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**Social silencing: Illustrated theories on features of the
epiphenomenon of silence in selected categories of the social**

Yard, Margaret, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1993

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A

SOCIAL SILENCING

**Illustrated Theories On Features of the
Epiphenomenon of Silence in Selected Categories
of the Social**

by

Margaret Yard

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in Sociology in partial fulfillment of the require-
ments for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
The City University of New York**

1993

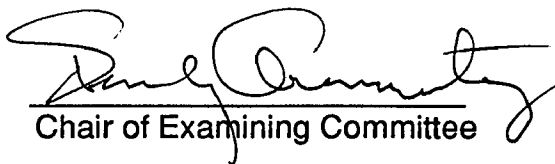
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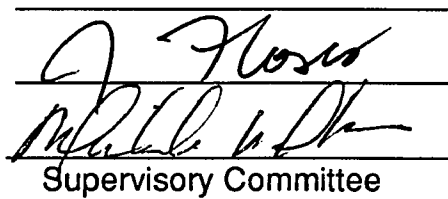
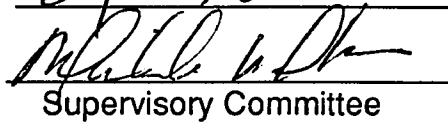
This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

8/2/93
Date


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August 5, 1993
Date


Executive Officer



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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract
SOCIAL SILENCING

by
Margaret Yard

Adviser: Professor Stanley Aronowitz

Social Silencing asserts that the word “silence” is used largely as a metaphor, not as a description of the absence of sound. And, it has a social construction and a social meaning. This meaning has to do with the suppression, repression, or non-presence of discourse. It takes three major forms: (1) political or brutal silence characterized by actual restraint (2) cultural silence which though devoid of explicit restraint is auto-induced and (3) sacred or organic silence which refers to all areas in which the verbal is inadequate, but which nevertheless remain part of the social.

This taxonomy is mapped across two major institutions and two different types of power differentials:

GENDER /WOMEN / POWER DEPRIVATION
MEDICINE /ELITE/ POWER PRESERVATION.

For example, in gender, women are considered as a “demos” or power deprived group and their silencing behaviors manifests their position in relation to power, while the medical profession is taken as an elite group whose power is connected to specialized knowledges and whose silencing is determined by their power.

The genealogy of this approach is itself tracked through the literature of sociology and psychology following the example of Freud, Fromm, and Marcuse.

This treatment of the subject calls into question that silence is a universally applied concept. It addresses the treatment of silence in the social as a “taken for granted” phenomenon, yet is manifest in the lifeworld in each and every institution of the social. Silence is identified as a specific marker which is emblematic for each period.

My procedure is to identify the myriad aspects of silence, and to prove its specificities and potent social effects by identifying it in social locations. I will analyze intersubjective, behavioral and institutional constructions and look at not only the mechanics, but the process of silence, that is, how silence is determinant under certain conditions of the social by how it influences, marks, disrupts and constructs social relations.

Preface

This work is an investigation by this author, as a student of sociology and the culture of everyday life, into several aspects of the phenomenon of silence within several institutions of the social. I will investigate silence as an object with which to reconfigure the study of everyday life. My general approach is to identify and analyze how the silences in our everyday life are constructed, and how the social in its institutional, behavioral and intersubjective loci are constructed or affected by silence. In other words, I mean to explore the nebulous quick-sand of the wordless, the unthought, and the unspeakable from a sociological perspective.

Acknowledgements

This work exists out of the fortuitous first moments of hearing Stanley Aronowitz speak in 1987 when I discovered that one can be both erudite and terribly real and “down to earth”. That moment dispelled all the ivory tower stereotypes of academia burying its passion and expression in the service of a sterile professional “front”. It was also the moment when I discovered in Sociology, a field as vast and exciting as my thoughts, a field with enough “give” in it to contain center and margins, a field requiring true reflection and ripe for debates, chock full of challenges, a field, a field, within which I might find a place. Stanley Aronowitz allowed this to happen and under his mentorship I have had the rarest of all experiences, the treasured days of being with a great teacher who is a center of intellectual life, a constant and reliable source of inspiration, and a key model of dedication to reflection and analysis and expression.. I will forever celebrate that priceless connection.

I thank my dissertation committee who together created a remarkable query in the old style of conversational challenges. The spirit in that room is memorable for all attending for it was remarkable as a process due to the interactions of Michelle Wallace, Juan Flores, and the chair, Stanley Aronowitz. I especially note the remarkable feminist presence of Michelle Wallace, who grounded those moments in strength, intellectual vigor and dignity. To Juan Flores, a special thanks for his questions and guidance, and to Jane Marcus, the deepest regard and love for the tremendous care and aggressive interest and guidance given me across the disciplines and across the world.

I thank Paul Attwell, Chair of the Department of Sociology, for his perceptions and kindnesses and strong support, and Barbara Katz-Rothman, who loved me the opportunity to debate and question and struggle with silence, not in silence, and Sam Bloom, the inspirational medical sociologist, and Bob Alford,

whose interest and care and questions are in the best scholarly traditions.

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Further, a special acknowledgement to Dr Bruce Grynbaum, Vice Chair Clinical Medicine at NYU without whose constant encouragement and help this effort could not be made. Roberta Satow did her best to keep me on track to accomplish this, as well. And, who at the most critical point did not let go-- instead held steadfast, and perceptive and fair. While Sidney L Friedman helped by "keeping silent" during this process, Richard McCarthy had no trouble "breaking silences" to discuss historical evidences of silencing and to give encouragement at crucial periods.

To my sisters of spirit, originally grouped in MASSCULT at CUNY, the precursor of The Center of Cultural Studies. Who, totally integrated into my sense of woman's pride, love and intellect: Dawn Esposito, Lynn Chancer, Suze Walters, Isabel Pinedo. A special note to the bliss and inspiration of Mary Rowell, Kate Johnson, Jill Godmilow, Joan Jubula and Nancy Erikson.

To Jed Friedman, a mother's salute, for our late night, coast to coast, theoretical discussions, and who got excited by my subject and gave me real feedback.

Michael Sahl's contribution to this work simply cannot be contained in words. There is no language which could sufficiently, efficiently delineate the degree to which this whirlwind, but tragic maestro of cajoling, demanding,

ranting, inspiring, challenging and celebrating made the production of this work a lifetime memorable event. No serious scholar could be so lucky as to have so many arguments, and so much support, and so much hassle as I, from Michael Sahl. What I learned from him, beyond all others, is the pure bliss in producing one's own creative work, and, the sacredness of leaving, however silent, evidence of our spirit and intelligences in the sand.

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SOCIAL SILENCING

1. Introduction: This thesis is a study of silence specifically as a social process. . I will interrogate the sociological notions of silence, specifically in relation to the concepts of social control, individual and group repression, social amnesia, the conscience collective, the unthought known, socialization, social fact and hegemony, the sociopsychology of abuse, maltreatment, and cultural sadomasochism, and lastly from the social organization literature, its administrative / bureaucratic language, structure, and ethic. I will concentrate on a concatenation of these theoretical notions which I believe are the grounding of a social theory of silence. This social construct identified from this analysis is what I call the "social silences" It is from this perspective that I will consider the phenomenon of silence as a social entity with observable effects in social relations. From this standpoint I situate silence as a locus from which to study everyday life.

Silence chosen as an object of study poses particular challenges. It is hard to define. It may have multiple meanings in any given social context. It is obscured and seen as a silent, disappeared, and/or secondary aspect of communication. It has multiple and frequently contradictory receptions. It is epiphenomenal, that is, only known through its effects, and these effects of silence can represent a variety of interests and social positions.

A scholarly focus on silence as a comprehensive and complex entity, thematic, or theoretical consideration is a relatively recent activity. A study of books published with silence as a central theme shows that the highest number ever (26) published is slated for publication this season of 1992-1993.

Something is in the “wind” about silence from a cultural perspective.

Subjects selected on silence vary widely from literature (fiction and no-fiction) to poetry, to religious and meditational themes, to philosophic, linguistic and feminist works. Prior to this decade, only occasional works such as Murphy's The Body Silent (1924), Cage's Silence (1939-1961), Picard's The World of Silence (1948), Steiner's Language & Silence: Essays on Language, Literature and the Inhuman. (1958), Hall's The Silent Language (1959), Malraux's The Voices of Silence (1953), Dauenhauer's Silence (1980), Tannen and Saville-Troike's editors of Perspectives on Silence (1985), and Castaneda's The Power of Silence (1987), dealt exclusively on the subject of silence. The spread of topics written from the 1920's through the 1980's concerning silence is broad, ranging from metaphysical analysis, to music, to poetics, to aesthetics, to disabilities, to linguistics and communication. Very few works deal with a comprehensive analysis, each picks “a piece of silence” reflected in a particular effect, with the exception of Picard, Hall, Dauenhauer, and Tannen and Saville-Troike. Even so, these author's commitment to “comprehensiveness” of approach to the subject can be questioned. Picard's metaphysics of silence waxes with poetic and religious incantations, Hall's classic and very popular book alerts the reader to the existence of silence as “a language in itself” which “functions “outside of conscious awareness and *in juxtaposition to words*”¹, Hall stresses a cultural awareness of silence and indicates some differences in apprehension of silence across cultures. Dauenhauer's work deals with a philosophical/linguis

1. Edward T. Hall The Silent Language New York: Doubleday, 1959-1973 pp xi

tic analysis of silence as a “subject or thing in itself”, Castaneda deals with the mystic value and power of silence, and Tannen and Saville-Troike present through the means of a set of scholarly papers, a general orientation to issues of silence from primarily a communications/psychology perspective. In Perspectives, Saville-Troike’s “Place of Silence in an Integrated Theory of Communication”² is exemplar of the complexity of theorizing on silence. She indicates that because of silence’s symbolic significance(s) serious communicative misapprehensions arise. Saville-Troike makes distinctions between the non-verbal and the non-vocal (sign language and writing). She picks out differences in meanings from what she calls silence in structural uses in conversation, and from communicative silences which are silences holding a propositional content.

A short summary of works on silence include Cage’s SILENCE somewhat misleading as a specific work on silence. It is an aesthetic treatise, more or less about a series of anecdotes about music and alternatives to music from a postmodern position, Murphy highlights the social position and experience of the disabled being silenced as a marginal social group, Steiner’s work is a rich exegesis of silence throughout literature from the classics through Marxist related literature. His work is the only one of this group which contains authors familiar to sociological and cultural studies audiences. Although, he envisions through a literary lens, Steiner discusses critical theorists and public figures such as Levi-Strauss, McLuhan, Marx, Lukacs and Trotsky.

2. Deborah Tannen and Muriel Saville-Troike Perspectives on Silence Norwood, Ablex Publishing, 1985. pp 3-17.

Currently, two recent books have been published dealing with silence in modern feminist literature and silence within the political landscape, i.e., Laurence's The Reading of Silence Virginia Woolf in the English Tradition (1991). In this key scholarly work, Patricia Laurence discovers the "multiple levels and meanings of silence" not only in Virginia Woolf, but references throughout the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries in world class literature³

In the popular market, You Just Don't Understand (1990) a book addressing conversational style and differences between genders has remained on the bestseller lists for two years. This popular success was followed by a reprint of the more basic That's Not What I Meant (1986). Tannen, an academic in sociolinguistics, popularizes silence as an ingredient in producing communicative gendered asymmetries.⁴

From a disciplinary perspective, the fields of communications, psychology, anthropology, the symbolic interactionists school in sociology, plus the management and medical sociology areas have contributed to the literature on silence: In psychology Freud (1920) mentioned silence, but it was briefly and in relation to the central subject of repression.⁵ A century later, Miller (1991) and Jack (1991) deal more directly with silence as a specific topic. For instance, in Silencing the Self: Women and Depression Jack features silencing as crucial in contributing to the loss of self in the symptomology of

3. Patricia Ondek Laurence The Reading of Silence Virginia Woolf In The English Tradition. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991. pp. 29.

4. Deborah Tannen You Just Don't Understand New York: Ballentine, 1990.

5. Sigmund Freud Introductory Lectures in Psycho-Analysis New York, W.W. Norton, 1966 @ 1900.

depression. Miller in Breaking Down the Wall of Silence (1991) exposes the conspiracy of silence which cloaks childhood abuse, as does Butler (1978,1985) in Conspiracy of Silence: The Trauma of Incest. In philosophy, Hassin (1987) marks "the Postmodern with its emblematic "silence". In contrast, Steiner (1958) marks the Modern, as "after the Word".

The institution of medicine is marked by codes of silence first recommended by the father of medicine, Hippocrates, when he wroteh "conceal most things from the patient while attending to him , turn attention away, reveal nothing of patient's future or present condition because the mind effects the body""⁶ as early as 400 B.C. The Hippocratic Oath goes on to codify silence within the profession itself as it mandates for strict confidentiality from the physican regarding all aspects of his patient's life. In medicine, until quite recently, practices performed in silence by cardiac resuscitation teams encoded selectively those marked for active life saving measures and at-temps versus those marked for passive, or placebo attempts at life saving measures, thereby contributing to a larger silence of complicity which selectively amounted ot death for some, life for others⁷.

The institution of medicine itself is shrouded in secrecy and silences. We have endowed medicine and its physicans with the authority and power to inform patients of their prognosis, including their prognostications on the severity of diagnosis and the duration of time before death. When it comes to the ethics of death, physicans show a preference "not to tell" rather than

6. *Crossroads of Medicine*. "Temple of Silence; Code of Silence". April 4, 1992.

7. Ibid. Also, *The New York Times* " Show Code; Slow Code" September 12, 1989.

to reveal.⁸ On a macro-medical basis, we currently witness a worldclass pandemic of AIDS never before experienced in human history. AIDS is symbolized since 1969 in the formation of the gay activist movement in the institution of the organization "Act Up" which emblemized the now universal AIDS insignia: SILENCE = DEATH.

What I propose is not another linguistic analysis as to the word and its signifiers, but a historiocultural sociological analysis of silence as an expression of traditional, modern, and postmodern social relations. My aim is to illustrate that silence can exist as an locus from which to reconfigure the study of everyday life. This locus can only be identified by determining the universal and varied qualities of silence and the integrity of silence within the social fabric. Basic questions asked are:

What is the nature of silence?

Is silence social?

If so, how does it configure in the sociological notional lexicon?

Because of its very universality, untested but customary assumptions are made regarding its meanings, effects, and representations. Because of the myriad of understandings, meanings, definitions, impressions, usages, effects, and applications, silence as a phemonemon generates its own problematic.

8. New York Newsday. "Death by Silence; A failure to notify costs lives" Nina Bernstein. January 15, 1993. pp 7., 38.

World News Review. "The Silence About Women" Estrella Miranda-Manquis. February , 1993. pp26.

Once silence is identified as an integral social ingredient some theoretical and notional issues under consideration in the problematic of silence are:

- A. If silences are social, what do they have in common?
- B. If the silences contradict each other, why are they all silences"?
- C. Given the possibility of construction of a taxonomy of social silences, in what sense are the types or units of social silence issue or movement related? That is, is there a "feminist" initiative, a "left" initiative, an environmentalist initiative, a gay initiative ?
- D. Given the connection of social movements to the activity of agency, what is the relevance of social silences to social control, social amnesia, to repression/oppression/suppression, to agency?
- E. How and with what effects do the historiocultural contexts frame social silences? Conversely, how do social silences participate in the framing of specific cultural and historical moments?

This investigation into the categories social silences is made with the following assumptions:

- 1. Social silences are a universal phenomenon, i.e, they have comprehensive "effects"
- 2. Social silences have transhistorical and transcultural aspects
- 3. Social silences are a key component in the formation of knowledge power axes
- 4. Throughout periods, each epoch is marked by it's predominant forms of social silence

(1) Silence is a **universal** expression with universal usages. However, although the word is universal the meanings may be very diverse. The universality of silence is demonstrated by the embedded quality of silence in languages as evidenced by the number and extent of metaphorical references in both spoken and written Western languages. Silence as a real and powerful presence is verified in the excess autarchy of the metaphorical marking and re-marking of all human conduct over the millennia. What I mean is that there is an overdetermined valence (or weightiness) of silence in the social. Language is shot through with metaphors of silence which seem to have very powerful effects. Styles of metaphors change over the millennia, yet silence metaphors continue to have force despite changing customs and styles of culture.

In other words, silence in language has an overdetermined position and has a force and direction (positive or negative) of that force which usually has values stuck to it.

First of all, silence in any but the strictest use as “no sound” is always a metaphor, a figure of speech. Like other the other figures of speech it is used to evoke a feeling about something, even a vivid feeling, yet, not to be “specific” i.e., a behavior is *like* not having any sound, or it *reminds us* of the absence of some sound. The reason for this has to be that the social phenomena referred to as “silence” are hard to describe, so a metaphor is used to refer to them rather than a definition. Silence metaphors are shot through all languages and across cultures. The sheer density of referents assure the prevalency and “in-commonness” of silence in language.

(2) Social silences have **transhistorical and transcultural** locations: The "tracings" and "trackings" of silence as metaphor drag through popular cultures and remain in the shared memory long after contexts and meanings have disappeared from practical understanding. Because of the impossibility of documenting the spread and depth of transcultural and transhistorical occurrences of silence in this work a set of limited case studies and examples are presented for reflection. Because this approach is crosscultural and transhistorical, some discussion will be made of specific instances where certain silences tend to appear or be produced in specific time periods.

(3) Silence is a key component in the formation of **knowledge/power relations**. Forms of rationality are evidenced through the strategies, technologies and programmes of power and that of "certain non-discursive social and institutional practices, and that of certain effects produced within the social field."⁹ (Foucault 1972-1977)

(4) Throughout periods, each **epoch is marked by its predominant forms** of social silence. Each epoch is marked with unique expressions and forms of silence similar to the process of generational imprinting, i.e., how each generation, despite experiencing the same psychological and physiological developmental patterns and schema, and evolution through a life course must mark and remark artifacts and interpret phenomena with its unique generational sign.

9. Michel Foucault, Power/Knowledge Selected Interviews and other Writings, 1972-1977. Ed. Colon Gordon, New York: Pantheon Books, 1980. pp. 246.

A change occurred as usages of silence evolved from silence considered to be "empty", the late modern and postmodern periods when it is considered "full" (of codes) and fully mutable, with a historicity of its own sign, signifying a lack of stability, and with a polymorphous character. Emerging from being considered "merely descriptive, or as a marker for codes, as in the romantic period where silence was used to signify the peaceful calm of idyllic nature (a space or time (relatively) without noise), or the sacred state of inner quietude, silence seems to begin to change in its passive referent to a mixed referent, both active and passive, as noted in the emerging feminist literature of the moderns, particularly the prose of Virginia Woolf. Virginia Woolf was the first feminist writer to acknowledge a positive enabling aspect of women's silence, devoting much of her work to its description and adding further clarification of silence being central to the positive aspects of women's communications.

With the impact of post structuralism, Léotard, Baudrillard, Derrida, Foucault, Lacan, and of feminism, particularly, French feminism with Cixous, Clement, Wittig, and Irigaray, silence dropped out of the backdrop business to become emblematic of the postmodern epoch itself. I speak of silence's particular articulation in the postmodern, a referent symbolizing the unbounded, indeterminate, fragmentation, destruction of the canon. The postmodern epistemological refusal of the a-priori, the contradiction and reversal of categories, the transmutation of the material and real into a society of signs, that is, culminating with the "death of the social".

Baudrillard heralds the "death of the social" as postmodern specifically:

"a speechless mass for every hollow spokesman without a past. Admirable conjunction, between those who have nothing to say, and the masses who do not speak. Ominous emptiness of all discourse. No hysteria or potential fascism, but simulation by precipitation of every lost referential. Black box of every referential, every uncaptured meaning, of impossible history, of untraceable systems of representation, the mass is what remains when the social has been completely removed."¹⁰

Lastly, the last gasp, the articulation of the unrepresentable, that is, the repulsion even of mimesis, a literature that in Hassan's terms "often seeks its limits, entertains its "exhaustion", subverts itself in forms of articulate "silence". Hassan, likening silence to the Kantian Sublime--the formlessness, the emptiness, of the Absolute---. What Hassan hints is that silence itself is the metaphor for the postmodern, and the postmodern itself is a signal for "a certain distress of self and civilization, a certain revulsion of language"¹¹ Thus, at the end of the millenium the postmodern theorists liken the post-modern to silence, but this silence is encrusted with the dead eczema of Weberian anomie, Marxist idealism, Nietzschean nihilism and is flung into fashionable, indeterminate chaos, becomining and unbecoming again "the thing in itself".

10. Jean Baudrillard. In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities. New York: Jean Baudrillard and Semiotext (e), 1983. pp. 3-4.

11. Ihab Hassan. The Postmodern Turn. Ohio State University Press, 1989. pp.169.

Approach: Along with exploring the pervasive qualities of silence the attitude is one of play in taking the ubiquitous notions of silence to explore their "taken for granted" or "common sense" qualities, in order to configure a set of working principles explanatory of the non-discursive social and institutional practices and that of certain effects produced within the social field.

The methodology is a brief literature review across relevant disciplines and with a short historical overview of various philosophical positions relating to silence. A preliminary investigative approach focuses on obtaining a clarity of identification of the object of study. This necessitates a survey of the use of the word silence through a broad spectrum literature review of some philosophy, literature and linguistics and the social sciences, particularly social psychology, medical sociology and the symbolic interactionist school of sociology. Further, literature of various periods representing pre-modern, modern and post modern will be discussed specifically as to how the usages of silence tend to be presented and utilized in the period.

A theoretical notional analysis of key concepts contributes to an understanding of the grounding of a theoretical position on silence. A "Grammar of Silence" will be developed to ascertain how the usages of silence in language is considered? For example, is it a noun, a verb, a thing, a quality, an action-, or is the critical usage mainly metaphorical? If so, what are the determinants, what is the possible meaning(s)? What are the transcultural, transhistorical implications of the usage of silence from a vertical (cultural) and horizontal (time) perspective?

From an analysis of the grammar (usages) of silence, three major forms of silence are derived. The three forms are:

1. Political Silence
2. Sacred Silence
3. Cultural Silence
4. Acoustic Silence (the fourth form is not considered a social silence)

These forms are put into action as a unit of analysis in the taxonomy of social silences. I refer here to the typing of groups of silence into taxonomies which will be supported by illustrations from various texts: literature, poetry, histories, newspapers, journals, cultural material, etc.

The next procedure is to select specific institutions of the social and use the following supporting techniques in the primary investigation:

Observation of pre-defined social silence behavior within the selected institutions or social categories from an ethnographic standpoint, using the a multiple case study research methodology. In certain cases, such as the investigation of social silence within the institution of medicine, the examination of medical records and the use of surveys is employed. The category selection for case studies of social institutions has been limited to the institutions of family/gender, medicine and media due to time requirements and the large amount of material requiring review and analysis

PART 1

CHAPTER 1

THE GENEALOGY OF SILENCE

THE EVERYWHERE AND THE NOWHERE OF SILENCE

The Paradoxical Nature of Silence

Silence floods each category of the social with a plethora of metaphorical references. No stone remains unturned wherein silence is not discovered as the unseen but nutrient moss upon which the nature of discourse, indeed, the very nature of the social is determined. Investigate each category of the social, and one will find that it is flooded with the use of silence as a metaphor for the unsaid but determinant meaning of aspects of that social category. Pick the social category, and from within the category pull out its categorical metaphors, one will discover that in every instance, there is a metahistorical reference involving some form, or some effect of silence.

Located in virtually every category of the social, silence reflects different spacial and temporal notional positions. While today's cultural life in Western civilization is characterized by a concentration on discourse and on language, paradoxically, the use of the word "silence" has increased. It is used to say the unsayable, state terms of oppression, express both overt and covert resistance as well as become evidence for states of personal and social despair as well as extreme alienation. Silence and its usages or

applications are complex and often contradictory. For instance, an investigator may ask--Is silence of the social? Or is it in the social? Or conversely, is silence a matrix upon which the social rests? If it is of the social, is it a category or form of the social, and if so, which? If it is in the social is it in as a thing? As a matrix upon which the social rests--an essence--or as a part of social processes, actions, intersubjectivities, or pieces of behavior--or is silence an effect? Is it a magic word, or incantation, or simply a complimentary reaction to more substantial causes? Further, can the use of the word silence in the social represent one thing, one phenomenon, one essence, or does it represent a multiplicity of behaviors and referents as Foucault thinks, what are these, what are their relationships, and why is the word silence being used to describe/conceal them?

First of all, consider the word silence in itself. What is silence? Despite silence being a universal, transhistorical and transcultural sign, silence remains oddly absent as a topic that is directly addressed in both secular and sacred realms. Silence is not immediately apparent. It is not taken seriously. It is not considered to be a unified entity. The subject itself is "hushed" in silence, i.e., kept secret, or, "held in silence", actively kept unnoticed despite its usage as a universal referent and experienced as a universal feeling or aspect for all people.

Silence historically has been silenced as a subject, and thus is a largely understudied arena¹² so that no comprehensive work relating silence to social relations across the institutions of the social has been attempted before

12. Patricia Oudek Laurence, The Reading of Silence : Virginia Woolf in the English Tradition. Stanford, Stanford University Press., 1991. pp. 22. Laurence indicates that she is "treading ground not mapped by literary criticism"

this work. The ironic focus yet most difficult aspect of this study is the “silence silencing itself”, for as an assumed contingent which goes hand in glove with language, yet , like the proverbial “horse and carriage”, silence gets relegated as a dependent idiom.

Silence is a universal expression. It is as taken for granted as the air we breathe, but like a lot of other phenomena, it is not one thing. Because of the myriad of understandings, meanings, definitions, impressions, usages and applications, silence is acknowledged as being there, but that “being there” generates an occasion for confusion and misunderstandings. Part of the reason for this is that silence, as a phenomenon, resists consistency, labeling and dissection. It is ubiquitous, but like other notions, which are also common and taken for granted, silence swims through the mesh of the most finely drawn definitions. Silence sometimes behaves (or is used or constructed) like a thing; or a structural element of the social, it sometimes behaves like a quality of things; it sometimes represents an action, an anti-action, or in-action, (i.e., noun, verb or participle), or something that is found to be something else, with a resultant effect, that is an epiphenomenon. The effect of surprise or shock, and sometimes new awareness which an epiphenomenon generates is analogous to peeling an onion, peel off the first phenomenon, and find another--and another---and another, as in Ibsen's Peer Gynt, thus modeling the Hegelian position that “the world both is and is not what it seems”.

The everywhere-ness of silence can be seen in every social institution, replete with congruent metaphors and aphorisms. There is no institutional aspect of the social, from family, to economics, to law, to medicine, to media, to politics, to education, to religion--that does not have silence encysted

deeply in its specialized discourses and articulations of power and knowledge. There is no epistemology which at some point does not crash head-on into the limitations of discourses saturated with words, but relies upon the unsaid or the excluded, that is, the silent, for meaning, implication, valence, structural breaks and pauses, exclamation or repression.

Silence as a universal remains remarkably obscure, particularly in its dynamic or shifting nexus of power and knowledge, and is especially unsilenced as a key component in the construction of social control. The question is why silence, a universal, continues to remain obscure? What process enforces the "un-hiddenness" of silence both as a topic both of the everyday and of the academic disciplines? The "silencing" of silence or the "hiddenness" of the entity and effects of silence is evident from a study of the geneology of silence. A geneology depicts the diversity of meanings falling under the rubric of silence. However, a rubric of silence is lodged within a variety of positions within a diversity of historiocultural junctures so that in each case in order to discuss the process, and meanings, it is necessary to contextualize the silences. Awareness of silence as a social phenomenon is derived concomitant to the conception of language as the decisive force in the social.

For our purposes in this study, silence is considered within the Euro/American contexts. In Western cultures silence is often seen as neutral or non-problematic ground for language, which "sets" language off as a background setting for a brilliant gem. An alternative way of looking at silence within our Western contexts is as a negative, or absence of something which must be retrieved. In other "non-Western cultures which do not prioritize the priority of language, silence is more directly accessed as a subject "in-it-self" or a

“thing-in-itself”.

Social silence is characterized as the absence of discourse, for any reasons, positive or negative. Since the social is saturated with, and often defined by discourses, then the absence of discourse, the silencing of that discourse, must be social in character precisely.

Within the aspects of everyday life silence fulfills both positive and negative dimensions. By positive, I mean those aspects of silence meant as productive or as peaceful, calm, tranquil, serene. These are the silences written about in the texts of the sacred, the organic, and the Eastern religions. The texts of the sacred look toward transcendence and silence as integral to the achievement of transcendence through a state of receptivity. In certain religious ideologies, silence itself is conceived of as a thing in itself, i.e., the essence of transcendence or nirvana in itself. By negative aspects, I mean the effects of silence in which, as a social process, we excuse, cover-up, drown-out, or in any way obliterate what is real, problematic, contradictory or challenging about persons, issues, problems or positions. Examples are found in the literatures of Western metaphysics, modernity and post-modernity. It is my premise that instances of both positive and negative forms and processes of silence can be located in the institutions of the social, i.e., marriage and family, education, medicine, media, law, politics and economics.

Silence is a paradoxical and highly charged metaphorical bed within which language is set. I invite you to think on the metaphors of silence used in everyday life which infiltrate our language. These usages reveal that phenomenon of silence has a multiplicity of meanings. Typologies include silence as

a sign signifying that “silence is golden”, silence as the penance of the Trappist monks, therapeutic silences (the silence of the couch), linguistic silences (pauses, gaps, Goffman’s “conversational lulls”, communicative lapses), family silences(skeletons in the closet), romantic silences (“she gave him the cold shoulder”), political silences (noisy silences) (infoglut, ducks-peak, “white noises”), the silences of slaves and subordinates (“under torture he never broke his silence”), capitalist silences (“I take your silence as assent”), Buddhist meditation experienced as a silence (“the sound of one hand clapping”, “eternity is no beginning and no end”; “MU”), the silence meditation of Quaker meetings¹³ (whose objective was to attain state of surpression to outter worldly life; a period of waiting and experienceing the strength and urgency of God’s light (not word-distrust of the Word), the silent reflection in Protestant, Baptist and Catholic prayer (“let us all take a moment of silence in prayer”) , the penetentes, mystics, and religious “mute” orders following the “rule” of silence as a way of life, silence as magic, silence as a weapon (to shut up and close off attention to someone), silence as a punishment (to blindfold and gag), administrative silences¹⁴, the withholding of revelant information, white noise, infobabble, professional jargons), artistic silences(the pauses for dramatic action within a play, music, rap, poetry or other cultural texts), medical silences(the professional’s decision not to tell her “for her own good”), the silence of pandemics,(the AIDS silences exemplified in the emblematic international slogan “SILENCE= DEATH”)

13. See Richard Baumann’s work on Quaker’s and Silence.

14. Administrative/professional silences, sometimes referred to as bureaucratic silences are discussed in Part II, Chapter VII on Medical Silences pp. 120

Who has not heard that "children should be seen and not heard", that "she gave him the silent look", that a psychiatrist dwells in therapeutic silences where the key process in Freud's "talking cure" is the therapist's silence, that we celebrate the major Christian holiday with the birth of Christ, and a sense of sacred silences singing such Christian classics as: "A Little Town of Bethlehem" "how still we see thee lie--how silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!--no ear may hear His coming"¹⁵ and with Silent Night"or "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht!, "all is calm, all is bright" that "our silence is louder than words!"¹⁶ ¹⁷

Not only syntactical and metaphorical silence actively configure in our everyday lives, but silence floods the thematic and structural semiotics of all discourses, all disciplines: In feminist discourse, women are "breaking the silence", they are disentangling from the Cixousian "snare of silence"¹⁸., in political discourse, former President George Bush told us to "read my (his) lips", in cinematic discourse, Spike Lee punctuates his recent films with a personal trademark: "My lips are sealed".¹⁹ In media discourse, covering the U.S. Senate Supreme Court nomination hearings (1991) for Clarence Thomas, Anita Hill accusing him of sexual harrassment states: "I had nothing to gain by making the accusations, in fact, I had more to gain by remaining

15. Chapel Hymnal. Revised Ed. New York : Harcourt Brace, 1931, 1953. Hymn 169 "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

16. Ibid. Hymn 212. "Silent Night"

17. Ibid.

18. Helene Cixous New French Feminisms. Amhurst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980. "The Laugh of Med p 24.

19. Spike Lee's early movie productions include the expression "My lips are sealed" in several texts including "She's Gotta Have It."(1985) School Dayz"(1989) Do The Right Thing (1990)

silent"²⁰ Conversely, a questioner makes a statement on the TV program "60 Minutes" that " I don't understand how she (Anita Hill) could remain silent for 10 years"²¹ The results of the hearing where Thomas was supported and Hill's testimony questioned and ridiculed for her reluctance to come forward sooner, her very credibility put in doubt because of her silence reaffirmed an older principle of phallogocentric relations, that women are not to be believed, whatever the evidence, her character, or the issue. The message of the hearing was that women are given the message that they won't be believed if they come forward. This is a form of social control which assures that women continue to be silenced through political or coercive measures.

Literature, including opera and other cultural forms, is full of metanarratives where women are not only not believed if they come forward (out of their silence), but they are frequently made the culprit for revealing, saying, stating. Punishment in the form of ostracism, humiliation, pain, and insults are given for raising a claim, even before a hearing can take place. The odds are that a fair hearing will not result. What comes to mind is the Tawana Brawley case in November, 1987, of a 15 year old black girl found dazed, partially scalped, with burns over one third of her body. The initials "KKK" and the word " Nigger" were inscribed on her body; her body smeared with garbage and dog feces. The only testimony made indicated that she had been kidnapped and raped by six white men. This story implicated a District Attorney, a highway patrolman, and a local police officer. Despite physical evidence of violence and rape, the case became a media circus where

20. Anita Hill Senate Supreme Court Nomination Hearings CNT 1991
p 26

21. "60 Minutes" TV News Talk Program Sept. 16, 1991.

Tawana was never heard from directly again. She became the managed object of "racist hustlers" and was fought over by a public left to believe she was a lying whore-- "after Tawana Brawley, who will believe the next black woman who says she was raped by white men?"²²

Joy Kogawa wrote an apt poem "white sound" that Williams quoted to express the condition of silence in this episode:

" There is a silence that cannot speak.
There is a silence that will not speak.
Beneath the grass the speaking dreams
and beneath the dreams is a sensate sea.
The speech that frees comes forth from that
amniotic deep. To attend its voice, I can hear
it say, is to embrace its absence. But I fail the
task. The word is stone?"²³

Silence is a slippery concept which turns out to be under scrutiny, much more than simply conceptual. Philosophic and linguistic theorists posit a plethora of approaches when considering silence: it is considered as an autonomous phenomenon, or it can be considered as a dependent phenomenon. It is primarily considered as a "secondary" or supportive phenomenon, very much in the manner of the conceptual "other" similar to how "woman" is treated as a dependent idiom.

The secret behind silence is the very silence of its own sign. The secret behind the secret is that the sign customarily taken for silence, that is, silence as the absence of sound, has changed in reference to mean many

22. Patricia Williams The Alchemy of Race and Rights. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991. pp 174.

23. Joy Kogawa. *Obasan*. Boston: David Goodine, 1981. pp.1.

more things, and its usage is both direct and indirect. Now people are talking about silence and there is a confusion of meanings. For instance, silence is customarily considered in its traditional usages and is taken for granted much in the manner that Wittgenstein described the "taken for granted " quality of the word "time". Time was considered as mere arbitrary markings of periods, and like time, silence was considered as an arbitrary marker of emptiness, a secondary result dependent upon language usage. Silence, in the traditional understanding was merely the gap or space between words, with speech in the drivers seat controlling all significance.

CHAPTER 11

The Grammar of Silence

Silence is a metahistorical and transcultural sign. Yet, is it language? This question leads to the center of the problematic of what we mean by language. If language is a speaking system, then as a system, it is an object of science and can have laws. This view of language as a speaking system has been held as early as 1816 when the term linguist was used by Raynouard²⁴ Yet, if language is a speaking system, a science with its own laws, then what is non-or not speaking, or the absence of language? Is it not a system? Is it outside a system? Is it outside a science and hence, without laws? If breaks or gaps (silences) are produced in and between speaking, is it part of the system, or outside the system, this erasure or gap in the production of language? If to speak is to represent, then what is it not to speak? Is it not to represent? What is a condition without representation? What can be communicated without representation? When language ceases, it is said that the presence of silence becomes more palpable. However, when language is initiated, it does not mean there is an absence of silence, neither is there an absence of silence in the presence of speech, rather, instead, Picard's (1952) position is that silence is said to exist in and through itself:

"it does not develop or increase in time, but time increases in silence, It is as though time had been

24. Ernst Raynouard. Souvenirs Sur le Symbolisme. Paris, 1895. pp 7.

sown into silence, as though silence absorbed it; as though silence were the soil in which time grows to fullness. Silence is not visible, and yet its existence is clearly apparent. It extends to the farthest distances, yet is so close to us that we can feel it as concretely as we feel our own bodies. It is intangible, yet we can feel it as directly as we feel materials and fabrics. It cannot be identified in words, yet it is quite definite and unmistakable. In no other phenomenon are distance and nearness, range and immediacy, the all embracing and the particular, so united as they are in silence"²⁵

Certainly, silence is a human practice. What does silence do? Is the effect of silence to bracket or remove from speech certain moments? What is the character of those moments? The existence of those bracketed or demarked moments is felt, has valence, is not neutral. In this case, the existence of valenced bracketed moments of silence yields a materiality. Can this materiality of privileged moments called silence be represented? Certainly, there is a common experience of demarkation and signification, and in this way, silence can be said to be a form of communication. If silence demarkates, signifies and communicates, then it can be a form of language. Then again, what type of form, which signification and what demarkation, from what boundary in which genre? What is it to refuse to speak? Is it to go against the system of speaking? If this is the case, silence could be considered anarchist against language, or, at the very least, anti-foundational and transgressive to written, visual and sound boundaries. Kristeva comments that the question, "what is language?", is too essentialist, and that the question, "How was it possible to

25. Max Picard. The World of Silence, trans. Stanley Godman, Chicago: Regnery, 1952. pp. 11.

conceive of language?, focuses on the processes of linguistic practice, thought and representations more specifically. In Kristeva's case then, we can question as well the processes of non-linguistic practice, thought and representations. If thought is vital to language, is it possible to experience a silence without thought? A language without thought? Again Kristiva affirms that it is "impossible today to affirm the existence of extralinguistic thought"²⁶ Yet, how do we characterize the activity of non-thinking non-linguistic non-focus of Eastern meditation, where even the signifier "MU" dissolves without a referent? Yet, what is the stuff of dreams, of feelings without representation, of blank states or "silent" moments, of "out of body experiences". What is the stuff of our peculiar laws of unconscious and preconscious representational felt affinities? What about states of instinctual urges, somatic states, body positions, proprioceptive organizings, images, partial sentences, abstract thoughts (the creative precess) sensed memories, recollections, felt affinities? This is the stuff of un-thought but "known" moments to which Bollas²⁷(1989, 1991) refers.

26. Julia Kristeva. Language: the Unknown. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989. pp 20.

27. Christopher Bollas Forces of Destiny. London: Free Association Press, 1991. p.21.

Definitions: When considering the aspects of silence that are social and in current usage, silence tends to swim through the meshes of the most precise dictionary definitions:

silence n -s

- "1. The state of keeping or being silent: forbearance from speech or noise: muteness
2. (a). absence of sound: absence of noise (b) general stillness: a relative stillness
3. absence of mention (a) oblivion" obscurity (b) 1 :failure to make something known: tacid ommission 2: secrecy c: withholding from written communication: cessation of any state of communicativeness or productivity
4. (a) a period of being siltent (b): rest <elegaic meter of the poems
5. (a) the state beyond death (b) death
6. Lack of flavor or odor in distilled spirits: flatness

silence vb

1. to compel or reduce to silence: cause to be still: stop the noise of: still
- 2.(a.) to restrain from the exercise of any function involving the expression of opinion: to restrain from the act of preaching (b) to put down: repress, surpress
3. to cause to cease hostile firing by return fire or bombing
1. to become silent 2. to cause silence"²⁸

Webster's Third New International

Dictionary

All descriptions of silence will be used with the exception of silence n -s # 1 muteness and # 2. a and b- "the absence of sound; absence of noise" "general stillness" 4 (b) rest: > elegaic meter of the poems, and # 6. Lack of flavor in distilled spirits"²⁹and also the exception of silence vb # 3 "to cause to

28. Webster's Third New International Dictionary ed Philip Babcock Glove, PhD. Springfield: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1971. pp 2116-2117.

29. Ibid

cease hostile firing by return fire or bombing”³⁰

These aforementioned silences are not considered social silences, but instead are referred to as physical or acoustic silences in the taxonomy section of the paper. Silence occurring in nature, that is silence meaning relative measurements of more or less sound defined as absence of sound or absence of noise, relative stillness or physical rest are silences dealing with the material aspects of physical sound and relative differences in sound. As I said above, acoustic silence is measurable and mechanical, hence it is physical, and not of the social. These silences usually are descriptive of material states and are not generally the effect of social interactions, therefore these silences are not relevant to this study, and hence are not addressed.

Another category which is referred to descriptively but not emphasized within this study of the social is “silence vb # 5 (a) the state beyond death (b) death. This silence refers to what is called in the theoretical sections on silence as related to sacred silences which have both primordial and mystical manifestations. It is seen in both organic and Eastern subtypes of sacred silences for these silences related to death disclose a form of silence which results out of a natural inadequacy of languages to describe a state of being-non-being. What is remarkable about this type of silence or “deep” silence is that despite the fact that language becomes inutile or impotent to infer the state of death, the movement in silence of the instance of death, or the feeling, or the expression is rendered more powerful, more meaningful with the linkage with a concept of a “sacred” form of silence. It is important to note that this silence, the silence reference to “death or the state beyond death” is

30. Ibid.

in the taxonomy of silence a social silence. The argument that it is a social form of silence, i.e., sacred, deep, organic and Eastern silences, is that despite the fact language is rendered redundant in these forms, the social does not cease to exist, but instead has a nonlinguistic significance. (Bollas, 1989, 1991) (Winnicott, 1963) In these cases, silence is said to transcend discourse.

Social silence is addressed in cases where silence is used as:

- forbearance from speech or noise
- absence of mention (oblivion: obscurity)
- tacit omission
- secrecy
- to compel or reduce to silence
- to restrain from the exercise of any function
- involving the expression of opinion
- to discourage questioning
- to restrain from the act of preaching
- to put down; repress, suppress
- calmness
- serenity
- tranquility

The definitional forms of silence listed above are indexes of the social due to the interactive quality required for the exercise of these silences. These types represent vertical cuts in the form of social silence from a cultural studies perspective. It takes group interaction, from dyads on, to register these silences for their effect. We know things through their effects and silence can represent an action, an anti-action, or in-action (i.e., noun, verb

or participle) or something that is found to be in something else with a resultant effect; that is, an epiphenomenon. Silence can also be used or constructed like a thing, or a quality of a thing, as a structural element of the social. There is, for example, a reliance upon the creation of certain silences to allow for assent or agreement within groups, to construct the orderliness and stability of behavior by relying upon the silent and compliant patience under the influence of socialization and social control practices.

In summary, this inquiry into the use of the word silence has the following considerations:

1. Consider silence as an autonomous phenomenon.
2. Consider silence as the metaphor, found in all forms and all categories of the social.
3. Consider silence with its multiple uses, multiple applications; consider silence as constructed of and by the social and embedded in the social.
4. Consider silence as derived from and constructed within historicocultural epochs from traditional modernist to postmodern silence. Consider silence as the metaphor, i.e., Silence is found in all forms; all languages encode it. It is part of the social construction, yet, it cannot be deconstructed from the social with much ease.

CHAPTER 111

The Taxonomy of Silence

The expression "Taxonomy of Social Silences" was chosen specifically for its biological or physical science derivations to discuss categories of silence. The rationale is that the emphasis in this work is social/behavioral, rather than a strict linguistic analysis. The social is a woven fabric of behaviors of groups and individuals, the science is the investigative part of an inquiry into behaviors, evidence of action and interaction and reliant upon observation of not only verbal, but nonverbal and other areas of non-classified phenomena, which do not necessarily fall under "discourse" analysis. I refer here to Bollas contributions on the "unthought known", and any number of "not- necessarily- discourse or- linguistic" episodes which I have collected for purposes of analysis.

This classification of silences from a social standpoint comes from an analysis of epiphenominal effects on the social. I have devised three primary categories of social silence, based on my investigation of the etiology:

(1) Political or brutal silence (2) Cultural silence (3) Organic silence. The fourth **(4) category, Acoustic silence,** is not considered a social silence. It is mechanical and measurable, hence, not of the social. Types 1-3 represent vertical cuts in the form of social silence from a cultural studies concentration. Political or brutal silence is the broadest and the most elementary category. Cultural and Sacred categories of silence are more complex and have representation in several

forms. For example, cultural silence has its administrative and saturated forms. Sacred Silences had both spiritual and organic forms. The following is a short description of the various categories:

1. **Political or brutal silence**

The quelling of discourse, that is, being prevented from speaking or hearing by direct coercion, i.e., terrorism, threat and physical force.

The word silence is used socially to say that the stopping of discourse/meaning is similar to the silence occurring in nature-for example: "Flavius and Marullus for taking garlands off Caesar's statues are put to silence" , i.e. killed. ³¹i.e., this is political or *brutal* silencing

2. **Cultural Silence**

The killing of desire, or taste for discourse in both the individual and the collective. This has a spontaneous effect in promoting the prevention of discourse at a deep prophylactic level . Cultural silence has two major forms : **popular and intramural (within professions)**When language is "full" or heavily saturated with a bombardment of codes it produces the impression that everything is addressed. This form is the **saturation form**.

Another form (B) is that of **administrative/professional form** which has the effect of creating the illusion of freedom of information. Rousseau commented on cultural silence in Emile :

"There is no subjugation so perfect as that which keeps the appearance of freedom, for in that way one captures volition itself"³²

31. William Shakespeare Julius Caesar Act I Scene II New York: Kittredge Edition, 1936. pp 1087.

32. Jean-Jacques Rousseau Emile, V. Pleiade, IV, pp. 692

Cultural silence also exemplifies the Gramscian idea of social control. For instance, consider a methodology of education which teaches forms of discourse while leaving no room for social challenges. This results in a framing of educational discourses on an exclusionary basis: prohibiting questioning and the use of original sources. By an analogy with Weber's theory of parliamentary democracy³³, cultural silence can be seen, not so much as a conspiracy, but rather as a self-administered narcotic, the purpose of which is to prevent the individual or group from becoming conscious of the real terrors and real "hard" social control in the society. One learns to self administer silence #2 in order to avoid running up against silence #1. People teach this to each other as protection, intergenerationally and institutionally.

3.Sacred silence.

The lapsing, or failure of discourse. Silence resulting from the natural inadequacy of language. Sacred Silence has two forms: (A) **Spiritual Silences**, both Western and Eastern (B) **Organic Silences**

(A)**Spiritual Silences** for example, religious, mystical, New Wave, Quakers, Trappist, Zen, etc.

(B) **Organic silences**, or "deep" silences are located in the pre-verbal (the originary), the sub-

33. Max Weber. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. New York: Bedminster Press, 1968.
 "Politics as a Vocation" " Theory of Parliamentary Democracy" in From Max Weber. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 1948.

verbal, (physical realities, the realm of the senses--sexual, musical, etc.) and "post "verbal, where language has been bypassed and is treated as karma"

4. Acoustic Silence

Silence occurring in nature. It not a social silence. Silence means no sound or less sound; it is measurable with a microphone and a VU meter.

'Physical silence, or a state of absolute "no sound" , i.e. complete physical silence is a state which is not physically possible..

First there was force, next there was language. Foucault in Discipline & Punish (1977) explicates the historical and cultural transition of using language instead of physical force with the same result in domination.

Information is not information. Questions are not questions. This is the language of militarism; this is the language of the administrative. These are the languages of social control. Social control is control under, over, upon, beside the directives. The language of social control is silence. The use of language instead of, or conjunct with, physical force is customary, but the meaning lies in the silences:

{silence in place of language---that silence in itself is discourse}

"The silences of the poor, of the tortured, of the submissive, of the silences of marriages to custom, the clear but silent reaffirmation of norms in satee , in spouse, child, elder abuse, in patriarchy. The silences of normative humiliations, public and private disgraces, "giving the cold (and silent) shoulder" the refusal to participate-to perform- to say-to do-to identify-to stand mute is their statement, their discourse of silence.

To say louder than words, than cries, to refuse even
to speak, to refuse to "give in" to refuse to "give out"
to refuse to "bring forth"-----

the silence of the poor is a refusal to participate or to answer.

The people drop out of the master narrative in order to destroy
the master narrative.

These actions represent a generalized refusal to use or
participate in the speech acts of the "other", the "alien",
the "uncivilized", as an extreme form of resistance.

Conversely, in political or brutal silence, to force to talk in torture is to "pull
out of silence"; to extract talk by means of torture so often culminates in the
"making silent", in the finality of death, for **death=silence**, or does it?

"Is not the death of silence louder than words?"

Recall the Haymarket Martyrs of 1887:

From the scaffold:

**an instant of silence and then from beneath
Spie's hood came the words:**

**"The time will come when our silence will be more
powerful than the voices you strangled today!"³⁴**

Or, even more anciently the New Testament of the Christian Bible states:

As P. Pilot asked Jesus:

"Art thou Jesus, King of the Jews"?
Jesus replied: "Thou sayest"

—

34. Paul Averich. Haymarket Tragedy. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. pp 393.

Crosscultural Orientation: This approach, as previously mentioned, is crosscultural and transhistorical in general. However, in specific instances, certain silences tend to be produced in certain periods, for example, political or brutal silencing was almost uniformly (but not exclusively) created in a historical period like the Middle Ages where torture and force, and explicit threats of physical force were the primary means for subduing people. In modern periods in the West because of the organization of labor and the structural pressures of growing bureaucracies and the instrumentalization of everyday life, both political and cultural silencing occurred at varying times and in varying degrees. In those cases when political silences (being prevented from speaking or hearing by terrorism, threat and physical force) were predominant, it was unpleasant, but simpler to identify one's persecutor. Under more advanced conditions of industrialization and capital it became more and more difficult to determine one's oppressor.

However, in my opinion, in the late Euroamerican capitalist postmodern period, cultural silencing is the predominant trend.

I use political or *brutal* silencing in tandem for they are specific to the same idea: the direct relation of abuse, emotional and physical maltreatment, i.e., punishment as the direct enforcer of behavior. In political or brutal silence, people are made to "shut up", or remain mute due to actual material violence, or threats of it. The term brutal is used with the idea of political, to ensure the understanding of the obviousness of the means (vio-

lence). The term political is used in the most basic sense of one person or a group actively convincing another individual or group by various means.

Historical Purview: From the early 17th century, force and the fear of punishment, either via legitimated authority, as Durkheimian "social facts" or by the process of socialization, dictated the terms of compliance. Each "environment of enclosure" or social institution had its manifest and latent ground rules with which to ensure social control. Because of the ingredient of force, actual unsaid, or silent threat, political or brutal silencing of populations within these environments of enclosure (Goffman) occurred. Thereupon, a new mechanism of social control evolves as the old idea of institutions, mutates and regenerates through the influence of postcapital and technological changes. This is currently a moment characterized by forms of social control no longer bounded by institutions but instead, fluid processes inherently self-tailoring to the situation. For this to happen, the codes must either be self contained, i.e., either internally integrated as part and parcel of behavior, or the codes must be blocked or short circuited in some manner. A self-enforcing form of social control, a form which is mutable and adaptable would fit instance# 1, that is, a form of cultural silencing wherein the "dividual"(individual) or group would autosilence (popular silencing) or create an auto-amnesia or massive forgetting as an integrated response to a code. Another example of what I call cultural silencing (or saturated silences) occurs when a "dividual" (individual) or group becomes saturated with the "white noise" of excitement, experience- full overload of stimuli, such as noise, infobabel, data glut, or denatured second and third hand communications. When this occurs, the normal encoding of meanings and relations becomes surfeited and a silenced state follows. This again is a

form of cultural silencing, which differs from political or brutal silencing in that there is no need for institutions, explicit spacial relations, or any external force or control. The only relation is one of electronic communication in which perceptions of overload, info-glut or overstimulation result in a down-time which erases memory and extinguishes agency. Sacred or organic silencing is not addressed in postmodern spaces, as this type of silencing or creation of forms of spiritual silence presumes some agency and identity. As with "dividuals", postmodern silencing contains no impulses characterized by will or subjectivity, nor does it attempt to encode differences.

In summary:

Aspects of a thesis of social silencing:

The effects of silence in hisorical societies differ from previous periods, as do the effects of silence in political and cultural frames. silence may refer to the "non-presence of discourse,s when nothing but discourse is recognized as the "social".

Silence has modern and postmodern forms. Both forms are grounded in repression. The effects of two forms of repression, political and cultural , can be evidenced in socially constructed "silences" seen for expmple in an analysis of the classic Orwellian dialectic of repression in 1984.³⁵

The action of "silencing" is revealed in its tow different social processes, each corresponding to the forms:

A. Typical political repression has been used throughout history, as a

35. George Orwell. 1984. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1949.

predominantly as a social methodology to create overt abeyance and compliance with predetermined social controls and controllers. Political repression includes torture, incarceration, etc.---obvious and physical measures in the construction of terror.

B. The contemporary form of cultural repression is the construction of hegemony (Gramsci) , (Althusser), standardization, censorship, media noise, "cheap gin, easy credit," the perks that bind. This is the Foucaultian "normalization", i.e., construction of self generated personal and social silences. An alternate description of cultural silencing is that of voluntary self-silencing. That is, semi-autonomously, autoimposed and selfpoliced, similar to Marcusean "surplus repression" as seen in the Orwellian free proclamation:

"I choose to love Big Brother"³⁶

The Orwellian case combines both political and cultural forms of repression with the cumulatively successful results in ensuring an environment of totalized social control and domination by "big Brother". However, in modern and postmodern epochs the application of political and cultural methodologies of repression produce silencing with significantly different aspects.

Modernist repression is involuntary silencing. This method is brutality. It leaves little room for any deliberation, any direct decisional participation, or activist forms of resistance. Silencing, in this form, even on a non-protective

36. Ibid. pp 245.

basis, is not a free or autonomous decision, for it is enforced through threat, the removal of protection or overt violence. State terrorism, violence, persecution, disappearance of civilians, etc. is reflective of this form on a nation-state or international grounds. Child, spouse, elder abuse, rape, gang terrorization, Mafia and other organized crime groups, in general, have objectives of silencing their victims through intimidation and threats of further or more fatal violence.

In contrast, cultural silences are imposed through the cultural repressions, not political repressions. Cultural silences are societally integrated into the fabric of cultural identity and are retained and elaborated through cultural devices and personal repression. The difference from political silencing is that in these cases, once the threat is removed, the threat is perceived to remain, and often becomes integrated within the personality structure. This is an "autocultural reinforcement of repression, i.e., cultural silencing. This is a silencing produced through cultural forms, via an autoimmunization process, not by overt physical force, violence, threats, disappearances, etc.

CHAPTER IV

SILENT THEORY; SILENCED THEORY

Introduction:

As yet, a largely untheorized domain, little attention has been afforded silence as a specific topic in the social sciences, with the exception of brief references. In psychoanalytic psychology with respect to repression (Freud, 1931)³⁷, a few studies in social psychology (Bruner,³⁸ 1973, Boomer, 1965, Asch, 1952,) and with the exception of Simmel's work on repression (1909)³⁹ and brief, attenuated and indirect reflection on silence as an individual and group reaction in the symbolic interaction school of sociological research (Goffman, 1961, Garfinkle, 1967). Very little attention has been paid to the subject as a critical discourse of the social; neither has it been identified in a categorical as a "social silence".

By a "social silence" I mean a central phenomenon which influences, marks, disrupts, and constructs social relations. The germane notions I use in my theorization of a social silence are based on the work of several theorists in the social sciences and encompass conceptualizations of: social fact (Durkheim), repression (Freud, Marx, Fromm, Marcuse), social amnesia, the

37. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) Introductory Lectures in Psychoanalysis, Civilization and Its Discontents, The Psychopathology of Everyday Life. New York: W. W. Norton, 1966. @1920. p 345-346., 354-374.

38. Jerome Bruner. In Search of Mind: Beyond Information Given. Studies in the Psychology of the Knowledge. New York: W.W. Norton., 1973.

39. Georg Simmel. The Philosophy of Money Trans. Tom Bottomore and David Frisby. Boston; Routledge & Keegan Paul. (1907), 1978.
Soziologie Berlin, 1908

unconscious (Freud, Penfield), conscience collective (Jung, Durkheim), the unthought known (Bollas), fabrications (Goffman), aspects of the construction of violence (Foucault), and the sociological constructs on social control (Ross, Gibbs, Parsons)

With this problematic in mind, I will investigate the few theorists who deal with silence as a separate category as well as heretofore unrecognized thinkers whom I include in a "cast": of "theorists of silence". These "theorists of silence" are located in diverse historical and cultural places, both within and without the "canon" of Western epistemologies. The theorists of silence are represented by philosophers, social scientists, political theorists, cultural theorists, feminist theorists, literary figures and poets. Thinkers as Simmel, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Wittgenstein, Goffman, Hall, Gramsci, Derrida, Lyotard, Irigaray, Lacan, Hoelderlin, Kafka, Carlyle, Dauenhauer, Picard, Steiner, can be called as witnesses in the interest of gaining an understanding of silence as a social phenomenon.

The social writers, from Marx on were preoccupied with the "question of agency", i.e. why do the masses not rise up and throw off the yoke of oppression? As the debate went on, into the twentieth century, there has come to be a consensus that the answer to the paralysis of agency lies in the paralysis of discourse, and that this paralysis of discourse is "taught" or "trained" in various ways. According to Weber⁴⁰, the society teaches that there is already democracy and there is therefore no reason to look beyond the parliamentary discourse. According to Gramsci⁴¹, the system of education is con-

40. Max Weber "Theory of Parliamentary Democracy" in "Politics as a Vocation" in From Max Weber. H.H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills, 1948.

41. Antonio Gramsci The Prison Notebooks
Selections from Cultural Writings Ed David Forgacs and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith,

structed to eliminate questioning or challenge. According to (Althusser, Cixous, Kristeva, Irigaray) that the terms don't even exist in the master discourse for challenge, controversy, and contention

From Freud on, attempts to answer the question of why individuals do not act in their own interest, why they can not speak, can not remember, can not act out what is important to them. First, the Theory of Repression, from Freud, Reich, Reik⁴², and then later, the idea that the threat of real punishment gets turned into a self-silencing mechanism of either aphasia or amnesia. (see Miller- Abuse literature)⁴³.

These two elements come together (as in social silence) with Marcuse's idea, in Eros and Civilization that there can be repression of a social as well as an individual character. This leads us to look for the answer to the question of paralysis of social discourse in a similar etiology to what generates the paralysis of individual discourse. That is, in the translation of the threat of actual punishment, i.e. fear, into the self-obliterating mechanism that obviates the confrontation with the feared situation. I assert that this mechanism, by analogy with Marcuse, is at work in the social aphasia and the social amnesia of CULTURAL SILENCING.

Trans. William Boelhower. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985.

42. Theodor Reik "Couvade and the Psychogenesis of the Fear of Retaliation" *Ritual: Psychoanalytic Studies* New York, 1946. Masochism in Modern Man. trans. M.H. Beigel and G.M. Kurth, New York, 1941

43. See # 56. pp54.

Basic sociological notions in the theory of Social Silence:

Notions of the social:

Application of what is considered "social" is derived from a precursor literature review of what is considered "social" within the domain of the discipline of sociology: Manicas writes in A History and Philosophy of the Social Sciences(1988) :

"societas originally was an alliance or a voluntary coming together of genuris human....then later generalized as social as societus generus humans."⁴⁴

The distinction between the social and natural sciences rests on an understanding of the social as distinct from the natural. Much of what we call the "social" is the active process of coding and encoding not only verbal and written language, but the preverbal and prelinguistic as well: gesture, performance, emotion or mood----

The word social, as Arendt pointed out, began to aquire the general mean-

44. Peter T. Manicas. A History and Philosophy of the Social Sciences. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988. pp26.

ing of a" fundamental human conditon"⁴⁵. Williams indicates in Key Words, A Vocabulary of Culture and Society(1976) that the social was associated in the 17th century as the sociable, in the 18th century social was associated as general or abstract, such as" man is a social creature"-that is, a single man or family cannot subsist (or not well) alone out of society.⁴⁶ However, the social in "social silences" as I use it, and to which Radcliffe-Brown (1952) refers is the concrete reality.... the set of actually existing relations, at a given moment in time, which link together ...human beings"⁴⁷..and as Schutz (1961) refers:....."social world...(everyday world experienced and interpreted by its members as an organized universe of meaning in the form of a typifications of the objects within it.....constitute a taken for granted means of orientation) has a particular meaning and relevance structure for the human beings living, thinking and acting therein."⁴⁸ From a modernist perspective, the social is the substantial relational matrix upon which all that is known to be "human" rests. We take it for granted that the social is operative and formational in reflecting produced culture and transmitting the consensual "quality" of what it means to be human. The norms, beliefs, languages, memories, and desires of a people construct and constitute the social--- and the social reflects these particular constillations and patterns of everyday life.

45. Hannah Arendt. The Human Condition. New York: Penguin Books, 1962 pp. 24.

46. Raymond Williams, Key Words, A Vocabulary of Culture and Society. Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp 1976, pp 24

47. Tom Bottomore Sociology, A Guide to Problems and Literature. 3rd Ed. London, Allen & Unwin, 1987. pp. 109

48. David Walsh " Sociology and the Social World" Modern Sociology. Ed Peter Worsley., New York, Penguin Books, 1986. pp 80 .

By social silence being a social process, I mean that silence is a facet of human activity and the "social is sustained and changed by such an activity"⁴⁹ The title of this work connotes that silence is a social phenomenon and that it is constructed by the interaction of intersubjectivities forming reciprocal typifications in an everyday commonsense world.

The object of study is the reciprocal typifications in everyday life which comprise silence. What is intended is not a linguistic, or semiotic analysis, but a social analysis of the usage silence and its signifiers on a cultural and sociological basis within the framework of societal relations.

Notions of social control, repression and social fact:

Most of the silence-related metaphors and aphorisms used in socialization support the process of social control. Control is posited by Gibbs (1989) to be sociology's central unifying notion. A central notion is a necessary condition for sustained progress in a field and facilitates the formulation of theories. Social control, first coined by E.A. Ross in 1901, and defined as a "domination which is intended and fulfills a function in the life of society"⁵⁰ while Parsons (1951) calls it "a complex system of unplanned and largely unconscious mechanisms which serve to counteract deviant tendencies"⁵¹ yet Durkheim refers to a "*conscience collective*" that constrains the individual public opinion, law, belief systems, education, custom, religion."⁵² Goffman

49. Walsh Ibid. #5 pp. 81.

50. E.A. Ross. Social Control. New York, Macmillan, 1901.pp.21.

51. Talcot Parsons. "The law and social control" William M. Evan , ed., The Sociology of Law. New York, Free Press, 1980. pp.,60-68. Also social control is discussed by Parsons in The Social System. New York, Free Press, 1951.

52. Erving Goffman Frame Analysis Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1974. Chapters 4 and 6.

spoke of "*fabrications*" in Frame Analysis⁵³, in which he deals with implicit or nonverbal types of referential social control.

There are two notions of silence, easily confused with each other, as it is related to a discourse: the first is "latent" discourse, (as in Merton's "manifest and latent functions"⁵⁴) which is "kept down" under the text, that is, not acknowledged to even exist. The contribution which Merton made supportive of the subject under investigation in this work is that Merton encouraged the researcher to "go under" the overt text or discourse presented by the individual, and determine the non-surface/non-obvious, or underlying (latent) motivations and power-relations and other social consequences of (verbal and *non verbal*) behavior. The concept of latent functions with consequences leads directly into the rich body of work on both individual and collective repression. Durkheim speaks of a notion of externality to individual consciousnesses:

"If, as is granted, this *sui generis* synthesis which constitutes every society gives rise to new phenomena, different from those which occur in consciousnesses in isolation, one is forced to admit that these specific facts reside in the society itself that produces them, and not in its parts, that is to say, its members. In this sense therefore they lie outside individual consciousnesses (*consciences individuelles*) considered as such. "⁵⁵

53. Ibid.

54. Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure. Enlarged edition, New York: The Free Press, 1968.

55. Emile Durkheim, "Les Regles de la Methode Sociologique," 1968, pp. xvi-xvii; trans. Margaret Gilbert in Social Fact, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1989. pp. 250.

Marcuse borrowed a concept of repression from Freud, but expanded and adapted it into a critical theory of the social. He used repression in a non-technical sense to encompass the conscious as well as the unconscious, and when developing his notion of "surplus repression" he addressed both external and internal processes in the social of restraint, constraint and suppression (oppression) (Marcuse, 1955, 1968)

Collectively repressed material such as the the concept of class in America offers us a prime example. Numerous surveys, including one prepared by this author⁵⁶, indicate that when college level students representing a variety of class positions are queried regarding their impression as to which class they belong, one of two predominant answers are given: either there was a belief that "there was no such thing as class", or, that they "belonged to the middle class" just like most Americans. These kind of responses give us an impression that only a homogenous public synonymous with a "middle" exists. Merton's latent function are consequences that are neither recognized or intended. A vernacular expression for latent discourse is that "first you forget it and then you forget you forgot it." Another way of looking at it is content which is put to the side in an acknowledged manner, (openly silenced) considered irrelevant. The law is full of manifest and created silences which are considered legitimate. The Gotti jury, for instance, was not allowed to hear certain testimony, but their ability to hear or not hear was openly discussed by the judge in the presence of the public.

56. See appendix # 2

Various measures of social control are used both positively (to facilitate order and cooperation) and negatively (to create repression and forced compliance) within society I submit that these institutions of the social promulgate the rules and practices which construct modes of silent "patience", (i.e., submission by waiting for a future event, or holding off and doing without) practiced by the "civilized" or "socialized" world. Further, that the modes of silence can be considered necessary structural and process elements for the achievement of the social aims within their respective institutional contexts.

In the institution of education, for example, educators theorize that a successful measure of the efficacy of social control produced from schooling is a students degree of quiet patience (or quietude) passing through grade levels in primary and secondary schools. The pedagogy of social control precipitates the transformation from overt to covert self-regulation whereby according to Wakerdine (1991) conflict is displaced on to personal feelings and rational arguments.⁵⁷ These practices reflect the power relations within the classroom with respect to who gets to speak and who does not. The teacher has a selective use of power In producting the quality of social control in the classroom. Certain practices of social control allow some people to speak, while at the same time restrict others from speaking, and/or exhibiting other expressions of presence, identity and power. These same practices indicate the expectation as well, that the "others" limit themselves from speak-

57. Valerie Walkerdine Schoolgirl Fictions. New York, Verso, 1990. pp. 49.

ing. Implicit is

the threat of disapproval, loss of attention, loss of esteem, loss of love, and more basely, the historical threat of physical punishment or public ridicule. The inclusion or exclusion of the speaker is an active function of power relations involving either inhibition or repression via the mechanism of silencing. Silence not only is a central part of negative coercion, but fulfill more positive (but latently manifest) social goals of training for good citizenship and training for work habits in industrial societies. On an individual level the threat of the loss of love or disapproval from a parent, respected teacher or important peer or relation motivates desired behavior which when performed may reinforce safety practices, enabling behaviors and security and continuity in the relation. For instance, silence and forms of passivity in socialization, and in particular in the socialization mode of the classroom, combined with induced behaviors of docility and helplessness can produce a subject position of safety for the student. By not taking the position of the "other" in a bid for power and recognition, students avoid the risk of staking out a claim for brilliance or smartness and thus avoid the conflict, competition, and threat of annihilation or destruction perceived by their conflicted and anxious minds.

Silencing in socialization is reinforced either externally or internally. The family is viewed as the necessary primary socializer. The process of

socialization is replete with metaphorical saturations of silences. And, tracking socialization through the lens (blindness) of silence reveals a number of socialization silences built into developmental steps: no infant is held without being hushed up at some time, no child grows up without being told "to hold his

tongue", admonished to "be as quiet as a mouse", or, ignored if he/she were not there, attend school without being told to "answer in turn", participate in a formal gathering without being taught that "silence means respect". Even as we develop and learn, we are proceeding through the process of socialization in which we respond to admonitions, threats, and advice. Through that process we become silenced. As we advance in socialization we incorporate the physically enforced rules and gradually, without acknowledging it, we silence ourselves. If we get sufficiently sophisticated, we learn how to speak while being silent, like George Orwell's 1984 "duck-speakers", persons who spoke entirely in clichés. Socialization discourse is shot through with silences, for silence metaphors and aphorisms have been used in the socialization process throughout history. Children, women and subordinates for centuries were brought up to "be seen and not heard." The adage "silence is golden" is one of the linguistic enforcers of behavior applied on a class, gender and cultural basis. Contrast this with Picard's intergenerational aphorism which details an ironic difference between youth and old age with respect to silence: "The language of the child is silence transformed into sound: the language of the adult is sound that seeks for silence"⁵⁸ As a youth matures into adulthood, social rituals are no less

58. Max Picard. The World of Silence, trans. Stanley Godman, Chicago: Regnery, 1952. pp. 121.

infused with silence. "Speak now or forever hold your peace!" is an ancient rule of conduct enforceable by both secular and religious laws. Recall that in a christian marriage, the gathering is told by a preacher: "whosoever finds reason that this man should not marry this woman, speak now or forever hold your peace"

An even more extreme dictum is Wittgenstein's aphorism: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent"⁵⁹ Or, remember the prison writer, Gramsci who in his Prison Notebooks⁶⁰ under the "Reasons of State", Gramsci talks about conspirational silence, the silence which exists because of power relations. Power relations are pure political discourse, for so much power keeps the communication loud. But mark this writer's observation:

What is kept in silence is the balance of power.

Silence, it seems, according to Gramsci is the key operative in the construction of political power relations. And, it will be shown in the coming chapters, as the key operative in knowledge relations. Further, I posit that in fact as there is power/knowledge relations so is there silence/power relations.

In terms of socialization for citizenship we are told by Gramsci ⁶¹ that in a

59. Ludwig Wittgenstein. Lectures & Conversations. Cyril Barrett, ed., Berkeley: University of California Press (from 1938 lectures))pp. 40.

60. Antonio Gramsci The Prison Notebooks
Selections from Cultural Writings Ed David Forgacs and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, Trans. William Boelhower. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985.

61. Antonio Gramsci The Prison Notebooks
Selections from Cultural Writings Ed David Forgacs and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, Trans. William Boelhower. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985.

democracy that silence can be assumed to be assent. Examples of silences commonly understood as assent are found in plenitude in the law and politics. It is common practice for a congressman to say "Mr Speaker, I ask that this material be entered into the record" and the speaker says: "Without objection, so moved". This means that business is done by acquiescence. Silence of assent is part of the administrative machinery for making decisions. A lawyer says "Objection!" to a question and/or an answer that they are irrelevant (silenced) and if the judge agrees, he says "Objection sustained". and then he goes on to say "The jury will disregard the question/statement." That means that the jury is under an obligation to not hear what they heard, that is, to purposely silence something actually heard. This implies that silencing is voluntary and open and above board. Groups silence themselves as a matter of will and assent, as part of the administrative cover of normative behavior.

Silence in a democracy exercised as assent is dramatically seen in common understandings about voting behavior. For example, those who don't vote are assumed by the government to be ratifying the decisions of those who do vote. This is the rationale for getting out the vote in an apathetic electorate like the United States and making campaigns by registering voters so that they can show that that assumption is false and go on record by not making their silence as assent. The reverse is also true, for example, in other countries where the electorate is a high percentage of the population, protest movements try to get the electorate to stay at home and silence themselves and delegitimize the election. That is, in the reverse case, silence is used to make a noise of protest. If in a dictatorship, a newspaper comes out with one half its front page missing, as in Spain under Franco

(pre-word processing), then that silence is a tremendously loud and public protest.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident"⁶² Contrapose Wittgenstein with the "I take your silence as assent", the capitalistic or democratic form of silence previously- described, to it's foregrounding of silence practiced under conditions of free speech, or the First Amendment.....for example, good citizens cooperate by complying in silence, and we queue quietly in established positions whether we form lines, or take turns at microphones. We cooperate by letting "one at a time speak. It is considered "civilized" to respectfully (and silently) wait ones turn.

However, with rebellion it is another story: "your silence will not protect you"--the common knowledge that one is " guilty until proven innocent" under certain political and community regimes.

Outside the classroom there is assumptive guilt by "taking the 5th Amendment. And, with torture, similarly with injury, disability, and disease, while struggling with pain, silence in suffering is constituted as a saintly trait, silence in torture is considered a courageous trait, and finally, in death, silence is considered epigramatic. If one has the opportunity to know and prepare as Kubler Ross⁶³ suggests in her stage theory of death preparation, the individual works through the stages of grief from disbelief to rage to the last stage of acceptance which is a form of quietude or silence. Indeed, we die and when we die we hit the final wall of silence, for death itself, as the grand and "last harrah!" becomes the final silence.

62. United States First Congress 1789 U.S. Bill of Rights

63. Elizabeth Kubler Ross, Death The Final Stage of Growth, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1975. Also, Coping With Death and Dying, Flossmore, III, Ross Medical Association, 1973.

"I have lost silence, and the regret that I feel over that is immeasurable. I cannot describe the pain that invades a man once he has begun to speak. It is a motionless pain, that is itself pledged to muteness: because of it, the unbreathable is the element I breathe. I have shut myself up in a room, alone, there is no one in the house, almost no one outside, but this *solitude has itself begun to speak*, and I must in turn speak about this speaking solitude, not in derision, but because a greater solitude hovers above it, and above that solitude, another still greater, and each, taking the spoken word in order to smother it and silence it, instead echoes it to infinity, and infinity becomes an echo".⁶⁴(*italics mine*)

Maurice Blanchot(1978)

Death Sentence

64. Maurice Blanchot Death Sentence. New York: Station Hill Press, 1978. (French original 1948))pp. 33.

Socialization/silence and violence: External reinforcement comes like other forms of social control in either positive or negative rewards or punishments. Silencing can be a forceful and physical act backed up by actual or threat of physical punishment. Currently reported educational autobiographies from college students from the United States, are full of remembrances of the nuns' slaps, and in the Caribbean and Latin America, there are remembrances documented of the school master's rod and the nuns' slaps and priests' fisticuffs despite the contention that we now live in an era of advanced educational practices, which theoretically, at least, eliminates corporal punishment. Foucault's commentary in Discipline and Punish on the traditional methods of "levying violence"⁶⁵ reflects the old dictum "Spare the rod and spoil the child". The traditional methods of levying violence were clear and direct, with no doubt as to the required response and no doubt as to the roles and relations of the subjects. Whenever behavior is enforced by punishment or threats of punishment, it is the form of **political or brutal silencing**. It is crucial to indicate that political silencing does not require any degree of cooperation at all by the silenced. It is clearly a story whereby domination is enforced by degrees, in other words, if one degree of extinction is not successful, the method is to "up the ante" with harsher measures until the subject is sufficiently silenced. Even in socialization, in childhood development, spanking or threat of this form of physicality and humiliation tend to be bottom line reinforcers of behavior when in the child fails in sufficiently internalizing and conditioning appropriate social behavior.

65. Michel Foucault. Foucault Reader ed. Paul Rabinow New York, Pantheon, 1984. p. 208.

On another level there is a more advanced form of silencing which would not work without the cooperation of the person silenced. It is silencing that is internalized as an everyday type of practice. The form of silence which I call **cultural silence** is a self induced silence. Cultural silence is actually similar to the Freudian notion of repression except instead of being on an individual basis as repression is thought to occur, **cultural silence** is a phenomenon of silencing of the group process. It is lodged in the social with respect to the reproductive and reinforcing function of group norms, laws and beliefs. The key is that cultural silencing is voluntary and cooperative social behavior. Cultural silencing may come as a result of reaction to socialization, or it may be created as a self induced repression, or amnesia. It is a critical ingredient to integration of compliance to Durkheimian **“social facts”**. My theory is that all “social facts” are associated with social silences as their expediting medium. The cultural silencing form of the taxonomy of social silences is the most relevant medium in the production of a social fact. Durkheim defined a social fact as “every way of acting, fixed or not, capable of exercising on the individual an external constraint”⁶⁶ However, if the conformity of behavior to the laws of nature by the social were guaranteed only by external constraint, conformity would be un-uniform and precarious. In such classical sociology, Durkheim emphasises the sanctions of the moral

66. Emile Durkheim. The Rules of Sociological Method. New York, The Free Press, 1950. p.13.

order as the most effective constraint society had in its tool box for social control. Social facts are social- structural determinants of behavior which are compliant to norms, laws and beliefs. One of the linchpins to the production of a uniformity of conformity, assuring an integration of conformity within the psyche and within the group ethic is the extrapolation from psychology of the Freudian mechanisms of repression and identification. Identification of the members of a group with a common model, or norm which assures the symbolic unity of the group or institution. Durkheim goes on to argue that individuals constitute a reality that can no longer be accounted for in terms of the properties of individual actors. That is, groups have a synergetic property, the whole is not being the same as the sum of its parts. That, indeed, a group identification and processing occurs linking the individual to the symbolic unity of a wider context and frame than the individual. Since group properties are independent from individual traits, phenomena which tend toward building social cohesion (or social dissolution) must be identified separately and distinctly. For these reasons, my notion of social silence comes partially from the extrapolation of Freudian "repression", which instead of being viewed as an solitary phenomenon, I view as a cooperative, collective, or group behavior. Further, as I understand it, social silences are also forms of social amnesia, which have their own silencing mechanism and are embedded within the practices of the institutions of the social. This view is informed by taking the Freudian canon under a social lens as Marcuse did in Eros and Civilization when he discussed "surplus repression".⁶⁷ What is unique to social facts is that a social fact must contain structural aspects, as

67. Herbert Marcuse. Eros and Civilization. New York, Vintage Books, 1955, pp.3-7.

well, of what I call **social silence**. Every social fact requires a silence before being put into play. The distinction I make is that while social facts are a class within themselves with their distinctive social characteristics and determinants, silence comprises the infrastructure. Silence fulfills the task of containing the critical messages of the reinforcing “coercive power” which endows the social fact with its endurance and potency. The enforcing element behind the coercive power is the implicit threat of actual or imagined punishment. It is critical that the implicit threat of real or imagined punishment be kept silent, out of rational awareness, but rather within the internalized “unthought known”, or the imaginary wherein the threat is somehow viscerally realized but not registered. The actual, forgotten, or imagined punishment could be a historical memory or narrative passed on through generations with the force of myth, (magical belief based on fear) or it could be the substantial and material facts of physical torture lodged either in generational memory or community belief, i.e., Durkheim’s Jungian “*conscience collective*”⁶⁸ What is key, I suggest, is that there can be no notion of social fact without the infrastructure of silence. Silence is the soldier carrying the weapon, the dog its bite, the teeth in the concept of social fact. This coercive power, activated by a social silence as its dark messenger, flushes through the everyday of acting, in customs, norms and laws, and is capable of exercising external constraints on the individual in the form of moral rules, and in the forms of Freudian internalization. These are behaviors lodged in the seedbeds of unchallenged accepted beliefs, taking on a character of permanence and immutability in the sense of the sacred and obeyed without question, without knowing. The “without question”, “without knowing” is silence’s

68. Ibid see #7.

effect.

In summary, a social fact is potent because of its embedded silences. The form that silence takes in the articulation of social fact in the economies of power relations is that of carrier of threat, more like a viral carrier agent in a pre-virulent disease, lodged within the cells there and waiting, which may be activated by time, or by appropriate conditions, but, the body registers in some manner, however discrete. The silence in a social fact is a buried silence which usually remains asleep. Within its boundaries lie the “skeletons in the closet”, the bones of painful memories of abuse and torture, of being disappeared and psychically annihilated,⁶⁹ of do or die behavior, of failed survivals which inform, however “unconsciously” the materiality of the social body, the lurking of a past, the amnesic cultural memory of the threat which so informs the coercion of social behaviors. Within its boundaries lies the silence of power, asleep or repressed, but, non-the-less potent, which when activated becomes a monstrous fact requiring reaction and sometimes radical social action, for then it comes as the revelation of the technologies of domination and the bases of power.

The silences that are embedded in the social are based in the silencing of the body, that is, in the form of what I call, **brutal or political silences**. The silences that inform the collective repression of social facts for instance come in the form of what I call **cultural silences**. Both forms of silence are social in that they are articulated and lodged within social relations and cre-

69. Alice Miller writes about the silencing of the abused child in Breaking Down the Wall of Silence. New York, Dutton Book, 1991. Also, For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Childrearing and the Roots of Violence. Thou Shalt Not Be Aware: Society's Betrayal of the Child. Banished Knowledge: Facing Childhood Injuries.

ated within social contexts.

The cultural form is a silence is an autoinduced or self created form while political or brutal silencing is caused by the threat of another. It is external and reactive to an interactive event, or the threat itself is relational and interactive. Cultural silences are those forms which are induced, they are the content of repression, nostalgia, the traces of public and private memory which are internalized to the extent of repression. Cultural silencing is the realizing mechanism of social facts, a necessity of social control. An example of a model of control in the everyday is the individual practice self-control in-complying with school rules. This auto-silencing or self imposed silencing is a mark of effective socialization and good citizenship that is **culturally induced silencing**. With cultural silencing the threats of noncompliance are not within consciousness, but are buried inside the soul, giving the illusion of freedom simultaneously with the anxiety of disobedience and the emotions of slavery and domination. The actor entirely believes he / she is in control of their choices, and, that these choices are made entirely freely.

Silencing may come as a result of reaction to socialization, or be articulated as part of the processes of social control, or it may be actualized as a self and/or community induced repression or amnesia. It is, in my estimation, a critical ingredient to the integration of compliance in Durkheimian _"social facts"⁷⁰. My argument is that all "social facts" are associated with social silences as their expediting medium. The cultural silencing form of the taxonomy of social silences may be the most relevant medium in the production of a social fact.

70. Emile Durkheim, The Rules of the Sociological Method, New York, The Free Press, 1950.pp 13.

The notion of the “Unthought Known”

These are occasions of silence, deep silences, which reflect a density of feeling or emotion which numerous times has been characterized as "too deep for words", that is, finding language insufficient to communicate the felt occasion.

These deep silences articulate in some manner with fundamentally non-representable knowledge which is somehow reflected by and contained in these "wordless occasions". Through the theories of "unconscious communication" we are internally shaped by the presence and actions of the other within a social silence. Deep organic silence connotes an extraphysiological body process. Bollas (1987) describes these occasions as "a rendezvous of mute recognition that defies representation"⁷¹

The notions of abuse, maltreatment and cultural sado-masochism

Physical abuse, the physical and often brutal punishment of a victim is analogous to physical or brutal silencing. There is virtually no difference between the two. Forms of physical punishment to greater or lesser degree, or threats of punishment, reinforced by the memory or ideation of the probability of real brutal punishment is evident in relations of subjugations by a domi

71. Christopher Bollas. The Shadow of the Object: Psychoanalysis of the Unthought Known. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.

Also, Being a Character. Psychoanalysis & Self Experience. New York: Hill and Wang, 1992 . p3

nant and controlling actor. Political or brutal silencing occurs, most particularly in cases of overt physical abuse, for the victim is forbidden "to tell", or "to rat" on his/her or their captors or dominators.

To reveal or "to break the silence" or to become "an informer" instantly places that person (s) in jeopardy of life and limb. In fact, part of the punishment, understood as punishment, is the maintenance of this "silence". As the faces and emaciated bodies of the Bosnians in the Serbian "detention" camps in August 1992, silent and gaunt, testify ---to remain silent while under torture or abuse is in itself a burden, often the most difficult one for it nullifies all chances of escape. If brutality is "kept under cover", if the public or key persons are not informed, and the person or group is made to look as though its a situation of "business as usual", then the silenced person who brutalized or abused, must actively participate in maintaining his/her own chains or subjugation.

Current postmodern theorizing seems to be complicit with the silencing of women, particularly when it is related to abuse, both violent and psychological. Bataille is a key example as is Lacan. Lacanian psychoanalysis contributes to this by commenting that: we (women) mean yes when we say not: "the tension of desire hidden in the most professed horror of incest"⁷²

An important distinction comes which indicates a demarkation between political or brutal silencing and cultural silencing. As I have mentioned in the taxonomy of silences, political or brutal silences are those caused by punishment or the threat of punishment. These are direct responses to the actual

72. Jacques Lacan. "Some Reflections on the Ego." International Journal of Psycho-Analysis 34 (Part II) , 1953. p. 12.

or feared punishment which is immediately experienced, that is, they are directly causal, one can find the evidence of brutality or threat of it. Cultural silencing occurs when the individual, group or state silences itself seemingly without an instigation, or the memory of a threat or punishment. It is at the point of no return, when individuals, groups or states automatically become complicitous seemingly without direct cause, and keep on maintaining their subservence, slavery or adherence to inutile and often self destructive norms at great price. This is not just the mechanism of political repression at work, it is a more active process, it is voluntaristic, doing something purposely to the self, to the group, to the state.

Political life is based on consent, not just fear of direct punishment. Consent requires propagandists either against oneself, as in psychological repression, or against the group and state, which is a mixed psychological and political repression. Whatever the energy to repress, keep information or knowledge down, then it (the memory) remains and must resurface in some form. It does not treat man as just rational, but as an integrated psychological and political animal.

This is the key to the victims complicity in his/her own pain., and for that matter, guilt. Guilt comes from the knowledge that (if that person were strong, capable, competent, smart) as he/she/they should be, then the person or group thinks that they are responsible for defeating or subduing the oppressor, whatever the odds, whatever his strength. This" should have defended myself" situation creates a doublebind in the person or group, for to acknowledge defeat to some means annihilation or chaos. It is a constant threat of psychic dismemberment for efficacy is lost and agency destroyed thus creating a constant state of helplessness and despair. This borderland

state of despair only reaffirms the unworthwhileness of the victim, and in essence it is the state most symbolic of victimhood. Victimhood is a condition whereby a person or group is rendered insignificant, except in the ability to withstand brutality and other forms of abuses until death. This condition is the harbinger of despair, a common state of the victimized. A key to understanding the essence of despair is that nothing works, for the mind and body are just marginally functioning, devoid of ideas, just simply trying to exist without further pain or death.

The notions of privacy and agency and their relation to silence:

It is important to be able to keep your own silence. An understanding of agency encompasses both the keeping of one's own silence, as well as the "breaking of silence." As Mann⁷³ (forthcoming 1993) indicates a concept of agency is multidimensional. Agency is intentionally taking significant actions which are determinant on person, place and time. Therefore, taking one's own silence, or breaking it, can both be representative of agency. Insuring one's own privacy, by not speaking, or, conversely, by filling up the sound space by noise saturation-"white noise", or administrative/bureaucratic speech which operates much the same way, can be considered acts of individual or social agency. A professional, for example, who uses professional jargon to obscure his/her meaning on purpose, creates a form of "white noise" and although compromising the free forms of communication to the

73. Patricia Mann. A Micropolitics for the 21st Century. University of Minnesota Press, forthcoming 1993.

disadvantage of another, is acting with agency for him/herself. A concept of oppression, however, for the oppressed, is entirely devoid, by definition, of their own agency.

The Fifth Amendment⁷⁴, which begins as a protection against confessions induced by torture, is a right to keep silence. The Miranda decision required that people arrested be informed of this right to silence. The hot debate over the right to privacy can be seen as an extension of the right to silence in the Fifth Amendment, because silence is the *sine qua non* of privacy. Those who oppose Miranda wish to keep indigent/ignorant people unaware that they have a right to keep silent. So, these people can be said to be silencing the Constitution. **Actions taken in privacy cannot remain in privacy and be protected as private without the right of silence.**

The abortion debate is simultaneously about an action and a silence about that action. The recent spate of state laws in 1990-1992 which require informing parents, or the doctor informing the state are attacks on silence FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING THE ACTION (ABORTION) IMPOSSIBLE. The Freedom of Information Act gives the individual the right to look in the government files (and corporate files?) to see how much of his/her privacy has been violated. We cannot as citizens, effectively tear off the silence of the government and big corporations. Therefore, corporations and government entities continue frequently to operate in privacy. Until the silence is broken by innovative investigative reporting however, the reporter is always challenged to give up the names of his sources, to renounce his-in-

74. United States First Congress 1789 Constitution of The United States, Fifth Amendment.

this-case First Amendmen⁷⁵t right of silence) While they, the corporate powers on the other hand can find out about “the people”. They can uncover our tax information, our private lives, our credit conditions, our previous criminal conditions, our insurances, and probably, our HIV status by buying into computer information banks. These are issues which we commonly refer to as privacy but which are, operationally, yet another right to silence. So silence becomes an issue of power. Those who have enough power can 1) keep their own silence and 2) destroy the silence of others. Those who have relatively no power 1) can not keep their own information out of prying hands and 2) cannot by and large find out about the chicanery and tyranny exercised upon them.

The notion of Administrative and Professional Language and Ethics.

A rich literature exists with respect to the professions and professionalism. Silencing may occur within professions, as internal silencing of its members, or it may occur between professions with one dominant or more powerful (or politically empowered) profession silencing another into the silence of “absence of mention” or relative obscurity and diminished status. Literature on professions starts with Marx who wrote about the key phenomenon of the marginalization of the working class with loss of autonomy and control of their everyday life. Marx also had a negative view of the separation of mental and manual labor and spoke about the emergence of guilds as a regressive social formation. In other words, Marx first identified imperialism in the

75. Ibid. First Amendment.

self interested feudal institutions. All of this builds into the silencing of subordinate groups through the economic relations of capital. Weber viewed professions as instances of rationalization in "Science as a Vocation"⁷⁶ and saw the rise of professions as strategies of control. Durkheim⁷⁷ identified professional groups and corporations as interchangeable, especially emphasizing the disarticulation of the economic from the social and the moral--thereby creating and recreating the metaphor of "business gone wild", i.e., replicating Weberian "anomie" and amorality. Also, Durkheim spoke of finding values of cohesion and commonality in professional associations where morals, ethics, standards, rituals arise. Parsons⁷⁸ functionalist perspective emphasized the legitimating and homeostatic role professions play in maintaining society. For Parson's the emphasis was on the sick role and the impact the professions had on it as an individual effect. Goode⁷⁹ describes the features of a profession extensively, many of the individual components are still

76. Max Weber. "Politics as a Vocation" in From Max Weber. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, 1948.

77. Emile Durkheim. Preface to the 2nd edition of The Division of Labor in Society "Some Remarks on Professional Groups: "Professional Ethics"

78. Talcott Parsons. "Professions" International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, v. 12, 1968.

"The Professions & Social Structure", Essays in Sociological Theory, pp34-39.

"Social Structure & Dynamic Process: The Case of Modern Medical Practice" pp. 428-479.

79. William Goode. "Encroachment, charlatanism, and the emerging profession: Psychology, sociology and medicine" American Sociological Review,

currently debated as valid inclusions by a variety of theorists. Giddens⁸⁰ speaks of the agency and structure of professions, and Bourdieu, similarly to Weber speaks about "cultural capital" when applied to professions. Because professions, with the exception of the Guilds, are characteristically treated as a set of ahistorical features they can be seen as designations of credentialled inequalities with respect to "cultural capital" Larson's⁸¹ professions are explicitly market organizations attempting a domination of the social. However, in this view, subordinate professions, that of nursing and physician assistants and other ancillary professions to the physician are ignored with this focus on dominance. Friedson⁸² contrasts with Parsons in that his emphasis is social and not individual (sick role) and queried as to how the overall handling of illness was impacted by the professions.

An understanding of the history, development and standards of professions is necessary as a backdrop in the investigation of tensions between two professions (nursing and physician's assistants) which when analyzed seem to be duplicative and in competition, while in the public eye, and internally as well, seem to be silencing dissent.⁸³ The questions asked relate to who has what to gain, why open conflict is suppressed, what is evolving in terms of power relations, and in the end, which profession will have primacy,

25:902-914.

80. Anthony Giddens. The Consequences of Modernity. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1990. pp 53-54; 21-28; 79-92.

81. Magali Larson The Rise of Professionalism. New York, 1977. Chapters 2,3,4,5,6.

82. Eliot Freidson The Profession of Medicine. New York, Dodd, Mead, 1970. chapters 1-4, 15-16.

Professional Dominance. Chicago, Aldine Publishing, 1970.

83. American Nursing Association Policy Statement 1989.

i.e. who wins.

Marx implied the existing of a kind of social unconscious. Freud in his last books treats society as if it were a patient and therefore posits a kind of social unconscious. Durkheim speaks of this idea with "*conscience collective*". Marcuse in Eros and Civilization posits in an explicit way the existence of a social unconscious. The idea of cultural silencing expands the notion of the working out of the social unconscious.

There is a tradition of expanding psychological notions and naturalizing them in the social. Therefore, one can have social neurosis, as in David Riesman's The Lonely Crowd.⁸⁴ Erich Fromm in Escape from Freedom⁸⁵ treats Nazism as if it were a social psychosis.

People who will not speak or cannot speak or cannot force others to speak are suffering from some kind of social disorder of which the cure must of necessity lie in the social rather than on the therapists couch. However, the analogy with psychoanalysis may hold, in that digging out the repressed material, acknowledging it, and acting on it could liberate the behavior of a social group.

For example, the gay telephone switchboards in the early 1970's were an effort to break the silence in which gay people found themselves buried and isolated. The urgent purpose of those switchboards was to prevent suicides by puncturing the shame, the sense of sin and the sense of solitude, i.e., breaking the silence. These initiatives led rapidly to a much greater self

84. David Reisman The Lonely Crowd New York: Columbia University Press, 1950.

85. Erich Fromm The Forgotten Language. New York: Grove Press, 1951
Also see Fromm's Escape from Freedom. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1941.

awareness of the “gay community” (an expression which was not common at that time⁸⁶) Similar examples can be found in the women’s movements (“biology is destiny”)⁸⁷ and the environmentalist movements (“Dirt is the price of progress”⁸⁸), in medicine, in patient’s rights movements (“the Doctor knows best”⁸⁹)

For a social fact to really function as a social fact it has to be ubiquitous and impervious. It has to pervade the social and it has to be somehow or other unquestioned in spite of being potentially questionable. It could always be challenged but somehow no one challenges it. Therefore all the natural or spontaneous questionings of the social fact that might arise from curiosity, the desire to analyze or investigate, or to measure the personal against the public have to somehow or other disappear. If these challenges were not to disappear, then a myriad welter of contending opinions would exist instead of what we call a social fact, which is a unity and an identifiable, normative opinion that rules. It can be seen that without the repression of potentially problematical discourses and affects, social facts could not come into being and they could not hold the “stage” of social life. So essential is this process that one might almost say that a pattern of silencing is the real content of the social fact, and the “fact” itself is a kind of a resultant product.

Although there is always silencing and there must be silences in order to

86. The term “gay community” is used as a general social term after “the Stonewall Riots” in the West Village in New York City in the late 1970’s (I’m gay and I’m proud”-after James Brown)

87. “Biology is destiny” is a form of saying “do not dare to question the prevailing patriarchal standard.

88. “Dirt is the price of progress” is a way of saying “to challenge the polluters is to become a pariah, an enemy of civilization.

89. “The Doctor knows best” is a form of saying “shut up” to lay people.

have any kind of discourse or social existence , it is nevertheless critical that silence be made a legitimate topic for analysis and criticism in the social sciences, and that it be understood as a process, rather than remain itself silenced. Silence is part of the glue that holds the myths of power together. There can be no hope of undoing those myths without untangling the social silences.

Sacred Silences.

Sacred silences address the other worldly aspect of a transcendental consciousness as well as realms of pre and post verbal states which have no linguistic base for reference. The sacred is said to go beyond words. Instead there is a knowingness or felt apperception of content deeply identified with transformative forces, both redemptional and destructive. A form of the sacred, or sacred aspects of life, are commonly or customarily acknowledged by all social groups. Silences are found referred to in the sacred as integral to the conception of the sacred itself. It is a component, and in some religions, the center⁹⁰, of the transcendental, estatic, relation between the human and the divine.

Sacred silences are addressed here in two categories:

(1) Spiritual and (2) Organic.

Spiritual Silences has two forms:

(A) Western Pre-biblical and Biblical Silences, and (B) Eastern Spiritual Silences

Organic Silences has one form which is discussed, as per research to date:

(A) "The Unthought Known", (Bollas)

(B) Also includes such areas as parapsychology and intuition.

90. Work on the silence meditation of the Quakers, the white noise silences of the Pentacostals, the mute medatational life of Trappists monks "vow of silence"

(A) Western Sacred Silences

Pre-Biblical and Biblical Silences:

the history of “political” and/or “brutal” silencing stretches far back in human history. Even the first biblical humans, Adam and Eve, were brutally silenced, as Fromm notes:

“Man and woman live in the Garden of Eden in complete harmony with each other and with nature. There is peace with no necessity to work; there is no choice, no freedom, no thinking either.

Man is forbidden to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil....acting against God's orders means freeing himself from coercion, emerging from the unconscious existence of prehuman life to the level of man. Acting against the command authority, committing a sin, is in its positive human aspect the first act of freedom, that is, the first human act.”

(Fromm, p. 34)

According to the old testament, silence either had no content in it, or at least had no content for humans. Without making any commitment about the nature of silence, the Lord seemed to have reserved the disposition of it for himself, and he goes to great pains, (e.g. The Tower of Babel) to silence or trivialize human communication, and to always elevate the idea of a non-linguistic communication. In the later Hellenistic period of Judaism, this looks very much like mysticism or gnosticism on a model analogous with the East. However, in the times of old testament, it seems much more like a di-

vine patriarchal jealousy of humans daring to speak at all. For when they do, they tend to protest the arbitrariness and capriciousness of the Deity himself, as Job does. But Job gets his come-uppance:

“Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the almighty instruct him? He that reproveth God let him answer it. Then Job answered the Lord and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.”(Job 40; 1-4)

One of the other things humans could do with their linguistic ability was to flatter and lie to the Deity.:

“The People draw nigh unto me with the mouths, but their hearts are far from me” (Jeremiah 2; 10)

And so the immanent power of God becomes lodged not in His utterances, which can after all be subject to human scrutiny, interpretation, negotiation, plea-bargaining, etcetera, but rather by His silence, for which there is no preparation and against which there is no appeal.

“In ancient languages the word was merely an interruption of silence.”⁹¹

“The language breathe silence, spoke silence, into the great silence from which it came”⁹²

Words were said to “lose their shape” without being rimmed around by silence., without silence speech would be an undifferentiated assault of sounds.

91. See # 22. pp 59.

92. Ibid.

"The Judaism of the dual Torah, oral and written stems from the belief that God's revelation of the Torah to Moses at Sinai "came forth in two media; one written, the other formulated and transmitted only through memory"⁹³

The Gospel According to John:

" In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God."⁹⁴(John , 1:1)

The WORD (logos) again regains its transcendental status first accorded to it in the New Testament. The mystical tradition of the old testament is seen in Ronell's reference;

"there is not "alliance", no "marriage" or mystical "union" which is not sealed before the exorbitant gift of a Word or the startling inspiration of a Breath:
Hear o'Israel the Law is always given a Voice because hearing (horchen) and listening (gehorchen) implies receiving, anterior to any "auto" giving or autonomy"⁹⁵

Heidegger bases his argument for the circular economy of the given and received word from this reference based on the mystical tradition of the old testament.

A separate, but not inconsistent notion is that of silence considered as "das ding an sich" but with both primordial and mystical manifestations.

Similar to the doctrine of Pharisaism " hermeneutic pretense", scripture was read in the Judaism of the double Torah within the principle that things

93. Somer Broadribb Nothing Mat(t)ers. A Feminist Critique of Postmodernism, North Melbourne, Spinifex Press, Ltd., 1992. P.76.

94. Bible King James Version. Gospel According to John 1:1

95. Avital Ronell The Telephone Book, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989. pp64.

were never what they seem⁹⁶

Resistance to silencing is an act of freedom or agency, but due to the fear of brutality (or the effects of socialization) this freedom is little appreciated or utilized. Although individuals (Socrates, Seneca) and groups (Primitive Christians, Sathars) were silenced in Classical period and in the Middle Ages, cultural silencing can be seen in the Gregorian chant standards, and through the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the rise of literacy in early modern Europe.

Gregory the 7th, Pope of Rome and the Holy Catholic Church in the Medieval period institutionalized silence as a standard of literacy. The invention of cultural silence started in the church with the requirements for scholarship, intellectual discussion and religious commentary mandated only in Latin. As Latin was the language of the elite clergy, it ostracised and controlled the participation of all other groups in the communities. Only learned discussions were held in Latin, as was the practice of the Mass. Further with the Gregorian chants, the use of Latin was codified as sacred. Prior to the use of Latin, the church communications were not written down, rather handed down or codified in chants, poetry and song. The Church maintained thusly, a cultural silence where in a form of professional or administrative control was held via exclusionary speech in Latin. In this way, the non elite followers (or faithful) were silenced from effective understanding and participation in all social, cultural, economic and religious matters, as these domains were controlled via the power constructed out of cultural silencing by the Catholic

96. Jacob Neusner What is Midrash? Philadelphia, Fortress Press.1986. p. 44.

Church. This cultural silencing of the Catholic Church was broken down only with the advent of Luther and the printing of the Bible in the German language, thus making it more accessible to a greater number (the literate) of the general population.

The Catholic Church, under pressure from the rebirth of classical knowledge, the discovery of various forgeries on which it based its secular power (e.g., the Donation of Constantine), and the use of the printing press to spread "heretical" ideas to increasing numbers of literate people, fought back with the Inquisition and the Index of Prohibited Books. The Inquisition, in most of Europe, was under the control of various Bishops. Heretics could remain safe if they moved from diocese to diocese. There was no general agreement as to what, exactly, constituted heresy. "After 1542, the tracking down of heresy passed from the power of local authority (bishops) to Rome. The Inquisition, the Index of Forbidden Books, and the resulting funk blunted inquiry and induced conformity.... Fear, cunning, compromise, and a preoccupation with fine points (scholarship) made up a good part of the intellectual climate of the sixteenth century." (Marines, p. 334)

In Spain, however, the Inquisition was under the control of the State, and its powers were used not only against heretics, but also against rebels and free-thinkers. With the Counter-Reformation after the conclusion of the Council of Trent (1563) silencing became institutionalized.

Modern Christian Thought:

Modern Christian thought still treasures silences as a necessary Christian trait:

DON'T SAY A WORD

" Are you nervous and blue?
In doubt what to do?
Misunderstood, too?
Don't say a word.

Is business so bad?
It's hard to be glad?
Inclined to get mad?
Don't say a word

Are things awry?
Does it seem vain to try?
Must you worry and sigh?
Don't say a word.

Climb bravely life's hill
Seek only God's Will
Trust Him and be still---
Sh! Don't say a word."

Roman Catholic prayer
Author unknown

Silence is a component in the vastness of the collective memory of Jungian psychology. Silence in gesture was thought to be the primordial act of signification. For example, the "Dogon god Ama "created the word by showing it", or the Bambaras "for whom things were designated and *named silently before they existed*" (Italics mine) It is referred to as the "deep silence" of the sacred, as well as being a key feature in the creative process.

In each of these cases, silence results out of a natural inadequacy of language. In these cases there is a lapsing, or falling away or failure of discourse. Despite the fact that language becomes inutile or impotent, the movement in silence of feeling or expression is rendered more powerful, more meaningful. Despite the fact that, in these cases, language is rendered redundant, the social does not cease to exist, but instead has a nonlinguistic significance. And, in some cases, silence is seen to transcend discourse.

Eastern Sacred Silences, a sub-category of sacred silences, is similar in the conception of its potency and place beyond the social. However, a notion of Eastern silences goes further than the organic or deep silences to transcend any connectedness, or relatedness and takes place both within and beyond itself. Eastern silences paradoxically, are found only within the social everyday" as they represent the "as it is ness" and yet is "beyond suffering and despair" which is the everyday experience of being contained in the mortal "what is just is of itself", i.e., the real state of human existence, which is conversely, Nirvana.

This is an example of Buddha's compassion of the "as-it-is-ness" of everyday experience contained in the mortal and fallible society:

Budda: "pay the bribe and get the scrolls with the writing on them. The scrolls with no writing are just as good, but the people of the middle kingdom are very literal minded and need to read something. " ⁹⁷

Wu Cheng-en

Silence is the categorical imperative of each aspect of the objects of social life. It fills both abstract and substantially material purposes. It has abstract qualities as in deep or spiritual silences where, according to Picard, (1948) silence takes primacy over utterance. It is the unfathomable Godhead, the unanswerable question, the sound of one hand clapping. It is the abstraction of the silence of creation which lies outside language; it is the substantial

97. Wu Cheng-En. Journey to the Western Kingdom. Ming Dynasty See # 22.

materiality of death, the final and complete silence. It is the mainstay or matrix for all interactions, and most especially, it is revealed in the explicitly intersubjective silence of intimates.

The Eastern idea about silence preaches a cessation of discourse and a cessation of rational thought in order to achieve union with a Godhead, or release from being. Meditation is the procedure which moves one and in which one is moved through the phenomenon of silence. In the Eastern religions silence is End, that after which you strive. You try to purify yourself of discourse in order to achieve a blissful radiant silence, the end of suffering and attachment to the world. Nirvana is silence.

The opportunity to experience real silence occurs when we have been driven into a corner and simply cannot move an inch. This seems like a situation of complete despair, but this silence is quite different from despair, because in the area of despair, the conscious flame of human desire is still burning. But real silence is the state of human existence that passes through this despair. Without everyday life, it is impossible to experience silence."⁹⁸

"In terms of the universe or Buddha's eye, silence is exactly as-it-isness or what-is-just-is-of-itself."⁹⁹

98. .Dainin Katagiri, Returning to Silence. Bodston: Shambhala, 1988. pp 41.

99. Ibid. Pp. 42.

(C) Organic Silences - - The Unthought Known.

“Shadowing all object relating is a fundamental and primary aloneness which is inevitable and unmoveable. And this aloneness is the background of our being, solitude is the container of self.”¹⁰⁰

Winnicott (1963)

A concept of an “unthought known” is perhaps the most exciting theoretical tool in the postmodern and feminist debate against the primacy of language. The centrality of this idea to a theory of silence is that it heralds an opening for future discussion and research into what Winnicott calls an intermediate

The process of discovery of a psychosomatic lexicon which textualizes “sensationally, structurally, conceptually, symbolically, mnemically and projectively to provide a syntax for self”¹⁰¹ and group experience. It forecasts another mode of apprehending and comprehending a world of human knowledges within a range of subjectivities, not only including the preverbal, but beyond, in preconscious, generationally conscious, unconscious and “day dreaming” states. What this has to do with silence and a theory of social silences is the confirmation of a specific process and delineation of components in the evocation of self states whether by choice, obligation or chance within which silences are fundamental and integral.

And, within which, social silences become evocative objects as well in the heart of self experiencing, and from which, in types of unconscious reflexivity

100. D.W. Winnicott. Human Nature. London, Free Association, 1988.

101. Christopher Bollas Being a Character New York: Hill and Wang, 1992. pp. 38.

social silences are the matrix of the process.

Part of the philosophical foregrounding to the concept of the "unthought known" is found in a study of the sophists, for whom, language equated motion in itself, as the world itself was (perceived) in motion and full of contradictions (*parenthesis mine*)--and because of that, "could not express anything fixed or stable"¹⁰² For example it is written that Parmenides appeared sad the moment immutable reality was dissolved, and consequently, could not express the real"¹⁰³

Recent work on the potential for experiencing a known without conscious thought is found in the innovative theorizing of Bollas (1989,1991,1992) in the object relations school of psychology Yet, numerous references from texts in literature, poetry, drama, and prose allude to wordless occasions of deep emotional, spiritual and aesthetic valence. These moments are said to "move the spirit". They are characterized by a quality difficult to express in words and cover experiences from spiritual conversion, to rapture from listening to music, to a poet's reverie, a trance-like sense of transcendence from the "effect" of a performance, lecture, love making, viewing of art, excessive exercise, or in a drugged state. I would call these occasions of silence, deep silences, which reflect a density of feeling or emotion which numerous times has been characterized as "too deep for words", that is, finding language insufficient to communicate the felt occasion.

These deep silences articulate in some manner with fundamentally non-representable knowledge which is somehow reflected by and contained in

102. Ibid. pp.135

103. Ibid. pp. 36.

these "wordless occasions". Through the theories of "unconscious communication" we are internally shaped by the presence and actions of the other within a social silence. Deep organic silence connotes an extraphysiological body process. Bollas (1987) describes these occasions as "a rendezvous of mute recognition that defies representation"¹⁰⁴

Although this form of knowledge has been alluded to for centuries, it has continued to defy description because of its non-conjuncture with language, particularly scientific language and ideology. Furthermore, forms of deep silence which may be on either the pre-verbal, sub-verbal, or post verbal levels have been ignored, (silenced), disreputed, ghettoized and denied as real forms of experience and knowledge. Yet, it is currently theorized that "a very significant portion of our existence is predetermined by this unthought known"

The best way of describing an "unthought known" is to describe experiences when one is sure of knowing something, but does not have the means of thinking what one knows (Bollas, 1987)

"Our private idiom and its operational matriculation into processes of care that are theories of being leave each of us as adults with a substantial part of our self somehow deeply known (profoundly us) yet, unthought..... we imagine, dream, abstract, select objects, before we know why and even than knowing so little"¹⁰⁵

For instance, the very centrality of the non-representable of deep silence has been held to be the dynamic of the creative process. Even in metaphor, one "sleeps on ideas":

104. Ibid. pp 3.

105. Christopher Bollas Being a Character. Psychoanalysis & Self Experience. New York: Hill and Wang, 1992 .p 51

"To be in a dream is thus a continuous reminiscence of being inside the maternal world when one was partly a receptive figure within a comprehending environment.--the dream seems to be a structural memory of the infant's unconsciousness, an object relation of person inside the other's unconscious processing"¹⁰⁶ "

" one waits (in silence) for an inspiration":

Bollas's theory is that the self itself is unconscious.

"We dream ourselves into being by using objects to stimulate our idiom, to release it into lived expression"¹⁰⁷

"Our weeks, months, and years pass by as we continuously work experience into psychic material, most of it beyond consciousness,

but certainly preconsciously familiar as "our" inner texture"¹⁰⁸

The self is therefore, a silent inner presence shaped by the forms "it " uses (chooses, comes across randomly) to find expression. It, like silence, is a movement beyond our consciousness.

Bollas believes that

"at birth(we) are equipped with a unique idiom of psychic organization that constitutes the core of our self..... we become a complex theory for being a self that the toddler (*child*) does not think about but acquires operationally"¹⁰⁹

106. Ibid. pp. 14.

107. Ibid p 53.

108. Ibid p 52.

109. Ibid. p. 51

And as adults:

“ Our private idiom and its operational matriculation in processes of care that are theories of being leave each of us as adults with a substantial part of our self somehow deeply known (profoundly us) unthought.”¹¹⁰

At the same time, deep silence is held to be the very center of the sacred. And in psychology, deep silence may be the possible explanation for the character of that part of the psych that lives in a wordless world, and in the language of other deconstruction, deep silence may be the determinant feature of the metaphysics of presence to which Derrida[39] alludes.

“ The more original a thought” says Derrida, quoting Heidegger, “the richer its Unthought becomes. The Unthought is the highest gift (*Geschenk*) that a thought can give.”¹¹¹

Derrida refers to something outside language which is a prime ingredient in the configuration of deconstruction, this supplement, performs the actions of (1) breaking up binary oppositions (2) inverting the hierarchy in binary oppositions and (3) is either the third term, or is related to it which synthesizes the two terms of opposition in the Hegelian dialectic. In human development, the unthought known which is a basic body fused silence is the "what if-of " knowing pre-linguistically. It is the "stillness" or silent

110. Ibid. p. 51

111. Ibid p 64

envelope, or insular quality of the early mother-child dialectic and culture. Part of that culture consists of the mother's way of holding, gesturing, feeding, protecting the child. What is this knowledge, this un-spoken intersubjective knowledge a child gains as he/she negotiates the rituals of psychosomatic need? Maslow writes of security, Erickson enumerates trust as the key knowledge gain as necessary requisite in their developmental models vital to the unfolding and facilitation of all other growth. Yet, trust and security are descriptions of a state which is known, deeply and somatically known, but unthought, that is, trust and security are relative to an "unthought known". An example of this is in learning to remember objects that are not present, which are not known by their words. Surely, these representations in silence have a knowledge content.

How is it after a stroke with aphasia, words are lost, yet, the world is apprehended intellegently, but, without language?

Another example is the knowledge as an infant, and afterward, the knowledge of phantasies which occur either prenatally or postnatally of motility, perceptions and integration, all at a preverbal level. The question is whether an object can affect us which we have not yet thought. Is it possible to evacuate (in language) that which is known, but not yet thought? This is what Bollas has termed the "unthought known", pointing out that "the mental forces engaged in the act of repressing an unwanted mental content, are as unconsciousness as the repressed content."¹¹²

112. Ibid pp.301

Western Metaphysical Silence

Western Metaphysical represents the realm of legitimated knowledges, and "binary oppositions".

Much of the direct reference to silence is in relation to ontological and philosophical conceptualizations. In these cases, silence is considered metaphysically as a phenomenon.

Ontologically, it is considered in two ways: either as a thing or essence, or, as an appearance or effect. In no case, is silence referred to as social.

The silence of the Gods was present in men and their things. Plutarch "We learn silence from the Gods, speech from man."¹¹³ Therefore silence was considered the communication of the Gods. Men's languages were considered merely dung tracks over the full communications in the silences of the Gods. Silence in this sense was considered "over" and superior to languages, it fell closer to the ideal of the sacred.

"words have fallen out of a dream of silence and pressing on into the silence of the Gods"¹¹⁴

113. Max Picard. The World of Silence, trans. Stanley Godman, Chicago: Regnery, 1952. pp 155

114. Ibid. pp. 156.

Skeptic philosophies describe the inevitable of the many veils of illusion woven in and of language with which we construct a shadow system of mirage. In Homeric tradition "to think" was to "speak".¹¹⁵ The "real" is equated with revealed reality which equals truth, with truth equaling Logos, or the "Word". Logical became a synonym for concept, for signification, and for the rules of truth.¹¹⁶ Full consciousness and rationality is absolute knowledge. Through absolute knowledge one can comprehend the totality of the world. Hegel's idea of totality comprised historical evaluation plus self consciousness, a form of rationality.

In Ovid's Metamorphoses the Maenads drown out the calming power of Orpheus's music by saturating his music by the noise of trumpets, drums, howls. This process by which unwanted or "dangerous" sound is obliterated by more sound, indiscriminate except for its "drowning out" function is the production of "white noise", or a "sound full" occasion which is one of excess, a double negative, so to speak, with the intent and the effect of actually producing a form of oversaturated noise which is also a form of silence. It is considered a form of silence because of its effect, the resultant obliteration of narrative sense, by the production of an indeterminateness of communication.

In the Platonic dialogues at the end "it is always as though silence itself were speaking"¹¹⁷ much as a third person in a conversation.

115. Ibid pp 29.

116. Ibid. pp 30.

117. Ibid. pp25

In Aristotle's treatise on Rhetoric:

"a mute is that which with addition has no sound of its own
but becomes audible when combined with some letters
which have a sound."¹¹⁸

In these terms, all truth can and should be explained by words in a discourse marked by its "reasonableness". What is considered "unthinkable" is nothing else than the untrue and irrational. What is not considered rational logos is considered the void, the irrational, the dangerous and the silence fulfills this category.

Spinoza, in his exclusion of women, children and lunatics from ethics, silenced them from public life and community commentary.

Descartes' '*Cogito*' places the mind at the center of man's existence, instead of the soul, as heretofore. Although he somehow manages to restore God a few pages later, he has, for future French and French-influenced thinkers, substituted the thinking mind, the rational mind, **the intellectual**, for **the spiritual** in the soul-body duality, so effectively, that we today refer to it as the "mind-body" duality. The effect on silence is cataclysmic. With the belief in the immortal soul (which shared its nature with God) came always the potentiality of silence being full of meaning, even of prophecy. Mysticism and gnosticism (non verbal immediate apprehension of the divine) were never quite separated out of the theological mix, even though they were heretical. Once the rational mind takes over and the soul is disposed, the sine qua non of the rational mind, the ultimate test of rationality, i.e. dis-

118. Aristotle. Treatise on Rhetoric, p 3.

course /language, becomes the predominant reality. Silence is an empty space, something to “meditate in”, or is the province of “nature”, that is, whatever is not covered by discourse, and not a primary human concern. The body, of course, remains as silent as ever. If this analysis of Descartes holds, then he can be seen to be the direct grandparent of the contemporary linguistic opinions about silence, that is - that silence is a space into which language comes, or a grid on which language is attached, or some kind of passive and inert linguistic entity.

Pascal recognized discourse and felt we live inside the act of discourse, yet felt silence as an “outside” power. However, he held more honor for the power of silence, by first admitting to a force and power in silence, but with an ominous bend: “silence of cosmic space strikes terror”¹¹⁹

Goethe prophesied that in silence man stands confronted once again by the “original beginning of all things; everything can begin again, everything can be recreated.”¹²⁰ Here he indicates that in silence man is in an original substance, the basic phenomenon of all things, the original substance of all things. Silence, was the grounding and entirety of all life

Gasche argues in The Tain of the Mirror¹²¹ that Western metaphysical philosophy reached its apex with the absolute reflection of German Idealism in Hegel. In Hegel’s thought “all otherness, difference and heterogeneity are recuperated in a grand gesture of perfect mirroring, in which the meta-subjects sees only himself.”¹²²

119. Blaise Pascal Pensees. New York: Penguin, 1966. 13th Meditation.

120. Goethe as quoted in Picard The World of Silence pp 22.

121. Roudolphe Gasche The Tain of the Mirror.: Derrida and the Philosophy of Reflection. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986. p. 238.

122. Martin Jay Force Fields Between Intellectual History and Cultural Cri-

Even more critically, and most recently in postmodern periods and in the modernist feminist writings has the distortions, and the deaths, and~disappearances of language as decisive forces in the social. The loss of language's potency to communicate has been the overriding philosophical and social preoccupation in recent works:

Modern (or Instrumental) Silences.

Issues of the legitimacy of knowledge were the major problem of modernity. Philosophies traditionally insured the legitimacy of knowledges, but modernity brought great doubts about legitimacies, most certainly, the traditions and the institutions of the sacred. Modernity's emblem is the counterthesis that "God is Dead", as also thrown by the wayside were tenets of Western metaphysics. With God and the Great Traditions dead, this epoch left legitimacy up for grabs. I use the term instrumental as a modifier to Modern Silences for much of the analysis of "modern" silences show effects of "utility", involvement in a direct effect, and can be easily traced from cause to effect., or is a means to an end. Silence is used in the traditional and modernist sense of de- scription, explication, denotation. It is called "instrumental" because it implies a lack of reflexivity. Modern or instrumental silences are basically manifest (known on the surface) occurrences.

Silence in modernity is seen primarily as an effect of "something else", i.e., instrumental usage or as a epiphenomenon. Heidegger infers that silence is a means to an end. Yet at the same time, his notions configure silence as soil in which ideas, thoughts and actions grow.(a "thing in itself")

As a means to an end, or instrumental silence, silence has material and instrumental pay offs. Brutal or physical silencing occurs under material conditions. On one hand, silence expedites all kinds of human behavior which involves force or fraud. Deals and slavery were practiced within the silence of everyday material relations.

The Stalinist Gulag, for example, and any other terrorist or prison camp regime are obvious sites of Brutal or Political Silence.

Conversely, cultural silence, for instance, can be exemplified in the recent failed coup in the Soviet Union. The plotters silenced Gorbachev, yet failed to silence the media. A successful coup would have successfully silenced both Gorbachev and the media.

Goffman(1981), for instance, includes silence in his nontalk sequences, "notions of a move" and makes a basic distinction between "elicitations" and "directives", also, his concept of "embeddings" can incorporate a notion of silence. However Goffman's inclusion of silence is partial and mechanistic because, although he indicates that silence contributes to the social--

"the very structure of a social contact can involve
physical as opposed to verbal (or gestural) moves)---
"in a nontalk design" "123

Silence is seen as a thing, a component in an overall "nontalk design" which supports the structures of conversation. This use of silence relates more to the metaphysical construction, a thing in itself, rather than the notion of silence as a primary constructor of the social and an interactive process. On the other hand, silence expedites physicality, intimacy, eccentricity, etc. which cannot proceed unless shrouded in silence. Therefore, silence can be said to have a very material manifestation.

123. Erving Goffman Forms of Talk Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981. pp. 38

Romantic Silences

Romantic silences as a subcategory of modern silences were described in the literature with specifically encoded terms implying a lack of movement, a certain mood of quietude, a lack of complexity and struggle.

All actions/non-actions which we group together as social silence existed in the 18th and 19th centuries, but not under the name of silence. This is what I consider to be the "hiding" or "silencing" of silence. Romantic prose and poetry liken silence to "quietude" and the "peaceful" aspects of soul and nature. In these cases, silence meant the relative absence of sound, as well as a powerful and sacred mood. Shelley likens silence to the power and mystery of nature in "Mont Blanc" :

"Mont Blanc yet gleams on high:- the power is there,
The still and solemn power of many sights,
And many sounds, and much of life and death.
In the calm darkness of the moonless nights,
In the lone glare of day, the snows descend
Upon that Mountain; none beholds them there,
Nor when the flakes burn in the sinking sun,
Or the star-beams dart through them:- Winds contend
Silently there, and heap the snow with breath
Rapid and strong, but silently! Its home
The voiceless lightning in these solitudes
Keeps innocently, and like vapour broods
Over the snow. The secret strength of things
Which governs thought, and to the infinite dome
Of heaven is as a law, inhabits thee!
And what were thou, and earth, and stars, and sea,
if to the human mind's imaginings
Silence and solitude were vacancy?"¹²⁴

Shelley (1792-1822)

124. Percy Bysshe Shelley "Mont Blanc" The Norton Anthology of English Literature, 5th Ed. Vol II, New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1962. pp685.

Keats likens silence to the blessedness of death in "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1819):

"Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness Thou foster-child
of silence and slow time, Sylvan historian who canst thus
express a flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme
.....

" Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft Pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone"¹²⁵

Keats (1795-1821)

Byron likens silence to communication without words:

"They were alone, but not alone as they
Who shut in chambers think it loneliness;
The silent ocean, and the starlight bay,
The twilight glow, which momentarily grew less,
The voiceless sands, and dropping caves, that lay
Around them, made them to each other press,
As there were no life beneath the sky
Save theirs, and that their IHe could never die.
There feared no eyes nor ears on that lone beach,
They felt no terrors from the night, they were

All in all to each other they thought a language
there-
And all the burning tongues the passions teach
Found in one sigh the best interpreter
Of nature's oracle-first love- that all
Which Eve has left her daughters since her fall."¹²⁶
Lord Byron (1728-1824)

125. John Keats "Ode to A Grecian Urn" Ibid. pp 822.

126. George Gordon, Lord Byron "Don Juan" Ibid. pp. 639.

However, silence is recoded in meaning some time after World War 1, when silence, along with its usage as the lack or absence of speech, or speech without communication, representation, agency and meaning. acquires some of its contemporary meanings. The various "machineries of social silence do not appear under the rubric of silence, but under a more "moralistic" language, e.g., the language of hypocrisy, self-deception", "arrogance", "paralysis of the will", force of habit, complacency". Many words used by Nietzsche to vilify the Christians are forms of social silencing:.

"It seems to me that even the bluntest word, the bluntest letter is still more goodnatured, still more honest, than silence. Those who remain silent are almost always lacking in delicacy and politeness of the heart. Silence is an objection and swallowing things down necessarily makes for a bad character- it even upsets the digestion. All who remain silent are dyspeptic. Clearly, I would not have bluntness underestimated: it is by far the most humane form of contradiction and, amid modern pampering, one of our foremost virtues. When one is rich enough for this, it is even good fortune to be wrong. Were a god to come down upon earth, he should do nothing but wrong: to take upon oneself and not guilt punishment, that alone would be godlike." ¹²⁷

Nietzsche

127. Friedrich Nietzsche. Human All Too Human. Trans. R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. pp. 66.

Rousseau

Rousseau's description of Geneva in the Confessions reads today as if he were describing, and attempting to break silence.¹²⁸

The interaction between the jingoistic rhetoric of World War I and the millions who died for it were described by protest authors of the time as fraudulent, stupidity, ignorance, passivity, "slave-mentality", etc., but today, read as silences, that is, silencing as a factor in the production of patriotism.

The great question agitating the Left throughout the 19th century and much of the 20th century was "why do the workers not throw off the yoke of oppression and create their own society?" is seen as a question about silence, as much as about inaction. The emphasis has shifted in our own time from action to discourse. We analyse non-performance as non-speech. Silent masses, silent majorities (who don not "speak-up") are our objects of focus rather than masses and majorities who are not initiating strikes or violence, or even, voting with less than one half of the U.S. population registered to vote even in Presidential elections. Language performs a ritual magic, so the failure to speak is bad magic. It is as action follows language at a very short interval, and therefore language is the key to turn it on. As a result so much power is invested in the naming of things, or the definitions of things, and the describing of things all of which are activities of control. A century ago less social effort was invested in

128. Jean Jaques Rousseau, Emile. Trans. Barbara Foxley. New York: Dutton, 1974., also see Confessions.

hemming in, steering, controlling language. Pamphlets of the 19th century contained treason, but were allowed to exist and were distributed; further, the authors were not jailed. Language was not seen as synchronous with action. Language was not considered as seriously.

One of the interesting signposts of change is the McCarran-Walter Act of 1950 which made it a crime to "teach and odvocate the overthrow of the U.S. government by force and violence"¹²⁹ Debate raged about the language regarding the issue of the governments right to jaila person when no overt act was committed. after this debate and from this time on in the U.S. language is considered to be an overt act. Just as the First Ammendment to the Constitution supports freedom of speech and allows for plurality of speech, we also incur responsibility for what we say.

Heidegger

Considering silence as either autonomous, a "thing in itself", or as a dependency contingent upon "something else" is what I would call the "duality" of positions regarding silence. Silence entirely consistant within the Western metaphysical referent. Another additional notion of silence is that of a "Platonic substance" or Kantian "ding 'I an sich", i.e., "thing in itself." A "thing in itself" is the irreducible center or essence of what a thing is.

129. McCarran-Walter Act U.S. Senate. 1950

Heidegger connects thinking and being with language:

"in thinking Being comes to language. Language is the house of Being. Thinking is considered an effect of Being¹³⁰ and Being is manifested through language. Yet the " history of Being is never past but stands ever before; it sustains and defines every *condition et situation humaine*."131

"But if the truth of Being has become thought provoking for thinking, then reflection on the essence of language must also attain a different rank".....¹³²

" Language still denies us its essence; that it is the house of the truth of Being"

" but if man is to find his way once again into the nearness of Being he must first learn to exist in the nameless".....

" Before he speaks man must first let himself be claimed again by Being, taking the risk that under this claim he will seldom have much to say."133

Heideggerian "Being" is a mysterious "nearness", yet this " nearness" is occurs "essentially as language itself. " language is not mere speech , insofar as we represent the latter at best as the unity of phoneme (written

130. Martin Heidegger Basic Writings from Being and Time (1927) to the Task of Thinking (1964) David Farrel Krell "Letter on Humanism" Editor J. Glenn Gray New York Harper & Row, 1977. pp 193.

131. Martin Heidegger Basic Writings from Being and Time (1927) to the Task of Thinking (1964) David Farrel Krell "Letter on Humanism" Editor J. Glenn Gray New York Harper & Row, 1977. pp.193.

132. Ibid pp 198.

133. Ibid. pp. 199.

character), melody, rhythm, and meaning (or sense). We think of the phoneme and written character as a verbal body for language, of melody and rhythm as its soul, and whatever has to do with meaning as its mind. "¹³⁴

"Language is the house of Being in which man ek-sists by dwelling, in that he belongs to the truth of Being, guarding it."¹³⁵

In Heidegger's lecture "What is Metaphysics" he indicated that the experience of anxiety because of the loss of speech was fundamental to the experience of the nothing:

"because beings as a whole slip away, so that just the nothing crowds around, in the face of anxiety all utterance of the "is" falls silent"¹³⁶

Heidegger retrospectively found that the loss of the thing arises from the lack of the word. The lack of the word refers to the lack of a word for Being. This is where his insight of a lack of a word for Being is connected to an idea of the history of philosophy was essentially a succession of words for Being. If there is a lack of a word for Being this, then, signaled the death or end or nothingness of philosophy. From a Nietzschean "Death of God" to a Heideggerian "Death of Philosophy" (hence of Being), comes the emblematic sense of the modern wherein both philosophy and God are dead. Silence plays a central position in Heidegger's thinking on the end of history and philosophy and of language itself.

134. Ibid. p 213.

135. Ibid P. 213.

136. Robert Bernasconi. The Question of Language in Heidegger's History of Being Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press International, Inc.1985. pp 58.

Volosinov

A Volosinovian referent is helpful in understanding language as Heidegger uses it, as well as his application of what he calls the “unity of the phoneme.” Volosinov’s social materialist history of language rejects “langue”, i.e., the linguistic system over actual speech. Volosinov stresses the idea of “parole” -i.e., language lived and shared by historical subjects in social interaction. In Volosinov’s understanding of language, reality is not abstract combinations of forms or even monologues but the social event of verbal and nonverbal communication which is overlaid with history. This history, comprised of both verbal and nonverbal communication is imbricated with ideology and infected by asymmetrical power arrangements. Further, Volosinov offers a conception of “Utterance” . For example, a discursive utterance is understood as either or combined with the following forms: inner speech, ordinary conversation (the gaps in conversation_meaning laden) written text, iconic artifact, imagined or real encounters -(hallucinations/erotic daydreaming, etc).

Another concept is the idea of “tact”, what tact is not is etiquette or diplomacy. Instead, the musical metaphor is brought into play: in a musical sense, tact is an ensemble of codes governing discursive interaction, including codes of economic and political and sexual power.

Tact can be understood as equaling cultural work:

Tact = cultural work

Tact can be then said to represent an aggregate of environing social relationships and ambient reality. For example, politically informed discourse is an analysis of social exchanges

Bakhtin's intonation, in this manner, can be considered a consequence of tact.

All linguistics are social struggles involving verbal and nonverbal utterances engaged on the playing field of tact filled with intonations. The metaphor of social struggle is seen, for example, in Tannen's recent (1991) work on the non-reciprocity of linguistic exchange between men and women.

Lefebvre

Like Heideggerian "pre-given life", silence is conceived of an integral and essential aspect of the conceptualization of a holistic vision of "everyday life". Lefebvre builds on this Heideggerian insight in his work on "everyday life" by describing silence as "at once inside language, and on its near and far sides"¹³⁷ Lefebvre focuses on the special function of silence which French linguistic philosophy has assigned to silence and builds a theory of speech dependent on organized patterns of silence in the continuous linguistics codes of ordinary or everyday life. However, silence is considered

137. Henri Lefebvre. " Contribution a l'esthetique". p 319. Quoted in Steiner. Language and Silence New York: Atheneum,1986. pp 52-53.

“another speech than ordinary saying”.¹³⁸ Lefebvre has two positions on silence: the first “another speech within speech”, the second, a super saturated, or excess speech as in Bataille’s conception, that is, silence created by too much speech, i.e., “white noise”: Lefebvre describes the production of white noise in Everyday Life in the Modern World:

“a cry of loneliness rises from the depths and the caves
what the heart of everyday life, the most limited
and specialization quotidianness lies coiled,
intolerable loneliness of unceasing communication
and information. Efficient communication
is now possible-impossibility, an obsession and
a torment possible every minute of the day
yet impossible one of its conditions is lacking; can
people (groups and individuals communicate
without referentials?.....

Now that semiological fields (not only common sense but
also music and song, gestures, ritual behavior, facial ex-
pressions) once unanimously accepted, have been
discarded as referentials, what will take their place, for
they must be replaced?.....
the most penetrating mind.....
asserts that if linguistic referentials have disappeared
it is because language is now its own referential.”¹³⁹

“Language endows a thing with value, but in the process
it devalues itself. Simultaneously it makes everyday
life, is everyday life, eludes it, disguises and conceals

138. Ibid. pp. 319.

139. Henri Lefebvre. Everyday Life in the Modern World. New Brunswick
Transaction Books, 1984. Trans. Sacha Rabinovitch. pp. 125.

it, hiding it behind the ornaments of rhetoric and make-believe, so that, in the course of everyday life, language and linguistic relations become *denials* of everyday life."¹⁴⁰
Lefebvre

Paradoxically, Lefebvre's revelation that language can itself hide its own message parallels Bolla's theorizing that overusage of language negates its meanings and devalues the potential of a possible unthought known. (silence)

"Overusage of a term though transitionally essential to individual and collective efforts of objectifying the signified, eventually loses its meaningfulness through incantatory solicitation, devaluing any word's unthought potential"¹⁴¹

Bollas (1992)

Merleau Ponty

Silence is referred to by both Heidegger and Merleau Ponty as "the grounds of speech which precede speech and from which speech stands forth"¹⁴² In other words, the idea of silence in these terms is that it is the germ plasm of speech. However, in order to assert that silence is a kind of black space in which speech occurs, this concept necessitates that silence have some kind of an essence. If it is indeed the precondition of speech, this implies there is some kind of connection between the essence of

140. Ibid pp. 120.

141. Christopher Bollas Being a Character New York: Hill and Wang, 1992. p 64.

142. Maurice Merleau Ponty The Visible and the Invisible. Ed. Claude Lefort
Evanson: Northwestern University Press, 1968. pp 32

speech and the essence of silence. Neither neo-Platonic aspects of the "real" and "ideal", nor metaphysical tendencies are consistent with the idea of a social grounded in intersubjectivities and contextual processes. Such essentialist thinking rules out a position of silence as social, and in particular, silence as a social process.

Habermas

Yet these supposing opposing tendencies are taken on by Habermas. He paradoxically embraces a neo-platonic ideal prioritizing discourse and ideal speech situations, while at the same time, suggests ideal forms of speech as a utopian social prescriptive. The social prescriptions of ideal communication enhances the intersubjective and contextualized process of the social. Therefore, Jurgen Habermas has theorized the best of both worlds. Never the less, both the world of the ideal meshed with intersubjective and contextualized communications of an undistorted nature still does not address the problematic of social silences, and in particular, cultural silence, a silence which does not surface in clarified and ideal speech situations.

Jurgen Habermas views the Enlightenment as merely an unfinished project which is in the process of finding a solution to the lived experience of 20th century barbarism as the Frankfurt School portended. Habermas holds with modernity as a continuing trend in the progress of enlightenment, seeing this epoch as an aberration in the trend which will be rectified and reintegrated into modernity's path toward progress. Habermas argues with Althusser that ideology impacts social institutions in reproducing relations of production, hence, domination, but goes further in stating that science is in itself ideology. Science is ideology precisely because it claims

to be above ideology (objective and value neutral) and presides in legitimating through cultural symbols all interpersonal and technical relations and processes joined together in the pursuit of "progress". What is key is that the legitimating pursuit of progress "at all costs" depoliticizes social issues and closes down critical scrutiny.

Despite the fact that Habermas includes the idea of the nonverbal within speech acts, he differs with both Heidegger and Lefevre in that silence is not directly conceived of as an integral part of everyday life. What is privileged above all else, is a discursive public sphere filled with debate and the resolution of all differences by means of rational argument. Positing in The Theory of Communicative Action¹⁴³ that a community can articulate generalizable interests in a imagery of free and open discussion, he tends toward a neo-Platonic idealization of attainable discourse of perfect balance and harmony with all aspects of special interests conflicts ironed out, with no strife in a situation of perfect rationality or reflective thought. In "On Systematically Distorted Communication"¹⁴⁴ Habermas suggests a society where actors communicate ideally and necessarily (to avoid domination) without distortion, and openly reconcile differences through a purified argumentation, free of constraints and coercion. Undistorted communication would have the following characteristics:

- "1. expressions, actions, and gestures are noncontradictory
- 2. communication is public and conforms to cultural standards of what is appropriate

143. Jurgen Habermas. The Theory of Communicative Action. boston: Beacon Press, 1984.

144. Jurgen Habermas "On Systematically Distorted Communication" *Inquiry* 13, 1970, pp 205-218.

3. actors can distinguish between the properties of language per se, and the events and processes that are described by language.
4. communication leads to, and is the product of, intersubjectivity or the capacity of actors to understand one another's subjective states and to develop a sense of shared collective meanings
5. conceptualizations of time and space are understood by actors to mean different things when externally observed and in interaction."¹⁴⁵

Suggesting a reconstruction of the social order based on undistorted communications and prioritizing # 4 (intersubjectivity, or the capacity of actors to understand one another's subjective states and to develop a sense of shared collective meanings) Habermas, puts all his eggs in the basket of master "dialogue-constitutive universals", i.e., the social linguistic structure. However, this social linguistic structure rests on the a universal pragmatics of a "standard form of communication" (defined as some version of I(verb) you {propositional content}. i.e., standard speech acts as per Searle's principle of expressibility. According to Habermas the principle restated is:

"for every interpersonal relation that a speaker wants to take up explicitly with another member of the language community, a suitable performative expression is either available , or if necessary, can be introduced through a specification of available expressions."¹⁴⁶

145. Jonathan H. Turner. The Structure of Sociological Theory. 5th Ed. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1991.pp 266.

146. Jurgen Habermas. Communication and the Evolution of Society. Boston: beacon Press, 1979.p.40.

Apparently Habermas believes that the conflicts Marx wrote about are somehow really linguistic, or have gradually metamorphosed into a linguistic level. Habermas uses the word discourse to describe a situation in which all communicative motives except the relation to truth is suspended. However, Balbus comments:

If the disputants did not assume that they shared this overriding commitment, it would, according to Habermas, make no sense for them to continue talking to each other. If, in short, we did not assume it was possible to distinguish an authentic consensus from a false consensus, there would be no point in participating in a discourse designed to achieve consensus in the first place".¹⁴⁷

This position seems to fly in the face of the idea that all discourse is ideology and implies the existence of some kind of real truth. It takes away without proving it, by the mechanism of assumption, the idea of real conflict, real difference, real domination, real exploitation, real revolution, etc. Habermas implies in his Dickensian way that if everyone were to understand everyone properly then it would, as Scrooge experienced, his eye opened by the visits from the three ghosts, wake a new man, and send the turkey around to the Cratchits on Christmas Day. The way the Dickens Christmas Carol works is the way that people under the theory of communicative action would make the world work. However, Dickens contradicts, or denies

147. Isaac Balbus, Marxism and Domination, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1982. pp. 221-222.

(silences) the real conflict between the boss and his clerk. In a similar fashion, Habermas in his reconstruction of Marx, easily removes or silences Marx's basic thought and major theoretical contribution that the "gain of some is the misery of others"

Benjamin influenced Habermas in his use of legitimating functions in his conception of "lifeworld", i.e., the unthematized horizon of meanings pre-existing in culture and language. However, Habermas, in his dream of a project which would achieve a new polis (in the Greek sense) that would lead to perfection of relations through communications, was dreaming a dream very similar to Hegel's notion of a "civic religion" which would combine rationality and subjectivity for a more harmonious living for all. Habermas combined Hegelian and Benjaminian concepts to incorporate "bildung" or spiritual formation which is derived from interpretations and enhanced cultural assumptions in his bilevel lifeworld system model of society. Habermas's model reflects the notion that one cannot look to the past to build a community but one must incorporate past reflections in constructing a present model of community.

Not agreeing with Marcuse's blanket notion of getting rid of democracy, Habermas, more of a Social Democrat, determined the problem with democracy was internal and could be solved. It involved the legitimating function. The problem in a democracy is the rule is justified by consent--but this consent is built upon special interests. If special interests equate power, then corruption ensues, (Note the recent tally of lobbyists in Washington D.C., 1992-3, range is from hundreds to one hundred fifty thousand.) Habermas suggests that rationality infused with non distortive communications is the answer for democracy, or for that matter, any style of government.

Relying on American Pragmatism (Dewey, James, Mead and Pierce) and emphasizing the relative and practical, Habermas relied heavily on Mead and Durkheim's notions of cultural reproduction, social integration and socialization. Mead particularly outlined the dialectic between the divided self and the other, showing that society is always a "context of relations", and socially constructed via interactions. Habermas expanded Mead's descriptions into his idea of "communicative" interactions. In constructing his theory of "Communicative Action", Habermas highlighted Parson's influences as well, including the "action" of Weber's "action unit" a theoretical aspect which he transformed into "purposive-rational" in the Communicative Action Theory. particularly important is Parson's description of manifest and latent meanings, for latent meanings are attributed to have unintended consequences (Merton) Latent and manifest meanings are examples which depict that the structures in society can have functional independencies. This feeds into Habermas's conception of distorted versus undistorted communications. That indeed, all levels, both manifest and latent meanings of messages must be clarified through a consensual validation process.

Habermas is in the business of obscuring (silencing) social conflicts. How is it that he does this? He does it by leaching the meaning out of language.

Habermas makes a distinction between grounded and illusory consensus"¹⁴⁸but in order to make that distinction there has to be an "ideal speech" situation which will make clear the relationship to truth. Suffice it to say that this taxes the contemporary mind.

148. Thomas McCarthy Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas Cambridge, MIT Press, 1981.pp 304

Habermas seems to be involved in silencing the awareness of real conflict in the social. For this he substitutes the idea of "misunderstanding" which is to be dispelled by a dialogue of parties committed to the truth and finalizing itself in a consensus. Apart from the fact that this is completely apriori and that in its essentials, conservative, it involves doing what Loyala called "seeing black instead of white". It requires the suspension of the knowledge of everyday life, of exploitation, of fraud, of violence, and of tragedy. In other words, of the realities and depths of the raw in life.

What is the reason that Habermas is so in vogue? What thirst is he quenching in the disciplines? Why does his theories evoke the linguistic analysis and positivism of the 1950's which is responsible for creating the fetish of objectivity which haunts us today, along with the style of consensus. Because Habermas announces that social conflicts are not irreconcilable, that they are even illusory, that there are no power struggles and no power relations that cannot be reconciled by this process of consensus. What violence and what silence this requires in the social can hardly be counted.

The Postmodern:

All postmodern discourse is the literature of silence.¹⁴⁹

The force of evasion, or absence, in the new literature is radical indeed; it strikes at the roots and induces, metaphorically, a great silence"¹⁵⁰ Theorists of the postmodern from Leotard to Jameson have all intimated about the indeterminacy of this postmodern moment, period, epoch, bracketing in time. Hassan(1987) goes so far as invoke silence as the metaphor for the postmodern:

"Prefigurations of postmodernism in mannerism, romanticism, modernism in a tradition of silence"¹⁵¹

(silence as) "the metaphor (for the postmodern) betrays a certain distress of self and civilization, *a certain revulsion of language*, which provokes gestures of outrage and apocalypse"¹⁵²
(*italics mine*)

In this discussion of silence the process of silencing is considered in a manner analogous to the method pursued by Foucault.

Foucault, a theorist of knowledge and power relations within discourse, within and without institutions, disputes earlier formulations of power as static, instead, he promotes the "interactional", "productive relations" of power as "it

149. Ihab Hassan The Postmodern Turn : Essays in Postmodern Theory and Culture. Ohio State University Press. 1987. Chapter i "The Literature of Silence, also pp.9,39.

150. Ibid. pp 46.

151. Ibid. pp 44.

152. Ibid. pp 45.

produces domains of objects and rituals of truth"¹⁵³ There can be coexisting within the same context different forms and activities of power. For instance, Foucault indicates we create things by talking about them, conversely then, is it not possible to state that we do not erase things by not talking about them?

The very mechanism that makes social silence social, (the 'we' of Foucault's "we create things") is consensus agreement. Consensus agreement is a form of social concurrence without acknowledgement. For once consensus is explicit, it is not social silence anymore. It is precisely this "unacknowledged consensus" that makes something "never to have existed". This element of willingness (to agree that something/someone never existed) is dramatically textualized in Orwell's Nineteen-Eighty Four which permits "unpersons" to be disappeared.

According to the "French Turn" philosophers:

"all social life is discourse; all discourse is ideology, therefore: all social life is ideology. "

However, that part of social life which is in silence consequently remains potentially separate from ideology. Also, a preoccupation with silence arises from the panoply of deconstruction which carried to its ultimate, always points in the direction of the silent. That part of social life which is silence emblemizes the "unknown" or "undecidable" which resists and

153. Ibid. pp 47

disorganizes philosophical (binary) opposition.

Derrida calls for a "new inscription"¹⁵⁴ of (a multiplicity) of truths thereby inventing a third term to the Hegelian dialectic-he calls for a "supplimentary logic"- which would break-up binary oppositions and hierarchy. This third term in Derrida's terms "marks the interval" between two oppositions, and, to determine the nature of the interval it is necessary to look: "within the text of the history of philosophy....certain marks, shall we say that by analogy I have called undecidables, that is, unities of the simulacrum, "false"verbal properties (nominal or semantic) that can no longer be included within philosophical (binary) opposition, but which, however, inhabit philosophical opposition, resisting and disorganizing it, without ever constituting a third term, without ever leaving room for a solution in the form of speculative dialectics".

The supplement is neither a plus nor a minus, neither an outside nor the complement of an inside, neither accident, nor essence, etc..... I suggest that this central element of Derrida's notion of a new (revolutionary) structure which destroys the binary oppositions of Western epistemology; which is "not quite a theory", nor a new third term concept; which is related to other Derridian terms such as "writing, spacing, trace, differance---could also be "that part of social life the remains separate from ideology, but supplementary to discourse--in other words, I feel that Derrida refers as well in his conceptualization of "suppliment, of a third term concept, of spacing, trace and differance references a silence which I call social silences Derrida has revealed the fossil remains of silences, i.e., that

154. Jaques Derrida Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles. Trans. Barbara Harlow, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1981. pp 48

"supplement" which is not recognized and does not fit into discourse. This concept is related as well to difference, space, trace, etc--- What Derrida discovered was a particular instance of how something tends to disappear out of the discourse because it doesn't fit the forms, or, it stays there, and is unrecognizable. Derrida refers to the third type of silence which I call organic, or natural silences---that is, the lapsing or failure of discourse. It is silence resulting from the natural inadequacy of language. Binary logic, the either/or of speech acts are not real "polarities" in Derrida's notion, but two elements parasitic upon each other. This is why syllogisms never really work, other elements (that are there) do not lend themselves to that kind of formulation. What I refer to is the generality of all those "disappearances" out of discourse. Those "undecidables, as harbingers of silence herald a preoccupation with silence which arises from the panoply of deconstruction. Deconstruction when carried to its ultimate analysis always points in the direction of the silent.¹⁵⁵

Notice that the space of the postmodern and the deconstructive process is described as language eating itself or cannibalizing itself, thereby reducing, or imploding itself into silence. The fetishism of language and the primacy of linguistic theory create on onehand an ennui, a feeling of disgust with language saturation i.e., "more of the same"¹⁵⁶, and, on the other hand, a prurient curiosity about what lies there in the absence of language.

New references to silence are continually surfacing in intellectual and

155. Ibid. pp 49.

156. See #149. pp. 16.

popular literature¹⁵⁷ This silence referred to in these multiple sources is clearly not the silence of acoustics, which is a mensurable absence (or relative absence) of sound, but is a silence having to do with discourse itself.

Not only is silence used in the traditional and modernist sense of description, explication, denotation; but it has expanded its effect because of social and technological innovations in a media dominant epoch in which we are virtually bombarded with produced electronics. The postmodern is replete with a multiplicity of contradictory sounds and valences signaling confusion in contexts and positions. MacLuhan's "media is the message" is sound blasted to an overperfection of Babble is babel. The seepage of saturated electronic "bleeps" into the substance of everyday life is so great that the intended effects are negated in a confusion of overriding messages leaving the opposite of too muchness- silence. In the sixties, for example Simon and Garfinkle's "THE SOUND OF SILENCE" (1966) signified a silence in the people which signaled an underground rumble of growing revolt:

'Hello, Darkness my old Friend"
It seems you've come around again ¹⁵⁸

157. References in the popular literature include, but are not limited to: Silence by John Cage, T.S. Eliot's Silent Voices by J.T Mayer, On Lies, Secrets and Silence by Adrian Rich, Language & Silence by George Steiner, To Break the Silence, ed. Peter A. Barrett, The Silent Language, by Edward T. Hall, Time of Silence by Luis Martine Santos, Violent Silence, Bataille, Silencing, an Anthology, The American Voice, Perspectives on Silence by D. Tannen and M. Saville Troike, Noise by Jaques Attaille, The Unspeakable by Steven A. Tyler, Languages of the Unsayable, ed. S. Budick and W. Isler, Silence by B. Dauenhauer, The World of Silence by Max Picard, African Silences by Matthewson and so on.

158. Paul Simon and A. Garfunkel "The Sound of Silence" 1966.

In order to have a revolution worth having the silence must be broken. In the Russian Revolution Bolsheviks were committed to silence by their Jacobinism, as an elite conspirational vanguard party. The silence produced the CHEKA out of which a police state mentality of Stalinism evolved. The underpinnings of revolution then, involved fighting the tendency to silencing.

Even in the 1960's
 "Sign flashed out its warning
 the words fo the prophets are written on the subway wall
 whisper the sounds of silence"¹⁵⁹

However, silence is no longer the calm before a social revolution. In the 1990's silence is coded as the non-answer/non-policy expressed in a glut of white noise. It is the non-mentioning, non-representing "forgetting" and collectively disappearing of information by a co-optation of the social.

Historiocultural changes in social silences: from traditional silence to postmodern silence. Not only are past historical epochs marked by a hidden but certain reliance on silence as a mainstay of the social, I propose that the usage is just as consistent within the modern and post modern epochs, and, may, in fact, have become more predominant, both in usage, meaning, transitions and in some cases, emblemize the period. Silence is silenced in time, from pre-modern epochs through the postmodern. As antithesis of the social it is disappeared, repressed, denied and buried as a potent force integral to the very knowledge-power nexus constructing the social in any particular locus or time. From Weberian "disenchantment" to Durkheimian "anomie", the modernist terms of alienation have shifted from

159. Ibid.

a deterministic "modern" referent into the more "fluid" postmodern anti-formalistic, anarchist designations of indeterminacy and incommensurability. The calculus of social silences is based on a study of epistemological progression from the heralded "death of history" through the atrophy, or disengagement from various theories of the social and the death of aesthetics to the final distillment of all thought into domains of semiotics and language theories {Sassure, Barthe, Derrida, Lyotard} culminating with the Lacanian language or "la langue" which is considered to be the inventor of the individual and the social with language constituted as the master narrative.

Notice that the space of the postmodern and the deconstructive process is described as language eating itself or cannibalizing itself, thereby reducing, or imploding itself into silence. The fetishism of language and the primacy of linguistic theory create on onehand an ennui, a feeling of disgust with language saturation i.e., "more of the same" and, on the other hand, a prurient curiosity about what lies there in the absence of language.

CHAPTER V

HERMENEUTICS OF SILENCE

What we do is we read texts and discover the content of the text is. Every text contains silences. Unless linguistics accept silence is a space, a grid, neutral-then must come to terms with idea that silences are "full" of something. Hermeneutics is incomplete unless it deals with what is silenced, kept out, excluded in the texts. The question is to first find out what is in that space, find out if silence forms or typologies #'s :

(1) Political Silence, (2) Cultural Silence, or (3) Sacred or Organic Silences. Then find out if it is silence that is forced, semi involuntary or whether its organic silence (couldn't be said no matter how much good will, ingenuity). For example, when a President gives a speech a finite number of things are said, on the other hand, there are an infinity of things not said--and somewhere in-between a number of things, that is, a special family of things not said have potential relevance. These unsaid things are potential necessities connected with tex. For instance the "not said" The President would like you to believe that the things left out are part of this vast infinite irrelevance. Those things pertinent, but not dealt with. are silenced material

THE AESTHETICS OF SILENCE: THE FOUR HYPOTHESES

1. SILENCE IS A BRACKETED, AND BRACKETING PHENOMENON YIELDING A MATERIALITY OF PRIVILEGED MOMENTS.
2. SILENCE IS CONSIDERED AS ANTIFOUNDATIONAL AND TRANSGRESSIONAL TO VISUAL, WRITTEN, AND SOUND BOUNDARIES
- 3 THERE IS A SELF-LIMITING POTENTIAL TO POTENT SILENCE- OR RETURN TO ACTION/IMAGE/DIALOGUE.
4. THE CRISIS OF SILENCE IS THE ANNIHILATION OF THE OBJECT, THE DEAD FRUIT, THE NULL SUM OF BATAILLE'S "EXCESS"

1. SILENCE IS A BRACKETED AND BRACKETING PHENOMENON YIELDING A MATERIALITY OF PRIVILEGED MOMENTS: The silences like the silences in the church, or in funerals, or at births, in meditation, or in erotic extasy, are separated from the ordinary realities of life {bracketed} and surfeit of speech {bracketed} but they are full of affect and the "too-much-ness of meaning" i.e., a materiality of privileged moments. The silence confers on those privileged moments a reality, the materiality, not otherwise experienced.

2 SILENCE IS ANTIFOUNDATIONAL AND TRANSGRESSIONAL TO VISUAL, WRITTEN, AND SOUND BOUNDARIES. Foundational refers to logical consequences and derivations; it refers to the paradigm of thinking as a Euclidian progression, (being able to trace any statement to a previous piece of logic).

Silence is antifoundational since the insertion of silence breaks up sequences and logical progressions, and exposes binary reasoning as inadequate pointing to "the something else" of discourse to which Derrida references. Transgressional means violation, tearing apart boundaries of known properties. There are boundaries to discourse, but they are artificial and mutable and porous all the time. The awareness of silence creates an awareness of this porous, fluid, mutable quality. The boundaries of a film are opened up by the insertion of silence. If the silence is substantial and manipulated in a film, for example, the sense of what is the film and what isn't the film breaks down. In a film with stretched or added silences, the meanings become radically changed.

In the Meditations of John Cage in which the pianist sits at the piano with a stopwatch and does not play, thereby allowing the street and audience noises to "fall into the piece of silence", and become integral with it and indeterminate with the time boundaries of the piece. Here again, the meanings become radically changed.

3 THERE IS A SELF-LIMITING POTENTIAL TO POTENT SILENCE--THE NECESSITY OF A RETURN TO ACTION/IMAGE/DIALOGUE. If there is enough silence your sense of whether the piece or discourse is on or not is lost. You can only stand deep transcendental silence for so long. The meaningfulness of the silence degenerates after a certain period of time and cannot last forever because we mortals being fallible cannot remain in

it, physiologically, mentally and meditatively. In late 20th century art there are repeated efforts to create moments without content (black paintings, white paintings, silent pieces, empty screens, etc) all of which eventually break down out of the failure of the all too human audience to be able to stay with it, to maintain interest.

4. THE CRISIS OF SILENCE IS THE ANNIHILATION OF THE OBJECT, THE DEAD FRUIT, THE NULL SUM OF BATAILLE'S EXCESS.

Bataille and Baudrillard describe a process of numbness resulting in the annihilation of the object. When the object is annihilated, what is left is silence. The crisis of silence is that of annihilation. Therefore, the crisis of silence is the end product, the hangover, of this process of excess (overstimulation reducing all stimuli into meaninglessness). The most efficient oppressor is the one who persuades his underlings to love, desire, and identify with his power; and any practice of political emancipation thus involves that most difficult of all forms of liberation, freeing ourselves from ourselves.

PROPOSITION ANALYSIS:

FIRST PROPOSITION: According to the "French Turn philosophers" all social life is discourse; all discourse is ideology therefore all social life is ideology. However, that part of social life which is in silence consequently remains potentially separate from ideology. Also, a preoccupation with silence arises from the panoply of deconstruction which carried to its ultimate always points in the direction of the silent. That part of social life which is silence emblemizes the "unknown" or "undecidable" which resists and disorganizes philosophical (binary) opposition. Derrida calls for a "new inscriptions] of (a multiplicity) of truths thereby inventing a third term to the Hegelian dialectic- "supplimentary logic~"- which would break up binary oppositions and hierarchy. This third term in Derrida's terms "marks the interval" between two oppositions, and, to determine the nature of the interval it is necessary to look: "within the text of the history of philosophy....certain marks, shall we say that by analogy I have called undecidables, that is, unities of the simulacrum, "false verbal properties (nominal or semantic) that can no longer be included within philosophical(binary) opposition, but which, however, inhabit philosophical opposition, resisting and disorganizing it, without ever constituting a third term, without ever leaving room for a solution in the form of speculative dialectics.

The supplement is neither a plus nor minus, neither an outside nor the complement of an inside, neither acci-dent, nor essence, etc..... I suggest that this central element of Derrida's notion of a new

(revolutionary) structure which destroys the binary oppositions of western epistemology; which is "not quite a theory", nor a new third term concept; which is related to other Derridian terms such as "writing, spacing, trace, difference---could also be "that part of social life that remains separate from ideology, but supplementary to discourse--social silences. Instead, Derrida has revealed the fossil remains of silences, i.e., that "supplement" which is not recognized and does not fit into discourse. This concept is related as will to difference, space, trace, etc--- What Derrida discovered was a particular instance of how something tends disappears out of the discourse because it doesn't fit the forms, or it stays there, and is unrecognizable. Derrida refers to the third type of silence: organic, or natural silences---that is, the lapsing or failure of discourse. It is silence resulting from the natural inadequacy of language. Binary logic, "the either/or of speech acts are not real "polarities" in Derrida's notion, but two elements parasitic upon each other. This is why syllogisms never really work, other elements (that are there) do not lend themselves to that kind of formulation. What I refer to is the generality of all those "disappearances" out of discourse. Those "undecidables, as harbingers of silence.

SECOND PROPOSITION:

Women are silent in Western epistemology¹⁶⁰i.e., theories of knowledge; theories of discourse--and therefore are silenced. ~ The social methodologies of silencing woman are historically, both political and

160. Margaret Yard "The Incommensurability of Women within Traditional and Poststructuralist and Postmodern Epistemology" Masters Thesis. The City University of New York, 1987.

cultural, however woman within the epistemologies of the "other" are the organic silence itself. Therefore, woman represents the field of repression as well as potential for liberation, for according to Kristiva, silence is the transgressive discourse.

THIRD PROPOSITION:

Postmodernist deconstruction uses language to destroy language, therefore opens the door into the silence. What is silenced is silenced in all three ways: by direct terror (method 1-political silence), by manipulation (method 2-cultural silence) and by inadequacy (method #3-organic silence). Postmodernism represents the means by which the socially silenced, including women, may re-enter consciousness through the awareness of the silenced brought about by the destruction (de-construction) of traditional discourses. This effect promotes an awareness that something is silenced.

PART I**CONCLUSIONS:**

Language and discourse are under attack. The feminism(s) attack it as corrupt; the deconstructionists attack it as internally inadequate, the mystics attack it as irrelevant. Simultaneously, there is a proliferation of the use of the word "silence". While part of the social is attacking language, and part of the social is alluding to silence, these phenomena are symptoms of the same process. I hold that the attacks on language approach, but do not cross the line into silence. This silence is the incubator of what may be new discourses (Derrida's supplementary) The prevailing linguistic, literary and philosophical analyses of silence code silence as empty. And this would seem to make common sense. I, however have chosen to code social silence as full. I here supply a metaphorical analogue of what is meant by "full", to wit:

In the practice of stage magic, there is an act which magicians call "black art". Against a black backdrop and with only strong forward white light, a magician seems to make many objects appear and disappear before our eyes. In this environment all black things are equivalently invisible, including the body of the magician who is himself clothed in a black suit and who often wears white gloves to make the contrast even more telling. It therefore can be seen that to cause something to be black is to cause it to disappear. For example, a sword, a favorite prop, is coated with black felt on one side so that by turning the haft of it, it disappears and reappears. The magician also has a black bag on stage with him, also functionally invisible, out of which can come rabbits, doves, scarves and other traditional paraphernalia. But his bag can also swallow up any object that will fit into it, giving the most startling impression, if done well, of a sudden disappear-

ance! If the stage lights were turned off, and the “work lights” were turned on, we would suddenly see a full stage which we had previously verified as empty.

To my thinking, social silence behaves like the “black bag”. Things that are in it seem to participate in the general non-existence when in actuality, they are still very much there. We observe constantly in society, especially in the media, the sudden disappearance of issues and circumstances, as well as the unpredictable explosion into our consciousness of momentous questions heretofore “unknown”. And when we ask “where was this”? the answer must be---- in the silence.

New acknowledgements of social expression further assert that Post-structuralism/Postmodernism (deconstruction of discourse-reaching into the silence), Feminism and Linguistic Fetishism(language as the source of all relations) are three points of a trinity defined and related by the epiphenomenon of silence. Silence is the resounding sociocultural note of the epoch which can't help but be heard above/below the noise.

The emphasis on discourse, has a potential cosmetic effect in that it buries the brutalities of social life, via mechanisms of repression, denial, selective inattention, substitution. Not simply is it only cosmetic, there is a much shorter fuse between information and action. For example, due to electronic media, within a couple of days it became known in the U.S. that Zoe Baird, nominated for Attorney General of the U.S., hired an illegal alien. Within a few days, she was out and considered old news. The breaking of the silence (un veiling of unknown information,) led **without hesitation** (instantaneous) national call-in response) to her demise. What was silenced (and continues to be is the number of high governmental officials(male with families requiring household and child care) who have undergone the nomination process where the question was never raised, so no breaking of silence occurred . This indicates a double coat of silencing because of the centrality of gender. One level is the silencing of any private/household type question as "being out of the question" for a male official. It is "out of the question", i.e., not in public awareness because of the gender stereotypes that a male would be (1) aware, (2) involved and (3) responsible for child care duties or arrangements thereof. The gender stereotypes continue to maintain unequal standards for women and men, particularly having to do with disturbances and shifts in the volatile boundaries between public and private. The second level is the revealing of the law broken, but not the social and economic realities creating the conditions for an upper middle class working woman to break the law. The hiring of illegal aliens and the usury thereof has been a historical and common practice, however, the

recent use of this practice has escalated when women flooded the work force in the 1970's and bad economic conditions placed pressure on the family to employ two, instead of one parent, in order to survive as a family. What is silenced is the peculiar position of working mothers, who are exploited and subsequently, exploit other women workers, due to a system which takes advantage of low wage/low value women workers. There is an assumption that affordable child care workers(who especially get along with one's child and who are "good surrogates" (can race play a part as well in selectivity factors?) are obtainable in the free market. The silencing that occurred with this incident, was that the problem of finding a qualified (female) attorney general was solved , because "child care was not her problem". It is significant to note that the two key women in Clinton's cabinet are both lesbian and not mothers, hence, are ruled out as having the conflicts working mothers have. The enduring silence is the core problem being unaddressed (left in its gendered silence).

PART 11

SILENCE IN THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE SOCIAL

SELECTED CASE STUDIES

Chapter VI

SILENT WOMEN: WOMEN'S SILENCE

Preface

1. A Word About Silence

2. A Word About Women and Silence

Women's Silence in Man's Language

The Body Silent/ The Body Silenced

Sexual Silences/ Silent Sex

Abusing/Abusive Silence

The Symptomology of Women's Silence

3. The Problematic of Women and Silence

Historic cultural Silences

Textual/Con-textual Silences

Origins, Organic Silences and the Originary

Identity Silenced

The paradox of the "talkative sex" "breaking their silence"

4 The Question of Breaking the Silence

The Modern and to "come out of silence"

The Postmodern agenda of erasure, indeterminacy and abandonment of the subject

SILENT WOMEN: WOMEN'S SILENCE

Women's oppression intersects with class, color, nationality, history and culture; silence is the glue cohesing the social fact of women's oppression with such consistency and efficacy that the silence of subservience seems impalpable- women for centuries are terrorized via political silencing and visibly forced to be silent; women in more "advanced societies" are socialized via cultural silencing to make themselves "'good" and silent."

Preface: For a number of years I've been doing work on Social Silences in Sociology, previous to that, I worked in Woman's Studies. It has gradually become manifest that the issues of silence are particularly critical to issues of women, and that the notions I have developed about cultural silence I wouldn't and couldn't have had, had I been a male author. This chapter is an attempt to bring together pieces of the lifeworld that are artificially separated. Namely, cultural silence is seen as the uniting subject in the social destruction of voice. However, the process of the destruction of women's voices is the bellweather, the practice, the paradigm, the prototype, of all of the forms of social silence.

1. A word about silence: There are a plethora of approaches to silence: whether an autonomous phenomenon, such as the metaphysical and sacred applications earlier discussed, or as a dependent phenomenon, as in a figure of speech, meanings incumbent upon context and social position. Silence and women are odd couples; both terms seem to delimit each other. Generally, silence is currently considered a "secondary" or supportive phenomenon, very similar to the station of women in patriarchy. That is,

very much in the manner of the conceptual "other", i.e., a secondary and supportive notion proping up Western discourse. Silence is relegated to a dependent idiom, and in likewise fashion, as women are considered, is rendered, as women are rendered, as non-subjects with a non-autonomous (non) identity reflecting male idealizations within their economy of the same.

¹⁶¹ Silence is seen in traditional terms, similarly, as the background and support for the word.

2. A word about women and silence

The question of silence and woman is one of casual dualities: both external and internal inducements, both brutal and cooperative, both voluntary and self eroding. In traditional terms, to be a woman is to be silent. In Heideggerian terms this positioning is likened to: "standing" in silence. In that traditional silence, women are characterized typically dicotomous extremes, either as blissful and thereby fulfilled in their silence, or as suffering in silence. Literature is stuffed full of the silently suffering or wasted heroine.

Particularly in death, and specifically, with the fate of sacrificial death, (which is the final silence,) women finally achieve their "ultimate excess". A ioverkill, if you will, of a life of silencing. Historically, the precedent of the final silence, after periods of being kept in silence, began in the cult of Dionysus with the murder of the mother.¹⁶² In modern terms, to become "woman" is to "break out of (traditional) silence(s)", to get a la Virginia Woolf "A Room of Her Own" either psychically or locationally and to hammer out all the re

161. "Economy of the same" is a term used by several feminist theorists, coined by Luce Irigaray, meaning that all things reflect and mirror the phallocratic referent. "culture everywhere rests on men's words"

162. Somer Brodribb. Nothing Mat(t)ers : A Feminist Critique of the Post-modern. North Melbourne, Spiniflex Press Pty Ltd., 1992. pp xxi.

pressed and denied observations and passions of a woman's own experiences. In order to go on past mind sets of modernity and past post modernity, into present times, it is more than the modernist "speaking out" which must be accomplished, but, in Irigaray's estimation we must overcome "our aphasia and our amnesia to *speak our minds* and live our time."¹⁶³ She goes on to write "When our lips speak together" (1985) not as a metaphor, but as a physiological actuality of female multiple and contiguous labial genitalia breaking the silence of complicit heterosexual transgressions to re-institute the origin of self wherein all locations and all lips (of woman) speak for herself, _by_ herself

"How can I say it? That we are women from the start. That we don't have to be turned into women by them. That that has already happened, without their efforts. And that their history, their stories, constitute the locus of our displacement. It's not that we have a territory of our own; but their fatherland, family, home, discourse, imprison us in closed spaces where we cannot keep on moving, living as ourselves. Their properties are our exile. their enclosures, the death of our love. Their words, the gag upon our lips....."¹⁶⁴

Silence is a particularly "slippery" concept when applied to women. For, woman, herself has been used as a metaphor for silences of all kinds. She is socially applauded as the epitomy of silent/compliant domesticity. All of the drawbacks found in phallogentric language which privileges one gender over another, one class, one race, over an "other", and thereby, all distort

163. Luce Irigaray. Speculum of the Other Woman. Trans. Guillian C. Gill. New York :Ithica Press, 1985.

164. Luce Irigaray. Ce Sexe Qui N'en Est Pas Un. Ithica, Cornell University Press, 1985. pp. 212-13.

tions/representations of "The Other", are found in the usages of silence related to women. The reasons are both structural and knowledge/power concerns. The same powers which constrict women's speech, and thereby force her to "be silent", can also maintain her silences as socially advantageous by propaganda, by socialization's behavioral basis in a system of rewards and punishments, and other forms of both "soft and hard" coherisons. The same powers which constrict her speech, label her "breaking her silence" as a subversive act carried out by a substandard and devalued creature. By "breaking the silence" she gets coded as marginal (a margin on the margins, so to speak). The same powers which condition her feminized (silent) behavior, also determine the degree of self inoculation she must practice into forgetting conditions required to maintain the "status quo". This "status quo", or normalization of the hypersocialization of women. Woman the objectified object (as in object relations) silences herself if she has correctly achieved socialization. In Lacanian terms, the law is the phallus and woman "cannot speak". The same powers which promote social expectations of a "proper" demeanor (calm and quiet) of women, also demonize the "loud", "crude", "crass" woman who takes the chance to speak her mind. This is a feat of magic denial. The magic in the denial is the ruse in the act categorizing the woman speaking her mind, as too loud. The "too loudness" is a condition of :too muchness; or excess saturation with noise, not sense meaning. With "too muchness, there is an inability with the degree of senseness, of pure saturation, to hear, or to be able to understand. There is a difference when this happens, in fact, our of escalating decibel levels as in "too much noise" from when it is culturally "manufactured" by coding women's audible

and natural communication as "too loud". Too loud to be heard, therefore silenced, therefore ostricized *within* her noise and her desire to speak.

"there is no longer any apparent contradiction between the infrequency of women's utterances and the insistance that they talk too much. Quite simply, if a woman is expected to be quiet, then any woman who opens her mouth can be accused of being too talkative."¹⁶⁵

Spender (1990)

Women in silence; silence in women; silence of women; women of silence, however you slice it, woman is in contradiction and considered by society "contradictory" (of a contradictory nature) when referring to her silences. These words are inextricably bound, much the same as in China when women's feet were bound, as a form of beauty, as a form of bondage, as a form of desirability, as a material handicap and stigma, as a sign of wealth and good breeding, as a sign of the unwhole and disgusting inequality of being female. These wild dicotomies reflect the bipolar referents when considering the question of silence and woman.

Culture, everywhere, rests on the indirect authority of men's words. It is men who provide the credit for this system specifically through the process of naming. The "justification (of this culture) is to sanction, organize, regulate and arbitrate the relationships between men, particularly by means of theorization"¹⁶⁶ Consider the 1880's, when on one hand, women were considered

165. Ibid pp 8,9.

166. Ibid . pp. 265.

the “talkative sex” yet, at the same time, Elizabeth Cady Stanton (as a too talkative woman) was forced to wage a long standing battle just to “give women the floor” , i.e., a chance to speak, at their first women’s convention.

Silence when referring to women is pre-determined for whenever “she” “shuts up “ or whenever “she” “ talks too much” both behaviors are considered as forms of women’s silence. Either women are criticized for too much silence, or using silence as a weapon, against men -“she gave him the cold shoulder” or, women are critized for speaking too much with the implication that whatever the measurable “quantity” of speech, whether a few words or a treatise, it is way “too much” to listen to because of the devalued content.

Women’s Silence in Man’s Language

**“The Being. Whose names, representations and figures,—
along with their differences, their intervals, their syntax,
and dialogic- re-mark, signpost, stagger the divisions of
the *gap*, which is always to be reduced between the
appearance of truth and the truth that it veils.”**

For centuries, women, like children, were expected to be seen, but not heard. Aphorisms abound equating women of whatever age to the dependent and helpless state of children, in some cases, a state considered less useful than animals. Women were not only considered intellectually inferior (stupid) but dumb in the mute sense, like animals. The respected linguist Otto Jespersen¹⁶⁷ insisted upon women’s incompetence

167. (167) Otto Jespersen Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin.

and negative effect on language, that in effect, language is better off without women's usage. This mute sense has not to do with utterances, even cows "moo", but muteness (deaf and dumbness) has much to do with being understandable or deemed acceptable in the use of the appropriate discourse. The language of action, decision and description- the act of naming which according to Janeway is the hallmark of power, is the legitimated discourse to which I refer. The legitimated public discourse to which Friedan (1963) referred in The Feminine Mystique is the language of white male establishment

Silence is a paradoxical and highly charged metaphorical bed within which language is set. In every case silence is constructed out of the binary hole of oppression and repression from which "ordinary women find their voice and (begin) to use it to gain control over their lives." (*italics mine*) In fact, much of the literature dealing with "silencing" of women fall into penalizing categories . By creating categories which are negative, descriptive catchalls of pathological behaviors, the individuals presenting such behaviors are pathologized and thereby fodder for analytic coding a la "the Medical Model" of disease, or un-health. This implication to the medical model of pathology is that the subject must be fixed. The treatment of silence in social psychology is invested in dis-ability focus with prescriptives such as the need for resocialization and social control measures, rather than recognition that there may be a sociopolitical cause behind silences, and that silences may be used as an effect of agency for women in terrible situations. Social psychology focuses primarily on silences as negative and asocial behaviors.

London: Allen and Unwin, 1922.pp. 246.

Such behaviors researched in social psychology related to silences are in the categories of lack of assertiveness: {Clance and Imes 1978; Cross 1968; Maccoby and Jacklin 1976; Piliavin 1976; West and Zimmerman 1983} inability to express ideas, thoughts, and emotions in public {Ries 1976; Eakins and Eakins 1976; Piliavin 1976; Sadker and Sadker 1982,1985; Swacker 1976; Thorne 1979}, in gaining respect from others (Hagen and Kahn 1975; Hall and Sandler 1982; Serbin, O'Leary, Kent and Tonick 1973}.

Scholarly investigations in the linguistics and gendered speech of women's everyday communications highlight silence as being descriptive, even, emblematic of women's interpersonal interactions.

-----it took some time for me to appreciate the salient characteristic of women's talk in conversation with men was silence"¹⁶⁸

Not only is silence problematic for women, but language, in itself, is problematic for women.

"Women, who for centuries had been the objects of male theorizing, male desires, male fears and male representations, had to discover and reappropriate themselves as subjects; the obvious place to begin was the *silent place* to which they have been assigned again and again, that dark continent which had ever provoked assault and puzzlement ("Was will das Weib?")

The call went out to invent both a new poetics and a new politics, based on women's reclaiming what had always been theirs, but had been usurped from them:

168. Dale Spender, The Writing or the Sex? New York: Pergamon Press, 1989. pp. 8.

control over their bodies and a voice with which to speak about it."¹⁶⁹ (*italics mine*)

This quote connotes the connection between women and silence, that women are assigned "silent places" in society traditionally, as members of a devalued subordinate class and to reclaim "what has always been theirs" they must take control of their voices (break the silences) and thereby take control of their bodies (shrouded in silence).

In discourse where each "meaning finds its force in truth, in being unique in extension and comprehension, using the self-identity of that assertion to define its spatial distinctness from the others, but also and at the same time, decisively cutting up the whole matter of language, the whole of speculation and moreover, of the "blanks" in discourse. Those things that are not said or said between the lines since they have already been given meaning. (The Other, lapsed within, disquieting in its shadow and its rage.)

Even in the silence of the other, who says nothing (but) what the subject has already told her to say. The "subject" will thus be able to exploit the other, fragment her, speculate, her--- and find in her nothing but the same sameness? (The male other will serve only to duplicate his own identity in a different way"¹⁷⁰) (*underlining and () mine.*

We are entrapped in a phallogocentric discourse which does not have a third term, and what is called for is not a genderless language, but for a gender undecidable or gender multiple language¹⁷¹ (Irigaray, 1985) This gender undecidable/or gender multiple language would embody and articulate the si

169. Susan Rubin Suleiman "(Re) Writing the Body The Politics and Poetics of Female Eroticism" *Poetics Today*, vol 1: 1-2, 1985, pp 43.

170. See # 3 pp 235.

171. Ibid. pp 43.

lences of women which are currently "silenced" in current discourses.

"Women no doubt reproduce between them,
the peculiar forgotten forms of close combat in
which they engage with their mothers. Complic-
ity in the non-said, connivance in the unsayable,
the wink of an eye, the tone of voice, the ges-
ture, the color, the smell: we live in such things,
escapees from our identity cards and our
names, loose in an ocean of detail, a data-bank
of the unnameable. Between individuals
(*women*) there is no communication, but a
matching of atoms, mole-
cules,.....(*italics*
mine)."¹⁷²

The Kristiva quote above implies another kind of communication going on between women, one not necessarily benign i.e., "forgotten forms of close combat in which they engage with their mothers", emphasizing the "activity" of silence where there is "no communication" as in the usual sense, but "a matching of atom, molecules--that is a simultaneous, or instantaneous "knowness", similar to a kind of symbiotic immediate knowledges. Kristiva implies more than a complementarity, more than an identity relation--but a set of knowledges "well known" so to speak by women who communicate at another level in "intra-silences" Kristiva on one hand talks about women's communication and relates it to silence, however, she does not hold for thought without discourse. Does Kristiva relegate women in their activity of silence to Jespersen's determination of muteness, that "women are better off without language". I wonder where this places Kristiva herself? In these terms, Kris

172. Julia Kristiva Language and the Unknown. Poetics Trans anne M. Menke, New York: Columbia University Press, 1989. pp 147

tiva both says and does not say, in effect, cancelling her position out. Is it possible she is practicing a form of postmodern silencing? A silencing of form, i.e. saying and not saying at the same time.

Irigaray also indicates another kind of language, differing from traditional masculinized form, including everyday conversation as well as scholarly treatises. In the economy of discourse the:

“silent allegiance of the one guarantees the auto-sufficiency,
the auto-nomy
of the other as long as no questioning of this mutism as a symptom- -
of historical repression is required”¹⁷³

“And if your words have such seductive power, such a potent charge of investment, is it not because they come to fill the place of a desire deprived of words? borrowing their strength from energy free from any declaration. A fundamental misunderstanding lies within your language: what it carries of persuasive power does not belong to speech but to what it covers in silence”¹⁷⁴

173. See # 3 pp. 134.

174. Luce Irigaray Elemental Passions Trans. Joanne Collie and Judith Still, New York: Routledge, 1992. pp. 52.

The Body Silent/ The Body Silenced

**“to reclaim “what has always been theirs”
they must take control of their voices
(break the silences) and thereby take
control of their bodies (shrouded in silence) “¹⁷⁵**

Yet, women's bodies are shrouded in silence and the silences based in the silencing of the body are foremost women's silences. There is a theoretical appropriation of her body, and with her body, of woman herself. The body itself is theorized as a coded system of recognition and misrecognition with its own particular historicity.¹⁷⁶ Civilization itself, is a narrative of the active recoding renaming of the body and place of feminized woman.

Women represent/are the body in Western metaphysics because woman is made symbiotically synonymous with nature, due to her reproductive function. Because of this association with nature, women are considered either pre-social or sub-social in status. In fact, the closer a “type” of woman is coded as being “closer to nature” (like an animal) particularly on a racial or ethnic basis) the more sub-social she is. Women and her body of women have been politically silenced for 3000 years under patriarchy. While women are key to the constant and regular reproduction of the body with which society could not exist, women as “bearers” of the reproductive role have been totally defined in those terms to in patriarchy and thereby tied in bondage to those traditional social places. Engel's historical materialism in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State¹⁷⁷ clearly placed women as chat

175. This text. Part II Chapter IX. This Chapter, section on agency.

176. Donna J. Harroway Simians, Cyborgs and Women. The Reinvention of Nature New York; Routledge, 1991. p32.

177. Marx/Engels: Basic Writings. Ed by Lewis S. Feuer. New York: Double-

tel in the marriage relation, in legal terms, a property relation. And, as property, her body to be valued as such object. Monogamy, primogeniture and the subordination of women all relate to the emergence of private property in capitalism. The silencing of the real property terms of the marriage relation has been part of the glue cementing the "matter of factness" or "social fact" under patriarchy of women as chattel /household objects and slaves.

"Thus the body that gives life never enters into language. She has no place there. She subsists before language as the woman who gives her flesh and blood, and beyond language as she who is stripped of a matrix/womb, a veil, an enclosure or a clearing in which she might live according to the horizon of her games, symbolizations, representations.....

"No one must see that it is they, the wives and the mothers, who are being offered up in communion here, who effect the communion.....it is the body and the blood especially of virgin women that are being sacrificed to the intermale society.
.....

The duty to bear children, to be silent, to be in attendance, but off to the side---

all this wounds the flesh and the spirit of women and there is no representation of that sacrifice.....

In fact, it is doubled in the duty women have to believe and to be practicing believers ." ¹⁷⁸(cultural silence)

day, 1982. Engles "Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State."

178. Luce Irigaray Sexes and Genealogies trans Gillian C. Gill New York: Columbia University Press 1987, 1993. pp 46 and 47.

The pre-symbolic; the mother's body is that towards which all women aspire, just because it lacks a penis. Here women actualize the homosexual fact of Motherhood where woman is closer to her instinctual memory and more negatory of the social symbolic bond. It is the re-union of a woman-Mother with the body of the Mother. *This cannot be verbalized; it is a whirl of words, rhythm.*¹⁷⁹ (*italics mne*)

Milk and tears are signs par excellence of Mater dolorosa, an icon which infiltrated Western Christian culture between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries. Kristeva posits milk and tears have characteristics very much in -common:

"both are metaphors of non-language, of a" semiotic"
that does not coincide with linguistic communication.
The Mother and her attributes signifying suffering
humanity thus become the symbol of a
"return of the repressed"

on monotheism. They reestablish the nonverbal
and appear as a signifying modality closer to the
so called primary processes.¹⁸⁰

For Irigaray, the mother represents "only a mute soil, a mystery beyond metaphor, at least she is still *pregnant*.-----"she at least is not nothing"¹⁸¹

179. J. Kristeva. Desire in Language, L. S. Roudiez, ed. T. Gora, A. Jardine and L. S. Roudiez, Trans. New York, Columbia University Press, 1980. p239

180. Julia Kristeva "STABAT MATER" *Poetics Today* The Female Body in Western Culture Vol 6 # 1-2, 1985. pp 143

181. See # 3 (163) pp 228.

Abusing/Abusive Silences

**“But Silence is where
the victims dwell.”¹⁸²**

Nelly Sachs (1967)

The mechanisms of maintaining the silence of women under patriarchy “keeping the little woman quiet” are the same mechanisms used to maintain control and domination of the abuser over his victim. These conditions are true under political or brutal silencing as they are under cultural silencing (more hidden and legitimated forms of socialization). In fact, I posit that the etiology and dynamics of abuse seems to fit all too closely the paradigm and maintenance of patriarchy across the centuries. And, the succession and integration of both political or brutal silencing and cultural silence seem to indicate an active and recurrent process in relation to the maintenance of both individual and social abuse and the institution of patriarchy. Abuses embed in an atmosphere of general violence permeating the household, and on a larger basis, the state. Abuse can also grow out of forms of neglect, i.e., removing support, interest, stimulation and communication.

**“ Sticks and stones are hard on bones
Aimed with angry art/ Words
can sting like any thing
But silence breaks the heart”¹⁸³
Phyllis McGinley(1959)**

182. Nelly Sachs. Glowing Enigma “O the Chimmys” 1967.

183. Phyllis McGinley. The Love Letters of Phyllis McGinley “Ballad of Lost Objects” 1959.

Physical abuse, the physical and often brutal punishment of a victim is analogous to physical or brutal silencing. There is virtually no difference between the two. Forms of physical punishment to greater or lesser degree, or threats of punishment, reinforced by the memory or ideation of the probability of real brutal punishment is evident in relations of subjugations by a dominant and controlling actor. Political or brutal silencing occurs, most particularly in cases of overt physical abuse, for the victim is forbidden "to tell", or "to rat" on his/her or their captors or dominators.

To reveal or "to break the silence" or to become "an informer" instantly places that person (s) in jeopardy of life and limb. In fact, part of the punishment, understood as punishment, is the maintenance of this "silence". As the faces and emaciated bodies of the Bosnians in the Serbian "detention" camps in August 1992, silent and gaunt, testify ---to remain silent while under torture or abuse is in itself a burden, often the most difficult one for it nullifies all chances of escape. If brutality is "kept under cover", if the public or key persons are not informed, and the person or group is made to look as though its a situation of "business as usual", then the silenced person who brutalized or abused, must actively participate in maintaining his/her own chains or subjugation.

Current postmodern theorizing seems to be complicit with the silencing of women, particularly when it is related to abuse, both violent and psychological.

Lacanian psychoanalysis also says we (women) mean yes when we say not: "the tension of desire hidden in the most professed horror of incest"¹⁸⁴

An important distinction comes which indicates a demarkation between political or brutal silencing and cultural silencing. As I have mentioned in the taxonomy of silences, political or brutal silences are those caused by punishment or the threat of punishment. These are direct responses to the actual or feared punishment which is immediately experienced, that is, they are directly causal, one can find the evidence of brutality or threat of it. Cultural silencing occurs when the individual, group or state silences itself as in "auto-silencing" seemingly without an instigation, or the memory of a threat or punishment. It is at the point of no return, when individuals, groups or states automatically become complicitous seemingly without direct cause, and keep on maintaining their subservience, slavery or adherence to inutile and often self destructive norms at great price. This is not just the mechanism of political repression at work, it is a more active process, it is voluntaristic, doing something purposely to the self, to the group, to the state.

American political life is based on consent, not just fear of direct punishment as in the power of a monarchy. Consent requires propagandaists either, against yourself, as in psychological repression, or against the group and state which is a mixed psychological and political repression. Whatever the energy to repress, keep information or knowledge down, then it (the memory) remains and must resurface in some form. It does not treat man as just rational, but as an integrated psychological and political animal.

184. Jacques Lacan. "Some Reflections on the Ego." *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 34 (Part II) , 1953. p. 12.

This is the key to the victims complicity in his/her own pain, and for that matter, guilt. Guilt comes from the knowledge that (if that person were strong, capable, competent, smart) as he/she should be, then the person or group thinks that they are responsible to defeat or subdue the oppressor, whatever the odds, whatever his strength. This "should have defended myself" situation creates a doublebind in the person or group, for to acknowledge defeat to some means annihilation or chaos. It is a constant threat of psychic dismemberment for efficacy is lost and agency destroyed thus creating a constant state of helplessness and despair. This borderland state of despair only reaffirms the unworthwhileness of the victim, and in essence, it is the state most symbolic of victimhood. Victimhood is a condition whereby a person or group is rendered insignificant, except in the ability to withstand brutality and other forms of abuses, until death. This condition is the harbinger of despair, a common state of the victimized. A key to understanding the essence of despair is that nothing works, for the mind and body are just marginally functioning, devoid of ideas, just simply trying to exist without further pain or death.

The dynamics of abuse associated with sexuality, incest, and physical abuse are the active maintenance of secrecy and denial by both the perpetrator and the victim,. The reaction of the victim to abuse is the suppression or exaggeration of certain aspects of personality, and the abused may evidence as a response to abuse either extremely fearful behavior, or extremely demanding or rageful behavior, and most frequently overtly compliant or passive behavior and extreme dependency upon their abuser.

The soul murdered¹⁸⁵ child/woman is the child/woman of extremes: either she is the quiet one, or too loud and boisterous, the annoying one. The soul murdered person is killed in such a way that the body is living, but the soul is slaughtered, for there is no life, desire, passion or wants expressed by this child, a strange child, one who seems non motivated but locked in forms of bondage which either surpress or cry out in the most distressing ways. The soul murdered child is silenced either way, by being so repressed and quiet that the silence seems to scream in pain, or, too loud, as if again silenced by a mantle of white noise, a sound barrier to prevent closeness or contact, also seeming to scream a "get away" scream of pain. Soul murder is the extreme form of emotional abuse and neglect; it may also be accompanied with physical abuse. In all cases, these children actually live a disability of silence. That is, the state of abuse is maintained via silence, and that to reveal, come out of silence, can mean to either intensify the state of abuse by challenging the power of the abuser without conditions of safety, or with conditions of safety, to destroy the hold of the abuser by naming and identifying the abuser for what he does.

The tools in the maintainence of political or brutal silences (either the action or threat of punishment) are the common tools of torture and abuse practiced across centuries such as women being subjected to murder, abandonment, incarceration (in seragilos or

185. The term "soul murder" was first used by Schreber (1903) , to mean a state where the victims, particularly sexual identity, is lost . Leonard Shengold,s book . Soul Murder : The Effects of Childhood Abuse and Deprivation. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1989,, documents the expanding use of this term in cultural and abuse literature

harems, in one man brothels such as forms of polygamy, in non-escapable forms of marriage (marriage in state and religious forms without escape clauses except in death) , mutilation, beatings and forced labor context of these phenomena , recognize that things that seem to us today to be brutal and senseless were entirely in keeping with their contemporary ethos. (Ross, 1980)

One of the most effective social measures for keeping women under control and compliant (silenced), aside from cultural devaluation of the female and the routine socialization of the devalued status, was the routine threat (political silencing) to women of the killing of their children . This extreme form of threat of punishment and actual punishment is the foundation of political or brutal silencing of women and the underpinning for their maintenance of their voluntary cultural silencing. So horrible is this history, so untold (silenced) the historic narratives of infanticide, torture and maiming of children that the very weight of this knowledge hangs like a holocaust over three millennia. The history of children in so called Western civilization is one of continuous, unrelenting disregard, maltreatment and abuse. From a historical standpoint infanticide, the widespread killing of infants (and children) by men who were their fathers,¹⁸⁶ or the elders of the community¹⁸⁷ was common practice, as were the interring of newborns in the foundations of buildings and bridges. "Defective children, female infants, the children of the poor, or those born to large families were put to death."¹⁸⁸

186. Edward Zigler and Nancy W. Hall. "Physical child abuse in America: past, present and future" pp 38.

187. Ibid pp 39

188. Ibid pp 40

The Symptomology of Women and Silence

I will assign the term symptomology to be used with respect to silence in women and in particular in relation to cultural silencing. A symptom is a sign of an underlying process or problem which reveals its presence with various effects. Silence is a sign which represents the problematic of women living in a culture. How silence reveals itself through behavior and presences is determinate upon the particular position of the woman in the particular location. The question is how cultural silencing appears or is observed in women. What is the experience of political and cultural silencing? What is the observed phenomenon with respect to women's lived experience? How does cultural silence manifest itself?

It appears in a wide variety of locations in the white Western contexts as a lack of assertiveness, a misdirection of efforts and anxiety particularly shown through the psychological mechanism of projection. It appears as paralysis, irrelevance, and various kinds of psychosomatic afflictions, also in speech problems such as stammering and swallowing and never completing sentences, and overt physical behaviors such as silliness, weakness, fainting and extreme awkwardness. Also, another symptom is common, frustrated non-directive rage. These symptoms can be called characteristic of psychology, but one can observe groups responding with these same characteristics. An example of a group that diverted or misdirected in efforts, is in the last Brazilian election where in spite of the fact that social issues clearly drawn in Brasil a TV personality got enough votes to throw the election to a Right wing candidate. Suppose a political issue is forefront, however a can

didate's sexual life surfaces in the media, but the audience's reception is to divert from campaign issues and focuses on the irrelevant issue to the exclusion of all else.

Literature, if it is not busy with "the scratching out of women's writing as a historical and political process",¹⁸⁹ is replete with a form of masking and subterfuge, i.e., the production of comic characterizations which rule out any serious representations of the felt and lived experiences of women. (Read woman's experience as Modleski highlights, as the experiences of oppression")¹⁹⁰

These deformations can also be seen as the characteristics of female comic types. There are cartoons not so much of women, but of certain aspects of women's behavior. The women's behavior that these cartoons are about, is a byproduct of cultural silencing, that is, women silencing themselves on the relevant issues to themselves, consequently being extravagantly loud, or distorted in displaying behaviors which are stereotyped.

A collection of comic female types, i.e., clichés, stereotypes, of women is exhibited in their characters and can be seen as a profile of various kinds of dysfunctionality. The chickens of dysfunctionality come to roost in silences. The self-silencing of women creates this gallery of grotesques. We laugh at them, but it is horrible to see a human being reduced to these forms of stereotypes. The existence of these stereotypes constitutes a kind of "cultural proof" that women really are a group of idiots/wimps/fools/bitches and cannot be taken seriously either individually or as a group: "By God, its true. Can;t live with em' and can't live without 'em!"

189. See # 1 (160) p. xxiii.

190. Tania Modleski Feminism Without Women: Culture and Criticism in a Postfeminist Age New York: Routledge, 1991. pp. 17.

These activities construct a kind of “white noise” of too full categories of extreme stereotyped images which fully occupy and dominate female representations. The history of literary narrative is stuffed full of the too talkative bitch, or the stereotype of the silent mysterious, or silent vacant women. What is called the sex kittens of the 1960’s and 1970’s in the movies of which the nonpareil was Bridget Bardo had little or nothing to say. Media reinforces characterizations of these dicotomies and is consistent with the prototypes of the period. From the 1950’s to the 1970’s one of the media’s most popular female characters was the loud and brash “I know nothingness and I’m proud of it” of “I Love Lucy”. Lucy of “I Love Lucy” was hyper verbal and hysterical, yet still a static hollow character busy denegrating and erasing any trace of content and agency, of intelligence and authority in her presentation of self. Lucy’s opposite side Ralph Cramdon’s “Alice”, another “comic book” prototype of the almost saintly, but frustrated, patient, suffering woman characterized by her silence and her ineffectivity. In the 70’s and ‘80’s, a merge of the two favorite female characters occured with the ridicule of the white working class family and the behind the scenes dithering of the well meaning but ineffectual, effacing Ethel of the TV series “All in the Family”. The underlying irony is that characters like Blondie and Ethel are smarter than they appear and we know it. They are smarter than the men who “dominate” them, however, their style in which they repress or silence their intelligence falls under the demeaning cover of imbecility. This is making oneself an example by taking the most extrem case behavior and “riffing” on it. For those who find a positive note, i.e. these women are really smart, I might say that to denegrate the self to the point of ridicule is to be forced into

an extreme situation of self denegration for purposes of perceived survival. This is not a funny joke.

Some of these types are the hysterical daffy dame, of whom the greatest exponent is Lucille Ball, although there are many. A paralyzed idiot, or imbecile wife, are exemplified by Blondie, the comic strip, and Archie Bunker's wife, Ethel, of the TV series "All In the Family". The nagging, torturing, shrew wife, the earliest example is Xantippe, Socrates wife, described by Plato who had no love for women, also Noah's wife in the Medieval Noah play, Maggie of "Jiggs and Maggie" in the "Bringing Up Father" comic strip, Mrs Bumble in Dicken's Oliver Twist, whose husband was the tyrant in the orphanage in Oliver Twist but who felt as much fear of her, as the boys did of him. Another type is the cosmic queen bitch represented by the character of Aphrodite in the Hippolytus of Euripides (no great lover of women). Cosmic bitches are represented by lots of mean schoolteachers, sadistic prioresses who gave out penances to their keeps, the Wicked Witch of the West in the Wizzard of Oz, the Red Queen in Alice in Wonderland, the bad Queen in Snow White, and The Queen of the Night in the Mozart's Magic Flute. The cosmic queen directs her wrath to girls and young women, whereas the shrew directs her wrath to men, in particular to their husband. Add to these, the inept social climber, Mrs Malaprop, is a character from a 17th century comedy. The out of control sexual slut, the whore with the heart of gold, or the irrepressible, and always accessible

Women are the characters, the only characters allowed sexuality in popular literature. When a woman character in narrative does not represent a grotesque character, she is no longer a comic character, she becomes a tragic character, and usually dies in the end !

All of the above types represent character dysfunctions which are a result of self silencing in a phallocratic culture. The dysfunctional female types represent a characterization of a certain kind of behavior, a cartoon of behavior, but the behavior they cartoon is a snapshot of some of the effects seen behaviorally of self silencing of women.

When one cannot protest and when one cannot fight back the energy has got to come out somewhere. In the nineteen thirties and the nineteen forties when that energy(protest) had a chance to come out more directly and honestly, we experienced a wave of women in film who "talked back "(Catherine Hepburn, Claudette Colbert, Carole Lombard, Joan Crawford, Betty Davis, Ginger Rogers, etc) and who were reactionary characters. In other words, they broke their silence and did away with pathogenic dysfunctional stereotypes as public images.

3. The Problematic of Women and Silence

The problematic about talking about silence is that like the “problem of woman” we wind up talking about its flesh, that is, the form(s) of discourse or non-discourse itself. However, when we talk about form, we wind up speaking of it as a thing, very much the same way woman has been instrumentalized, fetishized and commodified, as a form, as a thing.

“Two modes of fiction are tearing apart the time of presence”

“Two modes of representation are tearing time apart”¹⁹¹

Irigaray

What are the two modes of fiction, the two modes of representation tearing presence apart, tearing time apart? What is this power rendering being apart?

The concept of presence can be that of “God”, of Platonic ‘Ideas’; of Aristotelian and Thomist essence., of Cartesian self-consciousness; of Kantian transcendent logic, of Heideggerian ‘Being’. ¹⁹² Yet is Western metaphysics doesn’t address woman as subject, and subsumes “woman” into mankind, then, how can we posit a presence for women? The question of “what is presence when it comes to woman?” is moot in Western metaphysics.

Irigaray however writes of “two modes of fiction tearing apart the time of presence”¹⁹³. She refers to woman constructed in phallogentric culture as maternal or virgin. If woman is constructed as such and made to live an identity as such within the economy of patriarchy, as objectified, then, the time, or a woman’s presence in time(women’s presence in history) would be

191. See # 1 pp. 353.

192. Ibid.

193. Ibid. See #16.

torn apart under such binary domination.

Steiner(1989) goes on to write of presence as the exultant of felt meaning, He calls it a Hopkinsian referential "inscape",¹⁹⁴ an indwelling clarity and life force. He assumes that "being" is 'sayable' and can be recounted and variously expressed. Presence is where predication and essence coincide seamlessly, close to Hegel's (Geist) self realization of spirit. But all presence presupposes an other, and the meeting with the other is a sacramental and propitiatory rite which is a modulation from one to the other on a continuum ranging from menace and strangeness to recognition, comfort and enchantment.

Language corrupts.....

" that which silence.....' that which the unspeakable and unspeaking visitations of the freedom and mystery of being.....may communicate to us in privileged moments"¹⁹⁵

I posit that the two modes of fiction, two modes of representation which sunder presence and time, the determinants of being and identity are the artificial Cartesian constructions of masculinized economies grounded on dualities, with one and only one, standard: phallogentrism.

194. Gerald Manley Hopkins (1844-1889) *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. 5th Edition, Vol. II, New York: W. W. Norton, 1962. PP 1578.

195. George Steiner Real Presences Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1989. pp.139.

Gender can in itself be a form of silence. Since gender is socially constructed, it reflects the normative values of the culture. Hence in the United States in one day's news, one can follow degrees of silence and "breaking of the silence" when it comes to women's cultural lives. For example, on December 30th, 1992 in "The New York Times", a reader notes that two women were elected to the U.S. Senate (less than the Iranian senate) depending on the ideology of the reader the information can be read as a move to break the silence of women in the political regime i.e., a gain for cultural feminism, or it can be read as a nonconsequential moment which adds to the illusion of surface gains for those women who will represent token significations, i.e., useful instruments to reassure the majority of a participative democracy thereby aiding and abetting the masculinized order and means of maintaining the efficacy of administrative silences, i.e., the silencing of subordinates by professionals.¹⁹⁶

On the same page¹⁹⁷, in the same page, A.M. Rosenthal writes about "Female Genital Torture", i.e, women undergoing genital mutilation in parts of Africa and the Middle East to discourage both pleasure and sexual intercourse outside of marriage. He responds to a comment by Donatella Lorch of The New York Times writing about Somali women as

"by-far the most emancipated of Muslim women", however still undergoing ritual clitoridectomy at young ages. Rosenthal's position reveals the extent of cultural silence already created by Governments, most journalists, inter

196. See Part I Chapter V, pp 61-65.

197. New York Times A.M. Rosenthal *On My Mind* "Female Genital Torture" (December 30, 1992)Editorial page

national bodies, civil rights organizations, most women's groups, etc about the traditional and ongoing practice of genital mutilation in other cultures":

"Not because I did not know that genital mutilation was committed.....but because I did know" For

almost a year I had been planning to write a column about it but put...it aside in favor of more newsworthy" or "important" than the genital mutilation of tens of millions of people (*women?*) in dozens of countries" *italics mine*

"All of them know"(Governments, most journalists, international bodies, civil rights organizations, most women's groups)....."but just not enough to actually do anything"

The "just not enough to actually do anything" underlies the construction of a cultural silencing or self silencing, on several levels. In terms of silence# 1, or Political/ brutal silencing, (the silence which is enforced by actual pain or the threat of punishment) the social practice, or coming of age ritual of clitoridectomy is supported and often performed on women by women as a means of continuing the socialization into a traditional patriarchal economy (where the female body has an exchange value between men) where men exchange virgin daughters for the continuation of male authority and posterity in tribes, families or states. Traditional societies continue these practices with the effacy of social fact. The force first used to instill these practices is forceably silenced or repressed. The public memory or consciousness of the force is supplied by tribal myths, customs, ancestor narriatives (stories of

expulsion, warnings of what happened to deviants, the threat of death, disengagement, ostracisms, demons, amputations and death) The fabric of coercion is enforced and made more potent, therefore more terrible the consequences, by this political or brutal silencing. Hence, the continuation of painful and humillating and even torturous social practices within the cradle of traditional societies. To repeat, from the philosophical discussion of the construction of social silences:

“silence is the social glue which cements normative social facts”¹⁹⁸

Another type of silencing, as exemplified in Rosenthal's quote shows another form of cultural silencing. The practice of cliterodectomy practiced in other places (the exotic) , where groups or individuals (from colonial or cultural imperialist positions) know something, about it, and have different, better, more liberated (more righteous?) standards so that they feel a “responsibility” to respond (do something) but self-repress it, that is, actively keep it from consciousness. The act of actively repressing what we do know, because what we do know has consequences, which then means some responsibility for responding is almost a pure form of cultural silencing. It is the action of professionals (i.e., those with expert knowledge (who know, or should know better) who for the sake of their professionalism, i.e, responsibility to the group who should say something, do something to react (“individuals should search out and support groups that do not forget the women in agony”)¹⁹⁹ to a practice that becasuse it falls within insults to human rights must be their legitimated purvue. In order not to bear the responsibility for not

198. See text Part I Chapter pp. 46..

199. Ibid.

acting, writing, protesting the individual and/or group through processes of self administered amnesia, forget or silence the thought of responsibility itself. They cannot totally repress public documentation, knowledge or practice, but it can be put on "back burner" or silenced from active thought or attention, the mind acting much in the same way as a judge at a hearing advising the jury to disregard relevant testimony, "To act as if you had not heard" the information. This is the complex merge of processes of selective inattention and denial, but on a group basis. In this example, Rosenthal, after over a year, finally wrote an planned but sidelined or silenced article on the subject, not because he did not know about the situation, but because he "did know", and that he would not have written about it (with rationalizations based on denial and selective inattention) had he not been shocked ("These paragraphs jolted me")²⁰⁰ by a professional colleague (Donatella Lorch) who challenged his professionalism.

This is an example of someone silencing themselves (by pushing "know" facts, material to the "back burner" so that knowledge of information requiring a response is not in conscious awareness.) If, such data or information is not actively, i.e., responsibly " known, then, it removes the culpability of the knower to act (agency). This behavior is a form of cultural silencing called administrative/ professional or bureaucratic silencing. The major effect of that silencing is to remove or reduce the responsibility of the knower to act or to fulfill a role of agency in the situation.

200. Ibid.

"An ideal of truth is in fact necessary to under-ly and legitimize the metaphors, the figures used to represent the role of women, without voice, without presence. "Quite apart from any explicit violence on the part of men (incest, rape, prostitution, assault, enslavement) woman is subjected to a loss of identity which turns love into a duty, a pathology, an alienation for her." ²⁰¹

The feminine, the maternal are instantly frozen by the "like", the "as if" of that masculine representation dominated by truth, light, resemblance, identity. Culture has no space for women, yet women create elements of culture. The secret is what is created by women is appropriated and renamed by the dominant culture as its own. The standards of the dominant culture do not reflect women's contribution as a transcendental genre, as origin. What is silenced is consciousness, is awareness, is continuity. The silence is the silence of denying creativity, of origin of a different genre which gives man birth. What is silenced is that the "other" does not fit within the culture defined as patriarchy, as dominant, as real.

"For centuries, at least in the so-called Western tradition, that transcendence has seldom been recognized as such" ²⁰²

What is silenced and reburied under processes of denial, of repression, is that woman as other, as a different genre, is inappropriable. That is the secret which is silenced which cannot surface. It cannot surface in this economy of sameness for if it would become acknowledged, named, legitimated

201. See # 15. pp. 2.

202. Ibid. pp. 1.

by that different genre, it would render the world, the standards, ideals, truths, discourses and dominant ideology, as inoperable.

Cultural silence is the silence about the secret which is silenced that there is no formal culture which contains that which is woman. The official story is that women are included in the culture if coded in two categories, as (1) successfully feminized, i.e., successfully culturally silenced, or, (2) only if imitating men in terms of behaving successfully masculinized, i.e., a professional manager.

Cultural silence is co-preaching. It is ratifying the official culture by the people it was designed to oppress. The subjugated ratify this bad idea of a culture which excludes their own legitimacy in order to deny their repressed fury which might destroy that same world which reproduces their own discontent and misery. Women cooperate in not identifying or naming this process in order to protect themselves.

Just as we have already seen, the division in social silence between brutal silencing which represents coercion from the outside, and cultural silencing which represents participatory actions from the group, or the "inside" to repress, bury or obliterate the issue of women and silence divides along these lines. First of all, there is the direct coercive silence of patriarchy or the male order of power over the past 3000 years which sets into societies somewhat in the order of a social fact. This order of power is produced through violence or the threat of punishment i.e., orders and prohibitions. Then, there is women's cultural, or self generated silencing which can be looked at as as a kind of adaptive response to patriarchy./ unequal power relations. It originates from within the silenced group of women, the purpose

of which is to avoid the external experience and outcomes of political or brutal silencing (the tortures and beatings and external societal humiliations which come from being visibly dominated) but also to avoid the inner pain and sense of loss experienced on an inner psychic and group identification basis (the disgrace of being unfit, unwhole, unable to defend against domination). Cultural silencing or (self silencing through the mass repression required in practices of social control, or socialization) is directly implicated in the social construction of female identity, and in particular, the production of "what is considered feminine in a particular society" The sense of pain and loss comes from the protective fallacies involved in the construction of "femininity" the lies about what women's bodies, lies, minds, desires, hopes. The pain or loss can be so unbearable that the consciousness of truth²⁰³ of knowing about the reality of self The feminists truth-knowledge that body minds, history, achievements must to be obliterated for the sake of mental survival in a world ruled by political silencing. This kind of repression is analogous to "sour grapes"; "I never really wanted to go anyway." Women's expressive self failures are forms of "sour grapes" The "sour grapes" responses are related to the blocked awareness of past political or brutal coercion in order to avoid the awareness of the past. To free oneself out of terror of enslavement mentality mental games on an individual and group basis must be played (but out of awareness)

203. Consciousness of that "truth" is reflected today for Caucasian women in the US and Europe in the many feminist tracts, manuals and research regarding the felt experience of women's lives an example being the self help manual written as a collective Our Bodies Our Selves

The mechanism for creating silence in women

“ Words begin to fail her. She senses something *remains to be said* that resists all speech, that can at best be stammered out. All the words are weak, worn out, unfit to translate anything sensibly. For it is no longer a matter of longing for some determinable attribute, some mode of essence, some face of prescence. What is expected is neither a *this* or a *that*, not a *here* any more than a *there*. No being, no places are designated. So the best plan is to abstain from all discourse, to keep quiet, or else utter only a sound so inarticulate that it barely forms a *song*. ”²⁰⁴

Historicultural silences:

If you look across history and cultures, activities of women for women surface and resurface like tidal waves from the depths of patriarchy “the history of women is one of continuous silences and interruptions.”²⁰⁵
Adrienne Rich (1980)

Historically, women have been sensitized to the dilemma of speaking and not speaking and it's inherent contradictions and punishments.

“ For us then, to speak is difficult, and it seems we must shift from amnesia to aphasia as parts of our consciousness appear unreal to us. Loss of memory, loss of speech: it is as though we cannot

204. Ibid. p. 193.

205. Adrienne Rich On Lies, Secrets, Silence. London, Virago Press, 1980. p.11.

speak and cannot remember at the same time.

Being fully conscious is dangerous. Women's memory, women's language, women's body and sexuality have been annulled in the patriarchal tradition which has feared the female sex."²⁰⁶

Smith (1978) writes of the situation of women never having "controlled the material or social means to the making of a tradition among themselves or to acting as equals in the ongoing discourse of intellectuals....."²⁰⁷. Both Spender (1990) and Rossi (1973) document the contradictory and overdetermined position of women as being silenced historically and that silence integral to maintaining female socialization

"The entire history of women's struggle for self definition has been muffled in silence over and over. One serious cultural obstacle encountered by any feminist writer is that each feminist has tended to be received as if it emerged from nowhere; as if each of us had lived and worked without any historical past or contextual present. This is one of the ways women's work and thinking has been made to seem sporadic, errant, orphaned of any tradition of its own."²⁰⁸

The following is a case study of a historical process of silencing, depicting both political and cultural silencing of women. My approach builds on the extensive scholarship of historical and feminist writers in detailing the specific histories and experiences of extraordinary women's lives which have

206. Ibid. p. xviii

207. Dale Spender Women of Ideas. London: Pandora, 1982. p 11.

208. Adrienne Rich. On Lies, Secrets and Silence: selected Prose 1966-1978. New York W.W. Norton and London: Virago, 1979. pp. 11.

been previously (and recurrently, I might add) buried by the “tunnel vision” of phallogentric history and the fixedness of unitary ethnocultural purviews.

What I detail is not solely the uncovering (hence, unsilencing) of previously silenced women's lives. These are the texts of explication, with which I will unravel “the process and mechanics of burial” or silencing as a set of social procedures constructing forms of social silence, political and cultural silence, which are the constructs of the social fact of the devaluation and denegration of women across Western history.

The transhistorical/transcultural silencing of women under patriarchy has been a central subject of discourse in the field of women's studies since the 1960's. It is written that the wealth of common experience about being women in a particular place and time, and across places and times has been 'submerged'. As Spender (1990) points out, the founding texts of the most recent women's movement; Friedan's The Feminine Mystique (1963), Millett's Sexual Politics(1969), Greer's The Female Eunuch (1970), and many others were considered radical at that time by simply enunciating what gave way to “collective and visible (and audible) understandings”²⁰⁹ The surprise at unearthing such collective feelings toward defining “commonality” of concerns of women, and such intense desires toward autonomy and solving issues related specifically to women's lives brought forward further questioning as to what happened to women before, that is, why the lack of references, knowledge, ideas, agency from past experiences? A flood of research and writing ensued ²¹⁰, but with the mounting research and discov

209. Dale Spender, Women of Ideas London, Pandora, 1990. pp 2.

210. Leslie Tanner, ed. Voices from Women's Liberation, (1971) Elaine Showalter's Women's Liberation and Literature(1972), Wendy Martin's The

ery that indeed, women from the past shared similar concerns, were activists and fought the system resulted in the question as why women in the present were cut off from women in the past, that is, why the silence? Why the absence of woman's voices from history? How, for example, could a movement of intense pro-women's activities such as the one in 1911, as Spender (1990) describes²¹¹, could that knowledge of those activities be disappeared, or silenced *just 50 years after*? (One might add that it could also be possible that within a few years from now for women again will be repeating the wheel and re-asking that very same questions that Faludi poses²¹² in 1992.)

In the same vein, seventy (70) years prior to 1911, in 1850 and for 50 years before, an entire period is indicated by Spender as "The Silent Years". What Spender means is that not only are women's activities and writings silenced, but the silence is about the woman who are speaking and writing, their personas are erased from social recognition of their very agency at the same time they are speaking. What Spender refers to is not only public discrediting and other forms of "shamefulness" as punishment by powerful (usually male) dissenters, but the silencing also by "respectable" women upholding the norms of respectability, so that even the mere reference or thought of activist women created an automatic disavowal and with that, an erasure of acknowledgement on the part of women themselves. Therefore,

American Sisterhood: Writings of the Feminist Movement from Colonial Times to the Present (1972), Miriam Schneir's Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings (1972), Alice Rossi's The Feminist Papers: from Adams to de Beauvoir (1973).

211. Ibid. p.4. In 1911 21 regular feminist periodicals in Britain, a women's press, bookshop and bank run entirely by women,

212. Susan Faludi Backlash: The Undeclared War Against Women. New York, Crown Publishers, 1992.

the “silent years” refers to both a politically silenced group of activist women, and a culturally silenced public.

Paradoxically these “silent years” were the fertile years of pivotal women’s contributions to the progress of gaining basic rights for women in the United States, represented by Frances Wright (1795-1852), Harriet Martineau (1802-1876), Harriet Taylor (1807-1858), Margaret Fuller (1810-1850), Anna Jameson (1794-1860), Angelina (1805-1879) and Sarah Grimke (1792-1873), Mary Sommerville (1780-1872), and the flamboyant, George Eliot (1819-1880). Frances Wright, author²¹³, orator, educator, and freer and retrainer of former slaves was systematically accused of being so unfeminized and brash a woman that women’s rights advocated were called “Fanny Wrightists” derogatorily. Unfortunately one of her most exaggerated detractors was another woman (Frances Trollope) Harriet Martineau, a serious thinker, journalist, writer²¹⁴, and advocate of liberal divorce and uplifting the conditions of the female working classe, was labeled an old spinster and actively undermined, trivialized, and ousted from scientific and cultural recognition by Disraeli, Frazer and Empsom. Spender quotes an anonymous reviewer (male) who indicated that (Martineau) was neither a wife nor a mother, she had failed to fulfill woman’s natural role, and therefore had no natural right to demand²¹⁵ (*underlining mine*)

213. Frances Wright. Views of Society and Manners in America. London, 1821.

214. Harriet Martineau Illustrations of Political Economy. London, 1881.
“Conversations on Chemistry” 160,000 copies sold
(more than John Stuart Mill’s Principles of Political Economy (1848) (Spender p. 173)

215. Dale Spender Women and Ideas. p181. as per Pichanick, 1980, p. 100.

Harriet Taylor, a 20 year friend and intellectual associate²¹⁶ of John Stuart Mill is portrayed as a stupid, frigid, ogling woman by women as well as men of the period, as well as recent (female) critics²¹⁷

Margaret Fuller, called the "best literary critic", first editor of *Dial*, precursor of Florence Nightengale and Clara Barton in the Italian Revolution, foreign correspondent for the New York Tribune, and author²¹⁸, not only was maligned as an "arrogant old maid" and worse. Her writings were tampered with, "destroyed and defaced" by her editors, and blatantly rewritten by these so called "gatekeepers of knowledge"²¹⁹

Anna Jameson's biographer, Clara Thomas(1967) begins the preface to Jameson's biography with a lukewarm(?) quote from a male's testimony : "She was rather a compiler than a thinker, perhaps."²²⁰

Yet, again, like her feminist peers, Anna Jameson was a writer (Characteristics of Women(1832), Loves of the Poets (1829), Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada(1838)), a patroness for activist women, a sensational lecturer in literary and philanthropic circles in London, and organizer of the first periodical in the woman's movement. She was characterized

216. Ibid. "Enfranchisement of Women" (John Stuart Mills) is attributed by Alice Rossi to Taylor because of Taylors pamphlet (1849) on the same subject and published earlier.

217. Ibid p. 185.

218. Margaret Fuller. Woman in the Nineteenth Century. 1845. as noted in Spender p.197.

Summer on the Lakes.

219. Ibid. P 200.

220. Clara Thomas. Love and Work Enough: The Life of Anna Jameson. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1967. p. vii.

however by men of letters, as Spender points out, as ugly, and her records being that of “another disappointed woman”²²¹

Angelina Grimke´and Sarah Grimke´´were isolated first as young elite southern women, and later, as Quakers, yet began to discover their own silencing as women as they began to fight for self determination and freedom for slaves. The press, clergy and the public called them “deluded ladies”, or, “those fanatical women, the Misses Grimke´ “ especially after the publication of Angelina’s long pondered book “Appeal to the Christian Women of the South”(1836) and Sarah’s Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman (1838)²²² Even their employer, the future husband of Angelina, criticized the sisters focus on women’s rights as threatening to the integrity of the Anti-Slavery Movement. Women’s issues and rights were divisive issues to abolitionists, and, particularly to clergy involved in the anti-slavery movement. The Grimke´ sisters were great threats to the religious for they argued against the Church’s misogyny by reinterpreting scripture.²²³

Mary Somerville, a self learned mathematician, despite the disgust and roadblocks of her family, wrote several key scientific books of the period:: one on Pierre Laplace’s Mecanique celeste: The Mechanisms of the Heavens and one on Newton’s Principia, and in 1832 she was in rank among the foremost scientific writers of her time. Her work was a text in Cambridge, yet, she, as a woman, could not enter the college. Despite the fact that in

221. Ibid. p.214.

222. Sarah Grimke, (as Spender documents p221)begins her Letters by “women need to be emancipated from the “traditons of the men” for they have been constructed by men to reinforce their own power.

223. A Rossi, The Feminist Papers, New York Bantam Books, 1973. p 317. i.e., as per Sarah Grimke´´:” whether our brethern have defrauded us intentionally or unintentionally, the wrong we suffer is equally the same”

1832, when she published The Connection of the Physical Sciences, she was at the site of an observatory to sight the new comet, a moment she dreamed of all her life, yet was not allowed in the observatory, women were barred from such masculine science. As she aged she sharpened in scope and theorizing: at 89 years old, Somerville wrote Molecular and Microscopic Science, published in 1869, and many other scientific papers after that, thereby making a mockery of "conventional wisdom" regarding women's intellectual, particularly, scientific, inferiority, and of course, ageism, making a mockery of old women as useless crones. However, despite Mary Somerville's remarkable "self learned" accomplishments, her life has not been known, has been virtually erased, not even to women struggling with the sciences and mathematics seeking earnestly for role models.

George Eliot felt and acknowledged a sisterhood, particularly, with Margaret Fuller and Mary Wollstonecraft, because she did not see woman's problems as individual, but as collective and symptomatic of woman's social domination caused by patriarchy. Like other women writers, in order to retain some "respectability (read readers) she used a male pseudonym, plus the style and tone of writing acceptable to men, particularly elite "gatekeepers" of cultural literacy. points out that it is a too often used strategy of political silencing to "condemn a woman's personal life so that it removes the necessity to address her ideas"²²⁴ "Cajoling and hinting, tailoring arguments to suit the prejudices of the dominant group, masquerading as "feminine" to obtain a hearing, being interrupted and silenced, are demands that are made on women while they are subordinate. These are not means peculiar only to George Eliot"²²⁵ although Eliot has been constructed as the prototype

224. See # 50 p 241.

225. Ibid. p. 243.

of all such masculine masquerades.

Despite the key contributions of all of these women activists and writers, in 1855, only seven years after the Seneca Falls (1848) convention on women's rights, the women's movement had to be defended against accusations of failure. These accusations of failure were fortified by the previously described denunciations of creative, pro-rights women. The work of these women and even more so, women of color who have been routinely and consistently denied every access to genuine expression²²⁶ were silenced from public awareness, and expunged from any legitimacy.

All of their individual narratives, which must be only the published tip of the iceberg, did not influence some of the critical gatekeepers of culture when they said that feminism did not exist in the first half of the nineteenth century.²²⁷ For that matter, even today, there is a growing social amnesia among some groups as to the existence of a strong and influential woman's movement in the 20th century. Critics today announce that we are in the "post-post feminist" period. Women of the none elite, postmodernists, new historicists, deconstructionists, Marxists, African -Americans, deconstructionists, women of ethnic groups considered marginal "women with creativity find themselves virtually unknown...Wallace (1990) describes the plight of the black woman writer:

226. Michelle Wallace Invisibility Blues From Pop to Theory. New York: Verso, 1990. p 248.

227. See Dorothy Smith's article documenting: "A Peculiar Elipsing: Women's Exclusion from Man's Culture" *Woman's Studies Quarterly*. v1, # 4, 1978. pp 281-96.

(she)"is faced with an almost insurmountable communication problem: if she takes a scholarly or academic approach she will find herself virtually outside of language and without authority; she will find herself unable to say what she means 'universality', 'complementarity' or 'otherness', none of which, by itself, can describe the complex terms of the black female relationship to cultural production"²²⁸

How often now, for instance, do teachers of women's studies at a high school and college level come across young women who have no referent/ knowledge of the most recent wave of the "women's movement" which started in the 1960's?

" Now when I ponder the silences, the vocies that are not heard, the voices of those wounded and/or oppressed individuals who do not speak or write, I contemplate the acts of persecution, torture--terrorism that breaks spirits, that makes creativity impossible....."²²⁹

This is the first stage of an active process of political silencing, that is, denouncement with the real or supposed threat of punishment. The punishments detailed above can be characterized as an active assassination of character through the production of degrading, humiliation, devaluation and denegration of either the whole or aspects of the total person psychically and socially, in mind, in body and in gender. The punishments or denegrations serve to warn the population of women, who might *even* dream of emulating, mimicing, thinking or reading the ideas of their peers.

228. Ibid #65. pp 223.

229. bell hooks Talking Back, thinking feminist- thinking black Boston: South End Press, 1989. pp. 7.

These punishments come in the form of typical methodologies of terrorism and brainwashing,

“madness, not just physical abuse ,
was the punishment for too much
talk if you were female.”²³⁰

and other brutalizing techniques used traditionally to “correct” deviance, erroneous behaviors and simply, thinking.

With the active discrediting of the current woman’s movement (political or brutal silencing) initiated in the ‘60’s, we call this process a “backlash” as documented by Susan Faludi(1992)²³¹and others. This process is similar to all periods of active erasure of gains made in human rights; it is similar to the intermittent political and cultural process of banishing and delegitimizing the gains of social movements by competing ideologies, and political parties. More so, the history of “backlash, is but one component, i.e., the first stage, in the construction of a social amnesia which I call cultural silencing.

With the backlash, or in vernacular terms “the dissing” of an ideological position, comes a concomitant “erasure”, or silencing of the subject. The term “silencing” is used more specifically than the term erasure because erasure implies a voided subject, yet, with the wave theory of silencing, after and during the procedures of delegitimation, followed by devaluation (political silencing), a concomitant cultural amnesia or silencing is induced, not only by the devaluing of position, and the pain and humiliation concomitant with it, and the failure of defense of that position, but a self, or, group (social) induced amnesia occurs whereby, the position or parts of ideology are

230. Ibid . pp 7.

231. Ibid.

subsumed into a form of unconscious, a 'collective type of unconscious targeted in certain groups, not easily uncovered or pinpointed by the individual, or the population. The terms become unpopular, even for the group or individual espousing them, so that a protective, but fundamental distancing and selective inattending to the issue, or movement occurs psychically as a group avoidance behavior or amnesia, where even mere references or naming of the person, or point of view, produce an immediate level of non-identity.

As documented in historical narratives about women's lives, a key function in the process of disappearing and silencing is first to denigrate, disparage and, if possible, destroy the identity of the person or group by methods of character assassination (political or brutal silencing) so that the second, more "modern" level of cultural silencing evolves, that the knowledge of that person or idea or movement is self-repressed or neglected by the individual and group processes of selective inattention, amnesia, or denial of the negative information or impression of that person, idea or movement. Character assassination techniques have grown in sophistication since the 1960's where individual women were maligned.

This is the "don't rock the boat" stage so that contrary evidence either in the form of persons or artifacts (written, built, developed,) will be silenced and wiped from being encoded as credible knowledge bases, what attends to this is a socially constructed complicity of discourses designed to "blot out", working in the methodology of creating over-saturated noise bytes, that is, "white noise" overcoating dissenting evidence.

Despite different methodologies of social control, repression and erasure, the silence of women, both individual and as a group continues. The first

stage, political or brutal silencing is either physical brutality, neglect and abuse²³² or emotional abuse, mainly through the techniques of character attacks. The second stage is the active behavior of individuals and groups to forget, repress, deny "there is or never was any problem. This self amnesia is the most problematic aspect of gaining an understanding of how cultural silencing is constructed and enacted as process relations in women's behavior. It is easiest to understand women's cultural silence in an analogy with the abused child. Recently, a great deal of work has been done in understanding the abused relations with the abuser. According to Nietzsche (1886)²³³, Schreber (1903)²³⁴ (Niederland 1959a, 1959b, 1960, 1963), Miller (1991) Shengold (1989) Calef and Weinshel (1981), et al., the pattern is that the abused child who has gone through emotional or physical battering and is quiet (silent) about it (as in terrorized, as in political or brutal silencing) goes on to actually forget the painful incidents, but most importantly, splits off and isolates and **forgets** her hatred and fear of her abuser, to reconstruct a positive, even, loving attitude toward the self same abuser. (Orwell's "I love Big Brother") How this happens is a self and group protective process, for it is incommensurate for an entirely dependent person to identify another upon whom she is so totally in bondage, as a person/parent who

232. In the United States, 1990, one girl in four is a victim of male incest, one out of three women are raped, one half of married women are victims of violence.

233. F. Nietzsche Beyond Good and Evil In Philosophy of Nietzsche. New York: Modern Library, 1886 pp. 451

"I did that' says my memory. 'I could not have done that' says my pride, and remains inexorable. Eventually- the memory yields"

234. Judge Daniel Paul Schreber. Memoirs of My Nervous Illness. 1903. Ed J. McAlpine and R. Hunter. London Dawson, 1955.

{His memoirs were the subject of one of Freud's case histories (1911)}

will without doubt hurt, even kill her. Instead, the psychic and social process of amnesia is called forth. Marcuse spoke of this in terms of "surplus repression" In case of women as gender, the group historically has responded **as if** they has been politically or brutally silenced. This historical lack of memory of previous injustices, the wiping the slate clean each generation, has been a social amnesia induced for perceived purposes of protective coloration, i.e., acting en masse as feminized automatically²³⁵, as a normative social fact, which is a silent coersion of behavior in conditions without any visible means of threat. These actions are those of protection, much the same way, the abused child unconsciously forgets the real abuse levied at her person and psyche by the parent/abuser. Otherwise, it would not explain why women who **have not** been abused, politically silenced or repressed in overt ways, still continue to act, **as if** they were. The abused child analogy holds not well enough, but too well

Unsurprisingly, women continue to be constructed as the silent gender. I would submit that the very same forces, which on one hand, force a woman's hand in keeping herself silent, also enforce at the same time, the maintenance and servicing of that silence as social expectation of women, and often enforced by women as primary socializers. This is done by linking women's self silence (not speaking out for themselves) with forms of ineptitude, i.e., that "dizzy", "wacko" "chicken headed" woman, etc. What I refer to is the constructed cultural aspect of the silencing of women. The most im

235. What is problematic about "acting feminized automatically" for many women is that frequently acting feminized produces no practical material or spiritual gains, in fact, feminized behavior has been documented to produce heightened conditions of danger, risks of rape, battering and a lowered window of employment, emotional and group opportunity.

portant element of silencing of women is the self silencing of a woman's naturalness, i.e., her specific body smells, her tendency to privilege touch over the visual, her physical endurance, her creativity, in the aims of promoting an artificially constructed (masculinized or prescribed femininity. Women in their primary role as socializers in socialization uphold femininity through a series of rules and warnings to young girls about their behavior as differing from boys. "

This cultural silencing, I might remind you has a darker reinforcer, that is, it's etiology in political silencing, i.e., the threat of force or punishment. Behind any enjoiner for "breaking the silence" is the thread of force or punishment by the dominant gender for the social crime of disequilibrating gender relations.

From the point of view of a woman activist experientially described by Brodribb in her critique of Postmodernity:

"The way to myself and other women is blocked by this male icon as a point of reference, for reverence. And I have to make arguments which sound extravagant to my ears, that women exist. That women are sensible. Only knowledge of the male body and male thought is considered essential, the female is unessential, the female is an essentialist. And to contradict this, to speak against masculine culture is so incultured. The Master's of discourse have also said that it requires a great deal of sophistication to speak like a woman, clearly it's best left to men. Their texts play with and parade a hysterical femininity, in our best interests of course, to help us transcend the category of woman we somehow got into, and the neurotic idea that we can tell the truth.-----"Talking, writing, telling stories out of school: this is what we are forbidden"²³⁶

236. Somer Brodribb. Nothing Mat(t)ers: A Feminist Critique of the

The problem of "voice" is problematized in even in libertatory agendas: Even the "feminine", the "I" defined by liberated women reads that "I, woman, invent, enact, and empower in "our" speech, our practice, our collective quest for a redefinition of the status of all women" ²³⁷

Braidotti, in line with de Lauretis's formulation, describes the speaking stance of feminism not as an ideological, but an epistemological position.

"Speaking 'as a feminist woman' does not refer to one dogmatic framework but rather to a knowledge of interrelated questions that play on different layers, registers, and levels of the self.

Feminisms attempt to regain "voice" and come "out of the silence" of the lost, of the subordinate of the powerless. To be sure women's felt experience is to feel unheard even if her actions, speech or behavior is socially encoded as activity which falls into the realm of the powerful. This felt experience of woman's power, competency, feeling, intelligence, desire, ideas, spirituality and very being as "being silenced" virtually calls out to the effects, and silence being the epiphenomenon, of the externals of social control, socialization and the construction of gender. As a result, women are rendered "deaf and dumb" in culture, and culture, in turn, is fabricated to maintain the illusion in the interests of the status quo. Women are metaphorized as deaf because they do not learn the effectiveness, efficiency, competency and acceptability of masculinization, dumb, because even if they absorbed the hegemonic principle, they would be "voiceless" to speak it. This is the dominant usage of silence when referring to women.

Postmodern. North Melbourne, Spinifex Press, 1992. pxviii.

237. Rosi Braidotti "The Politics of Ontological Difference" Between Feminism and Psychoanalysis, Teresa Brennan, ed., London, Routledge, 1989. p. 102.

Each position stresses the usage of silence both as epiphenomenon and metaphor in the service of oppression (brutal silencing) and repression (cultural silencing) of women. Each position reflects what I call the medicalization or disease model of silence used as a negative, a mechanism to "keep women down", a tool for the continuance of in Irigaray's terms "more of the economy of the same" {phallocracy}

As I have mentioned earlier, there are divergent meanings and oppositional valences placed on silence depending upon the different cultural-historical contexts.

“ How can I say it? That we are women from the start.

That we don't have to be turned into women by them. That that has already happened, without their efforts. And that their history, their stories, constitute the locus of our displacement. It's not that we have a territory of our own; but their fatherland, family, home, discourse, imprison us in closed spaces where we cannot keep on moving, living as ourselves.

Their properties are our exile. their enclosures, the death of our love. Their words, the gag upon our lips.....”²³⁸

All feminisms come to agreement on the rejection of the masculinist subject in history as the foundation to all truth and knowledge.

“Male rule oppresses women in a near seamless historical and global patriarchal regime”²³⁹

238. Luce Irigaray. Ce Sexe Qui N'en Est Pas Un. Ithica, Cornell University Press, 1985. pp. 212-13.

239. Carmen Luke and Jennifer Gore Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy New York: Routledge, 1992. pp 7.

Textual/Con-textual Silences
Origins, Organic Silences and the Originary

"It is not difference which immobilizes us; but silence
 And there are so many silences to be broken"²⁴⁰

Audre Lorde 1984

The implicit meaning of "woman" has contained the referent "silent or silenced" for as long as woman is regarded "Other". As "Other", woman is "not man", or other than man, and depending on historical contexts is considered in valences which encode woman as "less than man" or "abnormal" (man being solely normal) to "more pure," "more perfect", "more moral", "more sanctified" than (lowly) man. Things in a rationalist positivist frame are either active/passive/ subject/object, phallic/oral, masculine/ feminine, good/bad, right/wrong, voice/ silence and so on, resulting in privileging and thusly empowering the first term while essentializing all terms. Such essentialist and non-discursive tagging of woman (in the categories of passive, object orally feminized, bad and wrong) serves the purpose of rendering woman as unreal, and devoid of variations whether it be considering woman as lowly and unfit to the idealized supernatural and perfect. The dualities fit rationalist thinking to the core, and only support those boring structures upholding phallocratic ideologies. As Ellsworth has noted "the violence of rationalism (is) against its Others" ²⁴¹

240. Audre Lorde Sister Outsider. New York: Crossing Press, 1984pp. 44.

241. Elizabeth Ellsworth "Why Doesn't This Feel Empowering?" Working Through the Repressive Myths of Critical Pedagogy" Feminisms and Critical

Part of the allure of woman in the traditionalist lore is the secrecy and hiddenness, the idea that the dualistic extremes (wife/mistress) are teasing fronts which hide a larger secret, a secret kept in silence by those very dualistic structures. The ruse of dualism provides a handy front to expedient sexist thinking, but more so, to continuing the tease, that there is something "hidden", behind, some power which calls forth excitement, tension, suspense. Such is the production of seduction and the power of what we call the difference between the sexes. All of the rationalist based discourses are premised on the individualistic, fixed male self, the "solid citizen" identity and silence the more murky conceptualizations of shifting identities, unconscious processes, competing desires, contradictions in self images, and unfixed and unsatisfied nature of human endeavors. It is "uncomfortable" to acknowledge life as a process, which necessarily means that things and selves are as Belsey comments, (1980) "perpetually in construction, perpetually contradictory, perpetually open to change" Silence keeps the secret of Kant's "things at the same time, are and are not the same."²⁴²

The referents referring to woman and silence really talk about one and the same. The construction of deconstruction virtually depends upon the analysis and terms of articulation with woman as essence--woman as silence--woman as organic--woman as absence--the "not I", the "void", the

Pedagogy. Carmen Luke and Jennifer Gore, eds., New York, Routledge, 1992. p 96.

242. C. Belsey, Critical Practice. London, Methuen. 1980. p132.

unsaid subjectless subject, the nonidentifiable, the nonidentical, the nondual, what the fathers discourse covers up, what is silenced is woman's amnesiac acting out of man's contraphobic projects, projections and productions of her desire.

The Freudian construction of the female Oedipus complex takes account of biological destiny, that is, the "accomplished fact of castration"²⁴³ surrounded by a silent denial. The female castration removes the desire for regaining one's own origin (the same and symbolic with the mother)-- "hence, the hole, the lack, the fault, the "castration" that greets the little girl as she enters as a subject into the representative system"²⁴⁴ ---the motherly role she plays, covers up the fact she is torn to pieces. Fragments of women, of discourse, of silences, of blanks that are still immaculate"²⁴⁵

"It is Nature who now fuses for him with that glass enclosure, that spangled sepulcher, from which- imaginary and therefore absent- she is unable to articulate her difference. Thus she allows herself to be consumed again for new speculations, or thrown away as unfit for consumption. *Without saying a word*"²⁴⁶ (*Italics mine*)

The sense of a secret, silent absence typified in the negative and empty referents represent a radical devalorizations of the Freudian repressed origin, or beginning, or primary attachment to the mother. What is considered the "void", is the lack of mimesis of the young girls desire for origin. In Freudian terms this the separation and devalorization of the

243. Ibid. pp 221.

244. Ibid. pp 232.

245. Ibid.

246. Luce Irigaray. Speculum of the Other Woman. Gillian C. Gill, trans. Ithica, Cornell University Press, 1985. p.228.

mother and the female sex, in favor of replacing original desire (for the mother) with desire for the father. Women silence their painful, paralyzing contradictory impulses and desires in objectless, nameless guilt and carry the evidence in their bodies in illness, with hysteria, hyperanesthesia, masochism, a variety of psychosomatic ailments, etc.

(Even the founder of the discipline, Freud, can be identified as a key cultural figure contributing to the silencing of women's material experiences:

They don't want to hear our stories: listening to women's stories of incest and rape almost cost Sigmund Freud his career before he decided that these were simply female fantasies of desire for the father. He probed women's unconscious and denied our reality²⁴⁷: his theory of human psyche and sexuality is an act of fear and betrayal. And he told us: it didn't happen, you made it up, you wanted it, you brought it on yourself.

What is the Master Narrative? That we can't tell the truth, that we can't tell the difference, between our rights and their wrongs. We can't tell."²⁴⁸)

Irigaray criticizes Freud's analysis of the Oedipal conflict and fear of castration because *the Mother never speaks*; she is marginalized. Her experience of desire is *never voiced*; we never understand her sexual drama, although she is the object of desire for both the boy and the girl."²⁴⁹ (*italics mine*)

247. Somer Brodribb Nothing Mat(t)ers: A Feminist Critique of Postmodernism. North Melbourne, Spinefix Press, 1992pp. xviii

248. Ibid p. xviii.

249. Arleen B. Dallery "The Politics of Writing the Body" in Gender/ Body/ Knowledge Alison M. Jaggar and Susan R. Bordo, editors. New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1989, p.57.

" It is striking to note the degree to which Freud holds the mother responsible for both the awakening and the suppression of sexual life."²⁵⁰

Legitimated discourses set in languages of rationalism, logocentrism and requisite dualities are ways patriarchal culture seeks to silence and repress the primordial memory of fusion with and later separation from the maternal body. For the erotogeneity of woman's body, its multiple sex organs, is repressed in the development of symbolic languages mentioned above because there is *no one to speak it. (italics mine)* Because there is no positive reading of woman's soma, Freud never analyzed (or heard) a "feminine voice" --therefore the *silent* girl in theory seeks only a penis- substitute for her desire; in this respect she is called a "partial man", the woman in her silenced. Only in feminist theory, particularly that of Cixous ²⁵¹and Irigaray has the speaking woman's body broken the symbolic theoretical seal and has the voice and origin of woman come out of silence.

Irigaray's thesis is that woman's relationship with her origin is silenced, cancelled, as well as her relationship with her mother and her sex which is "deemed to be on the surface", secondary"²⁴¹ Mother/daughter relationships "deemed to be on the surface", were not originally that way, but have been disrupted and reduced to mere characters due to the politics of matricide. This is the silence of a taboo broken. This is the source of silence between women. This, according to Blaise

250. Luce Irigaray Speculum of the Other Woman. Ithica, Cornell University Press, 1985. p 61

251. H. Cixous "Women seizing the occasion to speak, hence her shattering entry into history" "The Laugh of the Medusa" K. Cohen and P. Cohen, trans, in New French Feminisms. E. Marks and I. de Courtivon, eds., New York, Schocken, 1981 pp. 249-50.

(1988), is the source of current divisions, impasses, betrayals and violent denunciations among women. The destruction of the maternal effects the sexual identities of women, both psychically, symbolically and politically. Blaise has theorized that the original murder of the mother by her sons has destroyed the memory of origin, as well as set the stage for the continuous devaluing of the female, by the male, but also by women against themselves, as in a massive machosism, throughout history.²⁵² "To possess the mother, man destroyed the woman; to possess the daughter, he destroyed the mother"²⁵³In Lacanian terms woman has "forclosed", that is, woman has silenced her libinal economy, her desires whenever they differ from the male projected reflected auto-representations. Lacan assures the rule of the law of the phallus, wherein women cannot speak. Instead, Lacan speaks in her place. Taking her body, taking her mind, and taking even her image is Lacan's narcissistic solution to the problem of the Other. This foreclosure insures what Irigaray call the continuation of the "economy of sameness".

That something must be held "in silence", that something which is suppressed, withheld, or erased from the social contexts is a matter of contention between theorists, for it may be the identity of woman herself, it may be her own thinking, feeling, being (her own voice), or it may be, all of the above, plus, as Irigaray theorizes, it is the fact of origin and of feminine pleasure itself.

252. Suzanne Blaise. "The Theft of Origins, or the Murder of the Mother" On Communication Between Women. Paris, self published. 1988.

253. Ibid. p. 10.

With respect to origin:

‘ Eclipse of the mother, of the place of (be) coming, whose non-representation or even disavowal upholds the absolute being attributed to the father”²⁵⁴

“The power of the father must surplant that of the mother if order is to be maintained”²⁵⁵

With respect to pleasure:

“ Feminine pleasure has to remain inarticulate in language in its own language, if it is not to threaten the underpinnings of logical operations. And so what is most strictly forbidden to women today is that they should attempt to express their own pleasure.”²⁵⁶

254. Ibid p 307.

255. Ibid p. 307

256. Ibid. p 77.

Brodrigg's (1992) thesis in Nothing Mat(t)ers is that the postmodern is but another instance, continuing on from modernism, of phallocratic rule with its continuing patriarchal linguistic agenda²⁵⁷, descended from Cardinal Richelieu of the Academie Francaise of 1635. It is Brodrigg's contention that "postmodernism is a masculine ideology based on a notion of consciousness as hostile, and an epistemology of negation which is one of separation, discontinuity and dismemberment."²⁵⁸ In fact, Gallop goes further to say that postmodernism "dephallicizes modernism so men can claim to be current. If modernism..... is itself a defense against feminism and the rise of women writers, postmodernism is a more subtle defense, erected when modernism would no longer hold."²⁵⁹ Postmodernism, for Brodrigg, represents the ultimate in torture (the separation of the mind from the body) in that it inacts the ritual murdering of the mother through the violent destruction of the female subject and the continued silencing and repression of all agency, autonomy and activism of women. Part of the reasoning for moving from modernist to postmodern positions is the extreme threat to male theory and prestige that feminism has posed. Yet, Postmodernism has its privileged functions, i.e., that of purging feminism of all enlightenment, essentialist, absolutist and foundationalist tendencies. Why the fear of leaving male-only oriented theorizing for an inclusion of thinging and theorizing women expresses the fear of male theory being supplanted, i.e., silenced by feminism.

Marguerite Duras texts actively signify silence. She is the emblematic writer of, in and by silence:

257. Implicit in the "patriarchal linguistic agenda is the creation of a grammar which would correct women. (Brodrigg, p. xvi)

258. Ibid. p 19.

259. Jane Gallop Thinking Through the Body. New York, Columbia University Press, 1988 p. 100

"{...} for Marguerite Duras there is an absolute revalorization of silence{....}
Silence is *militant*, feminine passivity is the greatest force of the movement, 'inaugural of a feminine politics' ²⁶⁰

The Question of "Breaking the Silence"

The Modern and to "come out of silence"

The Postmodern agenda of errasure, indeterminacy and abandonment of the subject

The paradox of the "talkative sex" "breaking their silence"

When women are keeping quiet are they losing their agency?

Is there a way you can be deprived of agency

Yes, by putting down, indulging, patronizing to speak without making a hole in social, i.e. gaining attention

Silence has evolved into the master discourse of women across the ages. It has enveloped the social and personal lives of women and has been enforced as a component of socialization into the proper feminine as a matter of course.

The number is larger than appears on the surface, for the fear of public ridicule, and the loss of private favors from those who shelter, feed and clothe them, withholds many from declaring their opinions and demanding their rights.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton,
Susan B. Anthony,
Matilda Joselyn Gage

260. Christiane Makward "Structures du silence/ du dire: Marguerite Duras/Helene Cixous" Poetique 35 (September, 1978), p 317

1881²⁶¹

Because of this, each wave of feminist social movements and each individual heroine to feminism must first “break the silence” of women in order to establish a gain, or change in the repressive status quo for women within Western patriarchal structures. The history of “breaking the silence” is the history of the entire feminist movement, as it is similarly of every revolutionary movement. For, in order to break the silence, there lies an implicit assumption that something in the silence is valuable or dangerous enough to be suppressed (political silence) or repressed.(cultural silence). The mechanism for creating silence in women:

“ Words begin to fail her. She senses something *remains to be said* that resists all speech, that can at best be stammered out. All the words are weak, worn out, unfit to translate anything sensibly. For it is no longer a matter of longing for some determinable attribute, some mode of essence, some face of prescence. What is expected is neither a *this* or a *that*, not a *here* any more than a *there*. No being, no places are designated. So the best plan is to abstain from all discourse, to keep quiet, or else utter only a sound so inarticulate that it barely forms a *song*.”

261. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joselyn Gage. History of Woman Suffrage, vol 1, 1881.

Laurence writes of silence as a ritual for truth in novels. Woolf valued silence and was the first to actively employ the techniques for the description of women's silences as integral to their communication and identity. She "practiced " silence rather than speech.

"I have trained myself to silence"²⁶²

Not only did she train herself to silence, but felt women's lives were lived in a "zone" of silence. Because of this, each wave of feminist social movements and each individual heroine to feminism must first "break the silence" of women in order to establish a gain, or change in the repressive status quo for women within Western patriarchal structures. The history of "breaking the silence" is the history of the entire feminist movement, as it is similarly of every revolutionary movement. For, in order to break the silence, there lies an implicit assumption that something in the silence is valuable or dangerous enough to be suppressed (political silence) or repressed.(cultural silence).

262. Patricia Ondaatje Laurence. The Reading of Silence: Virginia Woolf in the English Tradition. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1991. pp 7.

Identity Silenced

The paradox of the "talkative sex" "breaking their silence"

Need a conceptual space for difference in subject locatio, identity and knowledges

Culture has no space for women yet women create elements of culture. The secret is what is created by women is appropriated and renamed by the dominant culture as its own . The standards of the dominant culture do not reflect womens contribution as a transcendental genre, as origin. What is silenced is consciousness, is awareness, is continuity. The silence is the silence of denying creativity, of origin of a different genre which gives man birth. What is silenced is that the "other" does not fit within the culture defined as patriarchy, as dominant, as real. "For centuries, at least in the so-called Western tradition, that transcendency has seldom been recognized as such"²⁶³ What is silenced and reburied under processes of denial, of repression, is that woman as other , as a different genre, is Inappropriable. That is the secret which is silenced which cannot surface. It cannot surface in this economy of sameness for if it would become acknowledged, named, legitimated by that different genre, it would render the world, the standards, ideals, truths, discourses and dominant ideology, as inoperable.

Cultural silence is the silence about the secret which is silenced that there is no formal culture which contains that which is woman The official story is that women are included in the culture if coded in two categories , as successfully feminized, i.e., successfully culturally silenced, or only if imitating men in terms of behaving successfully masculinized.

263. See # 50 pp. 1.

Cultural silence is co-preaching. It is ratifying the official culture by the people it was designed to oppress. The subjugated ratify this bad idea of a culture which excludes their own legitimacy in order to deny their repressed fury which might destroy that same world which reproduces their own discontent and misery. Women cooperate in not identifying or naming this process in order to protect themselves.

Just as we have already seen, the division in social silence between brutal silencing which represents coercion from the outside, and cultural silencing which represents participatory actions from the group, or the "inside" to repress, bury or obliterate the issue of women and silence divides along these lines. First of all, there is the direct coercive silence of patriarchy or the male order of power over the past 3000 years which sets into societies somewhat in the order of a social fact. This order of power is produced through violence or the threat of punishment i.e., orders and prohibitions. Then, there is women's cultural, or self generated silencing which can be looked at as as a kind of adaptive response to patriarchy./ unequal power relations. It originates from within the silenced group of women, the purpose of which is to avoid the external experience and outcomes of political or brutal silencing (the tortures and beatings and external societal humiliations which come from being visibly dominated) but also to avoid the inner pain and sense of loss experienced on an inner psychic and group identification basis (the disgrace of being unfit, unwhole, unable to defend against domination). Cultural silencing or (self silencing through the mass repression required in practices of social control, or socialization) is directly implicated in

the social construction of female identity, and in particular, the production of "what is considered feminine in a particular society" The sense of pain and loss comes from the protective falacies involved in the construction of "femininity" the lies about what womens bodies, lies, minds, desires, hopes are. The pain or loss can be so unbearable that the consciousness of truth²⁶⁴ of knowing about the reality of self The feminists truth-knowledge that body minds, history, achievements must to be obliterated for the sake of mental survival in a world ruled by political silencing. This kind of repression is analagous to "sour grapes"; "I never really wanted to go anyway." Women's expressive self failures are forms of "sour grapes" The "sour grapes" responses are related to the blocked awareness of past political or brutal coercion in order to avoid the awareness of past free oneself out of terror of enslavement mentality mental games on an individual and group basis must be played (but out of awareness)

Cixous (1981) speaks about women and identity:

" the moment women open their mouths-women more often than men- they are immediately asked whose name and from what theoretical standpoint they are speaking, who is their master and where are they coming from; they have, in short, to salute.....and to show their identity papers"²⁶⁵

264. Consciousness of that "truth" is reflected today for Caucasian women in the US and Europe in the many feminist tracts, manuals and research regarding the felt experience of women's lives an example being the self help manual written as a collective Our Bodies Our Selves

265. Helene Cixous "Castration or decapitation?" Signs, 7(1) 1981. p 51

Silent Agency/ Silencing Agency
Reception Theory and Issues of Agency

The question of silence and woman is paradoxical contradictory.. I feel it is helpful not to be swept away in clouds of reactivity testifying against the real and outrageous outrages represented within traditional codes. I so it myself it is easy to be automatic and reflexive thereby contributing to the "broken record" of rage, however just. Instead I have turned toward trying to look into the mechanisms and social potency of the powerful effects caused by silences in the social. In line with the forms of social silence I continue to use the categories of political or brutal silencing for much of the maintenance of patriarchal relations and from which women "break or emerge or come out of silence"

In traditional terms, to be a woman is to be silent or in Heideggerian terms "standing" in silence. And in that traditional silence, women are characterized typically dicotomous extremes, either as blissful sexless saints or as waifs or mothers suffering in silence waiting to be saved. Literature is stuffed full of the silently suffering or wasted heroine, for in death, and in particular, the fate of sacrificial death, which is the final silence, women finally achieve their "ultimate excess" in overkill, if you will, of a life of silencing. Historically, the precedent of the final silence, after periods of being kept in silence, began in the cult of Dionysus with the murder of the mother. In modern terms, to become "woman" is to "break out of (traditional) silence(s)", to get a la Virginia Woolf "A Room of One's Own" either psychically or locationally and to hammer out all the repressed and denied observations and passions of woman's experiences.

Silence has evolved into the master discourse of women across the ages. It has enveloped the social and personal lives of women and has been enforced as a component of socialization into the proper feminine as a matter of course.

The number is larger than appears on the surface, for the fear of public ridicule, and the loss of private favors from those who shelter, feed and clothe them, withholds many from declaring their opinions and demanding their rights.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton,
Susan B. Anthony,
Matilda Joselyn Gage
1881²⁶⁶

266. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joselyn Gage. History of Woman Suffrage, vol 1, 1881.

Chapter VIII

MEDICAL SILENCES

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Introduction: Medical Silences

So far we have studied the general nature of social silence and its particular relevance to women. Women characteristically represent a disenfranchised and power starved group. We have seen their social silencing as a part of their exploitation and subjugation. However, we are now compelled to deal with the silence of the powerful: elite silence, and particularly, the case of medicine. The silence of elites is differently motivated from that of deprived groups. but it is social silence all the same. And we shall find in it the same distinctions between political silence involving real restraint and punishment, and cultural silence embodying unacknowledged repression of information and relations.

Although we deal with medicine, we deal with it as a paradigm of elite social silences. The silencing of medicine is mirrored in the silencing of politicians, generals, journalists, scientists and all kinds of technocrats, those who possess power and whose power is related to knowledge.

One might ask "what makes elite silencing different from the silencing of the power starved?" First and foremost: even the political silencing, the real restraint and coercion, originates within the group rather than outside. Secondly, the purpose of elite silencing is the preservation of the elite. This is accomplished in two ways: first by concealment of what is unsavory or scandalous, including concealing failures or errors or even any kind of negative information. Second, is keeping the leakage of expert or specialized knowledge at a minimum so as to maintain the monopoly on expert/specialized knowledge the group or profession has. That knowledge/power monop

oly is the very lifeblood of keeping a profession an elite profession, and is inseparable from a silence-power monopoly.

We saw in the last Chapter on Women and Silence, dealing with the question of abuse, that cultural silence is intimately connected with shame. This was made clear in the case of women where there is a disposition for all the members of a group to behave as if they all were victims of abuse, to mimic the characteristic victim abused role.

But, how is it that the cultural silencing of an elite group can be shame based? The answer is by their inability to live up to the myth of superhumanity which has grown up around their collective body or profession.

It is not only the utility of the services and knowledges they provide which makes these elites so powerful, it is rather, the universal belief that they are not ordinary mortals, that they are more committed, that they have more energy and dedication, that they know more, and can further assimilate more and that these qualities inhere in each member of their fraternity.

If a doctor, a politician, a journalist, a general or scientist is conscientious they cannot escape be made continually aware of their own failure rate²⁶⁷. Consequently, the falsity (or disortion) of their public image which, although it benefits them, simultaneously haunts and mocks them, reminding them of their own fallible humanity. The following are methods of living down this contradiction collectively:

267. For a classic study of physican error or "failure rates", and the communication process surrounding them, see Marianne A. Paget The Unity of Mistakes: A Phenomenological Interpretation of Medical Work. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988.

1. The creation of “**gentlemen’s agreements**” which (unspoken agreements) by which members spare each other ²⁶⁸. (Cultural silence)
2. **Real delusions of the group** wherein each member supports each other.
(Malpractice is all the lawyers fault)
3. **Lacunae**. Where issues or information drops out of consciousness without fraud and without awareness. Similar to the “blackouts” of an alcoholic losing consciousness
(A professional example is studying the obvious, while not requiring proof.)

These characteristics correspond to the 1971 article “Groupthink” by Janis²⁶⁹:

“Above all , there are numerous indications pointing to the development of group norms that bolster morale at the expense of critical thinking”

“The more amiability and esprit de corps there is among the members of a policy-making ingroup, the greater the danger that independent critical thinking will be replaced by groupthink, which is likely to result in irrational and dehumanizing actions directed against outgroups.”

“As we see, victims of groupthink ignore warnings; they also collectively construct rationalizations in order to discount warnings and other forms of negative

268. Ibid. Paget’s book cites numerous examples.

269. Irving L. Janis. “Groupthink” *Psychology Today*, 1971 pp .97-101.

feedback that, taken seriously, might lead the group members to reconsider their assumptions each time they recommit themselves to past decisions.”

“ Victims of groupthink believe unquestioningly in the inherent morality of their ingroup; this belief inclines the members to ignore the ethical or moral consequences of their decisions”

“ victims of groupthink apply direct pressure to any individual who momentarily expresses doubts about any of the group’s shared illusions or who questions the validity of the arguments supporting a policy alternative favored by the majority. This gambit reinforces the concurrence-seeking norm that loyal members are expected to maintain.”

“ Victims of groupthink avoid deviating from what appears to be group consensus; they keep *silent* about their misgivings and *even minimize to themselves* the importance of their doubts”
(*italics and underlining mine*)

Janis is writing about silence without using the term. What he is describing in 1971 as group behavior of people involved in the inner circles of government, I am attempting to generalize in 1993 as part of the nature of the cultural silence of elites. Further, I believe that these characteristics can be seen in the upcoming Chapter as being relevant to medicine and could be seen with future research as being relevant to all elite behavior.

From an institutional perspective, silence can be seen to be a mechanism influential to the shifting of power relations and the construction and maintenance of systems of authority and status. All of medicine is changing. The power relations in medicine are constantly shifting and the field is full of uncertainty. In order to understand something about this uncertainty, we must address the silence in medicine. Social silence directly impacts clinical delivery patterns and other modes of health care provision.

Currently, we are undergoing massive shifts and dislocations in the structure of the delivery of health care. The traditional private practice entrepreneurial model is swiftly but silently being transformed into massive, so far, unsystemized conglomerations which market "managed" and "maintained" care (HMO's or health care maintenance organizations) . What is ironic about these new methods of health care delivery is that for optimum management, or maintenance, with the least cost, (i.e., the most efficient care) the patient should be "healthy", that is, without illness. The formula of efficiency for group practices under the health maintenance model has to do with maintaining the overwhelming majority of clients as healthy contributors, and minimizing the number of truly (and expensively) sick. This requires a certain silencing. And this social silence is predominantly in the cultural silencing form.

Cultural silencing can be evident in interpersonal relations between physician and patient, for example, and, it can also influence the overall structural and procedural aspects of the institution of medicine. Physicians have scarcely registered the relabeling process promogated by insurers and the government in that they are lumped not as separate entities as "a doc

tor, a physican or a professional"²⁷⁰, but as a *health care provider* , one among many. Dr David A Worth comments:

“ It is easy to regulate *providers* but more difficult to regulate docotrs, as people have a mental picture of their own doctor's care.”²⁷¹

With the labeling and relabeling process, the death toll of high status has rung (at least once). According to Safire (1993)

“This is just one step away from limiting what they say and depriving them of their ability to make professional decisions”²⁷²

Once, a profession gets restrained in language and function, it loses status. But as that profession loses status, it loses the ability to control silences. In this case, the silencing which is necessary to maintain the physican's role of infallibiity, in fact, falling more and more under regulation and surveillance, is on the verge of breaking up. And with this breaking of the silence of the public trust, the discourse and language are changing.

Cultural silence is also evident in the ironic predicament of medical care policy in that it must be stocked by the healthy.i.e., the best and largest enrollments for it must be to the healthy (those who by definition, don't need to utilize it.

270. William Safire “Health Care Provider, Heal Thyself” On Language New York Times April 11, 1993.pp. 12.

271. Ibid.

272. Ibid.

Other ironies and inconsistencies exist in the outcomes and consequences felt by the medical practitioner and the medical consumer. What is remarkable at this moment is that both the medical practitioner and the medical consumer continue to practice and react as if the “cat has not been let out of the bag”, i.e. nothing is really changing in medicine, ignoring shifts of magnitude in physician occupational status, of revaluation of different occupations providing care (such as nurses and physicians assistants,) of the status of the appearance of Emergency Medical Systems as first line care givers, of the growing proportion of our U.S. population requiring chronic and maintenance care, rather than emergency care . Concomitant with these macro institutional shifts between types of delivery systems, is a concurrent shift in status and power within the medical professions, and particularly that of the physician. What we witness in this period is the active process of destatisfying the key holder of power in the medical establishment, the physician.

This approach in this thesis, is both top down from a macro-perspective, looking at structural aspects, and bottom up from a micro_perspective, looking at evidence from case studies. The macroanalysis reports a slow but sure generation of a structural shift in professional occupations with the potential effects of the reconfiguring professions and with that, a reordering of social position within the hierarchy. This formation of newly competing professional occupational groups serves as an example of the potency of social silences evoking structural changes within medicine. To date, there is no prognostication on the results of these shifts and transmutations as to their potential for creating social disruption, discontinuities, and breaks in the delivery of care in the field.

On a micro basis, silence plays a role in direct functional aspects of health care delivery, particularly in usages of “codes of silence” as communication paradigm between the physician and the patient, the physician and the family, the physician and the agency, and intramurally, between physician and staff, and physician and physician.

What is happening with the use of terms such as “health care providers” the relative statuses in the health care profession are being changed and realigned. The physician role is collapsed into that general term. This, and other moves seem to constitute a demotion of status and power of the physician into a kind of “primus inter pares” relationship to other medical personnel.

What we are experiencing with this issue, is very material in effecting the knowledge/power relations in medicine. That is, the social silence in medicine. The following sections will talk about the history of the development of silence in medicine up until this point.

Medicine, Silence and the Sacred:

"The present state of the world and the whole of life is diseased. If I were a doctor and were asked for my advice, I should reply: Create Silence! Bring men to silence. The word of God cannot be heard in the noisy world of today. And even if it were blazoned forth with all the panoply of noise so it could be heard in the midst of all the other noise, then it would no longer be the word of God. Therefore create silence."²⁷³

Kierkegaard

Today, Kierkegaard's plea to remedy the world's dis-eases, illnesses and social problems by creating the physican as priestly caste seems outdated. Yet, is it so? Kierkegaard summons the physican priest to call to the Gods to restore reflective peace, e.g. "harmony", which he equates with a notion of the sacred. Since reflection is necessary for truth, and a state of noise precludes truth, the answer is of course, to "create silence." This reflective peace Kierkegaard construes is composed of both God and silence. In silence, which is Godly, then, truth will arise, and the "dis-eased" state of the world will be cured. Kierkegaard thusly refers to what I categorize as "organic or sacred" silences as the medicinal prescribed for the mental, physical, and environmental health of the world. To recap from earlier descriptions in Part I of this thesis:

organic silence is that silence which arises out of a lapsing

273. Soren Abye Kierkegaard Sickness Unto Death. 1844. pp 1251

or failure of discourse; it results from the natural inadequacy of language.²⁷⁴

Shot through this text is the idea of an earlier, more integral social sense of healthy care-taking that is lost. The loss is that of reflective silence. It is the loss of the moral and ethical basis for a society with a sense of the "sacred." Medicine becomes a moral enterprise, and in every society, medicine, does as religion used to: define and label that which is good, that which is proper, what can be expected, that which is legitimate and illegitimate. Medicine also, as a moral enterprise, has the means and the power to "look the other way", i.e., refuse the social recognition of pain, of a diagnosis, a state of mind or a behavior, of a condition, or a social problem.

Consider the shifting sands of societal power: it is not the religious, but the medical profession which was chosen by society to evoke and transform the diseased and unwhole society to one of harmony, equilibrium and well being as in Kierkegaard's example. This has been reflected in the practices of modernity in the 19th century caught in the throes of the germ theory, sacrificing all to the goals of greater scientific adequacy and the perfection of progress.

Organic silence, includes the "post" verbal as referred to in Kierkegaard's quote. The post verbal (or beyond the Word) is a state where language has been bypassed and is treated as "karma", as a religious or mystical phenomenon. It has the power of the transcendental and the mystic. It is mysterious but evident.

274. Part I Taxonomy of Silence. pp. 31.

Kierkegaard implies we have “lost” something, as Heidegger also referred to a absence, the unsaid, (silence) the “loss”, the obsolescence of Being through “nothingness” in his meditations on the ontology of the unthought in On The Way To Language (1971) Kierkegaard summons up images of postindustrialist and late capitalist woes, e.g.: “The whole of life is diseased” . This disease in modernity is surely evident in the plethora and saturation of civil and religious skirmishes and wars, the explosion of famines across the globe, and the persistently escalating genres of social problems.

Further, the modernist lament of James, Nietzsche and a number of other theorists of the shibboleth that “God is dead” ; and, “Philosophy is dead” inscribe the modern as a period of anomie, loss, and crisis of the word. The modern period is followed by the postmodern epoch of silent ideologies (silence as emblematic of the postmodern epoch) constituting the culture of indeterminacy and immanence.²⁷⁵ Steiner (1989) asks of the postmodern:

“what is the status of meaning of meaning, of communicative form,
in the time of ‘after-Word’?”²⁷⁶

Kierkegaard has an uncanny, timely, and obviously unintentioned, but apt entree in understanding medicine and in particular modern and postmodern psychic healing in his quote:

275. See this work Part I Modernism and Postmodernism. pp. 93

276. George Steiner Real Presences. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989. pp 94.

“and even if it were blazoned forth with all the panoply of noise so it could be heard in the midst of all other noise. then it would no longer be the word of God. Therefore create silence.”²⁷⁷

Paraphrased, silence is likened to the feeling of the sacred,. Yet,when mixed with (modern or post industrialist society’s) noise (Orwell’s Purebabble) and within the panoply of noise (white noise) would even if heard, no longer be “the word of God”, or the sacred and reflective, curative silence. In this quote, Kierkegaard also implies that the overstimulation and bombardment of noise, even with patches of acoustic silences within, has the effect on humanity of insanity, immorality, and contamination from the “ungodly”.

One might ask why Kierkegaard chose a physican as his actor to summon God to create silence. Why not a religious professional? Medicine has its origins in religion, after all. Physicans as a group have evolved from early signification linked with the sacred or religious (witch doctors, shaman). However, in this case, the primacy of role was prioritized with the sacred referent first (witch or shaman) while integral with the curing or absolving (doctor) secondarily. Contrary to this is the case of the early herbalists and midwives who were not of the religious status, yet, were summoned as healers on an “on call” basis providing required care and then, resubmerging back into their ordinary statuses without ritual, ceremony, compensation or acclaim as wife, mother, elder, citizen. In modernity, I would posit, a cultural shift evidenced a reversal of order of referent , i.e., the doctorprioritized first and integral or merged with symbols of magic, witch or shaman. The ancient magical or sacred powers fused within the role of the professional

277. Ibid . See # 1 61

physican and became embedded in the identity of the physican. The physican role usurped the previous power of the religious, and along with it, its magical power base. This sacred magic "power" was transferred by association to the institutional ideology of scientific medicine. Aronowitz (1988) in Science as Power: Discourse and Ideology in Modern Society speaks about art and religion becoming "extracurricular", or at the " margins of human endeavor"²⁷⁸ in modern societies due to modern scientific rationality becoming the privileged discourse.

Today, with structural , economic and cultural changes in the Western delivery systems of care, the physican is imminently losing (the lost something; the state of nothingness or nonsaid lack) his occupational identity, not only as a Godlike entity or priestly caste, but also as a viable healer and treatment professional who can "cure" disease in this time of pandemics. An example of this is the patient activist behavior of people diagnosed as HIV positive in the United States. The AIDS activist organization " Act Up" equates SILENCE=DEATH as their insignia and proposes that their members become as knowledgeable as is humanly possible, i.e., as knowledgeable as physicans, or more so, on all possible medical regimes providing relief to AIDS sufferers, including drugs and treatments.

Rather than call forth a hope for a reflective and peaceful period husbanded by the medical profession resplendant in its robes of hi-tech scientific medicine, society instead, is in the process of destatifying professions. It declares the caste (of physicans) emperor as "without any clothes". This is the era of the social discover of finding the physican "without any clothes".

278. Stanley Aronowitz. Science as Power: Discourse and Ideology in Modern Society. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1988. pp.8,9.

The metaphor of the "emperor without any clothes" reveals the physician as suddenly (and historically, but without the public awareness, or sight) as naked in his/her humanity and therefore fallible and mortal. This "shock" of discovery has the effect of chilling the social perception and weakening the former religiously derived "sacred trust". The destruction of "sacred trust" implodes what once was "hope" or "faith" or "charity" in the medical domain as standards of practice and transforms the former benovolent standards into the rawer standards of scarcity economics. With these standards currently in place, some projected outcomes may be various modes of health delivery peddled on a purely ironic and instrumental level.

Medicine is basically an instrumental field. Operations are performed, skills and tools are acquired and the practitioners "do their best" within their individual human means. A transformation of medicine takes place so that qualities of ethical and moral superiority become attached or fused to the procedures of medicine and to the practitioners by the lay public. This creates a burden of expectation on these practitioners, bringing about the necessity of both internal and social amnesias, or pushing from consciousness or repressions about the expectations. Unbearable irony between what can be actually, humanly done, and what one should be able to do, i.e., cure and ameliorate human illnesses. The unbearable tension between expectations are seen in the differences, or the distance between what an instrumental profession can accomplish and what it is expected to accomplish by dint of the ethical and moral obligations lent to a field considered close to priestliness (i.e., cure, savings of lives, souls). This priestliness is not just a metaphor. It is an inheritance, or second hand "remainder" of that which

has been lost by the priesthood, or religious itself. The religious, at the dawn of modernity, with the philosophic signification of "God is Dead" (Nietzsche, James) lost their credentials. The sacred credentials were transferred via a "lack, or "void"" into the domain of science. The inheriting of the priestly credentials by scientific medicine created a situation which necessitated forms of cultural silence within and without the profession. The ethical decisions about life and death, the moral decisions about sexuality, what to do about a troubled child, all these types of decisions formerly brought to a pastor and confessor were brought to the medical profession, (physician, psychiatrist) as their legitimate purview for their absolution and solution. This necessity for absolutions and solutions creates both types of silence, one of which is acknowledged, or deliberate silencing "for the patient's own good", and the second, an unacknowledged and unassimilatable tension about never being able to meet priestly (unattainable and perfect) standards for medicine.

Silence and the Medicalized Body

Great effort has been made over most of the years of Western civilization until recently, to silence the body. the two following quotes from Becker's Denial of Death might serve to indicate why man, with a terrible poignancy, has sought to silence the body:

"Man is a worm and food for worms. This is a paradox: he is out of nature and hopelessly in it; he is dual, up in the stars and yet housed in a heart-pumping, breath-gasping body that once belonged to a fish and still carries the gill marks to prove it. His body is a material, fleshy casing that is alien to him in many ways--the strangest and most repugnant way being that it aches and bleeds and will decay and die. Man is literally split in two: he has an awareness of his own splendid uniqueness in that he sticks out of nature with a towering majesty, and yet he goes back into the ground, a few feet in order blindly and dumbly to rot and disappear forever."²⁷⁹

"Natures values are bodily values, human values are mental values, and though they take the loftiest flights they are built upon excrement, impossible without it, always brought back to it."²⁸⁰

279. Ernest Becker The Denial of Death. New York: The Free Press. 1973.pp 26.

280. Ibid.

This body so repulsive, so doomed, so ill behaved, so out of control, had been the focus and the business of the physican since ancient times. And since as long as that body was considered to be merely an earthly shell for the immortal soul, something to be cast away at death, then the “patching up” of that body was morally a matter of secondary importance. The secrecy and the silence necessary to the preservation, repair and servicing of that body could go on without examination. However, with the disappearance of God and the immortal soul, the body and this mortal life began to be all that we have. Then our anxiety rather than fixed on hell fire from which we perhaps could be saved by the mechanisms of religion, began to be focused and fixed on our physical existence and on those persons who might perhaps be able to extend it, make it pleasanter, or more functional, that is, on the physican. Therefore, the kind of labor Hippocrates counseled executing in secret is suddenly brought into the harsh light of scrutiny in our century. This means, that suddenly, medicine has to be conducted in a different way and that “the best one can” is no longer good enough. And “the best that anybody could do can never be “good enough” for life ends inescapably in death.

The human body, the “object of investigation” for the physican, has been pragmatically silenced, denegated, and repressed throughout the history of medicine. The story of medicine is a narrative laced with silences and shot through the fabric of hegemonic medical science and its practices. The silencing of the body is a key strategem in the knowledge/power relations of its practitioners. Silence is the glue of hegemony bound by social facts. The hegemony of the institution of medicine is a testimony to silence itself

and depends for its maintenance and continued power relations on the silencing of these key factors:

- (1) Its structural and professional evolution
- (2) The silencing of its economic underpinning
- (3) The silencing of the origins of its priestly caste, the physician,
in the transfer of sacred trust from the religious
- (4) The silencing of inherent elitism;
the production and maintenance of elitism
in the name of altruism,
(issues, whether patient centered or not, get legitimated with
the ready slogan "it's all for the good of the patient")
- (5) The silencing of its internal and external power relations
- (6) The centrality of its function in maintaining social control
at the individual and group level.

However, what is done to repress, obfuscate and control the personal and the social through medicine only represents a technologized and refined (reified) stage in the continuous discourse of social silencing of the body.

In effect, the disenfranchisement of the traditional religion over the subject's mind, also amputated his body from its purview, and left it open season for the development of a new class of contenders, imbued with the hierarchical values of science and entrepreneurial progress--power, dominance, and specialization in a domain.

The formal social silencing of the body came with St Augustine. St Augustine's position paraphrased would be:

anyone who follows their body is led inexorably to sin
and thereupon to hell.

the only possible road salvation is the denial of the body----
(since one could not escape one's body,
this meant silencing the body)

Cartesianism is emblemized as the sophisticated realization of the mind/body split. In the 1500's, Decarte's mind/body split played out a misleading and asymmetrical "dualism", devaluing the human body . The body was coded as nothing more than a machine, equivalent, or even less than animal. Somehow the mind and the "soul" were kept in the church's aegis of "care", whereas the body got kicked below even the devils interests, to stockpiles of manipulatable "trash". "Nonthinking, non-rational man is an early conception of low class uneducated, unpropertied, uncontrolled heathen. Just as the human being was split into the soul and the body, society was split into the lower orders and the upper orders, the lower were identified as the body and the upper were identified with the soul. This population was considered "nothing more than animal", hence, needing social controls for "their own good", and became the prototype for the first physiological model of behavior. -- a mechanistic model, I might add, which predominates today.

The denegated body was upgraded as it became an area for development. Personal control and was institutionalized as an economic realm to be aquired and managed

by the early uneducated butcher surgeons and dentist entrepreneurs of the body, the physicians. It was constructed by these "physicans" to wrestle a profitable territory of influence and power over religion when religion's influence, particularly the Catholic Church, which dominated Europe for centuries, was waning. This small group of market oriented individuals plotted and eventually triumphed administratively and substantially over the church while the church's purview over the physical body (except in the female reproductive function, for church policy still dictated norms of reproduction over sexual behaviors) disintegrated and the newly emerging physicans took up the lead. This also weakened unorganized cottage industries of herbal healers, midwives and sundry mystics and remaining witches traditionally sought by the people for care in instances of need.

The construction of the institution of medicine itself has been historically silenced in the service of maintaining a benign and unthreatening visage of the 19th century professional, as prototype for the professional image as an altruistic elite individual struck by a vision (as was Florence Nightengale) or called vocationally to "serve the sick";

The difference is primarily structural and organizational, that is, traditional healers, including the tribal witch doctor, were called whenever needed, after their ministrations and rituals, reintegrated into the community into other roles and functions, becoming part of the tribe, or people. In this way, healers were individuals either marked for or apprenticed for special healing functions, but not exclusively so, in this manner, the structures of power and hierarchial valence which are preogatives for elite institutional structures did not foster the development of a "healer elite". Moreover, a majority of healers

in western civilization, were women. The kinship structures and loose, informal but collaborative relations of women who are gender constructed to function as caregivers under patriarchy maintained the nonhierarchical, integrative, "come when needed", lack of exclusivity, a subservience if you will, which is a necessary precursor for the construction of dominant power relations by another group (physicians)

A second critical ingredient is evident in the silencing of the institution of medicine, and it applies with special piquancy to physicians as the prime example of elite professionals. Medicine deals with the body, which in itself is silenced historically, and historically, the body's "workings" have been considered "mysterious". In Western medicine, mind and body since Augustine have been split, and considered dualities. In that paradigm the body is considered far from the kind of mind work we are taught to accept as discourse. Medicine takes this mysterious body, and by the exercise of certain "scientific" operations, makes the body comprehensible and manageable, if not by the individual, at least by the specialist practitioners. By doing so, and by not explaining how this is done the medical community replicates the domain of magic. Albeit, a magic dependent on science, but on a method and culture of science so mystified so as to lend science, airs of mysticism itself:

"Yet, having arisen by mutation from synthetic myth, science retains its status as a privileged discourse.... and its validity resides in powers of abstraction, which becomes the principle upon which the entire edifice of Galilean physics is determined."²⁸¹

281. Stanley Aronowitz. Science as Power: Discourse and Ideology in Modern Society.

The study of the body was so forbidden that Vesalius had to steal cadavers from the gibbet in order to perform dissections. This means that Vesalius had to function, (as a master Doctor) on the margins of society, as a deviant, simply in order to study and learn medicine. It took great risks for instance to validate publically, what was not religiously accepted, that men and women had the same number of ribs.

In summary, if the body is silent and secret and full of dangers and obscenities, and if medicine is the only one of the disciplines that can treat that body, and if it cannot treat or care for that body openly, publicly, then the practice of medicine has the same arcane, mysterious, threatening, evil quality that the body itself had. What is silenced now in medicine, is the relationship of contemporary medical practice to those ancient healers who lived in a shadow world somewhere between the Christian religion and paganism, who were regarded as dangerous, and suspect, and possibly (potential killers) to society.

Silence and the Mind

In the past, society identified the physican as the healer of bodily, but also, a healer of psychic maladies²⁸². Physicans treat the tribulations of anxiey and anomie, to the psychosomatic responses to stress and situational problems. Medicine practiced as religion, always considered sickness a lack of balance of the body stemming from either evils or maladies in the mind, or outside, hexes from evil persona (enemies or gods) in the environment. (The Bud-dists were the first religious group to meld the mind/body into one integral conception).

282. As early as 400 B.C. Hippocrates spoke of equilibrium and hamony of the body and mind.

He advised that body and mind profoundly affect each other and could not be considered separately as independent entities. William B. Cockerham Medical Sociology, Third Edition, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice Hall, 1986. pp 3-5.

Sigmund Freud, following the lead of Charcot, reinforcing the mind-body connection in 19th century medicine in his studies on hysteria, detailing physical conversion symptoms (paralysis, tics, loss of eye sight, etc) caused by sexual and aggressive repressed unconscious thoughts and wishes.

In the United States, Dr Edward Jarvis, in 1855 compiled the first and most complete investigation into the prevalence of mental disorders in the 19th century. Handbook of Health, Health Care and the Health Professions, Ed. David Mechanic New York: The Free Press, 1983. pp 159.

The Notional Underpinning of Power/Knowledge Relations in Medicine:

Foucault (1926-1984) had successive projects in medicine, describing in his works from Madness and Civilization²⁸³ to The History of Sexuality²⁸⁴ the terror and guilt and shame of the institutionalized subject, anthropologized and frozen in the gaze of clinical medicine. The practices of clinical medicine, sunk in Cartesian dualities, basking in Socratic-Platonic logic and measured and calculated in the laboratory temples of science, incarcerating the subject-object "patient" through semio-techniques of penal discipline, and normalizing dis-ease could not, according to Foucault, access the human being. For Foucault the subject is only accessible (but obliquely, not through self consciousness as in the reportage of illness) but through the "discontinuity of its shifting forms, in the different interrogations to which it is submitted, and in the ways in which its interiority is hollowed out."²⁸⁵

For Foucault, language is social life itself, and we create it by talking. Discourse is the theory for Foucault; it is a discourse which challenges logic and dwells in the domain of the "irreducibility of the distance between question and answer"²⁸⁶: that distance (going a step beyond Hegel) is the dialectic. That distance, which is irreducible, then, can never be boiled down to dualities, or to the certainty of sound or inscriptions, it must be impalpable, non

283. Michel Foucault Madness and Civilization : A History of the Insanity in the Age of Reason. Trans. Richard Howard. New York: Vintage Books, 1965.

284. Michel Foucault The History of Sexuality volumes I, II and III. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage Books, 1980.

285. Garth Gillan "Foucault's philosophy" in The Final Foucault ed James Bernauer and David Rasmussen, Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1988. pp 37.

286. Ibid pp 35

substantial, a gap, a lapse, and perhaps, a silence, but with an effect. If language is social life itself, and yet discourse's potency, or desire emanates in the irreducibility of the distance between question and answer (non verbal, non inscribed effect which is silence), then silence is key to discursive production, and hence, to social life itself.

As desire (emanating from silence) takes discourse as its object, and "through discourse reached the unrecognizable: a genealogy of the body that touches the nerve of its desire as it has been inscribed, by means of words or instruments of torture, in disciplines, institutions, discursive practices and sexuality."²⁸⁷

The definition of the exercise of power is a mode of action made upon the actions of another(s). Power is exercised only over free subjects, in so far as they are free. (Freedom can only exist in the realm of possibilities and choice which can be realized) With each exercise of power, freedom is lost. For example, slavery is not a power relationship because of the constraints and lack of possibility for action.

Knowledge is seen as a technique of power, power as a elaboration of the field of knowledge, and knowledge as domination of the object of (knowledge.)

The politics of medicine call into question the tensions between power relations and the strength or fragility of patient autonomy, i.e. degrees of relative freedoms.

An analysis of power relations in medicine would require an analysis of:

287. Ibid.

(1) The system of differentiations (determinations which permit one to act on others)

(2) Types of objectives

(Privileges, profits, authority, the exercise of professional functions, etc.)

(3) The means of bring power relations into being:

(Power exercised via butality, threat of punishment (Political silencing) , by effects of words (Cultural silencing) by systems of surveillance (Cultural silencing))

(4) Forms of institutionalization

(a given social ensemble such as the institution of medicine with its hierarchical functioning, complex and multiple apparatuses, customary phenomena (white coats ,stethoscopes, etc.)

(5) The degree of rationalization:

(Scientific technologies in proportion to costs and conditions of scarcity)

Silence is a bulwark for the continued knowledge/power relations as autoreinforcements for its own inertia and logic and continuance.

Institutions exercise power, and play power with power by means of the interplay of special knowledges in an apparatus structured by both explicit and tacit regulations (rules) , In this exclusive and unequal hierarchy, pervasive with secrets and silences, there exists the climate of giving to one or the other an exaggerated privilege in the relations of power, and "hence to see in the latter only modulations of the law and of coercion."²⁸⁸

288. Herbert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow. Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics Second Editon. Chicago: University of Chicago Press,

Domination is an outcome of law and coercion, and is itself, a general structure of power. Domination as a universalizing form fuses power relations with relations of strategy to produce a continuous interlocking history of disparities and contradictions.

Power, Secrecy and Silence

Power, secrecy and silence are indispensable companions. Power makes it possible to preserve silence, and silence, in turn, makes it possible to maintain power. All specialized elites, indeed, all elites, depend on selective silences to display their power, to maintain their power, and thus, to legitimate their power. Technological elites, those with codified knowledges and information, "hold on to" their specialized information and texts through scientific jargon and procedures. This boundaried communicative condition is maintained by walls of silence which seem to non-initiates as the specialized languages and codes of the professional. Professionals preserve their power by releasing it in controlled "units" on a "need to know", "need to pay" basis. Much of the overall picture (the uniting of discrete units of information or data) is kept out as silenced from public consumption. Unless legitimated as a member of the profession (insider elite), there is no means to acquire and use the language, or practice the skills of a profession legally. Indeed, if professionals did not keep information "under raps", or, silent, their professional uniqueness would be obviated and their ability to extract a price for their specialized information would disappear,

and with that, their status and power base.

Medicine holds, at this present time, a unique status among groups of professionals. The issues of health care and costs dominate public attention in this deficit period (1992-3) Health care is no longer considered one of many special interest issues, but expands in importance and scope beyond health. Health care hits home as a central economic problem which like the tendrils of a creeping virus, entwines and suffocates a fragile U.S. economy. Not only public television (responsible journalism) but network journalism (popular journalism) bristles with programs concentrating on the "crisis in health care in the United States". In only six weeks of national programming (February and the first two weeks in March, 1993) over 32 programs focused on health and virtually all news programs on a daily basis featured "health spots" with each viewing. Escalating health care costs are the major agenda problematic for the Clinton Administration and a top national priority. Because of a sense of public urgency flowing from this amount of exposure on the topic, spewing sometimes into a public outrage on issues such as malpractice, laboratory excesses and inadequacies, pharmaceutical company ripoffs and frauds, hospital swindles and incompetencies, illegal medical real estate and tax arrangements, physician managed illegal euthanasias, etc. Issues as to "rights", the patient's right to know, the patient's right to die, the patients right to care, the right to be covered by insurance, and a myriad of other rights formally sanctioned (in a democracy through assumed assent (silence)) by the public as the territory of medical "discretion" are suddenly no longer sanctioned as such because of rising public mistrust in the institution of medicine. The silence of assumed assent has been broken

with the rising public expectations and demands "to know" what formerly was ceded as the sacrosanct domain of the medical practitioners. With rising health expenditures growing faster than any other national expenditure area, faster than the GNP, it has become glaringly obvious that the system is not a system of delivery of care and that it is benefiting only those who are not sick.²⁸⁹ The previous "willingness not to know" by the lay population (a complicit cultural silencing) was, in fact, an expression of a certain trust which the public in general had for health care practitioners, the field, and in particular, the physician. When this trust is broken, then the cultural silencing ceases to function, gets "broken" "breaking the silence", and a sense of betrayal, public betrayal results. In this case, all manner of palliative reform and professional "self policing" will not remedy or restore the status quo ante.

This narrative is not simply reflecting power relations about information and agency. Something more insidious hangs over relations which demands the most forbidding silence as a matrix to its operations and requires a self silencing professional actor in conjunction with culturally silenced consumers. The silent coercion of medicine lies in the social fact of the dependence it creates as integral to its method of curing. The methodology of cure (not of care) requires a site dominated by the aura of altruism and benevolence. This altruism and benevolence in medicine fly under the proud flag of "doing the best for the patient", or, with a slight twist "for the patient's own good". All too often, however, the aura of altruism and benevolence cover a

289. New York Times "The Silence of Roxana Ramos" Monday, June 7, 1993. "A Welcome Silence" Topics of the Times, May 24, 1992. "U.S. Urges Doctors to Fight Surgical Pain (and Myths) by Warren Leary, March 5, 1992. "Doctors, Spaghetti and my American Wife" by Andrew Stephen, June 7, 1993., etc.

“business rationality” ideology which is anathema to the ideals within the Hippocratic code in medicine. This period is one of deepest skepticism and darkest resentment of the public toward medicine, a dependency-co-dependency of love-hate proportions, and in particular, the physician’s status position as the most respected professional in professional hierarchies in the United States is questioned. More frequently, individual “seasoned” physicians, those who have ridden the prosperous crest of entrepreneurial medicine are opting to retire early from their profession. They have read the writing on the wall of cost containment and evaluation of medical practice by outside agencies and corporations imbued with the necessity to reduce costs. These practices flowing out of what was first called utilization review, and now, total management review and control, have a prime aim at “managing” the doctor, and controlling his/her mode of practice. This reflects a climate of sacrifice within escalating ideologies of scarcity of means heralding draconian measures to further hamstring the autonomy and economic security of physicians. Also, the cultural climate has changed wherein the public is covered less and paying more out of the pocket for medical care. Further, we are experiencing a growing segment of population which are the “uninsured” and working poor uncovered, who access no medical care at all. Questioning of the profession is arising from all quarters: from the patient, from the government, from the insurers and the third party payors. The questioning is exactly in proportion to the amount of faith and trust previously held by the public toward the profession of medicine.

What is silenced is the power relations in medicine, but more so, what supports the professionalism and the compliance of patients in medicine is the underpinning of cultural forms of silence. Cultural silence seen in medicine is in two major subcategories or modes: (1) Popular or silencing of the Demos (Gk: "people"), and (2) Intramural silencing, also referred to as bureaucratic or strategic silence, is intramural because it is between or within professional groups. Intramural Silences in medicine comes primarily in the professional /administrative aspect. .

Popular silences are the self-silences, or self silencing of the people (demos). This is the production of auto-amnesia by groups so that they lose the referent to a particular epoch, experience or idea (ideal)

Professional silencing is a term used interchangeably with either bureaucratic silences or administrative silences. These are the silences and secrets and procedures within a group to silence or reinforce their group identity through various procedural mechanisms, not the least being professional languages and jargon. Professional silences are also called intramural silences. Professional silence is integral in the formational training of the professions, particularly physicians.

The Mechanisms of Silence in Medicine

Forms, Vectors and Techniques of Silence

Forms

The institution of medicine is a complex mesocontext of multivariate dimensions. The task addressed here is to investigate where in medicine social silences can be found , to uncover evidence of its existence, and to identify and explain the mechanisms of the production of silence as well as detain its outcomes and consequences to the consumer of medicine (the “patient”) , the medical community, and the State. A wide angle investigation such as this is, can only suggest a methods by which a phenemonon like silence can be detailed in some kind of organizing scheme. What I suggest is a framework for social silences based primarily on Part I, Chapter II's Taxonomy of Silences.

The forms of silence used in the Taxonomy are :

1. Political or brutal silences
2. Sacred
 - Eastern
 - Western
 - Organic
3. Cultural
 - Popular or Demos
 - Intramural or Professional/Administrative or Saturated
 (sometimes referred to as bureaucratic or stragetic)

Within medicine all three forms are found. These forms serve various functions for various special interests.

Kierkegaard called for a restoration of organic silences in medicine as a cure all for a "dis-eased world" and deligated that restoration to a priestly caste of physican. Today perhaps, the priestly caste might still remain, but the belief in the organic forms of life, and particularly , in organic silence, or sacred reflection, has gone by the wayside in favor of more elaborate and political beliefs. Instead, in this epoch, the evidence points to concentrate primarily on cultural silence.

Political or brutal silences relate to explicit coercion (torture and abuse). This form, political or brutal silence achieves its model practice in the former Soviet Union. There silencing was not mere censorship, but enforced censorship. There, and in any regime of human abuse, the State forced incarceration of political prisoners in psychiatric hospitals for blatant purposes of silencing and removing them (bad influences) from the population. This is political silencing used as a raw device of social control by the state enlisting the profession of medicine as its front.

**Intramural Silences: The Profession of Medicine,
a Paradigm for Professional/Administrative Silences**

Silence is a social process with ramifications not only within the delivery of care, but in interpersonal relations not only between patient and practitioner, but between practitioners themselves, and between practitioners and public agencies.

Professional or Administrative silencing is the over-assumption of professional privilege over the client or patient by the professional either by withholding pertinent and vital information concerning the treatment and or prognostications on outcome or other aspects of the client/patient -professional relation. This form of silencing can be evidenced both between the professional and the client/and/or his or her family or legal surrogate, and it can be evidenced within and between the disciplines. Authoritarian or professional silencing can occur in all professions as well as within and without institutional boundaries. It can also occur between institutions whereby the client/or patient is objectified and collusions are formed to protect both intra and extra institutional interests

Professional silencing is a term used interchangeably with either bureaucratic silences or administrative silences. These are the silences and secrets and procedures within a group to silence or reinforce their group identity through various procedural mechanisms, not the least being professional languages and jargon. Professional silences are also called intramural silences. Professional silence is integral in the formational training of the professions, particularly physicians. It is integral to the creation of

cohesion among professional groups and a key to the formation of a group identity. One of the mechanisms which trigger a self and group silencing is the formation of a particular physician identity derived from a modernist cultural conception of the physician as a scientific healer with extranormal or superhuman "Godlike" attributes and powers. This is not only a individual identity (which turns out to be problematic for the physician) but the false identity of the professional group to which the individual belongs. This mechanism works in the reverse as well, and with other groups. In the case of women, for instance, women who are strong, intelligent and competent, are identified individually and group or gender identified as weak, unintelligent and incompetent. The individuals in the group (gender) have an impossible job of reconciliation what they know experientially from what they are told from socialization and stereotyping, i.e., what they "know" as social facts about themselves. Most of the women's movement has been efforts to break the silence about competencies, intelligence, and strength (and power) of women despite continuing social construction and maintenance of the social fact in Western (and Eastern) societies of women's inadequacies, and lower social status and lack of determinant power.

In the case of medicine, intelligent, reasonably devoted, committed, competent individuals are group identified, and hence, personally identified as being superhuman, types of Godlike professionals of superior moral and ethical competencies. This may be irreconcilable with what these individuals know about themselves, particularly in early training with its life-death responsibilities under conditions of being "a green resident" on first rotations within the hospital units. Even with "seasoned" physicians, the self knowledge of a life

time practice with its quantity of "human" mistakes and errors due to the unavoidable percentage of failure and mis-diagnosis is a certainty. Yet, the peculiar status of a physican does not "allow" for the representation of "overt" human (non Godlike) error. Thus, the individual knowledges and consciences of "human" error must be kept silenced from society, and often the professional group itself and most certainly the patient who has "bought into" the physican's cultural group identity as a component of trust and respect. In these cases, cultural "popular" silence is the individual silencing him/herself, the individual in collusion with the group silencing itself and the patient silencing or blocking from awareness any doubts regarding the physican's sacred healing powers in order to construct trust within for the goals of effacy of treatment by that professional.

Any attack on silence is an attack on the profession, and efforts from the "outside" to peel the silence off in the interest of a greater public equity is met with negative and defensive reactions. The much cliched "blue wall" so often attributed to the police force becomes characteristic of all professions. The defense of one's "partner" (once again from the police referent) becomes paramount, rivaling and sometimes outdistancing the public good. In the context of this terrible loyalty, a "Gresham's Law"²⁹⁰ can take over, by which deviant members become the tail that wags good ones. This is especially true when the power of physicans to heal is not as great as the public imagines it to be or as the members of the profession might wish it to be.

Structurally, medical information and the methodologies for documenting it and producing it are also undergoing transformations so that in some cases discrepancies between the subjectively described symptoms of the patient

290. Gresham's Law is from economics: "the bad money tends to drive out the good".

and the new medical coding systems driving payment for prescribed care create a never-never land of a hyperreal discourses with respect to real presenting symptoms. Like the mad hatter, the physician providing the health care of today might be forced to ask him/herself : Should I code the real (which will be uncovered for payment, or paid less by the insurers) or should I code almost (or partially) real which would be covered for payment and thereby be healthier for both patient and myself. From the early 1970's medical practitioners struggle to fit traditional diagnostic categories into categories of medically insured coverage. Like fitting square pegs into round holes, something had to give, so conditions of hyperreality evolve where the questions often do not centralize the material facts (classic signs and symptoms), but use material facts like play dough, malleable under the weight of the dominant and mandated payment systems, Like every other instance in late capitalism, market conditions drive information display once it is linked to payment schema, and the economic hold sway over the "art" of medical diagnosis. Now, both practitioners and the quality assurance watchdogs of the insurers and third party payors now ask: Is what is being paid for real, or is it constructed in order to be paid?" The answer falling in the second case: is it constructed in order to be paid?" would thereby silencing the felt subjectivity of the personal statement by the patient.

The most powerful repressions/silences are those in which communities or groups co-act and in the case of this thesis, an elite community, defined by extreme professionalism and by a high degree of educational credentialization, such as physicians working in the institution of medicine, goes so far as to lose the awareness of the distinction between the personal and the social and the social sources of their silencing. Evidences will be discussed of

physicians or staff withholding critical or pivotal information from the administration, third party payors, insurance agents, other servicing agencies, families or the patient him/her self.

For instance, one critical issue is that of ethical practice involving creating silence is the physician's decision as to whether to "tell the terminal patient of his/her diagnosis and prognosis" in those cases where the patient is lucid, willing and able to receive important medical information regarding his/her condition. Another example of queries having to do with silence is physician's reports on how they feel about and will respond to the "gag" rules on abortion counseling imposed by the government in 1992.. This issue directly contradicts the Hippocratic Oath and professional ethical and teaching conduct supported by the professional organizations

The other in the profession, intramural professional silence, creating a silence within the profession itself to itself. Reciprocal silences within the profession are evidenced in physician's forbearance from criticism of each other's practice with systems of elaborate rules and customs signifying a kind of manners of professional respect. A standard exists in that it is correct to point out objective details of a patient's progress, but not the specifics of a known mistake made directly attributed to another collegial physician.

Vectors of Silence

In order to better delineate the specificity of case descriptions of the process of silence in the medical institution, further delimitation must be proposed. The ribs to the skeletal backbone of social silences(political and cultural silences) are vectors or directional positions of silence which float out of the political and cultural forms.

Four(4) vectors of focus in the investigation of the embeddedness of silence in the processes of the social are:

- (1) Evidences of physicians withholding critical information, i.e., information which would effect decisions or behavior, from patients/clients,
- (2) Professionals silencing behavior, outcomes or information, among themselves
- (3) Professions within medicine silencing competetors
- (4) The field effect of medical silences on the public sphere, i.e.,
evidences of the silencing or withholding of information in the public domain.
- (5) The State silencing medical practitioners through rules, laws, and surveillance procedures from practicing medicine

In Part I, I have discussed a criterion and standard for identifying social silences based on the taxonomy and grammar of social silences as well as

standard definitions of the social and related concepts already mentioned. They include a theoretical discussion on "social facts", social control", "repression", "surpression" and the "unthought known". The procedure used to present social silences in medicine details these forms at work and locates their action on particular vectors.

These vectors are identified in the case study material and participant observation field notes. Questions asked include: how is silence characterized, what forms and with what vectors? Which patterns exist and how are they generalizable?; further, how can these cases relate to patterns, how can generalizations be made and how then can this material relate to sociological theories and concepts?

The objective is that the case study will discover various modes of social silence in various practices and interventions in the everyday conduct of the institution of medicine.

Techniques of Silence

The production of professional or administrative silencing is dependent upon a specific process complete with sets of techniques. These techniques have the aim of effectively reducing or silencing knowledge, hence, power relations within medicine. The following are categories within which process of silencing might be mapped:

- A. Oral Communication and Written Inscriptions
- B. Structural
- C. Procedural

A. Oral Communication and Written Inscriptions:

Oral or spoken communication and written inscriptions include verbal orders, reports, patient staff meetings, "oral behavior "at the bedside with patients(the sterotypical "bedside manner"), in-service training, clinica lectures, "grand rounds", dictated medical summaries, multidisciplinary team meetings or other formal and informal forms of verbal communications. Written inscriptions include written orders, medical record notes, laboratory records and consultations, nurses notes, and other disciplinary inscribed notes in the medical record , computerized data, and records of all kinds as well as other formal forms of inscribed patient tracking.

Silencing occurs in the oral communications and written inscriptions cate- gory with the objective to omit or obfuscate information/data/knowledge.

Silencing in terms of inscriptions comes in 3 predominate forms:

- (a) The lack, loss, or errasure of inscriptions.
- (b) It is the distortion or illegibility of inscriptions.
- (c) It is the substitution of inscriptions.

An example of the substitution of inscriptions(c) is the documenting of a fictional diagnosis in place of the actual and valid diagnosis for purposes of insuring reimbursement for treatment (of the actual and valid diagnosis) It is of paramount importance that these fake and the real diagnoses be reason- ably similar or correspondent in work-up or laboratory requirements, pre- scribed drugs and other treatments and procedures in order that the original goal of treating (a valid but less reimburseable) diagnosis be achieved.

2. Structural - a structural category is any element within the institution of medicine which would create a disruption in the system.

(a) Destatifying or eliminating occupational roles within a delivery system is disruptive and would be considered a structural break requiring a reordering of the entire economy of relations within the structure. This may require reassessment, revaluing and recreating roles and rituals of prestige and power.

3. Procedural - any process or procedure which intervenes in or destroys data, information or knowledges.

- (a) Not following protocol, or conversely, following protocol
- (b) The use of placebos
the belief since Hippocrates
that "anxiety worsens illness, therefore use secrecy for
it's famous placebo effect"²⁹¹
- (c) Transferring the patient, or conversely removing
(transferring or reassigning treatment personnel)
Agencies selectively assigning/not assigning other agencies
for purposes of silencing
- (d) Exclusionary standards, as in the "hidden" criteria for
admissions review to prestigious institutions.
These "hidden criteria" can be, for example, financial status or

291. Crossroads of Medicine "Temple of Silence; Code of Silence" April 4, 1993.

diagnostic category driven e.g., rejection of the patient manifestly by fallacious reasons of "lack of beds", while latent reason (information silenced) is lack of substantial financial assets or, in the case of a Medicare/Medicaid patient, lack of an interesting enough diagnosis which would qualify for good "teaching material" for the resident physicians in training.

Medical Case Studies

Overview:

Case studies and other examples of the problematic of silence in medicine:

Case example group #1

One of the areas I have chosen to review and discuss as an example of cultural silences is related to death, either in omitting or restricting information regarding a patient's terminal condition, or in behavioral practices involving complicit silences which factor in as elements in the hastening or "allowing to happen" a terminal process extinguishing individual lives. What I speak and write about is the mechanism of silence which effectively conceals many of medicine's unintentioned and intentioned effects (Merton)

Vectors discussed are #'s 1, 2 and 4. Techniques are

Case example group #2.

Another example of what I call "cultural silencing" in a case study reflecting several vectors of social silences. The "vectors" of silence show the epiphenomena which are known through their effects or consequences to the patient, the profession, the professional, or the public either individually or in combinations thereof. The vectors discussed in case study #2 are: Vector (1) physician withholding of information regarding terminal condition to the patient Vector (2) the spreading effect of a staff silencing themselves both individually and collectively due to techniques such as "rules of silence" upheld in the institution of medicine (intramural or professional/ administrative silencing).

Vectors discussed are #'s 1 and 2

Case study group #3

In case study #3 silencing between professionals occurs in their impotence in effecting their individual and joint job responsibilities. Not only was speech cut off, but routine and appropriate action was short circuited. The protocol of hierarchy prohibited the physicans from being questioned too directly, or challenged as to authority. It occured in the staff not being informed of the discharge, which was not formally documented in the medical record yet, but was "hearsay"--privedged information only shared between "certain" team members. It occured from structual drawbacks of the scheduling of patient assessments at more pertinent times, plus the lack of role authority for team members, including other physicans other than the attending physican to give orders and dicatate intervention.

Vectors discussed are #'s 1, 2, and 3.

Case study group #4

The 4th silencing, Intramural or professional silencing comes from the inability of the institution or team to meet its goals of patient care in either long and short term management. In this case, the patient's very life is at stake. In this case, no one, despite "good intentions", or "appropriate motivation" at the very least, makes an effort to question the legitimacy of the patient's needs (the stated mission of caretaking in the institution) over the judgement of a physican who, in this case study, was not on the team, or in the particular institution. This silencing, due to maintaining the primacy of traditional physican protocol, reinforced the old traditional hierarchies, rendered the performance of allied disciplines as secondary and powerless, despite the perceived model of an egalitarian team management activity.

Vectors discussed are #'s 1 and 2

Case study group #5

The silencing of one profession over another in the spirit of market competition.

An understanding of the history, development and standards of professions is necessary as a backdrop in the investigation of tensions between two professions (nursing and physician's assistants) which when analyzed seem to be duplicative and in competition, while in the public eye, and internally as well, seem to be silencing dissent. The questions asked relate to who has what to gain, why open conflict is suppressed, what is evolving in terms of power relations, and in the end, which profession will have eventual primacy, i.e. who wins.

Vectors discussed are #'s 3, 5 and 2.

Medical Case Study #001

Vector representation: # 1, 2, 3 & 4

The following case study documents evidence of intramural or professional silences. In this case there is an overassumption of professional privilege over the patient by:

- (1) Withholding pertinent and vital information from:
 - (a) The professional and the client
 - (b) The professional and/or his or her family
or legal surrogate,
 - (c) Within and between the disciplines

These mixed channels of withholding information are not miscommunications, but represent a lack of vital communication:

Participant observation of medical case # ____ took place at _____ University Center at a regularly scheduled multidisciplinary case management team meeting. The "case management," or "team" meeting, or "team review" as it is called is held biweekly at this metropolitan medical center to report on and update the entire treatment team as to the status and progress of a patient's treatment. It should be noted that this meeting is a critical tool for coordination of the many professionals from different disciplines committed to the rehabilitation care of a patient. Rehabilitation care is more complex and involves usually more professional caretakers than a typical case in an acute hospital setting. For in a rehabilitation medicine setting the purpose of the "multidisciplinary team review" is expanded to include not only progress reports and the coordination of individual disciplinary treatment goals, but there is emphasis on a joint and collective team collaboration with respect to clinical "overall case management" decision making and coordination of the delivery of all services both within the hospital and without, on a follow-up ambulatory basis in order to provide consistency of care and enhance the quality, both before and after institutionalized treatment.

Rehabilitation medicine team meetings are held in addition to the individual case reports (usually daily or biweekly) held within individual departmental and disciplinary contexts. These macro "team review" conferences consist of the participation of representatives of all disciplines providing care for patients within the rehabilitation medicine setting. The attendees included: the

clinical chair of the Institute, a staff rehabilitation medicine physician, a nursing unit staff, a nursing education staff, a physical therapist, an occupational therapist, a dietary professional, a recreational therapist, a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a social worker and a review specialist

Theoretically, in the ideal team review conference within a rehabilitation medicine setting has an egalitarian, non-hierarchical orientation, with each member of the "team" expected to participate with equal status and importance in the joint effort of care management. In the "ideal" model for case management teams, leadership, i.e., the task of chairing the meeting and marshaling decisions and resource support for care decisions is delegated to a rotating system of chair appointments which is evenly distributed and routinely scheduled among the disciplinary representation of the team.

Due to cost containment regulations in both acute and rehabilitation hospitals cases are allotted under regulation according to a Diagnosis Related Case (DRG) schema the usual and normal lengths of stay per diagnosis in a category of predetermined diagnostic groups according to modes of customary medical practice. Any additional length of stay out of norms must meet "exceptional" criteria and be pre-approved by a separate review body.

* ** It was revealed that contrary to the ideal model of multidisciplinary team review, the consistent chair of the meeting, reflecting the traditional medical model was the rehabilitation physician and in his absence, the clinical Chair (MD) of the Institute.

*** (traditional method of report)

Since the schedule for team presentation of cases is on a biweekly continuum the average number of case reviews per patient depends upon the length of stay for the primary diagnosis. This is variable and can range from no review (with the exception of admission review, a separate process), to 26 meetings a year for (rare)* extended cases.

Medical Record Case # was presented for the 4th time since admission . The team was chaired by rehabilitation physician MD # ** Reports on patient progress were begun by nursing and each discipline reported in its own internal disciplinary language and standards using in most cases a "problem solving methodology" which orders the presenting problem first and subsequent other problems reported in order of severity. (The assessment of severity comes from internally developed criteria for the particular discipline, and may or may not be consistent with external disciplinary perceptions, evaluations and standards). It should be noted that these assessments coincide with the reportage of primary and in some cases, secondary diagnoses, but do not have to be related. The Chair of the team review is supposed to announce as protocol with the name and medical record number of the patient, the admissions diagnosis, primary diagnosis and secondary or other diagnoses of the patient.

In this case it did not happen, so that reportage focused on problems without the tag or orienting point of a diagnostic profile for members of the team who were covering the meeting but who were not familiar with the patient.

TEXT:

CASE STUDY #0001

Nurse # 1 The main problem is the patient's "poor progress and unrealistic self assessment".

PT: "No progress" She hasn't showed up to scheduled appointments and we're not able to get her up and walking due to the complaints of pain. "Apparently the cancer has progressed to the pancreas and the bones, thus preventing any real progress in PT for the secondary hip problem (reason for admission).

OT: Patient still feels she'll be able to go back to work 2 weeks after planned discharge this week.

SW: "Discharge? I wasn't informed. Why I don't have time to see her, assess her"

MD. "She's reached optimum progress. The best we can do with her."

SW: "Discharge? Why didn't somebody tell me."

Nurse #1 "We haven't got the order yet."

Clinical Institute Head -MD #2: "Unrealistic. This patient will be lucky to live 2 weeks!"

Pause- entire team silent.

MD #2 resumes: "We can plan to readmit her in 2 months, but it's unlikely she'll make it."

SW: " Why, if that's the case, I need more time to work with her, to help her adjust to her prognosis--to plan for her return home. She'll need equipment, she'll need a home attendant, she lives alone."

Nursing: "She doesn't seem to know how bad she is.---we need more time to work with her, to help her get more realistic, to get her to adjust." What do you think? (Turning to the psychiatrist)

Psychiatry: Oh, I only saw her at admission. I haven't evaluated her current status. You know our schedule, we don't get a chance to see all the patients within the hospitalization. We didn't get any emergency referrals"

Psychologist. "Same here." With this planned discharge, I won't be able to see her."

SW: "What do you mean? Is she going that soon?"

MD: "She's reached optimum medical progress for this round." We'll be getting pressure from utilization****" She's reached her maximum allotted stay"

Nursing: "Well, how about requesting an extension? ***** "We have work to do with this patient"

Team Chair MD: "That can't be done."

Silence.

SW: "Why?"Why is it impossible?"

Clinical Chair MD: (very officious) "Look. Her attending knows all about this situation. I spoke to him already. He's aware of her condition. He knows already our estimation of her prognosis and concurs!"

SW: "Oh, she has a private attending?"

Nursing: "Well, what is he going to do?"

Clinical Chair MD: (Sternly) " Her attending is Dr____, he's on staff in the main hospital. He's been informed; its up to him to handle his patient."

Nurse: "Why, he hasn't communicated that she's dying".

****** Utilization review/Quality assurance is the internal hospital department responsible for maintaining cost containment legislation by predetermining the standard length of stay and mandating the allotted medically insured days of coverage for the treatment**

******* Under certain documented exceptions the Utilization department may grant a few days , the number being predetermined according to the documented exception, validated by the attending physician, upon review. However, even the exceptions must fit criteria predesignated for "exceptions".**

Clinical Head MD. "That must be his decision".

Silence.

PT: Well, could you speak with him further?

Clinical Head MD: "He has, as you know, the main case management responsibility. I have already spoken to him. He has a special relation to her."

Silence --a sense of frustration is shown with fidgeting in seats, two people leaving room, finger and hand gestures of agitation. a long pause of 3-4 minutes--

**SW: I'll try to arrange a pre-discharge visit today or tomorrow if it's not too late to see if there's any equipment or help she'll need----
(although I doubt I'll be able to turn anything on so quickly)**

Nurse: When's the discharge date?

Rehab MD: "In 2 days"-----

A brief pause-----

Rehab MD: "Next case."

Discussion:

The three professional or authoritarian silences: (1) between professional and patient, (2) between professionals of equal status, (3) between professionals of differing status, and a (4th) institutional or group silencing, were documented in this case history. The first, silencing between professional and patient, occurred as the major theme of the team discussion, namely, the refusal, or reluctance of the attending physician to let the patient know of her terminal prognosis. Furthermore, the patient's knowledge was seemingly untempered by even a proportionate amount of knowledge concerning her condition due to her "unrealistic" self assessment noted by the team in her plans to return to work in 2 weeks, despite the fact of her pain.

Silencing between professionals of equal status occurred in 2 instances, i.e., the lack of notification of status between the Rehab Team leader MD and the Clinical Head MD. The Rehab Team Leader had to depend upon the Clinical Head's informal reported experience of speaking to the Attending Physician of record. And, the Clinical Head MD was silenced by the unwritten rules of "professional courtesy and privilege" to communicate the Rehab Team's desire to request extended days and to become involved in the planning for and counseling the patient for the probability her impending death as is their duty under their individual job responsibilities.

Silencing between professionals occurred in their impotence in effecting their individual and joint job responsibilities. Not only was speech cut off, but routine and appropriate action was short circuited. The protocol of hierarchy prohibited the physicians from being questioned too directly, or challenged as to authority. It occurred in the staff not being informed of the discharge, which was not formally documented in the medical record yet but was "hearsay"--

privileged information only shared between "certain" team members. It occurred from structural drawbacks of the scheduling of patient assessments at more pertinent times, plus the lack of role authority for team members, including other physicians other than the attending to give orders and dictate intervention.

The 4th silencing, institutional, or team silencing comes from the inability of the institution or team to meet its goals of patient care and long and short term management. In this case, the patient's very life is at stake. In this case, no one, despite "good intentions", or "appropriate motivation" at the very least, made effort to question the legitimacy of the patient's needs (the stated mission of caretaking in the institution) over the judgement of a physician who was not on the team, or in the particular institution. This silencing, due to maintaining the primacy of traditional physician protocol, reinforced the old traditional hierarchies, rendered the performance of allied disciplines as secondary and powerless, despite the perceived model of an egalitarian team management activity. The rationale and goals for team management with this case was made moot. A feeling of depression and frustration remained afterward, as documented in follow-up conversations. In 5 instances out of 6, the case results were duly noted, frustration registered, and another case, with more positive results quickly reintroduced in the conversational record.

CASE STUDY #0002

A 40 year old male alcoholic with a past history of drug abuse (ex-heroin addict) currently maintained on the drug Antabuse developed a severe stroke (left-sided) when attending an Irish Catholic funeral where he consumed alcohol while on Antabuse causing his blood pressure to elevate with the consequence of stroke. Married for 10 years with 3 young children to a devout Roman Catholic. Within the hospitalization at a major Medical Center, the wife decided to divorce the afflicted husband. Notes left in this patient's medical record from both social worker and physician alert staff that each professional has decided not to tell the patient of the wife's filing for divorce because "he is depressed already", and that they fear the patient "may go off the deep end" if such information is relayed. (It should be noted that the patient previously refused to see a psychiatrist or psychologist "due to rage that in the past a psychiatric professional had ordered Antabuse treatment for the alcohol problem".

CASE STUDY #0003

A 38 year old Irish homosexual living in special housing has a diagnosis of severe Multiple Sclerosis (MS). He has a past history of several bouts of depression. The social worker is trying to provide home services upon discharge of the patient, however, the key vendor and assessor for the need for home services, Visiting Nurse Service (VNS) has already refused to accept the patient because he requires ("too much care"), i.e., a higher level of care than home services provides". In this case, the patient cannot be sent back to his home, but is referred to a nursing home.

It is a concern of the physician that if this patient is told of the plan to send

him to a nursing home "he may be suicidal". (The social worker remarked upon hearing this "that now VSN will never take him if you suspect he's suicidal!") The decision of staff was (1) not to tell VNS that he may be suicidal (therefore, no note on chart to that effect, and no referral to a psychiatrist who would rule/out the possibility of suicide and most certainly document the chart unless brought into this collusion.) (2) not to tell the patient of the nursing home referral.

Discussion: This case study reveals the active conspiracy of silence by medical staff, both physician, social worker (and nursing *) to both the patient and to the service agency responsible for "picking up" the case for case management on a home basis. Neither is the nursing homes applied to for the patient (without his knowledge) so that they also do not know the full story "for their and the patient's good".

CASE STUDY # 0004

A male about 40 jumped in front of a NYC subway. His left leg was amputated and a psychiatrist ruled him insane. This patient was eventually sent to a state mental hospital. In the case of the patient vs the MTA, the state settled out of court. (NYC was the legal guardian of the patient so the case was NYS vs NYC MTA) The state settled out of court in a deal made with lawyers representing NYC because the real (but excluded) fact of the matter was that the train did not stop given warning because the motorman of the subway train was found by the MTA to be drunk. No written public record, as well as no medical record note, of the motorman's possible culpability in this case exists.

Discussion: The silencing here is a collusion between city and state agencies to avoid damaging public relations toward a NYC agency. The collusion extends to the practice of “settling out of court” so that a jury trial could be avoided and the release of any “damaging” information avoided that would discredit a city agency. The patient was omitted from knowledge of the case and the legal decisions due to his “insanity”. The public was denied knowledge of the event and “kept in the dark” permanently due to the silencing actions of city and state lawyers.

CASE STUDY #0005

A 30 year old married male of the upper middle class with professional credentials is discovered to have a diagnosis of Glioblastoma (a fatal brain tumor). His attending physician is convinced that “he should go home (be discharged from the hospital) and spend his last days enjoying his family.” This writer asked why he would not tell his patient (who is rational and not in pain) his diagnosis and prognosis.

The physician responded “the family would kill me!” “They don’t want him to know. Further, why should he be depressed and ruin his last days?” This writer responded that being competent “he might be deprived of his life choices, and also the opportunity to plan and work out parting and grief with his family.” The physician answered that “it’s better for people not to know”, and that “most patients don’t want to know, it’s too depressing”.

Discussion: Here the physician and the family are in collusion, keeping personal and vital information about the patient's fatal disease from him. Not much time left was prognosticated by the oncologists and neurologists called in for consult. In this case, a young vital professional was silenced from his life choices, however few they might be, "for his own good" by both professional and family. Moral questions as to whether the family's wishes in the case of a competent, highly intelligent and successful male professional take primacy? The patient was admitted after the "right to consent to life saving measures" form was regulated by the hospital, so that, even the possibility for considering life and death issues, even theoretically, was lost.

This form of silencing "for his own good", is a patronizing silence which deprives the individual of even the possibility or potential of dealing with his own life/death issues and the dignity and autonomy of participation in planning, however painful, in it. It reduced the 30 year old active, competent, and rational male to the dependent infantile position of "cared for object". Even if the patient suspects the seriousness of his condition, he has no way to validate it, and this too can lead to suspicion and distrust of the human "family" as he develops more incapacitating symptoms. This is a case where silence is maintained as a defense against self knowledge. This is a case where silence is used as a foil to exclude the possibility of the patient working through the natural stages of grief, which are compatible with preparing for death, some of which in the early stages, depression, rage against injustice of being "marked", diagnosed for death and so on which are uncomfortable stages for both medical professionals and families to bear. This silencing removes choice and autonomy from an otherwise viable person, and in

effect, steals their prerogative to make informed decisions about a precious life just about to end.

* although nursing is not specifically mentioned, the head nurse on the patients unit is quietly notified of the plan by the physician and this information may or may not be relayed on the rotation of shifts by the head nurses, depending on their 'feeling' about the case.

CASE STUDY #0006:

Evidence of professional / administrative silencing of subjectively reported symptoms and physician's initial medical impressions upon interview of the patient for purposes of fitting the patient's presenting medical profile with the appropriate (reimbursable) ICDA-9 codes will be sought through the review of medical records, analysis of ICDA_9 diagnostic codes and through interview with physicians who have participated in "shaping" medical data to fit reimbursement criteria for purposes of obtaining financial coverage for either themselves, the patient, or for both purposes. (Inscription fraud)

CASE STUDY #0007

Evidence of **Death=Silence** is obtained through a search of a reported case of actual clinical practice of cardiac arrest teams functioning either below standard or miming their functioning in order to indirectly aid and abet natural death. This behavior was recorded to occur in silence without written or spoken word, either verbally or in orders, or

other directives, except for a color code. **(Slow code/show code)**²⁹²

CASE STUDY #0008

Cultural silencing in medicine is either a surfeit of information, (saturation or white noise silencing) the holding back of information or data, the manipulation of the effect of information or data (usually by means of creating a form of administrative discourse) causing a "disinformation", or, in certain cases it is the creation of fraud through the mechanism of cultural silencing.

In early February, 1992, media focused attention on a severe complication of a surgical procedure practiced for the past 30 years which has been documented, but effectively "kept silenced" by the participating and responsible agents. Not only media, but individual physicians and the medical associations, including the American Medical Association, and the American Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and the industry manufacturing the substance managed to squelch inquiry and release of critical information having to do with a common practice practiced by plastic surgeons, dermatologists, and other physicians and routinely advised patients on office visits.

The subject is that of the growing business of silicon gel breast-implants and the Dow Chemical Company. On Monday, February 10th, 1992 under court order, the company made public 800 pages of internal documents suggesting that some of its officials had been informed regarding the

292. Ibid.

hazardousness of the silicon implants.

"For years doctors have complained to the company that its silicon-gel breast implants ruptured and leaked through women's bodies" ²⁹³

This correspondence was backed by clinical trials and patient follow-up. Silicon implants are used in reconstructive surgery for prosthetic and cosmetic reasons.

"Over 1 million women in the U.S. have silicon gel implants."²⁹⁴

"The letters and internal memos provided a revealing glimpse behind closed doors-- showing that, despite public assurances of safety, the company and doctors had long grappled with health problems caused by the implants"²⁹⁵ complaint is that the outer envelope is too greasy and that he is getting excessive gel bleed on all three pair that were given to him... The thing that is really galling is that I feel I have been beaten by my own company, instead of the competition. To put a questionable lot of mammaries on the market is inexcusable. I don't know who is responsible for this decision but it has to rank right up there with the Pinto gas tank'²⁹⁶

293. New York Times "Silicon Hazard" Op Editorial Page February, 11, 1992.

294. Ibid pp121

295. Ibid. pp13.

296. Ibid. pp141.

CASE STUDY # 0009

In 1950 coverage for required prothesis and equipment necessary for children's rehabilitation from a variety of diagnoses was not available. Medicaid and Medicare did not cover such items for payment. In New York City, the Department of Health did not provide funds for such expenditures. A number of physicians practicing in the rehabilitation unit at _____ Hospital were at a loss as to how to obtain needed wheelchairs, crutches, and other equipment for their needy patients who had no means to purchase such equipment. Many of the children seen had fractures of tibia, and femur, many had nerve injuries requiring a brace. The Polio Foundation, a private philanthropic agency, proved to be the sole source of braces, wheelchairs and other equipment for those patients diagnosed and treated for Polio. Private physicians practicing at that time with needy patients whose families were unable to provide funds for these required treatment modalities, began to document diagnoses of Polio on these children without objective signs or symptoms of Polio for the sole humanitarian purpose of obtaining the needed braces and wheelchairs for treatment of their "real" ailments. The diagnosis with proper documentation was accepted by the Foundation, and the equipment obtained. Because of this process, another child listed in the statistics as a New York City Polio Case, and this patient case added to the statistics yielding an "epidemic". In this case, the physician was enabled by obtaining necessary appliances to move forward in prescribed treatment (for another diagnosis), the family enabled by attaining a resource not within their financial reach, and the Polio Foundation enabled by the prompt and efficient service and support given a verifiable case, which also configured in

its reports, statistics and configured in fund raising strategy and aided its mission in humanitarian support.

This is complicit silencing for altruistic purposes, because of the lack of resources, public and professional understanding and support for the real "presenting" problem. At the same time, it provided distorted statistics for another health problem, misleading authorities to perceive (on the basis of statistics) a critical health problem (Polio) further reinforcing focus and future research and policy intervention in the name of a diagnosis with questionable occurrence rates.

Here, physicians knowingly confabulated diagnoses, hiding real cause, documenting falacious symptoms in order to negotiate a system which had no resources for the true diagnosis. (Fudged diagnoses in order to get equipment for patients) What are the ethical problems the social problems the research problems with misrepresenting, hiding, distorting data in medicine ?

CASE STUDY 0010

A 69 year old Jewish male, Mr. G., without a past history of medical diseases, after an extensive laboratory workup and physical examination was diagnosed with cancer of the prostate in 1974. He immediately underwent surgical orchidectomy upon the advice of his family physician.

This patient technically met the official cure rate standard for that disease and operation of 4 years without recurrence after discovery (diagnosis) and his "case" is included in the statistics for "cure" for 1978. However, the patient died in his 5th year post diagnosis.

In the 5th year, the patient experienced a recurrence of prostatic cancer accompanied by severe bilateral kidney disease, with early symptoms of uremia. The patient was not told by the family physician, as was his son, that when he had a recurrence of renal disease, it was a "negative sign" and it was highly predictable that he "was dying". An immediate portal venal shunt operation was recommended by the surgeon (who had consultation with the family physician as a matter of protocol) for the ostensible reasons of giving this patient a "longer and better quality of life". The family doctor was accosted and questioned by the son who was appalled at the painful and extensively invasive procedures on his "dying" father: "you told me that if this happened, it was the end. Then, why are they (the hospital attendings, residents and surgeons) torturing my father?"

The family doctor replied: "you can't just let a man die of uremia!" and walked away.

Within the hospital the physicians on daily rounds would tell Mr G. that:

"you have to take these treatments (major operation) in order to get better"
Mr G. (lucid, oriented and appropriate, i.e., in his "right mind") replied:
Better! Better! Better! This is a lot of _____! All I want to know
is when does the balloon go up?"

Mr G. got no confirmation one way or the other in his request to learn about his prognosis and (seemingly, in his mind) his impending death.

Reluctantly and fearfully ,upon as much silence as other forms of overt pressure, Mr G agreed to the extremely risky, uncomfortable and expensive major operation, a Portal Caval Shunt. Both Mr G and his wife both believed and wanted to believe that if a physican said he could save you, or improve your life, he could and would save him. It was an issue of trust, despite the silences and the medical jargon and administrative languages, themselves forms of silencing.

The operation was performed and the patient subsequently died after a short period of intense agony and disorientation. The unit nurse called the son at 11 A.M to inform him that "his father was critical". The son rushed from Brooklyn to the Manhattan based hospital arriving at 11:40 AM only to meet the family physican leaving the hospital, stopping the son in the street and stating "it was too late." The patient died at 10:45 AM as was documented by the death certificate and in the presence of his wife.

Discussion:

" Medicine has the authority to label one man's complaint about a legitimate illness, to declare a second man sick though he himself doesn't complain, *and to refuse a third social recognition of his pain, his disability, and even, his death*"²⁹⁷
(italics mine)

297. Ivan Illich Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health. New York: Pantheon Books, 1976.pp. 45.

“ Between delivery and termination this bundle of biomedical care fits best into a city built like a mechanical womb. At each stage of their lives people are age-specifically disabled . The old are the most obvious example:

*they are victims of treatments meted out for an incurable condition*²⁹⁸ (*italics mine*)

“ Social iatrogenesis designates a category of etiology that encompasses many forms. It obtains when medical bureaucracy creates ill-health by increasing stress, by multiplying disabling dependence, by generating new painful needs, by lowering levels of tolerance for discomfort or pain, *by reducing the leeway that people are wont to concede to an individual when he suffers,* and by abolishing the right to self care (and to decisions on death.)²⁹⁹

“ clinical iatrogenesis includes -----the damage that doctors inflict with the intent of curing or exploiting the patient....”³⁰⁰

The cultural silencing of the patient and relatives as accomplishes in denial of death

298. Ivan Illich Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health. New York: Pantheon Books, 1976.pp. 79.

299. Ibid .pp. 41.

300. Ibid. pp 31.

CASE STUDY 001 1

Upon query about a particular patient with the head nurse of the unit where the patient had been admitted the head nurse responded

“ _____ is no longer a patient at this hospital “
and hung up the telephone.

It was true that the patient was no longer a patient in that hospital, he had died that morning.

Chapter VIII**Medical Silences****CONCLUSION:**

Twentieth century medicine silently, almost imperceptibly mutates under the linguistic and laboratory exactitude of its dominant methodology, evaluation, from a misleading technological plenty (for advantaged classes) to the formation of systems of scarcity and rationing of care for the larger, less advantaged populations. Shifts in power relations within the field, imperceptible to the public, creep silently, "on little cats paws" through medicine, reordering profession stratifications and refueling the crises of legitimacy from within and from without the institution.

Medicine here stands not just for itself, but as an example of elite group silencing, as distinguished from popular or demos group silencing. This difference is found in the locus of power. The elite groups silence themselves collectively and silence their individual members in order to preserve and amplify their power. The motivation for their silencing comes from within the group. Concealing the negative (bad) information, on one hand, while hoarding the positive or specialized (good) information on the other, are intramurally motivated. In contrast to what I have asserted about Women and Silence, in which situation, the predominant impetus of the silencing is an external power source.

Silence is: in, of, and by the institution of medicine. Silence is a bulwark for the continued knowledge/power relations as autoreinforcements for its own inertia and logic and continuance. Silence is constituted as a social fact

and is the constituent feature comprising social facts. Evidence of the normative hold of social facts is that the social fact of medicine's legitimacy is assured through various coercive methods of social silences. Silence effectively conceals many of medicine's unintentioned and intentioned effects. It conceals the moments when these very effects outstrip its functions; outstrip its ends, even, destroy its reason for existing.

A Proposed Theory of Social Silence

A note on approach:

My notion of social silence is derived partially from a number of sociological notions such as social control, social fact, social amnesia, the conscience collective, socialization, agency, abuse, maltreatment, cultural sadomasochism and concepts of professionalism and administrative discourse, as well as from the extrapolation from social psychology of the discovery of the mechanism of repression. Repression, instead of being viewed as a individual phenomenon is seen in this thesis as cooperative, collective group behavior which is actively "in use" as part of the process of the above mentioned sociological notions. Marcuse as the precursor theorist elaborated the entire Freudian canon with respect to "repression" as a social, not only a individual phenomenon, when he talked about "surplus repressions" as potent ingredients in the construction of the social. My use of the social and, the phenomenon of silence related to the social, is brewed in the stew of its notional base¹, and derivative from the contributions of a number of cultural theorists representative of the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, psychology, women's studies, cultural studies and the humanities.

1. The notional base of social silences including such notions such as social control, social fact, social amnesia, the conscience collective, socialization, agency, abuse, maltreatment and cultural sadomasochism and the concepts of professionalism and administrative discourse.

The approach to this work is multidisciplinary, in the spirit of cultural studies. The form is constructed in two parts:

Part I includes three main elements: (1) the introduction to the concept (2) the background historicosociological research as to the evidence of silence in a social form. This included an analysis of definitions and development of a taxonomy and structural methodology as well as the identification of a notional theoretical base from which (3) a theory of social silences is proposed.

Part II is the discovery section wherein the evidence of the thesis of social silence is explicated. This is the actual depiction through documented behavior and case studies of pre-selected representative institutions of the social (family/gender and medicine)

What has been presented is a genealogy and grammar of silence as guidelines to lead us through the silent waters of what has heretofore been a little studied subject. A taxonomy of silence depicts the major categories of silence: (1) Political or brutal, (2) Cultural and (3) Sacred. The acoustic category silence has not been addressed. Next the process of silence, ie., "how silence works in the social" deals with two major areas:

- (A) Forms and vectors of silencing
- (B) Mechanisms of silencing

This “how to” approach certifies that silence is indeed constructed in the social and that if it is constructed, it too, can be deconstructed. Following the discussion on the process and mechanisms in the construction of social silence are selected case studies. Part II, Chapters VI and VII illustrate episodes and cases of social silence observed and documented in a case study format.

What I have attempted to present is not another linguistic analysis of silence, but a cultural studies analysis of silence as an expression of traditional, modern, and postmodern social relations and positions. I hope to illustrate that silence can exist as a locus from which to reconfigure the study of everyday life. My methodology focuses on determining the universal and multidimensional qualities of silence, and showing through examples and case studies the integrity of silence within the social fabric.

We know through the evidence presented that silence continually presents untested but customary assumptions regarding its meanings, effects, and representations. Because of the myriad of understandings, meanings, definitions, impressions, usages, effects, and applications, silence as a phenomenon generates its own problematic

Silence has been identified as an integral social ingredient. A working model of how social silences configure and operate includes a description of forms and vectors as well as some discovery into the process of creating silence and its uses in society. The major categories (or forms) of social silences : Political, Cultural and Sacred have some subcategories: Cultural (Popular/Demos and Professional/Administrative) and Sacred (Spiritual and

Organic). These categories have the following 5 vectors of directional interaction :

1. The withholding of information or knowledge from another (a subordinate)
2. The withholding of information/knowledge from another within a group
3. The group withholding information/knowledge from competing groups
4. The group withholding information/knowledge from the public sphere
5. The state withholding information/knowledge from the public

The vectors determine the direction and impact of social silencing on the individual and the group or field. Combinations of vectors most typically occur as was documented within the medical case studies. The effects may be exponential, especially since the objects of silencing (vector effects) may not be aware of the other agents being silenced in the same episode at the same time. The cumulative effects of vector silencing can be extensive in a culture, since by very definition, in cultural silencing there may be a collective form of amnesia or collective auto-silencing whereby the oppression goes totally unrecognized or acknowledged by the group, culture or society. I say that cultural silencing may be the mechanism in the production of what Durkheim (1897) called the "social fact", collections of normative behaviors which are followed unquestioningly, and often despite logic and utility to adaptation. The initial and hidden coercion behind motivating individuals and groups in what may be illogical or questionable behaviors is forgotten, and

despite the retrievability of this information, or despite occasional “breaks”, or “leaks” about the coerced enforcement, no effort is made by the individual or group to investigate, question or in any other way, “break the silence”.

Political silencing is relatively straight forward. It is an obvious repression or silencing by actual or physical force being levied upon the individual or group. The reaction(shutting up, or remaining silent) is usually immediate. This is the simple yet horrible effect of terror, forms of torture, abuse, maltreatment, and neglect. It is the simple (but, too terrible) reaction to war and violence. However, how political or brutal silences differs from cultural silencing (the second category) is that those who undergo political or brutal silencing still retain the memory of the abuse. It may be uncomfortable to uncover that memory, but upon identification, there is an identifiable enemy, perpetrator or abuser. And, attached to that memory or with that memory comes reactive rage at the outrage of violence.

Cultural silence may evolve out of political silencing. Cultural silence begins when the coercion/punishment is completely forgotten, or so distant as not to come into awareness at all. Individuals and groups almost automatically avoid political silencing (physical repression and restraint) as soon as the possibility of it becomes a potentiality, or as soon as attempts to use it on them become viable. The individual or group spontaneously develop it for the following reasons:

- A. To avoid pain (pure behaviorism)
- B. To forget that there is constraint

(painful awareness of subjugation)

Cultural silence turns on when constraints are forgotten. This mechanism is similar to the psychological defense mechanism of classical denial i.e.: "what guns? what police? why, we are acting on our free will". The power structure doesn't orchestrate the social silencing, it harvests its results. The population creates its own suppression and the forgetting is so complete that it rests like a semi-permanent scab over an old injury. To pull the scab (break the cultural silence) would be to tear up the tissue or fabric of society and with it the unhealed and bloodied memories which are the foundation of outrage, anarchy and revolution.

An instance in recent U.S. history when political silencing was confronted without going into cultural silencing was in the 1960's in the student movement which developed into a national reaction against the war in Vietnam, and an influence in the Civil Rights Movement, later evolving into the development of the second wave Women's Movement. In the '60's in some instances, students and activists confronted the U.S. National Guard on the campuses by placing daisies and other flowers in the rifles of the soldiers, (the "flower children") by singing to them and by greeting them as "brothers". The National Guardsmen (often the same age as the "hippie" "flower children") were identified by the activists as victims (in the same social location as they were) of the state, and therefore, "brothers" who had a choice to lay down arms and create love. These images (the daisy in the rifle) became emblematic of the spirit of the '60's, a unique cultural phenom

enon.

The political silencing did not work (threats of punishment, and actual punishment, i.e. the National Guard) because the activists and student movement, with the help of actual real time videos and reportage by media of the horrors of the Vietnam War, refused to deny the actual atrocities produced by the state and the war mentality, and to forget the constraints of the government. It became no longer "good citizenship" to go along with the war. The public would not silence itself (culturally) and become "patriots" and "good citizens". They refused to silence themselves.²

Instances when a public refuses cultural silence are pivotal to the creation of change and social movements. For purposes of brevity, I cannot expound on this thesis aspect, however, I believe it is a rich area for future research.

A capsulated conception of cultural silences is that it is (usually) a group reaction to social abuse. The components behind the mechanism of this silence are:

1. Socialized repression
2. Socialized "protective masochism" (T. Reik)
3. Socialized denial

2. Dean Rusk, Secretary of State under President Lyndon Johnson, among other members of the Johnson administration, expressed absolute shock at this "not going along". The expectations of public silencing were so great and so consistent by the government up until that period in the '60's.

These are a set of psychological defenses and behaviors which I have, in the spirit of Reich, Fromm, Freud, Reik, and Marcuse applied to the social as observed and documented reactions to social abuses and key in the manufacture of knowledge/power relations (Foucault) for purposes of protecting the individuals/groups against further abuses, or "the responsibility of knowledges" e.g., positions of culpability because of knowledge to act", and against feelings of isolation, anomie, remorse and powerlessness.

In this investigation into the problematic of silence the following questions have been asked:

- A. What is the nature of silence?
- B. Is silence social? How so?
- C. If so, how does it configure in the sociological notional lexicon?
- D. If silences are social, what do they have in common?
- E. If the silences show differences, why are they all silences"?
- F. Given the possibility of construction of a taxonomy of social silences, in what sense are the types or units of social silence issue or movement related?
- G. Given the connection of social movements to the activity of agency, what is the relevance of social silences

to social control, social amnesia, to repression/oppression /supression, to agency?

H. How and with what effects do the historicocultural contexts frame social silences? Conversely, how do social silences participate in the framing of specific cultural and historical moments?

What has been asserted is :

- (1) Exploitative or oppressive social relations cannot operate without silencing as an integral process
- (2) The most effective and pernicious social silencing is not from constraint, but is "spontaneous", or self created (cultural silencing)
- (3) The components of this silencing are the mechanisms of repression, amnesia, denial, shame, aphasia documented in psychiatric canon, yet also operating as a group dynamics, whereby they conceal social realities, and bolster "social facts."
- (4) Locations or sites for creating the state of mind receptive to "social silencing" are those of socialization and education.
- (5) The processes which insure that social silencing "takes" within those locations

(5) (continued)

are those of behaviorism and social conditioning, with negative conditioning through punishment the dominant scheme.

The paradigm for this process is that of the abuse model.

- (6) Whether a group is powerful and has much to lose by “breaking the silences”, or is less or least powerful, and has considerable gain by “breaking the silences”, the inhibitory mechanisms are parallel, or, perhaps even equivalent. Fear and shame engender silence and feed silences.
- (7) After a while, the silencing becomes so “naturalized” that it is unacknowledgeable, and to all intentions and purposes, constructed as part of the “truth” of the every day. At this point, the members of a group or profession lose their individual self- determination and become part of the “group mind” which is itself preoccupied with sustaining the “group image” and maintaining solidarity through concensus.
- (8) Every individual’s sense of inadequacy is bolstered by merging within a sense of group solidarity, partly composed of forms of denial and silencing, which excuses or overlooks, or obfuscates the doubts of the members

(8) (continued)

(about their individual inadequacies)

- (9) **Social Silence** is a function of the construction of knowledge/power relations. It is a situation of both.
Social silences are constitutive of and constituted by knowledge/power relations.

A Theoretical “Notion” of Social Silence

To invoke a notional strategy for the grounding of a theory of social silence, or a theoretical hermeneutic, implies that a notion of silence embedded in the social can be used in the exact and applied sciences.

I would question, is the notion of silence ontologically inapplicable in Western history? Our experience in the West is that critical theories have mainly been descriptive, post hoc, at best. This approach is a theoretical crossover approach embodying a multioriented foundation in notions some of which are well known and documented in the fields of psychology and sociology (repression, socialization, social fact, abuse), while other notions are derived from Eastern religion and philosophy. Also, some notions, such as the “unthought known” are contested breakthroughs which are untested, and, by their very nature, are not, like Freud’s hypotheses, testable under known scientific conditions. I cannot prove a notion of social silence through verification or falsification by means of experiment and predictive applications in the very concrete sense of scientific method. I can only offer an analytic paradigm upon which the case studies and examples pattern a notional field. I offer no blueprint to map the enormity of social sciences across the institutions of the social. This is not a formal analysis, for I cannot predict the deployment of social silence, or generalize it. All I offer is a contingent notion of silence in the social spaces, with some caution as to the indeterminacy dependent upon situation, and the complementarity of this notion to a number of consistent social case studies.

Silence is as a definition, only the absence of sound. All other uses of silence as metaphors; i.e. something or other resembles or reminds us of the absence of sound. So the social silences are all metaphors, and a process or series of processes goes on in the social which are difficult to describe and simplify and but are united by the resemblance to the absence of sound . As such, they may very well not have one essential characteristic. Indeed, it may be better to consult Wittgenstein and his notion of family resemblances.³

Social silence is characterized as the absence of discourse, for any reasons, positive or negative. Since the social is saturated with, and often defined by discourses, then the absence of discourse, the silencing of that discourse, must be social in character precisely.

Basic starting points for an analysis of silence included in this work are:

1. Social silences is a universal phenomenon, i.e, it has comprehensive "effects"
2. Social silences have transhistorical and transcultural aspects
3. Social silences are a key component in the formation of knowledge/power axes

3. Family resemblances: by which members of a group show, rather than a number of necessary and sufficient characteristics, "families" of characteristics, not all or any of which must be present in all members.

4. Throughout periods, each epoch is marked by its predominant forms of social silence

After the past number of ruminations on these pages, I ask again "What is silence?"

It seems my answer to this inquiry is the following:

Silence is not a quality, a space, an essence, or a thing as the metaphysical thinkers, and poets would like us to believe.

It is an epiphenomenal process which is known through its effects.

Silence appears to be a series of processes, not all the same, but with a similar identity called silence which indicates that information/feelings/identity/discourse have disappeared in social and cultural relations.

The reasons for this existence of silence are varied and may change conditionally.

However, silence, seems upon investigation, to fall into 4 specific categories or forms:

Political, Cultural, Sacred, and Acoustic.

Some of these main categories have subcategories of types: e.g.,

Cultural

(A) Popular or Demos

(B) Intramural:

Professional/Administrative/ Saturated

Sacred

(A) Spiritual : Eastern or Western

(B) Organic

These forms appear transhistorically, and across cultures in different mixes. Some epochs emblemize a specific form as prevalent over other forms, some periods show a mixture of forms. Political and Cultural Silencing are not necessarily chronological, the complexity of the social silences may not increase in proportion to the complexity of the state. For example, all forms of tyranny depend not primarily on political or brutal silencing, as common sense would have it, but must also have a basis in cultural silencing.

All tyrannies from the days of the Pharaoh on rest on the basis of acquiescence of the people to the divine right of kings. This need to believe in divine rights ceded to rulers their power over the people by the people. There was a silence, a cultural silence in this assent. This is the "truth" or social fact which maintained the system, and the cultural silence, once again, the glue which cemented the cohesion of the social fact. Despite, evidence to the contrary, (kings were not Gods, Kings and nobles were often all too fallible, corrupt and cruel to "deserve" to rule), the belief persisted and the tyranny maintained. Since there was not enough (and never will be enough) armed guards or military to physically restrain or terrorize the populations (political or brutal silencing), a belief system enforcing silence about the experienced realities ("Emperor has no clothes" syndrome) has been more efficient. Political or brutal silencing is employed on those members of a population who "break the silence", attempt to expose the contradiction or fallacy (the fact the Emperor has no clothes), for if they don't believe, then, harsher physical measures (prison camps, death) are taken to do away with the instigator and to maintain the cultural silences, by not requiring the public to recognize their own repression of the evidence.

And so, silence has begun in its social usages to evolve as a sign of what must be suppressed, of what is ignored, of what must be erased from consciousness, or kept under consciousness. In this way silence fulfills an active function of hiding from legitimation what is important, or drawing away attention from what is significant, critical or integral to a problem or a condition. Silence is the process by which we exclude, erase what is

pertinent, critical or important, while it is also the process by which we cover-up or drown-out and therefore, obliterate what is real, problematic, contradictory or challenging about persons, issues, problems or positions.

The key question is the old Roman Law question: "cui bono?" "who benefits"? It varies as to the kind of information kept in silence or the kind of person who has information (qui bono) and keeps it silent. The question is not only who keeps or is kept silent, but for whose benefit, and for what purposes? Social silences disparate classification is a function of knowledge (the keeping away from) power relations in society. For even the Trappist monk's seemingly voluntary silence is seduced/influenced by a power: i.e.,

"we agree to keep silent (as penance) because of the
prevalence of sin in the world."

The theoretical notion of a social silence is constructed out of the notional base of the social, repression, social amnesia, the conscience collective, the unthought known, socialization and social fact. It can be said that silence holds these processes together, If silence is broken, things become revealed, and a reaction, social or individual happens. When silence is broken, then a change in effect and action happens. This analysis speaks about a process revealed if silence is not there. It is a deductive focus, which proves existence from something it is not. The mechanisms which instill the efficacy of silence (the protein in the

glue) is abuse, maltreatment and cultural sadomasochism.⁴ Examples of the effect of silence (silence institutionalized in the social) is the tenacity of administrative and bureaucratic structures and professional languages.

Social silence is social. It has social effects. Ensconced in this idea, silence is social, is a dispute with postmodern theorists of discourse, that all there is is language, with silence occupying a "empty" or secondary, dependent position. Instead, I propose, that silence is a more lethal, potent ingredient in the effects of discourse. In fact, I feel it is the "tail which wags the dog". Not only is the procedure or process of silence seen to have effects, but these effects are the very grounding of power/knowledge relations, and may, in fact, occupy in some cases, the center of movement, action, effect. Silence, again, may be another form (or process) of knowledge previously unacknowledged, whereby language has no relevance, as in the work of Bollas's "unthought known" (Chapter I V)

Effects are either known or unknown. Known effects of social silence for the purposes of this thesis are seen in the documented case studies of gender, particularly the case of silence and women, in the institution of medicine, particularly the case of physicians and their professional languages, in the media, regarding the Gulf War, and most recently, in the interplay of tensions between the political and social silences in the recent fall of the Soviet Union.

It seems as if the whole civilization is in contention about information and about speech and presentation. This contention takes the place of the idea that civilization is in contention about food, energy, space, air, water, be

4. See Lynn S. Chancer's Sadomasochism in Everyday Life: The Dynamics of Power and Powerlessness. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992.

haviour. There are two plausible explanations for this. One is that speech, discourse is seen as the key to agency, so that if speech were to be opened up, agency/action/ revolution would immediately follow without hesitation. The second is that putting the contention on the linguistic level, at least for intellectuals, removes or obscures the brutal gross realities of social misery and conflict. It induces individuals and groups to forget about the raw social realities, power relations and their gross effects, and, instead talk about the problems of the naming.

Coming from a Foucaultian standpoint grandfathered out of Hegel, the issue of how the question is framed is of more importance than which side of the question you are on. There has to be a reason why discourse and silence is more of an issue today with its primacy in postmodernism and its dispute in modernism, than machine gun fire and other forms of brutality. The emphasis on discourse, has a potential cosmetic effect in that it buries the brutalities of social life, via mechanisms of repression, denial, selective inattention, substitution. Not simply is it only cosmetic, there is a much shorter fuse between information and action.

In the 80's in the Soviet Union, Gorbachev introduced glasnost, which meant freedom of information (silence breaking) which had tumultuous effects of monstrous proportions. He did not desire the fall of the Soviet system, the destruction of the Communist party or the dissolution of the state mechanism, but all of these things happened within a very few years of introduction, **without a shot being fired.**

Historically, heretofore, in order to have this scope of dramatic social change (remove such an enormous government) the country would have to be bathed in blood. Is it possible that the discourse issue is as powerful/relevant as postmodern philosophers indicate. Is it possible we will fight our civil wars without bullets? Certainly, it is not happening in certain parts of our world in 1992-3, for we are immersed in bloody civil wars in Somalia, Bosnia and Croatia.

What is the difference between a situation like Bosnia where all the information in the world doesn't make any difference in solving a civil/religious war, and a situation in Soviet Union where with information, the government fell?

This represents the difference between political and cultural silencing. Political silence (brutal repression) is represented in Bosnia and because it is a classic example of direct physical repression (silence #1) It was only the direct physical threat of violence from the central government which prevented the outbreak of open civil war in Yugoslavia. The country was always completely split in language and culture and style. Apparently not enough of political silence to go around, the country was not literally an armed camp.

In the Soviet Union, political and cultural silence working in tandem, have a certain amount of force which remains in reserve (surplus brutal silence) in case it is needed if the cultural silences "crack" in spots. Communism is based on hope of a workers paradise' it was an investment of idealism in Soviet idea. Capitalism, on the other hand, is "that what it is", it is the free

market, the competitive "beast in the jungle". This difference is a totally different locus of idealism. Marxism has an idealistic base. What Marxism represented was the hope of no exploitation, of decency, of resources "enough" ("from each according to his ability; to each according to his own needs"⁵), the dream of no more starvation. Marxism is a chiliastic system for the world. Capitalism, a English 18th century natural system, stewed in a Spenserian neo-Darwinism where the fittest (read wealthiest) shall survive.

The Soviet Union fell apart because the hype, the cultural amnesia about the self delusional system supported by a Marxist ideology of idealism was so great that when silence was broken about it, by revealing the real, the self imposed silence by its own idealistic belief created an implosion of that belief and ---- the entire state fell. The Soviet Union for all its prison camps and all its police (KGB, etc), was held together, I posit, by cultural silencing (silence #2). Cultural silencing or "self silencing" of the population occurred about the legal system, the mental health system, the wealth (perks) of aparatchiks, and most importantly, about the illusion of fairness and equal distribution in Marxism. An example was the self enforced silence of the people about the debacle of the decade of the Afgan War (1970's-1980's), despite the stories (rumours) brought home by returning soldiers. The greatest bitterness in the fall of the Soviet Union was directed against the " Revolutionary Expediency" behind which this Police State hid.

5. Carl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Communist Manifesto (trans first published, 1888.) Introduction and notes A J P Taylor. New York: Penguin Books, 1967.

All philosophy is said to be a search for freedom. Based on that premise, it could also be said that all philosophy's methodology in the search for freedom is nothing more than a breaking up of the silences surrounding all forms of ignorance and oppression. On that note, the knowledge/power complexes imbued in relations of inequality, hierarchy, oppression are kept there because of social silences. The work of revealing and breaking the silences (creation of agency and assertive behaviors) is that of the work of emancipation. In line with the Foucaultian understanding of processes of power, the understanding of processes of social silence can be a liberatory agenda. Such is the effect in breaking the silences covering over injustices. The characterizations in the taxonomy of social silence are occasioned by what and who has to be silenced.

Silence is thought of as being full, i.e., coded as full,⁶ and one thinks of a group or individual being held in silence, they are not just held in silence because of silence #1 political silencing, or silence #2 cultural silencing, but also because of silence #3 sacred silence, silence because of the inadequacy of language. In liberating groups or individuals out of silence, then it doesn't make sense to liberate them out of silence into a language which is not only (1) idiomatic to repression, and (2) inadequate to express what is in/of the silence. It is like saying to the native Americans:

6. See text Part I, Chapters II and III.

“here’s a grant, get an education, go to work in a company”

and after hearing that, they reply:

**“what about our relationship to the land and the land’s
relationship to God?”**

The response is, “that’s not part of our discourse!” (A silencing in itself.). This inadequacy, this hunger, this lack, is not just characteristic of native Americans, it is characteristic of everyone. It is very difficult to “maneuver” the language to create a supposed PC (politically correct) discourse which would have spaces for these things of and in silence. There is a limit to the utility of using our minds for naming things. Our chief method for dealing with personal misery, for example, is therapy. Therapy consists of exchanges of language, discourses, that is aimed at an understanding which has its goal to liberate the individual from their misery. The frustrations of the most determined therapy devotees indicate there is a limit for how much one can do by exchanging language.⁷

7. With paranoid behavior, it is common for the patient’s defenses to become “too clever”, for example to be amenable or touched by the traditional verbal therapeutic methodologies.

The current vogue for workshops in alternative medicine centered around physicality---screaming, hugging, chanting, laying on of hands, dancing, massages, etc, indicate the limits of discourse to provide relief. There may be certain parts of the self, or the group that are not the province of language.⁸ and that language can't reach. That thirst for physicality demonstrates the thirst for what is beyond discourse , the thirst for reaching and releasing what remains in silence because it can't (or has not yet) been named.

There are two possible responses to this dilemma: to create an alternative language, or new "pockets" in the language. But the results of this could turn out to be just tokenism or co-optation. The other alternative is to deal with alternative life styles and behaviors, those which have not yet atrophied under these cultures. In order to open up alternatives (difference, the other, anything coded on the margins of society) , it is necessary to crush hierarchical rankings and valuations for which language and discourse are primary. Kristeva said:

" you cannot have a thought unless it's in language".

"if it's not in language it is not a thought"⁹ .

8. See text Chapter IV "The Unthought Known"

9. Julia Kristeva Language the Unknown. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989. pp.34

If this is so, then most of social life doesn't involve thinking. And all nonverbal activity (mentioned above and inclusive of music, art, physical activities, spontaneous group and individual interaction, emotions, sensuous eroticism and free sexuality, "unconscious and pre-consciousness processes, and the unthought known) exist only on a secondary, "otherized" and "downsized" level of non-identity.

Society and the disciplines today are struggling with the impotence of language. In modernism, God was pronounced dead, and language all that was left. In postmodernism, Hassan has declared the inutility of discourses.¹⁰ And, silence has become emblematic of our times. This is a period which is "up for grabs," but seemingly not within the purview of language as we know it.

Silence is a paradox. On one hand silence represents some kind of tragic loss of not being allowed to speak. On the other hand, it simultaneously represents a source and a hope, an undiscovered terrain of unexhausted sentiments and knowledges.

10. See Chapter I #11

APPENDIX

Theory in a Nutshell

Social life doesn't exist without silence. It is everywhere but it is confused. I claim the "the everywhere-ness of silence. This important because

I claim that silence is social. How is it demonstrated?

When theorists write about silence they write about it as an empty space behind language, or a platform table supporting language."silence is thought of as a bed for language." Lit is descriptive, descriptive, descriptive. These contributions confuse any discussion of silence. Not a social or political meaning. Not a process or dynamic in the social causing an effect.

I construct categories of social silence. The two main categories are political and cultural , does this exhaust the spectrum?

Two major categories of silence

1 Political or brutal

2 Cultural self administered

Also speak about sacred and acoustic

Political and cultural are related. If there wasn't any political, there couldn't be any cultural silencing. Political or brutal is prior as always remains as the ultimate means of silencing

Social relations cannot operate on brutal alone. They have to have cultural. Usually misread as something else (things are not what they seem) i.e., popular support, acquiescence, democracy, freedom, responsible government, responsible citizenship, etc

In order to be culturally silenced have to be socialized group membership. Lean cultural silencing as part of general socialization., so that it is almost inseparable from your identity. Socialization on the power starved groups is socialization on the abuse model.

The military model or management team (masculine) is the model for powered groups. Their model is the "team" or "gang". On the medical team, the rubric is that "we're team players," etc.

With respect to the two paradigms of power; there are differences in silence between the empowered and those lacking it .

Cultural silencing and acting stupid

Cultural silencing and acting smart

all in the service of forgetting

Women are kept in subjugation, as a power starved group. Subjugation and power starvation are linked to silencing.(an example treats women as sui generis)

Originally silence is #1 Political silencing, but it evolves to cultural silencing silence #2, following the abuse model.

**Why pick women as a case study; Why pick medicine as a case study
How are the case studies different. How are they similar.?**

Women's voices are silenced historically, a constant process of burying under and denegration (no girl Socrates, just girl nurse) which are elements in the social forgetting of their work. There is no precedent for heriosm, for speech, in addition to the socialization of denegration, the result is character

ological deformation. So that we arrive at the stereotypes the talking without saying anything dunce) In the course of this complicated cultural silencing, the original brutal silencing is forgotten (everything that women do to conceal brutality from themselves and each other acts as a support for the argument that women are actually inferior and down because of some innate lack, and they hold each other down--if women are holding each other down, the fact that men are holding them down is concealed --Cultural silencing half the human race is afflicted with the vapors) and the secondary nature is naturalized.

This self silencing behavior of subordinate or power starved groups epitomizes the behavior of subordinate groups that are not in open rebellion. (like the old fashioned way to teach children not to confront the system) to avoid rights, to avoid their own anger in order to avoid political silencing. Subjugated groups tend to use cultural silencing to spare themselves the awareness and the pain of brutal silencing.

The silence of the powerful is exemplified by professional groups. It is the explicit keeping of secrets (e.g., not to testify against another physician) and secondly, the spontaneous human curiosity and desire to argue and to criti

cize. I.e., to rock the boat, is stifled and through silencing has disappeared. What is at stake is the power of the field in general and the the amount of prestige and power, perks and status, i.e., conditioned rewards in a field. What the examples show is that there needs to be no constraint, no brutality, no threat used to make members silent. It is "second nature". Silence is itself silenced. This silence is so ubiquitous and automatic that when candor haphazardly appears, it is a social shock, almost a crisis.

The powerless silence themselves to doge blows, the powerful silence themselves to preserve power. However, the mechanism of cultural silencing (which is shutting off the mind before it gets to expression) is , very similar or correspondent. What units both power laden and power starved under the category of cultural silencing is that "the group thinks for you" an analogy of Janis's "groupthink"(19) The ethos of the group in reinforcing this cultural silence is necessary and sufficient. (Can't do without it") The participation of the group aids the subconsciousness of the process of "forgetting " impulses (intuitive, individual reactive) of resistance to a noxious or unspeakable deed."Your don't need to think we think for you." If you think, then you

fall out of group identity, and then, in some cases, you are shot as a traitor) For example, Serbian soldiers raping in Bosnia in a systematic way are normalized, i.e., rid of individual consciousness because it replaced by a "share" of the group consciousness. They silence on an individual basis their intuitive, individual resistance to participate in harsh unnatural acts.

Descartes cogito stakes out all the spiritual ground for the mind the epitome of the mind is a rational discourse Believe this, science, academics take the place of the theologians of yore what doesn't fit (reduce itself to rational arguments) into rational discourse and language, writing and speaking, doesn't exist. The intellectuals make language rules to ensure certain things can't be discussed and they remain silenced. Women silenced because no place for them keeps things out of discourse.

SOCIAL SILENCE QUIZ

- 1 I claim the "the everywhere-ness of silence. Why is this important?
- 2 I claim that silence is social. How is it demonstrated?
3. I construct categories of social silence. The two main categories are political and cultural , does this exhaust the spectrum?
4. I construct categories of social silence. The two main categories are political and cultural , does this exhaust the spectrum?
- 5 . I assert relevance of social silences to knowledge/power nexus. Demonstrate/explain.
6. I assume the inability of sociology and other fields to theorize silence, justify.
7. Why pick women as a case study?

8 Why pick medicine as a case study?

9. How are the case studies different. How are they similar.?

10. What, if anything does social silence have to do with agency?

11. The right to keep silence is supposed to be sacred, making others silent is oppressive. Is it the same silence? What is the relation/contradiction?

**FACT SHEET/ FRIENDLY GUIDE
TO THE SOCIAL SILENCES**

- 1. I claim silence is a significant but uninvestigated subject in the social sciences.**
- 2. I claim the “the everywhere-ness” of silence. The universality of silence is demonstrated by the embedded quality of silence in languages; it is evidenced by the number and extent of metaphorical references in spoken and inscribed language. The overdetermined metaphorical aspect of silence because silences are “hard to describe”, and therefore, don’t easily fit into definitions.**
- 3. I claim silence is a social phenomenon. It is a social entity because of observable effects in social relations. Silence has evolved as a sign of what must be suppressed, of what is ignored, of what must be erased from consciousness, or, kept under consciousness. Silence is the process by which we exclude, erase what is pertinent, critical or important, while it is also the process by which we cover-up, drown out or obliterate what is real, problematic, contradictory or challenging about persons, issues, problems or positions.(p 237)**
- 4. As there is a knowledge/power relation there is a silence/power relation as well.**

Not only is the process of silence seen to have effects, but these effects are the grounding of knowledge/power relation and may in fact, occupy in some cases, the center of movement, action, effect

5. Social Silence theorizing is based on a foundation of notions in social sciences: the social, social control, repression, social fact, unthought known(p78)

6. Social silence forethinkers (with respect to social notions) are:

**Freud, Breuer, Simmel, Hegel, Marx, Jung, Durkheim, Merton, Ross,
Gibbs, Parsons, Gramsci, Weber, Foucault, Bolas, Cixous, Irigaray, Walkerdine**

7. Definitions p 28.

8. Assumptions:(pp 29,.235)

9. CATEGORICAL SCHEMATA

CATEGORIES:

(descriptions on pp. 30, 31***50,51,54,55, 57,58,61-68,74-81,

(1) **Political** (Brutal)

(2) **Cultural**

Popular (Power starved)

Elite or Intramural (Powerful)

(professional, administrative, bureaucratic)

(3) **Sacred**

Spiritual

Eastern

Western

Organic (Deep silence)

(originary)

(preverbal)

(preconscious/subconscious)

(post verbal)

(4) **Acoustic** (Natural, measurable)

VECTORS: (p. 240)

- 1. The withholding of information or knowledge from another (a subordinate)**
- 2. The withholding of information/knowledge from another within a group**
- 3. The group withholding information/knowledge from competing groups**
- 4. The group withholding information/knowledge from the public sphere**
- 5. The state withholding information/knowledge from the public**

10 PROCESS (P 229)

**Remember the individual or group spontaneously develops
cultural silencing because :**

- A. To avoid pain (pure behaviorism) (B) To forget that there is constraint**

11 MECHANISMS: (p 204, 219 233-240)

Cultural Silence:

- 1. socialized repression**
- 2. socialized “protective masochism” (T. Reik)**
- 3. socialized denial (wholesale falsification of the reality; the flip side of repression)**
- 4. saturation or “white noise”**
- 5. Amnesia or auto-innoculation**
- 6. Aphasia (you know, but you can’t speak)**

12 ASSERTIONS (p 30)

- (1) Exploitative or oppressive social relations cannot operate without silencing as an integral process
- (2) The most effective and pernicious social silencing is not from constraint, but from “spontaneous”, or self created (cultural silencing)
- (3) The components of this silencing are the mechanisms of repression, amnesia, denial, shame, aphasia documented in psychiatric canon, yet also operating as a group dynamics, whereby they conceal social realities, and bolster “social facts.”

4) Prime locations or sites for creating the state of mind receptive to “social silencing” are those of socialization and education.

(5) The processes which insure that social silencing “takes” within those locations are those of behaviorism and social conditioning, with negative conditioning through punishment the dominant scheme. The paradigm for this process is that of the abuse model.

(6) Whether a group is powerful and has much to lose by “breaking the silences”, or is less or least powerful, and has considerable gain by “breaking the silences”, the inhibitory mechanisms are parallel, or, perhaps even equivalent. Fear and shame engender silence and feed silences.

(7) After a while, the silencing becomes so “naturalized” that it is unacknowledged and to all intentions and purposes, constructed as part of the “truth” of the every day. At this point, the members of a group or profession lose their individual self-determination and become part of the “group mind” which is itself preoccupied with sustaining the “group image” and maintaining solidarity through consensus.

(8) Every individual's sense of inadequacy is bolstered by merging within a sense of group solidarity, partly composed of forms of denial and silencing, which excuse or overlooks, or obfuscates the doubts of the members (about their individual inadequacies)

(9) Social Silence is a function of the construction of knowledge/power relations. It is a situation of both. Social silences are constitutive of and constituted by knowledge/power relations. As we have knowledge/power relations so do we have silence/power relations.

Methodology

The unit of analysis is a taxonomy of social silences based on identification of the dictionary definitional categories of silence linked with evidences of silence as seen in social behaviors and activities within a pre-selected institution of the social: the institution of medicine. The institution of medicine is chosen as the primary site of analysis. Focus will target those identified "social" silences which exhibit evidence affecting the process and procedures of the institution in question.

The primary investigative technique of the problematic of a social silence is the use of a case study methodology. Case studies are obtained from medical records, qualitative interviews of physicians and staff, material reported in team case conferences, and literature or journal review. A qualitative content analysis of silences as documented within the 3 forms of medical case studies will be performed. The aspects of those medical records reviewed include the first social and medical data information section, the admitting notes to acute hospital or clinic, the physician's diagnosis (s), initial and final summaries of physician's notes, social worker's notes, nurse's notes, physical therapist's notes, psychologist's notes, various sections of patient progress notes and the discharge note.

More specifically the case studies represent:

- (a) Participant observation of a medical team staff meeting during the episodes of "team grand rounds" presenta

tions of patient progress in a major medical center located in New York City over a time period from 1990-1991. The method of inscription for team conferences is on site observation of the process with documentation of the episode in field notes.

(b) The examination of 45 historical records, in particular, medical case histories, of admitted patients in both the acute hospital and rehabilitation hospital to a major medical center located in New York City over a time period of 1990-1992.

(c) A review of supporting administrative and journal documentation of selected cases or incidents is such journals as : Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine, Journal of the American Medical Association, New England Journal of Medicine, Scholarly Inquiry for Nursing Practice, Geriatric Rehabilitation Preview, The Student Physician, Millbank Memorial Fund Quarterly/ Health and Society, etc. which reflect instances of socially created silences within the institution of medicine.

(d) Interview of medical staff, including physicians, in order to document examples of an utterances or conversations relating to silence among medical personnel, and in particular, physicians, that demonstrate silence(s) in everyday practices. 53 interviews were held over a period of 1 1/2 years (1990-1992), 75 % of these interviews were held with physicians, the balance 25% were held with other professionals, nurses, social workers, psychologists and quality assurance and admitting case reviewers. Interviews were documented in field notes, prepared with a qualitative interview guide prepared by this writer. The majority of the interviews with physicians focused on questions of an open-ended style requesting them to discuss "difficult

cases" which involved decision making about "whether to tell the patient or not about the newly discovered terminal diagnosis and prognosis?" Another type of question having to do with the state mandating the silencing of a professional group such as physicians is the question asked in a recent sample of "What do you feel about the recent administrative rules applied to abortion counseling whereby a professional in federally funded clinics may not relate the full range of options, and in particular the abortion choice, to the client /patient."?

(e) Interviews with individuals representing nursing and physician assistant organizations, associations and accredited programs and schools.

Professor Yard

CULTURAL SILENCE

Are you a victim of cultural silencing? Ask yourself these questions:

1. (a) Have you ever had the experience that when you are beginning to talk about yourself, something that means something to you, that the person changes the subject or talks over your words?

Discuss a, b, and c. *yes*

(b) When you are interrupted, do you give up/forget what you were saying? *sometimes*

(c) Or, decide that what you were saying wasn't important enough for you to make the effort to retrieve the conversation?

sometimes

2. When you start off to do something for yourself do you find yourself derailed into anxiety, into fatigue, or into doing something for someone else? Discuss.

Yes. It is easier to avoid what I should do in favor of what I want to do. Anxiety usually makes me work longer and harder, but not necessarily more effectively.

9. After discussing compelling theories that really involve your life in women's studies you go out on a date, with a friend, lover or husband, but--you say to yourself: "I would never bring up these things with him!"

Who needs more trouble?"

Discuss: It depends who the date is, and how intimate we are. Some people you can discuss anything with, other, you are afraid to open your mouth

Homosexuality and Silence*

Are you a victim of cultural silencing? Ask yourself these questions.

1.(a) Have you ever had the experience that when you are beginning to talk about yourself, something that means something to you, that you have to change gender references, in order to feel like you belong. Discuss.

(b) When you are questioned about your private life, do you give up/change the subject or just avoid the topic altogether?

(c) Or, decide that what you were saying wasn't important enough for you to make the effort to be honest.

(d) What actually happens when you do "grab the spotlight" and do speak openly about yourself, how does it feel?

2. When you start to do something positive for yourself , as a homosexual, do you find yourself derailed into anxiety, into fatigue, or into doing something for someone else? Discuss

3. Do you know any homosexuals who have done something for themselves in the "real" world? Discuss.

4. When you have done something for yourself in the world, meaningful to yourself, do you pay a price for it in some way? i.e. headaches, stomachaches, cramps, anxiety attacks, etc? Discuss

5. Do you believe that self sacrifice is a necessary part of a good life? Discuss.

6. Do people who talk about homosexuals, who are activists or raise gay issues seem abnormal or creepy?

7. After discussing things that really have meaning in your life in a woman's or gay studies group, then go out with a friend, lover or family member do you say to yourself "I would never bring up these things with them. who needs the trouble." Discuss.

8. So you feel the following are: (a) good people. (b) bad people, (c) suspect people, (d) no feeling

Lifestyle

Single woman, no children
Single mother, not working
Single mother, working
Two women living together
Two women, with children, living together
Two men living together
Two men, with children, living together
Single father working
Single father not working
Single man, no children

Mark either a, b, c, or d next to lifestyle

* The questions contained in this questionnaire are adapted from the original questionnaire on Women and Silence compiled and distributed by Professor Margaret Yard at Womenpower II, the second annual Women's Studies Conference at The College of Staten Island, November 14, 1992. Adaptions were made by Meri Kaufman.

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