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The Existential Phenomenology of Hazel E. Barnes: Toward a Theory of Existential Leadership

Jen Jones

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THE EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGY OF HAZEL E. BARNES:
TOWARD A THEORY OF EXISTENTIAL LEADERSHIP

A Dissertation

Submitted to the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Jen Jones

May 2014

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Jen Jones

2014

THE EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGY OF HAZEL E. BARNES:
TOWARD A THEORY OF EXISTENTIAL LEADERSHIP

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Approved February 28, 2014

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ABSTRACT

THE EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGY OF HAZEL E. BARNES: TOWARD A THEORY OF EXISTENTIAL LEADERSHIP

By

Jen Jones

May 2014

Dissertation supervised by Dr. Janie Harden Fritz

This project engages the Existential Phenomenology of Hazel E. Barnes to demonstrate that in being-in-the-world, the world and engagement with others are prior to being. Barnes makes a significant contribution to Existential Phenomenology with her idea of good faith where, not naïve to human suffering, situatedness provides meaning and human relations offer opportunity for learning. After providing a biographical and philosophical background of Barnes, discussion turns to the idea of *mythology* posited as an interpretive approach for studying the human condition. Myth continues as a cultural element for Existential dwellings, where group-in-fusion praxis is situated within organizations. Discussion then moves from group to Existential interpersonal relations with looking-at-the-world-together, which involves love, imagination, and communicative learning to fulfill projects and find meaning in organizations. Dwelling

places and engagement with others provide a meeting of horizons where Existential leaders emerge. Ideas are put into practice with Existential education, an alternative to Humanistic education, where universities may be dwelling places for the Existential engagement of ideas. Existential education does not provide answers or prescription, but offers hope for enlarging students' existence with others in the life world.

A biographical and philosophical background of Hazel E. Barnes is provided to situate her life and philosophy within the philosophy of Existentialism. Barnes is credited for bringing Existentialism to the United States with her translation of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*; however, her own works make significant contribution to the philosophy by reinterpreting Existentialist metaphors within a framework of good faith. Barnes lived during an historical moment of disruption where the meta-narrative of Modernity's guiding universal precepts failed to deliver its optimistic promises. Barnes's Existentialism offers a response to the demands of this moment. She found that the ideas of freedom and responsibility in Existentialism offer hope for human existence. Without determining precepts found in Modern Capitalism and Objectivism, which may be viewed in bad faith, organizations and leaders are free to choose their actions, and in good faith, be responsible for their actions within human communities.

Interpretive research is utilized as an approach, rather than a method, to reveal understanding from contributions of Barnes's work for implications in contemporary communication, organizational, and leadership studies. Barnes provides insight for a new horizon of doing interpretive research, posited here as *mythodology*. Her works provide ground for an Existential Phenomenological approach for doing research with the aim of garnering understanding of the human condition. Barnes claims that the Greek Dramatists

are relevant to the everydayness of contemporary life where characters experience life and interact with others in a world of shifting values. In a Postmodern moment of narrative and virtue contention, her observation of shifting values and lack of centralization is particularly relevant to negotiating what it means to be-in-the-world. She argues that in these Classical works, tragedy emerges from Existential choices characters make rather than from some irrational force. Her idea of tragicomedy blends the tragic and comedic—a search for a different way of being combined with temporal understanding and reminder that real life often interrupts and changes preconceived plans. While certainly far from scientific, myths offer salient means of understanding human experience that quantitative data cannot provide. In the spirit of interpretive research, Barnes posits that myths respond to questions that emerge in historical moments, which opens more questioning rather than providing answers.

The idea of dwelling situates individual human freedom. Barnes reinterprets Heidegger's idea of dwelling as a locality to that of a cultural climate. Discussion then turns to Sartre's idea of group dynamics in group-in-fusion praxis, which Barnes interprets as rhetorical excitement within dwellings. These ideas present an opportunity to forge a new understanding of organizations as Existential dwellings, which redirects questions about *being* to questions about *doing*. Depicting organizations as such displaces the necessity for responding to whether organizations can have agency, consciousness, or authenticity. From a Barnesean perspective, organizations can never possess subjectivity solely allocated to humans, but organizations are not mere objective facts of brick and mortar, either—they are the nexus of present and past human subjectivity offering

Existential dwellings for group-in-fusion praxis directed toward horizons of organizational and societal freedom.

Barnes reinterprets Sartre's position on interpersonal relationships as Hell with an alternative view of others as Heaven. She recognizes the serious lack of philosophical development of love in Existentialism with the majority of discussion devoted to cynicism, despair, and bad faith in human relations. Her philosophical development on love begins with the concrete and particular. Primarily, she believes that within the framework of Existentialism, good faith toward the Other, as a free subject, cannot be denied or destroyed; however, she asserts that Existentialism must move beyond this perspective through love, imagination, and communicative learning. Under these conditions, decision-making in organizations is moved out of the mind of the individual to engagement with others where Existential projects are fulfilled and meaning is discovered together.

The Existential self may be understood as a temporal embedded identity, which is always in flux and always connected to others' stories and larger dwellings. Barnes posits that people are not necessarily authors of their stories, but narrators who interpret their place in a story from a particular point of view. She presents the idea of people as a unique universal, which accounts for the influence of time and place on one's being as well as self-making. As one's place temporally changes from where one projects oneself into future possibilities, so too does reflection on one's past change temporally. Barnes challenges people to act in good faith—to meet Existential moments by choosing values within situations and with others. Barnes's perspective has been omitted in recent

discussions of Existentialism in Leadership scholarship. Her contribution provides the necessary next step to develop a theory of Existential Leadership.

Barnes, who referred to herself as a teacher first and philosopher second, has a great deal to offer to Existential education. Her works provide constructive insight for questions emerging about a crisis in business schools. Humanism has been offered as an answer to the crisis and as a paradigm shift from Modern Capitalism. While Humanism appears to have good intentions, its presuppositions of universality and individualism may result in a counterfinality of unintended consequences. Humanism grants universal rights to all, which ignores the question of who determines these rights by assuming a homogenous view of human rationality. Additionally, universality does not recognize alterity of human perspectives, cultures, and histories—it implies a sense of sameness. At the same time, individualism places the individual above human traditions granting confidence in the ability to reason above ‘the place’ upon which one stands. Previous ideas are put into practice by positing universities as dwellings for Existential education within the Humanities. Existential education does not provide answers or prescription for remedying the current crisis, but may enlarge students’ existence regarding their freedom and responsibility with others in the life world.

The works of Barnes demonstrate a necessity of a ‘communicative turn’ in business ethics and leadership studies to be responsive to the demands of the historical moment. In the spirit of Hazel Barnes, this project has humbly followed her exemplary works to posit an Existential Leadership that responds to the demands of the historical moment. This project ends with the Existential hope that it may spur additional ideas for future work in order to continue a conversation about human existence.

DEDICATION

To my mom, who believes in me more than anyone else, including me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I first discovered Hazel E. Barnes in a footnote, which led to an amazing discovery of her works as impetus for this project. While she is no longer with us, her words mentored me and will continue to do so as I humbly strive to teach and write in her spirit. I would like to thank Betty Cannon, the literary executor of Barnes's works, who so graciously supported my enthusiasm for developing this project, and who gave me permission to cite Barnes's unpublished essays. I would also like to thank Stephanie Yuhas, Project Archivist, at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Norlin Library, who provided great assistance accessing documents in the Hazel E. Barnes archive.

I would like to thank my committee for their support. Dr. Janie Harden Fritz embodies Barnes's idea of Existential love. I am honored to have her as the chair for this project. Once I discovered Hazel Barnes, Dr. Ronald C. Arnett encouraged me to explore her works, which resulted in the most wonderful journey of academic research. Dr. Erik Garrett introduced me to the world of Phenomenology, to which I hope to dwell in my continued scholarly work. I am forever grateful to this committee, who each, in her or his own way, made a positive impact on my life, and through grace, taught me to meet the Existential moment.

The support of my family and friends were fundamental to the completion of this project. I would like to thank my dear husband, who with an Existential spirit, continually uplifts my confidence, and reminds me that where people begin does not determine their future. My grandparents' spirits sustained my soul while I worked. Additionally, I would like to thank my doctoral peers who became lasting good friends and made the

experience personally fulfilling. Finally, I would like to thank the many women in my life who reached out, provided opportunities for personal and professional development, and offered their support to me. I promise to pay their efforts forward.

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CHAPTER 1

An Introduction to Hazel Barnes: Existential Encounter with Persons and Ideas

Hazel E. Barnes is most frequently noted as the translator of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (1943). However, her own works, which have largely been ignored by scholars, have a great deal to offer towards understanding human conditions as free within situated and communicative dwellings in the life world. Specifically, her works offer philosophical depth and communicative understanding to emerging ideas in business ethics and leadership within an historical moment that is challenging the ideals of Modern Capitalism. This project begins with an introduction to Barnes's life and philosophy to orient readers to her background and situate her within Existential philosophy. Discussion then turns to her historical moment of disruption of the 1960s and 1970s that fractured a meta-narrative of Modernity and revealed multiplicity of human conditions for postmodernity. Specifically, this chapter acknowledges emerging conceptions of Capitalism and how organizations and leaders may respond in good faith in a fragmented marketplace. The review reveals opportunities for exploration of Existentialism in organizational studies to make a scholarly contribution by providing a Barnesean perspective.

This multi-level review opens new opportunities where Barnes's works may philosophically ground and orient contemporary theory in organizational and leadership studies in order to move toward an understanding of Existential Leadership. However, first an interpretive approach utilized in this project is described and extended to the idea of Existential interpretive scholarship, which argues myths are vital to reveal understanding to questions undertaken during scholarly research. While dominated by

social scientific approaches, interpretive approaches are emerging in communication, organizational, and leadership studies to which Barnes may provide support and additional insight. After this scholarly approach has been established, the project will move from macro, to meso, to micro perspectives and conclude with a discussion of the interplay of these levels described as a meeting of horizons. Each chapter begins with a review of contemporary theory in order to frame the discussion and identify areas where Barnes's philosophy may offer contribution. Additionally, the project transitions from organizational to interpersonal, in order to situate a new understanding of Existential leadership. By doing so, this project brings together two arguments in the leadership literature—leadership is inseparable from ethics (Ciulla, 1998) and leadership is inseparable from communication (Ashman & Lawler, 2008). Overall, this project takes an approach aptly described as “going nowhere correctly” (Arnett, 2010b) to humbly contribute to a conversation about meaningfulness in human existence that began more than two-thousand years ago.

A Biographical and Philosophical Background of Hazel Barnes

Hazel E. Barnes (1915–2008) was an American philosopher credited for bringing Existentialism to the United States. What ultimately developed into a scholarly journey in Existentialism began with a student's question posed to her to whom she had insufficient answer: “What is this Existentialism everybody is talking about?” Pondering this question, she was led to translate Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (1943) from French to English, followed by her own contribution to Existentialism with the books, *Humanistic Existentialism: The Literature of Possibility* (1959), *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967), and *Sartre* (1974b). Her hosting of the National Public Television series, “Self

Encounter: A Study in Existentialism” (1962) further exposed the American population to Sartre’s philosophy. The fact that her scholarship began with a student’s question is fitting to her fervent commitment as an educator—always acknowledging herself as a teacher first and a philosopher second.

Perhaps this attitude developed in her through the example of her father, who was a high school teacher, and the first person she discusses in a section called “The People in My World” in her autobiography, *The Story I Tell Myself: A Venture in Existentialist Autobiography* (1997). She was born into a loving yet strict family who emphasized the values of the Free Methodist Church. She also acknowledges the influence of her rebellious aunts who eventually settled in to the religious and cultural expectations of women during that time, which would not restrain Barnes, although she never considered herself a feminist. Rather, prior to the origination of the term, she lived as an Existentialist, utilizing freedom and choice while being grounded in the space of human culture and history.

Barnes grew up the oldest sibling with a younger sister and brother in eastern Pennsylvania outside the town of Wilkes-Barre. Her irritability as an infant, described as ‘born protesting’ by her father, stayed with her as a disobedient child and a maladjusted teenager. However she writes, “My parents and my other adult relatives always made me feel that I was important” and reframed her shortcomings as opportunities for what she “could be” (1997, p. 2). This atmosphere fostered her personal and intellectual development. She describes her family environment growing up feeling “both loved and scorned, boxed in and tenderly nurtured” (p. 2). It was a place that kept her grounded, which thereby gave her freedom to grow.

Her upbringing conveyed to her a human condition historically situated in relation with others. This is exemplified in the family's beliefs to "be in the world but not of it" (1997, p. 6) and to have a genuine desire "to serve others" (p. 9), which consequently lends to the personal development of the mantra important to her family, "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (p. 5). Ultimately, "All of the family took it for granted that to help make the world better was the highest form of self-fulfillment" (p. 9). These ideas were later revealed in her interpretation of Sartre's Existential philosophy of the self as a human being positioned in the context of history and culture among Existential others who are also uniquely situated.

She departs from her family's tradition by becoming an atheist as an adult, but the values she learned as a child remained important to her further development of Existentialism in the realm of ethics. She viewed her father as possessing virtuous qualities of being absolutely genuine and unattached to material things (even though as a child she resented having to live a meager life) (1997, p. 10). He viewed wealth as an opportunity to do more good in the world (p. 11). Rather than providing his children with explicit moral instruction, he told stories containing the moral lesson that "Nasty people try to make trouble in this world, but there are also powerful forces for good, which in the end will triumph" (p. 12). This instilled an attitude in her that she "had both the capacity and obligation" to make her life worthwhile to herself and others (p. 12). Reflecting on her childhood, she recognized a parallel in Sartre's comment on moral development in his biography of Flaubert, *The Family Idiot: Gustave Flaubert* (1971), of the duty for parents to "develop in a child its sense of itself as a free agent, moving 'like a conscious arrow' toward a destiny. A child so favored, Sartre insisted, would never feel wholly lost,

whatever happened” (Barnes, 1997, p. 12). Barnes adds an ethical element that this upbringing prepares a child to contribute to the social good. The pairing of moral and intellectual development is important to Barnes in her teaching and writing, particularly in her text, *The University as the New Church* (1970).

Barnes’s intellectual foundation also began with her father’s instruction in the Pragmatism of William James. Daily, Barnes and her sister memorized and recited passages from James for a small reward of a dime. Barnes recalls a particular passage in James’s popular essay, “Habit” (1890), which remained important to her understanding of ethics as a practice of lived experience.

Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. Of course, this has its good side as well as its bad one. As we become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we become saints in the moral, and authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres, by so many separate acts and hours of work. (p. 127)

Her father sought to build both character and intellect in his children, which he believed were connected in a basic goodness of humankind. The self and its future are created through Existential habit of, in Sartre’s terms, engaged freedom as deliberate choice (Barnes, 1997, p. 15). Barnes’s father cultivated in her the ability to question and reason from a religiously and philosophically grounded place.

Barnes talks about others who surrounded her during childhood, such as her mother, whose most important gift to her was to read for pleasure. Her mother encouraged her to read with her in order to share ideas together (1997, p. 19). As Barnes’s literary interest expanded, despite her mother’s concerns, her exploration was not censored. Her love of reading grew throughout her school years. One of her teachers, Miss Smith, encouraged this pursuit and was fundamental in building Barnes’s self-

confidence. Her exceptional performance in high school academics prepared her intellectually for college, but equally important were the support and encouragement she received from others who believed in her even when she felt ordinary and lacking. They extended grace to her despite being a difficult and cantankerous child. These positive faces helped her put ‘the look’ of imperfection and the guilt associated with it behind her by reflecting on her feelings and translating the experience into self-discovery and renewal. She emerged feeling strong and exhilarated, which propelled her success in high school and college.

Barnes received a scholarship to attend Wilson College. There she encountered others who played a role in her life both academically and personally. She attended college when women were expected to adhere to a modest dress code that prohibited wearing pants; however, women elsewhere in the early days of feminism were wearing jeans. More important than dress to her were the lessons of her female professors, who in addition to extensive teaching of current events, films, books, art, and traveling, conveyed the importance of education, not as “a practical course to fall back on until one got married or in case of unexpected need” but because education and a career was “intrinsically rewarding” (1997, p. 60). Barnes carried this attitude with her throughout her career as both an educator and philosopher.

While Barnes garnered great interest in her Classics studies and teaching practicum, she felt compelled to further her education staying true to James’s avowal that “Joy is conscious growth” (Barnes, 1997, p. 65). However, she was not offered a graduate fellowship and when other opportunities fell through, she found herself following her best friend to graduate school at Yale University with the financial help of

her father. Moving from an environment surrounded by nearly all women in undergraduate school to nearly all men in graduate school, Barnes found the commonality of good inspiring mentors and scholarly inquiry at both institutions. She describes Professor Michael Rostovtzeff as “quintessentially what every teacher of graduate students might hope or strive to be. Instinctively he knew how to guide without controlling, how to make our individual reports a meaningful part of the experience of every member of the class” (p. 78). He also provided her with an appreciation for doing scholarly research. Overall, she was grateful for the faculty’s personal interest in the students’ academic progress (p. 79). Barnes later became an exemplar of this approach—recognized and admired by her colleagues and students alike.

Barnes focused her dissertation study on Plotinus. She was enthralled by his ability to blend rationality and mysticism; however, she remained cautious of his fundamental idea of transcending the material world (Barnes, 1997, p. 82). She found herself in the company of Camus who had “marveled at the aesthetic quality of Plotinus” but whose later work in humanistic Existentialism became antithetical to universal ideals (p. 83). Barnes made a similar transition; however, after becoming a scholar of Sartre, she found the idea of ‘nothingness’ linked the two philosophies. While their understandings of nothingness were dissimilar, “both philosophers demand of their readers the ability to conceive of negation as an active force without making it into a something” (p. 83). After completing her dissertation and graduating, she acquired a position at the Women’s College of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

After two years of teaching there, she accepted a position at Queens College in Charlotte to increase her rank to Associate Professor. She did not intend to become

rooted in this position, but it provided a mystical period in her life of conversion and epiphany—“an ongoing search for meaning in which the personal and the philosophical were intertwined”—long before she became aware of Existentialism (Barnes, 1997, p. 88). During this time she arrived at the point of no longer believing in God, which she describes as a liberating call to action rather than disparaging meaningfulness of life. She felt like she had uncovered a happiness that had always been with her unknowingly (p. 96). This new state of mind opened her to transformative thinking that was more emotional than rational. Her new being was signified in three vivid dreams representing her deeply held beliefs in teaching, equality, and personal growth. Her world continued to open when she accepted an opportunity to live in Greece for three years to reestablish Pierce College, an American school for girls that had been forced to close during the German occupation. This was one of the most profound experiences of her life revealing to her new ways of seeing and experiencing (Barnes, 1947–1948). While there, she traveled to Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Israel, and Egypt in the East and Switzerland and Italy in the West. While on this excursion abroad, Barnes states “My years in Greece (1945–48) saw the explosion of Existentialism in Paris. I knew nothing of it” (1997, p. 140). However, she would soon find herself enthralled with the philosophy.

When she returned to the United States, she accepted a position at the University of Toledo. It was while teaching in Ohio a student posed the question, ‘What is this Existentialism that everybody is talking about?’ She felt ashamed for not having a solid answer, even though unknowingly her life up to this point seemed to prepare her to discover and build upon the philosophy in her future academic career. Her research and presentation on Existentialism at a conference led to her next academic appointment at

Ohio State University. While teaching there, she was offered the opportunity to translate Sartre's *L'Être et le néant: Essai d'ontologie phénoménologique (Being and Nothingness: A Phenomenological Essay on Ontology)*. Despite writing the introduction to this work and translating approximately eight hundred pages, a new chairperson who came into the department sought to replace all tenured faculty including Barnes who he determined, "had not published enough" and commented that her work on *Being and Nothingness* (1947) was "only a translation" (Barnes, 1997, p. 153). While angered by this turn of events, it led to an appointment at the University of Colorado, Boulder, where Barnes felt the most happy and fulfilled. Her tenure at the university spanned thirty-three years. Students recognized her for making difficult material accessible. She was the first woman at the university to be recognized as a Distinguished Professor and later had the highest faculty award named in her honor, The Hazel Barnes Prize, to venerate 'the enriching interrelationship between teaching and research.' In a 2008 university press release announcing her death, Wesley Morriston, Professor and Associate Chair of Philosophy stated "in spite of her extraordinary intellectual accomplishments, Hazel Barnes was an unpretentious person who always made other people comfortable. She was one of the kindest and most generous people I have encountered in academia." Her life, philosophy, and pedagogy so deeply respected by her students and colleagues are a reflection of her engagement with Existentialism to which the discussion now turns.

An Engagement with Existentialism

Barnes describes the period of her life from 1948 to 1986 as her "Existentialist years" where she developed her potentialities as a scholar and teacher (1997, p. 142). In hindsight she observes a confluence of her encounter with ideas and persons, and her

human condition, with the enthusiasm she felt while first discovering Existentialism. Her enthusiasm with the philosophy revealed itself even more while teaching the subject for the first time where she and the students shared in “my excited sense of discovering a new and satisfying way of looking at the difficulties, the possibilities, and the responsibilities of the human condition. It was for all of us an awakening” (p. 144). Teaching Existentialism opened her mind to her own existence.

Barnes explored both religious and humanistic Existentialism, but found herself particularly aligned with the Parisian point of view of Sartre, Beauvoir, and Camus. Her upbringing may not initially lend to her feeling at home in their company, yet she states, “looked at more closely, my previous history held all the threads necessary for weaving into this new pattern” (1997, p. 144). Particularly, she found her father’s instruction in James’s Pragmatism, and her later research on Dewey, to affirm her interest in Existentialism. She writes, “It had been argued both that Pragmatism prepared the American reading public for Existentialism and that philosophers here resisted Existentialism because they had ready at hand a more cheerful version of it” (p. 144). Pragmatism, like Existentialism engages the metaphors of freedom and choice in meeting the demands of the present moment, but does not employ negative metaphors associated with Existentialism such as bad faith, anxiety, and the absurd. Additionally, for her, Pragmatism had already oriented her understanding of “the notion of relative truth, of truths ‘made’ in a process of verification” (1997, p. 145). She also appreciated Pragmatism’s “emphasis on volunteerism and the need to work for social improvement—without either supernatural or self-evident natural support for its absolute rightness” (p. 145). Estranged from the narrowness and irrationality of evangelical Christianity, she

found herself fulfilled with the sense of self-responsibility and accountability in Pragmatism and Existentialism. In this place, she felt her human condition was free to be authentic.¹

The Classics, as a philosophical background for Barnes, may also, at first, appear an odd fit with Existentialism; however, she notes “as Sartre pointed out, we ourselves designate (if we do not invent) the particular causes and motives that prompt our actions” (1997, p. 145). Therefore, she views her experience with the Classics as predisposing her to receptivity to Existentialism. She notes that Sartre, Beauvoir, and Camus utilize classical images and references in their writing. Moreover, she concludes the “Greek’s philosophy itself was not foreign to the way French writers viewed it. In their own way they were equally trying to describe our Existential condition and to define the authentic life” (p. 145). While the logic and reason of Plato and Aristotle are altogether different from Sartre’s dialectical reason or Camus’s logic of the absurd, Barnes finds commonality and interplay between Ancient and Existential literature. Her first book, *Humanistic Existentialism: The Literature of Possibility* (1959), explores the relationship of the literature of Sartre, Camus, and Beauvoir with the philosophy of Existentialism. In another of her works, *The Hippolytus of Drama and Myth* (1960), she reveals that Euripides offers an Existential understanding of “a world of shifting values where even the central issues are not clear. With Sophocles too, of course, the conflict may be between two ‘rights’ rather than between good and evil” (p. 71). While at odds with

¹ The presence of Pragmatism in Barnes’s upbringing and study influenced the development of her Existential Philosophy and spurs intellectual curiosity for the relationship of Pragmatism and Existentialism, but is outside the scope of this project.

Gardner Williams's² idea of egoistic hedonism, in his book, *Humanistic Ethics* (1951), Barnes accepted his presupposition “that one could write meaningfully about ethics without appealing to metaphysical certainties or any kind of absolute values, and about social responsibilities and community” (Barnes, 1997, p. 146). Barnes felt the need to fill a gap in Williams's work—“a view of consciousness that would support the responsible freedom on which his position depended” (p. 146). She goes to great lengths to do so in her text, *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967).

She found in Sartre's description of consciousness the ideas of the self and the ambiguity of self-knowledge. For Barnes, Sartre offered an interpretation of the human condition that had always been with her, but undefined within herself. She writes that it was liberating to “think of consciousness as distanced from its own creation, capable of assuming a new point of view on it and of altering it” (1997, p. 147). Contrary to a determinist view, the self that consciousness creates is a consciousness that continually interprets and reinterprets, creates and recreates the individual *human condition* rather than having a predicable *human nature*.

In her extensive analysis of Sartre's work, Barnes developed her own interpretation and contributed to Existentialism with ideas uniquely her own. While Existentialism is often associated with guilt, bad faith, and despair, Barnes's Existentialism is positive and liberating. She writes,

Sartre's propensity for utilizing the old theological concepts and metaphors, even as he assigned new meanings to them, reinforced my sense that he was recasting

² Barnes had a personal connection with philosopher Gardener Williams. She writes in her autobiography (1997) that he played a decisive role in opening up opportunities for her (p. 143). He was the chairperson of the Philosophy department at the University of Toledo where Barnes worked in 1948. Seeing her interest in studying Existentialism, he offered her time to do research and develop a course on the subject. Additionally, in his *Humanistic Ethics*, he recognizes Barnes in the acknowledgments for her indispensable contribution to his revision of the entire manuscript.

my childhood teaching in an acceptable form. Certainly his instance that we must create our own values came to me as a message of liberation, not of counsel and despair. (1997, p. 145).

Additionally, uncertainty in life's meaning and purpose along with the absence of absolutes may be viewed in a positive light as the freedom to engage the potentiality and uniqueness of self-creating life. Certainly Existentialism does not offer an easy path or a universal answer, but provides insight to the dynamic and changing complexity of human existence, which has been described as the "muddiness" of everyday life (Buber, 1947a, p. 277). Barnes views Sartre's *Existentialism is a Humanism* (1956), not in the sense of intellectual, cosmopolitan, and elitism of Renaissance Humanism (Nauert, 2006), but as a philosophy closest to the human condition and everyday life. Sartre's "declaration that in choosing for ourselves, we choose for humankind" and "the absolute equality of all self-making individual" (Barnes, 1997, p. 147) does not propose an equalizing effect of sameness or homogeneity. Rather, humanistic Existentialism embraces an ethic of equality accompanied by an absolute ethic of alterity.

Barnes's Existentialist ethics calls people to be responsible and accountable for their free choices while aiding the liberation of another's ability to choose his or her own destiny. Ethical concerns are integral to human experience and relations, and while Sartre does not directly engage Existentialist ethics, Barnes notes that "ethical concerns are implied in all of his work" (1997, p. 147) and more specifically in *Existentialism is a Humanism* where he discusses authenticity in the responsibility to the ethics people create for themselves. After nearly eight hundred pages, Sartre devotes three pages to "ethical implications" (p. 795) as the final subheading in *Being and Nothingness* (1947). In this section, Sartre argues against the idea of "ethical precepts" or "ideal meaning" he

describes as the “*spirit of seriousness*,” which ought to be repudiated because it is in bad faith (p. 796). This does not deny the possibility of ethics in ontology, but rather places ethics within “a *human reality in situation*” (p. 795) where a person chooses value and human existence is viewed as a passion *to* value, as consciousness is a consciousness *of* something.

An ethics of subjectivity in situation presents a challenge to consciousness much greater than the ease of relying obediently on *a priori* “transcendent givens independent of human subjectivity” (p. 796); however, the reward in the pursuit of being is all the more worthwhile. Sartre claims ontology

Must reveal to the moral agent that he is the being by whom values exist. It is then that his freedom will become conscious of itself and will reveal itself as its own possibilities, it will apprehend by and in anguish that they are possibilities only on the ground of the possibility of other possibilities. (p. 797)

This is the final statement Sartre makes regarding Existentialist ethics, which is followed by a series of questions regarding value, freedom, and situation. His final words in the text are “All these questions, which refer us to a pure and not an accessory reflection, can find their reply only on the ethical plane. We shall devote to them a future work” (p. 798). Sartre never completed this endeavor, but opened the possibility for Barnes.

Sartre’s lecture notes on ethics he gave in 1947–48 were published posthumously in *Notebooks for an Ethics* (1992); however, the ideas in his notebooks represent a turn toward Marxism and away from the Existentialism of his earlier thought in *Being and Nothingness* (1943). Themes in Sartre’s notebooks focus on more critical and political revolutionary topics of alienation, oppression, and violence with emphasis on history and society rather than the Existential individual and situational ethics. Sartre ultimately declared Existentialism subordinate to the “only philosophy” of Marxism (Barnes, 1959,

p. 403), which culminated in his later work, *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1960). Thus, the formation of an Existentialist ethics was perhaps in better hands with Barnes who stayed true to Existentialism by building upon themes and reinterpreting metaphors from a perspective of ethics in *Being and Nothingness*. Additionally, while Sartre relied on his own (and Marx's) philosophical perspective in his discussion of ethics, Barnes held an auspicious advantage of extensive study in a variety of interpretations of Existentialism and Pragmatism.

While teaching Existentialism, Barnes relied on the work of religious Existentialists such as Paul Tillich (1952), Miguel de Unamuno (1912), Walker Percy (1975), Graham Greene (1940), and Søren Kierkegaard (1843), as well as Existential psychoanalysts Victor Frankl (1946) and R. D. Laing (1965), and humanistic psychologists Abraham Maslow (1968) and Erich Fromm (1947). She admits she did not work with Marcel or Jaspers, and completely neglected Heidegger (Barnes, 1997, p. 163). Barnes corresponded with Sartre via mail, but never met him in person. She also corresponded with Beauvoir in this manner and in 1984 traveled to France to meet with her. Barnes discusses this encounter in the chapter "Existential Feminism" in her autobiography (1997). During their discussion, Beauvoir observed "young people today were not much concerned with philosophy and with 'the questions of what it means to be human'; they were more taken up with [...] 'things of the moment'" (p. 182) and perhaps someday her ideas and Sartre's "might be found relevant again" (p. 183). Beauvoir also affirmed Barnes's positive dimension of *The Look* in Sartre's philosophy.

The rest of their conversation focused on Feminism. Barnes observes a parallel of Feminism with Existentialism in the exemplar life of Beauvoir. As an Existentialist, "She

had succeeded brilliantly in her career, first as a teacher, then as a writer. She had written serious novels and even published books in philosophy...If ever a person created for herself exactly the life she wanted and lived it with relish and integrity, she appeared to be the one” (1997, p. 185). As a Feminist, “how great had been the odds against her having been able to create the woman she became” (p. 185). Bringing together Existentialism and Feminism, “Beauvoir spoke *to* women for whom she opened up a new world, and not only those on the threshold of their adult lives. Directly influenced by her, a significant number of married women went back to school, took up promising careers, and sometimes divorced or were divorced by their husbands” (pp. 188–189). In this way, Beauvoir opened up Existential choice and possibilities for women.

Recognizing Existentialism supports Feminist goals, Barnes, in an unpublished essay presented at the 1993 Phenomenology Symposium at Duquesne University, discusses how Beauvoir, “built primarily on two major themes in Sartre—the subject-object conflict and his insistence that human beings are not born with a given nature but make themselves” (p. 13). Beauvoir, in Barnes’s view, was an Existentialist in her own right, and not a mere disciple of Sartre. Beauvoir published the novel, *She Came to Stay* (1943) the same year Sartre published *Being and Nothingness*, which Barnes discusses in a book chapter, “Self-Encounter in *She Came to Stay*” (1998). Barnes valued Beauvoir for her contribution to Feminism and Existentialism in *The Second Sex* (1949), as well as her ideas on ethics in *The Ethics of Ambiguity* (1948) where like Barnes, Beauvoir provides a positive interpretation of Existentialism, particularly concerning the idea of ambiguity in human life.

After immersing herself in translating Sartre's work and broadening her understanding of Existentialism in Camus and Beauvoir in writing *Humanistic Existentialism: The Literature of Possibility* (1959), Barnes made another significant contribution to Existentialism with her text, *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967). She was careful in choosing the title to convey *an* Existentialist ethics from a Sartrean starting place, rather than claiming *the* Existentialist ethics, which would account for the multiplicity of Existentialist perspectives mentioned above. Barnes's work is not a Sartrean Existentialist ethics either; her Existentialist ethics should be recognized uniquely as her own constructive ethical philosophy. She writes,

Whether it is self-delusion or not, I like to think that what I have done in relation to Sartre is to have adopted a basic framework for my thought; if I have kept this structure as my dwelling place, I have at least gone outside to design my own garden it envisions. (1997, p. 180)

She refers to Sartre's ideas of dwelling places as having opened her mind to ways of thinking, which could not have occurred otherwise, but yet are original to her.

Barnes's experience with American Pragmatism and French Existentialism shaped the emergence of her own Existentialist perspective on the human condition, which lends to greater understanding of embedded agency.³ Barnes contends that individuals make free choices within larger cultural and historical narratives, but whose choices also involve responsible communicative encounters with other free and uniquely situated individuals. Hence, her perspective offers a salient contribution to an

³ Arnett, R.C., Arneson, P., and Bell, L.M. (2006) and Arnett, R.C., Fritz, J.M.H, and Bell, L.M. (2009) discuss a dialogic turn in communication ethics where agents are embedded in particular historical moments, sociocultures, and experiences whereby existence emerges through ongoing communicative learning from uniquely situated Others. The intersubjective allows Barnes to move Existentialism from a philosophy of the individual to an ethical philosophy of responsibility to Others.

understanding of Existentialism as historical, social, and communicative, thereby integrated with ethics.

The implications of her work are immense, but of particular interest for this project is how her works offer a constructive contribution for organizational research and practice. Recognizing an interpretive turn in business ethics and leadership studies, Barnes's philosophy offers valuable insight into *how* research is conducted and *what* is being studied within these fields. Her Existentialist approach reveals the value of interpretive research in understanding emerging topics in organizational literature that engage Existential themes. Both the *how* and *what* are integral to the human condition, which from an Existentialist perspective, cannot be severed. How research is conducted and what is studied is an Existential choice, which opens up new possibilities for meeting the historical moment. Considering the ubiquity of business scandal and crisis, and the failure of Modern Capitalism to deliver its optimistic promises, this is perhaps an apt time to engage Barnes's Existentialism in organizational contexts. Some work has been published on Existentialism in organizational studies; however, these studies particularly engage ethics and yet Barnes's perspective, which specifically attends to Existentialist ethics, has been excluded. Her work offers an opportunity to explore, reinterpret, and philosophically ground contemporary business ethics and leadership within changing horizons in the marketplace.

An Existentialist Response to New Horizons of Capitalism

Modern Capitalism as a guiding ideology for business practice has been questioned recently by scholars working to identify the emergence of a new sense of Capitalism that goes beyond a profit motive to attend to meaning and purpose in human

life and environmental concerns. In 2007 Hart published a book titled *Capitalism at the Crossroads: Aligning Business, Earth, and Humanity*, calling attention to the significant positive and sustainable social change business can forge when partnered with governments and civil society, but only with a changed mindset of Capitalism. Hawken and colleagues (2008) coined the term Natural Capitalism as a response to a changing historical moment in which industrial age Capitalism is no longer suited. Natural Capitalism offers commensurability between business and environmental goals to protect the natural world and posterity of future generations. Sisodia and colleagues (2007) argue that Natural Capitalism is necessary for a new age with new rules that no longer tolerates scandal and misconduct of business, which has generated widespread public cynicism. They propose companies focus on a higher purpose and passion, which can enhance the well-being of all stakeholders. Eisler (2007) in *The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics* presents an understanding of Capitalism she believes is more humane and effective, and later in a similar vein, Hartel and Brown (2011) discuss the idea of caring economies aligned with other topics of values and ethical leadership. Freeman and colleagues (2007) recognize the importance of value creation coupled with stakeholder theory in proposing Stakeholder Capitalism, which they believe provides a new narrative for Capitalism that opens up ethical implications. The term Creative Capitalism was used in an edited book by Kinsley (2008) to describe how Bill Gates and Warren Buffet advocate integrating 'doing good' into doing business. Gates also called for a new understanding of Capitalism in a speech he gave at the 2008 World Economic Forum.

Moreover, Grace Neville published an article highlighting Green Mountain Coffee as a case study for Conscientious Capitalism (2013). Bishop and Green (2008)

offer Philanthrocapitalism to show how those who have benefited from technology and globalization can give back in order to address societal issues including climate change, poverty, and disease. Viewing each business function as a profession that attends to specific stakeholders rather than market share and profitability, Buchholz and Rosenthal (2008) published an essay titled “The Unholy Alliance of Business and Science.” This essay inspired Buchholz (2009) a year later to publish the text, *Rethinking Capitalism: Community and Responsibility in Business*. In it, Buchholz acknowledges the value of philosophy and offers different ways to interpret and reorient Capitalism, which he utilizes in discussions ranging from individualism and rights to the social self and community. Nobel Prize Winner Muhammad Yunus also calls for Capitalism to address social issues in his texts, *Building Social Business: A New Kind of Capitalism that Serves Humanities Most Pressing Needs* (2007) and *Creating a World without Poverty: Social Business and the Future of Capitalism* (2010). Porter and Kramer’s (2011) Shared-Value Capitalism aligns economic and social needs to enhance the well-being of business and society. They argue the success of business is dependent on healthy communities. Most recently, Mackey and Sisodia (2013) present the idea of Conscious Capitalism as a liberating movement for Capitalism to become a heroic force with a new narrative that responds to the greatest challenges of society. The term Conscious Capitalist was used earlier in Aburdene (2007) and Strong’s (2009) texts, which focuses on social entrepreneurship to address global issues.

Overall, at the heart of this new horizon of Capitalism are metaphors of purpose, passion, and consciousness with renewed interest in the human condition in the marketplace. Recent literature in business scholarship has recognized a paradigm change

in the narrative of Capitalism turning toward a larger social purpose of resolving global issues such as poverty and disease. Consequently, this has led to changes at the organizational level with cultural transformation of integrated corporate social responsibility (Aguilera, Rupp, Williams, and Ganapathi, 2007; Bies, Bartunek, Fort, & Zald, 2007) and at the individual level of responsible leadership (Maak & Pless, 2006; Jones, 2014) and meaningful work (Ciulla, 2000; Crawford, 2009; Cheney, Lair, Ritz, and Kendall, 2009; Pauchant, 1994). While people have been asking questions pertaining to the meaning of life since Antiquity, the pressures of Modern Capitalism with efficiency and profitability have spurred renewed thinking about value and happiness in human life and whether there may be a better way for Capitalism to operate.

A new horizon for Capitalism simply did not emerge instantaneously, but was preceded by societal changes from the late 1950s through the early 1970s in the United States with feminism, civil rights, and environmentalist movements, along with Vietnam War protest, which all challenged traditional thinking and called for representativeness and equality for diverse voices. Frank (2011) provides a helpful perspective by acknowledging an astonishing number of articles appearing in 1958 that respond to “traumas of World War II, the Holocaust, the failure of reason to prevent war and genocide, the threat of thermonuclear war, the limitations of the Enlightenment, logical positivism, the analytic philosophical tradition, and the reduction of rhetoric to the elements of style” (p. 239). He argues that these scholars make either an explicit or implicit rhetorical turn to critique totalitarianism and genocide along with normative philosophies, which failed to prevent such atrocities.

Living during this time of social disruption, Barnes (1967) discusses the upheavals in chapter titles of her work “The Negative Rebels” and “The Temptation of Eastern Philosophy” that also welcomed post World War II Parisian Existentialist philosophy. During this time there was renewed interest in Marxism, Communism, and Maoism that fueled McCarthyism and cold war nuclear fears. Additionally, labor unions were exercising their voice in 1955 with the unification of The American Federation of Labor and The Congress of Industrial Organization representing sixteen million members. In 1962 Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, which became revolutionary in launching the environmental movement. In the preface of the second edition of Barnes’s *Existentialist Ethics* (1978), she calls attention to environmental issues and the constructive role Existentialist ethics may play in addressing these concerns. In 1973 Schumacher published *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*, which inspired the fair trade movement and buying locally. The turmoil identified above tilled the soil of Modernity making fertile ground for a budding of new understandings of Capitalism and the blossoming of Barnes’s philosophy of good faith human existence in society.

An Existential Critique of Rand’s Objectivism

Writing ahead of her time, and perhaps foreshadowing the postmodern critique of metanarrative (Lyotard, 1984), Barnes devotes a chapter in *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967) to “Egoistic Humanism: Ayn Rand’s Objectivism.” Barnes first observes that while Objectivism may appear to be the antithesis of Existentialism due to their respective correlations to Capitalism and Socialism, the two philosophies share metaphors of individual autonomy, freedom, and choice. However, what emerges from

these parallels is not a common world-view as Objectivists and Existentialists assign altogether different meaning (p. 125). Barnes posits the two philosophies diverge in the answering of the following questions: What is this consciousness which chooses? What are its objects in the outside world? And what is the status of the sense of being right? (p. 127). Answers to these questions generate associated metaphors. For Objectivists these include metaphysics, objective knowledge, self-evidence, Truth, reason, and right and wrong. Barnes describes Objectivism as the acorn theory—an acorn is known to develop into what a healthy oak tree ought to be—a pattern that may be used to judge another. Existentialism questions this pattern, which also puts objective reality into question. People must “choose between various beliefs or propositions, each one of which claims to be Reason or Truth” (p. 129). Truth is embodied subjectively; otherwise, who is tasked to proclaim an objective ought?

Barnes queried “Whose reason and when?” (1967, p. 131) prior to MacIntyre (1988) who also critiques objectivity in the text *Whose Justice, Which Rationality*. Barnes observes a tacit recurrent theme in Rand’s work of “reference to an absolute judgment which stands outside the immediate involvements of individual life” (p. 131). For the Existentialist, judgments are temporal and embedded in human experience, which involves meeting Existential moments with an ever changing consciousness. Barnes argues “when it comes to specific choices in the real world, existentialists are aware that the complexity of life is such that almost no action is pure and that still we must choose as best we can” (p. 132). Correspondingly, this presents difficulty in judging another’s action—we do not have access to the whole context of another’s world (p. 137). Barnes critiques Objectivism for simultaneously declaring that nobody has any responsibility for

others, but retains the right to judge others (p. 137). Barnes describes how the impersonal world for Objectivists translates into Laissez-faire free-market Capitalism in the following:

There are the men of the mind, and there are parasites, the rotters, those who would substitute *feelings* (spoken with utmost disdain) for thought. The rational are the productive, and this demonstrates their value. For they produce that which others want. The others, needless to say, want these things because they are worth wanting, and they give what is wanted and worth wanting in return. He who contributes more—i.e., produces more—gets more. Those who produce little or nothing, one need not worry about them. They have what they deserve, and what could be more logical and rational than that? It is easy for men of the mind (and these, after all, are the only real men) to find joy and rational happiness in such a world. Being rational and intelligent, they will quickly recognize, commit to memory, and practice the one absolute Truth—that each man must live only for himself and never for others. (pp. 137–138)

Barnes poses the question of “whether there are significantly different ways of satisfying the interest of the self so that we may restore meaning to expressions like ‘selfish’ and ‘unselfish’” (pp. 138–139). She responds to the question in the following:

I reject Objectivism, not because it is self-centered or because it seeks self-aggrandizement. I criticize it for being selfish in the pejorative sense of restricting horizons of the Self so as to leave the self-center, not enriched but impoverished, not blown up, but withered and blighted. The Self of the Objectivists runs the risk of the only child—it is not unloved, but is likely to be spoiled, ailing, and fretful, due to over protection and the too close attention which prevents the growth of responsible freedom. Objectivism claims to be a humanism and to reaffirm the essential worth and dignity of the human being. In reality it is one more form of evasion, seeking to escape the vision of what it really means to be human. (pp. 140–141)

Individual freedom as the sole starting point and goal refuses any responsibility for others, which for Barnes is in bad faith. What is more, a laissez-faire society tends to give more protection to the strong, who need it least (p. 144); this contradicts the Objectivist claim that nobody should be prevented from pursuing their self-interest. Given Rand’s rejection of the demand to love and look after the worthless members of one’s family

makes it even more unlikely “that leading industrialists will try hard to seek out and develop those who can’t make it in their given circumstances but who might if help were given” (p. 146). In Existentialism, every person has infinite value—one’s existence and potential are immeasurable. For the Objectivist, one’s value is measured by what one has produced, which may be judged. For the Existentialist, since one cannot judge authoritatively, mercy may be offered instead. However, Barnes does not support self-sacrificial do-gooders (p. 135), but also does not believe that consumerism is an appropriate replacement. She concludes that Existentialism rather than Objectivism fosters “the growth of unique self-centers” (p. 148) and the creation of values.

These new understandings of Capitalism parallel an upsurge in scholarly interest in Existential themes emerging in Leadership studies to which Barnes’s Existential phenomenology may philosophically ground and theoretically orient continued conversation. While a plethora of essays and books have utilized Existential metaphors such as authenticity and consciousness, only a few specifically connect them to Existential philosophy. Furthermore, none utilize Barnes’s works, but rather rely on other Existential philosophers who do not explicitly discuss ethics in their work. Therefore, this project seeks to illuminate the salient works of Barnes to recognize her contribution to Existentialism and the resulting implications for Business Ethics and Leadership scholarship. While scholars have ascribed new conceptions of Capitalism in the variety of names proposed above, Barnes’s Existentialism cautions searching for a new meta-narrative because even those with good intentions are in bad faith. Rather, communicative action and learning within organizational dwellings and interpersonal

relations offer a more fitting response, which, in good faith, contribute to Existential liberating goals and as a result may change the horizon of Modern Capitalism.

The Question and Project

Considering the opportunity to utilize Barnes's Existential phenomenology, this project seeks to connect and build upon the emergent literature in Business Ethics and Leadership studies with Barnes's major works, which both ground and propel positive social change through a new understanding of Existential leadership. Additionally this analysis seeks to reinvigorate the ideas of Barnes, whose work is vital to reinterpreting metaphors for this historical moment and to further understanding of the situated self and human condition. Thus, this project seeks to respond the question, how do the multiple works of Hazel Barnes enlarge understandings of Business Ethics and Leadership, which may thereby contribute to the emergence of Existential Leadership?

Multiple works by Barnes will be utilized to respond to the question posed above in six interrelated chapters. Each chapter will engage her works to interpret Existential metaphors and offer a praxis approach to organizational studies at multiple levels of analysis. This project seeks to make a contribution to the literature by introducing Barnes's work to new perspectives in Business Ethics and Leadership, and acknowledge the value of her ideas that have been overlooked by scholars interested in Existentialism. The hope of this project is to *respond* rather than *answer* the question above by providing understanding (*Verstehen*) of the interpretive implications of her work. This phenomenological approach to doing research is fitting for the project, which is an Existential activity.

Engaged Literature in Interpretive Scholarship: Barnes's *Mythodology*

Hermeneutics as a mode of interpretive inquiry seeks responsive interpretive engagement in questioning the unknown, reviewing the text in an in-depth manner, and revealing interest that propels inquiry and continues the conversation (Arnett, 2007, p. 33). Hermeneutics as a mode of inquiry promotes theory informed action to elicit thoughtful communicative practice.⁴ Likened to hermeneutics, but extending the interpretive horizon with the Existential goal of liberation, is an approach that Sartre termed, 'engaged literature' in the first issue of *Les Temps modernes* (1945) and further developed in *What is Literature?* (1947). Existential philosophers including Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Sartre, Camus, and Beauvoir all wrote in a literary genre to express their philosophical ideas, which Barnes argues, originated with the Ancient Dramatists. In the book *Hippolytus of Drama and Myth* (1960) and in the article "Myth and Human Experience" (1955), Barnes posits that the Greek Dramatists such as Euripides are relevant to contemporary life because the "characters move in a world of shifting values where even the central issues are not clear" (1960, p. 71). She argues that tragedy emerges from the Existential choices characters make rather than from some irrational force. Myths have long been part of the human experience, and while certainly far from scientific, they offer a salient means of understanding human existence data cannot provide.

Barnes provides insight for a new horizon of doing interpretive research, posited here as *mythodology*. Her works provide ground for an Existential Phenomenological

⁴ Works that elucidate philosophical hermeneutics include Ricoeur's (1991), *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics*, Palmer's (1969), *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*, and with a specific connection to organizational studies, Putnam and Pacanowsky's (1983), *Communication and Organizations: An Interpretive Approach*.

approach to doing research, with the aim of garnering understanding of the human condition. In the spirit of interpretive research, Barnes posits that myths respond to questions that emerge in historical moments, which opens more questioning rather than providing answers. The ideas proposed in Chapter 2 are aligned with emerging topics in business communication, business, and leadership studies, which advocate research approaches from phenomenology and the Humanities. While business ethics and leadership scholarship is often empirically grounded in the social sciences, some scholars note the validity and importance of interpretive research. In writing an introduction for a special issue in *The Leadership Quarterly* titled “Leadership: Views from the Humanities,” Ciulla’s (2006) essay “Leadership Studies and the ‘Fusion of Horizons’” calls for a balance of research conducted in the Social Sciences and the Humanities. She discusses what constitutes a view from the Humanities by articulating how history, religion, art, philosophy, and literature are vital to our understanding of lived experience. Hermeneutics provides a fusion of horizons between the past and present, which allows us to forge understanding for the future.

Existential Dwellings: Organizational Engagement as Group-in-Fusion Praxis

Myths convey knowledge and values of particular cultures, which may be understood as petite narratives, or dwelling places. The third chapter explores the idea of dwelling, which situates individual human freedom. The chapter begins with an examination of the Business Ethics literature at the organizational level of analysis, which reveals a common thread of ontological questions including whether organizations can have agency, consciousness, and authenticity. From an Existential point of view, these questions cannot be answered—they emerge through organizational engagement, or

action. Thus, for Existentialism, *doing* is prior to *being* and as such ought to be the focus of business ethics.

While Existentialism is often associated with metaphors surrounding the individual such as freedom, anxiety, and bad faith, Barnes demonstrates that the human condition is experienced within a theatre of situations. Barnes reinterprets Heidegger's idea of dwelling as a cultural climate rather than a locality, which adds clarity to an understanding of an individual's situatedness. Discussion then turns to Barnes's interpretation of Sartre's idea of group dynamics in group-in-fusion praxis that directs human action toward subjective, human, goals. These ideas present an opportunity to forge a new understanding of organizations as Existential dwellings that may offer cultures of engagement, thereby providing rewarding experiences for employees, who in turn contribute to organizational mission. Depicting organizations as such displaces the necessity for responding to the question of whether organizations can have agency. From a Barnesean perspective, organizations can never possess subjectivity solely allocated to humans, but organizations are not mere objective facts of brick and mortar either—they are the nexus of present and past human subjectivity offering Existential dwellings for group-in-fusion praxis that give rise to meaning and purpose in shared human experience. Barnes provides understanding of what it means to be grounded in dwellings, which serves as a communicative response to Arnett's (1994) idea of existential homelessness.

Existentialist Ethics: Interpersonal Engagement within Organizations

Existentialism has often been accused as individualistic and incapable of social ethics. Certainly Sartre's assertion "Hell is—other people!" in *No Exit* (1946, p. 45) and Hell as the outside world or "practico-inerte" in *The Critique* (1960, p. 58) could support

this claim. Barnes examines Sartre's position on interpersonal relationships as Hell and offers an alternative view of others as Heaven. Scholars in the field of Business Ethics have utilized Existentialism to propose an alternative to normative theories of deontology, utilitarianism, and teleology; however, they have entirely neglected the works of Barnes. Since they miss her positive expression of Existential others, they seem to adopt the negative Sartrean view, and ignore interpersonal relations while positing decision-making models oriented within the individual. This gap opens up opportunity for a Barnesean contribution of interpersonal engagement within organizations.

Barnes recognizes the serious lack of philosophical development of love in Existentialism with the majority of discussion devoted to cynicism, despair, and bad faith in human relations. Her philosophical development on love begins with the concrete and particular. Primarily, she believes that within the framework of Existentialism good faith toward the Other, as a free subject, cannot be denied or destroyed; however, she asserts that Existentialism must move beyond this with communicative learning⁵ that can lead to love. It is the Other, the outside, who offers a sense of dwelling within the impersonal world of objects where the Self may feel homeless. The Other validates the Self by caring for well-being and sharing Existential projects, but who does not imprison by being wholly self-for-other. In relations of love, those who look-at-the-world-together are also opened up to new understandings of their own projects, while at the same time, expand the horizons of the practico-interte.

⁵ Arnett, Fritz, and Bell (2010) also draw attention to the importance of communicative learning by positing dialogic learning as first principle in communication ethics.

Existential Meeting of Horizons: Toward a Theory of Existential Leadership

This project begins with dwelling and moves to others to demonstrate the self as an embedded agent who is situated in the world and who engages others who are also uniquely situated. Accordingly, the Existential self may be understood as a temporal embedded identity, which is always in flux, and always connected to others' stories and larger narratives. In Barnes's text, *The Story I Tell Myself* (1997), she posits that people are not necessarily authors of their stories, but narrators who interpret their place in a story from a particular point of view. She presents the idea of people as a unique universal which accounts for the influence of time and place on one's being as well as self-making. As one's place temporally changes from where one projects oneself into future possibilities, so too does reflection on one's past temporally change. Barnes states, "In looking back at what we have been and in projecting our future selves, we continuously interpret ourselves to ourselves...we find reason to alter meaning of many past events, and in so doing, we refashion our selves" (pp. xvii–xviii). This chapter is a continuation of the last showing the ontological implications of communicative learning.

Barnes writes about the human experience as an ongoing search for meaning and Sartre's use of the term "conversion" to "denote progressive changes in one's basic orientation, in one's way of being-in-the-world" (1997, p. 88). Moreover, Sartre believed one's basic orientation could be "thrown into question and radically altered, since we are always uneasily aware that it is our own invention and *could* be different" (p. 104). Not believing such epiphanies could originate in the supernatural, ontological changes emerge unpredictably from human experience. Demonstrating Existential identity as grounded in both dwelling and encounters with others provides understanding for a new conception of

Existential Leadership in organizations. Leaders' choices are free, yet dwellings shape their authentic choices, which are accompanied by responsibility and accountability in good faith.

Existential Education: Otherwise than Humanism

This final chapter returns to concerns raised about Modern Capitalism that were identified in the first chapter. Scholars are calling attention to an ethical crisis in business schools, which has exacerbated the crisis in the marketplace. In response, some scholars have offered that Humanism, in Management theory and education, is an appropriate paradigm change from Economism, which has plagued Modern Capitalism. However, other scholars offer caution in adopting Humanism, which appears to have good intentions, but like Economism, which emerged out of the Enlightenment period, Humanism shares its presuppositions of universality and individualism that run counter to the goal of improving human well-being. Additionally scholars have identified how good intentions of corporate social responsibility may be interpreted as imperialism.

As an alternative to Humanistic education, Existential education is presented, which takes into account people's alterity and situatedness. Barnes, who always claimed to be a teacher first and a scholar second wrote extensively on Existentialism and education. While she states that an Existential philosophy of education has not been entirely worked out, this chapter takes a first step in formulating an Existential education by pulling together ideas from her multiple works. Additionally, this offers an example of how ideas presented in chapters three through five may be implemented in education. First, universities are interpreted as Existential dwellings. Second, the classroom atmosphere forms through interpersonal communication in the sharing of ideas. Finally,

situated within university dwellings and communicative engagement with students, the idea of an Existential teacher emerges.

For Barnes, ethics is not about formulating idealist principles and values; it is about “doing the hard work of helping men and women attain the condition which will allow them to fulfill themselves as human beings” (p. 31). Moreover, other people are not hell; they offer touchstones of reality (Friedman, 1974) that interrupt existence and open opportunities for learning through engagement (Arnett, Fritz, & Bell, 2010). A person’s character is defined “through his [sic] acts” (Barnes, 1967, p. 35). Here is where Barnes views good faith as the recognition of one’s responsibility in choosing. Barnes also offers that ethics is most needed in a period of conflict, struggle, and uncertainty (p. 46) to which a postmodern moment of narrative and virtue contention (Arnett, Fritz, & Bell, 2009) is quite fitting. Ethics, in this fragmented moment, offers great opportunity for enlarged thinking. Encounters with others are not hell but opportunities for communicative learning and ‘Existential joy’ (Noddings, 1984).

CHAPTER 2

Engaged Literature in Interpretive Scholarship:

Barnes's *Mythodology*

In the spirit of a project on Existential Phenomenology, interpretive research (see review by Arnett 2007) is utilized as an approach, rather than a method, of hermeneutic entrance to view interpretive research from an Existential perspective. Arnett describes interpretive engagement as questioning the unknown, reviewing the text in an in-depth manner, and revealing interest that propels inquiry and continues the conversation (p. 33). By first recognizing Sartre's conception of engaged literature, Barnes provides insight for a new horizon of doing interpretive research, posited here as *mythodology*, that emerges from her text *Hippolytus of Drama and Myth* (1960) and article "Myth and Human Experience" (1955). These works provide ground for an Existential Phenomenological approach to doing research with the aim of garnering understanding of the human condition that goes back to the Ancient Dramatists. Barnes observes the Greek Dramatists such as Euripides are relevant to the everydayness of contemporary life because the "characters move in a world of shifting values where even the central issues are not clear" (1960, p. 71). In a postmodern moment of narrative and virtue contention (Arnett, Fritz, & Bell, 2009), her observation of shifting values and lack of centralization is particularly relevant in negotiating what it means to be-in-the-world. This approach provides significant implications for doing research in contemporary communication, business, and leadership studies.

Barnes argues that in these Classical works, tragedy emerges from Existential choices characters make rather than from some irrational force from "the meddling gods"

(Barnes, 1974a), which is in bad faith. Rather than the gods, social life comes into play, which does not determine, but situates a person's being-in-the-world. Moreover, her idea of 'tragicomedy' blends the tragic and comedic—a search for a different way of being combined with temporal understanding and reminder that real life often interrupts and changes preconceived plans. Myths have long been part of the human experience, passed on from generation to generation through language that conveys important lessons and a 'community of memory' (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985) of a culture's existence. While certainly far from scientific, myths offer salient means for understanding human experience that quantitative data cannot provide. In the spirit of interpretive research, Barnes posits that myths respond to questions that emerge in historical moments, which opens more questions rather than provides answers.

This chapter begins with an introduction to interpretive research as a mode of inquiry from the discipline of philosophy of communication, which opens the discussion of the work of Barnes who extends interpretive inquiry in philosophy of communication into the realm of Existential Phenomenology with Sartre's idea of engaged literature. Interpretive research within the fields of organizational communication, business, and leadership studies is also articulated in this chapter as each of these areas will be engaged in the chapters that follow. Primarily, this chapter utilizes the work of Barnes (1955; 1959; 1960) to argue for a new understanding of *mythodology* that enlarges the horizon for interpretive scholarship, and responds to Ciulla's (2006) call for a balanced research conducted in the Social Sciences and the Humanities. This chapter argues that *mythodology* provides a meeting of horizons between the past and present, which opens up understanding for the future.

Interpretive Scholarship in Communication Studies

Ethnographic and observation analysis are often considered as interpretive approaches to doing qualitative research; however, the hermeneutic approach, and specifically hermeneutic phenomenology also needs to be considered for opening understanding of the human condition. To begin, Arnett (2010a) relies on the work of Ricoeur (1984) to demonstrate philosophy of communication in action as a scholarly story that contains elements of drama, emplotment, main characters, and attentiveness to historicity (p. 59). Rhetorical interruption takes place within drama that demands response to questions of existence—responses that offer meaning rather than information (p. 60). Additionally, Arnett proposes that philosophy of communication is not a methodology—a research approach that emerged in the work of Descartes (1637). philosophy of communication aims at understanding rather than definitive truth. The ideas of Sartre and Barnes related to literature and myth take up aspects of Arnett’s engagement with Ricoeur’s idea of story to define philosophy of communication that extends the horizon of interpretive scholarship to the idea of *mythodology*.

In agreement with Arnett (2007), this project also advocates for interpretive research, extending its horizon by positing the idea of *mythodology* that engages meaning about human existence from Antiquity with contemporary issues to which it may still inform. Additionally, Arnett observes that scholars continue to expand the scope of qualitative research, an approach not set in stone (p. 30). The idea of *mythodology* is proposed accordingly to the demands of a project in Existential Phenomenology in order to be responsive to the “qualitative emphasis on human subjects, human situations, and human consequences” (p. 30) that shapes this approach and continues the conversation.

Also important to this sort of investigation is its communicative connections. Myths, whether spoken by a sage or performed on a stage originally utilized the art of verbal communication. Even in written form, the rhetorical nature of myths communicates validation or challenge of culturally held beliefs, whose fidelity (Fisher, 1984; 1985) is determined by an audience. As such, the idea of *mythodology* responds to the necessity of a public domain (Arendt, 1998) to keep the conversation going in order for others to follow, question, and accept/and or reject ideas proposed in qualitative study (Arnett, 2007, p. 31).

The idea of *mythodology*, which embraces ancient ideals of the myth, is, at the heart, about communication. As such, *mythodology* may be situated within the field of philosophy of communication with a commitment to questions of meaning in human existence and communication with others. *Mythodology* recognizes fragmentation of metanarrative with a goal of revealing the human condition in a multiplicity of guiding myths that both ground and transform as new horizons emerge from responsiveness to the demands of changing historical moments. Philosophy of communication “engages particulars contingent on a particular situation, a particular moment, and a particular public contribution to public opinion” (Arnett, 2010a, p. 58) and *mythodology* reminds us that these particulars are embedded in narratives that guide responsive action. *Mythodology* provides a bridge between discerning “whether theory (word) matches the outcome (deed) in Philosophy of Communication” (p. 58). This discernment is contingent on myth fidelity, which presents temporal and petit (Lyotard, 1984) understanding rather than universal truth. Thus, *mythodology* responds to “multiple voices in the diversity of

public opinion” (Arnett, 2010a, p. 58). Public opinion does not exist in a vacuum, but in historical and cultural contexts represented as myth.

Organizational Communication

Interpretive scholarship within the field of organizational communication has continued to gain receptiveness from researchers. The first work to value interpretive scholarship in the field was Putnam’s (1983) book chapter, “The Interpretive Perspective: An Alternative to Functionalism” in *Communication and Organizations: An Interpretive Approach*, which presents an alternative research model centering study on meanings; “the way individuals make sense of their world through their communicative behaviors” (p. 31). Furthermore, she recognizes stories, myths, rituals, and language as ongoing interactive processes in which members make sense of organizational life (p. 40). Through interpretive inquiry, researchers allow for multiplicity and dynamism of meanings, and are open to a richly textured and evolving understanding between researchers and subjects being observed (Cheney, 2000; Cheney & Lair, 2005).

In *Perspectives on Organizational Communication*, Cheney (2000) provides further understanding of interpretive research in organizational communication with his book chapter, “Interpreting Interpretive Research: Toward Perspectivism without Relativism”. Interpretive scholarship, which he describes as “historical-hermeneutic” reveals understanding alongside two other major approaches, empirical-analytic and critical (p. 18). Interpretive scholarship takes social relations in workplaces seriously, but does not claim to identify prescriptions or definitive answers, and ambiguity is expected. Cheney provides a helpful observation that, “ambiguity is an inherent and important dimension of language itself” (p. 18).

However ambiguous, interpretive scholarship may be identified, according to Cheney, by several elements. First, it involves a recognition that everyone engages in interpreting the life-world. Interpretive scholarship endeavors to understand how meaning is constructed in this process for uniquely situated persons. People are valued for their subjectivity rather than as a subject of study. As such, researchers cannot simply separate themselves from interpreting-in-the-world while performing research. Their subjectivity also matters. Cheney (2000) describes this by writing,

What I, as an investigator, do is interpret the world. Data, information, and ‘the facts’ do not merely present themselves to me. I actively construct important aspects of them, from the formulation of research questions and identification of a research ‘problem’ to the drawing of conclusions. (p. 20)

The research produced in interpretive studies may be understood as part of life and responsive to questions that emerge in historical moments. Moreover, researchers enter a conversation that began before them, and as such, they ought to present questions to incite further discussion.

More specifically, interpretive research in organizational studies questions assumptions about organizations that may not be readily apparent. Researchers look “behind the scenes” (Cheney, 2000, p. 26) at the multiple roles people play within organizations, along with dynamic relations and subcultures that texture organizational life. From an interpretive perspective, people cannot be classified into patterns, which may predict future behavior. Rather, interpretive scholarship recognizes temporality and change in what people do and who they are. While this may appear relativistic at first glance, Cheney contends that interpretive scholarship honors a multiplicity of perspectives, which spurs constructive learning and questioning thereby informing our meaning-making in the world.

In a more recent article, Fritz (2014) provides a comprehensive account of interpretive theorizing that corresponds to the qualitative turn in organizational studies. She recognizes that interpretive scholarship continues to garner credence in its ability to provide understanding of workplace relationships. Fritz also provides an historical account of the development of organizational communication study, which has grown to address many varied relationships and communicative engagement that takes place in organizations.⁶ Traditionally, organizational communication research was dominated by quantitative approaches; however, the qualitative turn in the 1990s “marked an epistemological and ontological sea change, altering the understandings of the very nature of inquiry and reorienting researchers to the organizational phenomena they studied” (p. 2).

While a variety of subjects emerged that were especially fitting for interpretive research such as culture, conflict, roles, and symbolic processes, more generally, “qualitative research was recognized as ideal for revealing constructions of the meaning of work relationships and negotiation of lived relational experience within the organizational context” (p. 3). Fritz asserts that “qualitative studies of workplace relationships are beginning to generate meaning-centered theories of communication” (p. 4), which are “discursively co-constructed with others both similar to and different from oneself” (p. 5). Similarly, Cheney (2000) raises the question, “What new forms of research can we imagine?” (p. 45). This project seeks to respond to Fritz by engaging Existentialism, specifically positing Barnes as a Philosopher of Communication, to reflect on the meaning of human existence in workplace dwellings and between people. This

⁶ Cheney and Lair (2005) also provide an historical perspective of organizational communication, which recognizes the sociological roots of organizational study.

chapter responds to Cheney by offering a new form of research in *mythodology* that joins a conversation about interpretive research that began with the classical dramatists.

Organizational Studies

While social science has been a dominate research approach in organizational studies, several scholars have argued for a more balanced approach by valuing interpretive inquiry. Ian Mitroff has been publishing within the field of organizational studies since the 1960s. His early works question the objectivity in doing empirical research (1972; 1974; 1980; Mitroff & Kilmann, 1975; Dandridge, Mitroff, & Joyce, 1980). In a recent article, Alpaslan, Babb, Green, and Mitroff (2006) present an “inquiry on inquiry”. They observe that

The field of organizational science constantly operates under the influence of a positivistic point of view, in which only what can be observed, measured, and quantified is considered real. This perspective assumes that the purpose of language is to accurately reflect reality. In contrast, Sandy, Murat, and Ian argued that ‘organizational science is an inherently rhetorical process,’ and theories and methods are continuously created and developed through the use of the four master tropes: metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony. Most simply, our own constructed language provides the basis for research. The language we use to describe an organizational situation affects how we understand that situation. These professors do not believe we can ever assume that language is an accurate reflection of reality. (p. 8)

The authors recognize that interpretive inquiry has not achieved equal acclamation of empirical study, and perhaps engaging in interpretive inquiry is somewhat of a risk.

However, Alpaslan, in this essay, argues that doing unconventional, and perhaps controversial, research is strengthened when orchestrated in a constructive fashion that builds upon established theory. In other words, unconventional ideas need to be grounded.

More recently, scholars have engaged in paradigm wars pitting quantitative (Pfeffer, 1993) against qualitative (Van Maanen, 1995). While for the vast majority of human history qualitative was the primary method for study, in modern times, quantitative usurped as the dominant paradigm. Back in 1979, Van Maanen wrote an introduction to *Administrative Science Quarterly* cautioning the limitations and possible negative implications for the lack of plurality in research. While the essays in that special issue promoted multiplicity and mutuality in doing qualitative and quantitative research, qualitative research and mixed methods remain stigmatized. However, this status has not stopped qualitative researchers from promoting alternative approaches to inquiry.

Phenomenology's association to organizational studies arose in Brown's 1978 article "Bureaucracy as Praxis: Toward a Political Phenomenology of Formal Organizations" in *Administrative Science Quarterly* and received attention again in Sander's 1982 article "Phenomenology: A New Way of Viewing Organizational Research" in the *Academy of Management of Review*.⁷ More recently, scholars have made additional contributions in presenting this approach to organizational studies (Conklin, 2007; Khan & Lund-Thomsen, 2011; Küpers, Mantere, & Statler, 2013; Letiche, 2006; Ogula, Rose, & Abii, 2012; Sandberg & Dall'Alba, 2009). Moreover, the Academy of Management recognized the essay, "Imaginative Theorizing in Interpretive Organizational Research" (Locke, Golden-Biddle, & Feldman, 2004) with a best paper award and publication in the *Academy of Management Proceedings*. Other scholars are calling for research beyond positivist frameworks (Brand, 2009) and acknowledging opportunities for joint research (Hosmer & Feng, 2001).

⁷ Important to note is banker and philosopher Alfred Schutz, who recognized a link between phenomenology and the social world in his work published in 1967.

Leadership Studies

The idea of *mythodology* is an unconventional approach to doing interpretive inquiry; however, it is the hope of this chapter to demonstrate that it is grounded in ideas that go back to ancient times and complements more recent interest in interpretive inquiry to reveal meaningfulness in human experience. While organizational studies have been plagued with paradigm wars, leadership studies may prove to be more collegial to plurality in research. Ciulla (2008) opens the conversation for scholarly contributions from the Humanities and the Social Sciences in her essay, “Leadership Studies and the ‘Fusion of Horizons’”. She questions, “Why is the research and literature on leadership studies mostly from the social sciences?” (p. 393). She responds to this question with the following:

The simple explanation is because the field grew out of work in psychology and management. The more complicated explanation has to do with how the views from the humanities differ from the views from the social sciences and the value that society places on scientific knowledge. The is not a question of whether the humanities or the social sciences are better for leadership studies—both have their strengths and weaknesses—but rather how the two are necessary to develop our understanding of leadership. (p. 393)

She concludes that scientific research helps to break leadership down, or dissect it, in order to produce data; on the other hand, Humanities research helps to present more holistic understanding of the human condition. Ciulla writes, “when we read a novel, a religious text, or history, we sometimes learn something that stands over and above what is written in the text yet does not have the same kind of truth functionality as a fact” (393). Ciulla notes that during the Enlightenment, Vico (1725) wrote contrary to his contemporary Newton about the importance of poetry and history for the interpretation of the human condition. Since then, others such as Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger,

Gadamer, Derrida, Habermas, and Foucault, each in their own respect, have identified alternatives to scientific method for studying the human condition. Ciulla argues though, that these perspectives have not received adequate attention in leadership study where their insight has much to offer. As such, the work of Barnes may also make a salient contribution. In a similar regard to the argument presented in this chapter about the value of literature and myth, Ciulla writes,

When we read what authors such as Xenophon, Plato, Machiavelli, or Tolstoy have to say about leadership, it is familiar, even though the cultural context of the authors is quite different from our own. Leadership scholars have always acknowledged the importance of context in leadership, but empirical studies of some aspect of leadership are rarely placed in the context of relevant literature from the humanities. (p. 394)

Ciulla and others who value perspectives from the Humanities have initiated a new publication *Leadership and the Humanities*, which had its inaugural issue in 2013, to provide a place for the type of research described in this chapter.

Additionally, Ladkin (2010) proposes studying leadership from a philosophical perspective. In her book, she specifically employs ideas from phenomenology in Continental philosophy. She believes that this approach is fitting as “Continental philosophy has never been wary of engaging with significant questions of purpose and meaning central to human life” (p. 1). This project seeks to follow Ladkin’s approach to be “both intellectually stretching as well as particularly relevant” (p. 13) to offer new ways of thinking about interpretive research and the subjects of its study. Combined with emerging ideas in leadership such as consciousness, ontology, and authenticity, it is an appropriate time to present a corresponding methodology, or *mythodology* perhaps more fitting for researching these subjects.

Engaged Literature as an Interpretive Approach

While Arnett relies on Ricoeur for a philosophical frame of philosophy of communication, Barnes's interpretation of Sartre's engaged literature may also provide a fruitful contribution to doing interpretive scholarship within the framework of Existential Phenomenology. Ricoeur, like Barnes, works within Existentialism to discuss the relationship of phenomenology and text (1991); however, Sartre and Barnes assert that liberating ideals of Existential Phenomenology need to be engaged in scholarship. Sartre's own literature, which was awarded the Nobel Prize, is an excellent example of engaged literature; however, he ultimately concludes that literature does not do enough to promote liberation, which spurs his turn toward Marxism, in the *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1960) and his more active political participation.

Barnes notes that Sartre presented the idea of engaged literature in the first issue of *Les Temps modernes* (1945) and developed the idea further in *What is Literature?* (1947). Engaged literature involves writing for a public by presenting opportunities for liberating change. However, Sartre makes a staunch caution that engaged literature is not propaganda, but a response to the demands of questions that emerge in historical moments. Sartre believed that writers ought to engage their work with an obligation to society. Barnes writes, "But while he insisted that the writer must be free as a writer, Sartre argued with literature, which derives from man's freedom, must always be addressed to the cause of human freedom" (1974b, p. 67). Sartre recognized the limitation of the ideas in philosophical works, including his own, to reach the masses, and posited that literature and plays have a much broader reach. As such, Sartre privileged

literature, or philosophy in literature, for its opportunity to influence society, which in turn, becomes engaged literature.

Barnes observes that since its beginnings, Existentialism “has tended to bridge the gap between the theoretical and the literary” noting the works of Kierkegaard who “was concerned with existential anguish and despair as they are felt in concrete situations and with the uniqueness of any lived situation” (1974b, p. 68). Moreover, she exclaims, “all of this cried out for the necessity of presenting not one totalizing view of reality, but many partial experiences of the real. What better suited for this purpose than imaginative literature?” (p. 68). Engaged literature does not serve to propagandize the way people ought to live, but explore possibilities for people to contemplate possibilities of their choice of being and relation with the world. Engaged literature presupposes that people have Existential freedom to choose and are in no way denigrated to a mindless herd.

In addition to the liberating possibilities of engaged literature, Barnes observes that Sartre also recognized the importance of imagination in human experience that may be fully expressed in engaged literature. Imagination for Sartre, is “a mode of consciousness and an essential structure of consciousness” (Barnes, 1974b, p. 68). Perception concerns always and solely with the real—it is the consciousness *of*; whereas, imagination “introduces the unreal” (p. 69). Barnes makes an important conclusion that “without the possibility of imagining—i.e., creating the unreal—man would be wholly engulfed, swallowed up in the real” (p. 69). Thus, perception offers quantitative facticity and imagination qualitative possibility. However, Sartre cautions that imagination should not be equated to fanciful escape from or falsification of reality, which to him are practices of bad faith. For engaged literature, the opposite occurs where “a definite

attitude toward the real world is postulated and the real world is affected” (p. 71). A fictional character becomes part of readers’ experience of the real world and therefore modifies their experience in the world.

Experienced uniquely by others who have their own point-of-view, engaged literature puts the familiar real into question by holding up an imaginary world for us to contemplate. Engaged literature goes beyond knowing into the realm of experiencing in light of situations experienced by characters in a story. Through engaged literature, a viewer or reader participates in these experiences that opens one’s experience, while paradoxically experiences a sense of distance with the realization of alterity, or a “multiplicity of countenances”. (Barnes, 1974b, p. 72).

Thus, engaged literature provides both an opening up of an individual’s being-in-the-world and respect for another’s being-in-the-world, which is shared in literature and reality, in what Sartre calls a literature of situations. Primary for Sartre is to go beyond *being* to what people make of their situations in what they choose to *do*, which thereby gives signification and meaning to life. Engaged literature maintains an Existential hope that people will emerge from bad faith in avoiding their responsibilities in life and find the courage to engage their freedom.

Literature of Situations

Barnes provides an extensive explication of Sartre’s literature of situations in her book *Humanistic Existentialism: The Literature of Possibility* (1959). Here she demonstrates the stark contrast between Existentialist writers whose focus is human experience *within a situation* and psychological writers whose focus is human experience *within a character*. According to Sartre, the rise of the psychological approach occurred between the two world wars. Both Sartre and Camus are critical of this approach because it disregards the ability of characters to act as free individuals. For Sartre, this is a false view of the human being—people are not ready-made characters “formed by heredity and

environmental pressures and developing in accordance with strict psychological laws” (Barnes, 1959, p. 11). Rather than by some external force, people determine their own attitudes with decisions of how to interpret the world around them. Moreover, Barnes asserts that people are free at any time to make new choices, to choose a fresh way of living out of existence, and to remake “so-called nature” (p. 11). The theater of character engages inevitable action, whereas the theater of situations engages free decision. Likewise, the theater of situations involves human possibilities rather than seeing how a present act was determined by the past (p. 11).

In addition to presenting a point of view of human *situations*, rather than human *nature*, engaged literature also works within myths and a literature of praxis. Myths engage imagination discussed earlier and praxis inspires liberating action. The nonrealistic drama of engaged literature deals with concrete problems of the historical moment to which it was written. By illuminating characters in the process of discovering or remaking basic choices for themselves by confronting their existential freedom, they demonstrate that possibilities to choose existence often occur in times of great circumstance (Barnes, 1959, p. 17), or defining moments (Badaracco, 1997). These moments emerge as big or trivial, either of which interrupts and puts being into question (Barnes, 1959, p. 32). Hence, myths convey the human condition as a theater of situations, which is unpredictable, rather than a human nature with a predictable internal essence possessed in character. This unpredictability in human experience is “why any attempt to find a definite self which one can know, understand, and use as a guide for future conduct is doomed to frustration” (p. 33). Myths are much more than mere

stories—they are engaged literature that illuminate life in a theater of situations, which open up possibilities for liberating human freedom.

Interpretive scholarship recognizes the limitation of quantitative work and embraces the idea of temporal truths. Engaged literature communicates possibilities of the human condition rather than attempting to define what the human condition is. Since for the Existentialists human existence constantly becomes, defining who one is, is impossible. Engaged literature makes a contribution to interpretive scholarship by propelling inquiry toward new possibilities that uplifts human freedom. Barnes argues that engaged literature did not originate in Sartre and Camus, or even Kierkegaard, but in Ancient Greek myths, such as those of Sophocles and Euripides. The philosophical ideas of the Ancient writers, like the Existentialist writers, portrayed their philosophy through myth. Even more important is Sartre's assertion that these ideas may *only* be conveyed in the form of myth for us to understand them.

Mythology: Extending the Horizon of Interpretive Scholarship

Barnes asserts that myths and reinterpreting myths offer a challenge to provide new understandings of the human condition. In *Hippolytus in Drama and Myth* (1960), following Donald Sutherland's new translation of "The Hippolytus of Euripides" (original 428 B.C.E.), Barnes offers an interpretive account of this play in "The Hippolytus of Drama and Myth" that discusses specific elements of the play and of myth in general accounting for the manner in which Euripides developed the play. Barnes is interested in Euripides because he was the first to portray "the full drama of the mystery of the human person" (p. 71). At play in Euripides' work is conflict within the individual human person and the symbolic cultural underpinnings in which the character is uniquely

situated. By positioning the drama in this manner, Euripides employs satire to challenge, on moral ground, the cultural norm of worshipping the Olympians. Barnes observes that this is an Existentialist idea of bad faith found in Euripides and numerous other Classics where “among the many functions performed by the gods for the early Greeks, at least one was the serving as an object onto which humans might ‘project’ their own emotional motivations” (p. 79). As follows, in a form of bad faith,

The Greeks attributed to external gods both overpowering impulses which seemed at times to force them to behave in ways which later reflection pronounced foreign to their basic attitudes, and, on the other hand, the inward voice which seemed to come from a distance and dictate counsel which was unwelcoming. The present tendency to make subconscious motivations wholly autonomous and in a sense external to the conscious ego is not after all so very different. (p. 79)

Thus, Barnes asserts that what may at first appear as a play reflecting the dictates over human behavior by the gods, is really, according to Euripides, conflict among people believing in different principles.

To negotiate this being-in-the-world-with-others, Barnes believes that Euripides calls for responsibility in one’s choices by becoming conscious of the background of emotional and cultural influences. Submitting to these forces brings about madness and destruction in Euripides’ play, but cutting oneself off “at the roots, so to speak, results in sterility, emotional starvation, the neurotic lack of any real contact with humanity” (p. 80). Consequently, the greatest aspect of the drama, she argues, is granting careful analysis of the situation and point of view for each of the protagonists, which makes passing judgment on them of right or wrong impossible (p. 82). In analysis of this myth, Barnes shows the uniqueness of each character’s human history and existence, which calls for understanding in their point of view that can never be objectively determined and whose future behavior cannot be predicted.

Barnes comments on Euripides' keen ability to show that no one person is to blame for the tragedy that occurs in the play because responsibility is interwoven among the characters; "any one of the participants might have prevented the tragedy if he had chosen to act differently" (p. 89). Hence, succumbing to bad faith in determinism rather than taking responsibility leads to tragedy. Sartre makes a parallel Existential claim for meaninglessness in human life when lived in bad faith. Barnes observes that Nietzsche made a similar assertion regarding the creation of moral systems to justify one's beliefs and behaviors (p. 81). Moreover, Barnes argues that this sort of bad faith is narcissistic because it prevents characters from understanding or sympathizing with one another—the characters' behavior may be read as unhappily neurotic due to their preoccupation with their own maladjustments and therefore incapable of forming normal human relationships. Arnett (1997) makes a comparable observation for contemporary times with his idea of "therapeutic communication" where focus on the self blinds awareness of one's place within a social fabric. Barnes observes in the play that when the characters lack wisdom stemming from introspection *and* relationships with others, they can only find recourse in predestination or curse.

Myths and Historical Moments

In addition to her commentary on the drama of "The Hippolytus of Euripides," Barnes remarks on a larger context of the story's place within the myth to which Euripides based his ideas in the play. She observes that fragments of themes from an earlier epic poem can be identified in Euripides' work. Also, his characters have been portrayed in other plays in varying roles and contexts. Euripides carefully assessed these accounts and chose to adopt or discard certain conclusions to reflect the beliefs of his

historical moment—particularly criticism of the Olympians. Euripides tacitly takes such action knowing his audience may have affinity to the sacred hero and gods (Barnes, 1960, p. 105). Furthermore, he incorporates changing cultural phenomenon, such as an account of the Amazons, who one of the main characters, Hippolyta is claimed to be. Barnes observes that themes, symbolism, and characters blend through the interaction of different cultures, which is evident in Euripides' play. While names of characters may be found in plays throughout history, their meaning varies according to the values of a particular historical moment. Euripides thus recognizes the importance of history while at the same time looks for new horizons to which future writers will engage his work in a similar fashion. Seeking authorial intent of Euripides is impossible because the contemporary reader misses the enthymematic meaning of his Ancient audience; in myths, however, traces of common human existence can be found that open understanding of the human condition. Hence, history is not linear, but, in Barnes's words, "the wheel has come full circle" (p. 123).

Myth and Human Experience

While Barnes's essay, "Myth and Human Experience" (1955) was written prior to her analysis of "The Hippolytus" (1960), it is more fitting to review it following the earlier discussion because she elaborates on the role of myth in human experience. She begins the essay with the following statement:

Myth, so long as it is known by anyone remains a living thing. This is because myths in one way or another comprise all of the most fundamental of man's experience and so stand as a constant challenge to us—suggesting human meanings but never fully. (1955, p. 121)

Specifically, Barnes investigates underlying meaning found in Greek myth and the role of myth in general in Kafka's *The Metamorphosis* (1915). She identifies the function of

myth for human experience, which she differentiates from the Platonic universal ideal; however, she recognizes that the universal plays a role as a matter of comparison to actual experience in spite of how Sartre may despise it.

Barnes finds Schopenhauer's aesthetic theory quite helpful in understanding the relationship of the universal and particular. She writes,

According to Schopenhauer the Platonic Ideas are the forms and types and laws, the skeletal structure, so to speak, through which the Will manifests itself. Art is the objective embodiment of these Ideas, a capturing of the eternal forms, a concretization of them in such a way that we can hold them up for observation and see them in action. (1955, p. 121)

Myth is not merely a fictitious story or an account of the past, but refers to a larger presence that is alive in lived actuality and significant to people even when they no longer *believe* in the myth literally. This is so because myths depict "fundamental emotional situations possible for human beings," which are intrinsically human and offer insight to which people may learn about their human condition "by way of suggestion only and never with clearly delineated solution" (p. 122). Thus, myths point to universal ideals that transcend historicity; however, myths are interpreted by uniquely situated individuals.

Barnes posits that there is no correct interpretation of myths, for if so, the mysteries of human existence would be solved. Even when certain belief systems are no longer held by their audiences, myths continue to become reinterpreted to respond to questions in unique historical moments. Barnes observes a multitude of those who reinterpret myths from Romantic poets to contemporary psychologists (e.g. Oedipus stories) and existentialists. Barnes references *Being and Nothingness* (1943) where Sartre identifies how myths are also referenced by scientists who describe the pursuit of

knowledge as a 'hunt'. A longer portion of this quote is provided here for the purpose of this chapter.

Every investigation implies the idea of nudity which one brings out into the open by clearing away the obstacles which cover it, just as Actaeon clears away the branches so that he can have a better view of Diana at her bath. More than this, knowledge is a hunt. Bacon called it the hunt of Pan. The scientist is the hunter who surprises a while nudity and who violates by looking at it. Thus the totality of these images reveals something which we shall call the *Actaeon complex*. By taking the idea of the hunt as a guiding thread, we shall discover another symbol of appropriation, perhaps still more primitive: a person hunts for the sake of eating. To know is to devour with the eyes. (pp. 738–739)

Sartre contrasts this consumption, digestion, or assimilation of knowledge with art, which is an act of creating. Wordsworth shares a similar observation in his poem “The Tables Turned” where he states, “Sweet is the lore which Nature brings; Our meddling intellect Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—We murder to dissect.” (Line 25, 1798). Moreover, for Sartre, as well as other Existentialists, particularly Merleau-Ponty, the body cannot be severed in the pursuit of knowledge; one’s being-in-the-world changes when knowledge is digested. The Existentialist is not averse to the pursuit of knowledge, but to espousal of the Cartesian mind body split.

Barnes (1955) points to Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis* (1915), which epitomizes the transformation of one’s being-in-the-world while also taking up a common theme in Greek mythology of a human turned into an animal. She observes that Kafka embraces elements of myth by communicating on multiple levels qualities and complexities of human experience—“something that would be lost if abstracted into a flat statement” (1955, p. 123). While many different meanings may be derived from this work, relevant to this discussion is the inability for the main character, Gregor, to act anything other than what a cockroach, which he was transformed into, could do. This is a reflection of how

“he had been smugly content with conventional human morality” (Barnes, p. 125). He was not a bad person; on the contrary, he may be aptly described as a do-gooder. However, he is guilty, Barnes observes, of being Self-centered because he acts in this manner unreflectively—not realizing that in actuality he is stifling those around him along with himself.

Important for this project is the significant reference Barnes makes to the difficulties in human communication that emerge in *The Metamorphosis* (1915). Gregor’s Self-centeredness is reflective in his lack of communication with others, even his family. In his state as a cockroach, he wants to express himself, but is always misunderstood. Barnes recognizes Kafka’s symbolism, taken to the extreme, of the feeling that all people experience—communication is not perfect. Transforming into a cockroach is certainly a horrible thing, but perhaps most horrifying is the removal of his ability to communicate—the ability that makes us most human. Without communication, Barnes observes, is the experience of “hope deferred”—of frustration and meaninglessness in one’s existence, which in Greek myths is illustrated in the torments of Hades (p. 126). The Existential calls us to embrace our human condition to choose—to go beyond living a passive bug’s life and consciously realize, or be awakened to (p. 126), our ability to be present to ourselves and others. As such, research regarding the human experience cannot be simply likened to entomology, or other nonhuman study. A sole focus on human nature, in both living life and doing research in both regards is, from an Existentialist perspective, in bad faith—either living a meaningless life, or digesting the subject of study. However, Barnes does not fall into the general negativity of other Existentialists and concludes her essay in a more positive light.

Tragicomedy in Human Experience

Barnes recognizes that without a meta-narrative to dictate, the human condition can be left in a state of anxiety, absurdity, nausea, and guilt—common Existentialist themes. These feelings along with suffering are elements of the human condition to which Barnes takes seriously rather than trying to disassociate herself. She realizes, akin to Frankl (1946) that these feelings are necessary to find meaning in life, which she articulates in the introduction to Schopenhauer's *The Pessimist's Handbook* (1964b). Barnes moves Existentialism into a more positive light without adopting the optimism of inevitable progress from the Enlightenment; rather, "suffering and anguish are essential facts of human existence" (p. ix)—an evasion of this is in bad faith of one's existence. Conversely, good faith is having the courage to embrace suffering in varying ways to find meaning and purpose in life. Existential hope is not looking at the bright side of life. Existential hope is meeting life's existential moments rather than falling into bad faith despair allowing the serious world to determine existence. In the translator's preface, Saunders writes that in Schopenhauer's view of life as tragedy people "can at least be heroes and face life with courage" (p. xlvii–xlvi). Additionally, the person who complains of misfortune needs to realize that sorrow is akin to all.

Whereas Schopenhauer views life as an oscillation between pain and boredom, Barnes (1964b) offers an alternative view in tragicomedy where these states pass into one another. The irony in these extremes come together when the goal a person attains is never quite the same as the one projected (p. 125). She writes:

By his acts he inscribes himself in a world which he can never fully control, which distorts and disappoints his projects, which he cannot comprehend any more than he can understand himself. Each person is a self-creation, but chance

furnishes most of the material out of which he must make himself. In short, man is absurd, but he does not always find his situation laughable. (p. 125)

For Barnes, tragedy is a revolt, action in pursuit or aspiration of making things different and as a consequence makes life significant and purposeful. Tragedy affirms life.

Comedy returns life to a comfortable norm and opens up temporal clarity of life. Comedy reminds us that our aspirations are not entirely in our control. Barnes argues that Euripides' work is true tragicomedy. In his works she finds the very essence of tragicomedy where, "we are left with ambivalent feelings, aware that we cannot quite sum it all up, either intellectually or emotionally, in any clear statement or attitude" (p. 131). This chapter argues that the same is true for interpretive research.

This project seeks to illuminate the idea of Existential hope in Barnes's works that grounds human experience thereby reorienting one's being-in-the-world to respond to existence. So too is the intention of interpretive scholarship in constructive hermeneutics. The idea of *mythodology* illuminates the intimate Existential relationship between being and understanding the human condition in living and learning. Unlike other forms of research that seek final answers, interpretive scholarship, like myths of tragicomedy, reveals "that when all has been said on all sides, the question remains..." (Barnes, 1964a, p. 131). Likewise, interpretive scholarship recognizes the importance of historicity, where perennial questions emerge seeking clarity in the midst of historical moments and offering temporal understanding without affirmative answers (Arnett, Arneson, and Holba, 2008). The idea of *mythodology* embraces hope and possibility in myths to propel public consciousness toward community for others (Arnett, 2010b). Arnett observes that a call from the 1960s counterculture for community in response to an imbalance of laden individualism (Bellah, 1975) was ignored. Perhaps this wisdom was

not ignored, but delayed for this historical moment. Barnes, who wrote during that time of disruption, provides guidance and responsiveness for emergent questions in business ethics and leadership studies. Posited as a philosopher of communication, Barnes brings to light communicative aspects, which are necessary for reinterpreting contemporary theory in these fields.

CHAPTER 3

Existential Dwellings: Organizational Engagement as Group-in-Fusion Praxis

This chapter explores the idea of dwelling in order to situate individual human freedom within the working life. While Existentialism is often associated with metaphors such as freedom, anxiety, and bad faith surrounding the *individual*, Barnes demonstrates in her work, *Humanistic Existentialism: The Literature of Possibility* (1959) that the human condition is experienced within a “theatre of situations” (p. 10)—an idea conveyed in the Existentialist literature of Sartre, Camus, and Beauvoir. The chapter begins with an examination of Existentialism in business ethics to both frame the organizational level of analysis and to open theoretical space for a Barnesian contribution to the field. Existentialism in the business ethics literature responds to questions concerning agency, consciousness, and authenticity; in this way, however, the focus of attention remains on the ontological *in-its-self*. This chapter argues that the work of Barnes provides necessary balance by offering an enriching perspective of the *for-its-self* at the organizational level of analysis. Depicting organizations as such displaces the necessity for responding to the question of whether organizations can have agency, consciousness, and authenticity. From a Barnesian perspective, organizations can never possess subjectivity solely allocated to humans, but organizations are not mere objective facts of brick and mortar either—they are a nexus of present and past human subjectivity offering Existential dwellings for group-in-fusion praxis directed toward Existential horizons of organizational and societal good. Barnes’s interpretation of Sartre’s group-in-praxis provides insight for people coming together in good faith for a common human purpose in organizations.

Theoretical Framework: Existentialism in Organizations

An Existentialist standpoint in the organizational literature is limited; however, a few scholars, particularly in more recent years, have brought Existentialism into the conversation. Both West (2008) and Jackson (2005) write about Existentialism for individual decision-making, yet conclude with questions about Existentialism at the organizational level of analysis. More specifically, scholars discuss the role Existentialism in business ethics focusing on the topics of agency, consciousness, and authenticity by utilizing Existential philosophers such as Sartre, Camus, or Heidegger, or relying on a broad understanding of Existentialism with an anthology such as in Kaufmann's (1975) text *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*. The absence of Barnes's works, *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967) and *Sartre* (1974b), is remarkable, especially considering that these essays involve questions of ethics, and rely on Existentialist philosophers who never directly address ethics.

The purpose in making this observation is not to critique these authors, for their interest in Existentialism's role in business is welcomed, but to identify where Barnes's perspective has a great deal to offer—especially since she, even more so than Sartre and Beauvoir, attended to questions of ethics in Existentialism. The following will provide a review of articles that discuss Existentialism in business ethics at the organizational level of analysis in order to provide a foundation for a constructive contribution of a Barnesean perspective. The review helps to situate organizations within new horizons of Capitalism discussed in the first chapter. Without a meta-narrative, or perhaps with a failed one, organizations are found in an Existential state of anxiety. Organizations fall into bad faith by denying the freedom to choose, but also have the potential to embrace responsibility in

good faith. Existentialism does not provide prescriptive answers for how organizations should be managed, but opens up understanding for meeting the demands of Existential moments. This path, however more difficult, provides an opportunity for meaningful existence through purposeful relationships with others. In an Existential manner, the following discussion positions organizations as dwellings—for people to come together in deliberate action rather than relying on a meta-narrative to determine behavior in bad faith. Organizational dwellings provide unique spaces of culture for people within which to act. Scholars recognize the current historical moment as a time of crisis, where the meta-narrative of Modern Capitalism has failed to deliver its optimistic promises. In response, scholars are raising Existential questions of agency, consciousness, and authenticity at the organizational level of analysis.

Whether viewed as limited or emerging, scholarship on Existentialist themes combined with issues Liedtka (2008) describes as “business as usual” including paternalism, pre-packaged communication, lip service, and transaction-based labor among others calls for greater attention to the study of Existentialist themes in organizations. Liedtka references Erickson’s (1995) “pseudo-individualism” and Hardt’s (1993) discussion of the rise of consumer culture that all point to an increasing problem of alienation to which Existentialism seems to offer remedy (2008, p. 238). Additionally, her observations parallel other scholars who view the current historical moment in crisis. Putnam (2000; 2003) observes a collapse in community and the resulting detrimental effects of the loss of social capital on society. MacIntyre (1981) also observes a crisis of community from the over-individualized attitude of emotivism, which resonates with Lasch’s (1978) culture of narcissism, Bellah’s (1975) broken covenant, and Arnett’s

(1997) therapeutic communication. Thus, what appears in the literature and in the everyday life of many people seems to be a crisis of Capitalism, namely a failure to offer purpose and meaningful existence. The framework of Existentialism in organizational studies helps to regain a sense of meaning and purpose, which thereby provides a constructive response to this crisis.

Do Organizations have Agency?

While his essay is directed to the role of Existentialism at the individual level of analysis, West (2008) ponders the question of corporate agency at the end of the essay, under a section titled “weaknesses”. He states, “frequently, ethical issues relate to corporate activity and it is not clear that all corporate activity can be reduced to certain individuals’ decisions” (p. 24). Moreover, he notes that corporate culture “can continue relatively unchanged despite changes in management” (p. 24) but does not go as far as French (1993) who grants moral agency to organizations independent of organizational members. West (2008) maintains an individual focus of Existentialism where ideas such as authenticity, good faith, and consciousness “cannot simply be extended to corporations that lack consciousness and do not experience absurdity” (p. 24). Often organizations are imagined in a dichotomy of either the organization possessing agency, for example, as a ‘corporate citizen’ or as people possessing individual agency who act autonomously within an organization. The question of whether organizations have Existential ‘agency’ may be better understood from a perspective of corporate culture rather than corporate agency. From this perspective, horizons of human stories and historical moments meet to form a nexus of corporate culture.

Organizational culture both grounds and facilitates individual action. Managers are accountable for their own actions as well as how their actions influence corporate culture; they are held responsible to themselves and others who are part of the shared public space. While a corporation cannot have individual agency per se, ignoring the impact of organizational culture on human existence is a form of self-deception or bad faith with comments such as ‘It’s just business,’ ‘let the markets decide,’ or Friedman’s (1970) assertion that the only ‘social responsibility of business is to increase its profits.’ These statements are in bad faith from an Existentialist point of view where not to choose is to have already chosen. Bad faith occurs when letting the markets decide and valuing profitability above all else is used as self-deception to permit the oppression and exploitation of others who have a relationship with the business.

Do Organizations have Consciousness?

Pruzan’s (2001) essay “The Question of Organizational Consciousness: Can Organizations Have Values, Virtues and Visions” gets to the heart of and goes beyond the question of organizational agency. Pruzan recognizes disconnect and lack of clarity between organizational theorists who often speak of organizational practices as a whole and other organizational theorists who attribute these practices solely to individuals within organizations. Through reflection of the literature and the ambiguous use of the term ‘consciousness’ Pruzan argues

Under certain conditions, it is both meaningful and efficacious to ascribe the competency for conscious and intentional behavior, including formulating and expressing values and visions, to collectivities of individuals, to organizations... not only *can* organizations acquire the ability for existential reflection and for self-assessment, but in addition the leaders of such collectivities *should* behave so as to promote the development of these competencies, i.e. of what we refer to as *organizational consciousness*. (p. 272)

The idea of organizational consciousness is understood in a more abstract manner than the concrete consciousness of an individual.

Pruzan's ideas lend to the earlier discussion of organizational culture. Individuals have stories, comprised of what Pruzan calls "feelings, such as pride, joy, guilt and pain in connections with their actions" (pp. 272–273), which cannot be attributed to organizations, but form in the collective and historical ether. Organizational members, Pruzan argues, must *embody* the metaphors of organizational values, visions, and virtues in order to respond appropriately to multiple stakeholders and communicate the corporate identity (p. 280); through this communicative 'dialogue culture', organizational consciousness emerges. This perspective is more of an Existential view of organizational consciousness than a Transcendental depiction, which Pandey and Gupta (2008) discuss, and although they cite Sartre, they perhaps confuse his idea of transcendence with a more universal idea of the transcendental. Each organization offers a unique space of culture to inform rather than dictate member actions. The consciousness of members' embeddedness in this culture allows them to make deliberate choices that open up possibilities for change. Thus, the Existential idea of *becoming* may be understood beyond the individual, but, is intimately intertwined.

Do Organizations have Authenticity?

In light of the interest in moral character of organizations and corporate social responsibility, Liedtka (2008) seeks to "extend these contributions by focusing on authenticity in relation to a set of organizational processes related to strategy making, most specifically to an organization's strategic intent, as they represent the key processes through which an organization defines the self it aspires to be" (p. 237). In this essay, she

builds on Pruzan's premise that organizations can, in certain ways, be understood as having an organizational consciousness. Pruzan proposes that organizational consciousness is developed through 'cultural dialogue;' and Liedtka demonstrates how the emergence of a more authentic corporate self takes place through organizational practices of strategy formation. She offers potential implications for this move may include "improving the moral good and the business outcomes of an institution simultaneously" (p. 237), which recognizes that organizations are situated within larger societal narratives.

Providing a helpful theoretical review of the origins of authenticity, Liedtka (2008) concludes "regardless of what literature we find it in, the concept of authenticity is grounded in a social constructivist perspective that questions the prevalence of objective, disembodied reasoning on the part of human beings in social settings" (p. 238). She references Anton's (2001) work in which he states "the issues at stake here are not knowledge, truth, and reality, but rather experience, meaning, and existence" (p. 13). Acknowledging the classic Greek mantra of "know thyself," Liedtka finds that Existentialism, particularly in the works of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (1943) and Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1927), provide great insight to understanding authenticity as a developmental process of becoming for organizations.

Liedtka (2008) also references contributions from other fields. She identifies the work of Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (1991), as an important perspective on authenticity from the field of Social Political Philosophy. She states Taylor "locates authenticity as part of a dialogical process between the individual and others of significance" where together they may find a shared identity (p. 238). She notes Taylor

adds a salient ‘moral dimension’ to authenticity. Drawing from Psychology, Liedtka acknowledges the contributions of Fromm (1947) and Maslow (1968) and contemporary scholars in the field of Positive Psychology such as Hardter (2002). Scholars from Psychology offer ideas such as voice, engagement, and invitation. Interestingly, she does not mention the work of Frankl (1946) and others in the field of Existential Psycholanalysis, particularly those who followed Sartre’s philosophy such as Cannon (1991), a student of Barnes. Finally, she recognizes a dominant theme in the work of the Fine Arts where authenticity is “both highly original and simultaneously rooted in familiar traditions” (2008, p. 239). She concludes that the seemingly disparateness between the familiar and the novel are actually quite commensurable: “they come together to provide useful yet untapped insights into creating an environment likely to result in more authentic selves in a business context” (p. 239). Still, even Liedtka maintains a separation of the individual within the context of organizational space, and utilizes the term ‘dwelling’ as the corporate intent that emerges “in the kinds of strategic conversations that recognize the possibilities latent within each individual” (p. 242).

A helpful transition from this discussion to a Barnesian contribution of Existentialism in the organization context is Mele’s essay, “The Firm as a ‘Community of Persons’: A Pillar of Humanistic Business Ethos” (2012). Mele argues that a firm should not be viewed as nexus of contracts, or abstract entity, but as a “human community” that opens up the possibility for “humanistic business ethos” (p. 89). Mele draws from Phenomenological-Personalist philosophers to ground an understanding of the firm that “emphasizes both individuals and the whole, and makes explicit the unique, conscience, free will, dignity, and openness about and participation in matters which affect people’s

life, and makes it essential to cooperate for the common good of the business firm and the society” (p. 89). This alternative phenomenological approach illuminates the interconnectivity among society, organizations, and selves.

All of the works presented here respond to an historical moment that demands a pursuit of meaningfulness, purpose, and ethics in organizations, which they seek to find through Existentialist themes. However, their focus of attention is on ontological questions of agency, consciousness, and authenticity—questions of *being*. While the in-its-self is an essential component, Barnes provides the necessary next step in the discussion of the for-its-self, or the *doing*. Additionally, by directing more attention to doing, Barnes helps to de-center organizations from questions of ontology, but which ultimately strengthens organizations as dwellings for meaningful and purposeful human activity. Little is accomplished by what an organization says it is, and from an Existentialist point of view this can never be determined because being never is, it is always becoming. More important is what an organization does, which occurs through a coming together of group-in-fusion praxis in an organizational dwelling.

Group-in-Fusion Praxis in Organizational Dwellings

The works of Barnes provide balance by offering a texturing of the aspect of action within organizations. Organizational dwellings are spaces of human activity organized in the active terminology of reorienting, interweaving, engaging, transforming, and sustaining. Developed by humans, organizational structures may be reoriented to facilitate participatory and connected human activity. The structure may then be conceived of as an interweaving of individual stories both present and past that compose an organizational dwelling. Those who come together within a dwelling engage in

meaningful human activity directed to the Existentialist goal of liberation, which may be transformed from a plurality of solitudes into active group praxis. Finally, it is important for organizations to sustain this praxis to avoid two opposing and undesirable extremes: falling apart or becoming hegemonic. Hence, it is through this understanding of organizations as dwellings for group-in-fusion praxis that organizational agency, consciousness, and authenticity may emerge.

The works of Sartre (1943; 1946) and Barnes (1959; 1967; 1974b) provide a necessary philosophical frame for Existentialism in business ethics that moves the theory beyond ontological orientation (in-its-self) to the domain of responsible action (for-its-self) directed toward good faith choices for the liberation of Others. The Existential for-its-self is always a consciousness *of* something, which presupposes something outside of oneself. Existentialism is not a philosophy of the individual, as some have critiqued, but rather a philosophy that engages the freedom of individuals as situated, or embedded within the larger society, organizations, and interactions with others. This embedded agency (Arnett, Arneson, & Bell, 2006; Arnett, Fritz, & Bell, 2009), also reconstitutes an influential change in relationships with others, organizational dwellings, and the larger society in the manner in which Sartre claims in choosing, one chooses for all humanity: “our responsibility is thus much greater than we might have supposed, because it concerns all mankind” (1946, p. 24). In this sense, the in-itself-for-itself relation may be understood at the meso-level of analysis.

A Constructive Interpretation of *The Critique*

In *The Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1960), a work that moves from the individual to group and societal levels, Sartre proposes the idea of dialectical reason as a

relationship of historical totalization with being and knowing. Being and knowing are not free, as he originally presented in *Being and Nothingness* (1943), but are rather cloaked with a heavy weight of the material world of work and scarcity. For Sartre (1960), man is not free to choose or interpret until he is free from the oppression of socio-economic structures in which he struggles—his choices are constrained by the *practico-inert* to which he either accepts or rebels. In the introduction, Barnes (1963) describes Sartre's belief: "Man's existential freedom doesn't amount to a pair of deuces when the chips are down" (p. xxv). Sartre's move to the socio-political realm of Marxism is not quite this simple though, and as one of the most astute scholars on Sartre, Barnes is not willing to confirm Sartre's separation from Existentialism so easily.

Barnes recognizes that while Sartre proposed an ethics to be his next work following *Being and Nothingness* (1943), he ultimately could not take this step "so long as we live in a society based on falsehood and inequity [where] any individual ethics is at best a compromise" (Barnes, 1963, p. xxv). Thus, Sartre appears to believe that the socio-political realm must be addressed first. Conversely, Barnes makes an important interpretation of Sartre's claim to remain within the realm of Existentialism. She writes:

Its actualization depends on the willingness of individuals to recognize existing contradictions and speed the creation of the resolving synthesis. Since Sartre rejects all belief in a mechanistic working out of history, he could not indicate the possibility of a future 'philosophy of freedom' if he did not believe in freedom as a present reality in men—even if at present it exists more as an abstraction in any practical form. The statement that we cannot conceive of its content is not a negative statement about man's potentialities, but rather the affirmation of the greatest, most far-reaching possibility of all—that man is free to transform himself, if he so choose, into a being so different that we cannot even in our imagination grasp what his creativity might demand or what might satisfy the new being he has made himself. (pp. xxvi–xxvii)

Hence, people must have the ability to engage their freedom if they are to enact the change that Sartre so desires—to create a world in which all individuals work together in full consciousness to honor the Existential emancipative ideal of freedom for all to pursue their destinies. Barnes concludes that Sartre in fact does not reject Existentialism in lieu of Marxism, but views “a Marxism that reinstates the individual and his *praxis* at the very heart of history...a true Marxism will recognize that history is not necessarily and forever a history of human relations determined by scarcity” (p. xxx). Thus, the *practico-inerte* may be a reflection of the freedom people choose it to be. In the spirit of *Being and Nothingness* (1943), people together also have the capability to create history rather than be determined by it. Thus, Barnes begins with reorienting the human creation of workplace structures to facilitate human praxis within organizational dwellings.

Reorienting Workplace Structures

Barnes specifically addresses the division of labor. Alienation does not necessarily stem from human error and weakness, but rather from human structures that accompany existence within the *practico-inerte* (1974b, p. 128). She writes, “division of labor, for example, even though it may initially be based on the recognition of differentiation in talent and ability, results in separation of the members from one another, both in space and in the quality of their daily activity” (p. 128). As such, decision-making is not conducted as a group, even if group members approve of it passively. The resulting hierarchy sees “the emergence of a sovereign or chief—either in the form of a single leader or of an executive committee” that may turn into a contentious relationship of distrust and passive obedience in fear of disapproval from the authority (p.

128). The goals of efficiency and progress associated with the division of labor turn into “the bureaucracy of a pyramid structure” that suppress freedom through impotent separation and alienation of the lower levels whose work fulfills the material acquisition of those above (p. 128). Thus, traditional hierarchical bureaucratic structures need to be reoriented into more participatory environments that uplift human freedom within the organization.

Barnes concludes that Sartre’s hope is to offer an understanding of social processes with appropriate praxis to resist bureaucracy where within the group “each ‘common individual’ is also a free self-creating person” (1974b, p. 129). While the *Critique* (1960) may be observed as an analysis of negative forces within the practice, Barnes offers a constructive interpretation of the hope that exists within the subtext of Sartre’s work. She ponders the possibility of moving to a point where “human beings need no longer feel that they must be inhuman toward one another” (p. 129), which may take place within organizational dwellings.

Interweaving Stories and Dwellings

Stories (individual lives) and dwellings (cultural contexts) are co-informative where dwellings provide the backdrop (Arnett, 1998) of lived stories, but whose stories reaffirm and extend dwellings toward new horizons. Without dwellings to guide, individuals find themselves in a state of “existential homelessness” (Arnett, 1994) and without individual stories, dwellings become fixed ideologies composed of cult members incapable of possessing an “enlarged mentality” (Arendt, 1958). It is important to maintain this narrow ridge (Buber, 1947b), where one side falls prey to excessive individualism (Arnett & Holba, 2012) while the other side turns into hegemonic regime.

For example, unrepresented groups who succeed in overturning their oppressors need to resist becoming what they originally despised. Organizations run a similar risk. Most often businesses are initiated by a creative vision of an entrepreneur who does not enter the marketplace for the sole sake of making money (Mackey & Sisodia, 2013); however, without deliberate care for its purpose, the business may become so narrowly focused on profitability, which is ultimately self-defeating. Barnes's interpretation of Sartre's group-in-fusion praxis provides insight for people coming together for a common human purpose, which may be understood as an organizational dwelling.

Barnes argues Heidegger's translation of dwelling as an abode or place is incorrect; the fundamental meaning of the word may more accurately be translated as custom or habit without suggestion of locality. While critical of Heidegger in many regards, Barnes utilizes his ideas in a constructive fashion to move on to what she finds more important, which is what one *does* with one's being. She concludes, "whatever Being is, if it is, it offers no clear apodictic message as to what we should do about it. We must still make, each of us, our own being by means of our specific projects in the world," which ought to be ultimate concern for oneself and mankind (1967, p. 423). Dwelling is a creative human activity and as such can be consciously chosen to be maintained through habit and custom, or human praxis in Sartre's terms. For this purpose, Barnes turns to Sartre's idea of group-in-fusion praxis found in *The Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1960) where Existentialist ideals of freedom and choice merge in group praxis, which may ultimately achieve goals of liberation.

Engaging in Praxis as Lived Experience

Barnes observes in Sartre's work the necessity for praxis within the practico-inerte; otherwise, study on the subjects of being and consciousness remains within philosophical analysis. Praxis is defined as "any purposeful activity, whether individual or group; it is always action in the world" and the practio-inerte is "the world of worked-over matter in which praxis inscribes itself" and is "far more than the physical world. It is the whole weight of the social environment, the prevailing customs and institutions, the public media, the very language I speak" (p. 119). Barnes also recognizes that praxis may be directed toward certain action, but it is not a teleological process due to the ever changing reality of the human situation described above. The result of praxis may be a "counterfinality" (p. 119), or contrary to what was expected. Consequently, praxis is hopeful, but is not optimistic—a term connected to a false sense deterministic certainty (Arnett & Arneson, 1999, p. 208).

In *The Critique* (1960), Sartre turns toward Neo-Marxism where he finds people's freedom, the primary focus of *Being and Nothingness* (1943), limited and oppressed by economic factors of materialism that have invaded human existence. Sartre describes this as the practico-inerte, or hell as the outside world. Barnes recognizes Sartre's position; however, she does not believe he wholly severed himself from Existentialism. More important she finds in this work the idea of group-in-fusion praxis, where Existentialist ideals of freedom and choice merge in group praxis, which may ultimately achieve Marxist⁸ goals of liberation. Thus, while others find *Being and Nothingness* and *The Critique* incongruous, Barnes claims that Existentialism is very much at work, at the

⁸ Barnes notes that Marxism ought not to be confused with Communism, and Sartre's position as a Neo-Marxist is a return to Marx's original ideas. Sartre in fact never joined the Marxist party.

meso-level of analysis, in group-in-fusion praxis, with the Existentialist goal of human freedom. While Marxism is a socio-political philosophy about liberating people from alienation, Sartre, in both *Being and Nothingness* and *The Critique* “reminds us that it is still men who make their history” (Barnes, 1974b, p. 99), Existentialism becomes a living philosophy of human action.

In *The Critique*, Sartre moves from individual consciousness to what he calls *le vécu*, or lived experience, which is a person’s dynamic place in the terrain or fabric of human life with others, culture, and history. The fabric of lived experience is a back and forth weaving of past and future. The past totalization and movement toward the future are what Sartre calls present acts of consciousness. Barnes describes this relationship in a passage in *Sartre* (1974b), which is worth repeating here:

First, every act of consciousness functions as a unification of past and present experience simultaneously with the organization of the external situation within which a consciousness finds itself. To be aware of oneself ‘in situation’ is to assume (we could almost say to become) a total point of view on the world and one’s role within it. In addition, we recall that each consciousness is aware that it is an object to others. At every moment the totalization which I am and which I reify, or objectify, in the world by my acts forms part of a larger whole. The unification which I have imposed is in turn totalized by the immediate group of which I am a member, and this group in turn is totalized by other groups and so on ad infinitum till we reach the overall story of mankind and the totalizing attempt of the historian to interpret it. (p. 114)

As such, lived experience is the role a person plays in effecting the situation by “perpetually projecting himself out of the past toward his future and always within the compass of a world already worked out by others” (Barnes, 1974b, p. 114). A person’s human condition is tied up within this web of lived experience, but is still ultimately free; “he *is* his choice of being, for his choice of being *is* the way that his consciousness relates itself to the world and organizes its experience” (p. 115). A person has an opportunity to

utilize freedom of choice to make meaning and take a new point of view for oneself, others, and ultimately human history.

The action that arises involves a commitment to values and to a better future, which must supplant the “materialist myth” (Barnes, 1974b, p. 101). Sartre extends his philosophy to the group level where he claims that because people’s existence is contingent upon what they choose to be, people may also transcend any established order toward another. Moreover, this argument may also be applied to shared values, which have the possibility to be transcended. Change exists temporally or contingently within the context of historical moments where emerging questions about existence and values are met and cannot be predicted, but may be foreshadowed by the very efforts to transcend the present toward the future (Barnes, 1974b, pp. 101–102). She writes, “we have no means, no intellectual instrument, no concrete experience which allows us to conceive of this freedom” (p. 103), so what is needed is *practical freedom* for people to fulfill their projects in the world.

Transforming from Passive to Active Practical Freedom

Barnes describes how a passive unity exists among people in the *practio-inerte*, or in Sartre’s terms, a plurality of solitudes exists with their own projects. Even when people are grouped together, which could be on a bus, as residents of a city, or members of an organization, they remain a collection of people who are not *present* to one another, but to the same *object* such as riding to some destination, living in an apartment building, or doing prescribed organizational functions. To move from passive to active, Barnes refers to the need for a “consciousness rising”—an “attempt to overcome serialization, to transform passive, external unity into the common action of a group” (Barnes, 1974b, p.

121). The focus of attention changes from the objective (material world) to the subjective (human projects). Consciousness rising involves orienting attitudes of group members to overcome the passive separation. When this occurs there exists a group-in-fusion of group consciousness and a sense of “We” (p. 121). For the We to succeed, they must come together around a common mission (Sartre refers to the taking of Bastille) and they cannot be dissuaded by the “Look of the Third” that can paralyze them to be only what the Third sees (p. 122). Hence, they can be inhibited by their own self-image derived from the Third.

Important to note is that the individuals who make up this We do not lose their individual autonomy, the result of, for example, partaking in a cult. Individual subjectivity remains intact while the “union which is realized is accomplished not by a union of consciousnesses but by means of common action in the world outside” (Barnes, 1974b, pp. 123–124). In this manner, Barnes asserts Sartre distances himself from sociological anthropologists such as Durkheim, who view groups resembling a metaphysical entity (p. 124). For Sartre, an organism⁹ cannot be used as a metaphor to describe a group; “No all-inclusive consciousness exists over and above the individual consciousnesses of the group’s members...the group-in-fusion is held together by a common praxis. Union is based on free, shared action” (p. 124). Action is the key term that holds the group together, which goes beyond the initial feeling of mutuality.

A primary characteristic of group-in-fusion praxis is the ability for the group to accomplish a project, which is true to each member, but could not be accomplished on an individual basis. At this point, Barnes refers to Sartre’s example of the group running on

⁹ The metaphor of an organism is also described in Morgan’s (2006) *Images of Organization* along with other metaphors for organizations.

its hundred legs. No one is the group is ascribed leader; “we are all united by what we do” but at the same time, this communal initiative does not alienate each member’s subjectivity (1974b, p. 125). In a later, unpublished essay, Barnes (1993) correlates this example to language, where “rhetorical excitement abound” when people come together in group-in-fusion praxis. Even more, through group praxis, individual members’ freedom is augmented. Barnes writes, “not only does the group achieve the common goal of its members who could not attain it alone, but the group enables each one to fulfill his distinctive individual capabilities in a way which he could not do in solitude” (1974b, p. 125). Group-in-fusion-praxis tills or churns the dwelling by people coming together in a shared project. Dwelling is a necessary space in which to push off of in order to change it. Thus, group-in-fusion praxis both controls the material world and liberates people from it.

Sustaining Group-in-Fusion-Praxis in Good Faith

While so far the discussion points to positive effects of group-in-fusion on human existence, Barnes provides helpful caution as well. She makes the distinction that controlling the material world through group-in-fusion is to control the economic reality to which humans created. That is, good faith group-in-fusion does not permit destruction of what humans have not created such as the natural environment. Additionally, the Existential goal of uplifting human freedom must remain central to group-in-fusion praxis. For example, while the Nazis were certainly successful in organizing around a common goal, their pursuit cannot be described as group-in-fusion praxis, because their horrific goal oppressed and extinguished human freedom. Moreover, Sartre’s immersion in this lived-experience of World War II, like other major scholars whose work emerged

similarly, played a fundamental role in shaping his ideas about human freedom, which certainly cannot be used in turn to substantiate the terror he witnessed in occupied France. The Nazis, moreover, turned into a hegemonic regime that swallowed all individual subjectivity,¹⁰ which is counter to group-in-fusion praxis where balance of We and I must be maintained.

This balance Sartre describes as the common individual—the “ideal of uniting individual fulfillment and community” in order to overcome serialization and enhance freedom (Barnes, 1974b, p. 127). This ideal is not easily maintained. On one hand, it is fleeting and evanescent in building to the point of the common individual, and on the other hand, once achieved, runs the risk of disintegration. Also, while directed to group-in-fusion, the common individual views others within the group as allies, setting aside differences while working toward a common goal. However, when the group-in-fusion falls apart, differences among “serialization amid collectives” (p. 127) become fodder for contention. Barnes is critical of Sartre’s frequent connection between combat or competition and group-in-fusion praxis. While Sartre admits that the recollection of the shared experience of danger and struggle may serve to keep the group united, Barnes points to other possibilities beyond the agonistic situation that offer hope for maintaining the common individual within group-in-fusion praxis. In fact, the celebration of combat may instill a violent attitude that could be directed toward the fraternal group thereby replacing community with hierarchy.

¹⁰ People such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who presented a fervent threat against the Nazis for the sake of human freedom, offer an interesting subject for future analysis within the Existentialist framework discussed here. For more on Bonhoeffer, please see Arnett’s (2005) *Dialogic Confession: Bonhoeffer’s Rhetoric of Responsibility*.

Only until very recently has Existentialism entered into the conversation in the business ethics literature. Within this body of work, scholars have focused on the subject of *being*, or in-itself, with the metaphors of agency, consciousness, and authenticity. However, these metaphors remain more in the ontological realm than the Existential and overlook the all important aspect of *doing*, or the for-itself of pursuing projects within the context of an historical moment. Scholars in business ethics are searching for meaning and purpose in organizational life as a response to the crisis of Modern Capitalism, yet meaning and purpose are not found in what *is*, but through purposeful and meaningful human *action* directed toward Existentialist goals of liberation. People need to recognize the place in which they stand within an organization, but according to Barnes, this place is not a locality, but a culture, or dwelling, that may be transformed into a potentiality the group desires. The future of an organization is hopeful rather than optimistic because counterfinality always lurks as a possibility as well. Even so, hope is maintained as the group responds to the demands of ever unfolding Existential moments.

Barnes provides guidance for how organizations may be newly perceived and transformed to offer a cultural space for people working together. She critiques the division of labor, which in its pursuit of efficiency has alienated people from the work and one another. In this hierarchical structure, people exist in a plurality of solitudes directed toward the *objective* material world. When the structure is reoriented to be participatory and connected, their attention is directed towards the *subjective* human world. Their work is a practical freedom where projects come together while still maintaining a sense of individual autonomy. There is a choice to form a 'We' as an active group coming together around a shared mission. They must also be cognizant of

the dangers of the group falling apart on one hand, or on the other hand turning into a hegemonic regime. Rather than asking questions about who the organization *is*, and whether an organization can even exist as an *is*, answers to ontological questions emerge in what people in the organization choose to *do*. Group-in-fusion praxis shapes an organization as a dwelling where people may find meaning and purpose in life working together.

CHAPTER 4

Existentialist Ethics: Interpersonal Engagement within Organizations

The previous chapter demonstrated how people may come together in group-in-fusion praxis within organizational dwellings to work toward a mission directed toward subjective human goals rather than objective material goals. The chapter worked within a framework of business ethics at the organizational level of analysis to present an argument that directs the focus from ontological corporate agency toward a new focus of what people actually *do* within organizations. The current chapter maintains this sense of responsiveness; however, it moves into an interpersonal level of analysis. It also parallels the previous chapter by examining and reorienting how Existentialism has been proposed in business ethics at this more micro level. This chapter argues that decision-making does not take place solely within the mind of a manager, but occurs within unique situated contexts with others.

Individual decision-making, as it has been proposed, not only neglects that much more is at play in Existential moments of decision-making, but also that model is designed to guide individuals solely within the context of their own minds is potentially dangerous and contrary to the intent of the model. As an alternative to this approach, Existentialism opens up new understanding of how choices are made by engaging others and the world. The following examines the literature of Existential and Sartrean perspectives in business ethics, which is primarily directed toward decision-making in business. Throughout the review, a Barnesian perspective will lend commentary to reorient some of the ideas presented in the literature. Most significantly, Barnes makes a constructive contribution by arguing for Existential engagement with others, taking into

account interpersonal communication and relationships situated within organizational dwellings. The business ethics literature suggests ideas such as imagination, emotional engagement, an ethic of care, and kindness and compassion, but it is Barnes who actually provides the necessary next step with an understanding of Existential love.

Existential and Sartrean Perspectives:

Existentialism for Business Decision-Making

While not grounded specifically in Sartrean Existentialism, several scholars have discussed the general role Existentialism plays at the individual level of managerial decision-making. Although Existentialism may date back to Kierkegaard and later Sartre, only within the past fifteen years has it joined the conversation in business ethics.

Agarwal and Malloy (2000), as do other scholars who will be discussed here, agree that Existentialism ought to be considered in addition to other perspectives such as consequential, deontology, and teleology as it has a great deal to offer to the study of business ethics. Viewing the implications of Existentialism at the individual level of employees, Agarwal and Malloy state “existentialism promotes the organisational [sic] member’s sense of individuality, freedom and responsibility” (p. 143). Similar to West (2008), who will be discussed later, they offer a complex and somewhat cumbersome model for ethical decision-making that illustrates interrelationship among existential, deontological, and teleological decision-making approaches.

An article by Ashman and Winstanley (2006) published six years later in the same journal adds to the literature on the role of Existentialism in business ethics. They acknowledge the increased interest in books that “raise questions over the lack of meaning, the loss of control and feelings of helplessness that pervade working lives, or

the anxiety and insecurity that dog modern-day executives” (p. 218). Specifically they mention the works of Pauchant (1994) *In Search of Meaning* and Sennett (1999) *The Corrosion of Character*. The goal of their essay is to “establish existentialism as an approach that can shed light on the everyday choices, ethical decisions, life and experiences that face individuals at work” (p. 218). A section of their essay titled “Existentialist ethics,” provides a philosophical foundation for implications in business ethics. Here they reference Anderson’s (1993) work identifying Sartre’s earlier and later philosophical thinking as two ethics—Existentialist and Marxist. They believe Sartre’s first ethic “represents a coherent philosophy offering the *concrete* hope of people seeking a greater sense of control over their existence” (Ashman & Winstanley, 2006, p. 224). The second ethic represents Sartre’s turn away from Existentialism and toward the socio-political level of Marxism. Additionally, they find Warnock’s (1967) *Existentialist Ethics* helpful in elucidating the influence of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Overall Ashman and Winstanley provide a comprehensive account of how Existentialism guides, rather than prescribes solutions for, concrete and particular ethical dilemmas. While their work is quite helpful in contributing to the literature of Existentialism and business ethics, their essay, along with others, neglect to include the work of Barnes in the conversation. The following essays specifically identify a Sartrean perspective for business ethics with reference to Barnes, but on a very limited basis. Nonetheless, these essays will be given more attention than the previous as they are closer aligned with the scope of this project.

Maintaining the common theme of decision-making, but grounding the essay specifically in Sartre’s philosophy, is West’s (2008) article titled “Sartrean Existentialism and Ethical Decision-Making in Business.” In a similar fashion, West seeks to distinguish

Existentialism as an alternative model to normative theories, such as consequentialist, deontological, and rights, and positivist research, such as scientific and empirical modes of inquiry. Relying on the Existentialist metaphors of freedom and responsibility, West develops a decision-making model with the goal of encouraging managers to reflect on possibilities within the context of their projects, situations, and encounters with others. West also seeks to elucidate Sartre's notion of bad faith or self-deception in the business environment.

West reviews themes in Sartre's Existentialism, such as purpose, freedom, subjectivity, bad faith, and choice, to provide a foundation for the business decision-making model he proposes. Purpose emerges from the being-in-itself/for-itself relationship as a person's desire *to be*, "in the sense that I desire to be a necessary rather than a contingent being, and self-fulfilled/self-caused as well as purposefully free" (2008, p. 17). Human purpose can be observed in a person's personal goals and projects. West writes "in contrast to the objects in the world around us (a tree, a building), which are complete in themselves, humans are constantly, and inevitably, purposeful" (p. 17). While the term "inevitably" in this sentence is used to add emphasis and importance to human purpose, Barnes cautions the *deterministic* definition of the word—from an Existentialist perspective, humans are fully 'evitable' in their self-cause. Thus, the first two ideas West presents are fundamentally tied—individuals are purposeful as they are free to choose action and interpret their particular situation.

The remaining ideas West offers include values, subjectivity, and bad faith, which illuminate some of the ethical theory found in Sartre's philosophy. He relies on Anderson's interpretation in *The Foundation and Structure of Sartrean Ethics* (1979)

citing a passage from this work worth restating here: “Since values... are beyond what is, what reality they have can be only to a being that is itself able to transcend what is and posit what is not. Such a being is, of course, human consciousness. Hence values are due to human consciousness” (West, 2008, p. 23). As a result, universal principles or rules cannot exist independent of the subjective experience of the individual. Absurdity and anxiety are experienced as a result of the free choices open to people to make without universal prescription (West, 2008, p. 18). However, this subjectivity does not relinquish a person from personal responsibility of choices made or refrain from making ethical choices. The primary demand of Existentialism calls for action and accountability; otherwise, a person lives in bad faith or self-deception. West suggests people should cultivate a clear awareness of their individual freedom and the associated responsibility of their choices, which involves commitment to choices, their consequences, and openness to future possibilities (p. 18). Living in this manner corresponds to authenticity and good faith. West concludes that values are a consequence of ethical decisions rather than a determinant of those decisions. For example, if a person acts honestly, the person’s life could then be characterized as honest (p. 18). Thus, believing one has an honest character has little meaning until honesty is portrayed in action.

Utilizing this foundation of Sartre’s philosophy, West (2008) presents “an existentialist decision-making model” that relies on the ethical value of “individual freedom” and encourages “the individual awareness of his/her freedom, responsibility, prior choices, projects and goals, the pressures and expectations of others, and the practical constraints of the situation” rather than an attempt to discover an objectively ethical decision (p. 19). This reflective process opens greater personal awareness of one’s

freedom and responsibility, which leads to authentic action. West's model is composed of six sequential steps (1) Acknowledge and identify freedom to act upon a variety of choices, (2) Accept responsibility of choices rather than pass responsibility to others, (3) Consider prior choices, projects, and goals that historically situate a person, (4) Consider the pressures and expectations of others that may coerce a decision made in bad faith, (5) Consider the practical constraints of the situation, or facticity that functions as practical constraint, and (6) Proceed with choice that best reflects an awareness of freedom, acceptance of personal responsibility, and is most consistent with the goals and projects that one freely chooses (pp. 19–20). This final step is the *act* of good faith. While West calls attention to a person's embeddedness in the world, perhaps his model should reposition this as the first step since the following steps seem dependent on the variance of each situation that calls forth subjective ethical action.

West addresses multiple critiques of Existentialism that may be raised regarding his model. The model marries consciousness with action, which as he observes, is quite different from ethical relativism, a frequent critique of Existentialism, where any sort of behavior is permissible (2008, p. 23). While Existentialism does not offer a means to universal principles, and consequently the inability to judge another on the basis of these principles, a person can be judged in bad faith for denying one's own or another's ultimate Existentialist value of freedom. This is an assertion Sartre makes in *Existentialism is a Humanism* (1956) when confronting the critics of Existentialism, which West does not explicitly reference. West recognizes another critique that Existentialism is highly individualistic and therefore cannot be considered an ethical philosophy since ethics involves consideration of the well-being of others. This critique

often arises from the reference to Sartre's literature (1946) where he exclaims 'Hell is Others,' which seems to preclude the possibility of social ethics. West offers a partial remedy in Cooper's (1999) work that identifies Sartre's move away from an individual perspective to a societal view in the *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1960). However, Sartre's other text, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, is a stronger remedy to the critique where he discusses how in choosing for oneself one chooses for all humanity. West offers a starting place for Barnes who further elucidates the social ethics of Existentialism in *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967), which was not referenced by West.

While published prior to West (2008), Jackson's (2005), "Towards Authenticity: A Sartrean Perspective on Business Ethics" is positioned after West's work because his essay moves more towards a Barnesian perspective, which will follow. Jackson goes beyond a limited focus of decision-making to address more relational aspects of business ethics. Jackson first observes that 'character' is often a subject for business ethicists who most frequently rely on teleological Aristotelian virtue ethics. He argues authenticity—an individual's consciousness of moral situations and the multiplicity of choices available—is a "radically different perspective on the nature of character," which is helpful in understanding business decision-making (p. 308). Jackson first provides an exposition of a Sartrean perspective and then explores business ethics implications from this point of view. Drawing from Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* (1943), Jackson identifies that consciousness offers the opportunity for an individual to break with motives (internal structures) and reasons (external structures), often viewed as objective or deterministic by other philosophies, to apprehend and *choose* interpretive meaning and action for oneself. The individual can then utilize freedom to engage in authentic choice, which is an

intentional and deliberate act made by a unique consciousness. Even more, Jackson observes in Sartre's philosophy that the objectivity of motives and reasons is illusory (p. 310–311). Choices are made through “the meanings we ascribe to the world” (p. 311), which are choices “of self at a fundamental level” (p. 312). West also rejects objective and prescriptive claims taking an alternative Existentialist standpoint of freedom and responsibility.

A person may be limited by the situation and one's past, which cannot be changed; however, a person has ultimate freedom regarding the meaning conferred upon a situation and past. This freedom is what Jackson (2005) identifies as an alternative understanding of character—a human project cannot be defined by character traits or roles. Moreover, this human project does not have a teleological goal of ‘happiness’ or ‘human flourishing’ associated with virtue ethics. For Sartre, all we can hope to have is authentic existence in human action; ‘bad faith’ arises when we turn away from the acceptance of our freedom. Jackson states “The aim of Sartre's analysis is not liberation from suffering, but rather to awaken us to authentic existence” (p. 314), which may be true of Sartre's philosophy in *Being and Nothingness* (1943), but not in his later work nor in his notebooks on ethics, where he is very much concerned with liberation from oppression. Indeed, in the endnotes of the essay, Jackson comments that he is relying on Sartre's earlier work.

Referencing Sartre's *Nausea* (1964), Jackson observes the idea of ‘story’ in Sartre's work where a story is in bad faith when:

For the most trivial even to become an adventure, you must (and this is enough) begin to recount it. This is what fools people: a man is always a teller of tales, he lives surrounded by his stories and the stories of others, he sees everything that happens to him through

them; and he tries to live his life as if he were telling a story. But you have to choose: live or tell. (Sartre, p. 39)

Jackson raises an important question regarding Sartre's stance on stories—are the stories we tell ourselves in bad faith, are the stories self-deceptive—perhaps as in the example of Don Quixote? Jackson does not pose the question, which should follow—how do we tell stories of ourselves in good faith? This is a question Barnes seeks to answer, but Jackson relies on the Sartrean perspective to conclude that stories we tell are a form of determinism allowing people to escape responsibility for their actions, and as such, stories are told in bad faith. Jackson states that stories create a pattern to which we conform and by telling a story to ourselves, we make ourselves “things” (2005, p. 314). In this sense, stories restrain an individual's ability to engage in the ultimate freedom of choice.

Sartre's philosophy is helpful in cautioning against fixing ourselves in a particular 'role,' such as his example of a waiter, and to avoid assigning an 'I am' to such a role, which limits multiplicity and potentiality of 'becoming.' However, telling stories and understanding ourselves as storied are part of the human condition to which Barnes reinterprets as present within Sartre's works. Jackson cites a passage from Barnes's introduction where she explicates Sartre's idea of bad faith. While this is helpful to better understand his notion of bad faith, it is perhaps not appropriate to connect her quote to the bad faith of stories discussed in this portion of his essay. Story is vital to Barnes, who engaged the idea in her own work, *The Story I Tell Myself* (1997). Additionally, later in his essay Jackson (2005) states “...our choices actualize and specify what *we are*” (emphasis added, p. 316), which contradicts the earlier discussion of the bad faith of 'I

am.’ The sentences following this quote, reprinted below, are more in line with the incompleteness of the in-itself for-itself relation:

Sartre shows how each of us has a fundamental project. Our free acts are always outlined for us against the backdrop of this project. We can see our choices in the selves we have created, and the projects which give meaning to reasons and motives are basic choices of ourselves in our modes of responding to the world. (p. 316)

Thus, an individual’s freedom is situated within the life-world, which does limit choice, but also provides meaning in existence.

To clarify Jackson’s position, Barnes offers that the self-project is never complete; it never *is*, but is always *becoming* through the freedom of choice. Freedom is absolute in the ability to always choose the meaning conferred upon the past and present situation where a person *chooses* how to narrate the past and develop the next chapter. Story is necessary for one’s existence and for the meeting of horizons of stories which contribute to larger narratives, such as organizational culture. Jackson states “If we conduct our professional careers as stories, laid down and fixed, we simply put up smoke screens to obscure our decisions” (p. 319); however, from a Barnesean perspective, a fixed story is impossible as our interpretations change through experience. It is only when we use story in a deterministic or blaming manner that it becomes a matter of bad faith. The stories we tell ourselves in good faith offer great opportunities for authentic living.

Jackson’s (2005) essay is helpful in furthering Sartre’s Existentialism in the business ethics scholarship. He identifies key themes in Existentialism that extend important implications in business ethics. These themes include: existence precedes essence; people are subjects, not objects; choices matter; universality of decisions; and bad faith (self-deception) (p. 315). Jackson argues Existentialism may have more to offer

business ethics than normative philosophies such as Utilitarianism or Deontological approaches, which can be overly theoretical and disconnected from the complexity of everyday life. Existentialism offers a perspective for subjective and relational *understanding* of ethical issues rather than positing objective solutions. Consequently, Jackson offers from this standpoint, the purpose of business ethics education ought to foster “the conscious condition of freedom in our manner of being, that is, authenticity” (p. 316). This lends to teaching about ‘emotional engagement,’ ‘an ethic of care’ (Noddings, 1984), and ‘emotional intelligence’ (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002) rather than codes of conduct and lists of dos and don’ts. In his endnotes, Jackson references an ethic of care can be observed in Adam Smith’s understanding of empathy and compassion, which is articulated in *A Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759/2009). Jackson argues that this sort of education cultivates a person’s understanding of the human implications and complexity of business decisions such as the human impact of a large layoff. A significant decision such as this cannot be viewed merely as improved quantitative data of labor costs on a spreadsheet, or an aggressive and unsympathetic “chainsaw” (p. 318) mentality, but rather from the stance of preserving human dignity through kindness and compassion.

Jackson also makes an Existentialist contribution to the business ethics literature by discussing Beauvoir’s *Ethics of Ambiguity* (1948). Jackson’s connection of Beauvoir’s work to business ethics is quite helpful. Uncertainty and ambiguity are part of the everyday life of business leaders. Jackson argues that those who have difficulty handling ambiguity will not be successful as they “close too quickly on solutions, are less prepared to consider all aspects of a problem, adhere too rigidly to a first solution in the face of

evidence of better alternatives, and are less capable of recognizing the frequent need for compromise and ‘best fit’ solutions” (2005, p. 318). Alternatively, “moral maturity” involves the ability to take action and recognizing one “cannot know” (p. 318). Moral maturity is even more salient in managing the complexity of stakeholder relations (Freeman, 1984), which has become a necessity for contemporary business leaders. Jackson recognizes that most business leaders are rewarded for their certainty and correctness; however moral maturity involves humble recognition that decisions are emergent in particular situations, which involve enacting creativity and wisdom rather than relying on a predetermined or prescriptive decision.

Jackson concludes that Existential guidance is needed for the ambiguity in balancing stakeholder relations and in making good choices in the many right versus right (Badaracco, 1997) dilemmas leaders face. He adds “For many hard cases there simply may not be any single, best-justified answer other than a sober prompting to ‘be imaginative—create’” (Jackson, 2005, p. 320). Since a leader does not have access to the right answer, Jackson argues for adopting an authentic attitude as a viable option that works to rectify organizational structures, which can deteriorate into bad faith of dehumanizing corporate bureaucracies. He calls for the awareness that these structures “(1) are not inevitable or ‘necessary’; (2) are the product of choice; (3) pose a persistent threat to human freedom (in the radical Sartrean sense); (4) if adopted unwittingly in the ‘spirit of seriousness’ can be barriers to authentic living” (p. 321). He concludes by offering a Sartrean perspective does not aid in solving ethical dilemmas but exposes “otherwise hidden assumptions and beliefs about the nature of human character and freedom that such assumptions and beliefs may be questioned and intuited in radically

different ways” (pp. 321–322). While freedom is an esteemed value for Capitalism and Democracy, Jackson shows freedom has not been engaged when rule-based ethical systems are the norm. Existentialism is democratic because it fosters questioning and opening up of creative possibilities to respond to ethical dilemmas leaders face.¹¹

The business ethics literature focuses on decision-making and utilizes Existentialism primarily to argue for an alternative approach to normative ethical theories, which engages individual freedom rather than universal ideals. However, in moving from the universal to the individual, these essays ignore the realm of interpersonal relations, which are vital to understanding how people choose within organizations. Others are necessary for decision-making. Others shape the situation in which a person faces making a decision. The type of decision-making referred to in these essays is not objective, such as deciding how much project to ship, but involves subjective questions with human implications. These essays point to perhaps the most important subtext that runs throughout them—there is a difference between ‘things’ to be managed and ‘human beings’ who deserve to be approached in a different, Existential, fashion. Even though their focus is on decision-making, these essays open up new opportunities to think about how people choose with others in organizations.

The Look as Exchange: Looking-Together-at-the-World

Barnes examines Sartre’s position on interpersonal relationships in the book chapter “Hell Is Others” in *Sartre* (1974b), which provides an introduction for the

¹¹ Ladkin (2006) also argues for a perspective beyond traditional approaches in business ethics such as deontology and utilitarianism. She primarily engages Heidegger’s notion of ‘dwelling’ as an alternative approach. The ideas in her essay are quite compelling and perhaps embrace more of a Barnesian perspective than a Heideggerian one although Barnes is not referenced in her essay. Still, it is important to note that her thinking works along the same lines as Barnes, and her ideas make a significant contribution by bringing a phenomenological perspective to the field of business ethics. Heidegger seems like a contrary figure to embrace for a discussion of interpersonal relations to which it may be concluded that Ladkin, as a philosopher in her own right, ought to be credited for the profound ideas offered in her essay.

subject, but is discussed in much greater degree in her *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967). Sartre opens the discussion for Barnes on Existentialism and interpersonal relationships, which she extends in a more positive direction and perhaps makes her most significant contribution to Existentialism. This chapter opens with Barnes's interpretation of Sartre's interpersonal relations and will then move to ideas that emerged from her close study of Sartre, but remain uniquely her own.

Most of Sartre's discussion of human relations is negative pertaining to the failure of human relations due to bad faith or from demands others make in relations that reduce subjectivity. Barnes summarizes this as either turning the self into an object, or trying to turn another into an object, to which both cases are unsuccessful in forming authentic relationships. Barnes writes, "the first seeks to deny that I am a free subject and responsible for my being; the second more violently would do the same thing to another" (1974b, p. 54). While Sartre does seem to convey that these situations are the only possibility for human relations, Barnes makes an important observation to a footnote in *Being and Nothingness* (1943) that states "these considerations do not exclude the possibility of an ethics of deliverance and salvation. But this can be achieved only after a radical conversion which we cannot discuss here" (Sartre cited within Barnes, 1974b, p. 55). At first, this may appear to put everything Sartre proclaimed about interpersonal relations into question, but it also provides an opening for Barnes to develop her own perspective of interpersonal relationships in good faith. At the end of *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre suggests his next work will be a volume on ethics, and presumably, ethics involving interpersonal relationships, but he instead moves to ideas of groups and society in the *Critique* (1960). Barnes concludes of Sartre's position on interpersonal

relationships that while he describes relations in bad faith, he believes that “good faith and positive human relations are possible” (1974b, p. 56). Barnes takes up this call in her *Existentialist Ethics* (1967). Before moving to this topic, the following discussion will provide a short review of bad faith human relations found in Sartre’s work to provide a background for the ideas Barnes develops.

Barnes describes Sartre’s famous example of being caught looking through the keyhole, which illustrates an awakening of another’s existence. Barnes writes, “engrossed in his spying, he exemplifies the existential situation of each one of us as we nonreflectively live our conscious life. All is referred back to him as center of reference. He is all subject, for everything and everybody is an object of his consciousness” (1974b, p. 57). However, being caught in the act of spying, a person realizes his objectivity in the look of another. This example demonstrates Sartre’s view of human relationships as subject-object encounters. There is a desire to pursue one’s own subjectivity while also hoping for others to see this subjectivity as well. The ideal would be a unity of subjectivities. Barnes references Plato who describes this unity as two free subjects becoming a single transcendence (p. 57). However, for Sartre, this is impossible since a person cannot fully experience another’s subjectivity nor can a person leave his or her own subjectivity while experiencing another.

Instead, Barnes prefers to view coming together in interpersonal relationships not as shared being, but a communicative encounter. Mutual agreement is needed “not to exploit the object side of either member of the couple in such a way as to injure him as subject” (1974b, p. 58). This is only the first step in getting close to the goal of love. In *Being and Nothingness* (1943), Sartre discusses love in the erotic form, but Barnes

believes in another approach to love as looking-at-the-world together.¹² Sartre's erotic love originates in the self with the desire to be loved, for the other "to found my being" (p. 58) and "make my world the center of his" (p. 59). Even when this is reciprocated, each self is still primary in the relationship. Moreover, love from this perspective as equal reciprocation is frail according to Sartre, because at any moment it is vulnerable to falling into bad faith or to the look of the third which turns both into objects. Thus, Sartre believes since this unity of love is so difficult to attain and once attained so frail, it is easy to see why people settle on relationships where freedom is surrendered or an attitude of indifference toward all others is adopted.

Barnes does not share in this belief and in fact views it as potentially dangerous. Barnes is also critical of Sartre's discussion of sadism and masochism, which do not necessarily have to be sexual. Submitting one's freedom to another or suppressing the freedom of another goes against the fundamental premise of Existentialism to uplift freedom for all. Barnes maintains greater hope that people can work to sustain relations in good faith rather than succumbing so easily to sadism or masochism. While these states fall into states of oppression or domination, Barnes also calls people to resist being indifferent by viewing others merely by function such as employee, clerk, or waiter, which denies their human existence and moves them into the realm of the objective material world. Barnes questions whether Sartre's descriptions of bad faith relationships means that all relationships are doomed to failure, or whether his descriptions demonstrate that "many, if not most, human relations display the ingredients of the subject-object conflict" (1974b, p. 63). Sartre seems to make a strong case for the prevalence of

¹² In an essay published posthumously, Barnes (2010) in "Sartre's War Diaries: Prelude and Postscript" also writes about love.

judgment and hostility in human relations. Barnes claims otherwise—“the Look may also be an exchange. And two people may look at the world together” where the “We” finds unity not in each other’s being, but in being-in-the-world (p. 64). Barnes writes, the Look-as-exchange “is not a union of subjects but a mutual affirmation of respect for the Other as subject” (p. 64). This idea is entirely original to Barnes. From Sartre’s perspective, the Other as hell limits my freedom, but the Other may also come to my aid to help me fulfill my freedom and help me to see myself from the outside world by looking *with* me with love.

Existential Love and Imagination

Barnes recognizes the serious lack of philosophical development of love in Existentialism with the majority of discussion devoted to cynicism, despair, and bad faith in human relations. She engages the idea of love in a chapter entitled, “Personal Pronouns” in her *Existentialist Ethics* (1967). She argues for personal pronouns of “you, I, and we” and begins the chapter with a firm assertion, “Existentially ‘It’ and ‘They’ are impersonal pronouns and have no place in a discussion of human relations in good faith. ‘It’ belongs properly to the realm of Being-in-itself. Illegitimately ‘It’ creeps into the human world when one person regards another as an object” (p. 318). She asserts that these impersonal pronouns are part of the serious world, which ought to be left there.

Leaving ‘It’ and ‘They’ to the serious world, Barnes begins her philosophical development on love with the concrete and personal. Primarily, she believes that within the framework of Existentialism in good faith, the Other, a free subject, cannot be denied or destroyed. In a traditional Sartrean sense, the Other exists as an obstacle or impediment, whose interaction is inescapable and causes hemorrhage that bleeds in the

Other's direction. Barnes notes "clearly we must go beyond this point" (1967, p. 321). First Barnes posits that even when caught in the Other's look, the Other cannot wholly ascribe the person gazed upon as an object. Because people are human, we distinguish person from thing, yet one cannot know how the Other is perceiving as such. This is however the minimum recognition of human subjectivity. After this initial glance, the self then may ponder other subject forms such as the "self-which-I-think-I-am-for-him, the self-which-I-remember-being-for-someone-else, the self-for-me which he was yesterday, the new-self-for-him which I am determined that he will find in me, and so on indefinitely" (p. 323). Barnes comments that most of us have experienced these feelings of subjectivity in human interactions. However, she still presses for an Existential understanding of selves-for-others as a true meeting of subjectivity that does not move into the transcendental union of merging consciousnesses.

Dispelling the belief in the metaphor of two circles merging into one, Barnes modifies the metaphor to describe two circles overlapping, where in love, the two circles maintain their own integrity, but provide mutual identity development, which could not grow on their own. As such the relationship is not parasitic, but symbiotic. Barnes cites Erich Fromm's *The Art of Loving* (1956) for these ideas; however, she does not agree with his contention of knowing the Other's essence along with an opening of one's essence to the Other. Barnes questions how this essence can be known. She asserts that Fromm suggests, "some sort of intuitive comprehension which lets me suddenly see the Other and his world from within" (1967, p. 328), but whose work does not explicitly show how this is possible. The term essence is problematic for Barnes, who reinterprets Fromm's position from an Existentialist perspective of existence. Rather than knowing

another's essence, the Other and the Other's happiness is valued and the Other is included in the self's projects. Claiming to know the Other's essence negates the possibility for a person to change. Barnes asserts that if a human being has an essence, the essence *is* freedom—"a being-who-is-a-freedom" (p. 329). She refers to Frankl (1965) who also speaks of essences; however, he stresses uncertainty in relations with others.

Both Fromm and Frankl call people to value the Other as a unique separate being; however, Barnes notes that neither scholar "quite satisfies our wish to know just how we are to apprehend this unique quality which the inward life of the other possesses" (1967, p. 330). Frankl, more so than Fromm, offers the idea of imagination, which is our idea "of what the Other is in himself which causes us to value and love him, not some mysterious ability to experience his inwardness directly" (p. 330). Imagination opens a person up to the Other's uniqueness and singularity and does not claim to know the Other. While a person can be open to another's world, an important fact remains that the consciousness and life experience of the I-subject is ever present in the background of receiving the Other. Barnes concludes that this suggests the inability of I-subjects to merge—"human beings meet as existents, not as essences" (p. 331). Sartre does not elaborate on the notion of love, but he presents an important starting point where love "begins by acknowledging our ultimate separateness as individuals living our particular lives in the world" (p. 331). Starting with this assertion, Barnes makes a significant contribution to an understanding of love from an Existentialist point of view.

The Existential You

Barnes opens up another consideration of the ‘You’, or ‘Thou’ which she notes has been neglected in Sartre’s work. Without an understanding of ‘You’, the ‘We’ seems hardly achievable even when one’s ‘I-ness’ is put in parenthesis. Barnes concludes, “why Sartre has altogether omitted all discussion of the second-person pronoun, I do not know. To speak of all encounters with the Other as if only first and third person were involved is to do violence to experience as well as to language” (p. 337). Moreover, she notes that the second-person pronoun is missing from Beauvoir as well. While Beauvoir may posit reciprocal recognition of consciousness, Barnes asserts that “what matters is not that I recognize *a* consciousness but that I am acutely aware of *your* consciousness or—still better—of *You* as a consciousness” (p. 338). Barnes clarifies that the word ‘you’ in the grammatical sense merely refers to another who, for example, may be asked for directions to some location; however, the You understood in the Existential sense, is a bond experienced between two people.

The Existential You exists only in relation involving two identifications. The first is the I-subject “making itself nothing except an awareness of the Other and an awareness of that awareness” and the second is an effort “to transcend the Other as object and assert both the existence and absolute value of the other as ‘I-subject’” (p. 338). The mutual recognition or affirmation of this identification moves from the Look as exchange to the looking-together-at-the-world in a stronger sense of ‘We.’ Barnes differentiates her understanding of We with Sartre’s assembly of third persons in group-in-fusion that places a remembrance of the You in the background in the unity of action in common projects. Beyond the grammatical sense of You used in impersonal exchange, the

Existential You and corresponding We falls apart on two other occasions. On one hand, the situation of self-for-others sets aside all self projects in order to help others further their projects. The self is objectified as an instrument for this purpose and the Other may be objectified when the self imposes a future destiny on the Other that was not freely chosen. On the other hand, the Other may be turned into an object in hatred. In either case, the Other is judged solely in relation to one's own value system and ignores the aspects of the Other's life that are in opposition to one's own (p. 340).

Barnes posits that "good faith compels me to realize that his acts have another aspect and color when seen within the framework of his own private world and that 'the one who' performed these acts does not stand in the same relations to them as the man whom I condemn" (1967, p. 340). Hating another is denying the Other's free subjectivity. Furthermore, living in good faith also involves the recognition that people "do not *have* to be ethical" (p. 340). Sartre directs his writing only to human relations in bad faith where the Existential You and We is not sought. Barnes concludes that it would be better posited that 'Hell is Others' by adding 'in bad faith human relations' and "that there is a counterpart 'Heaven is Others' for relations in good faith" (p. 341). She adds, "one can avoid the sort of Hell which comes into being when people struggle to destroy each other's subjectivity and to assert themselves as sole subject with their own object-side wholly transcended. To acknowledge that others are subjects and to be reciprocally recognized is certainly possible" (p. 341). As such, the structures that situate human relations as hell are transformed. It is a commitment to love and learning where such Heaven on earth may be possible.

Existential Communicative Learning

Sartre's 'Look' from the Other brings about the realization of the Other as subject, which for Barnes, is the next step toward a positive view of human relations in good faith (1967, p. 332). Moreover, the Look, leads to the fact that "the Other *is* irreducibly a subject, no matter how hard I try to prove that he is only an object for my manipulation" (p. 332). Hence, good faith human relations maintain, at the heart, an awareness of one another's free subjectivity. The next step is recognizing and valuing the Other's being followed by a resolve to "protect and further the well-being of this subject whom I cannot grasp..." (p. 332). Resolve needs to be followed by action, or communicative engagement with the Other. Barnes posits that "in close contact with another, I take something from him," but clarifies that this is not to be understood as a negative phenomenon (p. 333). She points to the expression in French, *de lui*, that loses something in translation, but may be understood as taking *from* and *of* the Other, in which the Other does in the same respect. She makes clear that this is not something mystic or mysterious; the engagement is concrete learning. Barnes describes this communicative learning as:

The Other, through words, gestures, actions, reveals to me new possibilities, new dimensions of the world...I read in him the emotional aspects of a world that is fearful, beautiful, disgusting...I learn from him new ways in which a consciousness may relate itself to its own products. All of this I take in from my own point of view, to be sure. But the point of view modified by that of which *is* a point of view. Once I have recognized his possibilities as real possibilities of the world, my own world must include them. Although our worlds have not merged, each one will henceforth include structures which the Other has led me to embrace. Something of this kind happens in any human contact, even a hostile one. (pp. 333–334)

Communicative learning is an enlarging experience when love is at the heart of the engagement. Otherwise, learning is replaced with indifference, or hostility where the Other's point of view is ignored or validity challenged. But in love, "I open myself to the

inward life of the Other. What I desire most of all is that he and I may both comprehend and live the new relations to the world which each reveals to the other” (p. 334). Barnes describes this as simultaneous enlargement, fulfillment, and wellbeing.

This didactic engagement is embedded within larger narratives that situate the encounter. Rather than describing this as being-with-others-in-the-world, Barnes chooses to posit it as looking-together-at-the-world. The latter term embraces the ideas discussed so far; it maintains subjective alterity by bringing free subjects together within the practico-inerte in communicative engagement rather than attempting to merge their subjectivities. Following Sartre’s group-in-fusion described in *The Critique* (1960), Barnes posits a dual looking-together-at-the-world as unity in action rather than being—

A oneness of attitude which is effected outside and then internalized. Absorbing themselves in the achievement of common projects, each one of the pair temporarily puts parentheses those parts of himself which would intrude in the present enterprise. Each consciousness becomes close to being *nothing but* the awareness of the progress of the project which they have launched together. (1967, p. 337)

The quote implies a sense of utility or instrumentality, which is advocated in a sense by Sartre as long as the mutual utility is directed toward the material world and not in objectifying another person.

Fulfilling Projects and Finding Meaning Together

In relations of love, horizons of the practico-inerte are expanded while at the same time, those who engage in interpersonal love are also opened up to new understandings of their own projects. Barnes asserts that “through my interest in the other, I enlarge my projects, expand the scope of my freedom” (1967, p. 352). It is the Other, the outside, who makes us feel at home and keeps us from losing ourselves in the impersonal world of objects. The Other validates us by making our well-being a part of his or her own

projects, but who does not imprison us by being wholly self-for-other. Barnes concludes, “thus, in a curious way he makes me aware of my being-in-the-world without causing me to lose my sense of being-for-myself. And of course I do the same for him” (p. 353).

What is described here is a genuine respect for oneself and the Other’s being-as-subject—a commitment to love in good faith.

However, Barnes recognizes that maintaining “life of love in good faith is a difficult undertaking, and there are innumerable unsuspected pitfalls” (1967, p. 353). For example, when overly focused on the attainment of love, love becomes a demand, which paradoxically destroys its possibility. Additionally, if the goal is to know the Other in total comprehension, then hope is lost for future enrichment. The Other becomes no more than what I find within myself. These are examples of love in bad faith; “love in good faith, perilous though it be, demands the constantly renewed pledge that each will seek both his own and the Other’s continued growth” (p. 354). In looking-together-at-the-world, the We needs to be directed to new possibilities of their freedom together rather than remaining fixed on the same objects. This does not imply a view of progress in the material world, but a view of possibility in the projects of being and finding meaning in life. Barnes argues that love fails when a person does not find existence itself an incentive for making life worthwhile. Rather, a person needs to have interest in enlarging one’s experience, which involves learning of:

The complexities of another personality and of the world as it appears to him, [which] has the fascination of a story and can carry us along with its continued suspense, its promises, fulfillments, surprises, reconstructions of past events, and hopes of still more tales to come. Unless we have already looked on life and our own lives with some of this same kind of fascination, we are not likely to be satisfied with the meaning we find in another’s existence. It is legitimate and desirable to find pleasure and interest in the semi-detached observation of the way in which one’s relations with another unfold. (p. 354)

However, Barnes cautions to avoid the temptation of substituting absorption for involvement in concern for the Other. She also cautions to avoid expectations of the Other and the relationship, found in the fantasy of some ideal, and fictional, relationship. In this regard, the Other is assigned a role that he or she is expected to play, which denies the Other's freedom. In a similar fashion, one may fantasize about how a relationship once was and view the Other in comparison to this recollection. Barnes describes this as love of love, not love of the beloved; "I have forgotten the Other as subject and made him into an object that is not even real" (p. 355). Thus, love in good faith avoids these pitfalls, along with what Barnes believes to be the most difficult, and the most important task, in balancing and negotiating the conflict between personal fulfillment and responsibilities toward others (p. 356). While this suggests a complicated situation in human relations, it also offers imaginative possibilities in shared existence.

Negotiating this dialectic involves communicative engagement and Existential choice that takes into account what is directed by 'the wisdom of the ages' or what society determines to be appropriate or taboo, without falling into blind adherence to what is naturally or morally ascribed. Rather, in good faith, "from an existentialist point of view, the only absolute demand is honesty and mutual agreement on the part of both persons as to what their commitments to each other are and what each wants them to be" (1967, p. 359).¹³ In good faith, "everyone is a subject and must be valued as

¹³ Barnes discusses other personal pronouns of "he" and "she" within the larger topic of love. This is an important conversation but is outside the scope of this project. However, it should be noted that sex and gender do play distinctive roles in interpersonal relations, which offers both limitations and possibilities, but according to Barnes, "must be viewed as the material out of which one makes oneself, not as the determinant of a life" (p. 360). Antithetical to the Freudian view, "one's being as a person preceded and determines the way in which one lives one's being as man or woman" (pp. 360-361). While many of her works were utilized for this project, still others remain open to further analysis particularly in the areas of gender studies. Barnes attends to topics in gender studies in several works including a section on 'He' and

such...[and]...everyone is totally responsible and wholly without excuse” (p. 362). This presupposes equality among persons, which removes hierarchal and superiority social structures without homogenizing all people to that of the same. To this end, Barnes writes, “the danger of making equality into sameness confronts us everywhere, and we must constantly be on our guard against it” (p. 364). Difference needs to be embraced in order for people to live in good faith. When a person succumbs to the pressure from the Serious World “to the point of one’s life giving in to the need to be like everyone else—all this is so far from authenticity...” and in bad faith (p. 368). Rather, within the sphere of authentic personal choice, one has the right to choose one’s own values and to “learn for himself what is best” (p. 369). Learning and shaping one’s values emerge and grow through communicative engagement with others. The subjectivity of the Other, who is always beyond one’s grasp, represents the highest value for Barnes because in loving the Other, “I can project myself in a project which is no longer my own future” (p. 375). It is my choice whether to view others as Hell or Heaven and experience life as such.

‘She’ personal pronouns in *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967), the chapter “Existential Feminism” in *The Story I Tell Myself* (1997), “Sartre and Sexism” (1990), an unpublished essay, “Sartre and Feminism: Aside from The Second Sex and All That” (1993), and a book chapter titled “Self-encounter in *She Came to Stay*” (1998). These works offer fruitful topoi, or common places, for insight into Existentialism and gender studies, which may be read along with another, and perhaps, most famous of works and women in Existentialism, *The Second Sex* (1949) by Simone De Beauvoir. Barnes, who never identified herself as a feminist per se, made great strides in the male dominated discipline of Philosophy. Her works continue to play a major role and extend into other fields where they offer constructive insight.

CHAPTER 5

Existential Meeting of Horizons: Toward a Theory of Existential Leadership

The Existential self may be understood as a temporal embedded identity, which is always in flux, and always connected to others' stories and larger dwellings. Barnes posits that people are not necessarily authors of their stories, but are narrators who interpret their place in a story from a particular point of view. The title of her Existential autobiography, *The Story I Tell Myself* (1997), demonstrates her view of the interpretation of one's story that temporally changes according to how one is situated. She presents the idea of Existential dialectics that account for the influence of time and place on one's being as well as self-making. As place temporally changes from where a person projects into future possibilities, so too does reflection on the person's past temporally change. Change in being is derived from encounters and engagement with others. This chapter further demonstrates the Existential implications of communicative engagement with others as an ongoing search for meaning and shared changes in orientation in being-in-the-world. An Existentialist ethics grounded in both dwelling and encounters with others provides understanding for a new conception of Existential Leadership. Existential Leadership recognizes that leaders are situated in organizational dwellings and interpersonal relations with others where they have the opportunity to meet Existential moments in good faith.

An Upsurge of Existentialist Themes in Leadership Studies

Within the past ten years Existentialist themes such as authenticity and ontology in leadership scholarship have emerged in a growing body of literature. A discussion on authentic leadership emerged between the years 2003 and 2005 (Avolio & Gardner,

2005; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Cooper, Scandura, & Schriesheim, 2005; Gardner & Schermerhorn Jr, 2004; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005; May, Hodges, Chan, & Avolio, 2003; Shamir & Eilam, 2005), which was followed by a plentitude of essays on the subject. In less than five years time, a prodigious volume of essays have been published on the topic of authentic leadership (Champy, 2009; Clapp-Smith, Vogelgesang, & Avey, 2009; Costas & Taheri, 2012; Dhiman, 2011; Diddams & Chang, 2012; Gardiner, 2011; Gardner, Cogliser, Davis, & Dickens, 2011; Hannah, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2011; Hmieleski, Cole, & Baron, 2012; Hsiung, 2012; Macik-Frey, Quick, & Cooper, 2009; Mazutis & Slawinski, 2008; Neider & Schriesheim, 2011; Peterson, Walumbwa, Avolio, & Hannah, 2012; Peus, Wesche, Streicher, Braun, & Frey, 2012; Rego, Sousa, Marques, & Cunha, 2012; Rego, Vitória, Magalhães, Ribeiro, & e Cunha, 2013; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008; Walumbwa, Wang, Wang, Schaubroeck, & Avolio, 2010; Wong & Cummings, 2009; Woolley, Caza, & Levy, 2011; Yammarino, Dionne, Schriesheim, & Dansereau, 2008). Nearly all of these essays are from a social-scientific perspective, which demonstrates an imbalance in studying the subject. Liedtka (2008) calls for more philosophical depth in leadership scholarship, and Ciulla (2008) argues that more perspectives from the Humanities are needed in leadership scholarship.

In response to this call, some scholars have made valuable contributions to leadership studies from a philosophical point of view. More specifically, they have approached leadership from the areas of ontology and phenomenology (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012; Fry & Kriger, 2009; Jones, 2014; Ladkin, 2006; 2010; Ladkin & Taylor, 2010). Two scholars particularly, John Lawler and Ian Ashman, have made direct

connections between the philosophy of Existentialism and leadership studies (Ashman, 2007; Ashman & Lawler, 2008; Ford & Lawler, 2007; Lawler, 2005; 2007; Lawler & Ashman, 2012). As a result of this expanding discourse, scholars and leaders of organizations are beginning to raise Existential questions regarding consciousness of purpose and influence on the lives of others.

Working from a platform established by scholars seeking to ground authentic and ontological leadership philosophically, and more specifically in relation to Existentialism, this section reviews the latter in order to take the next step to propose theoretical development of an understanding of an Existential Leadership. While talk of Existentialism in leadership studies is limited particularly to these two scholars, their work offers strong edifice upon which to build. Considering the interest in Existential topics and the very recent emergence of Existentialism in leadership scholarship, this is an opportune time to bring Barnes into the conversation, whose work is necessary for the philosophical development of an Existential Leadership. The following section reviews this most recent literature to elucidate the way Existentialism has been discussed in the Leadership literature and illuminate the areas in which Barnes may provide further theoretical development of an Existential Leadership. Ultimately, this section articulates an Existential Leadership through the Barnesean lens. The article ‘an’ in ‘an Existential leadership’ is used deliberately to parallel Barnes’s *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967) to demonstrate that what is proposed here is not *the* Existential Leadership, which would account for the multiplicity of Existential perspectives (e.g. Heidegger, Kierkegaard, Tillich, etc.), which follows Barnes motivation for the indefinite article as well (p. v).

While the topic of authentic leadership is popular in leadership studies, Existential leadership poses to offer significant advantages which satisfy a significant lack in the concept of authentic leadership. Authenticity is but one facet of Existentialism, which would place authentic leadership within a larger philosophical framework, and while authenticity is often associated with more ontological questions of *being*, Existential leadership adds the critical and salient aspect of *doing* to the in-itself for-itself equation. Although still relatively recent, in 2005, John Lawler was one of the first scholars to call attention to Existentialism in Leadership studies with his essay published in the journal *Leadership* entitled, “The Essence of Leadership? Existentialism and Leadership”, which offered an alternative view of leadership dominated by objectivist approaches. Lawler saw a need to articulate subjective experiences in leadership relationships by engaging in Existentialist metaphors of freedom, responsibility, and meaninglessness. This essay prompted a response from Ian Ashman in a 2007 essay also published in the journal *Leadership*, which spurred debate between these scholars with another essay published in the same issue by John Lawler as a reply to Ashman. Both have varying accounts of Existentialism and leadership, but together they went on to publish two major contributions to the interrelationship of these topics in “Existential Communication and Leadership” (Ashman & Lawler, 2008) and “Theorizing Leadership Authenticity: A Sartrean Perspective” (Lawler & Ashman, 2012). Additionally, Jackie Ford published an essay with John Lawler in 2007 entitled “Blending Existentialist and Constructionist Approaches in Leadership Studies”, which also reconsiders objectivist, functionalist assumptions and approaches to leadership. These works have made salient contributions

to bringing Existentialism into the leadership literature. The addition of a perspective from Barnes is the next step to actually proposing an Existential leadership.

Theoretical Framework: Existentialism in Leadership Studies

The following provides a review of the works mentioned above to elucidate Existentialism in leadership studies and open up space for Barnes to make a constructive contribution to the theoretical development of an Existential Leadership. Also important to keep in mind is the manner in which the previous chapters situate this discussion where an Existential leadership is understood as embedded in organizational dwellings and engagement with others. A comprehensive understanding of these elements is necessary in order to fully engage a consideration of an Existential leadership. This perspective leadership approach engages the Existentialism of Sartre and Barnes to further *understanding* of leadership, which is contrary to an attempt to *define* leadership with certain personality traits or other prescriptive attributes that from an Existential perspective would inhibit human freedom by ascribing a certain role to leadership, much the same way that Sartre uses the example of the waiter who should not be determined by his role. Lawler (2005) takes up this assertion by suggesting no essence of leadership, which allows leaders and other members “to exercise freedom as they wish or construct leadership relationships with those around them as best suits them and their circumstances” (p. 227). Lawler argues that proclaiming an objectivist view of leadership is an absurdity that closes potentiality for existence. Forcing certain types of leadership may actually be a counterfinality where work life may become a state of nausea.

Joining the Conversation of Existentialism and Leadership

Noting the numerous articles written on the topic of authentic leadership from a quantitative, or positivist, perspective illustrates how even within a narrow focus of authenticity, this perspective is dominant. Lawler (2005) observes a similar phenomenon in management and leadership studies in general—an approach that has dominated since the past century to present day. He proposes philosophical approaches which merit exploration in leadership studies, but have been overlooked. He reaches into Existential philosophy—an area that he believes has waned in recent times but may be appropriate to reinvigorate in response to the demands of the historical moment. Several areas within Lawler’s work may benefit from a reexamination from a Barnesian perspective.

While Lawler accounts for Sartre’s philosophy as both “individualist and holistic,” (2005, p. 217) within the same paragraph he writes that Sartre views humanity as being primarily made up of individuals alone in the world. However, *The Critique* (1960) conveys Sartre’s understanding of the common individual where he seeks to move beyond the plurality of solitudes in group-in-fusion praxis. Moreover, Barnes, provides insight into Existential love that resists unity in being but proposes looking-at-the-world-together. Thus, Barnes invites an understanding of Existentialism that goes beyond tolerance for another’s consciousness as the only human commonality, as Lawler purports. Barnes presents an Existentialism that engages others in groups and interpersonal relationships that uplifts freedom in pursuing human projects for both the self and Other. Lawler writes that the unique individuals interpret their own set of circumstance and the meaning they derive from or attribute to it (p. 219), yet others make up the world of existence—they help us to interpret the world otherwise, open up new

ways of seeing through communicative engagement, and make our lives more rich and meaningful. Sartre's proclamation that Hell is other people has often been taken out of context. Barnes observes that Hell can also be oneself alone in a narcissistic world of the Underground Man, or as portrayed in Williams's *Decent into Hell* (1937).

Following Lawler's original article that brought Existentialism into the conversation of leadership studies, Ashman (2007) offers a response to this work along with some additional ideas that engage additional Existentialist themes. Ashman critiques Lawler for positioning Sartre as a moral relativist and argues that Sartre follows the rationalist tradition of Descartes, Hegel, and Husserl where Sartre's ontological pursuit was driven by "an entirely systematic enterprise, in many ways conforming to the notion of grand narrative so detested by post-modernists" (p. 92). He references Sartre's *A Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions* (1996) where he asserts for Sartre the head, rather than the heart, rules consciousness along with Murdoch's *Sartre: Romantic Rationalist* (1999) as evidence of Sartre's rationalist position. Rather than referring to this secondary source, a return to Sartre's original text, *Being and Nothingness* (1943) may offer some clarification.

In Part Three, Being-For-Others, in the section entitled "Husserl, Hegel, and Heidegger" Sartre specifically addresses these figures along with Descartes. After nearly fifteen pages of this discussion, Sartre writes,

What has this long criticism accomplished for us? Simply this: if we are to refute solipsism, then my relation to the Other is first and fundamentally a relation of being to being, not of knowledge to knowledge. We have seen Husserl's failure when on this particular level he measures being by knowledge, and Hegel's when he identifies knowledge and being. (p. 329)

Sartre is deliberate in discussing these figures around the topic of Others. From an Existentialist position, people make choices within situated and communicative contexts with Others. Others inform our being and view of the world, which is always in a state of becoming, counterfinality is always a possibility, and life is experienced in the absurd and involves leaps of faith. Rationalism presupposes that objective knowledge can be attained through reason within one's own mind. While averse to human relations at first glance, Sartre's being-for-others may be understood as relational rather than rational. Moreover, viewing people as situated lends to a reinterpretation of being-in-the-world as the-world-in-being, and being-with-others as others-with-being. Ashman and Lawler may not agree with this position as both, either through rationalism or subjectivity, begin from individual consciousness rather than the world.

Additionally, Lawler does not claim that Sartre's Existentialism was focused on emotion, and Barnes, perhaps the most astute Sartrean scholar, never suggests Sartre is a rationalist. Lawler (2007) provides a solid response by citing Barrett's (1990) *Irrational Man* as well as other scholars who would not position Sartre as a rationalist. Additionally, Ashman seems to be pointing to a question of how individuals 'think' from an Existentialist point of view. Barnes provides helpful insight here in *Sartre* (1974b) where she examines Sartre's ideas of perception and imagination. Perception, she writes,

It is always and solely concerned with the real...[where]...one is attempting to fill out a form, part of which is clearly given, the rest taken as equally real though not fully revealed. In every case the real is the measure of the perception. Most of all, my original perception can be enriched by a return to the original object. (pp. 68–69)

Imagination, on the other hand, "introduces the unreal" (p. 69). Both perception and imagination need to be at play in order to avoid being "wholly engulfed, swallowed up in

the real” (p. 69) on the one hand and living life unengaged in an imaginary world (p. 70) on the other. Ashman (2007) also argues that Sartre was not a moral relativist and had a clear sense of right and wrong in his *Notebooks for an Ethics* (1992) although these notebooks were not published by Sartre; instead he published *The Critique* (1960) as his next work. Here, Sartre did not abandon Existentialism or ethics but redirected his attention to the socio-political realm. Barnes’s *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967), Beauvoir’s *Ethics of Ambiguity* (1948) or Sartre’s *Existentialism is a Humanism* (1956) are works more directed to ethics in the Existential realm.

Another argument offered by Ashman is as follows: “From the perspective of the *for-itself*, the *in-itself* simply *is* and as such is predetermined” (p. 94). However, the *in-itself* may be understood as *postdetermined* by the free choices of the *for-itself*. It may be conceived of as an essence, as Ashman argues, but it is a *result* of the *for-itself*, or the tail of the mermaid in Sartrean terms. It is essence without determinism. Essence is therefore understood in a different context compared with the way Hoag and Hooijberg (2001) use it in reference to leadership. Additionally, Lawler’s point was not to disclaim that good leadership involves the capacity to learn, change, and engage wisdom, but to caution against a universalized, unreflective notion of the essence of leadership. Ashman makes a similar claim in raising the importance of existential choices rather than relying on a trait theory of leadership, which may be perceived as the Acorn Theory (Barnes, 1967, p. 295), and incidentally as contrary to an Existentialist view.

Aside from these critiques, Ashman’s (2007) article makes significant contribution by offering constructive ideas of nothingness, being-for-others, and bad faith. He raises important points that absence is as necessary as presence, and negation is

as necessary as affirmation. Nothingness opens up possibilities, which is the premise for Existential freedom. Additionally, Ashman questions the *laissez-faire* style of leadership, which a Barnesean perspective could critique in a step further. Ashman states that this sort of leadership really is not leadership at all, but could be described to a greater extent as leadership in bad faith. While recognizing the Other as a free subject may be conceived as ‘live and let live,’ one might change the idiom to ‘live and help live’ to be in good faith. This is a good transition to Ashman’s discussion on *being-for-others* where again, Barnes provides a more positive reorientation of human relations described by Ashman as “an internal haemorrhaging [sic] as one’s world drains into the world of the other” (p. 99), or as Hell (p. 100). While not taking on a Pollyanna view of the world, Barnes addresses human suffering as part of life, while positing good faith—the necessary counterpart to bad faith. Both Lawler and Ashman invite each other’s critique to encourage further explication of Existentialism in leadership to which it is hoped the comments offered above will be welcomed. Together, these scholars open up additional insight with an article that attends to the topic of communication (Ashman & Lawler, 2008) that is particularly relevant to this project.¹⁴

Existential Communication

Ashman and Lawler (2008) posit Existential communication by engaging the metaphors of Being-in-the-world, the Other, intersubjectivity, dialogue, and indirect communication. Through the lens of Existentialism, they make an important observation that rather than viewing communication as a skill within leadership, the opposite may be true—“leadership might be considered as an aspect of communication” or that leadership

¹⁴ Lawler and Ashman (2012) also collaborated on an essay entitled “Theorizing Leadership Authenticity: A Sartrean Perspective” that makes a salient contribution to Existentialism in Leadership studies; however, they make no reference to Barnes even though a section within this essay has the subtitle “Sartrean Ethics.”

“*is communication*” (p. 253). They also note that leadership is often envisioned as instrumental means-to-an-end such as effective performance, motivation, inspiration, or other factors invoked in the follower. Existentialism may help to reorient the traditional leader-follower hierarchy, which may, even with good intentions, be a totalizing relationship. Where traits and behavior are often subjects of study within the leadership literature, Ashman and Lawler note the absence of communication in this field, or when mentioned, the transmission and reception of information is referenced as merely a transactional exchange. They argue “that the narrow view of communication presented or assumed in the majority of the literature on leadership is very narrow and potentially misleading” and propose an Existentialist view of communication that goes beyond instrumental exchange to encounters and relationships with others (p. 254). To support their argument, the authors rely on a number of Existentialist philosophers, who will be examined below.

Ashman and Lawler (2008) begin with the works of Jaspers who they assert was the first to use the term “existential communication” that provides opportunity for learning since truth is always partial (p. 255). A person’s existence *becomes* through interruptions in being, either through emotional events or encounters with others. Barnes (1959) makes a similar observation:

Our awareness that we *are* this undetermined and unpredicted consciousness comes to us at those anguished moments of crisis when we realize *nothing* prevents our suddenly behaving in a fashion which nothing in our previous lives could have foretold. Such moments may be ‘big’ moments, acts of heroism, religious conversion, a change in a fundamental outlook on life. Or they may be trivial moments. (p. 32)

These views challenge traditional notions of leadership of ‘being’ originating in the leader. Rather, leadership emerges and becomes in communicative engagement with others and the world.

Next Ashman and Lawler (2008) address an ethical dimension of leadership from an Existentialist perspective. They demonstrate, in a similar vein as this project has, that it is unnecessary to add the term ethical to existential leadership because the Existential presupposes the ethical with the primary goal to uplift human freedom. However, Ashman and Lawler reference Salamun’s (1999) moral attitudes of Existentialism, which includes not viewing others as a means to an end or unequal in status, helping others realize their own projects, maintaining an open mind and candor to the possibility of change, recognizing inadequacies in oneself, and honoring distance between the self and other (p. 257).

In addition to this moral attitude¹⁵, Ashman and Lawler call attention to situatedness, which is often ignored in the leadership literature. Interpersonal relations exist within unique contexts, which make leader-member exchange not only totalizing, but unrealistic in its homogenizing of ‘leader’ and ‘member’ universal roles. From an Existentialist perspective, leadership may be newly conceived as inter-subjective being-in-the-world where “leaders are inter-personally engaged with the world...as a dynamic process [of engagement] rather than a linear relationship” (Ashman & Lawler, 2008, p. 259). Those involved in communication have Existential choice, which may involve engaging the Existential ‘no.’ As such, ‘followers’ grant empowerment from themselves, rather than it being granted from a leader (p. 259). Consequently, leadership may be conceived as a self-other communicative relation, rather than a leader-follower exchange.

¹⁵ Another consideration is the “caring attitude” posited by Nel Noddings (1984).

The self-other relation does not imply a hierarchy or material reciprocity and honors the alterity of self and other. Leadership in-the-world and with others is less leader-centric, which is responsive to an historical moment plagued with individualism.

To further explicate the self-other relationship in leadership, Ashman and Lawler (2008) turn to Buber's (1958) *I-Thou* of dialogic encounter that honors the subjectivity of self and other. Ashman and Lawler view leader-follower exchange as *I-It* experiences, which impoverish others by not genuinely being present to them. Moreover, they cite Arnett and Arneson (1999) who, in interpreting Buber's *Between Man and Man* (1947b), argue that Existential development and growth are found *in the between*.¹⁶ Dialogue is not owned by either party; it exists in relation. Ashman and Lawler (2008) raise questions whether dialogue can exist between leader and follower and whether leader and follower can ever accept each other as equals (p. 263). A leader may be more experienced within an organization and have a different role than the follower; however, this does not mean only a linear relationship can exist. Both may honor the master-apprentice role in a particular profession, while recognizing that the subjectivity of those involved is not wholly limited to these roles. In the Buberian sense, technical dialogue ought not to be confused with genuine dialogue. Arnett (2009) offers a helpful caution against getting caught up in using communication that ought to be reserved for family and friends, or private life, which Arendt (1958) identifies as the sphere of the social where public and private collapse. As such, leaders run the risk of concerning themselves so much with "soft skills" (Marques, 2013) that they overlook the importance of the work that needs to

¹⁶ A source that Ashman and Lawler (2008) did not cite, but would be constructive to their understanding of existential communication is Arnett's (1981) essay titled "Toward a Phenomenological Dialogue".

be accomplished. These soft skills also become unauthentic as a forced technique of popular management theory.¹⁷

Finally, Ashman and Lawler (2008) posit the idea of indirect communication in leadership. They argue that “communicating by indirect use of language (the pre-eminent vehicle for Existentialists) opens up possibilities and acknowledges the freedom of *the Other* (the reader most usually)” (p. 264). It is interesting that Ashman and Lawler suggest the use of indirect communication because it is not even a prominent topic within the field of communication, although Garrett (2012) calls for a Kierkegaardian revolution within the discipline of communication considering the ethical impact of this approach. Garrett describes indirect communication as

a method of communicating a passionate subjectivity. However, the method is a secret because this radical inwardness is revealed through a Socratic method of midwifery that calls upon readers to see the responsibility they have for authoring their own lives from the position of their existential situatedness. The issue of authoring and responsibility for one’s own existence relates directly to the ethical significance of indirect communication. (p. 333)

Similarly, Ashman and Lawler (2008) state that Kierkegaard’s “aim was not to instruct the reader, but to emancipate them; to put them in touch with their own subjectivity and to emphasize the freedom through which to explore their own faith and sense of *Being*” (p. 264). In various works, Ashman and Lawler provide a strong edifice upon which to build connections between leadership and Existentialism. The works of Barnes provide the necessary link to move toward a theory of Existential Leadership.

¹⁷ Arnett (2009) refers to “professional civility” originally proposed by Arnett and Fritz (2004) as a good faith response to the collapse of public and private. Fritz (2013) provides an extensive elaboration on professional civility, which is an important topic for future exploration in relation to leadership.

Toward a Theory of an Existential Leadership

The Existentialist philosophers utilize the literary genre to indirectly convey their philosophical ideas, which is discussed at length in Barnes's *Humanistic Existentialism: The Literature of Possibility* (1959) and was the first topic of Existential exploration with the idea of engaged literature and *mythodology*. Not only do myths and indirect communication convey subjective meaning for the reader to discover for their own, some ideas, Sartre believes, are not able to be understood through direct communication.¹⁸

Ashman and Lawler opened the conversation of Existentialism in leadership studies and furthered this conversation with Existential communication. While they rely on several philosophers within the tradition, they neglect to utilize the critically important works of Barnes. The following offers a Barnesean perspective to take the next step in the philosophical development of an understanding of an Existential Leadership.

Existential Dialectics of Being-In-The-World

Barnes begins her investigation on dialectics within Existentialism with Sartre's understanding of the conscious individual who

in the present, is not what he is (past) and is what he is not (future). We perpetually remake the meaning of the past in the light of the future which we are in process of choosing. Therein lies our freedom...Just as we are both agents and recipients of historical action, so we make time and are made by time. (Barnes, 1974b, p. 10)

Through an understanding of Sartre's use of paradox described above, Barnes is able to offer a deeper understanding of the idea of embedded agency (Arnett, Arneson, & Bell, 2006; Arnett, Fritz, & Bell, 2009), understood in her terms as the unique universal where

¹⁸ An article of particular interest that accounts for leadership in the 'between' and indirect relational communication in the context of situatedness is Ladkin's (2006) essay, "When Deontology and Utilitarianism Aren't Enough: How Heidegger's Notion of 'Dwelling' Might Help Organisational Leaders Resolve Ethical Issues."

both elements are necessary for human existence in good faith. The universal, or embeddedness, is needed to keep people grounded, to avoid a feeling of “existential homelessness” (Arnett, 1994) while the same uniqueness, or agency, is needed to prevent the practico-inerte, or facticity of the world, to steal a person’s action (Barnes, 1974b, p. 10). Alienation—from the world or from oneself—is the result of losing either of these elements. This unity of contraries (Buber, 1997), she argues, is found in Sartre’s work but goes back to Heraclitus who “employs contradictory statements in order to point to an existing harmony composed of opposites” (Barnes, 1974, p. 16). The balance of contraries is necessary to combat the feelings of forlornness, nausea, and despair so often associated with Existentialism. However, Barnes interprets these metaphors in Sartre’s work as a call for meeting life creatively, which bestows “meaning where there would otherwise be chaos” (p. 17). Hence, a person finds purpose in life and avoids being lost it.

Barnes refers to Sartre’s use of the words ‘light’ and ‘gift’ in his play *Bariona or the Son of Thunder* (1940) where he uses light referring to one’s ability to be without weight—to become released from weight by viewing life and the world as a “perpetually gratuitous gift” (Barnes, 1974b, p. 20). Moreover, Barnes writes “every person finds himself within a situation already structured by other people and with the ‘coefficient of resistance’ which is offered even by physical things. But the significance and meaning of whatever he encounters are created by him alone as he internalizes the situation and makes it his” (p. 21). Barnes describes this approach to life as “total responsibility without guarantee” (p. 21). Moreover, this does not involve burrowing into oneself to discover what is true, but to engage life authentically in action. This is recognition of

one's freedom to which Barnes asserts joy accompanies. Joy exists on the far side of despair in living in good faith.

The type of humanism that Sartre ascribes is this good faith where every person is called to live. Sartre is staunchly opposed to

ally himself with those who propose an abstract love of the idea of man, those who talk of undying human values and in their name sacrifice or exploit the lives of existing men and women. He also rejects any belief in an *a priori* human nature which would endow mankind with a given set of potentialities within which it will make its preoutlined history. (Barnes, 1974b, p. 27)

Sartre does not deny that people have a human condition, the fact that people have mortality, but the human condition does not determine a person's actions, good or otherwise. People do not share a common nature that binds them in a sense of sameness. Rather, people come together "outside, in the world, in a unity of common projects" (p. 28). Similarly, society is not a predetermined social structure or value system; "it must be considered as free creations which are left open to question...all human enterprises are equally contingent" (pp. 28–29). The fabric of society is within people who continually choose what they are going to weave into it.

People need others and society to engage in this activity. The being-for-itself is always a consciousness *of* something. Consciousness is always in the world and is always an activity (Barnes, 1974b, p. 33). Conversely, being, or being-in-itself, simply *is*. In fact, the term Heidegger uses, Dasein, translated as 'there being', still implies a point of view of consciousness with the term 'there' or presence in the world. This element of 'there' is the world to which Sartre refers to as 'outside stuff', or 'a coefficient of resistance' because it impedes or deviates from the creative projects of people; however, the world and others bestow particular significance on human projects that bring about meaning in

human existence. Being is situated regardless of whether one is conscious of it or not, but being has the potential to change, to engage potentiality, when conscious of situatedness. Sartre utilizes the terms ‘being’ and ‘nothingness’ in his magnum opus to point to this relation. Nothingness, at first take may suggest *nihilation*, but Sartre’s understanding of the term is *potentiality* meant to emerge by a consciousness (p. 35). While not teleological, people can come together to move toward new horizons.

Acting in Good Faith: Meeting the Existential Moment

In contrast to the goals people set or the values people may claim to possess, which is *being*, action in engaging the existential moment is *living* in good faith; that is, “consciousness is not an entity but active process” (Barnes, 1974b, p. 37). A person’s situation is continually in flux, which calls for responsiveness. Even more, values and telos may impede a person’s free activity (p. 38). Barnes illustrates this phenomenon with the dancer who is graceful until the dancer thinks too hard about being a dancer. Barnes writes, “what happens here is that the real object of intention becomes not the original activity but myself as performer, and the distraction of thought prevents the accomplishment of its original aim” (pp. 38–39). An attempt to pin down and ‘know thyself’ is accompanied by bewildered frustration because a person cannot turn oneself into an object of reflection as the person is the one doing the reflecting. Barnes describes this as “a game of mirrors” (p. 40). Therefore, “each consciousness is particular but not personal” (p. 41). Personality, Barnes writes,

is not a structure of consciousness in the sense that we might describe the makeup of an optical lens. It is that at which the lens is directed. Consciousness itself is not timid or courageous or avaricious or generous. These qualities exist *for* consciousness. It evokes them, brings them into the world, for others and for itself. (p. 41)

Therefore, people do not possess a fixed integral personal structure or traits; on the contrary, people hold possible choices for consciousness to pursue, or the creation of nothingness. Questioning and finding meaning and purpose in life is conscious response, or the choice of being in Sartre's terms, rather than reflecting on who one is, and as such can change having no finality and no guarantees until death.

People have the potential to interpret their surroundings as well as their past. Barnes refers to Sartre's metaphor of the mermaid dragging her tail behind her as people drag around their past. However, perhaps this metaphor could be interpreted differently. The tail of a mermaid is not a lifeless weight that holds the mermaid down. She does not drag it. The tail propels the mermaid to future possibilities as an integral and necessary part of her being and becoming. If the tail is severed, the mermaid dies. Her tail, understood as the past, is presently there as she moves into the future and it is subjected to new judgments. Thus, the past is temporally changing and is forever in question. The future is not determined by the past, but is intimately tied through interpretation; "the meaning which I give to the past is the kind of future which I am in the process of proposing or purposing for myself" (Barnes, 1974b, p. 47). The mermaid chooses whether to view her tail as something that drags her down or as something that gives meaning to her life and propels her into future possibilities.

Barnes discusses how this also frees people from being determined by their past. She offers an example of a person who stole something yesterday. The man *was* a thief, and he *is* not defined as a thief unless he plans to steal tomorrow, but even then he cannot be attributed as such until the act itself. By that same token, acts of benevolence may be viewed in a similar fashion. A person may experience anguish with the realization that

the act that was made yesterday “is powerless to determine my present conduct unless I remake it as a living choice” (p. 48). Nothing determines or prevents a person from present choice, “with each act I inscribe my Being in the world” (p. 48). This may raise the question that if the past, character, or personality really matter, why not choose based on whatever one fancies and how can life have any meaning? Barnes offers a response that freedom and responsibility are inseparable; “if I am free, I am responsible” (p. 49). A further description of this response is worth quoting at length:

I am responsible, both responsible *to* and responsible *for*. I am responsible *for* whatever actions I have performed inasmuch as I am the author of them. I am responsible for my past because I have made it what it was and because I bestow on it its meaning in my present. I am responsible for my future because I am the author of the acts which will make it what it will be. We may say that I account for my life in every choice I make, for the nature of the choice is decided exactly by the way in which I do account for my past and choose my future. To whom am I accountable? To everyone and to myself. (p. 49)

What a person chooses matters because the world is affected by these choices. It is in this manner that Sartre’s claim in choosing for oneself, I choose for all humanity may be understood.

Finally, Barnes helps to reorient Sartre’s claim that man is a useless passion and never finally at one with himself. She interprets this in a similar way to Sartre’s term nothingness. She posits that perhaps if he had said man is a creature of infinite aspiration, the negative connotation could have been averted (1974b, p. 51). However, Barnes cautions to avoid an optimistic reinterpretation. The negative implications Sartre intended to convey are necessary to call attention to bad faith. Good faith does not ignore human suffering or embrace a sense of self-deceptive optimism (Arnett & Arneson, 1999, p. 208). Good faith “means recognizing that freedom must be its own sole support... If I seek to live authentically, I try to harmonize my external actions with what I

spontaneously feel to be a value worth preserving, a value which I have created as a value by choosing it” (Barnes, 1974b, p. 51). Good faith involves taking ownership for one’s actions both past and present along with the resulting consequences. Good faith involves living deliberately—making the best choice at the moment without guarantee it will be the right choice. The future may reveal more insight as to the appropriateness of past choices, but then a new situation is upon us, and “Truth remains an ideal out of reach” (p. 52). The past and the situation I find myself in belong to me, but are intimately tied with others. As such, others are uniquely situated. Existence is a temporally shifting fusion of horizons.

The Choice to Be Ethical

The title of this section originates from the same title Barnes uses for a chapter in her *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967) where she further articulates what it means to live in good faith. She refers to Dostoevsky’s (1864) *Underground Man*, which she believes was an appropriate critique of the metaphors of “easy optimism,” “inevitable progress,” and “insistence on viewing man as rational and inherently good” in the nineteenth century (Barnes, 1967, p. 3). Furthermore Barnes responds that Dostoevsky’s attack did not emerge out of cynicism. Rather,

The *Underground Man* takes offense at this picture of man as a predictable creature who can be counted on to act rationally and to pursue his own self-interest—the assumption being, of course, that there is no contradiction between these two activities. Such a man is left with no freedom, with no will of his own. (pp. 3–4)

However, Barnes notes that both she and Dostoevsky do not view *The Underground Man* as a positive ethical figure—“his life is wretched in his own eyes and harmful to others” (p. 3). He is an anti-hero, but still valuable to a conversation on the choice to be ethical.

While the Underground Man asserts his free will, his actions serve the purpose of stubborn defiance, which bring about destructive relations between him and others, and consequently severs him from the world.

If Existentialism is guided by free choice and the Underground Man chooses his sort of miserable existence, does an argument exist to convince him to act otherwise? Barnes does not give credence to this extreme relativism as any personally chosen ethic, and does not believe that an Existentialist ethic should be interpreted in this manner. For her there is more than the sole condition of Existentialism “that the decision to act and the choice of values must be authentic, embraced spontaneously rather than in a somnambulistic state of mingled fear and lazy habit” (Barnes, 1967, p. 6). The Underground Man’s ‘authentic’ choices are not ethical simply because they are deliberate. Acting deliberately is only one facet; to be ethical, and authentic for that matter, he must also account for how his actions affect others and leave a trace on humanity. He does not open himself up to communication with others or the historical moment. His decisions are purely narcissistic, or in Barnes terms, “to identify oneself solely with the subjective” (p. 19). Barnes concludes that since Existentialism argues not to choose is to already have chosen, “the refusal to choose the ethical is inevitably a choice for the nonethical” (p. 7). Hence, being ethical is a choice, which raises the question, why should a person be ethical? That is, what is the Existential ought?

Situated Ethical Choice

Existentialism is distinct from other ethical approaches such as teleological, consequential, and deontological; however, Barnes asserts that they “all rest finally on the choice of the ethical itself as a value. If the original choice is for the nonethical life, then

no system is compelling, no matter how logically consistent its structure...” (Barnes, 1967, p. 8). For Barnes, the choice to be ethical involves, “continuity between the moment of decision, the act itself, and the later judgment passed upon it” (p. 9). An Existentialist ethics is basic as it is a choice, yet it is dynamic as a moment of continuity among the self, others, and the world. In this sense, the choice to be ethical exists as moments of continuity, clarity, and light within a fusion of horizons. The ethical choice is more than rationality and is not categorical—it is conditional and a choice of life rather than reason. The choice to be ethical is not the same as having virtuous character or personality; it is a point of view, a consciousness of something that is constantly relating. An Existentialist ethics takes place in “ordinary human experience” of “choosing again at each moment the relation which we wish to establish with the world around us and with our own past and future experiences in that world” (p. 13). Furthermore, Existentialist ethics is “radical affirmation of human freedom” (p. 13) that offers hope for how we meet moments in everyday life, within a “given situation, located in time and space” (p. 14), which makes an Existentialist ethics hopeful rather than optimistic—a term connected to a false sense deterministic certainty (Arnett & Arneson, 1999, p. 208).

Consequential, deontological, or teleological approaches to ethics can be used as self-deception or in bad faith unless “in practice an ethical system is lived as a personal value system” and the person takes ownership of these values with resolve that the response is appropriate (Barnes, 1967, p. 20). Since the right answer is not absolute with the many possibilities at hand, people must seek to do their best and, in reflecting, believe that they did their best in meeting the Existential moment. An Existentialist ethics grants the freedom to choose varying ethical approaches, which may offer more fitting

responses than bad faith adherence to a strict moral code or ideology. Barnes further articulates this when she writes, “the perfectly coherent, rigidly observed code of ethics may well be maintained at the cost of foregoing all spontaneity. To be perfectly what one has chosen to be will inevitably exclude much that is precious in what he might otherwise have been” (pp. 21–22). Universal principles are rejected because they extinguish the possibility to engage life temporally.

Barnes has addressed the Existentialist ethical ought of multiplicity in appropriate responses, but what about the person who has no appeal for harmonious continuity of judgment and action, that is, “one who felt no interest or even connection with his own past and future, and one who was without any inclination to experience more rather than less of positive value?” (Barnes, 1967, p. 22). She surmises that such a theoretical person cannot exist for several reasons. A person cannot choose to be unaware and avoid being reflective—people must always choose their way of living and cannot simply ignore the background that situates their choices. Also, the person who chooses misery and pain still (paradoxically) affirms happiness and a sense of being satisfied with life and finding it worthwhile by rejecting these alternative choices. Recognizing that alternatives exist acknowledges that a person is responsible for “what has been and will be as well as one who is making the present choice” (p. 55). Barnes states that in reality this person acknowledges and acts in the name of the values the person pretends to reject (p. 24). She illustrates her point with an example of a person contemplating suicide:

The fact remains that if he could be convinced that there were goods worth striving for, he would not kill himself. The man who declares that he does not want to live states implicitly that he cannot find those things, which, if attained, would make him want to live. (p. 24)

By recognizing the possibility of something that can make his life worthwhile presumes something good. Thus Barnes provides a response to both cases, “the purely nonethical life is as impossible to sustain practically as the perfectly ethical one” (p. 25). Both reject responsibility for oneself and others; both are “not an expansion of life but a reduction” (p. 25). The ethical choice is feeling a sense of truth when answering the questions: What have I made of myself? How do I appraise what I have become? And what do I want to be? (pp. 27–28). Finally, the ethical choice derives from our awareness that these questions are intimately tied, forever repeated, and contribute to the fabric of society. In fact, while Existentialism is often thought of as a philosophy of the individual, personal choices impact others and the world. Thus, an additional question is raised: are my choices what I want represented for my relations with others and for all humankind? Barnes argues that because we are human, these questions cannot be ignored.

Choosing with Others

Barnes stayed true to Existentialism throughout her work whereas Sartre turned toward larger societal issues in Marxism. Sartre did not altogether leave Existentialism behind; he claimed Existentialism was subordinate to Marxism. Barnes perhaps takes an alternative view recognizing the important goals of liberation in Marxism, but to achieve these goals, she elevates the role of Existentialism. She writes, “It is living suffering and specific evils which he [Sartre] wants to cure, and I am with him on this” (1967, p. 44).

However, she diverges from his thinking where she states,

It is imperative to provide bread and freedom for all. But unless we whose lives have been preserved and liberated find them worth living, we have an empty goal to offer those we hope to rescue. It is my belief that we must begin now to formulate the philosophy of freedom, of which Sartre speaks, if we do not want to be lost forever in despair. (p. 44)

Sartre, she observes, believes that ethics must be universal—ethics cannot exist unless all situations are the same for everyone, but this Barnes believes to be in bad faith. Barnes redefines Sartre’s perspective by offering that Existentialism does have a universal; “it is precisely the irreducible reality of the free individual consciousness” (p. 45). Where Sartre looks to the ideal, Barnes looks to pragmatic reality of everyday life. An abstract universal does not guide the individual; others in the world, through communicative engagement, guide what is good.

Barnes describes this communicating-with-others-in-the-world as “a life justified” (1967, p. 46). A justified life is first, as the previous section discussed, the choice to be ethical. Barnes takes a step beyond this though by arguing that second, these choices “should keep open the door to such self-justification by other free subjects” (p. 46). A life is justified by “those whose lives have been directly or indirectly touched by his could in good faith support” (p. 46). As such, communicating-with-others-in-the-world is quite fundamentally rhetorical. Sartre calls for revolutionary action. Barnes agrees that a great deal of work needs to be done to address human freedom and suffering, but again, she stays within the pragmatic reality of everyday life:

These tasks do not rise up before us labeled in order or priority and with printed instructions. Taking care of the world is a strictly do-it-yourself project, and we are all amateurs together...the time when ethics is most needed is in the period of conflict, struggle, and uncertainty, not when some approximation of Utopia has been achieved. (p. 46)

Thus, where Sartre believes an ethics is impossible until the people of the world are liberated, Barnes believes an ethics is what is needed to realize the practical freedom of others. Arnett and Arenson (1999), referring to the *Good Society* (1992) and *The Broken Covenant* (1975), argue for “us to roll up our sleeves, pitch in, be part of the effort to fix

the broken and discover the needed for ‘us’” (p. 274-275) in order to find sustained meaning in a story worth living. Barnes cautions that this liberation must be on the other’s terms to avoid colonizing the other, or in her terms to destroy the very process of liberation (1967, p. 47). Barnes’s Existentialist ethics is an ethics-in-action (p. 50), which has implications for the individual and interactions with others in the life-world.

Barnes describes the life-world, a term derived from Husserl, as “the world as it appears to each one of us within its ‘horizon of meanings,’ its values, its organization in relation to ourselves as vantage point and center of reference” (1967, p. 65). Moreover, “in communication with others, I not only establish common reference points and meanings. I find my own attitudes toward the external environment and toward myself change as the result of the ‘views’ which other persons disclose to me” (p. 65).

Communication grants a sharing of each of our lenses of the life-world. And, communication is necessary because while “we all *look at* the same world; we *do not see* the same world” (p. 66). When others open their worlds to us, the way we see our own world changes. Others allow me to get closer to my “inner-horizon” (p. 73), which, ironically, is always at a distance from myself. Others help me discover and cultivate my own project as I am Existentially called to do for them. As such, we find our projects

intermeshed with the edges of the patterns of others—like the design of a paisley print. The satisfaction in a life may well result in large part from the sense that these intermeshings have positive significance for the individual pattern. There is another kind of satisfaction—that which comes from the knowledge that other persons have declared one’s pattern good. Still a third derives from the realization that what one has one done has helped make it easier for others to live patterns intrinsically satisfying to them. (p. 107)

However, Barnes cautions that involvement in others' projects not become paternalistic and that we need to avoid comparing the patterns we weave to others'. Both cases limit freedom of others and oneself, which of course is contrary to Existentialism.

CHAPTER 6

Existential Education: Otherwise than Humanism

Barnes, who referred to herself as a teacher first and philosopher second has a great deal to offer to Existential pedagogy. She attends specifically to this subject in the text *The University as the New Church* (1970), the book chapter “Existentialism and Education” in *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967), the book chapter “Teaching for a Living” in *The Story I Tell Myself* (1997) the article “Apologia Pro Vita Mea: The Ideal Portrait of a University Teacher” (1981), and unpublished essay “Humanities and the Tradition” (n.d.). These works may provide constructive insight to questions emerging in the Business Ethics literature about cultivating students to be Existential leaders in order to respond to the failure of Modern Capitalism to provide meaning and purpose in human life, or even more, to respond to a meta-narrative of bad faith that is used to justify inhumanness and oppression of people. Following the multiple level of analysis provided in each of the previous chapters, this final chapter will first discuss universities as dwelling places (organizational level), Existential education in teaching (interpersonal level), and a meeting of horizons with the Existential teacher (individual level).

An Ethical Crisis in Business Schools

Recently, scholars in business have been raising concerns about pedagogical practices in business schools. Salbu’s (2002) research revealed that MBA students had a reduced ethical and social standpoint after graduating. In a very forward essay titled “An Open Letter to the Deans and the Faculties of American Business Schools” Mitroff (2004), provided a staunch warning about the “appalling and sorry state of business

schools” that has contributed to business scandal and misconduct (p. 185). He believes that business schools have promulgated the following:

A mean-spirited and distorted view of human nature; a narrow, outdated, and repudiated notion of ethics; a narrow and highly limited definition of, and the role of, management in human affairs; an overly reified conception of the “sub-disciplines of the field of management;” and, a sense of learned helplessness and hopelessness among faculties, students, and workers regarding control of their careers and lives. (p. 185)

While Mitroff was forthright with his concern for business schools and their impact on the marketplace, we may wonder if he was ignored by those he addressed, since misconduct in business schools and businesses continue, and reached a breaking point with the 2008 financial crisis. Research has shown that business students are more apt to engage in academic integrity violations more so than non-business students (McCabe, Butterfield, & Trevino, 2006). Another study provides evidence for an increased attitude of greed among students who took multiple economics courses (Wang, Malhotra, & Murnighan, 2011). Consequently, if organizations seek to enact genuine sustainable and socially responsible practices, Ng & Burke (2010) argue that those values need to be cultivated in students in business schools.

As misconduct continues to proliferate in business, scholars are more recently calling for attention to ethics in business programs (Hartel & Brown, 2011) and for ethics to be more than a fad (Liedtka, 1996). Ciulla (2010) argues that business ethics pedagogy needs to be treated with the same respect and resource allocation as courses in functional areas. Preparing students in business ethics will contribute to their development as leaders, which will in turn facilitate an organization’s ability to engage stakeholders authentically, and on an even larger scale respond to the 2010 World Economic Forum to “rethink, redesign, and rebuild.” While these scholars illuminate a moral crisis in the

marketplace and corresponding business education programs, a new approach to education that responds to this crisis has yet to be formulated. From an Existentialist perspective, Jackson (2005) suggests that business ethics education ought to foster “the conscious condition of freedom in our manner of being, that is, authenticity” (p. 316). However, he does not propose how this sort of education ought to occur. Some scholars suggest that Humanism in business is necessary to respond to moral issues and crisis in our historical moment.

Humanism as a Proposed Paradigm Change in Business

Within the recent Business Ethics literature, scholars are calling for a paradigm shift to address the ills of Modern Capitalism to which business education is a part.¹⁹ While the idea of Humanism has been around for centuries, the subject did not enter the Business Ethics literature until 2003 with two essays published by Mele in the *Journal of Business Ethics*. Humanism in business is described as honoring and upholding universal human dignity within an economic context (Mele, 2003a; Spitzeck, Prinson, Amman, Khan, and von Kimakowitz, 2009). Spitzeck and colleagues (2009) furthered the conversation of Humanism in their text, *Humanism in Business* and a year later these same authors led by von Kimakowitz published *Humanistic Management in Practice*. Following this text, Pirson and Lawrence (2010) published an article that argues for humanism in business to meet the recent challenges in management theory and practice. They identify at issue the manner to which management theory has been informed by neoclassical economics, which accordingly, positions people as “materialistic maximizers that value individual benefit over group and societal benefit” (p. 553). They make a

¹⁹ For a direct connection between Humanistic management and Humanistic education see *Business Schools under Fire: Humanistic Management Education as the Way Forward* (2011).

connection between economic theory and Darwinian Theory of Evolution where human economic behavior is a reflection of a biological drive of the survival of the toughest.

They propose Humanism as an alternative to Economism describing the former as such:

Humanistic philosophy takes the human individual as its starting point and emphasizes the human capacity of reasoning. It is therefore hostile to any form of collectivism. In contrast to economism, however, humanism assumes that human nature is not entirely a given, that it can be refined, through education and learning. In addition, the ethical component remains a cornerstone in humanism in that it attributes unalienable rights to everybody, independent from ethnicity, nationality, social status or gender. Humanism addresses everybody and is universal in its outreach. (p. 554)

Furthermore, they believe that Darwin was largely understood and a renewed perspective of Darwinian Theory may support Humanism rather than Economism, which authenticates a paradigm change that promotes sustainable business enterprise.

In the year following this essay, three essays were published in the *Journal of Business Ethics* that continued the conversation on Humanism in business. The authors of the introduction call attention to the economic crisis that urged new discussion of alternative perspectives in business (Mele, Argandoña, & Sanchez-Runde, 2011). They argue that behavioral, moral, and cultural aspects contributed to the cause of the crisis, which are not independent of mainstream management and economic theory. According to them, the “real professional” has been lost, along with a corresponding sense of responsibility and accountability (p. 1).²⁰ When people are reduced to mere transactions, they are considered exclusively as a resource—an asset or expense—whose only value is their contribution to profitability. This, they believe, calls for a necessity of “a more humanistic and holistic vision of business and management” (p. 1).

²⁰ Extensive discussion of the meaning of a ‘profession’ and ‘professional civility’ can be found in Fritz’s (2013) *Professional Civility: Communicative Virtue at Work*.

Also discussing the relationship of humanism and economics, Grassl and Habisch (2011) provide an alternative to Darwinian evolution with a perspective that emerges from Catholic social thought. They begin with The Encyclical-Letter *Caritas in Veritate* by Pope Benedict XVI who called for reconciliation between ethics and economics. The encyclical provides a new framework for a business ethics that “appreciates allocative and distributive efficiency, and thus both markets and institutions as improving the human condition” through human action (Grassl & Habisch, 2011, p. 37). They conclude that a new Humanistic approach replaces the vicious circle of consumerism with a virtuous circle of human development.

The last two essays continue to critique economics, but focus on government and business spheres. Pirson and Turnball (2011) argue for a reexamination of governance structures, specifically those that exacerbated the problems of the 2008 financial crisis. They believe that an alternative, Humanistic, paradigm is necessary to provide network-oriented governance structures, to replace traditional hierarchical governance structure. Network governance structures provide checks and balances with inclusive voice and perspective from multiple stakeholders. Spitzbeck (2011) turns the attention of Humanism to the mission and practices of business firms. He recognizes an emergence of firms that replace traditional profit oriented motives with promoting the well-being of people. His essay reconciles the business case with the moral case for Humanistic management in order to present an integrative framework for Humanistic management.

Otherwise than Humanism

While Humanism has achieved recognition in the Business Ethics literature, and appears to rectify issues surrounding Modern Capitalism with a renewed focus on the

well-being of people, this chapter posits an Existential alternative to Humanism. Arnett, Fritz, and Holba (2007) offer a necessary link to make this turn. Their essay, “The Rhetorical Turn to Otherness: Otherwise than Humanism” provides caution in adopting a paradigm, which may be captured in the cliché, “the road to hell is paved by good intentions” (p. 119). While Humanism appears to have good intentions, its presuppositions of universality and individualism may result in a counterfinality of unintended consequences. Humanism grants universal rights to all, which ignores the question of who determines what these rights are by assuming a homogenous view of human rationality. Additionally, universality does not recognize alterity of a multiplicity of human perspectives, cultures, and histories—it implies a sense of sameness where people lose the very factors that make them unique. At the same time, individualism places the individual above human traditions granting confidence in the ability to reason above ‘the place’ upon which one stands. Arnett (1997) identifies this as a moral cul-de-sac that renders people in a state of existential homelessness (Arnett, 1994).

In the context of business, Khan and Lund-Thomsen (2011) also offer a cautionary account of good intentions paving the way to hell. Their essay, “CSR as Imperialism: Towards a Phenomenological Approach to CSR in the Developing World” illuminates how Western firms often enter developing countries and impose a Western understanding of what corporate social responsibility (CSR) is without taking into account how people in developing countries view or interpret CSR otherwise. Their case study provides an example of the dangers of universality and individualism that Arnett, Fritz, and Holba (2007) describe. Khan and Lund-Thomsen (2011) provide a helpful otherwise interruption of CSR, which is often taken-for-granted as a ‘good’ practice. In a

similar regard, Jones (2014) reorients the practice of responsible leadership that is associated with CSR. She identifies concepts within responsible leadership that totalize others when leadership is oriented as leader-centric. Both essays cited here rely on phenomenology as an alternative approach, which responds to the salience of Otherness that is central to Arnett, Fritz, and Holba (2007).

This chapter provides further elaboration on the value of phenomenology, specifically the Existential phenomenology of Barnes, which addresses the current crisis within the realm of education. While Sartre's text *Existentialism is a Humanism* (1956) may allude to support for Humanism described earlier, his Humanism is not representative of the Enlightenment project of universality and individualism. For Sartre, existence is always 'in situation' and, even more so for Barnes, existence is also in communicative relations with others. Sartre states that existentialism is a humanism because in choosing for oneself, one chooses for all humankind. However, this is not meant to imply universality, but responsibility to others who maintain infinite alterity. Arnett, Fritz, and Holba (2007) reference the cliché that the path to hell is paved with good intentions that was taken seriously in Sartre's play, *No Exit* (1946), which may be interpreted as a fervent critique of individualism.

Following the structure of this project that depicts Existential leaders as situated within organizational dwellings and encounters with others, Existential teachers are situated here within Existential dwellings of universities and Existential education through communicative engagement with students. The following discussion is not about how to teach Existentialism, but presents how Existentialism may inform an alternative approach to universities and teaching. Additionally, in the spirit of this project,

Existential education does not provide answers or prescription for remedying the current crisis, but may offer hope to enlarge students' thinking whereby they may make conscious choice regarding their existence and the existence of Others.

Universities as Existential Dwellings

Paralleling the crisis of Modern Capitalism with the loss of purpose and meaning in human life, Barnes (1970) makes a similar claim about a crisis in the university and church. She writes, "Each institution has been challenged with respect to the validity, value, and social relevance of what it offers to its members; each has been reproached for inadequately or improperly engaging itself in sociopolitical issues" (p. 1). Throughout history both the church and university played significant roles in shaping Western civilization, and both continue to influence contemporary life. In spite of often being at odds with one another, the two institutions share the goal "to point out the path to truth, to instruct the young, to guide man [sic] toward the good life" (p. 2). Succinctly stated, both serve a goal of positive social change. However they may be differentiated where the church has traditionally focused on character building and serving the poor, while the university oriented students toward citizenship and democratic participation.

Barnes observes a crisis of these institutions with a decline in religious participation and scientific objectivism usurping the Humanities along with a new emphasis on making college education 'relevant' with a focus on technique (Ellul, 1967). For the contemporary university, discussion of values and social justice has been deemed inappropriate for the intellectual sphere. Barnes does not believe in indoctrinating students with 'what they ought to believe, or values they ought to possess,' but this does not preclude an engagement with ideas about values and social justice in university

classrooms. Barnes calls for an opening up of students' thinking so they may be freer to work out their own particular beliefs. Moreover, she writes,

It is my conviction that a significant degree of crime, violence, and shattered lives is due precisely to the fact that the majority of people have seldom if ever been in a situation where for a sustained period they were forced to examine carefully the values by which they will continue unthinkingly to live. (1970, pp. 12–13)

While, according to Barnes, psychologists have in many regards replaced parish priests, and certainly have made positive contributions to people's lives, Barnes does not fully "entrust to psychologists the task of taking care of man's spiritual and ethical needs" and she questions why their efforts should be solely limited to their repair work (p. 13).

Perhaps everyone could benefit from some education on one's place in the world and engagement with others, and from Barnes's perspective, this is desperately needed.

Barnes discusses a revitalization of love and situational ethics. Both work hand in hand—"In situation ethics there are no rules. Every moral decision must be made within the context of its own situation, and all situations are unique. The touchstone value is love" (1970, p. 16). In a world squarely focused on laws and universal codes of behavior, situational ethics and love seem "like a stream of pure oxygen in the midst of smog. But like that pure gas, it carries its own dangers and can produce destructive explosions if one is not careful" (p. 16). Love is a good starting place, but Barnes believes that the ability to respond appropriately to the varying context of situations demands "a long period of study of the social context as well as self-awareness of the techniques of self-deception within us" (p. 17). Without a broader understanding, self deception may seem to be a fitting response, but in actuality is self-rationalizing in bad faith. The university, Barnes asserts, can be a dwelling, or shelter, where students may enlarge their thinking in this respect. Yet, the university, which, in its efforts to be squarely focused on intellectual

objective facts, has paradoxically turned into an ideology, or Church, of scientism. Despite this, Barnes believes, “the University rests the best, perhaps the only, hope of initiating significant changes in the life of man” (p. 19). In addition to the impact on students, Barnes asserts the university also serves the cultural life of the community along with the engagement of students with the community in service projects.²¹

Barnes recognizes the importance for students to acquire knowledge, but she disagrees with the prescription of this as the sole purpose of the university. Students need to also gain an understanding of connections and implications of knowledge and human existence as well as recognition that human endeavors do not take place in a moral vacuum. Barnes calls for education to go beyond knowledge acquisition to knowledge application in a world lived with others. To take this next step, universities need to be reoriented from propagating objectivist knowledge to cultivating wisdom (Barnes, 1970, p. 63). Barnes cautions that objectivist thinking homogenizes people and can contribute to fostering narrow ideals of the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant nationalistic male majority. As such, objectivism equates intelligence with fitting into a prevailing pattern, which discourages original thinking and may promote racism and oppression (p. 1970). Conversely, wisdom involves questions of human thriving, relations with other people, and moral maturity.

Barnes lived during a time of revolt against the objectivist majority with the civil rights movement and Vietnam War protest. People, particularly those associated with the solidarity of labor, brought to light that “individualism is a term inseparably tainted with the connotations of irresponsible capitalism and *laissez-faire*. It might be defined as the

²¹ Businesses and universities are discovering the benefits of service projects. See Pless and Maak (2009) for an example of a business service project. See Brook and Christy (2013) and Seider, Gillmor, and Rabinowicz (2010) for educational practices in service.

will and privilege to go one's own way without being accountable to others" (Barnes, 1970, p. 87). Barnes does not believe in an essential conflict between freedom and social responsibility. Yet, according to Barnes, understanding the commensurability of freedom and responsibility is a major task, and perhaps the most significant issue people need to address. Although a significant undertaking, Barnes argues that universities may be repositioned to address this crisis. She looks toward new horizons of universities by writing:

Sartrean existentialism has defined man as a free process, a self-making. Margaret Mead in her last book [*Culture and Commitment*, 1970] has stressed the idea that at this stage of the world's history we should accept change as the basic law and condition of man. Perhaps we are rediscovering the truth of the philosophy of the Greek Heraclitus, to whom has been attributed the saying, 'Everything is flowing'. If we like the metaphor of the river, we should recall that, while one cannot forever hold back the water, one can direct the course of its flow. (p. 139)

A continuously flowing river depicting life always in flux does not presuppose inevitable progress or linearity of history with an assurance that life will always get better. Barnes argues that this false optimistic view is never brought into question, so she offers the following critique:

It assumes that the forward movement of human progress has been established and that more of the same is desirable... what frightens me about this attitude is not so much its blindness and underlying policy of *laissez-faire* today as the thought of the possible developments to which might give rise in the future. At present people are given or buy for themselves tranquilizers to help them endure what they do not know to change. (p. 158)

The idea of progress is offered in the name of reason without seriously questioning it. Barnes believes a halt or interruption is profoundly needed to engage in thinking about the human condition and its future.

For Barnes, love is the bridge between individual and community, and as such, ought to be included in considering the restructuring of universities. Love involves both

justice and care, the universal and the particular. However, Barnes also offers caution—on the one hand, love of man proclaims the right of man to think of himself alone in extreme individualism, and on the other hand, love of all mankind “entails the sort of contradiction posed by the Greeks: ‘The man who has the whole world as his friend has no friend’” (Barnes, 1970, p. 161). When love is viewed as fulfilling personal and communal needs, rather than some mystical force, it, according to Barnes, becomes a necessary companion to rationality in all constructive thought about the human condition and our future. Love, Barnes writes, “is one of the criteria in our search for a new concept of responsible freedom or of individualism-within-community. Reason and love together may plan for the future of mankind without neglecting the well-being of the particular men, women, and children who will live through the human adventure” (p. 162). Barnes offers, “without apology or intellectual embarrassment”, intellectuals ought to teach and foster conversation about living in a diverse social world (p. 163). Even more, conversations need to address questions about human suffering and oppression.

Barnes calls for restoring balance in universities where faculty and students pursue knowledge along with enacting positive social change. As an esteemed scholar herself, Barnes values the role of scholarship for faculty, which she states is the primary concern for two reasons—pursuing knowledge and understanding for its own sake is intrinsically rewarding and self-fulfilling, and it gives them a sense of perspective beyond an imprisonment of their own minds (1970, p. 171). However, the concern Barnes has is that “we have gone too far with the training of scholars, scientists, and technologists” (p. 171). Those functions are needed in society, but are inhibited without imagination and broader understanding. Barnes concludes that the development of students in “the habit

of forming independent judgments in all matters which concern their way of life could ultimately be a greater check to the evils of the business sectors of the Establishment than even increased legal regulations would be” (p. 174). Similarly scientific pursuit, which has contributed to inhumanness and desecration of others, may be held in check (p. 175). Thus, Barnes proposes that in addition to the art of learning, students ought to be opened up to the “art of living” (p. 182) and “to make life worth living” (p. 183). By offering a place for discussion of social and ethical questions, universities may be aimed at “helping rather than recording man’s search for meaning” (p. 187). Barnes concludes her text with a passage about what universities ought to be, which deserves repeating here:

It is both the leader and the servant of humanity but it has not been entrusted with the mission of serving as the representative of god. In some ways, perhaps, we could say that the University is providing—or ought to provide—those things which traditionally have been said to derive from God. If our philosophy of education adequately fulfilled the ideal of reason combined with love, then those who came to the University campus ought to find ways of self-fulfillment and a meaning for their personal loves, a sense of their place in the unfolding of a historical plan and their participation in the community. They would be offered the opportunity of sharing in that kind of immortality which comes from knowing that what one has contributed to change the world lives on after personal death. If we are to consider that man’s original sin is willful ignorance and blindness to responsibilities, then the University can hope to supply the grace necessary for salvation. The underlying faith of the University in its own mission should rest simply on the conviction that all men and women are worth saving. (p. 191)

The university may serve as a dwelling for people to explore and cultivate their own projects while helping others fulfill theirs both within the university and in the surrounding community.

Existentialist Education within University Dwellings

In *An Existentialist Ethics* (1967), Barnes devotes a chapter to “Existentialism and Education” to address issues and enlarge understanding of the engagement of ideas within universities. She begins with an example of a news story that describes Westerners

shocked by an indigenous group of people refusing treatment for an insect-causing eye disease that render their people blind, while at the same time these Westerners passively accepted another news story about a local high school adopting a factory organizational structure. To Barnes, this latter story should be just as troubling. Both stories convey “the Procrustean idea that education is meant to fit the pupil into the existing limitations of the social order... whether one uses literal or figurative blindfolds” (p. 282). The news stories serve as a metaphor for the state of the university described in the previous section. Considering this crisis of the university, how can university teachers work to foster the type of dwelling Barnes hopes will emerge?

Barnes begins with calling attention to teaching that honors the right of students to arrive at their own understandings. She cautions impassioned teachers to avoid allowing their teaching to turn into indoctrination (1967, p. 288), yet the opposite approach of claiming to maintain detached neutrality is also a form of bad faith. Barnes states that the type of persuasion appropriate in the classroom is “to persuade the student to think for himself” (p. 290). Since freedom is always ‘in situation’ teachers must realize their role in creating situations in the classroom. Additionally, each student’s particular past and background, which contribute to his or her world-view upon entering the classroom contributes to the situation in the classroom. Teachers are also uniquely situated to which Barnes advises to honestly state their own bias, along with the ability to present other perspectives as well. Thus, the teacher is

Neither the decisive adult nor the indifferent adult, but the person who is concerned about his world and the world of others, who will be ready to act by that he believes to be best and true without closing his mind to the possibility of a future change of mind. Finally the teacher should *teach*, not merely referee. He *should* be able to impart some wisdom to the student beyond what members of the

class can find themselves. Otherwise all that is needed is a master of ceremonies.
(p. 291)

Creating this sort of environment does not present a major challenge; “the more difficult problem arises where the subject matter to be discussed is not intellectual ideas but emotional and ethical attitudes” (p. 291). Compounding the difficulty, Barnes asserts, is the little instruction students receive on the subject of ethics prior to entering the college classroom. Rather than teaching ethics directly, teachers may utilize an indirect approach that opens students’ thinking about who they would like to become.

In her autobiography, Barnes (1997) reflects on how teaching is a kind of sharing, which involves giving and receiving where the teacher is also engaged in pursuit of greater understanding. Barnes describes the classroom atmosphere where, “You give of yourself as well as of your knowledge; the reward is the pleasure of seeing others learn, grow, and create. To teach is always to be engaged in a common project” (p. 215). Barnes also comments that she demanded a great deal from her students, but this was received positively from her students who appreciated the opportunity to explore ideas and make the material meaningful. Barnes engaged students on their own terms recognizing that each one of them was on his or her own journey.²²

From an Existentialist perspective, education ought to foster a sense of becoming—not to find their true selves or “to ‘be himself’ but to ‘come to himself’” (Barnes, 1967, p. 294). Existential education presupposes that people are free in self-making. To impose on students what they ought to be is to do violence to them, or in Fritz’s (2007) term, to ‘colonize’ them. Students’ world-view changes through experience—the student who was in a teacher’s classroom last year, is not the same student the next.

²² Fritz (2007) presents the idea of ‘interpersonal justice’ that involves doing right by others, where what is ‘right’ is shaped by the narrative ground upon which each person stands.

Rather than closing students' minds by telling them how to be, teachers may open their minds to possibilities of their own being and life journey. Teachers provide encouragement and opportunities for students to modify their own self-creation. This may seem to engage only one side of freedom and responsibility necessary for social change, but Barnes believes that opening students to their infinite possibilities also teaches students an appreciation of the alterity of others in pursuing their own passions as well as others' ability to change. Stated simply, this approach introduces students to the subjectivity, rather than the objectivity, of others. Existentialist education helps to instill in students' a commitment to engage possibilities in life.

Commitment is an Existentialist value, but, as Barnes states, it is not the only one (1976, p. 298). A closely related value, action, is also necessary in Existential education. The question of whether, 'you are your acts', which originated in Sartre's play, *No Exit* (1946), may also be posed to students for contemplation and discussion. Several ideas may emerge such as word and deed, whether values dictate action or if values develop through action, and whether who one really *is* can be defined. Furthermore, discussion may then move to action in good and bad faith. Through the engagement of these ideas, students may become more thoughtful and deliberate in their actions as well as reflecting on their choices and recognizing that they may change, or in Barnes's words, "to choose again" (p. 300). For many students, this realization, may be freeing. For example, the student who beats herself up over poor choices made as a freshman can let go of worrying that those actions continue to determine her. In a similar, but different regard, the student who perhaps excelled academically her freshman year is also not determined by those actions. This does not discredit her achievement, but actually uplifts her from

the burden of feeling that she must continue to fit this mold. Barnes describes both cases as such, “Neither criticism nor praise of his past achievements touches him deeply, for he feels that the one praised or blamed is no longer there before the critic” (p. 300).

Existential education helps students to avoid clinging to former projects, but it does not promote entire detachment either. Rather, students learn that their “earlier activity of consciousness is a part of that background which goes to make up the situation within which it initiates any project or intends any object” (pp. 301–302). Their past actions, whether perceived as good or bad, are necessary to discover new ways of meeting existence in good faith.

Barnes recognizes that the current educational system does not necessarily foster opportunities for the sort of personal growth described above. More often the free development of students is hampered by some conventional means of measurement and classification (Barnes, 1967, p. 307). However, she is hopeful by claiming that the Humanities offers a place where this desperately needed creative approach may be easiest to arrange (p. 309). While students pursue specific requirement for their profession, they may also be exposed to “the liberating education of the mind” (p. 312). Barnes is confident that this more demanding approach will also be more appealing to students because it touches their hearts and minds. Introducing students to living in good faith does not suggest an easy path; in fact, living in bad faith is much easier although less fulfilling. Managing frustrations and barriers to one’s self-making can be very discouraging for students, which an Existentialist educator will be present to counsel. The Existentialist educator helps students

Understand their relation to their own emotions, to realize that they are not enslaved to their past and that they will themselves determine the quality of their

own future. We should unashamedly proclaim the doctrine of the irreducibility of each independent subjectivity and affirm that nobody should ever be relegated to object status because of some accident of his birth or social circumstance. To enlarge this list of presuppositions and aims and to implement them is the task of an existentialist philosophy of education which has yet to emerge. (pp. 316–317)

Barnes points to a new horizon of education, and while there is yet to be an Existentialist philosophy of education,²³ she was an exemplar of this approach throughout her teaching career (Cannon, 2008b), and continues to be honored by the University of Colorado's yearly award of the Hazel Barnes Prize to a faculty member identified as an Existentialist teacher.

Existentialist Teachers

In *Apologia Pro Vita Mea*, a speech she delivered in 1980 at the inauguration of a new president at the University of Colorado Boulder, Barnes responds to the question of what it means to be a professor at a university. She engages her audience to ask a question she asks herself, “What am I really doing or trying to do as a teacher, as a Professor of Humanities?” (p. 473). Her first response acknowledges the role of the Humanities, which she believes has been denigrated to the guardian of the past likened to a museum guard, or even a mausoleum attendant (p. 473). Yet, she also views science, which has conversely been oriented as a guide toward the future, denigrated to merely serve technical aspects of human life meant to improve material well-being, but has conversely destroyed our humanity. Barnes proposes a deeper look, beyond this superficial view of the sciences and humanities, where science may honor what has

²³ Barnes recognizes those who have made contributions to the development of an Existentialist philosophy of education including *Existentialism in Education: What it means* (1966), by Van Cleve Morris, and *Existentialism and Education* (1958) by George F. Kneller. Additionally, Barnes shares similar views presented more recently in Arnett's text *Dialogic Education: Conversations about Ideas and between Persons* (1992). Magrini (2013) utilizes Sartre in his essay, “Towards a Phenomenological Understanding of the Ontological Aspects of Teaching and Learning”; however, with a focus on ontology, his work relies more heavily on Heidegger's phenomenology.

happened in the past and contribute to the good life, and where the Humanities may engage history in the present to also contribute to the good life. In both areas, the university is a guardian of the past and guide to the future. Situated as such, Barnes believes the responsibilities of university professors in teaching, scholarship, and service are inextricably intertwined, mutually enriching, and even symbiotic (p. 474). Once this university dwelling has been established, Barnes turns toward her thoughts specifically directed toward the role of teachers in the Humanities.

Barnes begins with an observation that something goes on while teaching in the Humanities that is beyond the transmission of facts or skills where the teacher “gives of oneself” not by indoctrinating or charismatically performing for students, but enabling “others to find pleasure and meaning where one has found oneself” (1980, p. 474). Barnes’s approach may be described as de-centered teaching where the focus is on opening students’ minds to ideas rather than telling them what they ought to know and believe. Going beyond merely sharing information, Barnes states that she tries to “open the gates to areas in which students may learn to experience the joy of intellectual and aesthetic activity” (p. 474) and by doing so illuminate the intrinsic reward of academic pursuit. She believes, along with James and Aristotle, that learning provides fulfillment in life. Teachers help students discover areas where they may find this reward and guide more complex exploration where students may develop richer appreciation.

Most important for Barnes, but not in a direct fashion, teachers open students to “basic understanding of self and others without which human life would be barely distinguishable from that of the anthill” (1980, p. 474). The various areas of the Humanities, Barnes asserts, contribute in their own way to this endeavor. However,

Barnes elevates literature beyond entertainment or therapeutic escape to new heights where, through the interplay of real life and imagination, human experience expands and being with the world suddenly changes. Literature also opens people to an understanding of “how utterly different the world appears to each person as he or she lives it and how impossible it is in real life to comprehend completely the quality of another’s world” (p. 474). Literature, Barnes concludes, “gives us meaning” (p. 474), and while this may not be able to be articulated explicitly, it is highly significant. Literature has real effects in this sense, and is furthered when comprehended in connection to one’s own story. Giving students opportunities to make connections through reflective exercises opens contemplation of the self without making the self the center. Barnes concludes:

Literature gives us understanding of the life world—our own life world—and some sense of the life world of others and of what all life worlds have in common. It is the world in which we *live* as contrasted with the scientific world which we *know*. Literature makes us at home in the world. Our aim is not primarily to teach students to write literature or to live their lives as if it were literature. But I do believe that literature may help students to turn their lives into a meaningful, coherent story rather than a fragmented collection of nonsense syllables. (p. 475)

The Humanities keep us grounded to an Existential home. Barnes references an ancient Greek myth to depict this sense of ground through both meanings of the term. The son of the earth, Antaeus, maintained and renewed his strength as long as his feet touched the earth. Heracles killed him by holding him up in the air. The myth illuminates the importance of being grounded in the world and its history while fulfilling one’s projects. Additionally, the myth shows the importance of being-in-the-world-with-others. Placing oneself above the life-world leads to death. Being-in-the-world-with-others calls us “to be gentle and compassionate in our judgments”, but also to act in response to evil that oppresses people (p. 475). Finally, Barnes posits that the Humanities help us to overcome

cynicism, which citing Camus, is a state of mind as destructive as overt oppression. By valuing the past, the Humanities ground engagement of life in the present, which open possibilities for the future. Universities and their professors have an opportunity to make a positive contribution in the human journey.

Conclusion

The final chapter promotes a Humanities approach to foster Existential education and teachers. In another speech given at the University of Colorado, Boulder Barnes responds to the questions about “what the Humanities do for us and, second, what we as teachers do when we do Humanities” (n.d., p. 1). For Barnes, the Humanities prepare students for living—to view the world differently and convert from a fixed view of human experience. The conclusion of this speech is fitting for the conclusion of this project; Barnes writes, “In conclusion I will say simply that when we do Humanities, we must both preserve the tradition and search for means to enrich it. Thus we may make of the Humanities a pathway to greater humanity, and that is what the Humanities ought to be for” (p. 22). She points to meetings of horizons within dwellings and among people that move toward positive social change.

Overall, in the spirit of Existentialism, the chapters in this project extend horizons toward new understandings. It began by proposing *mythodology* as engaged scholarship to extend interpretive research and to propel this approach in communication, organizationa, and leadership studies. Next, given that Modern Capitalism failed as a guiding meta-narrative, organizational dwellings may serve as petite narratives to situate group-in-fusion-praxis in good faith. This perspective was presented to move the horizon of business ethics from hierarchical agency to rhetorical excitement in collaborative

responsiveness. Once recognizing the importance of the ground upon which people stand, this project then presented new understanding for interpersonal relations with looking-at-the-world-together and Existential love within organizations. Here, decision-making in business ethics was reoriented to move the horizon toward Existential engagement with others. These organizational and interpersonal perspectives are necessary to demonstrate that being-in-the-world is situated within dwellings and relationships with others. The chapter which follows represents a ‘*meeting of horizons*’ rather than a ‘*fusion of horizons*.’ As such, a meeting respects alterity while calling attention to the salience of communicative engagement between individuals and responsiveness within organizations. The works of Barnes demonstrate a necessity of a ‘communicative turn’ in business ethics and leadership studies to be responsive to the demands of the historical moment. Her works also illuminate opportunity for a new approach in teaching, which responds more to how to teach Existentially rather than how to teach Existentialism. Teaching Existentially is proposed as otherwise to Humanistic education. This final chapter was necessary to illuminate new ideas in pedagogy, but also to pay homage to Barnes who claimed to be a teacher first and philosopher second, and whose prolific scholarly career in Existentialism began with a student’s question.

In the spirit of Hazel Barnes, this project has humbly followed her exemplary works to posit an Existential Leadership that responds to the demands of the historical moment. University teachers may be viewed as Existential leaders within university dwellings needed in this moment. Barnes believed that Existentialism was integral to her life before she was able to articulate it, and then after extensive study and scholarship, it continued to inform her way of being as a teacher, scholar, and friend to which she is

described as an exemplar of living in good faith (Cannon, 2008a). This project ends with the Existential hope that it may spur additional ideas for future work in order to continue a conversation about human existence that presupposes “that when all has been said on all sides, the question remains...” (Barnes, 1964a, p. 131).

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