

## KARL JASPERS APPLIED by Glenn C. Wood (10-29-2005)

Herbert F. Muller, as Editor of the Karl Jaspers Forum (KJF), McGill University associate, can be indirectly credited for my Karl Jaspers Applied. Neither he nor McGill University are in any way aegis of my website. My website pivotally applies Jaspers whereas the KJF rarely did except for my inadequate efforts.

I tried to apply Jaspers' works to Ernst von Glasersfeld's radical constructivism, H. Muller's zero-derivation (formula "0-D") and what he calls mind-independent reality ("MIR"), consciousness, mind, and brain studies. Gonzalo Munevar's ideas on evolutionary relativism, and Helmut Walther's views on the evolution of Christianity are salient incidentals not unlike quantum evolution play, but applying Jaspers has been hindered by inundations difficult for one person. That necessitated selecting what was most prominent. Posted threats of disciplinary sanctions against me alleging violations of interdisciplinary netiquette have propagated an unfavorable image perhaps reflecting on Jaspers.

This sort of tactic is not unlike how Jaspers is described by Wikipedia as having been influenced by the Thomist Meister Eckart, and vicar general in Rome, Nicolas of Cusa--while ignoring Jaspers clear testimony about Max Weber. It seems there are forces attempting to minimize Jaspers' paradigmatic standing, e.g., by suggesting he is a by-product of Martin Heidegger. Talk about such forces isn't groundless, e.g., anonymous or pseudonymous unfavorable critics of Suzanne Kirkbright's biography on Jaspers, and S. Nassir Ghaemi's review. Her book has been criticized for what was not done relative to Heidegger, and for not showing disapproval for the personage of Jaspers, and for not recognizing what the critic affirms as Jaspers weaknesses--thereby implying the late Jaspers is out dated. Jaspers displays these forces, and points to F.A. Hayek's work as elucidating some of these forces. (See also Sigrid Koepke page).

On KJF's turf I moved against exploiting Jaspers, objecting to his name appearing in the masthead thereby associating him with worldview-emphases with which he might not have concurred. I objected to the biological-naturalism slant, (which now continues in Mr. Muller's postings on the Constructivist Foundation Journal <http://www.univie.ac.at/constructivism/journal/1.1/>.) and the inappropriate identification of me with creationism or intelligent design forces. That became in effect propaganda to censor me unless I made some effort at compliance, and an Editorial Question was posted just before a lull in postings due to vacation time, but not till some replies were posted.

Though having previously stated that I would continue to submit articles to the KJF as long as the name Karl Jaspers was included in the masthead; there has occurred an event to which I could modify that pledge. That pledge was made with a view toward the support that the KJF was receiving from McGill University. Recently, if my understanding is correct, allocated funding was withdrawn from the Forum. That seems to mean now it is owned and supported by an individual and/or invisible corporation, and not directly by recognized, influential academic institutions. The website owner(s) has been hit by what appears boycotting rather than sit-ins protesting my participation.

Rather, I submit the at-least-momentary apparent disassociation by the University has diminished the prestige and incentive to participate, although the Kinetic energy of its significant association continues.

The KJF stands out now as individually owned and controlled, and one has no regal, legal, or moral recourse, regarding censoring or imposed conditions except that of an ethical move. This Karl Jaspers Applied website--absolutely individually owned including the mistakes--is in part that ethical move but the primarily goal is to manifest the more accurate Jaspers. One must respect individual rights while not respecting the use of Karl Jaspers' reputation. The KJF is invaluable as a reference source for current trendy ideas and for the application of Karl Jaspers works. Precipitating ethical talk here is not a reflection against H. Muller's intentions, whose efforts at providing translations and information have been greatly appreciated.

Discussions on the KJF had polarized and flamed into public debating over issues relative to Jaspers positions on in-depth issues. Though the discussion style of the KJF is restrained now by certain sanctions, the debate continues in Karl Jaspers Applied and the third-person style is for public evaluation.

The debate here begins with a fair hearing request for philosophy, the issue that became the grounds for the KJF Editorial Question regarding my censorship, and became the naturalism test for Jaspers name used in the Forum's masthead.

Wood's Note to Muller's KJ FORUM N 56: EDITORIAL QUESTION

Title: FAIR HEARING REQUEST FOR PHILOSOPHY\*

Routed Sept. 24, 2005

\*Notation: Due to interdisciplinary protocol of TA relevancy I offer this Comment as a target-defense Note to Note 56, EDITORIAL QUESTION on censorship. It was initially prepared as my comment to Mr. Muller's TA 81-82, C 12.

(\*Reference: Karl Jaspers Forum, Statement of Purpose, paragraph two, second and third sentence, "The philosopher and psychiatrist Karl Jaspers pointed out the need for open philosophical reflection which is grounded in present experience and cannot be replaced by fixed traditions or methods. This maxim is proposed as a guiding principle to the FORUM.")

<0>

Please allow Jaspers a hearing regarding the effort to put him in a naturalism category. How can one be more fair than to look-see who in open discussion is more wrong than right? He has already replied to this issue of the derivation of humankind, for example, in his "Reply to Critics" in Editor Schilpp's The Library of Living Philosophers; The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers. One can be assured that his comment in The Perennial Scope

of Philosophy that “Man cannot be understood on the basis of evolution from animals” is a more accurate summary (and Jaspers says it’s a summary) of Jasper’s philosophical faith than Mr. Muller’s “he clearly accepted biological evolution of humans”. Jaspers could easily reply that when one asserts something never claimed, one refutes what was never asserted.

<0.1>

Mr. Muller propagates that I’m a radical proponent of creationism. I can only ask that he be at least as-if objective and give citation. Where have I used the word or concept creation? One might anticipate attacks from fundamental quarters for my refusal to manifest a certain style of word use, but I’ve only been attacked by a few including Mr. Muller and their attacks have been based on what they have conjured—constructed, created, arbitrarily.

<0.2>

It is within the traditional thinking of Karl Jaspers to parade and criticize worldviews whether in his work on the Great Philosophers, his Psychology of Worldviews, or his Future of Mankind. It’s regrettable that the Editor and some others are feeling uncomfortable, and this can be classified as at least feeling ill at ease. That’s a normal polarity essential for communication. I’ve not used the classification of schizothymic (thinking on the edge but still within the limits of normality) but it seems appropriate when trying to understand the meaning of “subjective-inclusiveness experience” for that seems like a withdrawal from objective criticism, a foreground camouflage for exclusivity; and that seems to be what’s really meant by talk about ongoing subjective experience not being the “consequence of any objective process”.

<0.3>

Lest I be accused of arguing by insults, let’s get to something Mr. Muller can identify with, like questions relative to Jaspers handling of the apeiron and naturalism. My comments below amount to an answer to Mr. Muller’s thought experiment in <7> TA 81-82 C12 where I’m asked for my signature and two others on an undetermined statement. He thereby identifies me with and makes me a party to something agreeable to two theocratic institutional representatives with worldviews that must come to terms with being associated with terrorism and the inquisition. I suspect the question is supposed to somehow prove the necessity for radical constructivism (vs. I don’t know what), atheism (zero derivation), while proving there’s no trustworthy historical reality independent of whatever is meant by mind. For reasons stated below, I hesitate to be limited to institutional personages confined to historical situations that have precipitated the problem. We don’t look for solutions to a complex in the complex. Before participating in the thought experiment surely I have the right to counsel, and why not from an authentic systematician (constructionist) like Karl Jaspers.

<0.4>

Patience is requested as I show that the same form of question was asked of Karl Jaspers which he answered by putting the forces behind the question on public display. The question, posed by James Collins (Department of Philosophy, St. Louis University), is whether Jaspers and Kant could agree upon anything regarding naturalism and Thomism. It's fair play here and within the scope of Muller's Comment about science and religion, or, in other words, scientism or naturalism and institutional-established religion as used by theocracies. That is covered in item <2> below, but first some concept-preparation comments about Anaximander's apeiron.

<1>

First, Gerhard Knauss gives Jaspers the chance to align with the naturalistic interpretation of Anaximander's apeiron. Knauss states there might be questions whether Anaximander is referring to something infinite or something determinable (that is, something undetermined but determinable). Then he says Anaximander "thought of it in the manner of an Encompassing of all the elemental materials contained in it; and not, indeed, as a mere summation of all things but as something that penetrates, rules, and regulates everything." (Schilpp p. 142, see <0> above for bibliographical reference and more details at the conclusion of TA 51.)

<1.2>

Jaspers reply is that Knauss "draws a few lines in terms of his own emphases and transformations, and finally offers a few critical observations...not against my basic thoughts but against my systematic exposition". Jaspers basic thinking process here is probably a continuum of the reasoning about Anaximander in his *The Great Philosophers*. There--in answer to the alleged naturalism that man developed from animals of another species--he says "Such views are imputed to Anaximander by other writers. Only one sentence, though introduced in indirect discourse, is quoted verbatim, and its content is entirely different" and further on he states the difference to be "the emergence of things from the apeiron and their return to it might perhaps be distinguished from the emergence of things from one another". Jaspers is saying to Knauss that the emphases on one sentence by Anaximander is in itself inadequate, but when that sentence is looked at, it simply might be the objective understanding that we come out of consciousness as such and return to consciousness as such, rather than finding something systematic and corporeal to cling to as surrogate or original derivation.

<1.3>

In his "Reply" to Knauss Jaspers ignores the word "apeiron" entirely in a direct sense, partly because its controversial significance—also acknowledged by Knauss--leads to a naturalism complex. That complex had already been penetrated and the dimension, frame of reference, is now philosophy. In the context of an ever-expanding realm of wisdom such as in a work on philosophy edited by Schilpp, it's out of place. Why? Because biological science is not only an ongoing endless endeavor but also it has been and will

be penetrated to the point of seeing its limits in the sense that the more we know the less we know (whether it's neanderthalensis or floresiensis--ad infinitum). Upon this realization, philosophy kicks in—engages at the limit of cognition. I've spoken against the trend where discussion proceeds upon the presumption that an absolute derivation for humankind is a maxim not just a premise. This philosophical perspective should not be considered symptomatic of Jaspers' discomfort with natural science as Mr. Muller has done. (See Jaspers/Heisenberg items <8> through <11> TA79, C5).

<1.4>

Knauss points out that “the derivation is missing” from Jaspers’ “seven modes of the encompassing”. (Mr. Muller speaks to only one “encompassing” and that of personal experience, and not the other encompassings such as variations of consciousness, psyche, feeling states etc.)

<1.5>

Jaspers responds by saying Knauss is not interpreting him correctly. “I have expressly declared myself against any derivation for the encompassings.” The encompassing concepts “not arbitrariness, but the acceptance of having had the experience is the basis for the unfolding.” “Derivation is impossible, unless we could find that principle of Being from which everything that is or can be would have to be derived.” His “encompassings” is a way of handling experience and the ground of experience, but that philosophical logic is not revealed as divinely inspired dogma. This is not the same as what Mr. Muller means by his formula of zero-derivation regarding objective reality. For Jaspers there is the reality of the comprehensive ground of the psyche. The ground is not reducible to faith in science as the absolute premise for the universal acceptance of a worldview. It's a philosophical faith comparable to revelational faith in that Being can speak through objectivity but not with creed-like definitiveness that needs no interpreting. However, Jaspers is tolerant of non-institutional revelation (but intolerant of revealed truth as a universal force), whereas Mr. Muller is intolerant of revealed truth unless institutionally approved for universal acceptance, and this intolerance becomes the force behind his handling of the fundamentals of religion. (See Jaspers' Philosophical Faith and Revelation.)

<1.6>

My first question to Mr. Muller is: How does he interpret Jaspers' following statement? “Perhaps what gives [biology] meaning is precisely and solely that through understanding it comes up against that which is ununderstandable through the play of thought at the limit of cognition.” The interpretation Jaspers gives is that what is valuable about biology is revealed by the fact that in contrast to earlier unclear conceptions of transitions, it is coming to an increasingly definite realization that this origin is unfathomable. (See his Perennial Scope of Philosophy, chapter on Man.)

<1.7>

Understanding Jaspers reply to the Knauss-reference to the naturalism alleged of Anaximander is important to reestablish the integrity of Jaspers possibly lost by efforts to associating me, and therefore my interpretation of Jaspers, with forces about which Mr. Muller thinks everybody understands and with which I must be cavorting.

<2>

Second, James Collins criticizes Jaspers for not learning something from Naturalism and Thomism. This sets Jaspers off because it's an implication that he lacks the awareness of science and Collins a greater familiarity with science and religion. Jaspers: "Whatever becomes object to and knowable by us is in some sense appearance, not Being itself (Kant)—our knowledge is able to grasp Being itself as thought object (St. Thomas)." (Schilpp, p. 799)

<2.1>

Jaspers begins his in-depth reply with comments about the forces involved in Collin's use of "isms" in "naturalism, Thomism, and Kantianism". Because they are isms, Jaspers approaches them as forces and "therefore never answerable", i.e. one cannot talk with a dogmatist. To communicate about biological naturalism Jaspers shows that Thomism is a far different force than Kantian thinking. Only Thomism is unambiguous because Aquinas represents catholic authority (Sainthood=St. Thomas). Natural biology is ambiguous but if reduced to the authority of objective certain unchangeable truth it becomes unambiguous. He says it's the ultimate task of philosophy to probe these isms so as "to become clear, if not concerning the ultimate origin—which is impossible--, at least concerning this depth itself". Note; he says naturalism, as unambiguous origin, is impossible.

<2.2>

Jaspers answers Collin's admonition to revisit naturalism and Thomism—for a further quest for truth--with elucidating talk about forces and the need for a criticism of a new kind. It's not a new knowledge, but an "essential type of thinking or inner action..." I see Jaspers talk about forces and the new way of looking as referring to very difficult but clear objectifications, such as seeing that the forces of naturalism have always historically existed. I mean humankind has always struggled with biological naturalism. It didn't start with Darwin or Aquinas, or with Anaximander or the biblical Paul, nor did it start with Moses. Seeing it philosophically is seeing the forces of naturalism in Chardin and Thomism—that's Jaspers' "authentic criticism of philosophical reality". He is saying to Thomistic Collins that he is in the service of a theological naturalism and himself (Jaspers) in the service of authentic selfhood's criticism. Jaspers is in the service of a criticism which tries to "catch sight of what is precisely not visible" but something felt, like: here I stand and cannot do otherwise.

<2.3>

Jaspers: “Objectivity is the indispensable medium of all speaking” whereby the deeper forces make themselves known if one dares to lay bare “the discussion in the foreground [that has] become an unnoticed hoax.” (See Schilpp’s p. 849 f.) This is my second question to Mr. Muller: What sort of objectivity is this that we need to discuss--rather than avoid by yielding to another’s adeptness to becloud the issue by couching anti-objectivity within stylistic verbiage like “subjective-inclusiveness experience?” I don’t mean that to be caustic but don’t know how else to put it—restrained by space and time.

<2.4>

Jaspers avoided Collin’s attempt to hitch him to his thought trains. Jaspers avoids biological naturalism, that ism, and the sainthood of Thomas, that other ism. He discusses the question but avoids being caught in his opponent’s way of thinking. He laboriously avoids getting into “only incidentals” that once latched unto results in endless struggle, for in those “diversions from what really matters” one has “unknowingly already recognized the substance of the opponent as true”. And that is part of my answer to Muller’s thought experiment--until the questioner exhibits an understanding of the forces behind the forefront. Those two personages in your thought experiment are nailed to a position where the harvested forces of naturalism and supernaturalism have been well hidden and stored out of sight but yet being used as cannon or canon fodder behind the balls (bullets).

<2.5>

And that leads to my third question: Could Mr. Muller resubmit the thought experiment with more of the hidden forces in the foreground and still make the matter intelligible? First iron out the wrinkles, like, reword the thought experiment to correspond with his item <3>: “Religion has developed as a response to the need for overall stabilization of thinking...” and relate it to overt and covert terrorism in terms of current and past inquisitions, i.e., relating it to the religious conditions (theocracies) he imposes upon the thought experiment.

<3>

In Mr. Muller’s final footnote he demonstrates a misunderstanding of the sewing machine incident of my early memory. I hope it was not intentional. Of course to me it appears he seemed to belittle it so he could say that the situation was not objective in any sense. Moreover my point was not to seek sympathy for the recall was partially due to the insignificance of the momentary discomfort comparable to the spank of a newborn. The point involved vague and vivid consciousness as objective, the place of the psyche, the feeling states, with information about guilt, parental guidance, and some linguistic information. Mr. Muller points at only what could be and was used to my discredit and to appeal to a certain class of readership. My apologies if that is an incorrect assessment, for it might simply be that one lacks the experiences of such recollections. One could hope it’s something innocent like that.

<4>

To address the request to correct Mr. Muller's deliberations about my understanding of what Moses wrote (see C12 <5>) it would necessitate repeating his comment and that would have the didactic effect of repeating something never said, but the repetition—repetition being a good or bad teacher—would draw attention to the refutation of something never asserted. To me it seems Mr. Muller has verbalized something in an accusatorial style. I simply ask that references be cited showing I've done more than express respect for this early writer (and I've even warned against bibliolatry). We need to talk about the hidden forces within Mr. Muller's request to "correct me if I'm wrong".

<5>

But if Mr. Muller in item <7> is asking for not only the interpretation of what he has constructed in the way of a thought experiment but also what the statement might be that the "Pope" and type of "President" of Iraq must agree to, I think the thing has been philosophically revealed with some inspiration coming from historic events. It reminds me of how once the President of Iraq (Babylon) had decided to censure (kill) the wise men because none could tell him what he had dreamed. Daniel (the name appears to have meant "God is Judge" renamed Belteshazzar meaning possibly the Lord of Babylon's leader) while in Babylon relieved the President of that mass-murder pledge by giving him something to replace the suppressed dream. He told the President what the dream was he'd forgotten. The statement Muller wants signed could be this: Mankind's derivation is to be understood best on the basis of biological naturalism. The interpretation of this signed statement amounts to a nihilistic "have at it guys." The final question to Mr. Muller is: Is that the statement to be signed and the expected consequences, if not, what is the statement?

<6>

With regard to Mr. Muller's question regarding the conflicts to be avoided in the next hundred years, I hope the force behind the question was not to get a fanatical-like quote from the bible. One could repeat Jaspers' solutions itemized in the Future of Mankind. One could take lessons from the Donner Party or Easter Island. Our populated world is getting very small and who and how some will be weeded out--cousin eating cousin--remains to be seen. One could wonder if the philosophers will be the first to go, and the scientifically empowered the first to leave for other domains. Also there's another determinate as hard to predict as the weather, such as what we are experiencing with tsunamis, hurricanes, and earthquakes. I'd hope we'd not give in to the nihilism of a zero-derivation or a fatalism of an absolutized historical derivation.

Glenn C. Wood

email me



G. WOOD'S SHORT NOTE TO KJF SHORT NOTE 57 AND SHORT NOTE 56  
AND DISCRETIONARY VALEDICTION AND FORWARDING ADDRESS

(Routed to KJF for posting 10-11-2005)

(10-14-2005 UPDATE: The following "Discretionary Valediction and Forwarding Address" as well as my replies to Short Notes 57 were e-mailed to Mr. Muller and dated prior to the 10-14-2005 posted ultimatum (see ultimatum at the conclusion of my Replies to Short Notes 57 below). The ultimatum comes across as if to be read as a response to my "Fair Hearing Request for Philosophy". However, the dating should be noted carefully—in general accountable dating has been a norm on the KJF. The date the ultimatum was prepared is not given, so one is supposed to presume no further comments had been received from me. In other words, the ultimatum postdates, by days, earlier routed comments; the decision to not post comments predating the ultimatum's posting could be considered as an arbitrary decision already made prior to the ultimatum and after the awareness of the following (below). For that reason the ultimatum is quoted below and following the communications already in Mr. Muller's possession according to accountable and fair dating procedures.)

DISCRETIONARY VALEDICTION AND FORWARDING ADDRESS

I want to thank Mr. Muller for past efforts at providing such helpful aids as translations and other requested information.

During this lull in postings due to his vacation schedule, I've stepped back, taken another objective view of the changed and current status of his "Karl Jaspers Forum".

The change, which was seen peripherally but now in focus, is that the Forum comes across more now as being individually owned and controlled due to the withdrawal of university support (and the at-least implicit prestige). If that premise is partially accurate, it presents a new restraining reality. Namely, there's no legal, moral, or regal recourse to website owner-autonomous decisions and actions.

There remains the ethical recourse. It's partly seen in a comment below regarding the matter of discussing the issue of censuring. Debating issues is somewhere betwixt the moral and ethical but closer to the moral, for it appeals to the public, and in this case before us determines truth by consensus or repetition which is precarious at best. It's as unstable, for instance, as Jaspers is neglected on the Forum.

The ethical decision I've made is this: My Karl Jaspers Applied website is currently available at [www.karljaspersapplied.net](http://www.karljaspersapplied.net) <<http://www.karljaspersapplied.net>> . One can be assured that it is privately owned and controlled. It is an objective work in process. Here my dispute can hopefully continue with a less caustic conduit to the KJF, but again, mainly because of the continued use of his name, but moreover because of the usefulness of the prevailing drifts displayed there that can be used to show Jaspers' applicability. On

my website I can exercise discretion without losing grasp of real issues, and thereby circumvent deflections from Jaspers' influence.

My replies to Short Notes 57 below are in brackets and placed first followed by respective quotes--that have been edited some because judgmental and not pertinent to a censor principle. These replies--more or less--will probably be posted on KJA.

As long as the name Karl Jaspers is included in Mr. Muller's Forum all I can do here is publicly ask that Karl Jaspers Applied be included as a Link listed with other links on the Forum.

Thanks to you all.

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#### REPLIES TO SHORT NOTES

[Wood--Fred Abraham's Note (immediately shown below) appears to address objectively the principle of censorship while keeping a safe distance from any direct personal evaluation except the unnecessary use of "obnoxious" (edited out) which, in context, can only refer to the personage targeted in the Editorial Note.

The situation here though is not identical with discussions within groups with a title like the Society for Chaos Theory, and only possibly with I Ching. The KJF group here carries the name of a most influential and current Karl Jaspers whose extant and powerful intellectually honest works dealing with historic and current forces is a force in itself to be harvested and processed to advantage by those forces. Crediting or discrediting Karl Jaspers is a main source of empowerment.

And a solution is so simple (if a university academia force is still involved): change the title to something comparable to Anaximander's, Vico's, Douglas Hospital's, McGill's Forum, or lean all items toward Karl Jaspers as the pivot point like one would expect in something like a Karl Jaspers Society. That solution is obviously asking too much for it's like asking a historic academic institution to disassociate with something it had once approved for funding. Institutionalism does not admit mistakes unless becoming extinct.

Another simple solution is: Mr. Muller seems to limit to several his weekly postings and apparently on a first-come dated and accountable basis. That predictable routine offers a resounding solution; sit-in but not boycott.

From the objective side Mr. Abraham's decision is comparable to one Jaspers made. I'd venture he is aware of it. It involved a University associate by the name of Gumble, and that incident can be found on pp. 49-52 of THE LIBRARY OF LIVING PHILOSOPHERS, THE PHILOSOPHY OF KARL JASPERS; editor Schilpp, Tudor Pub. Co., 1957. It can also be found in the paperback Gateway Edition of PHILOSOPHY AND THE WORLD, 1963, pp. 249-252, look under VII of his Philosophical Autobiography or Memoirs.]

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Fred Abraham Short Note 57—"We face a nearly identical problem on the CHAOPSYC discussion list. Our executive committee kicked a person off, but I and several others was against it. I think your appeal should help improve netiquette, and minimize flaming. We have another spate of flames over the I Ching, but nothing we can't live with. As owner of our list, I will not cave in to the executive committee throwing somebody off again. [edited out].

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[Wood—Mr. Bone's puts it well. I've found the Editor's efforts outstanding under his past circumstances—which have apparently changed somewhat--and appreciate the difficulty resulting from those who abjure the Forum leaving the void to be filled only by those whose views, like Jaspers', are difficult or too risky to challenge.]

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Hugh Bone Short Note 57—"I don't think any of us take responsibility for opinions like those of the Flat Earth Society, nor should we. Nor opinions re: mass hypnosis via the Internet. We have accepted your judgment of what is fit to print for years, and I hope we continue to do so, but the opportunity to discuss this matter is appreciated."

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[Wood--This note by Mr. Adams speaks for itself and all I should do here—in response to the personal attack--is genuflect obsequiously. However in as much as the fair discussion of issues is impossible, he is here challenged to debate issues under fair terms, relevant to Jaspers, such as begun in TA73, C 31(to Adams C3)--which he suggests he deletes quickly--on the subjects of representation and memory, consciousness and intention, etc. Here a caveat seems appropriate: this debate-gauntlet includes proceeding chivalrously on my part, but Mr. Adams' precipitating cavalier attitude toward worldview issues shows the need for zero-tolerance for the pedantic use of linguistic rules.]

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Bill Adams Short Note 57—"Filter Wood out. I agree with your assessment. I have been amazed that you, as moderator, have not exercised your discretion earlier. I have not

contributed for over a year and automatically delete any message with Wood's name on it. Life is too short to listen to intolerant ravings, and experience teaches that it is a waste of time to even engage people who promulgate them. Rational discussion is a mutual inquiry that depends on mutual respect.”

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[Wood--I agree with Andrew Brook that cordiality and candor is important in fair discussion but there's no title of distinction worthy of reverence that begs the question under discussion. When the discussion is public and a slant is designed to lean away from an important emphasis (Jaspers) the discussion becomes a debate as the audience is spoken to for they become the judge—now and later in records. But, lurking until it's safe could be conduct a bit revealing.]

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Andrew Brook Short Note 57—“Even though I have just lurked on this list, interested but not contributing, I do have a view on contributors who are a pain in the neck. I'm inclined to stick to moral suasion so long as the misbehaviour is not causing immediate practical problems. We're all professionals used to dealing with difficult people so should be able to respond to offensive talk by simply leaning on the offender. If the misbehaviour becomes a practical problem -- so much of it that the moderator is getting swamped or so affectively charged that normal dialogue is becoming difficult or impossible -- then the blunt instrument of removal might have to be considered. My two cents' worth.”

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[Wood—Unlike Mr. Dykstra I see the Forum as such not being the issue, but agree its significance is invaluable if the real issues can be addressed and the evasions circumvented. Using the name of Karl Jaspers in the title for a website ought not give free passage to incidentals resulting in a questionable use of his name by myself or those making no mention of him. Neither the issues or solutions are as simple as suggested here—not and still remain a forthright fourth estate. The Internet has become a fourth estate with an abundance of potential for the misuse of laissez-faire.

The most obvious solution was, again, sit-in rather than boycott. Boycotting amounts to a tactical transformation of laissez-faire into laissez-passer in this case. A perhaps more embarrassing but ethical solution is to find a more appropriate title if the matter cannot be discussed with a view to what Jaspers was and is.

Jaspers stood against naturalism and Thomism for instance, and these are world-shaping worldviews. One should be able to disagree with a slant that departs from these issues.

Asking one to come back when, for instance, one can demonstrate commitment to biological naturalism or respect for Thomistic institutionalism seems less than open-

minded. That is neither laissez-faire nor the ingress side of laissez-passer; it is calling for a space for planning in Toto without surveillance—in this case.

However, understanding the special issues involved here, basing excommunication on the conditions of kowtowing is not the discretion and wisdom acknowledged in this and a few other Short Notes.]

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Dewey Dykstra –“As a list manager of another list, I can sympathize with you. Having watched such things happen as you describe on this list and on other lists of which I am a member, my conclusion is that free and open discussion, only works if people are willing to respect each other and each other's ideas. I do not mean by this that they must agree, but they must respect the ideas of others. This requires, I think, working to demonstrate one understands the ideas of another to the degree that the other person sees in one's words evidence that convinces others that one understands their ideas. (I "sees in one's words" because words are the extent of the medium we have to work with on the Forum.)

What this boils down to is that open-minded discussion does not mean laissez-faire. I think your approach, to open reasonable discussion about how we discuss, is an appropriate first step. I have found in a number of settings that the outcome is much better discussion afterward because everyone modulates how they participate in the discussions in response to insights gained in the discussion about discussion.

It happens occasionally that someone is still not ready to respect the ideas discussed or in effect the group or members of the group. Such a person is not ready, at the present, to be a member and should be asked to come back later when they may be ready to respect the group. I know that on most on-line systems as I expect KJ Forum is on, there are ways that serve an individual out in order to enforce this if need be.

I value this Forum. I hope that it can continue open-minded discussion.”

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[Wood—Mr. Johnson’s parenthetical comment seems accurate. One can only make an educated guess as to why the use of the words “harsh” and “infinitely”. ]

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D K Johnson Short Note 57—“I would say that you were infinitely patient with my often harsh critiques of constructivism (which others have been inclined to view as mere insults). Good luck!”

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[Wood—My response to Mr. McCarthy is that it seems to me that ad hominem discipline is not the issue, for the Editor has enforced that rule as it appears from one of these Notes to the Editorial Question (see Greg Nixon’s admission below). The real issues are in-depth disagreements as pointed to in my Request for a Fair Hearing for Philosophy in response to the Editorial Note. It has to do with long-term issues that Jaspers saw and emphasized. The overriding issue is the proper use of Jaspers in this chronic struggle. Choosing his name for the Forum shows how significant the name of Karl Jaspers is. In the heat of the fine-line but real struggle Jaspers is made to appear at variance to something he doesn’t agree to or argue for.

But Mr. McCarthy’s point is important to show that amiableness is more persuasive if reason prevails over defensive rationalizations. Political smiles and theological scowls sway the crowd more than philosophical frowns. On public turf though, subtle--sometimes hardly distinguishable--gestures can change into a debate mode to gather support to save one’s reputation and/or preserve that of another. At that stage, when predicted consensus is against issues, one might then apply political discretion as the better part of valor for the sake of the issues.

For the sake of clerics, it should be made clear that I should not be identified with them, but I can understand why this title was used here. Nor should I be identified with Jaspers except, as noted by Jaspers, as one individual whose interpretations are inseparable from one’s personal biography—but not immutably bound.

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Maurice McCarthy Short Note 57—“With regard to your note about Mr. Wood I must agree that I'm somewhat concerned about his recent writings. They confuse me because several months ago I had to completely change my mind about him as being a difficult cleric when I received a private email which appeared to expose a most affable character. I have always found it difficult to follow his train of thought in kjf but that communication gave me some encouragement. However if the ad hominem attacks continue then indeed you may have no choice but to censure him as it will ruin the Forum.

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[Wood—Mr. Munevar is almost fair enough. I feel a little like the fellow being carried out of town on a rail: if it were not for the notoriety of some of the rail-bearers or those unobtrusively flinging tar and feathers I’d feel it a dishonor.]

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Gonzalo Munevar—“If he dishes it out, he should be willing to take it. As long as not many people emulate him, I would leave it at that.”

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[Wood—Mr. Nixon’s potential critique of Mr. Muller’s zero derivation etc. was impressive, as I recall, but both were most agreeable and uncritical regarding the derivation of brain and consciousness. Mr. Nixon too quickly agrees with Mr. Muller’s assessment of my early memory—a biographic event easily recalled due to errors I made. When reading something that seemed to add momentum to the departure from Jaspers’ overview--that included intolerance for an intolerant scientism--my effort to level the field did not involve a feeling of animosity toward a person. I can recall making many mistakes, some remedial (and if intentional, to you, my apologies). I recall at least one person on the Forum who admitted to a mistake, which I took as a manifestation of intellectual honesty. Having forgotten who that was I wondered if it might have been Mr. Nixon but he corrected me, and I apologized. Technology has reached a point where now one can index-spotlight a word like “oops”--and the gentleman is now known and still appears intellectually honest enough to deport--too.]

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Greg Nixon’s Short Note 57—“I may not be the only person who no longer contributes because of Wood's massive (as well as fanatic, irrational, & intolerant) tirades & ad homina. His clinging to his re-collected personal experiences as absolute evidence is self-indulgent & self-delusional to the extreme. The last straw for me, however, was when you disallowed a response I made on his level after he had directed personally insulting terms my way. Now that seemed hardly fair. The man has a mind like a disturbingly crowded walled city. The doors open & raging sorties stream out. But nothing, absolutely nothing, gets to enter in return. "A fanatic dare not change his mind and will not change the subject." (Winston Churchill)

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[Wood--When Mr. Meijden gets done chewing there’s nothing substantial left to swallow for further digestion especially in as much as there was mainly unambiguous “Editorial Note”-froth fed to crew on, leaving primarily the feeding hand. His item <2> captures the ambiguity of personal experience and points toward the intellectual honesty required for self-criticism and the intolerance needed toward the intolerance others have toward ambiguity. However I’d prefer not using the “ism” in connection with the existentialistic ideas of Jaspers, but otherwise I’ve included only that part of his quote that for now seems relevant for my Karl Jaspers Applied web site.

Due to no other disagreement, I respectfully request that on a principle of equal space that unneeded reply-space be set aside and applied to space for my plea for a FAIR HEARING REQUEST FOR PHILOSOPHY.]

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Adrian van der Meijden’s Short Note 57—“Wood is firmly into Jaspers experiential existentialism, which is a first person game and gambit where the dramatic plot, setting,

theme, action personified as character, to especially not ignore the purpose and intent of the action by way of assumptional beliefs, attitudes and POVs. This is a first person game... IOW Wood prefers understanding experience as primary and before reporting in linguistic metaphors, NOT to be taken personally so he cannot call people who disagree with him mentally sick, though perhaps mentally confused rather. The drama is here that one speaks for oneself in one's own authority being, so to speak, the only resident of one's own mind and being, hoping others will and can do the same."

#### MULLER'S ULTIMATUM

(Herbert FJ Muller [Herbert.muller@mcgill.ca](mailto:Herbert.muller@mcgill.ca) In response to Wood, above. If you want me to accept further communications from you for posting in the Karl Jaspers Forum, I need a GUARANTEE from you that you will "not use insulting or ad hominem language from now on". Do you see fit to sign this statement as is? Please answer "yes" if you will provide this guarantee; other answers I will take to mean that you will not provide it."

Wood's notation: It's regrettable that my Replies and valediction are inappropriately ill-dated as "other answers" and seemingly will not be posted on what is now apparently Mr. Muller's personal website.)