

ABSTRACT

Space is becoming an increasingly rare commodity both in personal terms and in the wider ethnographic sense with the exponential increase in the world populations. The purpose of this dissertation is to explore how external (physical) and/or inner (psychical) distortions of space, particularly that of restriction or foreclosure of our space, affect our way of be-ing and be-coming.

I first look at the development of a sense of space from the womb onwards and our use of space. In order to define a 'space' of any kind I have explored the function of boundaries or containment. I look at these boundaried spaces in terms of personal physical envelopes e.g. skin enclosing our inner psychic envelope, then the private space (home) through social (city) space to the wider national space. I suggest the physical function of boundaries, in terms of necessary territoriality, control and security, is paralleled by similar psychic functions. Using these different boundaried spaces I explore how individuals or groups create and use space. My view is that an individual's sense of space develops from the womb, which forms the basis of our sense of space. Integration of both inner and outer perceptions of space gives us our complete sense of boundaried space.

Foreclosure, to me, is a term that expresses a block in the process of becoming as well as in our being-in-the-world or an inability to integrate outer and inner perceptions. I explore the effect of a lack of space, using physical examples such as imprisonment of an individual or a country. I also explore the psychic

foreclosure which occurs in cultic groups and in Autism (the “encapsulated” child). The effect of foreclosed space is to impinge on an individual’s or group’s potential to become and develop. When this potential for growth is blocked, the individual (or group) either becomes crippled (“bonsai’d”) and ceases to develop, as in Autism, a psychically foreclosed space or acts to break out of these boundaries, as in the Intifada in the Israeli Occupied Territories, a physically foreclosed space.

My view of therapy is that, within the “potential space” of therapy, a personal sense of space may be re-created or unblocked within the individual. Re-creation of this space may also be done within a therapeutic environment which I present in the last chapter. As this “unblocking” is a creative or rather, re-creative process, I also look at creative expressions and use of space in art and therapy.

I suggest a view of life as a creative process in the art of be-ing and be-coming. When this is foreclosed in any way, therapy which attempts to recreate space for an individual to unblock this foreclosure, is appropriate. Re-creating or encouraging personal creative potential space may also increase an individual or group’s ability to withstand restricting outer pressures or traumas that threaten to foreclose. I suggest that a distorted sense of space, whether from early distortions or damage to our inner sense of space or later restrictions, foreclose the essential process of be-ing and be-coming which is fundamental to being human and to being-in-the-world.