

Spring 5-10-2017

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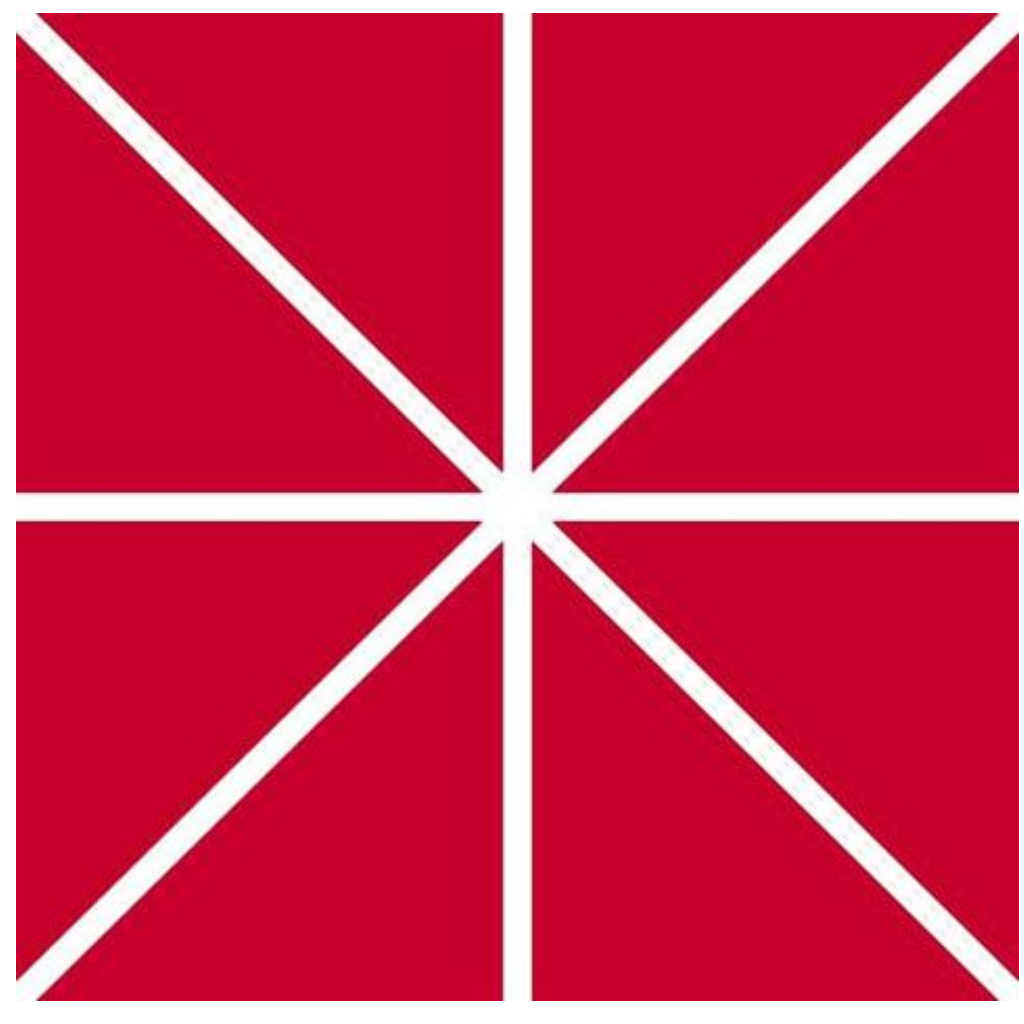
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Recommended Citation

Peterson, Gage, "An Ecological Application of Kleinian Theory to Political and Social Discourses as a Means to Extend Ecological Modernization Discourse" (2017). *Student Scholar Symposium Abstracts and Posters*. 230.

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An Ecological Application of Kleinian Theory to Political and Social Discourses as a Means to Extend Ecological Modernization Discourse

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President Trump's Rhetoric:

Splitting: The dissonance that exists when economic growth is confronted by environmental regulation is overcome by splitting. The environment becomes seen as a separate inconsequential entity.

Polarization: -" We are going to lift moratoriums on energy production in federal areas, we are going to revoke policies that allow unwarranted restrictions on new drilling technologies" ...
"We are going to cancel the Paris Climate Agreement and stop all payments of United States tax dollars to UN global warming programs."

-Donald Trump, Petroleum Conference in Bismarck, ND (5.26.2016)

Dichotomous Binary: "Every week they come out with new regulations, They're making it impossible..." When asked who would protect the environment without the EPA he responded, "we'll be fine with the environment. We can leave a little bit but you can't destroy businesses"

-Donald Trump, Interview with Chris Wallace of Fox News (10.18.2015)

Scapegoating: President Trump calls out Hillary Clinton by saying that " my opponent wants to put the great coal miners and great steel workers out of work and out of business"

-Donald Trump, Republican National Convention Speech (7.21.2016)

Agnes Denes:

Nature vs. Artifice: In 1982, New York artist Agnes Denes completed her piece 'Wheatfield – A Confrontation' which was grown on the Battery Park Landfill, two blocks from the World Trade Center and Wall Street. Speaking specifically to the confrontation with ecology, Denes' wheat field stands as a symbol of nature, now alienated by a culture dependent on production and consumerism. The picture below demonstrates this alienation, and the extreme paradox created when nature is reintroduced to a landscape of human intervention. Speaking more ecologically, 'A Confrontation' is an illustration of the splitting that happens in our culture that views technological and economic development as being pitted against the flux of nature. What Denes' work does is force a mending of our cultural ego, that has become split to defend against our anxieties regarding the consequences of development and consumption, by presenting the 'good' and 'bad' environment on the same plane.



Agnes Denes
Wheatfield - A Confrontation (Battery Park Landfill, Downtown Manhattan)
© 1982 Agnes Denes

Kleinian Object Relations:

- **Object Relations Theory:** An extension of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theories which holds that humans are primarily motivated by relationships with others.
 - **The Paranoid-Schizoid Position (PS):** a stage of development in which the defense mechanism of splitting separates whole objects into part objects that reflect the positive and negative qualities of the whole. Klein believed that some individuals will remain stuck in the PS position into adulthood.
 - **Polarization:** Feelings are either idealized or belittled. Ambivalence is intolerable within the PS position.
 - **Splitting of the Ego:** The fragmentation of objects into their dichotomous positive and negative qualities.
 - **The Depressive Position (D):** a stage of development in which an infant recognizes the autonomy of others and begins to integrate their fragmented perceptions of the good and bad they see in others.
 - **Ambivalence:** Feelings of ambivalence towards others is a crucial component of the depressive position.
- **Objects:**
 - Part object:
 - Objects are divided into 'good' and 'bad' objects
 - Whole Objects:
 - The object is seen as containing a mixture of both the 'good' and 'bad' perceptions.
- This project extends Joseph Dodds' (2011) application of Kleinian Theory to an ecological context. Dodds' sees Earth as a life encompassing ecological object that is viewed in the same way the mother is viewed as an object to the infant. Just like the mother to the infant, 'mother earth' possesses both good and bad qualities that provide for, and withhold from us.

Ecological Modernization Discourse:

Political theorists David Schlosberg and Sara Rinfret (2008) have made a call for the advancement of environmental discourse, also termed ecological modernization discourse, or EM.

Weak EM: Weak EM discourse is seen as being limited in its influence because of its emphasis on solution making through technology and efficiency development. These efforts are usually implemented with economic benefit in mind, without further aspirations for broad changes to existing social, political or economic systems.

Strong EM: strong EM is described as considering these possibilities of change and emphasizes the integral relationship between our social systems and the natural world.

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President Obama's Rhetoric:

Holistic Integration:

- "as the leader of the world's largest economy and the second-largest emitter, to say that the United States of America not only recognizes our role in creating this problem, we embrace our responsibility to do something about it."

-President Obama, COP21 Paris Agreement Speech (11.30.2015)

- "Last year, the global economy grew while global carbon emissions from burning fossil fuels stayed flat. And what this means can't be overstated. We have broken the old arguments for inaction. We have proved that strong economic growth and a safer environment no longer have to conflict with one another; they can work in concert with one another."

-President Obama, COP21 Paris Agreement Speech (11.30.2015)

- "accepting this challenge will not reward us with moments of victory that are clear or quick. Our progress will be measured differently -- in the suffering that is averted, and a planet that's preserved. And that's what's always made this so hard. Our generation may not even live to see the full realization of what we do here. But the knowledge that the next generation will be better off for what we do here -- can we imagine a more worthy reward than that?"

-President Obama, COP21 Paris Agreement Speech (11.30.2015)

Louie Psihoyos:

Giving Voice: To open the 2014 Climate Summit at the United Nations headquarters in New York, Director Louie Psihoyos, in collaboration with Obscura and Insurgent Media, canvassed the UN building with a video projection performance entitled 'illUmiNations: Protecting our Planet'. Psihoyos' illUmiNations forces a confrontation between the split parts of the wholeness of ecology, while additionally recognizing the role of all government bodies in the devolution of our ecological wellbeing. The messages projected on the UN buildings explicitly state the relationship between carbon emissions and the loss of diversity of life on earth. What Psihoyos' project aims to do is repair the splitting of the paranoid schizoid position and guide its audience to a position of insight within the depressive position where the part objects are seen as whole. Representing all of humanity, the United Nations approaches climate change as a *tragedy of the commons*, where all parties are responsible and will resultantly be affected by their collective actions.



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