

MEMORIALS

Eulogy spoken by Margaret Wolfensberger

GOOD MORNING. I am Margaret Wolfensberger Sager, the oldest child of Wolf and Nancy. On behalf of my mother and sister and brother I want to thank everyone for coming today, especially those who have travelled from great distances, including our dear friends, Oxana and Marika Metiuk, who surprised Mom last night by appearing from England, and my father's goddaughter, Paula Spera Burton, who also surprised us by travelling from Memphis. Dad credited Paula's father, Paul Spera, for teaching him how to be an American.

I also want to give our heartfelt thanks to those who came to the vigil service at All Saints last night. So many people, including my sister and brother, made beautiful remarks and told so many wonderful stories. We would also like to thank Ray Lemay for his beautiful remarks just now. Merci.

It is hard to put into words our gratitude to the All Saints Gospel Choir, of which my mother is a member, for the beautiful singing that they provided to us today and last night at the vigil service, and also for their and Father Daley's support generally.

Finally, I am particularly thankful that my children were able to be witnesses to the remarks about their Opa last night and today. My father was so pleased that my son, Tate, could read the Brahms Requiem in German today. My father had Tate practice with him a few weeks ago. Dad would have also been so pleased that Jennifer shared his sister's letter with us today.

As noted at the end of the pamphlet, we invite you to a reception after Mass at the Century Club. There are sheets with directions to the Club at the entrance of the church and I apologize that they are printed on fresh un-recycled paper and do not feature freshman Psych I term papers on the back.

You know that this means that you will need to reuse those sheets.

In 1957 when my father attended Peabody College (which is now part of Vanderbilt) he met and became friends with two other students, Jimmy Mann and Rolando Santos. By every indication these three men could not have been more different from one another. Jimmy was the good ole boy from Mississippi, Rollie was a Fulbright Scholar from the Philippines and Dad, of course, was the still freshly minted German immigrant. They did not have a dollar among them. They became fast albeit unlikely friends and their wives also became great friends. These friendships—and marriages—have lasted a lifetime. When two of them got together, they always delighted in telephoning the third—and reversing the charges.

Jimmy and Kitty will meet us in Indiana for Dad's burial this coming week. Rollie and Karen, who live in California, could not make it today but Rollie sent us a lovely letter—most of which I could not repeat in church. But Rollie, who is also my godfather, wanted me to read some excerpts from his letter. I really had to pick through the rollicking naughty vignettes recalled to great effect by Uncle Rollie.

It goes without saying that if the Cathedral lent itself to overhead projector use, I would be projecting the 10 most salient points of the letter on an overhead. But I will soldier on without that necessary tool.

Dear Nancy and family ... I met Wolf 54 years ago (!) and can remember the many happy and, sometimes, exasperating times we had together. The first time we met was at a Newman Club meeting off Vanderbilt campus. We somehow found common ground that ... sparked a friendship that, eventually, lasted almost a lifetime ... A

few months later, after finding out that I didn't know how to drive, he decided to give me driving lessons on Murfreesboro Highway. He was so frustrated with my ineptness that he thought it would be safer for us and for others to go off the highway and resume the lessons in a nearby cemetery. I lost control of the car and ran over a couple of headstones and almost killed a couple making out behind one of the headstones! I could have sent the couple straight to hell not having given them time for repentance! After a few more minutes of futile driving instruction, Wolf gave up. He said, "Rollie, you are a verbal genius but a mechanical moron!" That did it! I never tried driving again for the rest of my life, convinced that I was indeed a mechanical moron! ... Wolf, for all these and many more memories, thank you ... I really share your sorrow and Karen and I send you our deepest condolences. Rollie

Now I will turn to some personal reflections.

It was rarely dull in our household growing up. Both of my parents provided a type of excitement. On a family outing, my father would often say "wherever I go, excitement attends." And he was right. I always felt that I had the best of so many worlds growing up. Although Mom and Dad shared a German heritage, they came together in 1959 with very different life stories. Throughout their marriage they valued and honored the other's back story and made both of their stories and their story together our story as well. Our parents gave us an expansive variety of all things, which in turn opens so many doors to us every day. Although a common thing today, we grew up very much aware of the bigger world we live in. Because we had so many visitors from all over the world staying at our house, I used to make the comment that I grew up in the International House of Pancakes. We have been so very fortunate, and due to our

parents we realize and appreciate how fortunate we are.

Was WW an easy-going father? Of course not. But, really, how much fun is easy? I could go on for hours, but today I have chosen as my primary theme my IN BOX.

How many other kids have an IN BOX at home? It really was not until a few years ago that I realized that it was not typical to have an IN BOX at your parents' home. The other day it dawned on me that my IN BOX is now empty and that I will really, really miss my IN BOX. I know that many of you had an IN BOX with Dad, or at the least received from him clippings and articles and cartoons that he wanted to share with you.

As an adult, checking my IN BOX on visits home, I marveled at how much effort my Dad expended on our IN BOXes. Not only did certain items in our IN BOXes reference our inside jokes, but they were evidence of so many other things. For starters, I knew that when Dad read something, and tagged it for me and possibly for my siblings, that Dad was thinking of us. It was like a special secret conversation.

There were recurring themes in the IN BOX. Some of those themes were common to all three of us children, and—as in the case of my siblings' respective boxes—some were particular to me and often to a specific phase of my life. There were occasionally items marked for discussion, and ranked P1, P2 and P3. I often wish that I had saved in chronological order all the cartoons Dad put in my IN BOX. They would in many respects represent the story of my life—told in wry and funny ways.

I THOUGHT THAT I WOULD share eight of the primary recurring themes from our IN BOXes:

1. *Cats*: In case you are wondering, Dad included the reference to "cats and song" in his obituary. My favorite recent cat clipping was a man's eulogy for his recently departed cat. My father never stopped missing our beloved Siamese Gustav and then Felix.

2. *Food and Drink*: Last night at the vigil service, Paul beautifully addressed Dad's love of food in particular, and I cannot really add much to that. However, I will say that my mother delighted in cooking for our father. He was always an appreciative food audience—but, of course, as a result of my mother's outstanding cooking, he and we became quite spoiled about food.

3. *Manners and Comportment*: We needed it. And then my children needed it. And we all still need it. In fact, it did not escape our notice that sometimes even Dad needed it too. As a pre-teen I started collecting books on this topic. I note that Dad has squirreled away suitcases of books for each of us so that we will have birthday and especially Christmas gifts from him for years to come. As my husband noted so well last night, my father absolutely loved Christmas.

4. *Many Tips on an Enormous Spectrum of Topics*: And yes, some of those clippings later appeared in Dad's newsletter TIPS. Sometimes the clippings would prove his advice. For example, one should not wear high-heel shoes or, worse yet, backless shoes—because in an emergency you could not run for your life. In case you are wondering, a remarkable number of newspaper photographs of various disasters will show empty shoes on the roadside and perhaps even the hapless victim, often a woman, running shoeless over glass and bodies.

5. *Word Play*: Of course. Clippings often included annotations with words invented by our father.

6. *Tools to Help Us Live by the Concept of Decision Theory*: Decision Theory was often featured (and propounded) by means of lists and various approaches to help one think ahead and plan for all contingencies ... Because we know that what can go wrong often will go wrong, and so we must be prepared. Working on the various arrangements this week, I often said to myself: "decision theory dictates that I add a few more back-ups or have a

few more copies." But then I would find back-ups in the files Dad created for us for the necessary activities of this week.

7. *Travel Tips*: Dad travelled the globe. I believe that my parents' trips were the consistent high points of their marriage after we were grown. I loved travelling with Dad. Dad was the hardest working person I have ever known. So it was terrific to get Dad away from home and away from work. He was fun, prepared (of course) and he always had a plan—and a few back-up plans as well. Of course, during our trips his boundless energy and curiosity would often wear us out, but then again he was always willing to stop for a meal or ice cream or tea and dessert to keep us going. In 2004, my daughter Jennifer and I had a wonderful time in Switzerland and Germany with Mom, Dad and Aunt Hady for the Hitz family reunion. We were joined at various times by Dad's brother, Hanno, and his wife, Gisela, and Hanno's son, Hanno, Jr., and his wife and son. That trip is a jewel of a memory.

8. Finally, a recurring theme was *How to Be Prepared for When the End Comes*. "When the end comes" ... What kind of end? Perhaps war, including even nuclear war, or a natural disaster. Did you know that a Grundig radio operates on tubes, unlike a transistor radio, and therefore can be used even in the event of a nuclear attack? We have two of them. One here and one at the farm in Indiana. And speaking of which, we had a family plan in such event to rendezvous at the farm in Indiana, realizing that we may have to get there in terrific difficulty, but knowing that due to all the information from Dad and his clippings, and all the lists that he had given us, that we would hopefully be sufficiently prepared to make and survive the arduous journey. You can imagine that when we were children, all this talk about "When the End Comes" caused a little eye rolling. However, given our father's experiences in WW II Germany, we knew that he had witnessed events that did not make even a nuclear

attack seem impossible or even anything other than probable.

I was much older before I realized that the other 'end' that Dad was often addressing was death. Many clippings in the IN BOX reinforced Dad's admonitions to live life in a state of grace and peace with God—because you never knew when the end would come. He worried about our souls. Regrettably, we have often given him reasons to worry.

So it is only fitting that now that Dad has entered the portals of heaven, we will take him to our safe house at the farm to be buried in Indiana. Certainly Dad did not view death as the end, but for those of us left behind it is indeed a type of end. The farm is where Mom and Dad met and fell in love, and it is from that point that my mother met the great love of her life and my Dad met the woman who made it possible for him to accomplish the good that he was able to effect professionally and at the same time to have a loving and devoted family.

We pray for his soul.

Thank you.

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Eulogy spoken by Ray Lemay (Canada)

I WILL NOT BE USING OVERHEADS—but I do have my 3X5 index cards. Dr. Wolfensberger tried to teach me many things, but I should warn you that I missed the 4 day workshop on brevity.

I should start this eulogy by telling you the end of this story, because I think it is the first thing we should know about Wolf Wolfensberger's life. Dr. Wolfensberger often started with first principles that often illuminate the purpose of the thing. And this is the sum of it: There is a heaven and Wolf is now there.

I know this because over the past few days, I've heard the rumblings of heavenly reform. This reform will now have apprentice angels follow an

elaborate training ladder of very in-depth workshops. And all of this will lead to a new level in the hierarchy of angels; just below archangel, and just above guardian angel, there will in the future be change agent angels.

I've also heard that there have been rumblings of very recent innovations beyond the Pearly Gates. Angels are complaining about overly busy overheads and the use of 3X5 index cards. However, with Wolf there, I'm confident they are safe from PowerPoint for a while yet.

WOLF WOLFENSBERGER has now been taken from us, and we already miss him dearly. But then, his passing is not surprising, for he has lived an incredibly full life; he was a man for all seasons, and he lived fully through all those seasons. He was a man of his times, but also a man for all times.

Wolf lived in a unique and inspired way that few of us would have the temerity to follow.

As most of you know, the idea of social roles was central to Dr. Wolfensberger's teaching and his Social Role Valorization (SRV) theory (Wolfensberger, 1998). The roles that we are given and choose to play—teacher, father, policeman, book-lover, neighbour, and so on—affect in a crucial way how other people will relate to us and what they will do for us, or even against us. Let us for a moment consider the roles that Wolf Wolfensberger was given and chose to play as best he could. And this is but a very incomplete list, I'm quite sure you could think of many others:

War survivor, refugee, foster child, immigrant, student, scientist, researcher, scholar, learned man;

Author: 47 books, 63 chapters and partial monographs, 231 articles, 27 reviews and 6 poems. And innumerable manuscripts; 2 books that are just recently ready for publication;

Reformer, prophet, historian, benefactor (often in secret), hiker, cat lover, song lover, beer lover, chocolate lover, poet, protector;

Collector of books, antiques, post cards, stamps, human service buttons and pins, toy ambulances, and much else;

Psychologist, philosopher, thinker, advocate, spokesman, historian, leader, humanist, mentor, pedagogue, real chess master, last real German professor, change agent, friend, father, husband . . .

That is quite a list of roles and how busy he must have been.

Not surprisingly, very early on, Wolf made it a habit to get up early and he worked long days and weekends. Indeed Nancy tells me that he efficiently used all the time he had at hand and never wasted a minute.

Despite these very diverse occupations, interests and passions, Wolf remained quite single-minded and focused on a few big things that he thought needed to be said and needed to be done, and sometimes at great cost to himself and to his family.

How does one become Wolf Wolfensberger? What is the story behind the man that makes his productivity and such a contribution possible? I can think of four things about Wolf that round out the picture and tell us about how Wolf could be Wolf.

1: Childhood

WOLF'S WAS AN EVENTFUL LIFE right from the start. His formative years were Nazi Germany, the Second World War, a family shattered by world events, and young Wolf, ten, refugee and fostered by the Muellers, a German family in the Alsace. About a year after having been placed with the Muellers for his safety, Wolf's sister, Marian, made her way through great adversity to tell Wolf and their nearby brother, Hanno, to come back home. Wolf then made his way back to Mannheim in 1944 to find what was left of his family. So imagine for a moment: you are that 10 year old, it's 1944, you are in war-torn, rural France. One morning you leave on foot, to cross about 100 miles as the crow flies. Your purpose: to find your family. What has become of your mother, father, brother, sister, grandparents and family? I for one can imagine being terrified.

It is only in 1963, almost 20 years later, when Wolf and Nancy were back in Europe, and Wolf

decided to knock on the door of that farmhouse in Alsace France, that Herr Mueller discovered that young Wolf had survived his trek back home. The Muellers had never received the letters that Wolf had sent them to confirm his survival. Herr Mueller cried with joy, and the family celebrated the return of the prodigal foster son. And it is also in 1963 that Wolf saw again his brother Hanno, now deceased, for the first time in 13 years.

Wolf rarely spoke of these times but how could they not be formative?

In 2003, at the Third International SRV Conference in Calgary, Wolf took Bob Flynn and I aside to gently chide us for our naive optimism about resilience theory (Flynn, 2003; Lemay, 2003). He said to us: "You can survive and even overcome trauma and tragedy, but it marks you for life." Certainly the school of life prepared Wolf for adversity and it also, I suspect, taught him to be sceptical of the designs and plans of man, however seemingly benign.

And then there is the 16 year old penniless German boy who in 1950 immigrated to the US with his mother and settled in Memphis, Tennessee. He finished his high school and went on to do a degree in philosophy. He paid his way through school by working as a "control chemist" testing food preservatives—a job he liked—and many of the compounds he worked with, he later discovered, were carcinogenic. Wolf then went to Peabody to do his PhD in Psychology in the first ever Mental Retardation program.

Here is how later he described his PhD years (Wolfensberger, 2008). These are words that should serve to reassure every mediocre student in this church and of course should be posted in the admission departments of universities. This is Wolf writing:

I was not a particularly good student at Peabody, and was not grade-avid as some students were . . . if I did not like a subject matter or a textbook, my motivation flagged. I was also impatient with any

course work of which I could not see the relevance to my envisioned future work ...

At the 2004 Peabody reunion, my advisor [Rue Cromwell] admitted that the faculty would not have rated me as one of their more promising students. However, I stayed in the field, was indefatigable in addressing real-life challenges there, and worked full-time even after my supposed retirement, the same as my friend and mentor Gunnar Dybwad had done. Also, I formed extensive informal personal involvements with retarded people, some lasting for decades until death parted us. All this bears out the well-known pitfalls of predicting career outcomes (p. 77).

2. Family: His Rootedness

I THINK WE CAN ALL GUESS how the experiences of childhood and youth contributed to making Wolf Wolf. But there is another ingredient, a second ingredient if you will, that I think bears reviewing and that completes the picture of the change agent he would become. Without this ingredient, the rest would have been very difficult if not impossible. This ingredient came about because Wolf was then in the role of impecunious student who was trying to sell his typewriter. We are in 1959, Wolf is doing a Practicum at Muscatatuck State School in Indiana, and an employee there knows a young woman who is looking to buy a typewriter. Wolf wanted \$50 for the typewriter, a hefty sum back then. A young woman comes to see the typewriter and decides to buy it.

I don't know if he got \$50 for the typewriter, but Wolf did get the girl, and that is how Wolf met the beautiful Nancy Artz, and they were married February 13, 1960. Nancy and Wolf just recently celebrated 51 years of matrimony. He got the typewriter back and a superb typist in the bargain; not to mention partner, and love of his life. And of course he then firmly established his roots in this land.

And then there were the travels and the moves and the kids: Margaret, now a lawyer; Joan, a PhD in Health Care Delivery; and Paul, keeping

up the Hitz and Wolfensberger family tradition of engineering. Nancy and the kids were the first to be recruited in Wolf's crusade against institutions, and for community services, normalization and later Social Role Valorization. Nancy was typist, manager, collaborator, organizer, caterer and hostess, and she essentially insured over these many years and incredibly productive career that things got done and all went well. These are behind the scenes roles, but they were and are essential. Change agency requires such support.

The kids were the official keepers of all the collections, organizing the post cards, degumming stamps, keeping the 1000s of books in subject and alphabetical order, doing photocopies, folding, collating and stapling. A death by a thousand paper cuts, remembers Margaret. They remember well the 3X5 index cards that Dad would give them with their daily chores and activities to do. Margaret remembers being at the NIMR building in Toronto at 5 am with her dad, to help with the coloring of overheads and everything else that needed to be done.

And then there were the innumerable Wolfshops: bringing all the materials, books, overheads, slides, flyers. Tens of thousands attended these events. Setting up the thousand or so wine and cheeses. And then the hospitality at the Wolfensberger home. Hundreds have stayed with the Wolfensbergers, and Nancy's food was always remarkably hearty and delicious.

Wolf teaches an important lesson of parenting: Doing things with the kids doesn't mean you can't have them doing things for you and the cause. And Wolf of course was way ahead of his times: this was a decade before George Vaillant's (Vaillant & Vaillant, 2001) groundbreaking Harvard study showed that the only childhood activity that predicted future adult outcomes (in this case positive mental health) was parents who had their children do chores. I think that 3X5 index cards are optional.

Thus here are roles that contribute to being an effective change agent and are certainly not inimical to it:

- Son, nephew, uncle, brother;
- Proud member of the Hitz and Wolfensberger clans, Swiss German families with many engineers and other accomplished folk. Wolf, who was very interested in genealogy, presented at a recent conference in Washington to a Hitz-Wolfensberger family reunion;
 - Husband;
 - Father;
 - Father-in-law;
 - Grandfather to Tate, Jennifer and Hadley.

This was change agency 101: Don't do it alone: involve the family, and treat people to lavish hospitality.

3. How to Play the Roles of Leader, Colleague & Friend

WOLF WAS THE CHAMPION of many unpopular causes. But he was not a lone Wolf. Change occurs through people, and change agency is about bringing people along. There was the family of course. And his close collaborators at the Training Institute, Susan Thomas and Carol Flowers, who have steadfastly continued the work these many years. But over the decades Wolf has worked with many other leaders to help create opportunities for positive change. I hope you will forgive me if I do not recite the list of friends and colleagues; there are too many to mention here and a great risk of forgetting many others.

Leaders being leaders tend to want to lead, but surprisingly, there was a common cause that brought these people together. Single-handedly would be unfair to Wolf—he always had partners, collaborators, friends and allies. There were other professionals, students, parents, parent associations, SRV trainers, people with developmental handicaps—a wide network that Wolf supported, and people who supported him. And because what he advocated was serious, important, indeed life-and-death important, there were bound to be differences of opinion and even adversaries.

One great role that Wolf played I think with relish was the role of mentor. This went with peda-

gogue, teacher, trainer, maître à penser, a bit of the German professor, and wise counsellor. He took people under his wing and then gave them the benefit of his time and knowledge. He was incredibly kind and generous.

He took an interest in many here in this church and many who are not able to be here. He touched us with his wisdom, clear-sightedness, passion and friendship. He cultivated acquaintanceships, and was generous with his mentoring to students and protégés. He had a paradoxical capacity for deep friendship, despite (or perhaps because of?) a no less deep personal sense of privacy and reserve.

Just a few weeks ago, I got yet another package of materials which he'd cut out that he thought would be of interest to me. Over the years, we've had many a conversation, he has given me much advice, and he and Nancy have lavished on Lynne, the kids and I much welcoming hospitality. I can still see Wolf on a hot summer day many years ago, in his back yard regaling my then young children with his German-American accented French rendition of *La Cigale et la Fourmi*. My kids loved him and thought I had been very lucky to have had such a funny professor.

It is quite true that Wolf could be a lightning rod when he took up controversial issues: language and political correctness, recently the dire financial situation that human services are soon going to find themselves in, and of course abortion and deathmaking. He stood up and said what he thought needed saying. He risked his credibility, professional reputation and even relationships. He risked being alone on issues, but his integrity and authentic commitment to the truth would not allow Wolf to waiver. But sometimes it had to feel like that 100 mile trek to Mannheim all over again.

And even on issues where there were potential allies, it seemed like it was never good enough. Defeating the institutions was only a first step. Community services, always at risk of perpetuating institutional modalities, now had to take up the challenge of valued social participation and opening up access to the good things in life.

He saw and denounced addled ideas, and muddled practices that he estimated would lead to grief for vulnerable people. There was no satisfying the man. But then we all know that there is much out there that should dissatisfy and worry us all.

The situation of people with developmental disabilities has surely improved over Wolf's lifetime and he deserves much of the credit for making a difference. A few days ago, our colleague and friend, Darcy Elks, shared with me that her daughter, now a young woman, had recently graduated from high school and gone to her senior prom at an exclusive country club. This country club it so happens is but five miles from the now closed large state institution. My friend noted a great irony in this proximity because 30 years ago, her daughter, who has a developmental disability, would quite likely have been at that State School (Elks, 2011). A lot of people were involved in closing that institution and other institutions and for helping allow individuals with handicaps to live in the community, but Wolf certainly was at the forefront of those battles. And it is not only in New York state or even the US but throughout much of the Western world that this revolution has occurred. I've heard Wolf give credit to others. But no Wolf, a lot of this was because of you. And I'm sure you can all hear Wolf simply respond that there is yet much to do.

Teacher, trainer, learned man, mentor, friend.

The change agent should never be alone, and Wolf strived to be surrounded by allies, colleagues and friends.

4. Faith

AND NOW FINALLY the fourth ingredient: just a few words about the religious and spiritual foundations of his life.

For Wolf to be Wolf and to engage in these great causes, he needed his family, his friends and colleagues, and finally his faith. Wolf was convinced that he was never alone.

"Be not afraid!" Wolf was quite taken with this oft-repeated sentence in the Gospels, and that was

one of the major themes of John Paul II's papacy. "Be not afraid!"

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Wolf was born a Catholic in a family with a Jewish and Catholic heritage. He was always devout and pious, and in the 1970s, through the influence of his own readings, prayer and meetings with Jean Vanier and William Stringfellow, he explored and developed a more profound spirituality (Bersani, 2001). Wolf helped found and actively participated in the Syracuse l'Arche community and it was also at this time that he started actively participating in the Unity Kitchen Community, a Catholic Worker initiative that provides hospitality to homeless individuals in Syracuse.

His increasing spirituality and belief in God led him to abandon anything resembling "ordinary hope" in human affairs. All of this I believe further radicalized his efforts to stand in solidarity with people who were poor, lowly and excluded from the good life, particularly people with handicaps. Wolf came to see more clearly the great evils that confront us but are often hidden away and made subtle by all manner of subterfuge. His position on language and political correctness stem from his view that language has been subverted to hide from us what is going on, to make critical discourse ever more difficult. His open practice of religion and his positions on controversial issues were fearless, or just as likely, he put on a brave front as he risked much. He did not do it for effect or to be effective. He did it because it was the right thing to do.

In his teaching of the history of human services, Wolf made much of the Gospel passage in Matthew chapter 25 where service to the hidden Christ inspired much of primitive human service well into modern times.

In this passage, Christ thus tells a parable on the last judgment:

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.'

Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?'

And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me' (Matthew 25: 34-40).

Believer, Christian, pious man, faithful servant, child of God.

And that is how Wolf was Wolf: steeled by his childhood experiences, surrounded by family, friends and allies, and with his faith in God, he could be fearless in serving the hidden Christ.

“Be not afraid,” said Christ.

And we are here today to remember a life well and fully lived, to cherish his love and friendship, to ponder the example he has given us, and to take up with passion the important cause of serving people who are devalued.

And a final word from the Gospel that Wolf often had occasion to read and that applies so well to Wolf on this day:

“Well done thou good and faithful servant ... Now enter into thy Master’s joy” (Matthew 25:23). And pray for us all.

Thank you.

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Mitchel Peters (Australia)

What we do for ourselves dies with us ... what we do for others remains and is immortal.
- Albert Pike, 19th-century American soldier, lawyer and author

ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA, 1992: that was the place and the time when I first met Wolf Wolfensberger. Dr. Wolfensberger and his co-presenters, Susan Thomas and A.J. Hildebrand (a Citizen Advocacy co-ordinator) were presenting a series of events, two of which I was fortunate to attend. The two events were a five-day Social Advocacies workshop and a two-day Citizen

Advocacy workshop. These events represented an exclamation mark in the trajectory of my understanding of advocacy, and especially Citizen Advocacy.

Seeing Dr. Wolfensberger in action, so to speak, left an indelible impression on me. He was idiosyncratic, impassioned, inspiring—and much, much more. The depth, breadth and clarity of his knowledge and analysis was astonishing. Yet, despite his gifts, he seemed humble, not hubristic. Most obvious of all was his patent and palpable commitment to marginalised and vulnerable people in our society.

I met Dr. Wolfensberger for the second and last time in Brisbane, Australia in 1997, at a marathon seven-day Social Advocacies event. It was great to see him again—his charisma and conviction undiminished. Subsequently, I maintained sporadic contact with Dr. Wolfensberger, corresponding with him typically about matters pertaining to Citizen Advocacy and/or Social Role Valorization. He never failed to reply to my queries and advice-seeking, and his responses were characteristically insightful and incisive, often accompanied by a word of encouragement. Around 2002, I was privileged to co-author with him a lengthy article in which we updated some aspects of the operation of the Citizen Advocacy office, which was published in the journal *Citizen Advocacy Forum*. Although my contribution was modest, Dr. Wolfensberger was very generous in his appraisal, communicating that he was pleased with the collaboration and its end product.

The Chinese Communist leader, Chou Enlai, was once reportedly asked what the impact of the French Revolution was on world affairs. Mindful that the event had occurred more than 150 years earlier, he replied famously (and some would say, sagaciously): “It’s too soon to tell.” The too-soon assessment cannot be made about the “revolution” that Dr. Wolfensberger fomented: a revolution of the hearts, minds and actions of so many that has discernible present-day impacts, and which is likely to have long-lasting implications. There

may not be anything comparable to strident revolutionaries storming the Bastille, but many of the citadels of imperialistic entities will continue to feel the reverberations that are the result of his teachings and actions.

I cannot claim to have known Dr. Wolfensberger well. However, I can justly claim that my association with him has enriched and enlightened me. For that and more, I will always be profoundly indebted to him.

Gratias tibi ago, Dr Wolfensberger.

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Nancy McNamara
Past President, BDACI (Canada)

I, FOR ONE, WILL NOT SOON FORGET Wolf’s wide, warm smile, especially apparent when he was engaged informally with parents one-on-one or in small groups. He never forgot a face or a name and his own face would light up when he saw a familiar friend, colleague or parent—a memory those of us who were lucky enough to know him will forever cherish.

There is no doubt of Wolf’s monumental contributions to and influence of the Community Living movement throughout Canada, and in Ontario, especially with the closure of our three largest institutions for people with disabilities. Figuratively and quite literally, he pulled open the doors and revealed the inhumanity done to the vulnerable of this world. For this, he was regarded as an icon, a champion and a giant among forward-thinking minds in the disability field. Further, with his conviction that giving the vulnerable valued social roles would give them access to the “good things in life,” he improved the lives of many formerly institutionalized people.

Wolf’s impact was felt no more deeply than by us at Brockville & District Association for Community Involvement (BDACI), where he was also regarded as an inspiration and a friend. In fact, his work in Normalization, Social Role Valorization and Citizen Advocacy was fundamental in

the development of our Association and is embodied in our mission statement and our goals, guiding both our everyday human service practices and our advocacy work. It is no secret that he and BDACI had a special relationship, fostered through the Thousand Islands ComServ Project. There is a strong emphasis on training and education in SRV and PASSING, and related workshops and presentations. Financial support is provided to parents, core staff and support workers to attend these throughout Ontario and elsewhere. They are looked forward to with great anticipation and enthusiasm, especially when Wolf himself was participating. Parents will always treasure the special memory of his attendance at BDACI's Annual General Meeting in 2009 as our special guest speaker, and where I was honoured to present him with our President's Award.

Rest assured, Wolf's ground-breaking and visionary work will continue to be studied, preached and practiced throughout the world by his followers, human service workers and families. As a parent, I will always think of him with fondness and admiration, as a kind, gentle and compassionate scholarly man who inspired many of us and gave us hope for better futures for our children with intellectual disabilities.

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Ruth Abrahams (UK)

I FIRST HEARD ABOUT Wolf Wolfensberger when I became interested in the advocacy movement in the late 80's. My friend Maggie Adams and I were trying to start a Citizen Advocacy group in Newcastle, having realised that not every service user could advocate for themselves. The workshop in Lytham St. Annes was advertised and the organisation that I was involved with at the time (Skills for People) agreed to pay for me to go to the conference.

It was a privilege to hear Wolf Wolfensberger speak at Lytham St. Annes in the late 80's. My

immediate reaction, as a disabled person, was that he had an extraordinary insight into how people like me were treated. I remember him chastising his audience for not listening to him, and I also remember beginning the workshop at the back of the audience and, by the end, sitting at the front listening most intently. That was the beginning of a long relationship which became friendship. I remember going to Australia and taking part in his workshops there, and, not long afterwards, the small study group that had formed after a 'Sanctity of Life' workshop in Manchester (which he described as the most attentive audience he had presented to) managed to persuade him to bring this workshop here again and to let us do some of the presenting.

So it began: the trips to the UK and the opportunity to meet not only Wolf, but Nancy as well. Although we worked hard, we also had a lot of fun. I expect Nancy will remember our day at Durham Cathedral and having Sunday lunch at the Gosforth Park, and Wolf wanting a taste of everything. It was such a pleasure when Wolf and Nancy came to my parents' house and had a meal with us. I can remember my mother trying to get Wolf to eat poached herring. He gave it a go—even though fish was not his favourite. Somewhere along the line he gave me the nickname 'the Queen'—I always hoped that it was a joke. There was the race every year at Christmas to see which of us telephoned first with seasonal greetings.

I believe that the legacy of his work, his writing and his training courses will probably now be truly understood, as from my point of view he was a great teacher with enormous insight and a fantastic way of looking at a problem from a worldview perspective, suggesting methods of counteracting some very negative methodologies and ideologies. I will miss him greatly; it was always good to know that I could pick up the phone and talk to him about any issue.

RUTH ABRAHAMS is a disability activist in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England & was one of the people involved in bringing Professor Wolfensberger to the UK in the 1990s.

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Jacques Pelletier (Canada)

How Wolf Wolfensberger's Ideas Were Stronger Than Words in French Canada & Québec

IN 1988, THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF QUÉBEC unanimously adopted a motion presented by the Minister of Health and Social Services, the Honorable Thérèse Lavoie-Roux (1928-2009), proclaiming that “the integration of persons with mental retardation was a human and social imperative” in Québec. A publication entitled *L'intégration des personnes qui présentent une déficience intellectuelle: Un impératif humain et social* (Gouvernement du Québec, MSSS, 1988) had just been published, in which the general principles of deinstitutionalization and social integration were determined. This was followed a year later in 1989 by a document specifying how deinstitutionalization and social integration were to be implemented. Wolf Wolfensberger's *The Principle of Normalization* as well as *PASS 3* were cited and referenced.

What followed this historic event, the closure of all public asylum based institutions within 12 years and the development of community-based services, was inspired in very large part by Wolf Wolfensberger. This was amazing in itself because there was a great divide between the French Canadian/Québécois cultures and Wolf's culture, especially his German roots. The saving grace was that he was an American, not an English Canadian, and that he was referred to in Québec as a Professor at Syracuse University (the “cuse” pronounced as in Zola's “J'accuse!”).

Still another amazing fact regarding WW's incredible influence in Québec and French Canada is that the first Wolfensberger text that was translated and published in French was *PASSING*, published in 1988 (it came out after the National Assembly motion) by my company Les Commu-

nications OPELL. It was only in 1997 that the (first) SRV monograph was translated and published in French by Éditions des Deux Continents in Geneva Switzerland with which I am associated.

This means that the incredible influence Wolf Wolfensberger exerted in Québec and in French Canada was essentially through word of mouth, story telling, vignettes, political speeches, sermons (...) and even songs, with the help of no more than 20 dedicated (but strategically placed) social change agents that participated in PASS sessions in English, not always understanding the finer points of Anglo Saxon and Wolfensberger vocabulary, a handicap that was probably not that bad in retrospect. I was one of them and we had early on our own way of translating Normalization by “Valorisation Sociale.” “Normalisation” was not the correct word in French for what Normalization stood for. Wolf did mention something to that effect when explaining the change from Normalization to SRV.

He was, by far, the most influential person in the evolution of services for disabled persons in Québec and French Canada, and yet he never spoke to us in French. Most of us had yet to read him in our language by the time the human and social imperative movement he inspired was well on its way to revolutionize our service systems and dramatically improve the lives of thousands.

That's how incredible his influence was.

Merci Wolf.

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David Race (UK)

Wolf Wolfensberger & His Impact in the UK – A Personal View

IN AUGUST 2001, as I sat at Wolf Wolfensberger's kitchen table, another visiting academic made welcome by the ever hospitable Nancy, my wife called to tell me that my youngest son, who has Down's syndrome, had just obtained

six passes in the national examinations taken by all sixteen year old students in England. To his great delight, this was six more than his hero David Beckham.

That incident encapsulates in miniature Wolf Wolfensberger's effect in the UK. Whilst his writings had influenced academic thinking and government policies from before my own beginnings in the field in 1973, probably a much greater legacy is the inspiration that Wolfensberger has given to thousands of ordinary people, often via the leaders that were influenced by him, to act on the notion that people like my son should not be in institutions, but should have the opportunity to live full and ordinary lives.

The period before the early 1980s, when the organisation CMHERA first brought people over from the USA, had seen some normalization ideas in key government policy documents such as 'Better Services for the Mentally Handicapped' (DHSS, 1971). Government and academic papers do not always mean action, however, and the effort in the 1980s, more from the 'bottom up,' of the normalization and SRV teaching via PASS(ING) workshops, seems to have coincided with more change than the pronouncements of the 1970s. The 1980s saw instances of real development in learning disability services, but also coincided with the Thatcher government's creation of a 'welfare market' for all vulnerable groups. This mix led to some achievements, but also a sense of chaos and fragmentation in ideas and services.

Wolfenberger's own visits to the UK at this time focussed on his broader concerns. Disagreement with some of these ideas, or sometimes just with his teaching methods, led to a gradual tarring of SRV with the same negative brush. As the 1990s proceeded, therefore (though John O'Brien's work was still influential via his 'Framework for Accomplishment'), SRV teaching declined. So too did the resources within the increasingly fragmented service providers to fund values-based training.

The roots of change set in the 1970s and 1980s, however, went deep, and are what I believe were

a powerful force behind the New Labour government policy document, *Valuing People* (DOH, 2001). Certainly John O'Brien was heavily involved in the government guidelines on person-centred approaches that appeared a year later.

Wolfensberger himself had made his last speaking visit to the UK in 2000, with a series of one-day events in Newcastle, and again his UK reputation, rather than his ideas, preceded him, causing trouble for the organiser of the events. Since then, the main force of Wolfensberger's ideas in the new millennium seem to me to have been felt at the individual level, with which I began this piece. The so-called 'personalisation agenda,' again with powerful inputs from John O'Brien, has its roots in the notion of humanity with which I describe my son.

Ironically, in view of the disappearance of such workshops for the greater part of the 2000s, this is written during a PASSING workshop in March 2011. A new generation is being introduced to SRV, but we are finding that while services for people with learning disabilities, the main group impacted by Wolfensberger's ideas in the UK, have improved in their PASSING ratings, other services, especially for older people, remain at the institutional level. Given the universality of devaluation this should not surprise us, but the fact that there are a number of grounds for hope, especially for people like my son, rests to a not insignificant degree with the legacy of Wolf Wolfensberger.

DAVID RACE, PHD, is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the University of Salford, in Manchester, England, & Chair of Values Education & Research Association (VERA), a small network in the UK which undertakes SRV & related training & consultancy.

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Bill Forman (Canada)

LIKE SO MANY PROFESSIONALS in my field, I was influenced by the work of Wolf Wolfensberger long before I actually met him. It seemed that everywhere I turned, I ran into his writing and work. Sadly, some colleagues deemed both him and his work as passé. His writings sat ignored on the shelf as they adopted fad after passing fad. Others would claim originality of thought and method, when it was clear that both originated with Wolf.

I first encountered Wolf's ideas while teaching at a segregated school for children and adults with developmental delays. A PASSING evaluation was performed on the school, and a PASSING manual made available to us to prepare. I remember devouring it and relishing the crisp, clear analysis in it. I went on to read Wolf's 1972 *Normalization* text and found it equally compelling.

I did not actually take the PASSING course and the prerequisite SRV until a few years after. By that time, I was working in adult services, and had grown very troubled by my work, to the point of a kind of soul sickness. In spite of good intentions and sincere efforts, the lives of the people I served were tragically unfulfilled, and characterized by sadness, neglect, rejection and abuse. I vividly remember the moment, during the second site conciliation, when it 'all came together' for me. The gnawing feeling in the pit of my stomach was dissolved, replaced by a clarity of understanding I had sought, albeit fitfully, for years.

It was, however, a bittersweet liberation. While I had gained some modest apprehension of the dynamics of devaluation, it was accompanied by an appreciation of my own complicity, personally and professionally, in those destructive processes. Nonetheless, I was grateful for having the veil lifted from my eyes. It has grown back many times in the following years and still afflicts me, but the disciplines I have learned from Wolf, and his

many writings and teachings since, have always helped me to see more clearly.

Ever since that first workshop, I have continued to study and implement SRV in my work. I went on to teach SRV, and had the rare privilege to study and work directly with Wolf and other of his protégés. The study extended beyond SRV to matters of personal and social morality and the 'nature of human nature.' As with my first liberating experience with his work, each step afterward has deepened my understanding and helped me in practical and personal ways for which I am grateful beyond words.

Wolf was such an elegant writer, speaker, teacher and mentor. How I looked forward to the arrival of his TIPS newsletter in my mail, the appearance of his latest article, and especially the next opportunity to learn from him in person at the study groups I was so very privileged to be a part of. Not long before he passed away, I wrote to him to thank him for all of this, and to tell him how transformed I have been by his teaching. Hardly a week goes by that I do not call on something he said or wrote to help me approach an issue or challenge.

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Lorna Hallahan
Flinders University (Australia)

**For Fresh Peaches: Reflecting on the
 Good Life & Wolf Wolfensberger**

HOW COULD I EVER HAVE IMAGINED that I might have anything interesting or engaging to say on the subject of 'The Good Life'? Apart from the fact that the ancient Greeks were obsessed with this question (at least when they weren't busy snuffing any hope of it for their enemies), David Malouf has just made a pretty good fist of it in a recent *Quarterly Essay*. As I calmed myself however about this request, I realised that although it has all been said before, I haven't said it in quite this way. Perhaps it is important for all of us to

have a go at saying our own thing about the good life—to think through and explore the questions that rise in its shadow, for our own purposes, here and now. When we resort to familiar ideas we are not being inadequate. Aristotle himself would enjoin us to seek out the wisdom of past generations. It is the failure to try and wrestle our understandings of a good life which reeks of committed ignorance. So I will confidently draw on those who have asked this one before as I wend my way to some holding-for-now conclusions.

In this I start at ‘Haiku,’ a brief poem by Kevin Hart, and by which I live so much of my work:

*Each day we totter on planks
we hope will become bridges.*

I like this because it locates our work in every day; it uses the word we and not I; it refers to tottering which seems just right for a one-legged woman; it acknowledges that in striving to build connections each of us brings planks (no one arrives empty handed) and that all our work is governed by a hope of that connection. (That took me close to 60 words to Hart’s 11!)

I have arrived with a few planks I will explore with you now.

My few words:

*Where desire holds hands with decency,
there shall we find a good life.*

Desire is a laden word so often caught up with our sexuality or power or for some, oddly, motor vehicles. Here I am using it in a more general and less consuming, dominating or avaricious form. It is about: knowing what floats your boat, about having access to and use of sufficient external goods to make life easy and pleasurable, filled with friends, lovers, children and our parents, high quality food and drink, meaningful employment, times of relaxation and times of challenge ... free from oppression, from excessive struggle,

from hardship, from loneliness, the derision of our neighbours and the exploitation of employers. This perhaps equates most to the idea of the happy life, La Dolce Vita, the sweet life, the comfortable life.

I use the word desire because, if we are honest, we experience a sense that not all our needs and wants are met. We are set back by loss, or the failure of our plans, or cruel fate ... Many of us, living here in peaceful communities and consuming far too many calories, really live with a blend of contentment and craving. This existential state feels like desire.

I gave up wanting to be a nun at about 14 years, 2 months, 1 week and a couple of days, when a boy on a bicycle made my heart race and continued to everyday for a year before I spoke to him and discovered he was a thoughtless sort of fellow. Even with this early disappointment I never really took to the lessons of denial and detachment. So I am not going to lecture you about the horrors of materialism and loving unwisely. I love material things, the manifest world, I love comfort and I love it when my passions are reciprocated.

And that’s chiefly why I want a measure of realised desire for each of my fellow human beings. A realised desire that is also accompanied by an unfulfilled dream or five ... contentment and craving ... Of course, then, I think desire leads to morality.

I am persuaded by Aristotle on this one. Not the bit about having to be in the right social caste, a male, aged between 30 and 40 and without illness or impairment, neither a slave, nor a woman and so on. I think that leaving social goods exclusively to single elites undermines the other necessary element of my little model—things must be fair as well. Greed crushes the good. Generosity expands it.

Susan Haslip, summing up Aristotle’s work in *Quodlibet*, says: “The candidate for the good life, besides having the opportunity to act on the virtues, must have known what he was doing; chosen to act the way he did and chose it for its own

sake; and the act must come from a firm and unchangeable character.”

(As an aside: The firm and unchangeable character probably does not hold much academic appeal in these fluid post modern times, but I am bold enough to suggest that for most people our values hold fast for long periods in our lives. I know I do not yield cherished ideals to community education campaigns. I might realign my policy conclusions but I always do it within a framework of values I have sought to develop since childhood. Depending on where you sit that makes me either rigid or resilient!)

Aristotle’s term for this, *eudemonia*, has been explored by countless philosophers and theologians since that time. For now, let’s go with Martha Nussbaum’s definition. *Eudaimonia* is ‘activity according to excellence, living well and doing well.’ It is the doing well that we are looking at now, but I want to remind you that we cannot approach the question of doing well if we have no vision of living well. We need to know what we seek for others and for ourselves. That is desire.

Once again we are over endowed with resources on how to approach the question of doing well, or indeed doing things in a good and proper manner. This can unsettle those of us concerned with the fates of our fellow citizens rendered vulnerable to social disparagement by the frailties of their fellows unable to accept human fragility. The consensus seems to be that these people need desire little of the good life; they are after all the victims of cruel fate. A view that: ‘nobody can live well, like that.’

Next week marks the 35th anniversary of the amputation of my leg. Not long after this I was with my mother who had gone into the hairdresser’s salon to see if my wig was ready to be fitted. (No, they didn’t shave my head when they amputated my leg, I was having chemotherapy.) I was waiting on a bus seat outside. Mother still recalls the feeling of hopeless rage she felt when she returned to find me in conversation with a woman who was declaring: ‘you know if I was you

I would kill myself. This is no way for a young girl to live.’ I was very shaken.

Only two months ago a fervent young waiter who had just discovered an evangelical version of Christianity informed me that ‘God doesn’t want me to live like that.’ Fortunately I have toughened up over those years. I recognise that the countless people who have said to me that they can’t stand the thought of having to live like that, that they know, perhaps unconsciously, of the history and current reality of social rejection of the disabled. I have deliberately, as a form of moral development practice, taught myself to step over the shame that shears my soul at these moments and to try to open their eyes to a bigger view of life like this. To keep them there for a few seconds longer and to demand their attention.

This of course was Wolf’s starting point, well-meaning people are troubled by fragility and are prepared to go to extraordinary lengths to remove it from their presence and consciousness. When you think about what the state has thrown at us over the last 170 years, you can see that enormous effort and resources have gone into keeping us in our place, which of course is a long way from the place of intact others. Astonishing really.

When we say that we seek a good life—desire fulfilled and refuelled—for the socially disparaged, we start to do the improper—we are not doing what is good and proper but what we believe is good, and is consequently improper. And I think that Wolf did this with such tenacity and rigour. He was sooo thorough!

I came to his work through advocacy, not through services, normalisation and SRV. Perhaps one of the most divisive arguments played out in the Australian disability advocacy sector over the past 25 years related to his view that advocacy must come at cost. To me and my comrades, it made sense that advocacy can be costly. That is a description of what we had already learned. But that it must come at cost was challenging. It added a moral expectation into our work and it unsettled many people in our scene when we

started talking about it. It sat right up there with his suggestion that we should explore anticipatory suffering. We should know what is likely to be ahead if we are to commit to a path to change the conditions of life for one person or many. I think that he was right, for in a deep and lasting sense, all of us need to know the pain of the humiliation offered by a smug society and we cannot know it unless we stand beside and perhaps hold the one who does. All of us need to know the pain of rejection, of our desires and of our person, and we cannot know that until our advocacy meets powerful barriers and the strong social forces of rejection. And we must have some idea about how we will react.

We also know that where we have reached the good life—living well with desires fulfilled and expanded—we will have to yield some things in order to bring the socially disparaged back into our lives. This is part of cost. It's comfortable with the socially undesirable hygienically kept away from us.

And those of us who have touched into the worlds of social disparagement and humiliation, no matter how little, will need to risk some trust in a world that can seem so hostile. This is the cost for us.

Our services and our communities continue to humiliate those who must rely upon them, so advocates will always need to accept the cost of naming that truth.

This is the element of decency, developed beautifully in the work of Israeli philosopher, Avashai Margalit, in *The Decent Society*. He captures in depth the costs of humiliation, for persons and for societies. He argues that affording people their dignity is more important than attending to justice. I think that Wolf would have agreed.

Much as I welcome (even joyfully welcome) the turn to rights in our policy discussions, I know, from my own direct experience, from my professional experience as a social worker for 30 years and from my work as a scholar, that the shame that arises from an indecent society prepared to

tolerate a dominant myth that some people are unworthy to live among us, is the deepest affliction and the most profound barrier to living a good life.

The mystic philosopher/activist Simone Weil, who wrote so eloquently about affliction as physical pain, social rejection and a soul lacerated by shame, tells us two things about dealing with it. I am sure we would brainstorm many more. But these are hers. First, she tells us that: Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity. Attending to another is a gift of the self and that is always costly even when it brings great rewards. It is this form of attention when I try to engage those who would fill in the confronting gap or declare my situation intolerable.

Second, Weil says that we must speak only words of beauty to the afflicted. Here I think of hope, justice, peace, dignity, self, trust and love. Where do we hear these words in human services? Not really the lexicon of assessment and planning tools and yet so easily distorted into 'service is love; complaints mechanisms are justice, and pleading for your carers to kill you is dignity.' I could go on.

These are two pathways into decency. (There are many more, two will do for now.)

I said at the beginning that desire and decency must hold hands to bring about a good life. This holding hands I see in the way that Marcel Merleau-Ponty describes it: 'each hand is both touching, active, sensing the other hand and also being touched, passive, being sensed by the other hand.' An existential reminder that desire and decency are enmeshed in every dimension, transferring power and support to each other. They are not feet taking alternating steps at a time (an old metaphor for the binary), but they are in intimate, cooperative bond. Sometimes in deep knowledge of each other, at other times, toiling away in their own sphere.

Yet, when our hands spend too much time stirring their own pots, desire and decency lose the moderating effect on each other. Excessive moral rigour is judgmental and joyless. Excessive pleasure and contentment seeking causes us to be-

come bloated and insensitive. The recognition of the necessity to dream of and in part attain living well provides the impetus to our moral imagination that will not let us live in comfort when those removed from us live with shame, despair, oppression and poverty. Our living well both inspires and condemns us. Our doing well both deprives us and enriches us.

Where desire holds hands with decency, there shall we find a good life.

When the writer Alice Walker was reflecting on the nuclear threat during the 1980s, she was tempted to say, 'we black people have been forced to live in the darkest corners of the globe, if our oppressors were to blast the whole thing away it would be a sort of justice.' She concludes, however, that our goal is to share the earth as unashamed friends and that: 'Life is better than death, I believe, if only because it is less boring, and because it has fresh peaches in it.'

Benediction

SO, AS WE BID HIM FAREWELL and take up the vision and the moral rigour of our late comrade Wolf; as we all work to share this earth as unashamed friends; let's ensure that we take the time to grow and enjoy the fresh peaches and that we never back away from giving a slice to our most unattended-to neighbour.

Or as Hannah Arendt says: 'Dedicate yourself to the good you deserve and desire for yourself. Give yourself peace of mind. You deserve to be happy. You deserve delight.'

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Michael Steer

Wolfensberger: Tales from the Twilight Zone

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Thanks to the generosity of Ray Lemay, we are reprinting the following article, first published in SRV/VRS: The International Social Role Valorization Journal/La Revue Internationale de la Valorisation des Rôles Sociaux*, 2(2), 12–14.

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NOTE: *Wolf Wolfensberger had occasion to review this text before we decided to publish. His only comment was cryptic: "Si non e vero, e ben trovato!" (loosely: If its not true, it is nonetheless well invented.)*

THERE CAN HAVE BEEN few more stimulating places in the world to have studied than Syracuse University during the early-mid-1970s. At that time, some of our field's immortal names daily haunted the stacks of the university's magnificent Bird Library: Burton Blatt, Dean of the School of Education, author of *Christmas in Purgatory* and *Exodus from Pandemonium*; Thomas Szasz, the 'Rambo' of the (then) infant anti-psychiatry movement; Sol Gordon, the sensational sexologist; David Krathwohl, co-author of *Bloom's Taxonomy*; Dan Sage of 'Sage and Burello'; Biklen, Bogdan and

Taylor at the internationally renowned Center on Human Policy, and of course the highly controversial Wolf Wolfensberger.

As a faceless and overly obsequious Canadian graduate student, I first ‘experienced’ (as the scent sales ladies say) Wolf at a tutorial organised by the Faculty to expose unstructured and unwashed post-adolescent thought processes to new ideas and famous (sometimes infamous) ‘names.’

Syracuse was good at arranging lots of such (semi-idolatrous) occasions for its grad students. In my view it was a particular strength of an otherwise very strong, highly student-focussed program.

The Young Wolf

AT FIRST ENCOUNTER, Wolf was much younger than I had expected him to be. In appearance he reminded me of the TV pictures I had seen of Oppenheimer, the nuclear scientist. His rather ascetic, haunted face, esoteric vocabulary, somewhat guttural accent and indeed his entire manner were all entirely appropriate to the tutorial and to a prestigious academic with his name and reputation. There were perhaps eight students and Professor Dan Sage (my program advisor) at the event, sitting in crescent formation, with an intense Wolf facing them, armed only with a notepad, pencil, enormous energy and a truly formidable mind. Wolf led off and battle ensued.

As an Anglo-Saxon, schooled during the Second World War to dread our Continental relatives, I recall having felt overwhelmed with Wolf’s ‘German-ness.’ Most of the sparring between those in the group who had previously managed or been employed in institutional settings and Wolf, who in an absolute and unambiguous fashion stripped all dignity from their past careers, went completely over my head. After all I had been Principal of a residential school for blind children for the preceding five years and he obviously hadn’t meant his incredibly pointed comments to refer to me!

The jousting continued for over an hour and on the way back from Huntington Hall, stumbling

across ‘the Beach’ (a small piece of lawn, littered on sunny days with the bodies of undergraduate basking shark) to the security of the Special Education Division, I recall thinking appreciatively ‘Wow.’ As many American graduate students will affirm, a ‘Wow’ scores well on most Likert-type scales of appreciation.

Oh Granny, What Big Teeth You Have

THEN THE PASS WORKSHOPS started and so did the rumours. In those days PASS was only in its second edition. Faculty and students in the Special Education Division heard on the whisper grapevine that the PASS 2 conciliation sessions were so protracted and Wolf’s expectations so demanding that some participants had become physically sick from exertion at various high or low points in the interminable events. Some it was said had enjoyed seizures induced by paroxysms of rage and there might even have been a few student deaths from unknown but dreadful causes.

The news was intoxicating to Dan my program advisor, whose images of a successful professional preparation program corresponded with certain humiliation scenes from ‘An Officer and a Gentleman.’ Into everyone’s life a little rain must inevitably fall and despite my heart-rending entreaties, I was duly registered in two of Wolf’s sequential units, from which few (if any), it was said, had ever emerged with a grade, let alone a passing grade. And grades were of course, for potential human service administrators, one of the few tangible reasons for submitting to the anguish of graduate school in those days, perhaps still.

The classes were wonderful. Wolf of course was a brilliant lecturer and the extent of his preparation was a lesson in the seriousness I had long been searching for in most things to do with the human services. Expectation was extraordinarily high and the peer competition sometimes daunting, but always appropriately fierce. There was a paper to be completed each week and a formidable reading list with spot quizzes which the un-

prepared might fail and have the failure count as part of the final all-important grade.

The papers were returned each week covered with red-penned, highly detailed comments, sometimes more red ink than original submission. The experience was at once enormously instructive and absolutely horrifying. Sometimes, the final comment would be a definitive RE-SUBMIT which meant next week, two papers should be submitted and if, perish the thought, with the same result, compound interest so that the final week's submission might, in theory at least, result in each class member submitting a dozen or so reworked papers. But this was only part of the tribulation.

For the first time in my life, I had to sit still for lengthy periods of time, listen hard and think quickly. Above all, I knew that I had to be prepared, stay very organised, read aggressively for retention and with alacrity. The course load was a particularly heavy one, since like most of my peers, I was also enrolled in four other classes during the semester, including one in advanced statistics and techniques of research; both 'guillotine' courses with (all importantly) high failure rates.

The best classes were the Sunday marathons which Wolf gave as make-ups for some of the regularly scheduled classes he missed because of his gigantic public speaking commitment. We would meet on campus at 8.00 or 9.00 am and go hard all day and into the early evening, with Wolf's wife Nancy bringing in vast quantities of pizza for lunch.

Wolf would take about an hour to warm up and then go into high gear for the remainder of the day. At one of the sessions I recall Wolf having concluded a teaching module that had been brimming with arcane content and had asked for questions about the concepts on the overhead transparency, which like the eye of the Cyclops had been a dominating feature of the presentation. A hirsute young person sitting in front of me asked if Wolf would explain the final issue of an unbelievably dense and lengthy list. Wolf's quick response was

'Mr. Blackman, your understanding of this issue would depend upon your complete conceptualization of the desiderata—I will move on.' I recall again thinking 'Wow'—and moving on.

Invincibility

ON ANOTHER OCCASION, Wolf dwelt at length on the notion of 'Invincibility.' The focus of the lecture was on institutions, their longevity and the notion that in our battle to do away with them, we might never, ever win. The institution preservation movement, with its stranglehold at that time on AAMD, seemed invincible. Some things, like the poor and institutions, would (we all believed) always be with us.

To illustrate his point, Wolf told the story of how as a boy he had stood beside the bridge in his native village in Germany watching, as part of a crowd, the returning German Army flushed with the success of its invasion of France. They poured across the village bridge hour after hour, day after day in their trucks or tanks and wearing their helmets, flying their Nazi eagle standards, singing their victory songs to the hysterical cheers of the crowds. 'And as the hours and days passed,' said Wolf, 'the thought suddenly became clear to me—It's true—It's true. OUR SIDE IS INVINCIBLE! I felt like standing at attention,' said Wolf, 'And shouting with the crowd SEIG HEIL!' And to illustrate his point he did just that, as the classroom door opened and the Dean escorted a small group of wide-eyed visitors into the room. Wolf chose to ignore them, but it was indeed a moment to savour. The point of the story was, of course, that some three years after the incident, the supposedly invincible Third Reich was in ruins. Quite suddenly, the worm has turned and the conqueror was no longer invincible.

On another occasion, Wolf informed us that the class would be unable to meet during the following week because he had an engagement out of state, so that we needed to arrange a mutually convenient date and time to hold a make-up session. After five or six minutes of searching our

diaries for a suitable space, we concluded that our individual schedules clashed and that there was not possibility of consensus. Wolf's response was that in that event we should meet at 4 o'clock on Monday next—to which someone responded 'But Wolf, I can't come then, I have another class at 4 o'clock on Monday.' 'You have a class at 4.00 am next Monday,' said Wolf. 'I am increasingly impressed with this University. It seems to be taking the task of educating you very seriously. I am trrrruly impressed. If this is indeed the case I will excuse you from attending my class!'

The Wolf Awakens

IN MY FINAL YEAR at Syracuse, I was part of a small faculty team chaired by Dr. Jim Winschel whose job was to prepare the Special Education Division's annual budget submission to the State. It was an exacting task which had to be completed outside of regular class time, generally on weekends and holidays. As the budget submission deadline approached, I was left with having to quickly package the Training Institute's budget for presentation, but had little data. It was a late Sunday evening and a spectacular up-state New York thunder and lightning storm was raging. I phoned Wolf's home. Nancy answered and said that Wolf had only just returned from the airport and was in fact upstairs in the 'Wolf Den' resting, but since the matter was an urgent one I should drive over and she would interrupt his tormented dreams.

When I arrived at the house, the storm was at its height, rain sheeted down and the sky boomed with thunder and periodically crackled with lightning. Nancy answered the door and escorted me up the stairs to the fabled Wolf Den. I entered. It was a long, corridor-like room papered with tiger-striped wallpaper. There was a desk, chair and bookcase, and a picture of Whistler's sombre mother on one wall. The room was lit with a neo-Gothic lancet window I recall; and I imagined entire shelves of mysterious leather-bound and chained arcana further back in the shadows. At

the far end of the room lying on a camp bed was the fabled Wolf covered from toe to chin with a white sheet. As I slowly approached him, the lightning crackled across the sky and through the Gothic Window everything was thrown into bright relief. Wolf turned his eyes slowly towards me, bared his teeth in a smile and I once again thought 'Wow.'

The Debt to Wolf

AS AN AVID READER of Richard Scheerenberger's two lengthy catalogues of the heroes of our field, I sometime ago concluded that it would be difficult to find another name in the entire history of service provision to people with intellectual or developmental disabilities in this, or in any other era, who had made a greater contribution to public policy world-wide, than has Wolf Wolfensberger.

It is difficult to convey to the post PASS-PASSING reader the extraordinary impact of concepts, for example, "age-appropriateness" and the two juxtapositions (deviancy image and deviancy program) or indeed the developmental model which have these days become ordinary, widely accepted (if sometimes misapplied) professional terms.

Wolf's impact on the field in the early-mid 70s was absolutely phenomenal and today, so many of the seeds that were sown in those years (sometimes at great personal cost) have borne fruit.

I wish I could adequately describe the intensity of the personal thrill I experienced at an early training event when the "model coherency" concept became suddenly clear to me. It was akin to "pure" excitement. I wish I could adequately convey the feelings I experienced at a very early PASSING event here in Australia some years later, when the difference between "normalisation" and "Social Role Valorisation" suddenly became transparent to me.

I wish I could convey the sense of power that derives from visiting a traditional program for people with disabilities and in a very short time, being able, with reasonable accuracy, to synthesise data from direct observation into a coherent

format, so that helpful suggestions can be made to decision-makers on how the current situation might be improved. These feelings are all a small part of the personal debt I owe Wolf.

Wolf's influence can be seen in a variety of human-service programs world-wide—from Aden

to Zanzibar (as we used to say when the British Empire was in its declining years) and these “tales from the Twilight Zone” might best be appreciated as a small tribute to the human face of one of the few really great teachers, scholars and thinkers of our time.

LEARNING TO TEACH SOCIAL ROLE VALORIZATION (SRV)

SOCIAL ROLE VALORIZATION, when well applied, has potential to help societally devalued people to gain greater access to the good things of life and to be spared at least some of the negative effects of social devaluation. This is one of the reasons why it is important for people to learn to teach SRV, so that its ideas and strategies are known and available to the right people in the right places who can apply it well. Unless people continue to learn to be SRV trainers, the teaching and dissemination of SRV will cease. Many SRV trainers for example could teach lots of people how to **implement** SRV, but not how to **teach** it to others. At a certain point there might be implementation of aspects of SRV, but the knowledge of SRV itself might not be passed on to others, such as the next generation of human service workers. Teaching about SRV, and learning to teach SRV, can be done in many ways, depending in part on one's abilities, interests, resources and so on.

The North American SRV Development, Training & Safeguarding Council has developed a specific model for teaching people to competently do two things: (a) teach Social Role Valorization; and (b) teach other people to teach SRV. The Council named this a “Trainer Formation Model.” A description of the Trainer Formation Model is available if you are interested (http://www.srvip.org/about_mission.php); also see the article referenced below.

To find out more about studying SRV and learning to teach it, please contact Jo Massarelli at *The SRV Implementation Project*, 74 Elm Street, Worcester, MA 01609 USA; 508.752.3670; jo@srvip.org. She will be able to help you or to put you in touch with someone more local to your geographic area who can be of help.

RESOURCE

SRV Development, Training & Safeguarding Council (2006). A Brief Overview of the North American SRV Council's Trainer Formation Model (November 2005). *The SRV Journal* 1(1), 58-62.