

From: Carolyn Rangel
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Intelligence2 Debate hosts [The More We Evolve, The Less We Need God](#) with Deepak & Anoop Kumar and Michael Shermer & Heather Berlin

7:00 – 8:45 pm ET on March 27 2018

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For The Motion – Michael Shermer and Heather Berlin

- Humans no longer need God to explain the unknown. Rather than turning to faith or religious tradition, modern society should rely on scientific and reasoned inquiry to address today's challenges and questions.
- Morality is independent of God. From the oppression of women and LGBT people to the institution of slavery and genocide, religious groups have used faith to justify society's worst practices.
- Belief in God stifles modernization: [Studies show](#) that intensely religious countries are less innovative and produce less patents than those that aren't. It is science, rather, that has been at the heart of innovation and discovery.

Against The Motion – Deepak Chopra and Anoop Kumar

- According to NASA, only 4 percent of the universe is known matter; the rest remains largely a mystery. Science alone cannot illuminate or explain this large gap.
- Scientific progress requires God. The creators of today's most powerful innovations – from nuclear arms to gene editing technologies – require an awareness of consciousness, and must be guided by a belief in a common

good to ensure these technologies don't destroy society as a whole.

- The secularization thesis is a myth: A new study by Pew Research Center shows that the world's Christian and Muslim populations are continuing to grow – even if younger generations don't attend church.

Published by San Francisco Chronicle on March 26, 2018

It's Time for Science to Accept Consciousness

By Deepak Chopra

Although it takes place outside the headlines, even those that deal with science, a heated debate is occurring about mind and matter. On one side is a camp of so-called physicalists, formerly known as materialists, who hold fast to the assumption that any and all phenomena in nature can be reduced to physical processes and the interaction of objects (atoms, subatomic particles, etc.) --these for the building blocks of the universe. On the other side is no single camp but a mixed assortment of skeptics who hold that at least one natural phenomenon--the human mind--cannot be explained physically.

When one explanation (the physicalist) is supported by the weight of highly successful theories in physics, biology, biochemistry, and neuroscience, and the other side has no accepted theory on its side, the debate seems totally unequal. But in David versus Goliath battles, be careful of rooting for Goliath. The possibility of a science of consciousness, which would involve a thorough explanation of mind and how it relates to matter, can't begin until the obstacles in its path are removed and old accepted assumptions are overturned.

That has already begun, on all fronts. In physics, the essential problem of how

something came out of nothing (i.e., the big bang coming out of the quantum vacuum state) stymies cosmologists, while at the microscopic level the same mystery, this time involving subatomic particles emerge from the virtual state, is equally baffling. In biology the prevailing Darwinism cannot explain the quantum leap made, with astonishing rapidity, by *Homo sapiens* in terms of reasoning, creativity, language, our use of concepts as opposed to instincts, tool-making, and racial characteristics. We are the offspring of the newest part of the brain, the cerebral cortex, and yet there is no causal connection between its evolution and the primal Darwinian need to survive. This is evident by the survival of a hundred primate species lacking a higher brain, reasoning, tool-making, concepts, etc. Finally, in neuroscience and biochemistry, there is zero connection between nerve cells, and their chemical components, and mind. Unless someone can locate the point in time when molecules learned to think, the current assumption that the brain is doing the thinking has no solid footing.

The day-to-day work of scientists isn't dependent on explaining how mind arose in the cosmos--not yet. The relation between mind and matter has existed in philosophy for centuries and working scientists don't consider philosophy relevant to their research. Collecting data and doing experiments needs no help from metaphysics. But when you look at the unanswered questions in physics, biology, biochemistry, and neuroscience, it's more than a coincidence that all, without exception, impinge upon the same inability to know how consciousness actually works. By taking for granted the obvious fact that it takes a mind to do science, we've reached the point where science is leaving out the very component that might answer the questions that urgently need answering, not because philosophy demands it but because science does.

The sticking point is physicalism itself. If everything must be reduced to the smallest units of matter and energy, and yet there is zero evidence that mind follows that pattern, it is unscientific to cling to physicalism. Even a staunchly mainstream physicist like Stephen Hawking has commented that reality doesn't necessarily match the current models in science. The mind is real, and since that's true, defective models are required to change or even be thrown out. To repair the most glaring defect of all--our inability to explain mind--imperils all the sciences for the simple fact that science is a mental activity. If we set physicalism aside, what would be another starting point for a new model of reality?

Instead of conceiving reality from the bottom up, moving from tiny building blocks to

larger and larger structures, one could do the reverse and create a top-down model. In other words, the starting point would be the whole, not the parts. So what do we know about reality as a whole?

- Reality is knowable through the mind. What humans can't know, either directly or by inference, might as well not exist.
- What we know is tied to what we experience.
- Experience takes place in consciousness, nowhere else.
- Experience is at once boundless and very restricted. The boundless part lies in the human capacity to create, invent, explore, discover, and imagine. The restricted part revolves around the setup of the brain, which is confined to the behavior of space, time, matter, and energy. The brain is four-dimensional, while physics poses the possibility of infinite dimensions at one extreme and zero dimensions at the other extreme.
- Because the physical processing done by the brain works in parallel to the mind doesn't mean that the brain is the mind. To assert that brain equals mind involves showing the atoms and molecules can think, which can't be proven and seems highly unlikely. Therefore, the ground state of reality, the place from which everything originates, is consciousness.
- Consciousness is the only constant in human experience that can't be removed from consideration in science, or any other form of knowing.
- What we call reality "out there" is constructed in our own awareness. These constructs follow predictable paths according to mathematics, logic, the laws of nature, and so on. But this doesn't prove that reality is independent of our experience, only that consciousness is capable of extremely precise, predictable organization. In a word, the notion that everything is a mental construct is just as valid as the notion that everything is a physical construct. The two are merely different perspectives.
- If reality "out there" is a construct dependent upon consciousness, explaining the universe entails explaining consciousness. Where physicalists are stymied by how atoms and molecules think, non-physicalists are stymied by how mind creates matter.
- This impasse is broken by taking a concrete approach to mind; that is, by investigating the qualities of reality "out there." These qualities, such as how an object looks, sounds, feels, tastes, and smells, are entirely created in consciousness. As Heisenberg noted almost a decade ago, there are no fixed physical characteristics of an atom or subatomic particle. Everything is built up

from the qualities, also known as qualia, that the human mind knows, experiences, and can conceptualize.

- Ultimately, even where nature sucks all matter and energy into black holes and naked singularities, the actual horizon for science doesn't lie there, or with the big bang, by which matter and energy reappeared in manifest form. The real horizon is where the inconceivable source of mind meets the conceivable phenomena in nature. The problem of something coming out of nothing is exactly the same when the cosmos was born as when a thought is born. This is the level playing field where mind and matter can be investigated as two sides of the same process: consciousness interacting with itself.

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The Eternal Feminine Brings Wholeness

By Deepak Chopra, MD

A genuine social upheaval has begun, its theme is the empowerment of women. Old attitudes that have resulted in many kinds of unfairness are being challenged. The long-suppressed outrage of sexual harassment has been exposed to the light of day. No one with a heart and a conscience can do anything but respond with encouragement. It's about time.

Rising from a position of weakness to become stronger, turning old wounds into a source of healing—these are important changes in anyone's life. The eternal feminine has been a running thread in human culture for thousands of years, but each generation has to reinterpret it, and at the moment, embedded in a secular society where daily demands and distractions are the rule, envisioning the eternal feminine requires going deeper into our self-awareness.

Everyone's source is pure awareness, which has no gender. When pure awareness manifests into creation, gender isn't in evidence, either. When you wake up from deep sleep and become aware of your existence, the experience has no labels. The

issues of masculine and feminine enter in a social context, defined by your beliefs, attitudes, and mental conditioning. To be a woman is to be a creation of many factors, going far beyond the physiological.

The eternal feminine isn't found in any kind of belief, attitude, or conditioning, however. It isn't restricted to women, because in reality the eternal feminine is part of everyone's wholeness. When we divide women as being from Venus and men from Mars, that wholeness has been lost. In order to truly love women, and for them to love themselves, both sexes must nurture the universal values that belong to the eternal feminine. Every human quality that we cherish has a pure source, and the closer you are to the source, the more intense, personal, and lasting your values will be.

What does the eternal feminine add to everyone's life? In one way or another we express the eternal feminine wherever there is motherliness, inner beauty, devotion, nurturing, loving kindness, inspiration, and creativity. The Goddess has always been about these things. When the feminine is ignored, distorted, or wounded, the same values are undermined. Hardness, cruelty, war, ruthless competitiveness—it's not that these are bad masculine values. They are exaggerated and divorced from wholeness.

On the individual level, the loss of the eternal feminine can be devastating. There is an imbalance toward the masculine, which no one can sustain without damaging their capacity for loving acceptance, beginning with self-acceptance. I doubt there is anyone, man or woman, who can't benefit from healing their feminine side. We regain wholeness in meditation, yet it is in daily life, where we apply self-awareness, that healing steps can be taken.

Take a moment every day and look through the feminine values I've listed above. Think of one value you'd like to encourage and enhance, then make a mental note of the action you'll take that day to implement it. At night before you go to bed, reflect on your day to see if you carried out the action you planned. If so, how did it make you feel?

Here are some suggestions about how you might carry out healing the feminine side of wholeness:

Motherliness is warm, caring, accepting, and embracing. You might show someone

close to you that you care by listening without judgment. You might include a person who seems like an outsider to your group and make them feel welcome.

Inner beauty is about letting the light of your awareness shine through. The key is to find the courage to show your true self to others, dropping the social mask to reveal sympathy, innocence, openness, and your joy in life.

Devotion is about the heart's need to surrender to something outside yourself, pouring out love and appreciation. Devotion is private and happens in silent communion. It doesn't have to be showy or even outwardly expressed. But when you feel the impulse to express loving devotion, act upon it.

Nurturing is about all the things a mother does to raise her child, and we often identify it with helping the young. But adults also need support, encouragement, protection from harm, and wise guidance. These are nurturing values too often neglected in our relationships. We forget that the child within us hasn't vanished with the passage of time. So acting as a nurturing figure in anyone else's life is deeply appreciated.

Loving kindness is about compassion, and the values that flow from it, such as empathy, acceptance, and non-judgment. Being easy with yourself and ending your own self-judgment are acts of loving kindness. The same is true when you extend the same attitude to others. As exalted as compassion sounds, it comes down to deciding that you are on the side of acceptance and kindness rather than judgment and harshness.

Inspiration and **creativity** are about making life new by living from the source. We make a mistake setting creativity apart as the domain of artists. Pure consciousness endlessly creates, and every day can be based on the flow of renewal. The opposite of renewal is habit, routine, mental conditioning, and fixed beliefs. So rather than struggling to be more creative, use your efforts to remove the obstacles that block inspiration and creativity. Once you stop identifying with habit and routine, life's freshness returns naturally, like water gushing from a spring.

Published by Ellis Island Medal of Honor Society

The Fate of Immigration: Boiling Pots and Melting Pots

By Deepak Chopra, MD

Anyone who lives in a big Eastern seaboard city like Boston or New York has experienced irritation at getting into a taxi and finding the driver talking into his cellphone. The typical scene is that he barely interrupts his conversation to ask your destination before resuming a stream of Russian, Arabic, Hindi, or some other language you don't understand. Many riders experience irritation at this, and bans on using cellphones while driving have been passed.

But these little encounters are a kind of global interface—you and the cabbie are where two worlds meet. If you can afford to ride in a taxi, you are likely to have reaped the rewards of the Land of opportunity, while the driver is just getting a seat at the table. On the phone he's reaching out to his old world. He could be talking to his wife about how the kids are doing in school. If you have a dark imagination, however, he could be talking to a disgruntled cousin in Iraq whose anger is boiling over about America. One sees the occasional news story about foreign-born taxi drivers arrested for recruiting or contributing money to terrorists.

The most cherished myth about American immigration is the melting pot, but the situation is currently more like a boiling pot. Ellis Island has always stood for the former, more optimistic image. But the spectacle of mass immigration has always been bittersweet. In his 1917 silent short movie, *The Immigrant*, Charlie Chaplin's Little Tramp is on a boat pulling into New York Harbor—on YouTube you can view the scene titled "Arrival in the Land of Liberty."

Chaplin, nattily dressed in his formal coat and bowler hat, is slumped on deck with a tight gaggle of immigrants. They jump to their feet to see the Statue of Liberty pass by, then they are immediately roped off by uniformed authorities. Meekly they submit as one by one they are allowed through a rope barrier. The Little Tramp isn't quick enough, however, and his first greeting in the new land is a kick in the pants from a police guard.

Resentment and welcome are the two themes of historical immigration. No matter when your family arrived here—I came in 1971, a newly minted M.D. from India responding to the Vietnam War doctor shortage—there was always a simmering antagonism toward immigrants. I felt it from the established doctors in the emergency room in the hospital where I first worked in Plainfield, New Jersey. They assumed that I must have had an inferior education in India (in fact, the All-India Medical Institute in New Delhi boasted professors who came from the U.S. to insure a high level of quality graduates).

Being snubbed by American-born colleagues eventually led to my first appearance in print when the Boston Globe published my letter complaining of rank prejudice against Indian physicians. But opportunity is an undeniable factor in most immigrant stories, mine being no exception. Wave after wave of foreigners has withstood nativist pushback, whether it was the anti-Irish sentiment of the 19th century, the antisemitism that followed, giving way to the Red Scare, the McCarthy era, or the current furor over illegal immigrants.

No matter how far you go back, the melting pot ideal was always murky. New immigrants typically found a foothold in tight communities of the foreign born, and assimilation was a rocky road, as witness the vicious fighting between Irish and Italian gangs for political power in Boston a century or more ago.

The important thing throughout this turbulent history wasn't that the melting pot merged myth and reality but that ideals mattered. Most Americans had no idea that powerful mixed feelings existed in the old country, too. As a recent observer astutely put it, "America is the most hated country in the world and the country everyone wants to come to." When people grimly talk about the erosion of traditional norms, immigration policy could be Exhibit A. The world is witnessing a greater refugee crisis than at any previous period, we are told. A humane policy toward stateless people, whether they come from a war-devastated Syria or famine-devastated Senegal, should be upper most. Instead, some nativist faction is always seeking political power to deny entry.

It would be hypocritical for me to decry the current uproar over illegal immigration when this country, for all its contentiousness, gave me a chance to fulfill my dreams. Statistics show that upward mobility in the U.S. is declining. A 2012 report from the independent Economic Policy Institute states, "While faith in the American Dream is deep, evidence suggests that the United States lacks policies to ensure the opportunities that the dream envisions. According to the data, there is considerably more mobility in most other developed economies." Comparing the earnings of fathers and sons, not just immigrants but across the whole society, the U.S. ranked fifth behind Slovenia, Chile, Italy, and the United Kingdom.

As income inequality widens across the developed world, there is a growing desire for the haves to shut out the have nots, a distressing trend. Terrorist fears are grossly exaggerating the pressure to keep foreigners out, while on the other side of the gate refugees have no alternative but to leave countries where normal daily life cannot be sustained.

Strange as it may sound, I am grateful to the boiling pot and the melting pot both. Without the Vietnam War crisis, I would likely have been denied entry into this country, and without the Indian medical community to support me psychologically, my clashes with prejudice in the medical profession would have been harsher. The story of immigration has always been one of times in turmoil and populations in ferment. Those factors never change unless you are among the privileged few who enter this country based on a needed skill (as I did).

Right now the nativist movement seems to be in the ascendant, and balancing merit-based immigration (the model successfully used in Canada) and humanitarian concerns poses serious problems. The fact that the foreign-born amount to 13% of the population doesn't look like pluralism taken to the breaking point, but the figure swells when you count second-generation immigrants, and one sees more immigrants on the streets of big cities than in rural areas.

It's ironic that these rural areas are the seedbed of such fierce anti-immigrant feelings. It does little good to point out that robotics has taken away more blue-collar factory jobs than the foreign-born, that even illegal immigrants probably bring more to the economy than they take away, or that many of the biggest Silicon Valley tech firms were founded by children of immigrants, including Steve Jobs of Apple, whose biological father came from Homs, Syria, one of the cities now destroyed in the Syrian civil war.

What matters more than facts is perception. It takes only a handful of people speaking Arabic in the doctor's waiting room to fuel the kind of resentment that led to the Brexit vote. The United Kingdom has only 9% of the foreign-born, the European Union only 8.6%, which implies that there is plenty of room for immigrants to arrive and begin their rise toward assimilation. But one inflamed incident like the 2005 protest over Danish newspaper cartoons satirizing the prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper can override reason and economic statistics.

I can't foresee how this tug of war will end, but I know it will continue as it always has. Both sides, the aspiring foreign-born and the American-born, are defending their self-interest as they see it, using a combination of reason and irrationality, sympathy and prejudice, fact and fiction. What I hope for is enlightened self-interest instead of the naked kind. The taxi driver on his cellphone does me a service by getting me to my destination for a reasonable price, which is kept reasonable by his low salary. One day he or his children will hopefully move upward—millions have—and I will move on in my established life. I owe something to him as he owes something to me. That's all that enlightened self-interest means.

As an Ellis Island medalist, I never lose sight of these swirling cross-currents, as I also take responsibility to stand up for the ideals that gave me a fresh start 47 years ago. America made me who I am in large part, and I must do what I can to make America what it hopes to be when our better angels are heeded.

Note: Ellis Island Medals of Honor are given out annually on Ellis Island, the Medals promote patriotism, diversity, immigration and the restoration of Ellis Island

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