

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTARY

By Fred Gustaffson, Jungian Analyst

There is no question that every culture, every institution, every person needs a paradigm by which to be guided through life. The paradigm in itself is not the problem. The problem occurs when the paradigm has run its course and developed into a stasis with little or no imagination for a new world view to be guided by. This is often the result of dualistic splitting of the psyche as we witness daily in vicious fighting between political parties, imbalance of masculine and feminine energies, extremism of conservative/liberal opinions, and religious hierarchical attitudes (I'm right; you are wrong). The result of these and other examples fosters an extreme form of fundamentalism, which Professor Stan V. McDaniel calls Deductivism, that permits little or no variation from the existing norm.

In reading through the entirety of this book, I am left with one image of an experience the author had in a grocery store, which he shared in his last chapter. He witnessed an elderly person in a wheel chair turning into an aisle only to be stopped because of grocery carts used or abandoned that blocked the way. The individual had to turn around and find another way to proceed. Let me explain. Here in this one experience lies the drama between the dominant though unconscious behavior of our present time and the struggle to find a different path in order to proceed in life. At the outset, McDaniel strikes hard at the debilitating effects of the dominant paradigm of our present time that is rooted in a dualism that gives birth to a mechanistic and reductive view of humanity in science, philosophy, politics, religion and the mass of humanity, and how we do our economics with one another and with planet Earth. Matter and spirit are separated, resulting in an attitude of "we can do whatever we want with the environment". The dominant paradigm having reached a deadened state blocks every path that would move life forward.

My own education has been centered in theology and depth psychology. Even here I have seen the separation of mind and body, matter and spirit, resulting in an alienation of our deeper self and a de-souled religion and psychology. McDaniel shares his concern that contemporary philosophy would almost certainly have a difficult time with this writing simply because he pushes into "forbidden territory" beyond the dominant paradigm. Here he has ignored the need for acceptance by the mainstream and summarized his explorations into that territory, which he developed in the speculative journeys he refined over a quarter of a century of teaching not only western philosophy, but also eastern thought and close in-class analyses of Jungian psychology. These classes were developed in large part through creative dialogue with students. Now, applying his research and knowledge to the realities of our time, he has earned the right to step out of the box and explore the territory beyond. Indeed, I am confident he felt it as an obligation.

McDaniel challenges the reader to follow him, as step by careful step, he lays out the philosophical ground and compelling reasons that philosophy itself necessitates self-criticism. It is an inquiry needed by any long-standing paradigm at any period of history to see if it is still nurturing the collective soul, or remains stuck in a status-quo with no way out. A classic and obvious example of this from past history was the difficult and even painful revelation that the sun does not go around

the Earth but rather the Earth goes around the sun. Every dominant way of thinking at that time changed in spite of the resistance it encountered. I agree with him that we are going through the same dynamic in our present time.

There is no question that every culture, every institution, every person needs a paradigm by which to be guided through life. The paradigm in itself is not the problem. The problem occurs when the paradigm has exhausted its course and become a stasis with little or no imagination for a new world view to live by. The result fosters an extreme form of fundamentalism, which McDaniel calls Deductivism, that permits little variation from the existing norm. This applies not only to religion but to science, philosophy and the popular mind as well. The evolutionary drive to push the human race forward is temporarily halted.

In the later years of my practice as an analytical psychologist and pastoral counselor, I found myself asking a client not what he or she has lived since we last met but what has lived them. Implied in that question is the awareness of how difficult it is to see how the dominant paradigm influences what we think, what standards of behavior are required, even what will give meaning to life.

It is at this point that McDaniel initiates the task of laying out the philosophical ground for the necessary revision of the present paradigm by abandoning rigid deductivism and adopting an “ampliative” point of view. But what really is the ampliative point of view for him? In short, he says: “ampliative images attempt to represent a reality outside the dominant paradigm – in particular, outside the reductionist limitation increasingly fostered by contemporary physical science.”

To this end, McDaniel carefully and with well-thought-through justification avoids philosophical dead ends. His careful analyses of the theories of Henri Bergson, John Dewey, Carl Jung and Emmanuel Kant are particularly insightful and clearly readable even for a lay person. Here is solid ground to stand on as you, the reader, proceed through his book. Every step of the way through this philosophical labyrinth may encounter a trap resulting in a fall back into the dominant paradigm. In reading this book it became clear to me how subtly this can happen. McDaniel skillfully and consistently helps the reader avoid such traps. His use of many diagrams is a welcome and practical aid for the reader, allowing the reader to better follow the philosophical thread he lays out. As he says in the text, our task, like Ariadne’s Theseus in the Labyrinth, is to follow that thread.

Of particular interest to me was his referencing the work of Henri Bergson, who applied the concept of continuity to memory and time. Even here one might wonder what that has to do with the dominant paradigm or the Ampliative Model McDaniel provides. Consider, however, how time is compartmentalized in our culture into units historically established and then relegated to the past by simply saying “well, that was then but this is now.” Time is digitalized with one second, minute, hour standing alone, disconnected from the past or future. The Ampliative view is different. Each moment in time is the result of what went before and is the ground for what will proceed in the future, not by mechanical causality but by the inherent connections found in a continuous flow, what Bergson, we find, calls True Duration. There is *continuity* of time as one happening flows into the next, ever evolving forward yet never leaving the past behind.

On a personal level and reflecting on our own history, we would have to take into account all that happened even before we were born along with all of the peoples and events that moved along the continuum to the point of our own birth. Even a minimum respect for the depth of such history can make us see that we do not stand alone but are affected by the continuity of memories in the unfolding of time, even involving people and events we may never even been consciously aware of. In that sense, history is never past. It may fade or even be forgotten but its effects play a

part in bringing us individually and collectively to where we are today. It is that perspective that McDaniel emphasizes as a requirement for any consideration of the Ampliative perspective, a perspective resisted at all times by the reductionism of the dominant paradigm.

Alongside Bergson, and somewhat paralleling his understanding of continuity, is John Dewey's reference to the word *situation*, McDaniel incorporates Dewey's special understanding of the word into his own development of the Ampliative model. Dewey says that no situation stands alone, isolated from the rest of the surrounding environment. A person in a situation is wise to see that the situation also incorporates others as well as where any of those involved came from and where they are going. It involves the elements of the past which can explain to one degree or another how the situation came to be at that moment in time, the moment itself, and the future as to how the situation is unfolding. In other words, it involves a spatially and temporally integrated event.

An example is what my wife and I experienced visiting Vietnam recently. Vietnam is a country smaller than the state of California. It has ninety million people and an estimated fifty million scooters. There are very few cars. When anyone comes to a busy intersection with no stop and go lights, everyone is on their own. Or so it seems. Imagine maybe thirty or forty motor scooters and four or five cars converging on the intersection continuously from four sides. How do you cross the street as a pedestrian? Our tour guide said to absolutely not run across the street, as there would be a certain accident. He said to walk slowly. As we did, I became keenly aware that the drivers of every scooter and car was aware of the kind of temporal situation Dewey talks about. They were aware not only of their own driving but of the driving of scooters in their immediate area, anticipating where they came from, where they were going and how it would be, further on down the street. What a metaphor for mindfulness and reading a situation deeply. In other words, none of the scooters or cars were perceived as isolated events.

There is much more to this book than the few references mentioned here. After all is said and done, the Ampliative model remains a challenge to the dominant paradigm which in turn always challenges, degrades and corrects what the former has to offer. It is seen as heresy by the dominant viewpoint and certainly not seen as anything to be taken seriously. In the end, McDaniel makes a brilliant reference to the turning of the Wheel of Life which incorporates both chaos and renewal. This painful truth that the dominant culture would call heresy is now understood to include the necessity of chaos, or, as McDaniel says, "to renew, Chaos must be allowed in the door." In the end, the reader must reflect on the truth or untruth of this statement. But then again, what choice do we have today? The elderly person in the wheelchair looking at a grocery store aisle impossible to enter had only one choice, namely, to try a different route. It is that route, based upon the Ampliative model, McDaniel so brilliantly describes, which he encourages the introspective reader to consider.

Fred Gustaffson, 9 Sept. 2016