

This is extraordinary  
A+ for course!

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**"Yet if you consider the body, what can you find weaker than humanity?"  
Boethius in *The Consolation of Philosophy***

Prior to my most recent enlightenment, the abstract notion of '*clinical philosophy*' struck me as a mendacity fabricated by the UNF philosophy department to catch the attention of indifferent students and faculty who had never even ventured outside of right brain activity, let alone ever activated or developed their frontal lobes. However, after Dr. Colavito's brilliant presentation I found that the presentation was necessary in order to challenge pretentious scholars who believed they had already discovered and understood philosophy. The lecture demonstrated that philosophy is not a mere destination, but a journey... one that is never complete. If philosophy is believed to be the purification and perfection of thought, then it stands to reason that philosophy is empty if it does not relieve some form of human suffering.<sup>1</sup> Therefore it stands to reason that '*clinical philosophy*' encourages and demands one to 'know thyself' in order to obtain healing, to grasp inner harmony.

*The Consolation of Philosophy* is Boethius's construction on his stay in prison and how he came to *Philosophia*, or rather how she came to him. In his jail cell, he is weeping over his loneliness and kept company by several muses who fuel his lamentation. He yearns for a companion and thus the manifestation of *Philosophia* appears. Sending away the muses she seeks to lead him to an understanding of true happiness and inner peace, yet she refuses to work alone. "If you want the physician's help you must first reveal the wound."<sup>2</sup> Thus, how can he (one) expect or even desire to be healed if he is not even aware of the source of the pain?

*Philosophia* reveals that his onset of illness was brought about by his forgetting his *true nature*. Inserted in the story is the idea that nothing is healthier than being true to one's self, and more importantly *knowing thyself*. *Philosophia* continues, "Is there no good which belongs to you and is implanted within you, that you seek your good things else where, in things without you and separate from you?"<sup>3</sup> The experience of philosophy asks not for you to interpret what you see reflected outside of yourself, but rather to journey inward and understand, accept, appreciate, and build on what you

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Colavito, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2003

<sup>2</sup> *The Consolation of Philosophy* (taken from the presentation notes)

<sup>3</sup> *The Consolation of Philosophy* (p. 42)

discover. After all, how could anyone offer insight or understanding on any matter if they do not first know themselves?

*Philosophia's* guidance toward true happiness is reminiscent of the Oracle at Delphi. Boethius attentively listens to her song as she strums the harp, but he anxiously and impatiently begs of her to know what she yearns to teach him... what knowledge she wishes to impose. Finally she replies, "If you knew where I am attempting to lead you... [I am leading you] to the true happiness, of which your soul too dreams; but your sight is taken up by imagining views there of, so that you cannot look upon itself."<sup>4</sup> Profoundly Boethius's *Philosophia* calls for inward reflection to bring about healing and true happiness. Yet undoubtedly one will inquire, "How is such a journey taken? How can I find healing and true happiness?" Consequently one must implore *CLINICAL PHILOSOPHY*. You must move backward through reflection and search yourself internally.

Although many of the teachings of early *clinical philosophy* are attributed to Pythagoras, the essence of this healing process can be found in many Eastern cultures, specifically India; also *clinical philosophy* is more densely located in the arts rather than in philosophy itself. Pythagoras identified four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.<sup>5</sup> Specifically he felt that healing was in itself a form of justification for the soul. In order to find peace and happiness one must become the personification of all the virtues, thus establishing a personal harmony that is unique to each individual.<sup>6</sup> The easiest way to illustrate this harmonious union is to compare one's soul directly to music. The Byzantine Empire's culture epitomized the state of the soul as a single string continuously resonating. The beginning of the string represented one's birth, and upon the mortal passing of the individual a knot was tied. During the course of one's life, it was believed that one's pattern of vibration could be changed exponentially while the individual attempted to obtain a harmony... the harmony that belonged exclusively to him or her. If the resonance of one's string was in such a harmony, it was believed that their soul was in a healthy state as was the individual. If out of tune, a diagnosis would call for an adjustment in vibration to bring about wellness. It was considered crucial to reach one's harmony, for the composition in its final state at death would continue to resonate through future generations. It is imperative to note the role of individuality. When seeking peace and wellness, one was never to be compared to outside sources. All answers and solutions dwelled deep inside the individual; reestablishing one's health was solely dependent upon one's ability to complete the process of inner

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<sup>4</sup> *The Consolation of Philosophy*

<sup>5</sup> [www.nd.edu/departments/maritain/lib-p.htm](http://www.nd.edu/departments/maritain/lib-p.htm)

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Colavito 30<sup>th</sup> October 2003

reflection. When your soul and heart beat together in a synchronic rhythm you may claim that you '*know thyself*'. Thus the science of philosophy is the science of music.<sup>7</sup>

*Clinical philosophy* however is not merely understood by ectypal or archetypal knowledge... one must grasp at reaching *phronesis*. There are two kinds of individuals: hearers and students, doxophilists and philosophers. Doxophilists are those searching for data, while philosophers seek out the underlying matter... that which is eternal and unchanging. During a philosophical diagnostic exam a philosopher will discover if their subject is able to reach the Plato's fifth level of knowledge. The overall benefit of reaching this level is the acquisition of adaptive decision making. Dr. Colavito claims that there are five steps to the diagnostic procedure:

- (1) practice by examining the capacity of the individual's intelligence networks
- (2) exercise dialectical practice to activate the core issue
- (3) place the proportion in geometric space
- (4) discover the archetypal relationships within geometrical space
- (5) place the relationship within a paradigm to hold everything together

The overall purpose of such an examination is to see whether an individual is able to make the leap between the given paradigm and its relationship to themselves. Although it may appear objective and outlined on paper, each exam procedure is unique. This philosophical process is 'actor' based as each patient enters to proceedings with an individual internal make-up. Unlike psychology, *clinical philosophy* offers assistance and guidance while maintaining human dignity and refrains from passing judgments.

I elected to write on Dr. Colavito's presentation not only out of sheer interest and admiration, but also because it raised me mentally to a new level when considering mental health. I personally suffer from clinical depression, and under my parents' care have been formally treated for the disease for over ten years. The thread of depression is deeply woven through the tapestry of my father's family and if left untreated, I find that it can serve as an overwhelming, all encompassing handicap. Every doctor, no matter their expertise has always treated me 'by the book', and thus I have always felt like a mere number and that my case needed to align with the millions of others who have also been diagnosed. In her presentation, Dr. Colavito addressed a philosophy which I had never considered: "People cannot use

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<sup>7</sup> Dr. Colavito 30<sup>th</sup> October 2003

probabilities to come up with realities.” After learning about the practice and procedure of *clinical philosophy* as well as giving way to self reflection I found myself focusing more and more on this point.

Whether viewed as an elaborate metaphor or taken at face value, I believe that the harmony of the soul is proof of a peaceful and satisfied state of mind. Just as *Philosophia* instructed Boethius in order to find happiness you must look only *within* yourself, for nothing of one’s exterior can bring satisfaction. By enabling and challenging a person to embark on an internally probing excavation, a philosopher is able to offer up the gift of enlightenment. Specifically concerning the modern exploitation of prescribed medication, I feel *clinical philosophy* presents a much more appealing, and more importantly, a more permanent solution when addressing mental illness. The goal of any society should be to activate frontal lobes, rather than sedate them. ✓

I am more than aware that the presentation which I attended only began to scratch the rocky surface of *clinical philosophy*, and was delivered only as an overview of a very enriching and vague practice of alternative thinking. Yet no matter the preconceived depth of explanation, I feel I left Dr. Colavito’s discussion with a more activated brain, most specifically, with sparks of light consuming the darkness of my frontal lobes. It was mentioned during the talk that the evidence of a philosopher is found in what one leaves behind. I believe it is time to start on the endeavor out of the cave and into the light.

\* I have included my notes from the presentation as I was not sure of the proper way to cite the literature for the paper.  
-LAW, a

# 30<sup>th</sup> CLINICAL PHILOSOPHY (paper # 2)

prefrontal cortex: adaptive decision making part of the brain.

## I Textual Memories

- A "Philosophy is the purification & perfection"
- B empty philosophy if it doesn't relieve some form of human suffering
- C Pythagoreus was "coming to heal"
  - 1. according to their abilities
- D Brave New Brain (p 344)

## II. Where is Clinical Philosophy?

- A Philosophia,
- B. Pythagorean Temperance as medicine
- C. Socrates
- D easier to find in the arts and other areas than actually in Philosophy

## III. Philosophia, The Physician

- A The story, according to Boethius
  - 1 He was in prison and wanted a companion so he imagined a woman and she is Philosophia
  - 2 "if you want the physicians help you must heal the wound"
  - 3 "major cause of illness: you've forgotten your true nature."

## IV The key to healing: KNOW THYSELF

- A Hard to do b/c it moves backwards through reflection... it's internally
- B Socrates' "midwives" can see the signs and pull out the insights from within someone
- C Healing as Justice The Pythagorean Tradition

\* Byzantine Music Philos

1 relationship between Ovids Metamorphoses & Pythagoras (her PhD thesis @ stony brook)

2 body is like a string, tying is life & death. their vibration pattern is your alone & while alive you could move & change your vibration but when you die, @ that exact moment your vibration is set and carries on to the next generation, if you were out of tune, they must find YOUR harmony to make you well & not compared to outside source

\*Pythagorean "virtues" & relationship to Justice (health) \*  
 (look on the web)

|   |           |  |  |
|---|-----------|--|--|
| Activities of soul                                      | reasoning |  |  |
| What acts rule  | knowledge |  |  |
| Each part's virtue is                                   | wisdom    |  |  |
| The entire soul exhibits "virtue" when each pt exhibits | reason    |  |  |
| How parts of the soul injure & vice                     |           |  |  |

\* Soul is when the three parts are in harmony, thus the soul is the 4th

A. Pythagorean "Justice" in Plato

B. The Republic Dialogue about the training of the soul?

! The Republic is a metaphor for the soul, not really about gov't

**PART TWO** Method: How to become just? Know Thyself

I. The Science of Philosophy: Plato's Socrates

A. Asked if he believed in a myth

1. people can't use probabilities to come up with realities

2. Why should I focus on extraneous matters ~~why~~ when

I don't even know myself (Oracle @ Delphi)

B. KANON of Pythagoras

1. long string where you can prove proportions of music

2. Hearers & students: Philosophers & Doxophilists

3. Students were the ones that "got" that it was all about one underlying theme or practice while the teachers just heard & that was it

4. Students got the insight experience

5. Doxophilists are looking for answers

6. Philosophers look for underlying matter

9. understand what is eternal & unchanging not just those who wander

7. When you're in the dark, keep wandering & you'll see the light

## ★ DIAGNOSTIC TEST ★

### CLINICAL PHILOSOPHY

- adaptive decision making: frontal lobes
- practice by examining internal capacity of the individual's intelligence networks
- exercise dialectical practice to activate core issue (establish "golden proportion")
- Place the proportion in geometric space
- Discover the archetypal relationships w/in geo. space
- Place the relationship w/in a paradigm to hold it together

(can person make jump between story & themselves = PHILOSOPHY)

### CLINICAL DOXOPHILIST

- verbal decision making: left + v (left hemisphere by habituation)
- practice begins with desire to know about an object or phenomenon
- extract common elements among individuals ("golden mean")

(Republic)

Socrates: choose the best from what is possible to you !!  
decision making

\* it's actor centered !!! so it can't be written down

→ maintains human dignity w/o judgement

- give birth to TRUE VIRTUE, not images of VIRTUE
- you can tell if someone practices philosophy by the WORKS they do & what they LEAVE BEHIND

(Dr  
Solarito)

\* Doxophilia (e.g.) the image, the idol of her son is more real to her than the son in reality in front of her (so strong & overpowering that it can cause philosophical disorder) it can ~~destroy~~ lives it can be so strong

\* FOUR STAGES → identify in order to prevent (doxophilia) we suck @ preventing mental illness (psychopathology)

\* CULTURAL COMPETENCY \* (look up online)  
awareness of own culture, knowledge of others blah blah blah

- culturally sanctioned symptoms should not be considered in naming a mental disorder... IMPOSSIBLE!!  
you don't have non-cultured humans

\* why can't human subjects ever be disambiguated for sci. exam?

## RACE

\* Carolus Linnaeus (1758)  
- geographically divided & by the character traits by the four humors

\* Johann Blumenbach (1775-1817)  
- added 5<sup>th</sup> race  
↳ caucasian most beautiful and races divided from there (farther down → worse off)

↳ Doxophilia World Britannica 1<sup>st</sup> article on "Negro"

## MEDICINE (18<sup>th</sup> C)

they said you could use statistical data to diagnose mental dis

\* The Biocultural Paradigm & Clinical Philosophy \*

- recognizes the neurobiological origins of all human dev.

&  
- delineates how sociological influences & when sociological influences can & cannot affect those neurobiological invariants

• windows of opportunity in brain development (neuro networks)

we architecturally design and develop a child by how they

raised & this affects neuroconnections specific to the individuals

NATURE VS. NURTURE



## \*EG of Biocultures

### \* The Bioculture of Survival (Maia)

- hypervigilance of the amygdala (fear) conditioning  
weak development in frontal lobes due to poor development  
in early years

- over developed hind brain over forebrain

- areas of the brain for survival are stressed & thus thinking  
isn't (attachment or reading War & Peace not likely but they  
can run @ drop of a hat)

- transcends through generations (it gets handed down)

### \* The Bioculture of Authority (Left Brain Mimetic)

- training by habituation of concepts in left hemisphere

\* need philosophers to put thoughts together

\* genetic codes are predetermined but they get turned  
on by environmental stimulus (Genetics vs. Environment)

\* frontal lobes don't finish developing frontal lobes till 20  
must keep developing

- need 9 hours of sleep

\* → you must stabilize the patient & then **CREATE A LIFE**

\* The way we achieve philosophia is when it surges through inside  
and you never question outside again. The key is the heart (not sentimental)  
and connections to frontal lobes → **ENTRAINMENT** all parts  
work together and there is a surge of light in your  
head → enlightenment (Institute of the heart & mathematics in  
Colorado)

- look up to hearts if its healthy your heart rhythm creates a  
**HARMONY** (PBS program)

the science of philosophy  
is MUSIC