

Moral Imagination and Adorno: Before and After Auschwitz

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Recommended Citation

Oritano, Catlyn, "Moral Imagination and Adorno: Before and After Auschwitz" (2016). *Dissertations (2009 -)*. Paper 656.
http://epublications.marquette.edu/dissertations_mu/656

MORAL IMAGINATION AND ADORNO: BEFORE AND AFTER AUSCHWITZ

by

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A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School,
Marquette University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

August 2016

ABSTRACT
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Marquette University, 2016

In the aftermath of national or international tragedies, appeals for action such as, “Never Forget” or “Never Again” are ubiquitous. Theodor Adorno makes a similar call in the wake of the Holocaust, proclaiming that all education should be focused on the prevention of another genocide. While most would agree with such a statement, practically how do we respond to such a call, specifically in light of Adorno’s work? Answering this question is at the heart of this project and I argue that imaginative memorials can fulfill Adorno’s criteria for post-Auschwitz education.

I first present a theory of moral imagination by relying on contemporary accounts of the theory and then show how it complements Adorno’s work, specifically by offering an explanatory foundation to a number of his claims. I reveal that many of Adorno’s observations about the world are supported by recent advancements in the understanding of imagination and I argue that the combination of contemporary accounts of moral imagination and Adorno’s thought are mutually beneficial.

After the two theories have been sufficiently discussed and integrated, I focus on Adorno’s arguments regarding education following Auschwitz. Adorno argues that we should investigate how such a horror could occur, and the people who committed the acts of genocide. Such information will be helpful for the prevention of another Auschwitz because we can attempt to overcome the values and ideas of those who perpetrated genocide.

This dissertation is unique and of philosophical importance because it fleshes out Adorno’s discussion of the characteristics that led to the Holocaust and argues for a specific form of education that meets all of the criteria of Adorno’s post-Auschwitz education: memorials that stimulate the visitor’s imagination. In order to make this point, I highlight specific Holocaust memorials that are imaginative and argue for their efficacy. My goal for the project is to actualize Adorno’s post-Auschwitz education initiative through imaginative memorials.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Catlyn Origitano, M.A., B.A.

I would like to thank my mom and dad for inspiring me to pursue and complete my PhD. I would also like to thank my committee members: Drs. James South, Kevin Gibson, Susanne Foster, and Theresa Tobin; their constant support and guidance have been crucial to any success I've enjoyed. Thank you to my all colleagues, including: Daniel Vecchio, Shaun Miller, Jered Janes, Daniel Farmer, and Matthew Nowachek. Thank you Melissa Shew, Andrew Cutrofello, Dottie Rossitano, and especially Trevor Smith and Lee Wagner for all of your support and guidance. Thanks to Marquette University, as well as the Smith Family for supporting my research. Thank you to my Hines, Origitano, Drubel, and Proust families.

Finally, and most of all, to Matthew Ross who has been the constant encourager, editor, cheerleader, rock, and everything else that was necessary for this project to succeed. This dissertation is dedicated to you.

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INTRODUCTION

Imagination has had a rollercoaster relationship with Western philosophy. At its zenith, it is credited with the creation of artwork; at its nadir, it's a faculty of delusion, leading us astray from truth and reason. When it comes to ethics, imagination has only recently come onto the scene.¹ For most of the history of Western Philosophy, rational measurements in the form of golden means or hedonic calculations have been the methods of choice for determining the best moral action.

Recently, within the latter half of the century, imagination has begun to grow in importance as the study of it, especially within 'hard sciences,' develops. Cognitive science and neuroscience have begun to focus on imagination's role in our moral lives and philosophy is, fortunately, joining in the conversation. This project is meant to add to the ever-growing ranks of academics championing imagination's role in our lives. Though I think that imagination is present and required in most of our cognitive activities, in this project I am going to focus primarily on imagination's role in morality, most often referred to as moral imagination.

While I explore the major contemporary theories of moral imagination, I also extend them to Critical Theorist Theodor Adorno, specifically his work on education after Auschwitz. I look to integrate the two theories in order to realize Adorno's project of an education that combats the features that led to Auschwitz.

¹ At least explicitly—it can be argued that imagination has always been discussed in connection with ethics, even if not named. For instance, contemplating the mean between excess and deficiency requires holding two possibilities in the mind and comparing them. Such activities seem to rely heavily on imagination as we know it.

An aim of my research is to establish a clarified and unified understanding of moral imagination, merging contemporary accounts and focusing primarily on imagination's role in moral deliberation and perception. From there, my objective is to unite the theory with Adorno's, revealing how the two are mutually beneficial, as well as compatible. The ultimate aim of the project is to offer a possibility for education post Auschwitz. In particular, I suggest that certain imaginative memorials and museums can have a powerful impact on their visitors in such a way that the museums can possibly prepare visitors for future, similar experiences. By using data on the efficacy of imagination, as well as Adorno's work on the causes of the Holocaust, I offer an education that weds the two, as well as concrete examples of museums that utilize the education I discuss. Ultimately, then, my project will contribute to a body of literature on genocide education in a unique way by focusing on the role of imagination therein.

I was initially drawn to the topic of moral imagination through imagination itself. My early interest in philosophy was in aesthetics (and certainly such an interest remains). In most aesthetic theories, imagination is hailed as an important and necessary component to the creation of artworks and the appreciation of those works. Imagination was often touted as the 'lawless' feature that allowed for creativity and for those feelings of awe in front of artworks. It was here that I first became interested in imagination, but such an interest was not completely fleshed out until I moved out of aesthetics and studied in greater depth the history of philosophy. Here I saw my favorite faculty dragged through the mud. Not only that, but it seemed that many of the descriptions of the mental faculties, or activities that philosophers praised, were impossible without some of the features of imagination; if the faculty wasn't being criticized, its role was being denied.

It was this rejection that led me to study the role of imagination throughout the history of philosophy, and ultimately to moral imagination: the role of imagination in our moral lives. I was drawn to this specific area because, more than ever, imagination seems fundamental to our moral activities. Insofar as morality plays an integral role in our everyday lives, I thought it was important to investigate imagination's role therein. It wasn't until Dr. James South, my advisor, introduced me to Theodor Adorno that the other piece to the puzzle fell into place.

Adorno's work provides a solid framework within which moral imagination fits. His critique of reason offers a good place to suggest the benefits of moral imagination. His critiques of society, in particular the way, in which he blends psychoanalysis, and Marxist work, serve as a great place for imagination to lend its voice.

Further, his work focused on the Holocaust brings moral imagination into a place where it can have a real impact: an education post-Holocaust that addresses the conditions that led to it and attempt to counteract them. I have for a long time, like many, been fascinated by the Holocaust. It is an event that captivates many as it seems to defy comprehensibility. How could so many die and so few do anything to stop it? How could so many camps be built, and so much horror take place? I wanted to add to the large body of work on the Holocaust in a way that both looks back to understand, but also forward to move ahead. Further, introducing and incorporating imagination into the picture provides unique insights into what happened and what can happen: many people say that the Holocaust is 'unimaginable' but it wasn't, it was imagined, and it took place.

Discussing imagination in terms of understanding what happened, as well as tools for education post-genocide, seems an interesting and necessary direction for my project.

While I am interested in rigorous philosophical theory, if it doesn't have a foot in the everyday world, or attempt to do so, I worry that the philosophy isn't robust enough. Rather, I think that philosophy, or at least the philosophical projects that I find interesting and relevant, require some form of application. In particular, work centered on morality, and even more so, around genocide, cannot merely remain theoretical, but must strive for applicability.

Chapter Outline

In Chapter One, I outline the major contemporary theories of moral imagination as presented by Mark Johnson, Martha Nussbaum, and Patricia Werhane. Each discusses moral imagination within their own areas of expertise: cognitive science, for Johnson, literary criticism, for Nussbaum, and business ethics, for Werhane. I explain the major tenets of each account and draw out their similarities under Lawrence Blum's dichotomy of moral perception and moral deliberation.

Blum argues that our moral lives are made up of a number of different, though overlapping, activities including perception and deliberation. Generally, moral perception includes our seeing something *as* morally relevant (For example, seeing a joke as a racist joke). Moral deliberation, on the other hand, concerns the decision making process after one has perceived a joke as racist, for example. Calling the person out, reporting the joke to a superior, and laughing at the joke, are all outcomes that are produced as a result of moral deliberation.

Johnson, Werhane, and Nussbaum's accounts all emphasize the different imaginative activities found in both moral perception and deliberation. Johnson, for example, argues that we use metaphors to see and understand our moral choices. He discusses the Social Accounting Metaphor in which we use words and phrases associated with accounting, like debit, in our discussion of morality: "I am forever in your debt," for example. This is not merely a semantic shortcut, but actually impacts the way we see and deliberate about morality: when you view moral harm and help in terms of accounting, you think that there is a finite amount of it, just as there's a finite amount of other resources, and you become unlikely to help others so that you don't deplete your 'moral reserves.' Thinking of morality in terms of a metaphor utilizes imagination because it projects one set of rules or ideas onto another: morality is not actually accounting. This metaphor, which relies on imagination, impacts both our moral perceptions, as well as our moral deliberations and is one of the many examples that Johnson, and others, offer as to the reason imagination's integral to our everyday moral lives.

In Chapter One, for the most part, I focus most exclusively on Johnson's account as his is the most robust and well-rounded. I do outline through the major contributing ideas of both Nussbaum and Werhane, primarily to spell out the similarities between accounts. I conclude Chapter One by turning my focus to Nussbaum because she, more so than Johnson and Werhane, offers a prescriptive element to her theory of moral imagination. Essentially, Nussbaum argues that if it is the case that imagination is crucial to moral activity, then it is prudent that we cultivate our imagination in order to better handle and process moral perceptions and deliberations. Nussbaum recommends the reading of fictional narratives as the best method for such cultivation, preferring the work

of Charles Dickens. In particular, Nussbaum argues that the reading of literature allows the reader to practice the imaginative activities required in their moral lives, and see paradigms of such activity. For example, reading about a character's choice allows the reader to see what the character does and model their behavior off of it, or allows them to practice perspective taking, for instance.

Ian Ravenscroft, a cognitive scientist, takes Nussbaum's thesis a step further arguing that our understanding of mirror neurons further supports her claim. Primarily, that just as athletes are encouraged to imagine running and winning a race, so too should people 'preparing' for moral activity. The reason being that the same neurons fire in both instances, so imagining the activity fires the same neurons as actually doing the activity, thereby the former serves as a type of training or preparation for the latter.

Chapter Two springboards off the foundation of Chapter One by bringing the major themes of moral imagination to the work of Theodor Adorno. I begin Chapter Two by outlining the major themes in Adorno's work including, for instance, his discussion and critique of Enlightenment. By Enlightenment, Adorno, and his co-author and peer Max Horkheimer, don't necessarily mean a strict era of time, but rather a series of related intellectual practices that focus on removing mystery or spirituality from the world in favor of strict adherence to science and scientific pursuit. For example, Adorno argues that the way in which we view a concept transforms, or deforms, it from a complex concept to a simple concept. A tree, for instance, can be conceptualized in a number of different ways, such as a potential resource for lumber, housing for animals, shade for plants, and so forth. However, when we view or understand the tree as only one of these things, as a resource for humans, then you take something that is complex and makes it

simple, thereby deforming what it is. This simple way of viewing an object ultimately makes it easy to use or manipulate the object: it is easy to chop down the tree when it is only viewed as a resource for human and all other ways of being are ignored.

Adorno and Horkheimer are critical of such ways of viewing and understanding the world, as it ultimately makes everything simple and easily destroyed in service of humanity. After I outline the major tenets of such critique, I show how easily Adorno's theory fits with the theory of moral imagination outlined in Chapter One. For example, the idea of simple vs. concept concepts that I briefly mentioned, maps onto Johnson's theory of the imaginative work in conceptualizing concepts. Additionally, both theories decry an overreliance on reason, especially insofar as it leads to a renunciation of other cognitive activities.

Further, the two theories are mutually beneficial insofar as moral imagination offers Adorno a way to respond to his biggest critique: that he only provides a negative philosophy. If his theory is injected with imagination, a positive theory begins to emerge: the way in which one moves from a view of the world as simple concepts to a complex concept, is by integrating more imagination into their thought processes. On the other hand, the theory of moral imagination can be, and has been, criticized for its lack of clarity: what do we mean by the term 'imagination' and how is moral imagination different from other cognitive activities? While there are ways in which the theory makes inroads into such answers, a major feature of the theory is that it isn't clearly delineated and defined with necessary and sufficient conditions. With the backing of Adorno, in particular his critique of an overreliance on reason, the theory of moral imagination can be afforded the flexibility it needs.

Chapter Three takes the now integrated theories and focuses further on a specific topic within Adorno's oeuvre, the Holocaust, or as he refers to it, Auschwitz. In particular, I focus my attention on Adorno's "Education After Auschwitz," a radio-address-turned-article, which calls for education to be focused on the prevention of another genocide. In the article, Adorno's main argument is that we need to focus on the conditions that created the Holocaust and work at counteracting them. In Chapter Three, I examine and analyze the major conditions that Adorno discusses, as well as beginning to examine the methods for counteraction. Included in this analysis, is a bit of pulling at Adorno's work to develop it further. For instance, Adorno doesn't fully discuss the different parties involved in the genocide, but focuses primarily on the victims and perpetrators, as if the two are easily defined. I challenge such clear definitions and call for a bit more flexibility therein. Generally, however, the third chapter is dedicated to fleshing out and understanding Adorno's conception of a post-Auschwitz education, including negotiating any inconsistencies or lack of clarity.

The fourth and final chapter of my project synthesizes the work of the first three. The chapter focuses on actualizing Adorno's education initiative by incorporating imagination into the education plan. In particular, I argue that Nussbaum and Ravenscroft's theory from Chapter One, that imagination can serve as a tool of preparation for actual events, can be applicable here: an imaginative education can encourage people to practice fighting against the conditions that created the Holocaust. While Nussbaum and Ravenscroft limit their discussion to fictional narratives, I expand the potential educative sphere to memorials and museums. I focus on three Holocaust memorials (Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory, the Memorial to Murdered Jews of

Europe, and the Stumbling Blocks) and argue that each are highly imaginative, though in different ways, and because of their imaginative components, are highly effective forms of education post-Auschwitz. Further, I claim that these memorials fulfill the requirements for Adorno's post-Auschwitz education initiative. I continue my argument in favor of an imaginative education by addressing two recent studies that reveal that current educative initiatives, in particular initiatives that rely heavily on reason or are strictly fact based, are not helping to counteract the conditions or attitudes that led to the Holocaust, and in fact are harmful. Integrating imagination into a post-Auschwitz education, then, is important and necessary for a number of reasons: one, it fulfills Adorno's criteria for post-Auschwitz education, two, it can help cultivate one's imaginative capacity and potentially provide a practice space for future moral activity, and three, the current educative initiative, which is very much devoid of imagination, is failing and many of the reasons for its failure is a lack of the things that imagination bring to the table.

As the title of my project suggests, I am concerned not only with combining Adorno's work with moral imagination, but also looking at the ways in which such an integration works both in his article and ideas for education *after* Auschwitz, and then the ways in which such combination also functions before Auschwitz, or rather in the Adornian theories that precede and influence his specific work on Auschwitz. It is my hope that this project will merge a number of interesting discussions about education and imagination in a way that can be beneficial to education initiatives moving forward.

A CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNT OF MORAL IMAGINATION

The history of philosophy is, for the most part, dominated by discussions of reason, abstract thought, and general rules. In response to this overwhelming tradition, some philosophers challenge reason's dominance in our thoughts and lives. My project is to unite two such challengers: Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) and Mark Johnson's (1949-present) work on moral imagination.

Adorno is best known for his contributions to the Frankfurt School and Critical Theory by way of a number of 'negative' critiques. An ever-present theme in his work is the analysis and critique of an over-reliance on reason in our everyday dealings with the world and each other. He argues that many of our current social issues are due in large part to a way of thinking that is dominated by reason. I will outline in depth Adorno's major concerns in Chapter Two and discuss his writings on the Nazi Party and the Holocaust, which he also sees as a direct result of a reason-only way of thinking, in Chapters Three and Four.

Another major challenger to a reason-centric philosophy, and a theory I want to connect to Adorno's work, is moral imagination. Moral imagination belongs to the tradition in ethics that advocates for other, supposedly non-rational elements as central to our moral lives. While its roots extend back to Aristotle, my project is more contemporary, focusing primarily on the work of Mark Johnson. It is here, in Chapter One, where I outline a theory of moral imagination, including its definition, purview, and prescription.

I begin by outlining Mark Johnson's work on moral imagination. I will rely most heavily on his findings throughout this project because he gives the most complete and well-supported account. Next, I briefly outline two other contemporary scholars on moral imagination, Patricia Werhane and Martha Nussbaum, in order to give more depth to the picture of moral imagination. I then draw together their theories under Lawrence Blum's discussion of moral perception and deliberation in order to argue that imagination is necessary for moral perception and moral deliberation. Finally, I briefly discuss the prescriptive element of moral imagination: if imagination is necessary in our moral lives, then we must cultivate it and we ought to do so through the reading of fictional narratives. Ultimately, the goal for this chapter is to arrive at a rich understanding of the contemporary work on moral imagination, as well as its use in our moral lives in order to use the theory in explicating Adorno's work.

Mark Johnson and Moral Imagination

The overall aim of Mark Johnson's work in *Moral Imagination: Implications of Cognitive Science for Ethics* is the revelation of human beings as fundamentally imaginative moral agents.² In order to show this, Johnson puts forth both critical and constructive claims: the former is that the traditional conception of ethics as entirely rational is false, while the latter argues that one's moral understanding and deliberation are imaginative. In order to support both theses, Johnson reveals our moral understanding

² Johnson, Mark.(1993). *Moral Imagination: Implications of Cognitive Science for Ethics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1.

and deliberation to rely crucially on imaginative activities rather than abstract laws derived from reason and it is this discovery that he calls moral imagination.

Yet, what exactly is moral imagination for Johnson? One possible way of understanding this term is by first addressing and describing imagination as a unique mental faculty and then demonstrating the role this faculty plays in our moral lives. Such a tactic is not unheard of: Kant does something very similar, though with reason, in his account of ethics. This is, not, however, Johnson's method. One reason why Johnson does not address imagination *per se* is due to his critique of the tradition of philosophy that attempts to separate cognitive functions and assign specific tasks to each.³ As we see in Kant, for example, the faculty of reason produces universal maxims, while the faculty of imagination produces fantasy.⁴ Johnson argues that advancements in cognitive science support a collapsing of distinct faculties rather than a separation. Because Johnson is critical of imagination as a distinct faculty, he does not, then, discuss moral imagination in such a way.

A second reason Johnson's account does not answer the question about moral imagination with a strict definition of imagination and its role in our moral lives is because of what Johnson sees as the aim of his project. Johnson is not establishing a new normative account of ethics in which, at the end, by employing imagination, we are given a recipe for determining right from wrong. Rather, Johnson's argument is that when we participate in the world as moral agents, we use certain cognitive activities and these activities are imaginative. This is just what we do: we understand and deliberate about

³ Johnson, personal communication, August 4, 2013.

⁴ Kant writes, "The power of imagination, insofar as it also produces images involuntarily, is called fantasy." Kant, Immanuel. (2008). *Anthropology, History, and Education*. Trans. Allen Wood, Paul Guyer, et al. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 7:168.

morality through and with the imaginative devices known as metaphor, prototypes, and narratives. Since Johnson's project is to describe moral activity with the help of recent work in cognitive science, rather than give a new normative theory, his account of moral imagination is more descriptive than prescriptive.

Despite the fact that Johnson does not treat imagination as its own separate and unique cognitive faculty, but rather identifies it by a certain set of activities and devices, there is a unifying sense of imagination that Johnson employs throughout his work. In a private communication, Johnson admits to thinking of imagination in a Kantian way, as a capacity for making sense of our experiences and holding images in the mind.⁵ For the former, Johnson claims that imagination is "a capacity to give form and meaning that both precedes and makes possible our conceptual systems."⁶ As we will see, Johnson's argument is that morality is highly imaginative and he supports this claim by pointing to a number of imaginative devices, which are different ways of performing this sensemaking work. While for Kant, the sensemaking work of imagination is purely conceptual and comes about in the form of synthesis, Johnson argues that the sensemaking need not be purely cognitive nor done solely by synthesis.⁷ Johnson, unlike Kant, seems to take a very general understanding of imagination's capacity for sensemaking, namely, that imaginative devices literally are tools that humans use to make sense of the world around us. Further, identifying imagination as sensemaking is important because it allows us to see why certain devices, like metaphors, prototypes and narratives, are, for Johnson, imaginative devices rather than belonging to some other

⁵ Johnson, personal communication, August 4, 2013.

⁶ Johnson, personal communication, August 4, 2013.

⁷ Kant, Immanuel. (2009). *Critique of Pure Reason*. Trans. Paul Guyer & Allen Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, B:103-105, 210-211.

cognitive activity. In order to understand Johnson's use of imagination as sensemaking, we will briefly examine his imaginative inspiration, Kant.

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant, among other things, lays out the structures of experience including the mental faculties involved in ordering space and time, grasping concepts and so forth. As his title suggests, reason is his main focus. He does discuss imagination, though he often slights the faculty calling it "a blind though indispensable function of the soul" and referring to its activities as a "mere effect."⁸ Despite these remarks, Kant credits imagination with a very crucial function namely, synthesis. Synthesis is the "action of putting different representations together with each other and comprehending their manifoldness in one cognition."⁹ This synthesis, Kant argues, is crucial for experience since without it we would not be able to grasp cognitions and deliver them to understanding. For example, if there are representations of red, sphere, and hard, it is imagination that allows me to synthesize all three of these representations into one cognition and then hand that cognition over to understanding which can place said cognition into a category and recognize the object as "ball."

Not only is imagination responsible for synthesizing, it is also "the faculty for representing an object even without its presence in intuition."¹⁰ The description of imagination as the ability to entertain in the mind an object that is not actually present is the one most frequently given to the faculty. For example, if one pictures a unicorn in one's mind, this would be done by imagination since the object; here unicorn is not present anywhere on earth. The same goes for picturing things less fantastic like trees, shoes, and people; although they might not be physically present in front of you and you

⁸ Kant, *Critique of the Pure Reason*, B:103, 210.

⁹ Kant, *Critique of the Pure Reason*, B:103, 211.

¹⁰ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B:151, 256.

are not using your senses to grasp them, you can, nonetheless, “picture” them thanks to the faculty of imagination.

Although Johnson is influenced by Kant’s understanding of imagination, Johnson does not merely adopt Kant’s usage. In fact, as we will see in Werhane’s discussion, Kant’s account of imagination is much more complicated and can be understood in three distinct ways, though Johnson invokes only one. Additionally, Johnson does not want to merely adopt Kant’s distinction between cognitive faculties and even discusses imaginative rationality, suggesting that Kant’s distinction between reason and imagination is false. Johnson, however, does adopt the spirit of Kant’s work by making imagination responsible for sensemaking and holding images or ideas in the mind that are not actual. Since, as I have pointed out, Johnson’s account of moral imagination focuses on certain cognitive activities that are responsible for making sense of the world, in order to better understand Johnson’s project it is necessary to examine these specific cognitive activities.

The Activities of Moral Imagination

Metaphors are the first, and most discussed, imaginative device or activity that Johnson addresses. Johnson draws from the work of George Lackoff, a cognitive linguist who has conducted a “massive systematic analysis of the fundamental conventional metaphors of the conceptual systems that underlies the semantics and syntax of English.”¹¹ In an earlier book written with Lackoff, entitled *Metaphors We Live By*, the two investigate the extent to which our conceptual system is fundamentally metaphorical

¹¹ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 36.

in nature.¹² There they define metaphor as “understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another.”¹³ In *Moral Imagination*, Johnson continues his earlier work but focuses on the ways in which metaphors are pervasive in our conception of moral situations.

In the introduction to *Moral Imagination* Johnson argues that moral reasoning is based on metaphoric concepts at two basic levels: first, that “our most fundamental moral concepts (e.g., will, freedom, law, right, duty, well-being, action) are defined metaphorically, typically by multiple metaphoric mappings for a single concept,” and second, that “The way we conceptualize a particular situation will depend on our use of systematic conceptual metaphors that make up the common understanding of members of our culture.”¹⁴ Johnson’s argument relies on two major sources of evidence: linguistic evidence concerning the way we talk about morality and the patterns of inference in our moral reasoning that are based on metaphoric concepts.¹⁵ In order to clearly understand Johnson’s point about the importance of metaphor, I will focus on a specific metaphor: the “Social Accounting Metaphor.”

In the Social Accounting Metaphor, well-being is understood as wealth, and one’s actions earn credit or create debt to others.¹⁶ For example, if I am doing well I can be said to have a “rich life” and if I am down and out perhaps it is because I have made “poor choices.” Further, if I have done something morally helpful for you, it can be said, “You owe me” or, “You are forever in my debt.” Conversely, if I have harmed you then I may

¹² Johnson, Mark and Lackoff, George. (2003). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 3.

¹³ Johnson and Lackoff, *Metaphors We Live By*, 5.

¹⁴ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 2.

¹⁵ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 35.

¹⁶ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 41-2.

ask, “How can I repay you?” or you may proclaim, “I’ll make you pay for what you did!” We see that Social Accounting sets up a framework that allows us to recognize when we have rights and duties in terms of letters of credit and debts owed. It does not, however, define good or bad, or fully assess what we owe or what is owed to us. Rather, the metaphor constitutes “our primary conception of the way in which people can accumulate moral credit and moral debt.”¹⁷

Johnson argues that this metaphor, and others like it, serves as the foundation of our moral understanding; that it is not merely an easy semantic short cut, but rather shapes the way in which we make sense of or conceptualize morality itself. Additionally, because metaphors serve as the bedrock of moral understanding, they can guide us in thinking about “what we ought to do about [a given situation].”¹⁸ Therefore, even our reasoning or deliberation will be based on metaphors. For example, I will consider, if I have harmed you, how I could “enrich” your life through favors or begin to consider what action would be likely to cancel (or balance) my previous harm. Again, the Social Accounting Metaphor will not tell me unequivocally what to do or what is considered good. Rather, it will inform the way I reason about a possible action: debt or the canceling of it informs my reasoning. Ultimately, one does not find herself in a moral situation and consciously look for and employ a metaphor to assist in her understanding and deliberation of that situation. Rather, Johnson argues it is a matter of fact that we think through a moral event with metaphors.

Although the Social Accounting Metaphor does seem to capture our current way of understanding and deliberating about morality, one could ask why this and other such

¹⁷ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 49.

¹⁸ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 52.

metaphors are considered an activity of imagination.¹⁹ Our answer is found within Johnson's description of the activity we perform when we use metaphors: "we project from one source domain to another thereby constructively bring structure from the source domain into our understanding of the target domain."²⁰ First, we see here that metaphors, such as the Social Accounting Metaphor, are tools of sensemaking: they help us make sense of when we have harmed someone.²¹ Johnson's activity of sensemaking is adopted from Kant: for both the power of making sense of a situation is due to imagination. Second, metaphors require us to project beyond what is actual or given. For example, when I project ideas present in the concept of commodity, like debt, value, and so forth, onto ideas in morality, I am entertaining in my mind something that is not actually present in the world. As we have seen, such activity of entertaining in the mind something not present is credited to imagination. The two activities of metaphor, sensemaking and projection, are what, for Johnson, makes the device one that belongs to imagination.

A second question that may arise is, "Why metaphors are particular to *moral* imagination rather than other forms of imaginative reasoning?" Johnson admits that metaphor is not specific to morality but rather that our conceptual system in general is largely metaphorical. His earlier work, *Metaphors We Live By*, makes the same point by investigating metaphors that permeate a variety of contexts and situations. For example, in the opening sections of the work, Johnson and Lackoff examine the concept of

¹⁹ The sense of 'our' and 'us' used here needs to be qualified. Specifically, it is true, as Johnson argues, that the social accounting metaphor is used, however, it is not used universally. While it may reveal a metaphor used in the traditional framework of moral philosophy, it might reflect gender, class, and culture.

²⁰ Johnson, personal communication, August 4, 2013.

²¹ Social Accounting is not the only metaphor we use to make sense of the morality, or the world in general.

argument as understood in terms of war (e.g., “Your claims are *indefensible*,” “He *attacked every weak point* in my argument,” “I *demolished* his argument,” and so forth).²² Metaphors, then, are not unique to moral reasoning and this is due in part to Johnson’s argument that there is not a great deal of difference between reasoning about everyday things and moral reasoning. In the Introduction to *Moral Imagination* he argues that recent empirical work in cognitive sciences reveals that our general concepts and our reasoning are grounded by various imaginative processes and that “since moral reasoning makes use of these same general cognitive capacities, it, too, is...imaginative through and through.”²³ Metaphors, then, are an imaginative device that helps us make sense of the world by a projecting exercise. While they aren’t unique to morality, they are fundamental to our everyday moral understanding and deliberation and Johnson includes metaphors in his description of moral imagination.

A second imaginative device or process that is crucial to one’s moral understanding and deliberation is the use of prototypes. The theory of prototypes, which has been advocated by psychologists like Eleanor Rosch and linguists Linda Coleman and Paul Kay, concerns the creation and stability of categories. The theory of prototypes argues that categories are not definable by a rigid list of features (the position taken traditionally), but rather are defined by “identifying certain prototypical members of the category,” as well as recognizing and identifying nonprototypical members.²⁴ Categories, in the theory of prototypes, are radially structured: in the center, or core, there is a prototype, which is a certain central instance of a concept that is easily and non-controversially recognized. This prototype is surrounded by a large number of other far

²² Johnson and Lackoff, *Metaphors We Live By*, 4.

²³ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 1.

²⁴ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 8-9.

less clear-cut cases about which we may be less certain as to whether they belong in the category. In order to determine whether the radial examples, those at the border of the concept, in fact belong in the category, cognitive scientists argue that we imaginatively explore the connection and whether it belongs. This imaginative exploration includes holding a specific instance in our mind and comparing its context, use, and definition to the core case to determine whether the new instance belongs to the particular category. Let us, again, focus on a specific example in order to elucidate and simplify our discussion.

One category that is frequently of import in traditional ethics is the lie. We often see this category used in commands or maxims that require one not to lie. In order for this command to make sense, for people to follow it and accurately assess to what extent someone has broken or upheld this command, one must first understand the category of lie. Traditional understanding of categories suggests that there must be necessary and sufficient conditions in order for a speech act to constitute a lie. For example, a lie must conform to three conditions: 1) the speaker believes the statement is false, 2) the speaker intends to deceive the hearer, and 3) the statement is actually false.²⁵ Let's say that I steal something from you and then, when asked, deny having done so. This is a traditional example of a lie since my speech act contains all three conditions of a lie. The theory of prototypes, on the other hand, rejects sole reliance on necessary and sufficient conditions and argues that categories are determined by identifying prototypical members of the category. Our example of stealing and saying otherwise would be considered a prototypical example of a lie because it is easily and non-controversially identified by those who hear it as a lie.

²⁵ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 92.

While clear-cut examples are easy to distinguish in both the traditional and the prototype understanding of categories, it is when we are faced with examples that fall at the fringes of categories that the latter, unlike the former, proves superior. For example, let us imagine that you and I have a bit of an angling rivalry. I go fishing alone over the weekend and report back to you that I caught a whopper of a fish that was three feet long when in fact it was only two feet long. Here, my tale fits all the necessary and sufficient criteria of a lie: I know the story to be false, I do intend to deceive you, and my statement of the size of the fish is in fact false. However, we do not, as a culture, treat this speech act as a lie, worthy of punishment, or one that lessens your trust in me. Proponents of the necessary and sufficient conditions model would have to call this a lie, despite it seeming more like a mere exaggeration, a speech act which is responded to in a very different way than a lie. The theory of prototypes explains that we do not see this exaggeration as a lie is because “the concept [lie] exhibits prototype structure, and it functions and gets its meaning only in conjunction with certain background models of knowledge and communication that are presupposed by us in most of our mundane communicative interactions.”²⁶

In order to determine whether my angling story is a lie one must take the context into account and imaginatively explore to what extent the speech act fits within the radially structured category of lie. This imaginative exploration could include the following: First, was the deceit malicious? That is, I tried to deceive you but was I doing so in order to harm you or did I have a less malicious motivation? Also, how important is it that my statement is false? If we just have a friendly rivalry, then there are little to no consequences about my false speech act. If we had \$1,000 bet on it, however, that

²⁶ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 92.

background context would affect the categorizing of my speech act. Within these questions we are postulating in the mind possibilities, including motives and contexts, and trying them out to see if they affect the placement of the speech act. These questions, the answers to them, and the reasons we give are the imaginative exploration required in the theory of prototypes.

Prototypes, similar to metaphors, are part of Johnson's account of moral imagination because they serve as cognitive activities of sensemaking. Because, as Johnson and other linguists have argued, ordinary moral concepts are not defined in themselves, but get their meanings and moral force from background idealized cognitive models, prototypes are essential to understand how we make sense of such concepts.²⁷ Besides the sensemaking component of prototypes, Johnson suggests imagination is necessary in order to perform the cognitive work required in the extension of a concept. This extension requires one to postulate or imagine within the mind something not given. For example, in order to determine whether a speech act fits the prototypical example of a lie, one must imagine the intentions of the speaker, the possible consequences of the speech act, and other prototypical examples of a lie. The imaginer must see whether the context, intention, and consequences match up closely enough with other, past examples of lies, and in doing so she will be able to determine to what extent the specific speech act in question fits the prototype of a lie and some of its radial applications. Again, prototypes, like metaphors are not unique to moral situations; we may use these devices in thinking about the category of art, friendship, fashion, and so forth. Rather, Johnson's point here is that we rely on prototypes in moral situations and they are part of the devices that make up moral imagination.

²⁷ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 96.

The third major imaginative device or process that Johnson finds to be fundamental to our moral understanding and deliberation is the use of narrative. Johnson defines narrative in a broad sense as, “linguistic stories we tell to others and sometimes write them down in words.”²⁸ One of the first instances in which narratives are used as a tool of sensemaking concerns the way in which we make sense of ourselves as moral agents. Johnson argues, “human beings try to understand and justify themselves by constructing broad narrative contexts within which they locate their identities.”²⁹ In order to support his claim Johnson references a “Hooker’s Tale” in which a young woman explains the reason for getting into her profession. Johnson argues that not only is she telling part of her life story, “she is explaining herself and her actions from a *moral* standpoint, trying to justify herself through a narrative.”³⁰ For example, the hooker explains how it was easy for her not to feel any guilt the first time she turned a trick since she was used to seeing sex as a kind of transaction in which if a man bought you dinner on a date, you owed him at least a kiss. Therefore, having sex for money was just another form of this transaction she had been taught.³¹ Johnson remarks that not only is the woman telling us the steps by which she became a hooker, but also, “She is trying to construct a narrative explanation that will be morally acceptable in her social and cultural setting.”³² This “Hooker’s Tale” is not unique to the woman or her situation, but rather is what we all do in our lives every day; we too make moral sense of our lives in the form of a narrative, we tell the story of our lives, and in doing so we include explanations for

²⁸ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 152.

²⁹ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 154.

³⁰ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 154.

³¹ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 154-5.

³² Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 155.

actions, editing of certain events, and perhaps even the introduction of fictional circumstances.

Not only are narratives crucial to our self-understanding, and therefore a tool of sensemaking, they are also inherent in our moral deliberation. For example, if a young woman finds herself with an unwanted pregnancy, she does not exclusively employ some sort of hedonic calculator, nor does she only attempt to find a universal maxim under which she subsumes her action. Rather, when she deliberates, she does so in a form of narrative that explores possibilities for actions. She asks herself what kind of life, or story, she wants to see for herself and what kind of actions or events would be produced depending on what choice she made. These questions are a form of projection because they require the agent to contemplate and picture activities and ideas that have not yet come to fruition.

Ultimately, Johnson argues, “human life...is a narrative enterprise” because both understanding ourselves and acts of deliberation utilize narratives.³³ It is the synthesizing of various choices, actions, and events into a narrative unity that best describes the self, as well as our projecting possible narratives into the future that best describes our process of moral deliberation. The fundamental use of narratives plays into Johnson’s critical thesis because, in revealing their import, Johnson shows how one does not in fact merely use a set of rules that tell one what to do without additional imaginative activity. It is, rather, the imaginative activity of the narrative that best explains our moral understanding and deliberation.

Yet narratives themselves require other frameworks in order to function. For example, when we deliberate about potential activities we picture in our mind possible

³³ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 180.

activities and these possibilities require us to employ metaphors, exemplars, and past experiences. As Johnson argues:

Sometimes we recall previous situations where we acted well or poorly that are similar to our present one and so we use those as a model to guide us...Sometimes we try to imagine how those we regard as exemplary moral characters might act in our situation...And sometimes we consult conventionalized moral precepts or principles...But in each of these cases there are broader narrative frameworks in the background which make it possible for us to grasp the meaning, importance, and relevance of a particular exemplar, anecdote, or principle.³⁴

It is in these imaginative explorations that we can and do bring into other cognitive activities, such as memory or exemplars. Yet these too rely on imagination: in order to compare our actions to an exemplar, we must first imagine what the exemplar might do, or in order to compare our previous actions with our present situation, we must hold both events in our mind. Not only do we see here how moral imagination requires other cognitive activities, we can also begin to see how moral imagination can be a tool for moral guidance: through these imaginative activities we can be guided toward an action though moral imagination alone doesn't prompt us in one direction over another.

The Importance of Moral Imagination

Now that we have understood Johnson's account of moral imagination as a number of ways of thinking, or more specifically sense-making and projecting possibilities, in moral situations, we must ask why moral imagination is important, that is, what is lost if one does not recognize the imaginative components in our moral lives? The first thing that we must take into account is that, for Johnson, moral imagination itself

³⁴ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 156.

will not tell us the right thing to do. Moral imagination, then, is not important due to its ability to discover ethical principles or maxims because the activities of metaphor, prototypes, or narratives will never give us universal moral commands. Rather Johnson's theory of moral imagination describes how we go about moral understanding and deliberation. He says, "That is just the way our mind works...there is nothing intrinsically good about metaphor, or any other imaginative device."³⁵ The closest that moral imagination gets to being normative is that it can give a kind of guidance once we come to recognize the imaginative structures of our experience.³⁶ As we saw in Johnson's discussion of narratives, if we imagine what an exemplar might do, we could use that thought experiment to guide our actions. Yet, again, this guidance is not by definition good, nor does it necessarily direct one to do good, because the exemplar I imagine may not be a good one.

What I need to make clearer here is that Johnson is not necessarily arguing that imagination *per se* is the only cognitive activity required for moral activity. As I mentioned, Johnson argues that there is not a distinct mental faculty of imagination and, therefore, he would not advocate for a normative theory that relies solely on imagination. Rather, Johnson's project is to illuminate the variety and importance of a number of imaginative activities that we use in our everyday moral activities. As I revealed in the examples of metaphors, prototypes, and narratives, a number of different cognitive activities came into play: memory, exemplars, and rules. All of these normative components have imaginative elements or are closely linked to imagination.

³⁵ Johnson, personal communication, August 4, 2013.

³⁶ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, xi.

His focus on imagination then comes from his idea that imagination is a crucial element to morality that has been missing from most major ethical treatises.³⁷ Further, Johnson himself admits that moral imagination, by itself, without any principles or some form of grounding is “arbitrary, irresponsible, and harmful.”³⁸ Johnson’s project, then, is much more descriptive than prescriptive, though he does, as we will see, offer a bit of guidance at the conclusion of his work regarding the cultivation of moral imagination.

One of the reasons Johnson argues that his theory of moral imagination will not tell us the right thing to do is that he thinks there is “not one and only one right answer, and there is no simple method for deciding how to act.”³⁹ Moral situations are complicated and do not often simply repeat themselves so there will not be one rule that can determine all action. Rather, Johnson argues, if we admit that moral situations are complex and multifaceted, we will see that no ethical treatise that argues for a single right thing to do with a single path of reasoning will ever be sufficient. Instead, Johnson argues we should understand the theory of moral imagination in the same manner as scientific theories.

Psychological theories, for example, do not tell us how to be better, more fulfilled people, at least not directly. However, “knowledge of the nature of cognition, motivation, development, learning, and so forth, can have some bearing on how we live our lives. Such knowledge, will not, however, give us rules for living.”⁴⁰ Some theories can tell us how to be more fulfilled people, but Johnson’s argument here seems to be that most explanatory psychology, by explaining the behavior of humans, does not directly or

³⁷ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, ix-x.

³⁸ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, x.

³⁹ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 186.

⁴⁰ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 188.

necessarily tell us exactly how to become better people. In the same way, the theory of moral imagination tells us about the nature of moral understanding and reasoning, in particular the imaginative structure of our moral concepts and reasoning. The theory of moral imagination, then, will have implications for our lives and can give us some “very general guidance” because “knowing oneself and knowing how human beings work can help us understand situations, examine problems, and work out constructive solutions.”⁴¹ Recognizing, for example, that lies are not always clear cut or universalizable concepts, can allow one to see a moral situation with more clarity and respond differently than if I held the false idea of a lie as a rigid, concrete concept.

While moral imagination gets its importance from its activities, and the pervasiveness of its activities, Johnson does argue that once one has recognized the importance of moral imagination, two major obligations arise. First, an obligation to know that human cognition is in large part imaginative and the implications that arise from that knowledge, such as the importance of context and the need to move away from necessary and sufficient conditions. The second obligation is to cultivate moral imagination in ourselves and others.⁴² As we have already outlined the imaginative activities of human cognition, we are on our way to achieving his first obligation, his second obligation, however, entails a bit more explanation.

Johnson’s requirement of cultivating moral imagination specifically means, “exercising our capacity for envisioning new possibilities, and imaginatively tracing out the implications of our metaphors, prototypes, and narratives.”⁴³ One part of this exercise, Johnson argues, would be to develop our moral sensitivity through fictional narratives.

⁴¹ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 189.

⁴² Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 215.

⁴³ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 198.

Since, as he argues, our lives are structured by narratives, we should, moving forward, read and consume narratives because they can prepare us for recognizing metaphors and narratives in our everyday lives.⁴⁴ A second part of the exercise is developing empathetic imagination understood as imaginatively taking up the part of others. This ‘taking up the place of another’ is, according to Johnson, “an act of imaginative experience and dramatic rehearsal... We must [sic] go out toward people to inhabit their worlds, not just by rational calculations, but also in imagination, feeling, and expression.”⁴⁵ Empathy then is, for Johnson, merely a different form of practice, akin to narratives. Empathy, broadly understood, requires one to imaginatively rehearse what a situation might be like. This rehearsal, according to Johnson, will give us more information about ourselves (e.g., what would I do in this moral situation?) as well as more information about the world we inhabit (e.g., I didn’t realize people were in such moral situations). Empathy, as Johnson explains it, is not necessarily connected with care, but merely with identification of another’s experience and the imaginative rehearsal of it in our own mind. Through narratives or the taking up of the perspective of others, we will strengthen and develop our moral capacity but, not necessarily in order to make good moral decisions or become good moral agents. Rather, the development and practice of the imaginative activities involved in moral situations will only allow us to better employ our imaginative faculties. Ultimately, if we do not recognize the importance of narrative and metaphor, and then go out and do not become further acquainted with such devices, we will find difficulty fully utilizing both devices

⁴⁴ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 196-7 & 200.

⁴⁵ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 200.

In the following chapters I will refer to and rely on Johnson's account of moral imagination most heavily. His account is thorough, well-supported, and clear. I want, however, to address two other scholars' contributions to moral imagination in order to demonstrate that Johnson's work is in line with his contemporaries, though more developed, and so that we have a clear and robust conception of moral imagination moving forward. Both Patricia Werhane and Martha Nussbaum offer accounts of moral imagination and, despite their different starting points (Kant for Werhane and Aristotle for Nussbaum), they ultimately arrive at similar conclusions regarding the importance of imagination in morality.

Patricia Werhane and Moral Imagination

Patricia Werhane in her work, *Moral Imagination and Management Decision-Making*, aims at developing new insights into two questions that plague the business ethics community: first, "Why do ordinary, decent managers engage in questionable behavior?" and second, "Why do successful companies ignore the ethical dimensions of their processes, decisions, and actions?"⁴⁶ In order to address these questions Werhane offers, in a manner similar Johnson, both a critical and constructive thesis. The critical thesis comes at the beginning of her work when she shows the limitations of the current answers and insights into these questions.

Werhane begins her account of moral imagination with a definition of imagination as, "the ability to form mental images of real or unreal phenomena or events

⁴⁶ Werhane, Patricia. (1996). *Moral Imagination and Management Decision Making*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 5.

and to develop different scenarios or different perspectives on those phenomena or events.”⁴⁷ She goes into further detail, expanding her definition by focusing on and adopting Kant’s three forms of imagination.⁴⁸ Throughout Kant’s three critiques he distinguishes between three kinds of imagination: reproductive, productive, and reflective, or free play. As I noted in Johnson’s conception of imagination, the first type of imagination, reproductive, is concerned with synthesis. It is the reproductive imagination that synthesizes all of the sensations we receive into representations so that perception and memory is possible.⁴⁹ This leads Werhane to conclude that the reproductive imagination works in three ways: “(1) it forms images or representations from collections of sensations, (2) it connects these representations to produce those images in memory, and (3) it connects images with other similar images, thus enabling recognition.”⁵⁰

Kant’s second form of imagination is the productive imagination. The productive imagination is much more active and, according to Werhane, has at least three functions. First, it is responsible for structuring, schematizing, and providing order to representations by way of categories of understanding, which makes experience possible. Second, it assists us in making sense of pure categories of understanding such as “quantity,” because it allows us to think about abstract categories without needing a concrete representation. Third, “it synthesizes all our experiences as “ours” from the

⁴⁷ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 91.

⁴⁸ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 97.

⁴⁹ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 97.

⁵⁰ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 97.

locus of what Kant called the “transcendental unity of apperception...” the “I” that is the subject and unity of all that we call “my experiences.””⁵¹

The third form of imagination appears in Kant’s final *Critique*, which concerns aesthetic judgments. Here we see imagination in a free play with understanding in order to produce aesthetic judgments. The free play occurs when we judge an aesthetic object like a painting or flower and rather than subsume that flower under a specific, determined category, imagination “plays” with what we know from experience and “also sometimes manipulate[s] the categories of understanding.”⁵² An aesthetic judgment is defined by a connection of imagination and understanding, unlike other judgments in which understanding just subsumes an object under a category. Imagination, because it is lawless, allows the intuition to move back and forth, or play, between itself and understanding, and this back and forth is what constitutes an aesthetic judgment. It is in this third form of imagination that we get at a sense of creativity; imagination here is not limited by reason, categories of understanding, purpose, function or any other laws and this freedom allows imagination, in tandem with other faculties, to give rise to aesthetic judgments.

Werhane uses these three different forms of Kantian imagination in order to give a “finely tuned definition of moral imagination.”⁵³ She begins her account of moral imagination by saying *when* moral imagination begins, namely, “with a particular case, scenario, or event.”⁵⁴ Rather than beginning with abstract laws, like ‘thou shalt not steal,’ and moving into specific situations in which we test certain rules, Werhane argues that

⁵¹ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 97.

⁵² Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 97.

⁵³ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 100.

⁵⁴ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 103.

we must begin our discussion of ethics in the specific situation, which may or may not involve the temptation to lie. Her reason for starting here with moral imagination is because “ethical issues arise in specific real-life situations, not in abstract moral theory.”⁵⁵

Werhane argues that moral imagination functions analogously to Kant’s three forms of imagination, beginning with the reproductive imagination. Kant’s reproductive imagination is responsible for the synthesizing of sense data that allows for an experience to occur. This task of allowing for an experience to occur, Werhane also posits, is the first step of moral imagination. Specifically, Werhane argues that here awareness is crucially performed by the reproductive imagination including:

(1) awareness of the character, context, situation, event, and dilemma at issue; (2) awareness of the script or schema function in that context and role relationships entailed in that context, and (3) awareness of possible moral conflicts or dilemmas that might arise in the situation, including dilemmas created at least in part by the dominating script or the situation itself.⁵⁶

The awareness aspect of the reproductive imagination is necessary when one is first engaged in a moral dilemma. For example, let us imagine that I am a police officer who is going through a financial hardship and am offered a bribe by someone I pulled over. I am currently engaged in the role of police officer, which has certain obligations such as upholding the law, but I also have obligations to my family to financially support them. My various roles and the duties that accompany them are essential to a moral dilemma *per se*. Further, while Kant’s reproductive imagination synthesizes sense data to allow for an experience, here moral imagination is synthesizing more than merely colors, or shapes, but rather experiences as understood as the context of the situation, the people

⁵⁵ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 103.

⁵⁶ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 103.

involved, the roles they are playing in the event and so forth. By entertaining in the mind something that is not present before me, such as roles, responsibilities, social norms, and so forth, I am able to see the particulars that constitute the moral situation. It is imagination here, in the first stage that “enables us to become aware of the moral dilemmas of particular events and the conceptual schemes or mental models operating in specific contexts.”⁵⁷

The second form of imagination, productive imagination, is relevant for Werhane because “the human mind seldom rests on the particular” and because, “Almost all of us always generalize from a particular case to other similar and dissimilar characters, situations, or experiences.”⁵⁸ Just what Werhane means by the term ‘generalizing’ is not readily clear, though she does use an example which can help us understand how she is using the term. She cites two bonds traders who bought bonds for their clients without their knowledge, thereby illegally buying more treasury bonds than are allowed. Werhane argues that these traders took a particular situation, like buying a bond for a client, and traced that action to what they perceived to be the operative script at their company. In this example, generalizing seems to be taking that particular situation or event that we find ourselves within and, through the productive imagination, abstracting it to other situations, events, or even to larger scripts (such as a company’s motto). In our police officer example, I may become aware of the specific moral situation I am in thanks to reproductive imagination, and then it is the productive imagination that allows me to take this particular bribe and begin to abstract it to other events when I encountered a bribe, to

⁵⁷ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 107.

⁵⁸ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 104.

my training for the police, to an idea of justice, to my family and what they might think, and so forth.

In order to begin to evaluate the situation that we are in, namely by generalizing from the particular moral event to other moral events, or other scripts, one needs to be able to disengage from the specific role or script that one is in and take a step back. This disengaging is what allows us to be critical of a certain role and allows us to recognize that we are more than just one role and that we have more than just one set of obligations or duties and to see the situation from a more objective perspective.⁵⁹ This distancing seems to be a type of awareness, so one might want to say that the second form of moral imagination is merely another iteration of the first. While the second form can be construed as a form of awareness, it is different than the first. In the second form of moral imagination, unlike the first, we are able to distance ourselves from our individual roles and see the bigger picture of the conflict. The second form of moral imagination is also much more critical than the first: as productive, moral imagination “accounts for our ability to reframe our experiences in different terms, so that we can evaluate our operative mental models and critique role demands.”⁶⁰

The third and final form of moral imagination is analogous to Kant’s free reflection. Werhane argues that this form of moral imagination “helps us to project beyond the constraints of particular scripts or biases. Creative imagination facilitates the ability to envision and actualize novel, morally justifiable possibilities through fresh

⁵⁹ Werhane calls this disengaged point of view a disengaged view from somewhere. Werhane explains her phrase as a response to Amartya Sen’s claim that we have achieved a disengaged view from nowhere. Werhane, rather, argues that one can never fully disengage from a particular narrative and set of mental models. Even when we disengage in order to see the various point of view or schemas at work, the point of view that we achieve is still constructed because one cannot exist outside a narrative or point of view.

⁶⁰ Werhane, *Moral imagination*, 107.

points of view.”⁶¹ Just as Kant’s free imagination allows one to step outside of the rules of understanding in aesthetic judgments, Werhane’s creative moral imagination allows one to get distance from certain roles or role responsibilities and begin to envision possibilities for action that are not immediately present. This freedom and flexibility is important because if I am only involved in my role or script of familial support, I feel as if my possibilities for action are limited: I must take the bribe. If I can step back, however, and get some distance and evaluate the situation, then I can employ a creative aspect of imagination that allows me to see that there are a number of possibilities for action: I can turn down the bribe and perhaps in doing so I will receive a promotion and thereby satisfy all of my obligations.

Martha Nussbaum and Moral Imagination

Martha Nussbaum’s *Love’s Knowledge* investigates the role of literature in moral theory. Nussbaum, similarly to Werhane and Johnson, presents her readers with both critical and constructive theses, which intertwine in order to achieve her main aim: the importance of literature for moral understanding. Nussbaum’s critical thesis is a challenge to traditional moral theory that privileges abstract thought and general rules that apply universally. Her constructive thesis argues that ethical theories need to incorporate features such as the value of emotions, the priority of perception, and the ethical relevance of uncontrolled happenings because these features reflect “what we

⁶¹ Werhane, *Moral Imagination*, 105.

actually do when we ask ourselves the most pressing ethical questions.”⁶² She argues that novels support these features and allow us to explore important questions about our lives.⁶³

Nussbaum’s account of imagination is inspired by Aristotle. According to Nussbaum, Aristotle’s account of imagination (or *phantasia*) can be found in both perception and deliberation. In perception, Nussbaum argues that Aristotelian imagination is a capacity “of focusing on some concrete particular, either present or absent, in such a way as to see (or otherwise perceive) it *as* something, picking out the salient features, discerning its content.”⁶⁴ Nussbaum also stresses the importance of imaginative deliberation (or what she calls “deliberative *phantasia*”) as the “ability to link several imaginings or perceptions together.”⁶⁵ In both its perceptive and deliberative activities, Nussbaum argues that imagination, “works closely in tandem with memory, enabling the creature to focus on absent experienced items in their concreteness, and even to form new combinations, not yet experienced, from items that have entered sense-experience.”⁶⁶ Ultimately, Nussbaum argues that Aristotle’s *phantasia* does much of the work of imagination as we know it: it focuses on absent or unexperienced items. Yet, Aristotle’s account, she argues, also emphasizes imagination’s selective and discriminatory character.⁶⁷

In order to understand Aristotle’s dual description of imagination let us look at an example: I find myself at a party where a person makes a joke in which a woman is told

⁶² Nussbaum, Martha. (1992). *Love’s Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 24.

⁶³ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 25, 142, 189 & 290.

⁶⁴ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 77.

⁶⁵ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 77.

⁶⁶ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 77.

⁶⁷ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 77.

to go back to the kitchen, where she belongs, and make a sandwich. In this instance, according to Nussbaum, imagination functions in two ways. First, imagination picks out the concrete particulars of the event so as to allow me to see the joke as something, specifically here as misogynistic. Imagination does this selective activity by allowing me to hold in my mind certain aspects of the event, like the context, things I know about the person who said the joke, my conception of jokes, and in doing so assists in my seeing the joke as misogynistic. This activity is imaginative, as opposed to some other cognitive capacity, because one must hold in the mind phenomena that are not present before us and compare them to each other. Certainly, imagination is not working alone in this activity; memory, for example, is needed to have past experiences to compare to this new experience. But insofar as we hold multiple phenomena in our minds and compare them to each other, some of which are not physically present, imagination is at work in perception. Second, imagination is involved in my deliberation by allowing me to think of other times when I heard a misogynistic utterance and responded, and see if such a response would fit here. I can also imagine possibilities for actions that I have never done before but that might be appropriate now. This activity is imaginative because I am linking my perceptions and previous memories in order to deliberate about the best course of action.

Nussbaum's conception of imagination focuses on perception and deliberation and her account of moral imagination follows suit. In "Finely Aware and Richly Responsible" Nussbaum connects moral imagination to perception by arguing that the task of moral imagination is, "The effort to see and really to represent," in particular this

seeing and representing is done in the “face of constant...muddlement.”⁶⁸ Moral situations are often riddled with muddlement: what is the right thing to do? What duties carry more weight? What kind of consequences will my actions have? Imagination, then, will help clear away some of this muddlement by helping us better perceive the situation. For example, imagination can help us see a moral situation from multiple points of view and in doing so can help us better understand the consequences for our actions, or how violating a duty might feel to the other involved. Nussbaum also ascribes to moral imagination a more creative endeavor. She writes, “the work of the moral imagination is in some manner like the work of the creative imagination, especially that of the novelist.”⁶⁹ Here we see imagination as creative, in particular, as allowing for the novelist to create works of art. In a similar way, imagination will help us as moral decision makers to be creative when it comes to our actions and responses to moral dilemmas.

One of the most important features of our moral lives for Nussbaum is perception, specifically perception of the particular. This feature, which Nussbaum calls both “the Priority of Perception” and “the Priority of the Particular,” is the most often discussed feature in *Love’s Knowledge*.⁷⁰ Nussbaum defines the priority of perception as, “the ability to discern, acutely and responsively, the salient features of one’s particular situation.”⁷¹ In making her case for the importance of moral perception, Nussbaum turns to Aristotle and argues that Aristotle is one of the first to praise perception in his account of ethics. Aristotle’s privileging of perception is, according to Nussbaum, a “praising [of]

⁶⁸ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 148.

⁶⁹ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 148.

⁷⁰ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 37.

⁷¹ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 37.

the grasping of particulars.”⁷² For example, in order to determine or deliberate about what action is the most virtuous, one must first pick out and perceive the relevant features of an event. If I am in a battle and want to deliberate about the courageous action, I must perceive the relevant information about that battle that will make up my deliberation: the number of enemies, not the color of my hair; the type of weapon I have, not how much I miss my mom. Perception of particulars is important because rather than beginning with a universal law or rule, Nussbaum and Aristotle suggest that perception is the first step in moral deliberation.⁷³ Part of this need, early on, for perception is that Nussbaum argues, “Situations are all highly concrete, and they do not present themselves with duty labels on them.”⁷⁴ Rather, moral dilemmas, and life for that matter, are complex and messy. In order to cut through some of that complexity and deliberate well one must first perceive the important aspects of the situation.

While perception of particulars is necessary to be a good perceiver, Nussbaum argues that good deliberation is like an actress doing improvisation or a jazz musician doing the same.⁷⁵ The factors of improvisation that make it analogous to moral deliberation are that for both, “what counts is flexibility, responsiveness, and openness to the external.”⁷⁶ The improvising actress will be constrained by some rules, like the physical limitations of her stage, the actors with which she can interact, and perhaps a general guideline for the scene. However, what distinguishes an improviser from an actress enacting a script is the latter’s ability to create within that space new stories, actions, and responses. The good moral deliberator must do the same; she must be able to

⁷² Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 67.

⁷³ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 160.

⁷⁴ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 155.

⁷⁵ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 155.

⁷⁶ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 74.

respond in a way that is not entirely predetermined beforehand, but she must be creative in her ability to contemplate and enact new and unique responses to moral dilemmas.

Now that we have seen the importance of perception of particulars and creative deliberation, I want to show how, for Nussbaum, imagination is responsible for both. In order to do so, let us turn to an example she discusses frequently in *Love's Knowledge*: Maggie Verver in Henry James' *The Golden Bowl*. Nussbaum argues that Maggie is a paradigmatic perceiver and deliberator, and I will show how Maggie's exemplar status is due to her imagination. In one particular instance, Nussbaum gives a two-page excerpt from the book in which we, the reader, get to see Maggie's process of deliberation regarding her father. In particular, Maggie is torn between the love of her father, Adam, who has been her everything for most of her life, and the love for her new husband. Both men are making conflicting demands on her and she must determine to whom her duty lies and what course of action she must take.

Maggie's perception, according to Nussbaum, is paradigmatic because she recognizes the situation as highly complex. Maggie "allows herself to explore fully the separate nature of each pertinent claim, entering into it, wondering about what it is, attempting to do justice to it in feeling as well as thought."⁷⁷ The claims that Nussbaum references here are the ones being made of Maggie by the different men in her life. In order to fully see the claims and what values they may have, Maggie must hold them together in her mind and compare them. In her mental activities of comparison, she can explore to what extent the claims come into conflict and why. Maggie cannot do this work in the abstract but rather must focus on particulars: "[Maggie] must consider not simply what, in a general way, her duties [are]... She must think what they are given

⁷⁷ Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*, 89.

[this] concrete situation.”⁷⁸ In order to see these particulars, Maggie must imaginatively hold the claims and see them in their complexity.

Another place where we see imagination connecting to perception has to do with the specific people in Maggie’s life. Nussbaum writes, “[Maggie] is prepared to recognize non-repeatable and unique items as morally relevant alongside the universalizable. “Father” does not exhaustively describe the morally salient features of her situation with Adam.”⁷⁹ Here Maggie is using her imagination to extend beyond one way of viewing her father, and recognize that in fact there are a multitude of ways of perceiving him: “By finding a way to perceive him, to imagine him not as father and law and world but as a finite human being whose dignity is in and not opposed to his finitude.”⁸⁰ Maggie has, for too long, idealized her father by making him a god-like figure who gave her rules, responsibilities, and a purpose. Now, however, she has a new man in her life who challenges the duties and status of her father. In order to see the situation better, she must see her father better and this seeing requires imagination. Maggie must hold in her mind the various roles of her father and the particulars that make him who he is. These particulars are not present before her but held only in the mind. By comparing them, she is able to see her father anew, namely as something more than an authority figure. It is only with this new sight that Maggie can fully address and assess the situation she finds herself in.

In both examples we see imagination helping perception in a particular way, namely as being open, or as Nussbaum puts it, surprised. Nussbaum argues that “vision

⁷⁸ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 91.

⁷⁹ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 90.

⁸⁰ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 153.

of particularity involves a willingness to be incomplete, to be surprised by the new.”⁸¹ In the first instance, Maggie must let herself be surprised by the claims being made. She cannot merely see all claims or obligations placed on her by her father and husband as equal since they are not. Neither can she set the claims to a universal maxim and expect a wholly positive outcome. Rather, Maggie must be open in her perceptions. She must try out, and not be closed off to particular perceptions from the outset. In the second instance, Maggie must be open in perceptions of her father. She must be willing to see him as more than one thing (i.e., an authority figure). Without this openness in her perceptions, Maggie will fail to see her situation as complex. It is Maggie’s imagination that allows her to experience this openness: because imagination allows us to see things not present and link them with other experiences and memories, imagination allows us to experience or perceive things in new and unique ways.

Not only does Maggie employ a highly imaginative perception, she is also, according to Nussbaum, imaginative in her deliberation. In another scene from *The Golden Bowl*, Maggie is faced with a moral situation and imagines a number of possible responses to her situation. One such response, Maggie imagines, would cause suffering for her friend. Maggie’s deliberation, then, according to Nussbaum, includes “attempting to understand [the situation] and its implications for her choice, allowing herself vividly to picture and imagine the suffering of her friend.”⁸² This rich mental picturing makes Maggie’s deliberative activities paradigmatic because she becomes the improvising actress, which Nussbaum advocates as the best type of deliberator. Nussbaum writes, “Maggie sees herself as an actress improvising her role, we must remember, too, that the

⁸¹ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 180.

⁸² Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 89.

actress who improvises well is *not* free to do anything at all. She must at every moment...be responsively alive and committed to the other actors, to the evolving narrative, to the laws and constraints of the genre and its history.’⁸³ Maggie is constrained by the relationships that she has, the people with whom she cares about and these serve as her constraints; she does not want to hurt her friend so she will imagine a response that will avoid such hurt. Maggie does not merely apply an abstract rule to her situation, but rather imagines a number of possibilities of action and in those imaginings takes into account the potential harm or help that may result from her actions. Her decision is then based on this imaginative activity, and therefore requires her to be open and flexible, rather than merely follow predetermined laws.

Nussbaum’s example of Maggie Verver illustrates to us the ways in which imagination assists in our perception and deliberation of moral events. Maggie is the paradigmatic moral perceiver and deliberator because she is open to new perceptions as well as creative possibilities for response. It is Maggie’s constant employment of imagination that allows her to be Nussbaum’s paradigm: by seeing her father, her friends, and her situation in a certain way, by connecting those details with other experiences and memories, and by imagining and mentally trying out certain responses, Maggie is truly richly aware and finely responsible.

Johnson, Werhane, and Nussbaum Connected

In order to conclude the discussion of the contemporary work done on moral imagination I am going to draw out the major similarities between all three accounts and

⁸³ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 155.

argue for a picture of moral imagination that I will use going forward. I define moral imagination as the use of imagination in moral situations. My reason for structuring my definition of moral imagination as such is due to the ways in which Johnson, Werhane, and Nussbaum speak of moral imagination. For all three, they begin their respective works with a discussion of imagination *per se* and then specify how it works in our moral lives. Their basic definitions of imagination are also similar: for Johnson it is a capacity for mental projection and sensemaking, for Werhane it is a holding of phenomena in the mind and for Nussbaum it allows a creature to focus on absent experienced items. In all three definitions, imagination is the ability to hold in the mind something that is not necessarily present before us, which is the prototypical understanding of imagination.

Additionally, all three scholars advocate for the necessity of imagination in moral situations. I want to go further by drawing all their arguments together and suggest that each require imagination as necessary for moral perception and deliberation as defined by Lawrence Blum. Blum defines moral perception as “anything contributing to or encompassed within the agent’s take on the situation—his salience-perception—prior to his deliberating about what to do.”⁸⁴ The situation Blum has in mind is a moral one: moral perception constructs what an agent is faced with in a moral situation in the first place by tuning into a morally significant feature of the situation. For example, Tim, a white male, is waiting for a cab next to a black woman and her daughter. A cab pulls up, passing the family, and stopping in front of Tim who gets in. Blum argues that it is Tim’s moral perception that allows him to see this event as morally significant, rather than just a standard cab ride. Let us use the cab example as a tool for illuminating Blum’s conception of moral perception.

⁸⁴ Blum, Lawrence. (1991). “Moral Perception and Particularity.” *Ethics*. 10(4): 701-725, 707.

First, Blum argues that inferences are “within the rubric of moral perception.”⁸⁵

Tim can use his knowledge about racism or injustice to infer that the cab driver passed the family because “he just prefers not to have blacks in his cab, or does not want to go into the sort of neighborhood where he imagines the woman will ask him to go.”⁸⁶

Second, Blum considers retrospection to be a part of moral perception. Again in the cab example, Blum argues that Tim can put the pieces of the situation together after he is already in the cab and see the driver’s actions as not merely picking him up, but rather in a different way as passing by two black people because he is racist. Moral perception, then, is not necessarily an immediate act of perception like seeing the color red. Rather, for Blum one can be morally perceptive during an event or after it has taken place since he defines moral perception as merely preceding moral deliberation. Tim, for example, will not deliberate about how to respond to the taxi driver until he has seen, or inferred, the driver’s actions as racist. This seeing can come after the initial pick up and perhaps while Tim is in the car or after he has arrived at home.

Imagination is needed for a number of the activities that constitute moral perception.⁸⁷ For example, Johnson argues that metaphors constitute our primary method of understanding morality and shape the way we see moral harm and help; namely, as creating debt or credit. Metaphors are imaginative because they require us to project

⁸⁵ Blum, “Moral Perception,” 707.

⁸⁶ Blum, “Moral Perception,” 706.

⁸⁷ Blum does not given an exhaustive list of all the activities of moral perception, but rather only a general definition of “anything contributing to or encompassed within the agent’s take on the situation...prior to his deliberating.” He does list a few activities he would include in his definition, such as inference and retrospection. Blum’s project is not to list definitively every activity required for moral perception, but rather to argue that moral perception is a step prior to moral judgment. My discussion of moral perception will follow suit: I will show how the activities given by Johnson, Werhane and Nussbaum both fit Blum’s examples of the activities of moral perception as well as his definition of moral perception *per se*.

mentally beyond what is actual or given. Projecting ideas present in the concept of commodity, like debt, onto ideas of morality, require us to entertain in the mind something that is not actually present in the world. Metaphors since they shape the way we see moral harm, are tools of perception. Tim could, for example, see the passing of the black family as a harm and think that the cab driver owes him an explanation or owes them an apology; Tim, then, sees the cab driver's action as creating a debt to either himself or to the family.

Additionally, prototypes are a tool for moral perception because prototypes are ways of categorizing our thoughts or events and assist in our ability to see events as something. In Tim's case, he may think of a prototypical case of racism and hold this current event in his mind to see if the event fits within the category of racism. This perception through prototypes is a type of inference, which Blum places in the category of moral perception.

Narratives are also a form of moral perception. As we saw in Johnson's "Hooker's Tale," the woman in question saw her life in terms of a narrative. Not only that, she saw her moral choices in terms of a story and used it in order to explain her actions to herself and to others. Tim could conceptualize his life in terms of a story about social justice: Tim's life choices are made in service of promoting social justice. Because Tim sees his life in this way he is more sensitive to injustices and therefore will see the cab driver's actions as an injustice.

Werhane's first stage of moral imagination also fits Blum's definition of moral perception. In reproductive moral imagination, one becomes aware of the character, context, situation, event, and dilemma as a moral issue. In order to do so, Werhane

argues, imagination takes all of the information about the event and synthesizes it in order for us to see the event as a moral dilemma. This synthesizing requires one to project in the mind things that are not actually present. Although Werhane claims that moral imagination is necessary for moral decision making, I want to argue that her first form of moral imagination actually falls within the purview of moral perception. Because the reproductive moral imagination is focused on awareness, it is much more closely tied to perception than deliberation. Further, reproductive moral imagination is the first step for Werhane in moral decision making, just as moral perception is the first step in a moral situation for Blum. Werhane does not separate the different stages or processes in a moral situation, but lumps them all together under the heading moral decision making. Despite this lumping, because the reproductive moral imagination concerns only awareness, and because it is the first step in a moral situation, it belongs under Blum's category of moral perception.

Further, the synthesizing awareness in reproductive moral imagination is exactly what Blum has in mind with his conception of moral perception; the reproductive moral imagination allows us to see the event as morally salient previous to moral deliberation. For Werhane, we become aware by recognizing roles or schemas, and we can see Tim doing something similar: he can become aware of his role as a passenger in a cab, but also his role as defender of justice or his commitment to stopping racism. Once he becomes aware of these roles, he can recognize with better clarity what the cab driver has done and how it violates Tim's duties to uphold justice.

Finally, Nussbaum, as we saw, places a great deal of importance on one's ability to perceive particulars in a moral event. These particulars are perceived thanks to

imagination's ability to hold in the mind experiences, memories, or imaginings that are not necessarily present. As we saw in Nussbaum's paradigm of Maggie, she perceives the morally salient features of her father by holding in the mind different actions, emotions, and roles of her father. Tim becomes 'finely aware' by seeing the situation *as* something, namely as one in which an injustice has occurred. He can only see the situation in this way if he focuses on the particulars of what occurred, namely the cab driver passing up the black couple. Tim is able to focus on these particulars by bringing together in his mind his idea of justice, memories of racism, and what he imagines it must be like to be a black family who has been passed up by a cab.

The second component of a moral situation that all three of our imagination scholars discuss in conjunction with moral imagination is deliberation. Blum argues that perception comes first before "deliberating about what to do." For our purposes then, moral deliberation will be understood as the activity following moral perception and involves considering what action one should take in response to a given situation.

Included within this idea could be applying a principle or maxim to the event, like trying to determine which action would bring about the greatest amount of happiness or which action conforms to a universal maxim. In like fashion to our discussion of moral perception, I will show how moral imagination is used in moral deliberation.

Narratives as well as being a tool of moral perception are also used in order to figure out what one should do by employing a number of possible narratives in order to see potential responses to an event. These possible narratives require us to hold in the mind events or ideas that are not present or actual but could be. Like we saw in our unwanted pregnancy example, the young woman must picture events about what her life

would be like if she got an abortion, what her life would be like if she kept the child, and so forth. Tim, for example, may think of what narrative or story will be produced if he calls the cab driver out for his actions.

In Werhane's second form of moral imagination, in order to evaluate one's current situation, one generalizes a specific situation to other similar situations. This activity requires one to hold in the mind events that are not present and then use those as tools for comparison. The evaluative aspect of this second form is a tool of moral deliberation. Further, in the productive moral imagination one is required to get distance from the role she finds herself in and become critical of the situation. In order to become critical, one must already be aware that she is within a moral dilemma. For that reason, this productive moral imagination fits Blum's account of moral deliberation. In order for Tim to critically assess his situation he must distance himself from his initial position as a passenger of a cab. He must take a step back and recognize that there is a great deal more going on in the situation. If he, however, remains stuck in his viewpoint as a tired passenger, he may not be able to see the cab driver's actions as racist.

Additionally, according to Werhane, the reflective form of moral imagination allows one to see from a different viewpoint in order to assess unique or creative responses to a moral event. This activity requires one to step outside of her own role and try to put herself in another person's shoes. From this new viewpoint, one can contemplate possibilities for actions that she might not have seen before. This reflective activity requires one to hold in the mind a perspective that is not their own, but is imagined, as well as possibilities for action that are not present but could come to fruition. Because this third form of moral imagination focuses more on possible

responses to an event, it falls into the category of deliberation, rather than perception. Tim, in the reflective moral imagination, is free to create possibilities for action by combining previous experiences or imagined outcomes to the situation.

Finally, for Nussbaum, imagination is also involved in deliberation, or what she calls being richly responsible. In particular, imagination allows us to create new possibilities for action within our mind and try them out there before we act. Again, this is done by imagination's ability to combine in the mind, experiences, memories and imaginings in order to produce new connections. Maggie, as we saw, performs this responsive activity when she deliberates about an outcome that might cause her friend to suffer. As an agent who is richly responsible, Nussbaum argues imagination creates new possibilities for action by linking up our imaginings, experiences, and memories in new ways. Tim could be 'richly responsible' here by picturing in his mind unique responses to the cab driver's actions, like getting out of the cab and insisting the cab driver take the family, or calling the cab driver's authority figure and reporting him.

Through Blum's example of the racist cab driver we have seen how the major activities described by our three scholars are imaginative tools of moral perception or deliberation. We have also seen that imagination is not the only component required for moral perception or deliberation; one can also employ maxims in deliberation or memories in perception. Although imagination is not sufficient for either moral perception or deliberation, it is necessary.

Moral Education Through Narratives

As all three authors demonstrate, moral imagination is necessary for our moral lives. They also agree that, given the integral role of imagination, we must work on cultivating it. Johnson ends his work with the obligation that we must rehearse or practice the imaginative activities required for morality and advocates in favor of Nussbaum's suggestion that we do so through fictional narratives. Werhane, as well, discusses cultivation through narratives, though she focuses the least on a prescriptive element noting only that teaching managers via general rules will not produce good moral decisions and agrees that teaching through narratives would be a more preferable tool.⁸⁸ Ultimately, both Johnson and Werhane's projects were to set out a holistic picture of moral imagination and only briefly suggest methods of cultivation, though they do stress that the mere memorization and application of general rules will lead to poor moral agents. It is Nussbaum, in *Love's Knowledge*, who advances an argument for the cultivation of imagination through fictional narratives. It is also her work that is adopted by cognitive scientists and supported through recent advancements therein. I will, therefore, focus on elucidating her project.

Nussbaum, as we saw, adopts an Aristotelian understanding of imagination and a corresponding Aristotelian conception of perception and deliberation. Her discussion of education also follows an Aristotelian framework, in particular focusing on the need of a paradigm and practice in order to cultivate one's moral activities. The paradigm is, for Aristotle, often referred to as an exemplar or a person of practical wisdom. This exemplar is someone to whom a young, developing person can turn and look to in order to see an example of a good moral agent. By turning to this moral exemplar, the developing moral agent can mimic the actions of the exemplar and also use the exemplar as a real life test

⁸⁸ Werhane, in person meeting, April 10th, 2013.

of what to do.⁸⁹ For example, if I am a developing moral agent and I am faced with lying to my parents, I can look at a person of practical wisdom and ask myself, “What would she do in this situation?” and then model that behavior. I can also see what the person of practical wisdom has done in the same situation and mimic that response.

In addition to a paradigm, Aristotle argues that one must cultivate a habit of continually choosing between excess and deficiency.⁹⁰ In order to cultivate this habit, one must actively and constantly be choosing.⁹¹ One cannot just hope that she will form the habit, that is, the habit is not merely some theoretical goal or ideal, but rather is something that must be practiced. If I want to be a courageous person, for example, I cannot just hope that I will be, but rather I must, when faced with opportunities of courage, respond in a courageous way. Nussbaum’s claims about the educational aspects of novels follow closely to Aristotle’s: novels can give paradigms and practice for future moral agency; in particular, novels can give paradigms and practice for moral perception and moral deliberation. Nussbaum also claims that novels fit the Aristotelian idea of habit building, or what I am calling practice, by requiring us to perform similar cognitive and affective activities.⁹²

Nussbaum’s greatest paradigm of moral activities is the fictional Maggie Verver. Maggie is a paradigm for Nussbaum because of the way she sees, specifically that she is ‘finely aware.’ This way of seeing has to do with attending to particulars, like seeing a person as a friend, brother, and father and all of the particular duties and rules that each

⁸⁹ Aristotle. (1999). *Nicomachean Ethics*. Trans. Martin Oswald. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1179b 27-31.

⁹⁰ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1108b 11-1109b 25.

⁹¹ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1103a 15-1103b 25.

⁹² Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 95.

entail. Maggie, then, when we read about her is a paradigmatic example of a moral perceiver. We can see what actions Maggie takes and model our behavior after them.

A large part of what makes Maggie a paradigmatic seer is her imagination, specifically for Nussbaum, her ability to focus on concrete particulars and see them *as* something (i.e., seeing Adam as more than a father). While reading about Maggie's process of perceiving her father, I am given a model of how one should see, specifically how one should see a person in a concrete way; how all of the particulars about the person, such as your relationships, the duties you have, and so forth, constitute how you perceive the person. Maggie's way of seeing, in particular, the imaginative activities she employs therein, can serve as exemplary behavior and one which the reader can and should mimic.

Further, Maggie is an exemplar not only because she is 'richly' aware but also that she was not always. Nussbaum argues that Maggie, earlier in the novel, used to see people as works of art and that this method of seeing is incorrect: "We are shown that this ideal, followed out to its strictest conclusion, generates an extraordinary blindness to value and ends by subordinating the particular claim of each commitment and love to the claims of harmony."⁹³ Maggie's initial perceptions refused to view people as entire human beings and rather treated them as idealized things. The reader, then, observes the transition in Maggie's way of seeing from dull to refine. Accompanying this transition, the reader is given access to the failings and ill consequences that arise with Maggie's poor perceiving, contrasted with her growth and maturity found in her more robust form of seeing at the end of the novel. Not only, then, do we get the paradigm of Maggie in her perceptions, we also, as readers, are given her transformation here to: we see her

⁹³ Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*, 132.

struggles, how she overcame them and the benefits she gets with her new, finer perceptions.

We also, because of the nature of narratives, have access to Maggie's inner thoughts and motivations, which is something we wouldn't get with a normal exemplar. Because in novels, more so than in our everyday lives, we are given the thoughts and motivations of characters in moral situations, I want to suggest that characters in novels can sometimes be better, more helpful, paradigms than real people. With a real life person, I only see the result of choices and, often only the negative effects of poor choices. For example, if I have a real life paradigm to whom I look up to and model my behavior off of, I do not necessarily see every time she has struggled with telling the truth, and I am not given the intimate reasons for many of her life choices. Certainly times at which she may have failed to be virtuous are seen if they produce negative consequences and a few times I might be privy to her self-reported decision making process. Yet, for the most part, I am not given all of the components that are truly necessary to model my moral perception or decision-making processes. I am not given reasons for many of her virtuous decisions, nor shown how she, internally, deals with conflicts of duty. With fictional characters, in particular characters within novels, I can and often am given such access. Maggie, then, could be a better paradigm because we get to see her struggles, her transitions, her thoughts, and motivations.

Not only do novels give us a positive paradigm, someone we can and should model our behavior from, they can also give us negative models. Nussbaum also discusses the character Fanny whose perceptions are too colored by imagination and fantasy so that she regards "complicated people and predicaments of the world with an

aestheticizing love.”⁹⁴ Fanny is a poor perceiver because she is too much in a fantasy of her own creation. This poor perception leads Fanny into problematic situations and relationships. Although, Fanny is not a positive paradigm that we should emulate, she is important to the idea of novels offering paradigms. In particular, Fanny shows us what not to do and this lesson is made even stronger when Fanny is put in contrast with Maggie.

Additionally, fictional narratives allow us, the reader, to practice the activities involved in our own, moral perceptions. For example, in our reading of novels we imaginatively put ourselves in the position of a fictional character: “We are certainly called upon to picture the scene as we read. And since the world of the scene is given to us from the point of view of a single character, we are asked to enter, in our imagining, into that point of view.”⁹⁵

Further, the content and style of fiction promotes the practice of an exploratory form of seeing, in particular when we read novels we are engaged in a number of activities including “searching for patterns.”⁹⁶ The act of finding patterns is very much in line with Blum’s discussion of inferences in moral perception. Tim, if we remember, could see the cab driver’s actions as racist because he inferred it: Tim could have other experiences with racist actions and see if this current activity fits his situation. Novels, then, offer a method of practicing the cognitive activities of exploration in particular those closely associated with imagination. Johnson’s prototypes, for example, require an imaginative exploration, that is similar in kind to the exploration described here.

Nussbaum’s perception *phantasia* (as the capacity to focus on a particular in order to see

⁹⁴ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 158.

⁹⁵ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 252.

⁹⁶ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 171.

it as something by picking out the salient features) also fits the description of this exploratory seeing: searching for patterns requires one to see a number of things as related in some way. We get from novels, then, a method of practicing the imaginative activities required for moral deliberation.

Finally, novels offers us the opportunity to see and, in a way, experience events or moral dilemmas that we might not have encountered before. This additional content gives us a means to practice our perceptions as Nussbaum argues, “A novel, just because it is not our life, places us in a moral position that is favorable for perception and it shows us what it would be like to take up that position in life.”⁹⁷ In novels we are given the opportunity to see and, in a way, experience events or moral dilemmas that we might not have encountered before. Yet, we can now practice what it may be like to be in that situation. This additional content, then, gives us a means to practice our perceptions.

Fictional narratives can also give us, like moral perception, paradigms for deliberation. By putting herself in her friend’s shoes, Maggie, for instance, is attempting to find a decision that will produce a lack of suffering. She then, can be seen as a model for which we should follow: we too should, in contemplating what to do, imagine how it may harm those around us and consider such imaginative content when we act.

While fictional narratives offer us paradigmatic perceivers, which we can mimic, they also, according to Nussbaum serve as a method for practicing our own deliberative skills. Nussbaum argues:

What I now want to suggest is that the adventure of the reader of this novel, like the adventurer of the intelligent characters inside it, involves valuable aspects of human moral experience that are not tapped by traditional books of moral philosophy...For this novel calls upon and also develops our ability to confront mystery with the cognitive engagement of both thought and feeling. To work

⁹⁷ Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge*, 162.

through these sentences and these chapters is to become involved in an activity of exploration and unraveling that uses abilities, especially abilities of emotion and imagination, rarely tapped by philosophical texts.⁹⁸

Our very reading of novels is a practice for the imaginative skills that are required in our everyday moral deliberations. For example, novels are often rich with detail and complexity, in ways that very much mirror our real life. In order to deliberate about what to do in the face of complexity, we must explore it with our imagination. The content, then, of novels allows us to practice for future moral decisions because it can mirror real life but also extend it by giving us new possibilities to imagine and contemplate.

In addition to the mystery and complexity found in fictional narratives, we also undertake the imaginative activity of putting ourselves into another world and another's shoes, which is very characteristic of our real life moral decision making process. Nussbaum writes, "Interpreting a novel or play involves one, indeed, in a kind of sympathetic reason-giving that is highly characters of morality; for we ask ourselves, as we try to enter into the plot, why the characters do what they do, and we are put off of our inquires lead to nothing but mystery and arbitrariness."⁹⁹ Since many of the imaginative activities involved in moral decision making are performed by the reader in her study of fictional narratives, Nussbaum argues that exposure to these literature works can train one for future moral decision making.

Nussbaum, as well as Johnson and Werhane to a lesser extent, give thoughtful arguments that reading novels can cultivate imagination and these arguments have lead contemporary cognitive scientists to further investigate and support these arguments, most notably Ian Ravenscroft. In his article, "Fiction, Imagination and Ethics," he

⁹⁸ Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*, 143.

⁹⁹ Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*, 346.

attempts to defend Nussbaum's claim with contemporary accounts of imagination. Ravenscroft begins his support by arguing that if an athlete or musician imagines running a race or playing an instrument, including the motor skills required to perform both activities, then she will have improved motor performance when she actually undertakes the activities.¹⁰⁰ Ravenscroft notes that the reason for this success is that, "Enhanced motor performance due to motor imagery is not surprising given the overlap of neural substrates of motor imagery and motor performance,"¹⁰¹ that is, when one imagines doing X the same neurons are fired as if one actually undertakes X. It is this overlap in the brain, which has led Ravenscroft, and others, to postulate, "imagining provides opportunities to rehearse—and thereby improve—performance."¹⁰² Ravenscroft claims that if, as Nussbaum argues, reading fictional narratives allows us to rehearse many of the cognitive activities, specifically the imaginative ones, involved in morality while reading, then this practice will have real impact on our future, actual moral perceptions and deliberations.

Further, researches have long noted that, "subjects who observe another's behavior are more likely to engage in that behavior than subjects who have not witnessed the behavior."¹⁰³ Mirror neurons, and their discovery, can explain this behavior. Mirror neurons fire when either of two conditions is satisfied: "(1) the agent observes an actor performing an action, or (2) the agent herself performs the same action."¹⁰⁴ Imitation, understood and defined as, "mentally mediated replication," is closely tied to imagination

¹⁰⁰ Pascual-Leone, A. (2001). "The Brain That Plays Music and Is Changed by It." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. 930: 315–329.

¹⁰¹ Ravenscroft, Ian. (2012). "Fiction, Imagination and Ethics." *Emotions, Imagination, and Moral Reasoning*. Ed. R. Landgon & C. Mackenzie. New York: Psychology Press, 71-90, 76.

¹⁰² Ravenscroft, "Fiction, Imagination and Ethics," 76-7.

¹⁰³ Ravenscroft, "Fiction, Imagination and Ethics," 77.

¹⁰⁴ Ravenscroft, "Fiction, Imagination and Ethics," 78.

because one can imaginatively imitate and some argue the ‘mental mediation’ is performed by imagination.¹⁰⁵

The discovery of mirror neurons supports Nussbaum’s idea that novels can serve as a paradigm for moral imagination because seeing another perform an action influences our behavior. Training via paradigms, then, is not merely a good theory or suggestion, but in fact, has a real effect on our cognitive faculties. Ravenscroft connects this imitation to fiction by arguing that, “In dramas and films, the consumer may be able to directly observe the character’s emotional expressions and thus be able to behaviorally imitate them.”¹⁰⁶ Because with fiction we can imaginatively go through, and therefore mimic, the emotions of the fictional characters, fiction “can scaffold empathetic experiences and thereby improve our ability to respond empathetically. Practice makes perfect. Nussbaum’s nondevelopmental thesis is thus supported by our current understanding of imagination and imitative processes.”¹⁰⁷

I have presented a holistic picture of moral imagination as understood in contemporary literature. I have discussed from where the theory has emerged (i.e., a desire to move away from theories that solely rely on abstract reason), detailed the major activities involved in the theory (i.e., metaphors, prototypes, and narratives), and outlined the ensuing prescription (i.e., read novels to cultivate one’s imagination). I will utilize the theory set forth in this chapter in the subsequent chapters by connecting moral imagination to the work of Adorno. I will argue that the two theories are ripe for connection and then use moral imagination to deepen Adorno’s work on the Holocaust. Noting the prescriptive element of moral imagination will be important in the final

¹⁰⁵ Ravenscroft, “Fiction, Imagination and Ethics,” 78.

¹⁰⁶ Ravenscroft, “Fiction, Imagination and Ethics,” 79.

¹⁰⁷ Ravenscroft, “Fiction, Imagination and Ethics,” 80.

chapter of my project because I will utilize it in order to suggest a practical, imaginative form of education that can fulfil Adorno's demand that education should focus on the prevention of another Auschwitz.

MORAL IMAGINATION AND ADORNO

The theory of moral imagination presented in Chapter One was, in large part, conceptualized in reaction to a dominant way of thinking about the world, which privileged reason and in doing so shunned or ignored imagination. Critical Theorist, Theodor Adorno, has a similar catalyst for his work, and as I argue, a theory that is complementary to moral imagination. In this chapter, I examine a number of major themes in Adorno's work, beginning with his overall critique of the Enlightenment and then focus on particular examples of Enlightenment thinking. Additionally, I connect Adorno's theory to that of moral imagination outlined in Chapter One. I reveal the similarities between both theories through their particulars (i.e., Adorno's theory on the conceptualization of objects closely matches Johnson's theory on the same topic). I also argue that where Adorno claims a change or shift should occur in our way of thinking or relating to the world, that the inclusion of imagination would fulfill his requirements for said change. I conclude the chapter by arguing that connecting Adorno's thought to moral imagination is mutually beneficial because such a connection assists in responding to critics of both theories and gives both theories explanatory support. My goal for this chapter is to unite the two theories so that I can, in the final two chapters, focus on Adorno's work on Auschwitz while having moral imagination play a significant role therein.

Enlightenment

The *Dialectic of Enlightenment* contains the most thorough and most scathing critique of what Adorno and Max Horkheimer call the Enlightenment. The two writers do not classify the Enlightenment in the traditional sense (i.e., a series of 17th and 18th century philosophers). Rather, “they use [the Enlightenment] to refer to a series of related intellectual and practical operations which are presented as demythologizing, secularizing or disenchanting some mythical, religious or magical representation of the world.”¹⁰⁸ Adorno and Horkheimer’s new definition opens their book, “the Enlightenment has always aimed at liberating men from fear and establishing their sovereignty.”¹⁰⁹ The fear, as we will see, is of nature and the sovereignty they speak of is also one over nature. In order to establish sovereignty, ‘the Enlightenment’ changed our way of thinking about and relating to the world, as Adorno and Horkheimer mention a number of times: “The program of the Enlightenment was the disenchantment of the world; the dissolution of myths and the substitution of knowledge for fancy;”¹¹⁰ “In the Enlightenment’s interpretation, thinking is the creation of unified, scientific order and the derivation of factual knowledge from principles;”¹¹¹ and, “the philosophy which equates the truth with scientific systematization.”¹¹² The best way to explain Adorno and Horkheimer’s talk of disenchantment, nature, and ‘the Enlightenment’ is through an example.

Before our technological advances, the cause of rain was not thought of as a result of a water cycle containing terms, such as precipitation and condensation. Rather, some peoples and some societies thought that the amount and time of rainfall had supernatural

¹⁰⁸ Jarvis, Simon. (2008). *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*. London: Routledge, 24.

¹⁰⁹ Adorno, Theodor and Horkheimer, Max. (1972). *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Trans. John Cumming. New York: Herder & Herder, 3.

¹¹⁰ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 3.

¹¹¹ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 81-2.

¹¹² Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 85.

causes, specifically a god or the gods. Dances, prayers, or animal sacrifices were thought necessary to encourage a god to bring forth rain and immorality was believed to incur the wrath of god and in doing so stop the rainfall. For these societies and these people, the cause of rain was attributed to a mythical, supernatural god rather than climate patterns or meteorology.

The idea that the gods alone control the weather is an example of the mythic thinking to which ‘the Enlightenment’ wants to respond and correct. In order to do so, people in these societies began to examine and study the clouds, weather, and rain. They performed experiments, looked for patterns, and made a science out of the weather by reasoning about it and trying to understand it. Rain, then, is no longer thought to be a mysterious, mythical act of god, but rather a reasoned (or reasoned about), fairly predictable, and known science. Knowing rain scientifically, as we do now, disenchant nature: nature is no longer a mysterious or magical event; instead, it is a fully-known and understood science.

In order to further understand Adorno and Horkheimer’s critique of ‘the Enlightenment,’ it is important to note that they are working with particular concepts of both ‘science’ and ‘reason.’ Science has, as Adorno explains, undergone a shift in its conception:

[Science] once used to mean the requirement that nothing be accepted without first being examined and tested: the freedom and emancipation from the tutelage of heteronomous dogmas. Today one shudders at just how pervasively scientificity has become a new form of heteronomy for its disciples. They imagine that their salvation is secured if they follow scientific rules, heed the ritual of science, surround themselves with science.¹¹³

¹¹³ Adorno, Theodor. (1969). “Philosophy and Teachers.” *Critical Models*. Trans. Henry W. Pickford. New York: Columbia University Press, 19-35, 32.

At first, science was a way to break free from dogmatic myths, like studying the water cycle in order to break free from the idea of a god to whom you must please. Adorno now sees science as merely replacing myth; it has itself become dogmatic and god-like: if you need the answer to any question, science will provide it. If science does not have the answer, which is highly unlikely, the question will be dismissed. Science, then, comes to dominate the people just as the myths of gods once did. As Robert Witkin notes, “Science, which claimed to enlighten the world through overcoming myth is...in reality the successor of myth. It is a more complete or more perfect instrument for the mastery of nature and with it the mastery of society.”¹¹⁴

The movement of ‘the Enlightenment’ is precisely this movement away from the fantasy and mystery of nature to its domination and scientification. In this movement, we begin to see with greater clarity Adorno and Horkheimer’s two theses: “myth is already enlightenment and enlightenment reverts to mythology.”¹¹⁵ The idea that one thing, science, can explain completely why and how something happens is the same as thinking ‘the gods’ can explain everything. Science just becomes the new god or the new catch-all-phrase for examining anything and everything. Adorno, as I will demonstrate throughout this chapter, does not think anything can be known completely. Objects and concepts, for Adorno, are historically and culturally constituted and the ways in which a culture, for instance, thinks of an object will contribute to what that object is, or the truth

¹¹⁴ Witkin, Robert. (2008). “Philosophy of Culture.” *Theodor Adorno: Key Concepts*. Ed. Deborah Cook. Stocksfield: Acumen, 161-178, 170.

¹¹⁵ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, xvi.

of that object, as I will elucidate with an example momentarily.¹¹⁶ The idea, then, that science can come along and fully explain everything turns science into a myth.

Enlightenment thinking also, rather than moving away from myth, creates a supernatural force in the form of fate. Simon Jarvis and Alison Stone comment, respectively, “Everything which is, is thus presented as a kind of fate, no less unalterable and uninterrogable than mythical fate itself;”¹¹⁷ and, “enlightenment thinkers try to avoid appealing to mythic beliefs—in gods, supernatural forces etc.—by sticking to the facts.”¹¹⁸ Previously, in our rain example, because the gods were thought to cause rain, prayer and sacrifice were human actions that could affect the outcome of rain. Now because science has told us that rain is caused by a natural cycle, we think that everything is out of our control (as opposed to possibly influenced by us via dance or prayer) and a matter of one cycle or another. If a chain of cause and effect made a particular drop of water hit my eye and that drop of water caused me to blink and that blink caused me to

¹¹⁶ Despite what it may seem Adorno’s theory does not fall into a form of relativism, as I will address later in the chapter. Further, it is important to note early on that for Adorno there isn’t necessarily a clear divide between an object and a concept since both are historically and culturally dependent. Unlike some of his philosophical brethren (i.e., Kant), Adorno does not think it is possible to have a concept without an object since how we think about one will affect the other. I will go into greater detail about this lack of distinction in the discussion of constellations and complex concepts later in the chapter. For now, an example that may help make sense of just how connected the two are: the concept of function is intricately tied to objects, specifically objects that embody or reject the idea of function. The concept function does not make sense unless you bring objects into play: a hammer has function in relation to certain other objects like bookshelf or nail. Without objects to be functional, the concept of function is meaningless. Further, as culture and history changes, so too does the object/idea of function: a smartphone isn’t functional to people without a written language. As Brian O’Connor notes that Adorno maintains “subject and object cannot be adequately expressed in isolation from each other” (O’Connor, Brian. (2004). *Adorno’s Negative Dialectic*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 51). I do my best throughout the chapter to use the words concept and object interchangeably in order to do justice to Adorno’s theory. Moving forward, please keep in mind this lack of distinction when you see such words.

¹¹⁷ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 25.

¹¹⁸ Stone, Alison. (2008). “Adorno and Logic.” *Theodor Adorno: Key Concepts*. Ed. Deborah Cook. Stocksfield: Acumen, 47-62, 51.

bump into the person in front of me, then our meeting is a result of fate. Such thinking makes fate a supernatural and mysterious entity (i.e., a myth) because like the gods, it is in full control of the world and always greater than us.

In addition to moving from one myth-system (i.e., gods) in favor of another (i.e., science), ‘the Enlightenment’ also radically changes our relationship with nature to one of domination, mastery, and manipulation: “What men want to learn from nature is how to use it in order to wholly dominate it and other men,”¹¹⁹ which is done through, “the conversion of nature into manipulable material.”¹²⁰ When we begin to study weather patterns, agriculture, mining, etc., what we are doing is moving away from a relationship with nature in which it is mysterious and frightening, to one in which we use nature to keep us safe and comfortable. With advances in irrigation, we no longer have to rely on specific timely rainfall but can save water and use it later when it is needed. We can transport water and sell it to our neighbors who don’t have enough, changing water into a traded good. We can create dams to control water flow and stop its destructive flooding. We are working toward further climate control through the seeding of clouds to force rain when and where we want it.

Water, in the form of rain, is just one example of the many ways in which advancements in our scientific understanding of nature has made us the perceived masters of nature. We can control nature, stop it, destroy it, and sell it. As Stone argues, “Enlightenment distances us from nature by positioning us as masters over—not parts of—nature and by enhancing our ability to use abstract concepts.”¹²¹ In being able to do all these things, we think we know nature completely. However, in the water example, we

¹¹⁹ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 4.

¹²⁰ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 27.

¹²¹ Stone, “Adorno and Logic,” 51.

saw a progress in what water is from something to fear, to something to sell, to something to stop. In all of these movements, the concept of water changes. It is, as I mentioned previously, historically and culturally situated. Water's definition will depend on who is giving it: for a capitalist society it could be defined and known as a commodity, for instance. The idea that the more control we have over nature, the more we know it isn't necessarily true because the very actions involved with rationally understanding nature changes it.

Along with the mastery of nature, comes a change in the way we understand ourselves. As we began to see in the previous paragraph, we certainly move from seeing ourselves as a mere part of nature, to now above nature as a master or dominator. When we transition to a position of domination, Adorno and Horkheimer claim, we try and distance ourselves from nature, namely by placing ourselves above it as masters. However, as Stone points out, "The more earnestly people pursue enlightenment project and try to distance themselves from nature, the more they *submit* to their natural impulses,"¹²² and "Adorno and Horkheimer take mastery over nature to be indissolubly entangled not only with mastery over human nature, the repression of impulse, but also with mastery over other humans."¹²³ Stone also explains:

For Adorno, humanity repeatedly distances itself from previous systems of thought by criticizing them for being merely mythical. This progression is fuelled by humanity's desire to gain increased practical control over nature. Human beings have hoped that, by freeing themselves from mythical views of nature, and gaining greater insight into the real workings of nature, they could enhance their ability to intervene into these natural processes for their own benefit.¹²⁴

¹²² Stone, "Adorno and Logic," 51.

¹²³ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 27.

¹²⁴ Stone, "Adorno and Logic," 50-51.

In our attempt to control nature, we include our own nature: ‘the Enlightenment’ tells us that we are not merely beasts, but *rational* animals; we have something special and unique (i.e., reason) that allows us and perhaps even grants us via fate, dominion over all of nature. We must live our lives logically and rationally and suppress all non-rational impulses such as passion and imagination. We must, according to Enlightenment thinking, use reason to rise above our brutish nature and our base natural impulses. However, in doing so, we end up serving the most basic of animal instincts: self-preservation. Our motivation to control and dominate nature is to avoid death. Therefore, the more we try to rise above nature, the more we are tied to it.

Adorno and Horkheimer’s aim in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* is, ultimately, not to reverse ‘the Enlightenment’ or offer us concrete ways of reversing it, but rather to reveal its origin and its flaws.¹²⁵ One of the most common criticisms of Adorno’s work, as we will see, is that he offers significant and thorough critiques without an equally positive movement or plan forward. What Adorno and Horkheimer are looking to do is describe, not prescribe; as Jarvis points out, the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, “is fundamentally concerned with how we can think today,” by starting, “out from where we are now, from the assumptions about concepts and about the world which we habitually deploy, very often without recognizing that we are making these assumptions.”¹²⁶ As a result of our movement toward reason and domination of nature, a number of destructive and manipulative ways of thinking and relating to the world have emerged. My project here will be to examine the particular results of Enlightenment and compare them to the theory of moral imagination laid out in Chapter One.

¹²⁵ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 22.

¹²⁶ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 20-21.

Instrumental Reason

Instrumental reason is the first result that follows directly from Enlightenment thinking. Jarvis writes, “The consequence is a kind of rationality which is a tool, blindly applied without any real capacity either to reflect on the ends to which it is applied, or to recognize the particular qualities of the objects to which it is applied... [They] call this unreflective rationality *instrumental* reason.”¹²⁷ As J.M. Bernstein clarifies, “enlightened reason is instrumental reason, the constituting action of which is abstraction and the consequent identifying and subsuming of different particulars under some common universal.”¹²⁸ The idea of instrumental reason has its roots most notably in Horkheimer’s solo work, *Eclipse of Reason*, where he developed the idea in his discussion of, what at the time he called, subjective reason. He writes:

But the force that ultimately makes reasonable actions possible is the faculty of classification, inference, and deduction, no matter what the specific content—the abstract functioning of the thinking mechanism. This type of reason may be called subjective reason. It is essentially concerned with means and ends, with the adequacy of procedures for purpose more or less taken for granted and supposedly self-explanatory.¹²⁹

Moreover, “Having given up autonomy, reason has become an instrument...Reason has become completely harnessed to the social process. Its operational value, its role in the domination of men and nature, has been made the sole criterion. Concepts have been reduced to summaries of the characteristics that several specimens have in common.”¹³⁰

¹²⁷ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 14.

¹²⁸ Bernstein, J.M. (2001). *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 83.

¹²⁹ Horkheimer, Max. (1974). *Eclipse of Reason*. New York: Continuum, 3.

¹³⁰ Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, 14 & 15.

We can see here a number of features that were present in the discussion of Enlightenment thinking, including the domination of nature. What we also grasp from Horkheimer's early work on the topic is the idea that this type of reason operates primarily through abstraction; an abstraction that reduces and simplifies objects in the name of turning them into means. Horkheimer's work is certainly an influence on the later projects of instrumental reason as all of its major features and even the name can be traced back to him.¹³¹

As we began to see in Horkheimer's discussion, instrumental reason gets its name from the idea that rationality, as a whole, is only instrumental.¹³² I think there are two ways this 'instrumentalization' of reason can be understood. The first way to understand Adorno and Horkheimer's phrase is to think of reason as a kind of instrument, like a tool. The tool of reason is used to make everything clear; reason becomes like a Swiss army knife or skeleton key as every object and concept is applied to it in order to know them. The second way the instrumental part of instrumental reason can be understood is in terms of an instrument as a measuring device, such as a ruler or beaker. Reason is used to measure everything in our world: want to know something about nature? Look for a pattern, explain it in terms of holistic cycles. Want to understand ourselves better? Construct rational arguments over the mind/body relationship. Anything that does not measure up to reason is discarded as useless or distracting, like passions and imagination. In both these ways of understanding instrumental reason, reason becomes a supremely

¹³¹ The term can also be traced back to Weber and Lukes, though some draw the line farther back to Nietzsche. Schechter, Darrow. (2010). *The Critique of Instrumental Reason from Weber to Habermas*. New York: Continuum, 2.

¹³² Bernstein, Adorno: *Disenchantment and Ethics*, 84

powerful, singularly focused, god-like entity; reason becomes the only tool used to discover or learn about things in the world to the point that everything else is disregarded.

In order for reason to be the arbiter of all, it begins by making all objects and concepts conform to it and it is through abstraction and identification through subsumption, as mentioned previously, that instrumental reason operates. I will go into greater detail regarding both later in the chapter when I discuss identity thinking and constellations. What is important to note about instrumental reasoning in general is that its activities result in domination and repression.

For instrumental reason, domination comes in more than one form, including manipulation.¹³³ Everything in the world is determined by the subject and, as we discussed with Enlightenment, is transformed into an object of use by humans. We, then, dominate all objects by seeing and knowing them only in ways that we find useful. Domination also arises because reason dominates all other forms of thinking or forming relationships with the world.

Repression is the other result of instrumental reason. Repression, as well, comes in different forms. For instance, instrumental reason represses our other ways of thinking. Experiencing the world passionately or imaginatively must be repressed in favor of calculation and “encyclopedic thinking.”¹³⁴ This repression causes imagination to atrophy.¹³⁵ Repression is also seen in our relationship to objects in the world: we must repress the particulars of objects in favor of abstraction and simplicity. We can never, in our thinking, actually destroy an object's particulars; we merely repress particulars so that

¹³³ Adorno, Theodor. (1973). *Negative Dialectics*. Trans. E.B. Ashton. New York: Seabury Press, 332.

¹³⁴ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 28.

¹³⁵ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 35.

it seems as if they do not exist. For instance, if I say that I am a woman and identify myself only in this way, then all my decisions, ideas, and norms are driven by this identification alone. Rather than view myself as complex and multi-faceted (both woman, partner, teacher, and student, etc.), I repress the other aspects in favor of clear and simple definitions or ideas.

The domination and repression of instrumental reasoning ultimately leads reason to be unreflective. Adorno and Horkheimer explain, “Thinking objectifies itself to become an automatic, self-activating process.”¹³⁶ Jarvis echoes this idea by noting that unreflective rationality is instrumental reason.¹³⁷ The unreflective nature of reason arose because, if reason determines truth and knowledge, one never has to test reason to see if it is right or performing its job well because by definition it is. For instance, those who argue, or reason, that the best way to understand humans is as rational animals appeal to rational arguments to do so. Once such an assertion is made, no other capacity can be appealed to in order to unseat reason because it would be dismissed as irrational and therefore, inferior and unworthy of discussion. Reason, then has no way to get outside of itself and critique itself because with instrumental reason, it is the measurement of correctness and the tool for creating it as well.

The project of moral imagination fits closely to the project of Adorno and Horkheimer, particularly in this critical stage. Moral imagination gets much of its motivation from criticizing current or previous moral theories that exalt reason and usually banish non-rational elements. Moral imagination challenges the idea that a reason-centric theory is actually the best and also whether such a theory is even possible.

¹³⁶ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 25.

¹³⁷ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 13-14.

Moral imagination and Adorno, then, share the critique of theories that exalt reason to god-like status. Further, similar to Adorno, Johnson does not want to abolish reason. Rather, Johnson wants to make room for non-rational elements by revealing the imaginative nature of reason or what he calls rational imagination.

Identity and Nonidentity Thinking

While instrumental reason is the larger idea of making reason an all-purpose tool, it is through specific ways of thinking, most notably identity thinking, that the abstraction and subsumption mentioned earlier, occurs. Identity thinking is a phrase Adorno uses to discuss a type of thinking about objects or concepts in the world that he finds to be distorting. The concept of identity thinking has its roots in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, where it was originally called the principle of immanence and there entails that an object is known only when it is classified in some way.¹³⁸ In *Negative Dialectics*, Adorno names and develops identity thinking and sets it in contrast with nonidentity thinking, which he sees as a better way of thinking about the world. In identity thinking, the subject subsumes an object under a universal concept. Let us say that I am out for a walk and I come across a very large, very old tree. When I see this particular tree, I subsume it under a universal category, perhaps ‘oak’ or simply ‘tree.’ This subsumption, Adorno claims, is nothing extraordinary but rather is a result of our habit to classify things and objects and ensure that “all things have their place.”¹³⁹ Identity thinking, then, gets its name because

¹³⁸ Cook, Deborah. (2008). “Introduction,” *Theodore Adorno: Key Concepts*. Ed. Deborah Cook. Stocksfield: Acumen. 3-19, 9.

¹³⁹ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 32.

when I think about an object, I am quick to identify it and I identify it by subsuming the particular object under a universal concept.

Such subsumption may appear harmless because it is so automatic, but Adorno sees the activity as destructive. In subsuming my particular tree under the universal concept ‘oak’ or ‘tree,’ I am, according to Adorno, doing so in order to subsume particulars under universals so as to dominate and manipulate the particular tree.¹⁴⁰ For instance, a tree is a raw material. By subsuming the particular phenomena in front of me under a universal, which has, as part of its identity, a natural resource, I can now use and manipulate this tree; after all, it is only a tree and trees are resources. Further, the subsumption of a particular under a universal, as is done in identity thinking, “obliterates the particularity of objects, their differences from one other, their individual development and histories, along with their unique traits.”¹⁴¹ As I began my example, I noted that the tree was tall and old, but in identity thinking, it becomes just ‘a tree’ because all of the particularities that make it are repressed. For example, the tree may house a number of animal nests and be more than a resource for humans but also a home and refuge. Identity thinking represses all of the tree’s history and its particularity, in favor of a universal concept that allows manipulation and use.¹⁴² Adorno scholars agree that this subsumption is destructive and manipulative: Stone notes, “When I conceptualize something as an instance of a kind, I see it as identical to all other instances of the same kind. This means that conceptual thinking gives me no knowledge about what is unique in a thing.”¹⁴³ Cook writes, “By subsuming objects under concepts and laws, and concepts and laws

¹⁴⁰ Stone, “Adorno and Logic,” 54.

¹⁴¹ Cook, “Introduction,” *Theodore Adorno: Key Concepts*, 10.

¹⁴² O’Connor, *Adorno’s Negative Dialectic*, 66.

¹⁴³ Stone, “Adorno and Logic,” 54.

under explanatory systems, we wrongly substitute unity for diversity, simplicity for complexity, permanence for change and identity for difference.”¹⁴⁴

Another way to understand identity thinking is that it transforms complex objects or concepts into simple concepts or objects. Bernstein explains this transformation by calling identity thinking the law of the simple concept because, in identity thinking, the simple concept reigns supreme.¹⁴⁵ For example, when I saw the tree on my walk, in my identity thinking, I took a unique thing and made it simple. If, for instance, when I look at the tree I see it as a natural resource I am thinking of it in terms of a simple concept because I am taking a highly unique particular and simplifying it into one thing. In identity thinking, when one employs simple concepts, she is only allowing a basic, single perspective definition or understanding of the concept. Ultimately, identity thinking, through simple concepts requires “conceptual and linguistic determinacy, banning vagueness and indeterminacy.”¹⁴⁶

Simple concepts and our frequent use of them are a result of Enlightenment thinking. Instrumental reason’s attempt to put everything in neat, clearly defined categories gave rise to the idea that by naming something we have fully identified it. As Bernstein clarifies, “Adorno identifies the impulse to orient ourselves toward the object in this way as the impulse to *name* the object, *as if* naming were not labeling but an always complex perfected expression of the thing itself.”¹⁴⁷ For example, “That is a tree” or, “A tree is a natural resource.” Both of these sentences take the phenomenon present and in naming it as X, subsume it under a simple universal. Adorno distinguishes this

¹⁴⁴ Cook, “Introduction,” *Theodore Adorno: Key Concepts*, 9.

¹⁴⁵ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 315.

¹⁴⁶ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 349.

¹⁴⁷ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 277.

naming from communication because in the former one manipulates the object in the naming of it, while with the latter, one remains open to the possibilities present in the object.

In addition to his discussion of naming, Adorno also explains the problem of simple concepts through a discussion of complex concepts. Complex concepts are different from simple concepts because they get closer to revealing all of the intricacies and particulars of objects. Bernstein explains complex concepts as possessing two axes on which the object can be found, much like a point can be located on two mathematical X and Y-axes.¹⁴⁸ The first axis is the logical axis and this is akin to the simple concept. The logical axis is the different ways in which a tree, for instance, can be named: as a natural resource, an oak, a nest, etc. It is true that the specific tree can be thought of by way of these particular concepts because simple concepts are not entirely incorrect. They are wrong only insofar as they assume that *all* the object is, is a natural resource, or that in naming it as such we have completely understood it.

The second axis that constitutes a complex concept is the material axis. The material axis includes the historical and social aspects of the object or concept. For instance, the tree also serves as a home to squirrels or could be used to make a canoe and thereby as a way of sustaining a family or village. The tree, in certain religions, can be a deity or a place of worship. All of these ways of conceptualizing a tree are determined by different historical and societal contexts. Again, none of these completely captures the entire concept of tree or the object in front of me, but they all contribute to it. It is the combination of the material and logical axes that constitute the complex concept. For example:

¹⁴⁸ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 274.

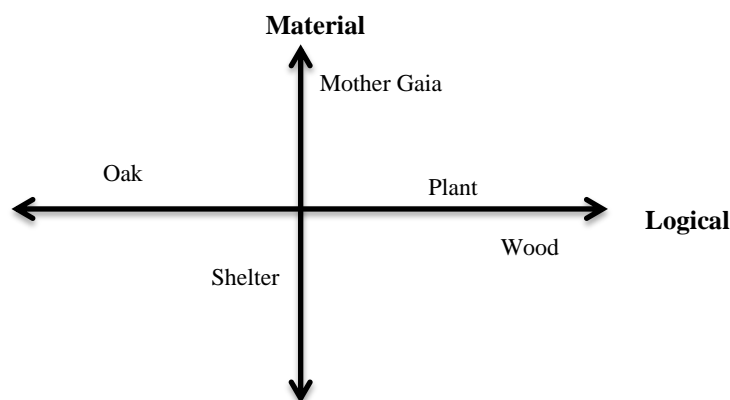


Figure 1. Adorno's Complex Concept for tree. Created by author.

The concept tree is not some mere point on one of these axes because a concept is never easily defined with just one idea or one sentence. Rather, whenever we identify think via simple concepts, the X we think of (e.g., a tree is a natural resource, where natural resource is X), is only a particular form of awareness of the concept that is context-dependent.¹⁴⁹ Certain societies and histories have different interests, which all influence their awareness and perhaps focus on one more prominently. This focusing can take over to the point where the concept is simplified to just the one awareness and then a simple concept is born. A complex concept, in contrast is:

[L]ocated, like life itself, in change and transition. Only if transition is constitutive of cognition will concepts have to be affirmatively conceived of as intrinsically indeterminate. The movement of the concept is not from indeterminate to determinate, but always a movement of conceptual redetermination.¹⁵⁰

Complex concepts, in direct contrast to simple concepts, make room for possibility via indeterminacy.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 322.

¹⁵⁰ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 333.

¹⁵¹ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 350.

Complex concepts, and their constant movement and flexibility, are in contrast to the rigid simplicity found in identity thinking and are, rather, a part of Adorno's nonidentity thinking. Cook explains that identity thinking says what something falls under, nonidentity thinking, on the other hand, seeks to say what something is.¹⁵² The difference between the two is that the former, by saying what something falls under, removes the uniqueness of the object in exchange for a classification that seems simpler. In seeking to say what something is the emphasis is on seeking rather than finding. The seeking is similar to Bernstein's 'conceptual redetermination:' in nonidentity thinking, I am open to repositioning myself, to looking at something from different points of view and this looking does not seek to fully determine or understand the concept, but to explore it in a number of ways.

In addition, nonidentity thinking focuses more on the object by seeking what it is, rather than what it falls under. In the 'falls under' of identity thinking, the abstract concept is the goal and the object is secondary to it. In the case of nonidentity thinking, we seek to say what something is and this means that we grasp objects in terms of possibilities. Stone writes, "But falling under concepts is not *all* there is to things. Each thing is also unique; this aspect of things is the "non-identical" element in them...Adorno criticizes identity thinking for disguising the fact that things have a unique side."¹⁵³ In non-identity thinking, the particularities and uniqueness are privileged rather than the universal concept.

It may seem that identity thinking has its merits and should not be completely disregarded. After all, a tree is a natural resource and denying such identity is impossible

¹⁵² Cook, "Introduction," 10.

¹⁵³ Stone, "Adorno and Logic," 54.

Adorno does not, in fact, want to do away with identity thinking entirely because, “meaningful judgments, by their very nature, express both the identity and nonidentity of object and concept.”¹⁵⁴ Rather, Adorno wants to illuminate and make room for the historical and social contexts that shape our understanding of the object. He wants to let in flexibility and indeterminacy in our discussions of concepts and objects. Adorno is not advocating for a purely historical, material axis way of viewing concepts: “the reduction of the object to pure material, which precedes all subjective synthesis as its necessary condition, sucks the object’s own dynamics out of it.”¹⁵⁵ Further, “the category of nonidentity still obeys the measure of identity.”¹⁵⁶ Nonidentity thinking then does still identify, but it identifies “to a greater extent” than identity thinking.¹⁵⁷ For instance, ‘tree as resource’ is a way of identifying a tree, but ‘tree as resource, home, and potential shelter’ captures the idea of tree to a greater extent.

Adorno’s discussion of identity/nonidentity thinking and simple/complex concepts obviously adds to his critique of the Enlightenment. Further, as Bernstein points out, it also contributes to his view of ethics: “the logic of the complex concept dispenses with the idea there is moral insight into *the* good...there is no “the good”...there are, or were, only the particular forms of awareness.”¹⁵⁸ The idea, then, that there is a single conception of the good, a lie, a harm, and so forth according to Adorno, is a mistake.

Adorno’s dispensing of rigid, universal concepts in favor of flexible particulars closely aligns him with the major ideas in moral imagination. Johnson’s prototypes for instance share a number of similarities to Adorno’s complex concepts and nonidentity

¹⁵⁴ O’Connor, *Adorno’s Negative Dialectic*, 67.

¹⁵⁵ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 91.

¹⁵⁶ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 193.

¹⁵⁷ Cook, “Introduction,” 10.

¹⁵⁸ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 322.

thinking. Both privilege particulars over universals, both reject the traditional view of static concepts, and both require the thinker to seek and explore within the concept. Further, both Werhane and Nussbaum also advocate for the importance of particulars, flexibility, and a movement away from traditional theories' rigidity. All three scholars credit imagination with the work described by Adorno in nonidentity thinking: picking out particulars, flexibility, and exploration of possibilities. Because of Adorno's critique of reason, it seems unlikely that more reason-only thinking will get us to the qualities in nonidentity thinking. Rather, it is much more probable that a faculty like imagination, given its prototypical definition and use, would be crucial to accomplish the kind of activities Adorno requires for nonidentity thinking.

A further reason to suspect that imagination should play a crucial role in Adorno's work is found in Bernstein's discussion of simple and complex concepts. In one of his attempts to explain the differences, Bernstein appeals to Kant's distinction between determinate and reflective judgments.¹⁵⁹ In a determinate judgment, one subsumes a phenomenon under a concept and in doing so judges it to be something. For instance, someone might experience the raw sense data of red, hard, and sphere. As I discussed in Chapter One, according to Kant, when I experience this data, I synthesize them into what he calls an intuition and thereby know they are related to each other. This intuition then goes to my understanding where it is determined as something, here as a ball. My understanding makes a determinate judgment and in doing so subsumes the intuition under a concept.¹⁶⁰ The similarities between Kant's determinate judgments and Adorno's simple concept are clear: both take a particular and subsume it under a universal and then

¹⁵⁹ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 307-8.

¹⁶⁰ Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B:103, 210.

call that knowledge. Adorno's theory, however, ascribes negative connotations to this subsumptive activity, while for Kant this is much more a matter of fact.

Reflective judgments are the other major type of judgment discussed by Kant. The most substantial discussion of reflective judgments comes in Kant's work on aesthetics, *The Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Briefly, a reflective judgment differs from a determinate judgment because the former requires a great deal more flexibility. The best way to understand Kant's reflective judgment is through an example. For Kant, an aesthetic judgment is a type of reflective judgment, so when we judge something as aesthetically pleasing, either a work of art, like a Picasso, or one of nature, like a flower, we are making a reflective judgment. If I were to come across a flower and judge it to be beautiful, according to Kant, something different happens in my mind than in a determinate judgment. The flower, according to Kant, stimulates my understanding, which tries to subsume it under a concept. However, it is unable to and the understanding passes the intuition off to imagination and imagination sends it back. Kant calls this interaction a free play between imagination and understanding. It is this freeplay that we find pleasurable, and this pleasure makes us proclaim that the flower is beautiful.¹⁶¹

Reflective judgments are akin to Adorno's complex concepts because both do not settle for the subsumption of an object under a universal concept. Both also require flexibility as it pertains to understanding concepts. What is interesting to note is that, for Kant, the major difference between a determinate and reflexive judgment is that in the latter imagination comes on to the scene and plays a crucial role. For Kant, it is the

¹⁶¹ Kant, Immanuel. (2000). *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Trans. Paul Guyer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 20:222-20:226. Guyer, Paul. (2000). "Editors Introduction." *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, xxi-xxii. Wood, Allen. (2005). *Kant*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 154-155.

lawlessness of imagination that allows for the flexibility in the reflexive judgment.¹⁶²

Though Bernstein uses Kant's work to explain Adorno, and in doing so points out the extent to which Kant influenced Adorno, Bernstein does not highlight the reason for the different judgments in Kant's theory. Given the requirements Adorno gives to nonidentity thinking and complex concepts (i.e., flexibility, focus on particulars, exploration) and the similarities they share to Kant's reflective judgment, I think we have good reason to think that the inclusion of imagination into Adorno's theory would help him achieve his ideal ways of thinking. Further, the very movements necessary in the viewing of our tree as a complex concept requires imagination, specifically in seeing the tree as different potentialities: imagining the tree as a canoe or a nest without it actually being the case, or at least without it being the case for me.

Constellations

Another major method for combating identity thinking, specifically its destructive way of seeing concepts and objects, is by thinking of them instead through constellations. Constellations are, very simply, a way of thinking and writing about objects or phenomena. In Adorno's later work he writes in constellations: short texts on different topics that are ultimately connected. Constellations are also discussed in *Negative Dialectics* as a way of looking at objects.

In order to better understand Adorno's constellations, we must look at from where he draws his inspiration for the discussion, primarily Walter Benjamin's theory of constellations and Max Weber's ideal types. For Benjamin, constellations are eternal,

¹⁶² Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 20:240.

unchanging and distinct from ideas.¹⁶³ In the prologue to his book, *The Origin of the German Tragic Play*, Benjamin claims that, “ideas are to objects as constellations are to the stars.”¹⁶⁴ Jarvis explains that, for Benjamin, this means that ideas are not concepts of objects, nor laws, and do not contribute to the knowledge of phenomena.¹⁶⁵ There are two important differences between Benjamin’s and Adorno’s conceptions of constellation. First, Benjamin makes a radical distinction between concepts, which he understands as a way of classifying particulars under universals, and ideas, which he thinks of as “merely positive knowledge.”¹⁶⁶ Adorno does not hold such a distinction because, as we have seen, he doesn’t think it is possible to separate ideas from concepts. Because our experiences are always mediated by relations to other objects and things and, importantly, by history and time, Adorno does not subscribe to the notion that we can have an idea that is not influenced or related to a concept. The second distinction to be made between Benjamin and Adorno’s conceptions of constellation is as Jarvis explains, “Just as a constellation is nothing without the stars, Adorno’s constellations *are* nothing in themselves but a relation between particulars (necessarily time-bound).”¹⁶⁷ As I will explain in further detail, Adorno’s constellations are not related to one another through timeless bonds, but are constituted by the bonds themselves, which can shift with time and social change. Benjamin, however, disagrees and instead, maintains that, “ideas are timeless constellations.”¹⁶⁸

¹⁶³ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 175.

¹⁶⁴ Benjamin, Walter. (2009). *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*. Trans. John Osborne. New York: Verso, 34.

¹⁶⁵ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 175.

¹⁶⁶ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 176.

¹⁶⁷ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 175.

¹⁶⁸ Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Play*, 34.

Benjamin not only serves as a direct influence on Adorno, he also, if we set the two theories in contrast, helps us see Adorno's theory with greater clarity. Benjamin views constellations in a way that is akin to an archaic or simplistic understanding of star constellations. The constellation Ursa Major, for example, appears in the sky as a sort of everlasting and easily recognizable set of stars. At first, it seems that this constellation is eternal, like Benjamin's use of the term. However, once we begin to refine our understanding of constellations through continued study we realize that the relation between the stars in a constellation is not at all unchanging or eternal. Ursa Major, for instance, is a group of related stars that travel as a cluster at the same velocity. The cluster is, however, slowly dispersing meaning that at some point the constellation will no longer exist because "stars within [a constellation] rarely have substantial astrophysical relationships to each other and their apparent proximity when viewed from Earth disguises the fact that they are far apart."¹⁶⁹ Constellations, then, are not the eternal, closely related patterns that Benjamin claims they are for the sake of his analogy, but rather constellations are actually much closer to the way Adorno envisions them.

As Adorno claims, a constellation is a way to understand a concept. Rather than there being a single solitary idea that fully captures the concept, a concept is best understood as having many different parts, like the way in which many different parts make the constellation. For example, a possibility for the constellation of water might look like this:¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ Wikipedia. (2014) "Constellation." Retrieved November 26, 2014, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?>

¹⁷⁰ Following Bernstein's use of the same example.

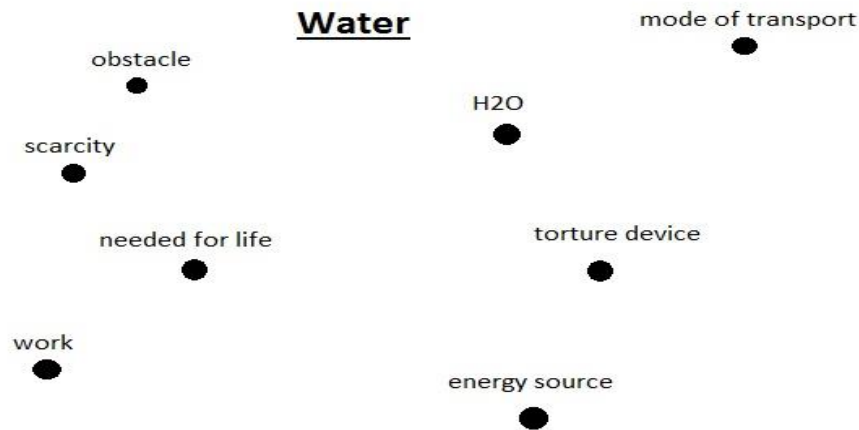


Figure 2. Water Constellation. Created by author.

In this constellation, one of the points does not in and of itself capture the totality of the concept water. For Adorno, nothing can capture the totality of anything because concepts are always historically derived and socially constructed. As we can see, some of the points in my constellation reveal such historical and social influences: water as a scarcity may be a truth about the concept of water for those in a drought or who lack proper systems of irrigation and treatment. Water as an obstacle and also as a mode of transportation is influenced by an individual or groups' access to boats.

This water constellation is similar to our better understanding of star constellations for a number of reasons. First, Adornian constellations maintain, like Benjamin's and traditional constellations, a relationship between all of the points that constitute the constellation. Yet, for Adorno, the relationship between the points is neither eternal nor unchanging. Just as Ursa Minor is beginning to disperse, so can ways of conceptualizing water. For instance, water is more increasingly being seen as an energy resource and also as a scarcity. Both of these more prominent ways of conceptualizing water are due to our neglect and maltreatment of the planet. Second, just

as most constellations do not actually have any astrophysical relationship, but are only seen as connected by humans, the same is true for Adorno's view of constellations. Constellations, like our water example, are entirely constructed by humans on Earth (e.g., water may be very different to ants and elephants). Water is never, for Adorno, completely defined or totally understood because context is required and that is constantly shifting.

Further, Adorno's constellations, as described by Cook, are, "opposed to identity thinking, which abstracts from objects when it subsumes them under concepts."¹⁷¹ Rather, a constellation of concepts illuminates "the specific side of the object, the side which to a classifying procedure is either a matter of indifference or a burden."¹⁷² An object has many sides, perspectives or ways of understanding it. Water is a prime example of this: it can be seen as a scarcity, a job opportunity, H₂O, a necessity and so forth. A constellation illuminates one such side when we focus on it. For instance, if I say water is H₂O, this is true but is not all that water is; it doesn't totally define water. Discussing water in terms of a constellation allows one to focus on water as H₂O, while maintaining the other definitions.

Adorno's idea of truth is closely aligned with his conception of constellations as he defines truth as a "constellation of subject and object in which both penetrate each other."¹⁷³ Truth then, as Cook points out, is not static. Rather, truth is constantly evolving, though accessible through constellations of concepts.¹⁷⁴ The constant evolution that occurs with constellations is due, in large part, to the idea that objects are never static

¹⁷¹ Cook, "Introduction," 12.

¹⁷² Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 162.

¹⁷³ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 127.

¹⁷⁴ Cook, Debra. (2008). "Influences and impact." *Theodor Adorno: Key Concepts*. Ed. Cook, Deborah. Stocksfield: Acumen, 21-37, 22.

or finished. Because concepts are historically and socially constructed and because history and society is always changing and evolving, so are the objects. A constellation of an object is the closest we get to a complete picture of an object. As Stone explains, “Adorno’s constellations capture the *particular* historical relations that have shaped an object, rather than whatever universal kinds the object may embody. And a constellation of concepts can only ever capture *some* of these relations.”¹⁷⁵ Constellations are never complete, then, but constantly open to evolution and change.¹⁷⁶

The other influence on Adorno’s conception of constellation is Weber and his ideal types. Adorno notes that Weber discusses ‘ideal types’ as the activity of gathering concepts round the central one that is sought and in doing so attempting to express what the concept aims at.¹⁷⁷ The ones that gather around are “composed of individual parts taken from different points in history to make up the ‘ideal’ type or concept.”¹⁷⁸ As Weber writes, “An ideal type is formed by the one-sided *accentuation* of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, diverse, more or less present and occasionally absent *concrete individual* phenomena.”¹⁷⁹ Adorno’s constellations differ from Weber’s ideal types because, as we will see, though Adorno agrees with the historical aspect of concepts, he disagrees with the idea that there is one concept to which all others aim.

Adorno’s constellations share a number of similarities with Johnson’s prototypes. First, both Adorno and Johnson do not intend for their theories to do away with stability

¹⁷⁵ Stone, “Adorno and Logic,” 59.

¹⁷⁶ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 165.

¹⁷⁷ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 156.

¹⁷⁸ Cook, “Introduction,” 12.

¹⁷⁹ Weber, Max. (1949). “Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy.” *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*. Ed. and Trans E. A. Shils and H. A. Finch., New York: Free Press, 90.

in objects or concepts entirely. Johnson maintains a stable core with which to test new examples of the concept while Adorno maintains, “Definitions are not the be-all and end-all of cognition...but neither are they to be banished.”¹⁸⁰ Second, both theories have similar requirements for the construction of a constellation or prototype; specifically that they are determined by social and historical contexts. The similarity in their construction also means they share a certain sense of flexibility: as the context changes so will the object or concept. Third, both writers, in the construction of their theories, give preference to particular over abstract universals. Even with Johnson’s core, it is a particular example of a lie that serves as the prototype with which other particulars are compared and tested. For Adorno, the particular also takes center stage, as Cook explained clearly and as Adorno writes, “there is no step-by-step progression from the concepts to a more general cover concept. Instead, the concepts enter into a constellation.”¹⁸¹ A general, abstract concept is not the goal for either scholar and both would agree: “We are not to philosophize about concrete things; we are to philosophize, rather, out of these things.”¹⁸²

There are, of course, differences between the two theories, though the differences are insignificant. For Johnson, the flexibility in prototypes is due in large part to our ability to imaginatively extend concepts and stretch categories, while Adorno does not necessarily name a cognitive capacity as assisting in the process for constellations. Johnson, for the most part, discusses prototypes in relation to concepts, while Adorno, differing from Benjamin, employs constellations to discuss objects as well as concepts. Despite their different foci, I don’t think either would object to having their theories

¹⁸⁰ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 165.

¹⁸¹ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 162.

¹⁸² Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 33.

extended from object to concept and vice versa; Adorno because he doesn't maintain a strict division between the two and Johnson because he sees much of the world, including our knowing objects, as requiring imaginative activities found in our exploration of prototypes.

Further, even the movement of thinking in constellations is similar to the movement in thinking of prototypes. Johnson argues that when we encounter a particular we begin to see whether it falls into the prototypical definition of something like it. Our example in Chapter One was the concept of a lie, and when we encounter a speech act, we test to see whether or not the context surrounding the speech act allows it to be subsumed under the category lie. In order to do this testing, one must engage with her imagination and hold other instances of lying in her mind in order to compare this recent one and also must imagine possible reasons for the speech act, things she knows about the person committing the speech act, and so forth. The individual uses her imagination to extend categories and concepts in order to determine what particular fits into, or does not, what concept.

As Stone describes it, Adorno's constellation is remarkably similar: Adorno claims that all concepts are limited and that "we inevitably strive to extend our concepts when they prove limited."¹⁸³ Stone continues, "Adorno suggests that the range of concepts that are gathered around a thing "illuminates" or gives insight into that thing...he expands on this point with the metaphor of unlocking something by using a combination of numbers rather than one single number."¹⁸⁴ Looking to extend our concepts in constellations is remarkably close to the imaginative activity required in the

¹⁸³ Stone, "Adorno and Logic," 58.

¹⁸⁴ Stone, "Adorno and Logic," 58.

theory of prototypes; one must use her imagination to see if a current concept can extend to the speech act or object present. Adorno also writes, “Cognition of the object in its constellation is cognition of the process stored in the object. As a constellation, theoretical thought circles the concept it would like to unseal... [it opens] not to a single key or a single number, but to a combination of numbers.”¹⁸⁵

A final similarity between Johnson’s prototypes and Adorno’s constellations is that each theory can be accused of the same flaw: ultimately, they lead to relativism. Without any necessary and sufficient conditions for distinguishing X from Y, categories might ultimately become meaningless. If a lie is so determined by the context, then how could we ever rely on it or agree on a lie? If, a concept is a forever-changing cluster of historically and socially derived concepts or ideas, how will we ever know the truth of any concept? Both men answer these questions in a similar way: concepts as historically and socially constructed does not mean that they are entirely relative or subjective. In the theory of prototypes, for instance, the core example of a concept offers stability to the concept and is often determined as the core because it is an agreed upon example of the concept. The society and history in question generally agrees on the prototype though as the society changes, those in power shift or their values refocus, so too can the prototype.¹⁸⁶ The core, then, gives the theory of prototypes an anchor to which it can respond to the relativist charge. Adorno agrees with the social and historical construction of concepts, and much like Johnson, does not see it as a sign of pure subjectivity as,

¹⁸⁵ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 163.

¹⁸⁶ The idea that the prototype requires a consensus can lead to a corrupted or oppressive prototype. For instance, depending on the society or history, you might have the prototype of a ‘human being’ excluding women and people of color. It will be important, in our exploration of the context that determines the prototype, to keep in mind the possibility for oppression and ask ‘to whom’ this is a prototype. Thank you to Drs. James South and Theresa Tobin for their thoughts here.

again, there is a consensus surrounding concepts and ideas because they are defined and understood only through their relation to history and society. For both scholars the indeterminacy that some may say is a sign of subjectivity is seen as much more positive: “indeterminacy in the concept corresponds to possibility in the object”¹⁸⁷

One may argue that there is an important difference between the theory of prototypes and that of constellations and it is the stable core found in the former. With our previous example of lie in the theory of prototypes, it is important that some form of necessary and sufficient conditions make up the prototypical lie and serve as the static concept with which all other examples of lie revolve around. This static core is in direct contrast to Adorno’s conception of a constantly evolving constellation. Although the two may seem to be in contrast with each other, I argue that the difference is not that great. One way to see that this divide is minute is to look at what Stone claims is a potential objection to Adorno’s account of constellations: “it seems that constellations can never exhaustively grasp an object because of the nature of *objects*, specifically the fact that their histories—which make them the particular objects they are—are unfinished, ever ongoing.”¹⁸⁸ This description of objects is one with which I think Johnson would agree, given the importance he places on context. In order to determine whether a speech act is a lie, one must look to, among other things, the context in which it was uttered, the person who uttered it and so forth. All of these are of course historically and societally determined. For instance, I may trust what my mother says more often, or excuse more of her speech acts as exaggerations rather than lies because I know her better and know her personality and sense of humor. I may be more likely to classify a speech act as a lie

¹⁸⁷ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 350.

¹⁸⁸ Stone, “Adorno and Logic,” 60.

instead of a joke or exaggeration if the person has lied to me before or if I greatly dislike them. What I constitute as a lie, then, is never finished but always changing and developing as I encounter new people, new contexts, and new speech acts. Johnson's core, then, is open to revision and just as Adorno claims, the revision continues as new contexts arise.

Further, even the static core that Johnson discusses is not necessarily static in the traditional sense. Johnson's reasons for establishing the static core is that it does seem to capture something about how we view lies, that is, it does seem to be the case that we agree on what a lie is. What is important in that previous sentence is who constitutes 'we.' Since Johnson stresses the importance of metaphorical language in our moral and everyday lives, he would surely acknowledge that metaphors are different from culture to culture, through history, and in different societies. The static core then, is much less static than someone who requires everlasting necessary and sufficient conditions. Rather, if we understand the core in a more Adornian way, namely that the core is created and acknowledged as a core by different societies in different times, then the theory of prototypes is not that different from Adorno's theory of constellations of concepts. Since the core is always open to revision and historically dependent, even though it has a sense of stability, it is still never finished, nor fully evolved.

Adorno's constellations and Johnson's prototypes present us with similar ways of looking at how we group and associate phenomena in our world. Both stress the importance of context for such grouping but without advocating for total subjectivity. Johnson credits imagination with much of the work for the flexibility in his theory and it is easy to see a similar imaginative activity at work in Adorno's constellations. In our

water constellation example, the object 'water' can be understood from a number of different points, which are each historically and socially determined. Water as a scarcity is not, for example, a truth about water for me. How then would I be able to 'illuminate' this part of the constellation? Such illumination is possible because one engages with her imagination; by trying to put oneself in another's position or attempting to disengage from one's own perspective, other points of the constellation can come to the fore.

Further, I think that the connection between points, and ultimately that which keeps the constellation a cluster is also dependent on imagination. In particular, the movement of checking the connection is the same as Johnson's exploratory movement in prototypes. Since the points are constructed by context and that context can and does change, in order to see and test the connection between the points, one must perform the imaginative exploration found in prototypes. What makes this point a truth about the object and to whom? How does this point relate to another point in the constellation? Does this point belong to this constellation or another? All of these questions are explored and possibly answered by imaginatively holding multiple points in mind and comparing them, and by imaginatively trying out different contexts to see how far they may or may not extend. Ultimately, the similarities present in the two theories, specifically, the focus on context, flexibility and particulars, suggest that a similar explanatory background for one is applicable to the other.

Finally, one could also claim that Johnson's prototypes are much more similar to Weber's ideal types than Adorno's constellation. Weber and Johnson do share the idea that there is a single, central concept but not necessarily the remaining part of Weber's theory: that this single concept is the one to which all other concepts aim to be like (for

instance, we try to make all lies conform to the prototypical lie). Rather Johnson, like Adorno, focuses more on particulars: the core is not a general concept but a particular example that seems (though is always up for revision) to be a central example. The other particulars do not aim for this central one, but rather use it as a test to see if there is a connection. Therefore, Johnson's focus on particulars, which maintain their particularity, aligns him less with Weber and closer to Adorno.

Barter and Accounting Language

Another similarity between Adorno's work and the theory of moral imagination concerns their understanding of language. Language is very important, for instance, in Johnson's account, specifically the metaphorical language of morality. Johnson explains that our thinking and discussing of morality is done in terms of a social accounting metaphor in which harms are thought of in terms of debt, for instance. Adorno offers a similar discussion in his barter system of language.

Adorno's discussion of the barter system of language is a part of a larger theme concerning the importance of language. We have already begun to see this theme in our discussions of constellations and identity thinking: naming something is often perceived as knowing it. Language, then, has contributed to our Enlightenment destructive thinking. Adorno's theory of language is much more involved than our discussion will be here. We will merely be focusing on his work on the barter system of language since it so closely matches with Johnson's and gives us a clear and succinct picture of Adorno's theory.

As a Marxist thinker, Adorno is concerned with the ways in which labor, exchange, and human interaction connect. As O'Connor points out, "For Adorno, the logic of exchange—a fundamental instrument of capitalism—informs the very processes of socialization."¹⁸⁹ Adorno is concerned that we have come to think, talk, and relate to others primarily through a barter principle and Adorno defines the principle thusly, "The barter principle, the reduction of human labor to the abstract universal concept of average working hours, is fundamentally akin to the principle of identification."¹⁹⁰ Adorno worries that by abstracting human's labor to the idea of working hours we begin to identify human's labor, and soon a human, in the same way. This barter system not only affects our view of labor, but also, as Adorno notes, seeps into our conception of morality: "Wealth as goodness is an element in the world's mortar: the tenacious illusion of their identity prevents the confrontation of moral ideas with the order in which the rich are right, while at the same time it has been impossible to conceive concrete definitions of morality other than those derived from wealth."¹⁹¹

Adorno, then, shares with Johnson the idea that morality is infused with exchange connotations. Adorno does not view the connection of morality with exchange as a good thing because it makes it impossible to conceive of morality outside of wealth. Adorno is critical of systems or terms that are abstract and inflexible. Further, as a Marxist, Adorno is not going to advocate for a method of moral interaction based on class, especially one that equates poverty with moral failings and wealth with moral success. Johnson, on the

¹⁸⁹ O'Connor, Brian. (2008). "Philosophy of History." *Theodor Adorno: Key Concepts*. Stocksfield. Ed. Deborah Cook. Acumen, 179-195, 191.

¹⁹⁰ Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 146.

¹⁹¹ Adorno, Theodor. (2003). "Selections from *Minima Moralia*." *Can One Live After Auschwitz? A Philosophical Reader*. Ed. Rolf Tiedemann. Trans. Rodney Livingstone. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 37-90, 74.

other hand, does not offer a critical reflection on the metaphorical nature of moral language. Rather, as the aim of his project states, he tries to offer an account of what we do when we are engaged in moral deliberations and decision-making.

Adorno's barter system and Johnson's social accounting are nearly the same theory and, because of their similarities, they can offer support and strength to each other's work. For instance, Johnson's explanation regarding how and why the metaphor works (i.e., imagination) can also be applied to Adorno's work: in the barter system, we imaginatively extend concepts of commodity to our ideas of morality. Also, Adorno's criticism of the barter system can deepen Johnson's discussion of the Social Accounting Metaphor. Johnson's account, despite his claim to be matter of fact, is actually quite biased insofar as it presents only the most positive picture of this exchange. The other side to such a metaphor is as Thomas McCullough points out, "when our imaginations are dominated by the metaphor of the market place, we are likely to act as anxious and hostile competitors in an economy of scarcity."¹⁹² Imagination's domination on our conceptualization of ethics can in fact lead to the many problems it has also been credited with reversing: namely, that because our thinking is dominated by a metaphoric market place, we are going to be less likely to expand our conception of community to others and include them within our web of shared resources. Rather, we will be more inclined to draw the line between others and ourselves and put ourselves in imagined competition for resources. The negative aspects of the barter/accounting metaphor do not negate Johnson's claim concerning the metaphorical nature of moral language. Rather, they help to deepen and enrich the account by revealing the wider implications of the metaphor, as

¹⁹² McCullough, Thomas. (1991). *The Moral Imagination and Public Life*. Chatham: Chatham House Publishers, 105.

well as the extent of its pervasiveness. As we will see later in my project, this metaphor, has dire consequences in connection with the Holocaust.¹⁹³

Adorno on Imagination

A possible objection to my connecting Adorno to an account of moral imagination is that Adorno's conception of imagination *per se* could be antithetical to the project of moral imagination. After all, most systematic philosophers, especially the ones Adorno draws from and replies to, have accounts of imagination and its role in cognition and therefore Adorno's theory of imagination could stand in opposition to my unification attempts. As it turns out, Adorno doesn't have an extremely detailed picture or theory of imagination, yet I argue that what he does discuss complements moral imagination.

Shierry Nicholzen is an Adornian scholar who dedicates the most time to Adorno's conception of imagination in her work *Exact Imagination, Late Work*. Nicholzen draws the name of her book from the eponymous phrase Adorno uses in his aesthetic theory. She writes, "Adorno's term "exact imagination" marks this conjunction of knowledge, experience, and aesthetic form,"¹⁹⁴ and "the term points provocatively and explicitly to the relationship between exactness—reflecting a truth claim—and the imagination as the agency of a subjective and aconceptual experience."¹⁹⁵ She also references Adorno's work in "Actuality of Philosophy:" "An exact imagination; an imagination that remains strictly confined to the material offered it by scholarship and science and goes beyond them only in the smallest features of its arrangement, features

¹⁹³ Adorno, "Selections from *Minima Moralia*," 52.

¹⁹⁴ Nicholzen, Shierry. (1999). *Exact Imagination, Late Work*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 4.

¹⁹⁵ Nicholzen, *Exact Imagination, Late Work*, 4.

which of course it must produce itself.¹⁹⁶” As NicholSEN elucidates, ‘exact imagination’ is a very specific form of imagination for Adorno because it is focused on a particular, hence the ‘exact’ nature of it. Exact imagination is also, according to NicholSEN, responsible for truth claims and knowledge, in fact a very specific kind of knowledge: “nondominating knowledge.”¹⁹⁷ Exact imagination is, then, a type of imagination that by closely focusing on particulars, produces nondominating truth or knowledge. This activity and result is in direct contrast to the identity thinking discussed previously that instrumental reason produces. Therefore, for Adorno, it is imagination, granted a specific kind, that is responsible for what seems to be his most positive account of nonidentity thinking.

Further, exact imagination is described very similarly to Johnson’s imaginative activities in prototypes. For instance, in both, imagination extends slightly beyond the concept in question in order to arrive at a flexible understanding of a concept or object. Adorno’s description of exact imagination then offers additional credence to my previous claim, in the discussion of nonidentity thinking, that the inclusion of imagination can assist in the realization of nonidentity thinking because its characteristics are exactly the nondominating ones required. Here, in the discussion of exact imagination, we see a similar claim being made.

Another type of imagination that appears frequently in Adorno’s scholarship is the reproductive imagination. This phrase is drawn from Kant and it is from Kant that Adorno takes his lead. In the reproductive imagination, as we discussed in Chapter One and as I briefly mentioned in the section on determinate and reflective judgments, it is

¹⁹⁶ Adorno, Theodor. (Spring 1977). “The Actuality of Philosophy” *Telos*. (31):120-133. NicholSEN, *Exact Imagination*, 4.

¹⁹⁷ NicholSEN, *Exact Imagination, Late Work*, 8.

imagination that is responsible for holding a number of related intuitions in the mind and synthesizing or comparing them. We find examples of Adorno referring to Kant's reproductive imagination in a number of places, for instance:

Adorno perceives an adumbration, almost a concession, of this thesis in Kant's conception of the reproductive imagination. In order for a present perception to be meaningful the immediately previous moments of experience must be held in mind and coordinated with it...Adorno interprets Kant's employment of the reproductive imagination as a "trace of historicity."¹⁹⁸

Further, "For Adorno, by contrast, we might learn that without memory, without what Kant termed "reproduction in the imagination," no worthwhile knowledge can be obtained."¹⁹⁹ Adorno himself in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* discusses imagination in a way that is in line with Kant's reproductive imagination: "Every perception contains unconsciously conceptual elements...Because truth implies imagination, it can happen that distorted personalities take the truth for fantasy and the illusion for truth. The distorted individual draws on the elements of imagination residing in truth by constantly seeking to expose it,"²⁰⁰ and "This ability [to take into account the true interests of others] is the capacity for reflection as the penetration of receptivity and imagination."²⁰¹ In all of these examples, Adorno discusses imagination in terms of the ability to hold a number of events, ideas, or concepts in the mind and in doing so perceive or arrive at truth or knowledge. This reproductive imagination, as I demonstrated in Chapter One, is an integral part of moral imagination: it is used in Johnson's theory of prototypes and in Werhane's discussion of moral imagination. Again, we see in this account of imagination a theory that fits well with our overall theory of moral imagination. In the reproductive

¹⁹⁸ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 139 & Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, 139.

¹⁹⁹ Tiedemann, Rolf. (2003). "Introduction: "Not the First Philosophy, but a Last One": Notes on Adorno's Thought." *Can One Live After Auschwitz*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, xvii.

²⁰⁰ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 193.

²⁰¹ Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, 198.

imagination, as we discussed, one synthesizes two things and in doing so is able to claim knowledge. While for Kant such knowledge claims are absolute and irrefutable, for Adorno they are much more flexible and open.

Beside these two specific forms of imagination, the last major source for Adorno's discussion of imagination comes in his genealogy and critique of Enlightenment. For example, he claims that Enlightenment, "transforms the meaning of 'reason' as ground and motive into only ground; it transforms a complex experience involving feeling, imagination and thought, into thought only;"²⁰² "It [Adorno's work] hopes to interpret this damaged life with sufficient attention and imagination to allow intimations of a possible, undamaged life to show through;"²⁰³ and, "Yet most often the imagination cannot be developed at all because it is mutilated by the experience of early childhood. The lack of imagination that is instilled and inculcated by society renders people helpless in their free time."²⁰⁴ In all of these examples, Adorno views imagination as somehow damaged or repressed as a result of Enlightenment and that damaging or removal of imagination from our lives and our thought processes ultimately leads to more damage and destruction. These comments on the removal of imagination from our lives are important because they support my claim that Adorno would advocate for a greater inclusion of imagination and imaginative activities: he agrees that a reason-centric theory is distorting and that without imagination we suffer. Therefore, it seems clear that bringing imagination back into our cognitive processes can be a way of combating the destruction experienced so far.

²⁰² Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 179-80.

²⁰³ Jarvis, *Adorno: A Critical Introduction*, 9.

²⁰⁴ Adorno, Theodor. (1998). "Free Time." *Critical Models*. New York: Columbia University Press, 167-176, 172.

Another possible objection to my connection of Adorno to moral imagination, is that there are philosophers from whom Adorno draws his theory that hold competing views of imagination. Therefore, Adorno would not ascribe to the contemporary accounts of the mental faculty. Two primary influences on Adorno's work, Freud and Marx, each given accounts of imagination that may have influenced Adorno. Detailing their influence on Adorno, in particular as it concerns imagination is not within the purview of my work here. I will, however, briefly address this concern and demonstrate that neither's account is incompatible with what I have put forth.

Marx does not have a detailed or robust description of imagination. He does not, like Johnson, enumerate the many ways in which imagination works in our lives or the devices to which it operates. Marx does, however, discuss imagination and does so in a way that is not inconsistent with Johnson's work. The most extensive place in which Marx mentions imagination is in his discussion of money.²⁰⁵ Found both in *The Economic Manuscripts of 1844* and *Capital*, Marx notes the influence imagination has in giving money its potency: "The value, or in other words, the quantity of human labour contained in a ton of iron, is expressed in imagination by such a quantity of the money-commodity as contains the same amount of labour as the iron."²⁰⁶ He continues to note that "commodities are equated beforehand in imagination, by their prices, to define quantities of money."²⁰⁷ Imagination then is crucial to the movement of placing the value of an object or labour into another object, namely money. Marx's account of the work of

²⁰⁵ Marx, K. (1844). "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844." *The Power of Money*. Trans. S. Moore & E. Aveling. Retrieved April 27, 2015, from <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/manuscripts/power.htm>.

²⁰⁶ Marx, K.. (1995). "Economic Manuscripts." *Capital, Volume I*. Trans. S. Moore & E. Aveling, Retrieved April 27, 2015, from <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch03.htm>.

²⁰⁷ Marx, "Economic Manuscripts."

imagination is similar in kind to Johnson's insofar as both credit imagination with the ability to extend objects or ideas beyond their normal bounds. For Marx, such imaginative extension comes in the form of money, while for Johnson the imaginative extension to metaphors, prototypes, and a number of other imaginative activities. Although Marx's account of imagination is nowhere near as complete or detailed as Johnson, I do not see, given Marx's limited discussion of the topic, that his theory presents any conflicting ideas or arguments regarding imagination's work. Rather, he shares with Johnson imagination's role in extending categories beyond their normal bounds and further it seems he shares the idea that imagination can be powerful: if imagination is what extends value to money, it must be powerful given the value our capitalistic society places on money.

Freud is another major influence on Adorno and more so than Marx, offers an account of imagination throughout his works. In the writings on his patients like "Studies on Hysteria," he often describes his patients as engaging with their imagination. One specific patient he describes as, "living through fairy tales in her imagination."²⁰⁸ There are frequent references of this kind in Freud's description of his patients insofar as many of the false ideas of his patient's he ascribes to imagination. In this way, Freud has a very traditional view of imagination: it is the faculty that produces fantasy and falsity.

It is in Freud's work in "The Interpretation of Dreams," that he delves into detail regarding imagination. He writes:

[B]y way of contrast, the mental activity which may be described as 'imagination,' liberated from the domination of reason and from any moderating control, leaps into a position of unlimited sovereignty. Though dream-imagination makes use of recent waking memories for its building material, it erects them into

²⁰⁸ Freud, Sigmund. (2010). "Studies on Hysteria." *Complete Works*. Trans. Ivan Smith, 22. Retrieved April 27, 2015, from http://www.valas.fr/IMG/pdf/Freud_Complete_Works.pdf

structures bearing not the remotest resemblance to those of waking life; it reveals itself in dreams as possessing not merely reproductive but *productive* powers. Its characteristics are what lend their peculiar features to dreams. It shows a preference for what is immoderate, exaggerated and monstrous. But at the same time, being freed from the hindrances of the categories of thought, it gains in pliancy, agility and versatility.²⁰⁹

Freud sees imagination as crucial to the formulation of dreams, or as he calls it ‘dream-
imagination:’ imagination takes the memories from the day and structures them into
dreams. As Freud points out, our dream-imagination is unfettered from reason and
therefore prone to fantasy and delusion. However, he notes that without reason,
imagination is far more flexible. Freud’s account of dream-imagination is strikingly
similar to Kant’s account of imagination, in my opinion. As I have explained previously,
in Kant’s *Critique of Judgment*, he notes that imagination is lawless and in the judgment
of an aesthetic work, it is the lawlessness of imagination that allows our cognitive
faculties to experience the reflective judgment. Freud is noticing the same lawlessness
and like Kant sees this feature as not necessarily negative. Also, similar to Kant, Freud
notes that imagination needs to be tempered by reason in order to maintain its connection
to reality. Ultimately, Freud’s account of dream-imagination reveals that he sees a great
strength in imagination: it is responsible for the transformation of our waking life into our
dreams and creates our very dreams. As Freud places a great deal of importance in our
dreams, he must then too place a great deal of importance in our imagination.

Two final points regarding Freud’s account of imagination that are important to
note. The first, comes in a later part of *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Freud argues that,
“the symbolizing activity of the imagination remains the central force in every dream.”²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Freud, Sigmund. (2010). “The Interpretation of Dreams.” *Complete Works*. Trans. Ivan Smith, 590. Retrieved April 27, 2015, from http://www.valas.fr/IMG/pdf/Freud_Complete_Works.pdf

²¹⁰ Freud, “The Interpretation of Dreams,” 592.

Freud, here, explicitly states that imagination is crucial to dreams, in particular giving dreams their symbols, which for Freud is the very heart of his work on dreams. Further, the symbolizing of dreams connects Freud's conception of imagination to Johnson's. In order for one thing to be a symbol for another, one must extend a concept or idea on to another. For example, if I dream I am pregnant, such a dream may be a symbol for my philosophical work insofar as I am pregnant with ideas. In order for the physical pregnancy to be a symbol for the mental, I must extend the idea of pregnancy from physical to the mental; after all, being 'pregnant with ideas' is a metaphor. For Freud, then just as for Johnson, imagination is necessary for the extension of one idea on to another as we find in metaphors.

Second, in Freud's discussion of *Psychical (or Mental) Treatment* he focuses on, as the title suggests, ways of treating physical or mental disorders. He argues:

Laymen, who like to sum up mental influences of this kind under the name of 'imagination,' are inclined to have little respect for pains that are due to the imagination as contrasted with those caused by injury, illness or inflammation. But this is clearly unjust. However pains may be caused—even by imagination—they themselves are no less real and no less violent on that account.²¹¹

Freud does draw a distinction between physical and mental, or here imaginary, pains but notes that imaginary pains 'are no less real.' This passage is important because it demonstrates that Freud sees a real power in imagination and in its ability to hold sway over our lives. Further, it complicates the picture that imagination is pure fantasy for Freud since he is here admitting that it can give real pain.

²¹¹ Freud, Sigmund. (2010). "Psychical (or Mental) Treatment." *Complete Works*. Trans. Ivan Smith, 1590. Retrieved April 27, 2015, from http://www.valas.fr/IMG/pdf/Freud_Complete_Works.pdf.

Ultimately, I see no reason to say that Freud's account of imagination, from which Adorno may be drawing, is in contrast to Johnson's theory. Freud certainly does not have a very complete picture of imagination, and does place it more within the realm of fantasy than Johnson. However, Freud notes, more than once, the power that imagination has in our lives to determine and influence the world around us. This power is not just the creation of fantasy, but also the power of a flexible symbolizing. Johnson claims something similar in his discussion of metaphors and prototypes. Therefore, I do not think that Adorno's influences, especially their work on imagination, prevent any strong claim against the joining of Adorno and moral imagination scholars.

Overall, Adorno does not have enough of a complete picture of imagination (particularly in comparison to the thinkers he critiques) to say for certain that he is in complete agreement with moral imagination's account. However, what we can glean is that he does share many of the same qualities and characteristics of imagination that are discussed in moral imagination. Further, there are no indicators that Adorno's theory opposes or is contradictory to moral imagination's account of imagination. Finally, given the remarkable closeness of Adorno and moral imagination, which I have been detailing all chapter, and the ways in which moral imagination nearly completely fulfills the positive requirements for Adorno's theory, I think it is clear that moral imagination and Adorno fit well together.

Moral Imagination and Adorno Connected

As I have been arguing throughout this chapter, Adorno's work and the theory of moral imagination share a significant number of important and strong connections. From a general need to move away from reason-centric theories, to specific arguments concerning the pervasiveness of exchange metaphors in our moral language, the similarities between theories is remarkable. Along with these shared qualities comes mutually beneficial support. As it concerns Adorno's work, a connection to moral imagination can offer Adorno a number of needed features. Connecting Adorno to moral imagination gives him a substantial response to one of the major criticisms made against his work: that he never offers a positive philosophy. He, as Cook points out, offers a number of criticisms regarding our current situation without any positive account of how we might overcome it. Adorno's work, then, has been called entirely negative.²¹² By connecting Adorno to moral imagination, we begin to give a positive account to Adorno's work. For instance, how do we overcome oppressively rigid and inflexible categories? We include imagination that allows us to be flexible and maintain a connection to particulars. How can we possibly move away from instrumental reason, but without the complete renunciation of rational thought? We can do so by incorporating a more imaginative rationality. Imagination, specifically, its addition, can assist Adorno in answering those who criticize him for being wholly negative.

²¹² Cook, "Introduction," 17. A possible reason as to why Adorno is seen as negative is that his project is very directly in response to Hegel. In particular, Hegel's claim that the dialectic will always produce something positive (synthesis). Adorno, on the other hand, "asks us to reject the idea that the outcome of the dialectic will always be positive but that we do so without leaving the dialectic behind as an explanatory model." Thompson, P. (April 1. 2013). "The Frankfurt school, part 2: Negative dialectics." *The Guardian*. Retrieved April 24, 2015, from <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/apr/01/negative-dialectics-frankfurt-school-adorno>

Yet, one may continue and say that the prescription ‘more imagination’ is too ambiguous to be helpful or practical. I would certainly agree with such a criticism, though I am not advocating for the addition of imagination at random or without direction. Rather, following Johnson, Werhane and Nussbaum’s work, and as I elucidated in Chapter One, a guided inclusion of imagination would be prescribed. Additionally, one could ask how we can trust that imagination has not been corrupted, for instance by the barter system, to the point that ‘more imagination’ just means more rigidity in thinking. I will address such a critique in my fourth chapter when I analyze Adorno’s “Education After Auschwitz.” There he speaks explicitly about ways to overcome rigid thinking *per se*, regardless of the metaphor at work, and his response will assist in answering our critique. Ultimately, I will spend my fourth chapter arguing for a specific method of imaginative education that closely follows Adorno’s work and that discussion will, I hope, answer any such critiques.

In addition to assisting Adorno in answering some of his critiques, the inclusion of moral imagination with Adorno’s work will also provide him with an explanatory support to his work. As we saw in the barter metaphor, the theory of moral imagination shows how the barter system works on a cognitive basis. This ‘how’ explanation offered by moral imagination is beneficial to Adorno’s theory because it lends further credence to Adorno’s work.

The relationship between Adorno and moral imagination is not only beneficial for Adorno, but also for moral imagination. In a similar manner to our previous discussion, Adorno’s work offers explanatory support to the theory of moral imagination. In particular, Adorno’s theory gives moral imagination a better ‘why’ explanation for many

of the qualities it describes. The imaginative extension of commodity terms to morality is a result of capitalism's pervasiveness. We get better insight, then, into why certain metaphors or imaginative content are privileged over others by connecting Adorno to moral imagination.

Another beneficial component for moral imagination is that Adorno's work can deepen and enrich Johnson's work on moral imagination. For instance, while Johnson looks to explore the fact that morality is metaphorical, Adorno reveals how these metaphors can be oppressive or contribute to an oppressive system. Adorno's insights, then, give us a better picture of just how complicated and deeply involved imagination is in our moral lives. In our discussion of constellations, Adorno's insights helped us see that even Johnson's stable core is open to revision and therefore not stable in the traditional sense of the term. Adorno's work ultimately gives Johnson's more depth by pushing his theories to be broader and more inclusive.

A final way in which Adorno's work can be beneficial to Johnson's moral imagination is that Adorno protects, or at least, responds to moral imagination's greatest criticism. Critics of moral imagination do not necessarily contend that imagination is not present in moral thinking. Rather, they desire a greater clarity to its role, too much clarity I think. In order for imagination to be taken seriously in contemporary ethics, necessary and sufficient conditions for a definition of imagination as well as its exact role and purview are requested. Without this the response is, 'What is meant by the phrase moral imagination?' and, 'What separates it from other cognitive faculties, such as memory and why?' Certain inroads can be made to answer such questions by focusing on moral imagination's role in specific moral examples or breaking apart moral imagination's

work between moral perception, deliberation, etc. Despite these clarifications, the requirement for more will arise.²¹³

Adorno can help answer these critiques in two major ways. First, Adorno's work rebuffs the typical philosophical need for stringent clarity. Instead, as we have seen, he advocates for greater amounts of indeterminacy. Rather than demanding of moral imagination more delineation and greater lines of distinction, Adorno allows and encourages flexibility. Situated within Adorno's theory, then, moral imagination needn't respond to the criticism that without necessary and sufficient conditions, moral imagination as a theory doesn't work or is incomprehensible. Of course ethicists who have for a long time clung to reason-centric theories would be suspicious of any theory that attempts to do away with their stronghold. Adorno, by calling into question their requirements, *per se*, allows imagination the flexibility it needs by not requiring it to become what it is not.

Second, Adorno's work, when connected to moral imagination, encourages moral imagination to be true to itself. The theory of moral imagination advocates repeatedly for a number of characteristics that are and should be found in moral thinking: flexibility, creativity, and a movement away from universals. To require of the theory necessary and sufficient conditions or to think that such is possible does a disservice to the theory because such a requirement is antithetical to the spirit and the particulars of it. Although I think the idea that necessary and sufficient conditions are antithetical to the theory of moral imagination can be seen without Adorno, I do think that Adorno's work can illuminate the idea. Adorno's work very much follows its own tenants: Adorno claims that ideas and concepts are thought of in terms of constellations and writes, himself, in a

²¹³ Thank you to Drs. Margaret Urban Walker and Bronwyn Finnegan for their insights here.

constellation-style; Adorno is critical of instrumental reason and therefore doesn't write in an overly analytic style. Seeing how Adorno's work, both the writing style and its focus, reflects the values set forth in his work only doubles the strength of his project. Similarly with moral imagination, the project and major tenets of the theory would fail before they ever go off the ground if it tried to be or satisfy the conditions required of the theory it is trying to critique and move away from.

In this chapter I have sketched out a number of the most central and important tenets of Adorno's work. I have also demonstrated how the specific tenets tie very closely into a theory of moral imagination that was presented in Chapter One. My aim was not merely to point out similarities but also reveal a mutually beneficial relationship between the two theories. Adorno's work offers moral imagination a deeper, more robust, and more complicated picture of imagination's role in morality while also offering an explanation as to why certain imaginative content or activities are more prevalent. On the other hand, moral imagination gives Adorno's work an explanation of how: both how to bring about some of Adorno's ideas (like nonidentity thinking) and thereby respond to his critics, but also a how explanation regarding the cognitive working of many of the activities he describes. I have shown, then, in this chapter that the two theories can and should be combined.

From here, and in the next two chapters, I will focus the discussion of Adorno and moral imagination further. I will hone in on Adorno's work on the Holocaust and examine in what ways the theory of moral imagination impacts Adorno's work therein. At first, in the proceeding chapter, moral imagination will reveal some inconsistencies, challenge some points, and deepen some of Adorno's claims. In the final chapter I will

examine Adorno's prescription regarding post-Auschwitz education and argue for an imaginative education to fulfill his requirements. Here, though, we have laid the groundwork for these and other discussions by thoroughly demonstrating the connection between moral imagination and Adorno.

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ‘EDUCATION AFTER AUSCHWITZ’

As I have demonstrated in Chapter Two, moral imagination and Adorno’s work offer each other a number of complementary cross-sections. In an effort to deepen my explanation of the ways in which the two theories interact, I focus my analysis in this chapter. Specifically, I focus on Adorno’s work on the Holocaust, and the educative claims that fall out of that discussion. It is my goal to utilize the efficacy of an imaginative education that I discussed in Chapter One, in a post-Holocaust, Adornian education. In order to do that, I need to first get a firm grasp on the goals of such an education, specifically understanding the challenges it needs to overcome. In this chapter, I hope to do just that.

Adorno opens “Education After Auschwitz” with the strong claim that drives the rest of the piece: “The premier demand upon all education is that Auschwitz not happen again.”²¹⁴ He argues, in this radio address, delivered on April 18, 1966, (and later turned into an article) that in order to prevent another genocide like the Holocaust, we must counteract the conditions that allowed it to occur in the first place.²¹⁵ To discover these conditions, Adorno details the attitudes and behaviors of the persecutors. This chapter is dedicated to outlining and analyzing those attitudes and behaviors, including: collective identity, hardness, coldness, the veil of technology, the barbarization of the countryside, and avoidance. In my analysis, I explore Adorno’s claims and work at improving or

²¹⁴ Adorno, Theodor. (2003). “Education After Auschwitz,” *Can One Live After Auschwitz?* Ed. Rolf Tiedemann. Trans. Rodney Livingstone. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 19-33, 19.

²¹⁵ Weinstein-Dobbs, I. (2015). *Spinoza's Critique of Religion and its Heirs: Marx, Benjamin, Adorno*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 9.

expanding on them, specifically by continuing my project from the first two chapters and integrating the theory of moral imagination within Adorno's work. Ultimately, this chapter develops a firm theoretical foundation for Adorno's post-Auschwitz education plan. In my final chapter, I take this theoretical foundation and use it to argue for concrete possibilities for an education specifically targeted at the Holocaust and post-conflict *per se*.

In order to establish and evaluate Adorno's educational plan, we must begin by investigating to whom Adorno is speaking or to whom this education is addressed. Such a distinction is important for the creation of an educative plan because in order for the education to be the most effective, it must be correctly targeted. Though I begin the discussion for those involved here, it will continue throughout the chapter as I flesh out more of Adorno's ideas.

Adorno is fairly explicit that the education he has in mind should target the persecutors of the Holocaust: "The roots [of why people commit genocide] must be sought in the persecutors, not in the victims, who are murdered under the paltriest of pretenses."²¹⁶ Adorno, then, draws a clear line between perpetrator and victim of the Holocaust. Such a distinction is maintained by most people who learn about the Holocaust with the Jews and other persecuted groups are the victims, and the Nazis are the perpetrators.

The persecutors, on the other hand, are for the most part members of the Nazi Party. He does name specific people, such as Eichmann and Höss, and also discusses the German military and government as guilty parties. However, the Nazis are not the only

²¹⁶ Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 20.

group Adorno finds responsible for Auschwitz. He concludes “Education After Auschwitz” by recounting a conversation he had with Walter Benjamin:

Walter Benjamin asked me once in Paris during his emigration, when I was still returning to Germany sporadically, whether there were really enough torturers back there to carry out the orders of the Nazis. There were enough. Nevertheless the question has its profound legitimacy. Benjamin sensed that the people who *do* it, as opposed to the bureaucratic desktop murders and ideologues, operate contrary to their own immediate interests, are murderers of themselves while they murder others. I fear that the measures of even such an elaborate education will hardly hinder the renewed growth of desktop murderers.²¹⁷

This quote is extremely telling, especially as it concerns Adorno’s account of the persecutors. Here we get a glimpse that the Nazis are not the only ones responsible for the Holocaust but that there are also “torturers” who carried out the orders of the Nazis and thereby seem to be different or distinct from the Nazis. Additionally, Adorno introduces us to category ‘desktop murderers.’ The phrase is not necessarily a popular one, that is, it is not one whose definition is clear within Holocaust literature. Rebecca Wittman, History Professor at University of Toronto, uses the phrase in her work: “[C]hanges to the law made it easier and easier for those who had the most power in the Nazi regime – the desktop murderers – to go free or escape trial, and in the end only the most sadistic – and exceptional – of Nazi criminals, usually camp guards, were tried and convicted of murder.”²¹⁸ Wittmann’s use of the phrase is interesting because for her, the desktop murderers are those responsible for a great deal of the genocidal acts, but did not pull a trigger, instead giving the orders from the comfort of their office.

Adorno’s motivation for including “desktop murders” as persecutors is a noble one insofar as he wants to challenge the idea that the only people who were responsible,

²¹⁷ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 33.

²¹⁸ Wittman, Rebecca. (January 1, 2008). “War Crimes Trials: Crystallization of the Principles of International Criminal Law.” *Jewish Virtual Library*. Retrieved April 14, 2015, from http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0020_0_20618.html.

or should be held responsible, are the ones who pulled the trigger. Rather, Adorno's project in "Education After Auschwitz" is the revelation of the different ways society has led to the Holocaust. By including desktop murderers he is, in particular, pushing against Hitlerism, the idea that one person, Hitler, managed to, by himself, orchestrate the slaughter of 8 million people while everyone stood by innocent, unaware of what he was doing.²¹⁹ Instead, Adorno wants to reveal that many more people were involved and responsible than perhaps they or we like to admit. While the SS guards of Auschwitz are responsible for murder, so too are the people filling out the paperwork to deport those victims.

I agree with the spirit of Adorno's work, specifically his broadening of those whom he considers to be responsible because without such broadening, we fall into false and dangerous narratives. For instance, the narrative of Hitlerism maintains Hitler as a charismatic monster who enticed so many people to do his bidding. Hitler then becomes, in this narrative, an evil genius, like those found only in comic books or Ian Fleming novels. This narrative is pervasive because it takes the common person off the hook and clearly gives us our guilty party/parties. The everyday German was either under Hitler's spell or so afraid of this evil man to do anything; either way, no one had a choice. Adorno is trying to complicate this picture by arguing that the common person was not so helpless, but rather that actions besides literal trigger pulling caused the Holocaust. Adorno is quite certainly correct in critique of such a narrative; Hitler was, of course, voted into office but Hitler did not invent anti-Semitism, nor did he personally drop Zyklon B.

²¹⁹ Boschki, R., Reichmann, B., & Schwendemann, W. (2010). "Education after and about Auschwitz in Germany: Towards a theory of remembrance in the European context." *Prospects*, (40), 133-152, 142.

Not only is Adorno challenging our understanding of guilt with the discussion of desktop murders, he is also challenging a traditional philosophical dichotomy of the active participant and the disinterested observer. The disinterested observer has a long history in philosophy as the preferred position for practicing philosophy and is most ardently defended by those Adorno would consider Enlightenment thinkers. The idea behind disinterested observers is to remove all non-rational elements from our thought processes (e.g., no emotions, imagination, etc.) and by doing so, one will make the best judgment. Adorno wants to contest that position, especially in light of the suffering of others. As Volker Heins states, “Adorno rejected the commonly held view that the roles of observers and participants are fundamentally different.”²²⁰ We see this rejection in *Minima Moralia*: “The detached observer is as much entangled as the active participant; the only advantage of the former is insight into his entanglement, and the infinitesimal freedom that lies in knowledge as such.”²²¹ While Auschwitz guards are clearly active participants in the genocide at Auschwitz, most people want to maintain that the person who signed transfer papers was not, that she was merely an observer. By including those who might typically be labeled as an observer as a type of murder (e.g., desktop), Adorno is trying to call attention to the many ways in which people were responsible for Auschwitz.

In order to see how Adorno pushes at this dichotomy of observer/participant, let us look at someone who might typically be considered a non-active observer, free from guilt during the Holocaust: a neighbor to a Jewish family. This neighbor observes the Jewish family being harassed, rounded up, and deported. The neighbor, true to her

²²⁰ Heins, V. (2012). “Saying things that hurt: Adorno as educator.” *Thesis Eleven*, 11(1): 68-82, 68.

²²¹ Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, 26.

position, stands by, inactive while all of this occurs. Her actions serve as the basis for her categorization as an observer: she is detached from the action, merely observing.

However, I, and I think Adorno, suggest that if we contemplate her attitude to the deportation of her neighbors, we find her certainly not detached or disinterested and far less than a mere observer. As I imagine it, there are two likely attitudes the neighbor has in response to the Jewish family's treatment: one, she buys into the Nazi propaganda and is gladdened by their abuse and ultimate deportation; or two, she buys into Nazi propaganda and wants to help but is too scared to do so; she worries she will be killed or deported if she does anything. It seems highly unlikely that anyone in a Nazi-occupied country was completely disinterested in response to the Nazis. It is also highly unlikely that anyone living next to a Jewish neighbor was entirely unaware of the Nazi propaganda about the Jewish people, or the situation of their neighbor (How does one ignore seeing neighbors deported? Further, if it was the case that the neighbor wasn't aware, she could not be labeled a disinterested observer since she did not observe anything). The question, then, is whether in any given situation the neighbor truly is disinterested or detached? It is clear that they are not insofar as they all were interested in some capacity: either glad to see their neighbors go, worried for their own lives, or wanting to help. The idea, then, that anyone in Germany, Europe, or even the rest of the world, was disinterested in their observation is an untenable position and Adorno is absolutely correct in his desire to remove such a position as an option.

Another category of people involved in the Holocaust are 'those who resisted.' He concludes "Education After Auschwitz" with the claim: "Concrete possibilities of

resistance nonetheless must be shown.”²²² Adorno suggests that we look at those who refused to adhere to the Nazi doctrines and use their actions as a guide to help us create an educational system that tries to recreate the conditions of resistance.²²³ I agree, in theory, with this step of the educational plan, though I am wary about how it might practically play out. For instance, as I will explain in greater detail shortly, Adorno criticizes the guilty for not critically reflecting; however, it is not necessarily the case that those who helped were critically reflecting. Some of those who helped, like the townsfolk of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, hid over 1,000 French Jews because, “God commanded them to save the Jews and they obeyed.”²²⁴ The townsfolk are so steadfast in their claim that they were merely obeying God’s commands that they refused any memorials or museums in their honor until recently.

A similar response of ‘just following orders’ is given by many whom Adorno wants to call guilty. Raised in a household or town in which Jews were blamed for all their problems, Auschwitz officer Oskar Gröning offers a similar answer to the question of why. Why did he participate in the Nazi party? Because that is what he was taught, because he knew it was right: “We were convinced by our worldview that we had been betrayed by the entire world and that there was a conspiracy of the Jews against us.”²²⁵ Neither Le Chambon nor Gröning claim a great deal of critical reflection about their actions, both just felt that what they were doing was right. Both also seemed to appeal to rules already established for them about right and wrong. Looking at those who resisted

²²² Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 32.

²²³ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 32.

²²⁴ Gilad, M. (April 29, 2014). “French town reluctantly takes credit for saving more than 1,000 Jews.” *Haaretz*. Retrieved April 17, 2015, from <http://www.haaretz.com/jewish-world/jewish-world-features/.premium-1.587866>.

²²⁵ Laurence, R. (2005). “Factories of Death.” [Television series episode]. *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State*. Netflix. Accessed November 14, 2015.

as a model might not necessarily produce fruitful results for how to promote resistance because they did not necessarily perform such actions (especially resistance understood as critical self-reflection which, as we will see, is fundamental to opposing the thinking of the Nazis).²²⁶

Although I agree with Adorno's desire to redefine the categories of those involved, I would like to go further. As I mentioned earlier, Adorno's definition of murders seems to include the people responsible for the bureaucratic side of the Holocaust: those who organized everything so that such large-scale deportations, thefts, and executions could take place. He also, at the same time, wants to hold the Jewish people, and other groups, as victims. Such a distinction, however, is a false dichotomy because the two categories can overlap or bleed into one another. Adorno doesn't necessarily spell out such a false dichotomy, however, and I want to add to his work here by suggesting that some of the people responsible for the activities associated with desktop murderers were Jewish people.²²⁷

One of the best examples of this overlap between innocent and guilt is found in the Czech ghetto Terezin. Terezin was a 14th century Czech fortress, turned into a town, then turned into a Ghetto for Jews. The Nazis expelled all of the villagers and started transporting Jews to the Ghetto in 1941. Besides serving as a ghetto, the main purpose of Terezin was propaganda: the Red Cross wanted to investigate claims regarding concentration camps and ghettos, so the Nazis created a model town for the Red Cross to tour. The story goes that when deported, all Jews would be going to their own cities where the children would be educated, there would be concerts, plays and musicals; they

²²⁶ Thank you to Dr. Margaret Walker for her insights here.

²²⁷ Hannah Arendt makes a similar point when she criticizes the Jewish leaders for assisting the Nazis with the collection of information and people in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*.

could self-legislate, and live in peace. The Nazis went so far as to have the Jews write postcards to their friends and family back home encouraging them to come out to Terezin and live there. In truth, Terezin was just a stopover for the concentration and extermination camps farther East, like Auschwitz. While the Nazis were behind the idea of Terezin, they had the Jewish people who lived there do most of the legwork to make Terezin the propaganda machine that it was.²²⁸

Two other striking examples come to light in the documentary *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State*. The first comes from the testimony of a survivor of Auschwitz, Ryszard Dacko. He reveals that there was in Auschwitz, what he calls, a brothel. It was set up so that the best workers could have a “reward” for their work. Dacko admits that the women did not have a choice in being part of the brothel but says that they got more food than others so everything was equal.²²⁹ Dacko’s testimony is stunning insofar as he is clearly unable to see that he is a rapist and victimized other prisoners. This example, in particular, reveals that we cannot maintain a clear and definitive line between victim and persecutor, but rather it must be admitted that some people who were victims, also persecuted others. The second example revealed in the documentary concerns the removal of corpses at Auschwitz. The *Sonderkommando* was a group of Jewish prisoners who were made to work in the crematoria on pain of their own immediate death. One member acknowledges, “They [the Nazis] didn’t kill us because there were 4,000 cadavers that had to go into the ovens and we are the only ones that could do it and that is

²²⁸ Green, Gerald. (1978). *The Artists of Terezin*. New York: Hawthorne Books.

²²⁹ Laurence, R. (2005). “Corruption.” [Television series episode]. *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State*. Netflix. Accessed November 14, 2015.

why they saved us.”²³⁰ The members of the group admit that the entire process of killing was done almost entirely by Jews, including those telling victims they should get in the shower. The Nazi officer was responsible, only, for dropping the Zyklon B into the chamber. The men, further, admit that without all of their work, and the work of their fellow prisoners, there is no way that the Nazis could have killed as many people as quickly as they did.

From Terezin, to the brothel of Auschwitz, what I want to reveal with these examples is that there is not always a clear line between victim and persecutor, or even victim and desktop murderer. Noting this is important for a number of reasons: one, Adorno claims that his educational plan needn't address victims, but only persecutors. If we understand that the two can be found in the same person, or that the two are not as distinct as we might like to think, then we need to make sure that our educational plan takes that into account. Two, Adorno's account could use a bit of further explanation insofar as he doesn't fully present the potentially overlapping categories of victim and persecutor dichotomy.

I hope it goes without saying that I see a substantial distinction between people like Eichmann and those who suffered in concentration camps. I would never suggest that the two are guilty in the same way. Rather, what I want to suggest is that the distinction between guilty and victim is not necessarily a clear one but more of a spectrum with individuals on various ends and then a lot of middle positions in which such distinction is less clear. I think it is necessary to talk about this spectrum because painting the relationship as only extremes is just not true and perpetuates a false narrative. Also, it

²³⁰ Laurence, R. (2005). "Murder and Intrigue." [Television series episode]. *Auschwitz: Inside the Nazi State*. Netflix. Accessed November 14, 2015.

leaves the door open for such events to happen again: no one thinks they could be Eichmann or Hitler and many people empathize with the victims, but few contemplate the experience of those in between. It is the in between position that I think is crucial to education following Auschwitz and is the biggest feature missing from not only Adorno's work but also current education.

In order to investigate the flexibility of the categories of those involved, we need to incorporate imagination. For instance, the imaginative device of prototypes can be helpful in our categorizing of the different positions, such as coming up with a prototypical victim and then using that to imaginatively extend definitions or try out other cases to see if they fall within the prototype. Alternatively, the spectrum method of understanding victims and guilty that I suggested earlier also relies heavily on imagination: one must imaginatively try out and extend categories and definitions to certain examples. One must also perform some imaginative perspective taking in order to discover where certain people and actions may fall: if I was in that position, would it feel like I had any other choice in the matter? Ultimately, there are a variety of imaginative devices and exercises that would be required for my proposed way of understanding the different positions because my method requires flexibility and fluidity of categories. I will go into specifics regarding the 'how' in the next chapter, but for now I want to suggest that post-Auschwitz education would be better served if it encouraged imaginative exploration and flexibility in the thinking of those involved, specifically the categories of people and their relations to each other.

Having gained greater insight into those to which Adorno is addressing both in his piece, we can now begin to examine the specific elements of his theory. Adorno separates

his education into two areas: “first, children’s education, especially in early childhood; then, general enlightenment, which provides an intellectual, cultural, and social climate in which a recurrence would no longer be possible, a climate, therefore, in which the motives that led to the horror would become relatively conscious.”²³¹ While Adorno states that he cannot sketch out a plan for such education, he does note that he will “indicate some of its nerve centers.”²³² It is these nerve centers that I will use to inspire a sketch of such an education.

Collective Thinking

The most often discussed mechanism or condition for Auschwitz is a type of thinking which Adorno describes as “the blind identification with the collective.”²³³ Adorno writes, “I think the most important way to confront the danger of a recurrence [of Auschwitz] is to work against the brute predominance of all collectives, to intensify the resistance to it by concentrating on the problem of collectivization.”²³⁴ Adorno describes it differently in another passage: “the very unwillingness to connive with power and to submit outwardly to what is stronger, under the guise of a norm, is the attitude of the tormentors that should not arise again.”²³⁵ This blind identification with the collective can be overcome in a number of ways, the most important, however, is autonomy: “the power of reflection, of self-determination, of not cooperating.”²³⁶

²³¹ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 22.

²³² Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 22.

²³³ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 25.

²³⁴ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 25.

²³⁵ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 23.

²³⁶ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 23.

Though not explicit, I think Adorno's identifying with the collective is a form of identity thinking. In identity thinking, we identify things or others as simple concepts, removing all of their particularity in favor of easy to understand universals, which you can then manipulate and use. In identifying with the collective, many of the same mechanisms are at work for others and also yourself. Adorno writes, "People who blindly slot themselves into the collective already make themselves into something like inert material, extinguish themselves as self-determined beings. With this comes the willingness to treat others as an amorphous mass."²³⁷ Thinking with a collective, then, performs the same activities associated with identity thinking, especially the destructive ones. If I think of myself a member of a collective in the way described by Adorno, I lose what is particular about me. No longer am I a unique individual, I am a Democrat, NRA member, Nazi, and so forth.

Identifying with the collective also erases my particular interests or needs in favor of universal ones that I cling to dogmatically: if the party ascribes to something, and I am a member of the party, then I do too. If Adorno was around today, he might critique the ways in which people identify with political parties in the United States (and certainly elsewhere) as another form of identifying with the collective: if you are a

Republican, you must be anti-abortion, pro-gun, anti-big government, etc. What these phrases actually mean might not be all that clear to you, but you know that because you are a Republican they are your ideals. Further, these ideals privilege universal rules over

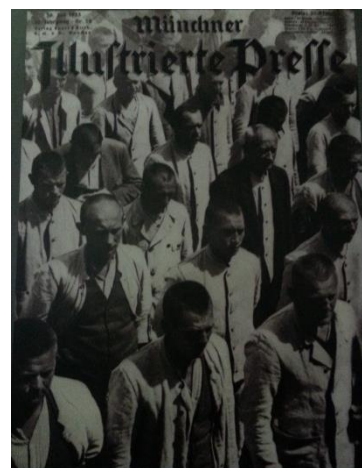


Figure 3. "Münchener Illustrierte Presse." Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial. Photo by author, 2014.

²³⁷ Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 6.

particulars. Anti-abortion laws most often do not leave room for pregnancies that are caused by rape or incest; these particular situations certainly do not get discussed in the mainstream discussion of abortion debates. In a similar manner, being pro-gun seems to mean pro all guns, for anyone, without the need for background checks or databases; anything less than this is a fundamental infringement on one's rights. Discussions about particulars, like assault weapons, accessibility by minors, and so forth do not enter into the debate because it is easier to stick to the universal and ignore the particulars.

Identifying with the collective, then, not only extinguishes you as a particular in favor of the collective, it does the same with the ideals it espouses or condemns.

Not only do you and your ideals become those of the collective, Adorno writes that thinking in terms of collectives also affects how you see other people. When you yourself already see in terms of collectives, it is easier to see others as "an amorphous mass." Seeing others as an amorphous mass makes it that much easier to exterminate them, as the Nazi party demonstrated. Examining the rhetoric of the Nazis is a good way to see just how they viewed the Jews, and others, as an amorphous mass and much of this language is still maintained in our discussion of the Holocaust today. For instance, we talk about the extermination of the Jewish people, which is ultimately the Third Reich's Final Solution. Talk of 'extermination' usually belongs only to the realm of bugs or insects.²³⁸ Even the most violent criminals are 'executed' by the state, not exterminated.

²³⁸ For example, Goebbels German radio essay "Die Juden sin Schuld" (The Jews are Guilty). "The essay marked the first time that a leading official of the Nazi regime publicly announced that the "extermination" of European Jewry had shifted from hypothetical notion or the threat included in Hitler's famous prophecy to ongoing action...Publication of "The Jews Are Guilty" ended the period of threats. The Jews had started the war. They were now suffering a "gradual process of extermination," one they had originally intended to inflict on Germany." Herf, J. (2008). *The Jewish enemy Nazi propaganda during World War II and the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 122.

An exterminator is someone you hire to come to your house and rid it of bugs or vermin, both of which are ultimately not welcome in your home, hence the need for the exterminator. Similarly, the idea that Jews and other targeted groups were ‘rounded up’ is again a phrase most often associated with animals, and not humans.²³⁹ We round up cattle or other animals to take to the barn, to the field, or to the slaughterhouse, most often. The language of the Nazi’s Final Solution is certainly one in which the Jews were treated like an amorphous mass. Further, pictured in Figure 3, for example, is an issue of “Müncher Illustrierte Presse” from 1933 and currently on display at Dachau Concentration Camp Memorial Site. The cover is a group of Jewish men entering Dachau and the issue contained an extensive propaganda report on the Dachau concentration camp. Notice how the faces of each person are not very clear due in part to their looking down. Also, every man in the image has similar hair and clothes, rendering them once again not distinct individuals or particulars. Finally, the photograph is clearly of a large group of men, there are bodies spilling out of the edges. Such a depiction encourages the idea that the Jewish people are in such great numbers, like vermin.²⁴⁰

Identifying with a collective, seeing yourself as definitively belonging to one group, makes it very easy for you to see others as belonging to a different group, and also as that group being another collective. When you see an other as only the collective, regardless of how you frame that collective, you begin to erase particular individuals in

²³⁹ For example: Winkelmann, Otto. (May 29, 1961). “Testimony.” Proceedings against Adolf Eichmann at the Competent Court of Justice for Bordsesholm/Rendsburg District. *Nizkor Project*. Accessed November 15, 2015 at http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/people/e/eichmann-adolf/transcripts/Testimony-Abroad/Otto_Winkelmann-01.html. The Jewish Agency Executive Communication. (November 23, 1942). “Decree of Deportation and Murder of All Polish Jews.” *Jewish Virtual Library*. Accessed on November 15, 2015 at <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Holocaust/Haaretz112342.html>.

²⁴⁰ I want to thank Dr. Sarah Gendron for all of her insights and conversations on propaganda.

favor of universals. Instead of seeing the person in front of you as a unique individual, with particular wants, desires and interests, she becomes a Jew, one of many. If the narrative of the Jewish people is one that is blamed for the downfall of Germany, then being a Jew, identifying someone with that collective, means that person is just ‘part of the problem.’

Even if the collective is considered a positive thing, such as a being a celebrity, blindly identifying someone in that collective, is, ultimately, going to be destructive to them. For instance, if I saw Joss Whedon on the street corner, because he is a celebrity, I would not necessarily treat him like a unique, particular person, but rather as someone belonging to the collective ‘celebrity.’ Because of that, I would treat him differently than other people, perhaps going up to him and asking him for his autograph or a photo, something I would not do to someone who didn’t belong to the collective of celebrity. While, hopefully, my interest would end there, someone who blindly identified with the collective might go further, following Whedon, taking photographs, and detailing his every movement. Such action is justified by the idea that he is a celebrity and this is what he gets for being a celebrity. Whedon, and others who are identified in the collective “celebrity,” have their individuality removed from them in favor of a universal that is easy to use and manipulate.

One could say that it is an individual’s uniqueness or particularity that makes them a part of the collective, and therefore is not removed from them when they are identified with it. For instance, Whedon is a celebrity because of his unique and particular contributions to film and TV. While it might be the case that Whedon’s work has led him to be identified as “celebrity,” being identified in such a collective still removes from him

his particularity and much of what makes him an individual. His privacy, for instance, is easily invaded and such intrusion is brushed off because he is a celebrity. Similarly, being of Jewish descent or identifying as a Jew religiously may be central to an individual as a particular, or contribute to what makes them the unique person that they are. Even if the identification begins with something the particular person has, as long as it ends with collective identification, it will be harmful.

In order to overcome and ultimately, hopefully, prevent the blind identification with collectives, Adorno proposes that we seek out the causes of collective thinking as one way to counteract such destructive ways of thinking. He suggests that a thorough analysis, in the psychoanalytic tradition, of each perpetrator would be a way to understand what lead them think and act in the way they did. While such analysis was not completed, at least at the depth to which Adorno speaks, I think that, nevertheless, we can gain insights as to the mechanisms that allow or encourage collective thinking.²⁴¹

²⁴¹ Adorno explains the analysis he requires, thusly: “I would like to make a concrete proposal: to study the guilty of Auschwitz with all the methods available to science, in particular with long-term psychoanalysis, in order, if possible to discover how such a person develops... This could be done only if they would want to collaboration in the investigation of their own genesis. Certainly it will be difficult to induce them to speak... Whether the attempt helps somewhat or not cannot be known before it is undertaken; I don’t want to overestimate it. One must remember that individuals cannot be explained automatically by such conditions” (Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 28). While Adorno has such a desire, he notes, one: that such analysis might not work out; two: that it requires talking with the perpetrators directly; and three: that the persecutors must desire to look into themselves and learn. While I think that such a proposal could be fruitful, I am not exploring such an investigation because without access to the perpetrators, their willingness to be analyzed, and my lack of training in such analysis, my contribution would be superficial at best. A potential place for future research would be an attempt to actualize Adorno’s call using autobiographical information and testimony. For now, my project does speak to Adorno’s call to use “all the methods available to science” in the investigation, here that method being the work of moral imagination.

Additionally, I think it is possible to turn to a number of the mechanisms Adorno calls out as being foundational to the Holocaust and analyze them from a Freudian sense. I want to briefly take the time to explain why I won’t be doing such an analysis. I began to investigate the possible Freudian influences in a number of these characteristics, for instance, the parallels between Freud’s aggression and Adorno’s coldness or hardness. The trouble is, that Freud doesn’t

In Chapter Two, when elucidating the connection between Adorno's work and Johnson's, I discussed Johnson's Social Accounting Metaphor (where moral harm and help and are viewed in terms of debt or credit). I also made note of the argument that such a way of thinking can be harmful insofar as it can lead people to imagine that they have a limited amount of help, that it is a rare resource or commodity, and so they will be less likely to help people whom they do not identify as residing in their close circles of care. Metaphorical thinking, which is highly imaginative, then, does not necessarily produce positive results. I argued in Chapter Two, that in the combining of Adorno and Johnson, Adorno can bring such critical insights to Johnson's work because of Adorno's negative critiques of society.

I would like to suggest that a similar negative turn of imagination takes place in collective thinking. First, as I pointed out, Nazi propaganda, both visually and rhetorically, relies on metaphorical thinking: extending the language and imagery of pests to the Jewish population. Such propaganda relies heavily on projecting what is not present, and therefore on imagination. Additionally, the creation and maintenance of

have one consistent view on aggression. Rather, as my research revealed, aggression began as an innate personality characteristic (presented in the Oedipal complex), then altered to be part of self-preservation, then the death drive, and finally that the origins and nature of aggression were not yet understood. Attempting to compare Freud on aggression to Adorno is just outside of this project's purview. Because I am not an expert on Freud, my contributions to the discussion would be superficial or cursory. And even my already cursory investigation into such influences revealed that the project would be immense in trying to detangle which period of Freud's work Adorno is referencing and why, and then what connection was established. I would like to suggest that such a project could potentially be fruitful but isn't within this project's perimeters. Further, I think that we can get a great deal of depth out of Adorno's work, in particular his characteristics of the Holocaust, without the Freudian background because, though Adorno himself calls for such an analysis, he says that it would be one of many he would support and further, that it might not even be successful. It is clear, then, that though Adorno is influenced by Freud, he doesn't necessarily think that a Freudian way of understanding or viewing the Holocaust is sufficient. For now, we will exclude such a view, though note its importance for later development.

groups depends, foundationally on imagination. The division of collectives is almost entirely made up and maintained through ideas or mental projections. If, for instance, you saw two people on the street, you would not know from any actual particulars about that person whether they identified as a Republican or Democrat. You may notice their age, gender, infer their socio-economic status based on their clothes, and then imagine them as belonging to one or another collective. This sorting activity relies heavily on the imagination to use past information, pick out particulars, and infer. Separating into collectives, then, very much depends on imagination.

It is important to note imagination's work in collective thinking because knowing the mechanisms that create collective thinking can help us overcome it, as Adorno suggests. If we understand how crucial imagination is to the formation and maintenance of collectives, we can perhaps utilize imagination to disrupt such formation and maintenance, or use imagination to form better, more flexible collectives. Yet, how do we overcome collective thinking? Adorno suggests that autonomy, understood as the "power of reflection, of self-determination, of not cooperating" must be engendered.²⁴² The reflection to which Adorno speaks is, according to K. Daniel Cho, always "outwardly oriented."²⁴³ Cho argues, "The practice in Adorno, never stops at the level of the individual or self; rather, it becomes an expansive form of thinking that maps the self within the conditions of society as a whole."²⁴⁴ Self-reflection is, ultimately, not merely about the self. Rather, it is about society because Adorno "tends to attribute evil to the

²⁴² Adorno, "Education after Auschwitz," 23.

²⁴³ Cho, D. (2009). "Adorno on Education or, Can Critical Self-Reflection Prevent the Next Auschwitz?" *Historical Materialism*, 17(1): 74-97, 76.

²⁴⁴ Cho, "Adorno on Education," 76-7.

social mechanisms which induce people to engage in heteronomous behavior.”²⁴⁵

Overcoming collective thinking, then, requires us to be reflective about the society we are situated in and/or that promotes collective thinking.

One could argue that we have a contradiction insofar as Adorno wants us to turn to others in order to break from our thinking with others. Yet, it is not in fact a contradiction for Adorno, though we are certainly walking a fine line. Adorno does not want us to merely fit in with the crowd and do what others are doing just because others are doing it. Rather, Adorno wants us to investigate the social context in which we find ourselves because, “Adorno suggests that it is wrong to assume that we always have a clear sense of who counts as one of us and that we have, or ought to have, a distinct preference for them.”²⁴⁶ We must, then, in order to overcome collective thinking, not automatically take up the thoughts and ideals of the group to which we have been told we belong or to which we find ourself in. Rather, with a critical eye, we must look at these ideals as well as the groups and investigate the reasons as to why the groups are divided as they are and why certain ideals are in place.

Overcoming collective thinking requires critical self-reflection but we need to go further and begin to gesture at actions that might bring about actual resistance to collective thinking. After all, Adorno’s plan for post-Auschwitz education is not merely a theory but one which he thinks needs to be put into place. Henry Giroux offers insights into how an education that promotes self-reflection would unfold, writing:

Self-reflection, the ability to call things into question, and the willingness to resist the material and symbolic forces of domination were all central to an education that refused to repeat the horrors of the past and engaged the possibilities of the

²⁴⁵ Finlayson, J. (2002). “Adorno on the Ethical and the Ineffable.” *European Journal of Philosophy*, 10(1): 1-25, 3.

²⁴⁶ Cho, “Adorno on Education,” 91 & Heins, “Saying things that hurt,” 70.

future. Adorno urged educators to teach students how to be critical, to learn how to resist those ideologies, needs, social relations, and discourses that led back to a politics where authority was simply obeyed and the totally administered society reproduced itself through a mixture of state force and often orchestrated consensus.²⁴⁷

Giroux is describing an education that I think is ultimately imaginative and therefore want to claim again that imagination is necessary to overcoming collective identity.

In order to be critical of one's social context, one must first be aware of one's social context. As I argued in Chapter One, imagination plays a crucial role in the perception of context, moral or otherwise. In the example of our sexist joke, we saw how imagination used past experience and information about the person to 'see' the joke as sexist (similar activities were required in Blum's cab example, too). Insofar as imagination is a necessary part of moral perception, which I demonstrated in Chapter One, imagination is going to be necessary in order to become aware of the social context that is so crucial for Adorno's critical self-reflection.

After one is aware of her social context, in order to be *critically* self-reflective, one must call the context into question and resist the heteronomy of ideals with which she is presented.²⁴⁸ Again, these activities require imagination insofar as they require flexibility and creativity. As we saw in Chapter One, imagination is necessary for the ability to think of possibilities for action. We can contemplate past examples or

²⁴⁷ Giroux, H. (2004). "What Might Education Mean After Abu Ghraib: Revisiting Adorno's Politics Of Education?" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 24(1): 5-27, 11.

²⁴⁸ Kant refers to an action that is influenced by a force outside of the individual as being one that is 'heteronomous' (Kant, Immanuel. (1956). *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Trans. H.J. Paton. New York: Harper, 441, 108). As opposed to autonomy, where an individual gives herself her ideals, in an 'heteronomy of ideals,' ideals are given or influenced by an outside force. For instance, if your ideals about what is valuable (e.g., labor, time, gold, etc.) are forced on you from the outside (e.g., society, parental pressures, government, etc.) and you cannot yourself create or dictate what is valuable, such an environment would be characterized as an heteronomy of ideals.

imaginary paradigms and compare them to the situation we are in in order to arrive at a possibility for action. If the ideologies are truly heteronomous, we will need flexibility and creativity to navigate out of them. Certainly, one wouldn't use more instrumental reason and abstraction to get out of heteronomous ways of thinking since they are in large part responsible for collectivity thinking.

I am not alone in my advocating for the inclusion of imagination as a method to counteract collective thinking. In *Autonomy After Auschwitz*, Martin Shuster calls for an inclusion of imagination following Auschwitz, arguing that, “not only are we turning ourselves into administered creatures but, even more alarmingly, we are becoming unable to even imagine or conceive a different world.”²⁴⁹ He continues, “This withering of imaginative capacities is...a serious problem for any discussion of freedom.”²⁵⁰ Insofar as collective thinking removes from us our autonomy, in favor of heteronomy, Shuster claims that our imaginative capacities are deformed; we cannot imagine a world in which we aren't a part of the crowd. Yet, Shuster, in line with my claims, argues that “reigniting the spark of such imaginative capacities will also jump start possibilities for practical reason and thereby open new regions for action.”²⁵¹ In the next chapter, I will offer a number of concrete possibilities for the stimulation of the imaginative capacities that both I and Shuster call for. For now, I want to set the foundation for my possibilities: in order to overcome collective thinking, we must be critically self-reflective and in order to be critically self-reflective, we must be imaginative. Therefore, imagination is necessary for the overcoming of collective thinking.

²⁴⁹ Shuster, M. (2014). *Autonomy after Auschwitz: Adorno, German idealism, and modernity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 104.

²⁵⁰ Shuster, “Autonomy after Auschwitz,” 105.

²⁵¹ Shuster, “Autonomy after Auschwitz,” 105.

Hardness and Coldness

In addition to collective thinking, Adorno explores two other mechanisms that contributed to the Holocaust: hardness and coldness. While the two terms are ultimately distinct, they are very much connected and relate very closely to collective thinking. The “ideal of being hard” is, for Adorno, a mark of traditional education, and is defined as “absolute indifference toward pain as such.”²⁵² He writes, “Whoever is hard with himself earns the right to be hard with others as well and avenges himself for the pain whose manifestations he was not allowed to show and had to repress.”²⁵³ Pretending that you are not hurt, or tolerating pain to the point that you make yourself (or at least pretend) indifferent to the pain, is the ideal of hardness. Adorno claims hardness is present in ‘traditional education’ and is surely referencing traditional education for males in which repressing feelings is preferred to expressing them since the latter makes one weak and effeminate. Tyson Lewis explains: “Hardness as an educational virtue makes the subject resistant to pain and likewise resistant to the guilt of inflicting pain on others.”²⁵⁴

In hardness, as well as coldness, one’s relationship to the world is indifference. What isn’t necessarily clear in Adorno’s account of either is whether it is true indifference or feigned indifference. For instance, in the case of hardness, it seems extremely difficult, perhaps impossible, to not actually feel pain. Rather, one would have to try to ignore the pain or experience it but not let it visibly affect you. In both instances,

²⁵² Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 6.

²⁵³ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 6.

²⁵⁴ Lewis, Tyson. (2006). “Utopia and Education in Critical Theory.” *Policy Figures in Education*. Los Angeles: UCLA, 4:1, 11.

you aren't really indifferent to the pain, that is, it is not that you do not care about the pain. Rather, you seem to care that the pain exists so much that all of your mental capacity is dedicated to trying to repress a response to it. Hardness, then, doesn't actually seem to be indifference in terms of not caring about pain, but caring so much about it that you try to control it.

The problem that Adorno sees in hardness is not necessarily the indifference to one's own pain, but rather that such indifference breeds more indifference: "In this [being hard] the distinction between one's own pain and that of another is not so stringently maintained. Whoever is hard with himself earns the right to be hard with others as well."²⁵⁵ Adorno's real qualm with indifference, then, is how it affects our perceptions of others, in particular, that if I am hard, I expect others to be so as well. It is ok, then, for me to inflict pain on others because I am indifferent to pain and everyone else should be as well; I see the ideal that I hold as something that should apply to all. The conclusion for Adorno is that I can expect others to then submit to a great amount of pain because I can.

Ultimately, Adorno's account of hardness is confusing because if the problem with hardness is that I no longer see a division between my own and an other's pain, why is it that I then expect them to be indifferent to pain? Further, as I explored, the indifference as described by Adorno is not real indifference. Rather, the individual who is hard seems to be acutely aware of the pain she undergoes. If hardness leads us to harm other people, and expect that they can take it, again, then we are not actually indifferent to pain but acknowledging that it is present, harmful, and looking to inflict it on others. None of these are the activities of someone who is indifferent.

²⁵⁵ Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 26.

What is further unclear is to whom Adorno is speaking about when it comes to the problems of hardness. Is Adorno accusing Nazis of being hard on other Nazis or were the Nazis hard on the victims of Auschwitz? In the first instance, hardness needs to be overcome and addressed because Nazi on Nazi hardness allowed the persecutors to push others to do things they might not have done before. It allowed the people giving the orders to influence the actual trigger pullers. By teaching the German people, the Nazi Youth, and so forth to be hard, the Nazi officers were preparing a generation of people to follow orders: we are hard and put up with all this pain, and now you do the same.

Another way of reading Adorno's critique of hardness is that the teaching of it led the Nazis to be indifferent to the pain of those they tortured and killed at Auschwitz and other concentration camps. Training young Nazi troops and officers to not care about pain makes it easier for them to not care about the pain they inflict on the Jewish people. I find this second reading a bit more difficult to accept, particularly in light of Adorno's discussions of the other mechanisms of the Holocaust, as well as the rhetoric of the Nazi party. The first condition or mechanism that Adorno addresses in this article is the blind identification with the collective. Doing so, he argues and, as I explained, allows one to view others as an amorphous mass, stripped of everything that makes someone a unique and particular individual. If it is the case that the Nazis viewed the Jews as an amorphous mass, and this certainly seems to be what Adorno suggests, as well as what their rhetoric and propaganda suggests, then it seems difficult to believe that they were also hard in the way Adorno describes. It seems unlikely that the Nazis struggled with distinguishing their pain from the pain of Jewish victims, if they do not, in the first place, see Jewish people as individuals capable of experiencing pain.

Further, Adorno says that a major concern with hardness is that it encourages someone who is indifferent to pain to expect others to be indifferent to pain just as they were. Maintaining this attitude, expecting another to be like you, again, seems difficult given the rhetoric of the Nazi party, and Adorno's discussion of collective identity. The Nazis tried, and some would say succeeded, in differentiating Jews from the rest of the German population. Their propaganda was focused on the idea that the Jews were a clearly distinct, subset group of people. It is inconsistent, then, that the Nazis, proud members of the elite Aryan Race, and proud of their hardness, would expect the same of the inferior Jewish people. The whole point of identifying with a collective is identifying those who do not belong in that collective and one important way that is done is through ideals; we have different ideals than others. If the Nazis maintained hardness as an ideal that marks their collective, it seems odd that they would expect it of a different, ultimately inferior collective.

Finally, this second reading seems difficult to maintain if you take seriously Adorno's use of the word 'indifferent.' If in hardness, one really is indifferent to their own pain and the pain of others, it seems odd that the Nazi party would try so hard to inflict so many different types of pain on the Jewish people. Perhaps, we are supposed to read Adorno as suggesting that the Nazis turned a blind eye to the suffering of the Jews and in that way they were indifferent. Again, this seems false: the Nazis seemed to care very much about the suffering of the Jewish people. They created entire cities, rail lines, and systems to inflict suffering on the Jewish people.

Given the inconsistencies with which Adorno uses the term 'indifference' and the ways in which he discusses collective identity and given the rhetoric of the Nazi party, it

seems difficult to maintain that hardness is between the Nazis and their victims. Rather, it seems that the hardness that can be addressed in post-Auschwitz education would be between fellow Nazis, or those who are disposed to such a way of thinking. Moving forward, then, the education after Auschwitz has to overcome hardness and the attitudes and activities associated in it within groups or collectives rather than between them.

Coldness is related to hardness insofar as it too concerns indifference. Adorno describes coldness as “the inability to identify with others” and argues that it is “unquestionably the most important psychological condition for the fact that something like Auschwitz could have occurred in the midst of a more or less civilized and innocent people.”²⁵⁶ He continues, “[I]f people were not profoundly indifferent toward whatever happens to everyone else except for a few to whom they are closely and, possibly, by tangible interests bound, then Auschwitz would not have been possible, people would not have accepted it.”²⁵⁷

Adorno did not create his conception of coldness whole cloth in “Education After Auschwitz.” As Simon Mussell points out, the rhetoric of coldness is present in Marx and Engel’s discussion of the ‘icy water of egotistical calculation’ and Weber’s ‘iron cage.’²⁵⁸ Additionally, as Bernstein notes, Adorno used coldness previously in order to describe “the mood...of identity thinking in its exploded bourgeois form.”²⁵⁹ Bernstein talks about Adornian coldness as a way of being in the world; he talks about how a “cold gaze” is a “constitutive feature of...rationalized reason.”²⁶⁰ This cold gaze appears to be the way in

²⁵⁶ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 30.

²⁵⁷ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 30.

²⁵⁸ Mussell, S. (2013). “Pervaded by a chill’: The dialectic of coldness in Adorno’s social theory.” *Thesis Eleven*, 117(1): 55-67, 56.

²⁵⁹ Bernstein, Adorno: *Disenchantment and Ethics*, 402.

²⁶⁰ Bernstein, Adorno: *Disenchantment and Ethics*, 83.

which people, the bourgeois in particular, view other humans as objects or things. The cold gaze is marked by “silencing compassion” and an “obsessive concern for efficiency.”²⁶¹ Bernstein also reiterates the indifference of coldness found directly in Adorno’s writing, “Coldness is the material inscription of logical indifference” and, “coldness...is the condition of abstraction from particularity that is necessary in order to carry on acting methodically and consistently in the midst of revolting carnage.”²⁶²

Adorno claims that in coldness people are ‘profoundly indifferent’ toward others and what happens to them. Similar to our previous discussion of disinterestedness (notably, in reference to hardness), a true lack of interest does not seem to be actually present. Let us break down the indifference to different relationships in order to gain greater clarity about what Adorno may mean here: when the Nazis rounded up Jews to deport them to ghettos and concentration camps, many of their neighbors did nothing, or rather, did not do anything to stop the deportations. Perhaps this inactivity is the indifference Adorno is describing. If we mean by indifference that the neighbors did not care for their Jewish counterparts, this seems difficult to maintain. First, because some neighbors did try to hide their Jewish friends. Others offered to safe guard their possessions when they were gone or take care of their house. There were also some who were glad to see Jews leave. Those who bought into the Nazi narrative about the Jews wanted them gone and many ended up ransacking their homes and taking their property once they were deported. It seems that none of these neighbors were indifferent to the deportation of the Jews. The former actively tried to help their Jewish friends while the latter reveled in their departure. Others were most certainly too scared to do anything.

²⁶¹ Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 410 & 400.

²⁶² Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 402 & 410.

Seeing entire families and neighborhoods rounded up by gunpoint and escorted into cars, some shot along the way, was enough to scare non-Jews into inactivity. They might have cared deeply for their Jewish friends, or they might have been scared they were next; neither are marks of indifference. In all of these instances, it is not that an individual cannot, as Adorno puts it, identify with another. It seems, in fact that many are doing just that. If I was in your position, I would want someone to help me, or if I do help I could be rounded up, just like you. Perhaps the only one who is not putting themselves in the position of someone else is the non-Jewish neighbor who rejoices at the departure of the Jewish citizens. The issue there, though, seems to be not so much with coldness *per se*, but with the inability to see Jewish people as part of your collective, as similar to you. If you do not even think that the Jewish people are of the same group, and are in fact inferior to you, then you wouldn't even venture to identify with them. This attitude, then, is more a result of identifying with a collective than coldness.

Perhaps we can gain greater insight into the indifference of coldness, or at least coldness itself, in our examination of secondary texts. Mussell in his aptly named article "Pervaded by Chill," argues that Adorno's comments on coldness come in direct response to Kant:

For Adorno, fulfilling the duties of such a formalized morality requires a disinterested subject, such that individual situations, actions and consequences are rendered indifferent... The moral subject abstracts away from the unique concrete object, and instead adopts a purely contemplative stance, at a distance, that allows for rules to be dutifully followed.²⁶³

Mussell's suggestion, that Adorno's description of coldness is a direct response to Kant, may give us a new avenue to interpret the indifference of coldness.

²⁶³ Mussell, "Pervaded by a Chill," 57.

Kant discusses disinterested observers in both his moral and aesthetic theory. In the former, the moral judge must not be concerned with particulars, but rather with universal and abstract laws (e.g., do not kill), in the latter the judge of the beautiful cannot take an interest, understood as interest in the existence of the thing or in the way the object might be used. Perhaps, then, the indifference that Adorno speaks of is synonymous with Kant's disinterestedness.

The problem with such a reading is that Kant's account of disinterest is unrealistic and unattainable. In Kant's aesthetic theory, found in his *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, he explicitly calls for a disinterested spectator or judge. He claims that in order to have a *pure* judgment of the beautiful, the individual viewing the art must maintain, along with a number of other cognitive capabilities, a disinterested position. Such a stance is not unique to Kant but found in a number of aesthetic theories such as Dewey, Plato and Dufrenne.²⁶⁴ The reason for the disinterested spectator, at least for Kant, is that one cannot and should not want to own or use the object judged as beautiful. If the spectator wanted to do these things to it then it could not be a *pure* judgment of the beautiful but would probably be a judgment of the good or pleasurable.²⁶⁵ These two other judgments arise when an object is judged as useful (e.g., a hammer for building a

²⁶⁴ For example, in the *Ion*, "the spectator is the last of the rings which, as I am saying, receive the power of the original magnet from one another." Plato situates the spectator far from the divine inspiration of the gods; if the individual was closer she would be either the rhapsode or the artist. Therefore, the spectator is defined by her distance from the process of the gods. Hofstadter, L., & Kuhns, R. F. (1976). *Philosophies of art and beauty, selected readings in aesthetics from Plato to Heidegger*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 56. In *Art as Experience*, Dewey argues that in order to experience a work of art, one must step back from particular actions and contemplate the ways in which her actions and activities weave together to form the experience. (Dewey, John. (2005). *Art as Experience*. New York: Penguin Group, 45-6). Finally, according to Dufrenne, one of the most important aspects of the spectator is that she has the proper "aesthetic distance." He writes, "The aesthetic object, too-indeed, especially-must be perceived at a proper distance and not simply lived in the proximity of presence." (Dufrenne, Mikel. (1973). *The Phenomenology of the Aesthetic Experience*. Trans. Edward Casey. Evanston: Northwestern University, 358).

²⁶⁵ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*. 5:223-224, 107-8.

desk), or as sensually pleasing (e.g., wallpaper as pleasing for decoration). When I viewed the Mona Lisa, if I thought “Oh, this would make a lovely gift,” or, “I love the colors so much,” then both of these responses take interest in the existence of a thing because of a use, or a pleasure the viewer gets out of it. *Pure* judgments of the beautiful should not have any of these features.²⁶⁶

I think it is important to note and really take stock of Kant’s account of a disinterested judge. It is too easy to just accept the idea that the judge must be ‘disinterested’ and move on applying the phrase without looking into just how Kant uses the term and how he sees the ‘disinterest’ playing out. I fear the same has happened with Adorno’s use of the phrase indifference, and it seems that Mussell might have done the same here. If Adorno identifies coldness as Kantian indifference, and if Kantian indifference is understood as not caring about the existence of a thing in terms of its use or the pleasure it brings us, then I think we have a hard time seeing how this indifference was the mark of the mood of Auschwitz. It seems very clear that the Nazi Party did care a great deal about the existence of the Jewish people; so much so that they wanted to make sure that existence was no more. Further, the Nazis did use Jews for both ‘good’ and ‘pleasure,’ creating work camps, as well as concentration camps, where the Jewish people provided free labor for the Nazi war machine. Disinterest in the Kantian sense, then, does not help us make sense of Adorno’s indifference.

Kant’s moral theory also appears to establish a disinterested judge. In deciding what rule can become a universalizable maxim, one must consider whether everyone else

²⁶⁶ I have made note that, for Kant, it is only pure judgments that cannot have interest mixed in. He does not go into detail about what impure judgments of the beautiful are but certainly leaves room for them through the creation of the category pure judgment of the beautiful.

could follow such a rule.²⁶⁷ In doing so, one is abstracting from particular people and their interests and instead favoring a universal ideal: rational being. In this way, the Kantian moral judge must be disinterested because she cannot care about the particulars

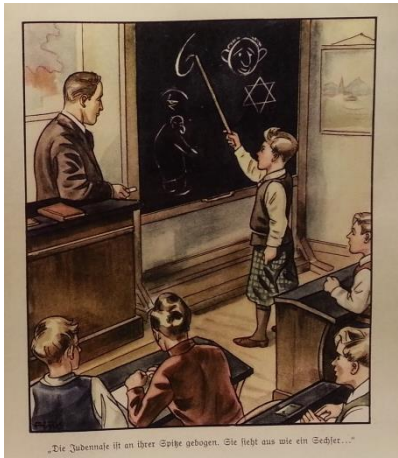


Figure 4. Documentation Center Nazi Rally Party Grounds. Photo by author, 2014.

of people or events. This abstraction also appears in Bernstein’s discussion of Adorno’s coldness, in particular in his enunciation of the cold gaze. He describes the gaze as one of abstraction, in which people are seen as things. I want to suggest that it is this abstraction that is really at the heart of coldness and is its defining feature.

Let us return to our neighbor relationships in order to see this abstraction at work. While indifference didn’t

seem to capture the relationship between the Jewish people and the Nazi officers, abstraction from particulars does seem to get closer to the truth. If the first step in the Nazi party’s method was collective identity, so that the Jewish people and other groups were seen as other, the second step would be to then look at these others in a certain way: with coldness. This coldness means that the Nazis did not perceive the Jewish population as individuals with unique interests, desires, or attributes. Rather, by perceiving them with coldness, all that is unique about a person was ignored in favor of an abstract universal. There is clear evidence of such methods of perception in Nazi propaganda, such as the issue of “Munchener Illustrierte Presse” mentioned earlier. Another potent example of this propaganda is found in Figure 4 at the Documentation Center, a museum within Nuremberg’s Nazi Rally Party grounds and dedicated to the propaganda and

²⁶⁷ Kant, I. (1993). *Grounding for the metaphysics of morals; with, On a supposed right to lie because of philanthropic concerns*. Trans. J. Ellington. Indianapolis: Hackett, 436.

general rise of the Nazi party. We see a young German boy reviewing the basic features of a Jewish person, specifically pointing to his nose. This image is a prime example of the type of abstraction which I think typifies coldness. Rather than seeing a Jewish person as a fellow German, or even as a fellow human being, students were being trained to abstract away from the person and focus on features of their Jewishness.

The propaganda of the Nazi Party resonates with the idea that coldness as abstraction was a key to their way of viewing the Jewish people and I think that abstracting from particulars identifies the relationship that the people of Germany, and other Nazi occupied countries, had toward victims of the Nazis. Those who rejoiced in the deportation of their Jewish neighbors seem to have bought into the narrative of the Nazi's propaganda: Jews are not individual human beings like you or me, they are a plague to be eradicated, and they are the cause of all our woes. Rather than seeing the Jewish shopkeeper as a person, the neighbor now sees him as an obstacle perhaps to him getting his own business, or to happiness for the German people. It becomes easy to smash the windows of Jewish owned companies on *Kristallnacht* when you perceive the owners not as people but as mere things in your way.

The neighbors who did not directly act either way when their Jewish neighbors were rounded up, that is they did not rejoice and help the Nazis nor did they hide or help the Jews, also perform a similar abstraction practice. If the attitude was: "If I do something then I will be killed or taken away too" it may seem that the individual is not abstracting from particulars and rather truly putting themselves in their Jewish neighbors' shoes: I see that terrible thing happening and I don't want it to happen to me. Herein lies the rub: putting yourself in another's shoes does not necessarily translate to helping or

caring for that neighbor because you are putting *yourself* in place of another and making a judgment from there. *I* wouldn't want to be rounded up so *I* won't do anything that might encourage such behavior, particularly aiding my Jewish neighbors. These 'inactive' neighbors are committing the activity of abstraction because they are not focusing on the particulars of their neighbors but abstracting from the situation and placing themselves in it. Their concern, then is not focused or located on the particular other, but removes them from the picture so that the inactive neighbor can put herself in the center of the situation. Because she is removing the particular person from the situation and focusing instead on a more abstract picture, she is as well viewing her neighbor and the situation with our new understanding of coldness.

Adorno's coldness then needs to be understood as not merely indifference (particularly in terms of not caring), but rather as abstracting from particulars. Further, I believe that Bernstein is correct in his discussion of coldness as a type of gaze; coldness seems to primarily concern a way of seeing or perceiving. Rather than perceiving Jewish people as unique individuals, non-Jews perceived them as things: either as obstacles to one's success or as examples of what one does not want to have happen to them. In both instances, the neighbor is not looked at as a unique person. Coldness remains different than, though closely connected to, collective identity insofar as coldness is the way one perceives those who are not within your collective.

Coldness, understood as a way of perceiving through abstraction, will be directly reproached through imagination, as I will argue in the next chapter. As I identified in Chapter One, imagination is a necessary component of moral perception and, further, is a

key tool in perceiving particulars. Imagination's work of focusing on salient particulars in perception will, therefore, directly combat the abstract seeing of coldness.

I further see imagination involved in our discussion of coldness insofar as imagination played a role in the false narrative of indifference that we have been discussing. Johnson, as I explained in Chapter One, discusses the role of narratives in our everyday lives: we use them to make sense of our decisions and our life. We can also add to or edit out events or choices in favor of a cohesive or understandable narrative. I think something similar is going on here with the discussion of indifference. How do we explain why so many did so little to stop the deportations? How do we explain why so many were killed so quickly and constantly? One way to make sense of these questions and perhaps arrive at an answer is to conclude that we are indifferent to each other; that society, modernity, and technology have made us not care about each other like we used to; that the real moral failing is that we turn a blind eye to the suffering of others. This narrative, though obviously not positive, seems easy to understand and even adhere to. As a contemporary German person, it may be easier to understand your grandmother as an indifferent observer rather than an active participant or as more concerned with her own particulars than another's during WWII. Such a narrative is certainly easier than the idea that everyone very much knew what was going on and cared in some capacity; that they actively went along with the Nazi propaganda and narrative that the Jewish people were to be viewed not as unique individuals but as objects. Understanding coldness not as indifference but as abstraction makes many more people active participants in the Holocaust: citizens actively perceived their Jewish neighbors in ways that were destructive to their personhood. Further, my reading of not only coldness as abstraction,

but also that people prefer the narrative of indifference over the narrative of abstraction, would be, I think, supported by Adorno because he views many people as active participants in Auschwitz.

Insofar as imagination is crucial to the creation and use of narrative, as Johnson argues, then it would be present here in this narrative. Further, because this is a false narrative I want to suggest that imagination might be even more present than normal. Imagination has long been credited, often as a way to diminish it, with fantasy or falsity. It seems that imagination is helping to do just that here. I bring this up only to show the power of imagination. This false idea and story has so permeated thinking of the Holocaust that it has, in a sense, taken over and replaced the actual narrative. Imagination is a powerful cognitive tool and just as it can play an integral role in a false narrative, it can do similar work in a true narrative. It is for this reason, and many others that we have been discussing, that I think imagination will be central to an Adornian post-Auschwitz education: because it can be a tool harnessed for bad education, like false narratives about what happened, it must be directed in clear and direct ways.

Ultimately, it is important to investigate coldness and hardness *per se* as Adorno finds them to be fundamental to the mechanisms of Auschwitz. If we are going to create an educational system inspired by Adorno's insights, then we must have a firm foundation to build from. If, as he claims, he wants to counteract the indifference found in coldness and hardness, it is important to know what he means by indifference and where he thinks it shows up. Also, it is going to be necessary to gain insight into the cause of this indifference in order to develop possibilities for targeting the cause, as well as its symptoms. In the next chapter, when I offer a positive account of a type of

education that meets Adorno's requirements for post-Auschwitz education, it will be important to have a firm grasp on coldness, in order to offer an education that counteracts it.

The Veil of Technology

Another factor that Adorno finds troubling is the prevalent role of technology in modern society and, in particular, the way it is used. He claims that the relationship between people and technology produces different personalities, specifically "technological people, who are attuned to technology."²⁶⁸ While such attunement can be a good thing, Adorno warns, "there is something exaggerated, irrational, pathogenic in the present-day relationship to technology."²⁶⁹ It is here that Adorno introduces what he calls a "veil of technology," understood as the ways in which technology can manipulate our understanding and interaction with the world. Adorno writes:

People are inclined to take technology to be the thing itself, as an end in itself, a force of its own, and they forget that it is an extension of human dexterity. The means—and technology is the epitome of the means of self-preservation of the human species—are fetishized, because the ends—a life of human dignity—are concealed and removed from the consciousness of people.²⁷⁰

Adorno's claim can be best understood by means of an example of modern technology: smartphones. Smartphones are, under Adorno's critique, supposed to serve as a continuation of human skill and as a means to an end. For instance, my smartphone is supposed to serve as a tool for keeping in contact with my mother or calling for roadside assistance. Perhaps it is also supposed to keep track of my calendar and to-do lists. In this

²⁶⁸ Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 29.

²⁶⁹ Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 29.

²⁷⁰ Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 29.

way, it is a means to other things in my life: a means to maintaining my relationships and my work. What happens instead, under the veil of technology, is that the smartphone is no longer a means to an end but an end itself. Companies like Apple have done a great job of making this move with their customers who camp out for days just to purchase their phone. The goal for the individual is the phone, it is owning the phone, and not what the phone does for the user. If the iPhone was treated as merely a means to an end, new editions wouldn't be so sought after since, ultimately, there is little in "extension of human dexterity" available in each new feature.

Additionally, under the veil of technology Adorno is concerned about the fetishizing of technology. As Robert Witkin explains, Adorno draws his discussion here from Marx, specifically Marx's account of the alienation of labor. Marx claims that laborers are alienated from their labor because the commodities they make (where commodities are understood as "goods made purely for sale in a mass market"²⁷¹) are not *their* product but rather belong to the company. The commodity becomes, in this scenario, a fetish-object when "it seems not to be the outcome of real relations among human beings but to belong to an autochthonous world of things."²⁷² Again, the iPhone example gives us clarity: we do not, when we buy or use the iPhone, think of it in terms of who made it and what conditions they had to work in to produce the phone. We do not think about the person that sells it and whether their job allows them a living wage or health insurance, rather we think of the iPhone as just always being there and existing. We do not think of what went into making it, we just use it. Because we do not think of it as a thing produced by other humans, but as a thing just merely present, and we fetishize

²⁷¹ Witkin, "Philosophy of Culture," 170.

²⁷² Witkin, "Philosophy of Culture," 171.

it. Ultimately, it is problematic to detach a commodity from the labor that went into it because it allows us to mistreat those who make it.

Adorno is also concerned that “the individual’s relationship to the commodity becomes one of authoritarian submission.”²⁷³ This subservient relationship certainly seems to describe anyone who would sleep outside to possess a piece of plastic, glass, and metal. The phone or whatever piece of technology, then, is no longer a tool useful for my daily tasks and work, but is now my master; without it I do not know what to do and will do anything to keep it and use it. This fetishization of technology is troubling because it deforms our relationship to things, as well as our relationships to other human beings. Because we obsess over things, we don’t care about the suffering of those who got us these things. It is this attitude that Adorno is particularly worried about counteracting in his post-Holocaust education.

This veil of technology is not inevitable; one can, it seems, have a healthy, or what he calls “rational,” relationship with technology. What Adorno is concerned about is “the overvaluation that finally leads to the point where one who cleverly devises a train system that brings the victims to Auschwitz as quickly and smoothly as possible forgets about what happens to them there.”²⁷⁴ Additionally, he writes, “With this type, who tends to fetishize technology, we are concerned—badly put, with people who cannot love... Those people are thoroughly cold... And whatever of the ability to love somehow survives in them they must expend on devices.”²⁷⁵ Adorno’s concern regarding technology seems two-fold: one, that our relationship with technology allows us to avoid contemplating the effects of our technology (e.g., such as the railroad or iPhone

²⁷³ Witkin, “Philosophy of Culture,” 171.

²⁷⁴ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 29.

²⁷⁵ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 29.

examples), and two, that there are certain people so obsessed with technology that they are incapable of love.

Adorno's first major concern about technology seems to center on the idea that we focus on the technology *per se* and ignore all of its possible implications. His example of the train tracks, though simple and quick, is a poignant and loaded example, because it gives us some insight into the division of people Adorno discusses as involved in the Holocaust. Though not explicit, it does seem that Adorno finds the people who devised, and perhaps even built, the railroad tracks to Auschwitz to be perpetrators. It seems, then, that those who devised the track system are just the personalities we now need to discourage.

Additionally, Adorno's discussion of the train engineers offers us insight into the question of Adorno's audience. Adorno seems to be putting his finger on the many people who helped orchestrate the Final Solution but might not feel guilty because "all they did" was come up with some plans or a system. They might want to maintain that there is a big difference between designing the gas chambers and dumping in the Zyklon B, or between planning the tracks to the concentration camps and actually rounding up prisoners and transporting them; buying an iPhone is not the same as being responsible for the suicides of the people who build the phones. What we need to do, then, moving forward, is find a way to connect these personalities to the effects of their technological advancements. That connection seems to be what is missing for Adorno and what is necessary to tear down the veil of technology.

The second major concern regarding the technology type, as I mentioned, was that those who tend to fetishize technology are incapable of love, according to Adorno. This

claim is more difficult to understand and certainly to prove. What I think is the greatest difficulty with Adorno's account here is the question of which came first: the obsession with technology or the inability to love? If someone is born with an inability to love, and therefore turns to technology to fill this hole, such a problem is far more difficult to overcome. This situation seems unlikely given that Adorno is concerned primarily with how education can change what society and culture has undone. It is much more likely, then, that Adorno thinks that either the obsession with technology gives rise to an inability to love, or somehow culture has deformed an individual so that they cannot love and then they turn to technology. Adorno connects these people to coldness calling them "thoroughly cold" and "cold in a specific way."²⁷⁶

One additional note that I want to make regarding Adorno's discussion of technology is that aside from the veil, which we discussed here, the other major way in which Adorno discusses technology is in reference to the efficiency of the Nazis. We can first see such a discussion implicitly in his above train example. Adorno notes that the train system is clever and that it "quickly and smoothly" delivers victims to Auschwitz; the system then appears to be efficient in its actions. He also discusses the character of the Nazis as being marked by "a cult of action, activity, of so-called *efficiency*."²⁷⁷

Efficiency is often a characteristic attributed to Germans and certainly to the Nazi party. In particular, people discuss the ways in which the Nazis systematically and efficiently killed the Jewish people. While the Nazis did seem to have a system by which they killed the Jews (e.g., concentration camps), it is not entirely clear that efficiency was their primary concern. I had often heard the narrative of efficiency in the killings of the

²⁷⁶ Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 30.

²⁷⁷ Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 27.

Holocaust but it wasn't until my research visit to Auschwitz that I gained greater insight into this narrative and began to think that perhaps it is false.²⁷⁸ On my tour of Auschwitz, far to the rear of the camp I saw a small building with a new exhibit. The building offers an introduction and explanation as to the arrival process for victims of Auschwitz. In one particularly striking panel, it reveals that victims sometimes waited outside for days, naked, to get their prison uniforms.²⁷⁹ This example, and others like it, made me question to what extent the murders at Auschwitz were really efficient, and to connect this back to Adorno, technologically advanced.

Adorno's seems to equate efficiency with technological advancement. Yet, many millions of people were killed in very inefficient and "low tech" ways. Countless victims died of exposure, hunger, and disease. It was actually, very often, the removal of technology that killed so many. Removing beds with proper linens, proper bathrooms with drainage systems, proper food storage and sanitation, resulted in a large number of deaths. While the tracks might have been cleverly constructed, people's deaths on the journey were due to dehydration, certainly not a high tech or efficient method of death.

What I want to push at here is: one, that technological advancements and efficiency are not necessarily related. So while the Nazis may have had an obsession with technology, it was not always utilized in their mass murder; two, that the narrative of the Nazis being efficient needs to be questioned since many of their methods were not necessarily efficient. Both points are important because they reveal a number of nuances that are not necessarily present in Adorno's work or in the dominate narrative of the Holocaust. Further, as I will discuss at greater length in Chapter Four, some of the

²⁷⁸ Generously funded by Marquette University's Smith Family Fellowship.

²⁷⁹ "The Building and the Exhibition in So-Called "The Central Sauna." *Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum*. Visited January 13, 2014.

stereotypes of the Nazis, including cleanliness and efficiency, have lead current German youths to see Nazis as having some features worth emulating.²⁸⁰ It is important, then, to disprove any myth that gives the Nazis something to idealize.

In summary, Adorno is concerned about those who idealize technology to such an extent that they block out the effects of their technology, especially when those affects are harmful to others. While Adorno is highly critical of these personalities and wants us to ward against them, he does not dismiss technology entirely, after all “Education After Auschwitz” was first presented as a radio address (he even suggests “television programs be planned” to counteract the conditions I’m detailing here²⁸¹). As I will suggest in Chapter Four, we should try to harness the positive aspects of technology, especially the way in which it is involved in the media, in our positive educational plan while working to combat the fetishization of technology.

Barbarization of the Countryside

Yet another mechanism to overcome post Auschwitz is the debarbarization of the countryside. Adorno writes, “I will go so far as to claim that one of the most important goals of education is the debarbarization of the countryside.”²⁸² Adorno’s ‘debarbarization’ discussion is inspired by the Marxist dichotomy ‘Socialism or Barbarism.’ Barbarism refers to a technologically advanced society that is exploitive and

²⁸⁰ Boschki, et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,” 140.

²⁸¹ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 24.

²⁸² Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 24.

oppressive, and in which as the technology advances, so does the exploitation.²⁸³ The countryside is especially susceptible to this barbarization because it promotes the instrumental reasoning that treats objects as practically useful and allows exploitation. For example, the activities involved in animal husbandry require an attitude of coldness associated with barbarization: treating animals like objects and systematically and efficiently slaughtering them without a second thought. Further, the countryside is prone to this barbarization because it is isolated from the city and the large institutions therein. This isolation promotes further barbarization because it does not foster critical reflection or radical change, but rather a clinging to tradition that contributes to destructive ways of relating to the world.²⁸⁴

Adorno specifically addresses the countryside because it possesses a unique problem, namely location. Barbarization, as a combination of coldness and instrumental reasoning, can be addressed by mechanisms that address its roots. However, the barbarization *of the countryside* is a unique issue because the educational system present in the city would not work in rural settings due to the diffusion of the population. Adorno, then, gives possibilities for reaching out to the countryside: “I could imagine that something like mobile educational groups and convoys of volunteers could be formed, who would drive into the countryside and in discussions, courses, and supplementary

²⁸³ Woods, A. (July 17, 2002). “Civilization, Barbarism and the Marxist view of History.” *In Defense of Marxism*. Retrieved April 16, 2015, from <http://www.marxist.com/civilization-barbarism-history170702.htm>. Rosa Luxemburg credits Fredrich Engles with the quote in The Junius Pamphlet when she writes, “Friedrich Engels once said: “Bourgeois society stands at the crossroads, either transition to socialism or regression into barbarism.” Luxemburg, Rosa. (1915). “The Junius Pamphlet.” Trans. Dave Hollis. Accessed November 15, 2015, from <https://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1915/junius/ch01.htm>. However, there aren’t any Engles text in which that direct quote appears.

²⁸⁴ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 24.

instruction attempt to fill the most menacing gaps.”²⁸⁵ The importance of the barbarization of the countryside, for Adorno, is more about location than anything else, or rather, location is what makes the countryside’s barbarization of particular importance. It does not seem to be the case that the city isn’t barbarized; Adorno opens his essay by saying that Auschwitz was a relapse into barbarism.²⁸⁶ If it is the case that everyone relapsed into barbarism during the Holocaust, then barbarism is not solely an issue for the countryside. Rather, what is an issue specifically for the countryside is its remoteness, and this remoteness fosters a greater deal of unreflectiveness. Because people in the countryside are not challenged by new ideas, people or customs, it is more difficult for them to be critical of their own position. In the next chapter, I will include in my educational plan ways to address the remoteness of the countryside. Insofar as my educational plan will address coldness and collective identity thinking, which constitute barbarism, my educational plan will address barbarism *per se*.

Avoidance

In order to explain another of Adorno’s concerns regarding the mechanisms of Auschwitz, he offers a personal experience wherein he was reading a review of Sartre’s play *Morts sans sépulture*. In it, apparently, many “terrifying things” occur to the point that the critic felt uneasy. Adorno writes, “[The critic] did not explain this discontent as being caused by the horror of the subject matter, which is the horror of our world...the

²⁸⁵ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 24.

²⁸⁶ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 17.

critic wanted to avoid confronting the horror.”²⁸⁷ Adorno uses this critic to make a larger point about the tendency to avoid horror and, ultimately, the problem he sees with such avoidance: “Herein lies, not least of all, the danger that the horror might recur, that people refuse to let it draw near and indeed even rebuke anyone who merely speaks of it.”²⁸⁸ Adorno is concerned with the possibility that if we avoid the horror of the Holocaust we are more likely to repeat it. Heins explains:

A recurring motif in Adorno’s writings is the educational ideal of making the young generation willing and able to face the horrors of the recent past without taking recourse to metaphysical consolations.. He wanted students to grow emotionally and intellectually sensitive, not only to be able to appreciate works of art, but even more so to be able to take in, absorb and communicate the traumatic rendering of the barbarous crimes of Nazi Germany.²⁸⁹

Heins’ comment helps us answer, or at least sheds insight onto, our primary question regarding to whom Adorno speaks. Heins suggests that Adorno’s educational plan, here regarding avoidance, is targeted to the young generation who was not directly involved or alive for the Holocaust. Because there is no further clarification, it seems that the avoidance is a concern for all, whether your ancestor was a Nazi or a Jew. Not avoiding the horror would, depending on your relationship to the Holocaust takes different forms. For someone related to a Nazi, the concern might be to not avoid the horror that your ancestor did; for a Jew, it might be to not avoid the horror of what happened to your ancestor and what the Germans did to them. It is unclear how much these distinctions matter for Adorno and this is a potential problem. I might, if I was a relative of a German soldier, say that I know that what happened was terrible but I didn’t do it, and my uncle was forced into service anyways. He didn’t pull the trigger or work at Auschwitz. Such

²⁸⁷ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 4.

²⁸⁸ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 4.

²⁸⁹ Heins, “Saying things that hurt,” 72.

an attitude seems to be a form of avoidance insofar as it isn't fully facing the horror but looking for ways to maneuver around it. Avoidance for a Jewish descendent could include, not recognizing the role that Jews played in the torture and murder of their own, as mentioned earlier, or not acknowledging the non-Jews systematically persecuted.

Part of the reason I inquire as to whom Adorno speaks is to get a better sense of what he means by avoidance. His example of the theatre critic offers us a bit of help: avoidance for Adorno isn't total avoidance; the critic after all, saw the play and did not walk out at the parts that made him uneasy. Rather, it seems that Adorno finds the avoidance in the critic's reflection; the critic didn't explain his discontent as stemming from the correct source. This lack of explanation is what Adorno calls the critic's avoidance. Avoidance, then, seems to be another form of lack of reflection. I may learn about the Holocaust and hear the number dead but then think, that is just too many people, the numbers must be wrong or, as some do, and as we will discuss, think that the Jews must be responsible themselves for what occurred. In these instances I am avoiding facing the true horror of what occurred and dealing with it in parts, the numbers dead, where does blame fall, etc. Ultimately, then, Adorno is concerned with individuals avoiding what occurred in the Holocaust by not fully reflecting on it.

Our talk of avoidance will be helpful in Chapter Four when we discuss a positive form of Adorno's education, in particular, this new form of education needs to be unavoidable, both literally and metaphorically. In theory, the education should be one that one cannot avoid in a literal sense. If one can avoid the education (e.g., not attend the class, the museum, or the monument), then those who need the education the most might not attend or know that it is there for attendance. Additionally, the education should not

allow one to avoid the horror, like the critic did. In Chapter Four I will go into further detail regarding what this type of education will look like, I will use examples of education that seems to perpetuate avoidance, as well as examples of education that push people to engage and face the horror.

Adorno's "Education After Auschwitz" is powerful and poignant from its very opening lines. Adorno, in no uncertain terms, calls for direct and real action to be taken in our education system that addresses the horrors of the Holocaust. Some of his claims, as I have outlined here, are more thorough and supported than others. In summary, Adorno's educational plan post-Auschwitz is addressed to everyone, including specifically perpetrators, bystanders, and victims of the Holocaust both actual and potential. The education must be accessible and targeted at different perspectives or people with the clear understanding that the categories of those involved are flexible and porous. The content of the education should promote critical self-reflection and should dissuade the viewing of people abstractly and avoidance of the issues.

Adorno does not think that his educational agenda is merely theoretical, and neither do I. That is why, in the next chapter, I will take the foundation that I have laid here and develop concrete possibilities for fulfilling Adorno's post-Auschwitz education. Here I have done the work of laying a firm theoretical base from which I can deliver a concrete Adornian educational plan. Ultimately, I will argue, as I have in all three chapters thus far, that an introduction of imagination into Adorno's work will yield the most positive results for making sense of and actualizing his work.

IMAGINING ADORNO'S 'EDUCATION AFTER AUSCHWITZ'

In his radio address, *Education After Auschwitz*, Adorno calls for education to focus on combating the conditions that led to and supported the Holocaust. In Chapter Three, I analyzed and explored these conditions and in this chapter, I will draw from this analysis and present an educative plan that meets Adorno's criteria for post-Auschwitz education. In this chapter I also further wed the theory of moral imagination that I have been discussing to Adorno's work, arguing that a highly imaginative education actualizes Adorno's plan.

I begin the chapter by briefly reviewing the prescriptive account of moral imagination that I outlined in Chapter One, and then show how such a prescription can be applicable to Adorno's post-Auschwitz initiative. I highlight a number of features found in an imaginative education and usually only discussed in terms of novels. I argue that such features can also appear in a variety of media including memorials, monuments, and museums. I offer three such monuments and use them to show the possible efficacy of a highly imaginative education. I then review the major contributing factors, as outlined in Chapter Four (i.e., collective thinking, coldness, hardness, and barbarization), and demonstrate how these memorials counteract them. Although the purpose of this chapter is to give concrete examples of the type of education that Adorno argues can overcome Auschwitz, I also suggest, by way of two studies on the efficacy of current Holocaust education and two studies on the mechanisms of prejudice, that such an education can be potentially transformative. Ultimately, this chapter will give concrete examples of a type of education that I think actualizes both Adorno and moral imagination's prescription for

improving people's ability to keenly perceive and understand the world, as well as serve as a powerful tool for overcoming conditions that lead to genocide.

An Imaginative Education

In Chapter One, I outlined the major tenets of a theory of moral imagination and concluded that the major moral imagination scholars argue that we should train our moral imaginations. Martha Nussbaum, as I discussed, offers the most robust account of this imaginative education, claiming that the reading of fiction can prepare a reader for future moral activity.²⁹⁰ Ian Ravenscroft, a cognitive science, took Nussbaum's thesis further and argued that empirical data and our understanding of mirror neurons further supports Nussbaum claims.²⁹¹ The major educative factors for Nussbaum and Ravenscroft come in the form of moral perception and deliberation: reading novels allows us to practice the activities involved in moral perception and deliberation, and also can give us a paradigm with which we can model our own behavior. I return to this discussion because I want to demonstrate the ways in which such a prescription can add to our discussion of Adorno.

Moral perception and moral deliberation are both important for Adorno, especially in his discussions of Auschwitz, though he does not necessarily refer to each by the same name. For instance, in Adorno's discussion of collective identity thinking, he places a great deal of importance on an individual seeing herself as a member of a collective, or seeing an other as a member of a different collective because doing so makes it easier for individuals to treat others as an amorphous mass. Collective identity

²⁹⁰ Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*, 95.

²⁹¹ Ravenscroft, "Fiction, Imagination and Ethics," 79.

thinking, though the title may suggest it has to do with thinking alone, is actually very much concerned with perception. The Jewish people were not actually vermin or pests, but the propaganda, both visual and written, attempted to influence the way Germans perceived the Jews. An education, then, that specifically targets the way one perceives another would be particularly useful for Adorno's educative purposes.

Similar themes regarding perception appear in Adorno's discussions of coldness, hardness, and barbarization. In coldness one sees another not as a robust human being with unique wants and needs, but rather as a manipulable object. In hardness, one views herself as impermeable to harm and views others similarly. Finally, in barbarization, one views the world in ways that privileges efficiency and detachment. Ultimately, the majority of issues Adorno attributes to the Holocaust center around perceptions, specifically ones that are pernicious, false, and dangerous.

Moral deliberation is also a factor in Adorno's assessment of the improvements necessary after Auschwitz. Moral deliberation, as adopted from Blum and discussed in Chapter One, includes contemplating possibilities for actions that perhaps one has never tried before, or never tried in a particular circumstance.²⁹² Improving one's ability to morally deliberate, perhaps by giving one more options for action, or improving one's skills for abstracting from one situation to another, would, it seems, have a positive impact in preventing the conditions of Auschwitz from recurring. For instance, an SS soldier may claim that he had no choice and he was just following orders. He may even actually hold this as true in his own mind. Helping him understand that he has possibilities for action or deliberation may help to reveal that he was not as 'choiceless' as

²⁹² Blum, "Moral Perception and Particularity," 702-7.

he might have thought. This kind of revelation could be a crucial step in counteracting the conditions that led to Auschwitz.

Nussbaum, Ravenscroft, and others, who share their enthusiasm for imaginative education, almost exclusively advocate for the use of fictional novels as the medium by which the education should be delivered. The reasoning is that novels often present the reader with access to the inner thoughts of a character, and those thoughts are necessary for the reader to understand the process of imaginative exploration that is required in moral deliberation.²⁹³ Further, novels, as a medium, encourage us to let down our guard and be more receptive to the new perspectives and ideas presented within. We usually read novels, Nussbaum claims, with an open mind and heart. This attitude allows us to be open to and receptive of the kind of education that novels provide.²⁹⁴

While novels can certainly be a powerful tool for moral education, they are not always the best tools for training, especially when it comes to cases like the Holocaust. Novels, for instance, are often given from one perspective, a characteristic Nussbaum praises.²⁹⁵ However, when it comes to more complicated circumstances, multiple perspectives are necessary in order to understand with greater clarity what occurred, why it occurred, and what one might possibly do to stop such events from occurring again. Fictional novels often do not employ multiple narratives or give equal weight to multiple perspectives and are, therefore, less than ideal for situations of a certain level of complexity. Further, there is no de facto reason why a fictional narrative would be

²⁹³ Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*, 132.

²⁹⁴ Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge*, 47.

²⁹⁵ For example, as I discussed in Chapter One, Nussbaum finds Maggie Verver's perspective in *The Golden Bowl* to be a font of knowledge and a source for training. The novel is given from her single perspective, and because of that we, the readers, are given space to step imaginatively into her shoes and try out certain possibilities, as well as practicing certain ways of seeing.

preferable to non-fiction when it comes to the teaching of something like the Holocaust. Indeed, removing the event from non-fiction, and blurring it with the invented could cause people to take a distorted view of the events. Non-fictional narratives, such as Elie Wiesel's *Night*, would perhaps be a better candidate for a book that might fulfill Nussbaum's criteria. Again, though, my concern is that a single perspective may not provide the most holistic education necessary for counteracting all of Adorno's concerns regarding the Holocaust.

Though I am critical of novels as the only, or the most reliable source for moral imagination, it may be the case, however, that no single form of education can ever be sufficient to counteract the conditions that led to the Holocaust. Though one form of education alone may not yield the desired results, I do want to suggest a form of education that is not often discussed, yet potentially effective: memorials, monuments, and museums. Memorials and museums often share a number of imaginative features comparable to novels, including the telling of a narrative, engaging with the individual, and requiring perspective taking. Memorials also have the added bonus of being public and possibly incorporating multiple perspectives, thereby moving away from the private experience of reading a novel. It is because of the similarities to novels, as well as some features unique to the medium, that I find memorials to be an effective, though often undiscussed, form of education.

I am not working with a strict definition of memorial, museum, or monument; if it self-identifies as such, or is called such, then for my purposes it is. Debating the necessary and sufficient conditions of a memorial or attempting to separate the differences between a monument and a memorial is not within my scope here. Rather,

what I am looking for and interested in with these structures are the ways in which they promote an imaginative education that fits Adorno's educative plan. I am also not claiming that all memorials, museums, and monuments are imaginative or even educational just because they exist; there are certain features that make these structures educationally potent. In order to explain these features I will utilize a number of spaces that I see as exemplars of this imaginative education, as well as noting spaces that do not ultimately fulfill the imaginative education requirement, and the failings that result from that lack. My hope is that through the use of examples, greater clarity will be shed on what constitutes an imaginative memorial, rather than offering strict conditions or guidelines for memorials. As with much of this project, imaginative exploration of categories will be required to test out examples and explore possibilities.

In order to get greater clarity regarding what types of memorials might be considered imaginative, I want to return to Nussbaum's and Ravenscroft's requirements for imaginative novels and suggest that what works for the latter can apply to the former. For the most part, Nussbaum (and Ravenscroft, insofar as he adopts Nussbaum's thesis), suggests that there are three crucial elements necessary for a novel to qualify for containing an imaginative education: first, the novel must help people pick out and focus on particulars. As we saw in Chapter One, this may take the form of watching a character do the very activity (i.e., Maggie seeing her friend *as* something particular, perhaps as someone in need, or someone who has been hurt), or encouraging the reader to undergo that very activity (i.e., providing content that assists the reader in seeing Maggie as a daughter and then over time as something else, like a wife). Second, the novel must allow the reader to put herself in the shoes of another. This is most often done by giving the

reader information about the narrator (e.g., Maggie, and her inner thoughts and deliberations). The reader, then, gets to see the process of another's decision making as well as test out how that process might match up with her own. Third, the novel gives the reader space to practice or see new possibilities for action. Reading about Maggie's choice to treat her friend in a certain way, gives us an example of what one might do there, as well as the opportunity for us to test out our own response: would we do as she does?

These features are at the heart of Nussbaum's requirements for an imaginative novel, and I claim that we can find the same features in public memorials, museums, and monuments. Indeed, I think we can find these features in greater quantity and with greater complexity in these public educative spaces. If it is the case that museums, memorials, and monuments can give the visitor the imaginative experience that Nussbaum and Ravenscroft see as necessary for receiving moral training via novels, then I think we can extend their thesis to this form of education: memorials, insofar as they are imaginative, can prepare visitors for future moral perception and deliberation.

Exemplars

As I have mentioned, I will be discussing three memorials in particular because I see these memorials as being exemplar. By exemplar, I think they do two things exceptionally well: one, they are highly imaginative and two, they fulfill many of Adorno's requirements for post-Auschwitz education. By highly imaginative, I mean that the memorials and museums utilize or encourage a number of the imaginative activities I

discussed in Chapter One. For example, the memorials I discuss all incorporate narratives into their educative experience, which is an important imaginative device that we all use to see and understand ourselves and others. Narratives that encourage us to take up the perspective of others are particularly effective forms of education because they allow us to practice for similar future activities, for instance. Insofar as these memorials utilize narratives and perspective taking (along with metaphors, thinking through particulars, extension of categories, and so forth), they are considered highly imaginative and one part of what makes an exemplar memorial.

The second criteria for an exemplar memorial is that it aligns with Adorno's educative principles. In particular, the memorials I discuss contain features that combat the conditions that Adorno claims contribute to the Holocaust, such as coldness and identity thinking. As I outlined in Chapter Three, coldness, for instance, is a way of seeing others, namely through abstraction. The exemplar memorial, then, would encourage visitors to focus on particulars, rather than abstract. The exemplar memorial also wouldn't fetishize technology, encourage or allow avoidance, or any of the other features Adorno has outlined as contributing to an attitude that allowed the Holocaust to happen.

In order to demonstrate that these memorials and museums are exemplar, I will first describe their features in general terms and then argue as to how and why those features are imaginative and/or Adornian.²⁹⁶ The point of this chapter is not necessarily to give a final, definitive educative plan to stop all genocides or that will unequivocally get at and prevent the roots of prejudice. Rather, I see this chapter as a natural conclusion to a

²⁹⁶ As I have been arguing throughout this entire project, the two are very much related. Therefore, when I speak of a memorial favoring particulars over abstraction, I hope it is clear that such a move is both imaginative and Adornian.

project that has set about intending to show the compatibility and necessary integration of two theories. Specifically, both theories offer us ways of explaining how we see, understand, and operate in the world. Both theories also offer us ways of improving that perception, understanding, and operation. This chapter attempts to concretize those suggestions for improvement by calling out specific modes of education that align with both theories. While I hope that such education can be effective in overcoming prejudice, for example, this chapter is much more concerned with actualizing an imaginative and Adornian education.²⁹⁷

The monuments, museums, and memorials I discuss were ones I was fortunate enough to visit and experience thanks to Marquette University's Smith Family Fellowship. As an honored recipient of the fellowship, I was able to travel to Poland and Germany visiting a number of Holocaust memorials. It is from this research that I draw my exemplars, and from my experience of them that I offer many of my arguments for their advantages and disadvantages. I understand that going to these sites with the thought of an imaginative education in mind already skews my results in favor, or out of favor, with such an education. I did my best to remain impartial and unbiased when entering the different museums that I speak of.

Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory

²⁹⁷ Though it should be noted, and I will discuss later, both theories do suggest that if we follow their prescription, we can improve and perhaps root out some of the causes of prejudice. For example, if we are more imaginative (e.g., if we take other's perspectives more frequently and with greater depth), we would be less likely to harm other's, especially given imagination's ability to allow us to rehearse certain moral activities. Similar with Adorno: the opening of his educative plan has in mind that Auschwitz never happen again. In that way, he certainly does want to stop the type of behavior, including prejudicial behavior that lead to the Holocaust.

The first exemplar memorial of post-Auschwitz education is located in Krakow, Poland in Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory. The format of the museum is narrative and, using documentary photographs, eyewitness accounts, film documentaries and more, to tell the chronological story of everyday life in Nazi-occupied Krakow.²⁹⁸ The permanent exhibit, "Krakow Under Nazi Occupation 1935-1945," is particularly striking because it uses a number of methods and techniques that "go beyond the framework of traditional museum exhibitions" by recreating wartime Krakow complete with cobbled streets, shops, trams, and even a Ghetto.²⁹⁹ At one point in the museum, you round a corner and are assaulted by a row of giant swastika flags that you must walk between (see Figure 5). As you walk, you notice the floor is tiled with small swastikas, bright lights nearly blind you, and loud Wagner music plays.

The experience is extremely uncomfortable and is the start of the section on the Nazi occupation. As a visitor, you get a feel for the magnitude of the Nazi occupation in its ability to be overwhelming and



Figure 5. Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory. Expedia, 2015.

imposing on everyday life. Another equally unsettling experience is your walk through the labyrinthine Ghetto (see Figure 6). The walls in this part of the museum are very high and the ceilings are very low. The light is dim and as you walk through and read the firsthand accounts of life in the ghetto, the noise of aggressive dogs bark at all sides.

²⁹⁸ Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory. Kraków under Nazi Occupation 1939–1945. (2013, June 18). Retrieved October 4, 2015.

²⁹⁹ Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory, Kraków under Nazi Occupation, 2013.

The designers and creators of the museum had a very personal experience in mind when they constructed the museum and its exhibits. For instance, they wanted the visitor to have a specific and unique experience: as being a spectator “voyeuristically” wandering through the city. They also include what they call “memory machines,” stamps which you can press on paper and take with you.³⁰⁰ They claim that, “By using the “memory machines” visitors can produce their own, tangible “time documents” which they can take home with them.”³⁰¹ They describe the overall experience thusly:

The 45 exhibition rooms have been used to present Krakow’s history in an almost tangible way, enabling visitors to get a personal experience of the past, and to feel the dramatic emotions shared by the city’s wartime residents...The motto of this permanent exhibition and of the entire new branch of the Historical Museum of the City of Krakow is “the factory of memory.” The space of remembrance created at the former Enamel Factory offers the visitors an opportunity to confront the past in a personal way.³⁰²



Figure 6. Ghetto Ceiling and Wall in Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory. Photo by author, 2014.

Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory is a highly imaginative form of education because, like the novels praised by Nussbaum and Ravenscroft, it engages the visitor in similar, imaginative ways. First, the experience of the museum encourages visitors to pick out and focus on particulars. In the Ghetto portion of the museum, placards, photos and various media pick out and focus on specific families and individual victims of the ghetto. Offering stories of specific people, including first person testimonies, encourages the visitors to see the victims as specific people with unique wants, needs, and desires. This focusing helps combat the ‘mass vermin’ propaganda by

³⁰⁰ Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory, Kraków under Nazi Occupation, 2013.

³⁰¹ Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory, Kraków under Nazi Occupation, 2013.

³⁰² Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory, Kraków under Nazi Occupation, 2013.

giving the visitor the necessary information to see the individual as an individual, rather than an indistinct member of the many.

Yet, the museum does not focus on victims alone. As I argued in Chapter Three, a better understanding of ‘those involved’ is necessary in education moving forward; focusing solely on victims or perpetrators, and not seeing those positions as flexible, reinforces a false and static narrative. One particularly powerful example of this

flexibility in the understanding of those involves comes in the discussion of the man for whom the factory is named, Oskar Schindler.

While many might be familiar with the person, and the story by way of the Oscar award

winning, *Schindler’s List*, the movie is not

necessarily true to history insofar as it paints

Schindler as a fully redeemable character. The museum, on the other hand, gives a great deal more of Schindler’s complexity, including his failure as a business man and the fact that he only ever succeeded when he was able to employ slave labor via the Jews. While

Schindler was interested in saving his workers, it was not necessarily because he felt the need to preserve human life, but rather his workforce. Schindler is a great example of the

ways in which people were complicit or even active in the persecution of the Jews but are

not necessarily demonized for doing so. He is a prime example of someone who doesn’t

seem to be merely following orders, but actively took advantage of the Final Solution. He



Figure 7. Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory.
Expedia. 2015.

profited from the forced labor of his workers and freely participated in their exploitation.³⁰³

The museum doesn't shy away from this side of the man and presents this less known, and less pleasant side of Oskar Schindler. In fact, I thought this was quite a powerful part of the museum experience in general. I was not, at first, looking forward to visiting the museum. The name suggested that it would be focused on the man, Oskar Schindler. As I have seen the movie, I did not think an entire museum dedicated to a person who didn't seem all that noble, nor all that evil, would be interesting or really full of relevant information. Yet, once inside, there is actually very little dedicated to the man himself; one room, his old office, is really the only focal point on him. It seemed, then, that people who might have really loved the movie, would be drawn to the museum to learn more about the man, only to experience something even more interesting and informative; an education on the occupation of Krakow. The room dedicated to Schindler did mention his saving of Jewish workers, but also discussed his failures as a businessman and his involvement with the Nazi party. Presenting the 'hero,' and perhaps the motivation for one's visit to the museum, in a complicated and more factually accurate way, requires the visitor to be flexible in her perceiving of others: they do not necessarily and easily fall into one category or universal.

A third component in the museum's work in education through imagination is that it requires or encourages the reader to step into the shoes of another person. The example

³⁰³ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. (August 18, 2015). "Oskar Schindler." Holocaust Encyclopedia. Retrieved January 10, 2016, from <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005787> & Yad Vashem. Oskar and Emilie Schindler (n.d.) "The Righteous Among The Nations." *Yad Vashem*. Retrieved <http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/righteous/stories/schindler.asp>.

of the Ghetto section of the exhibition not only helps visitors focus on particulars, but also with this second educational step. Having access to information on specific people or families is at least helpful and possibly necessary for the very activity of perspective taking. Without any information about the person, when I imagine what it might be like to be them, I might project on the person wants, needs, or interests that are not present or actual for that person. Such projection could be potentially dangerous; I may not think that things were that bad, as I imagine it, or that they deserved it in some way. Supplying visitors with first-person accounts, however, gives the visitor as accurate information as possible for her imaginative projection.³⁰⁴ By reading the testimony, watching videos or listening to recordings, I am, as a visitor, better able to have an accurate imaginative experience for perspective taking. Further, effects, like the lowered ghetto ceilings, darkness, and dogs barking, contribute to the feeling and overwhelming atmosphere that adds to the potency and efficacy of the perspective taking. Just reading placards, something typical of any museum, does not necessarily elicit an imaginative experience of perspective taking. However, reading about the cramped spaces, while in a cramped space can aid in one's willingness and ability to imagine the situation they are reading about.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁴ First person testimony has been criticized as not being factually accurate because people in extreme distress do not remember things, or even experience things, as factually accurate. The discussion of to what extent someone who lives through the Holocaust and reports her experience is factually accurate is not within the purview of my discussion. Since I am concerned with the ability of an other to imaginatively step into the shoes of a victim, persecutor, etc., I am only interested in the ability to do so in a way that matches up with the truthfulness of the reported experience.

³⁰⁵ Museum experiences that are highly imaginative would still, generally, include literary activities, such as the reading of placards. While there are certainly powerful, purely abstract or artistic memorials (such as, the Field of Stelae in the Memorial the Murdered Jews of Europe), I don't think that such memorials are the only, or even the best method of education. As I have been arguing throughout this project, the ideal experience would have a number of different

In addition to the Ghetto section of the museum, the introduction to the “Occupation of Krakow” portion of the exhibition does a remarkable job of encouraging the visitor to imagine in the shoes of another. Further, I think this part of the museum is potent because it encourages the visitor to take up the perspective of a bystander, a perspective not often discussed (as I mentioned in Chapter Three), in Holocaust narratives. As I mentioned, the section on the occupation of Krakow, comes as a bit of surprise; one rounds the corner and straight into a very bright, very loud hallway draped with giant flags that one must walk between. This experience is supposed to mimic that of the occupation: sudden and all encompassing. This part of the exhibit does an excellent job of introducing visitors to the experience of the occupation as citizens experienced it. Again, the placards, videos and other media gives information from a variety of specific people, including shopkeepers, school teachers, and parents, about the experience of the occupation thereby giving the visitor the cognitive information needed to take up another’s perspective. The setup of the museum, then, encourages and, in a way, forces (i.e., you have to walk in between the swastika flags and listen to the music) the visitor imaginatively experience some of the components of the occupation.

Every detail of this museum has been thoroughly planned in order to elicit a striking experience for the visitor. For instance, Marta Smietana, a spokeswoman for the museum, comments about the controversial floor, “We used the swastika symbol because it says so much about the occupation...At first you think how banal it is, then you start to understand how dangerous it is.”³⁰⁶ This room, then, is significant because it doesn’t

components, including the reading of facts. However, such an experience needs to be accompanied by other imaginative features, too.

³⁰⁶ McCracken, P. (June 9, 2010). “Exhibit at Schindler factory site recalls Nazi-era Krakow.” *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*. Retrieved October 4, 2015, from

specifically focus on the experience of the victim, but rather offers the visitor a bit of insight into the perspective of the bystander by giving a glimpse into the life of an everyday citizen of Krakow at the beginning of the Nazi occupation. Receiving information on the bystander's perspective is a crucial component to understanding with greater clarity and depth the experience of the Holocaust, and Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory has a number of components that provoke the visitor to take up such perspectives.

The final major component of an imaginative education is that it offers the reader, or here visitor, the opportunity to practice and envision possibilities for action. The Museum ends with an exhibit called the Hall of Choices, which is described as depicting, "The moral dilemmas and personal choices made by Krakow's residents: the righteous and the traitorous."³⁰⁷ The Hall of Choices also features large columns that spin, as the visitor moves them, with a number of firsthand ethical dilemmas and responses in a variety of languages. One excerpt reads, "Star of David on her right arm. I looked away. I pretended I did not see her." The Hall of Choices encourages visitors to practice and envision possibilities for actions by providing them with actions that were taken, and not merely actions of



Figure 8. Two books, one says "Righteous" in Polish and the other "Traitorous" in the Hall of Choices. Photo by author, 2014.

victims and SS officers, but people from all walks of life. The Hall of Choices, as the

<http://www.jta.org/2010/06/09/news-opinion/world/exhibit-at-schindler-factory-site-recalls-nazi-era-krakow>.

³⁰⁷ Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory, Kraków under Nazi Occupation, 2013.

concluding exhibit, encourages visitors to contemplate activities and actions, including those taken and in doing so, is again, highly imaginative.

Despite encouraging the envisioning of possibilities, The Hall of Choices is not, however, without issue. Dividing actions into righteous and traitorous presents actions as a strict dichotomy, which we have already seen can be problematic. It is not always the case that an action or a person is so clearly one or another. Further, presenting actions as if they fall into those categories alone can be problematic; one may think she wouldn't join the SS or help at a concentration camp and therefore that she is righteous. There are so many other ways, however, that actions could contribute to the Holocaust, actions that might not be considered on the face of it traitorous.

Overall, Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory is a space of imaginative education because it encourages visitors to undertake the imaginative activities that Nussbaum and Ravenscroft count as necessary for novels to have imaginative potency. Insofar as the museum incorporates the same features, and I think does so in a better way (e.g., through the inclusion of multiple perspectives), it is an exemplar of an imaginative memorial. Further, the visitor

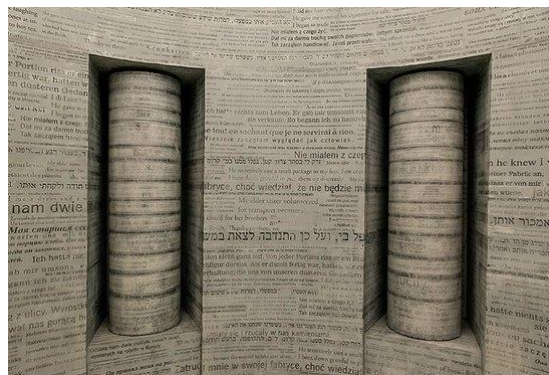


Figure 9. Oskar Schindler's Factory Photo: Hall of Choices. Tripadvisor, 2014.

should leave the museum not only with a more robust education on the Holocaust, for instance the specific history of the Nazi occupation of Krakow, but also an education that should prepare one for future moral activity. The museum allows visitors to practice the

imaginative activities required for future moral activity, and as Ravenscroft argues, practice makes perfect.³⁰⁸

While it is clear that Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory is an exemplar in terms of imaginative education. It is also, in large part because of its imaginative experience, a possible form of Adornian post-Auschwitz education. In Chapter Three, I discussed the key features that Adorno argued contributed to Auschwitz, as well as the possible avenues for counteracting those conditions, though Adorno's focus is more firmly on the former than the latter. The first component he discusses, and as I argued the one he sees to be the greatest contributing factor, is collective identity thinking. Very briefly, collective identity thinking is the unreflective slotting of oneself and/or others into collectives, often in an attempt to justify harming those outside one's collective.³⁰⁹ Adorno claims that responding to collective identity thinking takes a number of forms, though ultimately they are all synonymous: autonomy, critical self-reflection, and non-cooperation. As I discussed, critical self-reflection is primarily a focus on others, or specifically on the context in which one finds herself and others in. It is always outwardly oriented, challenging the assumptions we have about who fits into our collective and calls context into question. Shuster, as I pointed out, thinks that 'reigniting' imagination is a viable path to realizing critical self-reflection.³¹⁰ I also argued that imagination would be crucial to the activities involved in combating collective identity thinking because imagination is so crucial to the activity of picking out particulars, which is necessary when it comes to seeing people as unique, rather than part of an amorphous mass.

³⁰⁸ Ravenscroft, "Fiction, Imagination and Ethics," 80.

³⁰⁹ Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 26.

³¹⁰ Shuster, *Autonomy after Auschwitz*, 105.

Further, imagination is required for the exploration of who does and does not belong to your collective, as well as why they do/don't belong, and in what ways that matters.

As I have argued, imagination is necessary in counteracting the effects of collective identity thinking and I would like to further suggest that the imaginative education present in Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory is capable of just that. The museum encourages the visitor to experience moments of the occupation of Krakow in a way that it is much more immersive than merely reading facts on a placard. The museum, by recreating scenes from Krakow, encourages visitors to put themselves in the place of a number of different people within the Holocaust: victims, bystanders and even, to an extent, perpetrators. All of this perspective taking can awaken critical self-reflection because one is forced into a number of different social contexts to which she must respond.

Adorno also argues that post-Auschwitz education must also combat hardness and coldness. As I argued in Chapter Three, the key feature of both is indifference, specifically indifference as a way of seeing characterized by abstracting from particulars in favor of universals. Seeing someone not as a unique person, but as a rodent or part of the reason why Germany is failing, is exactly the method of abstraction that is performed in coldness and hardness. Again, counteracting hardness and coldness requires one to focus on particulars, rather than abstractions. Adorno, as I mentioned, does not require us to love our neighbor as a way to counteract indifference, but rather to understand or see our neighbor as someone that is loved by others, or capable of love. Again, Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory, in its imaginative education, promotes the activities of particularizing that counteract hardness and coldness. For instance, the museum

encourages visitors to participate on the individual level and to see those involved as particular, unique people. The museum tells the story of individuals, of families, and in doing so attempts to move away from the talk of the “extermination of the Jews,” a phrase often used but which maintains many of the problems of Nazi thinking: seeing Jews as an amorphous mass of pests. Individualizing Auschwitz helps to move away from the erasure of the particular by making a particular person’s life and story heard and felt.

The Veil of Technology is another concern Adorno has for post-Auschwitz education because it involves individuals fetishizing technology by treating it as an end rather than a means. This fetishization of technology allows or encourages people to do the same activity with humans; seeing them as objects or means to an end, rather than ends in themselves.³¹¹ Though, to be clear, Adorno is not against technology; quite the opposite, as his discussion here is in fact being broadcast across the radio. Rather, he wants to ensure that we have a healthy relationship to technology, one in which technology is used as a means to communication, connection, or whatever its service is, rather than valued in itself.

Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory is a great example of not fetishizing the technology therein. Video clips, music, sounds of dogs barking, touch screens, and so forth are all used in service of the larger goal: the immersive experience of the visitor. Though technology is used, and sometimes unavoidable (i.e., the sounds of barking), its use isn’t overwhelming or required (like the use of cell phones to scan in codes for reading placards). Much of the technology that is utilized is relatively ‘low tech.’ For instance, the recreation of streets or the mock entrance to a camp, uses some lighting

³¹¹ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 29.

features and music/sound effects, but mostly relies on a sort of realism of re-creation. The overall low tech features of the museum, especially compared to other museums, are particularly striking, but also gives an example of a proper and healthy relationship between technology and the visitor. The museum, rather than relying on the latest technology to convey its education, relies more heavily on imagination and immersion, and in doing so provides a more Adornian education.

Avoidance is another concern for Adorno in his post-Auschwitz educational initiative. This avoidance is not, as discussed, ignoring something or moving out of one's way to not experience something. Rather, as Adorno elucidated with the critic example, avoidance is lack of reflection: one avoids something by not fully engaging with it and reflecting on it.³¹² This feature is certainly hard to test for or ensure that visitors experience because you cannot guarantee that visitors are going through the imaginative activity of perspective taking while in the museum. A visitor might be too distracted by watching their kids, or concerned about a sick relative back home and not fully engage with the museum, and in that way fail to critically reflect. One can also enter the museum with an attitude of defiance; I refuse to engage with the material here and am going to just shut down all information that I am given. Again, this person will be difficult to reach, and it is not possible to guarantee that the museum gets these visitors to critically reflect. I want to suggest, however, that the museum, and the ways in which it is set up, certainly makes it difficult for people to avoid the Holocaust and the imaginative activities required of the visitor.

The path through the museum, as I mentioned, is made up in such a way that one cannot avoid certain experiences. For instance, one must walk between giant swastika

³¹² Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 23-4.

flags and over a tiled swastika floor. At a different part of the museum, a city block of Krakow is reconstructed, as are the ghetto walls. All of these reconstructions mean that while people may be able to avoid reading and reflecting on particular placards or the information placed therein, they cannot avoid the very physical experiences recreated by the museum. Because they cannot avoid some aspects of the experience, it seems unlikely that they can completely avoid the imaginative activities stimulated by the museum, such as perspective taking.

Further, being in the cramped, dark space of the ghetto makes it difficult to avoid the feelings that are provoked by that experience. The visitor may fail to reflect further on the situation of the Jews living in that ghetto, or even refuse to do so. However, this isn't necessarily a fault with the museum itself. Insofar as it is impossible to guarantee that everyone has the same educative experience, and further that everyone has the same imaginative education, Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory and every other educational tool could be considered a failure. However, the Museum does a remarkable job forcing or strongly encouraging engagement in its visitors by making certain experiences impossible to avoid, turn away from, or miss. The hope is that if one has to experience the museum, and the museum is set up in such a way that the visitor is engaged in a variety of ways and through a variety of media all at once, it becomes difficult to avoid the content and to fail to critically reflect on it.

The final major concern for Adorno in post-Auschwitz education is barbarization. As I discussed in Chapter Three, barbarization shares many features of Adorno's other symptoms insofar as it too centers on treating others as manipulable objects rather than

unique subjects.³¹³ The unique feature of barbarization for Adorno is the problem of location: he is concerned with barbarization *of the countryside*. The countryside provides unique problems insofar as it is removed from the city where new ideas and new people are found. The countryside, then, just gets the same traditions and ideas reinforced generation after generation without much reflection. In order to counteract this location issue, Adorno suggests some form of “mobile educational groups and convoys” that go around teaching the countryside.³¹⁴

The countryside, and the location issue, is going to be the hardest feature to overcome. The problem is if someone is sent from the city out to the countryside to teach, the city person may be seen as too much of an outsider; you don’t have to listen to what the city person says because she belongs to a different collective and couldn’t possibly understand our way of life. Alternatively, if you force people from the countryside to come into the city and experience the museums therein, you might get a similar resistance: these are issues for the city and not for us. Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory, then, as a static building located in the city does not solve the problem of location in the barbarization of the countryside.

While I do see the static location of the museum as potentially problematic, I do think there is something important and perhaps potent about the fact that the museum is located in the old enamel factory. As I mentioned before, the museum’s name is different than its overall message or focus; very little is about the man, most is about the occupation. People then, even from the countryside, might be intrigued to see the museum because they saw the movie. Who wouldn’t want to visit *the* factory from the

³¹³ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 24.

³¹⁴ Adorno, “Education After Auschwitz,” 24.

movie? Once there, however, the education that one receives is surprising and engaging. Visitors, then, may be more open to the educative experience because they enter the museum with the excitement of the movie and the legendary man, rather than the idea that they will be confronted with a new, imaginative experience.

Overall, Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory is an exemplar of a memorial that is imaginative at its core. Its educational material requires the visitor to undergo many of the same imaginative activities that Nussbaum and Ravenscroft argue are crucial for proper and effective education. Further, those same features that guarantee an impactful imaginative education are also crucial to Adorno's post-Auschwitz education.

Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe

Museums needn't recreate literal streets in order to engage visitors imaginatively. A different kind of memorial museum in Berlin stimulates imagination and fulfills Adorno's post-Auschwitz education, though in different ways than its Polish counterpart. The Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and Information Center is easily identified by its Field of Stelae: 2711 concrete blocks. The blocks are grey in color and begin short on the perimeter, resembling caskets, and growing taller as they move inward.

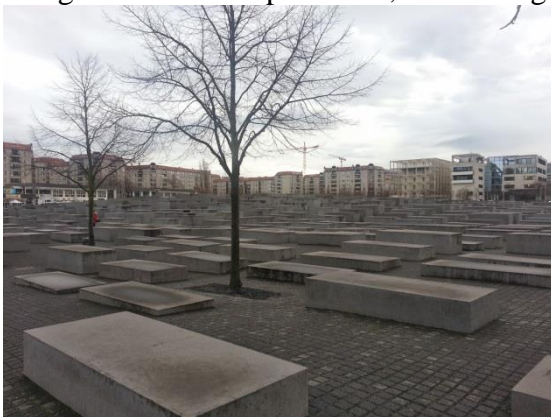


Figure 10. Field of Stelae of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. Photo by author, 2014.

Once inside, the concrete blocks tower over the visitor and create a maze like pattern.

The memorial itself has an interesting history. The museum site was dedicated to the memorial purpose over 10 years before the

project was completed. Issues with building arose, which delayed the project a number of times. For instance, after the site was chosen and construction began, excavation underneath the memorial site was started with the intention of placing a museum or information center. When the construction began, the workers unearthed Goebbels' bunker. Such a discovery is not totally unexpected as Hitler's own bunker is located just down the block from the memorial's site. This discovery delayed the construction as new plans had to be drawn up for the placement of the information center.³¹⁵

Further, the memorial at first was specifically to the murdered Jews of Europe, a group certainly at the center of the Holocaust, but not the only victims. People were concerned with the limited focus, concerned that it continued the erasure of other victim groups. Since the memorial's inception, the memorial is now also responsible for the Memorial to the Homosexuals Persecuted under the National Socialist Regime and the Memorial to the Murdered Sinti and Roma of Europe.³¹⁶ Finally,

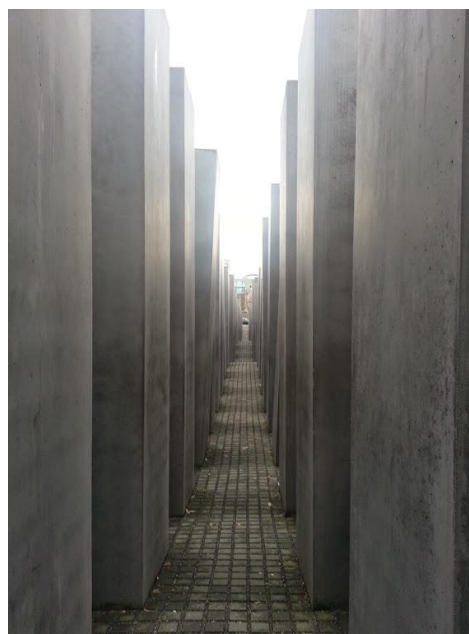


Figure 11. Inside the Field of Stelae of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. Photo by author, 2014.

³¹⁵ Chin, Sharon, Franke, Fabian, & Halpem, Sheri. (2011). "A Self-Serving Admission of Guilt: An Examination of the Intentions and Effects of Germany's Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe." *Reflections on the Holocaust*. Ed. Julia Zarankin, New York: Humanity in Action, 13-21.

³¹⁶ History of the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe. (n.d.). Retrieved October 4, 2015. <http://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/en/memorials/the-memorial-to-the-murdered-jews-of-europe/history.html>.

one of the elements of the construction required that a chemical be sprayed on the concrete in order to prevent graffiti. The company that manufactured the chemical is the same company that produced the Zyklon B during WWII.³¹⁷

Though the memorial is often criticized for its unique history, it is also, I think one of the reasons why it is so powerful: in trying to move forward in history and memorialize what happened, the events and people continued to resurface and reveal their connections to the present. The memorial doesn't shy away from its constructional difficulties and in embracing them, shows the ways in which attempts to move forward in history or progress can be complicated; moving forward often means dredging up the past and dealing with it in new and unexpected ways.

The Information Center, which rests underneath the Field of Stelae is small in size, especially compared to the rest of the museums in Berlin. The Center is broken up into various rooms which each have their own focus. The Room of Dimensions, for instance, displays diary entries, letters, and last notes that were written during the Holocaust. The Room of Families highlights 15 families' experience of life before, during and after the Holocaust. The



Figure 12. Information Center. Room of Families. Siftung-denkmal.de, 2014.

Room of Names plays a recording of names and brief biographies of murdered and missing Jews from Europe. To listen to the whole recording would take six years, seven

³¹⁷ Harding, L. (October 27, 2003). "Berlin's Jewish memorial halted after firm linked with supply of Nazi gas." *The Guardian*. Retrieved October 4, 2015. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2003/oct/27/germany.arts>.

months and 27 days.³¹⁸ The Center concludes with a video archive consisting of “Voices of Survival,” interviews with Holocaust survivors as well as a terminal dedicated to the debates regarding the very memorial itself.

The Memorial and Center are very different in style and content than Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory, which is precisely why I want to highlight it as an exemplar in order to reveal the different ways in which an imaginative Adornian education can be realized. For instance, the Room of Families, Room of Dimensions, and Room of Names all offer visitors the opportunities to focus on particulars, including particular victims, families, stories, and names. This picking out and focusing on particulars assists the visitor in practicing the imaginative activity required by Nussbaum, as well as the very Adornian activity of moving away from seeing others as an abstract mass, and instead as unique people. The Room of Dimensions, for instance, highlights letters and postcards people sent right before they were deported to a camp. In the letters the visitor is able to experience the confusion, hope, or defiance of an individual. Some wrote to their friends or their children saying goodbye or encouraging them to flee. The visitor, then, sees the individual as someone, a mother, a friend, a sister, and as having specific fears, wants, hopes and needs in the changing landscape of Germany in WWII.

Additionally, Peter Eisenman, the architect of the memorial, describes the design in a way that echoes many Adornian ideas. For instance, he discusses the concept of the memorial as one that attempts to find a balance between the mass graves that are a result of the Holocaust and the individualizing work tombs often participate in. He writes:

Today an individual can no longer be certain to die an individual death, and architecture can no longer remember life as it once did. The makers that were

³¹⁸ Information brochure. Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe and Information Center. Acquired January 6, 2014.

formerly symbols of individual life and death must be changed, and this has a profound effect on the idea of memory and the monument. The enormity and horror of the Holocaust are such that any attempt to represent it by traditional means is inevitably inadequate.³¹⁹

The Memorial and Information Center also encourage perspective taking, though in a more abstract way than the re-creation style of Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory. At the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, the experience of walking through the Field of Stelae encourages the visitor to have an experience akin to that of a victim: increasingly disorienting. Eisenman discusses the layout of the monument as purposively evoking similar feelings to those affected by the Holocaust, writing, "In this monument there is no goal, no end, no working one's way in or out. The duration of an individual's experience of it grants no further understanding, since understanding is impossible...there is no memory of the past, only the living memory of the individual experience. Here, we can only know the past through its manifestation in the present."³²⁰ He also describes the walk through the Field as 'agitating,' creating a 'slippage' and 'indeterminacy' with its seeming 'instability.' The experience of the visitor walking through the stelae mimics many of the feelings of the victims: everything that seemed familiar, or ever became familiar, was immediately disjointed or made indeterminate. This mimicry assists the visitor in taking up the perspective of the victim, something crucial for an imaginative education.

This perspective taking activity can be continued in the Information Center below. The layout of the Room of Families, for instance, mimics that of the concrete blocks up above. Information is projected on the slabs and in doing so the activity on the outside is

³¹⁹ Eisenman, P. (n.d.). Stiftung Denkmal für die ermordeten Juden Europas: Peter Eisenman. Retrieved October 4, 2015. <http://www.stiftung-denkmal.de/en/memorials/the-memorial-to-the-murdered-jews-of-europe/peter-eisenman.html>.

³²⁰ Eisenman, Stiftung Denkmal für die ermordeten.

brought in, but with specific people and information about them. The perspective taking activity, then, has more of an anchor in the Center in the form of actual victims and people.

In terms of practicing for future activity, the memorial does not give the visitor explicit direction to do so. However, the memorial certainly offers a number of possibilities for action by giving examples of what people had or had not done. Since the focus is on the victims in this memorial, most of the actions concern them as well.

Not only does the museum fulfill the imaginative requirements for education, it also as I have begun to demonstrate, fulfills Adorno's requirements. As I mentioned, many of the activities and focal points of the memorial focus on particularizing the victims of the Holocaust. By giving each victim's name and biography, each person is specifically remembered. This individuating activity, and the others like it, can be helpful in counteracting collective identity thinking, as well as coldness and hardness.

Further, similar to Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe does employ technology, but does not fetishize it. The Room of Names, for instance, is mostly dark with just the names being read and a projector with the names and biographies in different languages so that if the visitor did not understand the language in which the information was read, she might still be able to follow along. The technology, then, is limited, and used only in service of the message, rather than being the thing to experience itself. The memorial also doesn't rely heavily on technology insofar as it is merely concrete slabs. Yet, it is their placement that gives them such a high level of impact on visitors.

Additionally, the experience of the Field of Stelae makes it difficult for the visitor to experience ‘avoidance.’ The memorial begins in a very inviting and non-intimidating manner but as one ventures farther in one feels overwhelmed and a bit trapped. Further, one must walk through at least part of the field to enter the Center, so the experience cannot be avoided there either. I think that the physical aspect of the memorial, the disorienting nature of it, makes it difficult to avoid reflection. That doesn’t mean that people do; for instance a recent Crossfit expert visited the memorial and posted a photo of himself exercising on the memorials.³²¹ It is clear that people can fail to reflect on their experience. However, as I argued before, a memorial does not fail to be educative simply because a few people fail to reflect. While of course these are just the people Adorno would be worried about, as am I, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, gets close to a form of education that pushes people to reflect critically because of its layout, content, and imaginative exercises. Similar to Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory, we run into the problem of bringing the education to the countryside. The Memorial is in a static location in the heart of Berlin. Yet, the central location can actually work in its favor: it is down the block from the Brandenburg Gate and the Reichstag. Visitors to Berlin would find the memorial hard to miss, and in that way, perhaps people visiting from the countryside would be drawn to the memorial.³²²

³²¹ Mazza, E. (August 11, 2015). “CrossFit Guru Does A Handstand On Holocaust Memorial.” *Huffington Post*. Retrieved October 4, 2015. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/dave-driskell-holocaust-handstand_55c96c1ae4b0f73b20ba7ebd.

³²² One could claim that when Adorno speaks of the countryside he is doing so in a way that is metaphorical; the countryside is more a mindset than a real, lived experience. If we understand the countryside in this way then we can understand the overcoming of that mindset as being similar to Adorno’s other discussions of identity thinking. As I explained in Chapter Three, the countryside, as Adorno describes it, has to do with seeing others as manipulable objects, rather than unique subjects. This type of seeing is also a part of coldness and identity thinking. Therefore, if the countryside is more of a mindset, then, in theory, we’d overcome it with similar

Stopersten/Stumbling Block

The last memorial I want to discuss briefly is the *Stopersten*, or Stumbling Block.

This monument is
created by artist
Gunter Demnig and



commemorates victims of

Figure 13. Stumbling Blocks. Berlin. Photo by author, 2014.

Nazi oppression. The

Stumbling Blocks are just that, small cobblestone-sized plaques with individuals names engraved on them.³²³ The stones commemorate a number of victims: those who died, survived, were sent to concentration or extermination camps, euthanasia facilities, sterilization clinics, and those who were forced to flee/emigrate or committed suicide due to persecution. The Stumbling Blocks are located in 18 European countries (including Germany, Poland, and the Czech Republic) outside home or shops of the victims.³²⁴ Along with their names, the blocks contain dates of deportation, if available, and place and date of death. The stones are grouped together, as in Figure 13, if they were members

tools that we overcome the other, similar mindsets. That being said, I don't think that the countryside is purely a mindset for Adorno. After all, and as I discussed in Chapter Three, Adorno offers very specific advice for overcoming the problems with the countryside and specifically spells out sending people to the countryside to educate the people there. Adorno, then, does seem to see the countryside as being unique because of its very real isolation. With the countryside as a very literal problem, the central theme of which is its isolation, the root problem (e.g., a perverse way of seeing) remains to be solved.

³²³ STOLPERSTEINE GELSENKIRCHEN. (n.d.). Retrieved October 4, 2015.

<http://www.stolpersteine-gelsenkirchen.de/>

³²⁴ Stolpersteine. 8.20.2014 (@_Stolpersteine_) "Update: Rund 48.000 #Stolpersteine in 18 Staaten Europas (inkl. Deutschland) /// There are 48,000 #Stolpersteine in 18 countries in Europe." https://twitter.com/_Stolpersteine_/status/502186725255700480

of a family. Figure 14 shows a number of families from the same building who were all deported. Some, it is clear, died at certain camps, like Auschwitz and Chermno, while others are unknown. These bricks are placed in accordance with city officials permission (Munich has banned them, for instance) and often in collaboration with local schools. Children are assigned particular families or names of the Stumbling Block and do the research as a class or a group, or raise money for the installation of the blocks. These blocks, like most memorials, are not without their own controversy. Some people claim that these memorials are highly disrespectful; they are placed in the ground and people walk over them. Rather than have the memorials in a place of respect or silent reflection, they are on the ground, underneath citizens' and visitors' feet.

These memorials are certainly the smallest I encountered in Europe, but are truly my favorite because I think they are remarkably powerful and in very simple



Figure 14. Stumbling block. Berlin. Photo by author, 2014.

ways. One thing that is so important about the memorials is that they are 'stumbled' upon during people's everyday lives: outside shops, homes, on small and big streets, etc. In this way, they reveal just how ubiquitous the persecution was. Further, they cannot be avoided. One does not have to plan a day trip to a museum or a monument to experience these, they are everywhere, regardless of one's desire to see them or experience them. While some claim they are easily ignored and people just walk on them, in my view that is part of the genius of these memorials. As they get walked on they get brighter and

shinier. The more that they are ignored, the more polished they become and the more they stick out. Further, these monuments might be just the thing to combat the location of the countryside issue that Adorno addresses. Because they are placed everywhere where persecution occurred, and because persecution of course occurred in the countryside, placing them there would be bringing the memorial to them. Further, if the children from the countryside underwent the research required for the placement, they would receive a more specialized, more countryside specific education to which they might be more receptive.

Additionally, I think that these memorials can fulfill, in a way, many of Adorno's and Nussbaum's requirements for education. By placing them in doorways and on the street where people were deported or fled, it encourages people to stop their everyday lives and think about the particular people or family who could still live there if their ancestors hadn't been forced out. They name every person and are broad in their conception of victim, they also group people together in families so that you can see the number of people affected. In some places it is only one block, in others it is large groups. Seeing the numbers individuated, yet grouped, is a powerful exercise in individuating the victims. Further, these blocks do an excellent job forcing perspective taking because as one walks around doing one's chores or visiting houses, you are struck that such activities were exactly what other people were doing; that someone used to live here or shop here and do not any more. It makes the experience of the Holocaust much more personal. It is not in a silent place of reflection that we remember the victims; we remember them in the street, in the place where they lost their home. Thanks to these memorials, you can be struck at any moment with the idea that you are right in front of a

house where a family of Jews were pulled out and forced on a train to a concentration camp.

The three memorials discussed, Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory, the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, and the Stumbling Blocks, are all very different kinds of memorials: from a more traditional museum that focuses on reproduction, to a more artistic and abstract art installation paired with a focused information center, to small bronze stones placed in the street with minimal information. Despite the different media, styles, content and concentrations, all three are exemplar of memorials that can be imaginative and also fulfill many, if not all, of Adorno's requirements for post-Auschwitz education. It may seem, because of the varied memorials that I have discussed, that all memorials are imaginative and Adornian, but this is not the case. It is important to discuss non-ideal memorials in order to get a better picture of an imaginative Adornian monument. I am not, nor will I, advocate for necessary and sufficient conditions that are required for a memorial to be imaginative or Adornian. Rather, I can give, as in all of our previous discussions, general guidelines that need to be extended and reflected upon. In order to further distinguish an exemplar memorial, I will address a non-exemplar memorial in the form of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum.

Auschwitz-Birkenau and other similar concentration camps are preserved by the nations in which they are located as state museums. Though millions of people visit these camps, the sites do not contain a great deal of explicit, or specifically-focused, educational content. That is, most of the sites' resources are focused on preserving the past and making sure that people do not forget, as opposed to educating people about the conditions that allow for genocide and preparing visitors to recognize, or stand up against

them in the future. The space doesn't have interactive features or large pieces of abstract artworks. Auschwitz, the smaller of the two sites, has the most buildings still intact and a few of the buildings have been turned into exhibition rooms. The most powerful of these rooms feature glass cases full of the possessions of its inmates: shoes, glasses, suitcases, hair, etc. There are few informational placards around the camp, and a brief informational brochure. For the most part, the educational experience itself is the walking around and taking in the sites.

Birkenau is even more devoid of additional education material. Most of its buildings were burned by the Nazis on their retreat. There are a few barracks still intact with recreated bunkbeds so visitors can see as close as possible recreation of the victims' living situations. The train tracks are still there, and you can walk down them and into the camp. The lack of buildings, of people, and of educational placards and information, gives you the time and space to contemplate, mourn, and remember. The sites are not particularly imaginative in that they don't have the features described in the other memorials. That doesn't mean they can't be imaginative, but that there is nothing additional in the museum trying to provoke an imaginative experience.

Both sites seem to prioritize quiet reflection and contemplation and serve more as places for honoring and remembering victims than anything else. According to the museum's director, Piotr Cywinski, educating visitors has not been the museum's focus, though he wants it to be, acknowledging that the site needs to "explain itself better."³²⁵ For example, the site is looking to add more explanatory exhibitions including "how the camp worked as a German Nazi bureaucratic institution" because the experience of the

³²⁵ Kimmelman, M. (February 18, 2011). "Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching." *New York Times*. Retrieved October 4, 2015. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/19/arts/19auschwitz.html>

Nazis at Auschwitz has been purposely downplayed.³²⁶ Since the camp was established and funded by survivors and survivor groups, “they wished to erase the memory of their tormentors, as the Nazis had tried to erase them, so they said as little as possible in their exhibition about the Germans who had conceived and run the camp.”³²⁷ By not focusing on the Nazis, an incomplete picture develops of not only Auschwitz but also the Holocaust. Without any information, visitors might begin to supply their own: perhaps either perpetuating the Hitlerism narrative, or rather one in which all Nazis are seen as radically evil, another untenable narrative.

Having the survivors alone establish the purpose and focus of Auschwitz has also led to other stories being silenced. For example, “They focused on mass victimhood but didn’t highlight individual stories or testimonials of the sort that have been commonplace at memorial museums as devices to translate incomprehensible numbers of dead into real people, giving visitors personal stories and characters they can relate to.”³²⁸ At the time the camp was established as a museum, many people all over the world didn’t understand or comprehend the massiveness of the Holocaust, or denied it all together. Displaying the large number of eyeglasses, for instance, was a necessary tool to overcome this denial. Marek Zajac, the secretary for the International Auschwitz council explains, “People who visited after the war already knew what war was, firsthand. They had lived through it. So the story of a single death did not necessarily move them, because they had seen so much death, in their families and in the streets, whereas the scale of death at Auschwitz was shocking.”³²⁹ Zajac and the other camp leaders acknowledge that the motivation for

³²⁶ Kimmelman, “Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching,” 2011.

³²⁷ Kimmelman, “Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching,” 2011.

³²⁸ Kimmelman, “Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching,” 2011.

³²⁹ Kimmelman, “Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching,” 2011.

establishing and preserving the camp is not wholly present in modern times. Previously the major concern was to preserve the camp so as to respond to skeptics and critics. Now, the Holocaust as a historical event hasn't been forgotten and sceptics are few and far between. The camp is, then, looking to change; to move from memorialization to education.

Moving forward, new exhibits will, for example, work to “describe the process of extermination leading visitors step by step through what victims experienced, and end with a section on camp life, meaning “the daily dehumanization and attempts to keep one’s humanity.””³³⁰ Included in some of these activities may be offering visitors the choice of whether a mother should give a child to a grandmother or take the child with her through the selection process. The camp wants to show the impossible choices that individuals were faced with on a daily basis and show that there isn't always an easy solution to avoid what happened.

Cywinski and others also recognizes that moving forward they do not want to rely too heavily on technology, stating: “the more we use special effects...the more we draw attention from the authenticity of this place, which is unlike any other.”³³¹ In a move that almost echoes Adorno, videos and touchscreens will be kept at a minimum in order not to overshadow the site. By allowing the space to be the central focus, rather than technology, the Auschwitz-Birkenau site can continue to avoid fetishization of technology.

Another important aspect of the Auschwitz-Birkenau site is the way in which it reaches the countryside. It is, in fact, located very much within the country, as are many

³³⁰ Kimmelman, “Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching,” 2011.

³³¹ Kimmelman, “Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching,” 2011.

concentration camps. Part of the reason the camps were located in the country was that there was more space than in the city, and there were often already train lines nearby.³³² Some may argue that the countryside location of the camps is due to the locals 'barbaric' nature, those in the countryside would easily accept the horrors of the camps without saying anything, unlike the people in the city. I'm not sure that such a statement is true. Before Jews were deported to camps in the countryside, many were first rounded up and deposited from their city homes, where their many neighbors witnessed such removal. Many, too, were put first in ghettos in parts of the city. It is highly unlikely that residents of Krakow didn't realize or notice that a portion of their citizens were all moved to one area of the city, and that area was walled off. The attitude of turning away from atrocities isn't unique to the countryside, though the distance does make it more difficult to bring new ideas or education plans to the countryside. Creating a museum is easier in a large city with more resources and attendees. Keeping the camps where they are, and potentially updating their messages or foci, is important because the camps are already located in the countryside. They are already, in principle, performing the difficult work of reaching that audience.

I bring up the example of the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp not only because it doesn't incorporate a great deal of imaginative education experiences, but also because it is looking to change, and officials know it needs to: "The exhibition at Auschwitz no

³³² Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, and others were chosen for their proximity to soil suitable for making bricks, as well as local quarries. Holocaust Memorial Museum. (August 18, 2015). "SS and the Camp System." *Holocaust Encyclopedia*. Retrieved January 10, 2016, from <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007399>. Auschwitz was chosen for its railway junction with 44 parallel tracks. Auschwitz. (n.d.) "Concentration camp, Poland." Retrieved January 10, 2016, from <http://www.britannica.com/place/Auschwitz>.

longer fulfills its role, as it used to,”³³³ states Cywinski, “More or less eight to 10 million people go to such exhibitions around the world today, they cry, they ask why people didn’t react more at the time, why there were so few righteous, then they go home, see genocide on television and don’t move a finger. They don’t ask why they are not righteous themselves.”³³⁴ Cywinski and others that work with the memorial, recognize that while they have done a good job of ‘remembering’ or at least ‘memorializing’ the atrocities, the larger goal of transforming people’s lives so that such an event doesn’t again occur hasn’t really happened. There is a reason that such a reaction hasn’t necessarily emerged: it wasn’t the goal of the camp. The camp, and others like it, were preserved by survivors so that Germans couldn’t deny what had happened. The land and camps were preserved so that people could know how many died, and if the camps stood, the events could not be denied or erased from history. For the most part, the camp has succeeded in that mission: schools both in Germany, and throughout the world, teach the Holocaust every year. Cities all over the world have Holocaust museums and memorials, including cities in the US, Israel, and across Europe. Cywinski and his peers seem to realize that the role of Auschwitz must change, as the title of the New York Times article states: ‘from memorializing to teaching.’³³⁵

With this shift in focus, I think it is important to look at ways in which we can improve the educational aspects of Auschwitz and other camps like it. As I mentioned, these camps already have two powerful features: they don’t fetishize technology, and they are already located in the countryside. I think it is important to keep both these features as they are: to not inundate the camp with technology, nor move the camp, or

³³³ Kimmelman, “Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching,” 2011.

³³⁴ Kimmelman, “Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching,” 2011.

³³⁵ Kimmelman, “Auschwitz Shifts From Memorializing to Teaching,” 2011.

large parts of it to easily accessible locations. What the camp can do, however, is include more of the imaginative and Adornian features I have been describing. For example, the camp has a number of moving exhibits, in particular, the large collection of shoes, glasses, and briefcases. These exhibits help to demonstrate the magnitude of lives lost. However, within that magnitude, specificity and particularity needs to be drawn out. Focusing on one suitcase, for example, and giving the story of that family or that person could help give people a specific narrative to provoke imagination, which could be a powerful tool for that visitor's educational experience.

Another 'exemplar' feature I would encourage Auschwitz to consider is to complicate the story of Auschwitz by offering more narratives from different perspectives. I want to be clear that I am in no way advocating for all perspectives to be incorporated. For instance, I do not think that Holocaust deniers should receive a voice in the new educational plan.³³⁶ Rather, I think it is important to incorporate more narratives of people who lived and worked there, beyond just victims. As I mentioned before, the fact that Auschwitz had an involuntary brothel should be highlighted and discussed. I also think it is important to discuss in greater detail some of the guards who lived and worked there. It would also be important that, if it was the case, the guards weren't presented as evil, supernatural monsters, nor should they be perceived as entirely innocent and blind to the situation. Rather, incorporating first person narratives from the guards' perspectives could be helpful for visitors to understand the thoughts and justifications for the people

³³⁶ I don't think Auschwitz is required to give Holocaust deniers a space within the museum confines because the mission of the museum is to educate about the atrocities that occurred there. Giving deniers a voice would be antithetical to the mission of the museum. Just because Auschwitz wants to be a space of education that includes multiple perspectives, doesn't mean they need to allow all perspectives in, especially ones that are completely, first-person testimony, historical records, and so forth.

who worked at Auschwitz. Further, the neighboring village should be brought into focus in the new education plan. Discussing the role of people in the village who helped and who didn't can again be important for visitors to see with greater detail the varying roles of those involved in Auschwitz. By including other perspectives, I do not mean to take away from the victim's place at Auschwitz. I think you can maintain that the victims are important and central, while still expanding the narrative to include more perspectives. In fact, as I will discuss, getting perspectives from more than just victims can actually be helpful in seeing victims in a more positive and holistic light.

Finally, it can be helpful to include more context for the visitor. Including more narratives, and from a wider variety of people and perspectives, can help accomplish this. It can help the visitor see Auschwitz in its day-to-day activities as a real place with real operations, rather than as some supernatural place of horror. Also, context can be added by discussing recent or ongoing genocides that are similar to Auschwitz. If Cywinski and others like him, want to make sure that visitors connect the events of the Holocaust to other genocides, they should do just that in a more explicit way. For instance, showing suitcases of current Syrian refugees alongside the suitcases at Auschwitz could help people connect, in a real way, the two events. The suitcase, as I am suggesting here, can be a good way of helping visitors practice a type of seeing or understanding that is not abstract but particular. Rather than viewing the current refugee crises in a way that treats the people like an amorphous mass (e.g., as is done in coldness or identity thinking), taking particular suitcases, highlighting the stories behind each, and juxtaposing the two can help the visitor see a Syrian refugee as a unique subject and therefore in a more Adornian way, and also as one who is undergoing something similar to the victims of Auschwitz.

Incorporating more imaginative education into sites like Auschwitz could also be an important step in the movement from an education where the main focus is remembering, to one where the main focus is changing the people who visit. As much as we might like to think that seeing the gas chambers is enough to change every person's heart and mind, this just isn't the case. I think people don't connect, for example, those ovens, with the current refugee crisis. We feel that if we remember, or say 'never again,' we have done all the work necessary. However, what Cywinski, and others like him, rightly note is that mere remembering isn't enough to change people. What I will show next, is that merely knowing or learning about facts in terms of Holocaust education doesn't change people, at least not for the good, so there is further reason to think that an imaginative education is important.

A Necessary Change in Education

While it might be interesting to discuss changes in education, especially around the Holocaust, and while I may have made interesting connections between an imaginative education and an Adornian education, one may ask why any of this matters. Besides a possibly interesting philosophical discussion, do we really need to keep talking about education post Auschwitz? It is rare to find someone in the West who has never heard of the Holocaust; it is taught in schools, portrayed in movies, TV shows, and video games. Further, who cares if the education is more fact based, or reason-focused, as opposed to imaginative, narrative, and particular? As long as people know what happens and how many were killed, surely that is enough.

While I do think that this conversation is philosophically relevant and interesting, hence this project, I also think that my suggestion of an imaginative Holocaust education is important and necessary for Holocaust education moving forward because, as I mentioned, institutions like the Auschwitz-Birkenau group are looking to adjust and change as time, technology, and visitors change. Looking forward, then, I think we need to re-examine the educational techniques being used and incorporate new ones. Further, I think an imaginative education is a necessary change in post-Auschwitz education because, if we examine the trends and effects of Holocaust education now, we find that they often do not decrease feelings of anti-Semitism, or help students become the kind of people that might prevent another Holocaust. Rather, the education currently being used has been shown to encourage such behavior. In order to demonstrate this, I will focus on two major articles and discuss the empirical data conducted on Holocaust education and the anti-Semitic attitudes that persist despite, or perhaps even because of, such educational plans. I think that once we better understand the findings, the need for a new, more imaginative education, will be seen with greater clarity.

“Education after and about Auschwitz in Germany: Towards a theory of remembrance in the European context” explores the history of education about the Holocaust in Europe, and Germany in particular, and utilizes data on teachers’ and students’ engagement with those educational materials. Reinhold Boschki, Bettina Reichman, and Wilhelm Schwendemann also highlight Adorno’s role in the educational development in the wake of Adorno’s radio lecture, “Education After Auschwitz.” In particular, teachers began requesting textbooks that portrayed the Jewish population not as objects of history and victims, “but instead identify them as an independent section of

society with its own culture and identity that was persecuted by the majority of the populace.”³³⁷ However, as Boschki et al. discuss, despite these changes, textbooks, and education in general, didn’t address the roots of anti-Semitism, and therefore didn’t really get at the heart of the matter. At the same time, more information about Hitler himself emerged, as well his concepts of racism. According to Boschki et al., “This encouraged a view of history from the perspective of the perpetrators, while the role of the victims remained underrepresented.”³³⁸

According to Boschki et al., “In Germany today, the frame of education about and after Auschwitz includes a wide range of methods and approaches: classes in schools, memorial days, education programmes for adults, education about and after Auschwitz as part of religious education, and finally, films, the Internet and teaching media.”³³⁹

Boschki et al. discuss each type of education, though I will focus on a few for the sake of brevity. In Germany, teaching about the National Socialist Party and the Holocaust is an obligatory part of a school’s curriculum.³⁴⁰ However, Boschki et al. are critical of such a practice given that it occurs only in History classes, and only for 15-16 year old students. They argue that “family ties” and “the media” have already made crucial influences on students and that any teaching at this time is unlikely to have a great impact.³⁴¹ While there may be a variety of methods for educating about the Holocaust, Boschki et al. find that, for the most part, the education is not very effective:

Quantitative studies assess the awareness and knowledge of Germans, especially the current youth, with regard to National Socialism and the Holocaust. One of the most famous—and much discussed—of these studies is titled “Auschwitz—I

³³⁷ Boschki, et al. “Education after and about Auschwitz,” 135.

³³⁸ Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,” 135.

³³⁹ Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,” 136.

³⁴⁰ Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,” 137.

³⁴¹ Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,” 137.

have never heard of it” (Sibermann and Stoffers 2000). This is a prime example of a whole host of studies that identified a worrying lack of knowledge amongst the interviewed young Germans and pointed out the “increasing lack of awareness of Nazi Barbarism” (Siberman and Stoffers, p. 194, our translation). Such studies, however, have attracted strong criticisms: they treated those killed by the Nazis as little more than figures (in terms of question: “How many Jews were murdered in the Holocaust?”) and do not address any of the reasoning behind the answers given.³⁴²

Further, according to the authors, the current education sometimes has the opposite outcome to its intention with some aspects of the Nazi party are seen as positive, including “order, security, and cleanliness.”³⁴³

What is going on with the Holocaust education? Why is it the case that students aren’t hearing about, or apparently not hearing the right things about the Holocaust? The authors attempt to explain: “While National Socialism remains one of the most studied phenomena of our history, there are virtually no attempts to design teaching about this period in such a way that it does not merely convey information and cognitions, but also sensitizes students against wrongdoing.”³⁴⁴ They continue:

A further observation was the general level of ignorance regarding Judaism. Jews were seen as “victims” and “those who were gassed,” and identified as “foreigners...” At the end of the teaching block, which was very much geared towards cognitive content, the group visited the concentration camp of Natzweiler in Alsace, in France. This visit clearly left emotional traces: in the interviews students mentioned sadness, shock, dismay, shame, feelings of sickness, depression, loss...and many other feelings.³⁴⁵

Ultimately, the authors argue that “remembrance learning often fails” because the psychology behind the Nazi ideology isn’t adequately explored.³⁴⁶ Rather, education post Auschwitz focuses mainly on Hitler, the person and leader, and the large scale nature of

³⁴² Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,”140. Silbermann, A., & Stoffers, M. (2000). *Auschwitz. Never heard of it? Remembering and forgetting in Germany*. Berlin: Rowohlt.

³⁴³ Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,”140.

³⁴⁴ Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,”142.

³⁴⁵ Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,”143.

³⁴⁶ Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,”143.

the event, in terms of murders, and deportations. Such a focus doesn't seem to present an education that stays with people, or changes them because without a full exploration of a the Nazi ideology it becomes too easy to separate yourself from the people involved. Instead, you may think of those who followed along as either stupid or brainwashed. Most people don't see themselves as being susceptible to either fault. Without a clear connection, most people don't seem to make it themselves and therefore are unlikely to be moved or change.

In order to overcome the poor educational standards currently in place, the authors argue that three elements are essential to an improved education: "sensitive language, human rights education, and a culture of remembrance."³⁴⁷ As I will demonstrate, these three elements are very much in line with the imaginative, Adornian education I have put forward. The first feature that education post Auschwitz should look to is a focus on language:

After the Holocaust language proved itself to be insufficient to transmit what happened. Most of the survivors stated clearly that words cannot express their experiences of mass murder and death. For this reason education after and about Auschwitz is always in danger of failing because it is based on narratives. Nevertheless, the narratives of the victims are very important since they are the main source of history.³⁴⁸

This discussion is particularly telling for a number of reasons. First, it speaks to the insufficient nature of language to transmit what happened. I think this is why so much emphasis for so long was placed on the grand scale of the Holocaust. It is impossible for people to conceptualize so many people being treated in such a way, and so many people doing nothing. The large scale wasn't seen before, and survivors, and other interested parties, wanted to make sure the immensity was prominent in memorializing. While size

³⁴⁷ Boschki et al., "Education after and about Auschwitz," 144.

³⁴⁸ Boschki et al., "Education after and about Auschwitz," 144.

is important, it can also be a way for viewers to escape. When overwhelmed by so much, people's first reaction may be to retreat or avoid. So much suffering becomes almost supernatural, or thought of as a one-time thing that could never happen again. If we focus on individual stories, perhaps this will give people the story in more easy to digest pieces.

For example, I have been to Auschwitz before my most recent trip, when I was an undergraduate. I found the entire experience to be fascinating. When I went back for my most recent research trip, I reentered the room with the large collection of shoes. As far as I could tell, nothing had really changed in the room since I had been there a few years prior. On the way out, however, I noticed one pair of baby shoes. They were approximately the same size and style as a pair of shoes my nephew had worn the last time I saw him. All of a sudden I was struck in a new way, when thinking about my little nephew, and thought about him, specifically, going through the events. I got choked up. Now some may criticize such an event, worrying that the only way I was able to really be influenced was when I put myself or my loved one in the shoes of another; that I required myself to be at the center of the experience to feel any real empathy to others. I do not share such a criticism, especially, since an issue seems to be that many do not think they would be in those shoes. Those were others, of another time, and that would never happen to me. But when I focused on an individual "story," in the form of shoes, and connected it to a similar individual story in my life, a profound memory was created. This occurs, I think, because, as I discussed in my first chapter, we think and understand ourselves most clearly through narratives. If we're able to put ourselves into another's narratives we are more likely to see, understand, and connect to it.

I don't think that my experience is unique, nor do I think that it will work for everyone because I don't want to take one personal experience and suggest that because it worked for me, it works for all. After all, in writing this project, I think I have become more attuned to the role of imagination and narratives in my life and in the lives of others. I am, therefore, perhaps primed for such an experience to have an effect on me in ways that others are not. However, I think it is a good example of what happens when, in the midst of a large, seemingly infinite collection, particularity is found and noted. A story is heard or seen in a way that allows individuals to identify and understand, a way that is not found on the larger scale. I think these narratives, both in the non-traditional sense, like in shoes, and in the traditional sense, need to be brought into clearer focus. We need to incorporate more variety of narratives, as well as more particularity.

The second feature that Boschki et al. discuss for education reform is human rights education. This takes the form of “clarify[ing] the connection between the Holocaust in the past and humanity in the present.”³⁴⁹ As I mentioned previously in my discussion of what Auschwitz-Birkenau could do better, connecting past genocide to current ones, or the Holocaust to current anti-Semitic attacks, could serve to strengthen human rights education overall. Boschki et al. describe it thusly, “The creation of historic sensitivities is a first step towards an intensive discourse that can lead to the creation of a moral and historic identity... Through confrontation with historic topics, learners not only acquire an understanding about past situations, but also about the present and—more importantly—their very selves.”³⁵⁰ What I find particularly striking about their description here is the idea of ‘confronting’ historic topics. I think that this is correct,

³⁴⁹ Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,” 144.

³⁵⁰ Boschki et al., “Education after and about Auschwitz,” 145.

though it may be a criticism that some level against my suggestions for post-Auschwitz education insofar as what I am suggesting might be traumatic to visitors (e.g., forcing people to confront genocide) and transforms the space from a place for quiet reflection, into one that involves constant confrontation.

Many of the features I suggest may require visitors to be put in an uncomfortable position. Auschwitz, and other places like it are thought of as places of memorialization, quiet reflection, like that of a holy site or graveyard. They are places of respect, not places to make people uncomfortable, they shouldn't encourage imaginative recreations or push people into uncomfortable positions. While I am sympathetic to such a position, I, ultimately, don't think it is tenable. Again, as the director of Auschwitz acknowledges, while the place is currently one of respectful memorialization, it doesn't seem to have an impact on others beyond a bit of reverence while one is on the grounds (even that is tenuous³⁵¹). If educating about Auschwitz is important, and not just to learn about the numbers of dead, but rather to help mold people to be those who wouldn't participate, and might even intervene, in such situations, then the mood of Auschwitz, and other places like it needs to change. This doesn't mean that Auschwitz becomes an interactive free for all. There are still ways to incorporate and encourage silent reflection (if that is what is needed), but more importantly it must include places for discourse and engagement. We need to take steps to ensure that, similar to the theatre critic, people cannot easily avoid or ignore the horror, but we need to do what we can to require engagement, to confront the visitor. This doesn't mean we re-traumatize people, of course. That is why I think engagement on an individual level in a way that stimulates

³⁵¹ Durando, J. (July 23, 2014). "Auschwitz selfie girl defends actions." *USA Today*. Retrieved October 4, 2015. <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2014/07/23/selfie-auschwitz-concentration-camp-germany/13038281/>

one's imagination is the best course: individuals go who will struggle to avoid the imaginative experience, but without being forced into a traumatic, real life experience.

The third and final element of Boschki et al.'s educational reform is fostering a community of remembrance. For such a community, they suggest that social psychologist Harald Welzer's work is best for understanding and developing a culture of remembrance. In particular, Welzer argues that integrating emotions with memories help determine which memories are interpreted as important or significant.³⁵² Boschki et al. argue, "Thus it is clear: the effectiveness of education after Auschwitz cannot simply be measured using historical facts. Increasingly important are the students' emotional approaches to the historical event."³⁵³

The emotional aspect of significant memories certainly seems to be one that is missing from the majority of educational curriculum currently. Of course, including notes that encouraged teachers to make their students cry, or engage with them on an emotional level would most certainly make the educational experience feel disingenuous and fail. However, as Boschki et al. report, bringing students to the site often helped create such an emotional connection: seeing where it happened may help students imagine, or mentally envision the events with greater detail.³⁵⁴ The trip can give students context that they didn't have before, which allows them to create a more emotional response. Ultimately, memorizing numbers in a history class is not going to produce the emotional response that is necessary for significant memories to be formed. Rather, the education, as it is set up, treats the Holocaust like any other event that should be memorized, but relegated to the annals of history; something that occurred but won't again. An education

³⁵² Welzer, H. (2008). *Communicative memory: A theory of remembrance*. Munich: Beck.

³⁵³ Boschki et al., "Education after and about Auschwitz,"146.

³⁵⁴ Boschki et al., "Education after and about Auschwitz,"143.

that can counteract such response needs to be different, needs to be particular and imaginative.

Boschki et al. aren't the only researchers studying the effects of teaching students about the Holocaust. Roland Imhoff and Rainer Banse have studied the idea that ongoing suffering evokes an increase in prejudice of the victims, rather than the opposite, and focuses on the Jewish population in the study.³⁵⁵ Imhoff and Banse asked 63 first year psychology students from the University of Bonn to participate in the study. They attempted to assess anti-Semitism using twenty-nine questions containing "modern" anti-Semitic statements, such as, "Jews have too much influence on public opinion."³⁵⁶

In the beginning of the study, "The presence or absence of ongoing consequences for the Jews was manipulated...when participants read a text describing atrocities committed against Jews in the Auschwitz concentration camp." Two different groups, then, received different endings to what they read. The first, called the "no-ongoing-consequences condition" read a paragraph in which the suffering of victims has no direct implications for Jews today. The second, called the "on going-consequences condition," read a paragraph in which even today, Jews suffer because of "secondary traumatization."³⁵⁷ Three months after they read their assigned text, participants were presented with a text "about German atrocities inflicted on Jews at Auschwitz, which included the manipulation of ongoing consequences...At the end of the experiment, participants were asked to remember whether the text contained any information about

³⁵⁵ Imhoff, Roland and Banse, Rainer. (2009). "Ongoing Victim Suffering Increases Prejudice: The Case of Secondary Anti-Semitism." *Psychological Science*. 20(12): 1443-1447.

³⁵⁶ Imhoff & Banse, "Ongoing Victim Suffering," 1444.

³⁵⁷ Imhoff & Banse, "Ongoing Victim Suffering," 1444-5.

ongoing suffering of victims” in order to test for forgetting.³⁵⁸ Their results determined that “the acknowledgment of ongoing out-group suffering from past in-group atrocities can increase prejudice against the out-group. As expected, participants adopted a more negative attitude toward Jews to cope with the Jews’ ongoing suffering.”³⁵⁹

Most interestingly was that this result only came about when participants thought they were undergoing a lie detector test and that any false information would be found out. When participants weren’t put under the lie detector test, they reported the opposite idea. Imhoff and Banse claim, “This decrease of prejudice conforms to the strong social norm that the suffering of innocent people should be met with empathy, sympathy, and care.”³⁶⁰ Yet, what also needs to be noted, as they do, is that a large proportion 40% of the participants “did not recall the specific information given about the ongoing suffering.”³⁶¹

Imhoff and Banse’s article is interesting for a number of reasons: one, it shows that people know they should be empathetic to groups who are suffering but when people think they have to tell the truth, most aren’t. This first point is particularly disconcerting in terms of trying to create an educational system that can help people connect with greater empathy to others with greater efficacy. As I will discuss in my critique section shortly, one possible issue with my efforts is that there is no real way to test whether we succeed. Imhoff’s and Banse’s report only further deepen such a concern: people know what they should do or say, that is they are empathic, but they don’t *actually* feel that way. How, then, will we ever create an education that actually changes people to be more

³⁵⁸ Imhoff & Banse, “Ongoing Victim Suffering,” 1445.

³⁵⁹ Imhoff & Banse, “Ongoing Victim Suffering,” 1446.

³⁶⁰ Imhoff & Banse, “Ongoing Victim Suffering,” 1446.

³⁶¹ Imhoff & Banse, “Ongoing Victim Suffering,” 1446.

empathic if they aren't even honest about whether they are? I will save this discussion for the critique, but it is worth noting here.

I do want to draw attention to the fact that 40% of participants forgot about any specific information about suffering. 40% seems like a very large number, especially for forgetting about suffering, which is precisely what the test is trying to examine. I want to suggest that the method of conveying the information is at fault. Reading a story about what happened that ends with arguments about why the suffering of the Jewish people now connects to the past is not the kind of text that is likely to spark any real impact. As we saw, bringing emotions into the mix helps to create significant memories. Rather, what Imhoff and Banse seem to have done is bring college students in and have them read another text, in a long line of texts, and then quiz them about it. Such an education is precisely the kind that I and others are suggesting is ineffective in really influencing people. If anything, Imhoff's and Banse's analysis supports my claim that a reason-based education isn't effective. In this case, they couldn't even inspire people to remember about suffering they read about three months prior.

While Imhoff's and Banse's report is interesting, I am unconvinced as to its ultimate conclusions, because it begins with the same type of education that we see time and again failing to inspire or change students. Rather, I am much more in support and in line with Boschki et al.'s analysis and conclusions. I do think that Imhoff's and Banse's work is important insofar as it lends further credence to the idea that the memorization of cognitive facts doesn't produce wholly different people and that the current simplistic narrative of the Holocaust is not merely incorrect but also damaging. Ultimately, then, my call for a new form of education that is more particular, context focused, and

imaginative, is not merely one that fits within Adorno's framework, or is philosophically interesting, but also I think needed. As these studies indicate, education as it is now is ineffective and potentially damaging.

Mechanisms of Prejudice

Although the main focus of this chapter is the discussion of exemplar memorials (e.g., highly imaginative and Adornian), as I have been suggesting, such exemplars do seem to be needed and have the real possibility of offering an effective education. To that end, I want to briefly demonstrate how studies on the mechanisms of prejudice also support my project. Because I will be brief, I will only focus on two such studies, though there are many others that support my work and, ultimately, such a connection can be explored in greater detail following this project. I've chosen to highlight these two not because they are the most ardent supporters of my theory, but rather because they are different in kind and focus. The first, Eliot Smith's "Social Identity and Social Emotions: Toward New Conceptualizations of Prejudice" argues for a new way of understanding prejudice and how it grows. The other, "Mimicry reduces racial prejudice" is an experiment aimed at addressing and overcoming prejudice.

Smith begins his essay by outlining the traditional view of prejudice as an attitude: "Stereotypes of an outgroup are conceptualized as the perceiver's *beliefs* about the group's attributes: for example, they may be seen as dirty, clannish, musical, or

shrewd.”³⁶² In the traditional view, the overall model of prejudice and related constructs is as follows:

Negative stereotype: Members of group A are dirty, hostile, lazy...
 leads to
 Prejudiced attitude: I don't like As
 leads to
 Discrimination: I prefer to avoid As, exclude them from good jobs...³⁶³

In this traditional model, the mechanisms of prejudice are very much focused on the perceiver's beliefs about a group's attitude, and that in turn leads to discrimination.

Smith argues for an alternative view of prejudice as being centered on emotion, rather than beliefs. He argues that the beginning point for his alternative theory of prejudice is self-categorization understood as: “a view of oneself as a member of a social defined group or category.”³⁶⁴ In order to begin with the negative stereotype about group A, you must first identify yourself as not being a member of group A, or as being a member of group B. But how is such a distinction made? According to Smith's theory:

The salience of a particular social identity is a function of many factors including (1) the presence (real or imagined) of outgroup members as a focus of social comparison, (2) the perception that significant attributes covary with group membership, and (3) competition or conflict between groups.³⁶⁵

What is unique about Smith's view is that rather than begin with the other, he sees prejudice as beginning with the self. In a specific example he explains: “my taxes are burdensome; I work hard to earn a living; nobody gives me any handouts.”³⁶⁶ In order to see group A as lazy, which is the first step in the traditional model, you must begin to see

³⁶² Eliot, Smith. (1993). “Social Identity and Social Emotions: Toward New Conceptualizations of Prejudice.” *Affect, Cognition and Stereotyping: Interactive Processes in Group Perception*. Eds. Diane Mackie & David Hamilton. New York: Academic Press, 297-313, 298.

³⁶³ Smith, “Social Identity and Social Emotions,” 298.

³⁶⁴ Smith, “Social Identity and Social Emotions, 301.

³⁶⁵ Smith, “Social Identity and Social Emotions, 301.

³⁶⁶ Smith, “Social Identity and Social Emotions, 304.

yourself as hardworking and others like you as the same. This perception can be false, but it is the self and one's ingroup, rather than the other, that is the starting point of prejudice.

Smith's theory about the mechanisms of prejudice maps on to the discussions I have been having throughout this project, both as it pertains to moral imagination and Adorno. For instance, in Chapter One, I outlined Johnson's theory of prototypes in which we take prototypical examples of concepts or objects and imaginatively extend to see if others like it fit within that category.³⁶⁷ As Smith notes here, prejudice seems to have similar features: an individual begins with their context, their struggles and situation and from that begin to draw lines between groups. Adorno's discussion of collective identity thinking also parallel's Smith's discussion of prejudice. Adorno writes, "People who blindly slot themselves into the collective already make themselves into something like inert material, extinguish themselves as self-determined beings. With this comes the willingness to treat others as an amorphous mass."³⁶⁸ Adorno's discussion of collective identity thinking, just like Smith's discussion of prejudice, begins with the individual and extends outward. In particular, if I think of myself as part of the group of hard workers, it is easier for me to begin to see group B as inferior.

The theory of moral imagination and Adorno's work both align with Smith's work on prejudice insofar as all three share similar themes about the importance of the self in terms of the formation of groups, and the subsequent exclusion of others based on those groups. What is of further interest, especially for this chapter, is the ways in which an exemplar memorial can potentially overcome these mechanisms of prejudice. Insofar as Smith notes that thinking of oneself within groups is the first step in the mechanisms

³⁶⁷ Johnson, *Moral Imagination*, 8-9.

³⁶⁸ Adorno, "Education After Auschwitz," 6.

of prejudice, and that such a process of thinking involves perception of oneself and one's situation in a larger context, I think any of the memorials we discussed would be very helpful in speaking to the mechanisms of prejudice outlined by Smith. Insofar as the museums and memorials all push people to perceive a multitude of contexts and perspectives in new ways and in doing so give visitors a better understanding of their own relation to others, I think that such a push would be helpful to overcoming the mechanisms of prejudice outlined by Smith.

A second piece on the mechanisms of prejudice investigates even more so the ways in which we can overcome them. In particular, Michael Inzlicht, Jennifer Gutsell, and Lisa Legault investigate to what extent mimicry can reduce racial prejudice. They open their article with a claim that has been central to my project: "Humans are empathic animals. Basic research in neuroscience has established that we readily connect with others. We automatically match other people's motor and autonomic responses, thereby allowing us to get "under the skin," and understand their emotions and needs."³⁶⁹ If it is the case, as I have been arguing, and as Inzlicht et al. claim, that perspective taking is important to experiencing with others, why is it that prejudice exists? Wouldn't it just be the case that I should imagine I am an other and in doing so, I'd never be tempted to harm anyone? What Inzlicht et al. point out is that despite our tendency to be empathetic, such a capacity is constrained by social factors, most notably attitudes and group memberships.³⁷⁰ They mention specific studies in which white people, for example, are

³⁶⁹ Inzlicht, Michael, Gutsell, Jennifer, & Legault, Lisa. (2012). "Mimicry reduces racial prejudice." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. 48(1): 361-365, 361

³⁷⁰ Inzlicht et al., "Mimicry," 361.

less likely to mentally resonate with black people.³⁷¹ Further, they cite a number of neuroscience studies that show that we less readily resonate with people who belong to an outgroup, despite our automatic tendency to do so.³⁷²

Inzlicht et al.'s project, then, is to see if mimicry can help overcome some of our resistance for our natural empathic conditions. They ran their own experiment in which they had non-black participants watch a number of videos that had people performing generic motor tasks. The experiment group viewed a video with black actors and were instructed to mimic the actions of the actors and then completed two measures of anti-black prejudice, one implicit and one explicit.³⁷³ Their results demonstrated that mimicking outgroup members reduces implicit bias against that group.³⁷⁴

Inzlicht et al. offer a few possibilities as to why mimicry is helpful for overcoming prejudice, most central being that it increases what they call the “self-other overlap” defined as “the overlap between mental representations of the self and mental representations of another person or group.”³⁷⁵ They explain:

Mimicry kick-starts the brain system that underlies motor resonance. And it is precisely this motor resistance that is lacking for outgroups and for those we are biased against (Gutsell and Inzlicht, 2010).³⁷⁶ By having people artificially resonate with outgroup members-by having them mimic outgroup others-we are in effect priming the kind of perception-action-coupling that is normally absent for the outgroup but present for the ingroup and so important for empathy and liking.³⁷⁷

³⁷¹ Gutsell, J. N., & Inzlicht, M. (2010). “Empathy constrained: Prejudice predicts reduced mental simulation of actions during observation of outgroups.” *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. (46):841–845, 846.

³⁷² De Waal, F. B. M. (2008). “Putting the altruism back into altruism: The evolution of empathy.” *Annual Review of Psychology*. 59:279–300. Decety, J., & Jackson, P. (2004). “The functional architecture of human empathy.” *Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience Reviews*. 3:71–100.

³⁷³ Inzlicht et al., “Mimicry,” 362.

³⁷⁴ Inzlicht et al., “Mimicry,” 363.

³⁷⁵ Inzlicht et al., “Mimicry,” 364.

³⁷⁶ Gutsell, “Empathy constrained” 841–845

³⁷⁷ Inzlicht et al., “Mimicry,” 364.

So, how exactly does one go about overcoming this reaction to not associate with the outgroup? That is, how specifically can we encourage people to perform such mimicry?

According to Inzlicht et al:

Perspective-taking, or putting oneself in the shoes of another, can reduce stereotyping and prejudice, and does so by increasing self-other overlap (Galinsky and Moskowitz, 2000 and Vescio et al, 2003).³⁷⁸ Training people to approach the outgroup can similarly reduce prejudice on response latency as well as neurophysiological measures and does so by increasing the association between the self and the outgroup (Phills, Kawakami, Tabi, Nadolny, and Inzlicht 2011).³⁷⁹

The connection between Inzlicht et al.'s work and my project is twofold: first, in their opening they seem to suggest that a possible cause for prejudice, or at the very least a cause for the continued presence of prejudice is a lack of imaginative perspective taking of another. As I explained, they note that we are empathic animals, but that we fail to do so with certain others. This inability to imagine as an other is a result, or potentially a cause of prejudice. My project has been discussing the importance of such imaginative extension, and I think that Inzlicht et al. begin to demonstrate the importance of a lack of such imaginative extension.

The second place I see my project connecting is in their work on how to overcome the lack of imagination. In particular, Inzlicht et al. suggest that we train individuals to practice this perspective taking through activities like the mimicry of their experiment. My project, especially in this chapter, has suggested that encouraging others to take up the perspectives of others, especially perspectives to which they don't often

³⁷⁸ Galinsky, A. D., & Moskowitz, G. B. (2000). "Perspective-taking: Decreasing stereotype expression, stereotype accessibility, and in-group favoritism." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 78: 708–724.

³⁷⁹ Inzlicht et al., "Mimicry," 364. Phills, C., Kawakami, K., Tabi, E., Nadolny, D., & Inzlicht, M. (2011). "Mind the gap: Increasing associations between the self and Blacks with approach behaviors." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 100: 197–210.

have access to, can be extremely important to overcoming the conditions that contributed to the Holocaust. Here, Inzlicht et al. suggest that similar mimicry can be important to overcoming the mechanisms of prejudice. Further, as I have been discussing in this project, the work of improving oneself begins with the self, and in particular the self perceiving her surroundings and context in new, unique ways. For both Adorno and the theory of moral imagination, seeing the world without rigid, predefined perspectives is important to overcoming the challenges of reason. As it pertains to the Holocaust, seeing yourself as more than your group, and others as unique individuals, is important for both Adorno and a theory of moral imagination in overcoming the conditions that caused it. Inzlicht et al. lend further credence to the idea behind my project and the exemplar museums I mention insofar as the latter require visitors to take up another's perspective, go through, and in some ways mimic, the experience of others.

Potential Criticisms

Incorporating an education that focuses on imaginative activities can be a way to counteract many of the conditions that led to the Holocaust, as well as the harmful educational programs currently underway. In response to these claims, I anticipate two major criticisms, which I will address. First, throughout this chapter and the entire project, I have called for a refocusing on particulars, as opposed to abstractions or general categories. One could argue that by focusing on particulars, I am merely replacing one extreme with another. Second, one could argue that the educational system I am advocating for has no real method of measurement; we'll never know how well someone

is imagining, since it takes place entirely in their head, or to what extent their imaginative activities will impact their future decision making. Leaving such an important educative initiative entirely in the mind of students makes it too difficult to measure.

The first potential critique of my project is that I favor the particular too much and in doing so merely trade one extreme for another. This favoring is dangerous on two levels: one, as it pertains to the Holocaust, focusing on one person or family loses sight of the large number of people killed. One of the most important aspects of the Holocaust, and one of the most horrible things about it, is the number of dead. By focusing on particulars, we lose sight of the mass level of annihilation and in doing so do a disservice to what occurred. The second potential danger in focusing on particulars is that it has the opposite, but just as harmful, effect on people's view of those involved. For example, Hitlerism could be construed as a form of particularity over the abstract or universal. By lumping all the blame on Hitler and analyzing his particular actions, upbringing, and motivation, he becomes a supernatural being, one who hypnotized an entire nation into performing these evil acts, or who was so clever and crafty he was able to pull off this mass extinction without alerting the people. Focusing on Hitler gives us a particular villain, and in doing so, in not incorporating the larger view, we create a false and negative narrative.

Focusing too much on the particular can also have a negative effect on the ways in which victims are portrayed. For instance, by looking at a particular family or individual, and seeing their movement from deportation, to ghetto, to concentration camp, one could begin to give excuses for behavior. If only they hadn't gone along with the deportation, if they'd only hidden in the countryside, if they hadn't trusted their

friends that everything would be ok, if they hadn't gone to that temple at that time, if only they hadn't gone to the back of the cattle car, if only they hadn't insisted on staying with their kids, etc. In hindsight, we may have better ideas for what to do in such situations, as we read more and more narratives about what occurred. However, what can be missing, especially when focusing on particulars, is how out of the victim's control so many events and circumstances were. While for some insisting to stay with their children meant the children lived, for others it meant both died—it depended on the guard, the time of day, and ultimately, luck. When we focus on particular narratives, especially when we try and put ourselves in their shoes, we begin to come up with things we would have done differently, we see their mistakes, or we see their banal actions as mistakes. Yet, this way of viewing the situation is potentially harmful because it shifts the blame of what occurred to the victim and offers a rationale for doing so, while also ascribing much more control than any one victim had.

I agree that focusing too much on particulars can lead to false and potentially harmful narratives and that is something I want to actively work against and avoid. That being said, I don't think my proposal necessarily falls into the trap of trading one extreme for another. While I have called for a focus on particulars, I do so because Adorno makes a similar demand. As I detailed previously, instrumental thinking often focuses on abstract qualities and in doing so negates the particularities of a thing, making it easy to use. For this reason, Adorno wants to bring the focus back to particulars. Bringing the focus back to something, doesn't mean negating its previous focus. In my tree example from Chapter Two, I noted that in instrumental thinking we treat a specific tree as a resource, focusing on the tree in its uniqueness, such as a home for squirrels, a living

thing, and so forth. Thinking of a tree in this way doesn't mean that we forget that it is also a resource for humans. If anything, Adorno calls for us to constantly try and keep all of these in mind, forever shifting our focus along different axes.³⁸⁰ We, then, aren't trading one static viewpoint for another, but rather trading a general static viewpoint for a dynamic, ever-changing viewpoint of particulars.

The same can be said about imagination and particulars: most moral imagination scholars, as I discussed, argue that we need to focus on particulars in terms of moral perception, rather than begin with abstract universals. This does not mean that the abstract universals do not play a role in the act of moral deliberation, nor does it mean that we ignore them altogether. Rather, it means that we constantly test those abstracts via particulars, as we did with our example of "lie." Both of my inspirations for focusing on particulars do not advocate for their total replacement of universals, and both, it should be noted, want more particulars to play a role in creating, testing, or determining universals.

Similarly, I do not think that my education initiative necessarily leads to the extreme of focusing too much on particulars. For example, as I argued, a number of different perspectives and narratives need to go into the creation of a more robust education. I do not think that we should focus on one particular narrative, in fact I have been arguing against such an idea for this entire chapter. Focusing too much on one narrative, even if that is the narrative of the victim, gives us a false and potentially dangerous picture of what happened. What is dangerous is when the particular experience becomes the universal. Rather, as I have claimed, we need to create an education that does focus more on particulars than universals, but includes a wider range of particulars.

³⁸⁰Bernstein, *Adorno: Disenchantment and Ethics*, 274 & 322.

Further, though I have advocated for the particular because it is easier to imagine with a unique story or perspective, I do not think we should lose sight of the mass number of people murdered. Rather, I think that focusing on the particular can give us greater insight into the large scale of what happened. Because it is so immense, it feels almost impossible, or certainly hard to wrap our minds around. By focusing on particulars, like I did with the baby shoes, I was given a window into what seems like the infinite, and in that way I was more deeply affected. My view would also then certainly challenge the dominant narrative of Hitlerism, which tends to favor extremes (e.g., Hitler was an evil genius who brainwashed all of Germany into following his command). Ultimately, though I too worry about the over focusing on particulars, I do not think that my strategy necessarily encourages that to happen. Because I want multiple particulars, and am advocating for a view of the universal that is forever shaped by the particulars, I think I strike a happy medium between the two extremes.

The second major critique of my educative proposal is that it isn't measurable. Since it relies on engaging people's imagination, we won't be able to test to what extent individuals are engaging their imagination, whether they are imagining the "right" thing, and whether those imaginings will produce the desired outcome. While I agree that these three things are difficult to measure, I don't think that such difficulties render my proposal impossible. No educational plan is easy to measure insofar as education takes place, for the most part, in students' heads. However, we can try to assess the extent of learning, or the impact certain education plans or initiatives through tests such as the ones Inzlicht et al. perform.

Insofar as I am advocating for a specific type of education, one that is imaginative, it certainly is difficult to ensure that people are imagining the “right” things. For instance, someone could walk through Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory, a museum which I have argued is a paradigm for imaginative education, and either not imagine anything, perhaps because they are distracted, or maybe imagine the wrong things (i.e., they don’t empathize with the victims, they connect in some way with the Nazis instead). In the first instance, in which the visitor doesn’t imagine at all, I find such a visitor unlikely, especially in a place like Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory. Entering the room on the Nazi occupation, as I described, includes very loud music, bright lights, and the need to navigate around flags—to completely ignore or avoid such an experience would be difficult. Insofar as museums utilize a number of different media that are difficult to avoid (e.g., as I mentioned in the chapter, loud music, recreated scenes, tiled floors, flags and structures you have to move around and between), they do their best to ward off the ability to ignore, or be too distracted. I think it would be difficult, perhaps even impossible, to create an education plan that achieved total engagement and involvement with all students. I do think, though, that the type of immersive experience I am describing does a better job at engaging with the student and requiring them to imagine.

It is possible that someone who already has certain pro-Nazi feelings goes to Oskar Schindler’s Enamel Factory and rather than imagining with the victims, feels pride in what occurred, and in that sense imagines the “wrong” thing. I do think that this imaginative education might be able to reach people whose minds are in a sense already set in a certain direction. For instance, I have long thought that the Holocaust was a terrible event. While this may sound obvious, I want to make the point that my mind was

set in a certain way. However, before my experiences at these memorials, and as I have read more about the Holocaust, have developed and challenged my ideas on the matter. For instance, hearing about the brothels in Auschwitz, and the ways in which the prisoners referred to the women there, forced me to reconsider previous narratives about the Holocaust, namely that everyone there was wholly innocent. My point is that these educative experiences can still challenge our thought or deepen our understanding, even if we think we have the whole story or know everything there is to know. Perhaps a Nazi sympathizer who visits the museum (this itself might be unlikely), thinks that the events were over exaggerated. However, going through the ghetto section, with the recreated walls, sounds, and photographs, could give her a better sense of what occurred and begin to challenge her views. Again, I think this kind of education is more likely to do this activity than facts written on placards. Ultimately this criticism, as well as others like it, does not diminish the potential efficacy and potency of an imaginative education.

In this chapter I have advocated for a certain imaginative type of education in response to the Holocaust. An imaginative education has a number of key features, including: a focus on picking out particulars, especially in contrast to abstract or general terms, an emphasis on context, and the incorporation of imaginative activities such as perspective taking, and mental rehearsals. I don't think that this is necessarily an exhaustive list of features of an imaginative education, nor do I think that this education relies exclusively on imagination.

An imaginative education should be emphasized in education post Auschwitz for a number of reasons. One, because as I first argued, an education that emphasizes imaginative activities fulfills many of the key features of Adorno's education post-

Auschwitz. As I argued, for instance, an education that focuses on helping students understand the context of a situation can help people break free from their myopic cold stare, or having students mentally rehearse events can be a way to limit avoidance in observers. Second, as I demonstrated in Chapter One, performing imaginative activities, especially those involved in education (e.g., imagining to fly a plane, playing the flute, winning a race, etc.), can have a marked impact on the educational outcomes, so imaginative activities need to be included in more arenas. If the mirror neurons that fire while we imagine events occurring in our mind help us actually perform such actions in our real life, then perhaps the inclusion of imaginative activities in other forms of education can have a real impact on how people react to certain situations. Third, and finally, as I discussed in this chapter, it seems that the current system for Holocaust education is very much focused on treating the event in terms of historical facts (e.g., numbers dead, years of camp opening and liberation, etc.). This reason-based style of education isn't necessarily producing the desired impact on visitors. I think that the educational standard, then, needs to be changed and a more imaginative one would belie many of the concerns of today's education by helping to sensitize students and forming more significant memories.

Though I think that an imaginative education is a necessary tool in a more robust post-Auschwitz education, I also want to suggest that it needn't stop there. In fact, I think such an education could extend to genocide education *per se*. Insofar as Adorno's analysis of the conditions that led to the Holocaust are found in other genocides, similar educational techniques would be needed to overcome the conditions. There is certainly good reason to believe that Adorno's account is correct insofar as genocides have in

common the division of collectives and indifference towards those not found in our own collective. Breaking down these divides and seeing others no longer as radically other or as manipulable objects, is a key step in moving forward not only after Auschwitz but also post-conflict. Therefore, Adorno's work on education, and my developing of it through the work of imagination, can be extended beyond and after Auschwitz.

CONCLUSION

Overall, my project has demonstrated the integral role of imagination in our moral lives, specifically within the realms of moral perception and deliberation. Utilized in a number of different ways, such as perspective taking, projection of possibilities, and so on, imagination and its activities, is necessary, though not sufficient, for many, if not all of our moral activities.

My project has also demonstrated the potentiality of moral imagination by showing the ways in which it can help to counteract both Enlightenment thinking, as well as the conditions that led to the Holocaust. In the former instance, by integrating moral imagination in with Theodor Adorno's anti-Enlightenment critique, I developed both a deeper understanding of Adorno's critique, as well as possible avenues for combating or moving out of it. Further, Adorno's work contributes to moral imagination by bolstering it against critics who may demand a certain level of rigidity or clarity from the theory, which isn't possible. In the latter instance, incorporating an imaginative education or imaginative activities can be a potentially powerful tool in counteracting the conditions that led to the Holocaust. By incorporating Adorno's insights therein, as well as examining the current educational system, I've demonstrated the need for a more imaginative education after Auschwitz.

There are three major conclusions that I have drawn from my research: one is that imagination is integral, even necessary, for our moral activities of deliberations and perception. Many of the imaginative activities that we use on a daily basis have not necessarily been attributed to imagination, though most certainly must rely on it. Further, the more I research imagination, the less clear I become as to its purview and its limits.

This has led me to leave behind the archaic view of the mind as something with distinct cognitive faculties and rather embrace greater fluidity in my thinking of imagination.

Second, my research has concluded that Adorno's Critical Theory work is compatible with a contemporary understanding of moral imagination. In particular, that some of the ways in which Adorno describes methods for thinking of concepts or object can be explained by or supported by current understandings of concepts (e.g., prototypes) and that such current understandings are underpinned by imaginative activities. I did not necessarily go into the project with the understanding that the two would combine or support each other so well, but my research has, I think, concluded that the two are highly compatible theories that offer mutual support and depth.

Third, I've concluded from my research, that certain styles of post-Auschwitz education have been privileged, and have not been successful and sometimes even damaging to their audiences. While I went into my project hoping to advocate for an imaginative education, I didn't anticipate the extent to which such a need was present.

Contributions to the Literature

My research is important because it gives a practical educational initiative following Auschwitz. By highlighting specific memorials, museums, and the ways in which they are uniquely (and imaginatively) tackling Holocaust education, I have begun to outline education initiatives that are meeting some of the challenges facing the community today. Further, I have provided general guidelines for what others can do, insofar as they should incorporate or encourage visitors to undergo imaginative activities

in their museum experience. Further, they should reconsider the ways in which narratives are presented and the way those involved are discussed.

My research also contributes and engages with the secondary work on Adorno and therefore is of import. My project attempts to match Adorno with a theory not previously discussed within his literature. Further, my project attempts to deepen a number of his discussions by challenging some of his conclusions (e.g., the ways in which he talks about those involved), and offering a positive account to his negative critiques (e.g., a more imaginative way of viewing concepts is a way to move from simple to complex concepts). Bringing Adorno into conversation with more 21st century thinkers is an important step in keeping Adorno literature alive and thriving.

The motivation for this project was always imagination and insofar as imagination is at the center of the project, my research is important because it furthers the discussion of imagination, specifically moral imagination. Not only do I synthesize and analyze the major contemporary work on the issue, I also weave it into other philosophical discussions in order to demonstrate its import and depth. Incorporating imagination into discussions of Adorno's critique of society, as well as education post-Auschwitz, reveals the importance of imagination, its flexibility, and its potency. Insofar as my project elevates imagination's role in philosophy in any capacity, I find my project to be important.

Limitations and Further Research

Though my project may offer contributions to a number of fields, including Holocaust literature, education discussions, and general understandings of the theory of moral imagination, there are a number of limitations to my research, many of which I acknowledged within the project, but that should be clarified here. Though I argue that including imaginative activities in post-Holocaust education can be a powerful tool, I do not think that imagination alone can counteract the conditions that contributed to genocide. Rather, I think that imagination is a competent tool within an arsenal. Further, that it is a tool that has been, generally, ignored or dismissed.

Additionally, I am not sure that an imaginative education works for every person, every situation, or every education initiative. I certainly do maintain that insofar as imagination is crucial to our everyday moral activities, engaging with it can and should be beneficial in the long run. However, I don't think you need to force perspective taking, for instance, to the point that you traumatize, or re-traumatize people. Also, insofar as no single educational initiative can successfully reach every person, every time, I acknowledge that an imaginative education is not a panacea. That doesn't, however, mean that it can be a potent tool.

Looking forward, I see three major areas for future research. First, as I briefly mentioned at the end of Chapter Four, I am interested in exploring the ways in which the imaginative, Adornian education that I suggested can be extended to other cases of genocide. In order to make such an argument, I would first need to analyze the conditions that lead to other genocide, and demonstrate that they too are in line, or at least the extent at which they are in line, with Adorno's theory. For example, examining the propaganda associated with the Rwandan genocide, and the ways in which it promoted Enlightenment

thinking. I see my research extending beyond a specific genocide, and looking at whether genocide thinking, both before and after, match up with the work I have done in this project.

Second, I would like to develop my research to meet the needs of the changing Auschwitz education. As I mentioned in Chapter Four, Auschwitz is looking forward to adapting their message as more survivors pass away and as they shift from a message of “Never Forgetting” to a new, more modern message. I would like to pursue my research therein and contribute to the shift. Not only in what the content of the education might look like, namely, imaginative, but also the focus, or more likely foci, of this future education. For example, while ‘never forget’ may still remain a focus, it is certainly not going to be the only one looking forward; what else falls into that umbrella is a place I would like my research to grow and contribute to.

Third, I would like to further my work on imagination in general. I would like to further explore the philosophical spaces where imagination can be incorporated, including perhaps different areas of morality, as well as processes related to my discussion here, for instance the ways in which imagination is involved in deliberation *per se*, how imagination perhaps works differently in moral deliberation as opposed to any other form. I would like to see, and be a part of, the inclusion of imagination in more philosophical discussions, exploring its activities, definition and its integral and unique qualities.

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