

# EXECUTIVE EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

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Last year at this time the integral community was celebrating the success of the first biennial Integral Theory Conference (ITC). We spent four days (August 7–10, 2008) on the JFK University campus attending 100 presentations, 12 panel discussions, and 2 keynote addresses. More than 500 people attended the event. It was truly an historical moment for Integral Theory and the larger integral studies community. Although some aspects of the conference were identified for improvement, most attendees agreed that it was an amazing event and a real turning point for the field of Integral Theory—a turn that marked the birth of a global community of discourse where debate, engagement, criticism, inquiry, dialogue, and reflection joined together to build networks of theoretical clarification and practical application. In many respects, the event offered the integral community its first chance to see itself—something akin to the famous July 20, 1969, picture of the Earth taken from the moon. Our community began to make the shift from subject to object, wherein we could start to operate on ourselves as a field of discourse.

The special issue before you is an embodiment of this community of discourse. Approximately 2000 pages of conference proceedings were produced. Of that voluminous content, I selected what I felt were some of the best papers and invited the authors to submit them to JIIP's peer-review and theoretical review process. Eight of those articles appear in this issue.<sup>1</sup> What I love about this issue and its articles is they demonstrate the power of Integral Theory via their range and scale. Whether practical or abstract, up-close and personal or at a meta-level, each of these articles stretch the canvas of Integral Theory in new and valuable directions. The fact that a single framework can be enacted in so many divergent but equally important fields continues to inspire and excite me. My hope is that after reading these articles, you too will have a taste of the depth-span of Integral Theory and discover even more ways to apply it to your own personal and professional lives.

## In This Issue

We open with “The State of the Integral Enterprise,” a two-part article by Roger Walsh. This article is based on his well-received keynote address at the conference.<sup>2</sup> Given Walsh's stature in the community—as one of our wise elders—it felt important to have him serve as one of the keynote presenters. In particular, we wanted him to use his presentation to help set the tone for not only the conference at hand, but the entire trajectory that the conference was setting in motion. Thus, Walsh was charged with the task of providing some reflective comments that would help the field see itself, especially its blind spots and shadow. Walsh delivered in spades! Not only were his points and illustrative stories poignant, but he also gave a dynamic and entertaining delivery. (It turns out he spent some time as a stand-up comic. Who would have guessed?)

I am very excited that Walsh took the time to convert his speech notes into an article for this issue, so that the larger integral community can benefit from the written word as much as conference attendees did from his spoken word. In “Part I: Current Status and Potential Traps,” he invites each of us into a deeper mode of ser-

vice by personally applying integral principles. In applying Integral Theory to ourselves, we have to take a hard look at the “potential shadow and shortcomings” of the integral community and our role in them. Walsh identifies nearly a dozen pitfalls that we are likely all guilty of to some extent. By becoming more aware of these individual and collective dynamics, we can work together to address and minimize them. In “Part II: Key Ideas for a World at Risk,” Walsh shifts from helping us look at ourselves as a community to helping us engage with the world as integral practitioners. Walsh offers a wonderful set of distinctions (e.g., perspectival range) and practices (e.g., transforming motivation) to support each of us in responding to global crises.

Providing a very concrete example of how we might respond to the crises of “winner-take-all” electoral systems, Jim Anest outlines an alternative in “Ranked Choice Voting: A Path Toward a More Integral Politics.” Anest demonstrates how we can use social and political technologies that are already available to enact a more Integral Politics. Anest makes a solid case for the increased adoption of ranked choice voting at various levels of organizations, civic society, and government. While Anest’s analysis focuses on the United States, his insights are applicable to other countries and other fields beyond politics. By focusing on a very specific aspect of politics and providing concrete details, he demonstrates the value of integral actions that are available to all of us.

In “Integral Diversity Maturity: Toward a Postconventional Understanding of Diversity Dynamics,” Toni Gregory and Michael Raffanti shine an integral light onto the heart of postmodernism. There are few things as emblematic of green altitude as notions of diversity and multiculturalism. And there are few things green altitude resists as much as notions of structural psychological development. Thus, there is some integral irony (and we know how much postmodernists love irony) when Gregory and Raffanti present a developmental view of diversity maturity. Consequently, this is a very valuable article in that it applies integral principles to a context that has long resisted aspects of an integral approach. Interestingly, Gregory and Raffanti point out that diversity theorists and practitioners often focus on one of three areas: physiological diversity (e.g., biological sex), cultural diversity (e.g., multicultural values), or structural diversity (e.g., socio-structural institutions). Curiously, what is missing from this list of foci is the domain of psychological diversity (e.g., developmental complexity). As the authors point out, it is only in including the Upper-Left quadrant that one can really begin to make sense of the complexity of diversity dynamics and begin to cultivate diversity maturity in oneself and others.

The next two articles provide detailed examples of using Integral Theory in the context of higher education. First is Edith Friesen and Ian Wight’s “Integrally Informed Journaling for Professional Self-design: Emerging Experience in a Graduate Program Context.” This article provides a fascinating case history of how Integral Theory has been used over numerous years to deepen a journaling practice in a specific course. Friesen and Wight offer numerous student comments that bring in illuminating first- and second-person dimensions to their analysis. The article is accompanied by seven appendixes that serve to support other educators in developing similar journal practices in their own settings. Of particular interest is how the authors worked with the resistance students had to Wilber’s writings and adopted a more implicit integral approach. Anyone who has used Integral Theory in the classroom will want to read this article.

The second education article is “Integral Music Performance and Pedagogy: A Post-Secondary Performance and Education Model,” by Luis Loubriel. His article provides a detailed analysis of assessing music perfor-

mance integrally in an university context. Loubriel does a great job of demonstrating how quadrants and levels can be used to support and evaluate students' playing of musical instruments. In particular, he is interested in integrating the "expressive-artistic" (Left-Hand quadrants) and "technical-scientific" (Right-Hand quadrants) aspects of music performance at various levels of development. The 12 charts that accompany the article provide a lot of stimulating content and connections on their own. Overall, this article clearly illustrates the pedagogical advantage that Integral Theory can provide educators.

Over the years, JITP has published a number of articles on Integral Recovery. In fact, upon reflection, Lynwood Lord (JITP's managing editor) and I were struck by the amazing work that is being done in this realm.<sup>3</sup> Applying the AQAL model to the area of addiction and recovery seems to be one of the emerging new sub-fields of Integral Theory. Our next article, "Toward an Integrally Informed Approach to Alcohol and Drug Treatment: Bridging the Science-Spirit Gap," by Suzanne Shealy, contributes nicely to this growing body of applied literature. Shealy provides a helpful overview of the 12-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous as she explores the relationship between cognitive behavioral and mindfulness-based skills. Drawing on her many years of working with a Relapse Prevention Group, she provides grounded recommendations for applying Integral Theory to alcohol and drug treatment.

Moving from the concrete world of recovery work, we shift into a philosophical landscape with Raphael Foshay's "Tension on the Left: Buddhist Ethics and Postmodernism in Habermas and Wilber." This article sets the horizon for a critical engagement with Ken Wilber's notion of the "myth of the given." One of the great contributions of this piece is that it provides valuable historical context on the post-metaphysical contributions of both Mahāyāna Buddhism ethical theory and Jürgen Habermas' communicative action. Both of these traditions of liberation and emancipation have been key sources for Wilber's post-metaphysical philosophy and its Basic Moral Imperative ("to protect and promote the greatest depth for the greatest span"). Foshay models how we might dig deeper into the texts and traditions that inform a post-metaphysical perspective and arrive at insights and views that both complement and counter Wilber's own position.

In the next article, we see one of the great things about Integral Theory—it can take something as seemingly outlandish as channeling and provide a degree of rigor and discrimination that demands not only that we take such an otherworldly phenomenon seriously, but that we actually learn something from it. In "The Channeling Phenomenon: A Multi-Methodological Assessment," Paul Helfrich presents a sophisticated way to use Integral Theory to conduct Integral Research. In particular, he explores the ways in which Integral Psychology can model channeling phenomena and suggests that it might involve its own unique developmental line. He also provides a mixed-methods research proposal, built on Integral Methodological Pluralism, for investigating the channeling phenomenon. Anyone interested in Integral Research design, especially those interested in parapsychology and transpersonal psychology, will find value in Helfrich's thoughtful analysis.

Our last article in this issue is Christina Zampitella's "Bereavement and Death Construct Development in Integral Theory and Practice." Zampitella issues a compelling call for Integral Theory in general and Integral Psychology in particular to incorporate more fully insights from the field of thanatology. Drawing on the limited research available to date, she brings a developmental lens to individuals' awareness of death and how they construct meaning around it. In addition, she examines how 10 of the most common lines of development can be framed in the context of a death construct. This is a very helpful reframe for integral practi-

tioners, as it helps demonstrate the ways many lines can be linked to various kinds of psychological content. Given the inevitable occurrence of death in our lives, Zampitella does us all a great service in giving us a set of integral distinctions for supporting a more integral awareness of death and its mysteries.

This special issue not only gives you an experience (and for some of you a reminder) of what transpired at ITC 2008, but also serves to give you a sense of what to expect in 2010. Mark Forman and I have reassembled the JFK University team and are currently working on the next conference, which is less than a year away (July 28–August 1, 2010). We have just posted the call for papers on our redesigned website ([www.integraltheoryconference.org](http://www.integraltheoryconference.org)). I encourage you to consider submitting an abstract and writing a paper if you are chosen to present. Who knows—you might appear in our Integral Theory Conference special issue next year. In any event, I hope to see you there for what promises to be an even better conference than the first one.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Sixteen more articles will appear in *Integral Theory in Action: Applied, Theoretical, and Critical Perspectives of the AQAL Model*, which is part of the newly established SUNY series in Integral Theory. This book will be made available for the first time at the next Integral Theory Conference, in July 2010.

<sup>2</sup> The other keynote presentation was given by Susanne Cook-Greuter. An article based on her talk will appear in the above-mentioned book, *Integral Theory in Action* (SUNY, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> For those interested, a selection of Integral Recovery articles is listed in the references section of this editorial.

## REFERENCES

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