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Narrative and Peace:
a “New Story” to address structural violence

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Abstract

This thesis applies narrative as theory and method to explore a growing body of interdisciplinary scholarship that connects a holistic and process understanding of the world (a “New Story”) with social and ecological justice (or “positive peace”). First, the indirect violence of global poverty and environmental destruction are examined in terms of the dissipation of individual responsibility amid political, economic and social institutions. Second, a connection is made between these structural forms of violence and one-dimensional narratives. Drawing from an argument shared by process thinkers Charles Birch, Alan Watts and Thomas Berry, I critique the “Old Story” of one-dimensional religious narratives, and one-dimensional reductionistic narratives of the “Modern Story”. These stories are contrasted with a multi-dimensional and ecological worldview that Berry calls a “New Story”, which narrates an understanding of the self, humanity and the cosmos as one interconnecting process. This process understanding of the world is shown to be located in a rich and vast history of panentheistic theology. This research concludes that the narratological “New Story” engages conflicting worldviews, enables “positive conflict” and motivates action toward a long-term vision of positive peace.

Key words: Structural violence, New Story, narratology, process thought, ecological worldview, panentheism, positive peace, positive conflict

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Part I Introduction

IT'S ALL a question of story. We are in trouble just now because we do not have a good story. We are in between stories (Berry 1978: 1).

In the last 50 years or so, interdisciplinary scholars such as Fr Thomas Berry, Charles Birch and Alan Watts have posited that dominant worldviews of Western¹ cultures are a root cause of global environmental destruction and the vast division between the world's richest and poorest people. While approaching this argument from different perspectives, these scholars share a conviction that a new worldview, new theology or a new story can help bring about a more peaceful human existence. Their vision involves a shift from one-dimensional supernaturalist and materialist paradigms—that *separate* humans from nature—towards a more multi-dimensional process-oriented way of seeing the self and world as parts intimately *connected* to a greater whole. While this story was “new” to me, it is certainly not new to all people. The worldview and narrative that Berry refers to as a “New Story” has a rich and vast history that goes back tens of thousands of years and is found in many cultures, religions and philosophies across the world today. The interdisciplinary nature of peace and conflict studies² points to an overarching contention that more holistic and multi-dimensional approaches to understanding other people, cultures and the world is conducive to peace.

Johan Galtung, widely known as the “Father of Peace Studies”³, uses the term “positive peace” to indicate an aim beyond the end of war and direct violence (which he calls

¹ By “Western” I am referring to industrialised societies whose cultural heritage originates in Europe and the United Kingdom. I might also refer to this as the “Global North” (Diaz 2008). As an Australian neither “North” nor “West” seems particular appropriate, yet due to the historical significance and influence of those countries that were once “West” of the Roman Empire, I have chosen to use this terminology.

² Peace and conflict studies is a relatively new field that crosses a number of academic disciplines such as sociology, economics, psychology, political science, international relations, history, anthropology, religious studies, and gender studies. The interdisciplinary research and teaching delves into the causes of violence, the aim of peace, human rights, social justice, and the resolution of conflict in nonviolent ways.

³ This is the title of Chapter One in Galtung and Dietrich Fischer's book *Johan Galtung: Pioneer of Peace Research* (2013).

“negative peace”). Positive peace involves addressing indirect, structural and cultural forms of violence, as in the experiences of global poverty, discrimination against people of different cultures, religions, gender and sexual orientations, and the destruction of the environment (Galtung 1969). The aim of positive peace, as I will explore in Chapter Two, involves positive conflict with the institutions and individuals responsible for indirect violence. I use the term “positive conflict” in referring to conflict that brings about greater states of positive or negative peace, distinguishing it from “negative conflict” that involves or brings about direct, cultural or structural violence. Throughout the research project I will draw from the voices of peace scholars—particularly the writings of Betty Reardon (1988), Elise Boulding (2000) and Stuart Rees (2003)—in order to illuminate overlap between peace studies and the process and ecological perspectives informed by the “New Story”.

In framing this research, I could have focused specifically on the worldview found in Whiteheadian process philosophy (Birch 1990), eco-theology (Berry 1988), Eastern philosophy (Watts 1969), or one of its other expressions.⁴ However, I came to see the greatest contribution to peace arising from the *overlap* of these outlooks. I am interested in the way that these holistic and process-oriented worldviews *as a whole* can shed light on the aim and means to achieve positive peace. The “New Story” is closely tied with a natural, process-oriented, inclusivist and ecological theology known as “panentheism”—a term constructed to capture the idea that all (*pan*) is inside (*en*) “God” (*theos*). The majority of the literature reviewed in this research project implicitly or explicitly falls into this category. Birch, Watts and Berry are all considered to be process theologians or panentheists. Birch is explicit about his panentheism (see Birch 1990: 66; 1993: 67; 1999: 132), although he refers to the proposed worldview primarily as a “postmodern ecological model”. In *Philosophers Speak of God*, Charles Hartshorne and William Reese ([1953]; 2000: 333-4) evaluate Watts’ philosophy to be panentheistic. Berry’s *The “New Story”*

⁴ For example, as in analytic interpretive process philosophy (Heidegger 1962), process theology, (Hartshorne 1937), panentheism (Clayton 2010), spiritual ecology (Sponsel 2012), Indigenous spirituality (Stockton 1995), ecofeminism (Spretnak 1994), systems theories (Capra 2002), and quantum physics (Davies 1992).

(1978) was primarily influenced by process and panentheist thinker Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's 'cosmic evolutionary spirituality' (see Cooper 2006: 164).⁵

I initially conceived this thesis in terms of "panentheism" as I found the history and an anthology of panentheistic literature useful to orientate my understanding of the "New Story". The simpatico nature of panentheism and the "New Story" is found not only in the overlap of their history and current thinkers, but also in their ontology and epistemology.⁶ With limited space, however, the awkwardness of the term "panentheism" and loaded nature of the word "God" overcomplicated my argument.⁷ Instead I follow Berry, Watts and Birch's lead and for the most part explore this ecological, panentheist and process-oriented paradigm in non-theological language. The terminology of *story* (in Berry) and *drama* (in Watts) further complemented my use of narrative as a methodology. This led me to pose the central research question: *what can a "New Story" contribute to positive peace?*

I approach this topic as a former fundamentalist Christian, a student of peace and conflict studies and a narratologist.⁸ For this reason, I tend to direct my argument toward Christianity, although it may apply to Judaism, Islam and other religions as well. I do not

⁵ John W. Cooper (2006: 164) notes that Teilhard de Chardin was inspired by Christian Neoplatonism and Henri Bergson (1911; [1912] 2004), and has inspired liberation and ecological theologians such as Matthew Fox ([1979] 1999), Sallie McFague (1987), Leonardo Boff (1987), and Rosemary Ruether (2005).

⁶ A glance at the contents of the anthologies and histories of panentheism that I draw from—Tucker and Grim (1994), Clayton and Peacocke (2004), Hartshorne and Rees ([1953]; 2000), and Cooper (2006)—indicate the crossover between the schools and scholarship that I draw from in connecting the "New Story" with positive peace.

Ontologically the "New Story" shares with panentheism an emphasis on a nesting of connections, context and process, and epistemologically they share a largely phenomenological approach to knowledge. This will be explored in Chapter Five.

⁷ Initially this thesis was titled "Panentheism and Positive Peace", however, in the editing process I removed the long chapters exploring panentheism's history and explaining the theology, deferring a more detailed exploration of panentheist theology to a separate research project. Discussions in Part Two will include brief treatment of classic theism, atheism, pantheism and panentheism, however I primarily discuss these in terms of story.

⁸ By "fundamentalist Christian" I am referring to a form of Protestant Christianity with beliefs that include a literal interpretation of the Bible and a belief in the inerrancy of Scripture. By student of peace and conflict studies I am referring to my Master of Arts in Peace and Conflict Studies completed in 2009, which I continue to ground the research in this degree. By "narratologist" I am referring to my experience teaching "Storytelling" at Lenoir Rhyne University based on the application of narratological tools to stories in the Humanities.

have enough understanding, nor the time and space, to explore these religions (and the varieties within them) in great depth. My methodology intertwines autobiography as a form of narrative inquiry with a review of interdisciplinary academic and popular literature on the ecological and holistic worldview explored through a narrative lens. Due to this breadth, the contributions of many important narratologists, peace theorists, and historical and contemporary process thinkers have not been included.⁹ In a research project of this size, not all the contributions of narrative and peace can be explored. This thesis is a small part of a much larger life-long and collaborative project connecting and applying narrative, process thought and panentheism with peace, in hope of contributing to a more socially just and ecologically sustainable society.

The diversity within the terminology and concepts of the interconnecting theories and disciplines covered in this thesis may at times make my argument appear unnecessarily complex. I attempt to deal with this diagrammatically. I rely on mature thinkers to orientate the argument, recognising that a time is coming when I will be able to formulate my own arguments more tightly. Considering the vastness of the topic I have concentrated on what I believe to be the most essential concepts and key problems. In particular I have focused on cross-insights between two interdisciplinary academic domains: peace studies and process thought (including narratology). I aim to share insights from peace studies as they apply to process thought and insights from process thought as it applies to peace studies. This research does not claim to be conclusive—it raises far more questions than it answers. My purpose is to open up a horizon for future research and collaboration between these fields.

Mapping the Connections

At the outset it will be helpful to provide a rough map of the scholarship through which I understand the “New Story”, and introduce an intellectual, spiritual and ecological hub of academic institutes that are directly and publically promoting a process-oriented ecological worldview as a way of bringing about a more peaceful and sustainable

⁹ For example, the works of narrative theorists such as Tzvetan Todorov, Algirdas Julien Greimas, Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein, William Labov, and Jacques Lacan; peace theorists such as John Burton and Kenneth Boulding; process thinkers such as William Norman Pittenger, Jacob Needham, Henri Bergson, Paul Tillich, Jürgen Moltmann, and Wolfhart Pannenberg.

humanity. This map represents my experience in the field and the scholarship that I have thus far been inspired by—it is in no way a comprehensive list.

The first institute I would like to introduce is the leading school on the “process thought” of the seminal panentheist thinker Alfred North Whitehead. Originally termed “philosophy of organism”, Whitehead’s (1929) ideas are most prominently recognised today as a speculative metaphysical form of “process philosophy”. This was adapted into “process theology” of Hartshorne (1937), who assisted Whitehead at Harvard University and studied directly under Martin Heidegger. John B. Cobb, Jr., who studied directly under Hartshorne, joined with David Ray Griffin in co-founding the *Centre for Process Studies* at Claremont School of Theology (see Cooper 2006: 185). Philip Clayton, who is Ingraham Professor of Theology at Claremont, co-edited the panentheistic anthology *In Whom We Live and Move and Have Our Being* (2004), which orientated me to the voices of process thinkers such as David Ray Griffin and Paul Davies.¹⁰ Birch, heavily influenced by Whitehead and Hartshorne, co-wrote a book with Cobb entitled *The Liberation of Life: From the Cell to the Community* (1981) that, like many of Birch’s other works, promoted a holistic and ecological alternative to mechanistic ways of understanding the world. All of these process thinkers share an emphasis on process, context and the relationship between parts and wholes.

Secondly, the *Forum on Religion and Ecology* at Yale University, continues the legacy of Berry’s work by exploring ecological perspectives within established religious traditions, with a tendency towards panentheistic interpretations. Mary Evelyn Tucker and John A. Grim are the co-directors of this forum. Tucker and Grim edited a collection of essays in *Worldviews and Ecology: Religion, Philosophy and the Environment* (1994), which helps to shed light on the religious and philosophical location of the ecological worldview of the “New Story”, with essays by Berry, Griffin and Brian Swimme.

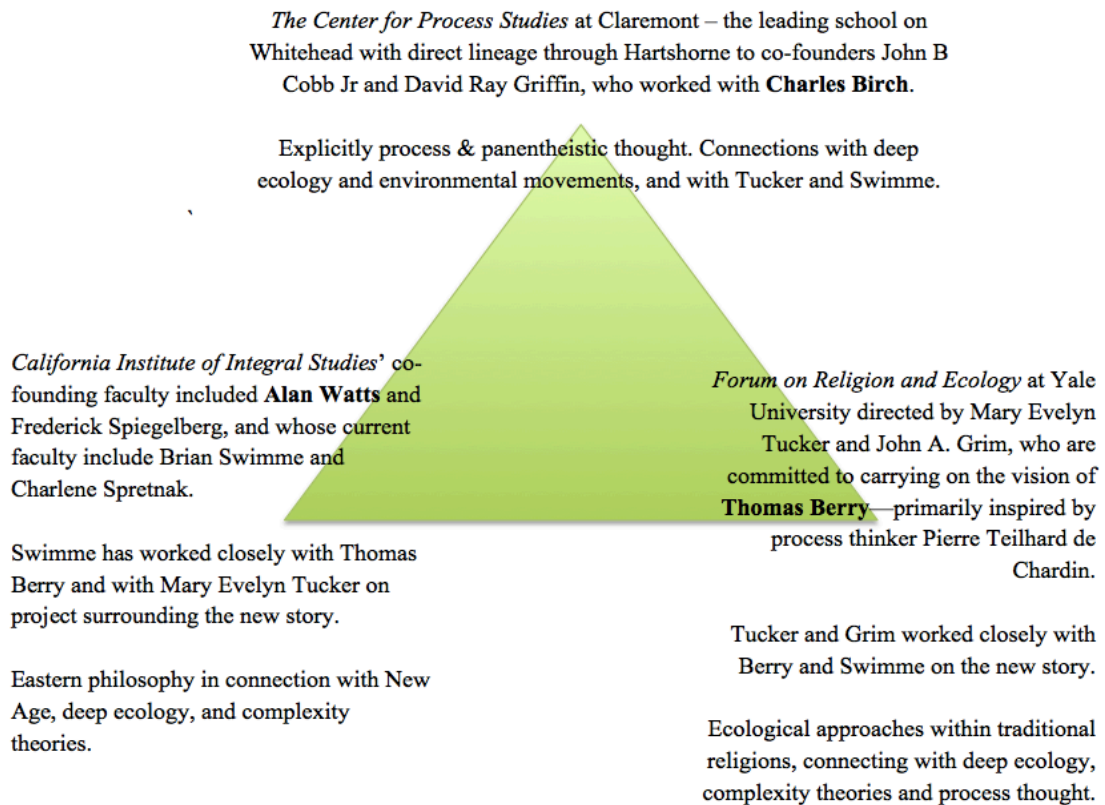
¹⁰ Co-edited with British theologian Arthur Robert Peacocke, other contributors to this anthology on panentheism include Joseph A. Bracken, Michael W. Brierley, Celia E. Deane-Drummond, Denis Edwards, Niels Henrik Gregersen, Robert L. Herrmann, Christopher C. Knight, Andrew Louth, Harold J. Morowitz, Alexei V. Nesteruk, Ruth Page, Russell Stannard, Keith Ward, and Kallistos Ware.

Finally there is the *California Institute of Integral Studies*, whose co-founding faculty included Alan Watts and Frederick Spiegelberg, and whose current faculty include Swimme and Charlene Spretnak, whose focus is on the intersections of the Eastern, psychological, cosmological, spiritual and ecological. With Berry, Swimme co-wrote a book called *The Universe Story* (1992) and, with Tucker, he co-wrote a book, film and educational series called *Journey of the Universe* (2011).

Many institutes teaching peace and conflict studies around the world might be included in this list, however their connection with the “New Story” or ecological worldview is not as clear as it is in the aforementioned institutes. Peace and conflict studies actively promotes positive peace in academic and public arenas on issues that span the local to the psychological, cultural and global. Within peace research, literature on ecology, peace education and inner transformation, are the closest connections the discourse makes with the holistic and ecological worldview of the “New Story”. These will be explored in Chapters Two, Five and Six. It is my hope that this project be useful for collaborations in this promising avenue for research aimed at moving global society toward positive peace.

The figure on the next page summarises the key references and connections above. This map locates the discourse from which I shall argue that a new story, new theology or new worldview, can contribute to bringing about a more peaceful and sustainable human existence. I have bolded the names of my three key thinkers. I selected Berry, Birch and Watts due to the clarity of their arguments, which they sought to make accessible to a non-academic readership.

Figure 1.1 Map of “New Story” scholarship



A community around this hub is building. Scholars from across the world are collaborating in an effort to bring about significant change in global society.¹¹ They are

¹¹ The tenth International Whitehead Conference called “WorldWide Process” to be held at Claremont, California in June 2015. Keynote speakers include Indian physicist Vandana Shiva (who received the 2010 Sydney Peace Prize), American environmentalist Bill McKibben, Chinese environmental activist Sheri Liao, and sessions led by Mary Evelyn Tucker (from Religion and Ecology at Yale University), Brian Swimme (from the Californian Institute of Integral Studies), along with leading process thinkers Philip Clayton, David Ray Griffin, John Cobb, Jay McDaniel, Catherine Keller, and many more. The conference is directly responding ‘to the growing sense of urgency’ surrounding the global ecological crisis, and the need for change that goes ‘to the roots of what has led to the current threat of catastrophe.’

The organisers of this conference state their conviction that ‘Alfred North Whitehead provides the best alternative to the Cartesian and Kantian views of the world that ground and pervade modernity.’ They note that while people in many fields share their concerns about environmental sustainability and the need for a new worldview, they do not ‘know of any other thinker who offers a vision as comprehensive and rigorous as Whitehead’s.’ They state that in Whitehead’s ‘philosophy we find a conceptuality that can ground and unify the creative and promising work that others are already doing.’ They ‘believe that Whitehead offers not just *an* alternative to the modern organization of thought and life but the most promising one’ (see Cobb 2014). I share this conviction, although I am also keen to explore expressions of process thought in sibling lines of thought, such as seen in the work of Teilhard, Bergson, and Heidegger; and as well as among long-established traditions and influences outside of Western culture such as those found within Eastern and Indigenous worldviews. Some of these will be explored in Chapter Five. Although

aiming to address structural violence and move toward positive peace, although without using these terms. To my knowledge this thesis is the first project directly exploring these interdisciplinary ideas in this way.

Within the literature mentioned above, references to Fritjof Capra (see Birch 1990: 83; Callicott 1994: 37; Spretnak and Capra 1984) and to Arne Naess (see George Sessions 1994: 210-13; Griffin 1994: 201), enticed me to seek and clarify the crossover between the “New Story” and complex systems theory, deep ecology and New Age movements. In Chapter Five I will consider the intellectual foundation of the “New Story” in more detail. The overlapping ontology between the speculative metaphysics of Alfred North Whitehead and the analytic interpretive process philosophy of Martin Heidegger and Paul Ricoeur, provide additional insights and tools for exploring the connections between narrative and peace, and for examining the process view of life encompassed by the “New Story”. Contemporary expressions of the “New Story” including undergraduate courses in Big History, cosmic education of Montessori’s model for peace education, and United Nations’ *The Earth Charter*, will be considered in Chapter Six. Throughout this research project I draw from this variety of disciplines where they help to inform (what I see to be) the “New Story’s” contribution to positive peace. Appendix Five provides a selected list of “New Story” thinkers to further provide some orientation to this rich and vast field of thought.

Many connections between aforementioned discourses—ecology, process philosophy, panentheism, Eastern philosophy and peace—have been drawn by other scholars. For example, Charles Hartshorne ([1953]; 2000), John Cobb Jr. (1989), Griffin (2001b), and Birch (1993) connect panentheism to process philosophy, ecology and ethics; peace scholars David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel (2009: 298-443) examine connections between peace and ecology. William Hipwell (2007) and Dietrich Fischer (2007) connect peace and ecology with systems theory; James E. Huchingson (1980) connects systems theory with panentheism; and Jeremy Hustwit (2008) connects Ricoeur’s interpretive theory with process philosophy. To my knowledge, however, an explicit exploration of

the main focus of this group of thinkers is the global environmental crisis, it also touches upon other issues including war, nuclear disarmament, global hunger and poverty, etc. (see Worldwide-Process 2014). I shall establish its connection with some of these issues in Chapter Two, in terms of structural violence.

the contribution of the overlapping arguments presented by Berry, Watts and Birch to positive peace—or more specifically the contribution of a “New Story” to addressing structural violence—has not yet been made. This lacuna will be filled across three parts and seven chapters in this thesis.

Chapter Outline

Part One introduces key terms, ideas and the use of narrative as a methodology to explore the contributions of more holistic worldviews to positive peace. Chapter One introduces the work of Rees, D. J. Clandinin and F. M. Connelly, Ricoeur, Heidegger and Dan McAdams to explore the use of narrative as a methodology to approach worldviews and positive peace. Connections between Berry’s “New Story” and narratology (the science of narrative¹²) are introduced with a preliminary reflection on how narrative can help address some of the most pressing issues of our day. It is argued here that narratology shines a light on context and process, drawing connections between personal, societal, religious, ecological and cosmological. Narrative is therefore established as a useful tool and lens through which to view the “New Story’s” contribution to positive peace.

Chapter Two examines Johan Galtung’s notions of “positive peace” and “structural violence”. Examining peace through a narrative lens draws attention to the *processes* involved, in particular the need to engage in “positive conflict” with the oppressive institutions, policies and people. Paulo Freire’s ([1970]; 2005) notion of *conscientization* stands as a model for engaging with the narratives that surround us, and taking a stand against oppression and injustice. I combine Galtung’s “Structural Theory of Imperialism” with William Hipwell’s “Industria” hypothesis and Alfred Kahn’s “Tyranny of Small Decisions”, in order to reflect on dynamics of structural violence on the global stage, and the role of individual’s worldviews in maintaining or addressing global forms of indirect violence such as poverty and environmental destruction. I close this chapter and Part One with a reflection on Betty Reardon, Elise Boulding and other peace scholars’ calls for a shift from reductionistic paradigms towards more process-oriented and holistic ones.

¹² Tzvetan Todorov coined the term “*la narratologie*” (“narratology”) in 1969 – what he and other theorists of structuralism perceived to be the science of narrative, motivated by a desire to lift literary and cultural studies to the ‘dignity of science’ (cited in Coste 1989: ix).

Part Two explores the connections between one-dimensional narratives and indirect violence. Chapters Three and Four consider the shortcomings of two dominant “Western” worldviews, establishing a pressing need to consider alternative worldviews that may be more conducive to positive peace. Birch refers to these one-dimensional worldviews as “supernatural dualism” and “materialistic atheism”. Watts refers to them as the “ceramic” and the “fully-automatic” models of the universe. Berry refers to them as the “Old Story” and a lack of comprehensive story within the secular and scientific community. The one-dimensional supernaturalist and materialist narratives correlate with my own experience of fundamentalist Christianity and New Atheism. I borrow and expand on Berry’s terminology to refer to these two worldviews as the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story”. I recognise that, of course, there are many old and modern stories that do not fit into these two categories. Many stories that are much *older* than my “Old Story” curiously fit into the category of my “New Story”. The labelling of these stories as “Old”, “Modern” and “New” are subjective and Western-centric, based on Berry and my own personal narratives in relation to religion and atheism.

Combining Lynn White Jr.’s famous essay on the “Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis” with a review of more recent primary research and discussion on the topic, I explore the ways that two examples of one-dimensional narrative contribute to maintaining global poverty and environmental destruction. Chapter Three locates the “Old Story” in the example of fundamentalist Christianity. The research findings point to an important distinction between one- and multi-dimensional interpretations of Christian narratives. By “one-dimensional” I am referring to interpretations that are removed from their historical and cultural context, which are exclusively claimed to be the “only truth” while regarding other religious and scientific narratives to be false. Under the “Old Story” Biblical narratives are interpreted literally rather than metaphorically, and the Bible is conceived to be the inerrant word of “God”. On the other hand, a multi-dimensional approach to Christian narratives interpret the Bible in its historical and cultural context, recognising metaphor and Midrash where it’s authors are likely to have been intended. A multi-dimensional approach to Christianity assumes a sense of openness toward learning from the truths of other religions. Approaches to Christianity might be mapped along a continuum of one-dimensionality (the “Old Story”) to multi-dimensionality (the “New Story”). The chapter finds that one-dimensional religious narratives foster attitudes that

are likely to maintain structural violence, while multi-dimensional religious narratives do not.

Chapter Four locates the “Modern Story” as a narrative found in the economics, values and institutions of Western industrialised capitalistic societies. I refer to this narrative as “modern”, not in the sense of a turn to something new but in relation to the period of modernity.¹³ I focus in particular on the varying approaches to science within the modern era. Following a similar pattern to that of approaches to Christianity explored in Chapter Three, Chapter Four maps approaches to contemporary science on a continuum of one-dimensional interpretations (referred to as a “Modern Story”) and more multi-dimensional interpretations (which reflect what I am referring to as the “New Story”). I establish one-dimensional approaches to science as those insisting that reductionist, positivist and material-based knowledge are the only valid ways of knowing. In contrast, I establish multi-dimensional approaches to science as those that encompass more holistic and inclusive understandings of the world, including the varying forms of knowledge found in other cultures. Referring to Birch I posit that the “Modern Story” is subtly embedded in Western institutions and many personal decisions that are at the root of a number of structural forms of violence.

Part Three moves on to explore the “New Story” and positive peace. Chapter Five explores the Teilhard-inspired narrative proposed by Berry, that tells a story of the self and the universe as one interconnecting process. Watts calls a similar view of the world the “dramatic model” of the universe, and Birch captures it in his Whitehead-inspired discussion of postmodern ecological worldview. I locate the “Modern Story” in multi-dimensional religious and multi-dimensional scientific narratives, establishing a common ground for bridging one- to multi-dimensional narratives.

Finally, in Chapter Six I consider the contribution of the “New Story” to positive peace. Here I examine a framework for process ethics offered by the “New Story”, in its ability

¹³ Modernity has a long history and has been experienced differently within different cultures. In a broad sense, and as referred to here, modernity refers to a period of history (approximately between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries) during which human societies in various parts of the world experienced a shift from feudalism toward capitalism and free market economics. Many of these societies also experienced increasing industrialisation, globalisation, democratisation, secularisation and rationalisation (see Hiebert 2008: 141-212).

to combine valuing difference with a unifying purpose, fostering awareness of multidimensional alternatives, and encouraging a broader and longer term approach to decision making, including decisions to engage in positive conflict with consensus narratives where they are a cause of indirect violence. I propose that the “New Story’s” expanded definition of the self—spatially and temporally—encourages a more holistic and long-term perspective of one’s responsibilities and their life’s contributions.

Chapter Seven returns to the notion of biography as a starting point for each of our contributions to the world. Here I reflect on some of the difficulties involved in challenging deep cultural assumptions, in sharing holistic perspectives and in addressing structural violence. I close by pointing to the junction between narrative, process philosophy and structural violence as a desideratum for future research.

At the crux of positive peace, as argued here, is a need for ongoing critical reflection on one’s place and role in the universe. As one reflects on their location in the world and in time, one may come to see the different ways that the self connects with socio-politic-economic-ecological structures. The actions and inactions of the global populace combine to maintain or change those structures. Contextualising one’s understanding of their self and world in their life experiences, helps one empathise with other people and other species’ different understandings of the world, based on their respective life experience. None of these stories are fixed. Our stories are constantly changing as we exchange stories with others, motivating us to narrate the past in new ways with a view to creating different futures. The “New Story” captures Whitehead’s ([1933] 1964: 293) notion of the ‘adventure of the universe as one.’ It posits that each human being is a participant in the shaping of that adventure. This emphasis on process includes the “New Story” and my thesis. I imagine that the “New Story” and my own perspectives will continue to evolve as my own and our collective understandings of our world to expand.

I will turn now to Chapter One, starting to draw the connections between the way we narrate our world and positive peace. I ground my fascination with the “New Story” in my personal biography, a position that Rees (2003) posits is the starting point for one’s choices that in turn have a peaceful or violent impact on our world.

Chapter 1 Why Narrative?

[W]e begin where everything begins in human affairs, with the basic story, our narrative of how things came to be, how they came to be as they are, and how the future can be given some satisfying direction (Berry 1988: 124).

The use of narrative as theory and method is inherently valuable to this research, extending from the use of narrative as a lens through which the subject matter is viewed, to being the subject matter itself. Narrative informs my use of framing and standpoints, and justifies my occasional use of personal journals and anecdotes as field texts to ground and explore the theory in practice.

Chapter One begins with the treatment of personal narrative as the starting point for understanding one's actions. It moves through to introduce the use of narrative as a methodology, and to reflect on the reasons for approaching worldviews and structural violence through a narrative lens.

1.1 Starting with Personal Narrative

“I wish you would hurry up and finish searching,” said my Dad, “you just never know when you might die. I worry about where you will end up.”

I appreciated his loving concern for my eternal life, but I couldn’t abandon my quest for answers. It is important. If heaven exists then I want to be there, but I don’t want to dedicate my entire life to something that is man’s creation [*sic*] not God’s.¹⁴

This conversation and personal reflection from 2007 captures a number of narratives that tie me to my family, my culture and my society. It captures the story of a father and daughter in conversation, and of a father’s genuine concern for his daughter’s afterlife. These stories are informed by an exclusivist Christian narrative that considers “non-believers”—people who deny a literal interpretation of particular Biblical stories, such as those about Jesus Christ’s death and resurrection—will go to hell when they die. While I was a “believer” for the first nineteen years of my life, at the time of this conversation I was dealing with the contradicting narratives presented by history, science, and other religions and cultures.

Several years later my personal and academic journeys intertwined in my first research project, entitled “An Ethical Dilemma: Childhood Conversion in Christian Fundamentalism” (2009). There I explored the tensions between the pure intentions of fundamentalists¹⁵—who genuinely care for the souls of non-believers; and the violent consequences of fundamentalist beliefs—for example, in the discrimination against homosexuals and women, sexual repression, in the actions of extremists groups such as

¹⁴ Diary entry dated 20/8/2007. The *sic* is a critique of my past self.

¹⁵ Fundamentalist Christianity started with a global movement inspired by a pamphlet called *The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth*—published and distributed in 1909 by two Christian laymen who called for a “return to the fundamentals.” Typically fundamentalist Christianity involves condemning Darwinism, liberal theology and modern philosophy, affirming the inerrancy of the Bible, interpreting its stories literally including the virgin birth, Jesus’ miracles, death and resurrection, and a future “second coming.” This movement has had a lasting impact on biblical literalism and Christian fundamentalism to this day (see Piggin 1996: 79-80; Mackay 2005: 73-74).

the bombing of abortion clinics, in the experience of spiritual abuse,¹⁶ etc. My experience and ongoing connection with a fundamentalist Christian community continues to provide an anchor to my research. It stands as an intimate example of a one-dimensional thinking, and the transition to a more multi-dimensional mentality.¹⁷ We each have a personal narrative, a biographical starting point informing our values, experiences, decisions and actions. Collectively the consequences of these decisions impact on the experience of peace and violence in the world.

Peace and social theorist Stuart Rees (2003: 35) examines how an awareness of biography entices one to question the ‘constraints and opportunities which affect freedom to participate in public life and to make choices about private affairs.’ Rees describes the ways that our personal narratives impact on our ability and desire to participate in society. He calls this the ‘promise of biography.’ Rees (1991: 9) suggests that biography is:

a beginning and end point in empowerment, a possible source of misgivings about the risks of breaking new ground but also the means of coherence which comes from fitting together those things which may have remained separate.

Connecting one’s cultural, economic and social inheritance with their perception of the possible plays a large part in determining the potential of a person’s life, and whether or not this potential is achieved.

In reflecting on the experience of being-in-the-world, Martin Heidegger (1962) describes the phenomenon of “thrownness”—feeling as if one has been “thrown” into a world that is *always already* there. We are ‘born into a world at a time and under circumstances over which [we] had no control’ (Dowling 2011: 28). This includes a “thrownness” into our

¹⁶ Spiritual abuse is a term used by psychologists to capture the condition of a penetrating fear of being punished in this life or with eternal damnation in hell, if one fails to live the way that God (or a particular religious authority) requires (see Purcell 1998).

¹⁷ According to some liberal and mainstream definitions, I am still a Christian. According to the definition that I grew up with, I am not. The difference is that the former accepts a mythical/metaphorical understanding of Jesus’ miracles, death and resurrection, full of meaning and life lessons. The latter insists on a literal belief in these events, supposed to have occurred in a literal sense, as the only way to reach “God”. Reading the Christian Bible in its historical context—recognising the myth, midrash and the man-made errors it contains—is to me far more rich and interesting than abiding by an interpretation dictated by religious authorities. Chapter Three will discuss these differences and their implications for positive peace.

bodily form, our nationality, the socioeconomic status of our family, language, culture, etc.—all which play a part in framing who we are and what we do with our lives. My “thrownness” into a conservative Christian family, attending a fundamentalist Christian school, with a socio-economic standing that allowed access to post-graduate education, travel and life experience, has played a role in my interest and ability to write this thesis. A person thrown into a situation of extreme poverty will have a very different way of being-in-the-world to mine, as will those thrown into a world convinced that a reductionistic science is the only way of understanding the world. The point is, we are all highly influenced by the culture, politics, economics and history of the society and circumstances that we are born into. As Garry Trompf (2005: 7) explains, ‘behind our subjectivity, our personal standpoints, lurk cultural preconceptions which are determined by language, thought-forms, upbringing and shared education.’ The idea that the self is more than what is inside our ‘bag of skin’ (to borrow from Watts 1969: 9) is obvious for some and alien to others.¹⁸

Rees (1991: 81) explains this more critical understanding of one’s culture as a transition from a consensus perspective to a conflict perspective. The transition moves from an acceptance of ‘one interpretation of family or society and the values which characterize the good family and orderly society,’ to the realisation ‘that these consensus views are disempowering because they reproduce others’ handed down versions of norms and values and the cultural and class origins of such assumptions.’ This involves ‘analysis which questions the influence of culture and examines how race, class and gender differences have affected people’s economic standing and social influence’ (82). Rees maps the stages involved in moving from consensus to conflict: from accepting and complying to the status quo, through the process of questioning, analysing, challenging the consensus, investigating and articulating alternatives, resisting nonviolently through to an armed struggle (84). Throughout this thesis I consider this continuum in terms of one- and multi-dimensional forms of narrative.¹⁹

¹⁸ This will be explored at length in Chapters Five and Six.

¹⁹ This transition from a consensus to conflict perspective resonates with Rees’ (2003: 66) analysis of one-, two- and three-dimensional expressions of power.

I can trace my own journey along Rees' stages (with the exception of taking to arms). In exploring the work of people who had considered alternatives, I found myself attracted to a perspective that had been largely unrepresented in mainstream Western media and my fundamentalist Christian high school education in Australia (see Bennett 2009). Across ecology, theology, philosophy and physics, a multi-dimensional, holistic and process-oriented worldview made sense of religions and modern science, while retaining a sense of connectedness and purpose to a greater whole (the universe or perhaps "God"). I will get to this "New Story" shortly. The point to close off on here is that our unique personal narratives are deeply embedded in the interpersonal, cultural, political and economic narratives that surround us and which inform our experience of the world.

Critically reflecting on these narratives and understanding our past in new ways can be an empowering process. These stories affect our individual and collective capacity to make choices that facilitate or hinder positive peace. As Rees (1991: 21) puts it, 'the promise of biography is in the telling of a story with a view to participating in a different way in future events.' By critically examining our cultural preconceptions we can consider the ways of evolving our language, worldviews and education toward more peaceful futures. The potential to reframe and rethink our stories applies not only to our personal narratives, but also to our cultural narratives.²⁰ In an increasingly intercultural and international community, facing issues such as a global ecological crisis and vast social injustice, it is helpful to reflect on our shared global narrative. Within the chapters to come, I will observe some of the tensions between narratives that separate and narratives that connect. Part Two explores stories that separate humans from each other and from nature, while Part Three examines stories that connect humans with each other and nature through their

²⁰ To provide an example of the power of narrative let me share a story. While living in North Carolina I made friends with a number of African Americans. At dinner one night they reflected on the way that schools in the United States teach children to be victims of the past. They felt that a narrative that emphasised a corrupt system that forced their ancestors into slavery disempowered African American students. This narrative entices a sense of powerlessness in the African American youth who see themselves as victims, products of circumstances outside of their control. My friends believed that this caused a low expectation of their future, with little motivation to take action to change the remaining unjust institutions in the present. They explained that by reframing the narrative so that it tells a story of African American ancestors as heroes who endured some of the most challenging circumstances known to humankind, the youth would feel empowered, proud of their ancestors. They believed that such a reframing would expand African American children's perception of the possible, and motivate them to work toward a better future.

intertwining processes. Narratives that separate tend to be one-dimensional, regarding other narratives as wrong and assuming that there is only one way of knowing and understanding the world. In contrast, narratives that connect tend to be multi-dimensional, making sense of alternative ways of being in the world by considering each in their historical and cultural context. In facing global issues that are (consciously or unconsciously) shared across our many countries, cultures and religions, this thesis posits that a transition from one-dimensional to multi-dimensional narratives is a critical step in moving toward the aim of positive peace. The next section of this chapter elaborates on the significance of using narrative as a subject and methodology for this research project.

1.2 Narrative as Method

The ways we understand each other in daily life involve an irreducible narrativity (Dowling 2011: 5).

Narrative analysis traces back in its written forms to Aristotle's ([335BC] 1996: 3) evaluation of the way that elements such as plots, characters, themes, purpose, and use of time, tone, framing and narrator standpoints, impact on a story's success or failure. In the last twenty years or so, many fields—from psychology to political science, business and legal studies—are drawing from a tool box that narratology has to offer. This is not without its problems, as Marie-Laure Ryan (2007: 22) notes: 'few words have enjoyed so much use and suffered so much abuse as *narrative* and its partial synonym, *story*.' Quoting Gerald Prince, Ryan (22) observes that narrative is often used as a 'hedging device, a way to avoid strong positions':

One says 'narrative' instead of 'explanation' or 'argumentation' (because it is more tentative); one prefers 'narrative' to 'theory,' 'hypothesis,' or 'evidence' (because it is less scientific); one speaks of a 'narrative' rather than 'ideology' (because it is less judgmental); one substitutes 'narrative' for 'message' (because it is more indeterminate).

If narrative is more tentative, less scientific and less judgemental than theory, argument, and ideology, then why am I using it? It is precisely because narrative is more tentative, less scientific and less judgemental, that it is an appropriate methodology for this interdisciplinary study of the connection between worldviews and positive peace.

The use of narrative as method involves seeing the world through storied lenses, encouraging a critical analysis of the role of language and definitions, narrator viewpoints, and themes involved in these understandings. This influences the *subject*—seen as constructed by narratives, the *analysis*—to which narrative tools are applied. Narrative inquiry and narrative analysis draw attention to the ways that personal narratives are embedded in and influenced by the narratives of one's society, and how simultaneously personal narratives combine to influence and construct the narratives of a society. This multi-dimensional causation sheds light on power dynamics affecting positive peace. From this perspective, narratives of a society influence actions and actions maintain and

change those narratives, and influence others to do the same. As Connelly and Clandinin (2000: xxvi) observe:

With narrative as our vantage point, we have a point of reference, a life and a ground to stand on for imagining what experience is and for imagining how it might be studied and represented in researchers' texts. In this view, experience is the stories people live. People live stories, and in the telling of these stories, reaffirm them, modify them, and create new ones.

The structures, agents and their dialogical interactions are always in process. Narrative inquiry is the study of stories *lived* and stories *told*. The use of narrative as methodology begins from the basic premise that we are all simultaneously telling, listening to, and acting within multi-storied lives. Richard Kearney (2002: 153-4) explains, 'We are subject *to* narrative as well as being subjects *of* narrative. We are made by stories before we ever get around to making our own.' Looking at the world through a narrative lens points to the context and process nature of our understandings and experience of life. I shall return to this application of narrative and process thought in later chapters.

Narrative inquiry is an explorative qualitative approach to research, it involves the study of how sequences of events join to create stories, and how these stories are communicated and given meaning. Narrative inquiry begins and ends 'in the storied lives of the people involved' (Clandinin & Connelly 2000: 42). Conducting an inquiry into the "New Story" begins and ends in my own story. The interpretation and evaluation of this inquiry begins and ends in the story of the reader. As narrative inquirers and as participants, we are always 'in the midst of living and telling our stories ... [and] in the midst of larger cultural, social and institutional narratives' (Clandinin 2007: xvi). As Roland Barthes (1977: 79) famously observed,

The narratives of the world are numberless. Able to be carried by articulated language, spoken or written, fixed or moving images, gestures, and the ordered mixture of all these substances; narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting, stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news item, conversation ... narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society ... Caring nothing for the division between good

and bad literature, narrative is international, transhistorical, transcultural. It is simply there, like life itself.

Barthes highlights the myriad sources from which a narrative inquiry may draw its field texts. To this list Clandin and Connelly (2000: 95-115) add field notes, journal writing, letters, narrative interviews, photographs, autobiography and more. Undertaking narrative inquiry involves a similar process to other qualitative forms of research: collecting and preparing the raw data, organising it in relation to the research question, and interpreting it by observing the patterns and themes, the contradictions and irregularities. In this project, such a process was applied to a broad scope of secondary literature as the raw data, while also being influenced by and occasionally drawing from personal conversations and journals, to help illustrate the connections between the “Old Story”, “Modern Story” and structural violence, and between the “New Story” and positive peace.

While the use of the tools from narrative theory and the use of narrative as methodology vary, all narrative researchers and theorists share an assumption that narrative is a fundamental way that humans cope with their experience of time. I shall take space here to establish why narrative is fundamental to human experience.

1.2.1 Storying our Lives

‘Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience’ (Connelly & Clandinin 2006: 477). Narratologists’ such as David Herman (2007: 5) observe that narrative is ‘a basic human strategy for coming to terms with time, process and change.’ Narrative psychologists such as Michele Crossley (2002: 3) affirm this connection, describing narrative as the ‘root metaphor’ for human reality and the ‘organising principle for human action.’ In three lengthy volumes of *Time and Narrative* (1984, 1984b, 1988), Paul Ricoeur considers the ways that humans use narrative to cope with our awareness of time—to make sense of the past and formulate expectations of the future. In *Introduction to Temps Et Récit*, William C. Dowling (2011: 88) explains the way that Ricoeur distinguishes between time in the *phenomenological* sense (psychological, time as we experience internally) and time in the *cosmological* sense (as in the movements of the sun, moon and Earth to create day, night, weeks, years, etc.). The human mind experiences time phenomenologically, while it is physically

located within the routine celestial cycles. For example, when one is bored, cosmological time can (phenomenologically) seem to pass slowly; yet when one is busy, cosmological time can (phenomenologically) seem to pass in the blink of an eye. How do we reconcile the gap between the two? Ricoeur (1984: 3) posits that ‘time becomes human time to the extent that it is organized after the manner of a narrative.’ That is, one’s experience of phenomenological time (in the moment) within cosmological time (the celestial movements) is connected through *narrative*.

Narrative ties together the successive experiences of moments in the “now”. Through our agreed measurement tools of calendars and clocks, we map most of the events that form our life story. Ricoeur suggests that narrative is a “third time”, mediating between external time (cosmological) and internal time (phenomenological) (see Dowling 2011: 35). Put simply: humans use narrative to make sense of time. The past and present exist in dialogue with each other. The work of history, fiction, autobiography and the recounting of memories in conversation, are examples of “third time”.

Figure 1.2 Narrative as “Third Time”: Bridging Cosmological and Phenomenological Time

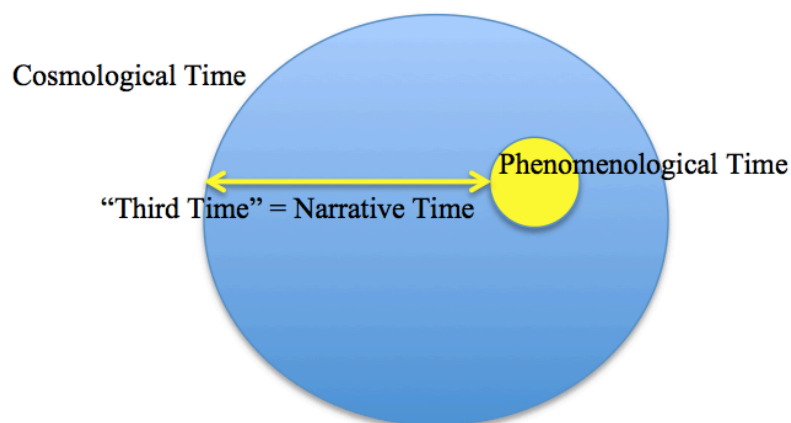


Figure 1.2 (above) illustrates Narrative Time as a means of communication between Cosmological Time and Phenomenological Time. Humans make sense of temporality through narrative, and narrative always involves a sense of temporality. Ricoeur (1984: 3) demonstrates that ‘the circle of narrativity and temporality is not a vicious but a healthy circle, whose two halves mutually reinforce one another.’ The reason for this

connection is that we experience life *in time*. Events happen in time, and in tying together the causal links between events, we tell stories. History records an official version of those events, while a memory may recall another. Narratology provides a number of tools that assist a critical examination of the narratives that comprise our biological, cultural, economic, political and economic systems. With a better understanding of these narratives and their implications, persons may begin to exercise agency within other narrated worlds.

1.2.2 Mythmaking

Our stories are more than our own—they are comprised of stories of our families, our culture, our ancestors, our species. Even the way that we tell stories is impacted by the storytelling methods of those around us during childhood, which influence ‘what elements to include, delete, and emphasize,’ and in turn tend to be shaped by cultural values (Baddeley & Singer 2007: 181).²¹ Dan McAdams describes the process of storying our lives as a form of *mythmaking*. McAdams (1996) suggests that our use and interpretation of stories is pivotal to our sense of self and world. These narratives guide our actions: ‘[t]hrough myth we determine who we are, who we were, and who we may become in the future’ (92). Myth, in this context, is not used in the sense of something untrue, but in its more technical anthropological meaning:

A myth is the overarching story, bigger than history and believed to be true, that serves as a paradigm for people to understand the larger stories in which ordinary lives are embedded. Myths are paradigmatic stories, master narratives that bring cosmic order, coherence, and sense to the seemingly senseless experiences, emotions, ideas, and judgements of everyday life by telling people what is real, eternal, and enduring (Hiebert 2008: 66).

McAdams (1972: 20) explains that mythology and humankind have developed simultaneously—since the ‘earliest evidences of the emergence of our species’ there are

²¹ This is exemplified in research finding European American parents’ tendencies to have child-centred and elaborative styles, which teach children ‘how to be the kinds of individual and unique selves valued in this society.’ Chinese parents, on the other hand, ‘use a didactic, hierarchically organised and low-elaborative approach to reminiscing with their children, promoting in children an understanding that the self’s place is within a larger social order’ (Baddeley & Singer 2007: 181). This points to a subtle connection between the stories that parents tell their children and the influence of capitalist and communist ideologies.

signs of myth shaping our world. Myths are psychological and social, personal and shared. Joseph Campbell, a master of comparative mythology, explores the psychological elements of stories central to human history. According to Campbell the separating of humans and other animals stems from the self-conscious understanding of our personal mortality and realising that our society existed before our birth and will continue on after we die. Campbell (1972 :21) writes:

These two fundamental realizations—of the inevitability of individual death and the endurance of the social order—have been combined symbolically and constitute the nuclear structuring force of the rites and, thereby, the society.

I bring Campbell's two realisations into this discussion on the use of narrative as method as these notions are central to the way that humans live and experience the world and have a fundamental influence on our decisions and actions.

Those familiar with phenomenology may notice a Heideggerian flavour to Campbell's two fundamental realisations. In his influential *Sein und Zeit* (in English: *Being and Time*), Heidegger ([1927] 1962) examines experience of being-in-the-world (*In-der-Welt-sein*). Realising what Campbell called the 'inevitability of individual death' brings about a state of living that Heidegger refers to as being-toward-death (*Sein-zum-Tode*). Realising that the 'endurance of the social order' points to the "thrownness" of the circumstances of our birth and upbringing, and helps define our "*Sorge*"—the things in our world to which we direct our *care*. In later chapters I will return to the connection between narratives of care, purpose, values and ethics and the implications of these for positive peace and structural violence.²² These concepts, it is argued here, are central to the "New Story's" understanding of context and process, and its contribution to positive peace. For example, thinking about death may stir up a variety of feelings. These might be feelings of anxiety, morbidity, and nihilism; or they might be feelings of care, spontaneity and appreciation for every experience.

²² Mentioning some Heideggerian terms in this short research project may appear to over-complicate the discourse, however surfacing deep human assumptions in order to question worldviews, and Heidegger's widespread influence in philosophy, justify this use.

Religion is one way that people make peace with death—for example, by believing a story that tells them they will go to heaven when they die. Another response is to ignore death, and seek ‘refuge in the trivial, the ordinary, or the everyday’ (Dowling 2011: 29). Heidegger considers the latter to be an *inauthentic* way to live one’s life—ignoring one’s situation of being-in-time and being-toward-death. On the other hand, Heidegger (1962) describes the *authenticity* that comes to a life that is lived with an understanding of its *resoluteness*. Authentic living, in Heidegger’s eyes, requires ‘a choice not to live on the level of the thoughtless majority who are fleeing their own death’ (Dowling 2011: 29). This resonates with Rees’ proposal mentioned earlier in this chapter that moving from consensus to conflict is critical to positive peace. To live without questioning the narratives, norms, values and institutions of our lives can leave us ignorant to forms of structural violence that may be constraining us (or others), and which we may inadvertently be contributing to. To live authentically requires conflicting with inequitable narratives rather than conforming to them. According to Heidegger an authentic way of making peace with death is to contribute to the world beyond one’s narrowly defined sense of self.²³

Ricoeur thinks that Heidegger’s emphasis on being-towards-death is unfounded—a result of writing at the time of the world wars. Ricoeur points out that one’s attitude toward death varies greatly between cultures, and therefore cannot be the basis of a hermeneutics of being (Dowling 2011: 34). Ricoeur asks what remains if we take away ‘resoluteness’, or this obsession with being-towards-death? He answers: *Sorge*. Care. To *which projects* will we dedicate our time? *Sorge* involves a ‘preoccupation’ with things and ideas that are not physically present. In caring for something, we are ‘making [it] present’ through an active involvement in a narrative project—working toward the ‘bringing about [of] an

²³ In drawing from the work of Heidegger in a research project exploring violence and peace, I must concede the difficulty in dealing with Heidegger’s biography, which includes a brief rectorship and membership of the Nazi Party. This lies outside the scope of my research except to share one lesson that has come from my selective reading of the vast scholarship on this controversial topic: good intentions can be misguided or misdirected and have horrifically violent consequences. A particularly dangerous ground may be found where different movements share an overlap in goals and values. For example, the Nazi mantra encouraging people to put “collective need ahead of individual greed” could be a mantra for addressing structural violence. This acts as a warning to those who care for a cause, stressing the importance of an ongoing critical reflective process that analyses the peaceful and violent aspects of both the means and the ends for which one aims their care.

already imagined state of affairs’ (Dowling 2011: 31). In other words, over and above being-toward-death, Ricoeur posits that we are *being-toward-care*. Whether that care is directed to paying off a mortgage, achieving a promotion, evangelising about Jesus, fighting for the rights of minority groups, or completing a research project, our world *bends around* this care. Our care influences the aspects of our reality that we observe, while other aspects of reality escape our notice. The choices that determine our lives, the promise of our personal biography, relates to not only our “thrownness”, but also our narratives of care and carelessness.²⁴

Related to death and care, in linking narrative and peace, narrative psychologists describe themes of “generativity”—a person’s ‘commitment to promoting the well-being of the next generation’ (Bauer et al. 2008: 82). Jenna Baddeley and Jefferson A. Singer (2007: 191) locate ‘generative scripts’ in four categories: *biological* (e.g. bearing offspring), *parental* (e.g. raising children), *technical* (e.g. teaching, setting up businesses, charities), and *cultural* (e.g. writing books, music, engaging in politics, economics, society). Generativity addresses the ‘narrative need for a sense of ending, a satisfying vision or plan concerning how, even though one’s life will eventually end, some aspect of the self will live on’ (McAdams 1996: 240). Motivating these actions often involves an ‘inner narration’ about how one’s own story fits into the story of their society, country, species or the cosmos (240). The actions that we take today have implications for peace and violence experienced by ourselves and others, including future generations and other species.

Herein lies an essential connection between parts and wholes. Every living entity is a part of a multitude of systems that continue on after the entity dies. How an individual participates in these systems will depend largely upon the way that an individual sees the connections between their actions and the implications of those actions.

²⁴ Some people do not care about other people or species, about social justice, about the environment or about future generations. Some people do not even care about themselves. In the same way that one may flee death, one may flee care—one may be indifferent to the future. One may even find a sense of peace in their apathy! In this short explorative research project I do not have space to reflect on apathy or other tangents, instead focusing on the nature of care and ethics in connection to the “New Story” and positive peace.

‘Storytelling,’ says Kearney (2002: 153-4), is ‘something we participate in (as actors) as well as something we do (as agents).’ Taking a narrative approach to research places an emphasis on ‘human agency and its efficacy, on context and the embeddedness of human experience, and on the centrality of language to the negotiation of meaning and the construction of identity in everyday life’ (Davis 2002: 3). Narrative inquiry raises questions like: How do stories construct my reality? Who authored those stories and why? What are the consequences of those stories, individually and collectively in the long-term? The philosophy of narrative entices a critical reflection that, as Chapter Two will show, is an essential feature of positive peace.

Interpreting the experience of being through a narrative lens allows one to reflect and analyse the elements of a story including the trajectory the story is taking, and how its direction might change. McAdams (1996: 37) observes:

The stories we create influence the stories of other people, those stories give rise to still others, and soon we find meaning and connection within a web of story making and story living. Through our personal myths, we help to create the world we live in, at the same time that it is creating us.

McAdams (1996: 12-13) believes that ‘we do not discover ourselves in myth; we *make ourselves* through myth.’ If our story no longer makes sense then we may need to consider alternative aspects of our past ‘in order to fashion a new myth’ (111). This applies not only to our personal mythmaking—the stories we use to make sense of our past, and give direction to our future; but it applies to our shared mythmaking—the overarching narratives that provide a framework for understanding the “big questions” about life, death and the meaning behind existence.

A narrative approach to the self and world, as discussed above, reflects a phenomenological approach to knowledge. This begins with an understanding that one is observing the world from within that world. This phenomenological approach stands in contrast with the traditional scientific and Cartesian approaches that assume that the observer is observing from an objective standpoint that is separate from that world. This distinction is central to a narrative methodology as theorised below.

1.2.3 Contextualising the Observer

‘A good skeptic,’ states Norman Denzin (2008: 15), ‘must ask, “Whose science?” “Whose scientific principles?”’ It is easy to understand the appeal of the scientific approach: of learning the “facts,” discovering “evidence,” and feeling a sense of objective certainty. Yet as Denzin (2008: 31) points out, ‘objectivity and evidence are political and ethical terms.’ This is not to say that scientific method doesn’t have its place, but it is to say that scientific experiments can benefit from reflecting critically on their socio-political-economic-ecological contexts, and the influence that this may have on the formulation and framing of their research questions. A significant difference between a (somewhat postmodern) narrative approach and a (largely modern) scientific approach is illustrated in the two figures below:

Figure 1.3 Scientific approach: observing objectively from outside

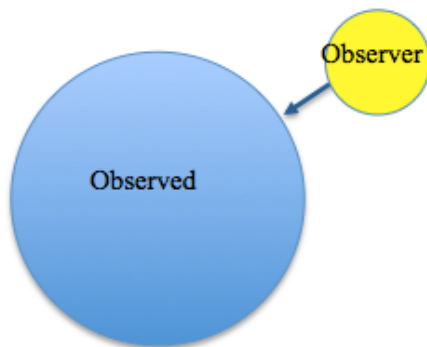


Figure 1.4 Narrative approach: observing subjectively from within

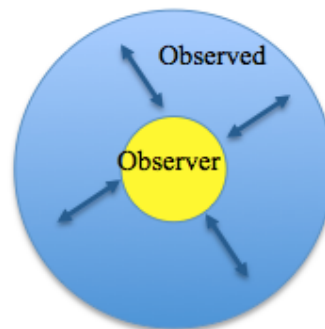


Figure 1.3 illustrates how one may see the observer (the yellow) as separate from the observed (the blue circle), objectively observing it from the outside. Figure 1.4 captures the contextualised approach of narrative inquiry, which recognises that the observer is *inside* the observed, observing it subjectively from within. It is important to note the nested pattern of the latter, as this will reappear in future figures and discussions. Figure 1.4 captures the way that Denzin locates the observer as inside, affected by and affecting that which one is trying to observe, rather than objectively sitting outside it.²⁵ Denzin

²⁵ This pattern is not only a reflection of narratological thinking, but also of phenomenology (study of subjective experience), ecology (study of relationships between organisms and with their environment), process philosophy (viewing all “things” as “events” or “processes”),

(2008: 29) points out: ‘We can never know the true nature of things. We are each blinded by our own perspective.’ This echoes Whitehead’s (1954: 14) famous words ‘there are no whole truths; all truths are half-truths. It is trying to treat them as whole truths that plays the devil. This is not to say that all truth is relative. As Trompf (2005: 14) puts it in a sort of synthesis of modern and postmodern, ‘*relative* objectivity is necessarily the name of the game.’ In order to deal with the embeddedness of a researcher’s standpoint, Denzin (2008: 30) supports ‘a narrative that teaches others that ways of knowing are always already partial, moral, political, and contested.’ Here we once again see an important overlap between narrative and peace. This transparently subjective approach of narrative inquiry, which retains the aim of objectivity while recognising the limitations of its own standpoint, is intrinsically conducive to a study about peace. The political, intercultural and contested nature of peace and violence means that one must ask and continue to re-ask: What is peace? What is justice? For who?

Narratology and the “New Story” share an intellectual heritage in process philosophy. Process philosophy comes in many forms, which include the category of speculative metaphysical process philosophy (such as Whitehead) and analytic interpretive process philosophy (such as Heidegger). The former has significantly influenced the “New Story” in its theological expression, that is, in process theology, eco-theology and panentheism. The latter has had a significant influence on narratology, particularly when explored in reference to Ricoeur (see also: Seibt 2012 and Hustwit 2008). This history opens the way for cross insights between the two discourses.²⁶ As such, the use of narrative as method and the application of narratological tools complemented and enhanced the forthcoming analysis of the contributions of a “New Story” to addressing structural violence. The key word here is *process*.

complex systems (wholes that self-organise via feedback loops with properties that emerge from their parts) and panentheism (the theological positing of all inside God). This pattern captures a shift in the way one sees their self and the world through the lens of the “New Story”, and by narrating the connections between parts and wholes it points toward a way of addressing a dynamic behind many forms of structural violence. I will return to this application in later chapters.

²⁶ Whitehead and Heidegger were contemporaries. It would be fascinating to do a detailed comparative study of the two, and use this as a launching point to explore the relevance of the two forms of process thought in the world today.

Such an emphasis is also endorsed by peace scholars such as Betty Reardon (1988: 51), who calls for a shift away from dominant ‘war-system thinking’ that is dualistic, antagonistic and ends-driven, to thinking in terms of ‘both unity and multiplicity,’ ‘mutuality and negotiated consensus,’ ‘means and processes.’ Reardon (60) also affirms this form of methodology, observing that:

We seek “objective” knowledge at the sake of “subjective” truth. The consequences of this separation of the knower from the known have probably been the real root causes of that whole array of planetary crises that comprise the global problematique in the curriculum framework of the University for Peace.

By using a methodology that recognises the observer’s subjectivity without losing some conception of the (unknowable) objectivity, I apply a conceptual framework shared by the “New Story” and peace theory in practice as the theoretical underpinning of this thesis. In the next section I consider the narratological notions of standpoints and framing, which will be applied in the analysis to come.

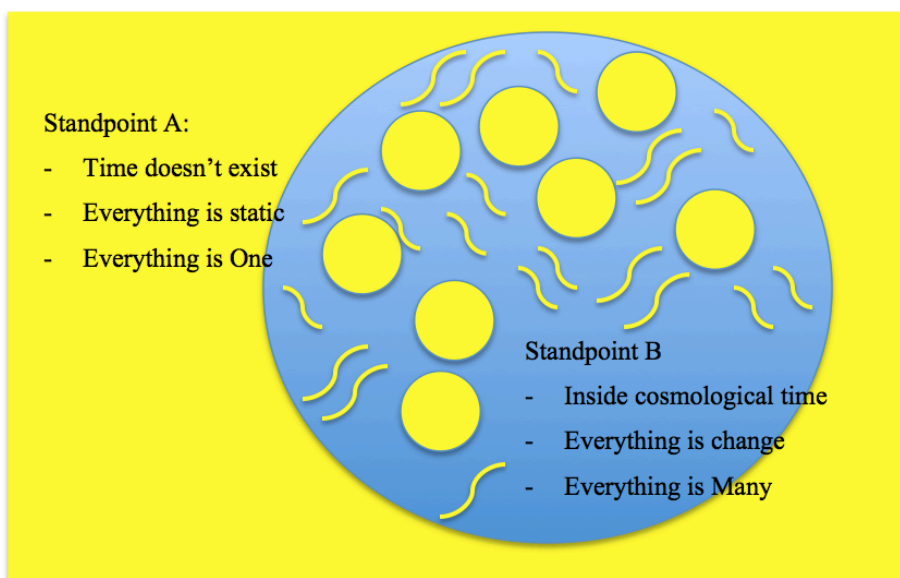
1.3 Narratological Tools

In narrative theory, a *standpoint* is the context in time and space that an observer observes or a narrator tells a story. It is from a standpoint that a narrator *frames* the story (fiction or not), observing events through a particular lens. Different stories may be framed (and re-framed) depending upon which parts are focused on and which parts are ignored, depending on how causality is attributed and drawn together in a sequence (or plot). The understanding and application of these narrative tools locate a central difference between one- and multi-dimensional narrative.

1.3.1 Standpoints

Corresponding with Figure 1.4, Figure 1.5 below illustrates the narratological notion of standpoints. Standpoint A imagines narrator telling the story of our universe from outside the universe—where everything is static and one. All the very many yellow dots indicated by Standpoint B point to the many viewpoints within the story of our universe, where everything is many (indicated by the dots), everything is change (indicated by the squiggles) and the story would be told differently from each of those viewpoints.

Figure 1.5 Standpoints: Everything is One and Many, Static and Change.



Within Standpoint B a myriad of standpoints exist: every being within the story has a different standpoint, and as time moves along those standpoints are always changing. At each standpoint one will tell a very different story. I shall illustrate this using the analogy of reading a book. From Standpoint A, one can pick up the book and see a world contained within its covers. They can narrate the book as one entity. Time within the book is irrelevant, paused, non-existent. Everything in the book is seen as if static and singular. Yet within the pages, from points within Standpoint B, time is constantly moving. From any character's standpoint, they are among many in a world that is constantly changing. Figure 1.5 illustrates how we can interpret all as change and all as permanent at the same time. In this way, the use of standpoints as a narrative tool has a second application in this thesis. The nested ontology indicated in two of the three figures thus far, patterns the synchronic structure of the "New Story" and is central to its contribution to positive peace. Put simply: the way that the "New Story" locates the story of *the self as inside and as part of the story of the universe*,²⁷ is akin to the way we observe *our minds inside the world*, and analogous to a narratological locating of *characters and plot are located inside a story*. This will be explained in detail in Chapter Five. By learning to imagine oneself viewing the world from another's standpoint, one can contextualise their knowledge and the reasons for that person's actions. In this way, understanding and undertaking a cognitive empathy with others' standpoints is a powerful tool for encouraging actions toward positive peace.

1.3.2 Framing

All stories involve a *framing* of events, connecting actions through some kind of causal chain, given meaning and incorporating an element of judgement to the events we live or imagine, and describe. These judgements and the values guiding them, whether explicit or implicit, mean that narratives are inescapably ethical, with ethical implications. As peace journalist and scholar Jake Lynch (2011: 5) explains, 'The opposite of value-explicit is not value-free, but value-concealed.' There is no such thing as value-neutral or value-free discourse; research is either values-explicit or values-concealed.

²⁷ In an natural and inclusive theology, this may be expressed as locating people and time inside a cosmic entity or event referred to as "God", as will be considered in terms of panentheism in Chapter Five.

Framing involves selection—not every detail of every event and character can be included. Storytellers must decide which facts to include and which to leave out in order to string together a coherent narrative. When we tell our life story we can frame it in ways that emphasise the good, or the bad. We choose where to begin the story, and where to end it. As described earlier in reference to Rees’ “promise of biography”, the possibility of *re-framing* one’s past opens a useful way to imagine alternate futures. The possibility of re-framing our understanding of our role in the universe, requires questioning our deepest assumptions, observing the role of perception and sensory framing, and how our language and culture have played a role constructing our reality.

One-dimensional narratives are often blind to the notions of standpoints and framing. They insist that their truth is the only Truth. They believe that they are telling the whole story, while ignoring the bits that don’t fit in. For example, this can be seen in religious narratives, political narratives and atheistic narratives captured in statements such as: “Jesus is the only way to God;” “Democracy is the only acceptable political model;” “There is no God.” A multi-dimensional narrative is one that understands the different ways that a narrative can be told from different standpoints, when framed in different ways and when different aspects are focalised upon. To embrace a multi-dimensional perspective is not to consider all narratives to be equally valid, but to makes sense of competing narratives from within their own contexts, piecing them together to form a multi-layered, open-ended story. A multi-dimensional narrative understands that one story cannot tell every detail—every story necessarily includes and ignores. Yet narratives are required to make sense of ourselves and our world, and to guide our future actions. Relating this to the discussion about time and process, phenomenological time and cosmological time, a story of the self and the universe will look different when told from different locations within different temporalities, when focusing on different aspects of experience, and when framed in different ways.

Thus far this chapter has established the way narratives in our mind combine to define our sense of personal identity within a context intertwining social, cultural, political, economic and ecological narratives. It is from our self-centric positions that we observe, evaluate, and reject or accept, competing religious, cultural and legal understandings about the origins and meaning of life, about what it means to be human, and about how

we might personally live out our lives. Using narrative as a methodology has been shown to involve not only questioning narratives and the factors that surround its compilation and telling, but also involves questioning the way that narratives are held. An important question to be asked is: can the narrative be held with a space for alternatives, a space for questioning and doubt, a space for process, evolution and change? Such multi-dimensionality and process perspective, as I shall continue to argue, is essential to narratives that are likely to contribute to positive peace.

1.4 A Narrative Inquiry into Worldviews and Peace

There is a compelling connection between the way the world is conceived (metaphysics [or worldviews]) and what is held to be good and bad, what sort of behaviour is right and wrong and what responsibilities and obligations we have as individuals (ethics) (Birch 1993: 72).

Our personal stories are located within overarching narratives—macro-stories or myths—which constitute the narrative components of our worldview. Often these master narratives of our culture, or economic, political or religious institutions, are held in our collective unconscious, the *Zeitgeist* (as Hegel called it)—the *spirit of the times*. It is upon this constantly evolving canvas that our stories take place. Whether religious or not, people throughout the history of human civilizations have sought some kind of explanation about how the universe began and the purpose of our lives. The idea of a narrative self draws attention to the micro-narratives occurring in our daily existence that combine to form our own life story. The macro-narratives that surround us, feed into the micro-narratives, and vice-versa. Ricoeur (2004: 211) observes that history functions ‘as an eyepiece, a microscope, or a telescope.’ Many layers exist simultaneously: what we see depends on the level of magnification one is viewing the self-world through. At different scales we see different things (see also Ricoeur 2004: 182-233).

The dialectical interaction between micro-narratives and macro-narratives reflects a pattern of understanding of many and one, parts and wholes, which will be returned to throughout this thesis. A multi-dimensional narrative provides a platform to connect and oscillate between the macro and micro, the one and the many. A narrative lens may be focused on the figure and with a slight adjustment it can view the background. Stories also differ from within those scales, depending upon the different context of the storyteller (the standpoint), the different aspects that one perceives and ignores (focalisation), and the different way these aspects are joined together (framing). The significance of this pattern and the way that will be further unveiled as the thesis unfolds.²⁸

²⁸ The many and one can be seen in many histories and one history, many worlds and one world, between the small decision of individuals and the collective impact of institutions. In forthcoming

This chapter has espoused a web of narratives in which we are caught, and the role that we play in maintaining and changing those stories. Our life stories develop every day as we engage in conversations, listen to other's stories, reflect upon the connections and reframe our past, all while simultaneously living and creating new stories. Our stories tie our past and present actions with our (pessimistic or optimistic) expectations for the future. This dynamic operates not only on a personal level, that is, in the way that the interpretation of our auto-biography opens the possibilities for our lives; but it also happens on a collective level—as a species, and as a planet. The stories that we tell to make sense of the world may take account of the impact that humankind is having on our land, air and on other species, or they may ignore it and emphasise the need to grow a nation's economy without concern for the long-term costs.

This section locates the interpretation of worldviews through narrative in relation to actions, in order to set up the approach of following chapters' analysis of the "Old Story", "Modern Story" and the "New Story" in relation to structural violence and positive peace.

1.4.1 Worldviews and Actions

The term "worldview" refers to the way that we, as individuals or groups, conceptualise reality. Clifford Geertz describes worldviews as 'both models *of* reality—they describe and explain the nature of things—and models *for* action—they provide us with the mental blueprints that guide our behaviour' (cited in Hiebert 2008: 28). In other words, our worldviews provide a map for perceiving reality, that directs the ways that we live our lives. Our worldviews are inseparable from our grand narratives, our macro-histories, which provide for us a sense of our place in the scheme of things. It is from this narrative that we derive what is valuable and what is not. Our image of the world and the narratives this evokes, has a significant influence on our actions, which individually or collectively, consciously or unconsciously, impact on the experience of peace or violence in the world.

The two dimensions that comprise a worldview correspond with the dimensions in which we live: *space* (the synchronic) and *time* (the diachronic). In *Transforming Worldviews*,

chapters I will consider the dialectic between institutions causing social and ecological injustice and the actions of individuals, which either affirm consensus narrative and maintain institutions, or conflict with a consensus and challenge the status quo. The latter is critical to addressing structural violence.

Paul Hiebert (2008: 68) explains that worldviews can be expressed *synchronically* (as a structure, an image, root metaphors) and/or *diachronically* (as story, or myth). However, the two cannot be separated—the spatial and temporal dimensions combine to form a worldview (72). An overarching story of the universe, as shall be explored in Parts Two and Three, is a diachronic expression of a person’s worldview. While narrative is the main focus of analysis to come, the “Old Story”, “Modern Story” and “New Story” cannot be understood without also mentioning the synchronic aspects of these worldviews. This shall include the ontological structure, and the metaphors and images used to make sense of the world.²⁹

The narrative structure underlying these worldviews may stretch over 14 billion years (for evolutionists), 6,000 years (e.g. for “creationists”), or into infinity of cycles (e.g for Hindus). These timelines (or time-circles), as we shall see, tell unique stories of life’s purpose, values and direct our actions in different directions. Such narratives are forms of “macro-history”, which Trompf (2012: 59) explains:

denotes the writing and envisaging of the past as a whole, synoptically or “from a bird’s eye view,” and doing so usually entails explaining present conditions and presaging momentous events in the future.

Trompf reminds us that not all cultures value a historical consciousness—for some it is a ‘cultural oddity.’ Trompf (1989: 621) reminds us that ‘there once lay hundreds of more regionally confined, more homogeneous and tribal oriented human groupings’ that ‘we simply lack long-term histories.’ As I previously discussed in terms of Heidegger’s “thrownness”, the time and society in which one lives has an overpowering effect on one’s worldview. Societies that tell their history orally may have very different ways of being in the world than societies based on written literacy.

Walter Ong ([1982]; 2002: 70) explores the movement from oral societies to written ones, the former being more connective than the latter. ‘Sight isolates, sound incorporates,’ he writes. ‘The spoken word is always an event, a movement in time, completely lacking in

²⁹ In particular the synchronic aspects of the “Old Story”, “Modern Story” and the “New Story” will be illustrated using Alan Watts’ “Ceramic”, “Fully-automatic” and “Dramatic” models or images of the world, in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

the thing-like repose of the written or printed word' (73). Once words are written down, it does not matter how much they are contested the written word will still remain. For Ong, 'The paradox lies in the fact that the deadness of the text, its removal from the living human lifeworld, its rigid visual fixity, assures its endurance' (80).

When language is written down, a risk arises for it to be understood in ways that it was not intended. Written words can be de-contextualised, 'resurrected into limitless living contexts by a potentially infinite number of living readers' (80). Although writing is divisive, it brings with it great benefits. Ong notes that while 'writing introduces division and alienation,' it brings about 'a higher unity as well.' Seeing a written word enables one to step back and see it from a distance, and often to see it with a new perspective. Ong explains that language 'intensifies the sense of self and fosters more conscious interaction between persons. Writing is consciousness-raising' (174). The tensions between oral and written literacy reflect a tension between separation and connection.

Worldviews are constantly influencing and being influenced by an evolving world and, in particular, the power hierarchies of a society. Worldviews simultaneously 'enable us to see reality and blind us from seeing it fully' (Hiebert 2008: 84). Worldviews are interwoven into social systems, with 'the powerful us[ing] them to justify the oppression of the poor, and the poor to justify rebellion' (84). Western society, with its economics based on growth and consumption, encourages an individualist and materialistic worldview. Because worldviews are deeply engrained in our psyche and our social systems, these 'foundational assumptions about the nature of reality' become clothed in an 'aura of certainty this is, in fact, the way reality is' (84). Hiebert points out that 'like glasses, [worldviews] shape how we see the world, but we are rarely aware of their presence. In fact, others can often see them better than we ourselves do (46).'

It is worth noting that Hiebert's underlying purpose for writing *Transforming Worldviews*—revealed in his Introduction and coming to full force in chapter titled "Toward a Christian Worldview"—is to transform people from other religions or atheists into a fundamentalist Christian worldview. Hiebert attempts a critical realist perspective of Christianity, admitting the 'it is arrogant to claim that we fully understand the biblical worldview' (267). Yet he moves on to articulate a cosmic narrative that perceives a hard

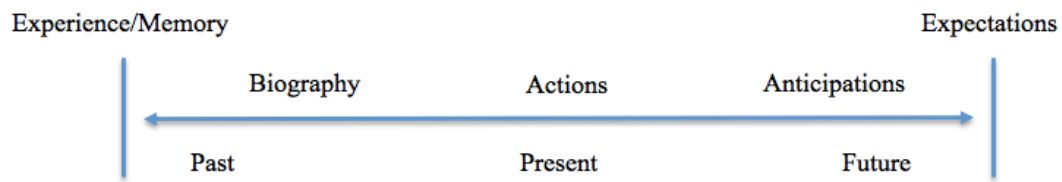
line between good and evil, and insists on a dualism between “God” the creator “His” creation. Hiebert stresses his concern ‘not with conversion in general but with *conversion to Jesus*,’ going on to discuss the levels at which a true conversion must take place (312; my emphasis). My distaste for Biblical literalism and my panentheistic, inclusivist and peace-oriented worldview plays a role in the way that I read Hiebert’s words. Through this lens I struggle to comprehend how, with such a vast understanding of the world’s cultures, this anthropologist’s own ideological glasses might remain so thick! But then again, I do not know Hiebert’s story. Like Hiebert, millions of people stand loyal to their faith, each grounded in their own personal biography. I will return to discuss the Biblical literalist worldview, its connection to peace and violence, and the ways that the Bible can be understood more one-dimensionally or multi-dimensionally in Chapters Three and Five.

1.4.2 Narratives and Decisions

The way that we interpret past events affects the way we make choices in our future. A coherent story about our past can empower us to deal with uncertainties faced in the present. Our expectations for the future, can impact on the decisions we make today. Connecting the personal with the political, Rees (2003) examines how an awareness of biography entices one to question the ‘constraints and opportunities which affect freedom to participate in public life and to make choices about private affairs’ (35). In short, our past, present and future, are interrelated, connected through story. If we want to bring about a more peaceful future, we need to take a critical look at the stories that influence our actions. As Rees (1991: 21) puts it: ‘The story which unmask choices made in the past can suggest opportunities for the freedom to choose in the future.’

The way that we focus on different aspects of events and frame our stories relates to our expectations for the future, which impact on the decisions we make in the present. Figure 1.6 (below) depicts the way that history influences present (the way our actions of the past become our biography) and the present influences the future (through actions, which can be expanded or limited by our expectations).

Figure 1.6 Connecting past biography with present actions aimed at an anticipated future



The two-way arrow in this figure illustrates the way that the present influences our past. We reframe different understandings of past events in light of our present. In this way the past remains alive and changing, as we may come to remember it in different ways. The way that we tell the story of past events influences our expectations of how future events may unfold. Together our biography and anticipations affect the choices we make in the present.

The point to be made here is that the aim of positive peace intrinsically involves a narrative. In saying to ourselves: “If I do this, it will bring about that,” we are in a sense telling stories. Ricoeur (1988: 249) observes that ‘the practice of narrative lies in a thought experiment by means of which we try to inhabit worlds foreign to us.’ For Ricoeur, narrative is a junction between aims and actions, between ‘imagination’ and ‘impetus.’ The same dynamics occur whether one is telling oneself a story, or sharing a story with someone else. The simple act of thinking about *time* brings about *narratives* and pushes one into an *ethics*. Storytelling is ‘never ethically neutral’ but ‘implicitly or explicitly induces a new evaluation of the world and of the reader as well’ (249). Ricoeur observes:

Narrative already belongs to the ethical field by virtue of its claim—inseparable from its narration—to ethical justice. Still it belongs to the reader, now an agent, an initiator of action, to choose among the multiple proposals of ethical justice brought forth by reading (249).

Ricoeur is not inferring that all narratives contribute to justice, but he is making the point that all stories involve a sense of justice (consciously or unconsciously) as the narrator

assumes it. Put another way, ethics is a by-product of the temporal and selective nature of narrative. This claim is informed by Ricoeur's personal biography, affected by his father's death during the First World War and the violence that he witnessed in a German prison during the Second World War. Ricoeur questioned how such violence could be committed in a society with high moral standards. This question motivated much of Ricoeur's research into the role of narratives, symbols and metaphors in guiding a person's actions, and the just and unjust consequences.³⁰

Through narrative one makes connections between the past, present and future. In doing so we feel a sense of anticipation and promise, that is, thinking about future action and outcomes. This includes the anticipation of "what will have been", in other words an anticipated narrative of retrospection.³¹ Such an appraisal, applied to connecting narrative and peace, raises questions about what is justice and for whom (or what is positive peace) and what actions might help to bring it about? It raises questions about how the actions of people in the twenty-first century will be recorded in history. Will we take action to address global forms of the structural violence such as the demolition of forests, the extinction of species, the exploitation of people in the third world and our relentless use of non-renewable resources? Will future generations look back at us with admiration or horror?

In this chapter I have established that the way we interpret the past affects the actions we take to bring about desired futures. This applies not only to our personal story, but also to our shared cultural past, our story as a species, and even as a universe. It is the contention

³⁰ In 2011 I visited the University of Chicago—where Ricoeur worked as Professor of Philosophical Theology from 1967 until 1992 (succeeding the influential panentheist thinker Paul Tillich). I took a photo of Paul Ricoeur's Obituary, written by Antonio Olivo, *Obituary: Paul Ricoeur 92*, which was pinned to an announcement board in a corridor at the University.

In Ricoeur's obituary, Olivo (2005) observes: "[Ricoeur] saw the butchery of the Second World War and asked: Out of a culture that has high ideals and high morals, how do you explain this problem of evil?" ... The search for an answer led Dr. Ricoeur to examine the symbolism of evil, in society and in literature, and the role that it plays in distorting one's will to do good ... From there, Dr. Ricoeur examined the nature of symbols, delving into how narrative, dialogue and the use of metaphors combined to create new meaning.'

³¹ The statement "anticipated narrative of retrospection" emerged from a Ricoeurian discussion group in Hickory, North Carolina, based on the final chapter of Ricoeur, Paul (1988). *Time and Narrative*. Vol. 3. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. This discussion group has had a significant influence on my attraction Ricoeur's thought and in particular with regards to understanding Ricoeur's take on time, narrative and ethics.

of this thesis and the “New Story” that interpreting our *own story as part of the cosmic story* is a powerful means of motivating action toward positive peace. My own story is an example of this,³² standing in contrast to two dominant Western narratives that conceive of the self individualistically, rather as a “self” that is an interconnected part of other “selves” and nature (as I will explore in Parts Two and Three). Narratives can be used to attach or detach our self from the ecosystems we are a part of. They can be used to attach or detach our present with our past and future. Narratives can guide our values, our choices and our actions in peaceful or violent ways. This central idea is explored throughout this research project.

1.4.3 Narrative: Bridge or Barrier?

This thesis emphasises a need to use of narrative to bridge parts and wholes within space (connecting the individual person with the web of connections in which they operate) and within time (connecting the present with the past and future). It is important to note that the opposite is also true. Narrative can be used to blockade parts and wholes, separating individuals in space (ecologically) and in time (from future generations). As far as narrative can be a bridge between parts and wholes, narrative may also be used to create a gulf between parts and wholes. Narrative, in this sense, is a *pharmakon*.³³ One can narrate other people as friends or foe. One can narrate a connection or a separation. Therefore, narratives may be used to maintain structural violence or to transform it.

Why should a middle-class Australian care about the poverty of people living in countries so far away? Why should Australians care about “boat people” (a term used to describe refugees seeking refuge from other countries by boat)? Is it not up to governments in other countries to fix these problems? Why should Australia implement a carbon tax when, with a population of less than 24 million, it won’t make a speck of difference in

³² As a fundamentalist Christian my life concerned evangelising to “save people’s souls”. Abandoning that narrative left a sense of purposeless, and I sought fulfilment in a more materialistic existence. When that didn’t provide satisfaction I looked further, finding meaning and purpose in the understanding that my personal narrative is part of the cosmic narrative and that I could participate in helping bring about a more peaceful and just society.

³³ I borrow this term from Ricoeur (2004: 141-45), who applies it to history and in relation to the myth of *Pbaedrus* Plato—in the Prelude to Part Two of *Memory History Forgetting*. Ricoeur considers history to be a *pharmakon*—unsure ‘whether it is a remedy or a poison, or both at once’ (145).

comparison to China's mass development projects? Global warming is such a monstrous problem, what difference does one person's actions make? All of the above questions depend on the way the standpoint from which one speaks, as well as the points one focuses on and ignores. It depends on the way that one frames the story. Rees (1991: 75) points out that a narrative which explains the injustice of poverty as due to the poor being 'lazy, disorganized or immoral,' is likely to maintain structural violence, with little time given to self-reflect on 'the behavior of the rich or about the policies and institutions which maintain social inequality.' In comparison, Dambisa Moyo's *Dead Aid* (2008) looks to the structural causes of poverty in Africa, blaming it on a dependency relationship caused by the international aid system, which she believes has disempowered the people.³⁴

Narratives can contribute to positive peace as easily as they can impede it. Within the narratives that dominate in Western culture, there is no clear reason why a person should care about global forms of indirect and structural violence. In that view, we are consumers in an economy, and to help this economy we should consume as much as we can. It is the contention of this thesis that narrating the connections between parts and wholes—between our individual selves, our socio-political-economic institutions, our ecosystems—points to the connection of our individual actions and the perpetuation or addressing of structural violence such as global poverty and environmental destruction.

In *Traces on the Rhodian Shore—Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century*, Clarence Glacken (1967: x) observes a pattern between the tendency to narrate a separation between humanity and nature, and a tendency to narrate their unity as parts within a whole, from the Greek and Roman Classics until the end of the eighteenth century. He traces the ways that nature has influenced humanity, and the impact of human attitudes and actions on nature.³⁵ It is at

³⁴ Although there are conflicting views on Moyo's thesis, I use this example to show how different narratives can maintain structural violence (as in blaming it on the poor's laziness or immorality), or work to transform it (by seeking to understand the structural causes and structural solutions).

³⁵ For example, Glacken considers Hippocrates' *Airs, Waters, Places* (400 BCE), Huxley's *Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature* (1863), Arthur Lovejoy's *Great Chain of Being* (1936), Thomas Malthus' *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798), and Count Buffon (Georges-

this point that the narratives that comprise our worldview meet the narratives that constitute our personal identity, which together impact on our decisions and actions contributing to violence or peace.

This chapter has considered what it means to use narrative as method, and some of the perspectives that arise from viewing the world through a narrative lens. It has pointed to the connection between the way that we tell the story of our personal and cosmological pasts; and the individual choices enacted in the present that combine to co-create our personal and cosmological future, and arguably influence the peaceful and violent experiences within it. I have discussed the ways that narratives contribute to peace or violence, depending not only on the construction of the narratives themselves—the aspects that they separate or connect—but also on the way that the narratives are held. Narratives may be held in a one-dimensional way that excludes other narratives, or in a multi-dimensional way that leaves space for alternative ways of telling the story and examines knowledge within its context. Examples of one-dimensional and multi-dimensional narratives will be contrasted in Parts Two and Three. But first, Chapter Two will tease out the definitions of peace, expanding from the absence of war to include addressing indirect and structural forms of violence, reflecting on calls for more holistic narratives as an important step toward positive peace.

Louis Leclerc's *Histoire Naturelle* (1812, 1831), studying the balance and harmony within nature that became early ecological theory.

Chapter 2 What is Peace?

Peace with justice is characterised by an absence of violence, whether it is direct and observable or indirect and invisible (Rees 2003: 20)

Peace means different things to different people. For some peace is an absence of war. For others it is an absence of conflict. In peace and conflict studies, the aim of peace strives for the absence of violence in all its forms.³⁶ This project is particularly interested in indirect and structural forms of violence as they relates to global issues of systemic social injustice and environmental destruction. This chapter considers expanding definitions of peace to include an ongoing process of “positive conflict” with people, ideas and institutions that are causing direct or indirect violence. It explores three theories through which I make sense of global forms of structural violence, and reflects on calls for holistic and process-oriented narratives that might help address the violence.

2.1 Expanding Definitions of Peace

Norwegian mathematician and sociologist Johan Galtung advances the need for an expanded definition of peace and violence beyond the prevention of direct and personal forms of violence such as war.³⁷ Galtung (1969) labels this limited understanding of peace “negative peace” and defines “positive peace” to include the absence of indirect and structural forms of violence such as poverty. In a footnote Galtung (1969: 190) observes that “‘positive peace’ is constantly changing.’ Indeed he admits that his own definition had changed from identifying positive peace in ‘terms of integration and cooperation’ in 1964, to identifying it ‘mainly with “social justice”’ (190). This definition of positive peace is closely related to Stuart Rees definition of peace with justice, as in the quote that opened this chapter.

³⁶ Galtung (1969: 9) defines peace as the absence of violence in the broadest sense as being ‘present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realisations are below their potential realisations.’

³⁷ Galtung’s personal biography informs his concern and approach to peace. At just fourteen-years old Galtung witnessed the Nazis take his father to a concentration camp, seeding a drive to help prevent war. His expertise in mathematics explains his tendency to categorise, observe patterns and derive formulas (see Galtung and Fischer 2013).

Twenty years later, Galtung's definition of positive peace expanded further to include addressing cultural forms of violence. Cultural violence, Galtung (1990: 291) says, makes other forms of violence 'look, even feel, right – or at least not wrong.' This includes 'those aspects of our culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence' from religion to language to science, which 'can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence' (291). An example of cultural violence used to justify structural violence is the belief that poverty is God's punishment for a person's or group's sin. Another example is the belief that there is no need to care for Earth because Jesus will soon return to save believers and send non-believers to hell. These two examples will be explored in Chapter Three.

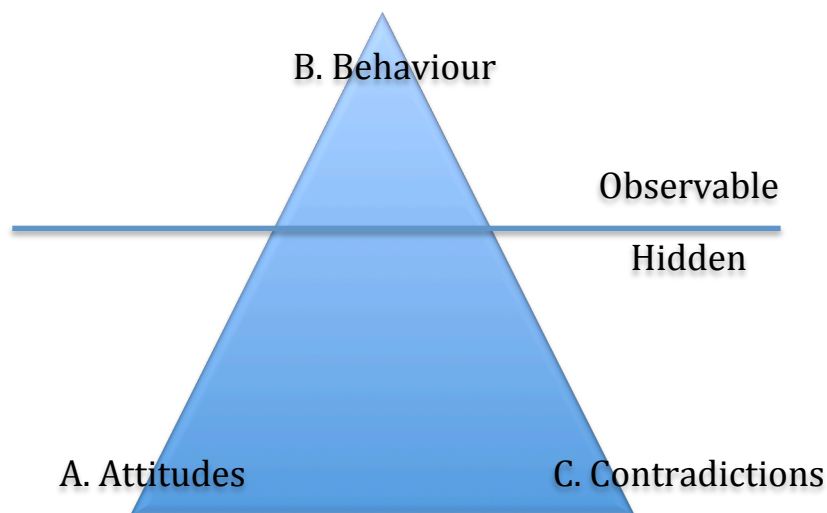
Galtung's vision of positive peace includes working toward direct peace, structural peace and cultural peace. Galtung (1996: 33) envisages a shift in the realm of human care from a natural state of 'survival of the fittest' to 'mutual aid and cooperation'; a shift from cultural imperialism to cultural co-existence; from violence against the self (seen in suicide and depression) and violence against each other (seen in war and vast social injustice) to intra- and inter-personal peace; from ecocide (irreversible violence against nature), to a non-homocentric ecological peace; and from sexism, racism, the militarization of education and war journalism, to humanism, non-speciesism, peace education, peace research, and peace journalism.

Yet even such a broad definition, Galtung observes, remains limited—it 'has a basic shortcoming: it is too static' (265). Galtung stresses the importance of a 'dynamic peace ... *Peace is what we have when creative conflict transformation takes place nonviolently*' (265). Here Galtung's definition evolves to focus on the process of conflict:

Conflict transformation is a never-ending process ... "The process is the goal" might be our formulation; and the moment one thinks a steady-state solution has been found it is lost ... We are in all conflicts. And they in us. (90)

Peace researchers emphasise that violence is not the same as conflict. Conflict occurs when different groups or individuals have goals or interests that they perceive to be incompatible. Conflict is thus observed in the Behaviour of parties, caused by Attitudes and Contradictions—as in the ABC of Galtung’s Conflict Triangle, see Figure 2.1 below³⁸:

Figure 2.1 Galtung’s The Conflict Triangle



Galtung points out that conflict can be a creator or a destroyer: ‘Conflict generates energy. The problem is how to channel that energy constructively’ (70). At times, the aim of positive peace calls for conflict with the status quo, for example taking a stand against oppressive structures such as against religious institutions that discriminate against women or homosexuals, or laws that allow people and corporations to profit from exploiting other people or the environment.

Galtung suggests that the ‘contradictions’ at the root of a conflict can be transcended without ‘compromise’ or ‘withdrawal’:

³⁸ Reconstructed from Galtung’s famous triangle (see Galtung 1996: 72).

Transcendence is the outcome that carries the proud title “creative conflict transformation”. Something new, *sui generis*, usually unexpected has emerged from the process ... Both goals are realized, possibly somewhat transformed ... Key word: *creativity*’ (96).

Galtung’s Transcend model of conflict resolution seeks a both/and answer to conflicts. In Part Three, I propose the “New Story” as a transcendent or both/and answer to the perceived conflict between religion and science.

Quaker and peace theorist Elise Boulding (2000: 1) also emphasises an understanding of peace that is ‘a far cry from the stereotyped notions of peace as a dull, unchanging end state.’ She observes the active process involved, contrasting a static and dynamic approach to peace:

A static image of peace, as reflecting human inactivity, is dramatically opposed to the characterization of peace as process, of peacebuilding as adventure, exploration, and willingness to venture into the unknown (1).³⁹

Boulding’s understanding of peace resonates with that of process thinker Alfred North Whitehead ([1933] 1964: 284), who considers peace to be a ‘barrier against narrowness’:

The deliberate aim at Peace very easily passes into its bastard substitute, Anesthesia. In other words, in the place of a quality of “life and motion,” there is substituted their destruction. Thus Peace is the removal of inhibition and not its introduction.

Proponents of the “New Story”, as will be explored in Part Three, share Galtung and Boulding’s emphasis on creativity and process as essential to positive peace. A central argument of this thesis is that the “New Story” can help motivate positive conflict against institutions and norms that maintain cultural and structural violence, in order to move toward positive peace.

³⁹ She reminds readers that ‘*Pacifism*, which literally refers to the *making* of peace (from *pace* and *facere*) is often mistakenly understood as passivism. One major attitudinal obstacle to the acceptance of peaceableness as a desirable social norm is the connotation of inactivity associated with it’ (1).

Theories of nonviolence suggest that conflict can and is most effectively conducted without violence. The life and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi is a prime example (see Gandhi 1956). American political scientist Gene Sharp (1973) articulates 198 methods of nonviolent conflict. These range from ‘methods of nonviolent protests and persuasion’ in the form of public speeches, mass petitions, slogans, caricatures, leaflets, posters, skywriting, picketing, lobbying, art, film, music, parades, walk-outs and ‘mock funerals’, through to methods of social, economic and political noncooperation such as civil or social disobedience, social excommunication, boycotts (e.g. by consumers of products, civilian’s of elections or government bodies), strikes (of students, workers, producers, industries), and withdrawal from social, political or economic institutions.

Galtung, Boulding and Whitehead’s emphasis on the constructive and creative role of conflict may be applied as an extension of Galtung’s notions of positive and negative peace, to introduce the terms *positive conflict* and *negative conflict*.

2.1.1 Positive Conflict

Recalling the conversation between my father and I, that opened Chapter One, one can observe a tension between a one-dimensional fundamentalist Christian narrative, and the search for an inclusive and comprehensive replacement. In stepping away from the one-dimensional perspective that the religion provided me, the notions of peace and conflict were at play. My former “certainty” in “knowing the truth” that fundamentalists’ purport (in Jesus as “the way” to get to heaven) contained a sense of *peace*. This narrative is packed with purpose; it provides a clear understanding of good and evil, and promises rewards and “justice” to be delivered in an afterlife. My father *knows* that he is going to heaven when he dies, and he finds great peace in this “Truth.”

Had I accepted my father’s “Truth”, I would have avoided conflict within my family, facilitated greater harmony in those relationships, and prevented a lot of personal anguish. It takes much less effort to agree with someone than to try to justify the reasons that you do not. Yet uncritical conformity, in this case, would have led to a deep sense of cognitive dissonance, colluding in a narrative of structural violence. The idea that Buddhists, Muslims, Jews and Atheists would be damned to hell for not believing in Jesus was not a story that I could accept. Such judgments made against whole groups of

people have violent implications on the global stage. These narratives are connected to the direct violence of extremist groups, the cultural violence of discrimination against homosexuals and people with different beliefs, and to forms of structural violence that will be explored in Chapter Three.⁴⁰ In my experience of fundamentalist Christianity, questioning the consensus narrative was a *positive conflict*—a creative and constructive stage of my life.⁴¹

In order to deal with ‘uncritical conformity in the family, the school, the agency, the college or university,’ Rees (1991: 41) recommends starting with examining norms and assumptions and contesting them when due. History shows that in order to address oppressive institutions and structures one must engage in conflict with the status quo. This is seen in Mahatma Gandhi’s hunger strikes, the leadership of Nelson Mandela in challenging and unhinging apartheid in South Africa, and even in the more recent sudden rise of protests surrounding the Occupy Movement. When positive peace is viewed as a process it becomes simpatico with the notion of positive conflict.

Here the term positive conflict will be used to emphasise the constructive and creative role of conflict in addressing violence and working toward positive peace. Positive conflict stands in contrast to *negative conflict*, that refers to destructive forms of conflict that cause suffering and harm to humanity, including generations to come.⁴² The term positive conflict emphasises the constructive role of (nonviolent) conflict in questioning

⁴⁰ For further discussion on the direct and cultural violence that results from religious narrative see Bennett 2011.

⁴¹ The evaluation of positive and negative outcomes of conflict depends on the *standpoint* and *framing* of the person making the observation. Questioning the consensus narrative of my upbringing was psychologically violent, as I temporarily lost my framework for making sense of the world. In hindsight I see this conflict as positive, although my family might see it as a negative conflict.

⁴² The distinction between means and ends is crucial. In peace theory, it is generally recognised that peaceful means are essential to peaceful ends. If defined according to its ends, positive conflict would not strictly deny the use of violence: theoretically violent conflict could be used to bring forth positive peace. Yet history shows that conflict enacted violently tends to have violent consequences—due to its ineffectiveness in bringing positive peace either in the short-term, or in the long-term—where dissatisfied parties take vengeance for former harms. Violence can therefore generally be considered to be a negative conflict—both in its process, and in its ends (for more see Gandhi 1956).

the status quo, challenging oppressive and unjust institutions, and contributing to the physical, intellectual and creative realisations of humanity.⁴³

The self-reflexive and embedded understanding of narratology explored in Chapter One, combined with the above discourse on positive peace, brings me to Paulo Freire's ([1970]; 2005: 67) educative and critically reflective notion of *conscientização* (in Portuguese) or *conscientization*. Freire's notion of conscientization captures what I consider to be the essence of positive conflict, and is at the crux of the "New Story's" contribution to positive peace.⁴⁴

2.1.2 "Conscientization" as Positive Conflict

Conscientization involves 'learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality' (translator's footnote, Freire 2005: 35). Although Freire wrote in the context of teaching literacy as a means of social change in Brazil, his notion of conscientization resonates with confronting other forms of oppression, such as those imposed by religions and cultures. In Figure 2.2 I represent the phenomenology of conscientization, as in the experience of an expanding awareness of the self in its socio-cultural-political-economic-historical and ecological context.

⁴³ Here and at other times during this thesis, deep ecologists might criticize me for retaining a humano-centric position. Yet by understanding humanity as inseparable from their ecosystems and considering a long-term perspective of the two, the value of all species and nature will rise to be equal if not superior to the value of humanity. Chapters Five and Six will explore these ethical dimensions in greater detail.

⁴⁴ Freire shares with process philosophers the influence of phenomenology and Hegel's dialectics (see Schugurensky 2011: 66), as well as a secular theology that emerged from a progressive Catholic Action movement, which 'expressed a "preferential option for the poor" and would later be known as "liberation theology"' (17). John Cooper (2006: 282-291) samples the work of Gustavo Gutiérrez, Juan Luis Segundo and Leonardo Boff, from the Latin American liberal theology tradition, noting their overlap with the panentheistic concept of "God".

Figure 2.2 A representation of conscientization

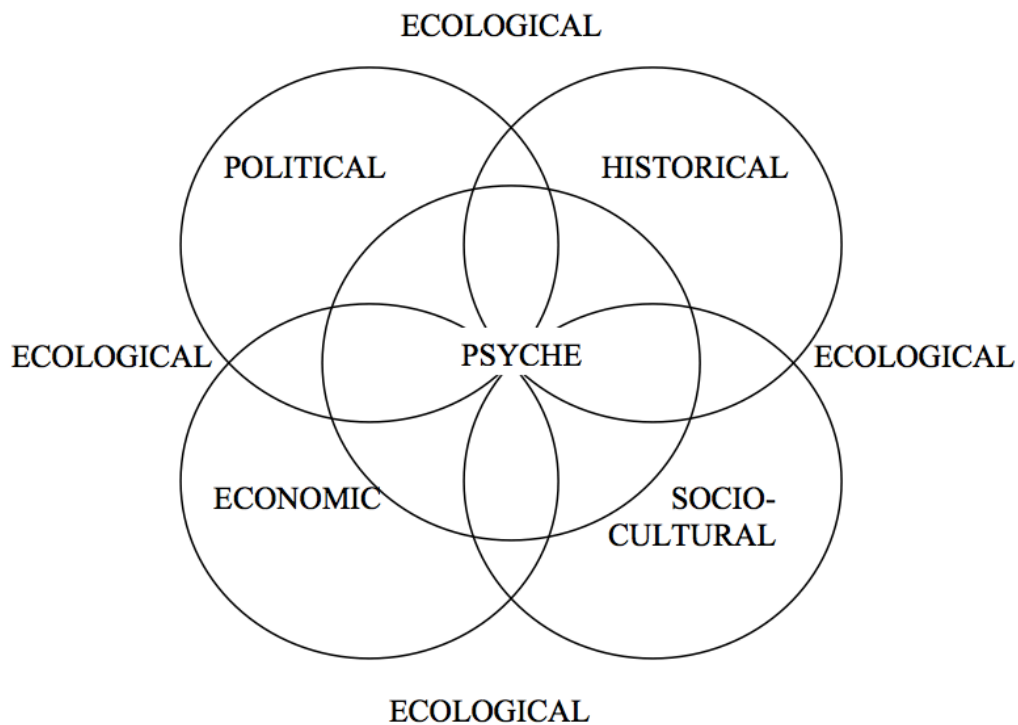


Figure 2.2 captures the way that I have experienced the process of conscientization in confronting various contradictions within fundamentalist Christianity and the outside world. It represents some of the spaces in which a person may strive to understand, as conflict resolution theorist John Paul Lederach (1995: 19) puts it, ‘awareness of *self in context*.’ The figure maps a web of relations in which each of us appears to be caught. It is from our self-centric position that we experience the world and, if curious enough, from this standpoint that we may question the construction of dimensions that surround us.

The figure places the individual psyche in the centre, the location from which our understanding of our selves begins. From this personal standpoint one experiences a world that is constructed by political, historical, economic and socio-cultural dynamics. All of these (human) dimensions are located within an ecological system on which human survival depends. This figure captures a dialectic between our inner and our outside worlds—our inner world influences the outside world, and the outside world influences our inner world. Political, historical, economic, socio-cultural and ecological dimensions construct our psyche; while simultaneously, our psyche and our actions impact on the

political, historical, economic, socio-cultural and ecological dimensions around us. These dimensions are not separate from one another.⁴⁵ This understanding feeds into David Barash and Charles Webel's (2009: 413) proposition that:

a world at peace is one in which environmental, human rights, and economic issues all cohere to foster sustainable growth and well-being. Ecological harmony cannot realistically be separated from questions of human rights or ecological justice.

Conscientization involves a challenging but rewarding process of coming to understand the world in its context and understanding its parts in relationship to other parts and their wholes. It involves examining why the world is the way it is, and asking how Earth's inhabitants can be empowered to flourish in a collective harmony with their habitat.⁴⁶

The narratives that we hold about our origins, the history, political and cultural identity of our personhood, society and species, and our economic and ecological location, are a starting point for each of us. As captured in Figure 2.2, these narratives meet our psyche—our subjective centric location and background upon which all other phenomena are observed, experienced and understood. One can learn to perceive the influences of interrelating levels of global political, historic, economic, socio-cultural and ecological systems, and participate in changing the oppressive elements of them. Or one can ignore these connections, and live within their constraints. Essential to the former is a narrative of possibility, a perception that structures can change, and that the decisions that we as individuals make actually do contribute to violence or peace. Paulo Freire ([1970]; 2005: 49) writes:

⁴⁵ Trompf (2005: 13) observes: 'all things are political (in Aristotle's sense again) and all things economic (since being human is about sustenance in a material world). All things are psychological (because human affairs concern the development and interaction of countless *psychai*), and there is no single datum of humanity's life which logically lies outside the scope of the social scientific interest in physical types, social structure, the place of men and women in space, time, or in ecosystems.'

For example: war is economic, as in the weapons industry; war is political, in the sense of seizing land and resources to increase power; war is socio-cultural, in its support or resistance from a nation's citizens; war is ecological, in the sense of its use of resources and the pollutants it expels; wars are recorded in history, and in recording some views and leaving out others, history is political.

⁴⁶ The world "flourishing" is a term often used in deep ecology and process thought as applied to ethical aims (for example see Palmer 1998 :169; Cobb and Griffin 1976: 155).

In order for the oppressed to be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of oppression, not as a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation which they can transform.

Freire notes that this perception is necessary but not enough to bring about the transformation. Knowledge must bring about *action*. Education that encourages questioning and critical thinking helps one understand their view of the world in its historical and cultural context, and to see the way that their beliefs and actions connect with larger-scale consequences.

The dialectical nature of the self and society, the interactive co-creating nature of the layers of our being, is essential to the aim of positive peace. On the micro level, structures may appear to be unchanging, even unchangeable; yet history shows that from a macro perspective these structures are *always changing*. Indirect forms of violence involve large institutions and structures that appear to self-perpetuate while at their roots are created, maintained, and can be changed, by individuals. Whether or not individuals are aware of it they are collectively contributing to maintaining or addressing structural violence. Addressing structural violence, as I will explore in Chapter Six, calls for reflection on a mixture of micro and macro narratives that drive institutional and personal habits.

The above discussion reiterates the importance of a critical reading of the concept of peace. The aim of positive peace is constantly changing, as understandings broaden. A country that is not engaged in war (a state of negative peace) may still fall prey to less visible forms of structural violence. The next section considers a global perspective of structural violence. It explores the connections between individuals' "small decisions" and the structural violence of poverty in the "third world", of colonialist's denial of original inhabitants of the "fourth world", and the destruction of global ecosystems. The chapter will close by making preliminary connections between structural violence and dominant narratives, and reflecting on a call for alternative ways of understanding the connections between our self and our world.

2.2 A Global Perspective of Structural Violence

Our foul air, polluted waters and oceans, shrinking croplands, creeping deserts and extinguishing species tell the true story (McDonagh 1986: 45).

Cutting down forests, mining coal and fracking may profit some people in the short-term, yet in the long-term it threatens habitats of other animals, disrupts ecosystems, and destroys the quality of air and soil for many generations to come. That the world's richest 300 people own the same as the poorest 3 billion people represents another inequitable part of our human story (Credit Suisse Group 2010). This violence is not directly anyone's fault, but is intimately connected to socio-political-economic institutions and the relations between them (here on referred to as "structures"). The structures responsible for indirect violence are embedded in a history that goes back millions of years to earth's distribution of what we now call "natural resources", and more recently through times of conquest, colonialism and globalisation.⁴⁷

Widespread mainstream and scholarly literature indicates that while environmental issues like a loss in global biodiversity, climate change and scarcity of resources are not new, these changes are 'moving faster and are having a greater impact than in the past' (Prong 2003: 28).⁴⁸ From deforestation and degradation of topsoil, to the pollution of our oceans

⁴⁷ These connections are made, for example, in *Guns, Germs and Steel : The Fates of Human Societies*. Here Jared M. Diamond (1997) tells the story of humanity from hunters and gatherers, agriculture, wars and disease that led us to today's global political and economic situation. Other historians focalise on different aspects of this story, the point being here that a complex of environmental factors, intentions and chance led to this point in history, which remains a constantly changing landscape.

⁴⁸ Seminal books drawing attention to global environmental issues include: Thomas Malthus' *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798), Aldo Leopold's philosophy of a "Land Ethic" in *A Sand County Almanac* (1949), Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1965), *Limits to Growth* (1972) by Massachusetts Institute of Technology, *Small is Beautiful* (1973) by Fritz Schumacher, and Ernest Callenbach's novel *Ecotopia* (1977), *The Economist's Blueprint for Survival* (1972) by Edward Goldsmith and Robert Allen, with contributions and signed by many leading scientists of their day. In *The Roots of Modern Environmentalism*, David Pepper (1989) draws attention to the above works, tracing the evolution of environmental thought, from Hippocrates' *Airs, Waters and Places* written in 5th century BC, through to romantic movements of the 18th and 19th centuries (that were a reaction against the noise and ugliness of Industrialisation).

More recently, documentaries such as former Vice-President Albert Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006) have increased mainstream public awareness and concern about the effect that humans are having on their environment. Developments toward a sustainable society can be seen in the biodegradable bags that are provided by mainstream shops such as Target. Even with these

and air, the extinction of some species and the exponentially growing population of our own, the future of earth as an attractive habitat for future generations of humans is now in question (see, for example: Escobar 1997; Hart 2007: 38; Sachs 2008: 3-6). In the last two hundred years the world population has risen from less than one billion to over seven billion people,⁴⁹ bringing with it the ‘systemic destruction’ of nature, species, societies and cultures, and posing a potential threat to the very ‘survival of biological life’ (Escobar 1997). Strategist for sustainable solutions, Stuart Hart (2007: 38), reminds his business-minded audience that:

one-third of the world’s cropland is losing topsoil at a rate that is undermining its long-term productivity, fully half of the world’s rangeland is overgrazed and deteriorating into desert, and the world’s forest have shrunk by about half since the dawn of agriculture and are continuing to shrink.

Industrialisation and capitalism have brought many gains, such as manufacturing, communication and transportation technologies. Yet the “business as usual” of Western society is damaging ecosystems, causing the extinction of many species and global warming, with destructive consequences for current and future generations. Deep ecologist Tim Hayward (1994: 1) observes that ‘now, perhaps more than ever, the exploitation of nature goes hand in hand with the exploitation of some humans by others.’ Exploring a holistic perspective of global issues through theories of structural violence point to the interconnection between issues of entrenched poverty in some countries, the exponentially increasing population (generally in those countries), and the consumption habits of people in other countries. It is useful to explore the connections between population, poverty and the planet as an example of the dynamics of structural violence central to a long-term perspective of the global ecological crisis outlined above.

efforts one must recognise that world populations continue to rise, the gap between rich and poor continues to widen, and the power of corporations to control governments and harm the planet in the name of profit is relentless and seemingly doing more destruction, faster than ever.

⁴⁹ The world population is estimated to have been well under half a million in 1000 C.E., and under one billion in 1750. By 1900 was reaching two billion. In one hundred years the world has added an extra five billion people, reaching seven billion in 2011 (see Durand 1977: 259, and United Nations 2011).

2.2.1 Population, Poverty and the Planet

The environmental impact of humans on earth's ecosystems largely comes down to a function of three factors: *Population x Consumption (or Affluence) x Technology* (Ehrlich and Holdren 1974: 720).⁵⁰ Ultimately to reduce the impact of humans on the environment the global community either need to decrease population, decrease consumption or improve our technology in a way that allows us to consume in non-harmful ways (Hart 2007: 31). Charles Birch (1993: 136), who is a population ecologist in addition to being a process thinker, explains a related global injustice: in third-world countries population is large and consumption is low, while in first-world countries is population is much smaller and consumption much higher. Relating the growth of human population and consumption to that of cancer in a body, Birch observes:

Parts of the body, namely the rich countries, have cancerous growth which is destructive to other parts of the body, namely the poor countries, which still need to grow in material goods (133).

Global population is tied to poverty, which is tied to our economic, social and political models of power, trade and consumption. Strategies for stabilizing the human population are largely tied to strategies for decreasing poverty, based on the theory that by increasing material wealth people will have fewer babies (see Rosling 2010). However, increasing material wealth increases consumption and pollution, and our Earth has limits to the non-renewable resources it can provide and the pollution that it can absorb.

While apologists of global capitalism believe that the capitalist model is the best path to eradicate poverty, economist and policy director of the New Economics Foundation in London Andrew Simms argues that this “trickle-down” theory is an illusion. Simms (18 Oct 2008: 49) shows that on our current trajectory it would take 15 planets' worth of Earth's biocapacity to reduce poverty to a state where the poorest receive \$3 per day. In

⁵⁰ This formula was first published in P. R. Ehrlich and J. P. Holdren (1974: 720). Originally “Consumption” is used rather than “Affluence”: resource consumption = population x consumption per person; and hence: environmental impact = population x consumption per person x environmental impact per consumption. Affluence is used in later works by Ehrlich due to the handy acronym PAT (rather than PCT)—see also Ehrlich 1990: 58, 273.

other words ‘we will have made Earth uninhabitable long before poverty is eradicated.’⁵¹ Similarly political scientist and activist Susan George (2004: 75) observes that even if the global population plateaus at around 10 or 11 billion people, we will need ‘five or six extra planets’, and that is ‘assuming no further environmental degradation takes place.’

It is predicted that if an increase in the affluence of the third-world can be achieved it will slow down global population growth to stabilise at approximately 10 billion (Rosling 2010). Returning to Ehrlich’s equation, the condition for this optimistic prediction is that green technologies allow production, consumption and waste processes to be conducted within the limits of our planet. This relies on people who are gaining short-term individualistic profits from non-renewable energies and unethical industries to cease lobbying their governments in ways that obstruct actions in the direction of positive peace. What narratives can motivate such altruistic decisions and actions to address structural violence? I will explore that question in forthcoming chapters. The point to be made at this stage is that the global community is presently facing a negative conflict between the Western economic model of unlimited growth and a planet with limits, which is causing extreme poverty and destroying the planet for future generations.

The causes of our global ecological crisis—global poverty and environmental destruction—are *indirect*. They are forms of what Galtung (1980: 183) calls “structural violence”, structural in the sense that ‘*no specific actors* are indicated, and ... *no specific motivation* is necessary.’⁵² The indirect nature of structural violence means that responsibility is often dissipated: one might justifiably blame institutions for this destruction. Yet institutions are inseparable from the humans that accept them, operate within them, and who can work to change them. Normalized production and consumption habits of industrialised societies, supported by an international legal and economic

⁵¹ Simms (18 Oct 2008: 49) steps through the mathematics to show why the capitalist system as it stands will not lift people out of poverty—demonstrating that it is designed such that for the poor to get ‘slightly less poor, the rich have to get very much richer.’ This means it would take ‘around \$166 worth of global growth to generate \$1 extra for people living on below \$1 a day’, hence to reduce poverty to a state where the poorest receive \$3 per day, ‘an impossible 15 planets’ worth of biocapacity’ equivalent to our earth would be required.

⁵² Galtung’s 1980 article is a follow-up on his influential 1970 article “A Structural Theory of Imperialism.”

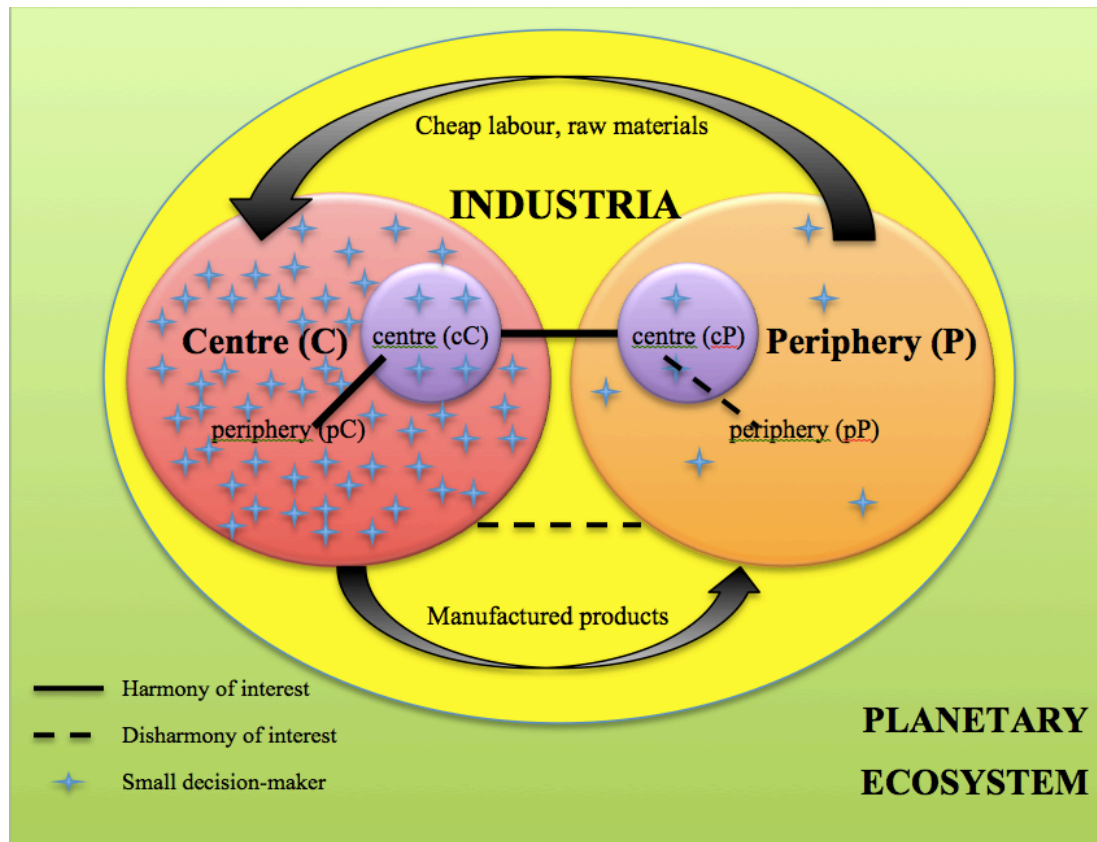
framework, encourage the maximisation of short-term profit for some individuals over the long-term health of the ecosystem.⁵³ My point here is not to blame individuals but to point to a narrative of possibility: if people want change, they can work together to bring it about. In order for this to happen people must see the possibility of that change. This understanding is affirmed by Freire (2005: 83) who observes that through critically reflexive education, people ‘develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation.’ As peace scholars David Barash and Charles Webel (2009: 485) point out, while ‘powerlessness is a self-fulfilling prophecy, so is empowerment.’

Theories of structural violence grapple with the “emergent” properties of the global systems, through which the feedback mechanisms of institutions such as legal and economic structures self-perpetuate and bring about unintended consequences for people, animals and ecosystems. This relates to the work of complex systems theorists, who describe the way that parts influence the whole and the whole influences the parts, with neither completely determined by the other (Thrift 1999). A sort-of property emerges out of interacting components that ‘couldn’t have predicted from what you know of the component parts,’ explains Chris Langton, ‘and the global property, this emergent behaviour, feeds back to influence the behaviour ... of the individuals that produced it’ (cited in Thrift 1999: 33-34). The significance of this two-way causation, particularly in its application to tensions between an individual’s short-term decisions and the collective long-term consequences, will be further interrogated in the analysis below.

For the purposes of this discussion I explore three theories that capture my understanding of the structural violence behind the global ecological crisis and global poverty as discussed above. These are: Johan Galtung’s (1971) “Structural Theory of Imperialism,” William Hipwell’s (2007) “Industria hypothesis”, and Alfred E. Kahn’s (1966) “Tyranny of Small Decisions”. Figure 2.3 combines the latter two theories with the diagram provided in Galtung’s (1971: 84) “Structural Theory of Imperialism”.

⁵³ For an account of this see, for example, Noam Chomsky’s (1999) *Profit over People: Neoliberalism & Global Order*.

Figure 2.3 The workings of “Industria”: small decision makers with varying power



The figure provides a reference point for the following discussion, illustrating the way that “small decisions” (Kahn 1966) maintain the unjust division between “Periphery” and “Centre” (Galtung 1971), which as a whole is maintained and threatened by “Industria” (Hipwell 2007). I use these theories to connect the decisions of individuals—from consumers to politicians and CEOs—to their indirectly violent consequences (structural violence). I will consider these theories individually, before tying them together to consider the role of narrative in maintaining or addressing structural violence.

2.2.1 “A Structural Theory of Imperialism”

In line with Immanuel Wallerstein (1974) and other World-Systems Theorists, Galtung (1971) explores the dynamics of power, dividing nations into the Periphery (P) and the Centre (C), each having within them a periphery (p) and centre (c).⁵⁴ The theory imagines

⁵⁴ In some world systems theories the word “core” is used instead of “centre”, for example in Wallerstein 1974. Galtung’s (1980: 184) theory ‘indicates *what* to look for if imperialism is at

a Conveyor Belt pumping resources (human and natural) from the periphery of the Periphery (pP) to the periphery of the Centre (pC). Figure 2.3 (above), adapted from Galtung's diagram (1971: 84) illustrates this process, including a harmony of interests between pC and the cC, and between the cP and cC; and a disharmony of interest between the pP and cC, and between the C and P. Cash crops such as coffee, cocoa and cotton demonstrate this conveyor belt in action.⁵⁵ Galtung (1971: 88) suggests solutions lie in the "social totality," by questioning 'the totality of the effects of an interaction process' including the economic, political, military, educational and communication dimensions, as well as the cultural, social and psychological effects.⁵⁶ These structures, as argued here, are always in a state of flux and in control of these structures are decisions and actions of individuals, which at present are too often small in scope and outlook to take the social and ecological totality into consideration when making these decisions.

I shall use an example to demonstrate what is meant by some of these concepts. Consumers in the Centre may or may not know that a \$5 cotton singlet is likely to involve sweatshop workers and cotton farmers working in near-slavery conditions, the destruction of top soil, and a significant amount of pollution from production through the transport from, for example, Brazil to China to Australia, and even its disposal. These connections are remote. Responsibility for the working and salary conditions of the people in the periphery of the Periphery are dispersed among powerful economic and political institutions and structures. This renders a single person feeling powerless against them. The more money or influence a person has, the more likely they are to be part of the cC,

work, not *where* to look for it.' Imperialism, here, might be in the sense of economic as well as the 'political, military, communicative, cultural and social' (184).

⁵⁵ Further expressions of this understanding are found in criticisms of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), often linked to neo-liberal agendas, which point out that non-industrial countries are growing food and produce goods for the industrialised countries, at the expense of their own people (for more see Sparr 1994).

In South America I was personally struck by the fact that the producers of some of the world's greatest coffee beans were drinking instant Nescafe. The pP (South American farmers) were growing the beans for a low cost, and were buying them from the cC (Nescafe) in a low grade form for a premium price. Meanwhile the pC (consumers in industrial countries) enjoyed relatively cheap coffee beans ready for their espressos.

⁵⁶ I have chosen not to include world systems models that take into account the rise of "Semi-periphery" nations, representing expanding economics such as Brazil, Russia, India and China. The dynamics of the models still work in a similar fashion, and the addition of Semi-Periphery would have confused the analysis (for more see Wallerstein 1974; Sklair 1997).

and the greater chance they have of helping change the systems. Decision-making by individuals—from consumers to investors to CEOs and governments—collectively work to maintain or address this injustice.

The decision made by one consumer to purchase a \$5 singlet may be of very little consequence, yet when multiplied by a million or 100 million people it can be the fuel that perpetuates sweatshops and destroys ecosystems. The consumer's choice may or may not be informed of these broader social and environmental costs. He or she may feel too small for their choices to make any real difference, or believe that some money for those factory workers and farmers is better than no money. He or she may wish to make more ethical purchasing decisions but not know of any particularly ethical options available to them. Responsibility is dispersed between companies and investors, governments, citizens and consumers. As such, addressing the structural (invisible and indirect) violence described by Galtung's theory is difficult to orchestrate and requires change at many levels.

All of these structural factors are created, maintained and changed by narratives that connect or disconnect one person's actions to their broader effects. Part Two will explore the ways that two over-arching stories that deny or ignore the causal relations between actions of individuals and the significance of their larger consequences act as barriers to peace. On the other hand, as Part Three will explore, narratives that bring these causal relations into focus have the potential to help ignite a sense of collective responsibility and direct actions toward positive peace. These stories operate within psychological and emotional structures, myths and images that comprise a person's worldview. The worldview of decision makers influences the choices that a person makes, just as the consequences of these choices can in turn mould their worldview. The effects are two-way. Causality involves a feedback loop, as Hipwell's theory will show.

2.2.2 “The Industria Hypothesis”

In “The Industria Hypothesis,” Hipwell (2007: 305) conducts a holistic analysis of the global political-economic-ecological situation, positing that a combination of physical, social and cognitive structures of industrial civilization has become ‘toxic to human societies.’ Alluding to Systems Theory, Hipwell describes “Industria” as a global

machine, a parasite to our ecosystem, that is ‘self-organizing, self-regulating, and self-perpetuating’, and is destroying its (and our) habitat (308). Hipwell observes, ‘As it has grown, this machine has disciplined (to use Michel Foucault’s rich term) its human servants’ to:

live their lives according to machine-time (the clock), to adopt machine-values (efficiency and productivity), display machine-properties (uniformity and conformity), and to think machine-thought (logic and disparagement of intuition) (307).

Industria operates by a number of feedback loops that are disconnected to the ecosystems inside which it operates and is dependent on. One of the feedback loops is the systematic prioritisation of monetary profit over almost all other values. The goal of corporations and the rewards that it offers its management staff, are based on monetary profit that the company returns to shareholders. The “limited liability” of owners of corporations rules that even they are not responsible for any exploitation of the environment incurred for their shareholder’s profits (see Boulding 2000: 201). While its management staff may be accountable for profit and abiding by a country’s laws and regulations, responsibility for its social and ecological consequences is often negotiated and neglected. The price that customers pay for goods and services reflects the economic cost and the market value, without taking into account the environmental or social costs involved in the goods production or disposal.⁵⁷ These aspects are left out of Industria’s story.

John Ralston Saul (1997) describes modern society not as a democracy but as a ‘corporatocracy.’ In this global hierarchy, money and power are handed down between generations in ways similar to monarchies (88). The right to free speech awarded to corporations legally allows money to sponsor political campaigns, creating conditions for corruption such as in exchange for influence over policy decisions. Saul observes that ‘corporatism is creating a conformist society’ (94), bringing about a consensus narrative:

We are faced by a crisis of conformity brought on by our corporatist structures.
While the universities ought to be the centres of active independent public criticism,

⁵⁷ The carbon tax and carbon neutral products are examples of market mechanisms working to incorporate these costs into the price of goods.

they tend instead to sit prudently under the protective veils of their own corporations.

We are faced with a crisis of memory, by loss of our humanist foundation (71).

This is not a matter of left or right politics—neither who focus on the ‘shared role of the citizen in the maintenance of the public good.’ Both sides, according to Saul, ‘are based upon a concept of individualism as self-absorption or selfishness’ (163). Corporatocracy breeds conforming entities dominated by other’s power rather than multi-dimensional entities with the power and motivation to engage in positive conflict with unjust structures when they arise. Saul connects the problems of corporatocracy with an ‘inability to see ourselves in the context of our reality’ (111). These observations point to the possibility of a more holistic narrative helping to expose structural violence, enabling positive conflict with destructive consensus narratives promoted by corporatocracy. In Chapter Five I will posit the multi-dimensional narratives of the “New Story” as contributing to this contextualisation and conscientization process.

Hipwell’s (1997; 2007) hypothesis illuminates the downward causation of structures to people. Hipwell attributes life-like qualities to the structures that seem to grow and reproduce, while attributing mechanical qualities to people who seem to think and operate like machines. This juxtaposing analogy is helpful as it elucidates confronting imagery, yet it is worth pointing out that while structures may be life-like and people machine-like, structures are not alive and people are. Structures perpetuate by limiting the perspective and scope of decisions made by humans, yet humans have the power to change those structures should they wish. Preventing such change is another feedback loop, a reductionistic, mechanistic and materialistic worldview facilitated by *Industria*, which decontextualizes human parts from the ecological whole. I will explore this worldview in terms of the “Modern Story” in Chapter Four, which referring to Watts, Birch and Berry I posit is a dominant story across the industrialised world with power embedded in the political and economic framework of *Industria*. Of course, the “Modern Story” is not the only story in the modern world—competing accounts of reality have existed throughout human history, through different religious, political and philosophical ideologies.

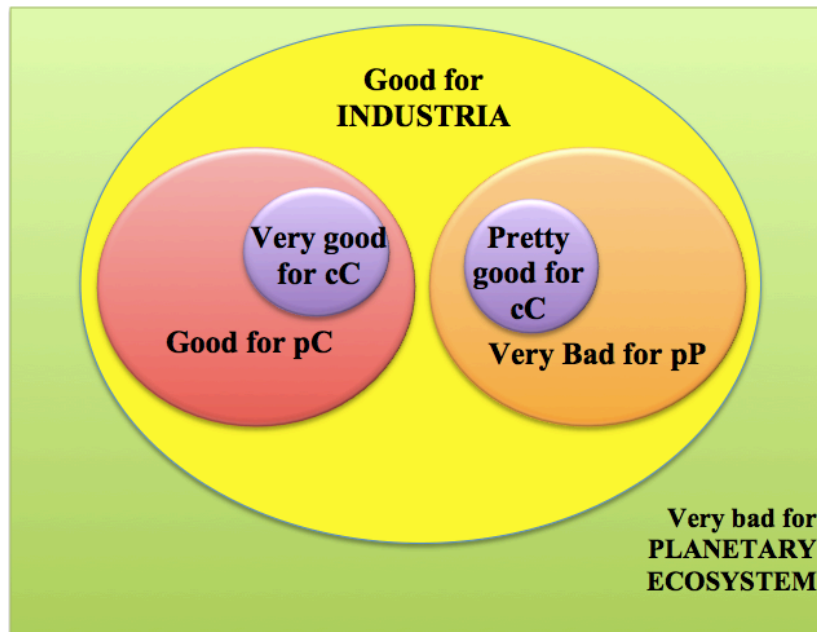
For example, Hipwell (1997: 4) illuminates a stark difference between dominant worldviews of “modern” society, and Indigenous worldviews that consider, as a “fourth world” delegate at the 1972 UN Stockholm Environmental Conference, put it: ‘all life

forms are sacred and part of a universal one.’ In contrast to Marxism and Capitalism, Hipwell asserts that many Indigenous people from around the world see left-right discourse as ‘all one Neo-European debate over who reaped the spoils of industrialization while the rights of indigenous people everywhere were ignored’ (2). Hipwell points out that, ‘for the nations of the Fourth World, the problem is “Industria” itself, regardless of who owns the means of industrial production’ (4). Hipwell uses the term “fourth world” to emphasise the struggle for self-determination expressed by Indigenous delegates at the 1972 UN Stockholm Environmental Conference, who found they have far more in common with other Indigenous peoples than they did with people in the “third world” (1). Hipwell describes the fourth world as ‘at war with modern states, whose discursive strategy is to deny their existence as peoples, and characterize their resistance to territorial invasion (“national integration”) and occupation (“economic development”) as terrorism.’ He points out that a ‘hegemony of European peoples and their descendants’ is still subjugating Indigenous people around the world (2). The worldview of many Indigenous peoples is (ironically) in line with the worldview that I will explore in terms of a “New Story” in Chapter Five.⁵⁸

Returning to Figure 2.3 in a new light, Figure 2.4 attempts to capture the aspects that are good and bad for different people and systems as considered in the theories above. Here I show that what is good for “Industria” (what grows the industries around the world, improves efficiency, increases production, increases consumption, and encourages population growth) is very good for people in the centre of the Centre (cC), and very bad for the people in the periphery of the Periphery (pP). Business as usual within this system is terrible for the planetary ecosystem. Given this ecosystem provides the conditions that allow for people and industry to live and grow, in the long-term Industria’s growth is no good for anyone at all.

⁵⁸ A worldview based on the interconnectedness of all people, with animals, the land and our planet—all considered to be part of one story—is a very old narrative for some people, yet it is a very new narrative to others.

Figure 2.4 **The beneficiaries and benefactors of “Industria”**



Today the most (materially) wealthy people in the centre of the Centre nations (cC) travel the world on oil-guzzling and highly polluting private planes and large power boats, making money from other people’s money and sipping cocktails in tax havens, while millions in the periphery of the Periphery nations (pP) work 14 hour days in sweat shops for 20 cents per hour (see Larson 2013). Figure 2.4 illustrates that while the status quo of today’s global economic institutions works in the favour of people in the Centre nations, it is not working for people born in the Periphery nations. In the long-term, the continuing expansion of “Industria” in its current socially and ecologically exploitive nature is not be in the interests of anyone or any species. Even “Industria” itself will die if our ecosystem perishes.

We are located inside and part of this ecosystem: our food and energy comes from it and our wastes return to it. Humans and industries cannot exist without it. “Industria” is not only inequitable for people of the “fourth world” whose connection to their land and culture has been severely disrupted and for the “third world” where people and lands are exploited. The growth of “Industria” is also a long-term threat to people in the “first world,” who will be unable to escape the effects of climate change, damage to top soil, polluted water, etc. In this way, “Industria” can be seen to be the consequence of a fault in our economic model that Kahn describes as the “tyranny of small decisions.”

2.2.3 “Tyranny of Small Decisions”

In 1966, Kahn postulated an important gap in the dominant economic modelling of supply and demand: an ‘inherent characteristic of the market’ that had not at that time been identified as, in some circumstances, producing a ‘defective or possibly objectionable allocational result’ (23).⁵⁹ While Kahn himself does not address structural violence of our global economy, other scholars have applied his theory to environmental issues including the plight of many of the world’s largest rivers.⁶⁰ This theory sheds light on a dynamic that is central to the diffusion of power of individuals, which animates Industria’s expansive claws.

In exploring tensions between “private wants and public needs,”⁶¹ Kahn points out that decisions which are “smaller” in size, scope and time, for example as considered earlier, an individual consumer’s purchasing choices can collectively have a larger result that impacts on the individual in ways that he or she would not choose if presented the whole choice. Kahn explains his theory with the example of a railway that used to transport passengers to Ithaca in upstate New York, the ‘one reliable means of getting into and out of Ithaca in all kinds of weather.’ Due to individual customer decisions to save time or money by flying or driving, the train service was shut down. Kahn’s own ‘introspective experiment’ shows that at least one customer (himself) would have been willing to pay extra, for example an annual fee, in order to keep the railway running. Kahn (26) points out that each person’s choice to take a flight or drive a car ‘had only a negligible effect on the continued availability’ of the railway, and therefore it would have been ‘irrational for him to consider this possible implication of his decision.’ Kahn (25) points to the

⁵⁹ In connection to the market I will be referring to the work of William Odum, who applies Kahn’s theory to the environment, and furthermore expanding its application to its implications for social justice.

⁶⁰ I first came across the “Tyranny of Small Decisions” as a subheading on an article “Discover Murray River” on the *The Murray: A River Worth Saving: The Murray Darling Basin* webpage (2013). This article explored how decisions of individual farmers were collectively impacting the health of the Murray River. This health of the river has a broad impacts including on the health of the Indigenous peoples such as the Ngarrindjeri community, and all Australians. See Bennett 2013.

⁶¹ Kahn notes that this is the title of readings edited by Edmund S. Phelps rev. ed., Norton, New York: 1965.

‘necessity of looking at the process in broader terms than does the market, and possibly substituting “large” for piecemeal accumulation of “small” decisions.’

This phenomenon of “small decisions” is central to the inner workings of structural violence such as those articulated by Hipwell’s “*Industria*” hypothesis and Galtung’s conveyor belt from Periphery to Centre. Returning to Figure 2.3, that opened the discussion, number of blue stars indicates a rough distribution of power inferred by these theories. The choices of people in the Centre have the most impact globally, while decisions made by people in the Periphery have less. The choices made by the centre of the Centre have the most effect per decision, but a relatively small number of powerful people make these decisions. The four stars in the centre of the Centre in Figure 2.3 represent this power—taking the form of people who own large amounts of capital, corporate executives, governments and influential media persons—people with the power to influence and make decisions that affect the masses.⁶² Collectively the actions of people in the periphery of the Centre (pC) have the largest collective impact on the system, but as individuals have far less than the centre of the Centre (cC). People in the centre of the Periphery (cP) also have a large impact in perpetuating the oppression of the periphery of the Periphery (pP) for their own benefit.

These three theories shed light on the dynamics of structural violence from different standpoints: Galtung points to the unjust flow of human and natural resources at the level of nations; Hipwell illuminates the power of industrial institutions to self-perpetuate this injustice; and Kahn examines the way that decisions of individuals bestows the structures their power. Addressing structural violence requires attending all of these dynamics. In particular it requires people’s small decisions to take into account the global consequences for other people and the planet, or for the institutions to take this into account for them. The question this thesis is concerned with is what narratives can help to motivate individuals to engage in positive conflict with “*Industria*’s” institutionalisation of injustice?

⁶² For example see Egan 2001 and Sklair 1997. Sklair describes this group of influential people in the centre of the Centre as a Transnational Corporate Class.

2.3 Calls for Holistic Narrative

Hipwell (1997: 7) suggests that the violence of Industria, in particular the hostility of ‘Industrian approaches to territory’ is largely due to Western metaphysics. Referring to J. Baird Callicott (1989) and others, Hipwell (4) observes that ‘[t]he predominant Industrian world-view is predicated upon Cartesian mechanistic ontological assumptions.’ Hipwell is referring to an understanding of the world that Callicott (1989: 181) explains reduces everything including nature, animals and even the human body, to ‘inert, material, mechanical “objects”.’ Within this understanding, a line of separation is ‘drawn at the human mind.’⁶³ Similarly, John Cobb Jr. and David Ray Griffin (1976: 18) observe that ‘the dualistic view that human beings are totally different in kind from the rest of the world’, is a contributing factor to the ‘widespread modern sense of being estranged or alienated from reality.’ The alienation of the “self”—felt to be separate from other people, other species and nature—impels “small decision making” that (intentionally or unintentionally) ignores the larger consequences of those decisions. This foreshadows the arguments of Watts, Birch and other panentheists that will be examined in Part Two.

Applying Kahn’s tyranny of small decisions to environmental degradation, William Odum (1982) makes a plea for less reductionist and more holistic approaches to research and decision-making. Reflecting briefly on the examples of air and water pollution, desertification, and management of fisheries, Odum considers the cumulative effects that the small decisions of individuals (parts) may have on the society or environment (whole). The phenomenon is far-reaching. The field of medicine has a tendency to focus on ‘single-cause and single-effect’ with ‘modest emphasis on total body responses’ (Odum 1982: 728). In academic research, Odum (729) points out that grants and tenure tend to be geared to projects that favour the short-term over the long-term, and specific outcomes over projects that impact on a broader level. This is understandable in terms of the “small decisions”, yet can leave significant gaps in the big picture. Trompf (2011: 16-17) observes that we have reached a point of an ‘unmanageable’ number of subject areas with

⁶³ Descartes articulated this in his *Meditations*, starting from radical doubt to arrive at *cogito ergo sum*—“I am consciously aware, therefore I know that I must exist”; or more famously (although less-accurately) “I think, therefore I am” (see Birch 1999: 55). Descartes was a dualist, imagining the mind to be of a different substance to the body. Mechanists or materialists are monists, considering even the mind to be physical.

a ‘weak’ scope of interest due to the ‘utter complexity’ involved in each. This has caused a fragmentation of knowledge within academia, and a lack of understanding of relations between disciplines.

Odum suggests that the key to avoiding these problems lies in developing a holistic understanding of world. Bridging the micro and the macro, the local and the global, Odum encourages an expanded understanding of how parts accumulate and fit into the whole. Applied to the examples above: politicians might consider the long-term and broader impact of their policy decisions; consumers might take into account the social and environmental ethics when making purchases, and academic researchers might expand their understanding of the broader influences and impacts of their specialty research. The possibility exists for politicians, CEOs, consumers and researchers, to make decisions with a view not only to the short-term personal gain but also to the long-term benefits for the whole Earth community.

In this thesis I do not have the space to analyse, compare and evaluate the actions that this effort might entail (the purchasing decisions, policy changes, leadership, investments, divestments, media stories, etc.) that can help to address the ecological crisis outlined above.⁶⁴ The aim of this research project is to explore the dynamics of structural violence in connection with attitudes arising from one- and multi-dimensional narratives. The

⁶⁴ For example, visions of more sustainable global economic systems have been presented by various scholars of economics and political science, such as Herman Daly and his “steady economy” (2008) and Serge Latouche and his “de-growth” economics (2004).

Alternatively, William McDonough and Michael Braungart (2002: 92-93) envisage production and consumption processes that are ecologically sustainable, through investment in cradle-to-cradle designs (as opposed to the dominant cradle-to-grave designs). Here waste becomes food rather than being put in the ground—it is split into biological and industrial, which feeds into natural systems and industrial systems. Within such a vision, the possibility arises that economic growth can continue in ways that are good for the planet and all of its inhabitants, rather than exploitative and destructive in the ways that production, consumption and waste is handled today.

On a more immediate level, climate activist Bill McKibben argues for divestment in the fossil fuels industry and investment in green solutions (see Fossil-Free 2014; Nyks & Scott 2013).

I do not wish to analyse or evaluate these ideas, but point to their existence and posit that—if humans have the motivation to do so—they can confront unjust social, political and economic institutions towards positive peace via the “New Story”.

connection between those narratives, actions and outcomes will have to be deferred to a future project.

This proposition runs counter to the basic assumption of dominant economic and political models that takes individuals' "rational self interest" as the basic unit of analysis. Yet the fact that many scientists, politicians and consumers already direct their research, policy decisions and purchasing dollars toward ethical aims, indicates that while it may seem a high ideal, ecological decision-making is not impossible to achieve. Human beings are not always rational or self-interested. Humans are emotional and relational, often not knowing what is in their best interests especially for the long-term. In *Common Wealth: Economics for a Crowded Planet*, Jeffrey Sachs (2008: 5) appeals to "enlightened self-interest," pointing out that it is in the long-term interests of individuals and 'the wellbeing of their children and children's children,' to care for other people and for the ecological systems that support our lives. What is this expanded concept of self-interest? How can the public majority come to know and act in this way? It is the contention of this thesis, based on theories of process, ecology and peace, that the "New Story" or holistic worldview is one way to motivate such an understanding.

Peace educator Betty Reardon (1988: 51) emphasises a shift from 'analysis' to 'synthesis'—from 'pulling things apart to understand them' to 'putting things together in positive relationships.' Reardon writes:

The present paradigm tends to be reductionistic, to see specific parts, to specialize in knowledge and experience; an alternative would prefer *holism*, asserting that you cannot understand the part unless you see it in the *context* of the whole. This holism is necessary to thinking in terms of "organic peace" or a peace system. It is, we are told by feminists, a drastically *different way of knowing* than the oppositional, dualistic thinking of the patriarchy that characterizes the present system.⁶⁵

Proponents of the "New Story", as will become evident in Parts Two and Three below, share Reardon's criticism of the dominant Western dualistic, reductionist, antagonistic, ends-based paradigm; and a desire to shift to a holistic, relational, systems and process-oriented way of being in the world.

⁶⁵ Emphasis mine.

Up to this point I have been introducing key ideas and the framework from which I approach this broad topic area. Chapter One considered the reasons to explore narrative as method to explore the contribution of the “New Story” to positive peace. Chapter Two has considered changing definitions of peace, articulated the notion of positive conflict and provided a global perspective of structural violence. In particular, I stressed the need to bridge small-scoped short-term decisions with their broader and longer-term consequences, and hinted at ways that narrative can act as a barrier or a bridge. Part Two moves on to explore the connections between one-dimensional narratives and structural violence. It evaluates the “Old Story” of supernatural separation, and the mechanistic separation of the “Modern Story”. This provides a background for my exploration of the “New Story” in Part Three. The stories explored in Chapter Three and Four exemplify one-dimensional narratives of separation, and the stories explored in Chapters Five and Six exemplify multi-dimensional narratives of connection. These stories are not mutually exclusive or collectively exhaustive, but are useful categories through which to consider the connection between worldviews, structural violence and positive peace.

Part II The Violence of One-Dimensional Narratives

“How do you know the Bible is the Word of God?” I ask.

“Because God tells us so.”

“But how did He tell you?” I ask.

“In the Bible,”

“But how do you know what it says in the Bible is right?” I ask.

“Because it’s the Word of God.”

“But...um...how do you know that?” I ask again...

This conversation is an example of what Paulo Freire ([1970]; 2005: 39) refers to as a ‘prisoner of a “circle of certainty” within which he [or she] also imprisons reality.’ A prison’s walls may be comfortable as there is no need to think for one’s self. This sense of certainty may make a person feel a sense of contentment and peace. Yet such a narrative can also be destructive and violent. How does one deal with the trade-off between the peace of a prison and the conflict of life? What justifies the interruption of such comfort? The notion of positive conflict, introduced in Chapter Two, proposes that if a one-dimensional narrative is causing violence to other people, then in the interests of positive peace it should be challenged.

Part One examined the use of narrative theory as theory, method and subject of this research project. It made some preliminary connections between narrative and peace, introducing use of standpoints and framing to distinguish between one- and multi-dimensional narratives. Reflecting on the standpoint (in space and time) from which we narrate our self and our world pointed to the larger stories that have influenced a given perspective. A multi-dimensional approach to narrative understands that every narrator, speaking from his or her standpoint, is not telling the *whole* story. A story can be told differently by including some aspects and leaving out others. Framing involves a selection process of what is perceived and what is ignored—in our experiences and in the memory of those experiences. This begs the question of the standpoint and framing

decisions made by the people who have narrated, edited and interpreted history, including the important stories of religions and cultures. While it sounds simple, an understanding and application of framing and standpoints entices an openness to new information and an empathic approach to the other.⁶⁶ These narrative tools can be applied in order to reframe stories that are detrimental to the aim of positive peace. They assist in the movement from one-dimensional understandings of the world toward more multi-dimensional understandings that, as argued here, are critical to bringing about a more socially just and ecologically sustainable global society.

Part Two of this thesis explores the connection between one-dimensional narratives and structural violence. I use the “Old Story” and “Modern Story” as two examples of one-dimensional narratives that focus on a separation of parts from wholes (or humans from nature), to the neglect of narrating their relationships and connection to the whole. I will consider ways that the narrative tools of framing and standpoints shed light on many dimensions that one-dimensional narratives ignore. The “Old Story” and the “Modern Story” correspond with an assessment by Alan Watts ([1960]; 2004) of two dominant worldviews in Western countries, which he refers to as the “ceramic” and “fully-automatic” models of the universe. A few decades later, Charles Birch (1993: 57) articulated a similar evaluation of what he considered to be ‘two versions of the modern scientific worldview: a supernaturalist, dualistic version and an atheistic, materialistic version.’ The terminology of “Old Story” and “Modern Story” are explicitly western-centric labels that are reflective of my standpoint and my personal experience.

Cultural historian and ordained Catholic priest, Thomas Berry (1978: 1) emphasizes the important role of the “Old Story” of Western society—‘the account of how the world came to be and how we fit into it’— which he believes is no longer functioning. By “Old Story”, Berry is referring to the traditional Christian story of creation and redemption of humanity through Jesus Christ. Berry (1988: 124) observes that while this traditional story is still believed by people across the world, it is now ‘dysfunctional in its larger social dimensions.’ Furthermore, Berry gauges that the reason why human beings are destroying their planet is that ‘we have not learned the new story’ (123).

⁶⁶ I will argue in Chapters Five and Six that this includes the possibility of empathizing with other animals, nature and the cosmos.

The “Old Story” and “Modern Story” will be shown to loosely correspond with one-dimensional interpretations of religion and science, reflected in polarised debates particularly those between fundamentalist Christianity and New Atheism (see Amarsignam 2010). In Chapter Four I will draw connections between the “Modern Story” and New Atheism (of Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, Christopher Hitchens, etc.), although it is important to state at the outset that the “Modern Story” encompasses a much broader space and far-reaching space than New Atheism does. The two are connected but are not synonymous: the “Modern Story” is more of a cultural narrative than an anti-religious one. As posited in Chapter Two, the “Modern Story” is embedded in modern Western institutions and is perpetuated by feedback loops within the global economic machine that William Hipwell (1997) referred to as “*Industria*”. This relationship will be discussed at length in Chapter Four. New Atheism, however, is useful as it is a very explicit representation of the atheistic materialist worldview

Although the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story” represent two very different ways of seeing the world, both stories exemplify one-dimensional narratives of separation. I will show that these polarized and one-sided narratives leave out a multitude of religious and scientific narratives—such as those found in more liberal and inclusive forms of Christianity, and those found in less materialistic, reductionistic and positivistic forms of science. The failure of the “Old Story” or the “Modern Story” to achieve coherence in regards to the narratives of other religions and cultures, and in regards to humanity’s connection to nature and the cosmos, motivated Berry, Birch, Watts, and others (including myself) to seek a comprehensive, inclusive and multi-dimensional alternative—which will be explored in Chapter Five in terms of what Berry called a “New Story”.

Watts, Berry and Birch’s theories are, like all discourse, embedded in their own historical and cultural contexts. While they do not reference each other, they share a similar perspective that was influenced by process thought in varied forms. Watts (1958) was largely influenced by Eastern process thought, Berry (1978) by Teilhardian process thought, and Birch (1990) by Whiteheadian process thought. Their general concerns overlap with discourse associated with Romantic, Marxist, Environmentalist and New Age movements, for example in their tendency to criticise the effects of industrialisation

and capitalism, and in their desire to bring about more care for social justice and for more harmonious relations with the planet. Admittedly these theories and movements differ greatly, for example in their treatment of materialism (as in Marxism) and spiritualism (in New Age movements), and in their prioritisation of humans (in Marxism and some forms of New Age thinking) or nature (as in environmentalism). Also within these movements there are many varieties. I do not have the space here to explore these varieties or compare their similarities, differences and influencing roles on each other in their respective histories. In order to explore the connections between narrative and peace, I follow the example of Berry, Watts and Birch in focusing on three categories: the “Old Story”, the “Modern Story” and the “New Story”.

Chapter 3 Indirect Violence of an “Old Story”

Chapter Three examines the connections between an “Old Story” and structural violence. I begin with a short and famous essay by Lynn White Jr’s ([1967]; 2004) entitled “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis”, which blames the Judaeo-Christian worldview for the damage that modern science and technology has caused to our environment. White’s essay acts as an introduction to some central ideas that will be discussed in subsequent chapters and helps to locate the “Old Story” in its Western historical context. White was not the first person to make such claims. Edward Payson Evans (1831-1917) criticised ‘the anthropocentric character of Christianity’—‘anticipating Lynn White’s thesis by seventy years’ (Nash 1990: 51). Still, White’s essay is said to have ‘crystallized’ the ‘modern discussion of the resistance of Western religion to environmental ethics’ (88). More recent analysis builds on White, which I will discuss at length shortly. I start with White’s proposition due to its clarity and fame.

3.1 Historical Roots of the Ecological Crisis

According to White (2004: 196), the central problem with dominant Western worldviews is that they assume ‘man [*sic*] and nature are two things, and man [*sic*] is master.’ For White, even most secular understandings of their relationship to nature are due to the Abrahamic notion that humans are separate from and superior to their environment. As White puts it, modern developments ‘cannot be understood historically apart from distinctive attitudes toward nature which are deeply grounded in Christian dogma’ (200). White explains that Christianity, as an incredibly influential monotheism, stands:

in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia’s religions (except, perhaps, Zoroastrianism), not only established a dualism of man [*sic*] and nature but also insisted that it is God’s will that man [*sic*] exploit nature for his proper ends (197).⁶⁷

While White’s argument is convincing, it is certainly not without criticism. Roderick Nash (1990) observes that White has missed out on arguments that provide additional support for his claims. For example, White does not mention the Christian belief that only humans may go to heaven, a narrative that Nash claims devalues plants and animals. Likewise, White does not mention the Christian fixation with heaven, which relegates Earth to ‘a kind of halfway house of trial and testing from which one was released at death’ (91). On the other hand, David Pepper (1989: 46) criticises White’s essay for being ‘vague about dates,’ using speculative language, focusing too much on the relationship between technology and ideologies, and leaving out the important role of social and economic factors.

Pepper explains that Christianity contains both the idea that “God” created human beings to *dominate* nature, as well as the teaching that “God” commands humans to be *stewards* of nature (46). Similarly, Birch (1993: 92) observes that the attitudes of domination and stewardship sit side by side within Western Christianity. The narrative of domination, ‘based on Genesis 1:26-38 and Genesis 9:2-3 ... assumes that all things are created for human use and for no other purpose.’ In parallel the narrative of stewardship, ‘derived from Genesis 2:15,’ sees humans as ‘trustees responsible to God for the care of their

⁶⁷ As a professor of medieval history, White focuses on Christianity rather than Judaism or Islam.

fellow creatures’ (92). Both of these attitudes continue to exist within modern Christianity—the narrative of domination is found in more fundamentalist forms and the narrative of stewardship is found in more liberal forms. This will be discussed at length shortly.

Criticisms aside, White’s thesis draws attention to the connection between one-dimensional narratives and indirect forms of structural and cultural violence, as introduced in Chapter Two. White contends that the ecological crisis will continue until ‘we reject the Christian axiom that nature had no reason for existence save to serve man [*sic*]’ (201). Understanding ourselves as disconnected from our historical and ecological context, disconnects people from each other and from the environment. This narrative of separation is arguably a root cause of the small, short-term decision-making that dominates Western capitalist culture. White’s essay moves on to point out that this exploitative attitude to nature is not the only attitude found within Christianity. In place of the narratives of domination, White endorses a lesser-known Christian view based on Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology.⁶⁸ White describes St Francis as teaching the ‘virtue of humility’ for all species, that is, *equality* among all God’s creatures—based on a ‘sort of pan-psychism of all things animate and inanimate’ (200).⁶⁹

Echoing White, Birch (1993: 92) also uses St Francis’s teachings to advance an attitude of *compassion*, ‘based on Genesis 1 and several Psalms such as Psalm 96:11-13 where all the earth “sings a new song”.’ From this perspective human beings are considered to be ‘fellow companions of other creatures, all of whom rejoice in the beneficence of God’ (92). Birch asserts that our compassion towards other people, species and the environment, increases within a process understanding of existence. This attitude inspires a shift from seeing our existence as static and separate from each other, to seeing our self as connected to and in process with everything else that exists. Birch notes that this attitude of compassion shares the biocentric ethic of John Cobb, Jürgen Moltmann and

⁶⁸ In 2013 the 266th Catholic Pope took Saint Francis of Assisi as his name. Is this a sign of an ecological tide? I hope so.

⁶⁹ Emphasis mine. Panpsychism, as the word infers, means everything contains mind or spirit. It is connected to the notion of everything being experience (also known as panexperientialism). The notions of panpsychism and panexperientialism are commonly found within panentheist (all-in-God) discourse. This will be explored in Chapter Five as an expression of the “New Story.”

Sallie McFague (94).⁷⁰ This attitude of compassion toward all forms of life, found in a multi-dimensional interpretation of the same Bible stories, is an expression of what Berry calls the “New Story” (which will be examined in Part Three).

I shall move now to consider White’s claims in more detail, examining the stories used to justify attitudes of exploitation, stewardship and compassion among people whose worldview is based on the “Old Story”. I draw from the overlapping arguments of Berry, Watts and Birch, consider their historical context, and then use secondary forms of qualitative and quantitative research to consider the implications of the “Old Story” in practice.

⁷⁰ I have already noted the panentheistic nature of much of the literature in this project. It is therefore worth noting here that Cobb, Moltmann and McFague are all panentheists (see Cooper 2006).

3.2 What is the “Old Story”?

So, what is the “Old Story”? By “Old Story” I am referring to one-dimensional interpretations of Christian narratives typically found in conservative and fundamentalist Christian churches. By “one-dimensional” I am referring to interpretations that are removed from their historical and cultural context, often interpreted literally rather than metaphorically, and which are exclusively claimed to be the “only truth” while regarding other religious narratives to be false. In this way, the “Old Story” is also my old story. Although this narrative may be current or new to some people, it also relates to the traditional Christian stories that, in line with discussions above, have dominated Western cultures for millennia.

Multi-dimensional interpretations of Christian narratives, as promoted by White and Birch, and commonly found within liberal theologies and Emerging Churches, are examples of the “New Story” (see Borg 2003). Here we find a multidimensional interpretation of Biblical stories, which recognise the historical context and metaphors of its stories, and is open to learning from the “truth” also found in other religions. There is no clear line between these two categories—some denominations and interpretations within Christianity mix up elements of each. The attitude of stewardship (as introduced above) and the “greening of evangelicalism” movements (see Wilkinson 2012) might reflect movement along a continuum toward two- or three-dimensional narratives (see Rees 2003: 66).

In this section I review the narratives on which the “Old Story” is based, in their historical and present context. In order to cover this vast ground in a small space, I present a very simplistic understanding of a religion that is, needless to say, far more complex. Simplifying the discourse into its most central narratives will be useful for locating my claims about the connections between the “Old Story” and structural violence. I start by introducing the grand-narrative of supernatural or a “ceramic” separation.

3.2.1 The “Old Story”: A Story of Supernatural Separation

The Biblical grand-narrative locates humanity on a linear timeline with “God” as infinitely present before and after human beings.

Figure 3.1 A grand-narrative of fundamentalist Christianity

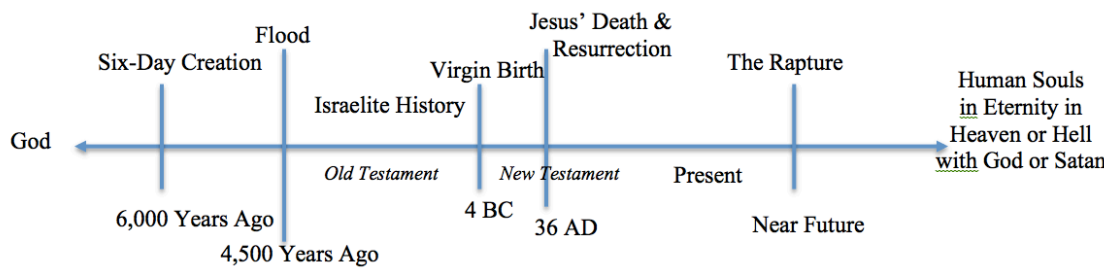


Figure 3.1 maps the “Old Story”, showing “God” as the infinite reality, who created the universe approximately 6,000 years ago (according to “New Earth” believers). It maps the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus. It predicts an impending Second Coming of Jesus, a period of Rapture, and Eternity in heaven (or hell, for non-believers).⁷¹ When life’s purpose is framed within this narrative, it emphasises the importance of saving souls and conforming one’s mind to fundamentalist narrative that considers “believing in Jesus” to be the only way to heaven.

3.2.2 The “Old Story”: A “Ceramic” Model of the Universe

In his lecture series *Out of Your Mind: The Nature of Consciousness*, Watts ([1960]; 2004) describes the “Old Story” in terms of the ‘ceramic model of the universe.’ Watts imagines a supernatural “God” creating life *ex nihilo* like an architect designs buildings or a potter moulds clay. “God” is imagined to create “stuff” from nothing and form it into a planet, animals and the people—whom “God” then animates with the breath of life. Another way to think of it is like a child making figurines out of plasticine, and proceeding to play house with them. The image is of a creator that is separate from his or her creation. This worldview reflects what is referred to as a “classic” theological

⁷¹ Certainly not all Christians believe in a six-day creation that took place within the last 10,000 years. As will be discussed shortly, more liberal Christians believe that these “days” are metaphorical, spaced across the last 14 billion years. For the purposes of representing the “Old Story” in a simplified form, I have chosen to use “Young Earth” understanding (see Ham 2006).

understanding of the Abrahamic God, shared by traditional interpretations within Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The classic theology of the “Old Story”, represented here by the ‘ceramic model’, separates the physical and supernatural worlds into two distinct realms. Individual human beings (and their individual souls) are considered to be separate from (and superior to) other animals and nature, all of which are separate from (and inferior to) a supernatural being (generally a man) called “God”.

Figure 3.2 Watts’ “Ceramic Model.

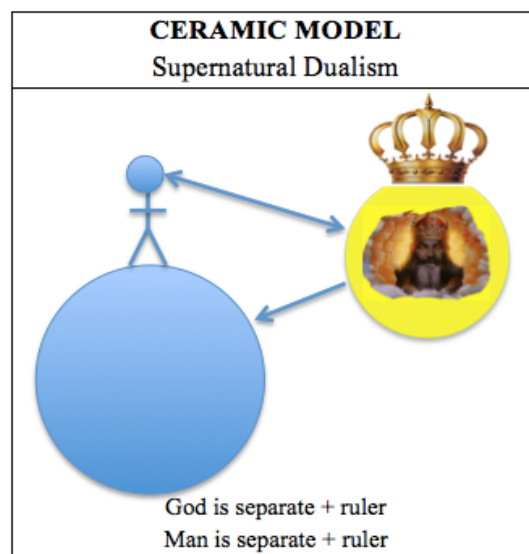


Figure 3.2 illustrates a supernaturalistic worldview that imagines “God” to be a separate king, ruling over living things. In this view, “God” is thought to be separate from the Earth and from humanity. This figure illustrates “God” (the yellow circle) as located in a position outside and separate from humanity (the stick figure) and our earth (the blue circle). The figure illustrates an understanding that these entities are separate from each other—the self and “God” are alienated and isolated from each other and from nature. The “ceramic” model, in a Western context, tends to be based on a literal interpretation of the creation story of Genesis 1. In the next section I will use the examples of the creation and Jesus stories in order to distinguish between one-dimensional and multi-dimensional approaches to Christianity.

3.3 One-Dimensional Narrative: The Bible as Literal

While the Bible is filled with stories of history, poetry and myth, it is the creation and redemption stories that are of most interest to this research project. These two stories when interpreted one-dimensionally—outside of their historical and cultural context—are used to establish a sense of separation and superiority of humans from each other, from other animals and from their planet. Yet a one-dimensional interpretation is not the only interpretation, as the following discussion will show. Distinguishing between one- and multi-dimensional interpretations of these stories is critical for evaluating the impact of different forms of Christianity on structural violence and positive peace.

3.3.1 A One-Dimensional Story of Creator and Creation

Stories of origins are a crucial starting point for the way that human beings understand life and their place in it. The Book of Genesis,⁷² the first book of the Christian Bible and the Jewish Torah, opens with the words ‘In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth’ (Genesis 1:1), and continues on to tell the Ancient Judaic story of creation.⁷³ The story of a seven-day creation in Genesis 1 is one of the two creation stories in Genesis.⁷⁴ On the first day God creates light, and separates light from darkness calling the

⁷² The title of this book “Genesis” comes from the Greek *Genesis kosmou*, which means “origin of the cosmos”. Jews refer to this book as *Bereshith*, a reference to the first few words of the book, meaning “In the beginning” (see Davis 2004: 40).

Traditionally the authorship of Genesis and the next three books of the Bible are attributed to Moses. The interweaving of different versions of the same stories throughout the Book of Genesis, and the recording of Moses’ death in Deuteronomy, provides support for the attribution of these books to a number of anonymous authors. Referred to as J, E, D, P and R, historians consider these stories to have been recorded written over a five hundred year period between 900 and 400 BCE (Davis 2004: 22-28).

⁷³ I have taken this and the following passages from an English copy of the New International Version of the Christian Bible—one of a plethora of translations available.

⁷⁴ Although within my twenty-years within Sydney Anglican and Baptist churches, and attending a Reformed Protestant school, I did not once hear these stories not recognised to be two distinct stories with contradictions between them. Similarly when teaching narratology at Lenoir Rhyne High School in North Carolina (considered to be on the “Bible Belt” of the United States) my class of twenty undergraduate students were also surprised to learn of these two stories and varying interpretations.

The second creation story starts in Genesis 2:4. Here the story of creation is told in a different order, framed differently. God starts by forming earth and then streams, and then ‘a man from the dust of the ground,’ which God ‘breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.’ Next God decides to make a ‘helper’ for man or “Adam” (the Hebrew word for man is Adam), creating all the wild

former “day” and the latter “night. On the second day God creates the sky to separate the water in the ocean from waters in clouds. On the third day God gathers the water into seas, so that dry ground can form into land, and from land into plants. On the fourth day God makes the sun and the moon in order to ‘serve as signs to mark sacred times’ (Genesis 1:14). On the fifth day God fills the water with ‘living creatures’ and the sky with birds (Genesis 1:20). On the sixth day God creates animals and human beings:

²⁴ “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds ... [and] ²⁶ Let us make mankind [*sic*] in our image, in our likeness ... ²⁷ So God created mankind [*sic*] in his [*sic*] own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. ²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” ²⁹ Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.”

On the seventh day, God takes a rest. I will draw attention to three interpretations of this story: as a story of domination, as a story of stewardship, and as a story for people in another time.

The passages above can be seen as a narrative of domination, as humans are instructed to rule over all other living creatures. For fundamentalist and largely conservative Christians, Genesis 1 provides a clear hierarchical order of being: “God” over humans, humans over living things. As such, this way of understanding existence has been used to justify violence toward animals, ecosystems (and even other human beings) that are thought to be lower in the hierarchy. God’s instruction for humans to ‘Be fruitful and increase in number’ can be interpreted as a case against the use of contraception (seen in Catholicism), disregarding the need to examine limitations to the global human population. Similarly, God’s instruction to ‘rule over’ all the other ‘living creatures’, and

animals and birds. Deciding that animals are not ‘suitable’ helpers, God takes Adam’s rib (or a part of Adam’s side), makes a woman and brings her to man. Man names her “woman”—‘for she was taken out of man.’

Feminists criticise this second story for subjugating woman to men—deeming women as derived from man, created as his helper, named by him and subordinate to him (see Tribble 1978: 73).

Birch also draws attention to the attitude of stewardship that is drawn from Genesis 2:15, stating that God put Adam ‘in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.’

for ‘every seed-bearing plant’ to be for human food, can be interpreted as justification for humans to use the planet and other animals as they please (as will be discussed below). This is the interpretation that reflects the “Old Story”.

Young Earth Creationists interpret the creation story strictly literally, as a six-day process of creation undertaken by the male God of Abraham, within the last 10,000 years. A recent poll found that 46% of people in the United States hold such a view (Newport 2012).⁷⁵ For example, in his book *The New Answers Book*, the Young Earth Creationist Ken Ham (2006: 32) explains the situation for him and others like him:

When we consider the possibility that God used evolutionary processes to create over millions of years, we are faced with serious consequences: the Word of God is no longer authoritative, and the character of our loving God is questioned.

John Garvey (1993: 32) observes that the ‘combination of inerrancy and literalism makes the Bible accessible to the average person’ and that the fundamentalists believe that ‘surely God would not speak to us in a language that only a few academics could understand’ (32-33). As the quote above and the conversation that opened Part Two illustrates, a sense of certainty in the Bible as word of God or God-breathed,⁷⁶ is pivotal to a one-dimensional Christian faith. Marcus Borg (2003: 51-52) explains that the reason for passionate Young Earth Creationists promoting creation science to be taught at schools in place of evolution, is that ‘they have identified truth with factuality: thus, in their minds, if the stories aren’t factual, they aren’t true. And if these stories aren’t true, the Bible isn’t true.’

In contrast, an alternative reading of the Genesis creation stories, as in White, Birch and Pepper’s discussions above, may be seen as instructing humans to be stewards of Earth and its inhabitants. The notion of seven days can be read as symbolic rather than literal.

⁷⁵ This statistic is ‘based on telephone interviews conducted May 3-6, 2012, with a random sample of 1,024 adults, aged 18 and older, living in all 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia’ (Newport 2012).

⁷⁶ This is based on two New Testament verses: 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:20-21—whose authorship is disputed by various theologians. It is also based on two Old Testament verses: Proverbs 30:5-6, that states ‘Every word of God is flawless’ and Psalms 12:6, which reads ‘the words of the LORD are flawless’—which in logically cannot refer to the collating of the New Testament, written centuries later.

The passage “let the land produce living things...” may be read in terms of evolution, as opposed to a supernatural God creating the world out of nothing. That humans are created on the same day as animals and instructed to eat plants may even be interpreted as a case for vegetarianism. These interpretations reflect something closer to and more compatible with the “New Story”.

A third interpretation understands Genesis 1 in its historical and cultural context—seeing this seven-day creation story just as that: *a story*. A more liberal and progressive Christian perspective sees the story of a six-day creation in Genesis 1 as more-than-literal, reflecting a *storied* representation of modern scientific understanding that our still-evolving universe is many billions of years old. Borg (2003: 52) captures this more progressive perspective, which takes into account the historical context and metaphors within the Biblical narratives:

The Genesis stories of creation are seen as Israel’s stories of creation, not as God’s stories of creation. They therefore have no more of a divine guarantee to be true in a literal-factual sense than do the creation stories of other cultures. When they are seen as metaphorical narratives, not factual accounts, they are “myths” in Thomas Mann’s sense of the word: stories about the way things never were but always are. They are thus really true, even though not literally true.

From this perspective, Genesis 1 reflects a story told to a particular people, reflecting an understanding of the world at that particular time, aimed at particular outcomes.

Three to four thousand years ago, it was in the interests of the Ancient Israelites to increase their population and spread across Earth. It was thought that the sun revolved around a flat Earth. The harsh conditions of nature had to be fought daily in order to survive. Today, with a global population of over seven billion people, with a much greater understanding of cosmology, evolution and the ecosystems on which human life is dependant on, and with technology providing some of those people a life largely protected from the elements, a different creation story might be both more accurate and more conducive to positive peace. While modern scientific understanding of evolution and the universe point to the interconnectedness of all that is, the assumption that the individual human is more valuable than other living beings and our environment

generally remains in mainstream Western culture. This can be seen within corporate, economic and industrial institutions, as discussed in Chapter Two. In other words, as will be explored in Chapter Four, the “Modern Story” retains the assumption that humans are superior. Be it based on religious justifications or unexamined assumptions within secular society, an understanding of humans as superior to animals and ecosystems, allows animals to be mistreated, the environment to be damaged and species to go extinct. Short-term human interests are prioritised over Earth interests, even though in the long-term a healthy Earth is precondition for a healthy humanity.

Karen Armstrong posits that the decontextualized strictly-literalist interpretation of the Bible reflects a misinterpretation of traditional stories as viewed through a modern lens. Armstrong (2000: xv) suggest that ‘in the premodern world, both *mythos* and *logos* were regarded as indispensable.’ While *logos* was concerned with matters of practicality and rationality; *mythos* was concerned with the story, provides ‘the context of meaning’ for people’s lives (xv). To confuse the two, and think that myth could be ‘demonstrated empirically’ is a dangerous mistake. With the coming of modernity, where ‘an increasing number of people regard scientific rationalism alone as true’, religious experience has changed. People in the modern world have ‘often tried to turn the *mythos* of their faith into *logos*’ (xvi). Armstrong’s book examines how these changes came about in the last five hundred years, finding expression in fundamentalist movements within the three monotheistic faiths: Christianity, Judaism and Islam.⁷⁷

The confusion between *mythos* and *logos* applies not only to the story of creation, but is applied to other stories and teachings of the Bible. Genesis continues on to tell of the “original sin” of Adam and Eve, and humanity’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden. It tells the story of Noah and his ark, and the flood that almost wiped out humanity and other land animals. The Book of Exodus moves on to tell the story of the Israelites’ escape from Egypt, their conquests of other peoples and journey toward the “promised land”. The remaining books of the (Christian) Old Testament (much of which is included in the Hebrew Scriptures) trace the Israelites history through the reigns of kings from

⁷⁷ Armstrong (2000: xii) focuses on ‘American Protestant fundamentalism, Jewish fundamentalism in Israel, and Muslim fundamentalism in Egypt, which is a Sunni country, and Iran, which is Shii.’ I do not have time to explore these varieties here. I will focus primarily on American and Australian Protestant fundamentalism.

Saul to David and Solomon, from Exile to Restoration. It records rules and laws (in Deuteronomy), poetry, proverbs and love stories (in Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon), and questioning and philosophy (in Ecclesiastes and Job). Among these books one finds stories of horrible violence—from fathers condoning the rape of their daughters, to the justifications for slavery and slaughter. Yet one also finds stories of peace such as Isaiah’s vision of a future kingdom in which ‘Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore’ (Isaiah 2:4). The words of violence in the Old Testament are used by atheists such as Richard Dawkins to argue for the abolishment of religion (for example, Dawkins 2006; see also Hedges 2008: 6-7 and Trompf 2012: 37). The Christian response to such an argument is that the New Testament—the “good news” of Jesus Christ—overwrites the teachings of the Old Testament. Thus I must also examine the narrative of Jesus and the promised redemption. It is a literal interpretation of this story and other stories in the New Testament that brings about a sense of supernatural evangelical purpose for believers. Thanks to this grand-narrative, fundamentalist Christians commit their lives to obeying their Church’s authoritative interpretation of the Biblical teachings, and to converting others to their worldview in order to save their souls.

3.3.2 A One-Dimensional Story of Jesus and Redemption

According to historical evidence, Jesus was born around 4 BCE and ‘condemned and executed as a nationalistic freedom-fighter who threatened Rome’ around 30-36 CE (Davis 2004: 409).⁷⁸ The Gospels provide varying accounts of the events that follow—earthquakes, visits from angels, citing’s of Jesus himself, who is sometimes recognised and sometimes not, and according to the authors of Mark and Luke-Acts, Jesus ascends up to heaven (410-12).

Berry (1988: 128) observes that in the last few centuries, believers in the “Old Story” have focused their values on ‘the Savior, the human person, the believing church, and a postearthly paradisal beatitude.’ For those less familiar with Christian theology, the ‘Savior’ that Berry is referring to is Jesus Christ, and by ‘postearthly paradisal beatitude’

⁷⁸ The Roman historian Tacitus, ‘one of the few references to Jesus’ death outside Bible sources’, observes in discussing Christians that ‘Christ, the originator of their name, had been condemned to death by Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius.’ Tiberius died in 36 CE.

Berry is referring to heaven as a place that Christians find a sense of peace in knowing that they will go to when they die. Berry explains that this ‘Christian redemptive mystique is little concerned with the natural world’, as for believers the ‘essential thing is redemption out of the world through a personal savior relationship that transcends all such concerns’ (129). For fundamentalist Christians (and most conservative Christians generally) the life and teachings, death on the cross, resurrection from the dead and ascension of Jesus Christ up to the sky and heavens is interpreted as a physical, literal and historical events. Belief in these narratives is considered to be the *only way* that a person can have a relationship with “God”. Belief in this narrative is also considered to be the *only way* that one can be redeemed—have their sins forgiven—and thereby avoid eternal suffering in hell and be rewarded for their faith with eternal life in heaven.

This interpretation of the “good news” of Jesus Christ is based on a literal and supernaturalist interpretation of the New Testament, in particular the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (names attributed by the Early Church). The epistles of Paul, and the writings of the Church Fathers, the Protestant Reformers, and evangelists such as Billy Graham, tend to interpret the story in this way. For example, the authors of the Gospels speak of various miracles that Jesus’ created, such as healing blind men and lepers, turning water into wine, walking on water, raising Lazarus from the dead, and indeed Jesus’ own resurrection and ascension up into the clouds. Taken out of their historical context these stories appear supernatural and magical. Interpreted within their context, as containing metaphor, myth and Midrash, these accounts can be seen as more-than-literal meaningful insights into an inclusive Christianity (for example see Borg 2002).

The point of discussing these two stories is to illustrate that the Bible can be read and understood in a great variety of ways. The most important distinction in terms of the impact of Christian narratives on peace and violence, as the final section of this chapter will show, is whether the interpretation of these narratives is literal or metaphorical. To be clear, I am using the term “Old Story” to refer to the literal, one-dimensional and decontextualized Christian narratives found in fundamentalist and conservative Protestant

Christianity.⁷⁹ The more multi-dimensional interpretations of Biblical narratives might be considered to be nearer to being expressions of the “New Story” than this “Old Story”. Jesus taught people to love each other, to forgive, to avoid hypocrisy, to resolve conflict nonviolently, to value peace, and to demand social justice. I have argued here that it is due to the one-dimensional nature of the “Old Story”, that interprets the Christian narratives as literal and exclusive, that this narrative of peace has turned into a narrative of exclusivity, conformity, fear and conversion. The next section provides a simplified and generalised history of the “Old Story”, in order to offer some context for this transition within our limited space. It points to some of the problematic developments within the history of Christianity.

3.3.3 A Brief History of the “Old Story”

Following the writing of the Gospels, which report on the life and death of Jesus Christ, the remainder of the “New Testament” shares teachings from early Christians. The early Christians, who referred to themselves as ‘the people of “the Way”,’ were pivotal to the spread and understanding of the religion after Jesus died (Davies 2004: 422). The Book of Acts includes the teachings of Simon Peter mainly to Jews but also Gentiles, who ‘believed that anyone who wanted to follow Jesus must convert to Judaism first’ (422). Acts also shares the journey of Paul the Apostle, a Roman Jew known as Saul of Tarsus before his revelation around mid-first century, who was pivotal to challenging Simon-Peter and making the “good news” more appealing to Gentiles (422).⁸⁰ Paul travelled widely, sharing the “good news” of Christ to Cyprus and modern-day Turkey, Syria and Italy.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Berry (1978: 1) used the term “Old Story” more generally to refer the traditional Christian narrative, while evaluating its contemporary expressions as being ‘nonfunctional in its larger social dimensions’ and working in a ‘limited orbit.’ As my critique of this narrative is focused on one-dimensional forms of Christian narrative, I found it more appropriate to use the term “Old Story” to refer specifically to one-dimensional Christian narratives rather than its varied traditional forms.

⁸⁰ Paul negotiated with people of “the Way”, for Gentiles to be able to convert without following Jewish practices such as circumcision and dietary laws (see Davis 2004: 428).

⁸¹ Paul wrote at least six of the 27 books in the Christian New Testament, as epistles (formal letters) to people in the towns that he visited, and his influence extends to the Gospel of Luke, Acts of the Apostles, and another twelve books (Davis 2004: 435-443).

Until the conversion of Emperor Constantine 1 in 313 CE fuelled Christianity's expansion across the Roman Empire, Christianity had been a 'pacifist sect' (Boulding 2000: 20). The movement became violent after 'the persecuted minority attained a protected position within the Roman Empire' and by way of 'the just war doctrine' Jesus was 'transformed from peace-bringer' to a 'warrior king' (20). The many burning of books, such as the Library at Alexandria, obliterated many of the narratives that competed with Christianity. The Inquisition and the Crusades impelled people to choose between conversion to Christianity, or a violent death. Martin Luther's 1517 *Ninety-Five Theses* inspired the Protestant Reformation. Following his marriage disputes, in 1534 King Henry VIII teamed up with Protestantism to separate the Church of England from the Roman Catholic Church. From a technological perspective, the spread of Christianity and its misinterpretations might be connected with the then-recent invention of the printing press, which allowed the Bible to make its way into the hands of the public, who did not have the education on Jewish thought, language or critical thinking to approach it in any other way.⁸²

While the traditional Christian story functioned as a context of life in Western societies for millennia, according to Berry (1988: 124), this story was understood in a very different form to that of the "Old Story" as explored above. Berry (1988: 125) considers the "Old Story" to have developed alongside the "Modern Story", as two responses to the Black Death in the fourteenth century that killed 'perhaps one-third of the population' of Europe between 1347 and 1349. As epidemic plagues spread across Europe, lasting until 1665, Berry observes the seeds of doubt in religious explanations of an all-powerful and all-good "God" who would allow for such catastrophe. One reaction was 'an intensification of faith experience, an effort to activate supernatural forces with special powers of intervention in the phenomenal world now viewed as threatening to the human community' (126). This led to an over-emphasis on the redemption story of Jesus, and a decline in significance of the creation stories. Berry observes that the 'American version of the ancient Christian story' (which I have been exploring in terms of the "Old Story"):

⁸² The 1450 invention of the printing press had allowed the Bible to be produced mechanically but had not yet been used to produce copies of the book for public readership, retaining power in the hands of the priests and most wealthy individuals (Davis 2004: 31).

This followed courageous peoples such as William Tyndale, translated from 'Hebrew, Greek and Latin into commonly used German and English', and were killed in the process (Davis 2004: 31).

has functioned well in its institutional efficiency and in its moral efficacy, but it is no longer the story of the earth. Nor is it the integral story of the human community. It is a sectarian story. At its center there is an intensive preoccupation with the personality of the Savior, with the interior spiritual life of the faithful, and with the salvific community (126).

The other response to the crisis of faith inspired by the plagues, was an attempt to gain ‘control of the physical world to escape its pain and to increase its utility to human society’ (125). Berry explains that:

from these two tendencies the two dominant cultural communities of recent centuries were formed: the believing religious community and the secular community with its new scientific knowledge and its industrial powers of exploiting the natural world (125).

Alongside the technological revolutions in industrial production, transportation, and chemicals, the ideological and political revolutions from the French Revolution to Marxism and Darwinism, among other notable events over the last five hundred years, a secular, industrialised and mechanical worldview has risen to power. This impacted on the nature of the “Old Story”, as explored above. It has also facilitated the “Modern Story” as a worldview that has aided the expansive power of “Industria”, as will be examined in Chapter Four.

The discussion above has examined what White claimed to be the historical roots of the ecological crisis. I have used Birch and Pepper to locate White’s propositions among alternative Judaeo-Christian perspectives. I have established that Judaeo-Christian narratives are not restricted to inducing an exploitative relationship between humans and nature, but can also be seen to promote stewardship and compassion. These interpretations have been explored by pointing out the ability to frame the Bible stories in diverse ways. It is not the task of this research project to examine the evidence for or against these teachings. This research project is less concerned over the theological justifications for one interpretation or another, and more concerned over their implications for positive peace. The point I wish to make here is that the “Old Story”, or a one-dimensional Christian narrative, ignores this multitude of interpretations and teaches

an artificially-harmonised and a strictly-supernatural interpretation which, as the next section will show, has violent consequences.

3.3 The “Old Story” and Structural Violence

Although not explored in great detail, White’s essay and his claims about the Judaeo-Christian worldview in relation to the global ecological crisis is not new to peace studies. In their textbook *Peace and Conflict Studies* David P. Barash and Charles P. Webel (2009: 417) draw attention to White’s claims, sharing his general conclusions. With reference to surveys and analysis conducted in the United States and Australia over the last thirty years, this section explores the connections between the “Old Story” and indirect forms of structural violence.

3.3.1 Destructive Social and Environmental Attitudes of the “Old Story”

In the early 1980s and 1990s a number of surveys were conducted to examine the application of White’s essay in real life, exploring the relationship between religion and environmentalism. In a study conducted between 1990 and 1991, James Guth, John Green, Lyman Kellstedt and E. Corwin (1995) built on earlier research (Hand & Van Liere 1984⁸³; Eckberg & Blocker 1993⁸⁴) to investigate the connection between theology and environmentalism with a large sample size of 4,995 religious activists.⁸⁵ These findings affirmed Pepper and Birch’s assertion that Christian adherents may hold an

⁸³ Hand and Van Liere’s (1984: 555) survey of 806 Washington state residents found that ‘Judeo-Christians are generally more committed to the mastery-over-nature orientation than non-Judeo-Christians.’ Yet this study also found that within Judaeo-Christianity other factors such as church attendance decreased concern for the environment, except in some mainline Protestant denominations where it increased it. Hand and Van Liere (557) suspected that this variation between denominations might be explained by a ‘fundamentalist Biblical orientation.’

⁸⁴ Eckberg and Blocker’s survey of 300 residents in Tulsa, Oklahoma, conducted in 1989, found that ‘Biblical literalism’ is a primary indicator of a person’s attitude toward the environment (see Guth et al. 1993: 374). Guth et al. (1995: 377) suspect that this is because Biblical literalists ‘take seriously an anthropocentric view of creation supposedly found in Genesis – that the world and all therein is for human beings to exploit.’ This points to a connection between people who hold a “supernatural dualist” view of the world and the destruction of the environment.

⁸⁵ This survey compared four major traditions: evangelical Protestants, mainline Protestants, Roman Catholics, and seculars, on a range of factors. A random sample of people from eight religious groups were administered a ten page questionnaire with 265 items. The survey received 4,995 completed forms, which was a 56.9% response rate (see Guth et al. 1993: 375 for more details, and a summary table included in Appendix Four).

attitude of domination or stewardship, with attitudes of domination connected to Christian fundamentalism and conservative perspectives, and attitudes of stewardship and compassion found in more mainstream and liberal Christian perspectives.

Guth et al. (1993: 373-4) found that liberal churches expressed the most concern for the environment, followed by Catholics and moderate evangelicals, with fundamentalist churches either avoiding or being sceptical toward environmental issues. The study showed that while the Genesis story of dominion was an influential factor, there was also a significant correlation between ‘conservative eschatology’ (belief in the “second coming” of Jesus and End Times⁸⁶) and negative attitudes toward the environment. Guth et al. (1993: 373) reach the conclusion that ‘doctrinal fundamentalism, carefully defined, is a powerful predictor of environmental preferences.’ They explain that fundamentalists tend to have a pessimistic outlook on the ‘possibility of this worldly reform’ (377).⁸⁷ In other words, fundamentalists are less likely to act in ways that are aimed at addressing structural violence such as global poverty or environmental destruction.

These findings point to a causal relationship between the “Old Story” and structural violence. Guth et al. (1993: 377) provide the example of the ‘Secretary of the Interior James Watt, a member of the Assemblies of God’ who ‘told Congress not to gaze too far into the future on natural resource policy because, “I do not know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns”.’ If one does not care about the future—because they think Jesus will return, or for any other reason—then there is a good chance that their decision making (in this case regarding natural resource policies) are likely to be focused on short-term benefits, regardless of the long-term consequences.

Extrapolating on these findings, one might consider that people who understand the world through the “Old Story” are less likely to make favourable choices for positive peace

⁸⁶ Stories espousing ‘End Times’ beliefs include: the Armageddon (a time of war between God and the Antichrist, where non-believers receive God’s wrath and many people die); The Millennium (an interval where Christ rules for 1,000 years); and The Rapture (a time where “born again” Christians will be taken to heaven). These stories are based on literal interpretations of 1 Thessalonians 4; Matthew 24; Revelation 20:1-7 (see Robinson 2012).

⁸⁷ Guth et al. (1993: 377) define fundamentalist as ‘characterized not only by biblical literalism, but by high supernaturalism, belief in the imminence of the “End Times” and the Second Coming.’ Guth et al. (1995: 372) found that Evangelicals shared a similar correlation to those with a conservative eschatology, although to a lesser extent.

when voting, consuming, investing, or researching. If one wishes to gain the political will for governments to enact more environmentally friendly regulations on production processes, or to encourage investment in green technologies and green energy alternatives, then questioning these narratives and attitudes is critical. A more recent study by Paul Froese and Christopher Bader (2010) connects religion—specifically images of God—with attitudes and actions toward a broader range of social and political issues, once again including the environment.

In their study of 1,648 Americans, Froese and Bader (2010) found a diversity of opinions about who or what this loaded word “God” is being used to refer to. They uncover four categories: the Authoritative God, Critical God, Benevolent God and Distant God.⁸⁸ The *Authoritative* God, thought to be male and interventionist in punitive ways, was believed in by 31% of Americans. The *Critical* God who will judge sinners when they die but who does not intervene in the world was believed by 16%. The *Benevolent* God, believed by 24%, was imagined to be forgiving, and intervening only in positive ways. The Deist-like notion of a *Distant* God that is a sexless cosmic force that set the universe in motion but does not intervene nor judge human affairs, was believed in by 24%. The remaining 5% did not believe in any God (Froese and Bader 2010: 36). This research finds considerable support in General Social Surveys (GSS) in the United States,⁸⁹ which in 2000 found that

⁸⁸ This analysis was based on the Baylor Religion Survey (BRS) funded by the John Templeton Foundation, administered by the Gallup Organisation in two waves—2005 and 2007. Paul Froese and Christopher Bader were two of five Principal Investigators. The 2005 wave involved a final sample of 1,721 respondents (with 395 variables), and the 2007 wave gathered a sample of 1,648 (with 319 variables), all from the United States, achieved through an initial random digit dialing followed by a mix of phone interviews and mailed surveys. The survey is available on the Association of Religion Data Archives, as are data and further analysis tools. Froese and Bader supplemented this quantitative analysis with one-to-one and focus group interviews with a total of 106 respondents across many states and religious denominations. See their “Appendix: Data, Methods, and Findings” (167-99).

⁸⁹ General Social Surveys (GSS) are a 90 minute face-to-face surveys of over 50,000 Americans conducted every other year by the National Opinion Research Centre (NORC). In the 1980s the GSS asked respondents a range of questions about the images that come to mind when Americans thought about “God”. These questions were answered by just over 2000 respondents.

The dominant image, with over 80% of respondents, thought that God was extremely or somewhat likely to be a male master, king, judge, creator and healer. Question 113 of the 1983 and 1984 GSS surveys. The survey found that 95.3% of Americans thought God was extremely or somewhat likely to be a creator; 91.4% thought of God as a healer; 88.5% a redeemer; 80.5% a master; 77.7% a judge; 73.6% a king; 73.2% a liberator; 64% a lover; 86.7% a father; and there was a split down the middle about God being a mother.

53.6% of Americans do not “believe” in the scientific theory of evolution, and only 15.3% of Americans believe it to be “definitely true” (see Appendix Three). The “Four Gods” were mapped according to God’s engagement with the world and God’s judging qualities—as captured in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 America’s Four Gods (from Froese and Bader 2010: 26)

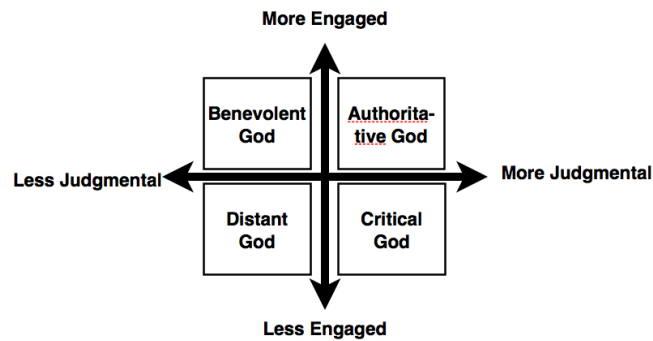


Figure 3.3 maps the four conceptions of “God” across their levels of engagement with the world, and judgement of the world. All four conceptions assume a notion of “God” as a separate, supernatural entity. Believers in a benevolent and authoritative conception imagine “God” to be more engaged than those believing in a distant or critical conception. Those believing in a distant or benevolent conception consider “God” to be less judgmental and requiring less obedience than the authoritative and critical conceptions. Examining these findings from a process perspective draws attention to an important gap in their analysis.

In analysing stories about “God” from around America, Froese and Bader give almost no space to natural and more metaphoric conceptions of “God”. Eastern and Indigenous worldviews, according to Froese and Bader’s analysis, would fall within the categories of “no God” and the “Distant God”. The closest mention to such alternatives is a brief discussion of Spinoza and Leibniz (whose views are arguably pantheist or panentheist)—only to say that the number of Americans who believe in such a “God” ‘would be

This question has not been asked in the GSS over the last twenty-five years. There did not appear to be any engagement in pantheist or panentheist questions in the survey (see NORC 1972-2006). See Appendix Three for the example of two datasets examining the question: does God exist? and did humans evolve from animals?

admittedly meagre' (87). Froese and Bader remark that 'most Americans have some sense that God is a being separate from nature who has opinions about the world and acts outside the usual restrictions of cause and effect' (87). They observe:

In general, religious choice in the United States is essentially limited to monotheism versus atheism, with very little discussion of polytheistic or nontheistic alternatives. Even Americans who think that God is in everything – a core tenet of pantheism – are more comfortable talking about God as a distinct being... (150-1).

These observations indicate that all four of America's images of "God" might fall into the ceramic model. Yet, there is also a hint of more naturalistic notions in their analysis. Froese and Bader (2010: 5) found that 53% of respondents referred to God as a "cosmic force," 'dismissing the idea that God has any physical appearance.' While 47% of Americans were reported to have an image of God as *male*, 20% believed God to be *sexless* and 33% were *undecided* about God's gender (87). The idea of God as a cosmic force indicates a natural image of the divine, which is not obviously reflected in Froese and Bader's four categories.⁹⁰

Froese and Bader note that responses 'sometimes even suggest that God is another name for the big bang – as did Mar, a laborer from the Midwest' (4). While Americans may be more comfortable personifying "God" and talking about "God" as separate, they may hold this conception metaphorically, not literally. The purpose of this analysis is to begin to unpack the images and stories associated with the word "God". This helps to distinguish the "Old Story" from the "New Story". The "Old Story" is based on a supernatural idea of "God" as separate from God's creation. This transposes into an understanding of the self as disconnected from our context as part of the universe, part of Earth, and part of each other. The "New Story", in its theological expression, is based on a connecting and holistic conception of "God" that transpires into an understanding of self as connected to each other, to Earth, and to the universe. The question I must move on to at this point is does one's conception of "God" have an impact on positive peace?

⁹⁰ Analysing Froese and Bader's data in a way that draws out the panentheistic images of "God" and compares attitudes of those to classic theists would be interesting further research.

In Froese and Bader's words (143), 'Do these different God's matter?' They conclude: 'Unequivocally, yes.' Concluding that stories and images of "God" have a significant impact on people's approaches to social and ecological issues, Froese and Bader (2010: 143-44) explain:

A person's God is a direct reflection of his level of moral absolutism, his view of science, his understanding of economic justice, his concept of evil, and how he thinks we should respond to it.

Froese and Bader provide specific examples that connect various images of "God" to the ways that people think and respond to various social and political issues. The study found that 76% of Authoritative-God believers think the US government should expand its authority to fight terrorists, while 40% of Distant-God believers and only 22% of Atheists agree (136-37). The study also found that 'believers in an Authoritative God feel that stricter regulation of homosexual behaviour and abortion are necessary to appease their God' (121). The attitudes of believers in an Authoritarian God are indicative of what Johan Galtung (1990: 291) considers to be cultural and structural forms of violence.

Less expectedly, Froese and Bader (2010: 120-1) discovered that one's image of "God" also affects the way that a person thinks a government should help the poor. Believers in a more judgemental concept of "God" (falling into the authoritative or critical categories) tend to believe that 'most social problems require religious solutions', such as a belief that teaching the poor to be more righteous so that "God" will reward them with blessings. This can be observed, for example, when Haiti was hit by the Earthquake in 2010, and Christian televangelist Pat Robertson said that it was because Haitians 'swore a pact to the devil', encouraging the appropriate response to be a 'great turning to god' (cited in Smith 2010). Froese and Bader (2010: 120-1) interviewed Philip, a retired teacher of religion, explained that these believers'

preoccupation with questions of godliness and morality, even at the expense of concerns for economic advancement or reform, is understandable, because they are worried about the hereafter and not the here and now. Their focus on individual salvation overwhelms their sense of social justice.

This quote highlights the way that a person's care for their afterlife can stand in the way of their care for this life. This can have very real implications for their own life and other's lives, for example by standing in the way of policy change that might help address issues of poverty.

Alternatively, people who believe in a less judgemental concept of "God" (falling into the distant or benevolent categories) were found to believe that 'most social problems can be adequately addressed with secular solutions' such as redistributing income or restructuring the system to be more fair (Froese & Bader 2010: 120-1). A belief that people in situations of poverty deserve to be is unlikely to motivate actions that can help address this indirect form of violence. On the other hand, those who look to secular solutions such as redistributing income are far more likely to contribute to addressing these indirect forms of violence and moving toward positive peace. Froese and Bader are distinctly pointing to the importance of examining the connections between narrative and peace. What a person cares about impacts on their actions. Care about oneself and others going to heaven when they die, may not on face value appear to be destructive or violent. Yet collectively narratives that encourage a conformist and uncritical approach to authority, can be central to maintaining power hierarchies.⁹¹

While this primary research data affirms White's proposition, it is important to once again emphasise the variety of views within Christianity. There are no clear divisions within and between denominations and their attitudes towards different social and environmental issues. For example, within Evangelical Churches (generally considered to be conservative and fundamentalist) one finds a division between attitudes of domination and of stewardship toward the environment.⁹² Similarly, within the American Christian Right (also generally of a conservative and fundamentalist nature) there is division over the issue of climate change (for example see Wardekker, Peterson & van der Sluijs 2009). This conflicted space is important. It indicates a movement from one- to multi-

⁹¹ Adherence to a set of *unchanging* ethics or rules, taken outside their historical and cultural contexts, can be restrictive and dangerous. This may be observed in the failure of some religions to respond to moral issues, as in the abolition of slavery two hundred years ago, and the equal treatment of women that is still being resisted by fundamentalist religions today.

⁹² This is reflected in what is referred to as "The Greening of Evangelicals" (for example see Harden 2005) and in the work of liberal yet Evangelical theologian and author Miroslav Volf (1996), who studied under panentheistic Christian thinker Jürgen Moltmann.

dimensional approaches to religious perspectives, by people in groups that are typically fundamentalist and conservative.

Unfortunately, trends in the opposite direction can also be observed. For example, within Australian Anglicanism (known in the United Kingdom as the Church of England and in the United States as the Episcopal Church), the Anglican Diocese of Sydney sits distinctly more on the one-dimensional interpretations of the Bible explored in Chapter Three, while other Anglican Dioceses appear more multi-dimensional, with more inclusive approaches to other religions and more socially-focused agendas. The difference may be immediately observed by comparing the websites of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne (2013) and the Anglican Diocese of Sydney (2013). Melbourne Diocese has an outward focus, standing up on issues social justice, helping the less fortunate, and caring for the environment.⁹³ In contrast, the Sydney Diocese prioritizes converting people to their beliefs over a broader sense of social and environmental responsibility.⁹⁴

The studies above have focused mainly on the religious attitudes in America, so I will briefly consider this in an Australian context. The 2011 Australian census found that Christianity was the largest religion selected by 61% of the population (see Appendix Two). Of the two other Abrahamic religions, Islam comprises 2.22% of the Australian population, and Judaism 0.45%.⁹⁵ Does this mean that approximately 64% of Australians have a view of the universe based on the “Old Story” and an attitude of domination toward nature? No. Within Abrahamic religious, and even within Christianity (as the

⁹³ See the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne website:

<http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/Pages/Anglican-Diocese-of-Melbourne.aspx> The site is full of social justice and environmental initiatives, and the resources explore contemporary theologians (including process theologians) as well as engaging a multitude of questions from a critical and contextualised perspective.

⁹⁴ The Anglican Diocese of Sydney website: <http://sydneyanglicans.net/#> stands in stark contrast to the Melbourne site – from its explanation ‘what we believe’ to its blog’s focus purely on ministry and the site’s lack of even mentioning any social or environmental concerns or interests.

Mackay (2005) explains: ‘the primary focus of a recently agreed "mission" was not to marshal the resources of the diocese in order to relieve the suffering of the homeless or disadvantaged of Sydney, but to get 10 per cent of the population of Sydney attending Bible-based churches within the next 10 years.’

⁹⁵ See Appendix Two for a table summarizing religious beliefs in Australia, generated using a TableBuilder with data from the *Census of Population and Housing* (ABS 2011).

studies and discussions above have shown), a great diversity of denominations and views exist.⁹⁶

In Australia, Catholics, the Uniting Church and Anglicans tend to be considered relatively mainstream and liberal, and more socially active than their fundamentalist counterparts such as the Baptists, Pentecostals and the Reformed Church. Yet even within mainstream denominations there are great differences, as in the example of Sydney Anglicans. The impact of a Diocese's image of "God", and their approach to the Bible as literal or metaphoric, may be seen in the way that churches set their priorities and views social problems. In line with Froese and Bader's findings, Australian social researcher Hugh Mackay (2005: 42) observes that fundamentalist Christians tend to care less for social justice issues than they do for proselytising their narratives to nonbelievers.⁹⁷ He writes that fundamentalists often consider more liberal churches to be dangerously misled:

Even the Salvation Army is sometimes regarded as suspect because of its non-judgemental compassion for the deadbeats and derelicts of society, and the trendies of the Uniting Church ... getting worked up about the plight of refugees, are likely to be regarded as missing the real point. For fundamentalists, that "real point" concerns personal faith and personal religious experience – especially "conversion".

As a result, it appears unlikely that fundamentalist Christians will be motivated to engage in positive conflict with status quo in order to address the structural violence of the rich profiting from other's poverty and from the misuse of our planet's resources.

Admittedly my choice of examples in this paragraph relate directly to my own story—attending and teaching Sunday School at an Anglican Church in the northern suburbs of

⁹⁶ Of the 61% that selected Christianity, 25.33% are Catholic; 17.14% are Anglican; 4.96% are members of the Uniting Church; 2.62% Eastern Orthodox; 2.79% Presbyterian and Reformed; 1.6% Baptist; 1.17% Lutheran; 1.1% Pentecostals; among others with smaller percentages. Within and between these denominations there are a variety of beliefs and understandings of God, humanity and nature.

⁹⁷ This is not to say that helping people in need is not part of a more fundamentalist or Evangelical Christian's agenda, many Evangelical people and organisations do a lot of good work for people in poverty or need. The point to be made is that such agendas are often secondary to the missionary agendas aimed at converting souls.

Sydney; attending a “non-denominational” small Christian school that insisted on their teachers having the beliefs of the Reformed Church; and attending youth group at a Baptist Church. I observe the irony that I am critiquing churches and schools within which my own development in terms of care for other people and for our planet have emerged from. Christian values certainly seem to ignite a care for others and a desire to make a difference. The problem appears in the way that this care is channelled. Fundamentalist churches tend to focus this care on their missionary work, in order to convert people to a belief in Jesus so that they may go to heaven when they die. Liberal churches channel their care into issues of social justice and environmental sustainability. Making judgements as to which is more important depends on one’s standpoint. In terms of the aim of positive peace, certainly the care of liberal Christians is more conducive than the crusades of evangelicals.

These studies and my analysis of the “Old Story” and structural violence face a significant limitation. While these studies show that worldviews affect peoples’ *attitudes* toward the environment, they do not go as far as showing they affect a person’s *actions*. Exploring the varieties of other religious attitudes toward the environment and investigating the connections between attitudes and actions, are valuable areas for further research. Limited time and space prevents me from exploring these here. I have also not entered into detail on the more direct and extremist violence that results from fundamentalist Christianity, or on other forms of fundamentalist religions in general, choosing to focus on more subtle connections between this “Old Story” and indirect forms of cultural and structural violence.

In the next chapter I will explore a different example of a one-dimensional narrative and its connections to structural violence. The “Modern Story” reflects a materialist and reductionist understanding of the self and world, that rejects the supernatural narrative of the “Old Story” but retains an understanding of humans as separate from and superior to other animals and nature. Birch refers to this worldview as atheistic materialism and Watts describes in terms of the “fully-automatic” model of the universe. Chapter Four argues that the central problem with this “Modern Story” is that it is one-dimensional. It narrates an understanding of the self and world that is disconnected from its historical and

ecological context, therefore enticing “small decisions” without the broad and long-term approach necessary to address indirect and structural forms of violence.

Chapter 4 Indirect Violence of a “Modern Story”

Despite Copernicus, all the cosmos rotates around our little globe. Despite Darwin, we are not, in our hearts, part of the natural process. We are superior to nature, contemptuous of it, willing to use it for our slightest whim (White 2004: 199)

This chapter explores a one-dimensional narrative that I shall refer to as the “Modern Story”. In line with Lynn White Jr.’s words in the opening quote above, Charles Birch, Alan Watts and Thomas Berry argue that the worldview of the “Modern Story” fails to provide an accurate picture of a person’s connection to each other and to nature. Birch (1993: 56-60) assesses this worldview in terms of ‘atheistic materialism’, Watts ([1960]; 2004) describes it in terms of the ‘fully-automatic model of the universe’, and Berry (1988: 126-130) considers it in terms of its ‘scientific secular’ story. Arguably, Western institutions and laws are based on cultural assumptions of the “Modern Story”. This chapter examines the scholarship above to propose that this one-dimensional reductionistic narrative is at root of structural forms of violence such as global poverty and environmental destruction. Tying closely to the theories of structural violence presented in Chapter Two, I posit that the narrative of the “Modern Story” underpins Kahn’s “tyranny of small decisions”, Hipwell’s “Industria”, and Galtung’s structural theory of imperialism. I begin by examining the “Modern Story” in its historical and cultural context.

4.1 What is the “Modern Story”?

By “Modern Story” I am referring to a one-dimensional version of modern secular understandings of the world. Ontologically the “Modern Story” sees the world as comprised of physical matter, and humans as separate from and superior to everything else. In a historical sense, the “Modern Story” has discarded the narratives of traditional Christianity, while retaining the assumption that humans are separate from each other, from other species and from Earth. In other words, the “Modern Story” replaces a story of supernatural separation with a story of material separation. In order to explain the “Modern Story” it is helpful to provide a brief historical and cultural context. Here I locate the “Modern Story” as a reductionistic and mechanistic worldview, and consider it in terms of Watts’ “fully-automatic” model of the universe.

4.1.1 The “Modern Story”: A Story of Material Separation

The individualistic narratives of modern Western culture, referred to here as the “Modern Story”, reflect mechanistic and reductionistic understandings of the world that have developed over the last 500 years, as the power of science rose and the power of religion declined. Paul Hiebert (2008: 142) explains this as a shift in understanding the world ‘as material rather than spiritual, as mechanical rather than teleological.’ The more that science could explain the world, the less there was a need to explain the world in terms of a “God” that intervenes with its creation. For some time, “deism” rose in popularity, positing that “God” initially created the world like a clock-maker, but then left to operate on its own. This image of “God” continues to be reflected in Paul Froese and Christopher Bader’s (2010) notion of a “Distant God”, discussed in Chapter Three. In this view, the universe was imagined to be ‘a giant clock—with springs, cogwheels, and hands governed by impersonal forces and laws’ (Hiebert 2008: 158). Watts (1969: 62-63) explains that the difference between deism and atheism is that for atheists the ‘world was *fully* automatic. It had constructed itself, though not on purpose.’

As mentioned in Chapter Three, Berry (1988: 127) explains the rise of the scientific secular worldview as a response to the Black Death, which turned away from “God” and sought its remedy in ‘understanding and controlling the earth process.’ Berry observes:

The telescope and microscope were invented. Calculus, the supreme instrument of modern science, was discovered. A scientific priesthood came to govern the thought life of our society (127).

In addition, ‘evidence was appearing in the realms of geology and palaeontology indicating that there was a time sequence in the very formation of the earth and of all lifeforms upon earth’ (127). As science expanded Western understandings of the world, rapid changes were occurring in cultural, political, economic and technological spheres. The French Revolution (1789-1799) upturned monarchical political systems and welcomed democracy and nationalism to the world stage. The development of manufacturing technology spurred the Industrial Revolution in Britain from 1760 until around 1840. This led into a ‘chemical revolution’ in the 1900s, with developments in pharmaceuticals changing our lifespans; pesticides and preservatives changing our food; cement and plastics changing our housing and consumption; and oil and petrol spurring a second industrial revolution with transportation and industrial development spreading across mostly-Western countries (see Trompf 1993). The global population exploded from under a billion in 1750 to seven billion in 2011 (Durand 1977: 259, United Nations 2011), while a small percentage of people in Western countries experienced unprecedented luxury.

Intellectual works such as Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) and Karl Marx’ *The Communist Manifesto* (2002 [1848]), transformed the way that many people in Western countries thought about the world. Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* (1859) challenged the way that many people understood the connection between human beings and other animals. The “Modern Story” evolved alongside these changes, as there was a growing sense that humanity could make sense and even control the world without any concept of “God”. Ecofeminist Charlene Spretnak (1994: 182) describes the worldview of the “Modern Story” as a ‘mechanical philosophy’ that ‘perceived the natural world as a clockwork that could be fully apprehended and mastered by (male) human intellect.’ Birch (1990: 57) refers to this perspective as a ‘mechanistic worldview’ in which the ‘universe is a gigantic machine made up of countless machines, be they

living organisms or atoms.’⁹⁸ Birch (1993: 57) also referred to it as an ‘atheistic, materialistic’ worldview.

By atheistic and materialistic Birch was not suggesting that all atheists are “materialistic” in the sense of loving material possessions. Birch was referring specifically to a worldview that is physicalist, atomist, positivist, reductionist and mechanist. In philosophy, these interrelated terms refer to a perspective that explains reality (including emotions and thoughts) solely in terms of physical matter. As Birch (1990: 57) explains:

The mechanistic model is properly called atomistic (from the Greek *atomos*, meaning indivisible). Its method consists in subdividing the world into its smallest parts, which at one time were thought to be atoms.

The basis of this worldview is *reductionist* in its assumption that a whole can be understood by studying its parts; *materialist* in the sense that everything is considered to be constructed of physical matter with ‘separate particles pushing each other around’; and *mechanistic* in its supposition that entities have no intrinsic relationships to each other, interacting like parts of a machine (Birch 1993: 20). Reductionists attempt to put together their understanding of the parts in order to grasp a whole. This leads to ‘the doctrine of mechanism’, explains Birch (1990: 57), which posits that ‘the universe and all entities in the universe are machines.’ Materialistic atheism overlaps with scientism in that it tends to reduce human sensual data to its properties and treat its understanding of the material world as the only valid form of truth.

The figures below illustrate the ontologies of four different theologies, and four different forms of truth: classic theism, pantheism, atheism and panentheism. These figures may be a useful reference point for comparing the theological representations of the “Old Story”, the “Modern Story” and the “New Story”, and variations within and surrounding those theologies. Each of these theologies, it is argued here, has different implications for ethics, values, actions and peace.

⁹⁸ Birch (1990: 57) notes that this ‘image goes back to the Greeks, but it was given its most complete expression in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the rise of classical physics.’

Figure 4.1 The “Old Story” of Classic Theism:
“God” is Separate

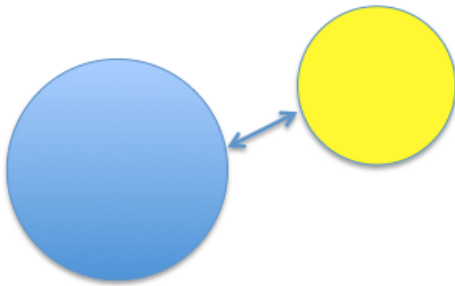


Figure 4.2 The “Modern Story” of Atheism:
There is no “God”

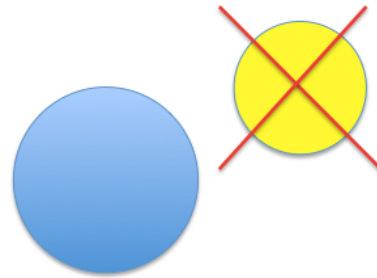


Figure 4.3 Another story is Pantheism:
Everything is “God”

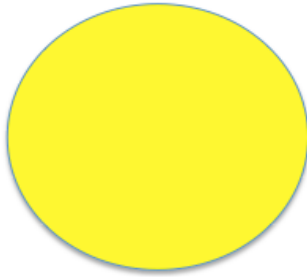


Figure 4.4 The “New Story” of Panentheism:
Everything is *in* “God”



In the diagrams, I use yellow to represent “God”, and blue to represent the world. The essential difference between these figures lies in their understanding of the relationships between “God” and the world: classic theism separates “God” and the world, pantheism equates the two, atheism rejects the idea of “God” altogether, while panentheism nests one inside the other. I include pantheism as a figure above, as it is a term often confused with panentheism, distinguished by the “en”. I will discuss this distinction further in Chapter Five.

4.1.2 The “Modern Story”: A “Fully-Automatic” Model of the Universe

Watts describes the transition to the “Modern Story” as the dethroning of one tyrant and replacing it with a worse one. The ‘game of God got embarrassing,’ says Watts ([1960]; 2004) and the ‘all-too-intelligent God’ was replaced with a ‘Cosmic Idiot.’ While the new model rejected the supernatural “God” of the ceramic model, it retained some of its “ceramic” building blocks—‘the laws of nature were still there, but no lawmaker’ (Watts 1969: 50). The “Old Story” of a supernatural separation was rejected, but its assumption

that humans were separate from nature was retained. Earth was still treated as an artefact, but now it was thought of as an automatic machine.

In the figure below I attempt to capture the ontology of Watts' fully-automatic model:

Figure 4.5 Watts' "Fully-Automatic Model"

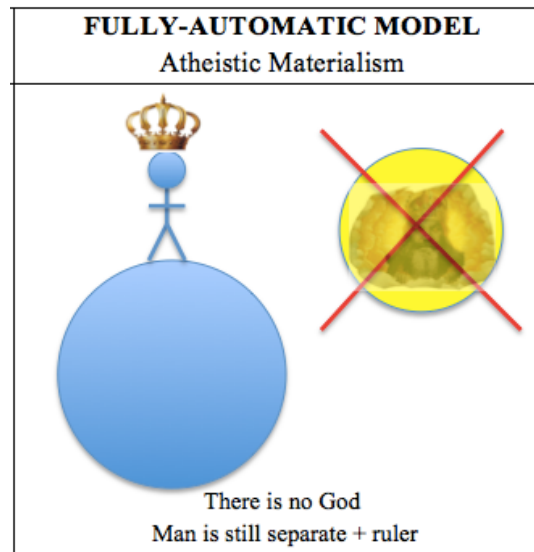


Figure 4.5 illustrates an atheistic materialist ontology in which the existence of any "God" is denied and humanity sees itself as the ruler over nature. In this figure, "God" (in yellow) is crossed out but humanity (the stick figure) still sees itself as separate from nature. The crown and humanity's position on top of Earth (the blue circle) indicates humanity's perception that they are ruling over Earth and other living beings.

It is important to note that in the movement away from the "Old Story", the reductionistic and materialistic approaches of the "Modern Story" was not the only story being told. In his "Classification of the Sciences", Garry Trompf (2011) points to the tensions between positivistic and holistic approaches to sciences going back to Antiquity. He observes concerns for the spiritual process throughout Continental thought. The German Idealists Georg W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) and Friedrich W. J. Schelling (1775-1854), and English mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947), are prime examples of a different narrative that developed alongside the "Modern Story". Theories

of general relativity, quantum mechanics, complex systems, postmodernism and heuristic phenomenology—which rose last century—also challenge the materialist perspective espoused by the “Modern Story”. Birch (1990: x) observes that the image of our universe as a giant machine is ‘challenged by modern physics, modern biology and by frontier thinking in theology and philosophy. But the news has not yet reached the headlines.’ These “new sciences” are contextualising knowledge, exploring the intrinsic relationships and webs of connections, and pointing to more ecological and holistic ways of understanding the world and our selves. As elaborated in detail in Chapter Five, these are holistic, process-oriented and contextualised narratives, in keeping with the “New Story”.

In Chapter One, in reference to Clarence Glacken (1967), I pointed out that an emphasis on separateness is not the only emphasis of narratives throughout Western history. Tendencies toward separation have interwoven with tendencies toward connection and unity. This tension was observable within Christian narratives, and it is observable within secular stories too. Nevertheless Lynn White Jr’s (1967) essay pointed out that in Western culture today there is a deep and dominant assumption that the “self” is separate from other people and from nature. This is explicitly seen in modern economic models that base their calculations on the supply and demand of individuals, assumed to seek their own self-interests regardless of the broader social and environmental consequences.

In the balance of this chapter, I establish the “Modern Story” as a form of one-dimensional narrative. I argue that the polarisation of the “Modern Story” (one-dimensional reductionism) and the “Old Story” (one-dimensional supernaturalism) spurs religious fundamentalism as a form of indirect violence. I posit that the “Modern Story” disconnects the self from the world, locating this one-dimensional narrative as a root cause of structural violence and a barrier to positive peace.

4.2 One-Dimensional Narrative: All is Material

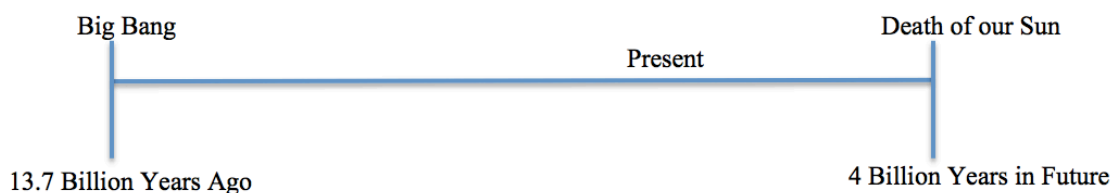
The worldview of the “Modern Story” is based on a narrowly defined window of scientific Western knowledge. It is stuck in the paradigm of “modernity”—adamant that there is an objective reality to be known and that science can provide all the answers. As touched upon in Chapter One and illustrated in Figure 1.3, a modern scientific approach enables the “Modern Story” to consider the observer to be separate from the subject that it observes. Anything outside the Western scientific paradigm is considered inferior. Not only does materialistic atheism discredit supernatural religions, but also it denies a sense of the *spiritual* that mystics profess, that Eastern philosophies explain, and Indigenous cultures embody. Such a perspective is reductionistic. It reduces everything in the world to atomic matter. In this way the “Modern Story” is one-dimensional. It portrays itself to be the “brave” option, able to deal with the gritty and dark realities of life. Yet the reality captured by this narrative lacks coherency and context. It reflects an abstract and disconnected version of what is otherwise an interconnected and multi-dimensional universe.

Birch (1990: 77) acknowledges the important role of a reductionistic approach to knowledge such as for the purposes of engineering and other practical sciences. On the other hand, he argues specifically against the *misuse* of this reductionist approach to knowledge, for example as ‘applied to human behaviours and the assumption of its final explanatory adequacy in any worldview’ (77). Birch (1990: 59) explains that the ‘Newtonian universe and elaborations which followed were a brilliant abstraction from nature. Its failure was to identify the abstraction with reality.’ Thus for Birch, the “Modern Story” mistakenly thinks that theories of atoms, such as Isaac Newton’s, are reality rather than seeing them as theories reflecting only an aspect of reality. This is ‘to mistake abstractions for concrete realities’, observes Birch (1999: 51), ‘reduces the human to physics and chemistry.’ This abstraction, as explored in Chapter Two, facilitates the expansion of “Industria”. If one looks only at the parts, one will form a narrow perspective of the parts without seeing the relationships and processes which constitutes a whole. It is argued here that neglecting to narrate individual humans as connected to each other and to the environment is a root cause of structural violence. Yet this is not the only way of understanding modern science.

Another reading of the “Modern Story” points to a continuous story of cosmic and biological evolution, from the Big Bang leading into a fourteen-billion year evolutionary process that is continuing today. Read holistically, scientific understandings of our day point to the connectedness of every living process, including every person, which are parts of a greater whole. Yet the “Modern Story” is not narrated in this way. Instead of exploring the story of human civilizations, animals, Earth and the Universe as one unifying whole, the “Modern Story” reduces it to its isolated parts. Scientists stick to the so-called “facts”, as do historians. Knowledge is seen as static, and the connections between subject areas are often ignored. A misinterpretation of ‘survival of the fittest’ has come to dominate, assuming survival to be a function of strength and selfishness to be human nature.⁹⁹ The story neglects the interconnectivity and meaning that comes from the whole of being in nature.

The scientific narrative expressed in Figure 4.6 locates humanity on a timescale 13.7 or so billion years. The story starts with a “Big Bang”, and it looks ahead to the impending death of our sun (and therefore our Earth) in four or so billion years time (see Christian 2004: 487).

Figure 4.6 The grand-narrative of atheism: from the Big Bang to our Sun’s death



If this macro-history is understood one-dimensionally, it appears rather meaningless and bleak.¹⁰⁰ I will show in Part Three that a multi-dimensional narrative constructed using the same facts—but framed in a different way—can transform this history into a narrative that is full of meaning and purpose.

⁹⁹ Jeremy Rifkin (2009: 91) points out, survival ‘is as much about cooperation, symbiosis and reciprocity as it is about individual competition.’ The misinterpretation is referred to as “social Darwinism”.

¹⁰⁰ I will return to the question of purpose within the “Modern Story” shortly.

On the surface one may not see the indirect violence of the “Modern Story”. An atheist, for example, might see the world in a reductionistic way while still caring for other people and for nature and acting in ways that they see as being ethically and morally “right”. The problem with the “Modern Story” is not the narrative itself, but what is missing from that narrative and what results from it, as the next section will discuss.

4.3 The “Modern Story” and Structural Violence

In this section I identify three central problems with the “Modern Story”. First, I explore the ways that the “Modern Story” provokes religious fundamentalism. I consider ways that, particularly in its anti-religious expression, the “New Story” positions itself as the only rational way of understanding the world and as the only alternative to the “Old Story”. Second, I argue that the “Modern Story” espouses a (spatial) disconnection of human beings from each other and from nature. This disconnection fosters individualistic decision-making focused on personal rather than global issues. Third, I posit that the “Modern Story” portrays a (temporal) disconnection of humans from their macro-history. This disconnection fosters a static-orientation to decision-making that prioritises the short-term over the long-term, and lacks a sense of united purpose necessary for addressing structural violence. All three of these problems reflect examples of how one-dimensional narratives indirectly work to maintain unjust institutional arrangements at the root of structural violence.

4.3.1 Polarising Narratives: Spurring Fundamentalism

In their most explicit forms, the “Modern Story” appears diametrically opposite to the “Old Story”. New Atheism is seen to mirror fundamentalist Christianity (see Stahl 2010: 97; Bunting 2006). These polarised one-sided narratives provoke and perpetuate each other’s positions. Karen Armstrong (2000: 370-371) points out that a perceived ‘terror of extinction’ has created an ‘escalating spiral of hostility and recrimination’ between secularists and fundamentalist Christian, Muslim and Judaic religions, who fear that secularists are trying to eliminate their religions and culture altogether. Both sides of this debate tend to assume that “God” is a separate supernatural being—which one-dimensional religiosity affirms and one-dimensional atheism denies. These two polarised positions are mutually reinforcing. Ironically, as discussed in Chapter Three, at deeper levels they are historically and ideologically connected (White 2004).

In *America’s Four Gods* (introduced in Chapter Three), Froese and Bader (2010: 3) observe that there is a growing religious illiteracy in which most Americans see themselves as ‘in the midst of a struggle between “true believers” and the “godless” or, put another way, “fundamentalists” and “secular humanists”.’ This illiteracy is reflected

and reinforced by popular “God Debates” that are often framed as a question of belief or disbelief in the existence of a supernatural “God”, or as a battle between religion and science. Each side of this debate reflects a very different, one-dimensional understanding of the world with each, as American political journalist Chris Hedges (2008: 7) points out, maintaining a belief that there is ‘only one Truth: their truth.’ Hedges observes that New Atheists believe that:

Human beings must become like them, think like them and adopt their values, which they insist are universal, or be banished from civilized society. All other values, which they never investigate or examine, are dismissed (6-7).

Hedges observes the dichotomised perceptions:

Religion (if you are secular) is blamed for genocide, injustice, persecution, backwardness and intellectual and sexual repression. “Secular humanism” (if you are born again) is branded as a tool of Satan (9).

Yet Hedges points out that there is ‘[n]othing intrinsically moral about being a believer or a nonbeliever’ (1). Religious people and secularists intentionally and unintentionally conduct acts of violence and acts of peace. Still, these worldviews remain crucial to people’s understanding of good and bad, right and wrong; and in motivating people’s actions in ways that maintain or work to address structural forms of violence. This debate distracts from the possibilities of looking at the world in a more mature way, which is important for global transformation toward the aim of positive peace. These one-dimensional positions, as argued in this thesis, ignore the many more multi-dimensional alternatives that lie in between or transcend these poles (which I will explore in detail in Chapter Five).

The so-called “New Atheists”, such as author of *The God Delusion*, Richard Dawkins (2006), author of *The End of Faith* Sam Harris (2006), and author of *God is Not Great*, Christopher Hitchens (2007), vehemently oppose the highly anthropomorphized conception of “God” as a supernatural male king who watches over humankind, judges their sins and intervenes in their lives. New Atheism is different from historical atheism in its conviction that the world will be a more peaceful place without religion. Rather than enticing religious people to critically reflect on their beliefs, New Atheists often

have the opposite effect. Hedges (2008: 6) observes that the New Atheists ‘are a secular version of the religious right. They misuse the teachings of Charles Darwin and evolutionary biology just as the Christian fundamentalists misuse the bible.’

For example, in his critique of *The God Delusion*, Trompf (2012) points to the vast omissions and errors in Dawkinsian scholarship—in particular the framing of evolution and “God” as mutually exclusive theories of origins. Trompf observes that ‘[t]hroughout *The God Delusion*, Dawkins consistently links evolutionary thought and natural selection to an atheistical view of the world’ (32).¹⁰¹ Yet, science is not simpatico with atheism. Although Dawkins’ infers that the ‘best contemporary scientists are atheists’, Trompf observes that ‘Albert Einstein, Stephen Hawking, Paul Davies, Wilson and some others [that Dawkins] names have for the most part edged toward deist outlooks, while Bertrand Russell conceded he was agnostic...’ (30).

Dawkins is stuck in what Trompf refers to as a ‘very old-style Rationalist response to the Bible’, making little attempt to understand the Bible in its historical context (37). Trompf observes that for Dawkins:

The very idea of *contextualising* the ostensibly “messy” Biblical material into historical perspective or discerning a development from a tribalist toward a universalizing outlook is apparently beyond him (37).

The point to be made here, reiterating arguments in Chapter Three, is that while fundamentalist Christians may read the Biblical creation story as literal, a great number of Christians do not. Yet Dawkins makes no attempt to represent such voices. Like fundamentalist Christians, Dawkins and other New Atheists take a one-dimensional approach to the practice of religion—understood outside of its historical and cultural contexts.

This is an example of the “Modern Story” perceiving religion as one-dimensional; enabling the “Modern Story” to reject a one-dimensional image of a supernatural “God”. In place of the “Old Story’s” supernatural “God”, the “Modern Story” posits a one-

¹⁰¹ As Dawkins (1999: 181) writes: ‘God and natural selection are, after all, the only two workable theories we have of why we exist’ (cited in Trompf 2013: 32).

dimensional materialist alternative that is reductionistic—stripped of a sense of its whole. Berry (1988: 130) explains this as a double-sided ‘impasse’ between the ‘redemption community of America’, which has ‘grown apart not only from the historical story, but also from the earth story’; and the ‘secular scientific community’ which is committed to ‘the realm of the physical to the exclusion of the spiritual.’ He goes on to say that while these communities can cooperate and crossover with each other in schools and professional worlds, this is not enough:

The antagonisms are deeper than they appear. An integral story has not emerged, and no community can exist without a unifying story. This is precisely why the communication between these two is so unsatisfying. No sustained values have emerged. Our social problems are not resolved. The earth continues to disintegrate under the plundering assault of humans. Both traditions are trivialised. The human venture remains stuck in its impasse (130).

Berry explains that ‘both scientists and believers remain disengaged from any profound understanding of the earth process itself. To remedy this situation we need simply to reflect on the story itself’ (132).

In regards to the essentially negative conflict between the “Modern Story” and the “Old Story”, Charles Hartshorne ([1934]; 2001: 107) points out, ‘both parties are mistaken.’ Hartshorne (107) observes that since the early twentieth century, an alternative conception of “God” has been proposed ‘so unobtrusively’ that ‘nearly all opponents of theism are still fighting the older conception.’ Birch (1990: 88) explains that he is an atheist about the supernatural concept of “God”. He is not, however, an atheist about the ‘notion of God as a cosmic event, and the ground on which that event (including me) takes place.’ Hartshorne and Birch are alluding to a panentheistic understanding of “God”, which will be explored in Part Three as an example of the “New Story”. I move now onto my final two critiques of the “Modern Story”. The first arises from the disconnection of humans from their ecological surrounds, and the second comes from a disconnection of humans from their historical process. I argue here that narrating a separation of humans from each other and from nature fosters individualistic short-term decision-making (Kahn 1966), enabling the structural violence of “Industria” (Hipwell 2007) and obstructing efforts toward positive peace (Galtung 1971).

4.3.2 A Reductionistic Self: Fostering Structural Violence

As posited in Chapter Two, reductionistic approaches to the self and the world foster decision-making that prioritises the short-term and personal, over the long-term and global. There I used Johan Galtung's "Structural Theory of Imperialism" (1971) to shed light on structural inequalities as an unjust distribution of wealth, observing the way that global political, economic and social institutions and historical factors that have led to a distribution of wealth from the poor to the rich (or in Galtung's terms, from the 'Periphery' nations to 'Centre' nations). Drawing from Hipwell's (2007) "Industria Hypothesis" and Alfred Kahn's (1966) "tyranny of small decisions", I considered the connection between such structural inequality and the individualistic narratives of neoliberalism. A feedback loop was identified through which the machine-like entity of "Industria" fosters a mechanistic and reductionistic worldview (or in narrative terms, the "Modern Story"), which encourages short-term and individualistic decision-making. These "small decisions" rarely take into account the consequences for living conditions of the "Periphery" nations or the long-term impact on the ecosystems required to function for humanity's survival. Put simply: the "Modern Story" encourages "small decisions" which is a root cause of structural violence. Here I shall explore this argument in more detail, focusing on the ways that the "Modern Story" disconnects people from their ecological context.

In the Preface to *The Book*, Watts (1969: 9) observes that '[t]he prevalent sensation of oneself as a separate ego enclosed in a bag of skin is a hallucination' that is, as his subtitle suggests, a *Taboo against Knowing Who You Are*. For Watts, this taboo 'underlies the misuse of technology for the violent subjugation of man's natural environment and, consequently, its eventual destruction' (9). Watts is eloquently arguing that understanding the self as separate from nature is central to global issues of structural violence such as environmental destruction. Watts (1969: 9) points out that the "Modern Story's" hallucinatory narrative of the separate self 'accords neither with Western science nor with the experimental philosophy-religions of the East.' A more holistic analysis of scientific understandings of the world points to an intimate connectedness between every human and entire universe in both time (macro-historically) and in space (deeply-ecologically).

Although I am critical of Dawkins' one-dimensional approach to religion, as explored above, the evolutionary biologist also offers a substantially holistic picture of the connection between species. In his book *The Ancestor's Tale* (2004), and elaborated on in an online article called "The Tyranny of the Discontinuous Mind" (2013), Dawkins points out that there was never a 'first Homo sapien.' Every generation of our ancestors 'belonged to the same species as its parents and its children.' Dawkins (2013: 4) emphasises, 'Evolutionary change is gradual: there never was such a line, never a line between any species and its evolutionary precursor.' An unbroken lineage throughout history connects us with every one of our ancestors. At every step along the way, one generation of our ancestors could breed with another of a number of prior and latter generations.¹⁰² All species are interconnected through time. However, due to the 'discontinuous' nature of the human mind, able to observe only a small window of time, it perceives species as if they are discontinuous from each other.

Similarly, Whiteheadian thinkers John Cobb and David Ray Griffin (1976: 26) observe that 'no neat line can be drawn between the individual and its environment, since what is "the environment" in one moment essentially enters into the individual in the next moment.' Rights-of-nature theorist J. Baird Callicott (1989: 114) makes a related point observing that there are no 'hard and fast boundaries between oneself, either physically or spiritually, and the environment.' Birch (1993: 94) states: 'To think of self as cut off from the rest of nature by one's skin is to think anatomically and not realistically. All things, including humans, exist by their participation in other things.' Birch illustrates this connection by drawing attention to a source of life that we often take for granted, our breath:

Every breath we take includes about a billion oxygen molecules that have been at one time or another, in the lungs of every one of the fifty billion humans who have

¹⁰² Dawkins illustrates this with the tale of the herring gull and the lesser black-backed gull in the Arctic Circle. These are two different species (named the *Larus argentatus* and *Larus fuscus*) that do not breed with each other. Dawkins (2004: 303) refers to these gulls as 'ring species' as 'at every stage around the ring, the birds are sufficiently similar to their immediate neighbours in the ring to interbreed with them.' Yet when the 'ends of the continuum are reached' in Europe, these birds live side by side but do not interbreed with each other. Dawkins (303) explains that 'Ring species like the salamanders and the gulls are only showing us in the spatial dimension something that must always happen in the time dimension.'

ever lived. The simple act of breathing links us in the curiously intimate way with every historical figure and the most obscure of our forebears in every epoch (120).

This simple act illustrates that humans are interdependent on their environment, nested within a web of ecological and social-political-economic factors. We cannot live or know ourselves outside of that web. I will return to this process and ecological perspective in Chapter Five.

The disregard for the biological and ecological insights of Dawkins and Birch above, are the root problem of the “Modern Story”. The “Modern Story’s” understanding of humans as separate from each other and from their environment facilitates modern economic models’ commodification and objectification of nature, animals and even people (Birch and Cobb 1990: 2). Whether workers in a factory, students at a university or customers in a supermarket, human beings are often treated as numbers rather than persons. Birch (1990: 9) criticises modern economic systems for treating people ‘as objects, not as subjects’, he observes:

It is a substance view of humans. Their value is their value to the gross national product. Their value is their service ... The tendency of the technological society that puts a premium on efficiency is to treat people as objects for economic ends and not as subjects who have an urge to live. But what’s the point of gaining top marks for GNP and losing your soul?

The calculating of “wealth” and “success” within “Industria’s” system and culture is conducted with a stark emphasis on monetary terms. Gross National Product (GNP) / Gross Domestic Product (GDP) treats wars and natural disasters as stimulating “growth” (see Ashford and Hall 2011: 24). Yet real wealth, according to more holistic stories, is found in public schools, public parks and public health, in clean water, clean air and nutritious food—as Stuart Rees puts it ‘try living without it!’ (pers. comm., 25 March 2014). Nicholas Ashford and Ralph Hall (2011: 24) call for more multi-dimensional success indicators, for example the Genuine Progress Indicator (see GPI 2014) and the Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW) (see Daly and Cobb 1994: 443-500). The point to be made here is that these deep-rooted assumptions about what it means to be human in relation to each other and our environment, are built into feedback loops such

as modern economic models that guide many decisions and actions of people in Western countries. Yet even the most ‘militant’ of atheists, as exemplified by Dawkins, illustrate the inaccuracy and incoherency of the “Modern Story” that results from the isolation and decontextualisation of knowledge. In this thesis I suggest that this fragmented knowledge from which the “Modern Story” is built, making it difficult for individual decision-making to take account of the long-term interest of the global community (as elaborated below).

4.3.3 A Reductionistic Purpose: a Barrier to Positive Peace

Due to the reductionistic tendencies of the “Modern Story”, it lacks a framework for global ethics and purpose that appreciates difference while uniting humanity in a common purpose (which would ideally be aimed at positive peace). Birch (1990: 2) observes that ‘we have failed to choose purposes that could fulfil life.’ Our lives are full of different forms of concerns out of which we find purpose and meaning:

We are concerned about our work, about our relationships to others and about ourselves as we grow and develop. Many of our concerns are the cause of worry and anxiety ... The concern about work becomes a god for some, as does the concern for pleasure for others ... We may then try to dismiss all concerns to maintain a cynical unconcern. Or we may attempt to practise the un-attachment of the Buddhist (5).

The need for a sense of purpose has particularly significant implications in situations where a person is brought up with a purpose-filled religion. Birch (1993: 42) posits that when a person loses a sense of purpose they are left with a vacuum that can be dangerous:

There is always a vacuum when the ultimate question is no longer taken into account.
The vacuum fills with quasi-religion as happened in Germany under Nazism.

Berry (1988: 123) observes that in Western countries, the traditional Christian narratives ‘shaped our emotional attitudes, provided us with life purpose, energized action.’ Berry admits that this story ‘did not make people good, it did not take away the pains and stupidities of life, or make for unfailing warmth in human associate. But it did provide a

context in which life could function in a meaningful manner.¹⁰³ Berry explains (1988: 124):

Even with advanced science and technology, with superb techniques in manufacturing and commerce, in communications and computation, our secular society remains without satisfactory meaning or the social discipline needed for a life leading to emotional, aesthetic, and spiritual fulfilment.

Berry explains that ‘Because this story presents the universe as a random sequence of physical and biological interactions with no inherent meaning, the society supported by this vision has no adequate way of identifying any spiritual or moral values’ (130). Like Birch in earlier discussions, Berry connects this lack of purpose and fulfilment with people ‘returning to a religious fundamentalism’ (124).

The incoherency and lack of a holistic story, the lack of answers to the big questions, and lack of framework for ethics offered by the “Modern Story” makes for fertile ground for ideologies and fundamentalisms. The reductionist nature of the “Modern Story”, that sees the world as its parts, lacks a coherent and united sense of purpose. Narratives that disconnect humans ecologically and historically disenchant the world and strip it of purpose (Griffin 2001b). Within this view, Whitehead ([1925]; 1967: 54) observes: ‘Nature is a dull affair, soundless, scentless, colourless; merely the hurrying of material, endlessly, meaninglessly.’ Depending upon the way that one frames the “Modern Story” they may think: there is nothing after death so why should I care? Alternatively they may think: life is everything and I am part of it, we have only one planet so we better take care of it.

The observations of Birch, Berry and Watts are consistent with my personal experience and with conversations I have had with others who have transitioned out of a fundamentalist religion. One friend whose father was a minister and who attended the same fundamentalist Christian school and Baptist youth group as I did, said to me: ‘do you ever worry that you’re wrong?’ It can be difficult to let go of a fear of hell when one

¹⁰³ Chapter Ten of Berry’s *The Dream of the Earth* is a revised version of his 1978 essay *The New Story*. The 1988 essay, for example, replaces the word ‘men’ with ‘people’, and adds small additional insights that Berry had gathered over the decade—hence my decision to quote the newer text.

is taught it as a child, a situation theorised in psychology as “spiritual abuse” (Purcell 1998). The one-dimensional narrative of the “Old Story” can be so comprehensive and convincing from within, that it calls for another comprehensive yet critically reflective and open narrative to replace it. The fragmented nature of the “Modern Story” arguably fails to do this. These claims point to the inadequacy of the narrative of the “Modern Story” to address structural violence and work toward positive peace. Yet Birch (1990: 5) observes that ‘There is another way. It is, in Tillich’s terminology, to be committed to “ultimate concern”, the one concern that matters ultimately.’ I will get to this in Part Three.

Part Two has considered (i) the “Old Story” as a form of one-dimensional narrative of supernaturalism, explored through the example of fundamentalist Christianity; and (ii) the “Modern Story” as a one-dimensional narrative of materialism, explored through the perspective of New Atheists and as assumptions embedded in global politico-economic institutions. Chapters Three and Four have shown the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story” to share a number of assumptions. First, both consider ‘the fundamental units of nature are *bits of stuff* wholly devoid of self-determination or self-motion’ (Birch 1993: 57). Classic theism typically attributes the First Cause to “God”, and atheism attributes it to a “Big Bang”. Secondly, both stories assume that ‘each one of us is a *separate individual, atomistic, particle-like, skin encapsulated ego*, with clear boundaries between us and all our other selves’ (Birch 1993: 20).¹⁰⁴ In the “Old Story” the human body is the home of a person’s soul, in the “Modern Story” this body is you, and when it dies so do you.¹⁰⁵ I have argued that this emphasis on the separation of humanity from each other and from nature contributes to “hidden” forms of structural violence for broader humanity, such as freedom of religion, entrenched poverty and destruction of the planet’s ecosystems. Finally and perhaps most importantly, in insisting that their knowledge is the *only form of Truth*, both worldviews were shown to be one-dimensional.

Within these chapters, I identified a variety of voices within the narratives of Christianity and the secular scientific community. Chapter Three emphasised a key difference

¹⁰⁴ Emphasis mine.

¹⁰⁵ Chapter Five will explore the “New Story’s” more multi-dimensional way of thinking about the self, human body and death.

between literal interpretations of Biblical narratives (the “Old Story”) that are linked to cultural and structural violence, and more contextualised interpretations that signify a movement toward more multi-dimensional perspectives (the “New Story”) and with this more caring attitudes toward social justice and nature. Similarly Chapter Four both critiqued Dawkin’s one-dimensional approach to religion (the “Modern Story”), while appreciating his emphasis on process and continuity within biological evolution (the “New Story”). This multi-dimensional approach to scholarship and categories exemplifies the critically reflective nature of the “New Story”—that looks beyond one-dimensional labels.

In bringing Part Two to a close, I wish to recap the central argument that is unfolding. As argued here, addressing global forms of structural violence such as poverty and environmental destruction requires dealing with the two tyrannies: that of “small decisions” (Kahn) and that of the “discontinuous mind” (Dawkins). In other words, there is a need to reconnect parts with their wholes (or connect the “self” with a global humanity and the Earth community). In place of the “Modern Story”, Chapter Two drew attention to the need for more holistic narratives that encompass a process approach to connecting the short-term with the long-term. Through process it shows that parts are connected with wholes, as individuals are connected with other people, other species and the environment. The “New Story” offers a means for one-dimensional theism and atheism to look beyond their reductionistic and supernaturalistic tendencies, and interpret religious, biological and cosmological evolution in a more multi-dimensional way. Part Three will explore the “New Story” as a non-supernatural yet non-reductionistic way of understanding the world; which I propose addresses the limitations and violent consequences of the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story”. It explores a multi-dimensional, process oriented and holistic narrative indicative of positive peace.

Part III Multi-Dimensional Narratives & Positive Peace

“I base my faith on the Bible, what do you base yours on?” my Dad often asked.

“History, science, mythology, all religions,” I tried to explain, “my faith is based on questioning and understanding the world. My relationship with God is stronger than ever.”

“But how? *Based upon what???*”¹⁰⁶

In discussions with my father, I would try to explain that while I had rejected the exclusive Biblical-literalist notion that ‘believing in Jesus is the only way to heaven,’ I felt that I had retained a ‘relationship with “God”’—but with a whole new understanding of what that meant. It no longer referred to a relationship with a supernatural person-like entity in the sky. Instead for me it meant feeling of being connected to the cosmic process. It seemed like a toe to my body, my body was connected to Earth, which was connected to the universe and anything beyond that too. For me, “God” encompassed all of these levels of being.¹⁰⁷ My father thought this was ungrounded New Age nonsense. In his mind, the Bible was true or false, “God” exists or does not exist, Jesus was a ‘liar, a

¹⁰⁶ In some ways, the three words “*based upon what?*” underpin this research project. “*On what is my non-fundamentalist-Christian worldview based on?*” Why this question is important for me might be hard to fathom for people who have never lived with the certainty that fundamentalism provides. Yet many ex-fundamentalists like myself desire a comprehensive narrative, regardless of whether theological language is retained or not.

¹⁰⁷ In line with process thinkers (Birch 1999; Cobb and Griffin 1976; Whitehead 1929; and Watts 1969), I use the word “God” to indicate a cosmic event that includes our universe. That is, God includes all of history from the Big Bang, to the complicated self-reflexive human being, as well as everything that (speculatively speaking) is before, after, inside and outside of our universe. Whether or not one chooses to use the word “God”, the worldview of the “New Story” conceptualises humans as *parts and participants of wholes* (of human society, the Earth community, the universe story), each of which is *more than the sums of their parts*. In theological terms, this understanding is referred to as pantheism, which conceives of the world as being located inside “God”, and “God” as penetrating the world while also transcending it. While it may be *useful* (to some people) to use the word “God”, the use of the term is not imperative.

lunatic or Lord.’¹⁰⁸ My father’s voice was reflective of the worldview of the “Old Story” explored in Chapter Three.

Within the “Old Story’s” approach to Christian theology: if the Bible is not the literal and divine word of “God” then it is worthless. In this view, everything is black or white—there is nothing in between. Part Two argued that the “Old Story” and “Modern Story” are one-dimensional narratives that mutually reinforce each other’s views. Chapter Four posited that the materialistic alternative and reductionistic approach to life, science and economics, offered by the “Modern Story” lacks a sense of purpose and comprehensiveness desired by questioning persons, particularly those who have left a fundamentalist religion. Both the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story” were shown to narrate a separation of human beings from nature, and in doing so contribute to structural forms of violence such as global social injustice and ecological destruction.

In contrast to these one-dimensional narratives, Alfred North Whitehead (1929: 484), observes that one ‘must not expect simple answers to far-reaching questions,’ calling instead for contemplation of the ‘many-sidedness of things.’ A multi-dimensional narrative is one that observes the many dimensions of a story—the many standpoints and many different ways that the same events can be framed and understood. For example, a multi-dimensional approach to Christian theology considers the basis for its own and other religious understandings as embedded in a historical and cultural context. A multi-dimensional approach to Christianity engages critically with the sources and motivations of the Bible’s authors, the editors, translators and the different meanings that can be interpreted from it. As I tried to justify in the conversation above, read in a critically reflective and holistic way, history, science, mythology and philosophy can combine to offer an understanding of the world that is full of meaning, of which we are each a part. In terms of Stuart Rees’ framework explored in Chapter One, a transition from the “Old

¹⁰⁸ This is known as the ‘Trilemma’ argument first put forth by C. S. Lewis. The Trilemma argument presents these three options as if mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive. Jesus must be a liar, a lunatic or Lord (see McDowell [1977]; 2004). This leaves out the myriad other explanations for who or what Jesus was. For example, it leaves out the historical possibility that Jesus was a revolutionary who hoped to set the Jews free from Roman oppression. It leaves out the historical context in which the Gospel writers wrote, who were likely to include elements of midrash and myth common to their time (see Davis 2004; Borg 2003).

Story” or the “Modern Story” to the “New Story” reflects a movement from one-dimensional forms of power to more multi-dimensional forms. The “New Story”, which will now be explored, is an example of a multi-dimensional narrative: inclusive, contextualised and interdisciplinary. This multi-dimensional alternative is one that does not immediately scare away from the word “God”, but explores it as a concept like any other.

Part Three considers the nature of the “New Story”, locating it as a more holistic, ecological and peaceful alternative to the one-dimensional narratives explored in Part Two. In contrast to the emphasis of the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story” on the separation of humans and nature, the “New Story” emphasises their connections and interdependency. Chapter Five explores the “New Story” proposed by Thomas Berry, in conjunction with Alan Watts’s “dramatic” model of the universe and Charles Birch’s “postmodern ecological” worldview. These narratives frame a story focused on the multi-layered connections and the ongoing process of everything that is. This is a space where inclusive interpretations of different religions, understood in their historical and geopolitical contexts, intersect with each other and with a holistic reading of scientific understandings of our selves and our universe.

Chapter 5 A Multi-dimensional “New Story”

We must learn to see ourselves as a part of, not apart from, our planet and all of its inhabitants (Reardon 1988: 60).

In line with Betty Reardon’s call for holistic and connected understandings of the self, Alan Watts (1969: 9) explores an understanding of the self that exposes the ‘hallucination’ that the self is a ‘separate ego enclosed in a bag of skin.’ He argues that it is of utmost importance to develop ‘a sense of our own existence which is in accord with the physical facts and which overcomes our feeling of alienation from the universe’ (9). In Watts’s opinion, the “dramatic model of the universe” offers such a perspective based on a ‘cross-fertilization of Western science with an Eastern intuition’ (9). This proposal lies parallel to Charles Birch’s (1990: 88) claim that a process-oriented ecological worldview is ‘a credible alternative to materialism and mechanism.’ This worldview is holistic (as opposed to dualistic or reductionistic) and panentheistic (as opposed to supernaturalistic or atheistic).¹⁰⁹ It is also akin to what Thomas Berry referred to as the “New Story”.

The “New Story” offers a multi-dimensional way of narrating the self and the world, that is unifying but open-ended, approaching the many stories of the self and world in-their-context. The worldview of the “New Story”, presented through the voices of process thinkers, is pluralistic while maintaining the integrity of rich and varied world traditions.¹¹⁰ Watts, Berry and Birch promote the “New Story” as a process-oriented alternative to the static worldviews investigated in Chapters Three and Four. In place of focusing on a supernatural or material separation of the self and world, the “New Story” focuses on interconnection of all things. A focus on process and web of connections, as argued here, offers a more accurate understanding of the self and world, and a more promising narrative for positive peace. This chapter builds on arguments from Chapters Three and Four to locate the “New Story” in multi-dimensional understandings of

¹⁰⁹ I will explain the concepts of holism and panentheism in more detail shortly.

¹¹⁰ I suggest that by examining religious narratives in their historical and cultural context, an inclusive understanding emerges. Process theology and panentheist understandings can be found within all major religious traditions, thus it is often a common ground for inter-faith discussion (see edited book Biernacki and Clayton 2014).

religion and science. It proposes that the “New Story” can help to address the indirect violence of the one-dimensional narratives of the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story”. The additional contributions that the “New Story” makes to positive peace, positive conflict and addressing structural violence will be elaborated on in Chapter Six. I begin here by introducing the “New Story” through the words and metaphors of Berry, Watts and Birch, examining the historical context of process thought and its influence across a number of disciplines including ecology, theology, philosophy, cosmology and physics.

5.1 What is the “New Story”?

Largely inspired by process thinker and Jesuit priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Berry uses the term “New Story” to refer to a unified reading of the universe story, the Earth story, life story and human story—as one interconnecting story. Many aspects of this “New Story” are not “new” at all. The holistic tendencies of the “New Story”, as this chapter will show, are found in ancient Eastern philosophies, Indigenous worldviews and in an unbroken stream of thought throughout Western philosophy going back to Antiquity. Today the “New Story” can be found in many liberal and mystic forms of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, and within the emerging interdisciplinary academic studies such as Big History, Integral Studies, Religion and Ecology, Deep Ecology, and Peace Studies, to name a few. Understood primarily through the work of Berry, Watts and Birch, I borrow Berry’s term “New Story” to refer to a process-oriented worldview that the three scholars share.¹¹¹ A first step here is to introduce the paradigm of the “New Story” through the voices of Whitehead and Birch, and its connections to narrative and time (as introduced in Chapter One).

5.1.1 The “New Story”: A Story of Inter-Connecting Process

The crucial difference between the “Old” and “Modern” stories and the “New Story” arises from the notion of process. It reflects a paradigm shift from a substance-based metaphysics that views reality as comprised of static entities, to a process-based metaphysics that sees reality as a web of interconnecting events. Birch (1999: xiii) explains that from a process perspective:

the individual entities of the world, from protons to people, are not to be thought of as things like solid matter but as events or processes. This is to make a fundamental shift from a substance view of the world to an event view.

Within this web, processes are found both in space (ecologically), and in time (historically). This correlates with my arguments in Chapter Four that criticise a

¹¹¹ As articulated previously, process thinker Teilhard inspired Berry, Whiteheadian process philosophy inspired Birch, and Eastern philosophy (which is also a form of process thought) inspired Watts. For more on the connection between these and other forms of process thought see Seibt 2012.

separation of humans from other life forms and ecosystems (in space) and from their macro-history (in time). There I considered biological evolutionary and ecological processes that affirm the “New Story’s” location in modern science (even though the “Modern Story” is not told in this way). The notion of process points to a fundamental connection between all things in the present moment and in the future. This allows for an expanded understanding of the self as a participatory part of the cosmos, and in its most expanded form as the cosmos itself. This understanding, as I will argue in Chapter Six, is essential to empowering individuals to make broader decisions and engage in positive conflict with unjust structures.

Through a process lens, living beings are not “things” that experience, but are what Whitehead called “occasions of experience”. There is no separation from the experiencer and the experience. We *are* experience. What Birch (1990: 76) calls ‘event-thinking’, is in his opinion ‘the deep meaning of thinking ecologically.’ Birch (1990: xvi) promotes this view in terms of John Cobb’s (1988) notion of a ‘postmodern *ecological* worldview.’ The “New Story” is postmodern in the sense of offering ‘a creative synthesis of the best of modern, premodern and new concepts in the forefront of holistic thinking’ (Birch 1990: xvi). The “New Story” is *holistic* in the sense that it focuses on the dynamics of the whole and the relationships between the parts and whole, rather than considering entities simply as its parts.¹¹² The “New Story” is ‘ecological’ in the sense that it emphasises *relationships*. Birch (1990: xvii) observes that there are two forms of ecological worldview—that of Whitehead, and that of Arne Naess (1989). Birch acknowledges his own predominantly Whiteheadian influence, although demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of Naessian thought (which I will return to shortly). The nested and contextual nature of process thinking defines an ecological perspective.

¹¹² Holistic theories come in a number of varieties including *ultimate source holism* (a God, creator or divine source) and *universal interrelatedness holism* (that sees the entire universe and everything in it as interconnected). Others base themselves on dialectic between poles (for example between yin and yang), and on the ‘analogy of the whole of reality, or of significant subsystems, with *organisms*’ (Hanegraaff 1998: 120). These categories can further be distinguished by looking at the various theories of holistic thinkers such as Karl Pribram, David Bohm, Ken Wilber, Frijof Capra, Gregory Bateson and so on.

This thesis is interested in how holistic ideas *as a whole* locate the worldview of the “New Story” and thereby support a narrative directed at positive peace.

The “New Story” envisages the world as systems within systems: quantum within atomic, within biotic, within sociologic, within ecologic, within cosmic, within “God”. By observing this from a human perspective, inside time, one observes that all of life (including “God”—if “God” is to be considered alive) is in a constant state of process. In this view every “thing” including all forms of organisms are actually “events”, comprised of events, within a web of connected events, nested within bigger events. Whitehead (1929: 31) observes that,

How an actual entity becomes constitutes what that actual entity is; so that the two descriptions of an actual entity are not independent. Its “being” is constituted by its “becoming”. This is the “principle of process”.

Whitehead and Birch point to an understanding that within a world that exists inside time, everything is a process (including the comprehension of these ideas). Everything inside the universe is always in a state of change. This process perspective reaffirms the importance of narrative. As established in Chapter One, humans make sense of their experience of time and change through story. The narration of a static notion of the self and world ignores the fundamental nature of our being-in-the-world, which is inescapably temporal (Heidegger 1962). Due to the parallel nature of time, narrative and process (as established in Chapter One), the “New Story” can also be understood as a grand-narrative of narratives. That is, the underlying narrative philosophy of the “New Story” entices ongoing critical reflection on all narratives, understood to always involve a selection process influenced by a narrator’s standpoint. Hence different versions of the “New Story” can be told from different standpoints, with different frames and in different languages. In this way the “New Story” offers a framework for making sense of singularity and plurality at the same time.

This is to say that the “New Story” recognises the partiality of all human perspectives, the subjectivity of the observer telling the story of life and the universe from within that story. The phenomenological stance of a narrative methodology, espoused by Denzin and Ricoeur in Chapter One and illustrated in Figure 1.4, is akin to the way that the “New Story” understands the self as inside, emerging from and influencing nature, rather than seeing the self as separate from it. In this way the “New Story” is multi-dimensional—it understands the many layers within which the world operates, and embraces the many

different ways of knowing and being in the world. While the “New Story” was “new” to me, for many people around the world this process paradigm is not “new” at all. In the upcoming discussion I will locate the “New Story” amongst a variety of ancient and contemporary worldviews, emphasising the common ground established by a multi-dimensional narrative in respect to religion and science.

The “New Story” crosses many disciplinary boundaries in an effort to see how the varied forms of knowledge fit together as a whole. The “New Story” embraces science and religion from a holistic, contextualised perspective. In *The Dream of the Earth*, Berry posits the “New Story” as a means to transcend one-dimensional religious and scientific narratives such as the “Old Story” and “Modern Story” explored in Chapters Three and Four. Berry (1988: 136) observes that within the “New Story”:

the scientific community and the religious community have a common basis. The limitations of the redemption rhetoric and the scientific rhetoric can be seen, and a new, more integral language of being and value can emerge.

The process perspective of the “New Story” helps to unmask a holistic and multi-dimensional approach to religion and science. These will be elaborated on in the balance of this chapter.

5.2 A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Religion

In this section I explore the “New Story” as a multi-dimensional approach to religious narratives. First I explore the Eastern-inspired philosophy of Watts. Second I use the theology of panentheism to ground the “New Story” in a long and rich history of religious and philosophical thought.

5.2.1 The “New Story”: A “Dramatic” Model of the Universe

‘Consider the world as a drama,’ declares Watts ([1960]; 2004), ‘What’s the basis of all drama? The basis of all stories, of all plots, of all happenings—is the game of hide and seek...’ In his “dramatic model of the universe” Watts draws from the *Vedanta* to describe a game in which the *Atman* (your “Self” with a capital “S”, or “God”) hides from itself by manifesting in different forms (such as your “self” with a little “s”, as the particular mind-body you are experiencing today). In this view, “you” are not just what is inside your ‘bag of skin’, but you are the whole cosmic process. Watts suggests that “God” manifests with different *personae* (for example as you and me) to experience life in new ways. “God” hides within our temporal identities in order that “God” may *get to know God’s Self*. In this dramatic model of the universe, “God” is imagined to be ‘playing the game of hide and seek with itself. It gets lost, it gets involved in the farthest-out adventures, but in the end it always wakes up and comes back to itself.’ For Watts (1972: 3-4), ‘every sentient being is God—omnipotent, omniscient, infinite, and eternal—pretending with the utmost certainty and determination to be otherwise.’

Watts’ biography includes a stint as an Episcopal (Church of England) priest, following a long fascination with Zen Buddhism and a masters degree in theology—which brought him to reconcile Western mysticism and Eastern philosophy.¹¹³ Watts spent a lot of his time presenting Eastern ideas in ways that Western people would understand as a “spiritual entertainer” (as he called himself). He uses the term “God” in ways that

¹¹³ Watts ([1947]; 1971) masters thesis was published as the popular book *Behold the Spirit: A Study in the Necessity of Mystical Religion*.

These adventures were followed by teaming up with Frederick Spiegelberg, Sri Aurobindo and Haridas Chaudhuri in forming the faculty of the American Academy of Asian Studies, now known as the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS)—one of the three institutes of the “New Story” intellectual hub mapped in the Introduction.

challenges the images of “God” associated with the “ceramic” and “fully-automatic” models of the world. Through his “dramatic” model, Watts helps make the Eastern notions more accessible to Western minds. Watts’ understanding the “self” and “God” is not based on a divine revelation, or any kind of stifling hierarchy or institution—it is essentially based on the philosophy of narrative. By observing that human beings cannot exist without the air, water, and food sources that come from our environment, or without the long evolutionary process from the formation of the first stars to our parents’ procreation, one can see that the definition of what constitutes the “self” and what does not is a matter of story.

Watts ([1960]; 2004) points out that “you” have no more or less control over your heart pumping blood around your body than you do over Earth’s rotations around the sun—your existence is equally dependent on and in process with both.¹¹⁴ Why then is it that modern Western definitions of “self” include the former and not the latter? This depends on how you frame the story, and from what standpoint. For Watts, the “self” includes both what is internal and external to your ‘bag of skin.’ Watts (2000: 90) writes:

When you take a scientific point of view, your organism is inseparable from its environment, and so you really are the organism/environment. In other words, each one of you is no less than the universe, and each one of you is the universe expressed in the particular place that you feel is here and now. You are an aperture through which the universe is looking at and exploring itself.

Within this understanding, when your body and mind dies “you” do not die, but you return to your bigger Self—the whole of which your ‘bag of skin’ was a temporary part. Watts touches on the implications of this in comparison with understandings of death in “Old Story” and the “Modern Story”. Watts (1969: 38) explains that under the “Old Story”, a fear of death is associated with respect to the ‘Last Judgment, when sinners will be consigned to the temporary horrors of Purgatory or the everlasting agony of Hell.’ Alternatively, for believers, a great comfort is found in the ‘popular fantasies of Heaven.’ Under the “Modern Story”, on the other hand, a fear arises with a view to death taking ‘us

¹¹⁴ Watts ([1960]; 2004) points out: ‘If you find out it's YOU who circulates your blood, you will at the same moment find out that you are shining the sun. Because your physical organism is one continuous process with everything else that's going on.’

into everlasting nothingness—as if that could be some sort of experience, like being buried alive forever’ (38). Yet in the “New Story”, death can be seen to be a ‘great event.’ Like birth, death is a ‘natural and necessary end of human life—as natural as leaves falling in autumn’ (40). Watts explains that in death, ‘the individual is released from his ego-prison ... this is the golden opportunity for awakening into the knowledge that one’s actual self is the Self which plays the universe – an occasion for great rejoicing’ (40).

In a way the contrast between perceptions of death in relation to the “Modern Story” and “New Story” is a question of: “Is the glass half full or is the glass half empty?” The “Modern Story” sees the glass as half empty: narrating an understanding of death as a material and finite end. The “New Story” sees the glass as half full: narrating an understanding of death as a return to the oneness that is, in a sense, eternal life. We are born out of the Whole, and when we die we return to the Whole. If one considers their “self” to be the Whole, one can see that death is an illusion. Figure 5.3 depicts this idea, showing how “God” can exist in different forms and at different layers within our self and our universe.

Figure 5.1 Watts’ “Dramatic Model”

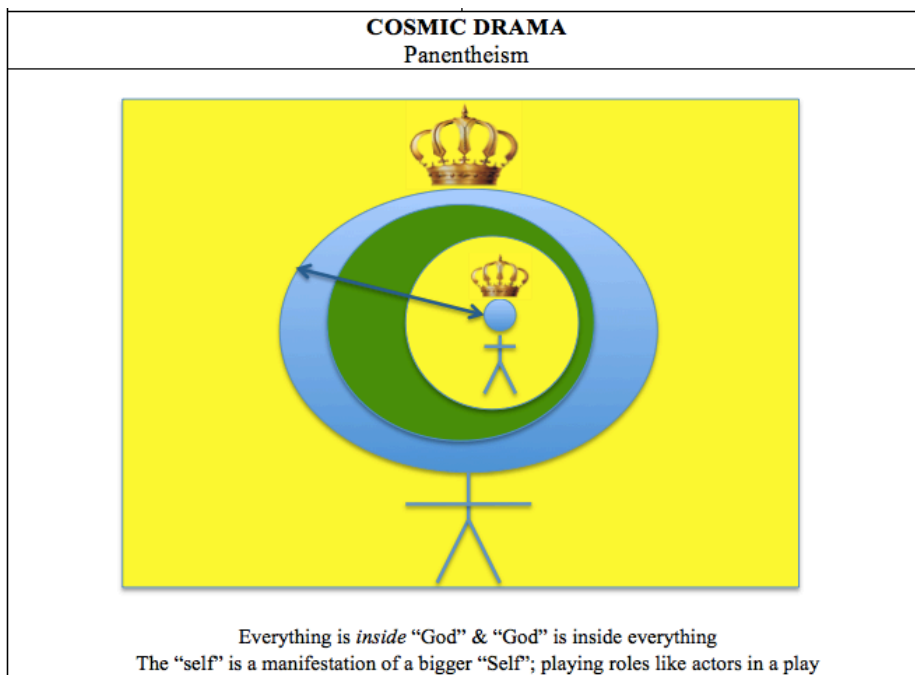


Figure 5.1 illustrates a panentheistic ontology in which “God” is inside humanity and nature, which is nested inside the world, which is nested inside “God”. In this figure, “God” encompasses the blue, yellow and green. “God” is the human (the small blue stick figure), which is nested inside “God” as the world (the green circle), which is inside “God” as the cosmic whole (the larger blue stick figure) that finds its form out of “God” as, in Tillich’s words, the “ground of being” (the yellow infinity). The figure illustrates how “God”, the world, and humans, may have their own distinguishable identities, while simultaneously all layers are connected and inseparable. In this view, “God” is inside and experiencing all of these forms (and non-forms). “God” is both being and non-being, and in Watts’ understanding so are “you”. Figure 5.1 stands in contrast with Figure 3.2 (the ceramic model) and Figure 4.5 (the fully-automatic model), which posit human beings as separate from Earth. Figure 5.1 resonates with the nested, contextualised observer, emphasised in Chapter One’s Figure 1.4. In this model everything is connected and everything is in process.

The “New Story” narrates an understanding of the world in which everything is one and everything is many. Everything is experience and everything is illusion. Each of us live and exist in a particular location in space and time, with our particular senses and society allowing for our particular experience of the world. Yet all of these experiences are part of one humanity, one Earth and one unified cosmic story—or as Whitehead ([1933] 1964: 293) wrote, the ‘adventure of the universe as one.’ This resonates with ancient yogic principles. Sri Aurobindo (1996: 414) writes of yoga’s synthesis, which sees ‘on one side the Infinite, the Formless, the One, the Peace’ and ‘on the other it sees the finite, the world of forms, the jarring multiplicity, the strife...’.¹¹⁵ It also resonates with deep ecology, in which Arne Naess (1974: 34) also identifies two notions of self: the ‘ego, the self with a small s, and then this great Self, the Self with a capital S, the atman.’¹¹⁶ These two identities—our self (inside our body) and our Self (as the cosmic event)—offer another way to make sense of a dipolar (primordial and temporal) “God” which will be explored shortly.

¹¹⁵ Aurobindo also includes with the latter the suffering and futility, which is reconciled in the bliss and calm of the One.

¹¹⁶ Naess relates this insight to Western thought in reference to Spinoza, who saw everything as ultimately an expression of the same one substance—call it God or nature (see Palmer 1998: 183).

Charles Hartshorne and William Reese ([1953]; 2000: 333) concur with Watts' analysis, although they do express concerns about his use of Hinduism and Buddhism. They qualify that Watts' does find 'some support' in particular texts (for example, in the *Upanishads* and *Vedantas*), and with Hindu philosophers such as Ramanuja and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. Yet Hartshorne and Reese also point out that they are not aware that the tensions between pantheism and panentheism in the East have 'yet been resolved' (333). I introduced the difference between pantheism (all is God) and panentheism (all is *in* God) in Chapter Four's Figures 4.3 and 4.4. There is not space in this research project to delve deeply into the differences between pantheism and panentheism, and the significance of those differences for peace. However, what is necessary to elaborate for this thesis (theologically) is an alternative to classic theism (the story of a separate supernatural God) and atheism (the rejection of that separate supernatural God). Panentheism (a story that locates the world inside God) has offered process thinkers (including myself) a more comprehensive alternative. So, I shall restrict myself to that theology while noting the existence of variations that are similar in some ways and different in others.

The philosophies of Watts, Hartshorne, Whitehead, Birch, and Berry fall into the theological category of "panentheism". Providing a brief introduction to panentheism here, is valuable for two reasons: first in order to ground the "New Story" in a long and rich history of ideas; and secondly to acquaint the reader with theological concepts that establish the "New Story" as a useful tool for bridging one-dimensional Christianity and more multi-dimensional forms of Christianity that Chapter Three established as being connected to care and action toward positive peace.

5.2.2 The "New Story": In Panentheistic Theology

The "New Story" finds its theological expression in panentheism—which refers to the philosophical idea that all (pan) is inside (en) a cosmic entity or cosmic event called "God" (theism). In this section I use panentheistic literature to explain and ground the "New Story" in a long-established philosophical tradition in conjunction with ancient and contemporary religious thought. I also posit panentheism as a useful tool for bridging one-dimensional approaches to "God" with more multi-dimensional approaches. The

Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church offers a widely accepted definition of panentheism:

PANENTHEISM: (Gk. πᾶν (pân) ‘all’; ἐν (en) ‘in’; and θεός (theós) ‘God’). The belief that the Being of God includes and penetrates the whole universe, so that every part of it exists in Him [*sic*], but (as against Pantheism) that His [*sic*] Being is more than, and is not exhausted by, the universe.¹¹⁷

Panentheism reflects a multi-dimensional notion of “God”—seen as the ground of all being, as well as being inside all beings. Panentheism challenges atheism, classic theism and pantheism, positing a synthesis that includes and transcends what ‘truncated’ theologies have to offer (see Hartshorne & Reese [1953]; 2000: 16).

Panentheism is a *natural theology* that, like modern atheism, rejects the anthropomorphised concept of “God” portrayed by fundamentalist Christians.¹¹⁸ At the same time, panentheism is an *ecological theology*, affirming that Earth’s organisms (including humans) are connected to the whole cosmic process that one may (or may not) choose to call (and even personify as) “God”. In its most widely-known expression, panentheism is a *process theology*, based on the writings of Whitehead, Teilhard de Chardin, and other process thinkers.¹¹⁹

Rather than imagining “God” as an entity that is separate from the world (classic and dualistic theism), or considering “God” to be identical to the world (pantheism),

¹¹⁷ This is the opening quote in the inner sleeve of Clayton and Peacocke’s 2004 anthology on panentheism. My *sic*.

¹¹⁸ That is, the idea that God is a supernatural man-in-the-sky who watches over humankind, intervening in the world and judging their actions and determining whether they go to heaven or hell when they die.

¹¹⁹ Not all panentheism is process theology, but all process theology is panentheism. Non-process forms of panentheism tend to not be exclusively associated with one religion.

For example, Niels Henrik Gregersen (2004) distinguishes between *soteriological panentheism* (of Trinitarian, salvation-based Christianity), *expressivist panentheism* (of the German Idealists such as Hegel) and *dipolar panentheism* (of process thinkers such as Whitehead). Gregersen explains that while these varieties share a considerable overlap, the latter is incompatible with the former two. Due to different interpretations of the “in” of panentheism, Gregersen concludes that a ‘clear choice of metaphysical principles will have to be made’ (34). This is largely due to soteriological and expressivist panentheisms’ insistence on God’s ability to exist without a world and inability for the world to change “God”. Such an argument is typically connected with more one-dimensional forms of Christian Trinitarian and salvation theology.

panentheism locates “God” as inside the world, and the world as inside “God”. In this way “God” participates in the world, and the world participates in “God”, yet (unlike pantheism), panentheism preserves the separate identities of “God” and the world. Griffin (1994: 200) explains that ‘Unlike pantheism, God is not simply identical with the world; unlike traditional theism, God could not live apart from a world. God is essentially the soul of the world.’ By locating all-in-God, panentheism envisions a renewed focus on the embedded relationship of all things to each other. Out of this nested relationship emerges a reconciliation of two ends of a pole or two sides of a coin: the one and the many, both encompassing each other.

The earliest known usage of the term “*panentheismus*” was in Schelling’s *Essay on Freedom* in 1809 (Clayton 2010: 183).¹²⁰ Yet the history of panentheistic ideas goes back much further. In *Philosophers Speak of God*, Charles Hartshorne and William L. Reese ([1953]; 2000) trace the history back to what they call “Ancient or Quasi Panentheism”, giving consideration to the understandings of Ikhnaton, the Hindu scriptures, Lao-tse, early Judaeo-Christian texts and Plato. Similarly, in *Panentheism: The Other God of the Philosophers*, John Cooper (2006) traces an unbroken lineage through Western philosophy from Plato to today. The term panentheism gained recognition with the “process theology” of Charles Hartshorne (1897-2000), which connected Whitehead’s philosophy of organism (now known as process philosophy) with the “panentheism” of the German Idealists (see Cooper 2006: 26).¹²¹

Modern panentheism has developed mostly under the influence of the speculative process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947); German Idealists such as George Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel (1770-1831) and Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775-1854); and current scientific thought, in particular developments within quantum physics, ecology, and complex systems theories. Panentheistic understandings are

¹²⁰ Clayton (2010: 183) notes that the coining of the term is often wrongly credited to Karl Krause, who studied under Schelling. Krause used the term (in German “*All-in-gott-lehre*” to distinguish the idea of being *inside* God from traditional theism (that considers God to be separate from the world) and pantheism (that considers God to be synonymous with the world). (See Cooper 2006: 26).

¹²¹ Hartshorne was influenced by many process philosophers (see Hartshorne & Reese [1953]; 2000). He studied directly under Heidegger (see Dombrowski Spring 2013) and assisted Whitehead at Harvard University (see Cooper 2006: 177).

intrinsic to many forms of Hinduism, Buddhism, Neopaganism, New Age movements, Indigenous spirituality, and more liberal and mystic Christian, Islamic, and Judaic interpretations of received scriptures.¹²² This is not to say that all of the worldviews within these traditions are panentheistic, but that panentheistic understandings are found within each of these traditions. Insights from the panentheistic expressions of these traditions, in addition to feminist, liberation, ecological and process theological perspectives, are enriching a conversation about common ground shared by multi-dimensional stories within the one narrative (a selected list of “New Story” and panentheistic thinkers is included in Appendix Five). This shared panentheistic understanding with religions and science locates panentheism as a promising avenue for interfaith and intercultural discussions.

In the context of this research project two important notions arise from panentheism: firstly the paradigm of process, which has been explored in depth above; and secondly a reconciliation of poles, mentioned briefly above in terms of “dipolarity”. I shall take a moment to illustrate dipolarity, as it is central to establishing panentheism as an expression of the “New Story”. In the final pages of *Process and Reality*, Whitehead (1929: 492-3) expresses a number of antitheses:

It is as true to say that the World is immanent in God, as that God is immanent in the world. It is as true to say that God transcends the World, as that the World transcends God. It is true to say that God creates the World, as that the World creates God.¹²³

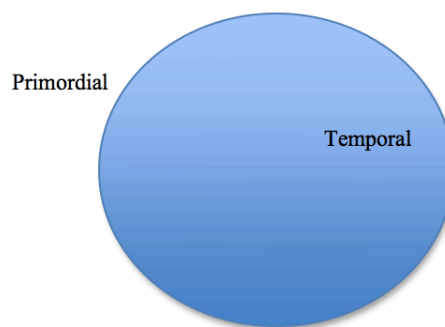
¹²² Most of these connections are made by the panentheist anthologies and histories by Cooper 2006; Hartshorne and Reese [1953]; 2000; Clayton and Peacocke 2004; Biernacki and Clayton 2014; and Clayton 2010; the connection to Indigenous spirituality is more subtly made by Grim 1994. The contribution that Indigenous perspectives such as those shared in Kanyini (Randall 2006); and Ngarrindjeri Being Heard (2009), I believe, have much to contribute to these discussions (see Stockton 1995 and a brief discussion of the overlaps in Bennett and Ngarrindjeri Being Heard 2013).

¹²³ This echoes Pseudo-Dionysius who, two millennia earlier wrote: ‘The name “One” means that God is uniquely all things through the transcendence of the one unity and that he is the cause of all without ever departing from that oneness. Nothing in the world lacks its share of the One. Just as every number participates in unity ... so everything, and every part of everything, participates in the One. By being the One, it is all things’ (*Div. Nom.* 13.2, cited in Cooper 2006: 46).

“Pseudo-Dionysius” is a term used to designate ‘writings traditionally but no longer attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite, Paul’s first convert in Athens’ (Cooper 2006: 45). Pseudo-Dionysius

Whitehead (1929: 492) explains that each ‘apparent self-contradiction’ is resolved by ‘a shift in meaning which converts the opposition into a contrast.’ That is, this both/and solution is based on “God” being multi-dimensional—at once both inside the World, while also transcending the World. Both are simultaneously true, with one truth nested inside the other. In the context of narrative, Paul Ricoeur (1992: 108) states, ‘It results that the thesis and the antithesis can both be held to be true, on the condition that they are maintained on different levels.’ Berry (1988: 132) observes dipolarity (without using the term and without reference to Whitehead) in observing that Earth and humans contain stardust, which means in that in a sense: ‘We bear the universe in our being as the universe bears us in it being. The two have a total presence to each other and to that deeper mystery out of which both the universe and ourselves have emerged.’ Figure 5.2 illustrates how the seeming contradictions of one in many and many in one may be reconciled.

Figure 5.2 God as Dipolar: Primordial and Temporal



In Figure 5.2, I represent Whitehead’s (1929: 488-9) understanding of “God” as encompassing two poles: the primordial (or “conceptual”) and the temporal (or “derivative”). From God’s primordial standpoint, the temporal side of “God” appears to be an eternal conceptuality, a fixed unity, where everything appears to stand still and be one—as in one world or one universe. From God’s temporal standpoint, one finds the ever-changing multiplicity of actualities, where everything is many and always changing—as in many people, many experiences, many interconnecting processes. This

draws from the theology of Plotinus and Proclus and applies Plato’s “dialectical” method to synthesise Neoplatonism and Christianity.

shows how the statements “all-is-one” or “all-is-many” can both be correct so long as they are held in different ways. This figure corresponds with Figure 1.5 in Chapter One used to introduce the use of standpoints as a narratological tool. Figure 1.5 posited two temporalities and illustrated this with the analogy of a book and its characters to imagine a standpoint in which time does not exist, where everything is one and everything is static (from a standpoint outside a book, the book is one); and another standpoint where everything can be seen to be change and everything is many (as in the many stories, characters and standpoints within the temporality of that book).¹²⁴

God’s ‘derivative nature’ is based on dualisms, while God’s ‘conceptual nature’ is nondualistic. The world that we experience through our senses is of the derivative nature: inside time and based on dualisms. For example, we cannot judge what is hot without having some relative experience of what is cold. The same applies to the categories of up and down, good and evil (see Watts 1978: 17-18). As humans, everything we know and experience is an expression of God’s derivative nature, experienced as a relation between dualisms. On the other hand, God’s conceptual nature transcends all that humans can know and understand. We may relate its primordial nature to what scientists call “dark matter” and black holes—the so-called “nothing” from which all that is “something” came from.¹²⁵ That is, the two poles of dualistic thought and experience meet in the primordial conceptuality (represented in Figure 5.2 as what is outside of the blue circle).

This notion of dipolarity portrays a way to reconcile the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story”. On the one hand the one-dimensional theology (wrapped up in a divine revelation as recorded millennia-ago) of the “Old Story” narrates only one-side or one pole of “God”: the primordial or conceptual. It neglects to observe “God’s” nature as also penetrating the temporal world and its beings.¹²⁶ On the other hand, the non-theological

¹²⁴ The notion of time viewed from these two standpoints reveals a way to synthesise the famous debate between Heraclitus, who insisted that reality is flux and change; and Parmenides and Zeno, who believed that there was no such thing as change and that everything is permanent (see Fraser 1968: 9-12). Plato saw this problem as ‘essentially the same as the problem of one and many’ (10).

¹²⁵ See scholarship such as Greene 1999 and Krauss 2012.

¹²⁶ The “Holy Spirit” of the Christian Trinity expresses some sense of God’s immanent and temporal nature in the world. When interpreted one-dimensionally, based on authoritarian dogma, this does little to offer an inclusive and multi-dimensional understanding of Christianity and its

narrative of the “Modern Story” attempts to explain the world as experienced by humans, and how it operates. Panentheists might say that the “Modern Story” represents a one-dimensional narrative of “God’s” temporal and derivative nature, ignoring the conceptual pole. The “New Story”, in its theological form of panentheism, offers a way to conceive of both as partially true, bringing both poles together. This is one way to envisage a multi-dimensional concept of “God”—not as one separate static entity, but as an inclusive, natural and changing process which all living beings are parts.¹²⁷ The term “God”, however, is not necessary in order to understand the “New Story”. The next section locates the “New Story” in a multi-dimensional, holistic approach to science.

compatibility with other religions. The “Holy Spirit” does, however, point to an underlying compatibility of Christian theology and other perspectives (through panentheism or the “New Story”)—if its fundamentalist and conservative expressions can let go of the elements of its narrative that are one-dimensional and exclusive.

¹²⁷ Panentheism also suggest ways to reconcile theological conundrums such as the problem of an all-good and all-powerful God who allows there to be evil in the world. I shall not go into detail about the broader theological contributions of panentheism, as such a discussion would distract from my primary research aim: exploring the ways that the “New Story” contributes to positive peace.

5.3 A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Science

In *Reenchantment Without Supernaturalism*, David Ray Griffin (2001a: 137) argues that there are ‘many reasons to affirm’ and ‘no evidence against’ a process-theological understanding of the world. He suggests that not only is this understanding ‘more probable’, but ‘the truth of something like process philosophy’s naturalistic theism is *overwhelmingly* more probable than the truth of atheism’ (203). Griffin explains the aim of process philosophy is to integrate the sciences with religion ‘into a self-consistent worldview’ whose adequacy is ultimately based on ‘hard-core commonsense’ (5). Western science affirms a process-oriented understanding of the self, the world, the universe and even “God” (if one chooses to explore the “New Story” through its process theology). As Whitehead (1929: 53) suggests, the ‘final court of appeal’ in regard to his philosophy of organism (or process philosophy, explored here in terms of the “New Story”) does not rely on authority but lies in its ‘intrinsic reasonableness.’

The scientific fields of cosmology, evolutionary biology and ecology, support the view that all of life is connected to all other forms of life both in time and in space. Even the notorious atheist Richard Dawkins, as discussed in Chapter Four, provides support for this process and relationship perspective in his treatment of evolutionary biology. Here I will expand on the scientific support for the “New Story” in two locations: first, the macro history or cosmological story of the universe and humanity as one; and second, the chaotic yet promising “new physics”. There is not space for detailed analysis of these locations. For this project establishing at least some sense of the presence of the “New Story” in a multi-dimensional approach to scientific understandings of the world will suffice.

5.3.1 The “New Story”: A Unifying Story of the Universe

From the discoveries of Copernicus, to eighteenth century geologists such as Georges de Buffon, through to nineteenth-century evolutionists Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer and others, humanity came to the shocking realisations that (i) the Earth was not six thousand years old; and (ii) they were ‘integral with the natural world’ (Swimme & Berry 1992: 233). Cosmological, geographical and biological evolutionary science points to a continuity between everything that is. These scientific theories concur with process

perspectives of the “New Story”, yet in Western society history and science (as considered in Chapter Four in terms of the “Modern Story”) is often not told in this way.

Brian Swimme and Berry observe that there has been a tendency to study history and science in fragments, rather than seeing how they fit together in one integral story. Swimme and Berry (237) suggest that what is more important to now explore is the *story*—‘especially if this story is to become what it should be: the comprehensive context of our human understanding of ourselves.’ Echoing Swimme and Berry, the founder of the academic discipline Big History David Christian observes:

There's a big problem with modern secular education—I don't think it is capable of offering a coherent vision of reality. And this is because we teach and organise knowledge in fragments (quoted in Lane 2013).

In line with calls for more holistic narratives, Berry (1978: 12) observes a need for education programs to ‘aid the young to identify themselves in the comprehensive dimensions of space and time.’ Berry (1988: 131) explains: ‘Children need a story that will bring personal meaning together with the grandeur and meaning of the universe.’

One answer to such pleas (to essentially teach the “New Story” in schools) is found in peace education. Growing out of works of Johan Galtung, Elise and Kenneth Boulding, Betty Reardon, John Dewey, Maria Montessori, Paulo Freire and many others, peace education involves a paradigm shift from ‘an antagonistic, simplified, fragmented, reductionist view of the world, which now conditions our behaviors and institutions, to a complex, integrated, and holistic view of the world and of human society’ (Reardon 1988: 56). Peace education is a dynamic, transformative and multi-disciplinary field, that educates for long-term responses to conflict from intra-personal to international levels in order to create more just and sustainable futures. Peace education encompasses ‘wholeness, integrity, complexity and change’ (56). The “New Story” is a part of the peace education agenda, observable in the ‘Cosmic Education’ taught at Montessori Schools (Montessori 2008), which is comparable to the curriculum of Big History

(introduced in Chapter Five) that has been making its way into public schools and universities across Australia, the United States and Europe.¹²⁸

From a macro-historical perspective, in *The Universe Story: From the Primordial Flaring Forth to the Ecozoic Era—A Celebration of the unfolding of the Cosmos*, Swimme and Berry (1992) tell the “New Story” as the story of the universe understood by modern science but told in a unifying yet open-ended and multi-dimensional way. Swimme and Berry begin the story of life billions of years ago, with the ‘primordial flaring forth’ though to the formation of stars, galaxies, our Milky Way, and the birth of our Sun. They celebrate each stage and development, connecting these cosmological events with the formation of Earth, and our evolutionary process through the first single cells to the development of shells, vertebrates, jaws, and lungs. They recount the evolution of insects, reptiles and birds (between 400 and 150 million years ago), through to primates (70 million years ago) and Homo sapiens (some 200,000 years ago). They reflect on the relatively recent development of agriculture, farming and irrigation systems (some 12,000 years ago). They plot the rise and falls of empires, the birth of religious figures, the Copernican revolution, through to a hypothetical period that they term the ‘Ecozoic Era.’ The Ecozoic Era refers to a time in which humans will understand and act in terms of their ecological connections (essentially in line with a vision of positive peace)—which Swimme and Berry (and I) optimistically hope that humanity will transition into. Swimme and Berry suggest that ‘[e]very form of being is integral with this comprehensive story. Nothing is itself without everything else’ (268). In other words, *the whole of the universe story is our story*.

Like Swimme and Berry’s *The Universe Story*, Christian’s (2004) textbook *Maps of Time* brings together insights from cosmology, astronomy, physics, geology, archeology,

¹²⁸ Christian established an undergraduate course on Big History at Macquarie University in Sydney in 1989. The course is gaining momentum, spreading across universities in the United States, Europe and Australia. With philanthropist Bill Gates, Christian has developed a free online course on Big History and a Big History curriculum for high schools. This curriculum has been piloted by 26 schools in Australia and implemented in 137 schools across eight countries, with another 120 Australian schools set to join in 2014 (see Lane 2013, Brewster 2013 and Christian 2011).

biology, history and more, into one unifying narrative.¹²⁹ Christian explains that Big History ‘attempts to assemble a coherent and accessible account of origins, a modern creation myth’ (2). The Big History Institute’s website (2014) states the field’s ‘attempt to understand, in a unified and interdisciplinary way, the history of the Cosmos, Earth, Life and Humanity’ bringing about a ‘possibility to understand our universe, our world, and our humanity in a new way.’ Christian (2010: 7) emphasises the unity and plurality of this big story, using these ‘universal maps of the past’ to show that ‘all human beings share a common, and quite distinctive, history.’ Christian points out that this narrative helps to ‘generate a sense of global citizenship, just as nationalist historiography once created a sense of solidarity within different nation-states’ (8). Furthermore, Christian believes that Big History can help people to ‘grasp the underlying unity of modern knowledge’, to ‘understand better the complex relationship between our own species and the biosphere,’ and ‘grasp the underlying unity of humanity as a whole’ (25).

Telling the story of life through the lens of the “New Story” illuminates the communion between micro and macro scales of life, from quarks to galaxies. At each level of magnification, a different reality is experienced. Viewed from different standpoints the story of life appears to be an entirely different story. Interpreting the experience of being a self-in-context allows one to see themselves not only as connected to the whole of humanity, but also connected to the whole of nature and the cosmic processes. This resonates with the physicist and quantum theorist Paul Davies’ (2000: 272-73) ‘undeniably romantic but perhaps true nevertheless ... vision of a self-organising and self-complexifying universe, governed by ingenious laws that encourage matter to evolve towards life and consciousness.’

Swimme and Berry (1992: 241) pose the Universe Story as a reason to ponder ‘how this account of the past provides a response to the present and guidance for the future.’ In

¹²⁹ In past times, unifying narratives and stories of origins were provided by religions and cultures. Even in the first half of last century one would find world history in popular literature. For example, H.G. Wells, *A Short History of the World* (1928) and Hendrik Willem van Loon’s *The Story of Mankind* (1921). Maybe due to the influence of social Darwinism on the Nazi movement, or the failure of modernity’s grand narrative to prevent such horror and bring about a more peaceful society, the teaching of a universal history temporarily disappeared from mainstream thought. Recently it has returned to the book shelves, through popular books (Bryson 2005, Dawkins 2004, Hawkings 1996 and Standage 2005).

relation to this thesis, such an aim points to the connections between narrative and peace, and the reasons that the “New Story” has much to contribute to addressing structural violence. Before I get to these contributions, I wish to further establish the location of the “New Story” within contemporary discourse. Without claiming a sophisticated understanding of quantum mechanics, I shall briefly mention first the location of the “New Story” within systems theory and quantum physics.

5.3.2 The “New Story”: In Systems and Physics

Developments in systems theories and quantum physics suggest that scientific disciplines are beginning to transcend the traditional mechanistic and reductionist approaches (Urry 2005). For example, chaos theory and string theory encourage a rethinking of the nature of “matter”, and hence the nature of “life” (see Greene 1999). Here I use the work of physicist and systems theorist Fritjof Capra to establish the connection between the “New Story”, systems theory and quantum physics. In *The Turning Point*, Capra (1982: 66) writes:

In contrast to the mechanistic Cartesian view of the world, the world view emerging from modern physics can be characterized by words like organic, holistic, and ecological. It might also be called a systems view, in the sense of general systems theory. The universe is no longer seen as a machine, made up of a multitude of objects, but has to be pictured as one indivisible, dynamic whole whose parts are essentially interrelated and can be understood only as patterns of a cosmic process.

Capra’s systems theory challenges the notion of matter as solid and objects as separate and supports the “New Story’s” non-dualistic notion that everything is connected. At its smallest quark, everything finds form through patterns of *energy* or ‘probability waves’ vibrating at different speeds (69). Capra explains that one cannot reduce the world to its parts as subatomic particles ‘are not “things” but are interconnections between “things,” and these “things,” in turn, are interconnections between other “things,” and so on’ (69-70). In other words, there are no ‘isolated basic building blocks’, only a great ‘complicated web of relations between the various parts of a united whole’ (70). Capra summarises that this ‘is how modern physics reveals the basic oneness of the universe’ (70). Affirming the understanding conveyed by the “New Story”, Capra (2002: 33) points

out that ‘all levels of life, beginning with the simplest cell, mind and matter, process and structure, are inseparably connected.’

Capra extends his analysis to explore the implications of systems theory for social issues across many disciplines from psychology to ecology, law, religion and business. Capra’s books have appealed to mainstream audiences and particularly to New Age spiritual movements.¹³⁰ While understanding where Capra’s thought fits into science and philosophy is helpful for further locating the “New Story”, his work is not without its critics. Two critiques of Capra focus on his interdisciplinary application of ideas. On one hand, Capra is criticised for applying ideas from quantum physics to social, political and economic domains. For example, Richard Sylvan (1985:17) observes that Capra ‘extends the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum theory virtually to absurdity’ giving it a ‘wild, holistic, and anthropocentric interpretation.’ Similarly, Wouter Hanegraaff (1998: 131-32) observes that Capra considered his theories to be in ‘fundamental accord with Schumacher’s views’, but the author of the famous *Small is Beautiful* E. F. Schumacher disagreed. Hanegraaff (132) explains that Schumacher found the application of science to social issues and economics unhelpful because ‘it cannot entertain the qualitative notion of higher and lower levels of being.’ Essentially Schumacher considered Capra’s theories to ‘accept only one fundamental level of reality and are therefore ultimately reductionist’ (132). Hanegraaff (132) observes that the ‘Capra-Schumacher discussion exemplifies a fundamental rift in New Age thinking between two contradictory views of reality: a monistic and a hierarchical one.’

On another hand Capra is criticised for applying ideas intended for ecological and biological systems into the world of atoms and physics. Hanegraaff (1998: 134-35) observes a particular conflict between the way that Capra (1982: 331-332, 433) presents

¹³⁰ In his analysis of *New Age Religion and Western Culture*, Wouter Hanegraaff (1998) considers Capra under the heading of New Age Science, which he also includes Prigogine, Bateson and Bohm. These are examples of scientists who had established careers in science and academia before writing for public audiences. This adds credibility to their positions, although Hanegraaff (1998: 63) cautions that the aim of these scientists-become-popular-writers is not longer to inform the public ‘about the current situation of scientific research, or at disseminating knowledge about new scientific discoveries’ but is ‘typically concerned with developing *unified worldviews*.’ Hanegraaff also notes this ambition is shared with ‘many popular expositions of modern science’ such as Stephen Hawking’s *A Brief History of Time* (1996).

the philosophy of Teilhard de Chardin as an affirmation of Gregory Bateson's systems theory, when in a footnote Bateson (1972: 472) states:

I do not agree with ... Whitehead, or Teilhard de Chardin that it follows from [the] mental character of the macroscopic world that the single atomies must have mental character or potentiality. I see the mental as a function only of complex *relationship*.

Capra's syncretising approach to Bateson and Teilhard, and my own syncretising approach to the scholarship in this thesis; stands in contrast to Bateson's conflicting ideas to Teilhard and Whitehead, and Schumacher's conflicting ideas to Capra. This reflects another example of the tensions between separation and connection. The idea of holism is connect and see the whole; yet within holistic theories one can also see disconnections and conflicts.

Hanegraff (1998: 133) observes that Capra's philosophy is considered a form of *parallelism*, which 'claims that there are significant parallels between modern physics, on the one hand, and oriental mysticism, on the other.' The approach of this research project, in seeing the "New Story" within physics and mysticism as well as within ecology and theology, largely falls into this category. It sees the commonalities over the differences. Judging the theories of Capra and his critics is beyond the scope of this thesis. From a narrative and peace perspective, Capra's observation and application of process patterns across many disciplines is a source of creativity and peace. As I see it, the differences within holistic yet rigorous intellectual thought represent a space for positive conflict between theorists who can challenge each other's approaches and build deeper understandings of their theories.

For the purposes of this thesis, it is important to note that Capra's syncretic perspective is shared by Birch, whose process thought is grounded in his work as a geneticist, and professor of biology. For example, Birch (1993: 21) observes that 'the new physics ... denies there are any such entities as particles uninfluenced in their inner nature by other entities. It pictures the universe as one and indivisible.' Capra and the majority of New Age thinking (and perhaps process thinking too) reflect a tendency to emphasise connections over separation. They see the compatibility of theories and sometimes ignore the conflicts. Hanegraaff (1998: 75) observes:

The holistic and syncretistic orientation of the New Age subculture is not congenial to conflicts. It tends to minimize differences in the name of a deeper all-encompassing truth, and discussions among New Age scientists often become occasions for “sharing” of viewpoints rather than for rigid intellectual debate.

An indepth critique of the varieties, differences and conflicts between holistic theories is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, the tension between separateness and connectedness is essential for understanding narratives of self and world, and for engaging with the ideas of violence, conflict and peace. Within multi-dimensional thinking, both a ‘sharing of viewpoints’ can exist alongside rigorous intellectual discourse. The link comes from understanding how the varied viewpoints fit into the bigger picture. Debates between different holistic perspectives may be seen as a space for positive conflict. An even more positive conflict, in terms of contributing to positive peace, would be found in rigorous intellectual forms examining the “New Story” as an alternative to the “Modern Story” and the “Old Story”. For this reason I am more interested in the unified holistic view of the “New Story” *as a unified whole*, which can be posited as a peace-promoting alternative to more fragmented and one-dimensional narratives.

In this section I have explored the ways that holistic interpretations of science support the claims of the “New Story”. Having located the “New Story” in multi-dimensional expressions of science and religion, I will bring this chapter to a close by giving brief consideration to the process of transitioning from one- to multi-dimensional narratives, and whether using the term “God” is likely to be a bridge or a barrier to positive peace.

5.4 Challenging One-Dimensional Worldviews

To challenge a worldview is to challenge one's identity and to shake the foundation of a person's understanding of the world, and the right and wrong within it. As Paul Hiebert (2008: 84) observes, 'there are few human fears greater than a loss of a sense of order and meaning. People are willing to die for their beliefs if these beliefs make their deaths meaningful.' Challenging the one-dimensional narrative of the "Old Story" is likely to be resisted 'with deep emotional reactions' (84). My experience with questioning fundamentalist Christian beliefs is a testimony to this. Moving from one- to multi-dimensional narratives is confronting on many levels. It may involve a conflict within oneself, in the struggle to question assumptions deeply-rooted in the way that one sees the world. It may involve conflict with one's community, and with societal norms, policies and institutions. Yet where a one-dimensional narrative, or a norm, policy or institution, are seen to directly or indirectly cause violence, this is a *positive* conflict. As Berry (1988: 132) explains, out of the "New Story" a 'new paradigm of what it means to be human emerges. This is what is so exciting, yet so painful and so disrupting.' This is a positive conflict.

Challenging the one-dimensional narrative of the "Modern Story", on the other hand, is less likely to be met with the same emotional resistance. The "Modern Story" is not a narrative that many people in the world feel particularly passionately about. Birch (1999: xvi) posits that 'the modern worldview ... is sustained more by habit than conviction and which has promoted ecological despoliation, militarism, anti-feminism and disciplinary fragmentation.' Birch is making an important point: the "Modern Story" is a dominant story by default, not by principle or persuasion. As Chapters Two and Four examined, the notion of material separation of the "Modern Story" is built into modern institutions and values. Such habits are difficult although not impossible to change.

Garry Trompf (2005: 7) observes the 'twin obstacles to understanding' are our '*intense personal commitments*', including our egocentricity, and our '*cultural boundedness*', our tendency toward ethno-centricity. These internal and external limitations to our understanding of our self and world can be transcended in different ways, but they will always contribute, at least in part, to the boundaries of our understanding. One way to

work through these obstacles is through the process of *conscientization*: the process of striving to expand one's understanding of their self and their world (as discussed in Chapter Two). Narrative tools such as standpoints and framing, as illustrated throughout this thesis, can help foster a more critical reflection on what we believe and why, and where this understanding may be taking us. Such a reflection process is crucial to positive peace. Once one develops a more critical perspective of the narratives that surround them, one can observe, reflect upon and participate in creating, maintaining and changing these stories and the institutions that they give power to (see Rees 1991; Freire [1970]; 2005).

With awareness and understanding comes empowerment and responsibility. In considering movement from one- to multi-dimensional narratives, Stuart Rees (1991: 28) urges for the 'replacement of ignorance with information, and fear with a willingness to challenge authority.' Rees encourages his readers to be 'both participants in and surveyors of the flow of events, and characters in and tellers of stories constituted by those events' (21). Learning to participate in events as characters and tellers of stories has the potential to transform confusion into coherence and empower the powerless. Rees notes:

Freire's educational goals, in common with Gramsci's, did not stop at teaching people to read and write but included political literacy to *demand dignity, justice and meaningful participation* in the politics of everyday life (44).¹³¹

This applies not only to taking a critical look at our personal biography and our participation in political and economic narratives, but to the ecological and cosmological narratives too. Rees (1991: 84) poses the question: 'How do we effect change?' He answers: 'in the conduct of personal relationships' and 'in the relationship to the representatives of authority.'

Essential to bringing about change is an understanding that everything is in process and that one's actions in fact can make a difference. In other words, what is needed (as mentioned in earlier chapters) is a narrative of possibility that is always critically reflective of itself and of the actions that it encourages. Freire (2005: 79) posits that

¹³¹ Emphasis mine.

‘Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men [*sic*] upon their world in order to transform it.’ Education must teach society not what to think but how to think. That is, education must encourage critical thinking, envisioning global peace while continually revising this vision. In this view, humans are ‘unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality.’ Humanity is always ‘in the process of *becoming*’ (84). The continuing emphasis on process, as observed throughout the thesis, is essential to the “New Story’s” contribution to positive peace.

While Freire and Rees make no direct reference to process philosophy or the “New Story”, their proposals display a significant overlap with a *process-oriented approach* to the self, the world and positive peace. Furthermore, given that Freire and Rees are not theologians it is not surprising that neither make reference to pantheism or “God” (except in reference to the use of religion as a means to oppress and control (for example see Friere 2005: 164). The final reflection of this chapter considers whether the terms “God” and pantheism might be a bridge or a barrier to positive peace.

5.4.1 “God”: Bridge or Barrier?

In my conversations with Christians word “pantheism” has been a useful tool for fostering a critical engagement with their religious doctrines and attitudes towards other religions and the environment. The term itself brings to the surface little-addressed assumptions found in stifled debates over the existence of “God”. The term “pantheism” opens up a conversation about *what* is being referred to by the term “God” and whether or not such a notion of divinity is *beneficial to peace*. Yet in conversing with atheists I have found that the words “pantheism” and “God” have the opposite effect. The word “God” can press an off-switch in the minds of those who have previously decided that all religion is nonsense, and the term pantheism sparks alarm bells, sounding to them like the name of a new religious cult. From a peace perspective it is more conducive to open up concepts for discussion, rather than closing off a conversation or trying to converse without a common language.

Mainstream religious debates revolve around whether or not “God” *exists*. But Birch (1990: 88) alludes to links with peace in pointing out that the pertinent question is ‘not, do you believe in God? but [is] what do you think you would be believing in if you did

believe in God?’ Birch (1990: 88) asks: Is “God” a ‘God who can do anything,’ such as prevent the holocaust but who did not? Is “God” a ‘God of the gaps,’ responsible for those aspects of reality that science cannot (yet) explain? Is “God” the ‘God who demands sacrifice’? Is “God” a ‘God who is on our side in wars who would have us kill for his sake’? Griffin (2001b: 203) observes:

The reason why arguments between atheists and traditional theists are interminable ... [is] that people have been forced to choose between two untenable positions, each of which has about equally strong considerations against it.

Debates between religion and science tend to misleadingly be based on the assumption of a supernatural “God”. They posit the supernatural versus material, complicit in one-dimensionality. Panentheism renders this pole obsolete. Panentheism (or process theology) poses an understanding of “God” that transcends the polemic between belief and non-belief. That is, it opposes *both* the classic theist conception of a supernatural “God”, and atheism’s rejection of it. As a philosophical theology, panentheism makes no claim to divine revelation, therefore offering an understanding of the world that cannot be “believed in” but is realised through narrative.

In exploring the one-dimensional nature of both the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story”, it seems beneficial to consider a more multi-dimensional approach to the idea of “God”. Panentheism, which etymologically challenges definitions of “God”, is one way to excite this question. Panentheism allows one to see that the personification of a meta-empirical force explored by religions *and* scientific non-personified understandings of the cosmos and life, may *both* be held true at their respective levels. Panentheism’s holistic and contextualised approach to both science and religion allows a perspective that shows how both can be read in illuminating and non-contradictory ways. The “New Story’s” theological expression as panentheism poses a challenge both to supernaturalism and materialism. Therefore the “New Story” offers a bridge between the one-dimensional positions assumed by the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story”, and more multi-dimensional alternatives.¹³²

¹³² In my analysis I have been focusing on the connections and overlaps more than the differences—between theories, theologies and philosophies. This is not to say there are no

In *Regaining Compassion for Humanity and Nature*, Birch (1993: 36-37) shares his journey of leaving a fundamentalist faith to pursue a multi-dimensional alternative. He describes moving from acceptance of a 'very simple set of affirmations about God, the world, and myself,' through to studying science and realising that his religion 'had foundations of sand.' Yet Birch continued to appreciate 'some deep experiences that had to do with forgiveness, courage, facing loneliness and with other values' that Christianity has provided. This led him to the Student Christian Movement at the University of Adelaide where he was urged to read Whitehead's *Science and the Modern World* and Hartshorne's *The Philosophy and Psychology of Sensation*. Through these works Birch (1993: 37) was able to build 'a new structure of meaning' in life and 're-establish a fundamental trust with respect to the meaningfulness of human life.'

One of the motives for Birch writing *Regaining Compassion for Humanity and Nature* (1993) was the response he received to his earlier book. Birch found that his book *On Purpose* (1990) particularly connected with two groups. Birch (1993: 13) explains that one group was of fundamentalists who were dissatisfied with their faith but had not considered alternatives. The second group was of people who had been 'brought up in a conservative Christian faith, who had rejected most, if not all of it, and who yet had a sense of being adrift on a huge ocean of nothingness' (13). This points to two sectors of society that may particularly benefit from the "New Story". However, from reading Birch, Watts, and other panentheists, it is my contention that the contribution of the "New Story" (in its macro-historical, theological or any other form) to positive peace extends beyond these two groups. By questioning some of the deep-rooted assumptions built into modern Western worldviews, and reframing the way that we narrate our self and world, the "New Story" points to a purpose-filled holistic and ecological worldview that can help address structural violence, as discussed in the second-to-last chapter of this thesis.

significant differences but to point to an underlying compatibility and common ground shared by multi-dimensional perspectives based on process. From this perspective, we are each part of one Earth, and therefore part of one story.

Chapter 6 Contributions of the “New Story”

We must find ways to harmonize diversity with unity, the exercise of freedom with the common good, short-term objectives with long-term goals (The Earth Charter 2000).

The “New Story,” as explored throughout this thesis, connects the individual with the collective, the short-term with the long-term, in approaching positive peace as a global vision. The “New Story” embraces a multiplicity of stories to see how they connect and in doing so enable tensions between them to inform understandings of violence and peace. The “New Story” encourages empathic approach to other’s stories, seeing both their differences and their underlying unity. The “New Story” encourages people to simultaneously look and act on personal levels, while looking and acting on global levels. It encourages people to value and consider both the short-term and the long-term impacts of their decisions upon different groups of people and species within our interconnected global system, and it offers a framework to help weigh up some of the trade offs between them. This is how many stories can exist in one, and one story can exist in many—all are expressions of and parts of one interdependent process.

Chapter Five has established the “New Story” as a holistic and process oriented narrative that can help to transcend the indirect forms of violence associated with the “Old Story” and “Modern Story”. By moving from a one- to multi-dimensional approach to religion and science, the “New Story” offers a bridge from one- to multi-dimensional narratives. Assisting in such a transition is in itself a contribution to positive peace (see Rees 2003). Chapter Six explores additional contributions of the “New Story” with a particular focus on the ways in which the “New Story” can help address structural violence. In this chapter I bring together arguments that have been built up throughout the thesis, to explicitly locate and assess the following claims:

1. The “New Story” encompasses peace-promoting qualities that are intrinsic to its holistic and process-oriented worldview;

2. The “New Story” broadens one’s sense of self, encouraging people to feel that they are part of the cosmic process, thereby enticing a deep sense of care for social justice and for the Earth—as oneself;
3. The “New Story” encourages a long-term and global perspective to be taken into account in personal and collective decision-making, by narrating the connections between small decisions and their larger consequences;
4. In its process-orientation, the “New Story” encourages an ethical framework based on inclusiveness, empathy and an appreciation of difference;
5. In its multidimensionality, the “New Story” promotes a holistic analysis of peace and violence, motivating positive conflict with consensus narratives that are causing injustice;
6. The “New Story” encourages an ongoing questioning of the both consensus and conflict narratives (including its own) and the actions and consequences for positive peace.

This chapter considers each of these arguments, locating them in the theoretical implications of the process-oriented narrative and holistic worldview encompassed by the “New Story”.

6.1 Peace-Promoting Qualities of the “New Story”

Charles Birch (1990: xvi) considers the “New Story” (or in his words, the postmodern ecological worldview) to be:

*postmechanic and ecological in its view of nature, postreductionist in its view of science, postanthropocentric in its view of ethics and economics, postdiscipline in relation to knowledge and postpatriarchal and postsexist in relation to society.*¹³³

Birch (1999: 64-5) points out that a ‘relational and process view of the world and all that is in it’ promotes multiculturalism, environmentalism, care for all living organisms who share our planet, and may help to transcend the ‘sense of profound emptiness’ that some people feel in the ‘modern world.’ These qualities of the “New Story” correspond with values and perspectives associated with positive peace.

As explored throughout this thesis, positive peace crosses the boundaries of many disciplines, including physics, philosophy, ecology, theology, history and cosmology. Process philosophy or the “New Story” is postmechanic and postreductionist in seeking ecological and holistic approaches to addressing structural violence. It is also postpatriarchal and postsexist in its treatment of all people as equally deserved of human rights and freedoms. In its theological form, the “New Story” offers an interpretation of the Bible without the sexism prevalent in the “Old Story”, by challenging male conceptions of “God”. The “New Story” is also postanthropocentric in its understanding of “God” (as the cosmic event of The Universe), and in its deep ecological framework—through which it focuses on the connections between humans, animals, all life-forms and the ecosystems it is a part of. The “New Story” also aims to address indirect forms of violence resulting from ethics and economics that do not care for all of humanity, other life forms and ecosystems. Furthermore, the “New Story” and positive peace share an emphasis on process, on relationships, and on a culture of peace that includes all people, all living species, the environment and peace of mind.

¹³³ Emphasis mine.

In *The Liberation of Life*, Birch and Cobb (1990) consider the practical contributions of process thought to a more just and sustainable world. They apply process thinking to animal and human rights, to biospheric ethics, and to specific topics such as genetic engineering and eugenics. They challenge the dominant economic model and the ideology of unlimited growth, and suggest its replacement with an ecological model of economics and development (or ‘liberation’, as they prefer). Birch and Cobb apply process thinking to uncovering more just and sustainable forms of agriculture, energy, transportation, urban habitats, and roles for women; and they consider the theological applications of process thought too.¹³⁴ These qualities and applications of the “New Story” are in themselves in line with the values and perspectives within peace theory. The “New Story”, therefore, both intrinsically and explicitly aims to address the structural violence associated with religious hierarchies and fundamentalism, patriarchal and sexist cultures and environmental destruction.

¹³⁴ Certainly a more detailed analysis of Birch and Cobb’s suggestions in relation to peace studies and more recent research developments across these disciplines would be a prime area for further research.

6.2 Broadening One's Sense of Self: Caring for Positive Peace

Thomas Berry (1988: 124) suggests that addressing the vast destruction of our planet requires a 'radical reassessment of the human situation' that takes notice of the 'great unity of the universe ... both in its spatial expansion and its time sequence.' The "New Story", as explored in Chapter Five, proposes a much broader sense of "self" both spatially and temporally. It equates the "self" with the universe in all its expressions in this moment, and with its 13.7 billion year past and continually evolving and expansive future. Humans come from the universe and also contain the universe. We are, in this sense, *one with the universe*. Swimme and Berry (1992: 280) consider humanity to be part of an Earth Community, that includes 'the interacting complexity of all Earth's components, entities, and processes, including the atmosphere, hydrosphere, geosphere, biosphere, and mindsphere.' According to the "New Story", our "individual" identity—including our species, personality, values, and culture—is intimately connected with our environment and our evolutionary and cosmic history.

The "New Story" reiterates Betty Reardon's (1988: 60) observation that in educating for peace: 'We must learn to see ourselves as a part of, not apart from, our planet and all of its inhabitants.' Elise Boulding (2000: 1) also emphasises the need for both 'a profound sense of species identity as well as kinship with the living earth.' Boulding writes:

There is that larger entity of which peoples and states are only a part — Gaia herself, that great body of interacting systems of the lithosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere, and atmosphere in a process of continuous adaptation and change (189).¹³⁵

This reflects an appreciation for the separation and the unity, the one and the many—that Chapter Five established as fundamental to the "New Story".

¹³⁵ James Lovelock's (2000 [1976]) theory of Gaia posits that Earth acts like a living organism.

Swimme and Berry (1992: 243) also allude to Lovelock's (2000 [1976]) theory in describing the Ecozoic view of Earth as functioning like an organism. Swimme and Berry (243) make it clear that they are not inferring that Earth *is* 'simply an enlarged organism at the same level as a tree or a bird', but that they are 'using the term *organism* as an analogous expression.' Yet they note that 'there are similarities between the unity of Earth's functioning and the unity of functioning of any other living being that justifies the use of the term *organic* to describe the inner coherence and integral functioning of planet Earth.'

One result of the broadened concept of self established by the “New Story”, is a sense of care for other people, species and for the planet *as the self*. Clare Palmer (1998: 183) observes that Arne Naess, who coined the term “deep ecology”, formulated the idea of an ‘extended self’ based on ‘the intuition that “all things are ultimately one”.’ Naess (1986: 13) suggests that ‘The requisite care flows naturally if the “self” is widened and deepened so that protection of free nature is felt and conceived as protection of ourselves.’ Fox (1990) calls this “transpersonal ecology”. Tim Hayward (1994: 71) reflects on Fox’s aim to cultivate a ‘wider sense of self’ that ‘extends *beyond* one’s egoistic, biographical, or personal sense of self to include all beings.’ Naess (1986: 2) maintains that through helping others realise their potentials, we are reaching our own potential, because they are (another expression of) our self. He writes:

Because of an inescapable process of identification with others, with growing maturity, the self is widened and deepened. We “see ourself in others”. Self-realization is hindered if the self-realization of others, with whom we identify, is hindered.

Put another way, ‘The bottom line is that I have a duty and interest to protect and preserve nature because I am one with it’ (Howard 1994: 71). Such a narrative provides a revived sense of purpose and care for other people and for the future of the planet. It encourages one to feel a part of the cosmic process, a participant in the future of the universe’s story. Reardon (1988: 56) explains that:

This paradigm shift, which has been emerging in large parts from new developments in physics and the convergence of physics and theology ... must become an integral part of the way in which we approach education. It certainly is essential if education is to contribute to the development of our capacities for peacemaking, which is the central purpose of a pedagogy of peace.

The intersection of physics and theology that Reardon is referring to was explored in Chapter Five in terms of the “New Story”—as a multi-dimensional approach to science and religion. Reardon words underline the importance of getting what is essentially the “New Story” into schools. Peace education and Big History, as explored in Chapter Five, show that it is already on its way.

Traces of evidence supporting the claims I have made regarding the contribution of the “New Story” to positive peace can be observed in the comments of teachers and students who have experienced the Big History course, introduced in Chapter Five. The head teacher of curriculum at one of the first schools to pilot Big History, Bernie Howitt of Narara Valley High School, explains:

One of [Big History’s] real strengths is that it allows us to see beyond narrow nationalist perspectives, and in a world that is becoming increasingly globalised, it’s really important to introduce kids to thinking globally (Lane 2012).

One student told ABC journalist Kerry Brewster (2013) ‘Humans really want to see everything together. It’s like a part of you that needs to be filled, you need to have an understanding of how everything’s connected.’ It is early days for Big History but certainly this intersection between narrative and peace is worthy of further research.

The convergence of the “New Story” and positive peace points to the potential for a “New Story” to help change the destructive trajectory of the human story toward a more peaceful one. Reardon (1988: 57) calls us:

to recognize that it is the becoming that is the significant part of being; that learning is living – not just preparation for life; that people as well as society and the natural order are in constant change; and that a significant element of the human potential is the ability to change in self and in society toward preferred values and to relate responsibility to changes in the natural order.

The “New Story” is one way to motivate change in the self and society by encouraging individuals to reflect and act in new ways (see Freire 2005). It narrates the possibility of influencing and changing powerful institutions and systems, in order to address their elements of injustice and barriers to positive peace. This change begins with broadening personal “small decisions” so that they encompass larger and longer-term consequences for the global community.

6.3 Broadening Decisions to Address Structural Violence

A central argument that has unfolded throughout this thesis is that at root of structural forms of violence such as global poverty and environmental destruction is the prioritization of “small decisions” or individualistic short-term wants, over collective long-term needs. Addressing this indirect violence, as explored in Chapter Two, calls for more holistic approaches to knowledge and to personal decision-making. Unlike the “Modern Story” and the “Old Story” explored in Chapters Three and Four, which narrate a separation of people from other people, animals and nature; the “New Story” explored in Chapter Five narrates their connection in both space and time. Drawing these arguments together one can see that in narrating a connection between the short and long-term, personal and global, the “New Story” can (theoretically) connect small decisions with their larger consequences. Thus the “New Story” can help to address the “tyranny of small decisions” at the root of the structural violence of “Industria”.

There are myriad examples of the “New Story” in action and education initiatives aimed at positive peace. This global vision calls for action from individuals at all levels of society, from filmmakers, artists and activists, to academics, politicians and consumers. A number of examples of more holistic decision-making were considered in Chapter Two. This thesis has proposed that the collective impact of each of our decisions works to maintain or address global structural violence. In this thesis I do not have the space to analyse, compare and evaluate the variety of actions that such efforts aimed at positive peace might entail (the purchasing decisions, law and policy changes, leadership decisions, investments in green technologies, divestments from non-renewables, media stories, consumption and production habits, economic models, etc.). This thesis has drawn from the work of process thinkers and peace theorists to propose that—if humans have the motivation to do so—they can confront unjust social, political and economic institutions and change them in ways that move towards positive peace. Such motivation, I have established is more likely to come from multi-dimensional narratives such as the “New Story” than from one-dimensional narratives such as the “Old Story” and the “Modern Story”.

6.4 The “New Story”: An Ethical Framework Based on Process

Elise Boulding, who dedicates her book ‘To the children of the twenty-first century,’ states that in order to bring about peace on and with our Earth, we must develop a culture of peace. A peace culture, in the simplest terms, is ‘a culture that promotes peaceable diversity’ (Boulding 2000: 1). This ‘peaceable diversity’:

includes lifeways, patterns of belief, values, behavior, and accompanying institutional arrangements that promote mutual caring and well-being as well as an equality that includes appreciation of difference, stewardship, and equitable sharing of the earth’s resources among its members and with all living beings (1).

Resonating with Boulding’s vision of a culture of peace, the “New Story” bases its framework for values on: (i) *differentiation*, an appreciation for the variety of beings that have emerged from Earth—from atoms to insects, plant and animals; (ii) on *subjectivity*, a ‘reverence’ for the ‘interiority’ of all beings; and (iii) on *intercommunion*, explaining that ‘[e]ach atomic particle is in communion with every other atom in the vast web of the universe’ (Berry 1978: 10-11). Corresponding with these values, Whiteheadian process ethics considers value to come from: *contrast and diversity*, as well as from the *richness and intensity* of individual experience, and its *harmony* with the whole process (see Griffin 1994; Birch 1990: 128-36; Palmer 1998: 164-211).

The multi-dimensional perspective espoused by the “New Story” contextualises different ways of knowing and being in the world. It encourages a deep sense of empathy with all entities and events. From this understanding comes a framework for ethics based on a multi-layered and multi-dimensional empathy. One can imagine what it might be like to be another person or animal, an insect or an ecosystem. One can consider what is their story, how their story relates to cultural, political and economic stories that surround them, and how these might improve. This ethical system (somewhat idealistically) posits that humans can find meaning and value in their contribution to the whole.

Berry (1988: 136) explains that within the “New Story”, ‘all our human affairs—all professions, occupations, and activities—have their meaning precisely insofar as they enhance this emerging world of subjective intercommunion within the total range of

reality.’ In more theological terms, Whitehead (1929: 105) considers God’s aim to be the ‘fulfillment of his [*sic*] own being.’ This is ultimately realised in the ‘process of self-creation’ (34). In keeping with the dipolar and holistic notion of “God” established in Chapter Five, this points to a balance of both the individual organism (as an expression of “God”) and the whole universal process (which is also “God”). Clare Palmer (1998: 144) observes:

in a perfect Whiteheadian society, be it an ecosystem, a species, or an individual human being, all the concreting actual occasions should behave as if they were organs in an organism, maximizing value for the whole, although they will be doing this by choice, not by necessity.

Discord arises from disconnections such as those between short-term and long-term, between parts and the wholes. Birch (1990: 15) explains that in a process framework:

The morally good act optimises the harmony and intensity of living, for all those lives that can conceivably be influenced by the act. It is also one that is in harmony with the unity of nature and of the universe in the sense in which Whitehead’s “Peace” is an individual experience including within itself the harmony and integrity of the universe. By contrast, evil is always the assertion of some self-interest without regard to the whole, whether the whole is conceived as the immediate community, the total community, or the total order of the universe. In short—good unites, evil divides.

John Cobb (1955: 128) describes the Whiteheadian aim as seeking a ‘balance between the intensity of that occasion’s experience and its contribution beyond itself.’ This balance, which might be posited as a balance between Watts’s (2004) notions of the self and Self, is at the crux of understanding this ethical system. It emphasises value in both parts and wholes. The diversity and richness of an expression of life—be it a species of flower, animal or a unique human language and culture—is valued simultaneously with the harmony of these experiences with other experiences and with the universal process as a whole. As explored above, if one sees other people, animals and the environment as other expressions of their Self, to be self-interested is to be interested in what is best for the whole. On a practical plane this could be described as a shift from *ego-driven* decision-making, to *ecological* decision-making. Charles Hartshorne (1983: 310) notes that this

aim ‘can reach no final maximum, but is endlessly capable of increase’—that is, the aim is always and always will be a process of creativity and transformation. These ideas correspond with notions of positive peace.

Narrative offers a means to excite a deep sense of empathy, which can help one deal with trade-offs between parts and wholes, each explored in their unique situation. The aim is to find solutions that are good for the parts and good for the whole. In this way, the “New Story” narrates a continuity and sense of unity between the one and many, the short-term and long-term, the intensity of an experience and the harmony of experiences. Within this story, one must constantly navigate the tensions between consensus and conflict, parts and wholes—as the next section will explore.

6.5 Motivating Positive Conflict through the “New Story”

Positive conflict, as defined in Chapter Two and elaborated throughout this thesis, indicates a constructive confrontation with oppressive elements of society. The footage of the anonymous man who stepped in front of the tanks at Tiananmen Square (also known as “tank man”) on 5 June 1989 (see Tyrprone 2009), symbolises the essence of positive conflict. The tank represents a consensus narrative, and the man represents a positive conflict. As discussed in Chapter One, Stuart Rees (1991: 82-84) analyses the steps in transitioning from consensus to conflict perspectives. This resonates with Rees (2003: 66) pendulum of power, illustrating the way that the exercise of power can swing between one-dimensional expressions of power as in ‘domination over others’ (represented by the tank), to two-dimensional forms of power across varying ‘degrees of sharing information’ (exercised by the person who filmed the tank man), to three-dimensional forms of power underpinned by ‘the ideal of creativity in the interests of others’ liberation’ (represented by the tank man himself).

The process framework of the “New Story”, as introduced above, expands on Rees’ model to consider multi-dimensional expressions of power, positing that one must discern between conflict narratives that are desirable (positive conflict), and conflict narratives that are undesirable (negative conflict). This is to say that one-dimensional narratives may convey a sense of peace on some levels, whilst causing violence on other levels. As eluded to in previous chapters, I would have more peaceful relationships with my family if my beliefs did not conflict with theirs. Yet challenging fundamentalist Christianity has been a positive conflict in my life. It is conducive to positive peace to engage in positive conflict within consensus narratives, as such conflict helps to expose indirect forms of violence. It is also conducive to positive peace to avoid negative conflict that fosters direct or indirect forms of violence.

There are many situations where conforming to a consensus narrative is desirable, for example in a general sense of law and order. Similarly, Berry (1978: 13) points out that ‘the basic values’ of all of the elements of our life, from language to history to religion, law and economics, ‘depend on conformity with the Earth process.’ That is, ‘[t]o harm earth is to harm man [*sic*], to ruin the earth is to destroy man [*sic*].’ Here conformity is

both necessary and desirable. To conflict with Earth's processes in the long-term is to destroy Earth's diversity. To conform with Earth's processes is to protect the longevity of humanity and other living species. This example is a reminder that a multi-dimensional and holistic understanding of the interdependent relationships, processes and contexts in which all beings live, is a helpful and empowering narrative for evaluating positive conflict. The process perspective of the "New Story" points to a potential for parts to change wholes, or humans to change their institutions. It also provides a framework for navigating conflict toward positive peace, as illustrated by the examples to follow.

6.5.1 An Example: Human Rights and Earth Rights

A process framework for ethics might be helpful for dealing with tensions between articles in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) and other cultural and ecological perspectives. For example, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* might be challenged when the rights of humans to life and liberty (Article 3) are causing irreversible damage to ecosystems and jeopardising all of the human rights of future generations. One way to deal with this challenge would be by locating human rights within a framework of Earth rights.

The Earth Charter (2000), quoted at the opening of this chapter, was drafted following the 1992 Earth Summit with an objective 'to produce a global consensus statement of values and principles for a sustainable future.' The Charter was developed by an independent Earth Charter Commission (including Mary Evelyn Tucker, who worked closely with Berry) with contributions from over five thousand people and was 'formally endorsed by thousands of organizations, including UNESCO and the IUCN (World Conservation Union).' The Preamble states: 'We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace.' The Charter articulates a holistic vision of peace, stating: 'peace is the wholeness created by right relationships with oneself, other persons, other cultures, other life, Earth, and the larger whole of which all are a part' (Principle 16(f)). *The Earth Charter* continues on to provide an outline of the ultimate aims of peace between humanity and Earth. It captures an ecological narrative that overlaps with narratives of positive peace, as well as a process understanding of the self,

other, our planet and our purpose. *The Earth Charter* is a watershed document that stands as a foundation for new thought and value. It reflects the “New Story” in action.

In this view, to engage in conflict with the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* or *The Earth Charter* would be to engage in negative conflict. In situations where there is a breach in these rights and charters, a conflict with those breaches would be considered a positive conflict. Questioning the consensus narratives of consumption and the prioritization of monetary conflict within the “Modern Story” and “Industria”, for example, in this view would be considered to be a positive conflict. In situations where Human Rights are in conflict with the Earth Charter, the conflict can be handled in the most positive way by examining the values of process ethics as articulated above. I consider such an example below.

6.5.2 An Example: Population Growth and Earth’s Limits

Another example of applied process ethics encompassed by the “New Story” is the trade off between ongoing global population growth and the limited capacity of Earth. From the multi-dimensional perspective of the “New Story”, this tension involves a weighing up of the short-term benefits to human lives, and the long-term health of the ecosystems that sustain humans as a whole. Palmer (1998: 160) explains:

From a process perspective, extra human beings add richness of experience to the world and provide contrasts between their own feelings and those of other humans. Thus it would seem important to keep on adding humans until the point where additional of an extra human would reduce the total richness of experience in the world (by increasing human misery so much that it would be better that they had never been born) and/or result in the death of other humans (thus leading to the loss of contrasts in the world).

It is a highly subjective and debatable to judge the point at which adding more humans becomes destructive by increasing human misery or causing death of other humans. Process ethics does not provide answers to such difficult and controversial dilemmas. But as shown above a process framework can help navigate the ideals of a long-term

sustainable positive peace. Palmer's deliberations indicate the possibility of foresight observing the positive and negative impacts of an increasing population, and seek nonviolent ways of stabilising it at a point where the misery outweighs the richness and contrast of experience.

These examples are highly complex, and require research outside the scope of this research project. The conclusion to be drawn here is that the application of process ethics of the "New Story" has a valuable contribution to make to these conversations, and is therefore worthy of further research in relation to positive peace. I have one final point to make in regard to ethics and positive conflict in the "New Story": that the ethical framework and subsequent navigation of positive and negative conflict, are *always in process*.

6.6 The “New Story”: An Ongoing Reflective Process

However far our gaze penetrates, there are always heights beyond which block our vision (Whitehead 1929: 484).

Alfred Korzybski (1921: 4) observes the tendency for people (generally in Western societies) to consider the knowledge of its generation ‘as true and permanent’ with ‘a mingled smile of pity and contempt for the prejudices of the past.’ Such generational arrogance is wrapped in a static view of the self and world. In contrast process approach to positive peace sees the self, the world and knowledge as *in relationship* and *in process*. As I have discussed above, at the junction of narrative and positive peace is critical reflection on consensus and conflict. The “New Story” entices positive conflict—evaluated as positive or negative in terms of a multi-dimensional value system underpinned by a narrative aimed at a desirable trajectory for all Earth’s inhabitants—which is held subject to ongoing questioning. As John Ralston Saul (1997: 194) puts it, ‘[t]he examined life makes a virtue of uncertainty. It celebrates doubt.’ In order to understand the “New Story” in its historical and cultural context, it is important to observe that it too is in a constant state of process. This begins with an acknowledgement of the standpoint from which one is observing the world and telling the story of that perception. I will reflect briefly on the example of Big History as an open-ended grand-narrative in order to locate the “New Story” as a narrative-in-process.

In *Maps of Time*, David Christian (2004: 6) acknowledges that an objection to Big History (that also applies to the “New Story”) is that it ‘proposes to create a new “grand narrative” just when we have learned the futility, even the danger, of grand narratives.’ Christian asks:

Will not a big history metanarrative crowd out alternative histories—of minorities, of regions, of particular nations or ethnic groups? Perhaps a fragmented vision of the past ... is the only one that can do real justice to the richness of human experience (9).

Yet Christian argues that ‘it is a mistake for historians to shun these large narratives, however grand they may be. Like it or not, people will look for, and find, large stories, because they can provide a sense of meaning’ (9). He makes the important point that, ‘a

“modern creation myth’ already exists just below the surface of modern knowledge’—and in this ‘poorly articulated and poorly understood fragments of modern knowledge,’ this myth is much more dangerous. He observes:

Only when a modern creation myth has been teased out into a coherent story will it really be possible to take the next step: of criticizing it, deconstructing it, and perhaps improving on it. In history as in building, construction must precede deconstruction. We must see the modern creation myth before we can criticize it. And we must articulate it before we can see it’ (10).

In line with the “New Story” (as emphasised throughout this thesis), Christian (2004: 6) affirms the narratological approach and subjective standpoint of the observer.¹³⁶ Christian acknowledges the narrative of Big History is provisional: it is a ‘map of reality’ not a ‘perfect description’ but a ‘workable description’ (11)—it is a starting point for critique. The same goes for the “New Story”. The process orientation of the “New Story” is an embedded reminder that the universe, the self, and our stories, are always in process—always working toward something new.

Whether or not a story is told chronologically, every narrative has a beginning, a middle, and an ending—or as Frank Kermode said, a “sense of an ending”. In the concluding section I will review where this research story has come from, where it has arrived, and the possibilities for the future.

¹³⁶ Christian (2004: 6) writes: ‘A modern creation myth will not and cannot hope to be “neutral.” Modern knowledge offers no omniscient “knower,” no observation point from which all objects, from quarks to humans to galaxies, have equal significance. We cannot be everywhere at once. So the very idea of knowledge from no particular point of view is senseless.’

Chapter 7 “The Sense of an Ending”

Meaning brings motivation. Motivation leads to action. Action leads to transformation. Transformation is possible because human life can rise above present circumstance (Birch 1990: 4).

In the quote above, Charles Birch points out that in order to motivate transformation toward a more socially just and ecologically sustainable society, we must look to the sources and nature of meaning in our lives. In other words, we must look to our *stories*. In locating the connection between narrative and peace, this thesis has posited that a transition from individualistic to holistic, from static- to process-oriented, and from one- to multi-dimensional narratives, is central to motivating transformative action toward positive peace. This thesis has emphasised that an individual’s actions (and inactions) affect different entities and ecosystems in a mixture of positive and negative ways. The evaluation of which narratives contribute to peace, and which contribute to violence, depends on an observer’s framing and standpoint.

It is clear that analysis from a variety of standpoints, micro and macro, short-term and long-term, provides valuable insights into the ethics of our decision-making toward the aim of positive peace. This final chapter returns to my central research question: *what can a “New Story” contribute to positive peace?* Here I review my thesis journey and look toward future projects that might expand on these exploratory insights into narrative and peace.

The “Old Story”, the “Modern Story” and the “New Story” reflect three very different ways of narrating meaning in a person’s life. These three worldviews were examined due to their prominence in the overlapping arguments of Charles Birch (1990; 1993), Alan Watts (1969;[1960]; 2004) and Thomas Berry (1978; 1988), and the resonance of these narratives with my own life story. The “Old Story” and the “Modern Story” were shown to narrate one-dimensional understandings of human beings as independent from each other and from nature. In Chapters Three and Four I established the inadequacy of these narratives to address structural violence. In contrast, I have posited that the multi-

dimensional “New Story”, which narrates humanity and nature as interdependent, is a more promising narrative with a view to contributing to positive peace. An indication of the features of one- and multi-dimensional narratives, as identified in this thesis, may be mapped as follows:¹³⁷

One-dimensional Narrative	Multi-dimensional Narrative
E.g. the “Old Story” and “Modern Story”	E.g. the “New Story”
Static-oriented narrative	Process-oriented narrative
Emphasises separation and differences	Emphasises connection and commonalities
Reductionistic and materialist	Holistic and ecological
Defines the “self” as separate from other people, nature and the cosmos	Defines the “self” as deeply connected to and in process with other people, nature, and the cosmos
Exclusive—stories that do not agree with its version of facts are considered to be false	Inclusive—seeks to learn from stories that are told from different standpoints, in different languages and framed in different ways
De-contextualised, lack of critically reflective approach to the limitations of its knowledge	Contextualises knowledge, encourages an ongoing critically-reflective approach
Expresses a one-sided point of view	Explores the many-sidedness of things
Contributes to indirect forms of violence such as structural and cultural violence	Explores the dynamics of peace and violence holistically and across many layers
Emphasises personal narratives (be it the salvation of one’s soul, or accumulation of capital goods) and does not look to the longer-term and global consequences	Seeks to unify personal narratives with a global narrative, in effort to address indirect causes of social and ecological injustice and work toward positive peace
Assumes “God” to be a separate supernatural being that can be believed in or rejected	Asks <i>what</i> is being referred to by the term “God”, and considers a common ground for theological and non-theological holistic understandings of the world

The aim of positive peace is to address violence in direct and indirect forms. It is therefore a requirement to unmask structural violence wherever it occurs, to consider its deep and broad-reaching causes and try to find solutions.

¹³⁷ An expanded table summarising the three stories and their implications for positive peace is included in Appendix One.

7.1 Reflections on the Thesis Journey

The Paths are many but their End is One (Watts 1972: xi).¹³⁸

This research project has encompassed the holistic philosophy that it investigates. It has been an exercise in interpretation and reflexivity as well as an ongoing dialogue between my personal intuitions and academic interests. Throughout the research process I could “feel” the connections between narrative, phenomenology, ecology and panentheism, which others had also addressed. Watts’ Eastern-inspired anecdotes exemplified Alfred North Whitehead’s philosophy of organism. The narrative notions of standpoints and framing, exemplified “dipolarity” without the need for the word “God.” Was I researching narratology or panentheism? Both! The research sent me down many rabbit holes, each time entangling me in the vast world of academic literature. At times I felt I was going around in circles, but there would usually be small hints of progress. I continued on with “faith” that the thesis would eventually take the form of a coherent narrative for others to comprehend and critique.

Learning that Charles Hartshorne had studied under Martin Heidegger and Edmund Husserl was my first clue. Discovering that process philosophy not only referred to Whitehead’s “speculative metaphysics” (as most commonly thought), but also encompassed Heidegger’s “interpretive analytics” was my apotheosis. It explained why Paul Ricoeur, whose hermeneutic phenomenology and narratology was significantly influenced by Heidegger, was not only informing my methodology but had become a source for explaining panentheism in a non-theological way. This justified my feeling that the Whiteheadian metaphysics and Heideggerian phenomenology were brothers, and Ricoeurian narratology was panentheism’s cousin. Johanna Seibt (2012) identified a *desideratum* for comprehensive comparisons between early American speculative metaphysical process philosophy (Whitehead and Birch), the European analytic-interpretive process philosophy (Heidegger and Ricoeur), and Eastern Philosophy (Watts). While such an endeavour was far beyond the scope of this project, I took liberty to draw

¹³⁸ Quoted by Lawrence Watts, Alan Watts’ father, in the Foreword to Watts’ autobiography *In My Own Way: An Autobiography* (1972).

from all three locations of process thought in considering the contribution of this shared narrative for positive peace.

Beginning with these connections, the process of writing faced the problem of needing to articulate a holistic worldview within the fragmented structure of thesis chapters and sections. Herein lies the tension between parts and wholes. A holistic philosophy tends to over-emphasise the similarities rather than the differences. In order to communicate such ideas I had to constantly adjust my scale, sometimes analysing from a macro perspective of the universe's story and ecological crisis, and at other times focusing on more micro considerations of personal narrative and particular examples. Categories and labels are essential for distinguishing ideas, yet they can also be divisive and misguided. This tension eventually led to the central and unique approach to this project: narrative as the method and the subject of the research.

Part One introduced the key ideas surrounding the research project's exploration of narrative and peace. Chapter One examined the significance of using narrative as a theory, subject and methodology for this interdisciplinary research project aimed at positive peace. Chapter Two considered theories of global poverty and ecological destruction, emphasising the need to address these injustices as pressing tasks for a global society in the pursuit of positive peace. Planet Earth is the life support system for humanity, yet collectively humans and their institutions—considered here in terms of “*Industria*”—are damaging the ecosystems that future generations are dependent on. The causes of these destructive effects need to be addressed. Approaching the topic through a narrative lens, I have considered the application of process thought via a “*New Story*” to help address these indirect forms of violence. Crucial to this is a movement from one-dimensional to multi-dimensional narratives.

Part Two posited that static one-dimensional framework that lacks consideration for the dynamics of social justice, underpins both the “*Old Story*” and the “*Modern Story*”, and contributes to indirect forms of structural violence. In Chapter Three, I explored the ways that under the “*Old Story*”, a person finds a sense of life's meaning in a literal interpretation of the Biblical narratives. The research by James Guth et al. (1993; 1995) indicated that such narratives entice little care about Earth (as Jesus will return soon) or

about people in poverty (which is blamed on their sin). In Chapter Four, I explored ways that under the “Modern Story” in Western countries, meaning is often framed in terms of neoliberal aims of capital accumulation and consumption, fostering individualistic and short-term decision-making at root of the structural violence of “Industria”.

Part Three explored the contributions of more holistic, process-oriented, multi-dimensional narratives for positive peace. In Chapter Five I explored the location of the “New Story” in multi-dimensional expressions of religion and science, including Eastern religions, panentheism, Big History and the “new physics”. Chapter Five established the “New Story” as a challenge to the many trappings of the one-dimensional paradigms of the “Old Story” and “Modern Story” such as those explored in Chapters Three and Four. I suggested there that the “New Story”, in its secular and theological versions, may be a bridge between one- and multi-dimensional narratives.

The “New Story” explores conflicting narratives in their historical and cultural contexts, embracing a multiplicity of perspectives as parts of one unifying story. Chapter Six explored the peace-promoting qualities of the “New Story” such as its postmechanic, postdiscipline, postanthropocentric and postsexist view of the world. I considered the possibility that this holistic perspective can broaden one’s sense of self as a means for expanding personal decisions to take into account the long-term wellbeing of the global Earth community. Within the “New Story”, a sense of life’s meaning is found in one’s participation in the creative cosmic process that all life forms are parts of. The “New Story” offers an optimistic narrative that aims to empower individuals to broaden their decisions with a view to positive peace and through conversations, voting, purchases, and investments, encourage others to do so too. The “New Story” poses that, in the course of history, knowledge has and will continue to change. Hence the “New Story” is dynamic and encourages a multi-layered and critically reflective perspective.

The “New Story” is inclusive of different stories, understanding that from different standpoints, with different framing techniques in different languages, the story of the self and the universe looks very different—yet they are all part of the one story of an interconnected humanity, Earth and cosmos. The many truths held by persons across the world are seen to be located inside one “Truth”. From myriad standpoints, we can only

ever know a partial and subjective version of this whole. The understanding of life posited by the “New Story” starts with reflections on one’s personal narratives in their “thrownness” into a world that existed before one was born, and moving outward (returning again to Martin Heidegger’s notion from Chapter One). As one critically reflects on the narratives that construct their lives, one “conscientizes” (as Paulo Freire calls it)—through this process, one can gain greater understanding of the interconnecting dynamics between their personal, cultural, political, historical ecological and cosmological narratives.

7.2 Directions for Further Research

The topic of narrative and peace represents a significant interdisciplinary project, combining the theories of process philosophy (including narratology and panentheism), with the praxis of bringing about a more socially just and ecological sustainable global society. This thesis has explored the intersection between process thought and positive peace in this thesis, but of course a great deal more research needs to be done in order to bridge this gap. Future research in this arena might involve the application of insights from Paul Ricoeur's work or other narratologists to positive peace.¹³⁹ Further scholarship examining the cross-insights between positive peace and process thought, including in its Whiteheadian (speculative metaphysical and panentheistic) form, in its Heideggerian analytical interpretive form, and in its Eastern philosophical form, would also be of great value.

A number of topics that have been discussed in this thesis will be considered at the tenth International Whitehead Conference called "WorldWide Process" to be held at Claremont, California in June 2015.¹⁴⁰ Amongst this vast interdisciplinary scholarship covered at this conference, the perspectives offered by peace theorists and the insights from theories of

¹³⁹ As mentioned in Chapter One, Ricoeur's research was motivated by the relationship between narrative and justice (see Olivio 2005). Such an exploration might consider Ricoeur's three volumes of *Time and Narrative* (1984; 1984b; 1988), and also his books such as *Freedom and Nature: The Voluntary and the Involuntary* (1966), *The Symbolism of Evil* (1967); *Oneself as Another* (1992); *Memory, History, Forgetting* (2004); *Living Up To Death* (2009) and essays such as *Memory, History, Forgiveness: A Dialogue Between Paul Ricoeur and Sorin Antohi* 2005 and *Reflections on the Just* (2007)—in relation to notions of positive peace and structural violence.

¹⁴⁰ These include: *The Threatening Catastrophe: Responding Now* with tracks exploring issues of war, nuclear catastrophe, global hunger, political and economic collapse and climate change; *An Alternative Vision: Whitehead's Philosophy* exploring connections between Whitehead's philosophy and Analytic and Continental Philosophy; *Alienation from Nature: How It Arose* exploring issues of modernism and reductionism, and the evolving relationship between humans and nature (content related to what my research project explored in terms of the "Modern Story"); *Reenvisioning Nature, Reenvisioning Science* including tracks on systems and complexity theories, and ecology; *Ecological Civilization* including topics such as Sustainable Practices; Women and Population; the Psychology of Wellbeing; and *Reimagining and Reinventing: the Wisdom Traditions* including explorations of process thought in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism and Contributions of Indigenous Traditions, *Education, Bodily and Spiritual Health, Societies and Social Thought, and Culture*; and *The Transformative Power of Art* (see WorldWide-Process 2014).

The WorldWide Process website address changed from www.worldwideprocess.org to <http://whitehead2015.wordpress.com/> between the months of January and March 2014, as did its content, which is itself still in process.

structural violence are (at least in an explicit form) largely unrepresented. Similarly, although there is a significant overlap in values and perspectives of process philosophy and peace theory, the global process movement (again, at least in its explicit form) is largely unrepresented in peace literature.

Finally, perhaps the most pressing direction for further research is in the communication and application of the process paradigm of the “New Story” in examining its connection to positive peace and structural violence in practice. Such a study might involve connecting social change theories with process philosophy, narrative and a mixture of quantitative and qualitative surveys and interviews. It might also involve examining in detail the applications of process philosophy in relation to positive peace and structural violence, and working with experts in various disciplines to see how the holistic and process perspective can be put into action. Challenging unjust institutions and systems, and evolving them to be more ecologically sustainable, may be the greatest challenge of our time. If the “New Story” (or the process paradigm more generally) is able to help address the structural forms of violence such as global poverty and environmental destruction, it is likely to involve a ‘long march through the institutions’ of education, media, culture, politics, finance and technology.¹⁴¹

Along with process philosophers I have proposed that a shift in people’s perceptions can induce a shift in people’s values and care, their actions, and the laws and institutions that guide them. Yet this proposal lacks practical evidence. A primary research project investigating these connections is necessary to take this exploratory thesis to the next step.

Is change possible? From a process perspective, change is not only possible it is inevitable. From a process perspective people, institutions and ecosystems are always in a state of flux. Betty Reardon (1988: 56-7) observes:

Peace can come about only by an intentional, organic process of continuous change, day by day and habit by habit, as well as norm by norm, structure by structure, evolving not as much sequentially and incrementally as simultaneously and

¹⁴¹ This is generally attributed to Antonio Gramsci, but Joseph A. Buttigieg (2005: 50, Footnote 21) observes that it is not actually Gramsci’s phrase.

constantly. Peace is not an end state or a final goal. It is something that will have to be refined as we continue to pursue it.

In this thesis I have argued that a multi-dimensional reframing of the “Old Story” and “Modern Story”—exemplified by the “New Story”—can help to address global injustices such as environmental destruction and poverty. I have also proposed that essential to this multi-dimensionality is a continuing critical engagement—questioning and re-questioning, framing and re-framing, evaluating and re-evaluating, forecasting and re-forecasting—that underpins the essence of the “New Story’s” contribution to a vision of peace with social and ecological justice not necessarily as an outcome, but as an ongoing process.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 A Summary of the Three Stories

	“OLD STORY” <i>Explored in Chapter 3.</i>	“MODERN STORY” <i>Explored in Chapters 2&4.</i>	“NEW STORY” <i>Explored in Chapters 5&6.</i>
Alan Watts	Ceramic model	Fully-automatic model	Dramatic model
Charles Birch	Supernatural dualism	Materialistic atheism	Postmodern Ecological worldview
Thomas Berry	A fundamentalist version of an “Old Story”	Secular scientific community	New Story
Theology	Classic theism	Atheism	Panentheism
Ontology (Nature of being)	Physical and supernatural are separate realms. Individual human souls are separate from the world and “God”.	Everything is material/physical. Humans are superior to nature and other species.	Everything is in process & relationship. Entities/events are nested inside each other.
Cosmology (Story of origins)	Creation <i>ex nihilo</i> . Human dominion, God’s rewards or punishment in afterlife.	Big Bang and evolution. Survival of the fittest.	Co-creative evolution; emergence; web of connected; <i>You are the Big Bang</i> .
Epistemology (Ways of knowing)	Based on literal interpretation of the Bible and a belief that it is the inerrant Word of God. Science is ignored, fought, or harmonised with the Bible. Generally one-dimensional.	A reductionist approach; explains the parts while neglecting the whole. Often denies the value of non-Western ways of knowing. Generally one-dimensional.	Embraces science and religion from a holistic, contextualised perspective. Phenomenology – starting from experience and moving outward in understanding. Generally multi-dimensional—understanding the many layers and different ways of knowing.
History	A history through Judaeo-Christianity.	A response to Judaeo-Christianity in light of the scientific findings of the Enlightenment.	Found in Ancient cultures such as Eastern and Indigenous. An unbroken lineage in Western philosophy from Plato to Whitehead to today.

Current Status	Today found in more Fundamentalist versions of Abrahamic religions.	Found easily seen in New Atheism, yet also built into the basic assumptions of industrialised economies and Western capitalist culture.	Found in many liberal forms of Christianity, Judaism and Islam; mysticisms; many Eastern and Indigenous ways of being; deep ecology, spiritual ecology etc.
Status in Australia (see Appendix 2)	30-60% identify with Abrahamic traditions, not including the more liberal interpretations (which I have included in the “New Story”).	2.7-30.7% are Atheist, though the influence is far broader.	9.25-40% (though the category is unknown).
Socio-political implications	<p>Sense of community, though often at cost of “othering”.</p> <p>Tend to discriminate against homosexuals, women, people of other religions etc.</p> <p>Creates social violence e.g. because no abortions, sexual repressive.</p> <p>Often supports conservative and neo-liberal politics.</p>	<p>Economic and political systems based on self-interest of individual person.</p> <p>Ethics, values and purpose are left up to individual and institutions.</p> <p>Can foster materialistic or misdirected self-interested “small decisions” without regard for broader consequences.</p>	<p>Deep care for social justice and the environment.</p> <p>Purpose found in creative contribution to the whole.</p> <p>Ethics based on deep sense of <i>empathy</i> – understanding the other as (another expression of) the Self</p> <p>Systems / process / holistic approach to economics and politics. Align small decisions with larger aims.</p>
Ecological implications	<p>Denies or ignore ecological problems.</p> <p>Believes the Earth was created for humans dominion.</p> <p>Thinks that the world will end soon when Jesus returns, so why care about the planet?</p>	<p>May initiate care or neglect.</p> <p>One may think: there is nothing after death so why should I care? OR there is only one planet and one humanity so we better care for it wisely.</p>	<p>Deep ecological appreciation, bringing about a deep care for the Earth as part of the Self.</p> <p>Provides a framework for inclusive values and some useful tools to deal with trade-offs between layers of the nested ecological web.</p>

<p>Psychological implications</p>	<p>Sense of peace in the certainty of “knowing” will go to heaven when die.</p> <p>Sense of satisfaction in “knowing” that that “sinners” will be judged by “God”.</p> <p>Provides code of morals one does not need to question.</p> <p>Discourages critical thinking.</p>	<p>Often limited to Western ways of knowing.</p> <p>Feels itself to be the “brave” options, dealing with the gritty reality of life.</p> <p>Lack of coherent narrative and sense of purpose can cause confusion. Stress on the individual self can cause depression, and suicide.</p>	<p>Decreases fear of death as death is only of the self, which returns to the Self that never dies.</p> <p>Sees the humour in the absurd and futility of life; but also sees the beauty and collective human potential.</p> <p>Ongoing critical thinking as a continuing process – provides strong and peace-oriented sense of purpose.</p>
<p>Likelihood of helping address structural violence?</p>	<p>Lack of care about the world today (due to more care for getting to heaven) decreases motivation to address structural violence.</p> <p>Ignores Industria, and therefore feeds it.</p> <p>Encourages conformity and discourages critical thinking, therefore preventing change.</p>	<p>Critical thinking makes it more likely to see connections than in the “Old Story”, but less likely than in the “New Story”.</p> <p>Defines self as separate fostering small decisions based on short-term self interest.</p>	<p>Holistic analysis draws attention to “Industria” and tries to fix it by connecting small decisions with larger consequences.</p> <p>Sees the self as participant of a social system that is changeable as it is always in process.</p> <p>Each person with a role in either maintaining or changing the whole.</p>

Appendix 2 Religious Identity in Australia

It is difficult to estimate the Australian populace falling into the categories of “Old”, “Modern” and “New Story”. Using data from (ABS 2011) I constructed the table below. I have estimated that Atheism (in red) is somewhere between 2.7% and 30.7%, depending on those in the “No Religion, nfd” (in red) and the “Not Stated” (green) category. I have highlighted religions with blue that I guess may fall toward the “New Story” understandings of the world, through a more process philosophical or liberal theological approach to their religion. I use this both loosely and conservatively, as I have not the depth of knowledge about many of these religions. With this in mind I have estimated that between 9.25% and 40% might fall into this category, depending on the views of those selecting No Religion or who did not state a religion. I have indicated (in purple) the non-monotheistic religions that I do not know enough about to assess, which in total add up to 0.02%. The rest (in black), estimating that between 30% and 60% of the Australian populace have some sense of the “Old Story” guiding their lives. People within all of these categories also might be seen to generally fall into the “Modern Story” in some aspects of their lives, as its rules underlie our institutions and ways of life.

I recognise that these are sweeping estimates. I include them only to provide some sense of the beliefs of the Australian populace. Further research on each religion and within the different forms of Christianity, would be valuable in order to provide a more accurate estimate of the location and status of the “New Story” in Australian society.

RELP - 4 Digit Level by AGE10P - Age in Ten Year Groups

Counting: Persons, Place of Usual Residence

AGE10P - Age in Ten Year Groups	Total	%
No Religion	4,796,788	22.3392%
No Religion, nfd	4,693,162	21.8566%
Agnosticism	34,632	0.1613%
Atheism	58,898	0.2743%
Humanism	7,662	0.0357%
Rationalism	2,434	0.0113%
Supplementary codes	174,277	0.8116%
Not Defined	35,169	0.1638%
New Age, so described	132,598	0.6175%
Theism	2,627	0.0122%
Theism	3,883	0.0181%
Not stated	1,839,648	8.5674%
Other Religions	168,196	1.4546%
Australian Aboriginal Traditional Religions	7,361	0.0343%
Baha'i	13,707	0.0638%
Chinese Religions	5,154	
Chinese Religions, nfd	22	0.0001%
Ancestor Veneration	508	0.0024%
Confucianism	340	0.0016%
Chinese Religions, nec	37	0.0002%
Taoism	4,247	0.0198%
Druse	2,974	0.0139%
Japanese Religions	1,636	
Japanese Religions, nfd	0	0.0000%
Shinto	1,106	0.0052%
Sukyo Mahikari	422	0.0020%
Tenrikyo	100	0.0005%
Japanese Religions, nec	8	0.0000%
Nature Religions	32,086	
Nature Religions, nfd	90	0.0004%
Animism	780	0.0036%
Druidism	1,048	0.0049%
Paganism	16,852	0.0785%
Pantheism	1,395	0.0065%
Wiccan/Witchcraft	8,415	0.0392%
Nature Religions, nec	3,506	0.0163%
Sikhism	72,296	
Sikhism	72,296	0.3367%
Spiritualism	11,551	
Spiritualism	11,551	0.0538%

Miscellaneous Religions	21,431	
Caodaism	678	0.0032%
Church of Scientology	2,162	0.0101%
Eckankar	674	0.0031%
Rastafarianism	1,390	0.0065%
Satanism	2,454	0.0114%
Theosophy	1,485	0.0069%
Jainism	2,921	0.0136%
Zoroastrianism	2,540	0.0118%
Religious Groups, nec	7,127	0.0332%
Hinduism	275,536	1.2832%
Islam	476,290	2.2181%
Judaism	97,336	0.4533%
Buddhism	528,979	2.4635%
Christianity		
Christian, nfd	470,931	
Christian, nfd	461,209	2.1479%
Apostolic Church, so described	5,107	0.0238%
Church of God, so described	976	0.0045%
Australian Christian Churches, so described	3,639	0.0169%
New Church Alliance, so described	0	0.0000%
Anglican	3,679,908	
Anglican Church of Australia	3,678,004	17.1289%
Anglican Catholic Church	1,904	0.0089%
Baptist	352,497	
Baptist	352,497	1.6416%
Brethren	21,731	
Brethren	21,731	0.1012%
Catholic	5,439,261	
Western Catholic	5,397,394	25.1363%
Maronite Catholic	30,660	0.1428%
Melkite Catholic	2,499	0.0116%
Ukrainian Catholic	3,054	0.0142%
Chaldean Catholic	4,973	0.0232%
Catholic, nec	681	0.0032%
Churches of Christ	49,693	
Churches of Christ, nfd	7,187	0.0335%
Churches of Christ (Conference)	42,144	0.1963%
Church of Christ (Non-denominational)	331	0.0015%
International Church of Christ	31	0.0001%
Jehovah's Witnesses	85,634	
Jehovah's Witnesses	85,634	0.3988%
Latter-day Saints	59,772	
Latter-day Saints, nfd	0	0.0000%
Church of Jesus Christ of LDS (Mormons)	58,838	0.2740%
Community of Christ	934	0.0043%

Lutheran	251,930	
Lutheran	251,930	1.1733%
Oriental Orthodox	41,258	
Oriental Orthodox, nfd	49	0.0002%
Armenian Apostolic	7,660	0.0357%
Coptic Orthodox Church	24,694	0.1150%
Syrian Orthodox Church	5,821	0.0271%
Ethiopian Orthodox Church	2,847	0.0133%
Oriental Orthodox, nec	187	0.0009%
Assyrian Apostolic	10,592	
Assyrian Apostolic, nfd	0	0.0000%
Assyrian Church of the East	8,497	0.0396%
Ancient Church of the East	2,095	0.0098%
Assyrian Apostolic, nec	0	0.0000%
Eastern Orthodox	563,080	
Eastern Orthodox, nfd	49,577	0.2309%
Albanian Orthodox	48	0.0002%
Antiochian Orthodox	8,264	0.0385%
Greek Orthodox	383,400	1.7855%
Macedonian Orthodox	52,049	0.2424%
Romanian Orthodox	1,881	0.0088%
Russian Orthodox	22,250	0.1036%
Serbian Orthodox	41,833	0.1948%
Ukrainian Orthodox	2,713	0.0126%
Eastern Orthodox, nec	1,065	0.0050%
Presbyterian and Reformed	599,518	
Presbyterian and Reformed, nfd	3	0.0000%
Presbyterian	584,817	2.7236%
Reformed	11,980	0.0558%
Free Reformed	2,718	0.0127%
Salvation Army	60,164	
Salvation Army	60,164	0.2802%
Seventh-day Adventist	63,001	
Seventh-day Adventist	63,001	0.2934%
Uniting Church	1,065,794	4.9635%
Uniting Church	1,065,794	4.9635%
Pentecostal	237,992	
Pentecostal, nfd	192,182	0.8950%
Apostolic Church (Australia)	296	0.0014%
Assemblies of God	28,299	0.1318%
Bethesda Churches	49	0.0002%
Christian City Church	619	0.0029%
Christian Life Churches International	243	0.0011%
Christian Outreach Centres	2,658	0.0124%
Christian Revival Crusade	3,776	0.0176%
Faith Churches	40	0.0002%
Foursquare Gospel Church	550	0.0026%
Full Gospel Church	1,465	0.0068%
Revival Centres	2,226	0.0104%
Rhema Family Church	52	0.0002%
United Pentecostal	851	0.0040%
Pentecostal, nec	4,686	0.0218%
Other Protestant	60,244	

Other Protestant, nfd	22,704	0.1057%
Aboriginal Evangelical Missions	3,449	0.0161%
Born Again Christian	11,885	0.0553%
Christian and Missionary Alliance	1,321	0.0062%
Church of the Nazarene	1,356	0.0063%
Congregational	4,359	0.0203%
Ethnic Evangelical Churches	2,909	0.0135%
Independent Evangelical Churches	1,830	0.0085%
Wesleyan Methodist Church	3,272	0.0152%
Other Protestant, nec	7,159	0.0333%
Other Christian	37,665	
Other Christian, nfd	978	0.0046%
Apostolic Church of Queensland	3,035	0.0141%
Christadelphians	10,652	0.0496%
Christian Science	1,358	0.0063%
Gnostic Christians	1,034	0.0048%
Liberal Catholic Church	304	0.0014%
New Apostolic Church	2,887	0.0134%
New Churches (Swedenborgian)	331	0.0015%
Ratana (Maori)	4,626	0.0215%
Religious Science	291	0.0014%
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)	2,076	0.0097%
Temple Society	705	0.0033%
Unitarian	1,335	0.0062%
Worldwide Church of God	126	0.0006%
Other Christian, nec	7,927	0.0369%
Total	21,472,546	100.0000%

Data Source: 2011 Census of Population and Housing

Table generated using ABS TableBuilder

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Appendix 3 **Belief in God and Evolution in the United States**

The following data is from the United States General Social Survey (NORC 1972-2006).
Dataset: General Social Surveys [Cumulative File].

General Social Surveys (GSS) are a 90 minute face-to-face surveys of over 50,000 Americans conducted every other year by the National Opinion Research Centre (NORC). These questions were answered by just over 2000 respondents.

Subject: God; Confidence in the Existence of God:

Does God exist?

2006

DONT BELIEVE	2.1 <i>Atheist</i>
NO WAY TO FIND OUT	4.3 <i>Agnostic</i>
SOME HIGHER POWER	9.6 <i>Spiritual</i>
BELIEVE SOMETIMES	4.2 <i>Unsure</i>
BELIEVE BUT DOUBTS	16.7 <i>Believer</i>
KNOW GOD EXISTS	63.1 <i>Believer</i>

Conclusion: 79.8% believe (with or without doubts), 18.1% might be lean toward panentheistic interpretations, and 2.1% are atheist.

Subject Religion; Opinion on Evolution; Humans Evolved From Animals

Did humans evolve from animals?

2000

DEFINITELY TRUE	15.3
PROBABLY TRUE	31.4
PROBABLY NOT TRUE	17.8
DEFINITELY NOT TRUE	35.5

Conclusion: 53.6% of Americans do not “believe” in the scientific theory of evolution, and only 15.3% of Americans believe it to be “definitely true”.

Appendix 4 Religious Support for Environmentalism

The following two tables come from James L. Guth, Lyman A. Kellstedt, Corwin E. Smidt and John C. Green (1993: 376, 378).

SUPPORT FOR ENVIRONMENTALISM AMONG RELIGIOUS ACTIVISTS

	(N)	Most Important Problem	Priority Score	Policy Score	Factor Score
Sample	(4995)	18%	3.66	2.51	0.00
Religious Tradition					
Evangelical	(3114)	12%	4.13	3.79	-.53
Mainline	(1132)	28%	2.97	2.09	.78
Catholic	(640)	29%	2.67	1.89	1.13
Religious Identity					
Fundamentalist	(1646)	7%	4.56	3.05	-1.01
Pentecostal	(728)	8%	4.34	3.00	-.85
Conservative	(2536)	10%	4.28	2.88	-.70
Charismatic	(1272)	11%	4.18	2.73	-.45
Evangelical	(3263)	15%	3.92	2.65	-.29
Mainline	(829)	31%	2.77	1.99	.98
Ecumenical	(1204)	33%	2.62	1.83	1.21
Liberal	(790)	38%	2.21	1.57	1.66
Church Attendance					
Weekly +	(2772)	14%	3.95	2.69	-.34
Every Week	(1691)	23%	3.36	2.29	.37
Most Weeks	(284)	28%	3.12	2.23	.56
Less Often	(228)	29%	3.10	2.19	.63

Key: Most Important Problem = Percentage of group offering an environmental answer to open-ended question on the "two or three most important problems facing America."
 Mean score for "protecting the environment" in a list of six "values," with a range of 1 "Highest Priority" to 6 "Lowest Priority."
 Mean score on policy question: "More environmental protection is needed, even if it raises prices or costs jobs."
 Range from 1 "Strongly agree" to 5 "Strongly disagree."
 Index score = factor score based on combination of priority response and policy response. Mean is 0, with minus scores indicating lower support for the environment and positive scores indicating greater support. Range is from -2.89 to +3.58.

TABLE 2
DEMOGRAPHIC, THEOLOGICAL, AND POLITICAL CORRELATES OF
SUPPORT FOR ENVIRONMENTALISM AMONG RELIGIOUS ACTIVISTS

Bivariate and Multivariate Analysis			
	Pearson's r	Category beta	Final beta
Demographic Variables			
Education (in years)	.32**	.27**	ns
Occupation	.24**	.06**	ns
Major			
Humanities	.17**	.10**	ns
Social Science	.11**	.06*	ns
Science	.08**	.04*	ns
Business	-.10**	-.04*	ns
Trades	-.07**	-.03*	ns
Region			
South	-.06**	-.09**	ns
West	-.08**	-.10**	.03*
Age	-.06**	-.03*	-.06**
		$R^2 = .40$	
		Adjusted $R^2 = .15$	
Religious Variables			
Fundamentalism	-.63**	-.43**	-.18**
Individualism	-.52**	-.13**	ns
Revivalism	-.45**	-.10**	.06**
"Fundamentalist"	-.40**	-.07**	ns
"Conservative"	-.40**	-.09**	ns
"Ecumenical"	.39**	.04*	ns
Catholic	.24**	.06*	.05**
Importance of Religion	-.09**	-.03*	ns
		$R^2 = .67$	
		Adjusted $R^2 = .45$	
Ideology			
General Conservatism	-.72**	-.70**	-.54**
Anti-Social Welfare	-.57**	-.09**	-.13**
Free Speech Priority	.26**	.09**	.08**
Morality Priority	-.26**	-.05*	-.04*
Economic Priority	.05**	.06**	.06*
		$R^2 = .73$	
		Adjusted $R^2 = .54$	
			$R^2 = .75$
			Adjusted $R^2 = .56$

* p < .01

** p < .001

Appendix 5 Selected List of “New Story” Thinkers

This very selected shopping list of contributors provides a broad sense of the historical and cultural context through which the “New Story” (or process thought) is located and evolved from ancient times into what it is today. I start with Western philosophical history and move into brief mention of thinkers from other cultures.¹⁴²

Antiquity

Ikhnoton / Amenhotep IV (d. 1336-4 B.C.E)

Plato (427-347 B.C.E) (traces found in *Timaeus*)

Stoicism e.g. Zeno (d. 264/263 B.C.E), In the Christian Bible, Paul quotes the Stoic Poet Epimenides the Cretan when he writes “in him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28).¹⁴³

Plotinus (204-270 C.E)

Proclus (410-585 C.E)

Pseudo-Dionysius (ca. 5th/6th Century C.E)

Medieval thinkers

John Scotus Eriugena (810-877)

Saint Francis of Assisi (1182-1226)

Meister Eckhart (ca. 1260-1327)

Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464)

Jakob Böhme (1575-1624)

Renaissance and Romanticism

Giordano Bruno (1548-1600)

Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677)

Friedrich Schleiermacher (1767-1834)

German Idealists

Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel (1770-1831)

Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775-1854) (who was the first to use the term panentheism)

Karl Krause (1781-1832) (who is often credited with coining the term panentheism).

Nineteenth-Twentieth Century Philosophers and Christian Theologians

Gustav Fechner (1801-1887)

Samuel Alexander (1859-1938)

William Inge (1860-1954)

¹⁴² This list is based largely on the following anthologies: Cooper (2006); Hartshorne and Rees ([1953]; 2000); Clayton and Peacocke (2004); Biernacki and Clayton (2014) and Tucker and Grim (1994). Where birth years are missing it is because the information is not publically available.

¹⁴³ See Cooper (2006: 38).

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914)
 William James (1842–1910)
 Henri Bergson (1859-1941)
 Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955)
 Paul Tillich (1886-1965)
 Martin Heidegger (1889-1976)
 Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2003)
 Nicolai Berdyaev (1874-1948)
 William Temple (1881-1944)
 Joseph Needham (1900-1995)
 Karl Rahner (1904-1984)
 Thomas Berry (1914-2009)
 John Macquarrie (b. 1919)
 Jürgen Moltmann (b. 1926)
 Wolfhart Pannenberg (b. 1928)
 Hans Küng (b. 1928)
 Rev. John Polkinghorne (b. 1930)¹⁴⁴
 Celia E. Deane-Drummond
 Kallistos Ware (Bishop of Diokleia)

Whiteheadian process thinkers

Charles Hartshorne (1897-2000)
 Charles Birch (1918-2009)
 John B. Cobb (b. 1925)
 David Ray Griffin (b. 1939)
 Philip Clayton (b. 1955)
 Catherine Keller (b. 1953)
 Jay B. McDaniel

Scientific fields – physics, cosmology, ecology

Gregory Bateson (1904-1980)
 David Bohm (1917-1992)
 Arne Naess (1912-2009)
 Fritjof Capra (b. 1939)
 Arthur Peacocke (b. 1924)
 Paul Davies (b. 1946)
 Brian Thomas Swimme (b. 1950)
 John Grim
 Mary Evelyn Tucker
 George Sessions

Eco-Feminist

Vandana Shiva (b. 1952)
 Rosemary Ruether (b. 1936)
 Sallie McFague (b. 1933)
 Charlene Spretnak (b. 1946)

¹⁴⁴ Although Polkinghorne does not identify himself as a panentheist, Cooper evaluates that Polkinghorne's theology fits within the definition of implicit panentheism.

Indigenous

Pachamamma Alliance
 Ngarrindjeri Being Heard
 Bob Randall

Eco-Libertarian

Juan Luis Segundo (1925-1996)
 Gustavo Gutiérrez (b. 1928)
 Leonardo Boff (b. 1938)
 Matthew Fox (b. 1940)

New Age

Starhawk (b. 1951)
 Deepak Chopra (b. 1947)
 Eckhart Tolle (b. 1948)

Narratology

Paul Ricoeur (1913–2005)

History

David Christian (b. 1946)
 Garry Trompf

Peace Theory and Education

Maria Montessori (1870-1952)
 Elise Boulding (1920- 2010)
 Paulo Freire (1921-1997)
 Betty Reardon (b. 1929)
 Johan Galtung (b. 1930)
 Stuart Rees (b. 1939)
 William Hipwell

Judaism

Martin Buber (1878-1965)
 Bradley Shavit Artson (b. 1959)
 Abraham Kook (1865–1935)

Islam

Muhyi al-Din Ibn al-‘Arabi (d. 1240)
 Sir Muhammed Iqbal (1877-1938)

Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucian

Lao-Tse (400/500 B.C.E)
 Abhinavagupta (950-1020)
 Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950)
 Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888-1975)
 Mahanam Brata Brahmachari (1904-1999)
 Alan Watts (1915-1973)
 Masao Abe (1915-2006)