apace. The proliferation of self-help texts and technologies, many promising access to a stronger, deeper, more actualized self, clearly suggests this much. In all of its protean popular guises—as the “child” or “giant” or “hero” within—there is little denying that the self has become a focal concern and defining feature of modern Western sensibilities, a sort of secular god (Sass, 1992), not to mention the celebrated cultural object of a veritable growth industry.

Working within this rather hospitable climate, psychologists in particular have proposed an impressive array of selves, a very partial listing of which might include actual, ideal, and ought selves (Higgins, 1987), possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986), true and false selves (Harter, 1997), ecological selves (Neisser, 1988), and existential and categorical selves (Lewis & Brooks-Gunn, 1979)—with the latter two variants captured more familiarly in the enduring distinction between the “I,” or self-as-subject, and the “Me,” or self-as-object (James, 1950a; Mead, 1934). Equally diverse are the guiding metaphors that psychologists have offered in their efforts to define and delineate the self. In some of the classic writings in the area, for example, we find the self being likened to a portion of a stream (James, 1950a), to a looking glass (Cooley, 1902), to a theatrical performance (Goffman, 1959), and to a

central region of a larger structure (Allport, 1961). This “fondness for metaphor” (Pratkanis & Greenwald, 1985, p. 311) is no less evident on the contemporary scene. Among the suggestive metaphors proffered in recent decades are those that liken the self to a narrative or story, containing plot, motivation, and character development (Gergen & Gergen, 1988; McAdams, 1985); to a theory containing postulates that can be appraised in terms of their internal consistency, hierarchical organization, testability, and parsimony (Epstein, 1973); to a computer or information processor with input, output, and storage capacity (Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1987; Markus, 1977); and to a multidimensional galaxy (Knowles & Sibicky, 1990).

With increasing scholarly attention devoted to issues of self and identity in the psychological literature, the number of conceptions and metaphors proposed for the self is sure to increase, a prospect that is not without its critics. Reflecting on this proliferation of selves, one contemporary investigator remarks that psychologists seem to “‘find’ and collect ‘selves’ like ornithologists find strange species of birds. Or . . . like God, they create the species (of ‘selves’) they wish to discover” (Wolf, 1994, p. 128). More critically, Harré (1998) argues that contemporary psychological scholarship on the self is characterized by much obscurity and confusion, the multiplicity and imprecision of its extant terminology amounting to what he sees as “a mass of ambiguities” (p. 1). It is very easy to be sympathetic to such claims. The interpretive multiplicity surrounding the self can be bewildering and overwhelming at times, certainly enough to suggest that despite the volumes

of literature devoted to its exploration, the basic meaning or definition of the self remains a subject of contest and consternation.³

On a more charitable reading, however, it might reasonably be argued that the conceptual, metaphorical, and terminological multiplicity in which the self is entangled is perhaps less a reflection of theoretical imprecision, muddled thinking, or the creative aspirations of individual investigators, than a testament to the semantically open and generative character of the term “self” itself. As some have argued, notions like self and identity “point to large, amorphous, and changing phenomena that defy hard and fast definitions” (Ashmore & Jussim, 1997, p. 5). Like the pronoun “I,” whose meaning and referent changes with the various contexts in which it is uttered, so too does the meaning of “self” seem to shift, often unpredictably, with its usage in different discursive domains—social-scientific, literary, philosophical, folk-popular, and so on.⁴ What it means to be a self, moreover, varies both across cultural contexts and historically within cultures (e.g., Baumeister, 1997; Danziger, 1997). In short, “self” is a term that is so pliable and friendly to discursive nuance, so open to cultural-historical variation, that it would seem to invite precisely the sort of interpretive multiplicity that surrounds it. On yet another count, however, perhaps the self’s multiplicity is only to be expected, even warranted, given the richness and diversity of the human experience of the world. What more adequate and human way to make sense of this experiential complexity than to propose an equally complex array of constructs and metaphors for the self?

Toward a Dialogical Conception of Self

It is within the horizon opened up by this rhetorical question that I invite the reader to consider the aim and content of this dissertation. Given, more specifically, that part of the rich and complex human experience of the world is the experience of other selves, this dissertation seeks to unfold a conception of the self which, in the spirit of the opening epigraph, affirms the formative role of others in the constitution of the self.

At first view, and certainly when set forth in such broad strokes, the notion that the self is in some measure a social-relational achievement would hardly seem to warrant an elaborate defence. The claim that the self is dependent on the participation of others for its formation is a familiar one in the present intellectual climate, with discussion centring largely on the forms of this participation (Kharash, 1991). From the time of Baldwin's (1897) early writings in the area, according to which consciousness of self was seen to arise in tandem with the awareness of and recognition by the other, developmental theorists—whatever their particular intellectual allegiances—have acknowledged the importance of social relationships to the child's emergent understanding of self. Whether we look to investigators drawing on the psychoanalytic tradition (e.g., Mahler, 1968), to investigators appealing to structural-developmental principles (e.g., Harter, 1988), or to those who approach the subject matter from an attachment-theoretical perspective (Bretherton, 1991), the idea that social experience contributes crucially to the formation of a child's sense of self stands out as a common, overarching, theme—one that is generally in keeping with

Baldwin's early metaphorical claim that just as a river is defined in relation to its banks, so too does the self develop in relation to others.

Despite this recognition of the formative role of social relationships in the child's developing sense of self, however, received theories of the ontogeny of selfhood remain in many respects committed to an individualistic conception of self-formation. As Mintz (1995) states, "Despite a rich tradition of thought that highlights the self as a relational entity, research in child development has historically reflected a highly individualistic notion of the child's emerging understanding of self" (p. 61). Kharash (1991) similarly argues that in the context of received psychological theory, the other occupies a rather marginal or "disenfranchised position . . . in the conceptual table of ranks" (p. 48). So, while existing theories may be attuned to the fact that our communications with others are formative for us, ultimately their commitment to the individual subject as the seat and origin of meaning—their reliance, in other words, on a "monosubject" or "intrasubject" approach (Kharash, 1991)—means that the other's contribution to the life of the self is invariably subordinated to the individual subject's own self-constituting activity. On such a view, the active role of the individual in his or her own self-formation and self-understanding is stressed at the expense of the other, who remains "a self-evident background, a superfluous satellite of the concept of self that, when the dynamic transformations occurring within the 'self' are analysed, is inevitably reduced to a parenthetical status" (Kharash, 1991, p. 48). And it is in keeping with such a construal that modern psychology has traditionally relied heavily on concepts that seem to be

articulated primarily in terms of an unmediated 'present-at-hand' mode of engagement with the world and with others, notions like self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-concept being exemplary in this regard (Richardson, Rogers, & McCarroll, 1998).

This dissertation represents an effort to move beyond this single-subject framework. More specifically, I aim to put forward a view of the self which, while acknowledging the activeness of the individual subject in his or her own self-formation, recognizes the equally active, formative role of the other in the life of the self.

But what more precisely do we mean by the claim that the other serves a formative or constitutive role in the life of the self? And why, moreover, must the other play such a role? These are two of the central questions that I address in this work. At this point, however, I want to offer an initial elaboration of my claims about the constitutive link between self and other. For this purpose, I draw on an example from the literary realm. Consider, if you will, that early scene in Shakespeare's King Lear in which the play's eponymous protagonist asks:

Doth any here know me? This is not Lear:
Doth Lear walk thus? speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, his discernings
Are lethargied—Ha! waking? 'tis not so.
Who is it that can tell me who I am? (I. iv. 246-250)

At the point in the tragedy where he utters these words, Lear seems barely to know himself, if he is dreaming or awake. Questioningly, he turns to objective criteria of his physical and mental existence—to his demeanor, voice, sight,

“discernings”—hoping but ultimately failing to find in them a reliable clue to his identity. His identity no longer outside of doubt or question, no longer complete unto itself, Lear’s predicament clearly illustrates an ego in crisis. For Lear, this crisis is attendant on what he is being forced to acknowledge about himself: that he is but a “shadow”—as the Fool, Lear’s looking-glass, darkly reminds him—of a once familiar image of strength and self-possession. He is no longer the sovereign that once commanded all things. His loss of power and position, both vis-à-vis his subjects and his family, have made him, like a child or a madman, dependent on the chance and contingent kindness of those who had once been dependent on him. In his apostrophic plea—“Who is it that can tell me who I am?”—there is more than a note of infantile desperation, however ironically it might be intoned. He no longer knows who he is. His authority eclipsed by a growing sense of his own fallibility and finitude, he needs others to tell him who he is, indeed even to confirm that he exists. And these others, Lear is forced further to recognize, refuse to be contained in the conceptual frameworks he may have otherwise prepared for them (Bruns, 1988). They speak to Lear from their own peculiar horizons of intelligibility, from their own sense of the world, and from their own sense of Lear. Others confront him in all their irreducible and inescapable otherness, an otherness that within the context of the play finds its perhaps most paradigmatic expression in Cordelia’s “Nothing, my Lord” (I. i. 89).⁵ And it is this otherness, for better or worse, which Lear must draw upon for his own self-formation and self-understanding. Whether the movement of his identity manifests itself as

tragic self-alienation or creative self-realization, the other, sycophantic or sympathetic, is inescapably there, taking up permanent residence in his social and psychological worlds.

Now, gauged from the standpoint of the everyday life of the self, Lear's predicament cannot help but strike us as truly exceptional, even epic, in its scope. It has all the markings, too, of what can be described as a hermeneutical experience (Bruns, 1988; Gadamer, 1989): the pain of negativity, the disappointment of frustrated expectations, the tragic awareness of one's finitude in the face of the otherness that the world offers up to us, and, finally, and more positively, the openness to otherness—that is, to further experience—that this sobering self-realization occasions. Allegorically, Lear's hermeneutical insight into his own limitations and need for the other seems to speak only to those rare moments of personal upheaval and self-loss, to those moments when, standing before a mirror, scrutinizing the image before us, we find ourselves asking the terrible question: “Who am I?” It is in moments like these, when wrenched out of our habitual, concernful engagement with the world and with others, that we are most enfeebled, that our sense of ourselves as the source and origin of meaning is eclipsed by a growing awareness of the limits and illusions of self-possession.⁶ And it is in moments like these, too, that our efforts at self-recovery impel us toward others, toward the consolation, sympathy, affirmation, and even challenge that others provide—in short, toward some point of support outside of ourselves and from the standpoint of which we might refashion ourselves. “Finding oneself,” as Bellah and his

colleagues (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985) have noted, “is not something one does alone” (p. 85).

But it is not to highlight what is exceptional in the life of the self that I draw on the example of Lear. Rather, it is to point up what remains true of the self even in its most prosaic, uncomplicated manifestations. I have two points in mind here. First, I take in Lear’s failure to establish his own sense of his existence from objective criteria a sign of the fundamental inadequacy at heart of self-perception. Our inescapable epistemological predicament is that as conscious subjects—and not solely as egos in crisis—we are never fully present to or identical with ourselves. Second, and attendant on this inadequacy or weakness, we need others to help constitute our sense of self; not only in moments of self-loss or self-recovery, but always, we are dependent on the other for our own self-formation.

In keeping with the theme of these preliminary remarks, this dissertation seeks to develop a way of talking about the self that highlights the active role and contribution of the other in the demarcation and constitution of selfhood. Indeed, this work takes the strong position that one is not able to know oneself in any sort of determinate way without the interacting presence of an other. I will argue, accordingly, that the experience of self or identity is a dialogical achievement. Our sense of ourselves—our understanding of both who we are and that we are—is delineated and embodied in our dialogical encounter with the other, where, for present purposes, we can take the “other” to mean the real, concrete others that inhabit our lives and with whom we are in

communication, or the range of others whose voices and corresponding values we have imbibed and which resonate on the plane of our internal, self-reflection. On the dialogical view, this other, whether physically present or absent, real or imagined, concrete or abstract, singular or multiple, participates actively and constitutively in the determination of our sense of self.

The Relevance of Mikhail Bakhtin

In arguing for a dialogical conception of the self, I am guided foremost by the writings of the Russian literary theorist and philosopher of language Mikhail Bakhtin (1968, 1981, 1984, 1986, 1990, 1993) and the “Bakhtin Circle” (Medvedev & Bakhtin 1978; Volosinov, 1981, 1986, 1987), in whose work the notion of dialogue is developed in unique and wide-ranging ways that touch upon ontological, epistemological, ethical, linguistic, literary, and psychological contexts.⁷ The literary scholar Tzvetan Todorov (1984), among the first to introduce Bakhtin to the West, proclaims Bakhtin “the most important Soviet thinker in the human sciences” (p. ix). As his biographers similarly note, Bakhtin has emerged—posthumously—as one of the most important thinkers of the twentieth century (Clark & Holquist, 1984). Whether or not Bakhtin is deserving of such acclaim, there is little doubting that his writings, and those of the Bakhtin Circle more generally, have had a notable and rapidly increasing impact on a number of disciplines within the humanities and social sciences. Though Bakhtin’s writings have been most widely appropriated by literary theorists and critics (Lodge, 1990; Kershner, 1989; Herrmann, 1989; Macovski, 1994; Pearce,

1994; Vice, 1997), their increasing influence on other academic disciplines is no less pronounced, a fact that is hardly surprising given the breadth of Bakhtin's concerns.⁸ Over the course of his long career, Bakhtin wrote on a wide array of subjects, including ethics and aesthetics, linguistics, historical poetics, literary criticism and theory, and the dialogic nature of language.

Most important to the present work is the fact that many of Bakhtin's writings reflect an orientation to human psychology that is especially attuned to the ongoing importance of the other in the constitution of self. From a Bakhtinian standpoint, selfhood is the process and product of the dialogic interplay between self and other, and hence is essentially social. Never an in-itself, never an accomplishment enabled solely by the self's own primordial materials and activities, the experience of self is an event of relatedness. Bakhtin's biographers put it in the following terms: "The Bakhtinian self is never whole, since it can exist only dialogically. It is not a substance or essence in its own right but exists only in a tensile relationship with all that is other and most important, with other selves" (Clark & Holquist, 1984, p. 65).⁹

It is important at the outset to consider what a Bakhtinian understanding of dialogue entails. Certainly, dialogue is an embracing notion in Bakhtin's writings, a key conceptual pivot around which the various facets of his philosophy turn. What is also clear in these writings is that dialogue and dialogic relationships speak to "a much broader phenomenon than mere rejoinders in a dialogue laid out compositionally in the text" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 40). Dialogue, in other words, connotes something more than verbal turn-

taking. Dialogue, writes Bakhtin (1984), is “an almost universal phenomenon, permeating all human speech and all relationships and manifestations of human life—in general, everything that has meaning and significance” (p. 40). In its most global sense, then, we might say that Bakhtin’s “dialogism” reflects an epistemology and an ontology, a broad philosophical perspective on the nature of knowledge and human existence.

Dialogism is also a feature of Bakhtin’s philosophy of language, and it is in this context that two particular senses of dialogue—often conflated in Bakhtin’s own writings—can be discerned (Hirschkop, 1986; Morson, 1986). More specifically, dialogue is both the natural condition or being of language as such and a particular stance toward the other’s discourse. In the first sense—as a description of language—dialogism holds that any individual utterance is dialogic in that it is inescapably implicated in a web of sociality, consisting in part of the previous and anticipated words of others on the subject at hand. Accordingly, under this definition, monologue is impossible: the speaker (or writer) is never the sole author of his or her utterance. In contrast, dialogism in the second sense, that is, as “a particular discursive stance of speakers” (Morson, 1986, p. 83), does admit the possibility of monologue. Within this second sense, it is useful to make a further distinction between a practical and an ethical dialogical stance. First, dialogue can represent an individual’s more or less conscious practical stance or disposition toward the words of others—a stance of agreement, disagreement, polemic, resistance, and so forth. Second, dialogue may suggest a more expressly ethical stance toward the other’s word:

a conscious openness or willingness to engage in dialogue, a willingness to listen to what the other has to say. In this latter sense, dialogue is a normative notion, a stance worth advocating—an ethical imperative, if you will. Each of these senses of dialogue—as a descriptive notion, and as a practical and ethical stance toward the other—will be relevant to my efforts to set forth a dialogical conception of the self.

In the remainder of this introduction, I provide an overview of the dissertation's general itinerary and a broad sketch of the major themes and conclusions that are treated in greater detail in the ensuing chapters.

Chapter Overview

As Bakhtinian claims about the dialogical nature of the self are inscribed within a particular philosophical understanding of knowledge, subjectivity, and language, it is important to begin my exposition of Bakhtin's work by elaborating this understanding. I approach this task, first, by pursuing a via negativa, that is, by describing elements of the modern philosophical tradition that are antithetical to the dialogical framework. More specifically, Chapter 1 examines several aspects of the epistemological individualism that characterizes the modernist philosophical project: its privileging of the epistemic activities of the individual subject; its denial or devalorization of this subject's reliance on the other in the quest for knowledge; and its adherence to a representational, instrumental view of language and communication, a view which in effect reinforces the individualistic conception of the subject at the heart

of the modernist tradition. Following this exposition of the modernist philosophical enterprise, I consider some of the ways that modernist assumptions about the individual subject, the other, and language are reflected in contemporary portrayals of subjectivity and the self, and most notably in those informed by the Piagetian, structural-developmental explanatory framework.

As an epistemological framework, Bakhtin's dialogism presents an alternative to the modernist view. One of the purposes of Chapter 2, accordingly, is to elaborate a dialogical conception of knowledge, according to which knowledge is an inescapably social phenomenon, something that transpires between people and that does not reside exclusively, as the modernists argued, within the confines of an individual mind. Part of this discussion will entail unfolding a conception of subjectivity that acknowledges the constitutive significance of the other for our perception of the world and our selves. As I will argue, Bakhtin's subject is not a self-present subject that establishes its own foundations for knowledge, but rather a dialogic subject, one who finds and achieves a provisional and dynamic meaning in interaction with and reliance upon others. In keeping with this conception, Chapter 2 also establishes the constitutive importance of language for human subjectivity. On Bakhtin's social ontology, the self is not conceived as some core, inner essence that exists prior to communicative practice and that is merely expressed or brought to the surface in speech. Rather, both selfhood and subjectivity are constrained, shaped, and enabled by linguistic-communicative practices. Accordingly, the dialogical view presupposes a conception of subjectivity as a

linguistically constituted process of inner speech. In short, it is in and through our individual use of language that we come to know and constitute ourselves as selves and that our self-relevant experience comes to assume a specificity of form and meaning.

Bakhtin's dialogism finds its most specific expression in his approach to language. Indeed, one of the most unique aspects of the Bakhtinian view is that its claims about the social, dialogical nature of the self are inscribed in a rigorously dialogical approach to language and communication. As I intimated above, this approach suggests that any individual use of language necessarily implicates the other, and more specifically, the word or discourse of the other. Language use is always a social affair. Chapter 3 elaborates these claims in some detail by considering Bakhtin's metalinguistic theory of the utterance. Among the more specific themes to be addressed in this chapter are the "eventness" of the utterance, the constitutive import for the individual utterance of the prior and anticipated words or discourse of others, the function of "speech genres" as social constraints on the individual use of language, and the "superaddressee" (or ideal listener) as a defining feature of the individual utterance.

One of the guiding assumptions of this dissertation is that the nature and vicissitudes of the self parallel those of the utterance. Accordingly, Chapter 4 charts out some of the more specific implications of Bakhtin's theory of the utterance for a dialogical conception of the self. In addition to elaborating a conception of the self as an unrepeatable event of meaning, and as an event that, like the utterance, implicates both the previous and anticipated utterances

of others and assumes particular generic forms, Chapter 4 will include an extended discussion of ontological significance (for the self) of the other's (addressee's) recognition. I argue that the other's recognition (response) helps to establish one's sense of self as a determinate entity. Drawing on literary and everyday examples, I also pursue the implications for the self of the lack of the other's responsive understanding. Finally, the function of the superaddressee is also reconsidered in light of the fundamental human need for recognition.

In Chapter 5, critical aspects of the dialogical view of self are brought further into relief through a comparative analysis of the writings of Bakhtin and George Herbert Mead. I argue that while both theorists espouse a social ontology that stresses the relation between self and other as it defines and manifests itself in human communication, only the Bakhtinian conception of dialogue, and of inner dialogue in particular, recognizes the enduring importance of the otherness of the other for the communicative process of self-formation. Among the more specific features of a Bakhtinian approach to dialogue that distinguish it from the Meadian view are its emphasis on difference as an enabling condition for dialogue; its resistance to formulations which see dialogue as a dialectical process that tends progressively toward the eradication of otherness; its depiction of the self's multiplicity as a non-systemic, aggregate of voices in interaction; and its provision of an account of the internalization process that preserves the sense of the particularity, and hence the otherness, of the voices that populate our inner speech.

In what is perhaps the most "applied" moment of the dissertation, Chapter

6 explores the analytic, methodological potential of the dialogical framework through an examination of the autobiographical utterances of three children. Upon describing the nature and content of these self-relevant utterances from the vantage point of the structural-developmental framework, they are reconsidered in light of some of the ideas and assumptions associated with the Bakhtinian dialogical perspective. More specifically, this chapter examines the social origins of children's self-utterances and, drawing on Bakhtin's typology of novelistic discourse, reconsiders the three verbal self-portraits in terms of the degree to which they are "double-voiced" or betray an active orientation to the other's discourse.

Moving beyond a conception of dialogue as an ontological given—that is, as a phenomenon that describes what invariably happens in human communication—Chapter 7 explores the moral or normative dimensions of dialogue. I argue that dialogue, and hence the dialogical self, may be understood not only as a description of what we invariably are, but also as an image of what we should be. Accordingly, one of my major aims in this chapter is to delineate a particular valorized way of engaging the word of the other. Toward this end, I have occasion to consider Bakhtin's distinction between authoritative and internally persuasive discourse, a distinction that speaks to the ways we experience others' words and voices in our verbal consciousness. As authoritative discourse is a less valorized category than internally persuasive discourse, I also spend some time considering the conditions that might support the erosion of a word's authoritativeness, and that, correspondingly, might facilitate a dialogical

sensibility vis-à-vis the other's discourse.

I conclude the dissertation with a brief discussion of the utility of Bakhtin's dialogism as a metatheoretical discourse for developmental psychology. More specifically, I argue that by virtue of its reliance on a temporal framework that highlights the unpredictability and eventness of existence, dialogism has implications for how we conceptualize the nature of change; how we understand the vicissitudes of individual development and the question of "maturity" or "adulthood;" how we conceive of the role of the past in the development of self; and how we envision the relation between individual and cultural-historical development.

CHAPTER 1

MONOLOGUES OF MODERNITY

The dialogical account of the self proposed in the present work rests on an epistemological and ontological framework that acknowledges the constitutive significance of linguistic communication in the acquisition of knowledge and formation of subjectivity. This framework argues that it is in our communicative, dialogic encounters with others that our knowledge of the world is formed and transformed and that subjectivity itself comes to assume a cognitively determinate shape. In its claims regarding the social nature of subjectivity and the role of language (qua communication) in its constitution, this dialogical view is at odds with some of the most fundamental tenets of the modern philosophical tradition as it finds expression from Descartes through to Kant. Pursuing the via negativa, this chapter examines elements of this philosophical tradition that diverge from Bakhtinian claims about knowledge, subjectivity, and language. More specifically, it considers the epistemic priority accorded the self-sufficient individual subject in modern philosophical thought, the image of the other to which this privileging gives rise, and the view of language that both reflects and reinforces the modern subject's presumed self-sufficiency. Following this exposition of the modernist view, I consider how these related philosophical commitments are played out in contemporary psychological analyses of the self, and in particular in those informed by Piagetian, structural-developmental principles.

The Monologic “I”

The modern philosophical tradition, which I here associate with the foundational projects of Descartes, Locke, Rousseau, and Kant, upholds a monological conception of knowledge and consciousness. Such a conception is reflected more specifically in the modernist commitment to “epistemological individualism,” a philosophical doctrine which “asserts that the source of knowledge lies within the individual” (Lukes, 1973, p. 107). However diverse and conflicting the epistemologies and philosophies of mind articulated by these central modern figures, they converge in their assumption that epistemological problems are to be framed in terms of how the individual, in and of himself (or herself), can construct and know the world. The general assumption is that knowable aspects of the world are inscribed into consciousness in the form of mental contents or structures that, in effect, constitute the only immediate, self-present objects of knowledge. Accordingly, it argues that human knowledge of the world must take the analysis of the contents of the individual human mind or consciousness as its starting point. This tradition, in short, is one that sees knowledge as the product of the workings of a single, self-contained, self-sufficient, and unified consciousness.

Descartes and the Cogito. René Descartes, the “godfather” of philosophical modernity, laid much of the groundwork for this individualistic epistemological orientation. Indeed, Descartes’ innovation consisted precisely in his posing the problem of knowledge firmly in terms of the categories of a unified individual subjectivity. The primacy that Descartes accorded the

individual subject was particularly evident in the conclusions he reached in the course of his methodical efforts to secure indubitable foundations for the new science of Galileo. Using the so-called method of doubt, Descartes set out to “reject as if absolutely false everything in which [he] could imagine the least doubt” (1988, p. 36).¹⁰ For Descartes, this amounted to a rejection of the evidence of his senses, and all the beliefs and opinions founded upon either them or his upbringing, including, most notably, the otherwise common sense belief that he was embodied in the material universe. Descartes articulates this lofty effort to wipe the slate clean and establish a new, certain foundation for knowledge, in one place, in the following terms:

I will now shut my eyes, stop my ears, and withdraw all my senses. I will eliminate from my thoughts all images of bodily things. . . . I will converse with myself and scrutinize myself more deeply; and in this way I will attempt to achieve, little by little, a more intimate knowledge of myself. (1988, pp. 86-87)¹¹

Descartes believed that his foundationalist aspirations were ultimately achieved by appealing to internal mental processes. More specifically, in the course of his methodical doubting, Descartes concluded that he could not doubt his own existence—his I—for the very act of doubting, he reasoned, entailed that existence: cogito, ergo sum (I think, therefore I am) was his celebrated conclusion. As to the nature of this indubitable I, Descartes claimed that it was in essence a thing that thinks (res cogitans): “A thing that doubts, understands, affirms, denies, is willing, is unwilling, and also imagines and has sensory perceptions” (1988, p. 83).¹² The body, on this account, was part of the material world (res extensa), a substance distinct from that of mind or reason, and hence

ultimately inessential to his self-definition. It was the self-conscious and self-present thinking mind, a mind possessed of an interiority that distinguished it from all else in the world, which was to be the privileged and indubitable starting point for philosophic and scientific inquiry.¹³ Endowed by a non-deceiving God with innate knowledge of essences and of fundamental principles used in the interpretation of experience, the individual subject could know the world and itself reliably, directly, and incontestably from within. Through its own primordial resources, the individual subject could form clear and precise ideas about the external world, ideas whose conformity to truth was guaranteed precisely by their intelligibility to the individual, that is, by their self-evidence.

For Descartes, as for those who inherited his legacy, the subject is primarily a subject of representations, a thinker of thoughts. The subject's acquaintance with objective reality, on this view, is indirect: the subject makes contact with this reality only through the mediation of the mental contents and structures housed in consciousness and which, in effect, constitute its only immediate objects of knowledge. In this respect, the Cartesian subject is a self-contained centre of consciousness. It inhabits a bounded, inner realm of representations that constitute its only source of contact with the external world. On the Cartesian account, therefore, the mind's access to reality requires that the latter become an object of thought, a process that can be “construed as the mentalization of the world: the translation of the object into an intrinsically representational mental medium” (Bakhurst, 1991, p. 205). Taylor (1991) articulates a similar sentiment in his description of the self-contained modern

subject:

This subject is a monological one. She or he is in contact with an “outside” world, including other agents, the objects she or he and they deal with, his or her own and others' bodies, but this contact is through the representations she or he has “within.” The subject is first of all an “inner” space, a “mind,” to use the old terminology, or a mechanism capable of processing representations, if we follow the more fashionable computer-inspired models of today. The body, other people, may form the content of my representations. They may also be causally responsible for some of these representations. But what “I” am, as a being capable of having such representations, the inner space itself, is definable independently of body or other. (Taylor, 1991, p. 307).

Locke's Ideas. To be sure, empiricists such as Locke presented a challenge to the Cartesian framework. More specifically, in contrast to the rationalism of Descartes, Locke (1997) derived an inductive philosophy of mind which claimed that it was experience that furnished the mind with ideas. The information received from our senses was basically trustworthy, capable of presenting us with a reliable version of the external world. Of course, this emphasis on sensory experience as the foundation of knowledge presented a challenge to Descartes' view that our knowledge was the product of the mind's inherent content and activity, with Locke asserting instead that the mind was at birth a tabula rasa, an “empty cabinet” or “white paper” containing no ideas.

However, like Descartes, Locke posited that the fundamental basis of knowledge was the individual subject's conscious “ideas” of things.¹⁴ With this emphasis on ideas, Locke, like Descartes before him, embraced a representational theory of perception (Hamlyn, 1987) wherein the mind is established as an interior domain of mental contents which map onto the external world. In his consideration of the specific ways in which individual experience furnishes the

mind with ideas, Locke appropriated the subject/inner-object/outer distinction popularized by Descartes. For Locke, sensation and reflection—corresponding to the object and subject poles, respectively—were the two “fountains of knowledge, from whence all the ideas we have, or can naturally have, do spring” (1997, p. 109).¹⁵ Sensation is the means by which the senses “from external objects convey into the mind what produces there those perceptions” (p. 110).¹⁶ Through sensation, “we come by those ideas, we have of yellow, white, heat, cold, soft, hard, bitter, sweet, and all those which we call sensible qualities” (p. 109).¹⁷ On the other hand, there is reflection, that is, “the perception of the operations of our own minds within us” (p. 110)¹⁸ which provides us with our ideas of those operations (e.g., perception, thinking, doubting, etc). “This source of ideas,” writes Locke, “every man has wholly in himself; and though it be not sense, as having nothing to do with external objects; yet it is very like it, and might properly enough be called internal sense” (p. 110).¹⁹ Hence, while devising an account of knowledge that, in contrast to Descartes’ view, paid more attention to the external/object pole of the dichotomy, the dichotomy itself, the language of inner and outer, and the ontological assumption it carried, remained uncontested in the Lockean paradigm.²⁰

Subjectivity in Kantian Perspective. Although Descartes certainly established the I as an epistemological centre of awareness, it was in the writings of Immanuel Kant, and most notably in his Critique of pure reason, that the glorification of the Cartesian I reached its apotheosis. Kant (1997) radically transformed the problem of knowledge by establishing a synthesis of rationalist

and empiricist doctrines which, in effect, undermined them both. While, in accord with the empiricist thesis, he acknowledged the role of sensory experience, granting that there is no knowledge without such experience, he affirmed that it does not therefore follow that it arises out of experience alone. Kant differed from both his rationalist and empiricist predecessors in his provision of a radically transcendental basis for the claims of human subjectivity. Kant emphasized the mind's inherent capacity to impose form and structure on experience. The mind was able to accomplish this task by way of a system of a priori mental structures or "categories of understanding" which, derived from traditional logic, included such things as space, time, quality, quantity, and relation. On Kant's view, the nature of the world we know is an active construction of the mind, every perception bearing the imprint of the mind's inherent structuring capacity. One implication of this is that we can never know things in their own reality, things in and of themselves. This "noumenal world," as Kant put it, cannot be known precisely because all knowledge is mediated by the constructive, form-imparting activity of the mind. Reality is always qualified: it is reality of the "phenomenal world," reality as we experience and know it, that is, as it is represented to us through the senses and structured by the categories of understanding. For example, experiencing the world in terms of objects situated in space and time, or discerning causal relations between events in the world, are activities that result not from the way reality is in fact structured but in the possibilities for knowing that inhere in the structures of our mind. In short, the order we find in the world is the order we impose on it by way of innately given ways of understanding.

In asserting that the mind imparts to experience the very properties in virtue of which it is accessible to us, Kant raised the primacy of subjectivity to a new level. As we saw earlier, for Descartes the clarity and distinctness of perception which he sought to attain with regard to ideas were believed to reflect the order that inhered in the things themselves. On his account, although we, as thinking beings, can know ourselves more easily and clearly than the corporeal world, a clear and distinct understanding of the latter, via the intellect, is still possible given the existence of a veracious God who is responsible for the ideas that we have. In Kant there is a more radical severing of mind from nature and the cosmic order than is found in Descartes, with cognition now seen to (co-)originate in the constructive or knowledge-constitutive capacities of rational consciousness. With Kant, we move away from concerns about the validity of perceptions, to concerns about the nature and structure of those perceptions and of the perceiving agent.

Modernity's Other

The fate of the other within the modernist epistemological framework is in many respects already inscribed in the tendency to frame the problem of knowledge in terms of what the individual can know or construct on his or her own. In the following section, I explore this claim in greater detail by examining the attitude toward the other reflected in the writings of Descartes, Locke, Rousseau, and Kant.

Descartes' Solitary Knower. Descartes' individualistic epistemology

encourages the view that if I am to understand, I must understand for myself, or, as Descartes puts it, “no one can conceive something so well, and make it his own, when he learns it from someone else as when he discovers it himself” (1988, p. 51).²¹ The individualistic ethos in Descartes’ work is no less evident in the comments he offers his readers regarding the value and virtues of individual invention. He writes, for example,

that there is not usually so much perfection in works composed of several parts and produced by various different craftsmen as in the works of one man. Thus we see that buildings undertaken and completed by a single architect are usually more attractive and better planned than those which several have tried to patch up by adapting old walls built for different purposes. (1988, p. 25)²²

One must, in short, establish one's own foundations for knowledge, not someone else's. Descartes enjoins us to be self-reliant in our thinking. Our capacity to heed this injunction, as we have seen, tends to be presented “less as an ideal than as something that is already established in our constitution . . . [a] reification of the disengaged first-person-singular self” (Taylor, 1991, p. 307). The Cartesian ego is, after all, present to itself as a pure extensionless consciousness with no constitutive ties to the other (to language, culture, or community). “It is a center of monological consciousness” (Taylor, 1991, p. 307). One could argue, accordingly, that Descartes rejected dialogue between people in favour of self-examination and self-questioning as the ground of truth. Descartes’ theatre of the mind is filled with spectators and not interlocutors. His epistemology is founded not on dialogue but on the inspection by the eye of an I of the world. As a Cartesian subject, what I know and who I essentially am can be explained

without reference to other subjects.

Reason and the Enlightenment Suppression of the Other.²³ Though Descartes is not typically seen in terms of his immediate influence on the Enlightenment project—that role is more often ascribed to Locke—the Enlightenment's ideal of reason and its insistence on a universal, inherently rational human nature certainly hearkens back to central aspects of Cartesian thought, and particularly to its fundamental individualism. The Enlightenment dream of escaping dogmatic metaphysics and the influence of tradition, along with its related aim of grounding all knowledge in pure, unprejudiced reason, is premised on the radical self-reliance and epistemic autonomy accorded to the individual subject. Of course, in view of its more explicitly empiricist commitments, Enlightenment thinking may have cast the Cartesian injunction to “think for oneself” in terms of a metaphor more appropriate to the age: rather than trust others (our teachers, say), we must see for ourselves. Moreover, although Enlightenment thinkers reaffirmed the propriety of Descartes’ search for an absolute epistemological starting point purged of all presupposed belief or opinion, in other respects the Enlightenment was a reaction against Descartes (Cassirer, 1951). Recall that Descartes’ subjective I that could not be doubted knew the world and itself according to divinely implanted innate ideas. From an Enlightenment standpoint, such theological appeals continued to betray the constraints of dogma in matters of knowing, constraints which the Enlightenment saw as inimical to truth. Enlightenment thought was more explicit and unrelenting than Descartes in the urgency and optimism with which

it heralded humanity's emancipation from religious superstition through the rigorous exercise of a universal human reason.

Locke's Disengaged Subject. Just as Descartes argued that seeing the world and ourselves clearly and distinctly required a prior (methodical) disengagement from our normal way of experiencing the world, so too did Locke's Enlightenment view propose that we must overcome the influences of passion, custom, and authority—what we have uncritically learned from others in the course of living in the world—if we are to satisfy our aspirations to truth. And with Descartes, Locke argued that knowledge is not valid unless fashioned through one's own methodical efforts, as the following passage from his Essay suggests:

For, I think, we may as rationally hope to see with other men's eyes, as to know by other men's understandings. So much as we our selves consider and comprehend of truth and reason, so much we possess of real and true knowledge. The floating of other men's opinions in our brains, makes us not one jot the more knowing, though they happen to be true. What in them was science, is in us but [opinionatedness], whilst we give up our assent only to reverend names, and do not, as they did, employ our own reason to understand those truths, which gave them reputation. (1997, p. 105)²⁴

So while it is certainly true that Descartes and Locke arrive at different conceptions of knowledge—Descartes locating its origins in the self-evidence of methodical reflection and Locke in the realm of sensory experience—it is clear that each adheres to the belief that the path toward scientific truth is ultimately one that the individual subject must traverse alone. No less than in Descartes' stance, Locke's epistemology and psychology is premised on an “ideal of independence and self-responsibility” (Taylor, 1989, p. 67). Moreover, each

agrees that the ability to comprehend the truth about the world for ourselves is something built into our very natures. For neither thinker is reason, nor the truth it brings to light, to be regarded as a necessarily collaborative, interlocative phenomena, something that exists and is constituted in the space of communicative practice. Indeed, on the modernist view espoused by Descartes and Locke, thinking is rational only when it is premised on our detachment both from others and from our habitual engagements with the world (Taylor, 1989).²⁵

Rousseau: Reclaiming our Natures. In keeping with the individualistic epistemology of the rationalist-empiricist tradition, the eighteenth century in particular is replete with images of solitary figures, of lone wanderers developing “naturally” in some locale free of cultural influence—on a deserted island perhaps. Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, of course, comes to mind here. In him we find the paradigmatic “solitary man” who, living in the state of nature, free of the concerns and demands of the civilized world, has the lone preoccupation of assuring his own preservation. Perhaps more than any other Enlightenment thinker, Rousseau steadfastly promoted this image of human self-sufficiency, erecting around it a detailed history of the human species (Rousseau, 1986) and, later, a pedagogical Bildungsroman (Rousseau, 1979a). Rousseau’s autobiographical writings (Rousseau, 1953, 1979b), too, stress the essential goodness that is to be found in self-sufficiency, a goodness potentially disfigured by the ills and artifices of modern society. Through detachment, however, one could rediscover inner peace and tranquillity, contentment, and a natural expansiveness and love of others. Similarly, as far as knowledge was

concerned, one could only trust oneself. In true Cartesian fashion, Rousseau argued that it was not through Socratic discourse with others but through monological introspection—through solitary, reflection-filled walks in the woods—that truth could be revealed.²⁶ Indeed, it was precisely during one of his solitary expeditions through the woods of St. Germaine that Rousseau (1979b) discovered—in a sort of epiphanic insight—what he called the “sentiment of existence,” a sense of one’s being that he describes in the following terms:

What do we enjoy in such a situation? Nothing external to ourselves, nothing if not ourselves and our own existence. As long as this state lasts, we are sufficient unto ourselves, like God. The sentiment of existence, stripped of any other emotion, is in itself a precious sentiment of contentment and of peace which alone would suffice to make this existence dear and sweet to anyone able to spurn all the sensual and earthly impressions which incessantly come to distract us from it and to trouble its sweetness here-below. (p. 69)

Rousseau understood this “sentiment of existence” not psychologically, that is, not as a mere feeling or particular experience, but rather metaphysically, that is, as something that actually revealed and constituted our true being and in which resided the source of our authentic happiness. Like the Cartesian cogito or “I think,” Rousseau’s sentiment of existence was supremely indubitable, but it was also much more fundamental than Descartes’ “I.” More specifically, Rousseau’s epiphany contained a simple truth: somehow a person existed not through his or her relation to God, nor through our social relations with others, nor even—as Descartes would have it—through a relation to some defining essence (such as thinking), but rather through a direct, unmediated relation to

oneself. What defines our being most definitively and indubitably is precisely this self-presence and self-sufficiency. In the sentiment of existence, we sense what is most authentic about ourselves: namely, that each of us is an integral, self-defining subject; that each of us is the self-contained, self-enclosed source of his or her own happiness (Solomon, 1988).

In his educational treatise, Emile, Rousseau (1979a) offers a pedagogical model whose aims are consistent with this philosophy of natural self-reliance. In the writings of many Enlightenment thinkers (most notably the French philosophes), early education came to be seen as a practice that filled the mind with stubborn prejudices (Schouls, 1989). Moreover, it was agreed that this bondage to prejudice was unnatural. The pedagogical implication of this belief was that a child might, if allowed to develop “naturally,” achieve a capacity for thinking that was uncorrupted by the impositions of civilized experience—unburdened, that is, by a dependence on the opinions, recognition, and example of others. It is no wonder, then, that Emile, the eponymous protagonist of Rousseau’s educational novel, was to be raised and educated in a manner that would protect him from the corrupting influences of civilized society and preserve in him the independence and self-sufficiency that was in any case part of his natural inheritance.²⁷ As Rousseau (1979a) put it, the goal of Emile’s education was “the very same as that of nature” (p. 38), that is, “to rais[e] a man for himself” (p. 39). In the countryside, isolated from his peers and from teachers, and through the carefully plotted “lessons” of his tutor and a guiding plan of “negative education,” Emile would learn to stay within himself, to think

for himself, to depend only on things but not on others, and in this way would, upon his eventual entry into the social world, be immunized against the vice-engendering features of modern, civilized society.

Dare to Know: Kant's Motto for Enlightenment. Given that Kant read and admired Rousseau, it is not surprising to find in his writings a similar emphasis on the Enlightenment ideal of self-reliance. Indeed, he defines a conception of Bildung, or self-formation, that reflects precisely this ideal. In his essay, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" he offers the following view:

Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another. This immaturity is self-imposed when its cause lies not in a lack of understanding, but in a lack of resolve and courage to use it without guidance from another. Sapere Aude! [Dare to know!]: "Have courage to use your own understanding!"—that is the motto of enlightenment. (1983, p. 41)

As this passage suggests, Kant's version of the Enlightenment project is one that stresses our liberation from self-incurred tutelage, and more generally from any kind of external constraint—social, political, traditional.²⁸ Maturity is defined as a critical, self-determining stance, a stance that suggests a self-transparency (of self-reflection) in the ability to bracket off habit and custom. In enjoining us to have the courage to "think for ourselves," Kant is urging us not to be led by external authority, to look within for the standard of truth. And the ever-present possibility of doing so inheres, according to Kant, in the fact that we are by nature, if not by habit, autonomous, rational selves, selves whose existence is logically prior to interpersonal relationships, to cultural traditions, and to the social collective we inhabit. What Kant's view ultimately suggests is that as

rational selves we are ready-made, and social-communicative existence is in no way constitutive or enabling of subjectivity. Kant's stance is therefore one of abstract individualism, one that fails to acknowledge the constitutive importance of people's embeddedness in communities and cultures. For Kant, this cultural situatedness—the specific demands and commitments of social life—is appraised largely as the source of externally imposed constraints, constraints which, while not fatal for the individual subject's autonomy, stand only to compromise and obscure the ineluctable freedom we inherently possess as rational beings—a freedom we always stand to reclaim, again, if we only have the strength and courage to do so.²⁹

By way of this all-too-brief and partial sketch, I hope to have shown how the modern philosophical enterprise orients us to a conception of the individual cognizing and/or feeling subject as the ultimate source, master, and arbiter of meaning, value, and authenticity. The monological, self-contained self that emerges in the writings of Descartes, Locke, Rousseau, and Kant is a self that enjoys an epistemic transparency to itself and that, correspondingly, owes nothing or ought not owe anything to the other for its own constitution and understanding of the world. Neither the meaning of the world nor of my own essential identity is, on this view, something that exists in or is fashioned out of my communicative encounters with others. As Dunne (1995) summarizes the implications of the modern perspective, “I can never come to discover or realize myself in a new way through interaction with the other; for I am already securely given to myself as my self prior to interaction and all that can

be at stake in the latter is success or failure in realizing my antecedently established ends” (p. 139).³⁰ Indeed, the modern subject exists, at least ideally, in a state of disengagement from the social world, its freedom and rationality defined crucially and precisely by such disengagement (Taylor, 1989).

Language and Communication in Modern Perspective

Supporting the epistemological individualism of the modernist views is a particular conception of language and communication. As I argue below, it is a conception that reaffirms the primacy or sovereignty of the individual subject and that reinforces the isolation of selves from one another and of the self from what, in effect, is its own essence (see Chapter 2).

We have seen that part of the legacy of Cartesian thinking requires that the individual subject’s intentions, plans, and ideas be transparent to itself. Experience, truth, or meaning is laid bare in thoughts or intuitions offered up directly or self-presently to subjectivity. The “clear and distinct” ideas of which Descartes writes are not mediated by or refracted through the lens of social signifying practices, nor are they inhabited by the words and voices of others. On the Cartesian view, language is but a neutral, transparent medium with which to describe the inner world of ideas, a means of externalizing thoughts contained in an otherwise nonlinguistic *cogito*. As Descartes himself puts it, “Whenever I express something in words, and understand what I am saying, this very fact makes it certain that there is within me an idea of what is signified by the words in question” (1985, p. 113).

This conception of language, while barely intimated in the writings of Descartes, receives a substantial elaboration in Locke's (1997) Essay. For Locke and the empiricists, as for Descartes, the basis of knowledge is the individual's "ideas" of things. These ideas, whether derived from sensory experience or, as for Descartes, from the mind's stockpile of innate ideas, are the mind's only immediate objects. And for rationalists and empiricists alike, words are seen simply to function as external signs or labels of these essentially non-linguistic internal conceptions or ideas. Language, in short, is conceived as standing in a purely external and ancillary relation to thought. Again, the purpose of words and language is simply to represent (re-present), with as little confusion as possible, a speaker's ideas.³¹

Allied to this modern conception of language is a particular view of the communicative process. This process is understood by Locke as one involving the conveyance of ideas from one mind to another. "When a man speaks to another," writes Locke, "it is, that he may be understood; and the end of speech is, that those sounds, as marks, may make known his ideas to the hearer" (1997, p. 364).³² Moreover, if words are to serve this communicative function effectively, it is

necessary . . . that they excite, in the hearer, exactly the same idea, they stand for in the mind of the speaker. Without this, men fill one another's heads with noise and sounds; but convey not thereby their thoughts, and lay not before one another their ideas, which is the end of discourse and language. (1997, p. 426).³³

This notion that communication is an act of individuals sharing thoughts is, at least according to the estimation of one commentator (Peters, 1989), a notion

invented by Locke. It is also a notion that informs Rousseau's own discussion of language and communication (Rousseau, 1953, 1986). For Rousseau, as for Locke, the aim of communication is self-expression and the reduplication of a spoken or written idea in the mind of another person. The point of a spoken message is ultimately to make of the other a sort of double. For neither of these modern thinkers does the communicative moment play a constitutive or formative role in the life of the idea or feeling. The communicative ideal upheld by these and other modern thinkers is one that accords primacy to the independent, self-sufficient speaker (to his or her preexisting ideas, feelings, and so forth). Accordingly, language use is conceived as a monological act, as an act governed by the communicative intentions of a single person: the speaker.

The Weakness of the Logos. To reiterate, on the modern view language is of little epistemological import, existing simply in the service of representing and communicating ideas. As it occupies the realm of the social, however, language is also the potential site of the distortion and corruption of the idea, a potential source of alienation from otherwise unspoken, immediately given ideas and feelings. A weakness inheres in language. Indeed, a recurring theme in modern thought concerns the inadequacy of language in representing or naming the world. Again, let us consider Descartes in this regard. Although Descartes does not deal at length with the issue of language, in at least one place he conveys his uneasiness about the epistemological fitness of words to stand for ideas:

I am amazed at how [weak and] prone to error my mind is. For although I am thinking about these matters within myself, silently and without speaking, nonetheless the actual words bring me up short, and I am almost tricked by ordinary ways of talking. We say that we see the wax itself, if it is there before us, not that we judge it to be there from its colour or shape; and this might lead me to conclude without more ado that knowledge of the wax comes from what the eye sees, and not from the scrutiny of the mind alone. (1988, p. 85)³⁴

More deliberately than his rationalist counterpart, Locke also argues that language is often the site of errors in thinking. Concerned, as were other empiricists, that knowledge could be impeded by the imprecision of everyday language, Locke rails against the “use and misuse of words” and advocates the adoption of a “plain style”: a clear and distinct use of words and language apposite to the clear and distinct ideas they signified.³⁵ Only when language is properly employed and assumed the appropriate style—a style purged of distorting, ambiguous, or unnecessarily ornate forms—can it reveal the natural associations and connections between ideas. Anything less and language risks corrupting and misrepresenting the natural purity of thought and thereby distorting the natural relations between ideas and objects found in nature and reflected in human knowledge of that nature.³⁶

Alienating Speech. Scepticism about the capacity of language adequately to convey ideas and feelings assumes an even more pointed form in the writings of Rousseau (1953, 1986). As Starobinsky (1988) observes, throughout much of his work Rousseau exhibits a constant preoccupation with the dangers and abuse of language, in particular in its capacity to express subjectively experienced truth. Indeed, on Rousseau’s account, language stands

out as one of the entities responsible for self-alienation: “Glittering like gold, language itself becomes a currency of exchange that renders man a stranger unto himself” (Starobinsky, 1988, p. 311). Because language insinuates itself between reality and our immediate experience of it, there is an essential cleavage between outer expression and inner feeling, between language and subjectivity. Ever the romantic naturalist, Rousseau dreams of a self or a truth capable of preserving its integrity in the face of the distortion it may suffer through its communication to an audience of listeners or readers. In his autobiographical writings, for example, Rousseau frequently enjoins his readers to look beyond appearances, to the pure, infallible intentions of his true, inner self, and in the process often “excuses himself for using language as he might excuse himself for committing a crime” (Starobinsky, 1988, p. 272). Rousseau wants his readers to see behind the smoke-screen of his words, to see behind them a truth beyond the deceptions and distortions of language. The communicative ideal for Rousseau is one that we have already mentioned: the reduplication of the ideas (or, rather, the feelings) of the speaker in the mind of the hearer.³⁷

Modernity and Psychology

In many respects, psychology is a child of philosophical modernity. Psychology’s allegiance to modernist assumptions is especially evident in the explanatory primacy it accords the individual mind. Received psychological paradigms, such as the information-processing and cognitive-structural perspectives, have formally entrenched the individual at the centre of their

explanatory and methodological frameworks, the individual tout court becoming the fundamental unit of analysis for psychological inquiry and the presumed locus and origin of psychological function and meaning. Contextual, social, cultural, and historical aspects of existence, though perhaps acknowledged as “factors” impinging on the individual, remain for the most part external impositions, in no way internally related to individual functioning, and hence outside the purview of psychological explanation properly conceived. In other words, a dualistic rendering of the individual and the social is maintained. Such a view establishes a firm boundary between the individual, construed as the locus and container of internal mental structures and processes, and the social, conceived as that which stands apart from, and in an external relation to, individual functioning. And psychology, traditionally at least, is argued to have come down squarely on the side of the abstract and abstracted individual.

The Piagetian Epistemic Subject. Within developmental psychology more specifically, the legacy of philosophical modernity is clearly sensed in the enduring explanatory value attached to the Piagetian epistemic subject. In Piaget’s epistemic subject we are afforded the image of the child as a rational inquirer endowed with an inherent repertoire of skills by which the child methodically makes his or her way about in the world, uncovering its mysteries and the structure of reality. In what amounts to a genetic or developmental version of Kant’s transcendental ego (Jardine, 1992; Wartofsky, 1983), the epistemic subject actively interprets the world via emergent categories and schemas. Within contemporary developmental analyses of the self in particular,

the epistemic subject is frequently implicated as the proximate source of the age-related changes that have been observed in the structure and content of children's self-understanding—changes characterized, more specifically, by a decreasing reliance on concrete, physical descriptors and an increasing reliance on abstract, psychological descriptors (Broughton, 1978; Damon & Hart, 1988; Keller, Ford, & Meacham, 1978; Livesley & Bromley, 1973; Montemayor & Eisen, 1977; Rosenberg, 1986; Selman, 1980). What enables this appropriation of Piaget's structural-developmental tenets is the assumption that the self is a concept which, in a manner analogous to concepts pertaining to aspects of the physical world, undergoes a predictable developmental transformation in a direction consonant with increasing logico-mathematical competence. Rosenberg (1986), for example, argues that if we conceive of the self-concept as a body of self-knowledge, we can stress "the degree to which the self-concept . . . is governed, controlled, and constrained by the processes of cognitive development" (Rosenberg, 1986, p. 108), that is, by the developmental vicissitudes of the epistemic subject. On this view, cognitive development represents a sort of limiting condition on a child's construction of a self-concept. In other words, the nature of a child's self-concept reflects the nature of her emergent and intrinsic cognitive abilities.

In a recent application of this logic, Harter (1996) argues that the Piagetian epistemic subject is "the epitome of James's I-self" (p. 9) or self-as-knower. In her effort to bring clarity to what she considers to be the otherwise intractable "I" of James' account, Harter reasons that Piaget's emphasis on the

universal cognitive activity of the epistemic subject allows us to account for how the “I” cognitively constructs the “Me,” that is, the objective, empirical self or self-as-object. Following Epstein’s (1973) model, which conceptualises this empirical self as a theory that one holds about oneself, Harter contends that the predictable growth of the epistemic subject can account for the development we observe in the specific “postulates” that comprise the child’s self-knowledge or self-theory: their increasing logical order and hierarchical arrangement; their increasing amenability to empirical testing and validation; and their increasing internal consistency. Echoing Rosenberg’s (1986) earlier remarks, Harter advocates that “a careful consideration of the abilities as well as the limitations at each stage of cognitive development will reveal how the particular features of the I-self at each period necessarily dictate the very nature of the Me-self, the self-theory, that can be constructed” (Harter, 1996, p. 9). In other words, changes in children’s self-descriptions are the necessary social-cognitive manifestations of universal cognitive-structural changes, changes embodied precisely in the epistemic subject.

While the appropriation of Piagetian insights by investigators interested in explaining age-related shifts in self-understanding has made for a picture of a very active individual, this appropriation is also beset by the individualism of the cognitive-structural view. An explanatory model erected around the activities of the epistemic subject necessarily overshadows or circumscribes the role that the other plays in the formation and constitution of self-understanding. Indeed, a perennial criticism of Piaget’s genetic psychology is precisely that it

underestimates the contribution of others to a child's cognitive development. In the Piagetian framework, the explanatory force of the role of the other in the child's mental growth is subordinated to the self-constituting powers and resources of the epistemic subject, a subject whose active encounter with an increasingly demanding range of problems stimulates the unfolding of increasingly sophisticated and adaptive ways of knowing the world and the self. It is no wonder, then, that the Piagetian view consistently downplays the significance of what children learn from their social-communicative dealings with others. Moreover, the universality and developmental necessity that characterizes the child's movement through the four Piagetian stages of cognitive growth practically ensures that what children hear and learn from others, along with the various socioculturally specific discourses to be which they are exposed, will be of little explanatory importance, except perhaps as a supplement to the epistemic subject's own self- and world-constituting activity.

That Piaget is not fundamentally interested in what children learn from others is in keeping with the more fundamental assumptions of the structuralist view. This view is premised on a form of psychological realism which holds that the mind consists in real and culturally invariant cognitive structures (Williams, 1989). These structures and capacities are the deep psychological realities that underlie surface or contextual variations in human thought. Piaget's focus, after all, is not so much on the content of concepts as on "the common instruments and mechanisms of their construction" (Piaget & Garcia, 1989, p. 26). These common instruments and mechanisms can be described independently of the

real, concrete, social, practical circumstances in which a child finds itself. In this regard, Piaget's epistemic subject is a rational ideal similar to Descartes' cogito, an ideal that stresses the power of deductive logic and mathematical reasoning. As the other bears no constitutive significance for the workings of the epistemic subject, it is not surprising that the concrete, content-filled voices and discourses that the child hears and imbibes are not, on this Piagetian view, what give rise to particular forms of reasoning, scientific or otherwise—except perhaps indirectly, that is, insofar as they cause children to review their own direct experiences or help them get their own thoughts straight. Still, these other voices and discourses remain subordinate to the univocal, content-less voice of reason. The fact that Piaget turns to arithmetical logic to unravel the formal character of cognitive organization—to the progressive order structures of arithmetical group transformations (similarities, familiarities, subsuming orderings, groupings, classifications, coordinations)—is consistent with the preceding claim. It is the universal, structural, logico-mathematical language of development, and not the socially and culturally specific discourse of the child's everyday existence, that constitutes the true hero of the Piagetian perspective.

On a more charitable reading, of course, one might say that despite the lack of prominence accorded social experience by the structural-developmental view, it cannot be accused of disregarding the essential fact that the child develops in communication and interaction with others (e.g., Kitchener, 1981). After all, Piaget's constructivist perspective is about stages leading toward

increasing levels of cognitive equilibrium, toward an increasing fit between the child and her world, between the knower and the known, and social experience no doubt contributes to the achievement of this increasingly equilibrated state. But how, more specifically, is the other or social experience conceived in this connection? Is the other simply a factor to be appended to a process of otherwise asocial and universal development—a sort of supplement to the more critical process of internal self-regulation—or is the other internally related or intrinsic to development, that is, a constitutive aspect of cognitive functioning? The prevalence of the interaction metaphor in Piagetian theory suggests that the first of these possibilities more accurately describes the status of the other, or of social experience, in this framework. In keeping with the biases of philosophical modernity, the interactionist metaphor reflects a dichotomized image of the individual and the social. On the Piagetian view, reasoning is placed in the child's mind while the social context is placed firmly on the outside, such that the cognition/context problem becomes one of “how the social impinges on the preexisting individual” (Walkerdine, 1982, p. 130, italics added). Here, the relation between the person and the social world is conceived as an individual standing apart from and interacting with a social environment (Bidell, 1992). Even where the self is seen to originate in interactions with the social world, the assumption of a self that exists apart from interaction persists. Social-communicative interactions with others are conceived in purely functionalist terms: they may influence—that is, impede or enhance—otherwise naturally emergent cognitive processes, but they “do not actually enter into the structuring

of cognition itself” (Urwin, 1986, p. 261), the more essential source for that structuring residing within the individual. Social experience, then, while necessary for completion of structures of intelligence, is not at the source of these structures. According to the Piagetian view, any social “influence” must be mediated by structures constructed independently by the individual. In other words, in order to assimilate the contributions of his or her social experience, the child must already be endowed with mental structures which make this assimilation possible.

It is precisely on the foregoing point that the Piagetian view diverges from the Vygotskian perspective and, as we shall see shortly, from the Bakhtinian view as well. While Vygotsky (1987), like Piaget, acknowledges the importance for cognitive development of the child’s inner maturational promptings and his or her active exploration of the physical world, he proposes, in contrast to Piaget, that social-communicative factors are foundational for the emergence of distinctively human psychological processes. Through their (pedagogical) interactions with abler members of their community, children learn to use and eventually internalize or appropriate “psychological tools” (e.g., language), tools that then come irrevocably to mediate all higher psychological processes (e.g., logical memory, voluntary attention, concept formation, strategic problem solving). According to the Vygotskian view, individual psychological functioning is inherently or constitutively social. As Vygotsky (1981) himself puts it,

The very mechanism underlying higher mental functions is a copy from

social interaction; all higher mental functions are internalized social relationships. . . . Their composition, genetic [i.e., developmental] structure, and means of action [i.e., forms of mediation]—in a word, their whole nature—is social. Even when we turn to mental [internal] processes, their nature remains quasi-social. In their own private sphere, human beings retain the functions of social interaction. (Vygotsky, 1981, p. 164)

Moreover, for Vygotsky, as for Bakhtin, language qua speech is a critical, constitutive feature of higher psychological functioning. In the absence of symbolic mediation, higher thought simply could not develop, and nor could the acquisition of a determinate sense of self. But in saying this much we are getting ahead of ourselves. The formative importance of language for the workings of consciousness and for self-understanding will be the subject of the following chapter. Presently, let us consider the ways in which the modernist devalorization of language and social discourse is reflected in some contemporary psychological thinking about mindedness and selfhood.

Language and Self: Received Views. Within the mainstream developmental literature, relatively little attention is paid to the constitutive significance of language for children's self-understanding. Rather, language is seen to function largely in either a referential or representational way. Consonant with modern conceptions, language is assumed to refer us to or to represent ideas, feelings, experiences, or self-referential categories whose origins lie in the structures, processes, and contents (e.g., ideas, images, rules, propositions, schemata) of the individual mind and whose ontological status is such that they are more or less self-sufficiently meaningful prior to their encoding in language. In other words, language is viewed as an instrument in the service of

mental representations. These representations are ultimately what mediate our relationship to the world by organizing experience and serving a regulative role with regard to behaviour. The mind is a system of such representations and the meaning of a cognition is a function of the network of cognitions in which it is implicated and with which it interacts, with language emerging as a more or less adequate tool with which to codify or mirror a meaning that is otherwise exhausted by this system of cognitions. Correspondingly, and in accord with the Lockean account, communication becomes a matter of transmitting, through the vehicle of language, ideas from one mind to another. The following description of the communicative provides us with a paradigmatic example of this view:

How do we transfer the ideas in one mind to another mind in the meaningful manner, which we call communication? Viewed in light of the previous questions, it becomes clear that language is but a tool that makes it possible for people to convey concepts and relations among concepts to other people. Language acquisition, then, is the learning of the use of a tool for communicating that which is already known in the form of concepts and concept relations. (Palermo, 1983, p. 51)

The assumption that language functions to represent or transmit ideas also underlies the Piagetian, structural-developmental perspective. In keeping with his modernist philosophical roots, Piaget is hard pressed to view language in its constitutive aspect. Rather, language is conceived as but one of a number of symbolic or representational functions, the others including imitation, the system of gestural symbols, symbolic play, drawing, and mental images. In characteristically structuralist fashion, Piaget regards language as a sign system of “differentiated signifiers.” Ancillary to this signifying system is a more primary system of “undifferentiated signifiers” associated with prelinguistic action, the

built-in logic of which helps to structure linguistic behaviour (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969). Language, more simply, does not guide thought. Indeed, the emergence of language itself is dependent on prelinguistic cognitive processes. Interpretive, conceptual, categorical intelligence, whose origin lies in the formation of schemata from the internalization or appropriation of action upon objects precedes and is merely represented by language.

Not surprisingly, Piaget also shares the modernist suspicion about the capacity of language adequately to reflect cognitive structures. He writes, for example, that “When the child is questioned he translates his thoughts into words, but these words are necessarily inadequate” (1929, p. 27). Elsewhere, he downplays the constitutive import of language for thought, attributing the need to articulate a meaning not so much to logical requirements as to socially imposed demands for clarity and facile communication (Piaget, 1959). Before this moment of express articulation, we have a full, self-sufficient understanding of the solution to some problem, “but as soon as we try to explain to others what it is we have understood, difficulties come thick and fast” (Piaget, 1959, p. 65). The reason for these difficulties, according to Piaget, lies in the initially imagistic nature of our understanding and perhaps also in the fact that this insight could be represented to oneself in abbreviated language (Blachowicz, 1997). Expressing this understanding to others requires filling in the gaps with those previously omitted connecting elements. According to Piaget (1959), such is the difference between “personal understanding and spoken explanation” (p. 65).

Many developmental accounts of children's self-understanding clearly reflect the Piagetian—or, more generally, the modernist—perspective on language. These accounts assume, more specifically, that children's self-referential utterances simply reflect underlying conceptual categories about the self that the child has formed through his or her own actions upon the world. The research of Lewis and Brooks-Gunn (1979) on the nature of self-understanding in infancy and early childhood is exemplary in this regard. As part of their research program, these investigators examined the spontaneous vocalizations of children ranging in age from nine to 36 months. Their specific interest was in demonstrating how language is related to young children's ability to recognize themselves. What is particularly relevant to the present argument is the fact that for these investigators language is regarded as a storehouse of "verbal labels," a sort of conduit to underlying, non-linguistic conceptual categories. Consistent with structural-developmental assumptions, language is conceived as a tool for expressing, but not constituting, the experiential categories and understandings that exist prior to any embodiment in or representation through language and forms of discourse. In other words, a rather static view of language is assumed, a view according to which "Lexical items or utterance-level propositions are interpreted as semantic encodings of self-referential categories" (Miller, Mintz, Hoogstra, Fung, & Potts, 1992, p. 47). According to this representational approach, "self and social concepts . . . become crystallized notions within a representational system. Verbalizations pertaining to self are viewed as direct referents to the child's concept of self"

(Mintz, 1995, p. 62).

Sperry and Smiley (1995) accurately characterize much recent work examining the depiction of self in spontaneous conversation, noting that it betrays an allegiance to a long tradition in psychological scholarship on the self which assumes “that language is the mirror of the soul” (p. 2). And because language is understood to function primarily in a representational way, it is not surprising that concerns about the communicative context in which talk about the self occurs are rarely considered in developmental investigations of children’s self-understanding. As Mintz (1995) has recently noted with regard to the developmental literature, seldom is attention directed to the rhetorical context of a child’s self-descriptive utterances: to whom they are addressed, for what purposes, and so forth. Provided that measures have been taken to eliminate the possibility of social desirability or self-presentation effects, such utterances are assumed to function in a strictly referential way. Language, in short, is simply a methodological tool that is adequate to its object (the self) and that reflects its object directly, bypassing the voices and potential responses of others. Indeed, the possibility that rhetorical concerns may be operative in these investigative contexts is considered problematic and potentially detrimental to efforts to reveal children’s “true” self-understanding. It is problematic because the rhetorical context may somehow contribute to the form and content of the self-descriptions that people, and perhaps children in particular, produce. Accordingly, efforts must be taken to ensure that a methodology is engaged to circumvent these concerns. In keeping with this

reasoning, Kagan (1989) argues that self-report measures almost invariably produce data that are tainted by social desirability and self-presentational factors; hence, he advocates the use of more indirect, projective assessment devices, the assumption being that such instruments are better suited to vouchsafing investigators a glimpse of the child's actual or real self, a self that is tainted neither by social desirability nor by any other rhetorical concerns. Of course, what this sort of thinking fails to take into account is the possibility that the self is inherently and inescapably a rhetorical production, that is to say, a phenomenon that betrays a constitutive or formative link to the context in which speech (or writing) about the self takes place.

In addition to assuming that language functions in a representational way, investigators sometimes also assume that language functions in a more destructive way. Expressing the self in language may radically transform, perhaps even destroy, a more primordial sense of self, one that existed prior to its mediation by or representation in language. Consider, for example, Stern's (1985) account of the role of language in the development of self in infancy. According to Stern, language emerges in the second year of life, becoming for the infant a new means and medium of interpersonal communication for the parent-child dyad. More specifically, Stern claims that the advent of language engenders an "intersubjective" understanding of self and offers "a new way of being related to others . . . by sharing personal world knowledge with them, coming together in the domain of verbal relatedness" (p. 173). Prior to this "verbal self" phase, Stern contends that the child's self unfolds naturally

according to predesigned characteristics. During this prior phase the infant has the ability to experience reality in an unmediated, holistic or omni-modal way, in a way unencumbered by linguistic-cultural interpretations. With the acquisition of language, however, a linguistic-cultural meaning system is imposed on a more primordial biological meaning system. Stern further argues that while the arrival, with language, of this linguistic-cultural meaning system promotes a greater union for infant and parent, “it is a very mixed blessing to the child. . . . The infant gains entrance into a wider cultural membership, but at the risk of losing the force and wholeness of original experience” (p. 177). This loss follows from the fact that linguistic or culturally-mediated meanings are symbolic, impersonal, generalized, abstract, and superficial, and thereby are by definition alienated from subjective, concrete, lived experience. Language, in effect, creates a rupture between two forms of interpersonal experience: experience as lived and as it is represented in spoken language. Ultimately, language separates and estranges the child from an earlier, more primordial and authentic knowledge of both self and self-other relationships, a knowledge that was in essence largely unshareable, amodal, and related to specific experiential moments.

More recently, Harter (1997) has expressed a similar view on the dangers of language. Harter’s analysis is concerned with authentic and inauthentic experiences of self, which she hypostatizes in the notions of “true” and “false” selves, respectively. Following Stern, she argues that “the emergence of language is a double-edged sword” (p. 84). While language, in

its provision of a common symbol system, helps promote greater connectedness and shared meaning among interlocutors and also helps in the construction of self-narrative, language can introduce a gap between interpersonal experience as it is lived and as it is verbally represented. The ability to objectify the self through language, while enabling one to transcend immediate experience, also entails the potential risk of distorting that experience. Objectifying the self through language leads to transcendence, and therefore to the distortion of the immediacy of felt experience. In a related vein, Harter also notes that in using language to construct a self-narrative, a child is at least initially highly dependent on parents who, in their scaffolding of the child's self-relevant story, often and perhaps unavoidably dictate which particular aspects of the child's experience are important and hence which aspects come to be codified in the child's autobiographical memory. This practice, she continues, engenders "potential misrepresentations of the child's actual experience" (p. 84), which, in turn, may contribute to the development of a false self—and even false memories.

Echoes of Rousseau's distrust of language are clearly heard in Stern's and Harter's understanding of language. For both investigators the advent of language carries the potential to distort and transcend reality as subjectively experienced, and thereby to alienate the self from its primordial, authentic relationship to the world. Just as Rousseau bemoaned the disappearance of our natural wholeness with the advent of civilization and language, lamenting the disappearance of the "noble savage," so do Stern and Harter conceive of language as a force

potentially contaminating the “noble child.” The self that pre-exists speech embodies a purity and wholeness that, once brought within the folds of the abstraction-ridden world of language, must remain an object of nostalgic longing.

CHAPTER 2

DIALOGICAL EPISTEMOLOGY AND THE BAKHTINIAN SUBJECT

In the preceding chapter, we have seen how knowledge is considered the achievement of a self-sufficient individual subject in the epistemological frameworks of modern thinkers like Descartes, Locke, Rousseau, and Kant. Each of these representatives of the modern philosophical tradition holds that the reliability and authenticity of one's understanding requires that one secure one's own individual foundations for knowledge. Each of us is built by nature to have access to the universal light of reason or experience. And while some of us may be more prepared for the task, each of us must think for himself or herself. And thinking for oneself, as we have also seen, requires that one turn away or disengage from the other, for knowledge could never be reliably grounded in or extracted from our social-communicative relations. On the modernist view, thought, knowledge, and truth are not collaborative achievements; they speak to phenomena that can be predicated only of individual minds.

Epistemology as Dialogue

In these defining aspects, the modern epistemological stance constitutes a thoroughgoing monologism, an orientation to the world which, according to Bakhtin (1984),

denies the existence outside itself of another consciousness with equal rights and equal responsibilities, another I with equal rights (thou). With a monologic approach . . . another person remains wholly and merely an

object of consciousness, and not another consciousness. No response is expected from it that could change everything in the world of my consciousness. Monologue is finalized and deaf to the other's response, does not expect it and does not acknowledge in it any decisive force. (pp. 292-293)

Bakhtin also reminds us, however, that monologism is but one possible framework for conceptualizing the nature of knowledge and existence. He asks us to consider the possibility of

a unified truth that requires a plurality of consciousnesses, one that cannot in principle be fitted into the bounds of a single consciousness, one that is, so to speak, by its very nature full of event potential and is born at a point of contact among various consciousnesses. (p. 81)

Here, Bakhtin is alluding to a very different conception of knowledge, one that sees it as an emergent, provisional, processual, and eventful phenomenon, as something that is possible at each and every moment of existence and that, most importantly, requires a plurality of consciousnesses, a plurality of perspectives on the subject matter in question. In contrast to Descartes' metaphor of the single architect, Bakhtin sees knowledge as an interlocutive event, something "born between people collectively searching for the truth, in the process of their dialogic interaction" (p. 110). Least of all, according to Bakhtin, is an idea "a subjective individual-psychological formation with 'permanent resident rights' in a person's head; no, the idea is inter-individual and inter-subjective—the realm of its existence is not individual consciousness but dialogic communion between consciousnesses" (p. 88). An idea lives not in the isolated individual consciousness, and indeed "if it remains there only, it degenerates and dies" (p. 87). Rather, the idea lives its most authentic, genuine

existence only when it exists in dialogic relationships with other ideas and, more importantly, with others' ideas. It is only in the space opened up by dialogue, in the space of communicative practice, that an idea takes on a determinate shape, that it develops and is transformed, and that it gives rise to new ideas. "Human thought," writes Bakhtin,

becomes genuine thought . . . only under conditions of living contact with another and alien thought, a thought embodied in someone else's voice, that is, in someone else's consciousness expressed in discourse. At that point of contact between voice-consciousnesses the idea is born and lives. (pp. 87-88)

Clearly, Bakhtin espouses a decidedly Socratic conception of knowledge. Knowledge does not exist ready-made, simply awaiting discovery by some self-contained, self-sufficient, and fully autonomous subject, but rather emerges in dialogic interaction, in the dynamic interplay of consciousnesses or voices.³⁸

In proposing this sort of dialogical epistemology, Bakhtin is attempting to do justice to a phenomenon that is obscured in modernist thought, namely, the existence at every point in cultural-historical development of an inescapable plurality of perspectives from which to conceive any given aspect of the world. On the modern view, this sort of plurality emerges less as an ineradicable fact of existence than as an accidental, superfluous, and problematic state of affairs, one that is ultimately antithetical to the notion of a single, unified, timeless, and universal truth. This modernist attitude toward diversity is readily discernable in Descartes' writings. At several points in his Discourse, for example, Descartes acknowledges the bewildering scope of human

diversity, a diversity with which over the course of travels he became personally acquainted. It was a diversity, moreover, which he saw no less to characterize the opinions of philosophers on any given question than the cultural manners and customs of other peoples. Conflict and contradiction among perspectives seemed to be everywhere, and this, for Descartes, reflected badly upon the world's state of affairs. However, Descartes' confrontation with such human diversity, his realization that despite the efforts of great thinkers “there is still no point in [philosophy] which is not disputed and hence doubtful” (I.8, 1988, p. 24), does not lead him to affirm a position of relativism or scepticism or, more generally, any position that might require the acknowledgement of the inescapably perspectival nature of truth. From a Cartesian standpoint, to acknowledge the ineradicable difference in human affairs would be a step in the direction of making the individual mind seem an inherently social phenomenon, of grounding our ways of perceiving and making sense of the world in the contexts of particular human communities; or, rather, it would mean seeing individual understanding as one arbitrary “voice” among many others. Of course, Descartes' response to diversity followed a different, and what proved to be a very influential, path. Rather than accede to the inevitable partiality and cultural specificity of one's beliefs and opinions, indeed of truth itself, Descartes sought to resolve the problem of diversity by asserting the absoluteness and universality of truth. Although there may be many conflicting opinions regarding a particular matter, there can only be one that merits the status of truth. Each of us, moreover, is endowed with the same kind of reason, the same “natural light”

which, if carefully cultivated and allowed proper methodical expression, would invariably reward us with such objective, absolute, and singular truths. In other words, beneath the cacophony of particularistic and socioculturally specific voices and their attendant worldviews, there sounds the unified and unifying voice of reason.³⁹

The universalistic framework of inquiry that characterizes the Enlightenment—that is, its abstract conception of a uniform and invariable human nature—similarly renders human difference and diversity problematic. In a recent work, Sampson (1993) reminds us that

The story of the Enlightenment is not simply one in which we find an unabashed celebration of the individual, but is better told in terms of the active suppression of the other—where the other is the particularistic standpoint available to people because of their group memberships and collectively shared experiences. (p. 80)

In Enlightenment thought, differences amounted to potentially conflicting views of the world and thereby “threatened a return to those times when people’s lives were endangered by the clashes of diversity, and no court but brute force could settle competing claims” (Sampson, 1993, p. 80). In effect, such diversity stood in the way of the Enlightenment’s political (humanistic) project of establishing a democratic society based on principles of freedom and equality. Establishing equality meant identifying some universally shared quality, some common core that, in effect, would make all human minds the same. Beneath the multiplicity of perspectives there existed a single perspective, “a fundamental universality, a kind of deep structure that all share” (Sampson, 1993, p. 79)—a single voice, as it were. The promise of equality resided in the unity and impartiality of reason

itself. Only via the impartial and singular voice of reason could competing claims to truth be settled without the contaminating influence of the contingency and particularity of potentially conflicting group interests.⁴⁰

As the example of Descartes and the Enlightenment shows, the discourse of modernity suppresses and undermines the diversity of voices and perspectives on the world by proposing the existence of what Bakhtin (1984) calls a “consciousness in general” (p. 81), a sort of basic, universal human nature that speaks to what we all have in common. In this respect, the discourse of philosophical modernity is a totalizing discourse, one that seeks unity in multiplicity, sameness in difference. Again, this is a unity or sameness that is made possible by the potential for reason that we all share.⁴¹ And it is precisely this potential that, on the modern view, imparts to the individual subject his or her epistemic self-sufficiency and self-containedness. The modern subject, conceived along the lines of the Cartesian cogito, is possessed of an inherent and inviolable oneness, a unity that stems from its ability to speak in the unified voice of reason. Accordingly, it need not rely on others or on outside perspectives to know either the world or itself.

From a Bakhtinian perspective, diversity or difference is not something to be overcome, but rather something to be celebrated, even nurtured. In keeping with more recent postmodern critiques of modernist epistemology, Bakhtin conceives of diversity as a constitutive and ineradicable feature of the social world. Diversity is not, on this view, the quality of an imperfect, yet-to-develop state, nor is it something to be overcome in the positing of a universal

human nature. Rather, social reality is unavoidably, but not lamentably, a fragmented ensemble of diverse elements and, as such, is incapable of being articulated as a single, integrated truth. As an apostle of difference, as an apologist for heterogeneity—in language, customs, world views, and so forth—Bakhtin launches a consistent polemic against the “tendency toward reducing everything to a single consciousness, toward dissolving in it the other’s consciousness” (1986, p. 141). His dialogism, accordingly, represents an epistemological pluralism that, like a cubist painting, seeks to represent the diversity of perspectives on an object as well as the lack of self-sufficiency of any individual perspective on that object. Indeed, on the Bakhtinian view, that lack of self-sufficiency is definitive of individual subjectivity.

A Phenomenological Grounding for the Dialogical Self

Bakhtin’s dialogical epistemology clearly requires an alternative conception of the individual subject, a conception that challenges the notions of self-sufficiency and self-presence allied with modernist accounts of subjectivity. In light of the constitutive and generative value that Bakhtin attaches to dialogue, the individual subject can hardly be presented as the ultimate source and origin of meaning. Least of all could this be a subject that knows itself apodictically from within. Rather, this must be a dialogical subject, a subject that needs and that is built to learn about itself and the world from others.

Foreshadowing recent postmodern efforts to rethink the sovereignty and self-sufficiency of the first-person perspective, Bakhtin’s (1990, 1993)

earliest essays on ethics and aesthetics offer a view of subjectivity that decenters or dislodges the subject from the privileged epistemological and ontological locus it has inhabited within philosophical modernity. But for Bakhtin this redefinition of the subject does not take the form of a dissolution or death of the subject under an impersonal system of language or “text” (Derrida, 1976), nor does it reduce subjectivity to a mere vehicle for fundamentally transsubjective, cultural, or traditional forces (Gadamer, 1989). Rather, Bakhtin takes as his starting point the inescapably perspectival nature of the individual subject. Each of us, he says, constitutes a specific, and irreplaceable center of awareness. From moment to moment, each of us, no matter how physically close to each other we may stand, occupies a unique place in the world. And our individual perception of the world is invariably grounded in that uniqueness. An event, it follows, is never the same for each of us.⁴² As we each observe the world from a temporally and spatially different perspective—from a different “chronotopic” platform, as Bakhtin might say—we each see the world in a different way. It should be noted here that while Bakhtin’s reliance on the categories of space and time suggests his indebtedness to a Kantian account of subjectivity—time and space specifying two of the a priori categories of understanding to which experience must relate for its meaning—Bakhtin does not see these categories, as does Kant, as transcendental ones. Bakhtin’s concern is not with articulating the universal and necessary conditions for knowledge as embodied by the Kantian transcendental self, but rather with foregrounding the uniqueness of each

individual's chronotopic situatedness in the world and the unique interpretive horizon associated with the particularity and concreteness of that spatio-temporal frame. In this regard, Bakhtin might be said to have detranscendentalized the Kantian subject (Maranhão, 1990). The Bakhtinian subject is not, after all, the universal, timeless, and disembodied subject of modernity, that foundationalist subject who is capable of rising above history and mastering the world. Rather, Bakhtin's is an embodied subject, a finite subject who inhabits a particular moment and place in existence and who is always subject to sociocultural and historical influence, a subject, finally, whose concrete historicity makes it always open to change and transformation.

To highlight the epistemological (ethical and aesthetic) implications of our chronotopic singularity and to establish a phenomenological grounding for the self's need for the other, Bakhtin (1990) draws on a metaphor from visual perception. He considers, more specifically, the case of two people looking at each other. "As we gaze at each other," writes Bakhtin, "two different worlds are reflected in the pupils of our eyes" (p. 23). As each occupies and looks out from a unique "horizon," each sees aspects of the other and of the other's surroundings that the other does not see: parts of the other's body, the expression on the other's face, the world behind the other's back, and so forth. What this metaphor clearly highlights is the visual "surplus" that each self enjoys relative to the other, an existential surplus or excess (of seeing and knowing and feeling) based on "the uniqueness and irreplaceability of my place in the world. For only I—the one-and-only I—occupy in a given set of

circumstances this particular place at this particular time; all other human beings are situated outside me" (Bakhtin, 1990, p. 23). While the metaphor suggests that each of us, relative to any other—and in virtue of the unique spatial-temporal platform we inhabit—enjoys a surplus of seeing, each of us is also—and again in virtue of the uniqueness of our place in the world—possessed of an inherent perceptual lack. There is a fundamental inadequacy, a méconnaissance or scotoma—a dark or blind spot—at the heart of self-perception. From the unique place I occupy in existence I cannot see myself whole, in a complete way, or in any sort of integral form. I am never, in other words, fully present to myself. There are parts of my own body, for example, that I cannot see, expressions on my face that are unavailable to me, scenes behind my back that I cannot witness.

To overcome the difference between the self and the other's horizon completely, Bakhtin argues, "it would be necessary to merge into one, to become one and the same person" (p. 23). But this difference is something that neither should nor can be overcome. The fact that self and other each see the world through the optic of their own unique place in existence is not a nod toward solipsism, nor is this radical perspectivism to be conceived as an impediment to communication with others—say, as a form of egocentrism that, with development, stands to be sublated into higher forms of cognition that would allow the subject to assume an objective position common to all. Rather than lament the perspectival nature of our awareness, Bakhtin sees it as an inescapable feature of the human condition. But more than this, he sees it as a

positive, enabling condition for self-understanding, as the following excerpt suggests:

In what way would it enrich the event if I merged with the other, and instead of two there would be now only one? And what would I myself gain by the other's merging with me? If he did, he would see and know no more than what I see and know myself; he would merely repeat in himself that want of any issue out of itself which characterizes my own life. Let him rather remain outside of me, for in that position he can see and know what I myself do not see and do not know from my own place, and he can essentially enrich the event of my own life. (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 87)

For Bakhtin, the difference between self and other is the productive ground for self-understanding. And, as his metaphor from visual perception clearly suggests, it is precisely the fact that I cannot perceive myself in any sort of complete way that ultimately occasions my need for the other (and, correlatively, the other's need for me). According to the Bakhtinian view, self-knowledge is not, as it was for Descartes, Rousseau, and Kant, a matter of self-observation. Indeed, Bakhtin insists that it is precisely our own selves that we cannot know. Knowing myself requires that I turn to the other, to you. From your position outside me, from your excess of seeing, volition, and feeling relative to my own, you can help to define me, to inform me about the complexities of my situation and save me from the limitations and fragmentariness of my own unique perspective on the world and on myself; and I, from my own position outside you, stand to return the favour. Neither of us being fully present to ourselves, we turn to each other. We share in each other's surplus and in so doing see the world and ourselves in a more complete way.

In the course of one his earliest essays, Bakhtin (1990) elaborates this visual metaphor and its implications for self-other relations through the use of an extended account of the relation between author and hero in the aesthetic event. For Bakhtin, aesthetics is conceived rather broadly as the question of how humans give form to or make sense of their experience. In this regard, aesthetic activity is a rather prosaic phenomenon, something we are routinely engaged in as we go about making sense of the world. More specifically, this activity of perceiving or making sense of the world—of an object, a text, or a person— involves the activity of gathering its disparate elements into provisionally stable, meaningful wholes. Bakhtin’s more specific aesthetic metaphor for such activity is authoring. An activity identified metaphorically with the self, authoring involves the process of “consummation,” shaping scattered fragments of meaning and assembling them into a finished image. What needs to be emphasized, however, is that we are not authors of our selves. We can author ourselves no more than we can love, esteem, chastise ourselves in an unmediated way. We cannot author ourselves because, again, we cannot see ourselves whole, as Bakhtin’s metaphor from visual perception clearly suggests.

I-for-Myself and I-for-the-Other. In order further to elaborate these claims, it is necessary to consider in greater detail Bakhtin’s phenomenological account of subjectivity.⁴³ This account appears in Bakhtin’s (1990, 1993) earliest writings and emerges as part of an attempt to lay the groundwork for a philosophy that would supplant the rationalism, objectivism, and abstraction

characteristic of the Western intellectual tradition.⁴⁴ As Bakhtin (1993) writes:

It is an unfortunate misunderstanding (a legacy of rationalism) to think that truth can only be the truth that is composed of universal moments; that the truth of a situation is precisely that which is repeatable and constant in it. Moreover, that which is universal and identical (logically identical) is fundamental and essential, whereas individual truth is artistic and irresponsible, i.e., it isolates a given individuality. (p. 37)

Against the “epistemologism” of the rationalist view, which, in its tendency toward cognitive abstraction and universalization, dissociates the subject from the realm of the concrete—and hence from the other—Bakhtin (1993) aims to situate the subject in the impure space of “the unitary and unique world of the performed act” (p. 60). In other words, Bakhtin’s conception of the subject takes as its starting point the concretely embodied, act-performing self.

In this phenomenological account, Bakhtin (1990) posits two categories or components of subjectivity to emphasize the essential asymmetry between the way the self experiences itself from within—that is, from the vantage point of its own self-activity—and the way in which it experiences the other. The first of these components, which he terms the “I-for-myself,” is an experiential mode of subjectivity which, in effect, speaks to the unique, concrete subject-position each of us inhabits, the place from which each of us perceives the world and from which in the course of lived experience we confront diverse others.⁴⁵ Phenomenologically, the dominant characteristic of this mode of subjectivity is its orientedness to an undetermined future. The I-for-myself experiences itself as moving constantly into open time: it leads a “forward-directed life” (Bakhtin, 1990, 14). Here, Bakhtin is pointing to what he sees as

a defining feature of human existence: As a human being, I plan, pursue goals and purposes, dream, hope, and anticipate consequences because I am in essence oriented toward that which I am not yet; in lived experience, I always project meaning and my own possibilities into the world ahead of myself. Accordingly, from within its own self-activity, the self—the I-for-myself—experiences or is present to itself as someone always “yet-to-be,” as a self whose meaning resides in the ongoing possibility of new meaning and of being otherwise. As Bakhtin (1990) writes, “My determination of myself is given to me (given as a task—as something yet to be achieved) not in the categories of temporal being, but in the categories of not-yet-being, in the categories of purpose and meaning” (pp. 123-124). From within itself, then, the self’s determinateness in being is perpetually deferred. As I orient myself from within to goals, purposes, and meaning, I am never present to myself in my factual existence. From within my own consciousness there are no moments that could “finalize” or “consummate” me or make me coincide with myself, that is, with what is already given in me or “present-at-hand.” The I-for-myself, in short, is Bakhtin’s “loophole” self, a self that is constantly shifting and fixing its sights on what might be, a self that inhabits “the world of what is yet to be achieved, outside my own temporal being-already-on-hand” (p. 123).

On the basis of the foregoing description, it would appear that the subject-position occupied by the I-for-myself is a privileged one, and indeed this is so. This privilege inheres in the fact that this innermost self cannot be encompassed completely in space or in time (as can the other, who exists for

me in space and in time). Shifting and unstable, never coming to rest, the I-for-myself continually perceives itself as open to possibility. In this ceaseless self-activity it enjoys a surplus vis-à-vis the other: where the other is present to me as a bounded, unified whole, my self never coincides with its already existing makeup.

But alongside this surplus is also a weakness or a lack. To understand this lack, we need to bear in mind that any freedom I might enjoy in being someone oriented toward a yet-to-be meaning is invariably a constrained freedom. What I am yet-to-be is not the projection of a pure, limitless possibility; rather, what I am yet-to-be defines a projection of possibility that is at once tied to and that goes beyond what I have been or what I am now. All the undetermined meanings, purposes, and goals toward which the I-for-myself orients itself are responses, in other words, to what is already given in me, to past and present determinations of my self. Awareness of such determinations requires that I be present to myself as a determinate object

But how do I achieve such determinateness? How do I become a given object for myself? We have seen that achieving the temporal, spatial, and axiological stability of a determinate being is impossible from within my own self-activity. Given its forward-looking orientation toward goals and purposes—its reaching for what it is yet-to-be—the I-for-myself can never be fully articulated, finalized, consummated, or perceived as an object from within itself. In one place, Bakhtin (1990) articulates this lack in terms of the impossibility, in principle, of self-narrative or autobiography. To the extent

that the I-for-myself is an extratemporal mode of subjectivity—extratemporal in the sense that it is never fully present to itself in lived-experiential time, but rather only in the temporally open category of what is yet-to-be—then it cannot narrate its own story. Narrative, after all, pertains not to the realm of actual, lived experience, but to its memory. Narrative, moreover, requires the imposition of temporal and spatial boundaries. Accordingly, for the self to be consummated or finalized narratively, it must be encompassed completely in categories such as space and time, must occupy a determinate space, a determinate time. We have seen, however, that such a spatial and temporal enclosure is incapable of being perceived from within the self: spatially, I cannot see the world behind my back; temporally, I cannot consciously experience the moment of my birth and death. And axiologically, too, I lack the resources, from within my lived-experiential orientation to the world, with which to assign a justificatory value to my life. In short, as my I-for-myself is incapable of perceiving its own spatial, temporal, and axiological boundaries, it cannot produce an autonomous narrative representation of my self.⁴⁶ As Bakhtin (1990) puts it, “From within lived experience, life is neither tragic nor comic, neither beautiful nor sublime, for the one who objectively experiences it himself” (p. 70). And again: “my own existence is devoid of aesthetic value, devoid of plot-bearing significance, just as my physical existence is devoid of plastic-pictorial significance. I am not the hero of my own life.” (p. 112). When I am experiencing life in the category of my own I-for-myself—when I am “diffused and dispersed in the projected world of cognition” (Bakhtin, 1990, p.

14)—I am fundamentally incapable of gathering myself “into an outward whole that would be even relatively finished” (Bakhtin, 1990, p. 35). From within my own inner sense of myself, I know only that each of my acts and utterances is partial and open-ended, unconsummated, always open to change. I know that I am more than I was in the past or am in the present.

But as much as the self is open to possibility, it needs moments of consummation or finalization. It needs to see itself in some determinate, objectified form (narrative or otherwise), for such determinations or objectifications are the necessary points of departure for its own meaningful projections into the open, undetermined future. On the Bakhtinian framework, the impossibility of representing oneself from within—whether temporally, spatially, or axiologically—brings about the need for a second consciousness, an other for whom—from his or her temporal and spatial position outside my lived life—events appear as discrete and closed. Only this outside consciousness can provide all those moments that are needed for self-objectification: the other can enclose me in space (situate my action in an “environment,” in a setting that is imperceptible from within my lived “horizon”); the other can frame me in time (against and beyond the moment of my birth and death, moments that are inaccessible to my own conscious experience); and the other can bestow significance upon my actions (gather up the moments of meaning in my life and bestow a value or a “rhythm” upon them, a rhythm which is alien to lived experience as such). In short, the spatial, temporal, and axiological enclosure required for forming a representation of

myself are acquired from the other. The other rhythmicizes my life temporally and forms it spatially. From the standpoint of narrative, the plot or story of my own personal life is created by the other.⁴⁷ And it is in this sense that

one can speak of a human being's absolute need for the other, for the other's seeing, remembering, gathering, and unifying self-activity—the only self-activity capable of producing his outwardly finished personality. This outward personality could not exist, if the other did not create it. (Bakhtin, 1990, pp. 35-36).⁴⁸

The self needs the other in order to constitute itself as something cognitively determinate—to pass from “primitive self-sensation [to] complex self-awareness” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 146). For from the diffuse and dispersed world of lived experience, I cannot arrive at any authoritative, stable definition of itself, and hence I must go out to the other to secure one, however partial and provisional it may be. In other words, I require a point d'appui outside the context of my own lived experience, a “genuine source of real strength out of which I would be capable of seeing myself as another” (p. 31).⁴⁹ Only another active consciousness is capable of imparting to the sense of closure, stability, and realization—the “gift” of form.⁵⁰

Incapable of establishing wholeness of form and autobiographical value from within itself, the I-for-myself must appropriate it from the other. Thus emerges the “I-for-the-other” as an indispensable, second mode of subjectivity in Bakhtin's early phenomenological account of the self.⁵¹ I must become an I-for-the-other, that is, I must become a self that is scaffolded by others' finalizations of me, by their images of me, and by their discourse about me. Through the appropriation of these finalizations, I in effect take up a position

outside myself and experience myself in a way that differs from the way in which I actually experience my lived life. For example, in perceiving our outward appearance,

we take into account the value of our outward appearance from the standpoint of the possible impression it may produce upon the other, although for ourselves this value does not exist in any immediate way (for our actual and pure self-consciousness). We take into account the background behind our back, that is to say, all that which in our surroundings we do not see and do not know directly and which has no direct axiological validity for us, although it is seen and known by others and has validity for others; all that, in other words, which constitutes the background, against which, as it were, others perceive us axiologically, against which we stand forth for them. . . . In short, we are constantly and intently on the watch for reflections of our own life on the plane of other people's consciousness, and, moreover, not just reflections of particular moments of our life, but even reflections of the whole of it. (Bakhtin, 1990, pp. 15-16)

In his most mature writings, when dialogue became a more central category in his thought, Bakhtin was to incorporate these claims about our dependence on others into a unique theory of language. More specifically, what in his early, phenomenologically-oriented writings he identifies as the consummating activity of the other in relation to the self, is in his later works presented more explicitly as a process in which my individual utterances dialogically implicate the words and voices of others (e.g., Bakhtin, 1984, 1986; see also Volosinov, 1986). In effect, it is through such dialogue that one encounters and engages the alterity that is so crucial for constructing a stable and externally integral image of one's self, and that one gains the outsideness that rouses one's possibilities and enriches one's life.

But even in Bakhtin's earliest writings, we find an intimation of the

importance of dialogue, and more specifically of the importance of the other's response, for self-formation. In these early works, Bakhtin likens the other's response to me to a screen through which I see the other's possible enthusiasm, love, astonishment, or compassion for me. Looking through this screen, I achieve some determinate form, and hence some determinate value. Indeed, the value of my identity, of my sense of who I am, is shaped for me into an aesthetic whole, and intermittently throughout my life, by the acts of others in relation to me: "acts of concern for me, acts of love, acts that recognize my value" (p. 49). In a passage that is especially relevant to developmental concerns, Bakhtin describes how a child's initial sense of self is built out of the authoritative, loving words of others. He writes that

as soon as a human being begins to experience himself from within, he at once meets with acts of recognition and love that come to him from outside—from his mother, from others who are close to him. The child receives all initial determinations of himself and of his body from his mother's lips and from the lips of those who are close to him. It is from their lips, in the emotional-volitional tones of their love, that the child hears and begins to acknowledge his own proper name and the names of all the features pertaining to his body and to his inner states and experiences. The words of a loving human being are the first and the most authoritative words about him; they are the words that for the first time determine his personality from outside, the words that come to meet his indistinct inner sensation of himself, giving it a form and a name in which, for the first time, he finds himself and becomes aware of himself as a something. (Bakhtin, 1990, pp. 49-50)

This passage illustrates quite clearly how others' words impart to the child the gift of form. It is in virtue of others' loving recognition, in virtue of the words addressed to and constructed in the infant's reciprocating presence, that the infant's self-experience otherwise acquires a specificity of form and content.

This passage also suggests a particular conception of internalization. A child hears others' words and voices and actively appropriates or internalizes them, that is, makes them his or her "own," and in the process achieves a sense of self that has a determinate form and emotional tone. Again, let me elaborate by quoting Bakhtin:

The child begins to see himself for the first time as if through his mother's eyes, and begins to speak about himself in his mother's emotional-volitional tones—he caresses himself, as it were, with his first uttered self-expression. Thus, he uses affectionate-diminutive terms in the appropriate tone of voice in referring to himself and the limbs of his own body—"my footsies," "my tootsies," "my little head," "go night-night," "nightie-night." He determines himself and his states in this case through his mother, in his mother's love for him, as the object of his mother's cherishing, affection, her kisses; it is his mother's loving embraces that "give form" to him axiologically. From within himself, without any mediation by the loving other, a human being could have never begun to speak about himself in such affectionate-diminutive tones, or, at any rate, these forms and tones would not express properly the actual emotional-volitional tone of my self-experience, my immediate inner relationship to myself. (Bakhtin, 1990, p. 50)

And so it is throughout one's life. For Bakhtin, our self-understanding is built up out of the intoned, concrete voices we encounter and appropriate in the course of our lives. Not only in infancy or childhood but always, I rely on others' words to establish my place in existence. These others' words "come to meet the dark chaos of my inner sensation of myself" (Bakhtin, 1990, p. 50), giving it a name, a direction, and linking it to the social world. In doing so, these others' words give real, material form to the otherwise indeterminate, formless world of my inner self sensation.

These allusions to the process of achieving form through the internalization of others' voices stand as a sort of bridge between Bakhtin's early

phenomenological writings and those produced after language became a central category in his thought. In these later writings, Bakhtin (1986; Volosinov, 1986) is still concerned with the question of form, but approaches that question more expressly in terms of the constitutive, form-imparting significance of language for subjectivity.

The Speaking Consciousness

An assumption that is foundational for a dialogical model of the self is that language (qua discourse) plays a constitutive role in the delineation of human thought and experience, and therefore, by implication, in the demarcation and constitution of selfhood. Rather than view subjectivity as the property of an autonomous, rational entity, containing purely mental structures, Bakhtin construes it as an internally diversified, socially and linguistically constituted process. Bakhtin challenges the notion of a disembodied, wordless cogito, and directs us, instead, to a "speaking consciousness" (Holquist & Emerson, 1981, p. 434). On the Bakhtinian view, the material of the human psyche is preeminently inner speech.

Within the Bakhtinian perspective, the notion that language is of constitutive significance for the self reflects a central and enduring concern in this framework with the embodiment or personification of thought. In particular, Bakhtin focuses on the idea, thought, or experience as it finds embodiment in some signifying material and as it lives in the space of communicative practice. In the boldest articulation of this position, Volosinov (1986) claims that

“independent of embodiment in some particular material (the material of gesture, inner word, outcry), consciousness is a fiction”(p. 90). Similarly, Bakhtin and Medvedev (1978) write that “no distinct or clear consciousness of the world is possible outside of the word.” (p. 133). And it is the word—“word” used here as a synecdoche for any type of verbal discourse—that is particularly critical on the Bakhtinian view, for “it is the word which constitutes the foundation, the skeleton of inner life” (Volosinov, 1986, p. 29).

Underlying this view of subjective life as an internally diversified, socially and linguistically constituted process of inner speech is the further, related assumption that expressibility is a condition of our ability to experience the world and ourselves in a meaningful way. For a thought or experience to reach the threshold of meaning or, equally, for it to be understood and interpreted, it must be expressible or communicable to others, which means it must find embodiment in some signifying material, such as words, stories, opinions, theories and so on. Again, Volosinov (1986) puts the point quite strongly in his argument that outside the material of signs experience as such does not exist and that any experience—any thought, intention, or emotion—is expressible, at least potentially. “This factor of expressivity,” he writes, “cannot be argued away from experience without forfeiting the very nature of experience” (p. 28). It is not the case, then, that some form of interpretive understanding or meaningful experience precedes expression—as Piaget and others (Harter, 1997; Stern, 1985; de Gramont, 1990) argue—but that experience (or thought) itself is inextricably linked to the moment of expression, whether that expression takes

place in outer speech or on the plane of inner speech. There is simply no raw, direct experience of the world, no meaningful thought about the world that precedes its embodiment in some discursive material. Rather, it is language or, more appropriately, discourse, that constrains and enables the way we understand, and thereby experience, the world and ourselves. “It is not experience that organizes expression,” adds Volosinov (1986), “but the other way around—expression organizes experience” (p. 85). Expression is active and formative. It is “what first gives experience its form and specificity of direction” (p. 85). A feeling, for example, “cannot achieve culmination and definitiveness without finding its external expression, without nurturing itself on words, rhythm, color, that is, without being forged into a work of art” (Volosinov, 1987, p. 87). Bakhtin (1986) himself expresses this sentiment somewhat more aphoristically: “Not from the thing to the word, but from the word to the thing; the word gives birth to the thing” (p. 153). In short, expression creates being; it does not simply mirror it. As Bakhtin (1986) states, “only thought uttered in the word becomes a real thought for another person and only in the same way is it a thought for myself” (1986, p. 127). Unformed notions are reconstituted into thought through dialogue with others. As Bakhtin (1986) puts it, it is others “for whom my thought becomes actual thought for the first time (and thus also for my own self as well)” (p. 94). Indeed, the degree to which the thought or experience carried in the word “is perceptible, distinct, and formulated is directly proportional to the degree to which it is socially oriented” (Volosinov, 1986, p. 87). What this means in part, of course, is that

expression in and of itself presupposes a language community within which any given expression can take on meaning. Expression always presupposes a relation to some common language and horizon of understanding.

It is worth noting that foregoing claims regarding the importance of expression for experience in no way constitute a posturing toward linguistic idealism. On the Bakhtinian view, language or discourse is not something that resides above life, something that is independent of human experience. While it is correct to say that meaning needs language in order to reveal itself, this is not to suggest that meaning can be somehow reduced to language. Meaning or experience is always an expression “of the contact between the organism and the outside environment” (Volosinov, 1986, p. 26). In many respects, the Bakhtinian view accords with phenomenological-hermeneutical conception of language, a conception that Madison (1988) describes in the following terms:

It is our lived experience that gets expressed in language and which confers on language whatever hermeneutical-existential meaning it can be said to have. . . . Experience is not a metaphysical “other”; it is not something other than language that language merely “refers” to. . . . Language is not just the “expression” of experience; it is experience; it is experience which comes to know, acknowledge itself, to be this or that specific experience. . . . When we achieve a more refined way of expressing an emotion, it is our emotional life itself which becomes more refined, not just our description of it. (p. 165)

Language without a foundation in experience, then, is as empty and meaningless as experience that eludes the realm of expressivity. Again, what expression does is impart a substantiveness to an otherwise inchoate experience. As Ricoeur (1983) has similarly argued in connection with the human impulse toward storytelling, narration is an act that configures a more primordial, prenarrative

experience into something with meaning and structure: “the plots that we invent help us to shape our confused, formless and in the last resort mute temporal experience” (p. 178). For his own part, Bakhtin (1981) contributes to this argument by directing us more specifically both to the subject matter toward which language is directed and to the communicative context of its use.

Discourse lives, as it were, beyond itself, in a living impulse . . . toward the object; if we detach ourselves completely from this impulse all we have left is the naked corpse of the word, from which we can learn nothing at all about the social situation or the fate of a given word in life. To study the word as such, ignoring the impulse that reaches out beyond it, is just as senseless as to study psychological experience outside the context of that real life toward which it was directed and by which it is determined. (p. 292)

Language, in short, is always about something, always carries us toward something other than itself—toward a particular idea, a particular experience (cf. Gadamer, 1989).

This emphasis on the formative nature of language establishes a general point of contact between contemporary philosophical arguments and Bakhtinian dialogism. On this postmodern view, we are said to encounter the world and everything in it through language; and even extralinguistic experience, if it is to have any meaning for us, must be mediated by language. Each of the following excerpts seems to capture this emergent and defining theme of postmodern thought:

Language is the double of being, and we cannot conceive of an object or idea that comes into the world without words. (Merleau-Ponty, 1973, pp. 5-6)

From the moment that there is meaning there are nothing but signs. We think only in signs. (Derrida, 1976, p. 50)

Language is not a vanishing or transitory medium for thought, nor merely the covering of thought. The nature of language is by no means limited simply to revealing thought. It is much rather the case that thought achieves its own determinate existence by being comprehended in word. (Gadamer, PH, p. 67)

Our own existence cannot be separated from the account we can give of ourselves. It is in telling our own stories that we give ourselves an identity. We recognize ourselves in the stories that we tell about ourselves. It makes very little difference whether these stories are true or false, fiction as well as verifiable history provides us with an identity. (Ricoeur, 1985, p. 214)

Each of these statements challenges the traditional epistemological understanding of language as a tool for expressing or communicating otherwise wordless ideas housed in the mind. And the self, by implication, is not some extra-cultural or prelinguistic phenomenon that we strive simply to capture in language. As Ricoeur (1985) states, “there is no self-knowledge without some kind of detour through signs, symbols and cultural works” (p. 213). However divergent these postmodern philosophies are in other respects, they are generally united in their defence of the constitutive, formative importance of language vis-à-vis subjectivity and selfhood. From Derrida’s (1976) deconstructionist enterprise to Gadamer’s (1989) ontological hermeneutics, the task remains that of dislocating, displacing, or decentering the subject from the privileged position it has been accorded within the epistemic, moral, and existential space of modern discourse, and that it in many respects continues to enjoy in disciplines rooted in modern or empirical-rationalist commitments, such as psychology in its mainline empirical guise. Motivated by the need to situate our attempts to know the world and ourselves in a way that acknowledges our embeddedness in the “life-world”—

that is, in the ongoing socially, culturally, and historically contingent practices of a community—investigators have turned to language as the productive, enabling ground of positive possibilities for understanding. Accordingly, the presumably self-sufficient, autonomous subject of modernity, which, as a center of awareness seeks to construct its own individual foundations for knowledge and action, suffers a displacement precisely through its implication in the webs of language and social life, or, to use Taylor's (1989) felicitous phrase, in the "webs of interlocution."

Each of the preceding viewpoints purges the concept of expression of its modern subjectivist flavour. Rather than conceive of expression as a secondary moment in the life of thought, serving merely to externalize or, equally, to communicate some inner experience, these accounts, in stressing the constitutive import of language, place expression more squarely in the rhetorical tradition. More specifically, on the dialogical view, the ontological distinction between an inner (individual, private) world and an outer (social-ideological, public) world of linguistic communication—no less than the corollary dichotomies which it supports (e.g., mind-body, subject-object)—is dissolved in positing that the stuff of human consciousness and individual experience, as of outer expression, is the word. There is an ontological and epistemological continuity here between the inner and the outer, between the individual and the social. And it is the dialogic word, the word that lives in social and cultural communicative practices, that is the bridge between these domains.

It is in view of these arguments, moreover, that we can approach

thought not so much as a self-present realm of pure interiority, but as a phenomenon that is defined at the junctures of dialogic, linguistically mediated exchange. For Bakhtin, inner life becomes less a bounded phenomenon than a boundary phenomenon, a social, “extraterritorial” phenomenon more properly situated in the space of dialogue between organism and environment, self and other (Volosinov, 1986). Indeed, “everything internal gravitates not toward itself but is turned to the outside and dialogized, every internal experience ends up on the boundary, encounters another, and in this tension-filled encounter lies its entire essence.” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 287). What emerges here is a new metaphor of locatedness. Inner life becomes a boundary phenomenon, a phenomenon situated in the space of dialogue between self and other.

CHAPTER 3

THE DIALOGIC UTTERANCE

A dialogical approach to the self is founded on the assumption that we achieve meaning as selves through communicative practice or discourse. As an individual's "own" utterance or discourse—both that which occurs externally between interlocutors and that which transpires in inner speech—involves an invocation of and reliance on the word of the other, language use becomes the site of the other's active involvement in the constitution of self-relevant meaning. The purpose of this chapter is to address these foundational claims in greater detail through a consideration of Bakhtin's (1986; Volosinov, 1986) metalinguistic theory of the utterance. Among the specific themes I address in this chapter are the constitutive significance for the individual utterance of the prior and anticipated words of others; the function of "speech genres" as social constraints on the individual use of language; and the role of the "superaddressee" (or ideal listener) in the act of speech communication. As Bakhtin's account of the dialogic utterance reflects his enduring concern with the "eventness" of human action, let me begin by considering the nature of the event in Bakhtin's thought.

The Recovery of Eventness

In his earliest writings in the area of ethics, Bakhtin (1993) launches a polemic against a mode of thought he calls "theoreticism," a style of thought which seeks above all to find what is generalizeable and constant in concrete human

actions. Closely allied with rationalist aspirations, this sort of thought is founded on the assumption that the meaning of any individual act inheres not in what is specific and unrepeatable about that act, but rather in the systemically organized rules, propositions, principles, or concepts of which the individual act is a mere instantiation. It assumes that meaning, if it is to be of the rational variety, must speak to what is repeatable and constant in a given act. Anything situated outside the purview of a system of generalizations, any remainder or surplus not accounted for by some previously specified set of rules—anything unsystematizable, in other words—is deemed either inessential or inconsequential to meaning or, alternatively, potentially subsumable under the yet-to-be-elaborated rules of the system (Morson & Emerson, 1990).

In the context of ethical thought, Kant's formulation of the categorical imperative clearly exemplifies the theoreticist mandate. Kant's moral philosophy seeks to establish a universal foundation for ethical action and judgment, a foundation that on the Kantian scheme is provided by the generalized rules and norms implied by the categorical imperative. On this ethical framework, morality inheres not in what is individual and unrepeatable in an ethical deed but rather in what is common to all—ultimately in what is universally and transcendentally valid. A particular moral agent's specific and local interests and circumstances do not establish the ethical value of the agent's moral acts or judgments. As an individual occupying a specific chronotopic platform—a specific place and time—the one-and-only “I” matters

little to categorical ethics. On the categorical view, moral agents are in principle generalizeable and replaceable—for after all, and again in principle, any number of other people could have occupied the same position as the actual participants in any given moral act. For Kant, it is not the specificity of the participants that matters here but rather the timeless moral rules or principles that their actions instantiate.

Now, from a Bakhtinian vantage point, the emphasis that categorical ethics places on abstract moral principles comes at a very dear cost. By shortsightedly ignoring the inescapable particularity of moral agents, categorical ethics ignores what, according to Bakhtin, is the real source of ethical value and meaning. To extricate a thought, utterance, or deed from the contingency and partiality of its occurrence—to ignore the uniqueness and unrepeatability of the thought, utterance, or deed—is to “transcribe” away its “eventness,” that is to say, its living, undetermined quality, its concrete situatedness in time and place, and the particularized meaning attendant on this unsystematizable specificity. As Bakhtin reminds us, any true moral act or deed is always oriented responsibly toward the specific context in which it unfolds, toward the particularities of the “once-occurrent” (sole, singular, unique) situation in which a moral agent finds herself. The seat and soul of ethical comportment are to be found precisely in the historical concreteness of the individual case, in the ongoing obligation to respond to the concrete circumstances in which the other is encountered, and not, as Kant argues, in some set of static, abstract, universally valid realm of moral norms and rules.

Morality is not categorical or transcendental, but local and specific, concrete and particular. Morality lives in particular people and particular contexts. The Bakhtinian ethical subject, like the knowing subject, is a fully real, embodied subject, a subject who occupies a specific temporal and spatial horizon and whose moral responses are conditioned by the uniqueness and unrepeatability of that horizon. Bakhtin's ethics do not resort to the ontological schemes of abstract or theoretical Kantian obligation, but rather highlight our need to address and respond to the other from within a concrete, dialogical situation.

While theoreticism, within itself, may be justified in its concern with abstract and general moments, it is fundamentally incapable of providing a full account of the complexities and meaning—ethical or otherwise—of any real, individual human performance. For life is messier than theoreticism assumes: there is always something in the concrete, historical event—a surplus, if you will—that eludes what is already given in the system of abstractions. An event is always more than an instantiation of a principle or concept. Indeed, with each real, concretely situated act I perform, I stand to create and contribute something new to the world—even if that contribution remains limited to the small world of my individual psyche. But even more than this, the eventness or unrepeatable particularity of an event is the source of an act's most authentic value. As Bakhtin (1993) elaborates,

Everything taken independently of, without reference to, the unique center of value from which issues the answerability of a performed act is deconcretized and derealized: it is deprived of its weight with respect to value, it loses its emotional-volitional compellentness, and becomes an empty, abstractly universal possibility. (p. 59)

It needs to be emphasized, however, that as an apologist for the concrete and the particular, Bakhtin is not simply privileging the opposite pole of a dichotomy. In claiming, for example, that the moral act or deed is the site of our unique answerability or responsibility, Bakhtin is not simply reducing the answerable act to our own unique interests and predispositions. To do so, in fact, would be to remain ensnared by the binary, either/or logic that is so characteristic of theoreticist thought. In fact, dichotomous renderings of any sort—say, between the particular and the general, the individual and the social, the subjective and objective—are the stuff of theoreticism’s rationalist cast of mind. Bakhtin consistently eschews the either/or logic of this rationalist enterprise, opting instead for a relational, both/and logic that has the effect of undermining any such dichotomous pairings. Bakhtin seeks units of analysis that establish a relational union between the particular and the general, between lived experience and abstract content or meaning, between life and “theoretical cognition.” Accordingly, every thought or act of mine, while speaking in some fashion to its generalized content, is an individually answerable performance or, to use Bakhtin’s preferred expression, a “deed.” Each of my deeds may be informed by abstract, generalized knowledge—such knowledge does, after all, provide me with possibilities—but there always remains the task of actualizing that knowledge. And it is in this moment of concrete actualization that what is otherwise abstract is imbued with real meaning: “Everything that is universal and pertains to abstract sense . . .

acquires its real heaviness and compellentness only in correlation with actual uniqueness” (1993, p. 44).

Moreover, this abstract knowledge is in and of itself incapable of carrying the weight of obligation, for obligation resides in the concrete event. In the context of ethics, for example, Bakhtin claims that an act is oriented to theoretical knowledge in a way that does not in any way absolve us of the responsibility to make that knowledge morally significant. In what amounts to a defense of phronesis or practical, context-sensitive judgment (Gadamer, 1989), Bakhtin maintains that we must always assess the implications of general knowledge in light of the present situation. The need for phronesis arises because rules can never exhaust the contingent, complex, even contradictory circumstances that define specific instances. So, for example, if parents are called upon to settle disputes among their children and want to do this in a fair manner, they must assess the implications of whatever general rules they want to bring to bear on the situation by considering the particular features of this situation. To apply rules mechanically in a detached, objective manner without considering these particulars would, in the end, lead not so much to justice and fairness but to dogmatic insensitivity. The application of moral knowledge, then, cannot be reduced to a form of techné or mechanical knowledge but rather must include within itself a finite understanding of the actual circumstances facing the individual. Hence, the ethical or answerable act gathers within itself both the general and the individual. It is answerably motivated by each of these realms.

Within the tradition of psychological scholarship, Bakhtin's criticism of theoreticism and his related efforts to rehabilitate the role of the particular and the eventful find their parallels in James' (1948) essay on "the sentiment of rationality," a work that discusses, in terms strikingly similar to Bakhtin's, the contrasting demands of philosophical thought. In this essay James distinguishes between two modes of inquiry, each of which corresponds to a particular intellectual need or passion. In the first of these modes, which James calls the "theoretic way," the philosopher, confronted with the "facts of the world in their sensible diversity," (p. 4) strives to conceive of this chaotic whirl of facts as the manifestation and expression of a single foundational fact. The philosopher seeks to reduce multiplicity to unity, an aim most clearly reflected, according to James, in the philosophical penchant toward classification. But while the classification of the world certainly satisfies the demands of theoretic philosophy, it is, says James, "a most miserable and inadequate substitute for the fullness of the truth . . . a monstrous abridgment of life, which, like all abridgments, is got by the absolute loss and casting out of real matter" (p. 7). Hence, alongside of this impulse toward economy and simplification James says we find a competing impulse, one characterized by an allegiance "to clearness and integrity of perception, dislike of blurred outlines, of vague identifications" (p. 5). This is an intellectual impulse that revels in the recognition of "particulars in their full completeness" (p. 5), preferring "any amount of incoherence, abruptness, and fragmentariness . . . to an abstract way of conceiving things that, while it simplifies them, dissolves away at the same time their concrete fulness" (p. 5).

While these rival passions may pose a dilemma for the philosopher, James contends that any philosophic strivings which hope to find acceptance require a balance of the sameness to which the theoretic mode aspires and the difference or otherness of the world's phenomena that the more particularistic mode of thought seeks to express. "A man's philosophic attitude," writes James,

is determined by the balance in him of these two cravings. No system of philosophy can hope to be universally accepted among men which grossly violates either need, or entirely subordinates the one to the other. . . . [T]he only possible philosophy must be a compromise between an abstract monotony and a concrete heterogeneity. (p. 5)

In many respects, Bakhtin appears to heed James' injunction.

Throughout his writings, Bakhtin might be said to come across, even more insistently than James, as a prophet of particularity. He continually seeks to establish a clearing for the scholarly study of the eventness of human existence. From his earliest writings on the nature of the moral act to his most mature writings on the philosophy of language, he betrays an unwavering concern with the vicissitudes and significance of the concrete, historical moment, seeking units of analysis that are adequate to its unrepeatable and unsystematizable particularity, and at the same time acknowledging the force of the general. As noted above, in his early work on ethics, Bakhtin (1993) proposes the "answerable act" or "deed" as the unit most capable of doing justice to both generalized content and the ethical demands of concrete situations. In effect, the act or deed has a dual orientation: it is directed at once to what is already given in the form of abstract moral rules and principles and to the unrepeatable exigencies that face us in the concrete circumstances in

which we are required to act.

Bakhtin's Metalinguistic Theory of the Utterance

When language becomes a more central concern in Bakhtin's thought, it is the utterance that comes to assume the role previously assigned to the answerable act or deed. Bakhtin (1986) proposes the utterance, as he did the act before it, as a way of recovering the importance of eventness to meaning, which in the case of language, is synonymous with a concern with the vicissitudes of concrete expression. In making the utterance his fundamental unit of analysis, Bakhtin is polemicizing more specifically against Saussure's (1966) structural linguistics. Bakhtin objects to Saussurean linguistics in the same way he objects, in his earliest writings, to the rationalist or theoreticist penchant for abstraction. Consistent with the theoreticist mode of thought, Saussurean linguistics posits a fundamental distinction between langue and parole. Langue refers to the systematic dimension of a language, to the abstract rules and constraints of language that together constitute a discrete and systemic whole. This system can be distinguished from parole, the actual utterances of particular individuals. On the Saussurean view, parole is a mere instantiation of the normative structures of language. Moreover, as parole is regarded as a purely individual, infinitely variable phenomenon, beset by the contingency and particularity of time and place associated with concrete expression, it eludes systematic and scientific analysis and hence, according to Saussure, is beyond the purview of a rational philosophy of language. Only language conceived

paradigmatically, that is, as a fixed and abstract system comprising normatively identical or repeatable phonetic, grammatical, and lexical forms—in short, as langue—could be the subject of such analyses and hence be considered the proper object of study for linguistics. As Saussure (1966) puts it, to study language is to study “speech less speaking” (p. 77).

For Bakhtin, in contrast, it is precisely the event of speaking, the utterance, that needs to be considered more fully, for it is only in the concrete, historically situated act of speech communication that language assumes its real being. "After all," writes Bakhtin (1986), “language enters life through concrete utterances (which manifest language) and life enters language through concrete utterances as well” (p. 63). Language cannot be reduced to a timeless and abstract system, for to do so would be to deny that language is used by actual speakers to communicate specific intentions and to accomplish specific ends in a real world. In effect, Bakhtin collapses the sterile, structuralist dichotomy between the social, objective system of language and the individual utterance by forging a path between static form and infinitely variable content, a path traversed, in the Bakhtinian scheme, precisely by the dialogic nature of utterance. Indeed, the situated act of speaking, the articulated utterance, is where language assumes its most authentic incarnation and where accrue to it all those features that distinguish it from language units, such as the sentence, that constitute the exclusive focus of traditional linguistic analyses.

The Event of Meaning. According to Bakhtin (1986), it is only as living, concrete expression that language regains the realm of actual (as opposed

to merely potential) meaning. In its concentration on the grammatical, syntactical, and phonetic features that define language as a system, linguistic science decontextualizes language by obscuring the dynamic, semantic life of the word. Limited to examining the purely formal relationships among iterative linguistic elements (e.g., phonemes, words, sentences), meaning cannot help but remain, on the traditional linguistic view, but an abstract possibility. In the absence of its spoken dimension, language is limited to expressing a static or generalized meaning, a sort of meaning in rigor mortis. In other words, formal, linguistic analyses can only provide us with an understanding of “abstract meaning,” which is to say the sort of self-identical, repeatable “signification” we might find, for example, in dictionaries. The conventionalized, semantic entries in dictionaries—even the most obsessively unabridged ones—can never exhaustively specify the meaning that accrues to words when they are actually uttered by one interlocutor to another, even when those interlocutors are one and the same person, as is the case, for example, in inner speech. “Neutral dictionary meanings of the words of a language,” as Bakhtin (1986) writes, “ensure their common features and guarantee that all speakers of a given language will understand one another, but the use of words in live speech communication is always individual and contextual in nature” (p. 88). Dictionary meanings, then, carry only the potential to mean. In order to be transformed into what Bakhtin (1986) and Volosinov (1986) refer to as “real,” “actual,” or “contextual” meaning, abstract meaning must enter the realm of lived expression. Hence, while the utterance's contextual meaning certainly presupposes—and indeed is

enabled by—abstract signification, contextual meaning is irreducible to abstract meaning. Actual, concrete meaning is possessed of a semantic surplus whose origins lie in the very reasons people use language, namely, to achieve specific communicative effects in the world.

One of the implications of Bakhtin's emphasis on the concrete, historical event of speaking is the nonrepeatability of any utterance and of the contextual meaning it embodies. This too establishes the utterance's critical divergence from a purely linguistic unit such as the sentence. Sentences, after all, can be repeated; they are, by definition, iterative units, and must be if they are to be the stuff of any rational linguistic analysis. The utterance, in contrast, is a singular, once-occurrent phenomenon. Even two verbally identical utterances will never, strictly speaking, mean the same thing.⁵² After all, the context and reason for being of each utterance will differ from those of every other utterance. Again, this follows from the fact that each utterance is born of the meeting of abstract, generalized meaning with a unique, concretely historical context of enunciation.

The Nature of Context: Derrida and Bakhtin. The Bakhtinian emphasis on contextual meaning complicates the view which sees an utterance's meaning as originating solely within, and as coterminous with, the speaker's individual, self-present intentions. In these claims regarding the social-contextual nature of meaning and, correspondingly, the de-privileging of the speaker's intention, the Bakhtinian view accords with recent postmodern critiques of subjectivist, originarist conceptions of meaning. Derrida's (1978, 1981, 1982) is one such critique. Both the Bakhtinian and Derridean accounts

problematize the conventional humanist (modernist) view of subjective agency, according to which the individual subject is empowered to communicate a univocal, self-identical, and self-present meaning through the medium of language. Both thinkers, in other words, challenge the conventional model of communication, which posits the direct transmission of a univocal meaning from a sender (speaker, writer) to a receiver (listener, reader).⁵³ This challenge, moreover, comes in the way of an emphasis on the inescapably contextual foundation of meaning.

A more detailed consideration of the ways in which Derrida's stance converges with (and diverges from) Bakhtin's requires that we examine their respective understandings of context more closely. Derrida's (1982) approach to the question of context can be discerned in his deconstruction of Austin's (1962) speech act theory—a theory, which, at first view, appears to share the Bakhtinian and Derridean emphasis on the contextual nature of meaning and on the de-privileging of the speaker's intentional stance. According to Austin, what defines a performative statement as a promise or a warning or a request—what establishes its illocutionary force, in other words—is not the inner state of mind that accompanies the speaker's utterance but the features and conditions of the context in which the utterance is made—features that can presumably be formally and exhaustively specified.

As Derrida's deconstruction of Austin's theory shows, however, Austin reintroduces the very feature that he wants to subvert. More specifically, Austin resurrects the notion that the meaning of a speech act is determined by a

speaker's conscious, self-present intention at the moment of utterance. This (self-)deconstructive moment in Austin's account comes about when he makes the distinction between "serious" and non-serious or "parasitic" contexts for speech acts. As Austin argues, a speech act must be uttered seriously, must be "felicitous," if it is to achieve its performative force. This notion of performative felicity requires, in other words, that the speaker means what he or she says. A promise spoken in jest, for example, would be lacking in commitment and therefore would not possess authentic performative status. This distinction between felicitous and parasitic speech acts is required because Austin's efforts to specify the features of context (e.g., the nature of the words, the particularities of the circumstances, and persons required) that are necessary for an utterance to have a particular meaning or force can never be completely successful. This is because an utterance can always be grafted onto a new context where the utterance would not have the illocutionary force it is supposed to have. To stop or control this process, Austin reverts to the notion that the success of a performative utterance depends on the presence of a signifying, self-present intention in the speaker's consciousness.

On Derrida's (1982) account, Austin's distinction between serious and parasitic utterances points precisely to what is required for the success of a performative statement. More specifically, Derrida claims that for an utterance to succeed, it must be "identifiable as conforming to an iterable model," (p. 326), must be "identifiable in some way as a 'citation'" (p. 326). That is to say, the success of a speech act depends on the repetition of a conventional

procedure in other contexts, including parasitic ones. A serious speech act can succeed only if it can be cited or repeated—stylized or parodied, for example—in other, non-serious contexts. In short, the presence of the non-serious is what makes possible the serious. Hence Austin’s effort to separate the serious from the parasitic employment of a speech act ultimately fails.

What Derrida’s deconstruction of Austin’s theory foregrounds is the more general importance of citationality or iterability in determining the meaning of a signifying sequence. The iterability of signifying forms implies that their meaning cannot be explained or located within the self-present intentions of a speaker or in the self-presence of a total context. Rather, these forms depend for their meaning on a larger system of non-self-present signification, on a play of difference that never coincides with an individual speaker’s signifying intentions. The employment of a signifying form depends on the endless iterability of those forms through innumerable and unsaturable conditions, conventions, and contexts, contexts of which the speaker is not consciously aware over the course of his or her speech act. Context is not transparently present to the speaker. As Derrida (1982) writes, “Every sign, linguistic or nonlinguistic, spoken or written . . . can be cited, put between quotation marks; thereby it can break with every given context, and engender infinitely new contexts in an absolutely nonsaturable fashion” (Derrida, 1982, p. 320). What this view would seem to undermine, then, is the effort to specify contextual conditions exhaustively and formally. Contexts cannot be theoreticized or mastered or totalized, as Austin’s theory suggests. While

meaning can be established only in context, context itself cannot be contained in a set of formal specifications—it cannot be specified without remainder, as Derrida puts it. No one context determines the meaning of a signifying sequence. And it is precisely this multiplicity of contexts that undermines the immediacy or self-presence of meaning.

Bakhtin (1986) converges with Derrida on this last point. Contextual meaning, he writes, “cannot be dissolved into concepts” (p. 160), but rather can only be revealed with the aid of another contextual meaning:

Contextual meaning is potentially infinite. . . . Each time [contextual meaning] must be accompanied by another contextual meaning in order to reveal new aspects of its own infinite nature (just as the word reveals its meanings only in context). Actual contextual meaning inheres not in one (single) meaning, but only in two meanings that meet and accompany one another. There can be no “contextual meaning in and of itself”—it exists only for another contextual meaning, that is, it exists only in conjunction with it. Therefore, there can be neither a first nor a last meaning; it always exists among other meanings as a link in the chain of meaning, which in its totality is the only thing that can be real. In historical life, this chain continues infinitely. (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 146).

This infinite contextual meaning, moreover, suggests that Austin’s efforts to establish a grammar of contexts, as it were—to codify context—is misguided. Any context is infinitely open to redescription, and hence is potentially unfinalizable. In this regard, one of Bakhtin’s notebook entries is particularly apposite: “Context and code. A context is potentially unfinalized; a code must be finalized. A code is only a technical means of transmitting information; it does not have cognitive, creative significance. A code is a deliberately killed context” (1986, p. 147).

But while there is a general agreement between Bakhtin and Derrida on the unfinalizability of context and, correspondingly, on the impossibility of a self-identical meaning, Bakhtin's understanding of context differs sharply from Derrida's in at least one crucial respect. Derrida's notion of iterability pertains to the repeatability of linguistic forms and hence betrays a concern with language in its systemic aspect (Evans, 1990). Context for Derrida is conceived rather abstractly, as an economy of difference characterized by the interminable play of signs—which results in the constant deferral of meaning. Meaning is never self-present, never stabilizes or comes to rest in some transcendental, originary signified, but rather exists in a state of perpetual movement from one signifier to another. And accordingly, the speaker's intentions are inescapably subverted by the “slippage” inherent in language. In contrast, context in the Bakhtinian sense speaks to an intertextual or interlinguistic or dialogical space of others' utterances, other subjects' voices. And it is precisely this context that allows for a determinate meaning (however partially and provisionally) to be attached to linguistic forms. In what follows, I examine this context of others' words and voices, and its implications for dialogical conception of meaning, in greater detail.

Utterance as Dialogue

To posit the embodied, contextualized utterance as the source and site of actual, unrepeatable meaning is at once to acknowledge that the utterance is an inescapably social phenomenon. For whatever else context may be, it is

decidedly social. In this regard, too, Bakhtin's approach to language diverges significantly from the Saussurean model, in which parole is depicted as a purely individual phenomenon. This traditional linguistic view assumes a telegraphic model of the communicative process, according to which information (e.g., an idea) is "transmitted" from the mind of a speaker to the mind of a hearer. More formally, the model posits the linguistic encoding of an idea into a signal by a sender, the transmission of this signal to a receiver, and the decoding of the signal into a message by the receiver. Premised on a modernist conception of communication, this model accords language both the status of a code—employed by an individual speaker in the service of representing some object or content of thought—and the status of a conduit—a vehicle for the transmission of ideas. Absent from the model, however, is any recognition of the social-rhetorical nature of the communicative situation, any consideration of the fact, for example, that in formulating an utterance, a speaker has a specific sense of the listener and specific expectations about how the utterance will be understood and responded to by an other. Ultimately, the telegraphic model regards the speaker's utterance as a purely monological phenomenon, the product and performance of a single consciousness, voice, and intention.

Bakhtin departs from the telegraphic model of communication in his emphasis on the social nature of the utterance. According to Bakhtin, every utterance is subject to certain social constraints, constraints that operate, however consciously or unconsciously, in any speech situation and in any utterance—from

a wordless sigh to a single-word rejoinder in dialogue, to a multi-volume philosophical treatise. Most pertinent to the present discussion are those constraints suggested by the Bakhtinian refrain that “Any utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 69). By this Bakhtin means to say that above and beyond its relation to its speaker and to its object, any utterance relates dialogically to other utterances—one’s own or others’—on the same topic. Indeed, the concrete and unrepeatable meaning of any given utterance rests in large part on the unique constellation of dialogical relations with other utterances into which that utterance inescapably enters. Bakhtin argues that the study of such dialogical relations is beyond the purview of purely linguistic analyses. While traditional linguistic units such as words and sentences do relate to one another, they do so only through a system of formal, grammatical oppositions (Saussure, 1966). According to Bakhtin (1986), however, such systemic interrelations do not amount to dialogical ones. While dialogical relations do “presuppose a language . . . they do not reside within the system of a language. They are impossible among elements of a language” (p. 117). Nor can dialogical relations be reduced to “logical, linguistic, psychological, mechanical, or any other natural relations” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 124). There can be no dialogical interaction between the formal elements of a system, or, equally, between concepts or abstractions. To use one of Bakhtin’s (1984) examples, two sentences, “Life is good” and “Life is not good,” while connected to each other through the logical relation of negation, do not enter into a dialogic relationship: “they do not argue with one another in

any way (although they can provide the referential material and logical basis for argument)” (p. 183). Dialogical relations are possible only among embodied utterances. In other words, sentences need to be envoiced, must belong to someone in particular, before they can enter into more complex, dynamic semantic relations with other utterances. In short, in the absence of any reference to actual speech events, the sentence remains closed off to dialogical, utterance-to-utterance relations. It is for these reasons that Bakhtin (1984) pursues what he calls a “metalinguistic” approach to the utterance, an approach that attends to those features of an utterance—most notably its dialogical implication in a web of other utterances—that purely linguistic frameworks have failed properly to accommodate.

But what, more precisely, does Bakhtin mean when he writes of an utterance’s dialogical interrelationships with other utterances? What, more simply, does he mean by dialogue in this particular context? On the Bakhtinian view, the meaning of dialogue exceeds the commonsense notion of verbal turn-taking. Dialogue is more than “merely . . . a compositional form in the structuring of speech” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 279). What this more usual conception of dialogue ignores, according to Bakhtin, is the “internal dialogism of the word, which does not assume any external compositional forms of dialogue” (p. 279). Utterances are internally dialogical. More specifically, they are shaped from within by a dual dialogical orientation. First, utterances are conditioned or constrained by what has already been said about the subject to which the utterance speaks; every utterance is related dialogically,

and with varying degrees of awareness, to the already-spoken discourse and historically accrued meanings on the topic at hand. Second, any utterance is shaped by what has yet to be said about the subject, that is, by the anticipated word and responsive understanding of the other to whom the utterance is addressed. In sum, no utterance is an island. Each utterance “always presupposes utterances that precede and follow it. No one utterance can be the first or the last. Each is only a link in the chain, and none can be studied outside this chain” (p. 136). Let us now consider this chain of utterance in greater detail.

The Already-Spoken. Ricoeur (1988) writes “that we are never in a position of being absolute innovators, but rather are always first of all in the situation of being heirs” (1988, p. 221). The world we encounter is invariably an already-interpreted, already-talked-about world. This insight finds a unique expression in Bakhtin’s (1986) writings on the utterance, and more specifically in his congenial claim that “any speaker is himself a respondent to a greater or lesser degree. He is not, after all, the first speaker, the one who disturbs the eternal silence of the universe” (p. 69). Bakhtin (1986) reminds us that any utterance, even if it appears to be directed solely to its object,

cannot but be, in some measure, a response to what has already been said about the given topic, on the given issue, even though this responsiveness may not have assumed a clear-cut external expression. It will be manifested in the overtones of the style, in the finest nuances of the composition. (p. 92)

In formulating a discourse about a topic, then, a speaker has a sense of what was previously said about the topic. Accordingly, the speaker’s utterance relates to

past utterances that had the same object, such that any individual utterance is always "a new link in the historical chain of speech communication" (p. 106). Each utterance responds to utterances that have come before it and engages these utterances dialogically in some way: "refutes, affirms, supplements, and relies on the others, presupposes them to be known, and somehow takes them into account" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 91). This "internal dialogism" of the utterance suggests the presence within the utterance of multiple—and often compositionally unmarked—voices. Our utterances are inhabited and interlaced by the voices of others who have spoken or written about a given matter, either in the distal or proximal past. In this regard, our utterances are "double-voiced" (see Chapter 6). Consequently, Bakhtin can write that our voice is "not impelled toward a well-rounded, finalized, systematically monologic whole" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 32), but rather stands forever as a rejoinder in an ongoing, unfinalizable dialogue.

Clearly, Bakhtin's account of the already-spoken-about quality of the utterance complicates a purely referential view of language, according to which words signify their objects in a simple and direct way. What Bakhtin is saying, in contrast, is that "no living word relates to its object in a singular way" (p. 276). When we speak or write about an object (topic, subject matter, issue), it is never the object in and of itself that we encounter, for the object is always already constituted for us by others' interpretive utterances about it. In a passage heavy with metaphor and imagery, Bakhtin (1981) writes that

between the word and its object, between the word and the speaking

subject, there exists an elastic environment of other, alien words about the same object, the same theme, and this is an environment that is often difficult to penetrate. It is precisely in the process of living interaction with this specific environment that the word may be individualized and given stylistic shape. . . . Indeed, any concrete discourse (utterance) finds the object at which it was directed already . . . overlain with qualifications, open to dispute, charged with value, already enveloped in an obscuring mist—or, on the contrary, by the "light" of alien words that have already been spoken about it. It is entangled, shot through with shared thoughts, points of view, alien value judgments and accents. The word, directed toward its object, enters a dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgments and accents, weaves in and out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet a third group: and all this may crucially shape discourse, may leave a trace in all its semantic layers, may complicate its expression and influence its entire stylistic profile. (1981, p. 276)

Its dense imagery aside, this passage succeeds in pointing up that the relation between the speaker's word and the other's already-uttered word on a given topic is, if nothing else, a highly complex one. The word signifies the object only through the prism of heteroglot and stratified discourses which engage and interanimate one another dialogically. Our speech always takes place in this "tension-filled environment" comprised of others' words and value judgments, an environment that includes even of our own previously uttered words. It is in this highly "agitated" arena that the speaker must construct his or her utterance.

In contrast to the assumptions of modernist view, then, the utterance does not simply "express" some inner, private thought of an insular consciousness, but rather speaks out of a tradition of discourse. The utterance never embodies a "separate thought" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 93), that is, a thought, claim, or proposition that bears only on its referential object (e.g., an idea, an experience). Utterances, and hence thoughts, always live in dialogic interaction

with other utterances, and other thoughts. This conception of the utterance/thought as always in some measure a response to what has already been said or written about a subject clearly problematizes the modernist quest of “starting again with a clean slate.” The monological pretensions of modernism notwithstanding, any utterance—a philosophical treatise, for example—

cannot but be, in some measure, a response to what has already been said about the given topic, on the given issue, even though this responsiveness may not have assumed a clear-cut external expression. It will be manifested in the overtones of the style, in the finest nuances of the composition. (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 92)

Let us take Descartes as an example. Even Descartes' most monologic writings do not stand alone, but are themselves links in a traditionary chain of communication. Descartes' understanding of the knowing subject, like that of other modern thinkers, is situated in a particular sociocultural, historical, and linguistic context. In building an edifice of knowledge, Descartes was, after all, constrained to use the French or Latin languages in developing his ideas, languages which carried the formal and thematic weight of their own prejudices and which, therefore, both constrained and enabled his philosophical discourse. The discourse and thought of the past, for example in the form of traditional logic and metaphysics (substance, matter, form, causality, reality, accident, and so on) still informed his meditations (Gallagher, 1992), despite his self-conscious efforts to put them aside and begin “from scratch.” That Descartes' discourse is a link in the chain of speech communion is further suggested by his appealing to the cogito “as rebutting Montaigne's denial of certainty in philosophy” (Toulmin, 1990, p. 72). Descartes' cogito ergo sum,

moreover, clearly stands in a relation of agreement with a similar pronouncement made by Augustine centuries earlier—although the expression of such agreement was not a part of Descartes’ “speech plan,” as Bakhtin might put it. Far from being the product of an isolated individual, then, Descartes’ philosophical project was a rejoinder in a conversation that preceded him and which he engaged—and to which he contributed—dialogically. In this regard, Bakhtin’s (1986) claim that “dialogic relations are always present, even among profoundly monologic speech works” (p. 125) seems particularly apt.

Addressivity. We saw above that the telegraphic model of communication conceives of the act of speech in unidirectional terms; that is to say, it posits a speaker as the sole source of a message and a rather passive listener—passive in the sense that the listener participates merely in the “extraction” of meaning from the speaker’s words and not, more critically, in the construction of that meaning from the outset, at the utterances’s origin as it were. By failing adequately to acknowledge the role of the other in the process of speech communication, the telegraphic model obscures what, on the Bakhtinian view, is the most essential aspect of this process, namely, the listener’s active role in the life of the utterance.

The fact is that when the listener perceives and understands the meaning (the language meaning) of speech, he simultaneously takes an active, responsive attitude toward it. He either agrees or disagrees with it (completely or partially), augments it, applies it, prepares for its execution, and so on. (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 68)

In contrast to a transmission model that pays only lip service to the role of the other (listener, receiver) in the speech process, Bakhtin claims that the way in

which the speaker senses or imagines the addressee enters as a constitutive moment in the creation of his or her utterance, contributing materially to its compositional form, style, content, and meaning. Bakhtin (1986) writes that

from the very beginning, the utterance is constructed while taking into account possible responsive reactions, for whose sake, in essence, it is actually created. . . . When constructing my utterance, I try actively to determine this response. Moreover, I try to act in accordance with the response I anticipate, so this anticipated response, in turn, exerts an active influence on my utterance. (pp. 94-95)

Bakhtin is referring here to a defining aspect of any utterance: “its quality of being directed to someone, its addressivity” (p. 95). As we formulate our individual utterances, the other’s “voice” or “semantic position” is taken into account such that it enters into the utterance as an active and necessary constitutive element. As Bakhtin (1981) argues, “every word is directed toward an answer and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates . . . Responsive understanding is a fundamental force, one that participates in the formulation of discourse” (p. 280). As a speaker, I continually anticipate and count on the listener’s active responsive understanding—on the addressee’s recognition, acknowledgment, agreement, disagreement. In any instance of speech communication, “the speaker strives to get a reading on his own word, and on his own conceptual horizon, that determines this word, within the alien horizon of the understanding receiver” (1981, p. 282). Hence in each utterance we can discern the voice of a listener or addressee, a “second” voice that participates actively in the construction of the utterance.

According to Bakhtin (1986), this addressee can take a number of varied forms, depending on the sphere of human activity in which the utterance is situated. For example, the

addressee can be an immediate participant-interlocutor in an everyday dialogue, a differentiated collective of specialists in some particular area of cultural communication, a more or less differentiated public, ethnic group, contemporaries, likeminded people, opponents and enemies, a subordinate, a superior, someone who is lower, higher, familiar, foreign, and so forth. And it can also be an indefinite, unconcretized other. (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 95)

Any utterance, in short, is always directed, with varying degrees of awareness, to a real or potential, physically present or imagined, other. So crucial in fact is this feature of addressivity that only when a word or sentence is addressed to a real or implied other does it become an utterance with real, concrete meaning; indeed, "without [addressivity] the utterance does not and cannot exist" (p. 99).

The notion of addressivity, no less than the idea that an utterance relates dialogically to previously uttered views on a subject, requires that we conceive of the utterance as a decidedly collaborative, interlocative accomplishment. While it is no doubt true that the speaker "owns" the utterance, this is only in the narrowest of senses, only perhaps in the physiological sense as the site of particular reverberations in the vocal tract (Volosinov, 1986). But as socially meaningful discourse, the utterance belongs to at least two people: the speaker and his or her listener. In this sense, the utterance

is interindividual. Everything that is said, expressed, is located outside the "soul" of the speaker and does not belong only to him. The word cannot be assigned to a single speaker. The author (speaker) has his own inalienable right to the word, but the listener also has his rights, and those whose voices are heard in the word before the author comes upon

it also have their rights (after all, there are no words that belong to no one). The word is a drama . . . performed outside the author, and it cannot be introjected into the author. (Bakhtin, 1986, pp. 121-122)

And similarly for Volosinov (1986),

the word is a two-sided act. It is determined equally by whose word it is and for whom it is meant. . . . Each and every word expresses the "one" in relation to the "other." I give myself verbal shape from another's point of view. . . . A word is a bridge thrown between myself and another. If one end of the bridge depends on me, then the other depends on my addressee. A word is territory shared by both addressor and addressee, by the speaker and his interlocutor. (Volosinov, 1986, p. 86)

Through the prism of Bakhtin's metalinguistic conception of the utterance, then, we see that the construction of an utterance never simply involves a completely free and individual combination of forms of language. The utterance cannot be generated ex nihilo by the individual speaker but requires the second voice of an addressee.⁵⁴

To illustrate this point, let us return once again to Descartes. Despite his withdrawal in solitude, and despite the self-understanding that his most authentic self was a separate, disembodied entity, owing nothing to others for its constitution, Descartes can reasonably be argued to have constructed the autobiographical and philosophical discourse of his Meditations against the dialogical backdrop of an other's reciprocating presence. He did, after all, craft the preface of this work, as he himself suggests, in light of the anticipated and actual "objections and replies" of others. Moreover, as O'Banion (1992) has recently noted, Descartes' decision to write his discourse in both French and Latin may well be regarded as "a rhetorical decision designed to sidestep ecclesiastical authority and appeal directly to academics" (O'Banion, 1992, p.

141). And might we not also regard Descartes' malin genie (evil genius) as an imaginal other, a sort of virtual addressee whose anticipated objections and ruses figure crucially in constituting Descartes' discourse? His antipathy toward the concerns of rhetorical scholars notwithstanding, it would appear that Descartes was no less bound to exploring and building his notions through the refractive mirror of his interlocutors, both real and imagined—again, despite any monological aspirations he might have harboured about his discourse as "speech that is addressed to no one and [that] does not presuppose a response" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 117)

Speech Genres. Closely related to the Bakhtinian notion of addressivity is that of speech genres. Speech genres refer to the relatively stable types of utterances that characterize language use in particular spheres of human activity. "We speak only in definite speech genres, that is, all our utterances have definite and relatively stable typical forms of construction of the whole." (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 78). Whereas utterances are individual and momentary, in the sense that they reflect the unrepeatable dimensions (the eventness) of concrete language use, "each sphere in which language is used develops its own relatively stable types of these utterances" (p. 60). Genres are collective and historical, and hence implicate the speaker's broader institutional and sociocultural setting. However, genres are not merely linguistic devices. As reflections of moral values, beliefs, and social evaluations, they are also discursive frameworks that help us interpret the world. As we look out and try to make sense of the world, we always do so through the eyes of particular speech

genres. Genres create and communicate particular “themes” by giving direction as to what constitutes an appropriate topic, by guiding what can and cannot be said in given situations, by specifying a range of questions and answers, by guiding the speaker’s choices with respect to lexical and syntactic forms, and so forth.

The relevance of genres to the notion of addressivity inheres in the fact that the utterance's belongingness to a particular genre is based on the relation of the individual's word to the word of others: “each speech genre in each area of speech communication has its own typical conception of the addressee, and this defines it as a genre” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 94). Genres are characterized and constituted by various forms of addressivity and various conceptions of the addressee.

The Superaddressee. Although when formulating his or her utterance a speaker may not always have a particular, concrete addressee in mind, a reciprocating, interlocutory presence of some kind is always assumed. Bakhtin (1986) adds, however, that the speaker “can never turn over his whole self and his speech work to the complete and final will of addressees who are on hand or nearby” (p. 126). Accordingly, in addition to the second voice of the immediate addressee(s), the speaker

always presupposes (with a greater or lesser degree of awareness) some higher instancing of responsive understanding that can distance itself in various directions. Each dialogue takes place as if against the background of the responsive understanding of an invisibly present third party who stands above all the participants in the dialogue. (p. 126)

Separate from an actual addressee, this “superaddressee” is a hypothetical presence “whose absolutely just responsive understanding is presumed, either in some metaphysical distance or in distant historical time” (p. 126). The nature of this ideal addressee may vary culturally and historically, and may assume different ideological embodiments—for example, “God, absolute truth, the court of dispassionate human conscience, the people, the court of history, science, and so forth” (p. 126). This implicit “third” voice may be seen as a recognition of a strong psychological need to achieve understanding and legitimation from others (Cheyne & Tarulli, 1999) (see Chapter 4). For the superaddressee fully comprehends the speaker’s utterance and hence allows the speaker to make his or her utterance even in the face of doubts about whether the “second” voice of the actual addressee will understand or respond. When we speak, we imagine being understood, perhaps only partially by our addressee, but more perfectly by our superaddressee. Like the real (physically present or imagined) addressee, the superaddressee “is a constitutive aspect of the whole utterance, who, under deeper analysis, can be revealed in it’ (pp. 126-127).

As the preceding discussion suggests, the utterance is implicated in a complex social situation consisting of the past and anticipated words of others, culturally specific generic forms, and a superaddressee’s responsive understanding. Because consciousness on the Bakhtinian view is always a speaking consciousness, what we have said in regard to the utterance might be said equally about the self. It is to this parallelism of utterance and self that I now turn.

CHAPTER 4

UTTERANCE AND SELF

We have seen that meaning, on the Bakhtinian view, is a dialogical, interlocative achievement, one that hinges on the self-other relations that characterize vocative exchange. Having considered Bakhtin's metalinguistic account of the utterance, we are now in a position to consider some of the implications of this account for a conception of the self as a dialogically constituted phenomenon. The assumption guiding the following discussion is that the nature and vicissitudes of the dialogical self parallel those of the utterance: the dialogic self and the dialogic word work in the same way. Accordingly, I elaborate, first, a conception of the self as an unrepeatable event of meaning. Then I consider the self as a phenomenon that implicates both the previous and anticipated utterances of others and that assumes particular generic forms. Finally, I discuss the ontological significance (for the self) of the other's recognition and, through a consideration of literary and everyday examples, chart the implications of its absence.

The Dialogical Self as an Unrepeatable Event of Meaning

Like the utterance to which it is constitutively related, the dialogical self is an unrepeatable event of meaning. To regard the self as a phenomenon characterized by eventness is to highlight the degree to which one's emergent sense of identity is a concretely situated act or performance carried out for particular purposes and under particular circumstances. If on some occasion,

for example, I reflect upon or talk about who I am or engage in a discourse about a particular self-relevant experience, I am doing something very specific with words. In speaking, I am achieving some end, answering a specific question, creating a specific effect in the world. Indeed, it is only when I engage the world eventfully or participatively through the medium of language, through concrete expression, that I acquire a specific sense of self. In its eventness, this dialogically constituted self involves the specific achievement of a once-occurrent, unrepeatable meaning. If on two separate occasions, for example, I describe myself as “a graduate student in psychology struggling to complete my dissertation,” the meaning of these words for me is different, even if only slightly, on each of the occasions in which I utter them. After all, the specific context of enunciation of the second utterance is different from the first, time having intervened to make it so. Each time I utter these words, covertly to myself or overtly to others, I do so for various unrepeatable reasons having to do with the specific time and place I occupy in existence. What this suggests, then, is that the dialogical self is a site of perpetual becoming. The task of determining who and what I am—and even that I am—is never a matter of finished business. My identity confronts me as an unfinalizable process of moment-to-moment meaning in the making. Determining my identity presents itself to me as an ongoing, never completed task, a project always yet to be achieved. The self is a never-ending, creative process, constantly accruing new meanings. Indeed, my whole life is composed of a series of such deeds.

In its eventness, the dialogical self differs quite substantially from what psychologists usually refer to as the self-concept. By definition, the self-concept, like any concept, is a generalization or a system of generalizations (schemata, propositions, and so forth), and hence speaks to what is abstract and repeatable about the self. Indeed, the assumption underlying the use of self-concept as a mediating variable in psychological explanations of human behaviour is that the self-concept relates to any instance of self-relevant behaviour as a general to a particular moment. Just as the traditional linguistics assumes that the formal elements and generalized meanings of the language system are simply instantiated in the individual act of speech, so too is it assumed that underlying any given individual act is a self-concept which in effect contains the meaning of that act. Any situated, self-relevant human act or thought is understood as an instantiation of a particular self-concept or system of self-concepts. In this respect, psychology, particularly in its contemporary cognitivist self-understanding, espouses a commitment to what Williams (1989) calls "intellectualism": "the idea that all behavior is to be explained by some act of rule-governed cognition" (p. 108). What a person does, and hence the meaning of what a person does, "is a function of the concepts and/or rules that characterize the psychologically real structures of his or her mind" (p. 109), an assumption perfectly in keeping with theoreticism's rationalist penchant. Meaning, on this view, originates in the structures and processing of the individual mind and is a function of the mental representations of an object of experience. To understand the meaning of action requires that we

examine these individual, internal representations (Wakefield, 1988).

While the notion of the self-concept satisfies mainline psychology's nomothetic strivings for prediction and control, as a transcription or generalization of experience, it omits something essential: the eventness of experience, and hence of the self. To be sure, one's self-concept is inductively derived from individual experience—a fact which would seem to distinguish it from the sorts of transcendental abstractions and generalizations (ethical, linguistic, or otherwise) that preoccupied Bakhtin in his critique of theoreticism. But the self-concept does betray a family resemblance to these more impersonal concepts and abstractions in that it inhabits a domain outside the concrete, historical event. As such, the self-concept remains incapable, from within its own explanatory possibilities, of capturing the eventness of the self.

Nor can the dualism of concept and event, of cognition and life, be surmounted from within cognition itself. Such a strategy is suggested, for example, by those who put forth hierarchical models of the self's multidimensionality (e.g., Cantor & Kihlstrom, 1987; Epstein, 1973; Shavelson & March, 1986). The general notion underlying such models is that the self's diversity consists in some organized collection of knowledge structures (e.g., schemata, prototypes, subselves, episodic exemplars, goals, images, propositions, attributes, and so on) which represent differentially abstract encodings of self-relevant information. Though hierarchical models differ in the way they conceptualize the association among features and levels,

they are generally consistent in positing a core or global self-conception at the hierarchy's apex with many more self-aspects positioned subordinately beneath it. The most abstract elements of the self (e.g., the general self-concept) sit at the top of the hierarchy; intermediately abstract components (e.g., the academic self-concept) occupy the middle ranges of the hierarchy; and the lowest-level abstractions sit at the bottom of the hierarchy. Within such hierarchical models, the function of the general, most superordinate self is to provide a sense of unity in the face of the individual's diverse and sometimes conflicting self-relevant experiences. It is a theoretical expression of the self-continuity we experience in the face of different, context-dependent manifestations of our selves. The lowest-level self-representations, on the other hand, are meant to represent episodic or behavioural exemplars that are closely tied to specific contexts. The purpose of including this lowest level of self-representations is to accommodate the fact that we behave and see ourselves differently in different contexts. In other words, through the inclusion of such context-specific representations investigators attempt to establish a sort of mental grammar of self-relevant contexts. Now, according to the dialogical perspective, this mental grammar of contexts, however much it might suggest a means of accommodating the contextual specificity of the self-concept, remains incapable of accounting for the self-relevant meaning associated with any actual, concretely situated act. Even the lowest-order, most contextually specific abstractions—the phonemes of the self, as it were—cannot exhaust the meaning generated in an actual performance.

What role, then, is the self-concept to play in a dialogical conception of the self? In light of the preceding arguments, the nature of the self-concept and its explanatory primacy vis-à-vis self-relevant meaning and experience has to be reconsidered. More specifically, just as generalized ethical knowledge constitutes but a moment in the life of the ethical act, so too must the self-concept, as a distillation of personal experience, be seen as but a constituent, technical moment in the life of the self. The self-concept is, on this revised view, a statement of what is given to the self before any concrete act or event. Bakhtin's (1993) comments on the nature of generalized knowledge are suggestive in this regard:

The abstract-sense aspect, when it is not correlated with inescapable actual uniqueness, has the character of a project: it is something like a rough draft of a possible actualization or an unsigned document that does not obligate anyone to do anything . . . only through the answerable participation effected by a unique act or deed can one get out of the realm of endless draft versions and rewrite one's life once and for all in the form of a fair copy. (p. 44)

Through articulation and embodiment in a dialogical self, the concept enters the life of concrete meaning and value, and it is there that it suffers its peculiar displacement. The self-concept achieves its fullness only in the event. The event is what puts flesh on the concept, brings it within the folds of the real moment. The dialogical self is where the concept enters life.

As an event of meaning, the dialogical self is, to be sure, created out of what is given and hence must somehow be oriented from within itself to generalizations drawn from experience. In this respect it is analogous both to the individual utterance, which needs the resources of the given system of

language to come into being, and to the ethical deed, which needs to be oriented to and aware of general ethical prescriptions if it is to be nothing more than a random act. But also like the utterance and the ethical act, the dialogical self, as an event, must be a response to and product of the particularities of the moment. The dialogical self, like the dialogical utterance, is situated at the intersection of the general and the particular.⁵⁵ But precisely as a particularistic, singular, creative, and unpredictable event of meaning, the dialogical self surpasses what is given in the self-concept. The notion of a dialogical self reminds us that we never fully coincide with concepts about ourselves.

The Self and the Already Spoken

James (1950a) writes that “it would be difficult to find in the actual concrete consciousness of a man a feeling so limited to the present as not to have an inkling of anything that went before” (p. 241). As an event of meaning, self-relevant discourse orients itself toward and engages the already uttered words of others. In forming an utterance about myself, I cannot help but be influenced by previous utterances—my own and others’, actual and imagined—about me. It is not the case that in moments of self-reflection I hold before me some unmediated conception of some autobiographical experience of who I am. Talking to others or to myself about myself is never the accomplishment of a single voice. In describing myself as this or that person, for example, I do not individually construct categories and conceptions, but rely on preconceptions

informed by my situatedness in traditions and carried in the language of the linguistic community (or communities) I inhabit. Invariably, then, there is a collective element in self-definition. In describing myself as a student, a son, a brother, a friend, I express a range of experiences stemming both from my contexted uniqueness and from a larger tradition, one which identifies student, son, brother, and friend as meaningful, discursively constituted categories that betray a relation to the words and voices of others.

Addressivity and the Self

The notion of addressivity suggests a number of implications for the conception of a dialogical self. First, at a methodological level, Bakhtin's ideas about the constitutive import for the utterance of the other's anticipated responsive understanding speaks quite directly to recent emerging concerns within psychology about the need to take the social context of autobiographical statements more directly into account in studies of individuals' self-understanding. As Mintz (1995) has recently noted, consideration of "who these statements are addressed to and the conversational genres in which they are embedded . . . are not systematically figured into the interpretation of what these utterances mean" (p. 62). The virtue of a dialogical account of the utterance and of the self is that it provides a theoretical framework that explicitly acknowledges the formative role that these rhetorical elements play in the production of self-descriptive utterances. In this regard, Bakhtin's work anticipates some of the more recent claims about the socially constructed nature

of self-narratives. Gergen and Gergen (1988), for example, argue that self-narratives are not fundamentally individual possessions, but rather constructions that are particularly responsive to social-communicative demands. Invoking notions strikingly similar to those addressed above in connection with the dialogic utterance, Gergen and Gergen claim that in constructing self-narratives one relies on discourse that inherently implies an audience of some kind. In the process of their public realization, narratives of personal life events are said to “become subject to social evaluation and resultant molding” (p. 38). The rhetorical context of the communication of such narratives becomes particularly significant here. Individuals are described as socially negotiating their narrative accounts, a process that may be “anticipatory or implicit, taking place with an imaginary audience” (p. 38).

A second implication of the notion of addressivity pertains to the question of the self’s multiplicity. The idea that the self is characterized by multiplicity is widely held in the scholarly psychology community. Indeed, it is a notion that figured importantly even in the earliest writings on the self (Cooley, 1902; James, 1950a; Mead, 1934). The fundamental premise of this early work—which continues to inform contemporary analyses—is that we are different things, different selves, to different people. I am one thing to my parents, another to my colleagues, and yet another to my friends. As James (1950a) put the point,

Properly speaking, a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind. . . . But as the individuals who carry the images fall naturally into classes, we may practically say that he has as many different social selves as there are distinct groups of persons about whose opinion he

cares. He generally shows a different side of himself to each of these different groups. . . . We do not show ourselves to our children as to our club companions , to our customers as to the laborers we employ, to our masters and employers as to our intimate friends. From this there results what practically is a division of the man into several selves. (p. 294)

James' notion that we portray different selves depending on the company we happen to be keeping at any particular moment was later appropriated by Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934). For Cooley, the looking-glass self develops as the child interacts with other people, such that

The young performer soon learns to be different things to different people . . . If the mother or nurse is more tender than just she will almost certainly be "worked" by systematic weeping. It is a matter of common observation that children often behave worse with their mother than with other and less sympathetic people. (p. 197)

In the life of the child, argues Cooley, a complex peer structure may generate several selves, because one displays a different self for each distinct peer or peer group. According to Cooley, what

moves us to pride or shame is not the mere mechanical reflection of ourselves, but an imputed sentiment, the imagined effect of this reflection upon another's mind. This is evident from the fact that the character and weight of that other, in whose mind we see ourselves, makes all the difference with our feeling. We are ashamed to seem evasive in the presence of a straightforward man, cowardly in the presence of a brave one, gross in the eyes of a refined one, and so on. (p. 184)

Mead (1934) similarly recognizes that the self breaks into different parts or different selves, given that we interact with different people who place different demands on us.

We are one thing to one man and another thing to another. . . . We divide ourselves up in all sorts of different selves with reference to our acquaintances. We discuss politics with one and religion with another. There are all sorts of different selves answering to all sorts of different

social reactions. (pp. 142-143)

What a dialogical view adds to this fundamental insight that we are different selves to different others is an explicit discursive framework. In speaking, we fashion different accounts, present different aspects of ourselves, for different auditors. Were there a different interlocutor, a different utterance, and hence a different self, would be formulated.

Speech Genres and the Self

Bakhtin's (1986) notion of speech genres also becomes particularly relevant in this context. More specifically, the concept of speech genres allows us to approach our membership in and identification with different social groups, and the different selves to which those memberships give rise, in discursive terms. On the Bakhtinian view, self-discourse is characterized by generic heterogeneity; we use different genres in speaking with different groups of people. Each of the social domains in which we participate or groups in which we are members is characterized by a particular way of speaking that mediates our identity within that social domain or group. According to Bakhtin (1986), one factor determining the choice of a genre is "the nature and degree of personal proximity of the addressee to the speaker" (p. 96). Speech genres may range from formal genres, which involve a hierarchically inscribed social distance between addresser and addressee, to familiar and intimate genres, which "perceive their addressees in exactly the same way: more or less outside the framework of the social hierarchy and social conventions, 'without rank,' as it

were” (p. 96). The result of the use of familiar and intimate genres is “a certain candor of speech” (p. 96), which, in the most intimate of genres “is expressed in an apparent desire for the speaker and addressee to merge completely.” Such intimate genres reflect a “maximum internal proximity of the speaker and addressee” (p. 97).

Intimate speech is imbued with a deep confidence in the addressee, in his sympathy, in the sensitivity and goodwill of his responsive understanding. In this atmosphere of profound trust, the speaker reveals his internal depths. This determines the special expressiveness and internal candor of these styles. (p. 97)

Familiar and intimate genres are more conducive to our expressing what we are thinking.

Bakhtin’s notion of speech genres also allows us to situate self-relevant discourse in the larger sociocultural context of its production. In talking about ourselves, we invariably cast our utterances in certain socioculturally specific generic forms—forms that communicate particular “themes,” that give direction as to what can and cannot be said in a given situation, that guide a speaker’s choice of lexical and syntactic forms, and so forth. These genres serve as enabling constraints for self-understanding and are acquired like any sort of cultural knowledge. Being a member of a particular linguistic community and participating in the communicative activities of daily life in a particular culture means acquiring a certain proficiency in its available genres. Of course, this knowledge is often tacit, as we are generally unaware that our speech and thought are subject to generic constraints. As Bakhtin (1986) puts it,

Our repertoire of oral (and written) speech genres is rich. We use them confidently and skillfully in practice, and it is quite possible for us not

even to suspect their existence in theory. Like Moliere's Monsieur Jordan who, when speaking in prose, had no idea that was what he was doing, we speak in diverse genres without suspecting that they exist. (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 78)

As an example of the generic structuring of self-relevant discourse, consider the linguistic practice, typical of many Western cultures, of appealing to transcontextual regularities and generalities to describe the self. In the West, the self is understood as an abstract inner landscape, a bounded space populated with intentions, psychological qualities, and other mental entities that together constitute a private inner world. It is not surprising, then, to find that people enculturated into this belief—into this speech genre, in other words—use self-descriptive terms that refer to abstract psychological dispositions or traits. In Eastern cultures, on the other hand, people's self-relevant discourse is more likely to refer to relationships and to the concrete, social contexts in which in people are situated, than to qualities abstracted from any particular setting (Cousins, 1989). In this respect, each broad cultural ethos—autonomy and independence in the case of the West, relatedness and interdependence in the case of the East—is associated with its own particular set of generic conventions for talking about the self.

The Ontological Significance of the Addressee

Bakhtin's metalinguistic theory of the utterance acknowledges the constitutive significance of the listener or addressee in the construction of an individual utterance. An utterance can only be completed through the responsive

understanding of that addressee. Indeed, in the absence of an active, responsive, and reciprocating presence of some kind, it is impossible for the utterance to mean. The importance, for the utterance, and hence for meaning, of the other's response, is suggested in Bakhtin's discussion of the boundaries of the utterance. These boundaries, says Bakhtin (1986),

are determined by a change of speaking subjects, that is, a change of speakers. Any utterance . . . has, so to speak, an absolute beginning and an absolute end: its beginning is preceded by the utterances of others, and its end is followed by the responsive utterances of others (or, although it may be silent, others' active responsive understanding, or, finally, a responsive action based on this understanding). The speaker ends his utterance in order to relinquish the floor to the other or to make room for the other's active responsive understanding. (p. 71)

The utterance, whether overt or constructed on the plane of inner speech, is followed by a sort of pause, "a silent dixi" (p. 72), which is filled with the speaker's anticipation of the other's response or responsive understanding, a responsiveness which in effect completes the utterance. That the other will in fact respond is an expectation contained in the utterance itself. The very reason we speak, after all, is to occasion a response from an other.

The role of the addressee's responsive understanding in the completion of the utterance also has broader ontological implications for the self. What I want to argue, more specifically, is that it is only through the other's response or responsive understanding that I achieve the subjective sense of myself as something of value and determinateness, that I gain a sense of my own being "as a reliable event, objectively occurring, here and now, in the life of the human species" (Kharash, 1991, p. 54). In other words, our sense of ourselves as

distinct and fully weighted beings depends crucially on the other's responsiveness. Our identity arises not from within, not from some inner, pre-social, or primordial sense of ourselves, but rather dialogically, from our vocative contact with others. In keeping with the eventful nature of the dialogical self, Bakhtin (1984) says that dialogue "is not a means for revealing, for bringing to the surface the already ready-made character of a person; no, in dialogue a person not only shows himself outwardly, but he becomes for the first time that which he is . . . not only for others but for himself as well" (p. 252). In dialogue, an other's reciprocating presence does not merely reveal being but rather actively produces it. For Bakhtin (1984), the ongoing process of communication is the key to existence:

I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another, and with the help of another. The most important acts constituting self-consciousness are determined by a relationship toward another consciousness (toward a thou). Separation, dissociation, and enclosure within the self as the main reason for the loss of one's self. Not that which takes place within, but that which takes place on the boundary between one's own and someone else's consciousness, on the threshold. And everything internal gravitates not toward itself but is turned to the outside and dialogized, every internal experience ends up on the boundary, encounters another, and in this tension-filled encounter lies its entire essence. . . . The very being of man (both external and internal) is the deepest communion. To be means to communicate. (1984, p. 287)

It is only through such interchange or dialogue with the other that the self is aware of its own distinctness and substantiveness. Bakhtin says that "two voices is the minimum for life, the minimum for existence" (1984, p. 252). Or as Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1970) puts it, dialogue is "an existential necessity" (p. 77).

The Value of Recognition. One of the central provisions of the addressee's reciprocating presence is the other's recognition. Recognition, conceived along Bakhtinian lines, is not something that we can provide for ourselves; rather, recognition is only something that the other can bestow upon us. In dialogue, the other's "recognition or acceptance descends upon me . . . like a gift, like grace, which is incapable of being understood and founded from within myself" (1990, p. 49). And similarly: "recognition cannot be self-recognition" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 288)

The importance for the self of the other's recognition is certainly not a theme that is unique to the Bakhtinian account. We find a somewhat congenial view, for example, in the writings of James (1950a). To be sure, James may seem an unlikely place to launch a defence of dialogical nature of self. After all, his position is often seen as one of strong subjectivism. To be sure, there are many places where James seems unquestionably to advocate such a stance. He argues, for example, that the self is the subjective screen through which we select and create our reality: "The fons et origo [source and origin] of all reality, whether from the absolute or the practical point of view, is thus subjective, is ourselves" (1950b, pp. 296-297). James's subjectivism is further reflected in his claim that we have privileged and direct access to the contents of our own minds, but are barred unconditionally from having knowledge of the contents of other minds. His contention that all thoughts are "owned" and that "My thought belongs with my other thoughts, and your thought with your other thoughts" (1950a, p. 226) is couched in terms that stress the seemingly unbridgeable gap

between minds. Indeed, he refers to the gap between such thoughts as “the most absolute breaches in nature” (1950a, p. 226). James’s use of the metaphor of the “stream of consciousness” for conceiving mindedness appears further to support this ontological separation of minds. The stream of thought is, for James, an isolated stream following its own course and utterly isolated from other streams.

But for all his allusions to the unbridgeable gap between minds, James is hardly an apologist for some radical subjectivism or, worse, solipsism. Despite his seeming emphasis on the ontological insularity of our thoughts, James does not deny the possibility of real communication. That possibility, however, does not rest for James on a sharing of minds, but rather in a reaching out for the other's recognition and in establishing a connection to a network of social relations. In this regard, James’ correspondence is most informative. For example, in a letter to a friend (Thomas Ward), James alludes to his own protracted period of melancholy and depression and writes of the pressing need to escape from the “tedious egotism” and the debilitating self-obsession that this isolating depression engendered: “the disease makes you think of yourself all the time; and the way out of it is to keep as busy as we can thinking of things and other people—no matter what’s the matter with our self” (H. James, III, 1920, p. 132). In this same letter, James also mentions the importance of establishing a sense of belongingness in order to escape the confines of a disconnected interiority. James speaks of entering into “real relations” with people: making some practical difference in the world, contributing to its welfare in various ways: “You may delight its senses or ‘taste’ by some

production of luxury or art, comfort it by discovering some moral truth, relieve its pain by concocting a new patent medicine, save its labor by a bit of machinery, or by some new application of a natural product. . . . and you will come into real relations with your brothers—with some of them at least” (130-131). For James, to “make my nick, however small a one, in the raw stuff of the race” (H. James, III, 1920, p. 132) is to assert one's reality. For making a difference in the world is to be noticed, to be acknowledged. It is to achieve recognition and response from others and, as a result, to feel that one belongs to an unbroken chain of existence.

In the absence of the communion that affirms being, one remains trapped in the debilitating self-engrossment of which James writes in his letters. Outward connection, belongingness, making a difference, dialogue and the recognition it affords, locating one's thoughts and deeds in a human social order—all these act as foils to the hermetic, insular self and help one weave what Bakhtin refers to as the relational fabric of the self. As Bakhtin goes on to say, the self “must find itself . . . within an intense field of interorientations” (1984, p. 239). For the sake of the integrity of one's own sense of self, one wants and needs to be linked to the vocative chain of existence. Might we not, accordingly, invoke a companion metaphor to the more individualistic Jamesian stream of consciousness? Might we not perhaps also speak of a “stream of communication”?

Of Rage and Impotent Despair. The theme of recognition is captured even more forcefully in his scholarly writings. James (1950a) defines a

person's "social self" precisely as "the recognition which he gets from his mates" (p. 293). This notion of the social self rests in turn on the assumption that we have an "innate propensity to get ourselves noticed, and noticed favorably, by our kind" (p. 293). Indeed, so indispensable to us is others' recognition, in whatever form, that its absence precipitates a loss of self, a circumstance in which any form of interaction would be a relief. James (1950a) puts the point more poignantly in the following classic passage:

No more fiendish punishment could be devised, were such a thing physically possible, than that one should be turned loose in society and remain absolutely unnoticed by all the members thereof. If no one turned round when we entered, answered when we spoke, or minded that we did, but if every person we met 'cut us dead,' and acted as if we were non-existing things, a kind of rage and impotent despair would ere long well up in us, from which the cruellest bodily tortures would be a relief; for these would make us feel that, however bad might be our plight, we had not sunk to such a depth as to be unworthy of attention at all. (p. 293-294)

James's hypothetical scenario seems clearly to point up the ontological significance for us of the other's response and recognition. Our very being, it would appear, is enacted through the recognition we receive from others. Later in his text, James elaborates on this theme in a series of remarks concerning the recognition one receives from the person one loves: "To his own consciousness he is not, so long as this particular social self fails to get recognition, and when it is recognized his contentment passes all bounds" (p. 294). Indeed, so dominant is this instinctive impulse toward "social self-seeking," that its pursuit may even extend to the recognition accorded us by persons we might otherwise self-consciously exclude from our list of "significant others."

The noteworthy thing about the desire to be “recognized” by others is that its strength has so little to do with the worth of the recognition computed in sensational and rational terms. . . . So that it comes about that persons for whose opinion we care nothing are nevertheless persons whose notice we woo; and that many a man truly great, many a woman truly fastidious in most respects, will take a deal of trouble to dazzle some insignificant cad whose whole personality they heartily despise. (James, 1950a, pp. 308-309)

What James seems to be suggesting here is not that there is some originary self that gets confirmed in recognition, but that the self comes into being, assumes a particular form, in recognition. Being socialized to the opinions of others is not, on James’s view, a matter “of remaking a preexisting self into a social being, but of creating a self that is from the beginning social in nature” (Leary, 1990, pp. 109-110). James’s scenario points up our lack of self-sufficiency, and thereby our absolute need for the other. It is in dialogic interchange, in confrontation with a responsive other, that one’s self is actualized. To sustain the engagement of a listener, to be recognized, is actually to construct and perpetuate one's own being.

It is certainly difficult to imagine a world in which others’ recognition could be so utterly lacking as to give rise to the impotent despair described by James. In human society, people engage in a wide variety of practical activities that routinely provide this sense of confirmation. In our daily interactions with others we participate in many communicative rituals that help sustain mutual recognition. We offer greetings and bestow gifts, we smile responsively, tender congratulations, pick up our end of a joint task, listen to people’s stories, express sympathy. One thing we also do in this regard is call people by name, a

simple but ontologically formative act, as Taylor (1989) has recently argued.

Names, he says, betray the link between dialogue and identity.

My name is what I am 'called'. A human being has to have a name, because he or she has to be called, i.e., addressed. Being called into conversation is a precondition of developing a human identity, and so my name is (usually) given me by my earliest interlocutors. Nightmare scenarios in science fiction where, e.g., the inmates of camps no longer have names but just numbers, draw their forces from this fact. Numbers tag people for easy reference, but what you use to address a person is his name. Beings who are just referents and not also addressees are ipso facto classed as non-human, without identity. It is not surprising that in many cultures the name is thought in some way to capture, even to constitute, the essence or power of the person. (p. 525)

Whether in calling people by name or in participating in any of the other aforementioned activities, we seem routinely to proffer signs and acts of attention which "by confronting the subject with the task of remembering, recognizing, and practically reacting, serve objectively as a test of the level of his mental mobilization relative to other people and social groups" (Kharash, 1991, p. 56).

One Character in Search of an Auditor. To the extent that "man has to communicate with others for the sake of his own awareness of self" (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967, p. 85), the absence of any linkage to a community of others is to perpetuate loss of self, to be denied existential weightiness. Indeed, the violation of any of the aforementioned rituals and practices—even if only the simple absence of a wordless, acknowledging glance—can evoke feelings, if not of "rage and impotent despair," then at the very least the sense of not existing for the other. With this in mind, I want further to address the significance of others' responsiveness for our sense of

self by considering the case where such responsiveness is all but absent. As I noted above, to one degree or another all societies make provisions to ensure that their members are afforded the opportunity for mutual recognition; and so it would be rather difficult to find a real-life example. I will turn, therefore, to the literary realm in an effort to highlight—in admittedly rather exaggerated form—the implications for the self of the lack of others' recognition.

Two central characters inhabit the world of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein: Victor, the eponymous protagonist of the tale, and his creation, the "monster." This narrative, which in fact is a series of nested narratives, is among other things a sort of treatise on the quest for identity, both Victor's and the monster's. It is also without question a very sad account of the ravages of loneliness (primarily the creature's) in one of its perhaps most extreme forms imaginable, namely, as the affective expression of a desire for being. The tone for this particular theme is set when the creature first confronts his creator with the apostrophic plea to be heard. At first, Victor vehemently refuses, seeing in the creature before him a detested enemy, a "daemon." The creature, however, persists:

How can I move thee? Will no entreaties cause thee to turn a favourable eye upon thy creature, who implores thy goodness and compassion? Believe me, Frankenstein: I was benevolent; my soul glowed with love and humanity: but am I not alone, miserably alone? . . . Let your compassion be moved, and do not disdain me. Listen to my tale: when you have heard that, abandon or commiserate me, as you shall judge that I deserve. But hear me. . . . Listen to me." (p. 70)

Moved by a blend of curiosity and unformed compassion and duty as his creator, Victor consents to listen to this "odious companion." But despite this

initial and momentary triumph, the creature's supplications for an auditor are time and again denied in the course of the story. In effect, the tale charts the tragic collapse of at least one man—his monstrosity notwithstanding—in the face of an unfulfilled desire for communication: "Like Adam, I was apparently united by no link to any other being in existence. . . . I was wretched, helpless and alone" (p. 92).

The man-creature longs desperately to join the human world.⁵⁶ Both through his observations of the social world and the books he has taught himself to read, he imbibes many voices, gaining knowledge of love and companionship, of "all the various relationships which bind one human being to another in mutual bonds" (p. 86). In his emergent ideas, desires, and feelings, he comes to regard himself as similar yet sadly unlike those others who he watches and of whom he reads: "But where were my friends and relations? No father had watched my infant days, no mother had blessed me with smiles and caresses" (p. 86). And similarly: "I was dependent on none and related to none . . . and there was none to lament my annihilation. . . . Who was I? What was I? Whence did I come? What was my destination?" (p. 91). Ultimately, his increasing knowledge proves a double-edged sword. While it allows him to entertain the notion of himself existing in communion with others, it also exacerbates his loneliness and reminds him "more clearly what a wretched outcast I was. I cherished hope, it is true; but it vanished when I beheld my person reflected in water, or my shadow in the moonshine, even as that frail image and that inconstant shade" (p. 93). Fatefully and increasingly

over the course of the story, he lives in a state of perpetual discrepancy between his actual social relationships and what he feels from within as his ownmost social potentials. In the absence of a sympathetic interlocutor, of an other's responsive understanding, the monster's fate is to remain hopelessly within the grips of a very bad infinite: the infinite hope for love and fellowship and the infinite deferral and frustration of these hopes.

Furtively, from a barren, low hovel, the creature is vouchsafed images of the routine existence of the DeLaceys, a family of dispossessed cottagers who the creature grows quickly, but lamentably from afar, to admire. These cottagers inhabit a world of which the creature longs to be a part, a world seemingly sheltered from barbarities and injustices. In the telling of his tale to Victor, the creature recalls his captivation by the DeLaceys' manners and qualities and the warmth of their social relations, how, agonized by his hideous countenance and forever lamenting the exile in which he reluctantly lived, he craved incessantly to find acceptance and friendship among the cottagers, to be a participant, "an actor in the busy scene where so many admirable qualities were called forth and displayed" (p. 90). He recounts how his "heart yearned to be known and loved by these amiable creatures: to see their sweet looks directed towards me with affection was the utmost limit of my ambition . . . I required kindness and sympathy" (p. 94). The creature spends much of his time imagining "a thousand pictures of presenting myself to them, and their reception of me. I imagined that they would be disgusted, until, by my gentle demeanor and conciliating words, I should first win their favour, and

afterwards their love” (p. 81). He lets himself “fancy amiable and lovely creatures sympathising with my feelings, and cheering my gloom” (p. 93). For a time, it is this internal dialogue that sustains him and that, at least for a time, gives him hope and moves him to establish contact with the DeLaceys.

Following his tragic encounter with the cottagers the creature recounts how he began his search for Victor in the hope that his creator, while having mercilessly abandoned him, might show him the compassion he desperately sought. He asks that Victor create for him a female, someone with whom he could “live in the interchange of those sympathies necessary for . . . being” (p. 103). If only he might see that he could “excite the sympathy of some existing thing” (p. 104), “feel the affections of a sensitive being” (p. 106), then perhaps he would “become linked to the chain of existence and events, from which [he was] now excluded” (p. 106). Victor reluctantly agrees, but later in the story fatefully destroys this incipient “bride,” sending the creature on a vengeful rampage. Having despaired of obtaining from the other the gift and grace of recognition, the monster is now forced to secure it not, as earlier, by supplication, nor even any longer by threat and coercion, but rather by violence: “Am I not shunned and hated by all mankind? . . . I will revenge my injuries: if I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear” (p. 104).

His murderous campaign of revenge ultimately consummated, we find the monster at the end of the tale reflecting plaintively on the futility of his actions: “For while I destroyed [Victor’s] hopes, I did not satisfy my own desires. They were for ever ardent and craving; still I desired love and

fellowship, and I was still spurned” (p. 161). The story ends, of course, with the monster disclosing plans for his own self-destruction, then disappearing into an arctic wasteland.

If, as I stated earlier, it is through one's dialogic encounter with a responsive other, and through the recognition such an encounter affords, that one acquires existential weightiness and that one's self is enacted, it becomes clear that our story protagonist's quest for sympathetic audition is nothing less than a quest for being. Beyond the "captive audience" the monster addresses at different points in the story, he ultimately fails to secure a friendly, reliable, and reciprocating presence of some kind and hence never attains the level of a self with form and substance. He remains that shadowy figure inhabiting the lonely, wooded margins of human community. His namelessness is prophetic in this regard, a homely sign of his inability to be called into being.

Being Heard. In the more routine scenarios of life, the failure to secure others' recognition is not an entirely uncommon event. While I extrapolate from my own experience, I think it would be safe to argue that most of us have felt compelled, at one time or another in our lives, to relate or “share” some experience—an adventure, a triumph, an emotional fall—to an other or others who might be eager, willing, or perhaps just gracious enough to listen. Phenomenologically, the sense of anticipation and urgency associated with this compulsion can be rather strong—“I can't wait to tell . . .”—at times, I imagine, strong enough to suggest that what is at stake in this overt telling is the very consummation, or least some further or different consummation, of the

experience or thought itself. The sense here is that the experience can only be called into being interlocatively, that is, in the form-imparting space of dialogic praxis. Recall, too, the sense of dejection that often overcomes us when we have something to tell but no one to tell it to. “No pleasure has any savor for me without communication. Not even a merry thought comes into my mind without my being vexed at having produced it alone without anyone to offer it to”—so writes Montaigne (1585-88/1976, p. 754). Each utterance wants to be heard or recognized. Expression is always in the service of eliciting a response from an other. To speak to someone is precisely to speak in the anticipation of a response. Or as Gadamer (1989) puts the point, “to find the expression means to find an expression that will make an impression—that is, it is not an expression in the sense of an expression of experience” (p. 503). Or, arguing from an aesthetic standpoint: “Expression is not to be understood primarily as an expression of one’s own feelings, but as an expression that arouses feelings” (Gadamer, 1989, p. 503). It is ultimately the other’s dialogic, responsive understanding that imparts form and substance to thought and experience. Lived experience needs a response, needs to be affirmed, agreed or disagreed with, polemicized against, and so on, if it is to constitute experience in the sense I am advocating here. Experience, like the word, needs to be situated dialogically, needs to be uttered and expressed, and therefore heard, recognized, acknowledged by others—even if only potentially or on the imaginal plane—if it is to be meaningful, if it is to assume some shape and contour, if it is to be more than a chaotic, formless impression. “Like the word, the idea wants to be heard,

understood and ‘answered’ by other voices from other positions. Like the word, the idea is by nature dialogic” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 88).

This is not to suggest, however, that any old interlocutor will always do. An especially powerful example of the despair one might feel in the face of a particularly unresponsive interlocutor is provided by Oliver Sacks (1984). In his recollection of the events and insights surrounding his ordeal with a severe medical condition, he writes of his desperate attempt to relate the limbo-like nature of this condition to one of his doctors:

This would be tolerable, or more tolerable, if it could be communicated to others, and become a subject of understanding and sympathy—like grief. This was denied me when the surgeon said "Nothing," so that I was thrown into the further hell—the hell of communication denied. (p. 85)

Sacks seeks out, but unfortunately does not secure, a confirmatory response on the part of his interlocutor. He fails to evoke the sort of response that, as Laing (1969) describes it, "is relevant to the evocative action, [that] accords recognition to the evocatory act, and accepts its significance for the evoker, if not for the respondent" (p. 82). In a description that seems apposite to the circumstances raised by Sacks, Laing goes on to say that “emptiness and futility can arise when a person has put himself into his acts, even when these acts seem to have some point to him, if he is accorded no recognition by the other, and if he feels he is not able to make any difference to anyone” (p. 67). Again, as in James, we are attuned to the “sense of emptiness and impotence in self” (Laing, 1969, p. 68) in the face of an unresponsive or impervious other. In a similar vein, Watzlawick et al. (1967) discuss the sense of alienation and

loss of self that accompanies the phenomenon of “disconfirmation,” which they define as an instance of pathological communication in which one’s very existence is put into doubt by an unresponsive other. More specifically, in contrast to “rejection,” which

amounts to the message “You are wrong,” disconfirmation says in effect “You do not exist.” Or, to put it in more rigorous terms, if confirmation and rejection of the other’s self were equated, in formal logic, to the concepts of truth and falsity, respectively, then disconfirmation would correspond to the concept of undecidability, which, as is known, is of a different logical order. (p. 86)

Given this need for social confirmation of the self, it is not surprising that its absence often occasions highly motivated attempts to regain it in some fashion. Consider, in this regard, the plight of many lonely people. Loneliness is sometimes described as a “driving” force that motivates people to seek out social interactions despite any anxiety they may have regarding such interactions (Sullivan, 1953). Weiss (1973) argues that “the lonely are driven to find others” (p. 15). The hypersensitivity of lonely people to social cues is perhaps only an exaggerated instance of what we all seek in some measure: some sort of response from the other that helps to establish our place in the social whirl, that lets us know that we matter. Commenting on this state of enhanced vigilance, Weiss adds:

The individual is forever appraising others for their potential as providers of the needed relationships, and forever appraising situations in terms of their potential for making the needed relationships available. . . . [Loneliness] produces an oversensitivity to minimal cues and a tendency to misinterpret or to exaggerate the hostile or affectionate intent of others. (1973, p. 21)

Though Weiss frames his account of loneliness in terms of the absence of

certain social provisions, one might reasonably argue that in the experience of loneliness one's very sense of self is at stake. The sometimes desperate search for a friendly presence of some sort becomes the expression of desire for living intercourse, for a linkage to the communal chain through which one's sense of self is enacted and affirmed. Indeed, it has even been argued that this search for recognition bears not simply on our psychological well-being, but on our physical health as well. The ability to secure the other's recognition is literally a matter of life and death. Lynch (1981), for example, has documented the adverse medical consequences of loneliness (i.e., of a "broken heart," not so figuratively speaking) and in his most recent work (Lynch, 1985) establishes a connection between the experience of dialogue and hypertension. More specifically, his analyses indicate the medical benefits of reciprocating dialogue and, conversely, the physically damaging effects of not being heard.

So vital to human health is the language of our hearts that—if ignored, unheard or misunderstood—it can produce terrible physical suffering, even premature death. For the language of our hearts cries out to be heard. It demands to be understood. And it must not be denied. Our hearts speak with an eloquence that poets have always, and truly, sensed. It is for us to learn to listen and to understand. (Lynch, 1985, p. 10)

Of course, in the absence of an immediate interlocutor or a live, reciprocating presence of some kind, we may search out other modes for its telling: for example, we might document the experience in writing, perhaps describe it in a letter to a friend, make it the day's journal entry, and so forth. In a recent work on "the courage to write," Keyes (1995) denies any fundamental difference between a writer's compulsion to write and a child's urge to scrawl

her name in wet sidewalk cement or a youth's proclivity to spray-paint his monicker on city walls. Underlying each of these otherwise diverse acts is a need for attention.

Recognition. Immortality. And why not? One of the most fundamental of human fears is that our experience will go unnoticed. We'd all like to have it recorded somewhere. What better way to achieve this goal than by writing? Long after maggots have had their way with my corpse, my name will still be on the spines of books in the Library of Congress. I'm on the record." (p. 79)

Talking to Ourselves. We are borne along, it seems, by a fundamental impulse to communicate, an impulse that Cooley (1902), for example, grounds in the human "need for social feeling" (p. 86). For Cooley, thought and the impulse to communicate "are like root and branch, two phases of a common growth so that the death of one presently involves that of the other" (p. 92). And if outer expression, in the form of overt speech or writing, is for some reason impracticable, this thought realizes itself on the imaginal plane in the form of an inner conversation. We speak to ourselves to accomplish a number of things. We chastise, encourage, and console ourselves in response to actions we perform or to events that befall us. We speak to ourselves to aid in the retention of information or experience. Perhaps we even speak to ourselves to keep ourselves company or, as Steiner (1978) suggests, "in order not to speak to others" (p. 64). In light of my remarks on the importance of expression and recognition, perhaps we also speak to ourselves to consummate some otherwise unformed experience or thought. More or less self-consciously in this case, we become an other to ourselves, fashioning an account of the experience,

perhaps even rehearsing some version of its telling, in the imagined presence of an addressee whose responsive understanding—whose sympathy, consolation, laughter, agreement, disagreement, questions, perhaps even expression of disbelief—we anticipate and somehow take into account in a way that shapes the form and content of this internal (sometimes even external) dialogue with ourselves. Perhaps we talk to ourselves, too, in order to establish the distinctiveness and continuity of our very identity. Steiner (1978) seems to suggest this much:

Quantitatively, there is every reason to believe that we speak inside and to ourselves more than we speak outward and to anyone else. Qualitatively, these manifest modes of self-address may enact absolutely primary and indispensable functions of identity; they test and verify our 'being there'. Taken together, internal and external discourse constitute the economy of existence, of our presentness. (p. 91)

So we talk to ourselves to ground our own presentness, to call forth our own selfhood. By invoking and provoking an other on the imaginal plane, I effect my own sense of separateness, I delineate my "I" contrastively against the backdrop of the other's responsiveness. But in the end it is perhaps not enough to have an imaginal addressee: "the response must come sooner or later or thought itself will perish. The imagination, in time, loses the power to create an interlocutor who is not corroborated by any fresh experience" (Cooley, 1902, pp. 94-95). We cannot talk only to ourselves indefinitely. "One inevitably seeks an audience, has to pour himself out to somebody" (Mead, 1934, p. 141). Sometimes we need real others to help us clarify what we are thinking or feeling. Sometimes even a mute listener will do: "Being heard as such is

already a dialogic relation" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 127). And we do need to be heard, for we cannot hear our own tune. We can hear ourselves no more than we can see our own bodies in motion as we move about the world.

Somebody, Somewhere: On the Function of the Superaddressee. To repeat, we need to be heard. We have, as James (1950a) proposes in connection with the social self, an instinctive tendency to get ourselves noticed. A similar theme runs through the writings of Bakhtin (1981,1984, 1986, 1990). Indeed, Bakhtin is no less explicit and impassioned than James in the manner in which he describes the urgent need for acknowledgment and recognition. In contrast to James, however, but certainly in keeping with the spirit of his claim, Bakhtin frames this need in more explicitly vocative terms, that is, as an inherent aspect of communicative, dialogical praxis. According to Bakhtin (1986), the nature of the word is such that it "always wants to be heard, always seeks responsive understanding, and does not stop at immediate understanding but presses on further and further (indefinitely)" (p.127). For both the word and, by implication, the human being who utters the word "there is nothing more terrible than a lack of response"(p. 127).

It is precisely in light of this deep need for audition that Bakhtin's (1986) notion of the superaddressee may be appraised. The need to posit the existence of a higher addressee, a "third" voice if you will, signals the possibility that understanding in actual, face-to-face dialogue is not a given, despite the common ground interlocutors may share. Dialogue between interlocutors may be the site of misunderstanding and even conflict; there is

always the real possibility that one may fail to be heard. Under such circumstances in particular, the superaddressee offers some redemption for a speaker, offers the hope that his or her message will get through. We might turn once again to James (1950a) for an elaboration of this notion. James' discussion of the "potential social self" seems particularly apposite to the Bakhtinian idea of the superaddressee. Like Bakhtin, James connects this notion to our moral and religious life.

When for motives of honor and conscience I brave the condemnation of my own family, club, and "set" . . . I am always inwardly strengthened in my course and steeled against the loss of my actual social self by the thought of other and better possible judges than those whose verdict goes against me now. The ideal social self which I thus seek in appealing to their decision may be very remote: it may be represented as barely as possible. I may not hope for its realization during my lifetime; I may even expect the future generations, which would approve me if they knew me, to know nothing about me when I am dead and gone. Yet still the emotion that beckons me on is indubitably the pursuit of an ideal social self, of a self that is at least worthy of approving recognition by the highest possible judging companion, if such companion there be. This self is the true, the intimate, the ultimate, the permanent Me which I seek. This judge is God, the Absolute Mind, the "Great Companion." (pp. 315-316)

James adds that we might understand the nature and function of prayer in this light. Praying is something we cannot help doing. It is an expression of the need to be recognized and acknowledged, to find personal meaning through some ideal other's receptive understanding. "The impulse to pray," says James, "is a necessary consequence of the fact that whilst the innermost of the empirical selves of a man is a Self of the social sort, it yet can find its only adequate Socius in an ideal world" (p. 316). As with Bakhtin, then, there is a sense that we cannot always reveal ourselves fully to an interlocutor who is

immediately on hand. The superaddressee, it appears, provides a sort of “loophole” out of the present, and respite from the failure to be heard by an actual interlocutor. Here is how James frames the point: “The humblest outcast on this earth can feel himself to be real and valid by means of this higher recognition. And, on the other hand, for most of us, a world with no such inner refuge when the outer social self failed and dropped from us would be the abyss of horror” (p. 316).

From the moment we come into the world, we are in some relation to other people (our parents, siblings, friends, teachers, and so on). As I have tried to show in this chapter, our sense of self is achieved not in our separation from these others but in our dialogues with them, in the recognition such dialogues afford. The self is neither whole nor self-sufficient nor ever in complete control, but constantly in need of the other for its own (inescapably provisional) dialogical completion.

CHAPTER 5

DIALOGUE AND OTHERNESS

The emphasis on the importance of otherness for dialogue is a unique, defining feature of the Bakhtinian view. Indeed, it is an emphasis that sets the Bakhtinian account apart from many other classic and contemporary conceptions of dialogue (Cheyne & Tarulli, 1999). The purpose of this chapter, accordingly, is to examine the nature of otherness and its role in dialogue in greater detail. In the hope of bringing more fully into relief the uniqueness of Bakhtin's claims in this area, I will pursue a comparative strategy. More specifically, I will address the question of otherness dialogue by contrasting the Bakhtinian view on this subject with that put forth in the writings of pragmatist philosopher George Herbert Mead (1934, 1936, 1964).

Bakhtin and Mead

In recent years, several scholars have noted points of convergence in the writings of Bakhtin and Mead (Holquist, 1990; Sampson, 1993; Shotter, 1993a; Todorov, 1984). Undeniably, Bakhtin and Mead begin with similar concerns. Each is critical, for example, of the individual-social dualism and the deeper epistemological dichotomies (mind-body, inner-outer) on which it rests. Against both rationalist and romanticist views which pit an inner, private world against an outer, social world, these thinkers approach the study of individuals in terms of relations rather than dichotomies. Each espouses an ontology of the social as opposed to the private, atomistic subject, arguing that there is no self

prior to a relation with an other. Each would agree, in other words, that

Selves can only exist in definite relationships to other selves. No hard-and-fast line can be drawn between our own selves and the selves of others. Since our own selves exist and enter as such into our experience only in so far as the selves of others exist and enter as such into our experience also. (Mead, 1934, p. 164)

Indeed, rather than positing a ready-made, individual consciousness that exists apart from human social activity, both Mead and Bakhtin argue that it is the social and cultural that gives rise to consciousness. Moreover, each of these thinkers places language and communication at the centre of his respective social ontology. Language, each contends, underlies all relations between self and other and constitutes the means through which human beings understand the world and become selves.

More significantly for present purposes, both Bakhtin and Mead uphold a conception of self erected around the idea of inner dialogue. Mead's thinking on this matter clearly reflects his roots in the pragmatist tradition. Mead's pragmatist forebear, Charles Sanders Peirce, had strongly defended a dialogical conception of consciousness. He often repeated, for example, that "all thought is dialogue" (quoted in Colapietro, 1989, p. xiv), and again, that "thinking always proceeds in the form of a dialogue—a dialogue between different phases of the ego" (1933, p. 6). In this same pragmatist tradition, Cooley (1902) insisted on the social-communicative foundations of thought and defended the view that at least two symbol-exchanging beings in interaction constitutes the basis of mindedness and selfhood. As Cooley (1902) observes, from children's overt conversations with imaginary playmates to the more

elaborated, sophisticated, and silent meditations of adults, a fundamental socialization of thought underlies thinking at any age. Accordingly, he writes that thought, at any age, is but a “perpetual conversation” (Cooley, 1902, p. 90). Following in this tradition, Mead (1934) also contends that the process of internal reflection is dialogically constituted and sustained. Pursuing a dramaturgical metaphor, he writes that

There is a field, a sort of inner forum, in which we are the only spectators and the only actors. In that field each one of us confers with himself. We carry on something of a drama. If a person retires to a secluded spot and sits down to think, he talks to himself. He asks and answers questions. He develops his ideas and arranges and organizes those ideas as he might in a conversation with somebody else. (Mead, 1936, p. 401)

Elsewhere, Mead (1964) is more explicit in pointing up the linguistic basis of this inner dialogue, arguing that “insofar as thought uses symbols, which are used in social intercourse, [it] is but an inner conversation” (p.146).

Despite this common point of departure, however, the specific paths that Mead and Bakhtin take, as well as their eventual destinations, are divergent—and in places even radically so. Below I explore some of these critical differences as they emerge more specifically in their respective accounts of the conditions and processes surrounding the notion of a dialogically constituted self. As I hope to show in the following analysis, the Meadian account of inner dialogue differs from the Bakhtinian view in terms of four critical, interrelated features: 1) positing unity in or sameness of meaning, rather than difference, as the enabling ground of dialogue; 2) equating progress in the development of self with the eradication of otherness; 3) conceiving the self’s (apparent) multiplicity in

systemic terms; and 4) conceptualizing the internalization process as one that entails the increasing loss of the other's particularity, and hence of the other's otherness. Each of these aspects of Mead's account overlooks or effaces the alterity of the other and by doing so dismantles the conditions which, from a Bakhtinian vantage point, are crucial for dialogue.

Sameness as the Enabling Ground of Dialogue. The pragmatist conception of dialogue is one that seeks to do justice to the notion of sympathy or fellow feeling. Peirce certainly follows this injunction in his contention that our interpersonal dialogues "are capable of generating such intimate unions among distinct selves as to be comparable to personal beings themselves" (Colapietro, 1989, p. 91). In taking this stand, Peirce is responding in particular to James's claim that we have privileged and direct access to the contents of our own minds, but are barred unconditionally from having knowledge of the contents of other minds. The stream of thought is, on Peirce's reading of James (see Colapietro, 1989), an isolated stream following its own course and utterly isolated from other streams. The further implication of this view, according to Peirce, is that we are each trapped in our own self-enclosed subjectivities, that we each inhabit a private, uncommunicable subjective world. In contrast to James, Peirce argues that communication between and interpenetration of minds is the norm. This possibility follows from the fact that the self is a sign. If the activity of signs (semiosis) is the essence of mindedness, and if it can be assumed, furthermore, that the life of a sign exceeds any of its particular instantiations, then it follows that the semiotically constituted mind need not be

taken as the exclusive property of, or as inherently residing in, any particular body. The mind, like the sign, is not confined in its being to any particular location. The sign can be at two places at once, and more specifically, it can be in each of our respective minds, where it can mean the same for each of us (Colapietro, 1989). "Two minds," writes Peirce, "can communicate only by becoming in so far one mind" (quoted in Colapietro, 1989, p. 104). While this fusion of self and other is no doubt incomplete, there is little denying that the barriers otherwise separating us are, on the Peircian view, effectively eroded by the word.

The notion that dialogue or communication presupposes this sort of intersubjectivity is similarly reflected in the writings of Cooley (1902).

Generally faithful to the spirit of the Peircean view, Cooley argues that the growth of personal ideas through conversation

implies a growing power of sympathy, of entering into and sharing the minds of other persons. To converse with another, through words, looks or other symbols, means to have more or less understanding or communion with him, to get on common ground and partake of his ideas and sentiments. (p. 136)

For Cooley as for Peirce, then, conversation or dialogue is premised on the shared apperceptive horizon of self and other. Not difference but the intersubjectivity achieved through sharing a common outlook is the enabling ground of dialogue.

The pragmatist emphasis on the sameness or unity of meaning that characterizes the dialogical situation is also evident in Mead's (1934, 1964) understanding of the communicative process. According to Mead's

communication model, when an individual making a vocal gesture understands and can anticipate the other's response to his or her gesture, that individual is capable of "significant communication" (or language). Such communication transpires through the use of what Mead calls "significant symbols." The defining feature of a significant symbol is its ability to affect the individual who utters it as it affects others. Meaningful or significant symbols, in other words, indicate the same to self and other, to speaker and listener. As Mead (1934) puts it, significant symbols "implicitly arouse in an individual making them the same responses which they explicitly arouse, or are supposed to arouse, in other individuals, the individuals to whom they are addressed" (p. 47). Mead wants to provide an analysis of meaning in terms of response and he imparts to a social gesture the status of a significant symbol only if it elicits the functionally identical response or attitude in its maker that it does in the other participants in the social act to whom it is addressed.

The commonality upon which significant communication is premised is also the basis of people's ability to introspect and carry on conversations with themselves or intrapsychologically; it is the very condition, in fact, that enables one to become an object to oneself—that is, to achieve self-consciousness. On Mead's view, a self emerges only when one can adopt the attitude or response of the other toward oneself. Hence, in order to be an object to myself I must have internalized the communicative process, the conversation of significant symbols. It is when a person "not only hears himself, but responds to himself, talks and replies to himself as truly as the other person replies to him, that we

have behavior in which the individuals become objects to themselves” (Mead, 1934, p.139). In other words, the use of significant symbols in inner speech allows me to take the other’s attitude toward myself and toward what is being thought about. In thought or inner speech, I hear and respond to myself just as another would hear and reply to me—and this, again, is precisely what allows me to be a self. According to Mead, the mechanism responsible for one’s ability to be an object to oneself is the ability to hear one’s words as others do. The vocal gesture is heard by the one making it “in the same physiological fashion as that in which it affects others. We hear our own vocal gestures as others hear them” (Mead, 1964, p.287). And again: “We can hear ourselves talking, and the import of what we say is the same to ourselves that it is to others” (Mead, 1934, p. 62). By hearing and being aware of our own vocal gesture, we arouse in ourselves the same response that it arouses in those who hear it, and hence we may respond to ourselves as does an other (i.e., take the role of another toward ourselves).

In conceiving of the communicative process as one that transpires through the use of significant symbols, Mead’s account presumes a virtual symmetry of interlocutors, of self and other. Indeed, the basis for the development of a self requires such symmetry. It is only through communication with socially shared, significant symbols that evoke the same response in self and other that one achieves a self. As a speaker I hear and respond to myself exactly as another would. I can only access the standpoint of the other—and hence achieve self-awareness—by sharing the listener’s

response to my vocal gesture, by duplicating the other's response.

Mead's emphasis on communication as a process that rests on common meanings is consonant with his broader social concerns and with his understanding, or vision, of human society. The necessity for such commonality stems, more precisely, from Mead's view of society as a cooperative enterprise. The social aim of communication is cooperative activity, the achievement of some shared social end. And according to Mead, shared meanings are the enabling foundation of cooperative, socially useful activity and for the coordination of society's goals. Any social act must be a collective one, one oriented toward a collective object, that is, one having common meaning to participants in the act. In Mead's framework, this system of common meanings is embodied in what he calls the generalized other, an abstract formulation of a societal ethos constructed by the individual by abstracting the attitudes and responses common to the group. The generalized other represents the organized attitudes or responses of all members of the group to which the individual belongs.

There is little doubting that dialogic communication involves the interplay of both commonality and difference, of what is familiar and what is other. Either extreme—absolute difference or absolute identity of perspectives—would signal the end of dialogue. In the former instance, dialogue is impossible, as there would exist no common topic or language of exchange. In the latter, dialogue is unnecessary, as nothing new is likely to emerge from an encounter of identical perspectives.

In stressing communication as a process involving the exchange of significant symbols, Mead's view generally fails to establish the importance for dialogue of the otherness of the other, that is, of the capacity of the other to respond differently. For Mead, dialogue requires that self and other share a common horizon of meaning. In this regard, Mead betrays the traditional concern of linguistics with "'language' itself and the logic specific to it in its capacity as a common ground, as that which makes possible dialogic interaction" (1984, p. 183). Accordingly, Mead rarely considers social situations where one may be required to put oneself in the place of another who occupies a different interpretive horizon than one's own. Dialogue is never considered across such differences, across the distance introduced by the other's otherness. As Gurevitch (1990) observes, role taking is always seen as an ever-present possibility for Mead, something rarely fraught with problems and difficulties and the potential for misunderstanding. Moreover, in stressing the fact that the other shares the same response to the speaker's utterance, Mead privileges the single voice of the author of the significant symbol. In this case, it is the speaker who ultimately controls meaning. The speaker never really gets outside himself and the listener enjoys no essential surplus, no direct power to mean differently. The other's voice is not fully autonomous; it is a reflection of the voice of the "author" of the utterance—a state of affairs that seems generally in keeping with the Hegelian notion of "self-recognition in the other." The failure to acknowledge the possibility that the other may respond differently amounts to a denial of the otherness of the other.⁵⁷

On the Bakhtinian view, in contrast, dialogue is not conceived as a sort of harmonious colloquy in which there reigns a single meaning. Dialogue between interlocutors, or, equally, among the voices in inner speech, may be the site of misunderstanding and even conflict. These speaking voices must not, and never do, completely understand one another, for without difference, without the creative tension of different voices, be they the voices of actual or presumed others, dialogue dissolves into reduplication, into the celebration of sameness. As Bakhtin scholar Caryl Emerson (1984) notes, “Two speakers must . . . remain only partially satisfied with each other’s replies, because the continuation of dialogue is in large part dependent on neither party knowing exactly what the other means” (p. xxxii). The unfinalizability or inconclusiveness of the dialogue hinges, in part, on misapprehension, on the fact that two perspectives never perfectly coincide—in short, on otherness. Consequently, even when Bakhtin and Mead are speaking of dialogue, they are not speaking from the same horizon of understanding. Epigrammatically, one might characterize the difference in the following way: for Mead, dialogue is the sharing of the created, while for Bakhtin it is the sharing in creation. For Bakhtin, dialogue is much more open-ended and a much riskier business. The risk and danger lie precisely in the confrontation with an other whose divergence from one's own perspective, whose otherness, carries the potential for transformation in one's understanding of the world and of oneself.

The Fate of Difference. Mead’s understanding of difference, like his understanding of the communication process, has its roots in the pragmatist

tradition. Before Mead, Cooley (1902) had argued that while shared meaning is required for comprehension, difference between interlocutors is required for interest. He writes:

We cannot feel strongly toward the totally unlike because it is unimaginable, unrealizable; nor yet toward the wholly like because it is stale—identity must always be dull company. The power of other natures over us lies in a stimulating difference which causes excitement and opens communication, in ideas similar to our own but not identical, in states of mind attainable but not actual. (p. 153)

Hence, while a radical or absolute otherness would preclude dialogue, complete identity between interlocutors would make for an unproductive tedium. Accordingly, Cooley concludes that there must be a “resembling difference” (p. 154) in order to revitalize thought. The difference that Cooley recognizes as important for outer dialogue, however, fails to be considered as a needed, uneliminable feature of the internal conversations we hold with ourselves. Here, Cooley gives the example of one whose “personal symbols” may stand in a conflictual or discrepant relation. One may be torn, for example, between the competing impulses of contributing to a charitable cause, on the one hand, and using one’s savings to take one’s family on a summer outing, on the other. In such cases, says Cooley, our imagination is beset by what appears to us as the mutual exclusivity of these impulses, this usually at the expense of our noting “common elements.” But it is precisely in the appeal to such common elements, argues Cooley, that these “apparently conflicting personalities” (p. 130) can be harmonized. One achieves this reconciliation by invoking the moral sentiment of justice or right: “Thus I may

say to myself, 'I can afford a dollar, but ought not, out of consideration for my family, to give more,' and may be able to imagine all parties accepting this view of the case" (Cooley, p. 130). And so the dissonance which the individual experiences as intolerable is resolved in the positing of a higher-order unity that consists in the appeal to a sort of moral universal. Cooley adds that the advent of this more universally valid and unifying perspective is a sign of psychological progress: it is movement from a weaker to a stronger self-understanding.

The conciliatory ethos reflected in Cooley's account finds an even more ardent defence in the writings of Mead (1934, 1964). Consider, for example, Mead's (1964) discussion of the process of moral deliberation. Mead assumes that as an "organization of habit" the self is not typically conscious. Sometimes, however, a problem appears which causes disorganization in the self, causing character to be compromised, and hence occasioning conscious efforts at self-reconstruction: "When . . . an essential problem appears, there is some disintegration in this organization, and different tendencies appear in reflective thought as different voices in conflict with each other. (1964, p. 147). This gives rise to a moral process that is productive of a "new self". Here is how Mead describes the ideal resolution:

Where . . . the problem is objectively considered, although the conflict is a social one, it should not resolve itself into a struggle between selves, but into such a reconstruction of the situation that different and enlarged and more adequate personalities may emerge. . . . In the reflective analysis, the old self should enter upon the same terms with the selves whose roles are assumed, and the test of the reconstruction is found in the fact that all the personal interests are adequately recognized in a new social situation.

(pp. 147-148)

What is particularly important to note here is the conciliatory nature of this process of psychological reconstruction: “Solution is reached by the construction of a new world harmonizing the conflicting interests into which enters the new self” (Mead, 1964, p. 149).

The Hegelian teleology of reconciliation and consensus is similarly reflected in Mead’s (1934) discussion of conflict in society. Mead asks us to consider the case where one finds oneself in conflict with the group of which one is a member. Upon encountering the “conflicting experience,” the individual is faced with the need to exercise his or her reflective intelligence and freedom as a thinker. Through such free reflection the individual proposes a new idea with the potential to change the generalized other. In this regard, Mead says that when the individual opposes his or her own group, the individual does so by appealing to a more universally valid community that he or she holds to be superior to her own: “The only way in which we can react against this disapproval of the entire community is by setting up a higher sort of community which in a certain sense out-votes the one we find” (Mead, 1934, pp. 167-168). Given the existing generalized other, the individual proposes a new, private perspective or kind of social action which, if successful, will be accepted by others. The problem is resolved, in other words, with the reconciliation of the private and community perspective. For present purposes, what is especially critical to note about this process is that conflict is resolved through the formation of a more inclusive consensus, a consensus

reflected in the construction of a more encompassing, and therefore more adequate, social whole or generalized other. As Mead (1934) describes it,

the way in which any such social reconstruction is actually effected by the minds of the individuals involved is by a more or less abstract intellectual extension of the boundaries of the given society to which these individuals all belong, and which is undergoing the reconstruction—an extension resulting in a larger social whole in terms of which the social conflicts that necessitate the reconstruction of the given society are harmonized or reconciled, and by reference to which, accordingly, these conflicts can be solved or eliminated. (1934, pp. 308-309)

According to Mead, creative social change always proceeds in the direction of greater universality.⁵⁸ Indeed, Mead goes so far as to say that social genius describes an individual “who is able to take in more than others of an act in process, who can put himself in relation with whole groups in the community whose attitudes have not entered into the lives of others in the community” (1934, p. 256). He refers to Jesus, Socrates, the Buddha as individuals who were able to change the course of history by, in effect, expanding the generalized other in the direction of a universal society, by making their own experience universal and by mediating between social groups and ecumenical movements.

The notion that social change or progress always proceeds in the direction of greater universality finds its perhaps most impressive expression in Mead’s (1934) eschatological vision or historical ideal of the “universal human society,” an ideal he in fact expresses in terms of the potentials inherent in the communicational process itself:

The human social ideal—the ideal or ultimate goal of human social

progress—is the attainment of a universal human society in which all human individuals would possess a perfected social intelligence, such that all social meanings would each be similarly reflected in their respective individual consciousnesses—such that the meaning of any one individual’s acts or gestures . . . would be the same for any other individual whatever who responded to them. (Mead, 1934, p. 310)

In Leibnizian fashion, it would appear, Mead dreams of a system of perfect and universal communion. The universalism, if not the utopianism, of this vision is in many respects inscribed in the communication process itself. “Language,” writes Mead (1934), “provides a universal community” (p. 283) in that it functions, by definition, as a means of getting beyond ourselves and accessing a more generalized experience, a system of common meanings. Indeed, Mead (1934) defines the most inclusive abstract group to which we belong as the

logical universe of discourse (or system of universally significant symbols) . . . which enables the largest conceivable number of individuals to enter into some sort of social relation . . . a relation arising from the universal functioning of gestures as significant symbols in the general human social process of communication. (pp. 157-158)

Here, Mead is willing to call a significant symbol “universal” to the extent that it can be understood in the same way by anyone who might be in the same communicative situation in which it is used. Signification is not limited to the particular situation in which language is used, but rather “acquires universal meaning. Even if the two are the only ones involved, the form in which it is given is universal—it would have the same meaning to any other who might find himself in the same position” (Mead, 1964, p. 245).

Within Mead’s model, the other is not conceived as someone who preserves herself as other in dialogue; rather, the communicative process is one

that effaces the other's alterity. At best, the other's otherness proves to be a productive impetus that, in the course of dialogue and through some ineluctable synthesizing process, is sublimated or negated in the more encompassing identity of a unified higher consciousness or idea. Here, Mead shows his implicit reliance on a Hegelian conception of otherness. On the Hegelian view, otherness is a quality of the world that stands to be dialectically overcome in the process of development. The universal language to which Mead aspires is ultimately a monologic language in which otherness is absent, having been superceded by the construction of universal meanings. It is an ideal language that, to use a Bakhtinian locution, has suppressed the "tension-filled environment of alien words" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276).

For Bakhtin, in contrast, it is precisely this sort of tension and difference that productively enables dialogue and hence that neither can nor should be overcome. Difference or otherness is not conceived as the antithetical pole in a self-other dialectic monologically and inexorably grinding out more encompassing, synthetic wholes. Bakhtin (1984) rejected Hegel's synthesizing dialectic, for "the unified, dialectically evolving spirit, understood in Hegelian terms, can give rise to nothing but a philosophical monologue" (p. 26). As Bakhtin (1984) writes,

there can be no question of synthesis; one can talk only of the victory of one or another voice, or a combination of voices in those places where they agree. It is not the idea as a monologic deduction, even if dialectical, but the event of an interaction of voices [that is critical]. (1984, 279)

On a Bakhtinian view, then, dialogic interactions are not necessarily aimed

toward the achievement of consensus or reconciliation, as on the Meadian view, but rather may even precipitate alienation: We come up against something other, there ensues an aporia of sorts, which introduces uncertainty into self-understanding and hence the otherness needed for dialogue.

Multiplicity and the Will to System. Mead's (1934) theory clearly acknowledges the presence and importance of multiplicity both within society and within the self. In his discussion of the diversity among individuals, for example, he acknowledges that the common social origin and constitution of selves "does not preclude wide individual differences and variations among them " (p. 210). Each individual, according to Mead, reflects the social whole from a particular and unique standpoint, with no individual mirroring the community in the same way. Hence, socialization produces both common, shared traits and unique traits that distinguish one individual from others. The need for commonality, of course, stems from the need for cooperation in the pursuit of common social objectives. Individuals need to be able to coordinate with others if society is to function as an integrated whole, and hence the internalization of a common symbolic structure is required.

On Mead's view, however, multiplicity within society is seen largely as a functional multiplicity, that is, in terms of functionally differentiated roles and skills. Moreover, these differentiated roles and skills are systemically interrelated and hence form an organized unity. "Society," writes Mead (1934), "is the interaction of these selves, and an interaction that is only possible if out of their diversity unity arises. We are indefinitely different from each other, but

our differences make interaction [i.e., working toward a common end] possible. Society is unity in diversity” (p. 359). Whatever their differences in other respects, then, it remains the case that individuals need to be able to coordinate with others if society is to function as an integrated whole.

Rather than a conflictual multiplicity, Mead stresses and advocates a harmonious combination of functional differentiated roles and skills, a pluralism without conflict or misunderstanding. Mead acknowledges the value of difference and multiplicity only to the extent that it reflects or is capable of being contained within the operations of a unified, overarching social system. Pluralism in any other sense, say as disparate and conflicting multiplicity of voices and perspectives, can only compromise—indeed, would be antithetical to—the achievement of some constructive, social end. Understandably, then, Mead downplays individual and group differences that do not support “the system.” A diversity incapable of being contained in a common social concern could only breed chaos and social disorganization, both in society and, by implication, in the self.

This last point is a critical one and hence warrants some elaboration. Mead argues that in the building of a self the social process is “taken up” in the experience of the individual. Inner life “is socially organized by the importation of the social organization of the outer world” (1934, p. 141). Hence, differentiation in the self is related to differentiation in the social collective and in particular in the multiplicity of generalized others that reflect the many groups in society. As people may hold membership in several

different groups, they have multiple generalized others and hence multiple selves. "A multiple personality," says Mead, "is in a certain sense normal" (p. 142). In short, as the structure of the self reflects the organization of society, whatever multiplicity inheres in the social world will have its analogue on the plane of the self. Again, however, we need to ask: What kind of multiplicity is this? In view of the preceding arguments, it is clear that Mead conceives of the self's multiplicity in systemic terms. Corresponding to his vision of social organization is a unified, systemically integrated self. The self's multiple aspects and roles are mutually complementing, all interrelated in a common deep structure that goes by the name of the generalized other. The great value of the internalization of the generalized other is that it allows for greater coordination of society's activities and the "increased efficiency of the individual as a member of the group" (Mead, 1934, p. 179). Moreover, as an internalized abstraction that reflects what is common to all, the generalized other ensures that the individual is not just a very loosely arranged, unintegrated aggregate of roles, and patterns of particularistic self-other interactions. The inclusiveness and hence also the unity of the self becomes increasingly established as one incorporates a wider and wider array of complexly organized self-other role relationships (family, peers, co-workers, the church, the community, the society, and so on). Nor does the multiplicity attendant on the construction of multiple generalized others preclude the existence of a more overarching, unified self wherein these otherwise diverse generalized others are combined. Indeed, Mead believes in the value of such

inclusiveness and, as I noted above, defines ethical progress precisely in terms of the formation of universalistic selves.

Bakhtin agrees with Mead that the organization of subjective life reflects the organization of the sociocultural world one inhabits. A critical difference between these thinkers, however, lies in their respective conceptions of that social organization. In his conception of the generalized other as a rather monolithic entity (Meltzer, 1972), Mead upholds a monologic view of society. Consistent with this assumption, Mead depicts the internalization of the social-communicative process as one that entails growing into a unitary language. In this respect, Mead appears to follow the Saussurean view in presupposing both a “unity of language” and “the unity of an individual person realizing himself in this language” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 264). Societies are not, on Mead’s view, characterized essentially by a struggle among languages and their attendant conceptions of the world; nor, by implication, is the self (cf. Loriggio, 1990).

A notion like the “universal language community” proposed by Mead fails adequately to acknowledge the cultural pluralism of complex modern societies, the fact that cultural life is characterized by a conflicting, and irreducible, multiplicity of discourses. From a Bakhtinian standpoint, verbal-cultural life is not to be conceived, in fact or ideally, as the site of a singular language. Bakhtin resists the view that social and linguistic communities constitute undifferentiated, organic wholes. Rather than see such communities in terms of solidarity, as does Mead, Bakhtin focuses on diversity, on

ideological struggle, on the suppression of marginal voices by the discourses of officialdom. Accordingly, rather than stress the stable, abstract, systemic aspects of language, Bakhtin (1981) sees language and culture as the material site of a constant struggle between what he calls centripetal forces and centrifugal forces. Centripetal forces are those that strive toward unification, toward overcoming the multiplicity of cultural languages and discourses. A unitary language, such as the ideal language proposed by Mead, makes its presence felt in the manner by which it imposes limits on socio-linguistic diversity and in its guarantee of a certain maximum of mutual understanding between the members of any given linguistic community. The effect of such forces is reflected more specifically in the establishment and regularization of national languages and of standards for correct and incorrect usage. For example, we might regard the Publication Manual of the APA as a text that, in its mandate to regularize or standardize scholarly communication among psychologists, exerts a centripetal force on their scholarly discourse. Moreover, in its rather exclusive emphasis on guidelines for the reporting of empirical research, the manual implicitly partakes in a gesture of exclusion or marginalization. Written works that fail to conform to the dictates of proper form, content, and style may be at a disadvantage as far as acceptance for publication is concerned. Understandably, then, centripetal forces may also be regarded as the “official” forces that seek to impose a unifying order on the otherwise diverse and messy social world.

But Bakhtin reminds us also that language (and hence culture) is

characterized by an inescapable heterogeneity. Language is essentially plural—always languages. Language is unitary only if considered abstractly, say, as a reified grammatical system of normative functions, as in Saussure, or as a “universal grammar,” as in Chomsky (1957). But when we look at living language, that is, at language as it exists in the contingency and particularity of the concrete communicative event, it becomes clear that there exist diverse and conflicting voices and value systems in the social-cultural landscape. Accordingly, opposed to centripetal forces we find the “unofficial,” centrifugal forces of language and culture. Where centripetal forces seek to unify, centrifugal forces tend to disrupt this imposed order. Within any given linguistic community, for example, there can exist a number of distinct national languages (e.g., French, English, Italian, etc.). Bakhtin insists, however, that any national language is never unitary and that within any such language there exist uneliminable centrifugal forces. The presence of such forces is evident in the fact that each national language is internally stratified into diverse “social languages.” Bakhtin (1981) defines a social language as “a concrete socio-linguistic belief system that defines a distinct identity for itself within the boundaries of a [national] language” (p. 356). These social languages constitute

specific points of view on the world, forms for conceptualizing the world in words, specific world views, each characterized by its own objects, meanings and values. As such they all may be juxtaposed to one another, mutually supplement one another, contradict one another and be interrelated dialogically. (pp. 292-293)

As examples of such languages, Bakhtin (1981) mentions

social dialects, characteristic group behavior, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generation and age groups, tendentious languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions, languages that serve the specific sociopolitical purposes of the day, even of the hour. (1981, p. 262-263)

Each social group, then, speaks its own “social dialect” which reflects certain shared values and ideologies. Bakhtin’s (1981) term for this linguistic-ideological diversity, and for the centrifugal forces exerted by this diversity, is “heteroglossia.” The term implies that cultures or societies are not unified, monolithic entities, but rather the sites of linguistic and social diversity, characterized by an intense struggle among coexisting voices and their corresponding views of the world. It is precisely the interplay and conflict of these sociolinguistic perspectives or voices that constitute the life of a given community and that problematizes any unity that might otherwise be posited in cultural life.⁵⁹

For Bakhtin, the psyche, like language and culture, cannot be described as a system. It too is the site of tension and the play between centripetal and centrifugal forces. Rather than being understood as a univocal, self-instructed ratiocinator the person is supplied with heteroglot voices, opinions, and motifs to animate and enrich thought with such sources of creativity as inconsistency, conflict, and ambiguity: that which, in short, renders both inner and outer dialogue possible and necessary. Consciousness as a “field of battle for others’ voices” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 88). The self is a “zone of intense struggle among several individual consciousnesses” (p. 89). It is precisely this internal divergence and conflict that provides the rhetorical conditions for vocative

exchange and the construction of self-understanding. In this regard, the self is much more loosely organized phenomenon than we find in Mead. The self is hardly a unity or a system, but rather an aggregate or relational ensemble of differentiated, opposing, and—as I elaborate more fully below—particularistic voices that interanimate one another dialogically and whose idiosyncratic configuration is definitive of one’s individuality. This internal division is not a fragmentation of the self but the basis for its dialogic expansion.

On the Bakhtinian framework we may still speak of a unity in the self, but doing so requires that we move away from a systemic conception of unity. A dialogical understanding of unity suggests neither systematic interrelations among the components or voices of the self, nor the existence of a central, core, or general self that ensures the continuity and stability of identity. Rather, the notion of a dialogic unity suggests only that the voices of the self engage and interanimate one another in some often unpredictable way. They are not to be thought of as a collection of insular, windowless, non-interacting monads, nor are they to be conceived as deterministically or hierarchically related aspects of a self-system. It is a forever provisional unity defined by the unsystematizable relation between the voices that comprise our self-understanding.

Abstraction and the Loss of Voice. For Mead (1934), internalization is a process that entails a progressive overcoming of the constraints imposed by particularistic others and a correlative movement toward abstraction. Consider, in this connection, Mead’s notion of the generalized other. In his development of

this cornerstone concept, Mead seeks to provide a mechanism that accounts for the stability of the self in the face of particularistic social situations. Self-control and character involve moving away from the particularity of self and others and responding instead to the more generalized perspective that encompasses the particular others who comprise the social situation. Achieving stability and autonomy for the self, as well as “self-control” and “character,” is synonymous with moving away from the particularity and toward a more generalized perspective that abstractly encompasses the particularities of any given social situation.

The developmental progression toward a more stable and autonomous self is reflected more specifically in Mead’s account of the play and game stages in the development of self. Each of these phases is characterized by a particular form of role taking, and hence by a particular way of being an object to oneself. During the play stage the child engages in the most elementary form of role-taking or of being another to oneself. So for example, in childhood role-playing, a child may haphazardly play at being a mother, a teacher, a police officer. The definitive feature of this form of play is that the other enters the child’s experience as a specific or particularistic other. And it is precisely because the level of self-consciousness associated with play is constituted through a process of taking the attitude of particular others, that Mead sees the young child’s self as unstable and unpredictable. At this play stage the self is a supremely shifting phenomenon, changing in accordance with whatever particular other’s perspective the child assumes toward himself or herself.

While this, according to Mead, contributes to "the charm of childhood," it also reflects its "inadequacy." In his or her lack of predictability from moment to moment, the child at this stage is simply undependable, lacking a definite character and personality.

In the phase of the game, in contrast, there is no haphazard quality to the taking of roles. The child assumes a definite position, a position defined more specifically by the child's organization of the roles, actions, and expectations of other participants in the game. In the more complex stage of the game, the child is required to internalize the role of all others in the game, as well as the system of rules which governs the game and its various roles. It is at this stage that the child organizes and generalizes the attitudes and responses of particular others to form a broader community perspective, that is, a symbolized unity that comprises and brings together all the stances of the participants—in short, a generalized other. It is this organized, systematic unity that controls the actions of each individual in the game. According to Mead (1934), it is only at the stage of the game, when the child can look at herself from the standpoint of the generalized other, that the child attains "self-consciousness in the full sense of the term" (p. 195). The social responses embodied in this other are the abstract attitudes that "constitute just what we term a man's character. They give him what we term his principles" (p. 163). Developing a complete, unified self, then, requires that we disentangle ourselves from the attitudes of particular others, for our reliance on them is, in the end, too limiting and constraining: it precludes autonomy and compromises

the authenticity of principled self-expression.

On the Meadian framework, it is precisely the supplanting—over the course of development—of diverse, particularistic standpoints by a unified, generalized other defines the arrival of mature, abstract thought. The following passage vividly describes this developmental process:

Thus the child can think about his conduct as good or bad only as he reacts to his own acts in the remembered words of his parents. Until this process has been developed into the abstract process of thought, self-consciousness remains dramatic, and the self which is a fusion of the remembered actor and his accompanying chorus is somewhat loosely organized and very clearly social. Later the inner stage changes into the forum and workshop of thought. The features and intonations of the *dramatis personae* fade out and the emphasis falls upon the meaning of the inner speech. . . . But the mechanism remains social, and at any moment the process may become personal. (Mead, 1964, p. 146)

Children who are mired in the particularity of play, who engage in mental conversations with imaginary companions and take the role of concrete others toward themselves, do not have at their disposal the rational and objective analytic lens that mature thinkers possess and use for understanding the world and themselves. It is in conversing internally with the generalized other, as opposed to images of specific acquaintances, that we attain “the levels of abstract thinking, and that impersonality, that so-called objectivity that we cherish” (Mead, 1964, p. 288). This objectivity is built into the generalized other, indeed defines this other; that is, because it is an abstract principle reflecting the organized views of the wider social system, it somehow combines the multiple perspectives of the many into an integrated oneness, and as a result of this systemic fusion achieves greater objectivity than the

standpoint of any particular individual considered apart from the systemic whole. With increasing social experience and symbolic knowledge, the individual becomes capable of seeing the world in its larger, more universal aspect.

As we have seen, Mead's understanding of the internalization process entails a progressive overcoming of the constraints imposed by particularistic others via the construction of an increasingly abstract generalized other. Here, Mead once again exhibits an indebtedness to Hegel, and more specifically to a Hegelian conception of Bildung (education or self-formation). The main goal of Bildung, as conceived by Hegel, is to overcome immediacy through thought of the universal. As Wood (1998) puts the point, "If there is a central . . . thesis underlying Hegel's general theory of education, it is probably that education or culture consists fundamentally in disciplining what is particular or individual in the human personality so that it conforms to what is universal" (p. 313). For Hegel, Bildung is a process that involves overcoming the otherness of concrete particularity and immediacy by way of the concept. In this respect, Hegel's conception of Bildung involves

the power to abstract from, transform, and order previously acquired concrete knowledge. It is the kind of education that leads the individual to internalize a variety of specific experiences in order to overcome their specificity by schematizing and then expressing them again as general precepts. (Smith, 1988, p. 19)

On the Hegelian account, by acquiring a rational and articulate and defensible understanding of what was previously given as familiar or immediate, the mind acquires an independence or freedom that allows it to rise above mere feelings

and intuitions. “Only in this freedom is the will completely with itself, because it has reference to nothing but itself, so that every relationship of dependence on something other than itself is thereby eliminated” (Hegel, as quoted in Wood, 1998, p. 302).

Consistent with this formulation, Mead presents internalization as a process that abstracts out the voices and the relationships among voices until the person becomes an autonomous and principled individual with the capacity for independent thinking, principled decision making within formal institutional frameworks, and effective mastery of the world. It is in light of this emphasis on abstraction, moreover, that Mead’s failure to consider the affective dimension of the self might be understood. Mead’s account of the self is a relentlessly rational one. Identifying the self with self-consciousness, Mead leaves no role for affective experience in the development of self. He writes, for example, that “[s]elf-consciousness, rather than affective experience with its motor accompaniments, provides the core and primary structure of the self, which is thus essentially a cognitive rather than an emotional phenomenon” (Mead, 1934, p. 173). In a world of abstract, generalized others, in a world approached from the standpoint of “that so-called objectivity that we cherish” (Mead, 1964, p. 288), affect could serve no purpose other than to impart to the other a concrete, human face, to make of the other a real, embodied interlocutor, and thereby immerse one in the (regressive) constraints and dependencies of the fully contextualized dialogic situation where, in Levinasian terms, the other demands to be heard in all his particularity and otherness. Hence to call the

self's relation to the generalized other a dialogue seems somewhat misplaced, at least from a Bakhtinian perspective, unless of course we were willing to extend the term to actions and thought performed under the weight of what essentially amounts to disembodied—and hence voiceless—abstraction. Mead's generalized other has about as much personality, as much fleshy existence, as a categorical imperative. The generalized other is not an other at all.

Bakhtin (1986) notes that the dialogic relation between the uniquely contexted horizons occupied by interlocutors is too often disregarded as the site of meaning and creativity. He says that frequently investigators approach meaning in dialogue by invoking “an abstract position of a third party that is identified with the objective position as such, with the position of some ‘scientific cognition’” (p. 143). This, it would appear, is precisely the role of the generalized other. This abstract other stands in an authoritative position vis-à-vis the interlocutors and is what imbues their individual gestures with meaning. Indeed, in describing the generalized other, Mead notes that it embodies a means of moving away from a dependence on the strictures of particularistic others and of appraising oneself from the standpoint of impersonal or objective standards. With increasing social experience and symbolic knowledge, the individual becomes capable of seeing the world and the self in their larger, more universal aspects.

Bakhtin (1986) certainly does not deny the utility of adopting this third-party position. More specifically, he claims that such a stance

is quite justified when one person can assume another's position, when a person is completely replaceable. But it is justified only in those situations, and when solving those problems, where the integral and unrepeatable individuality of the person is not required, that is, when a person, so to speak, is specialized, reflecting only a part of his individuality that is detached from the whole, when he is acting not as I myself, but "as an engineer," "as a physicist," and so forth. In the area of abstract scientific cognition and abstract thought, such a replacement of one person with another, that is, abstraction from the I and thou, is possible (but even here, probably, only up to a certain point). In life as the object of thought (abstract thought), man in general exists and a third party exists, but in the most vital, experienced life only I, thou, and he exist. (pp. 143-144)

What Bakhtin is saying here is that concrete value is to be found in the equally concrete dialogical situation facing self and other. The appeal to an abstract third party or societal standard stands to transcribe away the importance to meaning and value of the encounter of uniquely contexted interlocutors. By advocating just such an approach, what Mead's account loses is precisely the eventness of the dialogical encounter. For Mead, after all, the actual other who responds is not important in his or her specific, concrete otherness. It is not the particularity of the situation that is of interest to Mead, but rather the way in which the gesture speaks to our membership in a larger social whole. Mead establishes this common membership as the very basis for the convertibility of self and other. Disparate and particularized voices are collapsed into an all-encompassing system, one that can be comprehended and fully contained by a single, abstract consciousness analogous to the Hegelian conception of Spirit.

As noted earlier, Bakhtin is critical of the Hegelian model. Bakhtin's antipathy to dialectics, for example, is revealed in the following notebook entry:

Dialogue and dialectics. Take a dialogue and remove the voices (the

partitioning of voices), remove the intonations (emotional and individualizing ones), carve out abstract concepts and judgments from living words and responses, cram everything into one abstract consciousness—and that's how you get dialectics. (p. 147)

In keeping with these anti-dialectical sentiments, Bakhtin presents an account of the internalization process in which language enters and constitutes the human psyche as a diversity of appropriated voices or perspectives engaged in inner dialogue. The multiple perspectives we carry on the world and the self are always spoken, always carried in a particular voice. The notion that the language of the psyche takes the form of different voices that a person has heard in his or her sociocultural world is a way of embodying or personifying the speaking subject, of returning us more specifically to the site of language in use. “Voice” brings us to the dialogical event. The particularity and otherness of these voices, moreover, is never completely overtaken in the course of ontogeny by a progressively decontextualized and abstract process of thought. Understanding this last point requires that we take a closer look at Bakhtin’s views on the process by which we internalize or appropriate the words, discourse, and voices of others (see also Chapter 7).⁶⁰

Bakhtin’s account of the internalization process is concerned with the way we hear others’ words and voices and make them “our own.” According to Bakhtin (1981), a word “becomes ‘one’s own’ only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention” (p. 293). The conspicuous quotation marks around the expression “one’s own” are reminders,

however, that the individual speaker is never singularly in possession or control of the meaning of his or her utterance, for meaning, as Bakhtin's metalinguistic theory of the utterance suggests, is always a collaborative accomplishment; a speaker's intention always passes through a complex web of other's past and current intentions and meanings and motivations. What this bracketing of "one's own" is meant further to suggest is that the appropriation of the other's word is only ever partial and incomplete. The other's word becomes "mine" without ever losing its otherness. The word is always, as Bakhtin says, "half someone else's" (1981, p. 293).

The enduringly partial nature of one's appropriation of another's discourse stems from the fact that the word always belongs to others before it is appropriated. As Bakhtin (1981) writes,

Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions; it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own. (pp. 293-294)

In imbibing the words of others I am not internalizing abstract words or forms of discourse but concrete words and voices (Tappan, 1991). Words come to us precisely as concrete, embodied voices—the voices of parents, siblings, friends, peers, teachers, acquaintances, books, television characters, movie stars. Words are encountered in the context of their specific use by specific others in the process of accomplishing specific ends. Hence, in making a word my own and using it for my own purposes, I must take it out of that complex environment of previous usages and intentions. This process of adapting the word to my own

intentions is not always an easy feat.

Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated—overpopulated—with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process. (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 293-294)

The word is resistant and carries an autonomy of its own, bearing within it the echoes and traces of others' meanings. The word carries the memory, the discursive echoes of "its transfer from one mouth to another, from one context to another context, from one social collective to another, from one generation to another generation" and hence "cannot completely free itself from the power of these concrete contexts into which it has entered" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 202). The words we internalize and use in our inner and outer speech remain partly other; they carry an evaluative tone and ideology of their own and so continue to move in directions that reflect alien intentions that are not always consonant with our own. Because it is constituted both by pre-existing meanings and the intentions of the other in the dialogue, the utterance is inescapably polysemous. "My voice gives the illusion of unity to what I say; I am, in fact, constantly expressing a plenitude of meanings, some intended, others of which I am unaware" (Holquist, 1981, p. xx)—a notion that certainly complicates Mead's assumptions about unified meaning. Language is never so pliable that it can be unproblematically adapted to the speaker's unique purpose. The enduring and inescapable otherness of the word is a paradoxical necessity—paradoxical because the appropriated word of others is simultaneously the self's and the other's. And it is, again, the residual autonomy of the other's word, its existential

surplus vis-à-vis self—its otherness—that productively enables the dialogic relation to unfold.

Polyphony and the Self

Having established the relevance of otherness to a Bakhtinian account of dialogue, I want to conclude this chapter with a brief discussion of Bakhtin's (1984) notion of polyphony—a notion that clearly suggests the importance of otherness for genuine dialogue. Polyphony is a term that Bakhtin uses in a literary-theoretical context to describe a form of interaction between the voice of an author and that of her characters. According to Bakhtin, the relation between the author's voice and the characters' voices can take at least two forms: monologic and polyphonic. In monologic or homophonic literary works, the author enjoys "ultimate semantic authority," by which Bakhtin means that the author's omniscient intentions and authorial vision are the source and foundation of the work's meaning. Accordingly, the author of a monologic work creates and approaches the perspectives embodied by his or her characters in a way that finalizes them, that is, in a way that sees them merely as instances of a perspective that is typical to a person or social group of this or that sort. Here, a character's autonomy, creativity, and freedom are essentially closed off by the monologic voice of the author; the characters' voices are relegated to the role of instruments with which to articulate the author's own ideological viewpoint. There is no sense that the author is engaging her characters' perspectives in a reciprocal fashion, that she is

allowing them to speak to her in a way that might challenge or surprise her. In short, in a monologic literary work the other is not construed as an independent voice whose difference from the author's might constitute the enabling ground of a dialogically emergent meaning. Indeed, the other's typicality and predictability divests the other of her otherness and hence of any power actively to contribute to the achievement of meaning.⁶¹

In contrast to the monologic author's text, there is the polyphonic novel, which, on Bakhtin's literary-historical analysis, came most explicitly to fruition in Dostoevsky's writings. Part of the explicit "artistic design" of a polyphonic novel is to reflect the diversity of socio-ideological perspectives in society. On the plane of the novel, this diversity is captured in the plurality of characters' voices. These voices, more importantly, are unmerged: they are not subordinated to any singular, overarching authorial intention. Indeed, in polyphonic works the author's voice becomes but one of many voices, enjoying no essential privilege or authority with respect to meaning. In such works, the characters are

not voiceless slaves . . . but free people, capable of standing alongside their creator, capable of not agreeing with him or even of rebelling against him. . . . The consciousness of a character is given as someone else's consciousness, another consciousness, yet at the same time it is not turned into an object, is not closed, does not become a simple object of the author's consciousness. (Bakhtin, 1984, pp. 6-7)

In other words, polyphonically constituted works ensure the other's otherness by conceiving the other as a subject, as an independent voice that participates in the dialogical construction of meaning. Raskolnikov, Myshkin, and Ivan

Karamazov are all author-characters, capable of replying in their own right, Dostoevsky having constructed their voices polyphonically.

Now, if the self, as I have argued, involves a constant interplay between differing, often conflicting perspectives, then polyphony can be offered as a model to represent that diversity. Just as the speaking voices represented in Dostoevsky's polyphonic novels enjoy a certain autonomy with respect to the author's voice, so too may we regard the multiple, internalized voices that constitute inner speech less "as interior, solipsistic aspects of an insular 'I' [than] as idiolectal entities—voices distinct from the self" (Macovski, 1994, p. 4). More than merely reflections or passive instruments in the hands of an omniscient self, these voices retain the rhetorical contrastiveness and autonomy of distinct outside voices.

The usefulness of polyphony as a model for self-other relations can be illustrated by considering the interplay among temporalized versions of the self. In an important elaboration of the theme of the self's multiplicity, investigators have begun to examine the inherent temporal dimension of the self, noting the importance of both past selves (Ross & Wilson, 2000) and future, "possible selves" (Markus & Nurius, 1986) to one's present or now self. More specifically, both past and possible selves are argued to provide an evaluative and interpretive context for the current behaviour or for one's current view of self. For example, Markus and Nurius (1986) argue that one often judges one's performance or attributes against the contrastive background afforded by feared or hoped-for possible selves. Implicit in such

accounts is the belief that we are not self-identical, that our present view of self exists in a state of incompleteness. In order to understand ourselves, we need somehow to engage past and anticipated versions of ourselves.

More important for present purposes, however, is the possibility of conceiving past and possible selves, at least in some measure, as projections of past and present others whose voices are taken into account and shape the form and content of a speaker's present self-relevant discourse or self-evaluation. On this view, it is in extrapolating, recalling, constructing, or projecting one's past and anticipated selves as distinct others that we achieve the "exteriorization" or otherness that is necessary for dialogue. The speaker/self "like Prometheus, creates (or rather re-creates) living beings who are independent of himself and with whom he is on equal terms" (Bakhtin, 1984 p. 284). This progenitive creation enables the individual speaker, in a sense, to stand outside himself; and "looking inside himself, he looks into the eyes of another or with the eyes of another" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 287). By engaging past and possible selves I achieve a point of support through which my current self becomes something determinate, something of a particular value. "By objectifying myself (i.e., by placing myself outside) I gain the opportunity to have an authentically dialogic relation with myself" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 122). In this regard, Ross and Wilson's (2000) discussion of the significance of past selves seems particularly relevant. These investigators appear to hold the view that past selves may, in some measure, be regarded as past others. More specifically, they liken past versions of the self metaphorically to "other

individuals who range in closeness to current self, and have achievements or failures on attributes that vary in importance to the present self' (p. 240)

Engaging these earlier or anticipated versions of the self opens up a distance that is productive for establishing the meaning of who we currently take ourselves to be. Nor, more importantly, are these past self-others to be seen as sluggishly acquiescing to the will, needs, and vicissitudes of the present self. Like characters in a polyphonic novel, these temporalized versions of the self may, at least in part, be capable of exceeding and disputing the present self's authorial will, such the current self's own self-understanding is subject to the dialogizing effect of the temporalized other's voice. The fact that Ross and Wilson argue that under some conditions individuals derogate past selves to sustain or enhance positive self-regard and to bolster the impression that one is, like a bottle of fine wine, improving with age, also should not be read to suggest a fully malleable and ultimately voiceless past self. The very fact that past selves have actively to be derogated suggests their ongoing relevance, again in certain instances, to the self of the present. Past selves carry voices that continue to matter to us, that continue to be heard and responded to and engaged polemically, and to this extent may be said to enjoy a sort of autonomy or efficacy with regard to the present self. In short, they continue to be other and continue to make their presence felt through self-relevant discourse.

The authors themselves stress this possibility in their consideration of cases where individuals refrain from derogating past selves or, more

accurately, where individuals find it more difficult to counteract (through derogation or rehabilitative action) the evaluative implications of their past deeds. This is especially the case where some past immoral act is at issue. In such a case the individual may be limited to efforts to justify or minimize the immoral connotations of the past deed. Here, I would argue, the dialogue between past and present selves is likely to be especially conflict-ridden, with the voice of the past self emerging as more fully valid and autonomous, as more distinctly other, and indeed sometimes even asserting itself over the present self, perhaps on occasion even overpowering it, and at the very least engaging it in an intense dialogical struggle. The relative otherness or autonomy of a past self, operationalized in this case in terms of its ability to resist derogation at the hands of the present self, must also, I imagine, be sustained by that fact that other people—perhaps those who still comprise one’s social circle and whose voices continue to be persuasive for one—were witnesses to the deeds, words, and competencies of that past self, and hence may complicate our efforts to derogate a past self, or at least be around to qualify any revisionist account of a former self we might entertain. Certain conceptions of ourselves in the past may be sustained by others’ ongoing beliefs about us. Simply put, sometimes other people will not let us forget who we “once” were. Thus the dialogue, the struggle, expands, becomes even more notably multiplex as it incorporates not only one’s own internalized versions of past and present, and even possible selves, but also the similarly internalized versions of oneself as others see us.⁶²

CHAPTER 6

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL DISCOURSE IN DIALOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The present chapter explores the methodological utility of the dialogical perspective through a consideration of how it might be brought to bear on the analysis and interpretation of autobiographical discourse. Toward this end I will examine three self-descriptions provided by children (siblings) in response to an age appropriate version of the question “Who am I?” (Harter, 1988). These particular self-descriptions are cited and used by Harter (1988) to illustrate the typical pattern of changes characterizing children’s self-descriptions as children move from preschool age, through middle childhood, to adolescence. They are enlisted, more specifically, to highlight a structural-developmental explanation of the age-related changes that are often observed in children’s self-understanding. Upon briefly examining these self-descriptions in terms of Harter’s own analysis, which stresses the role of children’s emergent reason in determining the content and structure of their self-portraits, I reconsider them in light of a Bakhtinian dialogical framework. My aim is show how these self-descriptive utterances, while monologic in their compositional form, bear the traces of multiple voices—voices that are anticipated, polemicized with, or simply taken into account in a way that has a material influence on the style and content of these utterance. Discerning these voices and the nature of their interrelationships (e.g., stylization, parody, polemic) is one of the goals of a dialogical analysis.

Three Self-Portraits

The first of the following self-portraits is provided by Jason, a four-year-old preschooler. Jason's self-portrait is followed by that of his ten-year-older sister, Lisa, who is in the fifth grade. Fifteen-year-old Jennifer, the eldest of the three siblings, is the author of the third self-description in the series.

I am a boy, my name is Jason. I live with my mother and father in a big house. I have a kitty that's orange and a sister named Lisa and a television that's in my own room. I'm four years old and I know all my A,B,C's. Listen to me say them, A,B,C,D,E,F,G, H,J,L, K, O, M, P, R, Q, X, Z. I can run faster than anyone. I like pizza and I have a nice teacher. I can count up to 100, want to hear me? I love my dog, Skipper. I can climb to the top of the jungle gym. I have brown hair and I go to preschool. I'm really strong, I can lift this chair, watch me! (Harter, 1988, p. 47)

I'm in the fifth grade this year a Rockland Elementary School. I'm pretty popular. That's because I'm nice and helpful, the other girls in my class say that I am. I have two girlfriends who are really close friends, and I'm good at keeping their secrets. Most of the boys are pretty yukky. My brother Jason is younger and I don't feel that way about him, tho' sometimes he gets on my nerves too. But I control my temper most of the time and don't get too angry and I'd be ashamed of myself if I got really mad at him. I've always been smart at school, ever since the first grade and I'm proud of myself for that. This year I'm doing really well in reading, social studies, and science, better than the other kids. But some of them do better than me in math, like on a test where sometimes I goof up. When that happens, I feel really dumb, but usually not for long. I don't worry about it that much, and most of the time I feel like I'm smart. I'm not very good at sports, like I don't do well at baseball, soccer, or gymnastics. I don't really see why they even have sports in school since they just aren't that important. I'd like to be an actress when I grow up but nobody thinks I am pretty enough. Jennifer, my older sister is really really pretty, but I'm smarter than she is. I know I would make a good teacher, that's what my friends say and that's what I'll probably be. Mostly I am just me. Some things about me might change when I get older but a lot [sic] of them will probably stay the same. I'm a pretty OK person. (Harter, 1988, p. 49)

I'm pretty complicated, actually. Most people don't understand me, especially my parents! I'm sensitive, moody, affectionate, and

sometimes self-conscious. It depends on who I am with. When I'm with my friends, mostly my best friends that is, I'm sensitive and understanding. But sometimes I can also be extremely uncaring and selfish. At home, with my parents I'm affectionate, but I can also get very moody; sometimes I get really depressed and go to the opposite extreme. I'm usually pretty tolerant of my little brother and sister. But I'm a different person on a date. I'm outgoing and I can be a lot [sic] of fun. There's this one guy I went out with, tho', and I know he was trying to analyze me! When that happens I just change on the spot! I get self-conscious and nervous and then I become a total introvert. I don't know what to say or how to act. It really bugs me too. I mean the real me is fun-loving so why do I have to act so weird? I also don't really understand why I treat my friends the way I do. I'm a naturally sensitive person and I care a lot [sic] about their feelings, but sometimes I say really nasty things to them. I'm not a horrible person, I know that, but then how can I say horrible things that I don't really mean? Sometimes I feel pretty confused and mixed up about it. Talking to my best girl friends, Tammy and Sharon, helps. We talk on the phone for hours. They understand me better than anyone else, and they care about me. You probably don't understand what I'm trying to say.. What I mean is that I can be pretty obnoxious with my friends sometimes, but that's not who I really am as a person. That's not part of my personality, it's just the way I act sometimes, and it's not that important, actually, so I probably shouldn't even have mentioned it. There are things that are much more important, for example, I think I am good-looking. Not exactly Brooke Shields, understand, but I'm really attractive compared to the other girls in my school, or at least in the group I go around with, they think I'm good-looking. My little sister Lisa tells me I'm pretty too, but she really bugs me because there are days when I look at myself in the mirror and think I look absolutely, totally, atrocious, I'm the ugliest person in the entire world! She tries to talk me out of it, but what does she know about looks, she's only 10! My mother is the same way. She'll say "you look lovely, dear" when I really look like a total zero! But then there are days when I look great, and my mom says "Are you going out with your hair like that?" I hate to go to school on days like that, I get really depressed. Besides, I'm pretty bored at school anyway. Nothing they teach is relevant to anything in life! I think of myself as an inquisitive person but there's nothing about school subjects to be curious about. So I'm a pretty mediocre student, I just do what I have to in order to get by, but it doesn't bother me that much, it's just not that important. I know everyone in class is looking at me thinking I'm really dumb, but I only care about what my friends think. Besides, I'm going to be an airline stewardess [sic], anyway. Well probably. So are my best friends, Tammy and Sharon, we're all going to airline school together after we

graduate, if we graduate. I'm confused about what to do. Subconsciously I want to quit, but then the real me knows I should stay in school for my own good. I really don't know. There are days when I wish I could just become immune to myself! (Harter, 1988, p. 54-55)

A Structural-Developmental Interpretation

In discussing the developmental trajectory of self-knowledge, Harter (1988) considers each of the self-descriptions above in terms of the underlying cognitive competencies suggested by their particular features. Consider, first, Jason's self-description. Jason's discourse about himself is typical of most children his age, especially in the preponderance of references to concrete, observable activities or characteristics. Children at this age seem to be primarily preoccupied with their "overt" self (Rosenberg, 1979), which incorporates such external aspects as one's body, possessions, behaviour, and demographic information. Leahy and Shirk (1985) similarly claim that at this early age children's inner life is not an object of cognition; inner experiences not being well articulated, the child attends to peripheral or observable, physical qualities or activities, features which comprise what the authors call the "objective self." According to Harter, also typically absent in preschool children's self-descriptions are generalizations or more superordinate conceptual categories (e.g., being good at sports) based on more concrete characteristics and skills (e.g., running fast, being a good climber). Harter also notes that these self-descriptions are not realistic, that they generally reflect inaccurate self-appraisals, often suggesting competencies—for example, reciting the alphabet—that the child has not objectively demonstrated. In a related vein, these self-descriptions are generally free of "negativity," that is, they do not

contain any reference to the child's potential shortcomings or to any conflictual dimensions of the self. They are also offered in a rather incoherent, haphazard fashion, leading Harter to conclude that at this stage we have "a rather disjointed account of 'all things bright and beautiful' about the self" (p. 48).

Following the Piagetian framework, Harter accounts for the content and structure of preschoolers' self-descriptions largely in terms of the cognitive limitations associated with preoperational, prelogical thought. The main problem for the young child seems to be an inability to think inductively, to move logically from particular instances to a more general claim about oneself. This, according to Harter, is why we do not see references to more superordinate category labels, such as "smart" or "good at sports" in Jason's self-portrait—although we should note that Jason does say he is "strong" and gives an example (lifting a chair). Also undeveloped at this age is the capacity for deductive thought, a cognitive limitation that may explain the inaccuracy and positivity of Jason's self-description. Children at this age, writes Harter, "confuse the wish to be competent with reality, and as a result their self-judgements represent overestimations of their true abilities" (p. 48). Invoking aspects of Epstein's (1973) view of the self-concept as a theory one constructs about the self, Harter adds that this tendency represents not so much a wilful misrepresentation of one's abilities, but more simply an inability realistically or logically to test the postulates in one's self-theory. More specifically in this case, Jason seems incapable of differentiating a postulate that represents his ideal self-image from the postulate that relates to his real self-image. Finally, the absence of logical

skills is reflected in Jason's inability to provide an organized, coherent, and smooth narrative description of himself. Harter notes that this logical deficiency might also account for the fact that a child at this stage may produce different and inconsistent self-descriptions if asked to do so at different points in time. The preoperational child is "unable to recognize such contradictions and is thus unconcerned about the lack of logical consistency" (p. 48) reflected in his self-description.

Lisa's self-portrait is illustrative of those provided by children in the period from middle to late childhood. A major developmental change in self-descriptions during this period is the appearance of trait labels (e.g., smart). Lisa's use of trait labels especially reflects her growing concern with interpersonal circumstances and relations with others, particularly peers. Accordingly, there emerges in Lisa's account a greater sensitivity to others' opinions about herself, a sensitivity that is illustrated precisely by her invocation of trait labels that implicate her relation to others (e.g., popular, helpful). Among the other important features of self-descriptions at this age is the introduction of emotion concepts. In particular, children's expression of emotions and their efforts to subject them to control become central characteristics of the content of their self-concept; notable in this regard are self-affects or emotions that Lisa directs to herself (e.g., pride, feeling ashamed) and that are not contingent upon others' observations.

A child of Lisa's age has certainly made a number of cognitive advances, many in the area of classification and hierarchization of concepts. These

emerging inductive skills, specifically associated with the concrete operational stage of cognitive development, allow her to combine and organize specific behaviours and characteristics into a more generalized, higher-order concept about the self. Also, unlike her preoperational counterpart, Lisa offers more realistic appraisals of her competencies. She proceeds more scientifically, as it were, by frequently providing the necessary "evidence" for her particular trait self-attributions (e.g., she is nice because others have said so). Lisa's self-descriptions are also generally more accurate, owing in part to the increasing use of social comparison in the determination of her competence in a variety of domains, an ability which is itself seen as an outgrowth of her more general cognitive ability to relate, classify concepts, and hold their multiple aspects (in this case, one's own and other children's characteristics) in mind simultaneously. As a consequence, she is also more likely to provide an honest picture of herself, one in which both relative strengths and weaknesses across various, differentiable domains (e.g., academic, social) are acknowledged. Not surprisingly, a concrete operational child like Lisa also produces a more thematically organized and coherent self-description, a fact Harter considers to be a specific manifestation of a broader emerging "organizational penchant" associated with the stage of concrete operations. The result is that she can articulate a rather flowing narrative account of herself in the different domains that are relevant to her self-definition. In a related vein, her narrative also suggests a concern with the self's continuity over time, with the stability or constancy of her current trait ascriptions in a temporal context that includes both the past (e.g., being smart ever since the first

grade) and projection into the future (e.g., aspiring to be an actress or a teacher). This too, according to Harter, can be seen as a function of concrete operational children's capacity to attend to more than one dimension of the self at the same time—in this case, to temporalized versions of the self.

Whereas the concrete operational child can think logically and inductively, but only with respect to concrete, observable aspects of the world, by adolescence the advent of formal operational thought expands the child's logical thinking to include more abstract constructions. For example, where Lisa could only organize specific behaviours into trait categories, Jennifer can accomplish the more cognitively sophisticated task of combining and integrating trait abstractions to infer even higher-level abstractions, such as integrating the trait labels "depressed" and "fun-loving" into the psychological abstraction "moody." Such abstract generalizations, according to Harter, "require much more inference about one's latent characteristics than do the self-descriptions of the younger child" (p. 55). Accordingly, with the advent of adolescence, there is a decreasing reference to concrete and context-dependent overt qualities and a corollary increase in allusions to an abstract, psychological, "covert self" (Rosenberg, 1979) or "subjective self" (Leahy & Shirk, 1985) that comprises an unobservable interior realm of thoughts, feelings, attitudes, traits, and motives.

As Jennifer's self-descriptive utterance also shows, the abstractions incorporated in adolescents' self-portrayals are also likely to be more diverse, a feature attendant on the development of cognitive differentiation skills and the increasing awareness of socialization pressures—that is, of the different

expectations imposed on the adolescent by different significant others. By adolescence, self-descriptive attributes begin especially to vary across different social roles or relational contexts (parents, friends, intimate others, and so on) (Harter, 1986; Hart, 1988; Rosenberg, 1986; Smollar & Youniss, 1985). Accordingly, adolescents see themselves as possessing a number of role- or context-dependent selves, some of which, when juxtaposed and brought into awareness, may be recognized as contradictions or inconsistencies within the self-concept. Such contradictions may partially explain the confusion and “intrapsychic conflict” of adolescence, a condition exacerbated, according to Harter, by the experimentation, physiological upheavals, mood swings, and pressure of new social expectations that characterize this period of life.

Following Epstein (1973), Harter assumes that adolescents are driven to integrate divergent or contradictory self-attributes by creating a self-theory that is coherent and unified. Just as the postulates of a sound and viable scientific theory must be internally consistent, so too must the postulates of a self-theory stand in a non-contradictory relation to one another. Inconsistency in these postulates presents a threat to one’s self-theory and hence a source of motivation for its resolution. According to Harter, the lengthy and often tortured self-descriptions of adolescents—Jennifer’s is exemplary—attest precisely to this need to achieve consistency in one’s self-theory. Harter argues, moreover, that by adolescence the cognitive skills that enable the construction of a good self-theory begin to emerge. The advent of hypothetico-deductive reasoning—the hallmark of scientific logic— and the emergent ability to integrate and relate concepts are two

developmental achievements that are particularly relevant in this regard.

More recently, Harter and Monsour (1992) have elaborated on Harter's (1988) initial claims about adolescents' increasing ability to integrate potentially conflicting self-attributes. Drawing on Fischer's (1980) cognitive-developmental theory, Harter and Monsour posit a three-step model to explain varying responses to contradictory self-attributes over the period from early to late adolescence. In early adolescence, the individual functions at the level of "single abstractions." At this level, the adolescent can construct abstract attributes about the self but still lacks the cognitive ability to compare these abstractions—a state of affairs that explains young adolescent's relative lack of concern about potentially conflicting self-representations.

With the advent of "abstract mapping" in middle adolescence, the individual acquires the conceptual tools needed to compare and relate self-attributes. The emergence of these cognitive tools enables the adolescent to evaluate the internal consistency of her self-theory and hence to detect inconsistencies in the self across roles. What a child at this stage still lacks, however, is the capacity adequately to integrate such apparent contradictions. Given, on the one hand, these inconsistencies and the adolescent's new found ability to detect them, and, on the other hand, the intense drive to construct an integrated, internally consistent self-theory but the absence of cognitive skills to do so, the adolescent at this middle stage is particularly susceptible to confusion and psychological distress.

It is only with the emergence of "abstract systems" in late adolescence

that the individual acquires the cognitive skills that enable her to reduce internal conflict by integrating seemingly opposite self-attributes into compatible higher order abstractions—for example, combining “fun-loving” and “depressed” into the higher-order “moody.” Other sorts of generalizations used to cope with apparent inconsistencies in the self also become available to the individual. For example, the adolescent may resolve the contradiction in self-attributes by coming to a self-conscious understanding of the self as flexible or adaptive across contexts. Or, in a related strategy, the adolescent may reduce potential conflict by adopting a more abstract generalization with regard to the desirability or normalcy of behaving differently in different roles, the understanding being that people act differently in different situations; for example, an adolescent may say “It wouldn’t be normal to act the same way with everyone; you act one way with your friends and another way with parents” or “it’s good to be different with different people, would be strange and boring if weren’t.” In her earlier article, Harter (1988) also claims that adolescents like Jennifer may cope with contradictions in the self by engaging in a number of self-protective or self-enhancing strategies, among which is the tendency to appeal to the notion of a core, real, or true self: a stable, consistent entity that can be distinguished from more superficial, and hence more inconsistent, self-presentations. A related mechanism for preserving self-esteem is the strategy of discounting the importance of negative self-evaluations in a particular competence by regarding them as inessential aspects of one's true self.

In sum, the standard structural-developmental account approaches age-

related changes in children's self-understanding largely as the epiphenomenal product of the children's emergent reason. In keeping with the biases of the traditional structural-developmental perspective, typically absent from such accounts is a recognition of the role played by children's and adolescents' enculturation into particular language communities in their emergent self-understanding. Little, if any, consideration is given to the constitutive significance of the language and voices that children have heard and internalized in the course of their communicative encounters with others or to the possibility that, in talking about themselves, children may be casting their utterances within particular socioculturally specific genres or modes of discourse that offer particular ways of seeing and evaluating the world and themselves. Nor is children's autobiographical discourse considered with a view to discerning its rhetorical dimensions.

The Social Origins of Selfhood.

While not disputing the relevance of a child's emergent cognitive skills to the child's understanding of the self, the dialogical view put forward here proposes that autobiographical discourse is something whose nature is social and whose origins lie, in some good measure, in the interpersonal, social, and cultural matrix of which the child is a part. A dialogical perspective argues that understanding children's self-descriptions requires an understanding of the social sources of children's talk about themselves. It directs us to the fact that a child's autobiographical discourse is "scaffolded" by others' words and voices (Bakhtin,

1984; cf. Vygotsky, 1987). As Bakhtin (1986) writes,

I live in a world of others' words. And my entire life is an orientation in this world, a reaction to others' words (an infinitely diverse reaction), beginning with my assimilation of them (in the process of initial mastery of speech) and ending with assimilation of the wealth of human culture (expressed in the word or in other semiotic materials). (p. 143)

It would be surprising, then, if children did not learn to talk about themselves by being interlocutors, by hearing, internalizing, and responding to the utterances of others, and by being enculturated into different discursive forms for self-understanding.

That factors other than children's emergent rationality might be implicated in determining the particular nature of their self-descriptions is readily suggested by cross-cultural research which shows that the shift from a concrete and social to an abstract and psychological self-understanding may not take place for children raised in collectivistic societies. For example, one group of Dutch investigators (van den Heuvel, Tellegen, & Koomen, 1992) reports that Turkish and Moroccan immigrant children in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades who come from collectivistic backgrounds understand themselves more readily in terms that implicate their relation to the social environment, whereas Dutch children refer more often to psychological qualities. In another study, Miller (1987) examined developmental shifts in person perception in American and Hindu Indian children of 8, 11, and 15 years. On open-ended descriptions, older American children were found to refer to general psychological dispositions in describing others, a finding consistent with the structural-

developmental explanation considered above. In contrast, Hindu Indian children, while capable of invoking such abstract dispositions as frequently as American children when asked for them explicitly, did not employ them spontaneously; rather, these children were more likely than their American counterparts to provide relationally oriented, context-sensitive descriptions of others. The findings of such research cast at least some doubt on the view that the developmental change from concrete to abstract self-understanding is one guided solely by increasing cognitive competence—by the mental ability, say, to differentiate general properties from the contexts in which such properties are displayed.

The findings of cross-cultural research with older subjects show a pattern that is generally consistent with the research cited above. Much of this research has been aimed at documenting and exploring the contrast between the Western-individualistic-independent self-concept, on the one hand, and the Eastern-collectivistic-interdependent self-concept, on the other (Cousins, 1989; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Miller, 1987; Oyserman & Markus, 1993; Shweder & Bourne, 1984; Triandis, 1989). The distinction speaks to the difference between understanding one's actions in terms of transcontextual regularities and generalities, usually embodied in abstract psychological dispositions attached to the self (the independent self-concept), and understanding the self in terms of the more concrete, social contexts in which actions occur (the interdependent self-concept). Cousins (1989), for example, reports that when asked to describe themselves in no particular context, Americans more often rely on abstract,

psychological attributes in their self-descriptions than do Japanese subjects, who are more likely to describe themselves in terms of specific cases and contexts. While Japanese individuals do use psychological self-attributions, they do so with respect to particular social contexts; they do not see these psychological attributions as qualities abstracted from any particular context. Again, results like these suggest that factors other than those associated with the basic, universal features of cognition may influence the particular shape that autobiographical discourse takes. More specifically, the culturally variable pattern in children's and adults' self-descriptions would appear to reflect the importance to these self-descriptions of factors pertaining to social transmission. Being raised in a particular culture involves acquiring certain genres or modes of discourse for talking about oneself and others and for explaining one's own and others' action. Over the course of a life, and with increasing participation in cultural forms of life, one adopts or appropriates an increasingly wider array of social-communicative practices and genres, each of which carries its own themes, typical forms of expression, and so forth. In many Western cultures, for example, children's increasing use of psychological abstractions in their self-descriptions may be a social-discursive phenomenon. Adolescents' autobiographical discourse may be characterized by the use of mental terms and abstractions not because they have acquired a more cognitively sophisticated understanding of a substantive, inner, private world, but because, perhaps more than most preschoolers or middle children, they have been enculturated into social forms of life in which the use of such abstractions is explicitly promoted. As children grow

into the social-ideological environment of Western culture, they are likely to come to believe in the modern orthodox view that “to know oneself is to know the hidden self deep within us” (Morson, 1988, p. 520). This is a view that says that meaning unfolds in an abstract expanse of inner space. It is in connection with this inner space, a space populated with individual intentions, psychological qualities, and other mental entities, that meaning accrues to an individual’s actions. Moreover, the identification of this abstract interiority with what is most essential about our personhood gives rise to a fundamental cleavage between and—as Jennifer’s discourse suggests—a great concern about the “inner” and “outer” self, the “real” and “false” self, and so forth. Children and adults in Western cultures, it would seem, learn how to think and talk like philosophical modernists.

Consistent with the assumptions of the dialogical framework are the findings of recent research on the socialization of children’s self-understanding. Working within a narrative framework, Miller and her colleagues (Miller, Potts, Fung, Hoogstra, & Mintz, 1990; Miller et al., 1992; Miller & Moore, 1989; Miller & Sperry, 1988; Sperry & Sperry, 1995) have demonstrated how preschool children learn to construct a sense of self from the verbal content of their parents’ and caregivers’ discourse, and more specifically from the conversational narratives of their child’s personal experience told in face-to-face interaction. This research suggests that children learn culturally constituted ways of talking about themselves and their experience through their exposure to and participation in “local narrative

practices,” practices which “become a resource to the extent that the growing child resists, accedes to, seizes upon, or in some way makes use of the self-relevant messages embodied therein” (Miller et al., 1990, p. 294). Among the more specific narrative practices related to children’s self-construction are caregivers’ stories about the child’s experience told in the child’s presence but not addressed to the child; caregivers’ intervention in the child’s narratives; and children’s appropriations of other children’s stories as their own (Miller et al., 1990). In their analysis of caregiver interventions in children’s narrative accounts of personal experience, for example, Miller et al. (1990) show how by asking questions, challenging, supporting, or introducing comments that orient the child to the particular features of some self-relevant event, caregivers communicate to the child a particular version or rendition of his or her experience. “By intervening in these ways,” the authors argue, “the mother carved out for the child the reportable or publicly claimable parts of his experience” (pp. 299-300). Hence, consistent with a Bakhtinian account, this research supports the notion that children acquire a particular sense of self-understanding not simply “by reworking and transforming their experience in solitary contexts but by virtue of hearing how significant others portray and respond to them in conversational contexts” (Miller et al., 1992, p. 48).

Research drawing explicitly on Bakhtinian concepts has similarly stressed children’s internalization of the concrete voices they encounter in the rounds of everyday communicative activities. Dore (1989), for example, interprets the crib speech and language development of a two-year old child in

terms of the concepts of voice and genres. More specifically, he provides evidence to suggest that the child's "narratives from the crib" entail a re-voicing of the particular generic features of the child's previous dialogues with his or her parents, dialogues pertaining to such routine activities as preparing for bed. More recently, Tappan (1991, 1992, 1997; Day & Tappan, 1996; Tappan & Brown, 1996) draws on Bakhtin's dialogical framework to elaborate a sociocultural account of children's moral functioning. In particular, he examines how children's linguistically mediated responses to moral problems invoke the voices of "justice" and "care" that the child has internalized in the course of his or her concrete communicative encounters with others. These research programs converge in presenting us with the image of a developing child who, far from being a self-constituting, unitary subject, is nurtured by and oriented toward social interaction and speech communication. Children actively partake in a social-communicative process through which their own unique discourse or speech experience is shaped and formulated in an ongoing interaction with others' utterances. This research also suggests that language is more than merely an instrument used to express previously understood dimensions of the self. Language emerges, rather, as "the means by which self is transformed and created . . . through the dual capacity of language to be both reflective of and embedded in interpersonal experience" (Miller et al., 1992, p. 47). As Tappan (1997) has similarly argued, children's self-understandings do not emerge sui generis from their own experience of relationships—that is, children do not construct texts of self-understanding merely on the basis of their

extralinguistic experience of relationships with others. Rather, in learning to speak in certain ways—say, about “fairness”—through their dialogues with others, children come to experience the world in ways that correspond to the language they appropriate. Nor, in keeping with the Bakhtinian premise, are the child's self-descriptive utterances wrought out of abstract words and discourses. Rather, children's talk about themselves is an expression of the concrete voices they have heard and appropriated. In the course of her concrete communicative encounters, the child actively appropriates the words of others (parents, siblings, friends, teachers, and so on). As we imbibe more voices we find new ways of reaccenting the words of others and hence new ways of knowing ourselves.

Bakhtin's Discourse Typology

Earlier, we saw how Bakhtin's theory of the utterance establishes the constitutive importance for any utterance of the already-spoken and anticipated words of others. On the Bakhtinian account, every utterance is invariably dialogical in that it necessarily engages the other's word in some way. In his more expressly literary-critical writings, Bakhtin (1984) establishes another sense of dialogicality, one that speaks less to dialogue as an inescapable feature of discourse than to its status as a variable quality. On this alternative sense, it is possible to speak of an utterance as being monologic or dialogic, depending on the degree to which it more or less self-consciously or explicitly establishes a relation to the other's discourse. In this regard, Bakhtin (1984) makes a

fundamental distinction between single-voiced (or monologic) and double-voiced (or dialogic) discourse. In the remainder of this chapter, I provide a selective exposition of these discursive categories and, in an analysis that is admittedly meant to be more suggestive than rigorously exhaustive, explore their potential analytic relevance to the self-descriptions provided by Jason, Lisa, and Jennifer.

Single-Voiced Discourse. In single-voiced or monologic discourse, which encompasses “naming, informing, expressing, representing” (p. 186), a referential orientation prevails. This is a direct, object-oriented discourse that “recognizes only itself and its object, to which it strives to be maximally adequate” (1984, pp. 186-187). In its object-directedness, direct discourse performs its task confidently, never containing linguistic or paralinguistic markers that might otherwise suggest a self-questioning regarding its ability to accomplish its purpose. The speaker of direct discourse simply names his or her referent, speaking as if there were no “spectral dispersion” of the word. In speaking in a direct, unmediated way, there is also, by definition, no effort to see the phenomenon through the optic of another language; that is, the speaker's design does not require a consideration of how the object is located in different languages and in others' already-spoken words about the topic. Single-voiced discourse is not mediated by a relation to another's speech, does not respond to it, take it into account, or anticipate it in some way. Accordingly, there is no effort to represent the other's discourse in the utterance, for example, by alluding to it in some fashion—at least not in a way that would erode or challenge the

authority of the speaker's own speech on the subject.⁶³ So, for example, a scientist may talk about a phenomenon in his or her "own" language without feeling any need to consider some other way of talking about it that may be more adequate.

It should be stressed that direct, object-oriented, single-voiced discourse, while monological in the senses noted above, is no less dialogically related to others' words—as Bakhtin's metalinguistic theory of the utterance clearly suggests. In the context of single-voiced speech, however, this relation to other's words and voices amounts to "scaffolding, which is not incorporated into the architectural whole even though it is indispensable and taken into account by the builder" (1984, p. 187). It is not included in the actual design of the utterance or, as Bakhtin (1984) puts it, does "not enter into the project that discourse has set itself" (p. 187). It does not figure as an intentional part of what, elsewhere, Bakhtin (1986) calls the writer's or speaker's "speech will" or "speech plan." The writer or speaker is simply not interested in making the scaffold of other people's words about the topic detectable in the utterance, although cited elements could, under deeper analysis, be discerned in it. If the speaker were interested in incorporating this scaffolding in his or her speech and making the use of other people's words an express aspect of the utterance, the speaker would have used double-voiced discourse.

Double-Voiced Discourse. According to Bakhtin, linguistic and stylistic analyses of literary discourse have traditionally limited themselves to studying how a discourse relates only to its referential object. Bakhtin claims, however,

direct object-oriented discourse is rather uncommon in literary discourse; for an author's or speaker's intention "is realized not in his direct discourse but with the help of other people's words, created and distributed specifically as the words of others" (p. 188). Literary artistic prose, while directed, like ordinary discourse, toward the referential object of speech, is also frequently oriented "toward another's discourse, toward someone else's speech" (p. 185), incorporating "a relationship to someone else's utterance as an indispensable element" (p. 186). In pointing up these possibilities, Bakhtin is broaching the problem of double-voiced discourse. Whereas in direct, single-voiced discourse, the author's intention predominates, in double-voiced discourse the author makes use of another's discourse such that two intentions or speech centres are present in the discourse. More specifically, double-voiced discourse is a way of discursively embodying the speaker's stance toward and valorization of the other (or the other's discourse). This can be accomplished in at least two general ways. A speaker may, for instance, incorporate another's language directly into his or her own speech, where it is reaccented according to her own discursive aims and intentions. Alternatively, the other's language may exert its effect on the other's discourse from without; that is, while the other's language may not be incorporated into the speaker's discourse, it may nonetheless shape the tone and semantic orientation of the speaker's words. In either instance, however, the speaker's discourse is formulated in a dialogic interplay with the word of the other.

Although discussed by Bakhtin largely in connection with literary

discourse, the phenomenon of double-voiced discourse is no less, and perhaps even more, commonly encountered in everyday speech. Our “practical,” everyday speech is full of others’ words, words we relate to in diverse ways. We may, for example, take others’ words as supplementing and affirming our own words. Alternatively, we may use another’s discourse in such a manner that we convey intentions that are in some measure hostile or alien to it, say, through parody, irony, or sarcasm. In a face-to-face dialogue, for example, a speaker may repeat another’s statement, “investing it with new value and accenting it in his own way—with expressions of doubt, indignation, irony, mockery, ridicule, and the like” (p. 194). Something as simple as repeating someone’s statement as a question may lead to a clash of voices or intentions within a single utterance: one simultaneously asks a question and conveys the problematic nature of the other’s statement. In short, and more generally, we often introduce another’s words into our own speech, casting upon them an evaluative interpretation and thereby making our discourse double-voiced.

Bakhtin subdivides double-voiced discourse into three main types: unidirectional, vari-directional, and active. Each of these discourse types defines a particular way of relating dialogically to the word of the other.

Double-voiced discourse is called unidirectional when it carries a convergent relation between the individual purposes or aspirations of the speaker and those of the other. The paradigm case for Bakhtin is what he calls “stylization.” In stylization, the speaker or author’s thought has considered another’s discourse and “made its home in it, does not collide with the other’s

thought, but rather follows after it in the same direction, merely making that direction conventional” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 193). The other’s word, no longer accepted unwittingly or naïvely—say, as in direct unmediated discourse—has been questioned or tested and its authority found (and not simply assumed) to be reasonable and adequate to the task at hand, and hence also to the speaker’s, if not to any other person’s, discursive aims. Indeed, it is precisely the speaker’s acceptance of the other’s tested word that the speaker seeks consciously to convey in his or her discourse. The stylizer actively constructs an utterance in such a way that the other’s voice will be heard to resonate convergently with his or her own. The speaker wants the voice of the other to be heard and, more importantly, wants to be heard agreeing with or even reinforcing that voice. If the speaker’s speech plan were not characterized by this aim, that is, if the speaker were simply interested in making a straightforward claim about some object that corresponded simply to his or her own individual intention, then the speaker would construct a single-voiced utterance. In this latter instance, the other’s voice, rather than being expressly heard in the utterance, would become invisible scaffolding.

To construct a double-voiced utterance that expresses a relation of agreement is to make the other’s voice both visible and conditional. That the other’s voice is accepted conditionally follows from the very nature of agreement. Agreeing with an other on some matter always implies the possibility of disagreeing with that other. Agreement with the other presupposes, as noted above, that the speaker has considered or tested the

other's position and come to the conclusion that the other's discourse and referential intention is "right"—although the speaker may have certainly concluded otherwise. But the very fact that the other's discourse has been tested in this fashion alters the nature of the authority of the other's voice. That voice is now accepted conditionally. Another way to put this is to say that stylization involves using "another's discourse precisely as other, and in so doing [casting] a slight shadow of objectification over it" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 189). The original intent of the direct object-oriented discourse of another is now used in the service of new purposes, which internally dialogize it, thereby rendering it conditional.

To stress the preceding point, Bakhtin (1984) contrasts stylization with imitation, which "does not render a form conditional, for it takes the imitated material seriously, makes it its own, directly appropriates to itself someone else's discourse" (p. 190). What happens in the case of imitation is that we completely merge our own voice with that of the other. This sort of merging, and hence the erasure of stylization, may occur, for example, under conditions where one's enthusiasm for the other's discourse effaces the distance between self and other and weakens "the deliberate sense of a reproduced style as someone' else's style. For precisely distance had created the conventionality" (p. 190). Here, the speaker's utterance becomes such that it conveys a single intention. With imitation, the speaker's distance from the other is lost, the objectification of the other's discourse is attenuated, resulting in a merging of the author's and the other person's voice, and hence in an attenuation of the

double-voicedness of the speaker's discourse. Where two voices were once sensed, we now sense a single voice: "stylization becomes style" (p. 198). Of course, stylization may reassert itself if the distance from and authority of the other's discourse were to change.

In vari-directional double-voiced discourse, the other's discourse becomes the object not of agreement but of critical or even hostile treatment. The other's word has been found wanting, has failed to pass the test, and now needs expressly to be challenged. Accordingly, the author introduces into the other's discourse a semantic intention that opposes or introduces an accentual shift in its original intention. Parody is an exemplary case of vari-directional discourse. Whereas in stylization the author's voice follows in the same direction as the other's voice, in parodic discourse the author's voice,

once having made its home in the other's discourse, clashes hostilely with its primordial host and forces him to serve directly opposing aims. Discourse becomes an arena of battle between two voices. In parody, therefore, there cannot be that fusion of voices possible in stylization. (p. 193)

In parodic discourse, the aspect of the other's discourse that is objectionable is made evident in the speaker's or author's words. In effect, the speaker uses the other's discourse to challenge that discourse. As Bakhtin notes, moreover, parody is a diverse phenomenon. One may, for example, make parodic use of another person's speech style or of another's socially typical or idiosyncratic way of perceiving, thinking, and speaking. Parody may also vary in terms of the depth of its focus: on the one hand a speaker may parody rather superficial verbal forms, and on the other he or she may parody the deepest principles,

values, and assumptions informing another's discourse.

A third variety of double-voiced discourse, one to which Bakhtin accords the sharpest focus, can be distinguished from the others in terms of its active orientation. In both stylization and parody, the other's discourse is a relatively passive tool in the hands of the author: the author simply reaccents the other's words to express his or her own intentions and purposes. In contrast, in active vari-directional discourse the other's word exhibits greater resistance to a speaker's authorial will and intention. The other person's words, while taken into account or referred to in some way, retain a measure of autonomy from the author's discourse, suggesting a greater reciprocity or dialogical equality between the speaker and the other's discourse. We sense this discourse more specifically as a struggle between two equally valid voices, a fact that complicates the speaker's project and introduces into it an element of extreme internal dialogization: "Another's discourse in this case is not reproduced with a new intention, but it acts upon, influences, and in one way or another determines the author's discourse, while itself remaining outside it" (p. 195). People's self-descriptions, for example, may be permeated with a sensitivity toward the previous and anticipated words and reactions of others, a fact that influences the style and semantic structure of the speaker's self-utterances. Bakhtin discusses several subvariants of active, double-voiced discourse, among which are dialogue, hidden dialogue, and hidden or internal polemic.

Bakhtin (1984) argues that a rejoinder from "real and profound

dialogue" (p. 197) is both oriented toward its referential object and at the same time a reaction to someone else's word. In a dialogue, my words are always answers to an other's word. In formulating my rejoinder I anticipate the other's word, rework the other's replies, and in the process the structure of the dialogue changes, bringing the object of discourse into a new light, illuminating aspects of it otherwise concealed in monologic or single voiced speech.

In hidden dialogue, a discourse exhibits the effects or traces of another's words on a given utterance, but unlike overt dialogue, that other is invisible. One speaks or writes as if responding to this absent other. While in such speech only one person is actually speaking, the effect of the invisible other's presence, of the other's unspoken words, can still be sensed in the speaker's utterances.

Imagine a dialogue of two persons in which the statements of the second speaker are omitted, but in such a way that the general sense is not at all violated. The second speaker is present invisibly, his words are not there, but deep traces left by these words have a determining influence on all the present and visible words of the first speaker. We sense that this is a conversation, although only one person is speaking, and it is a conversation of the most intense kind, for each present, uttered word responds and reacts with its every fiber to the invisible speaker, points to something outside itself, beyond its own limits, to the unspoken words of another person. (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 197)

According to Bakhtin, hidden dialogicality characterizes much discourse in both the literary and everyday realms.

In hidden polemic, the category that most interested Bakhtin, the other's discourse is—as in the case of stylization, parody, and hidden dialogue—not actually present or reproduced in the speaker's discourse, but

rather is merely inferred. Still, the other's discourse enters actively into the construction of the speaker's utterance. The most critical feature of this inferred discourse is its antagonistic treatment by the author-speaker.

In a hidden polemic the author's discourse is directed toward its own referential object, as is any other discourse, but at the same time every statement about the object is constructed in such a way that, apart from its referential meaning, a polemical blow is struck at the other's discourse on the same theme, at the other's statement about the same object. A word, directed toward its referential object, clashes with another's word within the very object itself. (p. 195)

In hidden polemic, then, it is this antagonistic treatment of the other's words, no less than the very topic being discussed, that determines the shape and content of the speaker-author's discourse. While directed toward its referential object—which it names, expresses, portrays—internally polemical discourse also assumes an intentional orientation toward—takes a “sideward glance” at—someone else's (the addressee's) word about the object. Internally polemical discourse anticipates a hostile response from the other and that anticipation enters the utterance from within; the speaker's reaction to the other's implied or anticipated rejecting words affects the syntactical structure, style, intonation, and content of his or her speech. This sort of discourse, Bakhtin (1984) adds, is relatively common in everyday life and speech and can be heard in “all words that ‘make digs at others’ and all ‘barbed’ words” (p. 196). But the sideward glance of the internally polemical word need not be aggressively oriented. It can also be fearful: “here belongs all self-deprecating overblown speech that repudiates itself in advance, speech with a thousand reservations, concessions, loopholes and the like” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 196). This

is speech which “cringes with a timid and ashamed sideward glance at the other’s possible response, yet contains a muffled challenge” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 205).

One particularly interesting variant of internally polemical discourse is the “word with a loophole,” which, in Bakhtin’s analysis of Dostoevsky’s “underground man,” manifests itself in a pathologically extreme form in the (anti)protagonist’s constant efforts to elude the other’s power to define him, to prevent his “finalization” at the hands of the other. The underground man is relentlessly anticipating and polemicizing against the impressions he senses his words might make on others. His long, tortured utterances seem continually to be formulated with the aim of eluding and undermining any stable definition the other might form of him. The “word with a loophole” is not only a form of double-voiced speech, moreover, but a whole ideology and view of the world: “A loophole is the retention for oneself of the possibility of altering the ultimate, final meaning of one’s words” (1984, p. 233). This is a theme with which Bakhtin was concerned over the course of his writings: from the extra-aesthetic I-for-myself to the semantically open “internally persuasive” word (see Chapter 7), to the unfinalizable nature of dialogue itself.

Three Self-Portraits Reconsidered.

Having briefly considered Bakhtin’s categories of single-voiced and double-voiced discourse, let us now return to the self-descriptions of Jason, Lisa, and Jennifer. More specifically, let us see how Bakhtin’s discourse typology can be

used to highlight what is obscured in a traditional structural-developmental account: namely, the dialogical nature of these children's autobiographical utterances.

At first blush, Jason's self-description appears strikingly univocal in its content and construction. It seems, for the most part if not exclusively, to be composed of direct, object-oriented discourse and, correspondingly, characterized by a single semantic orientation: namely, objective self-reference. Accordingly, he simply lists features and qualities and affiliations pertaining to him in a way that seems largely unmediated by others' words in the senses discussed above. Jason's speech does not "cringe" under the weight of the other's anticipated word, nor does it engage that word polemically or antagonistically in any way. His own words about himself, in short, betray the monologic confidence of speech that is largely unencumbered by a concern with the evaluative dimension of discourse of others on the question of his self.

The single-voiced character of Jason's self-portrait is supported, moreover, by the fact that it lacks any sense of temporal extension. Its time is concentrated in the present, with little intimation of a past or future perspective. This interpretation certainly jibes with Harter's (1988) observation that the preschool child's self-description lacks narrative structure—the imposition of a narrative structure on experience does, after all, presuppose a sense of temporal extension. In the absence of temporal duration, the child offers not a narrative but a list of attributes and accomplishments associated with the present. If Jason's self-description tells a tale at all, it is a very fragmented tale of externally

verifiable qualities and accomplishments, one in which events and attributes can be rearranged without loss of sense. These attributes and events appear as disconnected and isolated points, their meaning unrelated to a temporally extended whole. Accordingly, the image of the self reflected in Jason's verbal self-portrait is that of a univocal and static object domain. The self is an object whose features may be straightforwardly listed or affirmed—hence the seeming prevalence of single-voiced discourse about the self.

Interestingly, however, Jason's concentration on the here and now establishes the rhetorical significance to his self-description of the reciprocating presence of his immediate interlocutor. In several places he solicits his "interviewer's" attention or responsiveness to some specific accomplishment. Consider, for example, the following segments of his self-description: "I know all my A,B,C's. Listen to me say them, A,B,C,D,E,F,G, H,I,L, K, O, M, P, R, Q, X, Z . . . I can count up to 100, want to hear me? . . . I'm really strong, I can lift this chair, watch me!" (italics added). In each of these three segments, the interviewer becomes the child's audience, an interlocutor for whom the child can display his particular achievements. In this "show-and-tell" respect, the investigator is hardly, as Harter (1988) has occasion to note, "a neutral adult who was merely recording . . . self-descriptions" (p. 58). Rather, the investigator's presence comes to exert a material influence on Jason's discourse about himself. The substantive influence of the interviewer on Jason's autobiographical discourse is also apparent in his statement that he has "a television that's in my own room." What is especially notable here is Jason's stress on "own." The use of

this intonational pattern readily suggests a sensitivity to the anticipated response (perhaps praise or astonishment) of the interviewer-interlocutor. On the Bakhtinian framework, more generally, the intonation of an utterance always reflects a particular dialogical relation between the speaker and his or her addressee. While this segment of Jason's utterance does, like many others in his self-description, simply convey information about personal, material possessions, and talents and skills, its intonational form would also appear to incorporate an awareness of his immediate interlocutor. This is a case, too, where we hear a ventriloquation of the parental voice. In his emphasis on "own," this voice bursts into view.

The fact that aspects of Jason's self-portrait seem to reflect the influence of a responsive (even if silent) interviewer is in some respects hardly surprising. After all, it must be recalled that Jason's self-description, no less than that provided by Lisa and Jennifer, is a rejoinder in an overt dialogue initiated by the interview's question. In virtue of their being answers to an explicitly formulated question posed by an other, these self-portraits are all in some measure, and perhaps even by default or definition, double-voiced utterances. The fact that these self-descriptions are provided orally in the presumably reciprocating presence of an addressee—and not, say, inscribed as entries in a journal or spoken silently to oneself—invariably exerts some influence on their shape and content, as I hope to have illustrated through an examination of Jason's discourse about himself. Turning to the self-descriptions of Lisa and Jennifer, we see even further manifestations of the

effect of the interviewer's responsive understanding on children's autobiographical utterances.

Early in her self-description, Lisa describes herself as being “pretty popular,” and adds “that’s because I’m nice and helpful, the other girls in my class say that I am.” Toward the end of her self-portrait, she provides a similarly structured reflection on herself, stating “I know I would make a good teacher, that’s what my friends say.” What is particularly notable here is Lisa’s reference to the supporting voices of her friends. In each case, her positive self-evaluation passes through or is offered in the context of others’ corroborating evaluations of her. The inclusion of these evaluations is open to a number of interpretations. Harter (1988) understands Lisa's allusions to others' opinions about her, in part and following Cooley (1902), as a particular manifestation of the emergence of a "looking-glass self." In other words, Lisa displays a growing sensitivity to what other people think about her—about her sociability, attractiveness, and ability to be a good teacher—and she incorporates these significant others' opinions and evaluations into her own self-description. For Lisa, it is the voices and opinions of peers that are particularly important to her sense of self. As others (e.g., Crittenden, 1992; Harris, 1998) have noted, group membership is critical during the preadolescent period. Children of Lisa’s age typically exhibit a need to conform to group standards and this often means having a keen awareness of others’ opinions. As Crittenden (1992) observes, the child of this age enjoys little critical distance from her peers: “the child is captured by their viewpoints,

opinions, and expectations, and thus conforms to them” (p. 47). Invoking what her friends say about her, then, may be one way of establishing her solidarity with the group. Elements of stylization may be at play here. In appealing to what her friends say or think about her, she wants to be heard agreeing with them.

Alternatively, however, Lisa's allusions to her friends' opinions about her qualities and competencies may reflect a more internally polemical relation to her friends' voices. The need at this age for solidarity and loyalty to the group works against any presentation of self as better or worse than others (Fine, 1987). This would mean that self-praise has somehow to be qualified by deference to the sentiments of the peer group if it is not to disrupt the child's sense of group affiliation or to evoke the censure of her peers. On this interpretation, appealing to what her friends say and think about her praiseworthy qualities becomes an instance of double-voiced internally polemical speech. In other words, these appeals are constructed in light of the anticipated reactions of her peers to any statement that might otherwise serve to distinguish her from the group and thereby compromise the group's solidarity. This sort of solidarity is similarly maintained through Lisa's statements about her relative strengths. For example, while stating that “This year I'm doing really well in reading, social studies, and science, better than the other kids,” she immediately adds “But some of them do better than me in math, like on tests where I sometimes goof up.” This latter qualification, again, seems to suggest a certain loyalty to the group characteristic of preadolescent

children.

It needs to be mentioned, however, that in attaching certain qualifications to statements about her praiseworthy qualities, Lisa's double-voiced speech may also betray the influence of the anticipated evaluation of her more immediate addressee, namely, the interviewer. Referring to the direct or implied evaluations of others may allow Lisa to talk about herself in ways that might be frowned upon when speaking plainly or in a direct, object-oriented way. In other words, making reference to others' evaluations of her could be seen as a rhetorical play of self-presentation to the interviewer. Self-praise, in this case, can only be rendered persuasive to her interlocutor by presenting it as coming from other people's mouths. Lisa offers peer evaluations as evidence to her interlocutor and recognizes that her listener will be more impressed with the reported evaluations by others than with any unsupported self-evaluations. Similarly, including negative self-evaluations in her self-description may reflect an attempt to present an honest portrait of herself by herself, "warts and all," and may equally reflect an awareness of rules of discourse and reportage. To the extent this is true, then Lisa's self-descriptive utterances become instances of internally polemical, double-voiced discourse. They are words in whose formation we sense the child's "sideward glance" at the potential response of her addressee.

Relative to Lisa's self-description, Jennifer's is characterized by a greater degree of dialogic complexity, this owing in large part to a more acute awareness of others' opinions about her. As Harter (1988) notes, for Jennifer

there is an intensification of the looking-glass self, which means that others' opinions about the self become even more critical to her emerging self-definition. From a structural-developmental perspective, this intense preoccupation with other's images of the self is in keeping with the nature of formal operational thought, and in particular, with its peculiar brand of egocentrism (Inhelder & Piaget, 1955/1958): namely, the inability to distinguish the abstract perspectives of self and others. According to the structural-developmental view, adolescents' capacity to think abstractly, in concert with the experience of various physical changes, is especially conducive to their thinking more about themselves. One particular manifestation of this elevated self-consciousness is the "imaginary audience" (Elkind & Bowen, 1979), that is, the adolescent's phenomenological sense of being always on stage, of continually being the focus of others' attention, concern, and evaluation. Understandably, the idea of an imaginary audience suggests a particularly intense sensitivity to public criticism and censure. Under the weight of this audience, adolescents are constantly monitoring the actual or anticipated critical remarks of others. In Jennifer's case, for example, the acute concern with how others see her is manifested in her claims about being on a date with a boy who "was trying to analyze me" and, in another context, in knowing that "everyone in class is looking at me thinking I'm really dumb." Interestingly, in his literary analysis, Bakhtin (1984) claims that this sort of intense self-consciousness is the artistic or characterological dominant in Dostoevsky's novels.

The hero's attitude toward himself is inseparably bound up with his attitude toward another, and with the attitude of another toward him. His consciousness of self is constantly perceived against the background of the other's consciousness of him—"I for myself" against the background of "I for another." Thus the hero's words about himself are structured under the continuous influence of someone else's words about him. (p. 207)

Like Dostoevsky's hero from the underground, it seems, Jennifer is constantly "eavesdropping" on other's words about her, constantly wondering if others are thinking or talking about her. This heightened self-consciousness and sensitivity to others' opinions is fertile soil for double-voiced discourse. Where Lisa appeared to take what others said to her at face value—that is, without suspicion—Jennifer appears increasingly concerned about what others say, or even think, about her, which suggests a growing hermeneutic suspicion on her part about others.

Unlike Jason's speech, Jennifer's does not gravitate largely toward itself or toward its referential object (the self, autobiographical experience, and so on), but rather is characterized by an orientation toward another's speech and consciousness. Jennifer seems to think mostly about what others think or might think about her. We sense in the tone, style, and semantic structure of Jennifer's speech an acute awareness of the anticipated evaluations of these others, including her immediate interlocutor. Accordingly, generally absent from Jennifer's discourse is the monologic confidence we sense in her younger brother's self-description. As it is constantly structured under the weight of the actual or imagined rejoinders of others, her speech becomes less sure of itself. It becomes speech with a "sideward glance" at the other's possible reactions

and possible replies. Indeed, much of Jennifer's verbal self-portrait is permeated by an intense sensitivity toward the anticipated words of others about her and with others' reactions to her own words about herself. Her self-consciousness and self-affirmation unfold against the background of other alien consciousnesses or voices.

Jennifer engages in a sort of dialogue with herself. The initial segment of her self-description involves a tension-filled dialogue between, on the one hand, a self that she identifies with generalized attributes (e.g., moody, affectionate, self-conscious) and, on the other hand, a series of selves that she associates with specific interpersonal roles and contingent circumstances. Every seemingly single-voiced reference to her personal attributes is accompanied by an understanding that the trait label in question somehow does not fit, somehow remains inadequate to her self-understanding as "pretty complicated." Her reflections in this initial segment of the self-description seem to culminate in a self-addressed question that retains the tension between the consolations afforded by her ownmost sense of herself as a person with certain given (positive) qualities and the inescapable eventness associated with acting in the world: "I'm not a horrible person, I know that, but then how can I say horrible things that I don't really mean?" Here, the dialogue that is merely implied or hidden in the opening lines of her self-description takes on a more overt quality.

Jennifer's self-description is especially rich in its polemical tones. Her affirmation of self resonates and unfolds like a continuous polemic or dialogue

with some other person on the theme of herself. The other's words are present invisibly, determining the structure and style of speech from within. That Jennifer's discourse is characterized by a "sideward glance" at another's word is reflected most clearly in the numerous reservations, hedges, and qualifications she offers about her behaviour toward others. Consider, for example, the following excerpts:

What I mean is that I can be pretty obnoxious with my friends sometimes, but that's not who I really am as a person. That's not part of my personality, it's just the way I act sometimes, and it's not that important, actually, so I probably shouldn't even have mentioned it.

I think I am good looking. Not exactly Brooke Shields, understand, but I'm really attractive compared to other girls in my school, or at least in the group I go around with.

I hate to go to school on days like that, I get really depressed. Besides, I'm pretty bored at school anyway. Nothing they teach is relevant to anything in life! I think of myself as an inquisitive person but there's nothing about school subjects to be curious about. So I'm a pretty mediocre student, I just do what I have to in order to get by, but it doesn't bother me that much, it's just not that important

I know everyone in class is looking at me thinking I'm really dumb, but I only care about what my friends think. Besides, I'm going to be an airline stewardess, anyway. Well probably. So are my best friends, Tammy and Sharon, we're all going to airline school together after we graduate, if we graduate.

In each of these segments, we sense a discourse that "cringes" anxiously under the weight of the other's possible negative evaluation or response. Jennifer's discourse is full of interruptions and reservations, all of which betray her intense preoccupation with others' characterizations of her. And there is a sense, too, in which she tries to stay one step ahead of these characterizations. She is constantly trying in advance to destroy the impression that will be

created by her claims about herself. She simulates independence from or indifference to the other's word.

On other occasions, Jennifer's polemical relation to the other assumes a more overt quality, breaking out into the open as the other's response takes root in her self-description. In contrast to hidden polemic, overt polemic "is quite simply directed at another's discourse, which it refutes, as if at its own referential object" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 196). In overt polemic, the other's voice or discourse is the openly acknowledged object of discussion and evaluation. For example, Jennifer practically begins her verbal self-portrait with the defensive utterance "Most people don't understand me," an utterance whose theme she reiterates when she turns to her immediate interlocutor and says "You probably don't understand what I'm trying to say." We also see this polemical treatment of the other's word in Jennifer's reflections on Lisa's impressions of her older sister's physical attractiveness:

My little sister Lisa tells me I'm pretty too, but she really bugs me because there are days when I look at myself in the mirror and think I look absolutely, totally, atrocious . . . She tries to talk me out of it, but what does she know about looks, she's only 10!

Jennifer works with her mother's impressions of her in the same way.

My mother is the same way. She'll say 'you look lovely, dear' when I really look like a total zero! But then there are days when I look great and my mom says 'Are you going out with your hair like that?' I hate to go to school on days like that, I get really depressed.

In both these instances, Jennifer seeks to destroy others' words polemically as not adequate to her. But while she tries to stay one step ahead of these characterizations, she cannot fully deprive them of their import. For example,

while Jennifer is able to parodically reaccentuate her mother's "you look lovely, dear," and in the process undermine its authority for her by investing it with a tone of ridicule, exaggeration, and perhaps even mockery, she is not fully capable of coming out from under its authority. Jennifer seems less successful in parodying her mother's question "Are you going out with your hair like that?" Here, the mother's discourse is no longer the passive object of parody but rather emerges as a word that enjoys a more substantial activeness and autonomy vis-à-vis Jennifer's discourse. The authority of her mother's word resists Jennifer's parodic intentions and is enough to make her "hate to go to school on days like that" and "get really depressed."

Jennifer's word about herself is not only a word with a sideward glance, but also a "word with a loophole." The loophole word is an internally polemical word that reflects the individual's investment in securing a sense of uniqueness and freedom from the other's word, and more specifically, from the finalized images that others' words may carry. This loophole accompanies Jennifer's discourse like a shadow and reflects a particular attitude toward her own self. The construction of a loophole finds its most fundamental expression in Jennifer's various allusions to a real or authentic self. The word with a loophole is particularly evident in the following passages:

I mean the real me is fun-loving so why do I have to act so weird?

I . . . don't really understand why I treat my friends the way I do. I'm a naturally sensitive person and I care a lot about their feelings.

What I mean is that I can be pretty obnoxious with my friends sometimes, but that's not who I really am as a person. That's not part of

my personality, it's just the way I act sometimes.

Subconsciously I want to quit, but then the real me knows I should stay in school for my own good.

Jennifer's rather frequent references to her "real me" might be interpreted as attempts to construct a loophole self, or, better, a loophole other, that preserves the hopeful sense that the self can be other than what others perceive it presently to be. The loophole in this case is one that leads out of negative self-evaluation (as though there is a "bad Jennifer" who, *à la Three faces of Eve*, comes out every now and again).

The presence of these loophole selves recalls several of Broughton's (1981) observations on the dualism of adolescents' beliefs about the self. Broughton notes, more specifically, that adolescents are especially fond of making the conceptual distinction between an authentic inner self and a sham outer self or exterior. What is most essential to the self is believed to be independent of one's outwardly observable activity in the world. There is an awareness of outside pressures to conform, which precludes anyone's ever really coming to know the essence of one's self. Moreover, as a rationale for preserving and protecting this inner sanctum, adolescents make allusions to "the humanistic belief that self-disclosure and publicity profane the sacredness of the individual" (Broughton, 1981, p. 21). The adolescents interviewed by Broughton expressed the view that "there is a danger of reification in others coming to know the self . . . a 'taking apart' that would destroy the living nature of an individual, making it into a thing" (p. 21). In short, making the

inner self public would mean that “it is no longer your own” (p. 21). Sharing or disclosure of unique thoughts robs the self of its essential uniqueness: “personal essence becomes absorbed into impersonal appearance” (p. 22), implying a loss of the purely mental, and hence a loss of the self. Broughton’s position, however, seems somewhat overstated. One generally wants others to know one’s inner self while appreciating that only a “superaddressee” could do that. The loophole self allows one paradoxically to present oneself without ever finalizing or “pinning down” the self. Jennifer conveys her awareness of all possible objective definitions of herself, but retains the final word on her self. It is as if by expressing her awareness of these possibilities, she renders them powerless in advance, denying them any finalizing import. Jennifer can make them all inadequate because she has the final word, and she does whatever she can to retain that final word about herself, to convey that sense that “you really don’t know me after all” or that “this is not all of me.” Her “consciousness of self,” Bakhtin (1984) would say, “lives by its unfinalizability, by its unclosedness and its indeterminacy” (p. 53).

Constructing loopholes is not entirely positive, however, as the person may become “ambiguous and elusive even for himself” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 234). To be sure, Jennifer is in places as elusive as Dostoevsky’s hero from the underground. In attempting to elude the other’s finalizing word, Jennifer travels a long and circuitous path, and in the end remains uncertain as to whose opinion—her own or others’—is ultimately to be the final judgment on her. Jennifer does not even know even her own final word on herself: “I really

don't know. There are days when I wish I could just become immune to myself." This is almost a wish to escape into alternate selves, identity disorder being an extreme case in which there is an immunity or impermeability of the various selves. The most desired self no longer need deal with the bad selves.

Self-Description and Dialogic Complexity

To conclude, the preceding dialogical analysis offers an alternative means of interpreting the form and content of children's autobiographical discourse. Unlike the structural developmental interpretation, which emphasizes how changes in the structure and content of children's self-descriptions follow from age-related changes in cognition, the dialogical interpretation stresses the appropriation and interplay of voices that populate the child's self-relevant discourse. This interpretation is premised on the notion that we are born, live, and die in a richly polyphonic world, in a world that reverberates with others' words, with others' meanings and accents and intentions and voices. And not surprisingly, given this ubiquitous presence of others' words, our talk about ourselves is invariably shot through with the speech of others, with a polyphony of other prior, current, and anticipated voices, voices that we are continually engaging dialogically in our efforts to know the world and ourselves.⁶⁴

While this dialogical analysis is not, strictly speaking, a developmental one—it does not, after all, attempt to document naturally occurring, age-related changes in children's self-descriptions—it does offer some suggestions as to

how we might conceive of the process of change in children's autobiographical utterances.⁶⁵ On the dialogical account, change is not to be viewed as a necessary, progressive unfolding of increasingly mature conceptions of identity. The maturity of children's self-descriptions cannot, for example, be regarded as tending inevitably or ideally toward the surmounting of contradictions and conflictual multiplicity within the self (e.g., Harter & Monsour, 1992). As Sidorkin (1999) has recently noted in his critique of the cognitive-developmental orientation, this view "wants to overcome the complexity of the self, to achieve the constancy of a single voice representing the self. The main point is that in order to achieve integrity, one's multiple identities should be 'integrated' into a harmonious whole" (Sidorkin, 1999, pp. 58-59).

From a dialogical perspective, in contrast, development does not tend toward the production of such coherent and unified selves. Rather, change in self-description "tends" toward what might be called dialogic complexity.⁶⁶ Compared to her siblings' self-descriptions, for example, Jennifer's autobiographical discourse is characterized by a wider range of voices and by a more complex interplay of these voices—by a greater degree, for instance, of hidden and overt polemic. That children's self-descriptions might, with age, come increasingly to be characterized by dialogic complexity follows from a rather simple fact: As children grow older and come to participate in different forms of social activity, they are likely to encounter and appropriate an increasing range of voices and their associated perspectives on the world—

voices that populate both their inner and outer speech and that, accordingly, allow children increasingly to illuminate themselves from multiple points of view. As we have seen, this multiplicity is fertile ground for dialogue. As we imbibe more and more voices in response to social experience—and more and more words about us spoken by others—new dialogues, new ways of accenting, refuting, challenging, affirming, and supplementing the words of others—and hence new ways of knowing ourselves—are encouraged.⁶⁷ Of course, this increasingly polyphonic state of the self is not to be conceived in essentialist terms: it is not an automatic process, nor is it likely to characterize all cases (cf. Gagnon, 1992).

CHAPTER 7

IDEOLOGICAL BECOMING AND THE DIALOGICAL IMPERATIVE

It is increasingly argued that theory in developmental psychology, and in the human sciences more generally, both reflects and unavoidably promotes particular images of human beings (Kaplan, 1983; Wartofsky, 1986). Kaplan (1983), for example, expresses this position in his claim that ideas of development (e.g., development as a progressive movement toward higher or more advanced forms) do not originate in the “mere facticity of what is observed” (p. 59), that is, in the domain of empirical and experimental inquiry, but rather derive from axiological and eschatological concerns, from concerns about values and final ends. Development, on this view, is an inescapably ethical notion which, “however dimly held or vaguely apprehended” (p. 59), insinuates itself in our theoretical ventures no less than in our practical engagements with children and in what we, as specialists, advocate for children's lives.

In keeping with the spirit of these claims, the purpose of this concluding chapter is to address the notion of a dialogical self as an ethical ideal or imperative for development, as a particular vision of what a mature self should be like. Up to this point in my discussion, I have considered the dialogical self largely as a descriptive category, as a statement of what the self simply is—beyond our willing and doing, as it were. In speaking (or writing) we invariably engage the previous and anticipated voices of others in some fashion. I have also addressed the notion of a dialogical self as a more variable phenomenon. In the

preceding chapter, for example, I approached the question of dialogicality from the standpoint of the aims one has more or less consciously set for one's discourse—hence the distinction between single-voiced (monologic) and double-voiced (dialogic) discourse. In the present chapter, in contrast, I want to consider the dialogical self as a sort of project, as a particular valorized way of orienting ourselves among or engaging the voices of others.⁶⁸

Preliminarily, I want to situate this claim about the importance of engaging others' voices by considering it against the contrastive backdrop of the individualistic image of the self allied with the modern philosophical tradition. In the opening, I noted how modernity inscribes the individual subject as the seat and origin of meaning and how, correspondingly, the authenticity and rational autonomy of this subject is secured by its ability (or courage, as Kant might say) to disengage itself from the words and ways of the other. Reflecting on the Western conception of the individual, MacIntyre (1990) claims that one of the inheritances of the modern philosophical legacy is the image of

a divided self, often enough a self-divided self. . . . From the individualism of the Enlightenment there derives a capacity of the self to abstract itself from the particular social role which it happens to inhabit and indeed from the whole social order of which that role is a constitutive part, so as to reflect upon itself as an individual qua individual, rather than qua family member or member of this or that social group. This ability of individuals to stand back from the social is quite compatible with a recognition by each such individual that he or she is up to this point in his or her life in large part a product of the influences of his or her social environment but it involves a belief that the individual is free to withdraw him- or herself from these influences and take toward them whatever attitude he or she chooses to adopt in accordance with those preferences which are truly his or hers qua individual. So there is this part of the self which views itself as beyond all social roles, capable of escaping from its past history and of making it new. (p. 123)

In the wake of modern thought, people tend to think of their own essential natures not as something fashioned out of their encounters with others but rather as something to be found by appealing to some freely chosen, self-authenticated standard that inhabits a realm beyond all social-cultural and historical influences and entanglements. Indeed, finding one's most authentic self—one's "real me," as it were—requires that one peel off the layers of sociality to reveal what is most essential about oneself.

We see this theme articulated quite expressly, for example, in Descartes' (1985) writings. Descartes was clearly aware that in our upbringing and education we establish close, trusting relationships with our parents and teachers. And unavoidably, too, we acquire the habits of trusting what we have learned from others (as well as from our senses), thereby creating fertile soil for the formation of prejudices. During the course of life these habits and prejudices become so riveted to our minds that we are almost incapable of questioning, let alone rejecting them. Even worse is the fact that these habits and the long-held opinions to which they give rise are so deep-seated that they tend to preclude reason from presenting its evidence in the first place. Emerging from the immaturity of this predicament and asserting our natural autonomy, however, requires that the unquestioned belief system we have acquired from others be thematized and critically suspended so that reality-as-such can be known. This, as I intimated earlier, could be accomplished both through an act of free will and through the exercise of methodic doubt. In the act of doubting all that can be

doubted, and, correspondingly, in striving to resolve whatever confronts my mind into a multiplicity of items which present themselves clearly and distinctly, I am able ultimately to disengage myself from the context of my existence, to disencumber my mind of all the "knowledge" which I have not built upon my own individual foundations. For Descartes, then, it is by distancing ourselves from all that we are in virtue of our inhabiting a social, cultural, and historical world that we can let individually-experienced, self-authenticated reason guide us in our reflections upon the world and upon ourselves.

The emancipatory movement suggested by Descartes' defence of "disengaged reason" (Taylor, 1989) finds a more current expression in Habermas' (1971) modernist ideal of undistorted understanding and communication. According to Habermas, achieving the "ideal speech situation"—a communicative arrangement disencumbered of potentially distorting influences, such as power imbalances between speakers—requires a neutralization of those forces that might otherwise compromise or constrain the mutually reciprocal nature of dialogue between interlocutors.

Developmentally, the Piagetian concept of cognitive decentration facilitates this process, for it allows us to stand back from our sociocultural entanglements—to objectify them, so to speak—and thereby subject them to critical scrutiny, ultimately supplanting them with self-chosen (i.e., unconstrained) ideals. Cognitive decentration allows the individual subject to appropriate different viewpoints and thereby to

comprehend itself in its own self-formative process. An interpretation can

only grasp its object and penetrate it in a relation in which the interpreter reflects on the object and himself at the same time as moments of an objective structure that likewise encompasses both and makes them possible. (Habermas, 1971, p. 181)

In this rational and critical process of reflection, we objectify or make transparent to ourselves our own individual or collective life-history. The distance afforded by the ability to decentre allows us to view traditions objectively, to see precisely how they shape our lives. Through this awareness, autonomous action is possible. Hence, in keeping with the modernist injunction, rational autonomy and authenticity are achievements that require a disengagement from the word and ways of the other.

Within psychology, Leahy and Shirk (1985) present a structural-developmental account of the development of self that converges in many respects with Habermas' position. Leahy and Shirk defend the view that the growth of reason enables children to disentangle themselves from the particularity of their social engagements, and thereby come to a more purely individual and objective self-understanding. Their proposal is offered more specifically as a corrective to the symbolic interactionist position (Mead, 1934), which, on their reading, posits a socially constructed self which comes increasingly to incorporate the values and attitudes of the community and which, as a consequence, suggests the "submersion of the individual in the group" (p. 129). In contrast to symbolic interactionist accounts, Leahy and Shirk argue that over the course of development the influence of others on one's self-concept may in fact decrease. For these authors, development entails not so much the

submersion of the individual to group standards as the individual's gradually developing ability to disengage his or her views from any particular group.

Leahy and Shirk garner support for this claim by drawing on the literature on role-taking and on Kohlberg's (1976) theory of moral reasoning. For example, they cite the Kohlbergian view that underlying the shift from conventional to postconventional moral judgment is a transition from other-directed to self-directed forms of reasoning. Where the conventional thinker is oriented to the expectations of significant others or of the social group of which he or she is a part—deferring to those others or to that group in the interpretation of reality, moral action, or autobiographical experience—the more morally mature postconventional individual is unburdened by such expectations, having acquired the ability to “construct impressions of themselves that are relatively independent of others' beliefs and expectations about them” (p. 131). Postconventional thinkers have the ability to evaluate their behaviour by referring “to values that are experienced as internal, that is, values that depend on their validity by considering the self's own moral code or principles” (pp. 136-137). The authors relate the attainment of postconventional thought more specifically to the ability to decentre from conventions, an ability they further associate with advances in role-taking capacities. The increasingly abstract understanding of reciprocity and relationships attendant on these emergent abilities constitutes the cognitive prerequisite for reflecting on the social sources of the self, indeed for separating the self from its social sources. With the advent of higher cognitive functions one becomes capable of decentring from, and thereby capable of questioning, one's

own values and relationships. One develops the capacity to refocus from long-learned and established values (frequently the values of others or of the dominant culture) to reflect on the shortcomings inherent in those values. So, while the social environment is important in providing the interactions and categories that will determine who I become, in a paradoxical sort of way the self I become is defined and understood in terms of its power to separate me from others, to make me independent from my admittedly social sources.

Voice, Authenticity, and Dialogue

Interestingly, and in some respects like the moderns, Bakhtin too is preoccupied with the question of establishing one's own foundations for knowledge and with the importance of the self's liberation from a state of unquestioned allegiance to the word of the other. The central difference, however, is that for Bakhtin this is not a process that entails silencing, ignoring, or methodically disentangling oneself from the other's word. Nor is it a competence that emerges invariably and universally with the advent of more sophisticated cognitive skills. Rather, the Bakhtinian view describes individual authenticity, responsibility, and freedom precisely in terms of the individual's capacity and willingness to dialogize the other's word, to bring it into a critical interanimating relationship with other words. Dialogic participation in life is presented as a spoken process of questioning and responding. As Bakhtin (1984) writes, "The single adequate form for verbally expressing authentic human life is the open-ended dialogue. . . . To live means to participate in

dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth” (p. 293). It is only through such engagement with other’s words and voices—through affirming them, redefining them, differing with them, developing them—that one reveals one’s “own” voice. Rather than understand “thinking for oneself” as suggesting an unmediated relation to oneself, Bakhtin (1984) sees it as a process of actively and responsibly situating one’s voice among those of others.

To find one’s own voice and to orient it among other voices, to combine it with some and to oppose it to others, to separate one’s voice from another voice with which it has inseparably merged—these are the tasks that the heroes solve. . . . And this determines the hero’s discourse. It must find itself, reveal itself among other words. (p. 239)

To know one’s own word entails understanding how one’s own knowledge is situated in relation to that of others. Voice is about how my discourse relates to yours and to other discourses I have heard and which speak to whatever topic is at hand. As Bialostosky (1991) writes,

Voice is never something speakers have before they speak but something they create by defining a relation to the other voices that have already opened the discussion and to those that wait to enter into it. ‘I’ am—and ‘my self’ is—created in the course of my assimilating, responding to, and anticipating the voices of others. (p. 13)

Defined in these terms, the process of finding one’s own voice is sure to be a long and complicated one, certainly one that stretches over a lifetime. Over the course of experiential time, we hear and internalize an increasing number of voices. Inevitably, we face the complexity and contradiction of these heteroglot voices and discourses and their associated points of view on any given subject—including, of course, the subject of one’s own self. The

presence of these tensions presents the person with the difficult, struggle-filled task of having actively to choose her orientation among these discourses. One must decide how one is to participate in or orient ourselves toward any given subject and toward others' utterances about that subject. (Jennifer's autobiographical discourse provides a particularly vivid example of how an identity is negotiated through a complex web of others' voices.)

For Bakhtin, the task of orienting oneself actively to the discourse of others is one that entails, and indeed requires, a dialogical (or novelistic) attitude or sensibility. Elaborating on this notion, Bakhtin (1981) writes that the "linguistic consciousness of the educated person" (p. 294-295) is one which, like the (polyphonic) novelist's discourse, involves not "a single language but a dialogue of languages. . . . a highly specific unity of several 'languages' that have established mutual contact and mutual recognition with each other" (pp. 294-295). Bakhtin offers the following elaboration of the novelistic task:

Concrete socio-ideological consciousness, as it becomes creative . . . discovers itself already surrounded by heteroglossia and not at all a single, unitary language, inviolable and indisputable. The actively literary linguistic consciousness at all times and everywhere comes upon 'languages' and not language. Consciousness finds itself inevitably facing the necessity of having to choose a language. With each literary-verbal performance, consciousness must actively orient itself amidst heteroglossia, it must move in and occupy a position for itself within it, it chooses, in other words, a 'language.' (295)

What is critical to add here is that choosing a language involves not simply seeing the world, exclusively or serially, through the eyes of a single language. Choosing a language or languages is not a question of moving from one

language to the next “as if these languages were in different chambers” (1981, 295). To illustrate this sort of insulation of discursive domains, Bakhtin considers the life of a hypothetical illiterate peasant who uses a variety of languages in the course of his daily life: he prays in one language, sings in another, speaks to his family in yet another, and so on. He moves from the language of church to the language of family to the language of official transactions automatically, without pausing to consider the differences in the points of view they embody. This is a case where each language is activated by and considered adequate to the demands of the situation, topic, or task at hand. In this situation, the peasant’s languages do not dialogically interanimate one another; instead, each is in its own place.

The notion that one may move from one closed-off discourse to the next finds a more theoretical instantiation in certain classic role-based conceptions of the self’s multiplicity (Cooley, 1902; James, 1950a; Mead, 1934). The assumption in such cases is that each of the multiple roles we adopt expresses a particular unity—a unity not at all compromised by the fact that in the presence of any given other we may adopt multiple roles. As we noted previously, this view suggests that I can be many things, many selves, to you, no less than you can to me. This account, however, suggests a rather relativistic (Bakhtin would say monologic) rendering of the self’s multiplicity. For, in effect, such a conception seems to be saying that we adopt, successively or simultaneously, many more or less insular roles and hence are possessed of many more or less insular selves, each perfectly or ideally adequate to the

situation that calls out for it. Multiplicity is certainly present here, but it is of a monologic sort, a multiplicity consisting in the existence of many well-bounded, non-interacting, monadic wholes. It is multiplicity without dialogue, and more specifically, without a dialogue across differences, without the interanimation of different roles, discourses, or, for that matter, selves. Any given performance or utterance emerges on this view as a largely unitary phenomenon, uncomplicated by other role demands and unencumbered by multiple, perhaps even conflicting perspectives and allegiances. Like languages in separate chambers, these roles “do not collide with each other in . . . consciousness, there is no attempt to coordinate them, to look at one of these languages through the eyes of another language” (p. 295). From a Bakhtinian perspective, as long as one moves from one discourse to the next without considering one from the point of the other, consciousness remains monologized.

Elaborating the Bakhtinian alternative to this sort of discursive insularity requires that we return to the case of the illiterate peasant. Imagine, more specifically, the same peasant capable of approaching one language and its associated view of the world in terms of another language—for example, looking at the language of everyday life through the language of prayer or song. In such a case we have an interaction of languages and world views. The languages have entered into a dialogical relationship characterized by their interillumination. This interanimation effects a transformation in these “verbal-ideological” positions, a transformation that can be expressed in terms of a

“loss of naiveté” with respect to the values and beliefs of any given language. The unquestioned, taken-for-granted status of a given language as the way of conceptualizing this piece of the world is lost. Even if the language is still deemed most apposite to the task at hand, its loss of unself-consciousness with respect to itself, its self-objectivization, as it were, disputes its unquestioned authority vis-à-vis the topic in question. A language that sees itself from the outside perspective of another language comes to see how its own values and beliefs appear to the other language. A speaker comes to compare different verbal-ideological positions, to examine how the same topic may be addressed in terms of different viewpoints. It is only when the multiple discourses and voices that make up our social-linguistic space dialogically interanimate one another, when we are able to “regard one language (and the verbal world corresponding to it) through the eyes of another language” (p. 296), that our discourse becomes dialogized. Again, it is not the fact that we are polyglossic, that we speak in a variety of languages, that is the critical point. Rather, speaking, if it is to be more than reciting or the saying of prescribed lines, must comprise an understanding of the diversity of languages and their associated semantic positions and, attendant on this understanding, must reflect an active effort to engage this diversity responsibly and dialogically. Only by proceeding in this fashion do speakers situate themselves responsibly, answerably, in the ideological world.

In his earliest ethical writings, Bakhtin (1993) claims we all enjoy (or suffer) a “non-alibi in Being” (p. 40), which is to say we are each individually

responsible for the way we live our lives and that we are each answerable to others for our actions. It is this non-alibi in existence, the fact that I occupy a unique and unrepeatable time and place in existence in which I stand to accomplish what no one else can, ever, that ethically obliges me to impart my own “tone” or “signature” to, or to bear a singular “answerability” for, my own acts. What I am answerable for is the authorship of my responses. What this means in the present context is that we must be self-consciously thoughtful about and productively engaged with the multiple discourses that make up our social-ideological horizon. We must engage the language of others, and their attendant worldviews, responsibly, self-consciously, and openly—all of which make for an authentic voice. “An independent, responsible and active discourse,” says Bakhtin (1981), “is the fundamental indication of an ethical, legal, and political human being” (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 349-350). We achieve an authentic, responsible voice by being aware of where we stand relative to past and ongoing discourses about a topic.

Ideological Becoming

Bakhtin (1981) refers to this process of finding one’s own voice amidst the polyphony of speaking voices as the “ideological becoming of a human being” (p. 341). An individual’s ideological becoming is not just about the learning of information, directions, rules, models, but involves the individual in a “process of selectively assimilating the words of others” (341). It is about the struggle to make the other’s word one’s own, and to resist being completely owned by or

to avoid fully coinciding with alien discourses. The “history of an individual ideological consciousness” (p. 342) is about the dialogic interrelationship and “struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions, and values” (p. 346), a struggle ultimately between what Bakhtin calls “authoritative” and “internally persuasive” discourse.

Bakhtin’s (1981) distinction between authoritative and internally persuasive discourse is meant to address the question of how we experience the other’s words and voices in our verbal consciousness, how they operate and make their claims on our linguistically constituted psyche. Here, it is important to bear in mind that neither authoritativeness nor internal persuasiveness is a quality inherent in the discourse itself, but rather reflects an attitude or disposition toward it, a way of receiving and evaluating the discourse. Accordingly, since individuals may differ in terms of how they perceive or internalize a particular discourse, we can say that what may be for one person internally persuasive may for another be authoritative.

In elaborating these two ways of relating to the voices or discourses of others, Bakhtin (1981) draws on a metaphor from education. He notes that in the context of pedagogy “two basic modes are recognized for the appropriation and transmission—simultaneously—of another’s words (a text, a rule, a model): ‘reciting by heart’ and ‘retelling in one’s own words’ (1981, p. 341). Reciting by heart is about passive reception of the other’s word and, in the Bakhtinian scheme, corresponds to authoritative discourse. Retelling in one’s own words, on

the other hand, corresponds to Bakhtin's conception of internally persuasive discourse and suggests a more active engagement of the other's word. Let us examine each of these modes in turn.

Authoritative Discourse. While it takes many forms, authoritative discourse often addresses political, ethical, moral, or religious issues. The authority attached to authoritative discourse can be associated with and enforced by any person or social group (e.g., the monologic word of parents, teachers, elders) or discursive set (e.g., tradition, acknowledged scientific truths, a popular or fashionable treatment of some issue, inherited narrative frameworks that establish the propriety of a particular life course, and so on). But it is not authority as such that makes a word authoritative, but rather the place from which that authority speaks. According to Bakhtin, authoritative discourse is discourse that speaks to us from a "distanced zone," from a valorized, hierarchically privileged "past"—metaphorically speaking, a time of firsts and bests. But whether it is a word that originates in the past or the present, or even the future, what remains critical is that the authoritative word is held reverentially at a distance. It is perceived by its hearers as untouchable, removed, and remote. From this distanced plane, authoritative discourse speaks commandingly and our attitude toward it can only be one of one-sided adoration and respect. Indeed, it makes a claim on our psychic lives precisely by virtue of its own unconditionally accepted authority. As Bakhtin (1981) writes, authoritative discourse "demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us

internally; we encounter it with its authority already fused to it” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 342).

Because it is sensed as so removed and untouchable, authoritative discourse remains aloof from and resists dialogic interaction with other discourses. We can only passively receive it and repeat it. We cannot agree or disagree with all or only part of it, dispute its authority from the standpoint of another discourse, question it, modify it, or respond to it. Authoritative discourse allows “no play with the context framing it, no play with its borders, no gradual and flexible transitions, no spontaneously creative stylizing variants on it” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 343). Authoritative discourse remains what it is no matter who speaks it or under what circumstances. Confined to a monologic, single-voiced mode of being, the authoritative word remains relatively closed to growth and transformation. It cannot enter into hybrid or “double-voiced” constructions which might incorporate semantic changes into it. Authoritative discourse makes its claim on us as an already finished discourse, a discourse with a single, stable, unified meaning. The word that operates in an authoritative way does not need what is other to reveal its potential to mean. It is (understands itself as) self-sufficient. It is a word closed to dialogue.

In many respects, authoritative discourse functions in inner speech in much the same way that adult authority and constraint function, according to Piaget (1932), in the young child’s understanding of morality. The young child approaches questions of ethical duty and rules from the standpoint of what Piaget calls “moral realism.” More specifically, the child regards duty and the

values on which it is based as external to and independent of the mind, "as imposing itself regardless of the circumstances in which the individual may find himself" (Piaget, 1932/1977, pp. 105-106). And like authoritative discourse, these rules are not so much freely elaborated or interpreted by the mind, as they are already given, ready made, and demanding of unquestioned respect and unconditional allegiance. For the child at this stage, truth amounts to whatever conforms to the word of the adult and is reinforced by adult constraint. This gives rise, moreover, to what Piaget calls an "'annunciatory' conception of truth: the mind stops affirming what it likes to affirm and falls in with the opinion of those around it" (p. 389). In mechanistic fashion, the child simply repeats or transmits what the adult has said.

As I have argued at various points in this work, a child's initiation into language is foundational for the development of self. We are born into a conversation that precedes us and it is through our communicative encounters with those who care for us that we first learn who we are. The authoritative figures in our lives establish the tone of our earliest self-definitions.

Everything that pertains to me enters my consciousness, beginning with my name, from the external world through the mouths of others (my mother, and so forth), with their intonation, in their emotional and value-assigning tonality. I realize myself initially through others: from them I receive words, forms, and tonalities for the formation of my initial idea of myself. . . . Just as the body is formed initially in the mother's womb (body), a person's consciousness awakens wrapped in another's consciousness. (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 138)

Our first words, in other words, are authoritative for us. They serve to shape and define us from without such that we initially coincide with the other's

discourse about us. In this respect, the Bakhtinian view finds an interesting ally in R. D. Laing (1969), who writes:

The others tell one who one is. Later one endorses, or tries to discard, the ways the others have defined one. It is difficult not to accept their story. One may try not to be what one “knows” one is, in one’s heart of hearts. One may try to tear out from oneself this “alien” identity one has been endowed with or condemned to, and create by one’s own actions an identity for oneself, which one tries to force others to confirm. Whatever its particular subsequent vicissitudes, however, one’s first social identity is conferred on one. We learn to be whom we are told we are. (p. 78)

A child’s first sense of self no doubt reflects an unquestioned interiorization of others’ perspectives on the self. Being who others tell us we are—that is, coinciding with others’ authoritative words about us—is a critical first step in the process of acquiring a self and in ideological becoming more generally. It is a process, too, that lasts a lifetime. It is not only for the young child that the other’s word first functions authoritatively. Every new discourse that we encounter and that matters to us exerts its initial effects on us in an authoritative fashion. The authoritative word is always a point of departure for subjectivity. It is what sets up the task of making the other’s word one’s own. “One’s own discourse is gradually and slowly wrought out of others’ words that have been acknowledged and assimilated, and the boundaries between the two are at first scarcely perceptible” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345).⁶⁹

If authoritative discourse were the only discourse constituting inner speech people would fully coincide with others’ views of them, and hence with themselves, and be perfectly predictable and fully definable to others. A person would be already everything she could be. Both the “internal” and “external”

worlds would lie on the same plane, which is to say there would be an absence of a gap between the other's authoritative "outer" word and one's "inner" discursive orientation to the world. Using Bakhtin's (1990) earlier, phenomenological language, one might say that in such a case my I-for-myself would be completely fused with my I-for-the-other. Such a state of affairs would suggest an inadequacy in the self.

I see myself through the eyes of another. This coincidence of forms—the view I have of myself as self, and the view I have of myself as other—bears an integral, and therefore naive, character—there is no gap between the two. . . . The one doing the depicting coincides with the one depicted. . . . He sees and knows in himself only the things that others see and know in him. (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 34)

Recall, however, that ideological becoming is also a process that involves “emancipation” or “liberation” of one’s discourse from the “authority of the other’s discourse” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 348). This process of emancipation is not one that involves ignoring the other’s word, but rather engaging it in such a fashion that it loses its status as an unconditionally accepted or even dogmatically revered word and begins to function in our psyches in an internally persuasive fashion.

Internally Persuasive Discourse. In contrast to the authoritative word, internally persuasive discourse exerts an effect on our psychic lives precisely through its persuasiveness. For a word to function for us in a persuasive fashion suggests that this word has been subjected to a much more active, creative, and selective process of appropriation. Internally persuasive discourse makes a claim on the speaker which, while carrying authority, is open to transformation

through questioning. Internally persuasive discourse is not passively received or inherited, but rather actively assimilated. On the Bakhtinian view, assimilation deals with the process of making something that is initially other, or part of the non-self, one's "own." A language "becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention" (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 293-294). Assimilation is an active process that involves responding to and transforming others' utterances as we use them for our own emergent purposes.

Such an exposition [of internally persuasive discourse] is always a free stylistic variation on another's discourse; it expounds another's thought in the style of that thought even while applying it to new material, to another way of posing the problem; it conducts experiments and gets solutions in the language of another's discourse. (1981, 347)

This process therefore involves a fundamental reorganization or reworking of what has been taken in. Working with discourse that functions for us in an internally persuasive manner takes us beyond the mechanical and monological act of blindly reproducing or reciting the other's language. Rather, it becomes a question of creatively developing it, varying it stylistically, applying it in new ways and allowing it to mean differently as it encounters new contexts. In invoking the word in new contexts, in light of new others and new addressees, it acquires the capacity to mean in ways that go beyond the intentions originally expressed in it. The internally persuasive word is hence an unfinished, semantically open word, a word whose meaning changes in response to participation in social life and social experience, a word whose

creativity and productiveness inheres precisely in its ability to come into interanimating relationships with other words and in particular with other internally persuasive discourses.

Unlike the distant authoritative word, then, internally persuasive discourse occupies a "zone of familiar contact," which means that it speaks to or touches us more personally as we negotiate the process of establishing our own authority over it. It is in this respect that one can say that an internally persuasive word is an other's word that one has reworked and reaccentuated to the point where it is "tightly interwoven with 'one's own word'" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 345). Bakhtin (1981) writes that "the internally persuasive word is half-ours and half-someone else's" (p. 293)—only "half-ours" because, as I noted earlier, no word is ever fully our own. What this suggests is that the internally persuasive word always exists on the border or frontier between two speaking subjects, in the space of eventful communicative praxis.

The vicissitudes of the internally persuasive word recall what Bakhtin (1993), in the period before his linguistic-dialogical turn, called the I-for-myself. Like the I-for-myself, the internally persuasive word lives in the immediacy of the emergent present, never coinciding with itself but rather inhabiting the ever-changing chronotopic platform of the self-(or word)-in-the-making. The internally persuasive word, again like the phenomenologically intuited self of lived experience, exists in a perpetual state of becoming, is always unfinished and incomplete, always accruing new meaning with each act of expression. Just as the I-for-myself, in appropriating the image that the other

forms of it, takes that image and makes it immanent to its own consciousness, that is, translates and transforms it into its own language—where, in virtue of the self's living a restless, forward directed life, that image does “not attain any consolidation and self-sufficiency in our consciousness” (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 16)—so too can we say that the internally persuasive word never coincides with its presently existing makeup but rather exists in the space of its discursive movement.

Assimilation: Bakhtin Versus Piaget. Since Bakhtin uses the term “assimilation” to refer to the process of actively engaging the other's word, it may be instructive briefly to contrast this usage of the term with Piaget's. While both Bakhtin and Piaget use the term to suggest an active process that results in a mental reorganization of sorts, it is important to stress that for Piaget this process and the reorganization it engenders tend toward a centripetal end, that is, toward greater unity and stability in the cognitive system. Piaget understood assimilation, and the child's initiative in development more generally, as subject to the structural, organizational constraints of a bio-cognitive system which, with development, becomes increasingly unified and systemic in its functioning. For Piaget, every act of assimilation constitutes a progression or improvement over previous assimilations, a feature consistent with his view of development as the transition from “weaker” to “stronger” structures (Piaget, 1970). This movement toward improved structures is coterminous with the eradication of the otherness of the assimilated “object.” “The subject-object dynamic is a vector directed at the narrowing of the space

of difference, of otherness. Assimilation is a condensing or internalizing movement, redefining both the 'subject' and the 'object' in ever more integral ways" (Soffer, 1994, p. 172). Schemas become multiplied and systemically interrelated and linked such that construed objects and events are increasingly experienced as consistent with previous ones. As schemas become progressively differentiated and integrated, we encounter less in the world that can surprise us.

For Bakhtin, in contrast, the process of assimilating others' voices may betray centrifugal, dispersive effects, leading to increased conflict or struggle among voices, to a more tension-filled, diversified, discursive self. As I argued in Chapter 5, the psyche is not the site of a harmonious equilibrium of contending voices, where all voices are equally available, but rather one of conflictual, non-systemic plurality. Accordingly, Bakhtin describes the process of ideological becoming in terms of a struggle—often enough a power struggle—among voices. Just as the social world is characterized by the struggle among the many languages of heteroglossia, so too is the psyche the ground—and perhaps even the battleground—of an intense interaction among many unmerged voices, each of which embodies a particular semantic position and a different kind and degree of authority, and each of which participates in a struggle for influence on the plane of inner speech. An individual's ideological becoming entails a conflict or dialogic interaction between internally persuasive and authoritative discourses and between the heteroglossia of internally persuasive voices and their attendant values and attitudes. This struggle is

critical for development of verbal consciousness, as the conflict of voices is productive of new experience and hence occasions the transformation of the self. It is a struggle, too, that reflects the constant battle—within language, culture, and the psyche—between centripetal forces that strive toward unity, stability, and sameness, and the centrifugal forces of openness and becoming. Like centrifugal forces that decentralize, disunify, and stratify, internally persuasive discourse questions the centripetal authority of the authoritative word, thereby working away from any single, original meaning.

Overcoming Authoritativeness: Valorizing the Internally Persuasive Word

The foregoing remarks suggest that internally persuasive discourse is a much more critical aspect of an individual's ideological becoming. "Such discourse," Bakhtin (1981) writes, "is of decisive significance in the evolution of an individual consciousness" (p. 345), for it speaks directly to the question of how we achieve an individual voice amidst the many dominant and dominating discourses that characterize our social and mental worlds. Implicit in Bakhtin's argument, moreover, is the assumption that an individual consciousness is deficient and closed to growth in the measure to which it speaks under the weight of the other's authoritative word. A consciousness in which authoritative discourse is preeminent is one in which dogmatic thought prevails. This "thought . . . like a fish in an aquarium, knocks against the bottom and the sides and cannot swim farther or deeper" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 162). As authoritative discourse is closed to unfinalizable, creative

transformation, so too must be the self for which such discourse is predominant. As Morson and Emerson (1990) claim, "The truly novelistic, mature, and responsible self knows a minimum of authoritative discourse" (p. 220). Extending this logic to the problem of the development of self-understanding, Day and Tappan (1996) have noted that

The goal of development is not simply a matter . . . of speaking in one's own true or 'authentic' voice. Rather, it is a matter of engaging in ongoing dialogue with the words of others, and thereby coming to a more "self-persuasive," and less "authoritative" sense of self-understanding. (p. 72)

The presence of internally persuasive discourse in an individual's verbal consciousness suggests a consciousness that is responsive and responsible to the other's word. As an ethical ideal, ideological becoming is a process that involves acquiring a critical, increasingly dialogized consciousness. In this respect, ideological becoming may be likened to Freire's (1970) notion of "conscientization," that is, the development of a capacity and willingness to question the power and authority of the status quo.

In light of this valorization of the internally persuasive word, a critical developmental question concerns how an authoritative discourse can be dialogized—assimilated or reaccented—so that it comes to function for us in a more semantically open ended, internally persuasive manner? How, in other words, can a discourse be challenged and deprived of its absolute and unconditional authority? Interestingly, a clue to the conditions that enable one's emancipation from the unquestioned authority of the other's discourse is to be found in Piaget's (1932) discussion of the factors that support a child's

developmental shift from a moral orientation based on constraint to one based on cooperation and reciprocity. Piaget notes how in the child's cooperative interactions with peers who hold different viewpoints from his or her own, the child's heteronomous sense of justice and morality is dislodged from its moorings in external, adult constraint. As a result of his or her interactions with peers—interactions governed by solidarity and bilateral respect, as opposed to social constraint—the child achieves a more flexible and contextually sensitive morality, one based on personal judgement and reciprocity. In Bakhtinian terms, we have here a situation where the adult's word has ceased to be authoritative for the child, its authority dialogically challenged and supplanted by a word—the word of peers in this case—that makes its claim on the child as an internally persuasive word.

On the Bakhtinian view, the erosion of the authoritative status of the other's discourse presupposes that one has achieved a certain objectifying distance from it. This self-distanciation from the authoritative word is not, however, one that is gained through a process of rational decentration (as the Piagetian view ultimately suggests), but rather is granted through the encounter with another concrete voice, with a viewpoint that affords the outsideness or alterity from which we can objectify the discourse under whose otherwise authoritative, unchallenged horizon we see the world and ourselves.

Multiplicity and Otherness. The process of objectifying an authoritative voice or discourse is facilitated by the fact that language exists in an interlinguistic space. We live in what Bakhtin (1981) calls “an actively

polyglot world” (p. 12), which is to say in a world where multiple discourses and their associated forms of life are available to us. We all belong to a specific age group, are of a particular social class, inhabit a particular geographical region, work in a specific profession, have different sets of close relationships; and each of these affiliations is associated with different ways of speaking and seeing the world. For Bakhtin, it follows that when we experience and represent the world to ourselves, we often do so not in a single, unitary, shared language, but rather in a multiplicity of languages—official, everyday, technical—some overlapping, some conflicting, each in any event associated with a particular sphere of activity and carrying a set of views and evaluations. This sort of multivoiced existence is, of course, foundational for dialogue. In the present context, however, what is important also to emphasize is that the multiplicity of our lifeworldly affiliations is itself a (centrifugal) force that carries the potential to dialogize or undermine the monologic purity of a language that would otherwise exert an authoritative (centripetal) effect on our speech. The idea here is that simply belonging to multiple, overlapping groups, is likely to set in motion the dialogical interanimation of voices—the transposition, say, of cultural elements from one discursive-ideological group into another. The discursive multiplicity associated with our participation in diverse spheres of communication is especially conducive to objectifying the other’s word. As Bakhtin (1981) writes:

One’s own discourse and one’s own voice, although born of another and or dynamically stimulated by another, will sooner or later begin to liberate themselves from the authority of the other’s discourse. This

process is made more complex by the fact that a variety of alien voices enter into the struggle for influence within an individual's consciousness (just as they struggle with one another in surrounding social reality). All this creates fertile soil for experimentally objectifying another's discourse. . . . it is questioned, it is put in a new situation in order to expose its weak sides, to get a feel for its boundaries, to experience it physically as an object. (p. 348)

We begin, in other words, to see the world and ourselves in a different way.

More specifically, this sort of dialogic interplay of voices or discourses has the effect of disrupting the sense that the authoritative word is the only adequate word to describe the world. Only under conditions of multivoicedness is there a disruption of "the sense of an absolute fusion or bonding of a use of words to a concrete ideological meaning" (La Capra, 1983, p. 312). Or as Bakhtin (1981) also puts it: "Only polyglossia fully frees consciousness from the tyranny of its own language and its own myth of language" (p. 61).

Multivoicedness (or heteroglossia), then, is a meliorative phenomenon, a source of relative freedom. For if each of us had only one voice, we would be trapped within it; it would have exclusive power over us. The philosopher Odo Marquard (1991) puts the point in connection with having many histories or personal stories.

It is necessary for human beings to have not only one unique history or story, or a few of them, but many of them. For if they—each individual human being, and all of them together—had only one unique history or story, they would be utterly in the power and at the mercy of this sole history or story. Only when they have many histories or stories are they freed, relatively, from each story by the other ones, and thus able to develop a manifoldness that is, in each case, their own—that is, able to be an individual, be it only a desperate individual, who knows that only one thing really helps him to get past one desperate situation, and that is the next one. (pp. 66-67)

Our need for such multiplicity, adds Marquard, speaks directly to our need for others. It is only through our communication with others—all of whom lead a number of different lives—that it is possible for us to have a number of lives, and hence to have many stories at our disposal. Indeed, it is precisely the motley otherness of the historical or cultural others we engage—their differentness from us—“that is needed and important, and must therefore not be expunged, in our communication with them, but fostered and protected” (p. 67).⁷⁰

As Emerson (1997) has remarked, given the benefits of otherness, a Bakhtinian prescription for mental health would suggest striving to expose oneself to a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. More specifically, a Bakhtinian view would insist

that I not seek out people just like myself for the sake of security or identity. It narrows my scope and thus is too much of a risk; should I change or the environment change, I might become extinct. . . . Any instinctive clustering of like with like threatens to reduce my "I" and its potential languages to a miserable dot. Those who surround themselves with 'insiders'—in heritage, experience, appearance, tastes, attitudes toward the world—are on a rigidifying and impoverishing road. In contrast, the personality that welcomes provisional finalization by a huge and diversified array of "authors" will command optimal literacy. It feels at home in a variety of zones; it has many languages at its disposal and can learn new ones without trauma. From its perspective, the world appears an invitingly open, flexible, unthreatening and unfinalized place. (Emerson, 1997, pp. 223-224)

Surrounding the self with different others, then, is the distinctive imperative of a mature, dialogical consciousness. It is only through one's dialogic encounter with otherness—with the other's questions, challenges, and contrasting experiences—that one's own meanings are revealed in all their depths and that

one overcomes the dogmatic “closedness and one-sidedness” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 7) of any particular semantic position. Indeed, this sort of plurality allows us to see ourselves from multiple perspectives, each giving rise to an image or story of a self that one can engage, draw on, criticize, and bring into interaction with other such images and stories, thereby further disclosing—in an unpredictable and unfinalizable process—the self’s potentials.⁷¹

Play and the Inversion of Authority. The phenomenon of play also carries the potential to deprive the authoritative word of its unconditional authority. This possibility inheres, more specifically, in the fact that play can take a given language, serious and straightforward in its tone, and subject that language to a reaccentuation of some kind. Play, and particularly dramatic play, is a means of drawing an otherwise lofty discourse into a zone of (sometimes crude) familiarity that relativizes or renders conditional whatever authority that discourse might enjoy. Vandenberg’s (1986) discussion of play is certainly congenial to the conception I am putting forward here. Vandenberg argues that children’s reality is much more labile than that of adults, a feature that accounts for children’s ability more quickly to reinvest belief in alternative realities. This flexibility is evident in children’s dramatic play with peers. In this brand of play, according to Vandenberg, children playfully engage the myths or narratives of a culture. And in doing so, children become both more rooted in those cultural narratives and more capable of exercising control over and emancipating themselves from their grasp. In socio-dramatic play, children often make social norms and rules and scripts they acquire from authoritative

others suit their own purposes; indeed, play often affords children the creative license precisely to transform these norms, rules, or scripts. So, for example, in playing house, children may write roles that redress the power differential that otherwise exists between children and adults. As Vandenberg observes, in playing the role of a parent, the child may refract that role through the optic of the child's own concerns, and hence play that role in a way that affords the "child" a greater degree of empowerment. In the sociological tradition, Fine (1987) reports a similar observation. More specifically, he notes how, within the peer group, the play of pre-adolescent boys' often involves reworking the codes established by their fathers, such that the boys' speech and behaviour provides "a world that both reflects and distorts adult male behaviors" (p. 79). This distortion follows from the fact that children experience a gap between the ideals their parents project for them and the world they experience. In sum, then, each of these accounts of play illustrates the inversion of authority that arises when one language (that of parents or adults) is seen through the optic of another language (that of children). In the context of play, the parent's authoritative word is drawn into the immediacy of children's lives and brought into contact with the discourse and concerns of children themselves, where it loses its otherwise unquestioned authority.

Carnival, Parody, and Laughter. The argument that children's play may contain a subversive element is curiously reminiscent of Bakhtin's (1968) discussion of the process by which official unitary languages are overturned at the hands of marginalized, "low" voices associated with the less valorized

areas of society. After the model of medieval carnival, Bakhtin (19868) calls this inversion of the social hierarchy "carnivalization." For Bakhtin, carnival celebrates the temporary liberation from the prevailing truths and wisdom of the established order.⁷²

The world of carnival is one of a topsy-turvy heteroglossia where nothing remains pure. Everything is mixed, hybridized, subjected to rituals of degradation and defilation by way of a diverse array of irreverent discourses: oral and written comic verbal pieces, parodies, curses, oaths, slang humour, popular tricks and jokes, scatological forms, and so on. Most important for the present argument is that these irreverent carnival activities, while not directed toward the total rejection or dismantling of the established social order, serve to question and challenge that order. Parodies, for example, invert social norms and hierarchical relations of power. In the middle ages, as Bakhtin (1981) notes, parodies were an element in "school festivals" and played a role in the cultural and intellectual life of the times. "The medieval monastic pupil (and in later times the university student) ridiculed with a clear conscience during the festival everything that had been the object of reverent studies during the course of the year" (1981, p. 72). In a more recent discussion, Sidorkin (1997) has explored the role of carnival in contemporary educational theory. His analysis, which focuses on Moscow schools, centres around the sbor, a spring retreat in which teachers and students participate in a variety of activities, including the performance of skits, serious discussions, physical work, sports, and games. In keeping with the spirit of medieval carnival, the sbor is

characterized by the inversion of school and social conventions. For example, the otherwise all-powerful principal acts like a small child and teachers relinquish control over their students, allowing them to regulate and determine their own conduct and affairs. Sidorkin (1997) conceives of the sbor as a conciliatory phenomenon, an event that helps to establish connectedness among the various groups represented in the school and to smooth out conflicts that might adversely affect the school year. The sbor is a temporary “retreat into a utopian world” (Sidorkin, 1997, p. 237). It is seen not so much as an expression of oppressed voices as an outlet for the expression of freedom. But while Sidorkin (1997) downplays the critical function of such inversions, it can reasonably be argued that such activities allow children to see the conditionality of all discourses and the instability of all meanings, and especially of those that may otherwise function authoritatively for them. Through such activities, the distant authoritative word is “contemporized,” that is, “it is brought low, represented on a plane equal with contemporary life, in an everyday environment, in the low language of contemporaneity” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 21).

Parodies are also a characteristic element of children’s play (Fine, 1987; Jorgensen, 1983). Fine (1987), for example, notes how preadolescents’ song parodies often spread quickly within the preteen subculture and are often performed in the earliest stages of a child’s entry into another group. Jorgensen’s (1983) research examines anti-school song parodies—parodies of traditional, solemn, anthem-like songs (e.g., “Mine eyes have seen the glory of

the burning of our school/ We have tortured all the teachers and have broke the golden rule/ We are going to the office and we crippled the principal/ Our troops go marching on!"). Her analysis is centred around the various functions of such parodies, which include, on the one hand, establishing and maintaining peer cohesiveness, and, on the other, constructing a make-believe world where the peer group rules and rebels against authority, thereby allowing the child vicariously to transcend the social and structural limitations that characterize childhood and the child's experience in school. In this latter respect, parodies are "forms of social commentary in which resentment toward the institution of the school is being expressed" (p. 100). While Jorgensen, like Sidorkin (1997), interprets such activities largely in terms of the emotional release they afford and in terms of their facilitation of children's efforts to cope with the conflicts and pressures toward conformity that the socialization process engenders, it is clear that such parodies of authoritative discourses have the effect of bringing these discourses, and the view of the world they embody, into a zone of contact where they are interanimated—and hence minimized in their authority and finality—by the everyday, sometimes even crude, discourse of children's peer groups.

Parody reminds us that reality is much more complex and contradictory and that there is no authoritative word that can semantically exhaust the object of its focus. "Language is transformed from the absolute dogma it had been within the narrow framework of a sealed-off and impermeable monoglossia into a working hypothesis for comprehending and expressing reality" (Bakhtin,

1981, p. 61). In other words, the previously authoritative discourse becomes the “image” of a discourse, and as such loses its unquestioned authority. On the Bakhtinian view, forming an image of, or “representing,” a discourse is coterminous with objectifying a discourse. Only through representing or forming an image of a discourse can it be held as something to be questioned or dialogically engaged in some way. Moreover, one discourse can be foregrounded only by perceiving it through the optic of another discourse. Parody introduces a gap between the authoritative word and its object, between the word and reality, surface and centre, potential and reality.

The language that more specifically exposes this gap between the word and the world is the language of laughter. In laughter, reality stops coinciding with the word. In laughter, one ceases to be contained by a discourse.

Laughter has the remarkable power of making an object come up close, of drawing it into a zone of crude contact where one can finger it familiarly on all sides, turn it upside down, inside out, peer at it from above and below, break open its external shell, look into its center, doubt it, take it apart, dismember it, lay it bare and expose it, examine it freely and experiment with it. Laughter demolishes fear and piety before an object, before a world, making of it an object of familiar contact and thus clearing the ground for an absolutely free investigation of it. Laughter is a vital factor in laying down that prerequisite for fearlessness without which it would be impossible to approach the world realistically. As it draws an object to itself and makes it familiar, laughter delivers the object into the fearless hands of investigative experiment—both scientific and artistic—and into the hands of free experimental fantasy. (1981, p. 23)

Laughter is, in this respect, the antithesis of dogmatism. It erodes the “one-sided seriousness of the lofty direct word” (1981, p. 55), overcoming authoritative distance and establishing a more conditional acceptance of the

other's word. Laughter is a reminder that the self does not coincide with itself, that it always remains the site of unrealized potential and unrealized demands.

CONCLUSION

OPEN TIME, DEVELOPMENT, AND DIALOGISM

In this concluding chapter, I address the relevance of dialogism as a metatheoretical discourse for developmental psychology. Dialogism, I argue, is allied with a particular image of temporality which has implications for how we conceive of the process of change and development vis-à-vis the self. More specifically, dialogism supports an open sense of time (Morson, 1994), a temporality which accommodates the eventness—that is, the unpredictability and moment-to-moment creativity—of self-formation. The following discussion is divided into four parts. I begin with a consideration of the implications for understanding change of an open conception of time. I argue that ongoing, creative change is a defining feature of the dialogical self. I then address the issues of human identity and individual development. Here, my basic claim is that development in open time is non-teleological; rather it is an eventful phenomenon characterized by risk and unpredictability. In this connection, I also have the occasion to reflect on the peculiarly modern, essentialist distinction between “childhood” and “adulthood,” and to argue that this distinction or binarism is undermined by a dialogical framework, in which maturity is conceived as an open-ended process of continual becoming. Next, I consider the nature and role of the past or the already-given in the development of self, and in the interpretive process more generally. I conclude that while a Bakhtinian view acknowledges the influence of the past on present action and thought, that influence cannot be conceived in deterministic terms. The past is

a dialogical participant—a voice that is neither privileged nor devalued—in the ongoing interplay between past and present. This dialogical conception of the past further suggests that the self, while constrained by what is already given to it, is nonetheless free; indeed, its freedom is enabled precisely by such constraints. Finally, I address the relation between individual development and the cultural-historical context in which such development occurs. Against the view, often ascribed to social constructionist beliefs—and erroneously to Bakhtin—that individual psychological functioning can be reduced to cultural and linguistic categories, I argue that the Bakhtinian self never simply reproduces such categories, but rather that while the self assimilates those categories, it enjoys a surplus relative to the ideological world they reflect—a surplus which, in the final scheme of things, is precisely the source of the difference that is required to sustain the dialogue between self and other.

How Change Happens

The emphasis on eventness that characterizes the dialogical view implies that change in the self proceeds incrementally; it is the product of the small, moment-to-moment choices and decisions we make, the result of the ongoing dialogues that we carry out, both with external interlocutors and within ourselves, over the course of our lives. This conception of change is premised on an open sense of time, according to which a fundamental indeterminacy characterizes all moments (Morson, 1994). Open time allows for eventness and unpredictability in development. Each event, each dialogical encounter,

however unremarkable, carries the potential for transformation. Hence, rather than stress the “epic” transformations in the life of the self—transformations wrought through critical moments and crises, through “major life events”—dialogism orients us also to prosaic change, to the creativity inherent in every unrepeatably moment. On the dialogical view, each moment has real developmental significance.

The notion that the self is a site of constant, prosaic change is at odds with reigning assumptions in psychology, and in particular with those held by investigators working within the metatheoretical framework known as social cognition. Heavily influenced by developments in information-processing psychology, social cognition stresses the storage, processing, and retrieval of information about the self and the social world and the effect of these processes on social behaviour. According to proponents of the social-cognitive perspective, the self is a cognitive structure that consists in abstracted and organized information about individuals’ life experience. One of the central questions addressed by social-cognitive research pertains to the conditions for change in the content and structure of stored self-knowledge (Sherman, Judd, & Park, 1989). On this point, there is a fundamental agreement that the self (i.e., self-concept) is somewhat resistant to change, that it is a fairly conservative structure, one characterized by a good deal of “inertia” (Sherman et al. 1989). Greenwald’s (1980) classic description of the “totalitarian ego,” for example, certainly supports this conclusion. According to Greenwald, one of the central “biases” characterizing the self—a bias argued to serve an adaptive, ego-

preserving function in “intrapsychic evolution”— is “conservatism,” which he defines as “the disposition to preserve that which is already established . . . the disposition to preserve existing knowledge structures, such as percepts, schemata (categories), and memories” (p. 606).⁷³ In keeping with Greenwald’s argument, there is much social psychological literature that documents how social behaviour serves to verify, protect, and maintain one’s existing sense of self—to preserve the self’s “status quo,” as it were (Banaji & Prentice, 1994; Sedikides & Strube, 1997). To be sure, investigators recognize that the self-concept does change in spite of such biases. The self-concept is bound to change, for example, as a person encounters new people, grows apart from others, takes up new activities, in short as the person confronts the inevitable vicissitudes of life and day-to-day coping. Still, the empirical research emphasizes the sameness of the self over time. In a recent review of the literature in the area, one group of investigators offers the following summary remark:

In light of the impressive evidence for maintenance of the self, it is somewhat surprising that self-concepts ever change at all. Indeed, the literature contains many demonstrations of temporary changes in the self-concept, but relatively few examples of enduring self-concept change. (Banaji & Prentice, 1994, p. 324)

This finding of stasis in the self-concept is, at least in part I imagine, a function of the mode of inquiry used to study the self-concept. It is also presumably a function of the unit of analysis in such investigations: namely, the self-concept. As for the mode of inquiry, most psychologists—and in particular those who approach the subject of self from a scientific, empirical

vantage point—pursue a nomothetic strategy: they are interested in specifying lawful generalizations about some feature of the self. Here, the self is understood not in terms of its creative, lived-experiential movement in open time—that is, in terms of its situationally-specific, moment-to-moment vicissitudes, but rather in terms of its generalizable elements. Compared, for example, to a “thick description” of the dialogic event, the nomothetic approach is not particularly well adapted to capturing the eventness of the self-in-the-making. The particularities of individuals, accordingly, are of rather little concern—a fact that finds expression in statistical practice of conceptualizing individual, non-systemic variance as “error.” As for a unit of analysis like the self-concept, it is by definition a cognitive abstraction, and as such inhabits the closed temporal realm of already-completed deeds.

Conceptions of Human Identity and Individual Development

It follows from dialogism’s reliance on an image of time as open, and on the eventness that such an image suggests and supports, that change or development cannot be conceptualized as an unfolding or as a necessary progression toward some preestablished terminus or telos. On the dialogical framework, development is neither progressive or teleological—that is, events are not linked in such a way that there is movement along an evaluative dimension over time to some goal state. In this regard, a dialogical conception of development can be distinguished from that allied with a Piagetian account. Piaget’s developmental theory suggests that development is progressive and

teleological. Each person's life, consisting of a fixed sequence of hierarchical stages and culminating in formal operational thought, exemplifies this progressive life cycle. The progressive character of development in Piagetian theory is premised on a cyclical sense of time inasmuch as the essential processes of development are repeated within the life of each individual and in the sense that each stage transition is an epicycle governed by the functional invariants (i.e., accommodation and assimilation) (Cheyne & Tarulli, 1999). Also, development is thematized primarily as a natural and intrinsic development rather than a process of extrinsic worldly social transactions. Although Piaget is clearly sensitive to the impact of social relations, their function is merely to activate maturationally inevitable biological and logico-mathematical structures (Rogoff, 1990; Wartofsky, 1983).

Following Morson's (1994) analysis of temporality, the Piagetian view of development as a progressive unfolding of maturational inevitabilities may also be described as one that reflects a closed sense of time. Time is closed in the sense that development follows a path articulated in advance in the form of an overarching developmental blueprint. Logico-mathematical operations are situated in a developmental framework in which they become a terminus ad quem, the point to which knowledge proceeds. For Piaget, there is no eventness in human development. The "growth" of reason is characterized, rather—and in keeping with Piaget's Kantian roots—by its universality and necessity; it does not allow for what Morson calls "surprisingness." For Piaget, individual cognition merely unfolds in time, predictably, without surprises or eventness.

In contrast to the closed sense of time that predominates in the Piagetian view, the dialogical framework understands development not as an unfolding of abstracted competencies, but rather as a genuinely creative process characterized by moment-to-moment changes. On this view, development can follow many possible paths, paths not given in advance in some overarching blueprint for development, nor in some implicit teleology. The temporal openness of the dialogical view allows for surprisingness or eventness (Bakhtin, 1993). “For there to be eventness,” writes Morson (1994),

there must be alternatives. Eventful events are performed in a world in which there are multiple possibilities, in which some things that could happen do not. In such a world, time ramifies and its possibilities multiply; each realized possibility opens new choices while precluding others that once could have been made. The eventful event must also be unrepeatable, that is, its meaning and weight are inextricably linked to the moment in which it is performed, Choice is momentous. It involves presentness. The same act performed later would not be quite the same act. It is therefore constituted in part by important particularities that no abstract and timeless system could foretell. (p. 22)

Hence, an approach to development premised on an open sense of time would claim that people change throughout life, both in response to particular, unpredictable circumstances and through their own action. We are always making and remaking ourselves. And such change, moreover, tends to no preestablished goal. As Morson concludes, we “do not live in completed selves” (p. 108).

The orientation to open time undermines the logic of possession and the conception of maturity or adulthood that characterizes essentialist assumptions about development. According to Misgeld and Jardine (1986), in a “technical”

approach to adulthood, adults possess “specifiable ‘competencies’ that can be understood, developed, and possessed independently of the ongoing, contingent, and fluid way in which they actually appear over the course of everyday life” (p. 262). Such competencies can be described objectively and inculcated to the point where their possession is no longer in question. To use Misgeld and Jardine’s example, becoming linguistically competent will, on this technical view, come to mean the acquisition of a fixed, univocally determinate set of competencies, the possession of which has been objectively demonstrated such that their possession, again, is inviolable and beyond dispute. As an adult then, I can describe myself as having linguistic competence or being compassionate. As a skill or competence that I possess, my linguistic competence can be called upon and applied in all manner of communicative situations. To be sure, I may on occasion fail to do with words what I would have liked to: for example, I may, with seeming ineptitude, stammer, hedge, perhaps even fall silent in the face of some pointed question addressed to me by an interlocutor. But even on such occasions, it is not my competence, linguistic or otherwise, that is undermined by my inability effectively to speak, nor is my self-understanding as one who is linguistically competent, for such competence is what I, as an educated adult member of our culture, invariably and unquestionably have. What such occasions demonstrate, rather—assuming that one does indeed possess the underlying talent in question—is a mere failure in application, a failure in particularizing what I otherwise unquestionably possess—a failure that stems perhaps from the

instability of certain environmental variables—for example, an unresponsive interlocutor, a noisy room, and so forth. My success, or lack thereof, in applying what I possess (in advance of any specific encounter) is what is at issue here, not that I possess it. Similarly, in defining myself as a compassionate person, I may on occasion find myself lacking in compassion, perhaps even acting rather callously. But even here, my compassion is secure and objectively beyond dispute: “One can never fail to be what one objectively ‘is’” (Misgeld & Jardine, 1986, p. 264). Or, alternatively, when one fails, what is is a failure.

As I intimated above, the logic of possession informs our received conceptions of “maturity” or “adulthood” and, by implication, those of “childhood” as well. On the modern conception, according to Archard (1993), “childhood is a stage or state of incompetence relative to adulthood. The ideal adult is equipped with certain cognitive capacities, rational, physically independent, autonomous, has a sense of identity and is conscious of its beliefs and desires” (p. 30) Childhood, in contrast “is defined as that which lacks the capacities, skills and powers of adulthood. To be a child is to be not yet an adult” (p. 30). Now, premised on an open conception of time, the dialogical framework problematizes this understanding of adulthood, as well as the essentialist distinction on which it is founded. As Misgeld and Jardine (1986) argue

Hermeneutically [or dialogically] conceived, adult and child are not taken to be univocal object domains, but are conceived as constantly interpreted and re-interpreted events whose meaning and relation to

each other is always yet-to-be decided. Adulthood is not a fixed set of properties, as if it were never in question. Rather, to be an adult, to be mature, requires the unceasing effort to establish for ourselves courses of action, indicating possibilities of self-understanding, which are not there as a matter of course, simply open for theoretical examination and ascription (p. 267)

In other words, adulthood or maturity is not defined in terms of the unquestionable possession of certain objective properties, properties whose absence, in turn, defines childhood or immaturity. On the dialogical account, adulthood is not an achieved state in which one has ceased, once and for all, to be a child. Rather, adulthood or maturity is understood as an event that is brought forth situationally, as something that comes into existence for the first time, as it were, in the moment of our practical, dialogical engagement with the world. Maturity is a performance ever to be renewed and enacted. As Archard (1993) similarly claims in this regard,

Adulthood as a process is a continual becoming, a never-completed maturing. It is not a plateau of age but the asymptote of life's developmental curve. The individual can become more and more of an adult, but there is no guarantee that ageing automatically brings with it maturity as understood normatively. Childhood is not necessarily left behind forever when one grows older; its characteristics may be retained to lesser or greater degree in later years. To that extent childhood is construed not so much as an actual period of one's life, but more as a metaphorical immaturity which can be present to some extent throughout a lifetime. (pp. 36-37)

A processual understanding of maturity, then, stresses the situational bringing-into-being of adulthood. So, to return to our previous example, compassion is not a fixed attribute or an objective property that I can ascribe to myself and that can be secured or achieved in advance of my involvement in a situation that requires me to act compassionately. My compassion, rather, is contingent

upon the unique circumstances that I encounter. My compassion is an unfinalizable, concrete, dialogical accomplishment; it is not something achieved or accomplished once and for all. Being compassionate is always about becoming compassionate, with all the risks, contingencies, and uncertainties that such becoming entails. From within an open temporality, my self-understanding as a compassionate person enters the realm of the uncertain present where it stands continually to be transformed in dialogue. Self-understanding, like any kind of understanding, is therefore better conceived as a venture, an undertaking full of risk and whose outcome is uncertain. "Understanding," as Gadamer (1981) writes, "is an adventure and, like any other adventure, is dangerous" (pp. 109-110). The risk and danger lie precisely in the eventness of open time.

This processual conception of maturity bears a clear affinity with Bakhtin's (1981) understanding of ideological becoming. Such becoming can be distinguished, more specifically, from the notion of development traditionally understood as progressive change. Ideological becoming is non-teleological in the strict sense: it is neither directional nor cumulative, nor does it tend necessarily and universally—unfoldingly, so to speak—to some given end state. Rather, it implies process, unfinishedness, unfinalizability, an orientation to the open future, and an emphasis on centrifugal (event-ful) over centripetal (systemic) forces. The inner voices that comprise our self-understanding continue to interanimate one another in dynamic and complex ways, continually and creatively giving rise to new meanings as they engage

one another dialogically. Our selves, on this view, exist in a perpetual state of incompleteness. We never stop becoming who we are. Accordingly, there is a sense in which Bakhtin's notion of ideological becoming makes children of us all. Like children, and by definition too, we are always—all of us—yet-to-be.

Sensing the Past

Bakhtin has been called an “apostle of constraints” (Emerson, 1988, p. 507). One of those constraints is what is already-given to us, or, more simply, the past—tradition, past images of the self, memories of better, or worse, times. In short, the dialogical view recognizes the reality of biographical continuity and the fact that individual development is linked to the historical process—whether that process be conceived in terms of the history of an individual life or, more encompassingly, in terms of the history of an entire cultural-linguistic community. In claiming this much, however, Bakhtin is not appealing to a conception of “genesis” in which the past determines the present. A reliance on an open sense of time clearly undermines such a view of the past's influence. Bakhtin's notion of becoming is inimical to the belief that the past plays such a deterministic role in individual or cultural-historical development. The past constrains but does not determine development. It is not surprising, then, that Bakhtin rejected the Freudian view, according to which a child's experiences in the first five or six years of life are responsible for the shape of personality in adulthood. Indeed Morson (1994) argues that Bakhtin's antagonism toward Freudianism was based on “its sense of the essential completion of the

personality at a young age" (Morson, 1994, p. 108).

In contrast to the Freudian account, a Bakhtinian view argues that while we are constrained in some measure by the past, the eventness and incompleteness of the present opens up multiple possibilities for development. In the Freudian world in which time is closed and eventness is forestalled, actions are not truly creative and cannot exceed what is given in the past. "Oedipal" development involves no real historical emergence, no genuine novelty. It is an oft-told tale of eternal recurrence. But for Bakhtin, the possibility of novelty inheres in the fact that individuals enjoy a certain measure of freedom from the past. As Bakhtin (1990) argued in his early phenomenological account of the subject, the I-for-myself enjoys a "loophole out of time, out of everything given, everything finitely present on hand. I do not, evidently, experience the whole of myself in time" (p. 109). In other words, I (as subject) never coincide with who I have been in time. Any past image of myself is brought into contact with "the incomplete process of a world-in-the-making," that is, with the open present, and so becomes "stamped with the seal of inconclusiveness" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 30).

For Bakhtin, the past and the present are dialogically interwoven. This dialogical interplay, and the productive possibilities for self-understanding it affords, are in fact enabled by temporal separation, by the difference between the horizon of the past and the open horizon of the present. Bakhtin defends the productivity of temporal distance most clearly in his consideration of the interpretation of historical texts. More specifically, Bakhtin (1986) argues that

the meaning of literary texts cannot be contained in the cultural circumstances of their creation, that is, in their writers' own time. In their efforts to stay close to the phenomenon at hand, to the text's original voice or meaning, investigators may try to regain the historical and biographical circumstances of a work's creation by somehow disentangling themselves from their own present horizon and entering—empathically, methodically, or otherwise—into the horizon of the past. The movement here would seem to be toward an eradication of the temporal distance that invariably opens up between the production of a text and its interpretation in subsequent times. According to Bakhtin, however, uncovering a work's "semantic depths," its potentials to mean, requires just this sort of temporal separation. The temporal distance between the text and the interpreter contains the productive possibility for new meanings to emerge from the work. Indeed, literary works "break through the boundaries of their own time, they live in centuries, that is, in great time and frequently . . . their lives there are more intense and fuller than are their lives within their own time" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 4). Works originate out of a tradition and continue to lead a "posthumous life" in subsequent epochs, characterized by new, enriched meanings: "it is as though these works outgrow what they were in the epoch of their creation" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 4). Crucial to this awakening of new meanings is temporal distance, the interpretive possibilities afforded by the passage of time. One should be careful to note here that Bakhtin's claims in this regard do not entail an absolute privileging of the present; rather, it is the relation between past and present, the dialogue between

the two, that Bakhtin is stressing.⁷⁴ Meaning is achieved neither in recreating the horizon of the past nor in subsuming that horizon under the interpretive interests of the present, but rather in the interlocative relationship between past and present voices. The past enters into the present via memory and “expresses itself like a ‘thou’” (Gadamer, 1989, p. 358), and like a participant in dialogue enjoys a certain autonomy and efficacy, a voice if you will, with regard to the construction of meaning.

The result of this encounter of past and present voices is something genuinely new. Each present utterance responds in some fashion to past utterances—one’s own and others’—and in doing so “always creates something that never existed before” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 120). Thus, any novel creation—any new way of understanding oneself, for example—contains both the “given” and the “created,” and as Bakhtin reminds us, what is “created is always created out of something given [past]” (p. 120). Freedom, then, is not defined in terms of the absence or overcoming of constraints. Indeed, on the Bakhtinian view, the acknowledgment of such constraints over individual creativity is a precondition for the existence of freedom. As Bakhtin (1986) writes, “The better a person understands the degree to which he is externally determined . . . the closer he comes to understanding and exercising his real freedom” (p. 139).

The Relation Between Individual and Cultural-Historical Development

In recent years, there has been an increasing awareness both within and outside

of psychology of the importance for individual development of both macroenvironments (Bateson, 1972; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Foucault, 1975, 1988) and microenvironments (Minuchin, 1984; Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967). Within the discipline, the metatheoretical discourses of social constructionism in particular have stressed that human mental processes cannot be separated from social and discursive context (e.g., Burr, 1995; Edwards & Potter, 1992; Gergen & Davis, 1985; Harré & Gillet, 1994; Shotter, 1993a). Generally, social constructionism is characterized by its Wittgensteinian critique of positivistic science and foundational, originarist epistemology, and by its ongoing polemic against the Cartesian view of the self as a private, self-present inner realm to which individuals have unique and privileged access. Social constructionists argue that people's interpretation of experience, their natural inclinations and behaviour, are generated and mediated not by real psychological structures housed in the mind but by discursive and cultural practices. Hence, rather than conceive of things like memory, emotion, self—and individual subjectivity more generally—in essentialist terms, that is, as objective mental entities, they are regarded as social types, as ways of making sense of the world that are grounded, again, not in the realm of individual or private experience, but in the institutional or social contexts of discursive negotiations. We learn to be selves and we learn to experience emotions, then, by internalizing socially and discursively grounded habits of thought. More generally, social constructionism reflects the recent postmodern trend within psychology toward the “externalization of the person” (Kvale, 1992). On this

account, meaning, memory, beliefs, and other presumably psychological entities “are actually out in the social world of action and interaction” (Gee, 1992, p. xvii).

Given the foregoing description of the social constructionist position, it is not surprising that some investigators have noted its resemblance to Bakhtinian dialogism. In this regard, recall once more Bakhtin’s (1981) notion of the “ideological becoming of a human being” (p. 341). The term “ideological” is appropriate in this context as it serves as a clear reminder that the psyche and selfhood are inescapably social phenomena. The term is appropriate, too, as it suggests, at least etymologically, the connection between the social system of ideas (ideo) and speech or the word (logos). At least preliminarily, then, we might say that ideological becoming is about how we grow into social ideas (of others) through the use of language (also of others). As we have also seen, a dialogical perspective on the self highlights not only the more immediate interpersonal context in which the self develops, but the larger historical and sociocultural context as well. Bakhtin’s (1986) notion of speech genres, for example, clearly orients us to the latter dimension. In sum, and generally in keeping with social constructionist tenets, the dialogical self is shaped both by our dialogical involvements with the real, interpersonal others that inhabit our lives and with the broader sociocultural and historically situated discourses which, as a sort of omnipresent third interlocutor, materially frame and enable our more immediate dialogues.

That Bakhtin affirms that individual identity is constructed within social reality is not inconsistent with his rejection of a deterministic view, which sees the individual as imprinted by historical and cultural forces. To argue that the self is a function of the social, of dialogue, is not to argue that the self is in the thrall of some omnipotent other. Indeed, in this respect, Bakhtin's view is capable of eluding recent criticisms that point up the apparent inability of social constructionist thought adequately to accommodate notions of individual agency and responsibility, the existence of personal, non-shared experience, and the creativity of individual thought (Fisher, 1995; Throop, 2000; Wong, 1999). Increasingly, critics are reacting sharply to the view that the self, emotion, and agency are simply fictions that disguise the construction of social reality through discourse; that the creative activity of individuals can be reduced to the passive reception of socially and culturally grounded knowledge systems; that dissent from sociocultural expectations and demands is a delusion.

The Bakhtinian view, I contend, readily accommodates these concerns—without, however, lapsing into the essentialist vocabulary which characterizes some of the above-mentioned critiques (e.g., Throop, 2000). According to the Bakhtinian view, it is true that subjectivity, because it consists in inner speech, is saturated with the social and the ideological. Language, after all, is the social-ideological medium par excellence. But despite the apparently deterministic tenor of this claim, the Bakhtinian view escapes the charge of sociological or linguistic reductionism. In this

connection, consider the following selection of excerpts from Bakhtin's writings:

Even if we succeeded in encompassing the whole of our consciousness as consummated in the other, this whole would not be able to take possession of us and really consummate us for ourselves: our consciousness would take that whole into account and would surmount it as just one of the moments in its own unity (which is not a unity that is given but a unity that is set as a task and, in its essentials, is yet-to-be). The last word, that is, would still belong to our consciousness rather than to the consciousness of another, and our own consciousness would never say to itself the word that would consummate it. After looking at ourselves through the eyes of another, we always return—in life—into ourselves again, and the final, or, as it were, recapitulative event takes place within ourselves in the categories of our own life. (Bakhtin, 1990, pp. 16-17)

I am not—for myself—entirely connatural with the outside world, for there is always something essential in me that I can set over against that world, namely, my inner self-activity, my subjectivity, which confronts the outside world as an object, and which is incapable of being contained in it. This inner self-activity of mine exceeds both nature and the world: I always have an outlet along the line of my experience of myself in the act . . . I always have a loophole, as it were, through which I can save myself from being no more than a natural given. (Bakhtin, 1990, p. 40)

An individual cannot be completely incarnated into the flesh of existing sociohistorical categories. There is no mere form that would be able to incarnate once and forever all of his human possibilities and needs, no form in which he could exhaust himself down to the last word, like the tragic or epic hero. (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 37)

In a human being there is always something that only he himself can reveal, in a free act of self-consciousness and discourse, something that does not submit to an externalizing secondhand definition. (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 58)

As long as a person is alive he lives by the fact that he is not yet finalized, that he has not yet uttered his ultimate word . . . man is free, and can therefore violate any regulating norms which might be thrust upon him. (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 59).

Any truly creative text is always to some extent a free revelation of the personality, not predetermined by empirical necessity. Therefore, it . . .

admits neither of causal explanation nor of scientific prediction.
(Bakhtin, 1986, p. 107)

Bakhtin is arguing here that as individuals we enjoy a certain existential surplus vis-à-vis the social-ideological world, a surplus that inheres not in the fact that we inhabit a realm of pure individuality—that is, a realm apart from the social—but rather in the fact that we occupy a unique time and place in social-historical existence, that we live in an emergent present that is moving into an unpredetermined future. Our freedom or surplus, in other words, stems not from our capacity to elude the sociocultural and ideological space into which we are thrown and exist but from the fact that we are always in a position of responding to and creatively applying the generalized, appropriated aspects of our social and ideological heritage to the unique, once-occurrent situations in which we continuously find ourselves. A corollary to this claim is that ideology is at the same time an inescapably individual phenomenon.

“Every ideological product bears the imprint of its creator or creators”

(Volosinov, 1986, p. 34). Indeed, ideology has no objective existence outside its realization (and continuous transformation) by particular individuals.

On the Bakhtinian view, the ideology carried in public speech must live amidst the flow of inner speech: “it must ring with subjective tones in order to remain a living sign and not be relegated to the honorary status of an incomprehensible museum piece” (Volosinov, 1986, p. 39). Through verbal interaction, “the social is drawn into the particular individual and continues to live and change—as an ongoing part of his private inner world and speech. It is

through the shared process of language use . . . that the social is actualized and the individual is realized” (Volosinov, 1986, p. 39). Hence, the individual and the social interanimate each other. The individual psyche expands and develops by being drawn into the social sphere, which in turn is challenged, transformed, and individuated on the plane of individual functioning (cf. Cheyne & Tarulli, 1999; Valsiner, 1994). Subjective life, while taking its origins from culture and social structure, does not simply mirror or reproduce culture and social structure, nor is it determined by them. Becoming enculturated is not a question of mechanical socialization. Bakhtin presents us with the image of an individual who rather than passively receiving the other's word, actively responds to the other's word, who reworks and reaccentuates it in the process of making it "one's own." And it is this active process that Bakhtin (1981, 1986) has in mind when he speaks of our ideological becoming as the more or less creative assimilation or appropriation of the words and voices of others. Assimilating an other's word, making it "one's own," is a productive, transformative process. The complex social-psychological process of assimilation involves developing the other's word, allowing it to mean differently as it is placed into dialogue with other voices, voices that agree with or challenge it, or change it in some fashion. Our inner speech constitutes a hermeneutic writ small—a "living hermeneutics" that allows us to contextualize, understand, and respond to the other's words.

After all, it is not a mute wordless creature that receives an utterance, but a human being full of inner words. All his experiences—his so-called apperceptive background—exist encoded in his inner speech, and only to

that extent do they come into contact with speech received from the outside. Word comes into contact with word. (Volosinov, 1986, p. 118)

A rejection of both individualism and sociology, the Bakhtinian view stresses the complex, open-ended dialogical relation between individual development and cultural-historical development. It stresses both the evolution of cultural tradition and the historicity of identity and the interplay between the two. Both individual and society, self and other, are continually becoming, continually entering the uncharted territory of history-in-the-making. The world itself is changing, along with and indeed through, the experiences of individuals—individuals whose existential surplus, in effect, is the enabling basis for the dialogue between the individual and the social world. Like any dialogical relation, the dialogue between self and society requires difference, and this difference is ensured precisely by the self's existential surplus vis-à-vis—its non-coincidence with—the other of society, culture, and ideology. As Holquist (1990) reminds us, however, we should not understand this surplus “as yet another Romantic claim for the primacy of the absolute subject: self for Bakhtin is a cognitive necessity, not a mystified privilege” (p. 22). Structured in terms of otherness, the self is at the same time not the other. Rather, the self is the dialogic relation between self and other.

NOTES

¹ While the self occupies a prominent position among the concerns of contemporary psychology, historically within the discipline interest in the problem of the self has waxed and waned. The earliest period of interest in the self was coextensive with the pioneering efforts of psychologists, such as Wundt and Titchener, to establish a scientific approach to the study of consciousness. Though the self was far from being considered an integral subject matter for the structural and functional psychologies of the day, or an indispensable feature of the program of scientific psychology, the general preoccupation with introspectively analyzable conscious contents offered a clearing for the study of the self. In this regard, intellectual homage must be paid to early theorists such as James (1950a), Baldwin (1897), and Calkins (1900), and in the sociological tradition, Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934)—both of whom I consider in another context below. In spite of their unremitting efforts, however, turn-of-the-century theorists' prospects for self did not come immediately to fruition. The conceptual, anecdotal, and empirical analyses they carried out generally failed to initiate within mainline psychology a tradition of sustained and uninterrupted scholarship in the area. With the rise of logical positivism in philosophical circles and with the corresponding advent of behaviourism within psychology, the self was virtually exiled from among the discipline's central concerns. The theoretical and methodological dominance enjoyed by the behaviourist paradigm cast a net of suspicion over what, ultimately, were viewed as fictitious inner contents: mind, consciousness, and along with these, self, were constructs that could find no home within the folds of behaviourism's inhospitable scientific vocabulary. (Interestingly, however, in this act of exclusion, the self remained a sort of "serviceable other" for behaviouristic psychology, that is, a determinate other which

exceeded the conceptual grasp of behaviourist thought and whose denigration could serve to legitimate behaviourism's own claims to knowledge.) On the canonical account, the so-called "cognitive revolution" in psychology is generally credited with bringing about the conditions for the current revival of interest in the self. The notion of self was readily incorporated into the conceptual, linguistic space opened up by cognitive psychologists' preferred metaphors for human mentality (cf. Greenwald & Pratkanis, 1985).

² Early proponents of the self attempted to impart to the study of conscious experience a more concrete, personal aspect than that accorded it by structuralist and functionalist schools—schools whose penchant for abstraction seemed to occlude what for James (1950a) was the simple, uncontestable fact that every thought and experience belongs to someone. It is never just a matter of thought or experience per se, argued James, but of my thought or your thought, "every thought being owned" (p. 226). For this reason, James urged that psychologists focus on the "the personal self," as opposed to abstracted, disembodied thought. Indeed, James was insistent in declaring that "No psychology . . . can question the existence of personal selves" and that, indeed, "The worst a psychology can do is so to interpret the nature of these selves as to rob them of their personal worth" (p. 226).

³ Rosenberg (1979) similarly remarks that "The 'self' stands as a concept foremost in the ranks of confusion" (p. 5).

⁴ Reflecting on the problem the child faces in learning the meaning of the pronoun "I," Cooley (1908) remarked that while "An apple is an apple to all alike . . . 'I' is different for every user of the word" (p. 340).

⁵ One might argue here that Cordelia's utterance simply reflects the constraints of

the speech situation: How does one disagree with the monarch? How does one express dissent? Such questions suggest that Cordelia's reticence may be socially (discursively), as well as psychically, produced.

⁶ In his essay, "Dream and existence," Binswanger (1963) elaborates an account of existential disappointment—of frustrated hopes and expectations—that certainly jibes with the sentiment I am expressing here.

⁷ There is an ongoing debate concerning Bakhtin's authorship of the texts signed by Volosinov and Medvedev. Clark and Holquist (1984) support the view that Bakhtin was the sole author of the "disputed texts," while Morson and Emerson (1990) argue that these texts were in fact written by Medvedev and Volosinov. See Morson and Emerson (1989, 1990) for a concise summary of the controversy surrounding the "disputed texts." For present purposes, I take an agnostic stance. I will refer to Bakhtin, Medvedev, and Volosinov as the authors of the particular texts ascribed to them. I will use the expression "Bakhtinian" to refer to ideas that are congenial to the Bakhtin Circle more generally.

⁸ Bakhtinian concepts have proven fruitful in diverse areas within the humanities and social sciences, including: film criticism (Stam, 1989; Montgomery, 1993); feminist theory and criticism (Bauer, 1988; Bauer & McKinstry, 1991); socio-political theory and cultural criticism (Gardiner, 1992; Hirschkop, 1999; Hirschkop & Shepherd, 1989); anthropology (Clifford, 1983; Quantz & O'Connor, 1988); biblical interpretation (Reed, 1993); rhetoric (Klancher, 1989; McClellan, 1990; Schuster, 1985, 1990); the visual arts (Haynes, 1995); literacy and composition studies (Farmer, 1998; Halasek, 1999; Himley, 1991; Cooper, 1994; Nystrand, Greene, & Wiemelt, 1993; Dyson, 1995; Hicks, 1994; Lensmire & Beals, 1994; Ward, 1994; Berkenkotter

& Huckin, 1993; Welch, 1993); second-language acquisition (Bialystok & Hakuta, 1994); bi-lingual education (Moraes, 1996); education theory (Hoel, 1997; Sidorkin, 1997, 1999); and geography (Folch-Serra, 1990). Within the scholarly psychology community, Bakhtin's writings are beginning to enjoy some currency among both Russian and English-speaking investigators (Bandlamudi, 1999; Baxter & Montgomery, 1996; Bibler, 1984; Buzzelli, 1993, 1995, 1997; Cheyne & Tarulli, 1998, 1999; Day & Tappan, 1996; Dore, 1989; Dore & Dorval, 1990; Dorval, 1990; Dorval & Dore, 1990; Ely & McCabe, 1993; Evans, 1991; Fernyhough, 1996; Florenskaya, 1989; Hermans & Kempen, 1993, 1995; Hermans, Kempen, & van Loon, 1992; Hermans, Rijks, & Kempen, 1993; McNamee, 1996; Meacham, 1989; Radzikhovskii, 1991; Sampson 1993; Shotter, 1993a, 1993b, 1993c; 1997; Tappan 1989, 1991, 1992, 1997; Tarulli, 1994, in press; Wertsch, 1980, 1985, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992; Wertsch & Smolka, 1993). While these appropriations of Bakhtinian concepts span various content areas in psychology, each contributes to a significant emerging project within the discipline, namely that of foregrounding the social, cultural, and historical context of human thought and action, and of psychological theory itself. For example, in some of our own work (Cheyne & Tarulli, 1999), we draw on Bakhtin's (1981, 1986) historical analysis of literary genres—from the travel novel, to the novel of ordeal, to the Bildungsroman—to suggest a narrative framework for understanding the current methodological and theoretical preferences of mainline academic psychology. We see in Bakhtin's implicit psychology a way of pursuing the ontological and epistemological openings provided in recent efforts to reconstrue the psychological person along cultural-hermeneutic lines.

⁹ Other prominent theorists of dialogue include Buber, Gadamer, Levinas, and

Freire. To date, relatively little attention has been paid to exploring the relationship between Bakhtin's conception of dialogue and that put forth by these thinkers. Some exceptions include Perlina (1984) and Sidorkin (1999) on Buber and Bakhtin; Gardiner (1992) on Bakhtin and Gadamer; and Nealon (1997), Patterson (1988), and Ponzio (1994) on Bakhtin and Levinas.

¹⁰ Quoted from Discourse on method, 4.31.

¹¹ Quoted from Meditations on first philosophy, 3.34.

¹² *Ibid.*, 2.28.

¹³ Descartes' understanding of the mind as a realm of interiority constituted a radical departure from received classical and medieval epistemologies wherein mind or reason was taken to be coextensive with nature and the cosmic order (Dallmayr, 1991; Taylor, 1989). For Aristotle and his medieval philosophical descendants, for example, knowledge or truth entailed a conformity of intellect and reality. On the Aristotelian account, what determines the nature or essence of an entity is its form; and this form, embodied in some particular piece of matter, also informs the intellect of a particular knower, thereby ensuring that the nature or essence of the entity is knowable. On this understanding, the human faculty of reason is not inscribed within the metaphorical texture of the inner-outer dichotomy; reason is located neither "inside" nor "outside" the human being, but rather equally in both.

¹⁴ Loeb (1981) argues that the traditional distinction between Continental Rationalism and British Empiricism is, in contrast to "the standard theory" espoused by most philosophers and intellectual historians, "broken-backed." According to Loeb, Descartes' and Locke's respective epistemological stances are not so diverse. Indeed, he claims that both thinkers might be better regarded as rationalists. More

specifically, Loeb argues that

Locke shares with Descartes the following claims with respect to the standards, sources, structure, and extent of human knowledge: (1) certainty is a condition for knowledge; (2) truths known by intuition are perceived all at once, are self-evident, and do not require argument; (3) truths known by deduction or demonstration are perceived in a succession or progression, are certain but not self-evident, and are established by arguments consisting a series of intuitively grasped steps; (4) intuition and deduction or demonstration are the sole sources of knowledge, at least with regard to all general truths; (5) not only do propositions known by intuition not require argument, they do not admit of argument, and in that sense they function as the foundation of all our knowledge; (6) we have intuitive knowledge of propositions about the content of our present sensory states; and (7) demonstrative knowledge of general or universal truths in principle extends well beyond mathematics, to morality and natural science” (p. 54)

¹⁵ Quoted from An essay concerning human understanding, 2.1.2.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 2.1.3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.1.3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.1.4.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.1.4.

²⁰ Bishop George Berkeley moved the empiricist epistemological program along by denying that reflection constituted an inherent activity of mind and by redefining ideas as particularistic images. He did not, however, reject Locke’s belief in the mind as agent. David Hume, taking as a point of departure the empiricist doctrine that all knowledge comes through observation and only observation, challenged the view of mind as agent, proposing that mind, self, soul, and personal identity were notions that did not have a grounding—could not be seen—in direct experience. For Hume, every real or determinate idea originates in some singular impression; but as the self, for example, is not any one impression but rather an inconceivably rapid succession of multiple, disparate, and perpetually fluctuating perceptions that pass before the theater of the mind, the idea of unified self, indeed of a self of any sort, is but a fiction, and

hence could not be considered fundamental to inquiry. For Hume, moreover, all the abstract ideas (e.g., relations, causality, necessity) that were presumed to be foundational epistemological categories were redefined as particular images (“ideas”) contingently gathered together according to principles of association.

²¹ Quoted from Discourse on method, 6.69.

²² *Ibid.*, 2.11

²³ I recognize that “the” Enlightenment is not a unitary phenomenon in the history of ideas. Rather, Enlightenment is a complex and plural notion to which diverse meanings are attached—which may perhaps explain why we are still asking “What is Enlightenment?” (e.g., see Schmidt, 1996). In a recent work, Outram (1995) claims that while historians have tended to acknowledge the differences among individual Enlightenment thinkers on particular issues, there has been a tendency to see the ideas of the Enlightenment as relatively homogenous. In an effort to accommodate the fundamental diversity at the heart of the notion of Enlightenment, Outram suggests that it be understood not as a completed project but rather as a process, as a series of problems and debates that bore on social and political developments and that took on different shapes and forms in particular social and cultural contexts.

²⁴ Quoted from An essay concerning human understanding, 1.4.23.

²⁵ It may reasonably be argued that Enlightenment period is both individualistic in the extreme and highly social, valuing dialogue. As Outram (1995) notes, the Enlightenment saw the establishment of new forms of sociability for the discussion and transformation of opinions. Formal institutions, in which membership was controlled, included masonic lodges and learned academies and societies. Informal settings included public lectures, coffee houses, lending libraries, and booksellers’

shops—all commercial operations which, for a small fee (e.g., the price of a cup of coffee) provided access to printed material and allowed people of different classes to be exposed to the same ideas. The emergence of this “public realm” suggests that the Enlightenment may be regarded as an age of collaboration in knowledge. It should be noted, however, that while such collaboration offered a nutrient medium for the development, testing, and communication of ideas, it is questionable whether ideas themselves were considered constitutively social as opposed to being predicated of individual minds.

²⁶ Unlike many of his eighteenth-century Enlightenment counterparts, Rousseau did not follow Descartes in defining humans as rational animals and in emphasizing the inborn faculty of reason as the cornerstone of individual autonomy. Where Descartes defines the self as a “thing that thinks,” Rousseau’s account of human nature construes the self primarily as a “thing that feels.” Despite being critical of the excesses of reason, however, Rousseau did not abandon the idea of reason, but rather idealized its union with matters of the heart. Rousseau follows Descartes in positing the power of autonomous reason to structure the world through its categories, but, as a reader of Locke, follows his sensationalism and empiricism as a counterpoint to Cartesian rationality. Such a synthesis of reason and feeling was in the service of reintegrating the individual and achieving a unified, unalienated consciousness.

²⁷ Rousseau (1979a) makes the distinction between dependence on things and dependence on wills or on others. Dependence on things is part of our natural inheritance and, as such, neither compromises freedom nor encourages vices. In the state of nature, the individual knows only amour de soi, a natural self-love and self-esteem uncorrupted by dependence on others, and strengthened by dependence on

things. Dependence on things teaches Emile to resign himself to necessity and thus keeps him within himself. In contrast, dependence on others' wills, which is a consequence of societal life, is both detrimental to individual autonomy and leads to vices; it divides the self and thus destroys the individual's natural wholeness and self-sufficiency. According to Rousseau's account, history and culture have forced a division between this originary amour de soi and a contingent amour propre, or pride, engendered by our dependence on others. The goal of education, then, was to regain the self's natural wholeness by preventing amour de soi from devolving into amour proper.

²⁸ Kant's (1986) essay hinges on the distinction between the private and the public use of reason. According to Kant, freedom needs to be attached only to the latter. By the private use of reason, Kant did not mean solitary or individual reflection, but rather the reason practiced by those in specific civil posts—clergymen, tax officials, officers. In the interests of preventing an outbreak of chaos, restrictions could be imposed on private reason; in other words, it could be subject to—indeed entailed the acceptance of—some form of external authority. In the private use of reason, as Kant says, one behaves relatively passively, “with an artificial unanimity” (p. 265) and with a view to advancing or defending certain “public ends”: “here argument is not allowed—one must obey” (p. 265). Such constraints and restrictions do not, however, compromise the goal of Enlightenment, which pertains to the public use of reason. In contrast to private reason, the public use of reason refers to “the use which a person makes of it as a scholar before the reading public” (p. 265) and requires the rejection of external authority: “The public use of one's reason must always be free, and it alone can bring about enlightenment among men” (p. 265). In advocating the free use

of public reason (the freedom of writers and publishers), Kant is defending the practice of unconstrained communication and debate. According to O'Neill (1989), Kant's communicative ideal requires that each of us is free to speak in our own voice: "otherwise understanding and agreement will be spurious, mere echoings of what the other or the many assent" (p. 46). In Kant's view, autonomy, intellectual independence, goes hand in hand with community and public discussion—with the appeal, more specifically, to shared (universal), rational principles which, in effect, are the foundation of community and cooperation. On the Kantian account, thinking for ourselves means thinking universally, from the standpoint of everyone else (the "sensus communis")—something that can be accomplished by unconstrained public discussion. Here, discussion and debate emerge as means of facilitating this rational impulse toward universalism—toward the abstract other embodied in the categorical imperative, for example—and, correspondingly, of transporting the individual beyond the insidious grasp of particularity, prejudice, and habit.

²⁹ One of the central lessons of post-positive philosophy is that it is impossible to approach a phenomenon of interest from a neutral or objective standpoint, from a standpoint outside of time and place, or outside of the discursive practices of a particular linguistic community. Gadamer's (1989) ontological hermeneutics represents one such philosophy. Gadamer challenges the Enlightenment notion of presuppositionless understanding, a notion that rests on a belief in the powers of subjective reflection and individual self-awareness. In contrast to Enlightenment thought on the matter, Gadamer deemphasizes conscious reflection and stresses, instead, the importance for understanding of historical belongingness. According to Gadamer, every question we ask of our subject matter, every attempt to understand something—whether that something

be a text, a cultural practice, another human being, or one's self—ineluctably begins with pre-conscious anticipations and projections—“pre-judgments” or “prejudices,” as Gadamer termed them—that predispose us to see the world in certain ways and that are rooted in our cultural and historical tradition. These “pre-judgments” are not, as on the Enlightenment assumption, impediments to understanding, but rather constitute the positive possibility of understanding anything at all. The central role of prejudice in human understanding and, correlatively, the limitations of subjectivity and self-awareness, are evident in Gadamer’s claim that “The self-awareness of the individual is only a flickering in the closed circuits of historical life. That is why the prejudices of the individual, far more than his judgments, constitute the historical reality of his being. (pp. 276-277). According to Gadamer, in its condemnation of prejudice, the Enlightenment exhibits its own overarching prejudice: namely, the “prejudice against prejudice itself” (p. 270). The presupposition of Enlightenment thought is that reason, and not tradition, is the source of authority. Gadamer challenges this dualistic conception of authority and reason. He argues that authority rooted in tradition—and manifested in pre-judgments carried in language—is not invariably the site of false thinking, but rather is the site of our openness to experience. For Gadamer, authority has less to do with obedience than with knowledge—with the knowledge, more precisely, that one’s own knowledge may be limited and that others may know more or have a better understanding of the subject matter at hand. Accordingly, from a hermeneutical perspective, the Kantian injunction to “think for oneself” is ultimately misguided and, in any event, impossible. As Schmidt (1998) observes, “The imperative ‘think for yourself’ makes sense . . . only because those who heed Kant’s call are not thinking by themselves. They are rather thinking with others, as members of a particular tradition in

which activities like ‘critique’ and ‘reflection’ have a meaning” (p. 20). However refined their sense of reason, then people are not free to disentangle themselves from the historical situation or tradition they inhabit. But this is not to suggest that tradition is a prison house. We can, through our dialogic encounters with historical and cultural others, come to a more self-conscious appreciation of the presuppositions that underlie our view of the world and ourselves. However, such self-conscious reflection is only ever partial. We cannot stand completely and disinterestedly outside of tradition in order to scrutinize it, like an object, in its entirety. Tradition, and hence we ourselves, are not so transparent.

³⁰ The Enlightenment emphasis on education as a means of inoculating the individual against prejudice and the uncritical acceptance of opinion and, more positively, of facilitating the development of critical reason and individual freedom, would seem to be inconsistent with these claims regarding the individual subject’s self-sufficiency. Locke (1913), for example, stresses the role of others in helping to constitute the child’s personality development. In Locke’s pedagogical model—no less than in Kant’s (1991) and Rousseau’s (1979a)—the task of education is to realize the human potential for moral autonomy and epistemic agency. Paradoxically, it would appear, we need others—tutors, for example—to help us gain the road to self-reliance, to help us become what we already are, at least in potentia. Here, the control or influence of others is seen as a sort of social scaffolding that, once internalized—and hence transformed into rational self-control—stands to be dismantled. In short, while we need others (perspicacious tutors, brave teachers) to disseminate and consciously inculcate in us the spirit of autonomous reason, once we achieve maturity (in the Kantian sense) and are able to think for ourselves, others cease to exert a formative influence on our choices, beliefs, and so forth.

³¹ The emancipation tendencies of the Enlightenment extended to liberating reason from language. As Cloeren (1988) notes, it was assumed that language was independent from philosophical and scientific thought, and from cognition more generally.

³² Quoted from An essay concerning human understanding, 3.2.2.

³³ *Ibid.*, III. 9.6.

³⁴ Quoted from Meditations on first philosophy, 2. 31-32.

³⁵ Rhetoric is generally taken to refer to the elaboration or embellishment of arguments or, more generally, any aspects, presentations, or stylings of arguments that have the intended function of persuading others of the correctness of an argument. Rhetoric is often regarded with considerable suspicion, especially in the scientific community, as a corruption of rationality and even morality. In pejorative terms, rhetoric is called sophistry, implying captious or fallacious reasoning in which rhetoric rises above all other features of an argument. To be seen to employ rhetoric is to be seen as insincere, manipulative, or deceptive. Rhetoric fell into especially low repute during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Mitchell, 1986). Locke (1997), for example, referred to “rhetoric, that powerful instrument of error and deceit” (p. 452, 3.10.34). Note, however, that the plain style advocated by Locke is at root a counter rhetoric—sanctioned by the Royal Society—to that of scholastics and poets, and as such is other-oriented via the goal of persuasion (Easton, personal communication).

³⁶ According to the self-understanding of the modern philosophical perspective, the validity and evaluation of a knowledge claim can be established independently of the social, cultural, rhetorical context in which it is made (Toulmin, 1990). A

proposition or thought embodies a truth that is in essence repeatable, a truth that exceeds the local, contingent circumstances of its production. In a world governed by such truths, “rhetoric was of course subordinate to logic: the validity and truth of rational arguments is independent of who presents them, to whom, or in what context—such rhetorical questions can contribute nothing to the impartial establishment of human knowledge” (Toulmin, 1990, p. 75).

³⁷ Rousseau’s communicative ideal is expressed less directly in his pedagogical writings. In *Emile*, he writes:

The greatest harm from the hurry one is in to make children talk before the proper age is not that the first speeches one makes to them and the first words they say have no meaning for them, but that they have another meaning than ours without our being able to perceive it; so that, appearing to answer us quite exactly, they speak to us without understanding us and without our understanding them. It is ordinarily due to such equivocations that we are sometimes surprised by their remarks, to which we lend ideas that they did not attach to them. This lack of attention on our part to the true meaning which words have for children appears to me to be the cause of their first errors; and these errors, even after they are cured of them, have an influence on their turn of mind for the rest of their lives. . . . Restrict, therefore, the child’s vocabulary as much as possible. It is a very great disadvantage for him to have more words than ideas, for him to know how to say more things than he can think. (1979a, p. 73-74).

³⁸ Bakhtin’s (1984) understanding of Socratic dialogue stands in contrast to the conventional view, according to which Socrates is seen as upholding a notion of autonomous knowers and as serving as a catalyst in the dialectical unfolding of an already-known truth. For Bakhtin, Socratic dialogues convey the notion that the determining form of truth is not dialectic, but rather dialogic interaction. Bakhtin argues that in Socratic dialogue, truth does not exist ready-made, simply awaiting discovery by some self-contained, fully autonomous subject. Moreover, he cautions us against conflating a Socratic conception of truth with Plato’s monologization of Socratic dialogues in the service of the “Idea”. In Plato, Bakhtin warns us, dialogues

become dialogical in compositional form only, with truth simply unfolding inescapably in a particular direction. As a result of this monologization, truth loses its processual, emergent quality.

³⁹ In Passions of the soul, Descartes (1988) writes: “For there is within us but one soul, and this soul has within it no diversity of parts” (p. 236, l.47).

⁴⁰ While not doubting that the Enlightenment’s self-understanding and perception of the world is shaped by the discourses of cognitive and moral universalism, Vogel (2000) gathers evidence to suggest that such universalistic principles did not always eventuate in immutable, dogmatic beliefs about the uniformity of human nature. More specifically, she examines the genre of the philosophical travel account, in which traveller-philosophers described hitherto unfamiliar regions of the world. Vogel argues that this genre did not simply generate empirical, factual descriptions of the world’s diversity, but rather was also directed to how such diversity spoke to philosophical questions concerning the nature and moral constitution of humans. In some cases, Vogel argues, the encounter with such difference became “the catalyst of a ‘painful’ enlightenment—of a critical self-reflection on Europe’s own identity” (p.5). As an illustration of the self-doubt elicited by such encounters with cultural otherness, Vogel cites the case of Diderot: “observations of sexual customs on Tahiti led Diderot . . . to understand that shame and guilt were not, as assumed in the moral codes of civilized natures, universally inscribed in human nature, but were products of social conventions” (p. 21).

⁴¹ Outram (1995) observes that despite the Enlightenment’s pretensions to universalism, women writers’ status as producers of knowledge remained equivocal. Women were never truly accepted as part of the “Republic of Letters”—and indeed,

their participation was seen as compromising its legitimacy. The independence and autonomy of women was considered to be compromised by their family duties, and their lack of impartiality to be due to their emotional natures. (On this point, see also Rousseau's (1979a) description of Emile's prospective mate, Sophie.) As Outram (1995) further notes, "the Enlightenment . . . often seemed to devote as much energy to denigrating entire social groups, such as women or peasants, as impervious to the voice of reason, as it did to constructing a better world for human beings" (p. 24).

⁴² Bakhtin is not ascribing to a form of solipsism. Nor does he regard this essential otherness, this difference between self and other, as a lamentable state, an impediment to communication, akin perhaps to a distorting "egocentrism" as conceived, for example, along Piagetian lines. On the Piagetian account, the universal path of social-cognitive development involves the movement from an autistic, egocentric state to one in which mature, objective perspective-taking is possible. In this framework, taking the perspective of the other means overcoming the other's otherness, an achievement which, in Piaget's rationalist account, is enabled by the emergent ability to assume a perspective that is common to all.

⁴³ The sources on which Bakhtin's phenomenological argument relies are not clear. In any event, a discussion of the varieties of phenomenological thought that may have influenced these early writings is sure to be complex enough to warrant a separate discussion. It should be noted, however, that Bakhtin himself refers to the phenomenological tradition as one of his sources (e.g., 1990, p. 188n).

⁴⁴ Bakhtin (1993) calls this legacy "theoreticism." (See also Chapter 3.)

⁴⁵ Bakhtin (1990) also refers to this innermost mode of subjectivity as "spirit."

⁴⁶ On Bakhtin's (1990) view, there is no clear demarcation line between

autobiography and biography: “Neither in biography nor in autobiography does the I-for-myself (my relationship with myself) represent the organizing, constitutive moment of form” (p. 151).

⁴⁷ On the importance of others’ stories about us, Bakhtin (1990) writes: “Without these stories told by others, my life would not only lack fullness and clarity in its content, but would also remain internally dispersed, divested of any value-related biographical unity” (p. 154).

⁴⁸ On the Bakhtinian framework, the others who author the self are conceived fairly uniformly in benevolent, quasi-religious terms. The form I receive from the other is likened to “the relationship of a gift to a need; of an act of freely granted forgiveness to a transgression; of an act of grace to a sinner” (1990, p. 90). As Emerson (1984) contends, the other in Bakhtin is not an alien menace but a “friendly other, a living factor in the attempts of the I toward self-definition” (p. 302n). Bakhtin certainly does not seem to entertain the notion that the other may in fact want to destroy me (Emerson, 1988). Of course, it might be argued that the encounter with an utterly alien and menacing other can be as productive for the self as an encounter with a friendly other. Meeting up with a threatening, malevolent other can make me realize certain things about myself—even if only how vulnerable I am and what my escape options are.

⁴⁹ Bakhtin’s allusion here to an authentic source of alterity implies that self-objectification cannot be accomplished by an abstract, discursive thought that abstracts me from the unique place I occupy in existence and places me on the same plane with all others.

⁵⁰ Nor can we comprehend ourselves as a whole or see ourselves directly by

looking into a mirror, for mirrors afford a poverty of otherness. According to Bakhtin (1986), "our real exterior can be seen and understood only by other people, because they are located outside us in space and because they are others" (p. 7). When we look into a mirror,

We see the reflection of our exterior, but not ourselves in terms of our exterior. . . . Indeed, our position before a mirror is always somewhat spurious, for since we lack any approach to ourselves from outside, in this case . . . we project ourselves into a peculiarly indeterminate possible other, with whose help we then try to find an axiological position in relation to ourselves; in this case, too, we try to vivify ourselves and give form to ourselves—out of the other. Whence that distinctive and unnatural expression of our face which we see on it in the mirror, but which we never have in our lived life. (Bakhtin, 1990, pp. 32-33)

⁵¹ Bakhtin (1990) also refers to this component of the self as "soul."

⁵² The notion that the actual meaning of the "same" utterance changes each time that utterance is made seriously complicates the notion of a permanently existing idea that appears in the mind the same way on different occasions. Interestingly, James (1950a) addresses this issue in his claim that "it is certainly . . . true that no two 'ideas' are ever exactly the same" (p. 235). He quotes Hodgson to the effect that "The chain of consciousness is a sequence of differents" (p. 230). Elaborating the Heraclitian nature of this argument, he further observes that

we should have to confess that, however we might in ordinary conversation speak of getting the same sensation again, we never in strict theoretic accuracy could do so; and that whatever was true of the river of life, of the river of elementary feeling, it would certainly be true to say, like Heraclitus, that we never descend twice into the same stream. (p. 233)

And similarly in regard to thought:

For there it is obvious and palpable that our state of mind is never precisely the same. Every thought we have of a given fact is, strictly speaking, unique, and only bears a resemblance of kind with our other thoughts of the same fact.. When the identical fact recurs, we must think of it in a fresh manner, see it under a somewhat different angle, apprehend it in different relations from those in which it last appeared. And the thought by which we cognize it is the

thought of it-in-those-relations, a thought suffused with the consciousness of all that dim context. Often we are ourselves struck at the strange differences in our successive views of the same thing. (p. 233)

Hence the reason that our thoughts about some issue are never, strictly speaking, the same lies in the fact that on each successive occasion a thought is shrouded in a unique, once-occurrent set of vaguely apprehended relations. Against the idea of a completely rounded, bounded, fully delimited thought—of a whole unto itself—James wants to promote “the re-instatement of the vague to its proper place in our mental life” (p. 254). “Knowledge about a thing,” writes James, “is knowledge of its relations” (p. 259), and of most of these “we are only aware in the penumbral nascent way of a ‘fringe’ of unarticulated affinities about it” (p. 259)

⁵³ Also critical of the conventional, transmission model of the communicative process as follows, Derrida (1981) describes it in the following terms:

communication . . . in effect implies a transmission charged with making pass, from one subject to another, the identity of a signified object, of a meaning or of a concept rightfully separate from the process of passage and from the signifying operation. Communication presupposes subjects (whose ideality and presence are constituted before the signifying operation) and objects (signified concepts, a thought meaning that the passage of communication will have neither to constitute, nor, by all rights, to transform). A communicates B to C. Through the sign the emitter communicates something to a receptor, etc. (pp. 23-24).

⁵⁴ Merleau-Ponty (1973) expresses a similar view: “But I cannot even say that speech may be “in me,” since it is equally “in the listener.” Speech is peculiarly my own, my productivity, and yet speech is so only to make meaning out of my productivity and to communicate that meaning. The other who listens and understands joins with me in what is most singular in me” (p. 141).

⁵⁵ Benevise (1971) offers an account of the subject which, like Bakhtin’s, posits the discursive production of selfhood. Benevise argues that the reality to which the

pronoun “I” refers is a “reality of discourse” (p. 218). “I” cannot be defined, like a noun, as a particularization of some objective, persistently identical notion—like “tree,” for example. Unlike the uses of nouns, “I cannot be defined except in terms of ‘locution.’ . . . I signifies ‘the person who is uttering the present instance of the discourse containing I.’ This instance is unique by definition and has validity only in its uniqueness” (Beneviste, p. 218). Each person constitutes or announces himself or herself as a subject by uttering “I.” In this way, by saying “I,” an individual speaker appropriates the resources of language toward the end of actualizing his or her subjectivity. Subjectivity on this view is “the capacity of the speaker to posit himself as ‘subject’” (p. 224). Subjectivity is achieved in discourse by taking on the role of the “I” in that discourse. Moreover, in his claim that “I” functions dialogically with a “you,” Beneviste puts forward a relational conception of subjectivity. He writes:

Consciousness of self is only possible if it is experienced by contrast. I use I only when I am speaking to someone who will be a you in my address. It is this condition of dialogue that is constitutive of person, for it implies that reciprocally I becomes you in the address of the one who in his turn designates himself as I.” (pp. 224-225).

⁵⁶ See Baumeister and Leary (1995) for a social-psychological discussion of “the need to belong” as a fundamental human motivation.

⁵⁷ In contrast to this reading of Hegel, Williams (1992) argues that in his concept of “recognition” Hegel defends the value of otherness for subjectivity. On Williams’ reading, Hegel does not reduce the other to the same, but rather preserves the sense of an ongoing, reciprocal dialectic between self and other.

⁵⁸ On a Gadamerian account, in a genuinely productive dialogue across differences, the horizons of self and other (of interpreter and text, more specifically) blend to create a new, shared horizon. Gadamer (1989) expresses this new,

dialogically emergent understanding in terms of a “fusion of horizons.” That is, in articulating and testing our beliefs and practices in the contrastive light afforded by the other’s horizon, I am involved in a sort of synthesizing process wherein a consensus (even if structured around disagreement) is dialogically forged. Here, Gadamer clearly betrays his indebtedness to Hegelian thinking, for the new understanding is conceived as reflecting a more sophisticated—differentiated, better articulated—form of knowledge, though to be sure, unlike Hegel, Gadamer does not envision this process in terms of a dialectical synthesis of opposites that issues inevitably and necessarily in the eradication of otherness. Still, for Gadamer, dialogue is successful only in the measure to which it eventuates in a substantial consensus—that is, the attainment of a greater degree of universality with regard to the subject matter at hand.

⁵⁹ In his defence of the ineradicable plurality of social languages and their corresponding ways of viewing the world, Bakhtin may be allied with contemporary postmodern analyses of difference, and in particular with Lyotard’s (1984) elaboration of the “postmodern condition.” Just as Lyotard’s postmodern “incredulity toward metanarratives” is rooted in his optimism regarding the critical and emancipatory force of small, local narratives—narratives whose complexity and diversity mirror social reality—so too does Bakhtin counterpose the multiple languages of heteroglossia to the unifying thrust of any given national language. See Carroll (1987) for a discussion of the political implications of difference in Bakhtin and Lyotard.

⁶⁰ Bakhtin’s account of the process by which others’ words come to populate our inner speech is admittedly rather sketchy, and certainly less elaborated than the internalization theories advocated, for example, by Mead (1934) and Vygotsky

(1987). Bakhtin seems most often to take as his point of departure a psyche already populated with words and voices.

⁶¹ As an example of monologic literary works, Bakhtin (1984) cites Tolstoy's texts: "Tolstoy's world is monolithically monologic; the hero's discourse is confined in the fixed framework of the author's discourse about him" (p. 56).

⁶² Higgins's (1987) self-discrepancy model is notable in its attention to the role of the perceived evaluations of significant others on self-understanding. Higgins distinguishes between the actual self, the ideal self, and the ought self. The actual self is a representation of the attributes that you or another believe you actually possess. Ideal and ought selves, on the other hand, are what he calls self-guides, which pertain to hopes and aspirations regarding attributes you would ideally like to possess (the ideal self), and attributes that, out of duty or obligation, you think you ought to possess (the ought self). Like the actual self, these self-guides may involve both one's own standpoint or that of any number of significant others about the attributes one ideally or ought to possess. Higgins predicts that certain types of discrepancies between the actual self-concept and self-guides produce distinguishable affective responses. For example, a discrepancy between one's actual and ideal self gives rise to dejection-related emotions (e.g., disappointment, sadness); a discrepancy between one's actual self-concept and the self one believes another thinks one ought to possess gives rise to agitation-related emotions (e.g., fear, feeling threatened). From a dialogical perspective, what is significant about Higgins's theory is that it points up the complexity of the self, and in particular the role played by others' voices in the vicissitudes of self-understanding. While Higgins speaks of matches or mismatches between the self-concept and various self-guides (one's own and others'), we might

equally speak of the dialogical interplay (e.g., agreement, disagreement) of the voices reflected in actual, ideal, and ought selves. This dialogical rendering points up the dynamic fashion in which these voices engage one another and their struggle for influence over the individual.

⁶³ A second variant of single-voiced discourse is represented or objectified discourse, which refers primarily to the direct speech of characters. It is discourse in which the character speaks in a direct, unmediated way, that is, in a way not shaped by an awareness of another discourse. Such speech is to be understood at once in terms of what it says about its referential object and “as characteristic, typical, colorful discourse, a referential object toward which something is directed” (p. 187). In other words, objectified discourse represents a character's words in object-like fashion for the audience.

⁶⁴ Indeed, it is these words and voices that constitute our particularly human habitat. “In all areas of life and ideological activity,” writes Bakhtin (1981),

our speech is filled to overflowing with other people's words. . . . We can go so far as to say that in real life people talk most of all about what others talk about—they transmit, recall, weigh and pass judgment on other people's words, opinions, assertions, information; people are upset by others' words, or agree with them, contest them, refer to them and so forth. Were we to eavesdrop on snatches of raw dialogue in the street, in a crowd, in lines, in a foyer and so forth, we would hear how often the words ‘he says,’ ‘people say,’ ‘he said...’are repeated. (pp. 337-338)

⁶⁵ A more detailed account of the dialogical conceptualization of change and maturity is provided in the concluding chapter of the dissertation.

⁶⁶ See Baxter and Montgomery (1996) for a discussion of “dialogic complexity” as a construct for understanding change in interpersonal relationships.

⁶⁷ As Bakhtin (1984) notes in this regard:

The weakening or destruction of a monologic context occurs only when there

is a coming together of two utterances equally and directly oriented toward a referential object. Two discourses equally and directly oriented toward a referential object within the limits of a single context cannot exist side by side without intersecting dialogically, regardless of whether they confirm, mutually supplement, or (conversely) contradict one another, or find themselves in some other dialogic relationship (that of question and answer, for example). (pp. 188-189)

⁶⁸ The ethical nature of dialogue is sure to be revisited and recontextualized in light of publication of Bakhtin's (1990, 1993) earliest writings.

⁶⁹ Ponzio (1990) sees the developmental course of appropriation in the following terms: "We finally arrive at our "own" discourse through an itinerary that goes from the repetition, imitation and stylization of the discourse of others to its ironization, parodization and criticism; an itinerary, that is, leading from the serious to the parodic" (p. 223).

⁷⁰ The ethical ideal reflected in Bakhtin's notion of ideological becoming has much in common with the aims of what might be called hermeneutical education. The goal of such education is the never-completed cultivation of the "experienced" (*gebildet*) person. What makes a person experienced is not so much the accumulation of knowledge but the openness to new experience. The *telos* of hermeneutical education is the recognition of the value of different perspectives. This openness can be understood as the readiness to enter into genuine dialogue with the other.

⁷¹ The constitutive significance of outsideness for the self is a theme that Bakhtin defends throughout the course of his career and which, in one of his last pieces, takes up in the context of inter-cultural understanding. "In the realm of culture," Bakhtin (1986) writes,

outsideness is a most powerful factor in understanding. It is only in the eyes of another culture that a foreign culture reveals itself fully and profoundly. . . . A meaning only reveals its depths once it has encountered and come into contact with another, foreign meaning; they engage in a kind of dialogue,

which surmounts the closedness and one-sidedness of these particular meanings, these cultures. We raise new questions for a foreign culture, ones that it did not raise itself; we seek answers to our own questions in it; and the foreign culture responds to us by revealing to us its new aspects and new semantic depths. Without one's own questions one cannot creatively understand anything other or foreign. . . . Such a dialogic encounter of two cultures does not result in a merging or mixing. Each retains its own unity and open totality, but they are mutually enriched. (p. 7)

⁷² Babcock's (1978) notion of "symbolic inversion" also captures this aspect of carnival. Symbolic inversion is "broadly defined as any act of expressive behavior which inverts, contradicts, abrogates, or in some fashion presents an alternative to commonly held cultural codes, values, and norms be they linguistic, literary or artistic, religious, or social and political" (p. 14).

⁷³ Interestingly, however, Greenwald concedes that, in the long run, "the totalitarian-ego biases are . . . disadvantageous" (p. 614) and that the "ego's biases will produce cognitive stagnation in a person who is capable of greater developmental achievement" (p. 614).

⁷⁴ Bakhtin (1986) writes: "the work cannot live in future centuries without having somehow absorbed past centuries as well. If it had belonged entirely to today (that is, were a product only of its own time) and not a continuation of the past or essentially related to the past, it could not live in the future. Everything that belongs only to the present dies along with the present" (p. 4). See also Gadamer's (1989) conception of "effective history."

REFERENCES

- Allport, G. W. (1961). Pattern and growth in personality. New York: Holt.
- Archard, D. (1993). Children: Rights and childhood. London: Routledge.
- Ashmore, R. D., & Jussim, L. (Eds.) (1997). Self and identity: Fundamental issues. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). How to do things with words. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Babcock, B. A. (Ed.). (1978). The reversible world: Symbolic inversion in art and society. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1968). Rabelais and his world (H. Iswolsky, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1981). The dialogic imagination (M. Holquist, Ed., C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Bakhtin, M. (1984). Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics (C. Emerson, Ed. & Trans.), Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). Speech genres and other late essays (C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Eds., V. W. McGee, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Bakhtin, M. M. (1990). Art and answerability (M. Holquist & V. Liapunov, Eds., V. Liapunov, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Bakhtin, M. M. (1993). Toward a philosophy of the act (V. Liapunov & M. Holquist, Eds., V. Liapunov, Trans.). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Bakhtin, M. M., & Medvedev, P. N. (1978). The formal method in literary scholarship: A critical introduction to sociological poetics (A. J. Wehrle, Trans.). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Bakhurst, D. (1991). Consciousness and revolution in Soviet philosophy.

Baldwin, J. M. (1987). Social and ethical interpretations in mental development: A study in in mental development. New York: MacMillan.

Banaji, M. R., & Prentice, D. A. (1994). The self in social contexts. Annual Review of Psychology, 45, 297-332.

Bandlamudi, I. (1999). Developmental discourse as an author/hero relationship. Culture & Psychology, 5, 41-65.

Bateson, G. (1972). Steps to an ecology of mind. Toronto: Ballantine.

Bauer, D. (1988). Feminist dialogics: A theory of failed community. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Bauer, D. & McKinstry, S.J. (Eds.). (1991). Feminism, Bakhtin, and the dialogic. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Baumeister, R. F. (1997). The self and society: Changes, problems, and opportunities. In R. D. Ashmore & L. Jussim (Eds.), Self and Identity: Fundamental issues (pp. 191-217). New York, Oxford University Press.

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. Psychological Bulletin, 117, 497-529.

Baxter, L. A., & Montgomery, B. M. (1996). Relating: Dialogues and dialectics. New York: Guilford Press.

Bellah, R., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. (1985). Habits of the heart: Individualism and commitment in American life. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Benveniste, E. (1971). Problems in general linguistics (M. Meek, Trans.). Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press.

Berkenkotter, C., & Huckin, T.N. (1993). Rethinking genre from a sociocognitive perspective. Written Communication, 10, 475-509.

Bialystok, E., & Hakuta, K. (1994). In other words: The science and psychology of second-language acquisition. New York: Basic Books.

Bibler, V. (1984). Thinking as creation (Introduction to the logic of mental dialogue). Soviet Psychology, 22, 33-54.

Bidell, T. R. (1992). Beyond interactionism in contextualist models of development. Human Development, 35, 306-315.

Binswanger, L. (1968). Being-in-the-world: Selected papers of Ludwig Binswanger (J. Needleman, Trans.). New York: Harper Torchbooks.

Blachowicz, J. (1997). The dialogue of the soul with itself. Journal of Consciousness Studies, 4, 485-508.

Bretherton, I. (1991). Pouring new wine into old bottles: The social self as internal working model. In M. R. Gunnar & L. A. Sroufe (Eds.), Self processes and development: The Minnesota Symposia on Child Development (Vol. 23, pp. 1-42). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). The ecology of human development. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Broughton, J. M. (1978). The development of concepts of self, mind, reality and knowledge. In W. Damon (Ed.), New directions in psychology: Social Cognition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Broughton, J. (1981). The divided self in adolescence. Human Development, 24, 13-32.

Bruns, G. L. (1988). On the tragedy of hermeneutical experience. Research in Phenomenology, 18, 191-201.

Burr, V. (1995). An introduction to social constructionism. London: Routledge.

Buzzelli, C. A. (1993). Morality in context: A sociocultural approach to enhancing young children's moral development. Child & Youth Care Forum, 22, 375-386.

Buzzelli, C. A. (1995). Teacher-child discourse in the early childhood classroom: A dialogic model of self-regulation and moral development. Advances in Early Education and Day Care, 7, 271-294.

Buzzelli, C. A. (1997). Origins, differences, and the origins of differences in moral development: Parent-child discourse as moral activity. Developmental Review, 17, 101-109.

Calkins, M. W. (1900). Psychology as a science of selves. The Philosophical Review, 9, 490-501.

Cantor, N., & Kihlstrom, J. (1987). Personality and social intelligence. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Carroll, D. (1987). Narrative, heterogeneity, and the question of the political: Bakhtin and Lyotard. In M. Krieger (Ed.), The aims of representation: Subject/text/history (pp. 69-106). New York: Columbia University Press.

Cassirer, E. (1951). The philosophy of the Enlightenment. Boston: Beacon Press.

Cheyne, J. A., & Tarulli, D. (1998). Paradigmatic psychology in narrative perspective: Adventure, ordeal and Bildung. Narrative Inquiry, 8, 1-25.

Cheyne, J.A., & Tarulli, D. (1999). Dialogue, difference, and voice in the zone of proximal development. Theory and Psychology, 9, 5-28.

Chomsky, N. (1957). Syntactic structures. The Hague: Mouton.

Clark, K. & Holquist, M. (1984). Mikhail Bakhtin. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Clifford, J. (1983). On ethnographic authority. Representations, 1, 118-146.

Cloeren, H. J. (1988). Language and thought : German approaches to analytic philosophy in the 18th and 19th centuries. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Colapietro, V. M. (1989). Peirce's approach to the self: A semiotic perspective on human subjectivity. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Cooley, C. H. (1902). Human nature and the social order. New York: Scribner.
- Cooley, C. H. (1908). A study of the early use of self-words by a child. The Psychological Review, 15, 339-357.
- Cooper, M. M. (1994). Dialogic learning across the disciplines. Journal of Advanced Composition, 14, 531-546.
- Cousins, S. D. (1989). Culture and self-perception in Japan and the United States. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 56, 124-131.
- Crittenden, J. (1992). Beyond individualism: Reconstituting the liberal self. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dallmayr, F. (1991). Life-world, modernity, and critique: Paths between Heidegger and the Frankfurt school. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Damon, W., & Hart, D. (1988). Self understanding in childhood and adolescence. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Danziger, K. (1997). The historical formation of selves. In R. D. Ashmore & L. Jussim (Eds.), Self and Identity: Fundamental issues (pp. 137-159). New York, Oxford University Press.
- Day, J. M., & Tappan, M. B. (1996). The narrative approach to moral development: From the epistemic subject to dialogical selves. Human Development, 39, 67-82.
- de Gramont, P. (1990). Language and the distortion of meaning. New York: New York University Press.

Derrida, J. (1976). Of grammatology (G. C. Spivak, Trans.). Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Derrida, J. (1981). Positions. (A. Bass, Trans), Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Derrida, J. (1982). Margins of philosophy (A. Bass, Trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Descartes, R. (1985). The philosophical writings of Descartes (J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, & D. Murdoch, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Descartes, R. (1988). Descartes: Selected philosophical writings (J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, & D. Murdoch, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dore, J. (1989). Monologue as reinvoicement of dialogue. In K. Nelson (Ed.), Narratives from the crib (pp. 231-260). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Dore, J., & Dorval, B. (1990). The politics of intimacy: A dialogical analysis of “being intimate” in a psychology experiment. In B. Dorval (Ed.), Conversational organization and its development (pp. 78-98). Norwood, NJ: Ablex

Dorval, B. (1990). A dialogized version of Piaget’s theory of egocentric speech. In B. Dorval (Ed.), Conversational organization and its development (pp. 131-164). Norwood, NJ: Ablex

Dorval, B., & Dore, J. (1990). The adolescent's intimate other: Comparing Piaget, Freud and Bakhtin in an analysis of dialog. Discours Social/Social Discourse, 3, 23-55.

Dunne, J. (1995). Beyond sovereignty and deconstruction: The storied self. Philosophy and Social Criticism, 21, 137-157.

Dyson, A. H. (1995). Writing children: Reinventing the development of childhood literacy. Written Communication, 12, 4-46.

Edwards, D., & Potter, J. (1992). Discursive psychology. London: Sage.

Elkind, D., & Bowen, R. (1979). Imaginary audience behavior in children and adolescents. Developmental Psychology, 15, 38-44.

Ely, R., & McCabe, A. (1993). Remembered voices. Journal of Child Language, 20, 671-696.

Emerson, C. (1984). Editor's preface. In M. M. Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's poetics (C. Emerson, Ed. & Trans.) (pp. xxix-xliii). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Emerson, C. (1988). Problems with Baxtin's poetics. Slavic and East European Journal, 32, 503-525.

Emerson, C. (1997). The first hundred years of Mikhail Bakhtin. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Epstein, S. (1973). The self-concept revisited or a theory of a theory. American Psychologist, 28, 405-416.

Evans, F. (1990). Language and political agency: Derrida, Marx, and Bakhtin. The Southern Journal of Philosophy, 28, 505-523.

Evans, F. (1991). Cognitive psychology, phenomenology, and “The creative tension of voices.” Philosophy and Rhetoric, 24, 105-127.

Farmer, F. (Ed.). (1998). Landmark essays on Bakhtin, rhetoric, and writing. Mahwah, NJ: Hermagoras Press.

Fernyhough, C. (1996). The dialogic mind: A dialogic approach to the higher mental functions. New Ideas in Psychology, 14, 47-62.

Fine, G. A. (1987). With the boys: Little league baseball and preadolescent culture. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Fischer, K. W. (1980). A theory of cognitive development: The control and construction of hierarchies of skills. Psychological Review, 87, 477-531.

Fisher, H. (1995). Whose right is it to define the self? Theory and Psychology, 5, 323-352.

Florenskaya, T. A. (1989). Psychological problems of dialogue in light of the ideas of M. M. Bakhtin and A. A. Ukhtomskii. Soviet Psychology, 27, 29-40.

Folch-Serra, M. (1990). Place, voice, space: Mikhail Bakhtin’s dialogical landscape. Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 8, 255-274.

Foucault, M. (1988). Madness and civilization: A history of insanity in the age of reason (R. Howard, Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.

Foucault, M. (1975). I, Pierre Rivière . . . (F. Jelinek, Trans.). Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press.

Freire, P. (1970). Pedagogy of the oppressed (M. B. Ramos, Trans.). New York: Continuum.

Gadamer, H. G. (1981). Reason in the age of science. (F. G. Lawrence, Trans.), Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Gadamer, H. G. (1989). Truth and method (2nd rev. ed.). (J. Weinsheimer & G. Marshall, Trans.). New York: Continuum Press. (Original work published 1960)

Gagnon, J. H. (1992). The self, its voices, and their discord. In C. Ellis & M. G. Flaherty (Eds.), Investigating subjectivity: Research on lived experience (pp. 221-243). Newbury Park: Sage.

Gallagher, S. (1992). Hermeneutics and education. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Gardiner, M. (1992). The dialogics of critique: M. M. Bakhtin and the theory of ideology. London: Routledge.

Gee, J. P. (1992). The social mind: Language, ideology, and social practice. New York: Bergin & Garvey.

Gergen, K. J., & Davis, K. E. (1985). The social construction of the person. New York: Springer-Verlag.

Gergen, K. J. & Gergen, M. M. (1988). Narrative and the self as relationship. Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 21, 17-55.

Goffman, E. (1959). The presentation of self in everyday life. New York: Doubleday.

Gurevitch, Z. D. (1990). Being other: On otherness in the dialogue of the self. Studies in Symbolic Interaction, 11, 285-307.

- Habermas, J. (1968/1971). Knowledge and human interests. (J. J. Shapiro, Trans.), Boston: Beacon Press.
- Halarek, K. (1999). A pedagogy of possibility: Bakhtinian perspectives on composition studies. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Hamlyn, D. W. (1987). A history of Western philosophy. New York: Viking.
- Harré, R. (Ed.). (1986). The social construction of emotions. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Harré, R. (1998): The singular self: An introduction to the psychology of personhood. London, Sage.
- Harré, R., & Gillet, G. (1994). The discursive mind. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Harris, J. R. (1998). The nurture assumption. New York: The Free Press.
- Hart, D. (1988). The adolescent self-concept in social context. In D. K. Lapsley & F. C. Power (Eds.), Self, ego, and identity (pp. 71-90). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Harter, S. (1983). Developmental perspectives on the self-system. In E. M. Hetherington (Ed.), Handbook of child psychology: Vol. 4. Socialization, personality, and social development (pp. 275-386). New York: Wiley.
- Harter, S. (1986). Processes underlying the construction, maintenance, and enhancement of the self-concept in children. In J. Suls & A. G. Greenwald (Eds.), Psychological perspectives on the self (Vol. 3) (pp. 137-181). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Harter, S. (1988). Developmental processes in the construction of the self. In T. D. Yawkey & J. E. Johnson (Eds.), Integrative processes and socialization: Early to middle childhood (pp.45-78). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Harter, S. (1996). Historical roots of contemporary issues involving self-concept. In B. A. Bracken (Ed.), Handbook of self-concept: Developmental, social, and clinical considerations (pp. 1-37). New York: John Wiley.

Harter, S. (1997). The personal self in social context: Barriers to authenticity. In R. D. Ashmore & L. Jussim (Eds.), Self and Identity: Fundamental issues (pp. 81-105). New York, Oxford University Press.

Harter, S. (1998). The development of self-representations. In W. Damon (Series Ed.) & N. Eisenberg (Vol. Ed.), Social, emotional, and personality development: Vol. 3. Handbook of child psychology (5th ed., pp. 553-617). New York: Wiley.

Harter, S., & Monsour, A. (1992). Developmental analysis of conflict caused by opposing attributes in the adolescent self-portrait. Developmental Psychology, 28, 251-260.

Haynes, D. J. (1995). Bakhtin and the visual arts. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Herrmann, A. (1989). The dialogic and difference: "An/other woman" in Virginia Woolf and Christa Wolf. New York: Columbia University Press.

Hermans, H. J. M., & Kempen, H. J. G. (1993). The dialogical self: Meaning as movement. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Hermans, H. J. M., & Kempen, H. J. G. (1995). Body, mind and culture: The dialogical nature of mediated action. Culture and Psychology, 1, 103-114.

Hermans, H. J. M., Kempen, H. J. G., & van Loon, R. J. P. (1992). The dialogical self: Beyond individualism and rationalism. American Psychologist, 47, 23-33.

Hermans, H. J. M., Rijks, T. I., & Kempen, H. J. G. (1993). Imaginal dialogues in the self: Theory and method. Journal of Personality, 61, 207-236.

Hicks, D. A. (1994). Individual and social meanings in the classroom: Narrative discourse as a boundary phenomenon. Journal of Narrative and Life History, 4, 215-240.

Higgins, E. T. (1987). Self-discrepancy: Theory relating self and affect. Psychological Review, 94, 319-340.

Himley, M. (1991). Shared territory: Understanding children's writing as works. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hirschkop, K. (1986). A response to the forum on Mikhail Bakhtin. In G. S. Morson (Ed.), Bakhtin: Essays and dialogues on his work (pp. 73-79). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hirschkop, K. (1999). Mikhail Bakhtin: An aesthetic for democracy. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hirschkop, K., & Shepherd, D. (1989). Bakhtin and cultural theory. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Hoel, T. L. (1997). Voices from the classroom. Teaching and Teacher Education, 13, 5-16.

Holquist, M. (1981). Editor's introduction. In M. M. Bakhtin, The dialogic imagination (M. Holquist, Ed., C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.) (pp. xv-xxxiv). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Holquist, M. (1990). Dialogism: Bakhtin and his world. London: Routledge.

Holquist, M., & Emerson, C. (1981). Glossary. In M. M. Bakhtin, The dialogic imagination (M. Holquist, Ed., C. Emerson & M. Holquist, Trans.) (pp. 423-434). Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Inhelder, B., & Piaget, J. (1958). The growth of logical thinking from childhood to adolescence: An essay on the construction of formal operational structures. New York: Basic Books. (Original work published 1955)

James, H., III. (Ed.). (1920). The letters of William James (Vol. 2). Boston, MA: Atlantic Monthly Press.

James, W. (1950a). Principles of Psychology. (Vol. 1). New York: Dover. (Original work published 1890)

James, W. (1950b). Principles of Psychology. (Vol. 2). New York: Dover. (Original work published 1890)

James, W. (1948). The sentiment of rationality. In W. James, Essays in pragmatism (A. Castell, Ed.) (pp. 3-36). New York: Hafner. (Original work published 1882.)

Jardine, D. W. (1992). Immanuel Kant, Jean Piaget and the rage for order: Ecological hints of the colonial spirit in pedagogy. Educational Philosophy and Theory, 24, 2843.

Jorgensen, M. (1983). Anti-school parodies as speech play and social protest. In F. E. Manning (Ed.), The world of play (pp. 91-102). West Point, NY: Leisure press.

Kagan, J. (1989). Unstable ideas: Temperament, cognition, and self. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Kant, I. (1983). Perpetual peace and other essays on politics, history, and morals (T. Humphrey, Trans.). Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.

Kant, I. (1991). Education (A. Churton, Trans.). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Kant, I. (1997). Critique of pure reason (P. Guyer & A. W. Wood, Trans.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Original work published 1781)

Kaplan, B. (1983). Genetic-dramatism: Old wine in new bottles. In S. Wapner & B. Kaplan (Eds.), Toward a holistic developmental psychology (pp. 53-74). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Keller, A., Ford, L. H., & Meacham, J. A. (1978). Dimensions of self-concept in preschool children. Developmental Psychology, 14, 483-489.

Kershner, R.B. (1989). Joyce, Bakhtin, and popular literature: Chronicles of disorder. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Keyes, R. (1995). The courage to write: How writers transcend fear. New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Kharash, A. U. (1991). The "other" and its function in the development of the self. Soviet Psychology, 29, 47-61.

Kitchener, R. F. (1981). Piaget's social psychology. Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour 11, 253-277.

Klancher, J. (1989). Bakhtin's rhetoric. In p. Donahue & E. Quandahl (Eds.), Reclaiming pedagogy: The rhetoric of the classroom (pp. 83-96). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Knowles, E. S., & Sibicky, M. E. (1990). Continuity and diversity in the stream of selves: Metaphorical resolutions of William James's one-in-many-selves paradox. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 16, 676-687.

Kohlberg, L. (1976). Moral stages and moralization: The cognitive-developmental approach. In T. Lickona (Ed.), Moral development and behavior: Theory, research, and social issues (pp. 31-53). New York: Holt.

Kvale, S. (1992). Introduction: From the archaeology of the psyche to the architecture of cultural landscapes. In S. Kvale (Ed.), Psychology and postmodernism (pp. 1-16). London: Sage.

La Capra, D. (1983). Rethinking intellectual history: Texts, contexts, language. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Laing, R. D. (1969). Self and others. New York: Pantheon Books.

Leahy, R. L., & Shirk, S. R. (1985). Social cognition and the development of the self. In R. L. Leahy (Ed.), The development of the self (pp. 123-150). New York: Academic Press.

Leary, D. E. (1990). William James on the self and personality: Clearing the ground for subsequent theorists, researchers, and practitioners. In M. G.

Johnson & T. B. Henley (Eds.), Reflections on The Principles of Psychology: William James after a century (pp. 101-137). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Lensmire, T. J., & Beals, D. E. (1994). Appropriating others' words: Traces of literature and peer culture in a third-grader's writing. Language in Society, 23, 411-426.

Leont'ev, A. N. (1986). The problem of activity in the history of soviet psychology. Soviet Psychology, 4, 109-120.

Lewis, M., & Brooks-Gunn, J. (1979). Social cognition and the acquisition of self. New York: Plenum.

Livesley, W. J., & Bromley, D. B. (1973). Person perception in childhood and adolescence. London: Wiley.

Locke, J. (1913). Some thoughts concerning education. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Locke, J. (1997). An essay concerning human understanding. London: Penguin. (Original work published in 1690.)

Lodge, D. (1990). After Bakhtin: Essays on fiction and criticism. London: Routledge.

Loeb, L. E. (1981). From Descartes to Hume: Continental metaphysics and the development of modern philosophy. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Loriggio, F. (1990). Mind as dialogue: The Bakhtin Circle and pragmatist psychology. Critical Studies, 2, 91-110.

Lukes, S. (1973). Individualism. New York: Harper & Row.

- Lynch, J. J. (1981). The broken heart: The medical consequences of loneliness. New York: basic Books.
- Lynch, J. J. (1985). The language of the heart: The body's response to human dialogue. New York: Basic Books.
- Lyotard, J. F. (1984). The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge (G. Bennington & B. Massumi, Trans.). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- MacIntyre, A. (1990). Individual and social morality in Japan and the United States: Rival conceptions of the self. Philosophy East & West, 40,
- Mackinnon, N. J. (1994). Symbolic interactionism as affect control. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Macovski, M. (1994). Dialogue and literature: Apostrophe, auditors, and the collapse of Romantic discourse. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Madison, G. B. (1988). The hermeneutics of postmodernity: Figures and themes. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Mahler, M. S. (1968). On human symbiosis and the vicissitudes of individuation. New York: International Universities Press.
- Maranhão, T. (Ed.). (1990). The interpretation of dialogue. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Markus, H. (1977). Self-schemata and processing information about the self. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 35, 63-78.
- Markus, H., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. Psychological Review, 98, 224-253.

Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. American Psychologist, 41, 954-969.

Markus, H., & Wurf, E. (1987). The dynamic self-concept: A social psychological perspective. In M. R. Rosenweig & L. W. Porter (Eds.), Annual Review of Psychology, 38, 299-337.

Marquard, O. (1991). In defense of the accidental: Philosophical studies. New York: Oxford University Press.

McAdams, D. P. (1985). Power, intimacy, and the life story: personological inquiries into identity. Chicago: Dorsey Press.

McClellan, W. (1990). The dialogic other: Bakhtin's theory of rhetoric. Discours Social/Social Discourse, 3, 233-249.

McNamee, S. (1996). Therapy and identity construction in a postmodern world. In D. Grodin & T. R. Lindlof (Eds.), Constructing the self in a mediated world (pp. 141-155). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Meacham, J. A. (1989). Discovering the social-cultural context of research: Listening to and learning from research participants. In D. A. Kramer & M. J. Bopp (Eds.), Transformation in clinical and developmental psychology (pp. 136-153). New York: Springer-Verlag.

Mead, G. H. (1934). Mind, self, and society (C. W. Morris, Ed.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press

Mead, G. H. (1936). Movements of thought in the nineteenth century (M. Moore, Ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mead, G. H. (1964). Selected writings (A. Reck, Ed.). New York: Boobs-Merrill.

Meltzer, B. N. (1972). Mead's social psychology. In J. G. Manis & B. N. Meltzer (Eds.), Symbolic interactionism: A reader in social psychology (pp. 4-22). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1973). The prose of the world (J. O'Neill, Trans.). Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press. (Original work published 1969)

Miller, J. G. (1987). Cultural influences on the development of conceptual differentiation in person description. British Journal of Developmental Psychology, 5, 309-319.

Miller, P., & Moore, B. B. (1989). Narrative conjunctions of caregiver and child: A comparative perspective on socialization through stories. Ethos, 17, 428-449.

Miller, P. J., & Sperry, L. (1988). Early talk about the past: The origins of conversational stories of personal experience. Journal of Child Language, 15, 293-315.

Miller, P., Potts, R., Fung, H., Hoogstra, L., & Mintz, J. (1990). Narrative practices and the social construction of self in childhood. American Ethnologist, 17, 292-311.

Miller, P., Mintz, J., Hoogstra, L., Fung, H., & Potts, R. (1992). The narrated self: Young children's construction of self in relation to others in conversational stories of personal experience. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 38, 45-67.

Mintz, J. (1995). Self in relation to other: Preschoolers' verbal social comparisons within narrative discourse. In L. L. Sperry & P. A. Smiley (Eds.), Exploring young children's concepts of self and other through conversation. (pp. 61-73). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Minuchin, S. (1984). Family kaleidoscope. Cambridge: MA: Harvard University Press.

Misgeld, D., & Jardine, D. W. (1989). Hermeneutics as the undisciplined child: Hermeneutics and technical images of education. In M. J. Packer & R. B. Addison (Eds.). Entering the circle: Hermeneutic investigation in psychology (pp. 259-273). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Mitchell, W. J. T. (1986). Iconology: Image, text, ideology. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Montaigne, M. de (1976). The complete essays of Montaigne (D. M. Frame, Trans.). Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Montemayor, R., & Eisen, M. (1977). The development of self-conceptions from childhood to adolescence. Developmental Psychology, 13, 314-319.

Montgomery, M.V. (1993). Carnivals and commonplaces: Bakhtin's chronotope, cultural studies, and film. New York: peter Lang.

Moraes, M. (1996). Bilingual education: a dialogue with the Bakhtin circle. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Morson, G. S. (1986). Dialogue, monologue, and the social: A reply to Ken Hirschkop. In G. S. Morson (Ed.), Bakhtin: Essays and dialogues on his work (pp. 81-90). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Morson, G. S. (1988). Prosaics: An approach to the humanities. The American Scholar, 57, 515-528.

Morson, G. S. (1994). Narrative and freedom: The shadows of time. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Morson, G. S., & Emerson, C. (1989). Rethinking Bakhtin: Extensions and challenges. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Morson, G. S., & Emerson, C. (1990). Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a prosaics. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Nealon, J. T. (1997). The ethics of dialogue: Bakhtin and Levinas. College English, 59, 129-148.

Neisser, U. (1988). Five kinds of self-knowledge. Philosophical Psychology, 1, 35-59.

Nystrand, M., Greene, S., & Wiemelt, J. (1993). Where did composition studies come from? An intellectual history. Written Communication, 10, 267-333.

O'Banion, J. D. (1992). Reorienting rhetoric: The dialectic of list and story. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press.

O'Neill, O. (1989). Constructions of reason: Explorations of Kant's practical philosophy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Outram, D. (1995). The Enlightenment. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oyserman, D., & Markus, H. (1993). The sociocultural self. In J. Suls (Ed.), Psychological perspectives on the self. Volume 4: The self in social perspective (pp. 187-220). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Palermo (1983). Some thoughts on semantic development. In L. S. Liben (Ed.), Piaget and the foundations of knowledge (pp. 49-78). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Patterson, D. (1988). Literature and spirit: Essays on Bakhtin and his contemporaries. The University Press of Kentucky.
- Pearce, L. (1994). Reading dialogics. London: Edward Arnold.
- Peirce, C. S. (1933). Collected papers of Charles Sanders Peirce (Vol. 4) (C. Hartshorne & P. Weiss, Eds.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Perlina, N. (1984). Bakhtin and Buber: Problems of dialogic imagination. Studies in Twentieth-Century Literature, 9, 13-28.
- Peters, J. D. (1989). John Locke, the individual, and the origin of communication. The Quarterly Journal of Speech, 75, 387-399.
- Piaget, J. (1929). The child's conception of the world (J. Tomlinson & A. Tomlinson, Trans.). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Piaget, J. (1932). The moral judgement of the child (M. Gabain, Trans.). Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Piaget, J. (1959). The language and thought of the child (M. Gabain & R. Gabain, Trans.). New York: Humanities Press.

Piaget, J. (1970). Genetic epistemology (E. Duckworth, Trans.). New York: Columbia University Press.

Piaget, J., & Inhelder, B. (1969). The psychology of the child. New York: Basic Books. (Original work published 1966)

Ponzio, A. (1990). Bakhtinian alterity and the search for identity in Europe. Discours Social/Social Discourse, 3, 217-227.

Ponzio, A. (1994). Scrittura dialogo alterità: Tra Bachtin e Lévinas. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.

Pratkanis, A. R., & Greenwald, A. G. (1985). How shall the self be conceived? Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 15, 311-329.

Quantz, R. A., & O'Connor, T. W. (1988). Writing critical ethnography: Dialogue, multivoicedness, and carnival in cultural texts. Educational Theory, 38, 95-109.

Radzikhovskii, L. A. (1991). Dialogue as a unit of analysis of consciousness. Soviet Psychology, 29, 8-21.

Reed, W.L. (1993). Dialogues of the word: The Bible as literature according to Bakhtin. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richardson, F. C., Rogers, A., & McCarroll, J. (1998). Toward a dialogical self. American Behavioral Scientist, 41, 496-515.

Ricoeur, P. (1983). On interpretation. In A. Montefiore (Ed.), Philosophy in France today. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1985). History as narrative and practice. Philosophy Today

- Ricoeur, P. (1988). Time and narrative (Vol. 3) (K. Blamey & D. Pellauer, Eds.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 1985)
- Rosenberg, M. (1979). Conceiving the self. New York: Basic Books.
- Rosenberg, M. (1986). Self-concept from middle childhood through adolescence. In J. Suls & A. G. Greenwald (Eds.), Psychological perspectives on the self (Vol. 3, pp. 107-135). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Ross, M., & Wilson, A. E. (2000). Constructing and appraising past selves. In D. Schacter & E. Scarry (Eds.), Memory, brain, and belief (pp. 231-258). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Rousseau, J. J. (1979a). Emile or on education (A. Bloom, Trans.). Basic Books.
- Rousseau, J. J. (1979b). The reveries of the solitary walker (C. E. Butterworth, Trans.). New York: New York University Press.
- Rousseau, J. J. (1986). The first and second discourses (V. Gourevitch, Ed. & Trans.). New York: Harper & Row.
- Rousseau, J. J. (1953). The confessions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (J. M. Cohen, Trans.). Harmondsworth: Penguin. (Original work published in 1781.)
- Sacks, O. W. (1984). A leg to stand on. New York: perennial Library.
- Sampson, E.E. (1993). Celebrating the other: A dialogic account of human nature. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Sass, L. A. (1992). The self and its vicissitudes in the psychoanalytic avant-garde. In G. Levine (Ed.), Constructions of the self (pp. 17-58). New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Saussure, F. de (1966). Course in general linguistics. (W. Baskin, Trans.) New York: McGraw-Hill. (Original work published 1915)

Schmidt, J. (Ed.). (1996). What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-century answers and twentieth-century questions. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Schmidt, J. (Ed.). (1996). Introduction: What is Enlightenment? A question, its context, and some consequences. In J. Schmidt (Ed.), What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-century answers and twentieth-century questions (pp. 1-44). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Schouls, P. A. (1989). Descartes and the Enlightenment. Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Schuster, C. (1985). Mikhail Bakhtin as rhetorical theorist. College English, 47, 594-607.

Schuster, C. (1990). The ideology of illiteracy: A Bakhtinian perspective. In A. A. Lunsford, H. Moglen, & J. Slevin (Eds.), The right to literacy (pp. 225-232). New York: Modern Language Association of America.

Selman (1980). The growth of interpersonal understanding. New York: Academic Press.

Shavelson, R. J., & Marsh, H. W. (1986). On the structure of self-concept. In R. Schwarzer (Ed.), Anxiety and cognition. (pp. 305-330). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Shelly, M. (1994). Frankenstein. Ware: Wordsworth.

Shotter, J. (1993a). Cultural politics of everyday life: Social constructionism, rhetoric, and knowing of the third kind. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Shotter, J. (1993b). Bakhtin and Vygotsky: Internalization as a boundary phenomenon. New Ideas in Psychology, 11, 379-390.

Shotter, J. (1993c). Harré, Vygotsky, Bakhtin, Vico, Wittgenstein: Academic discourses and conversational realities. Journal for the theory of Social Behaviour, 23, 459-482.

Shotter, J. (1997). Artificial intelligence and the dialogical. American Behavioral Scientist, 40, 813-828.

Shweder, R. A., & Bourne, E. J. (1984). Does the concept of person vary cross-culturally? In R. A. Shweder & R. A. Levine (Eds.), Culture theory: Essays on mind, self, and emotion (pp. 158-199). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sidorkin, A. M. (1997). Carnival and domination: Pedagogies of neither care nor justice. Educational Theory, 47, 229-238.

Sidorkin, A. M. (1999). Beyond discourse: Education, the self, and dialogue. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Smith, J. H. (1988). The spirit and its letter: Traces of rhetoric in Hegel's philosophy of "Bildung." Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Smollar, J., & Youniss, J. (1985). Adolescent self-concept development. In R. L. Leahy (Ed.), The development of self (pp. 247-265). New York: Academic Press.

Snodgrass, J. G. , & Thompson, R. L. (1997). (Eds.). The self across psychology: Self-recognition, self-awareness, and the self concept. New York: New York Academy of Sciences.

Soffer, J. (1994). Before the other: Genesis, structure and development in Piaget. Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology, 25, 170-182.

Solomon, R. C. (1988). Continental philosophy since 1750: The rise and fall of the self. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sperry, L. L., & Smiley, P. A. (Eds.). (1995). Exploring young children's concepts of self and other through conversation. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sperry, L. L., & Sperry, D. E. (1995). Young children's presentations of self in conversational narration. In L. L. Sperry & P. A. Smiley (Eds.), Exploring young children's concepts of self and other through conversation (pp. 47-60). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Stam, R. (1989). Subversive pleasures: Bakhtin, cultural criticism, and film. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Starobinsky, J. (1988/1971). Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Transparency and obstruction (A. Goldhammer, Trans.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Steiner, G. (1978). On difficulty and other essays. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stern, D. (1985). The interpersonal world of the infant. New York: Basic Books.
- Sullivan, H. S. (1953). The interpersonal theory of psychiatry. New York: Norton.
- Suls, J. (Ed.). (1993). Psychological perspectives on the self. Volume 4: The self in social perspective. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Tappan, M. B. (1989). Stories lived and stories told: The narrative structure of late adolescent moral development. Human Development, *32*, 300-315.
- Tappan, M. B. (1991). Narrative, language and moral experience. Journal of Moral Education, *20*, 243-256.
- Tappan, M. B. (1992). Texts and contexts: Language, culture, and the development of moral functioning. In L. T. Winegar & J Valsiner (Eds.), Children's development within social context. Volume 1: Metatheory and theory (93-117). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Tappan, M. B. (1997). Language, culture, and moral development: A Vygotskian perspective. Developmental Review, *17*, 78-100.
- Tappan, M. B., & Brown, L. M. (1996). Envisioning a postmodern moral pedagogy. Journal of Moral Education, *25*, 101-109.

Tarulli, D. (1994, May). Encountering the other: On the dialogical nature of the self. Paper presented at the Biennial University of Waterloo Conference on Child Development, Waterloo, Ontario.

Tarulli, D. (in press). Identity and otherness. Narrative Inquiry.

Taylor, C. (1989). Sources of the self: The making of modern identity. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Taylor, C. (1991). The dialogical self. In D. R. Hiley, J. F. Bohman, & R. Shusterman (Eds.), The interpretive turn: Philosophy, science, culture (pp. 304-314). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Throop, C. J. (2000). Shifting from a constructivist to an experiential approach to the anthropology of self and emotion: An investigation 'within and beyond' the boundaries of culture. Journal of Consciousness Studies, 7, 27-52.

Todorov, T., (1984). Mikhail Bakhtin: The dialogical principle. (W. Godzich, Trans.), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Toulmin, S. (1990). Cosmopolis: The hidden agenda of modernity. New York: The Free Press.

Triandis, H. C. (1989). The self and social behavior in differing cultural contexts. Psychological Review, 96, 506-520.

Urwin, C. (1986). Developmental psychology and psychoanalysis: Splitting the difference. In M. Richards & P. Light (Eds.), Children of social worlds: Development in a social context (pp. 257-286). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Valsiner, J. (1994). Culture and human development: A co-constructionist perspective. Annals of Theoretical Psychology, 10, 247-298.

van den Heuvel, H., Tellegen, G., & Koomen, W. (1992). Cultural differences in the use of psychological and social characteristics in children's self-understanding. European Journal of Social Psychology, 22, 353-362.

Vandenberg, B. (1986). Play, myth and hope. In R. van der Kooij and J. Hellendoorn (Eds.), Play, play therapy, play research (pp. 87). Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger.

Vice, S. (1997). Introducing Bakhtin. Manchester: Manchester University press.

Vogel, U. (2000). The sceptical Enlightenment: Philosopher travellers look back at Europe. In N. Geras & R. Wokler (Eds.), The Enlightenment and modernity (pp. 3-24). London: Macmillan Press.

Voloshinov, V. N. (1981) La structure de l'enoncé. In T. Todorov (Ed.), Mikhaïl Bakhtine: Le principe dialogique. Paris: Éditions du Seuil.

Volosinov, V. N. (1986). Marxism and the philosophy of language. (L. Matejka & I. R. Titunik, Trans.), Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Volosinov, V. N. (1987). Freudianism: A critical sketch (I. R. Titunik & N. H. Bruss, Eds., I. R. Titunik, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1981). The genesis of higher mental functions. In J. V. Wersch (Ed. & Trans.), The concept of activity in soviet psychology. Armonk: M. E. Sharpe.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky, Volume I: Problems of general psychology (R. W. Reiber & A. S. Carton, Eds.). New York: Plenum.

Wakefield, J. (1988). Hermeneutics and empiricism: Commentary on Donald Meichenbaum. In M. J. Packer & R. B. Addison (Eds.), Entering the circle: hermeneutic investigation in psychology (pp. 131-148). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Walkerdine, V. (1982). From context to text: A psychosemiotic approach to abstract thought. In M. Beveridge (Ed.), Children thinking through language (pp. 129-155). London: Edward Arnold.

Ward, I. (1994). Literacy, ideology, and dialogue: Towards a dialogic pedagogy. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Wartofsky, M. (1983). From genetic epistemology to historical epistemology: Kant, Marx, and Piaget. In L. S. Liben (Ed.), Piaget and the foundations of knowledge. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Wartofsky, M. (1986). On the creation and transformation of norms of human development. In L. Cirillo & S. Wapner (Eds.), Value presuppositions in the theories of human development (pp. 113-132). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J. H., & Jackson, D. D. (1967). Pragmatics of human communication: A study of interactional patterns, pathologies, and paradoxes. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Weiss, R. S. (1973). Loneliness: The experience of emotional and social isolation. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Welch, N. (1993). One student's many voices: reading, writing, and responding with Bakhtin. Journal of Advanced Composition, 13, 493-502.

Wertsch, J. V. (1980). The significance of dialogue in Vygotsky's account of social, egocentric, and inner speech. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 5, 150-162.

Wertsch, J. V. (1985). The semiotic mediation of mental life: L. S. Vygotsky and M. M. Bakhtin. In E. Mertz & R. J. Parmentier (Eds.), Semiotic mediation: Sociocultural and psychological perspectives (pp. 49-71). Orlando, FL: Academic Press.

Wertsch, J. V. (1989). A sociocultural approach to mind. In W. Damon (Ed.), Child development today and tomorrow (pp. 14-33). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Wertsch, J. V. (1990). Dialogue and dialogism in a socio-cultural approach to mind. In I. Markovà & K. Foppa (Eds.), The dynamics of dialogue (pp. 62-82). New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Wertsch, J. V. (1991). Voices of the mind: A sociocultural approach to mediated action. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wertsch, J. V. (1992). A dialogue on message structure: Rommetveit and Bakhtin. In A.H Wold (Ed.), The dialogical alternative: Towards a theory of language and mind (pp. 65-76). Oslo: Scandinavian University Press.

Wetsch, J. V., & Smolka, A. L. B. (1993). Continuing the dialogue: Vygotsky, Bakhtin, and Lotman. In H. Daniels (Ed.), Charting the agenda: Educational activity after Vygotsky (pp. 69-92). London: Routledge.

Williams, M. (1989). Vygotsky's social theory of mind. Harvard Educational Review, 59, 108-126.

Williams, R. R. (1992). Recognition: Fichte and Hegel on the other. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Wolf, H-G. (1994). A folk model of the "internal self" in light of the contemporary view of metaphor: The self as subject and object. Frankfurt: Peter Lang.

Wong, K. N. (1999). The residual problem of the self: A re-evaluation of Vygotsky and social constructionism. New Ideas in Psychology, 17, 71-82.

Wood, A. W. (1998). Hegel on education. In A. O. Rorty (Ed.), Philosophers on education: New historical perspectives (pp. 300-317). London: Routledge.