

SWEDENBORG ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA LTD

Established in 1992 and Celebrating 10 Years of Activities

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688 ~ 1772), recognised as one of the great scientists of his era, demonstrable through inventions, anticipations and theories now part of modern understanding, employed his skills for a higher use - to seek the meaning and purpose of life. Transcendental insight was opened to him and for about 30 years he reported experiencing spiritual processes underpinning all events, from the greatest to the least, occurring in this level of existence. He predicted that until such processes became part of human understanding, progress in mankind's development would remain profoundly limited.

Today, there are many contemporary issues for which society struggles to find long-term solutions. The Swedenborg Association of Australia Ltd believes that the spiritual teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg can assist in building positive responses and is committed to creating an awareness in the broader community of the contribution he made to our understanding both of this physical and the higher level of existence.

Offering Spiritual Principles... for Life's Issues



WHAT DO ALL THESE THINKERS HAVE IN COMMON?



Emanuel Swedenborg: Scientist and Spiritual Explorer



In terms of intellectual stature and original, creative thinking, Swedenborg has been compared to Leonardo da Vinci. Yet for the most part the world remains in ignorance of the significant contribution made by this Swedish genius in so many fields of human endeavour, and of the veritable mine of enlightenment to be found in his esoteric writings which give the blueprint for individual spiritual development and growth. These writings are known to have influenced the earliest anti-slavery movements and many of the great thinkers and religious leaders who have helped shape western culture during the past 200 years. These same writings largely inspired the establishment of infant education in Germany and England in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Whilst their impact has spread far and wide, it has been largely forgotten that they were such a source of inspiration. Today though, as the world enters a new era with a growing thirst for an understanding of the purpose of life and the working of the human psyche, there is a re-awakening of interest in, and appreciation of the immensely valuable insights to be gained from the contents of Swedenborg's works. His name is becoming increasingly known.

“For you Westerners, it is Swedenborg who is your Buddha of the North.”
Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki
Japanese philosopher and Buddhist scholar

Born in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1688, Emanuel was the third child of Lutheran Bishop Jesper Svedberg and his wife Sara. Endowed with a remarkable mind he grew up to be one of Sweden's most illustrious men of science. In an era when scientists were few and their inquiries limited, Swedenborg investigated the physical universe in many directions. He designed a number of useful inventions, made some remarkable discoveries and anticipated theories now accepted by modern science. He wrote some 33 scientific works embracing such widely differing subjects as metallurgy, mineralogy, physiology, mathematics, cosmology, and the structure and function of the brain. During this period of outstanding mental activity he worked in an important government position as a Royal Assessor of Mines contributing significantly to the revitalisation of his country's mines industry. He travelled extensively throughout Europe taking notes everywhere on the latest scientific marvels, meeting the leading scholars of the day, always searching, wondering, probing the mysteries of life.

His stated purpose in pursuing a scientific career was to locate and understand the working of the human soul. He gradually realised that he was not going to achieve his objective, however, on reaching the boundaries of human knowledge. Rational deductions postulating the existence of the soul could not be proved. At 50, Swedenborg relinquished government work and his scientific and anatomical research. Whilst continuing a normal, active life for a gentleman in his position, being a member of the Upper House of the Swedish Parliament, he began a detailed study of the Bible following a series of mystical experiences. It may sound extraordinary, but Swedenborg writing a year or so before his death in London in 1772 claimed that his spiritual faculties had been opened for 27 years enabling him to become a citizen of two worlds at the same time - this natural plane of which we are all conscious and the spiritual dimension of consciousness into which we fully enter when the physical body ceases to function. A scientist

and philosopher as he had been, trying to demonstrate the existence of the things of the spirit, Swedenborg was brought to see that the answers he had tried to discover could only be known by revelation - from above and from within. He became a spiritual explorer.

The profoundest questions about the existence of God, the creation of the world, our spiritual dimension, and the Divine government of the natural and spiritual worlds, are all discussed in one or other of the approximately thirty volumes which comprise Swedenborg's spiritual writings. He saw these things written by himself as a God-given response capable of satisfying the questioning and the probing of men and women in full possession of their rational and critical faculties.

Neville Jarvis

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Membership of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Ltd. is open to anyone interested in pursuing an interest in Swedenborg, the man, his science and his spiritual teachings. For details on how to join, please refer to page 15.

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Neville Jarvis Coordinator, April 2003

Assisted Suicide or 'Euthanasia'

IAN ARNOLD

In recent years this issue has been much to the fore in public debate in Australia. Governments and individuals have been challenged to form an opinion either from principles or from emotion and feeling because someone close to us is involved. It is one of those issues that is not going to go away.

The purpose of this paper is to examine some of the points which are canvassed and look at teachings found in Swedenborg's spiritual writings, a helpful resource material in making conclusions.

The debate about assisted suicide or euthanasia has gone on for a very long time. We know that different cultures and people have adopted different attitudes towards it. Both the ancient Greeks and Romans practiced euthanasia and also infanticide. The Hebraic and Christian traditions both have invariably been opposed to it, human life being seen to be from God, given by him and taken away by him only at that time he sees to be best. Timing is entirely in his hands. Although new factors have entered into things, in our day the two sides of the debate are, nevertheless, essentially represented by these two schools of thought.¹

One relatively recent emphasis is on patient autonomy and right of self-determination, a far cry from earlier medical paternalism. Now patients (or their surrogates) are extensively consulted about treatment and, as far as possible, their wishes followed and respected. The right of self-determination is cited as the basis of the Dutch position on euthanasia.² Some recoil from this as taking things too far. What of others, and of Society, to which they belong, they ask? *"If humans wish to be fully themselves, they stand in need of encounters with others and of being encountered by others. This is a fundamental insight that can guide us in our approach to the dying"*.³

Another new factor which has entered in, and so complicated the euthanasia debate, is the institutionalising of death in modern times and, with it, the invariably life-prolonging medical technology which, wonderful as it is, confronts patients, doctors, carers and family

None of us likes to see another in pain, helpless, dependant on others

or friends with the need to make decisions such as would previously never have arisen. *"The focus of dying has shifted to health-care facilities where the course of illness can be managed and, with good luck, reversed"*.⁴ The whole issue has become so much more complex as a result. Who decides? No wonder there is so much debate going on; so much being said and written about the subject. Agonizing choices must be made about accepting or forgoing treatment by the patient, if capable, and, if incapable, by doctors and/or others. Decisions must be made as to what constitutes 'ordinary' or 'extraordinary' ('proportionate' or 'disproportionate') means to keep the patient alive. And, crucially, does one actively assist the dying process (or concur with it being assisted), or passively allow it to happen?

When it comes to reasons in favour of euthanasia, one has already been mentioned, viz., respect for patient autonomy and right of self-determination. But there is another, as equally if not more persuasive, and this is to bring to an end unbearable suffering.

None of us likes to see another in pain, helpless, dependant on others, maybe a physical shell of what he or she once was. Why not help them move on?

At first sight this whole matter of unbearable pain is a persuasive argument and one that cannot but move us emotionally especially if it is someone close to us. Whilst at one time it may well have been "a choice between dying in unbearable pain or actively shortening the dying process", today it is rarely so straightforward. Most pain can be managed these days and, as well, research has shown that a loving and re-assuring environment can greatly remove the suffering which contributes to pain and compounds it. Additionally, we can hope to have access to hospice and end-of-life care which, by general agreement, and since its

inception in the 1960's, has profoundly changed the nature of the dying process.⁵

In concluding this short, and due to space constraints, inadequate survey of issues which come up in this debate, we briefly look into the rich resources we find in Swedenborg's writings for what might shape our thinking and influence the conclusions we arrive at with regard to assisted suicide or "euthanasia".

To begin with, there are many statements which, as I read them, affirm the Hebraic/Christian stand on the sanctity of life, e.g. *"The truth is that there is but one life and that this life flows from the only Lord. The truth also is that angels, spirits and men are merely recipients of life."*⁶

Does this not imply that our lives are not our "own" to make decisions about as if they were?

Having in mind the appearances we live with in this world, it is not at all surprising that people in great physical distress, or despair, feel abandoned by God, as if he is unmoved by their suffering or doesn't care. Swedenborg's writings, though, tell us this is not the reality.

*"The smallest of things, and even the smallest of smallest, are directed by the Lord's Providence, down to the very steps taken by the feet."*⁷ Even the roll of a dice, wrote Swedenborg, is under the Lord's Providence.⁸ The Lord is monitoring our lives every fraction of a moment, looking to what is optimum in relation to our eternal well-being. Remarkably, this even extends to the very moment at which we die.⁹

There is yet another teaching which needs to be considered, and it concerns temptation. We find in Swedenborg's writings that throughout our life we are vulnerable to temptation, different types of temptation, even, at different stages of our lives. From what I hear and think I have sometimes observed there are fearsome temptations which can come upon the old, the sick, the dependent and the infirm such as to cause them to call into question whether their life can possibly have any quality, meaning or purpose. No wonder some start ➤

Each person is created to live for ever. We experience life as our own, so that we are free to make choices between good and evil, right and wrong. Every person is created for heaven, but we are also born with tendencies to be selfish. In this life here, people inevitably develop their life's main delight which is to live in harmony with others and to serve the good of the whole, or to live self-centredly and love to rule over others. Each person chooses one or other of these loves, which Swedenborg describes as the states of heaven and of hell.

◀ brooding and asking themselves whether they would be better off dead. As in all types of temptation, appearances take over, reality becomes obscured, and God becomes remote and lost to them.

"As long as the temptation lasts, a person assumes that the Lord is not present, for he is being harassed by evil genii, so harassed in fact

*that sometimes he has so great a feeling of hopelessness as scarcely to believe in the existence of any God at all."*¹⁰

And a similar kind of temptation can invade the thoughts of those looking on.

The physical situation, and crisis, both triggers and accentuates a spiritual crisis, and assisted suicide or "euthanasia" seems a logical way out. Perhaps if sufferers and those who love and care for them could be helped to see these deeper issues and factors as being involved, that option might decline in its attractiveness and the whole awesome episode be seen as part of a strengthening of their spirit and preparation for passing on at a time initiated by the Lord.

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² Schotsman, Paul. "When the Dying Person looks me in the Face: An Ethics of Responsibility for dealing with the problems of the patient in a persistent vegetative State." *Birth, Suffering and Death* edited by Kevin Wm. Wiles, p.128

³ *ibid.* p.132

⁴ Caperton, Alexander M. "Death and Dying: Euthanasia and Sustaining Life, III – Professional and Public Policies", *Encyclopedia of Bioethics* (details as above) Vol.1 p.577.

⁵ Lynn, Joanne, Monica Koshuta and Phyllis Schmitz: "Hospice and End of Life Care", *Encyclopedia of Bioethics* (details as above) p.1158

⁶ Swedenborg E. *Arcana Coelestia* para 3742

⁷ *ibid.* para. 6493

⁸ *ibid.* para. 6494

⁹ Swedenborg E. *The Spiritual Diary* para 5003

¹⁰ Swedenborg E. *Arcana Coelestia* para 840

"Praise be to the God of... Swedenborg."

**Alfred Deakin,
Australia's 2nd Prime Minister**

SWEDENBORG ASSOCIATION'S FIRST 10 YEARS

First suggested in the mid 1960's by Bernard Willmott (1915 - 2001), the Swedenborg Association of Australia itself evolved from functions commemorating the Tricentenary of Swedenborg's birth in 1988. Its Constitution was drawn up in 1992 with 85 Subscribers, the inaugural Directors being Kevin Attwater (President), Neville Jarvis (Secretary), Jack Benson (Treasurer), Ruth Duckworth, Brian O'Neill, Rev. Arthur (Terry) Schnarr, Professor Eric Sharpe and Rev. Bernard Willmott.

OTHER OFFICERS

President John Brogan 1998 -
Secretary Alexis Jarvis 1993 - 1996
Michael Chester 1996 - 2001
Michele Knight 2001 -
Treasurer Louise Brogan 1998 - 2002
Kirk Holst 2002 -

HIGHLIGHTS

1992 Regular Group Meetings began in Melbourne, Perth and Sydney
First *Celebration of Spring* held at North Ryde (Sydney)

1993 Logo Competition won by Joe Vandermeer

Regular Newsletter *Candela* first issued

"Coffee Shop" discussion Group began meeting at North Ryde

1994 Group Meetings held at Penshurst (Sydney)

Meeting in Adelaide with a view to forming a Group there.

1995 First *Celebration of Easter* in Sydney
Bookmark designed and produced

Bi-weekly "Meditation Group" began at North Ryde

Website established on the Internet

1996 Life Membership for Bernard Willmott

2001 Gold Coast Group commenced

2002 Cooperative agreement between the Swedenborg Association of Australia and The Swedenborg Lending Library and Enquiry Centre concluded with future activities under Association's name.

CELEBRATIONS OF SPRING

Swedenborg Award for Spiritual Art
Winners (entries received from across Australia)

1993 Heather Sved, Sydney, NSW
1994 Maryanne Heslop, Bellingen, NSW
1995 Kay Keller, Sydney, NSW
1996 Phillip Hay, Leura, NSW
1997 Mary Wilcox, Sydney, NSW
1998 Tim Hixson, Sydney, NSW
1999 Lenore Sandow, N. Tamborine, Qld
2002 Laura Riddell, Sydney, NSW

Swedenborg Literary Award Winners

1995 Lachlan Hinds, Sydney, NSW
"Essay on Swedenborg and Homoeopathy"
1996 Neville Jarvis, Sydney, NSW
"Salamanders in Venus: Thoughts on Planetary Surfaces to Inner States"
1997 Michael Chester, Sydney, NSW
"Ponderings on Metanoia"

Kevin Attwater, Inaugural President

I'm blue, what colour are you?

TREVOR MOFFAT

Fall flat on your face and you're likely to be physically "black and blue" with bruises. Feeling overwhelmed with daily routine and the limited range of choices we have to select from, we can often feel "blue" saying; "I'm suffering from the blues!" Obviously this is not about the actual colour or ethnic origins; rather it is about a human state of mind, and is common to all human lives. Given that everyone has the potential of sharing in this type of experience, we may wonder what is the common link. Is it our human character, which causes the way we each feel? Is it our individual lifestyle? Is it analytical powers of the mind? Or is it a deep-seated inner quality which is common to everyone? Well, the questions may continue as we each reflect on human nature. Most likely we may never agree on a single answer to any of the questions because human nature is superficially complex.

We might begin to understand the depth of complexity in human nature when we compare people with animals. Essential to understanding this difference is acknowledging the concept of instinct. A dog will always be a dog, a lion a lion and so on. It may well be stating the obvious, but we do need to acknowledge the fact that animals can only act within the "confines" of their instincts. I know when I'm walking our little dog that he is drawn to every lamp post and tree. He has to check out the "trademark" of previous visitors. This annoys me intensely. Yet I have to accept a dog is not able to live with other dogs passing along the road ahead of him without having to place his mark over theirs. This is its basic instinct.

Of course we human beings may also act instinctively; this is why researchers in the field of Psychology conduct animal experiments. I. P. Pavlov found that ringing a bell at the same time as feeding dogs led to triggering salivation when the bells were rung, without serving up the food. This generated the theory of Conditioned Reflexes. B. F. Skinner developed a theory of Positive Reinforcement

Swedenborg clearly draws attention to the human potential of deeper spiritual development

through "teaching" a variety of birds to play ping-pong. Instinct may be manipulated to bring about a desired outcome. Human thinking processes (Cognitive Psychology) may be channelled in a manner which potentially helps the individual to grow or to develop an improvement in lifestyle. That is to say we might avoid negative behaviours, avoid taking an addictive drug or rid ourselves of a negative personality trait and come to develop a better self-image.

In practice the principles of psychology make life-changing decisions relatively easy. Certainly human beings, at one level, function instinctively for we all have a "fight or flight" instinct. We hear a sound or frightening explosion, the adrenalin flows and in a split second we have to decide either "to run away" or "stand and fight". The sex drive is also instinctive; but here we come to the subtlety and difficulty of distinguishing between instinct and something deeper. Swedenborg clearly draws attention throughout his theological and philosophical works to the human potential of deeper spiritual development. This goes far beyond physical change, even beyond the thought processes.

I'm blue, what colour are you? This is a question generated by human distinctiveness and the desire to know more about other people. Thinking about other people as individuals is a great way to see them. In a positive sense thinking of others involves looking to their welfare, while in a negative context it involves comparisons, "Why haven't I got what they've got?" and so on.

Once we move into the negative way of thinking we are in danger of consolidating a lifestyle of jealousy, hate and regret about all

the opportunities lost. This then is where I believe that psychology and the principles presented through Swedenborg come together to serve humanity.

If we focus on missed opportunities, reflect too much on "what might have been" and come to believe everyone else is better off, then we shall never achieve contentment. Counselling may work only if those seeking insight to the cause of problems in their lives are prepared to see it for themselves. No matter how skilled the Counsellor might be, or how knowledgeable, a client will go away disappointed if there is no personal insight gained.

Albert Ellis developed his theory of Rational Emotive Therapy upon personal experience. The story is that Ellis was a timid young man struggling with the sense of personal worth. He uses very graphic terms to describe his feelings about himself. In an effort to overcome these feelings he set himself a tough task. The task was to sit in Central Park, a well-known part of New York, and ask the first 100 women who came past him for a date. Evidently two said yes, one even turned up! Ellis centres R.E.T. very much upon weighing up the evidence to hand as a means to change feelings.

Gerard Egan, another writer in the field of counselling psychology, formulated a more complex model for his basis of helping others. Egan begins the introduction to his work, *The Skilled Helper, A Systematic Approach to Effective Helping* (Third Edition), with the following:

Who needs helping models and skills?

The ongoing crisis in the helping professions
Models of helping: Richness or clutter?

A problem-management approach to helping
The model in the service of a systematic eclecticism

The training of helpers

Client self-responsibility

Helping as a social-influence process

Client and helper collaboration



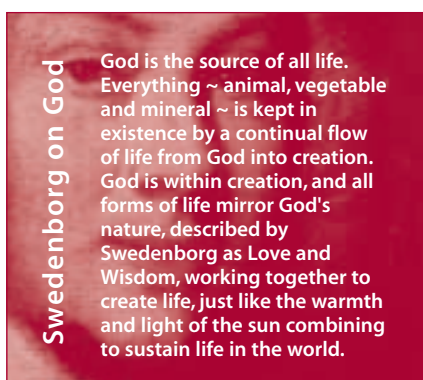
- ◀ The helper as consultant
- The resource collaborator role
- The client as problem solver
- The contract between helper and client
- Portrait of a helper.

From this opening onward Egan emphasises the need to bring all points down to concrete images. Error, mistaken attitudes, jealousy of others, desire for wealth and power, wanting to be seen as better than the next person all lead to problems which may compound and come out as breakdowns, or physical disease. Recognising mistaken attitudes and wanting to deal with them is essential before growth or change can happen.

Reaching out toward our Spiritual Potential involves "seeing" what has gone wrong, wanting to grow, and embracing the ideals which can lead to that growth. In his work *The Divine Providence*, Swedenborg tells the reader that even the extremes of evil are permitted to show themselves so people might understand the horrors of such extremes. This also means people will always have a choice, but can only act or change direction as we come to appreciate there is an alternative way of life, then desire that new lifestyle. We may think it goes without saying, yet it remains true that the greatest Counsellor of all is constantly allowing us individually to experience life as it happens uniquely each for us. Then we are left in freedom to make the crucial decisions so that we may see for ourselves the changes we need to make.

It doesn't matter if I'm blue and you're red! What truly matters is that we respect each other's condition, position, and understanding of life. All are equal in the Lord's sight.

Trevor Moffat B.A. has a Degree in Psychology and Counselling. Currently he ministers to a New Church (Swedenborgian) congregation in Perth.



SWEDENBORG IN AUSTRALIA

1768

Captain James Cook leaves Plymouth, England, after spending three days with a friend, William Cookworthy, an ardent student, translator and promoter of Swedenborg's spiritual teachings.

1770

Captain Cook lands at Botany Bay.

1787

First Fleet leaves England with Assistant Surgeon John Lowes, Swedenborg reader, entrusted with a large assortment of Swedenborg's writings as a gift to the new Colony.

1788

Establishment of first European settlement (convict) in Australia. Letters indicate that Swedenborg's books had been well received by officers, crew and convicts but not by the Chaplain.

1832

Thomas Morse, first immigrant committed to Swedenborg's spiritual teachings, arrives in Sydney.

1844

First Australian Swedenborgian congregation meets in Adelaide under leadership of Jacob Pitman, brother to Isaac Pitman, inventor of the shorthand technique.

1853

Swedenborg congregation meets in Melbourne.

1854

Swedenborg congregation meets in Sydney.

1866

Swedenborg congregation meets in Brisbane.

1873

"The Swedenborg Club" established in Sydney.

1881

Swedenborg congregations affiliate into a national organisation.

1928

Swedenborg congregation meets in Perth.

1959

Bequest from the estate of homoeopath Dr. William Moore, Sydney, establishes The Swedenborg Lending Library and Enquiry Centre to promote and distribute Swedenborg's spiritual writings throughout Australia.

1973

Exhibition on the Life, Times and Influence of Emanuel Swedenborg goes on display for the first time. The State Library of Tasmania in Hobart is the venue.

1992

Swedenborg Association of Australia Ltd. incorporated to meet the needs of individuals interested in Swedenborg the man and his spiritual teachings.

"The idea of influx and the fact that we (and all else) are recipient vessels really constitute a deeper truth. If we explore inwardly, we begin to see we receive our very life and all our ideas and thoughts out of the spiritual world. If we reflect on it, although we are each a life, we hardly know what life is, and even less how livingness is created in us. Influx can be directly experienced, mainly through meditation. When the person is passive, inwardly doing nothing, life still manifests within. After much meditation, I began to recognize influx even in ordinary daily events. Things flow in. Our lives and even our sense of being alive are given to us. The sense of influx and of ourselves as a recipient vessel are higher spiritual insights. It is an insight on the way to seeing that only God exists and is the actual life of all."

"Our Inner Design" by Wilson van Dusen from *The Design of Existence* p. 89

Feeding the Inner Person

JULIAN DUCKWORTH

A young lady spoke to me after a public meeting at which I had introduced some basic spiritual ideas drawn from Swedenborg's teaching. She said, "I enjoyed your talk very much. I have never heard of Swedenborg before tonight. I already knew everything you said but I couldn't have put it into words." Her comments left me with a warm glow – not so much to do with my speaking ability – but with the use and powerful effect of this particular system of spiritual teaching which comes through the writings of Swedenborg. It seems to resonate with so many people when they come into contact with it. It has the ability to crystallize what people already feel and believe but can't adequately express in words. Perhaps I could add that this body of teaching seems very balanced and extraordinarily wholesome and cohesive. It deals with our own existence and suggests what is going on in our joys and trials and personal choices. Swedenborg talks so much about the spiritual world and its influence on us in this world and yet we are never once encouraged to float off into reveries but to get on with our life's activity and usefulness **so that** the influence of the spiritual world can thereby get to work in us.

We need to get into and behind the material that we're given in the body of Swedenborg's teaching. Outwardly there are thirty volumes of spiritual texts ranging through various themes and topics; inwardly, there is a dynamic world of rich insights and personal realities that is never-ending in its application. For me, it just goes on and on feeding my spirit and soul with new discoveries that bring great joy to me because they are being put into words. One of my own regular delights with Swedenborg is to read a paragraph – often in the middle of a section dealing with something else – and suddenly find a confirmation or a connection with what I am

This mind of Swedenborg seems to have grasped everything and brought it into workable form for our human consumption!

presently thinking about or trying to understand. But this is the very nature of spiritual material as opposed to dry cold facts. Factual information tells you things; spiritual information draws things out and brings things together because ultimately it is all the one substance. Swedenborg would call that substance 'the Divine' which we can see as the creative energy that makes and sustains the universe or as a personal revelation made to us individually when the time is right. The place of **the Divine** is so central to everything in Swedenborg that it is fair to say that this is the single overriding theme. At heart, Swedenborg's writings are collectively presentations of Divine activity and purpose.

This idea leads on to an important point about the 'form' of Swedenborg's writings. Swedenborg began his theological output with the *Arcana Coelestia*, with its twelve volumes in English translation. This is often called his 'magnum opus' and for many people it is the foundation. I think of it as a vast reservoir of spiritual ideas and principles which find expression through Swedenborg's explanation of the deeper meaning in the first two books of the Bible – Genesis and Exodus – and in-between through various topics inserted between Biblical chapters. But when you read the *Arcana*, you are not really aware of this pattern and composition, for suddenly he is discussing things like the growth of the human mind, the nature of evil, the appearances of life, the life of service to others, our conjunction with the Divine, and so on, and describing these principles by reference to God, heaven, hell, angels, spirits, people, the Word, and good and evil. The effect is amazing: this mind of Swedenborg seems to have grasped everything and brought it into workable form for our human consumption! He can range here and there and never lose direction for a moment. That is, perhaps, the mind of a genius; maybe this is also the means of Divine revelation, to inspire what is seen and recorded by a human mind.

I would add another thought to this; that in the process of formulating his writing, Swedenborg's own spiritual perception became alive and highly receptive. I can't really believe that he had these countless insights and then decided how to give them shape; no, much more the other way round, that, as he explored a particular line of thought (or Biblical verse) the floodgates of his mind opened and great seas of understanding came into being. Look at a few pages for yourself and you will certainly see how this works.

After writing the *Arcana Coelestia* (*Heavenly Secrets*) Swedenborg wrote more systematically, arranging topics in the form of a book, about such things as Heaven and Hell, Divine Love and Wisdom, Providence, Charity, the Soul and the Body, Marriage Love, and finally the theology of True Christian Religion. These are not so 'heady' as the *Arcana*, but they are drawn from it, and presented for human minds that cannot operate in the more rarified atmosphere of the *Arcana* world. Some say that Swedenborg lost something as he turned towards systematizing things into topics; perhaps we could suggest that this was his way of 'grounding' this Divine revelation.

In conclusion, I want to highlight two things. The first is the **universal** nature of Swedenborg's teachings. They go far beyond the boundaries of religious beliefs and creeds into the world of personal experience and spiritual activity. Today, we are much more at home with this freer, broader approach to truth; but in Swedenborg's own time it was unheard of to transcend such frontiers. The second point is perhaps even more vital; that underpinning everything in Swedenborg is the point that we ourselves must come to co-operate with the Divine. As we see something, we must implement it in some way; we must own it. As we come to understand more of the processes of our own life, with its endeavours, resistances, delights and disorders, we must begin to choose what we will set our hearts on and what we must put away from us. For in this way and no other can the Divine work on our behalf and gradually bring us to the point for which we are created.

Julian Duckworth currently ministers to a New Church (Swedenborgian) congregation in Sydney. He qualified as a school teacher (specialising in music) in England.

Swedenborg on Angels

Angels are not a separate creation of God but are beings who have gone through a life and development similar to ours. In this sense, we are all potential angels. Angels (and evil spirits) are influencing our inner life, thoughts and feelings, seeking either to strengthen and protect us (or to weaken and confuse us). All inhabitants of the spiritual world, whether angelic or demonic, seek to bring people into the same love and life that they have and enjoy.

Business Ethics in Today's World

LOUISE BROGAN



It is so easy to be distracted by the "wrongs" occurring in the business world – they are continually in front of us via the media - so a focus on those "wrongs" is maintained. Whilst it is important to be aware of these "goings on", it is equally important to develop a broader, deeper view of our business world. So let us explore the contributions and potentials of business life and the business community.

The Macquarie Encyclopaedic Dictionary defines the first two words in the title as follows:

BUSINESS

1. one's occupation, profession or trade,
2. the purchase and sale of goods in an attempt to make a profit,
3. that with which one is principally, seriously and rightfully concerned

ETHICS

1. system of moral principles, by which human actions and proposals may be judged good or bad or right or wrong

So integrating the above would lead us to a study of the systems of moral principles and rules of conduct which guide not only our working life, and that of our corporations, but also that part of our life "with which we are principally, seriously and rightfully concerned".

A study of the moral principles themselves is one part; a study of the IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE of those principles is the second and vital part. In other words, whilst

"A country free enough to examine its own conscience is a land worth living in, a nation to be envied."

- HRH Prince Charles

we can carry out theoretical studies of various systems of principles and codes of conduct, until those systems are put to good use, they themselves mean nothing and neither does the study itself. *"The ability to be wise should not be taken to mean an ability to use knowledge to engage in reasoning about truths and forms of good, and so an ability to prove anything you like. Rather, it is an ability to observe what is true and good, to choose what is appropriate, and to apply this to functions performed in life...."* (Swedenborg E. *Arcana Coelestia* para 10227³)

As we have seen from the meaning gained from the earlier definitions, "business" covers a much broader landscape of our life and resultant activities than just that part involved in our earning a living. "Business" includes those activities and/or interests about which we are passionate, enthusiastic, interested and involved.

So when we talk about "business ethics" we may, I believe, also talk about "life ethics" where both personal and economic practices are covered. Our individual beliefs and values affect every aspect of our life and are determining factors in our behaviour. Therefore a study and understanding of existing systems of ethics within our corporations is vital to broaden our

awareness and understanding of ourselves and our communities.

Let us look at two examples of corporate life:

COMPANY A

Where ethics and a code of conduct were quite clearly regarded as an ideal, existing solely for a quick mention in the company's annual report – a "feel good" exercise for reporting to the shareholders of the company. I refer to this example in the past tense – that is because it has collapsed and gone out of business.

COMPANY B

Where ethics is the very backbone of the organization and is lived by each and every employee, every day. This company is still going, and growing, strongly.

Both these examples are about high turnover, multi-national corporations.

The companies are not named, nor are their goods or services described, as, in the larger context, these details are not important. What IS important is HOW the goods or services are produced and sold, and what the leaders of those companies did with the profits.

COMPANY A

The directors borrowed (never to be repaid) money from the company for personal use:

Building a Heavenly Home

Each one of us is building our house in heaven while we are living in this world.

Our house is in correspondence with our mind, which is why we recognise it and feel at home there. What kind of house are you building? We spend a lot of time decorating and altering our homes here but the house we are going to live in for ever is being formed by our life here. We should pay attention to what we are building since it is our more important and eternal home. In Swedenborg's *Apocalypse Revealed* para 611 we read:

"Those who are being prepared for heaven in the world of spirits long to go there. Their eyes are opened and they see a way leading to heaven. They ascend towards a gate which a keeper opens. An examiner then tells them they may go and look to see if there is any house which they feel is theirs. If they find such a house they declare it and stay. If not, they keep travelling to different societies until they find one matching their own affections. They live there for ever, because they are among people like themselves, like being in a family."

Swedenborg on Life After Death

On physical death, each person immediately enters the spiritual world, the dimension of life after this life. In general, the experience of life in that world is similar to life here, except that the environment of the spiritual world becomes a true reflection of the delights and desires of the people who are there. In the first stages of the afterlife, a person's true delight, chosen in this life, gradually emerges and reveals itself clearly. When this process is complete, each person will naturally gravitate towards others of similar delights and enter either the life of heaven or the life of hell.

1. Lavish entertainment paid from shareholder funds;
2. Dubious transactions created to withdraw money from the company and hand it to directors and friends, even when it was known that the company was having profitability problems;
3. Services and products sold when the directors knew that the company was bankrupt and those services could not ever be delivered;
4. The products and services offered to customers purely to make profit for the company. What was right and most appropriate for the customer was of secondary, or no, importance.

Most of this company's problems lay in the fact that the leaders' focus and love was for money, power and possessions above all else. There was no involvement in community projects or contribution to the greater good **unless** there was money to be made, or prestige to be gained – prestige and profit were their "gods".

"Since these riches and these uses have nothing spiritual within them, only something earthly, they become squalid... So they decay like a body without a soul..."

(Swedenborg E. *Heaven and Hell* 362).

As stated above, this company collapsed into bankruptcy.

COMPANY B

1. The founder and current leader insists on the use of top quality, environmentally sustainable ingredients;
2. A good percentage of profits is contributed annually towards community projects at home and abroad;
3. Employees are encouraged and funded to participate in their own personal and spiritual growth as well as the growth of the company;
4. The company observes the "triple bottom line" policy where the environment, the community and company profitability all take equal priority.

This company continues to enjoy growth, expansion and profitability.

What is fascinating is that the leadership of each company was the deciding factor regarding the direction, implementation and maintenance of each company's ethical systems, or lack thereof; bringing us back to the point that the individual is just as influential and effective as the corporation.

So, how does business ethics affect us? How do we apply these things in our life? In Swedenborg's words:

"People can be formed for heaven only in the world. Here reside the outmost results in which everyone's affection must find its closure. Unless the affection puts itself forth or flows out into action (which happens only in a public community), it is stifled, ultimately to the extent that the person no longer focuses on his neighbour, but only on himself."

*We can see from this that a life of charity toward the neighbour – which is doing what is just and right in every word and in every task – leads to heaven, but not a life of piety apart from this... charity and the consequent growth of its life can exist to the extent that a person is engaged in normal activities. **It cannot exist to the extent that he withdraws from these.**"*
(*Heaven and Hell* 360²) (emphasis added)

We cannot humanly do the right thing all the time. However, we can with God's grace maintain the will, or willingness, to observe ourselves, examining our actions, thoughts and intentions – both in and away from the workplace. Our willingness to hold the tensions between the rights and wrongs we find within us (and within our workplaces), examining them, choosing appropriately and working on making the necessary changes – that willingness and action – is the key to ethical business practices.

Louise Brogan is the founder and Managing Director of All Money Matters Pty. Ltd., a business offering a wholistic money management education program teaching integrating numeracy skills with those aimed at securing financial independence through resolving past limiting beliefs, attitudes and habits with a higher purpose in view.

Mental Health - A Spiritual Dimension

BRIAN O'NEILL

The quote from Sylvia Fleming Crocker shows the development that is happening today, albeit tentative and seminal, of the spiritual dimension in psychotherapy and the treatment of mental health issues. It is only now, two centuries later, that we are seeing the effects and the influence of the work of Emanuel Swedenborg.

As I approach 25 years as a psychologist, I still find one of the most interesting things about Emanuel Swedenborg is not the breadth and depth of his psychological accomplishments, or the amazing number of talented people he influenced ~ it is that so few people have heard of him.

As we shall read, it is easy to miss Swedenborg's impact on psychology and mental health treatment, as he is like the mustard seed that grows into a large tree and yet seems so small to start with. Such is the influence of Emanuel Swedenborg on the field on mental health, even though he has not provided his work as a direct treatment approach to mental illness.

The table of contents of *Rational Psychology*, which Swedenborg wrote in 1742, gives a taste of the depth and breadth of the psychological theory developed by Swedenborg. His first sections, like most introductory psychology books, deal with perception and the senses. He then attends to sections on imagination, memory, reasoning and the intellect. Then in the sections following he treats of the interaction of the soul and the body.

“Even my own constricted self expands to feel a Swedenborg spirit world.”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
German poet and dramatist

“Within the past few years there has been a growing interest in spirituality amongst therapists, counsellors and others who work with people. Many of the therapists with whom I have had discussions about spirituality say they experience something deeply spiritual in the processes of therapy.”

A Life Well Lived: Essays in Gestalt Therapy
Sylvia Fleming Crocker (page 309)

DIVINE LOVE AND WISDOM

Inner World of Reality

ANIMA

Higher Unconscious mind.
Influx of life of Mind and Body

MENS

Conscious Mind

ANIMUS

The Life of the Body and its Senses

Outer World of Reality

In writing this book, Swedenborg was the first modern psychologist and a pioneer who bridges the ancient wisdom of the Hindu, Taoist and Buddhist traditions with the newly emerging discipline of psychology.

Yet while so much of his initial work in psychology is not attended to by mental health practitioners, it is perhaps the influence of his writings as a whole which have had the greatest effect on modern day psychotherapy. Swedenborg has clearly influenced some of the great psychologists of the 20th century - from the early pioneers, notably William James and Carl Jung, to modern day writers such as Wilson Van Dusen.

WILLIAM JAMES - THE FATHER OF AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGY

William James is seen by many as the father of American psychology. His father, Henry James, was independently wealthy and took his family to live in England to broaden his education and after a year there experienced a profoundly deep depression and sense of fear

brought on by the feeling that there was "some damned shape squatting invisible to me within the precincts of the room and raying out his fetid personality influences fatal to life." (Hoover, 1988).

Henry suffered from this experience for two years until a friend offered him to read *Divine Love and Wisdom* and *Divine Providence* by Swedenborg. He felt this had an immediate effect on him and took the writings of Swedenborg as his core spiritual ground and wrote twelve books on Swedenborgian thought and spirituality. Authors have argued that William James' works are additions, qualifications or rejoinders to the Swedenborgian metaphysics of his father, Henry.

CARL JUNG AND ANALYTICAL PSYCHOLOGY

It is rare to find a psychologist or psychotherapist who has not heard of Carl Jung, even if they are not interested in spiritual or transpersonal psychology. Jung was well read in Swedenborg and includes him in the index of his autobiography as well as discussing him in his *Psychological Commentary to the Tibetan Book of the Dead*. In the *Tribute to Emanuel Swedenborg* (Howard Millar, page 6), Jung states: "I admire Swedenborg as a great scientist and a great mystic at the same time. His life and work always been of great interest to me, and I read seven fat volumes of his writings when I was a medical student".

Jung cited Swedenborg numerous times in his collected works and it is argued that Swedenborg contributed to the formulation of Analytical Psychology in three important areas:

- the exploration of the visionary experience (Swedenborg's actual experiences);
- the whole notion of synchronicity (Swedenborg's *Divine Providence*); and
- in his analysis of alchemy symbolism (Correspondences).

(Eugene Taylor, *Swedenborg Revisited* 1988 p.164)

SWEDENBORG REVISITED

In the modern era writers such as Eugene Taylor, Geoffrey Childs, Michael Stanley and Wilson Van Dusen have provided texts on spiritual psychology which draw heavily on the work of Swedenborg.

WILSON VAN DUSEN

One writer who stands out is Wilson Van Dusen, one of the original Gestalt therapy pioneers and a well known phenomenological psychologist. Van Dusen was a clinical psychologist in California working with people such as Carl Rogers (one of the most famous psychologists in the world today) and was responsible for bringing Fritz Perls (one of the originators of Gestalt therapy) to the West Coast. He published a popular book entitled *The Natural Depth in Man* (ISBN 0 87785 165 4) which presents a mixture of psychological, transpersonal and spiritual natures of humans and then the *Presence of Other Worlds* (ISBN 0 87785 247 2) which deals exclusively with the psycho-spiritual transformation of Swedenborg, a process which mirrored that of Van Dusen himself as he wrote. Van Dusen worked for many years as the chief psychologist at a State Psychiatric Hospital and developed ways of hearing and understanding the experience of people with mental disorders such as schizophrenia. Supported by Swedenborg's writings and his training as a psychologist he was able to hear and understand the reality of people hearing voices in a very supportive way. He saw the usefulness of this method and has provided clear direction for working in this way in his articles and books.

MICHAEL STANLEY

Michael Stanley's early career was in physics and his background ranges over philosophy, psychology and comparative religion. He developed a psycho-spiritual counselling approach based on Swedenborgian principles. His writings are an integrative approach to psychology, Eastern religions and the New Age movement. Stanley places Swedenborg, not Blake, as the Father of the New Age movement, because he sees the principles of the New Age on thinking and consciousness as deriving from Swedenborg's writings (refer to the essay "The Relevance of Emanuel Swedenborg's Theological Concepts for the New Age as It is Envisaged Today" in *Emanuel Swedenborg: A Continuing Vision* (ISBN 0 87785 136 0)).

GEOFFREY CHILDS

Child's originally published his book *The Golden Thread: Spiritual and Mental Health* (ISBN 0 910557 15 2), in 1986. He clearly interweaves both religious teachings and current psychotherapy into a text which deals first with mental health (and mental illness) and then takes the next step into outlining spiritual health. Each section draws on the work of Swedenborg and provides a developmental model that links spiritual and mental health and the resultant disorders which can arise along the way of this development.

EUGENE TAYLOR

Taylor has written a number of books in this area of spiritual psychology and was a devotee of William James. He went on to study at Harvard Divinity School and became the 1983 William James Lecturer and Director of the Cambridge Institute of Psychology and Religion. His work with the unpublished manuscripts of James introduced him to Emanuel Swedenborg, so he is one of the few transpersonal writers who has an in-depth background with the early pioneering work of Swedenborg as well as that of Carl Jung and Henry James. Refer *A Psychology of Spiritual Healing* (ISBN 0 87785 375 4).

CONCLUSION

Along with the direct connections I have traced between Swedenborg and some of the notable pioneers and modern day psychotherapists, I believe the influence of Swedenborg's writings has extended in ways we cannot directly trace but which give evidence of a New Age in Mental Health treatment and therapy still at a beginning-state today.

As someone who has worked for the last two decades with people with drug problems and people with mental illness, it is clear to me that until the Divine is included, our psychology will only partly cure and will partly fail. This will continue until, like Swedenborg and the other writers listed here, we see the Divine as the source of our psyche and develop a psychology which is spiritual and God-centred.

"All the troubles of the world, especially spiritual troubles such as impatience, hopelessness, and despair, derive from the failure to see the Grandeur of God clearly."

The Essential Kabbalah by Daniel C. Matt

Brian O'Neill has worked as a psychologist and psychotherapist for the last 24 years in both the drug and alcohol and mental health field, as a clinician, manager and academic. He is currently Co-director of the Illawarra Gestalt Centre and a Senior Fellow in Mental Health at the Institute of Mental Health. He was part of a team to win the 1996 Gold Medal for Mental Health by the Governor General.

Symbolism of Trees

In *True Christian Religion*, paragraph 584, Swedenborg writes:

"The Word calls mankind trees; their truth, seed; their good, fruit. Useless trees can bear good fruit by engrafting branches from good trees. Engrafting converts inferior sap into good sap and good fruit. 'I am the vine, you are the branches. If someone remains in me and I in him, he bears much fruit. Unless someone remains in me, he is cast out like a branch, and is withered and cast into the fire' John 15: 5, 6"

Swedenborg describes this process as the ONLY way to regenerate in paragraph 296 of his work *Divine Providence*

Cloning - Beyond Ethics

ANDREW HESLOP

The term “Cloning” has been applied to plants, animals and humans, and with insight can be seen to represent processes of a spiritual nature.

In the botanical world the word **Clone** (the Greek word being Klon for twig or slip) has reference to cultivated plants consisting of individuals derived from a single original seedling or stock, the propagation having been by asexual methods. Most apple trees, rose bushes, citrus trees are grafted clones. There are varieties of plants that clone by accident, in that if a piece is broken off it will develop into an adult plant. For some plants, eg. some seaweeds, this is a way of spreading and growing. A virus particle invades a cell, hijacks the genetic machinery and replicates itself. In the process it destroys the cell and releases many copies of itself.

Animals at the simplest level, single-celled protozoa, reproduce by binary fission - a process where a cell splits in two, both new cells growing in turn to maturity, dividing and so on.

In higher animals and humans, the term “cloning” refers to processes where the genetic material of the individual to be replicated is transferred to another cell, generally that of another animal, to produce more of the desired material. That may be a twin (**Embryo cloning**), or a duplicate of an existing adult animal (**Adult DNA cloning**), or the production of stem cells (**Therapeutic cloning**). These are artificial processes initiated by man.

“Swedenborg was one of the world's greatest geniuses. With his rare intellect and deep spiritual insight, he has much to contribute to our modern life.”

Norman Vincent Peale
American author of
The Power of Positive Thinking

The human body contains 220 different types of cells. A stem cell is a primitive type of cell that can be coaxed into developing into any one of most of those 220 cell types (e.g. blood cells, heart cells, brain cells, etc). Spiritually this represents the great variety of truths that flow from good and are pictured by the various tissues of the body.

There are different situations covered by the word cloning. In plants there is natural purposeful cloning and there is accidental cloning. In animals there is natural purposeful cloning and there is artificial cloning i.e. not naturally occurring. The underlying theme of all cloning is that something is reproduced in an asexual way, either naturally or by human action.

Cloning in the world of space-time, or as Swedenborg terms it ‘Ultimates’, is a representation of a spiritual process. The Law of Correspondence states that all laws, materials and processes in ultimates (Space-time) are representative of, and correspond to laws, materials and processes in spiritual worlds that have brought these things into being.

Of itself the body is simply a vehicle for the spirit

The central thing about cloning is that in its natural purposeful state it is representative of a process that is automatic and built into the natural order of the world, and it will occur with or without human intervention or interference. In its artificial state it is not automatic or built into the world's natural order and will occur only through human intervention or interference. Whether it is good or evil depends on its use, which in turn depends on the aim or loves of the instigator of that particular episode. In itself the process is neither good nor evil. To what end and for whose benefit it is applied determines those things.

That which is to be replicated in a cloned individual is the genetic material of its cells, which is also known as its genotype. The Genotype, as well as other external factors, generally determines the physical structure of a plant or animal. That which is the central drive of humans is our “spiritual genotype”. This relates

to our loves and affections, for these determine the form and nature of the spiritual body that guides the physical body in its actions.

From an esoteric perspective it has been consistently taught that man is a spiritual being inhabiting a physical body, and that the spirit fits the body just as a hand fits a glove, and so the outer does the bidding of the inner. Of itself the body is simply a vehicle for the spirit as is evidenced by the departure of the spirit (life as a soul) on the death of the body.

In cloning, it is the body that is reproduced and the same genetic sequence is present in the parent donor and its cloned offspring. The spirit of a person is not cloned and cannot be as it is unique to a person, containing, as it does, their infinite potentials and possibilities which are brought into being according to their loves and proclivities. This is clearly stated by Swedenborg in *Arcana Caelestia*, paragraph 4149²:
“Regarded in itself good is one, but it becomes various by means of truths...it is thus that good, although one, is yet various with every individual...hence it is that the mind of one person is never exactly like that of another”.

I have said that it is the body and not the spirit that is cloned. There are, though, aspects of a person's spirit that can be affected by a cloning process.

The interesting question for us is not “is cloning good or evil?” for that depends on the end to which it is applied, and for what use it is intended by the facilitator. The question is what processes does cloning represent in the spiritual world and, in particular, in the personal spiritual world of our own psyche with all of its understandings, loves and passions.

Swedenborg has pointed out that spiritual communities inhabit our psyche and that like attracts like. The love of one will be attracted to, and be attractive for, others with similar love. It is the multiplication of these loves, having different external actions and appearances, but at their core the same central love or affection, that is spiritual cloning.

In our daily life our own ruling love will seek to be reproduced in many ways. It can do no

Swedenborg Association Where to from here?

other, for love is the strongest guiding force in creation - whether it is applied in a positive way or a negative way. It is sobering to observe in one's self this process in action.

How often do we observe the moulding of people by political regimes that seek to propagate influence over others. It is an attempt to clone their own loves and wishes and have others carry these loves into action.

The repetition of a habit means that it is reborn from minute to minute, day to day, year to year, and in this sense is cloned. When someone impressionable copies another's behaviour, it is cloning too. A same or similar affection may be aroused during the mimicking and it can attract an ongoing life of its own. For those who are role models, whether they are aware of their influence or not, there is a responsibility to realise that their behaviour will be copied by others who see them as admirable or enviable. Some will be consciously copied and some will be unconsciously taken on board. In both instances there is a cloning of behaviour to a greater or lesser extent.

As with any process that we see in Ultimates, there is the opportunity for each of us, if we wish to take it, to see things from a spiritual perspective, and in doing so participate in a greater life.

Dr. Andrew Heslop is a country G.P. practising in Bellingen, NSW and an esoteric student of 18 years.

Swedenborg on Providence

Divine Providence is the government of creation by the Divine. Its goal is human salvation and the Divine can use everything in a person's life for that purpose. Providence works according to Divine laws of freedom and reason and seeks unceasingly to bend self-loves towards heavenly ones. The Divine cannot force Itself on us and allows us to pass through self-centred states in order that these can lead us into the work of spiritual growth.

When the stresses of school homework and exams are behind us, the flirtatious teenage years have left dreams and scars, the home-making years with young children needing constant attention no longer demand our fullest consideration, we turn to questions about why we are here at all and where do we go to after this life.

Many people, when asked whether they enjoy their jobs, often reply that it is only a way of making ends meet. There is no job satisfaction. Perhaps worse still they do not feel appreciated by the boss. They feel they keep the business alive and contribute to the shareholder's income but have no real idea what the future holds for them.

Women at home ask the same questions. They look after the home front providing the practical and emotional support for the family but do not always feel appreciated for their contribution.

I think life can be like that. Unless we can find meaning to life we are only onlookers without any conception of who the "boss" is and what the future is for us when we die. Are we useful? Do we contribute to the return of the "shareholder"?

I believe many members of this Association have found the spiritual writings of Emanuel Swedenborg to be a blue-print for being of "use", to be a part of the work-team knowing from the writings where they are destined to go and what that place or state looks like. They give a spiritual order to the meaning of life.

The future of the Swedenborg Association lies in creating an awareness of Emanuel Swedenborg in the wider community and especially making his writings accessible to all who seek them in an atmosphere of unconditional giving. Furthermore, the members search at their own pace. There is no bundy to log on and off, no boss to make one work harder. The effort is ours and the returns flow according to our usefulness.

The Swedenborg Association of Australia will continue to encourage discussion on matters of practical and spiritual significance and explore new ways to bring Swedenborg's insights within reach of each of us and in the end to find meaning to our lives.

John Brogan, President

Being Content Under God's Providence

- ▶ Massive payments to retiring CEOs
- ▶ Huge Public Risk damages settlements
- ▶ Workers strike for more pay
- ▶ Maternity leave claims
- ▶ Record household debt
- ▶ Gambling crisis

It seems so many people want more, or something for nothing! Maybe it is an appropriate time to look at Swedenborg's personal approach to his life:

SWEDENBORG'S RULES OF LIFE

- ▶ Diligently to read and meditate on the Word of God.
- ▶ To be content under God's providence.
- ▶ To observe propriety of behaviour and to keep the conscience clear.
- ▶ To obey what is ordered, to attend faithfully to one's office and other duties; and in addition to make one's self useful to society in general.

We can be guided by this simple, but beautiful philosophy in our quest for contentment.

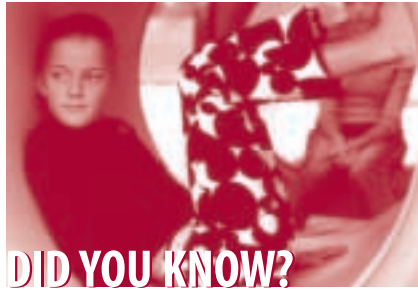
MYTHS, FABLES, LEGENDS THEIR VALUE FOR US TODAY

The concept of ancient stories having come into existence to convey processes of the psyche in meaningful and understandable terms, using both imagination and the natural surroundings of daily experience, is one which has been widely recognised by anthropologists, philosophers, poets and transpersonal psychologists. Emanuel Swedenborg, too, dwelt at length on this particularly with regard to the stories in the early chapters of the Bible, such as Creation, the Garden of Eden, the Flood, the Tower of Babel etc., which he regarded as myth, not historical events. He presents us with a Law of Correspondences, a sacred law known to ancients but lost over time, whereby literal objects, people, activities and events express dynamic psychospiritual processes at our higher level of consciousness.

Creation stories and legends of ancient floods exist in most cultures and spiritual writings. In today's world when materialism has become the "God" for so many, an appreciation of the spiritual relevance of a flood story is very worthwhile. Using the Law of Correspondences, Swedenborg explains that the Biblical Flood describes the experience of temptation to which we are prey. It graphically portrays how negative thoughts and selfish desires can flood into our minds and overwhelm us totally. Yet, we can ride out this otherwise devastating storm if we have built into our approaches to life (the ark) basic concepts of positive and neighbourly affections and thoughts (animals and birds) sourced in the Divine life. In his work *Arcana Caelestia*, Swedenborg shows that every recorded detail is significant for us in terms of building a sure spiritual foundation for withstanding the turmoils of life. The principles of Swedenborg's Law of Correspondences, which is neither arbitrary or engineered, can be applied consistently to myths, fables, legends ~ even Australian Aboriginal Dreamtime myths ~ to source a wealth of spiritual knowledge for the benefit of humanity.

Useful reference resources: *Dictionary of Bible Imagery* by A. Sechrist (ISBN 0 87785 118 2) and *Language of Parable* by W. Worcester (ISBN 0 87785 155 7)

Did you know?



DID YOU KNOW?

The word "**Kindergarten**", used where the care and education of very young children is involved, was coined by German translators of Swedenborg's Latin work *De Caelo et Ejus Mirabilibus, et de Inferno (Heaven and Its Wonders, and Hell)* regarding those who die in childhood being educated in paradisaical gardens. Swedenborg's insistence that everyone is born into this world in a state of innocence, not full of sin and therefore to be dealt with harshly, transformed the way children were viewed and became a focal point for the pioneers of infant education in Europe 200 hundred years ago (such as James Buchanan, Johan Frederik Oberlin, Robert Owen and Samuel Wilderspin) and since.

"The state of children has an advantage over that of others in this respect, that children are in innocence, and evil is not yet rooted in them by their real life"
Swedenborg E. *Heaven and Hell* paragraph 330

DID YOU KNOW?

Lois Wilson (née Burnham), co-founder of **Alcoholics Anonymous**, was a life-long member of a Swedenborgian Church in Brooklyn, New York. It was her husband, Bill, who gave AA its famous *The Twelve Steps* program. Having suffered a breakdown involving alcoholism, he became interested in the book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* by William James, also a member of the Swedenborgian movement. Through his reading, Wilson came to see that the principles of religious conversion and spiritual growth were comprehensively explained in Swedenborg's writings. There is a clear parallel between his "Twelve Steps" and Swedenborg's pattern of spiritual development in his work, *True Christian Religion*.

"There are two obligations incumbent on one after self-examination: prayer and confession. Prayer that the Lord may have pity, grant the power to resist the evils of which one has repented, and supply the inclination and affection for doing good, since man without Him cannot do anything; Confession that one sees, recognises and acknowledges one's evils, and reveals oneself as a base sinner. (para 539)



DID YOU KNOW?

"**Conjugal**" is a word unique to English translations of Swedenborg's works. It is used to convey the principle of a deep, spiritual love which married partners should endeavour to develop in their relationship, in contrast to the more outward and sexual one meant by the word "conjugal". According to Swedenborg, the masculine and feminine aspects of human existence have their origin in the Divine, in Love and Wisdom of God, the union of which brings an offspring ~ a further living aspect of useful creation ~ into being. It is masculine to seek to understand truth from love; it is feminine to seek to apply truth to love and practice usefulness. While each person has the capacity to unite love and truth in their life, the complementary natures of man and woman enables this process to take place within the relationship, becoming the source of the deepest human love possible ~ **Conjugal Love**.

"The attributes of conjugal love are innocence, peace, tranquillity, deep friendship, full confidence, and a desire in heart and soul to do everything good for each other. And from all these things come blessedness, happiness, joy, passion, and from the eternal enjoyment of these, heavenly bliss."

Swedenborg E. *Love in Marriage* paragraph 180

"Swedenborg... the works of this visionary... are the foundation for grand things."

William Blake

English poet, painter and engraver

Swedenborg on Spiritual Life

The purpose of life in this world is to lead us to change self-love gradually into a love for others, or heaven. The key for this transformation is a life which is based on use and service. In being useful and in receiving the friendship and help of others we come to appreciate life and begin to acknowledge God. This pattern of new life goes beyond religions and belief systems and is a universal process in which all people who live by what they believe are prepared for eternal life.

WHY A SWEDENBORG ASSOCIATION?

WHY JOIN?

- To promote Emanuel Swedenborg, the man and his message, throughout Australia by personal contact, meetings, etc.
- Having active Branches for those with common interests.
- Providing information on topical subjects by drawing on Swedenborg's contributions.
- Ensuring Swedenborg's writings are kept before the community's awareness.

- To share with others what has been of help to you in your quest for truth.
- Pursuing areas of interest in Swedenborg through ready access to material and events where available.
- A Free Newsletter every three months.
- 20% discount on books, etc.
- Free Swedenborgian-based book, tape, CD each year enabling you to introduce others to Swedenborg.

Over the years, items distributed to members for introducing others have included : *Emanuel Swedenborg: Essential Readings* (Michael Stanley); *Presenting Swedenborg: A Roadmap for Readers* (Julian Duckworth); *My Religion* (Helen Keller); *Emanuel Swedenborg: Pioneer of Inner Space* (Justin O'Brian); *The Country of Spirit* (Wilson Van Dusen); *Tunnel to Eternity* (Leon Rhodes); *Swedenborg: Scientist, Philosopher, Theologian* (Talk on CD by Michael Stanley); *Talking With God* (Gwynne Dresser Mack). All these titles are still available for purchase. Please contact the Swedenborg Association of Australia Ltd at its registered office (see page 2) for more details and current prices.

“Swedenborg's message has meant so much to me. It has given color and reality and unity to my thought of the life to come; it has exalted my ideas of love, truth and usefulness; it has been my strongest incitement to overcome limitations.”

Helen Keller

American blind, deaf, author and lecturer

Swedenborg on Religion

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