



Philosophy Study Guide Based On  
Red Mountain, Birmingham, Alabama, 1965,  
a Novel by Charles Entekin  
by  
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Warning to the Casual Reader of *Philosophy Study Guide to Red Mountain*

This Philosophical Journey is not a substitute for reading *Red Mountain*. If you proceed to read this work without having read the novel, not only will the plot be spoiled for you, but you will deny yourself the experience of reading this intensely lyrical and evocative first person narrative.

You'll lose out on seeing what happens, when a life based on emotion and feelings, meets a life based on the search for truth. The birth pangs of a new struggle for social justice reverberates in the background, and sometimes in the foreground of the novel, as the characters search for authenticity in their lives. The time period is that of the American Civil Rights movement of the 1950's and 1960's, and is set mostly in Birmingham, Alabama and in NYC. And its application is universal.

Also, no summary could do justice to the finely detailed textures of the author's storytelling. As narrator-poet, the author revels in giving the reader wonderful details – of landscapes, of homes of the time, and details about the various characters, which helps to make the setting and period come alive for us.

And so I invite the reader to return, after they've read *Red Mountain*, to resume this Philosophical Journey. Then, you could further explore with us, the contrasting philosophies of life, and their social implications. Hopefully, you will return to reread and re-experience *Red Mountain*, like a favorite DVD. And the *Study Guide*, well, it would be like the trailer of *Red Mountain*, revealing its philosophy, like extra footage, hidden inside.

Poem: "Love at First Sight" by Jennifer Maier from *Dark Alphabet*. © Southern Illinois University Press, 2006.

*Love at First Sight*

You always hear about it—  
a waitress serves a man two eggs  
over easy and she says to the cashier,  
That is the man I'm going to marry,  
and she does. Or a man spies a woman  
at a baseball game; she is blond  
and wearing a blue headband,  
and, being a man, he doesn't say this  
or even think it, but his heart is a homing bird  
winging to her perch, and next thing you know  
they're building birdhouses in the garage.  
How do they know, these auspicious lovers?  
They are like passengers on a yellow  
bus painted with the dreams  
of innumerable lifetimes, a packet  
of sepia postcards in their pocket.  
And who's to say they haven't traveled  
backward for centuries through borderless  
lands, only to arrive at this roadside attraction  
where Chance meets Necessity and says,  
What time do you get off?

## Preface

*Red Mountain – Birmingham, Alabama 1965*, a novel by Charles Entekin, reveals the moral dimensions of experience in a particularly memorable and forceful manner, drawing on the background of a tumultuous period in American history-- the Civil Rights movement of the 1950's and 60's. In order to understanding the book, and appreciate its value today, I explore the intersecting personality maps of the main characters, and also bring in other disciplines, including philosophy, ethics, and psychology.

Reading and reflecting upon *Red Mountain* provides a powerful vehicle to uncover and explore different philosophical attitudes toward life, that could move people in and out of all sorts of places and situations, some of which they may desire, and others, not. Our goal should be not just to make the unconscious conscious, which was Freud's goal in psychoanalysis, but to make our unspoken unconscious philosophical attitudes conscious. With knowledge, comes awareness, and the ability to choose, and consciously move one's life in the directions that one wishes.

As I further considered the lives of the characters in *Red Mountain*, the instructive value of the novel became clear to me. And so, the idea for a philosophy study guide was born. Charles Entekin encouraged me to proceed with this *Study Guide*, and has kindly assisted in its funding. So, *Philosophy Study Guide for Red Mountain* came into being, much longer than originally conceived. The study guide is multidisciplinary because life is multidisciplinary, and *Red Mountain*, the novel, presents many slices of life. It expresses philosophy, psychology and social relations as these are embodied in a person's life experience.

The *Philosophy Study Guide for Red Mountain* is a standalone work in the sense that it includes the plot, and presents ideas which could be understand without a reading of *Red Mountain*, the novel. *However, we urge everyone who is considering reading this study guide, to first read Red Mountain, the novel.* You will have the thrill of reading of reading an historical novel, one which lavishes great attention to detail, with an artist's eye. It also has a substantive plot and much character development. After you read *Red Mountain* the novel, you could return to this Study Guide. However, in a sense, it doesn't matter which work one reads first, for one could go back and re-read a novel, or see a movie again -- in a movie theatre or on a DVD -- and have new insights each time.

### *For The Instructor*

This study guide is written for the everyday reader. It is also written for use in Humanities and Philosophy courses. If it is used in Philosophy courses, we strongly urge instructors to also have their students read *Red Mountain*, the novel. That ideas, particularly ideas about morality, be studied in the context of life experience is itself an ideological position. But it is an approach to learning, I believe, that enriches both the study of ideas, and how ideas and attitudes so powerfully influence our lives.

Scholarship – going deeply into particular works or traditions – is indeed very important. But, in practice, scholars tend to write for other scholars. I prefer to write for the educated public. I like to take a few key philosophical ideas, and apply them in wider settings, where their value could be appreciated by many. A study guide for *Red Mountain*, the novel, is a wonderful way to realize this goal. If this work helps to popularize philosophy – which is literally, the study of wisdom – and helps the reader apply philosophy to their daily living, then, this work will have served its purpose. And I think that our hero, Eddie, student of philosophy, would like that, too.

\*\*\*

In the Study Guide we will introduce some dramatic devices as *Questions* to help engage the reader in the narrative, and *Comments* to allow commentary that is distinct from the text. We will also introduce some *Concepts for Understanding*, and explore their implications for us, today. We'll use citations from *Red Mountain* too, sparingly, but include here, in the context of discussion, the complete diary of Chrissy -- a compilation of the excerpts in *Red Mountain* -- intense, and beautifully written.

The format of this Philosophy Study Guide is as follows:

- social and cultural background to the story, in post-WW II Birmingham, Alabama
- introduction to the philosophical issues raised in the novel
- detailed Plot Summary
- discussion of the main characters, Eddie and Chrissy, with particular reference to philosophical issues that they raise in the course of the novel.

- We'll then explore various philosophical issues raised by the novel, in a wider field. These issues won't appear abstract -- they will be very real, for the reader, since they are based on the lives of the characters and the plot, which we've been discussing. We'll discuss particular philosophical issues as they relate to the characters, and then articulate some of the broader philosophical questions.

- In the *Appendix* we expand on some themes and issues. This will help to round out our discussion in these areas. We very much hope that we have motivated the reader to continue their study of philosophy.

## Introduction

### *America in the 1950's and 1960's*

The main theme is *Red Mountain* is *freedom* – individual freedom, and social freedom. An individual's actions exist both within the social matrix of society, and in the context of their own upbringing.

People carry their history with them, in everything they do. They could maintain awareness of this fact, or be in denial. In this awareness they exhibit their freedom of choice. When they truly grasp that they have been enslaved by society's attitudes, laws, and their own upbringing, then, acting from this *awareness*, *they may seek to realize their freedom*, and no longer be in bondage to what has enslaved their bodies and minds.

For individuals, this is the *existentialist credo*. When this insight is grasped by groups, then you have a *movement for social justice*, as the Civil Rights movement which forms the social background of *Red Mountain*.

When a person realizes that they no longer need accept things as they are -- the status quo of class, racial, and social oppression -- this is nothing less than a new way of at looking at the world, a Copernican Revolution. And so, Eddie reflects, on the insights of great philosopher, Kant, from whom he learns, that *how we perceive and interpret things, is as important as simply viewing them*.

Eddie awakens and comes into awareness of his freedom and choices, as does Chrissy, as does American society in the late 50's through the late 60's. Freedom is in the air, but it doesn't come easily, not without a fight from status quo forces. There is civil disobedience in the early Civil Rights struggle of the late 1950's, which draws on such figures as Thoreau, and Gandhi.

The 1960's is a period of tragedy and heroism too. In *Red Mountain*, several historic incidents are described, in which several people show great personal courage in the face of violent mobs -- a young student/lay minister who speaks out for racial equality and integration, has to flee from both arrest, and from an angry mob of Church members attending a meeting in Birmingham in 1960. He drives to the home of the president of Crestview College, who gives him shelter, and successfully prevents the young man from being arrested, by

insisting on a search warrant, which the officers couldn't produce. But the young man loses his job, and the college president too.

Also described in *Red Mountain* is the infamous 1961 Birmingham bus incident in which a school bus, filled Freedom Riders is pursued by about 50 cars, and is forced to pull over, with a flat tire. Then, it is firebombed. An FBI agent, onboard, who is undercover, whose job was to keep track of the so-called outside agitators on the bus, comes out of the bus, his gun drawn to protect the Freedom Riders from the mob, saying, in words, that resounded around the world, *Now you get back and let these people off, or some of you are going to die.* They did, and the people survived.

The 1950's through the 1960's is the time when many movements for self-awareness and social change come together. There is *existentialism*, a literary and philosophical movement, which comes to American shores from Europe, and which focuses on helping individual realize their freedom to choose. Existentialism provides some of the background of the *beat generation* of the 50's and 60's, which becomes the *hippie movement* of *do your own thing*. These both have roots in American individualism. The anti-war movement, stemming from outrage at the Vietnam War and the draft, mixes with the hippie movement. There is the *so-called Consciousness movement*, coming from SE Asia and the Far East. These teaching come from such notable figures as *Alan Watts*, who wrote books on existentialism and Zen Buddhism, going back to the 1950's; *Maharishi Mahesh Yogi*, the founder of transcendental meditation and a prominent teacher of the famous British rock band, the Beatles; and *Timothy Leary*, former Harvard professor turned LSD explorer and advocate, who lived by his own famous phrase, "tune in, turn on, and drop out." This phrase became the watchword of the hippies in the late 1960's and 1970's. The consciousness movement was also influenced by *Abraham Maslow*, a famous psychologist and writer, who moved psychotherapy in the direction of humanistic psychology, in contrast to experimental psychology -- which emphasis scientific analysis and quantification of results -- and classical psychoanalysis, as well. And there is the *Civil Rights movement*, which goes back to the history of slavery in the US and to the Civil War and its aftermath. Some individuals and groups try to move the clock backward, toward segregation and racial oppression, while other people seek to move the clock forward toward racial and social equality. All this forms the background of *Red Mountain*.

*Question:* How would you classify the various periods of time through which you've lived when compared to each other, or to other periods

of time in history -- more change, less change, more stable, less stable, more oriented toward a particular goal as money, or religious truth, or social justice, or less so?

*Question:* If you could choose, in what kind of society would you like to live, and why?

## Part I

### Chapter 1.

#### The Setting of Red Mountain

Red Mountain is set in Birmingham, Alabama, in the post WW II period up through the late 1960's. The scene later shifts to NYC for a time, and then moves back to Birmingham. We follow the lives of a small group of young people, who, for the most part, meet in college, and continue their friendship through college and a few years beyond graduation.

Eddie Andersen, the first person narrator, relates the history of post WW II Birmingham, as he describes his childhood. Prior to the Civil Rights movement of the late 50's there was only an apparent social balance, and the social issue of racial equality was suppressed. Segregation was the official and then unofficial policy, supported by local custom.

There are also class divisions between the working class and upper classes. Wealthier folk live higher up Red Mountain. The physical growth of the city after WW II, and the destruction of the undeveloped areas, presages social disturbance too, in the upcoming Civil Rights struggles.

On the surface, at least, there is complacency in society. Blacks and white live lives that are not "separate but equal," but "separate and unequal" in practice. For instance, schools for white students and black are separate, but the black schools are not nearly as well funded by the state. Also, as Eddie writes, the basic attitude in Birmingham, at least prior to the Civil Rights movement, seems to be, that if you don't have anything nice to say about other people, then you don't say it. This attitude conceals a host of imbalances and injustices, with which the characters contend – Eddie in particular – throughout the course of the novel.

## Chapter 2.

### Introducing the Philosophical Themes of Red Mountain

#### *The Issue of Balance*

*Stability and Instability.* Red Mountain, the mountain, becomes a symbol of nature, and stability, in the novel. It stands in contrast to Vulcan, the statue erected after WW II by the City Fathers, outside of Birmingham, on Red Mountain, to symbolize their city as the industrial center of the South.

#### *Vulcan*

To symbolize its economic development after World War II, the City Fathers of Birmingham erect a statue, which Eddie says has the second highest elevation in the nation. It is a statue of Vulcan, who was the Roman god of metallurgy, the blacksmith for the gods. In Vulcan's right hand is an electric torch which announces highway fatalities – it shines green if there have been no fatalities, and red if there have been fatalities. It is supposed to be the symbol for Birmingham in the post WW II epoch, as the city expands.

Eddie, throughout the course of the novel, regards the statue with distain, identifying it with raw power and the trammeling of nature by commercial interests, which become ever more powerful.

*Comment:* Vulcan is also the god of the subterranean world of metal and its smelting, or the god of what literally smolders beneath the surface. Given various kinds of unrest in Birmingham -- the destruction of the local ecology by commercialization, the resentments set in motion by segregation, and the oppression of the white working class by the upper classes -- Vulcan also portends great social pressures about to erupt. And these do erupt. And, then, there are the issues that come up, in the lives and minds of our characters. *Red Mountain, the novel itself is the smithy which offers tools for readers to cut, clear out their consciousness, and forge new attitudes.*

*Concept for Understanding:* Often we hear the phrase, Nature vs. Culture or Nature vs. Commerce. What do these distinctions mean? Could you give examples, from your own experience? Do observe how these concepts play out in Red Mountain.

Social Balance or the struggle for justice, which we mentioned at the beginning, is a key theme in the novel. It's at the center of the lives of the main characters. The social issue of *balance vs. imbalance*, and related issues of justice and poverty are also played out in the Civil Rights struggles of the 1950's and 1960's. These struggles are mostly described in Birmingham, Alabama, and later NYC when the plot takes us there.

*The Issue of Balance and the Family*, in its conventional and non-conventional forms, is a key theme. The two main protagonists, Eddie and Chrissy come to express and represent radically different lifestyles, along with other characters as Anita, and Tim.

*Chrissy's diary* is so important as part of Chrissy's persona, and it almost warrants introduction as a character in the novel. The excerpts presented in *Red Mountain* are gathered, and printed together, because of the insight they offer into Chrissy, and the issues with which she struggles.

*Reason, Will, Emotions What is the balance?* Issues of balance and excess: monogamy vs sex with multiple partners, bisexuality and homosexuality, drug use and alcohol. Later, we discuss these attitudes and others, through the eyes of several different philosophies – Aristotle and Nietzsche, among others, and the tradition of *classicism vs. romanticism*, and the distinction between the *human sciences* and the *natural sciences*.

*We study the issues of religious consciousness, authority, conformity and psychology in Red Mountain*, particularly as these relate to the issue of *balance -- social and psychological*.

#### *Free Will and Determinism*

*Question:* Why do things happen in the way they do? Do we have free will or is there determinism, either caused by God , or our own psychological make-up or social background, within a particular historical and social period? Please keep these questions in mind as you read both the Study Guide and Red Mountain, the novel. By the end of the *Study Guide*, we will have explored these questions.

#### *Existential Choice & Existential Freedom*

For Chrissy and Eddie and other characters, the issue is how to use their sense of freedom to fulfill their nature and take responsibility for their choices.

*Comment:* By the word *existential*, we mean a person making personal choices about themselves or their own existence, and accepting responsibility for their choices. Later, we examine some philosophical aspects of existentialism in more detail. The issue for us, extrapolating the lessons of *Red Mountain*, the novel, is how can a person gain a measure of existential freedom, in which to make choices? Can a person exorcize the demons of their past, or are they to be possessed by them for the rest of their life, playing out destructive patterns of behavior? This issue is explored in the lives of the characters.

### *Change and Permanence*

*Comment:* The philosophical issue of change and permanence, and one's reaction to it, is an issue raised by the novel. The issue would be how one deals with impermanence and the inevitability of change. We see this played out in the interactions between Eddie and Chrissy, the sexual interplay among various characters, the death of Doug, and in the social issue of the coming of integration to the South.

*Question: Do you try to control events, or do events control you? Do some strategies seem to work better than others? Explain. This could be especially interesting as a class discussion, or a discussion in general.*

## Chapter 3

### Plot Summary of Red Mountain

#### *Eddie's Upbringing*

The novel is in the first person voice of Eddie, and extends from his childhood through his early 20's, a few years after his graduation from college. Eddie's description of Birmingham during WW II, when he was a child, opens the novel. He is raised in Birmingham by his mother, the oldest child in the household, with five brothers and sisters. His father is off fighting in the war. Eddie plays with the other children, and seems to get along well at home. He speaks with fondness of that period in his life. However, his father has fits of rage and sometimes would beat the children. Eddie dreads the times that he returns on furloughs during the war. When he returns for good after the war, getting a job as a lineman for the local phone company, Eddie tries to avoid his father as much as possible. When he is in high school, his mother develops a facial tick, due to an exposed nerve, and also develops Parkinson's disease. She's not able to hold things together in the family, as well as before. But by this time, Eddie is in high school, soon to graduate and do his six months of National Guard service in the Alabama militia.

*Question:* Despite a somewhat difficult childhood, Eddie manages to keep things together much better, in terms of his life, than the other characters, as Chrissy and Tim. As the novel unfolds, please reflect on the reasons why you think this is so.

#### *The Circle of Friends*

Growing up in Birmingham in the 40's and 50's makes Eddie feel very culturally closed in, as he describes. After graduating from high school, enlistment in the Alabama National Guard offers him a way out of his family's house, and local provincialism. Impressed by the intelligence and questioning attitude of fellow guardsmen who had been in college, Eddie decides to enroll in the local college, Crestview College, when his active enlistment is up. He will be the first person from his family to attend college

At Crestview College, Eddie meets several other intellectually inquisitive classmates, and they form an intense and cohesive group or circle of friends, as he describes it. The circle of friends includes the

couple, Sarah and Allen, who are music students, Anita, Chrissy, and Tim and Doug. Eddie and Chrissy don't meet at Crestview, but after Eddie graduates high school, as he is completing his service in the Alabama National Guard. He meets her right before he decides to go to Crestview to get his college degree. He meets Chrissy on a blind date. She had a starring role in the local showing of *Oklahoma* that very evening, and she is also planning to enroll at Crestview. These young people coalesce into a group, led by Doug and Tim. They discuss philosophy, literature and culture with great enthusiasm, often challenging their professors.

*Question:* Did your education in high school, or college, encourage learning and love of learning, or just repeating back to your teacher what they wanted to hear? Expand on this, please, if it's not too frustrating to think about!

At Crestview, the friends are liberal and support the burgeoning Civil Right movement. Eddie doesn't get involved with voting registration drives or marches in Alabama during that period. We discuss this period of Eddie's life more, in the section on Eddie.

#### *Life at Crestview*

Over the course of several years, Chrissy has sexual relations with different members and groupings within the circle of friends, with Sarah and Allen, as a couple, with Anita, and with Anita and Tim in a threesome. Later on, Chrissy and Eddie marry, though Eddie didn't find out about Chrissy's sexual partners and attitudes about sex till much later.

*Comment:* Even when he finds out, Eddie seems to be reasonably tolerant of this behavior, because he and Chrissy dislike convention and hypocrisy, and because they have an emotional bond, as a couple. It is her sexual relationship with Anita that seems to affect Chrissy the most, and has the most lasting implications for the novel. We discuss Chrissy in much greater depth in a section on her, later in our study.

Eddie and Chrissy graduate from high school, and marry. They both attend Crestview College, in the Birmingham area, and live in student housing off campus. Eddie supports himself with two part-time jobs, in a bookstore and the library. He continues to be fascinated with literature and philosophy. Indeed, it would not be inappropriate to say that Chrissy's sexual obsessions bothered him less, because he was

already having a love affair with philosophy and literature. More in the section on Eddie.

*Question:* A love affair with philosophy? What could that mean? Please think of the question again, at the end of Red Mountain. Maybe, by the end of the *Study Guide*, you will be having a love affair with philosophy!

### *Death of Doug*

The group of friends holds a party to celebrate the graduation of Allan and Sarah and the coming of age of Doug, who would be drinking alcohol legally, for the first time. Eddie is a junior at Crestview College, at that time. The group of friends celebrates with lots of alcohol and sex, which seems to absorb everyone except Eddie, who was quite absorbed in his philosophy studies --- about Hume and Kant on causality (which we'll be examining in a later chapter). Sarah leaves the party abruptly, and Tim and Doug go out in their car, to find her. They all had been drinking. The weather was rainy, the road very wet and Tim is driving fast. The car in which Doug is riding overturns. Doug is trapped in the car while the water starts to rise, within it. No one can think of what to do to try to save him. Tim takes off in the other car to find help. He later returns with the sheriff but Doug has drowned. The sheriff reflects that they did have a jack which they could have used to elevate the car, or otherwise try to have freed Doug. Everyone seems to think that Tim's choice of driving for help was wrong, and Doug's family considers pressing charges against him for negligent homicide.

### *Tim's Mental Breakdown*

Tim is very despondent, for Doug was his long-time friend. Tim feels guilty over not being able to save his friend, and possibly making the wrong decision to drive away and seek help, instead of staying with him. Tim leaves town for a while, travels to California on motorcycle, but returns to Birmingham. He has steadily been using various illicit drugs, and seeking out new sexual partners, perhaps, compulsively. He continues to be very despondent over Doug's death.

Over the span of a few years, Tim has come to believe that he could control the weather through his mind, and descends into schizophrenia. One day, as he is outside, with his shirt off, staring at the sun, neighbors call the sheriff. They are not sure what to do with Tim, since there is no space in the closest psychiatric hospital. They

put him into a solitary cell in the local jail, and forget about him for 3 days. His schizophrenia becomes more pronounced. He smears feces all over his body, as part of a magical ritual, so Eddie believes. The officers find him and he has to be scrubbed head to foot. He remains at the mental hospital and does regain some mental capacity, though Eddie doesn't speak with him for the remainder of the story. Anita does visit him, however.

### *Chrissy's Pregnancy*

While they are living in the little house in the woods, Chrissy becomes pregnant, most likely with Eddie being the father, they believe, despite Chrissy's multiple partners. Andrea is born. While Chrissy enjoys the baby, she continues to be very moody and depressed, often not washing, missing classes and taking to her bed. Chrissy continues her affair with Anita, though Eddie doesn't exactly know about the sexual component of the relationship at that time.

### *Chrissy's "Tristram Shandy" study.*

After the move to the cabin, Chrissy completes a very well-received re-writing of the novel *Tristram Shandy*. Chrissy regards it as a vindication of both the creative and non-conventional parts of herself. She and Eddie are elated. We consider this important episode in more detail in later chapters.

### *Chrissy Gets Counseling*

Some time later, Anita graduates college, leaves the area and moves to NYC. Chrissy becomes quite despondent. Eddie finally prevails on her to get psychological help from Dr. Cantrell, a psychologist at Crestview College. On prodding from Eddie, she agrees to tell Eddie that she is treating Chrissy for depression. Chrissy is angry at Eddie for speaking to her doctor. She continues to have intense periods of depressed, particularly when Anita leaves, in the context of her subsequent visits.

### *Chrissy's Move to NYC*

Not much later Chrissy unexpectedly leaves Eddie and moves to NYC to be with Anita. Andrea stays with Eddie, who enlists their families' help in raising her. Chrissy returns to visit and unexpectedly, without talking to Eddie, takes Andrea and returns to NYC. Eddie is quite disturbed, not just because Chrissy, in effect, kidnapped their daughter, but because she doesn't yet have good living arrangements

in place to raise a child. Chrissy has gotten a job as a social worker in NYC. She has a roommate, a man named Gary, with whom she and baby Andrea live, in an apartment in the East Village, in NYC.

Eddie visits Chrissy and Andrea in NYC. The visit goes all right and Eddie returns to Birmingham. He sees Anita and her friend, Carina, socially. He and Carina have a brief affair.

### Eddie Moves to NYC

#### *Chrissy's suicide attempt*

Shortly afterward, Eddie decides to move to NYC to be with Chrissy and Andrea, and to study Philosophy in graduate school at NYU. After a visit by Anita, Chrissy becomes very depressed and despondent. Soon afterwards, attempting suicide attempt, she slits her wrists and takes an overdose of pills. Eddie visits Chrissy in the hospital and speaks to the psychiatrist treating her, Dr. Williams. He tells Eddie his philosophy that psychiatric patients need to return to the outside world to deal with their problems, and need to keep to a minimum the time they escape from this by remaining in the hospital. (more on Dr. Williams in the section on Chrissy). Eddie and Chrissy talk about their relationship, which is described in the later chapters on Eddie and Chrissy in more detail.

In the meantime, a despondent Eddie is befriended by a married neighbor, Linda. However, when they drink, the solace turns into sexual liaison. Chrissy returns from the hospital. She has taken a leave of absence from her social work job. Eddie breaks off his affair with a reluctant Linda, after a very short period, and expresses guilt about it, as narrator, but doesn't tell Chrissy about it. He does express his continued commitment to the relationship with Chrissy.

*Comment:* Chrissy becomes worn down by the double frustration of her sexual orientation and the apparent unwillingness of Anita to make a commitment to their relationship. There were psychological and philosophical issues at play too, and we discuss this more in Chapter 3 in the section on Chrissy. This also takes its toll in the relationship between Eddie and Chrissy

#### *Chrissy's Suicide*

Chrissy's mother, Evelyn, and stepfather, Bill, come up to NYC to visit her. The visit doesn't progress very well, not getting past Chrissy showing her mother her bandaged wrists, and running out of the

room. Her mother, in tears, leaves, without Chrissy and her speaking, and Chrissy takes to bed for three days. Eddie finally helps to get her up, after they exchange heated words – Chrissy saying that she’s a lesbian and doesn’t want Eddie, but lamenting that Anita does not see a future with her. Eddie erupts that she could try to kill herself again, if she wants, but she has to take responsibility for herself. She calms down and things seem more normal for a time, though she remains despondent. Then, Chrissy seems to perk up and be more self-assured. But, then, one rainy day, she goes out, walks to the FDR highway in the East Village, stands by its edge. Then, when a car approaches, she throws herself in front of it, and is killed.

The news is conveyed to Eddie by Dr. Samuels, the chairman of the NYU philosophy dept, whom Eddie never met before. Chrissy has Eddie’s college ID in her pocket, which the police find, and so his department chairman is asked to inform Eddie. Eddie finds Dr. Samuels is extremely unhelpful to him in his time of need, and has virtually no advice to offer Eddie (more on the various professionals with whom Eddie comes in contact, in the novel, when we examine Eddie in more detail).

### *Chrissy’s Funeral*

Eddie must attend to the details of Chrissy’s funeral and burial in Birmingham. He must attend to both families, and deal with the stigma, in the minds’ of the families and townspeople, of being the husband of a woman who runs away from home, and then commits suicide. He strongly dislikes the conventions associated with the funeral and the banal speech by Pastor Bingham (another professional with a doctorate) , but Eddie is civil to all. Eddie grudgingly accepts the conventions of the funeral eulogy. He realizes that he doesn’t agree with many of the values surrounding death, as he doesn’t agree with the conventional attitudes toward life. He speaks briefly to Anita, who comes to the funeral. She counsels him to let Chrissy go and give himself some peace too. These were the two people to whom Chrissy was most committed. Off in the distance, he sees Tim, with his attendant from the mental hospital. They had come with Anita to the funeral. Eddie remembers Chrissy and her independent defiant spirit, and he lets his marriage band drop into the open grave.

Eddie considers his next options. He wants to stay down South, where his family and Chrissy’s could help with the childcare for Andrea. Over the objections of his father, he will join the new Head Start program as a teacher, the first white male teacher in Alabama in the program. He

stands up to his father on this, even when his father tells him that he must leave his family's house, after he accepts the Head Start job.

## Chapter IV

### Character Analysis

#### *Eddie*

Chrissy's openness to sexual experimentation reflects the period of openness to change and experimentation, in America in the 1960's. Eddie's reaction to this, especially to Chrissy, who has become his wife, at this point, is very interesting, and reveals a great deal about him, at this time in his development.

He neither accepts nor condemns Chrissy's sexual activity. He is not Puritanical. He loves Chrissy, who has become his wife, including the physical part of their relationship. Perhaps, he is not sexually possessive of her because of his other interests – his studies, and his two p/t jobs. He also still spends time with Chrissy and their friends.

#### *Eddie's Sense of Balance*

Without pondering on it, Eddie lives life at the center, and not the extremes. This may have been part of his temperament, and also the negative lesson he learned, from his father's fits of rage, while growing up. Eddie seems to have a very strong sense of balance. He does smoke pot, and uses alcohol. But he knows that he has to stay healthy and balanced, so as to keep a full course load, and work at his two part-time jobs. So, if he veers from his center to excess or deficiency; he comes back to rest at his center. And he puts this attitude into practice.

Eddie's mental balance, in contrast to Chrissy, is attitude is quite striking, and is really the underlying philosophical theme of the book. As we develop in the section on Philosophy, the contrast between these two characters is at the very heart of the novel.

Eddie favors peace of mind rather than extreme emotion, as his basic orientation to the world. That Chrissy does not, for a combination of psychological and philosophical reason, we discuss further. Anita's comment to Chrissy on this, which Chrissy relates to Eddie, is that she stays with Eddie in order to help give her balance (more in the section on *free will and determinism*).

In his life style, and studies, Eddie seems to embody Socrates' famous dictum – "the unexamined life is not worth living." While aware of the world around him, and as an active social participant, his is very much the life of the mind. He is curious, looks at the larger social picture, and approaches things with a basic sense of good will. He retains his sense of wonder, at the world of ideas, to use Plato's famous phrase. And he seems perpetually grateful that he was exposed to ideas and values with greater breadth of vision, than those he experienced while growing up. He focuses on the positive. His enlistment in the National Guard, becomes a consciousness-raising experience for him, as he eagerly observes the college graduates in his unit, and sees that learning could expand his horizon, too.

*Comment:* Eddie's father has instructed him, by way of negative example, and this seems to exert a big influence on Eddie. Thus, he experiences love from his mother, fits of violent rage from his father, fun with his friends while a boy, and later, and later on, happiness with his friends, in Crestview College. The friendship with the new circle of friends at college, plus exposure to new ideas, was like having a new upbringing for him, a kind of secular "born again" experience. He recognizes the narrowness and parochialism of the way in which he's been raised, and that this was part of the basic attitude of the society around him. Eddie's search for his own sense of freedom coincides with the larger social movement around him, the burgeoning Civil Rights movement. These individual and societal tendencies reinforced each other, for many people during that time, and for Chrissy too. The problem for Chrissy was the issue of limits, as we discuss later.

### *Eddie and Authority Figures*

Eddie's sense of justice and need to think things through, put him at odds with one authority figure after another – (with the exception of his father, these are mostly males with doctorates or medical degrees). These range from an imperious college English teacher, to Dr. Williams, Chrissy's second therapist, Dr. Samuels, the head of the Philosophy Department, and Dr. Bingham, the local Birmingham pastor, who presided at Chrissy's funeral. Each of these men is at best, unable to solve the presenting problem, and at worst, is shown to be hypocritical. It's not that Eddie has a "problem" with authority figures. It's more that they are shown not to have the necessary wisdom that would warrant his respect. So, they are more like the Wizard of Oz figures, with a lot of show (i.e. title or position) but little substance behind them.

These authority figures are not particularly open to Eddie's concerns, as an individual, but more focused on promoting their own basic approaches to issues. At the same time their own narrowness of focus makes them much less effective at their jobs than they might be. By the end of *Red Mountain*, Eddie is able to surmount their influence, as well as feelings of cynicism on his part, grieve for Chrissy, and then move on to new things, like teaching in the Head Start Program in Alabama.

The authority figures also represent aspects of the status quo, which Eddie increasingly rejects as he matures, and the novel develops. He says:

*I begin to think we Southerners do not question our beliefs because we live in the heart of the Bible belt, and we have been told what to think by our Baptist and Methodist ministers, who, as God's spokesmen, are the policemen of public opinion. But they have failed us. The majority has preached from the place of privilege about heaven and hell. They have politely protected the status quo. They have protected the powerful and said nothing about the KKK and the four dead little girls.*

...

Also, Eddie writes, "

*I am not happy to be a representative of my culture. I want to be seen as just myself, as an individual making his own way in this world.*

*Comment:* Eddie doesn't have a confrontational style with various authority figures, with whom he disagrees. He rejects their influence over his life by questioning them, and speaking his mind. His finding his own voice, which also expresses the aspirations of the Civil Rights movement, and the spirit of the time: the search for social justice.

### *Chrissy*

In this section, we focus on Chrissy's psychological dynamics.. Philosophical aspects of Chrissy's lifestyle and attitude are explored in later sections on philosophy, existentialism, and free will. This is a reference to existential choice in this chapter, which we explain.

*Comment:* Our purpose in this Study Guide is neither to catalogue Chrissy's mental health problems, nor to make judgments about her life style. *It is to discuss the issue of freedom in the context of one's personal psychological makeup, and one's choices.* As we indicated at

the beginning of our study, the issue of freedom is key, in *Red Mountain*, the novel, and in this study guide. And this issue is expressed in the different life styles of Eddie and Chrissy. It is hoped that detailed exploration of these factors will result in insights that help the readers in their lives.

Having said this, Chrissy seems to display a whole range of psychological issues. We describe her childhood first, and then discuss these symptoms, as they range from the less severe to the more severe.

Chrissy is often withdrawn, and sullen. She has flashes of artistic inspiration, as in Diary entries and her painting, and the *Tristram Shandy* study. There is also sexual excess and drugs. Attracted to the extremes- she tends to veer off to one extreme or the other as a resting point, not the center. While Eddie grow up and grows outward, Chrissy turns inward. She is very childlike in sense of displaying great moodiness, enthusiasm, possessiveness.

She can't let go and remains fixated on the unique parts of relationships which can't be duplicated or shared, yet are not sustainable in their present form. She is possessive and she clings to certain experiences, as those with Sarah and Anita, while despising the temporary or temporal nature of the experience. She is also able to sublimate those states of mind into beautiful writing on transiency, which we see in the Diary entries, and in her *Tristram Shandy* study.

*Concept for Understanding:* As we learn more about Chrissy, do you see the possibilities for tragedy unfolding? Do you think that Chrissy could have done other than what she does, as the story unfolds. We examine this issue in terms of *freedom and necessity*, (or, rephrased as, *freedom vs. determinism*), toward the end of the *Study Guide*.

### *Chrissy, and Tim*

Some remarks on Tim, are relevant here. With Tim, we see Chrissy's inclination toward excess in sex and drugs, enhanced. He has great sexual desires or needs – he's willing to give up an already unconventional threesome with Chrissy and Anita, because he wants to add more women. .

He continues down the path of extremes -- extreme use of drugs, and also extreme personal guilt over not being able to save his very close friend from drowning. After his mental breakdown, he resides in a

psychiatric hospital in the Birmingham area for the duration of the novel, and is visited by Anita, who has since moved to NYC.

*Comment:* These extremes in lifestyle, and the trauma of Doug's death, combined with possible psychological predispositions on his part, seem to contribute to feelings of grandiosity, and eventually result in schizophrenia.

*Question:* Chrissy and Tim both had psychological issues that they needed to address. What are there things in Chrissy's life that kept a mental break, as affected Tim, from happening to her? Yet, these things didn't save her, in the end. What might have saved her? A treatment plan and life style plan?

### *Chrissy's Relationship to her Mother*

Let's continue our discussion on Chrissy. She can't accept less than total absorption with the object of her affection, whether be it a person, as Anita, or an activity, as writing. She also becomes very absorbed in her emotions. So, if she feeling depressed, she becomes extremely so, taking to her bed for days or weeks, as happens throughout the course of *Red Mountain*.

Her mother does not seem to be particularly nurturing and is also very competitive with her daughter, apparently competing with her, when she was young, for her boyfriend's attention, This apparent lack of early bonding with her mother seems to cause a basic insecurity within Chrissy. It manifests when a lover, particularly another woman, Anita, would leave. And so, she becomes very distraught and depressed, when Anita tells her that their relationship couldn't indefinitely persist in its intensity and all absorptive character.

*Comment:* Rephrasing, from the above paragraph--Chrissy's feelings of abandonment by lovers, as Sarah and Anita, may have been psychologically based on her re-experiencing her mother's abandonment and competition with her. Becoming withdrawn, depressed and suicidal are part of the way she deals with loss. In rejecting her mother's sympathy, or help, after she attempts suicide, she acts out her mother's abandonment of her. Anita now seems to have become the distant and unreachable mother, in Chrissy's mind, in the events leading up to her suicide attempt, and in subsequent events that lead to her actual suicide. As she continues to act out this drama, she abandons Anita, her mother, Eddie, her baby, and her very self, for the very last time, when she commits suicide.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO CHRISSEY

### *The "Good Enough" Mother*

The particular sense of loss, caused when a person close to her leaves, seems to have arisen deep-seated anger in Chrissy. She blames her present frustrations on her mother's abandonment of her (or perceived abandonment) as a child, and her mother's later competition with her.

In Freudian and psychoanalytical terms, in general, if the young child feels secure, they have a feeling of confidence and a feeling of being at home in the world. They increasingly extend this feeling to increased mastery of the world. This is facilitated by the *good enough mother*. (The psychiatrist, D.W. Winnicott introduces the term *good-enough mother*.) The *good enough* mother does not cause the child to feel they are abandoned. This mother is neither over-demanding or perfectionistic, nor does she smother the baby or child with attention. Rather, the *good enough mother* encourages the baby to feel sufficiently secure about themselves, to progressively move out into the world and master objects and situations within in it (Hence, this approach is also known as *object relations* therapy).

The concept of the *good enough mother* promotes balance in the mother-child relationship. An insecure child might project unfulfilled desires and attitudes about the parent onto various other people around them, as lovers, and clings to them as surrogate parents.

### *Defense Mechanisms*

Chrissy keeps *acting out*, or projecting her insecurity onto her relationships with people, particularly her female lovers. Then, various *defense mechanisms* as repression, resistance, reaction formation, projection and displacement (of symptoms) occur. There is also *projective identification*. By projective identification, we mean that Chrissy might act in such a way – extremely clinging – *so that she evokes reactions from Sarah and Anita which are precisely the ones she most fears, namely rejection*. She would have internalized her mother's rejection of her (or her perception of her mother rejecting her) and then acted this out through one defense mechanism, or another). These defense mechanisms and others are useful tools by which to understand Chrissy's behavior

This approach to the unconsciousness through ego defense mechanisms is known as Ego Psychology. Anna Freud's famous work,

*The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense* is part of this school of psychoanalytic thought. Winnicott and Anna Freud are both considered as object relations psychoanalysts. This approach focuses less on the individual's state of mind, and more on how they relate to the others as objects in the world – hence the name, object relations.

Chrissy withholds nothing of herself in the relationship with Anita. At the same time, she engulfs Anita with her neediness. She may be acting out the role of the deprived infant from her own childhood -- when deprived of her mother, she may seek to envelop and smother another woman, Anita, on whom she projects the image of mother.

Psychologically, a big issue for Chrissy is establishing proper *boundaries* between herself and others, particularly her female lovers. Chrissy complains to Eddie, after her suicide attempt, that Anita rejects her because she doesn't want to deal with a lesbian relationship. But as Anita relates, at different points, Chrissy's obsessive need for her, and her need to control the relationship, is the main problem they have.

Interestingly, enough, while Chrissy was bisexual, in practice, she seems to identify herself as a lesbian. This may have actually increased her feeling of isolation, at being a lesbian who was, in some sense, straying into having sexual relations with the opposite sex. In Freud's famous phrase, she may have been polymorphously perverse, in the sense of the sexuality of a child, which is the sense in which Freud made this statement.

*Is Chrissy Psychologically Free to Choose Her Lifestyle- Preliminary Remarks -*

We discuss this issue in more detail in two later chapters, Existentialism and Free Will and Determinism.

Chrissy's inability to be psychologically free, undermines her ability to act as a free moral agent, in the way that Eddie tries to act, despite his restrictions while growing up.

On one hand, Chrissy blames her mother for her problems. This is *bad faith*, in Jean-Paul Sartre's sense of the term, i.e. using a circumstance, even a dire one, as an excuse for one's actions( we have a whole section on existentialism, in a later chapter). Chrissy knows that her nature is to throw herself into activities and relationships 100%, holding nothing back for herself. Her friends, Gary, in NYC, criticizes

that attitude as being self-destructive, as a person. Unfortunately for Chrissy's peace of mind and mental balance, her holding nothing back includes her mood swings, and hypersensitivity to events and circumstances (e.g. she becomes ill due to the psychological pressures of her physically and emotionally demanding social work job in NYC).

*Comment:* Chrissy is not psychologically free, but a prisoner of her fear of abandonment. Proactive and intense emergency counseling might have provided her with enough insight to not attempt suicide again, to accept insecurity and impermanence as part of life -- as in Buddhism, Classical Greek Stoicism and Epicureanism -- and be able move forward with her life, rather than seek to end it. But discussions with Dr. Williams in the hospital, or even earlier sessions with Dr. Cantrell on the campus were not able to propel Chrissy in this direction of hope. Eddie seems to have some regrets too, that he wasn't more open with Dr. Williams, in discussing in greater detail, Chrissy's history of periods of extreme depression.

Had Chrissy been more honest about the depth of her feelings of isolation and despair, she may have been received more sustained inpatient treatment before she was released from the hospital. However, she may not have been fully aware of this herself, possibly minimizing her periods of extreme depression, in her mind. Eddie does ask Dr. Williams if Chrissy could be allowed to stay longer in the hospital. His reply, as mentioned, is that patients are not encouraged to use the hospital as a buffer from the world, but to integrate themselves back into the outside world as soon as possible. We're not sure whether Chrissy was going to outpatient treatment, though Dr. Williams indicates she would receive it. Eddie too, does keep an eye on Chrissy too, particularly when she returns home after her suicide attempt. Yet, Dr. Williams might have been right in the end, for he says that nothing would prevent Chrissy from trying to commit suicide again, if that's what she really wants --she structures her 2<sup>nd</sup> suicide attempt so that it would succeed, and it does.

### *The Issues of Abandonment, and Defense Mechanisms*

Chrissy expresses overwhelming feelings of isolation and abandonment when people with whom she has become close -- women like Sarah and Anita, in particular -- leave the intensity of the relationship with her. We're actually speaking of physical separation, as when Sarah and Anita move away. She experiences the loss as depression and not taking care of herself, as not bathing and neglecting her appearance.

This goes back a long time, as Sarah leaving for graduate school, when Chrissy was still a student at Crestview.

*Comment:* Chrissy literally acts out the role of the abandoning mother (which is how she perceived her own mother), leaving Eddie and Andrea to go to NY to pursue Anita obsessively. She then switches roles and becoming the needy, all-demanding infant-type personality, who alienates the object of her needs – Anita – with her intensity, and Eddie also, to some degree.

*Comment:* Chrissy fears that Anita will leave her, as she believes her mother did. This may have involved physical absence, or withdrawing the emotional support that the young Chrissy needed. Anita, in fact, does leave her. If she actually induces or provokes this behavior in Anita, then we could say that the defense mechanism of *projective identification* (which we discussed earlier) is operating, in Chrissy's psyche.

#### *Chrissy's Passive-Aggressive Behavior*

She becomes sullen, withdrawn from friends, and neglects her hygiene and basic appearance. But she'd also becomes angry and lashes out at people around her, even friends. This is *passive aggressive* behavior. It dates back at least, to the time when Eddie meets her, before they both start attending Crestview This issue feeds into the final portion of the narrative, the period beginning with Chrissy's leaving for NYC, and her subsequent suicide.

*Comment:* To consider Chrissy's behavior in terms of her being passive-aggressive seems to help our understanding of her. There are many times in the course of *Red Mountain* when Chrissy experiences periods of anger, depression and withdrawal. She then takes to her bed for days or weeks at a time, and is hostile to those around her (as Eddie) who try to help her. These are some examples of this type of behavior.

She leaves Eddie at home with their new born daughter, Andrea, to move to NYC, to live closer to Anita. Anita wanted to break off their relationship because of Chrissy's desire that it be more consuming.

Later, Chrissy literally swoops back down to Birmingham to take Andrea with her back to NYC. She doesn't tell the father or either family, though she didn't yet have a stable home environment or steady work for herself. The fact that she literally kidnaps or removes

her to baby to an uncertain environment, is very noteworthy of her extreme willfulness and willingness to act out in a way that might have undesired consequences. This would be another instance of passive-aggressive behavior. Calling for, but refusing to speak to her mother, followed by displaying her bandaged wrists, after her suicide attempt, is another example of passive-aggressive behavior. And finally, Chrissy commits suicide by jumping into traffic on a highway, during a busy time. The way that Chrissy committed suicide might be considered as a passive-aggressive act, because it might have caused accidents or other fatalities to occur. Hypothetically, she might have jumped instead, into the river which was right next to the highway, which would not threatened anyone else's safety. This might not have been as certain a cause of death as jumping in front of a high-speed car, however, a fact of which Chrissy was all too aware, from her earlier "unsuccessful" attempt at suicide.

### *Psychiatric Treatment*

Chrissy sees Dr. Cantrell for counseling, and Dr. Williams after her suicide attempt. Dr. Williams releases her from the hospital relatively quickly, saying that the hospital was not designed to be a refuge from the world for people who attempt suicide. They would try again, anyway, as he says. His commitment to further helping Chrissy seems somewhat remote, though, presumably he would have helped her secure therapy, or counseling, or drug therapy outside. Nor does she work through any of the issues that brought her to her suicide attempt – feeling of abandonment by Anita, and frustration at being a lesbian (or bisexual) in a society that was, as a whole, not tolerant of this lifestyle.

*Comment:* Eddie seems to present Dr. Williams as being somewhat narcissistic, and overly concerned with his appearance, possibly at the expense of his interest in, and commitment to his patients. At the very least, he was not sufficiently attentive to Chrissy, and was more concerned with promoting his own point of view about getting people who've attempted suicide back into society, than in dealing with the issues that caused them to try to kill themselves.

*Comments:* We've discussed Chrissy in terms of defense mechanisms, and passive-aggressive behavior which are not extreme pathological conditions, like schizophrenia. Psychiatric disorders should be mentioned too,, discussion of which could help shed light on her

character, and her development in Red Mountain. The connection between states of mind, somatic or physical states in the body, (as reaction to stress), and activity itself, is profound, and is instructive for everyone to consider.

Chrissy exhibits behaviors that might be diagnosed today, as borderline behavior – borderline being a psychiatric diagnosis which denotes modes of behavior that are at the "border" between neurotic and psychotic behavior. In the borderline disorder, one's grasp on reality is loosened. So, Chrissy's bouts of extreme depression may have opened her psyche to this possibility, which would have affected her judgment.

Chrissy exhibited symptoms of bipolar disorder (manic-depression). She certainly is narcissistic, or very self-involved, in the everyday sense of the word, if not the clinical sense. It should be noted too, that there is a histrionic side to Chrissy, which in her case, may have tended to feed her oppressiveness and manic-depression. In other words, she tends to be over-emotional, attention seeking and demanding, especially as intimacy with a partner increases. Eddie notes the irony here – he has his first date with Chrissy, as he's leaving the National Guard, right after seeing her perform in Oklahoma, playing the part of Ado Addie who is, as Eddie writes, "the girl who cain't say no."

*Comments:* Chrissy was also a victim of her time, to no small degree. A generation later, a woman might still have felt despair at being rejected by a lesbian lover, but felt greater self-acceptance that she was a lesbian. In the end, it seems to be a combination of psychiatric and social conditions, and an attitude of not wanting to adapt to monogamy and to society's puritanical attitudes on sexuality, which caused Chrissy to kill herself. Her possessives in relationships, and her obsessive-compulsiveness certainly impairs her judgment. Her judgment also seems to be tied to severe manic-depressive episodes.

*Concepts for Understanding:* Is inevitable that Chrissy kill herself, or try to commit suicide? How free is she to choose, in terms of internal (psychological) and external (social) factors which influenced her?. We later return to this issue of free will vs. determinism, as a philosophical issue.

The Tristan Shandy Study:  
Sublimation and Creativity, Affirmation  
vs.  
The Diary:  
Sublimation, Romanticism and Subjectivity

A big issue for Chrissy, in her daily life, is to maintain her mental balance, despite intense mood swings and obsessive-compulsiveness, and to continue to function in the world. Her mood swings emphasize subjectivity and romanticism, rather than a more balanced and rational attitude. We've already examined the psychological aspects of Chrissy's mood swings, and we later deal with their philosophical aspects in the Philosophy section of the study guide.

In the Diary, which we'll be examining in more detail, Chrissy exalts in subjectivity, in intense feeling which demands everything, leaving her with nothing (This is actually the way that her roommate Gary describes some relationships, which we'll also consider later, in the Philosophy section of the study guide). What Gary describes is part of the psychiatric borderline condition disorder, which we've been discussing. But it is also the fuel of artistic creation too. It expresses the attitude or philosophical approach of romanticism, which we'll also be examining shortly in this study.

Whether the artist can master their emotions so as to re-channel them in the service of their work, or whether it masters them, is key. Will the artist's intense emotions and mood swings fuel the engine of creativity, or will this mixture ignite outside the engine, engulfing the whole vehicle in flames, resulting in possible self-destruction or destruction of others?

Freud's theory of sublimation, is a way for us to understand the energetic exchange between the mind and body. Rather than live through, or act out certain forms of behavior, a person could sublimate or channel their energy into other pursuits, as art. Sublimation is the process by which an individual redirects their life energy to desired goals, whether these be sports, or an intellectual pursuit. Sublimation could re-channel intense feeling in a constructive rather than destructive way. A person might re-direct aggressive energy from physical fighting to sports, for instance. Or a person might re-direct energy from a focused activity, like gambling, or a less directed one as watching shows on TV, or to a goal that has a more intellectual thrust, as reading a book, or writing an essay.

*Concept for Understanding:* Consider an example of sublimation from your own experience. It is a very powerful experience, is it not? Do you see how important an approach it would be to helping people who have addiction problems? The redirection of energy is actually part of the 12 Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous and other-called 12 step programs, as Narcotics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous and Shoppers Anonymous.

We see this artistic side of Chrissy in full flower in her *Tristram Shandy* study, to which we now turn.

### *Chrissy's Tristram Shandy Study*

The period of time during which Chrissy does her update and rewrite of the novel, *Tristram Shandy*, was one of the most happy and balanced periods of time for Chrissy and Eddie, as Eddie relates, in *Red Mountain*. It's really one of the artistic high points of the relationship between two.

For a literature course she was taking, Chrissy writes a contemporary update of *Tristram Shandy*, a famous English mid 18<sup>th</sup> century comic novel by Laurence Sterne. It is considered now by readers, as very modernist, with multiple narrators, iconoclastic uses of symbols, and has references to bisexuality.

Chrissy identifies both with the work's iconoclasm and rewrites herself into her role of the novel's bisexual hero. Eddie writes that, with great enthusiasm, she is able to sublimate her own obsessive energy into her writing, and projects and identifies with the action in the novel, and in her rewrite. Her essay is her vehicle. On it, she can safely traverse the hazardous terrain of her intense feelings, while not getting on the road and into accidents, herself!

*Comment:* Chrissy's own energies are contained and focused on her writing project – she does not specifically explore her own psyche, except through her study of the novel. Possibly, exploration of her own psyche through the symbolism of her study does not trigger any ego defense mechanisms, as resistance, as happened when she spoke with Drs. Cantrell and Williams. So, her writing project enables her to express herself freely too, without feeling any loss of her individuality, or sense of intrusion, as when her dark disorder, as she put it, is plumbed in psychotherapy sessions.

by the professor. Chrissy and Eddie both feared it would get a low grade because it was so unconventional and bohemian in that conservative Bible belt area, and the professor tended to be a low grader. But he gives it an A+ and heaps praise on it.

Eddie and Chrissy both bask in the glow of this experience, for a time. Chrissy soon becomes pregnant, and her mood swings become more pronounced.

*Concepts for Understanding:*

*Questions:*

- Have you ever lost yourself in a novel, short story, or poem? What was the story about, and how did it feel to be "lost" in it?
- Think of a character in a literary work whom you like. Rewrite yourself into that role. Play with this a bit. How does it feel?
- Which do you prefer? To identify with, or recreate a literary character, or go and act a certain way in your own life. What are the benefits and pitfalls of each approach?

We'll now contrast Chrissy's Tristram Shandy essay to her diary.

Chrissy's Diary: Subjectivity and Romanticism

Eddie gives the diary the briefest of introductions -- we're told that it was left behind with Chrissy's effects, and Eddie, periodically, reads from it, to the readers. At various points in the narrative, it appears, like a character in the book.

The diary entries are extremely important for the reader's understanding of Chrissy. They are short enough as a grouping to include them in their entirety. We will present them sequentially, and describe briefly, their context in the novel. We will include introductory comments, some additional comments interspersed among the entries, and some final remarks at the end.

*Introduction to the Diary:*

*Comment:* Chrissy's diary entries are very powerful, moving and beautifully written. Chrissy's character -- her intensity and obsessiveness -- shows through in her writing. Whether she could have acted differently than she did, raises a key philosophical issue -- free

will vs. determinism. This is considered separately, in the section on *Philosophy*.

*Comment:* The diary is portentous, and intense, neither the voice of God, nor deus ex machina. It is something ponderous, deep and eloquent.

*Comment:* The Diary parallels Red Mountain, the physical mountain. It erupts from the earth, like a primal force of nature. The Diary erupts, unbidden, from the source of Chrissy's nature, which is also the source of creativity. The Diary has great beauty, like Red Mountain. Eddie loves Chrissy, and he loves Red Mountain.

Chrissy is a talented writer. She recognizes this, and so do those people close to her, as Eddie and Anita. But she also puts herself down as a writer, by saying at one point, in her diary, "me in graduate school? Everyone knows that I'm no scholar."

*Comment:* The diary entries are strikingly direct and honest, often expressing things like, no other person could know my individuality and my suffering. This is not unlike the grandiose feelings that a young child might express when they are suffering.

*Comment:* Despite their emotional and lyrical power, the content of the diary and the act of writing itself, don't point beyond themselves toward healing action in the world, for Chrissy. The journaling experience isn't able to lead her beyond her subjectivity and her emotional expressions, or resolve any of her personal issues. However deep their roots her psyche, by whatever name we call them, Chrissy's strong obsessive and possessive psychical energy invariably asserts itself, pulling her back into excess and deficiency (as taking to her bed in deep depression for days at a time). Sublimation doesn't seem too occur for her, in a life-changing way. The Tristram Shandy study points the way, but is unable to lead Chrissy away from her obsessions.

Chrissy isn't able to experience catharsis, accompanied by some holding back of psychical energy for herself. "Everyman" Gary, tells her that a person must hold something of themselves back, to avoid being emptied of oneself, by the intensity of love of another. But Chrissy can't seem to hold back her intense feeling for Anita, and sense of loss when Anita is gone. Indeed, she experiences prolonged periods of despair, which she documents in almost clinical detail.

Chrissy does put her feelings into words, a key process of healing in psychoanalytic therapy, into very eloquent words, in fact, and clearly state the issues at hand. However, she holds on to both the joys and sorrows she describes, and ultimately, either can't or won't try to bring to light, or to sublimate, or try to heal, her dark disorder, as she puts it. In the end, her writings trail behind her, and do not lead her or give her strength to continue to want to live, and she meets a tragic end, at her own hand. She lives out the role of tragic heroine in a romantic drama of her own creation. Eddie meets Chrissy after watching her perform in a play, Oklahoma. She was an actress, who acts out, and who is out of control. This is her un-doing, her tragic end, her final act.

*Comment:* The stigma of homosexuality, lesbianism and bisexuality in American society in the early –mid 60's certainly feeds Chrissy's sense of social isolation. In the course of the novel, she later moves to the East Village in NYC, a bohemian center, where lesbianism is much more tolerated than most any other part of the country, particularly, Birmingham, Alabama. But she is too distraught and off-balance to give the East Village a chance. And the extent of human suffering that she saw in her social work job, seemed to rob her of whatever life energy she could accumulate to help herself.

*Chrissy's Diary – the complete entries*

The comments of this writer, which provide the context for the entries, are enclosed on parenthesis. These are the complete diary entries, now collected in one place. They are sprinkled through Red Mountain, by Eddie, as narrator.

*A glimpse of Mystery: that you are there and I am here and we are not separate...From the diary of Chrissy Andersen*

In her diary, actually a notebook of poetic fragments and thoughts which I discovered years later (writes Eddie)

(The early entries describe aspects of her relationships with Anita and with Sara and Allan. They describe her feelings or closeness and intimacy with them )

*Friday. Saw Dr. Adams today. I bled for over four hours afterwards.*

*He broke my hymen. Forced his way into me with his cold*

*hands. He said, "Now go home honey. Show that husband of yours you know how to make him a happy man." It hurt.*

(from early college days)

*My dear friend Anita, I might address this letter to my alter ego; you are as well known as a part of myself and, at the same time, other-than and strange to me. I cannot say I miss you—I see you on the tennis courts, and in a group of the girls walking on Dormitory Hill, and sometimes in the balcony of the auditorium. I will not forget what happened, and I only hope that you will remember that there is always one who cares, who will never forget.*

(The entry refers to Allan and Sarah)

□ In her diary Chrissy writes)

*I have this problem: not to say, or try to say, too much. It was a hurtful experience—contact, that touching of another's soul that sustains and drives me to death wishes. There is so much that can never be expressed. Yet I feel compelled, and just this side of able, to put forth my efforts, for I am persuaded there is something for me to affirm. This contact, an hour's conversation, was unique. Unique in the same way that others like it were, are, will be unique. Allan's small soft soul as he calls it is ever so large and gentle. He is neither male nor female to me. He is a person, a being in whom I can find father, mother, sibling, friend—or just a recognizable acquaintance. He invites me to crawl in and lie with him in cool green grass. If Bach had not already crept into his being, he would now. Allan Gregory has moved in as a part of me. Sarah: sensuous body undulating in time with pulsing warm calls, invoking response, hiding and yet suffering from the grief that lives inside her. Sarah is distinctly female, as much as one can be in the male-female balance of an individual. She can be at times, and is, Mother, Sister, Friend, never just a recognizable acquaintance. She is loveliness. She is Love. And she invites me into another world, into the warmth of her touch, and into the special realm of a deep dark friendship.*

(The text immediately continues, and Eddie movingly writes:)

Some evenings, when I came home from work I would find a note "Gone out with Sarah, Anita, and Allan." There would be a plate of food waiting for me, and I would settle into studying and waiting. And then they would all come in the door singing, hug me, hand me a beer, and continue on with a discussion of a symphony that Allan was composing for Sarah. And we would all stay up way past midnight, hugging, touching, and talking.

*Comment:* This following entry describes what is probably one of the most lyrical of the diary entries. It was undoubtedly one of high points of Chrissy's life, when the circle of friends was together, before Doug's death, and before Sarah's departure for grad school. Chrissy and Eddie were already married, and living in student housing.

*Oh, the poetry of us, the lovely flowing lines of form flowing into formlessness, the small strong utterances birthing worldlessness...And the music of us, singing, oh so softly, straining round crescendos, hard and tempo-driven, tumbling into humming soundlessness... Oh the painting sight of us, splashing reds and touching pinks onto the white, warm canvas, and oh, the dim dark brightness never before glimpsed until now through the eye of us. What will I do when my people go away? We have only this limited time together and then— Sarah to grad. school and Allan to the West Coast. Anita says, "You'll find others," but I am afraid I will not.*

(After Sarah leaves for graduate school, Chrissy writes in her diary)

*The skin about my eyes is swollen from crying, but the dark black centers of me are open and looking, struggling to see, to recognize what can be seen. Yesterday, in the lighted darkness of a bus station, I saw people talking and laughing as people do in time-killing situations. I liked them. I felt close to them. I understand what you said about not wanting ever to recreate this relationship with another friend, and I accept it. It is true: each rare time one moves into the sphere of another, the experience, which opens the way to new dimensions of being, is unique and can never be reproduced. I hope the wise part of me will not search the world for another Sarah. I will remember the simple parts, the all-embracing music, the crowds of people in bus stations, and the touch of your neck, your fingers, and your hair.*

(Depression soon follows, Chrissy takes to her bed and stops going to classes. Eddie pushes her to see Dr. Cantrell, the female school psychologist at Crestview College)

(Eddie writes:

I kept after her until she made an appointment to see the campus psychologist. She said she was afraid a therapist would find a label for her "dark reality" and profane it with a name. I told her she was hiding from herself. A few weeks later, after several visits to her therapist, she still didn't seem to be getting any better, and she wouldn't talk about what was bothering her. If anything, her moods seemed to

darken, as if she harbored some deep-seated anger that she would not or could not talk about with me. I worried she might begin failing some classes. She never seemed to have any homework. I decided I had to talk to Dr. Elizabeth Cantrell, the campus psychologist she was seeing, so I arranged to have some time off from work.)

(Eddie writes) In 1963, Janice entered intensive therapy and made two decisions:

to learn to play the guitar and to have a baby.

In her diary she wrote:

*The whole concept of future frightens me now. I'd prefer to ignore that Great Question Mark, to look only to this moment, or this day, but sometimes my solipsism is intruded upon. Like tonight when I find myself in the middle of the realization that graduation is approaching. Graduate school is rearing its ugly head. Me in graduate school? Everyone knows I am no scholar! And then, of course, there is the marital situation...complications abound. I love Eddie, but I am afraid I will hurt him in the end, and he doesn't deserve that. I think I should pray earnestly for one of two things: 1) that I have a baby! 2) that I do not have a baby!*

(Chrissy decides to have the baby)

(The Tristram Shandy episode happens. Then, Chrissy becomes pregnant with Andrea. Some time before Andrea is born, Chrissy writes in her diary:)

*As I sit here in our enchanted forest house—for there is a spell sitting lightly on it—I sense the current of joy running deep within our life. My husband, across the warmly lit room with his books and his coffee cup, seems absorbed entirely in his thoughts and unaware of all about him, yet I know that he knows I am near and that he would miss my presence if I were to leave the room. In the lamplight my new, brightly colored house robe is pleasing to see, and when I take my eye from the page of the book before me, I let myself feel the robe's satiny warmth as I run my hand over its blue and green flowers. The words from my book—Isak Dinesen's *Winter's Tales*—help spread the mantle of magic over the evening scene. Between us and around us there is music: Vivaldi's stringed Seasons, Bach's bright harpsichords—two, three, and then four. The child moves within my body; my hand moves, without thought behind it, to meet the movement. The spring,*

*the living spring!*

(After Andrea birth and after going out on with Anita)

She wrote in her diary:)

*What is this directionless madness? My old explosive energies have burst back on me! Pregnancy was a state of inner-direction, but I—I am essentially an other-directed person. I was safe and rooted when I was with child, but now the dangerous, contingent world thrusts itself on me once again. Perhaps I should pattern my life thus: a baby one year, a lover the next. I offer this capriciously—but then caprice could be the next turn my little adventures will take. I speak of adventure lightly here; I really want to speak about adventure, in the absolute; and yet I must deal in the relative. Is my adventure only in relation to my husband and my child, my immediate family? Sometimes I think so; tonight, no. Perhaps it is my part to play many roles. There are at least two faces of Chrissy.*

(Chrissy and Eddie are still living in the cottage as construction crews clear the forest around them for development)

*Pregnancy was a condition of beautiful, purposeful simplicity, but it was not my usual condition. As my energies surge again, the complexities have returned, the conflicts of desires and needs, the questions, the ambiguities, the wonderful plague of sexuality—that power, the very life force in all of us, male and female. I believe that as long as I am capable of caring for my child I cannot fall into utter despair. I can allow myself to explore this Mystery of Self.*

(Eddie writes: And then one day towards the end of December the chainsaws and bulldozers came alive again as the highway construction crews arrived and began taking out the last of the trees.)

In her diary Chrissy wrote:

*As our leafless trees come down, I wander from room to room, crying, and as I pace the floor I know I cannot stay. Once again my old energies surge within me, telling me to have "the courage to be," as Paul Tillich explained so beautifully. But I am not free. How can I be when I know myself to be other than what I am? Andrea is pink and pearl, and smooth soft-warm fragrance, and she laughs the pure laughter of innocence, cries the real distress of innocence, of needs. Children are close to absolute emotions. Every feeling of pleasure and pain and all the shadings are complete in their one moment. Andrea is*

*the only light of my days now; she is the only thing in the world I am sure about. But I, I am in a state of no freedom. I cannot stay and I cannot go. My mind is a vast desert. I range about in it and find dryness, nothing green and growing. How can I be so empty? I ask myself: What is courage? Is it the persistence of hanging on? Or is it the strength to face head-on that desperate last wish to live an honest life?*

(Chrissy decides to leave Eddie and Andrea and move to NYC to be closer to Anita. Right before she leaves, she tells Eddie about the threesome involving Tim, Anita and herself, and her feelings for Anita. Then, she leaves. Eddie then relates the follows diary entry:)

*In the long, dark night of the soul of utter aloneness, this darkness cannot be lifted. Perhaps it could be outlasted. There may be love in this darkness; it may wait for me, but it cannot reach me here. It knows not me nor itself. I wait and I hang on, but there are no words to scatter this palpable dark. Nothing dispels it. Perhaps outside this town there is another world and another life for me. Perhaps that stranger who is myself waits only for me to choose to live in that other possible world. Perhaps she waits in the shadows of my future, waits for me to come to her in another time and place where she may live and not die.*

(Some time later, Chrissy returns and takes Andrea back to NYC with her, without telling Eddie or either of their families. Some time later she attempts suicide by slashing her wrists. Eddie relates the following diary entry from before that episode.)

*It is a stark and frightening fact that nobody but me knows what it is to be me. The bright lights that have exploded in my head, and the heavy hurt that I carry in my breast—they're mine. They belong to my aloneness, to that dreadful, awesome gift of myself, to that thing I cannot give away and can't really even share. These words I write now do not show me to you who read them. These words are my cover-up, don't you see? I can't let you see me. But in spite of myself, without wanting to, I call out to you, I reach, knowing you can't be held and you can't hold me. We are forever you and I, not we. And that's the hardest thing I know.*

(Eddie goes to see Chrissy, who is recovering in NYC. Eddie mentions this diary entry before Chrissy is released from the hospital )

*A glimpse of Mystery: that love must break through barriers of need and can and does. And though we are encased in our need and near suffocation for the lack of the pure love of the free spirit, there is this wholly other God, which cannot be denied, which is Truth. Truth is a controversial term. I suggest that Truth is that which we sometimes glimpse and long for, but into which we cannot look fully because we are creatures of the cold dark. We have crawled out of Plato's cave, upward, and we seek our completion in the warm light.*

*But we cannot survive except in the shadow of Mystery. Oh, if only we could leave Truth behind, then perhaps we could wrap ourselves in the mantle of Mystery, we could put out this chill, and we could walk unafraid upon the land.*

(Chrissy is released from the hospital. She seems to be frustrated, for a time, but then appears to become peaceful. Some time later, Chrissy commits suicide by walking into traffic on the FDR Drive. Afterwards Eddie reads the last undated entry.)

*One should be able to live with some small degree of self-sufficiency, with order and beauty. I cannot. Not if I am allowed only this selfless love that is required of me. I am what I am. I cannot change it. I have lost control of my life. I can no longer deny it. I'm nothing. What I want I can't have; what I want to be, I can't be; and so I have nothing. I am nothing. Am I a mother? No. Am I a wife? No. There is no love left over if I cannot be what I am. So, there is no value to my life.*

*Question: What do you feel now? About Chrissy? Her situation? Her Diary?*

*Comment: They are very moving, and lyrical expressions of intimacy that use images of loss of boundaries.*

*Comment: In the next to last quote --which Eddie sees written in her diary before she is released from the hospital -- Chrissy writes that we search for truth and for God. But instead, we wrap ourselves in the mantle of mystery. In her last quote she writes that she doesn't want to live if she can't be what she is. *Authenticity, individuality and the search for truth are key for Chrissy.* She is very committed to art, with its sublimating and cathartic effects, as in her *Tristram Shandy* essay, or writing in her Diary. However, because she is not emotionally stable, and her personal boundaries are not clear, she is not content with merely describing in words the creative fantasy of starting over -- she*

instead acts this out, by committing suicide. Later, we explore the issue of free will, whether Chrissy have done other than what she does.

## Chapter IV

### Philosophical Issues Raised by Red Mountain

#### *Our Point of Departure:*

#### *Reason and Will in the History of Philosophy*

Our underlying concerns, in this philosophical study of *Red Mountain*, are the issues of *how a person utilizes their life energy and for what purposes*. This ties in with the issue of *free will*, which we discuss in both Part I and Part II of the Study Guide.

As Eddy and Chrissy differ significantly in their lifestyles and attitudes, so do they differ as philosophical analogues, study of which, enables us to better understand, and learn from their attitudes and actions.

Our reference point, and our point of departure, is actually near the very beginning of Western philosophy – the philosophy of human nature of Plato and Aristotle. Eddie tends to utilize reason, and Chrissy tends to follow her will, apart from reason, and apart from the consequences of her actions. This issue historically, has tremendous philosophical, psychological, and social implications.

The distinction between the human faculties of reason and will, as faculties, provides the basis of our philosophical analysis of Eddie and Chrissy. This results in two distinct sets of philosophical attitudes and traditions, which are traceable to Plato and Aristotle's view of human nature. We discuss these two thinkers, and then proceed historically, through some of the major philosophical schools which focus on reason and the will.

#### *The Threefold Human Soul (i.e. Psyche) of Plato and Aristotle in Philosophical Traditions*

Plato and Aristotle both emphasize *reason, and balance one's in daily living*, and describe how the human soul (i.e. psyche) is divided among the faculties of reason, the will and the appetites. Reason constitutes the rational part of the soul, and the will and appetites constitute the irrational part of the soul. The imagination tends to be aligned with the will and irrational part of the soul.

There is another tradition of Western philosophy, which also derives from the view of the soul (psyche) of Plato and Aristotle. But this tradition emphasizes not reason, but will, and the appetites, or the

body, in general, in contrast to the mind. In short this other tradition of Western thought, philosophically derives from the irrational part of the soul (psyche). In the opening quote of *Red Mountain*, from Friedrich Nietzsche, which we'll be examining later. Nietzsche warns of the danger of emphasizing the will and feeling, (or subjectivity), over reason. He sees the importance of including instincts and life energy in one's lifestyle, but which includes reason, or an approach of objectivity.

The attitude and resultant lifestyle that emphasizes feeling over reason, and the subjective over the objective, is the philosophical attitude of *romanticism*. We see this embodied in the lives of Chrissy and Tim. It stands in contrast to the attitude and lifestyle that involves reason, and reason's re-directing of life's energy toward desired goals. This is the attitude of *classicism*, which emphasizes reason, balance and moderation, which we see expressed in Eddy's life, for the most part. In classicism, the objective has precedence over the subjective.

For Plato and Aristotle, reason should dominate one's will and appetites. Later schools of Greek philosophy take up this issue. *Epicureanism* focus on the senses, but on moderation and temperance in one's lifestyle, and *Stoicism* focuses on reason but also in the context of moral balance and temperance. *Hedonism* does however, emphasize the unbridled will, as described in the famous phrase, *eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die*.

After the Greeks, we'll trace European philosophies that are based on the reason or will, through schools of medieval philosophy: the *Scholasticism* of Thomas Aquinas (which includes a synthesis of reason and religious faith) vs. schools of *voluntarism* (schools which emphasize the will, as those of Duns Scotus and William of Occam), up through the contrasting schools of *rationalism* and *empiricism* (knowledge based on the senses). As we examine briefly, Kant's famous synthesis of rationalism and empiricism in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, we nod to Eddy, as we retrace his steps of learning, in our brief consideration of these philosophies.

To restate, briefly, approaches to experience which focus on reason are part of the artistic/literary & philosophical movement of classicism; approaches to experience which involve the will and subjectivity, are part of romanticism. The relationship between reason and the will is not static but dynamic. Later, we consider *Wilhelm Dilthey*, a late 19<sup>th</sup>

century German philosopher, who combines aspects of classicism and romanticism in his concept of what he calls the *human sciences*, which he distinguishes from the *natural sciences*.

*Concept for Understanding:* In the novel, things turn out badly for Chrissy and Tim, both of whom follow the non-conventional sexual paths and use excessive drugs. But things turn out well for Eddie, who is much more balanced in his lifestyle. *Is Red Mountain, then, a kind of morality play -- not one in which good wins over evil, but balance and stability win over excess and instability?* This is instructive to consider, because we all have elements of the characters in our make-up. And we all have to deal with aspects of stability and flux, in our daily lives, and with the inevitable obstructions to what we may perceive as our natural flow.

### *Autonomy, Tranquility and the Golden Mean*

Eddie is very busy with his course work, and his two part-time jobs at Crestview, and later on with helping Chrissy manage herself and their new baby. But he also loves the contemplative life, and the study of philosophy in particular. He is just enamored of philosophy, and without really trying, in his studies Eddie seems to embody Socrates' famous dictum – *the unexamined life is not worth living*. And, of course, as narrator, his is also the voice of the novel. As he supports himself with his jobs, so he supports his own belief system by looking to himself, the thinkers he reads, and stimulating discussion with friends. He acts as an *autonomous* being, a person who seeks to govern himself rather than be governed by the belief systems of others (*heteronomy*).

As Eddie's lifestyle of moderation seems to express Socrates' dictum, so does his lifestyle generally follow Aristotle famous approach to morality embodied in the philosophy of the *Golden Mean* (described in more detail, in the following section) a few paragraphs below).

### *The Threefold Soul – The Faculty of Reason Controls the Will and Appetites*

Rationality permeates Greek philosophy and ethics as whole, generally speaking. Indeed, the very term, *classical* or *classicism* which denotes reason, goes back to Classical Greece. The rational approach to living is exemplified in several famous sayings, deriving from this period of thought. There is Socrates' dictum, *the unexamined life is not worth living*, and the famous credos of the Oracle of Delphi – *know thyself*,

and *nothing in excess*. It certainly should be noted that the Oracle offers prophecies based on states of intoxication or otherwise altered state of consciousness, from the inhalation of vapors from the cave where she resides. That wisdom arises from non-rational states of consciousness parallels Freud's pivotal insight -- that knowledge and our beliefs arise from our unconscious and percolate into the conscious mind, going through family and cultural filters, in the process. Carl Jung adds a supra-rational level of human awareness, what he calls the *collective unconscious*. This "part" of the mind is the repository of universal symbols which provides the basis for the mythologies from which religions and philosophies draw, as the Divine Mother, the Suffering God, death and rebirth, etc. So, the rational utterances of the Oracle of Delphi, the Pythia, could also be examined in the context of psychoanalysis, and Western philosophy.

Plato was Aristotle's teacher. Plato is generally more other-worldly oriented than Aristotle, who was a naturalist and scientist, as well as a philosopher (more on these figures follow, in the text and Appendix) . Both Plato and Aristotle divide living beings into three basic types: plant beings have a *vegetative nature*; animals have more developed sensory apparatus than plants, and so also have a *sensitive nature* (i.e. sensation); and human beings insofar as they possess reason, have a *rational nature*, though they might not always act rationally, in their lives.

Human beings contain all the qualities of these three broad categories of living beings- vegetative, sensitive, and rational beings.

Comment: As the healthy body automatically maintains itself, without us thinking about it, we maintain ourselves in the same way as plants and animals. However, we use reason, through choice, in a way that is distinctive to humans beings.

*Question:* All this leads to the question of what you feel the balance of reason, imagination and will, and appetites ought to be, for people. And what about for yourself?

*Comment:* There is a sense in which the division of living beings into vegetative, sensitive and rational types of beings, presents a *theory of evolution*. In this approach, there is a developmental unity among these different types of being. However, unlike the Darwinian view in which different types of beings evolve *into* other types, the Aristotelian model is a static model—one celled organisms do not become plants, some of which evolve into animals, and some of which evolve into

primitive humans and then into the modern type of human being.

These typologies are fixed, in what the famous writer Arthur Lovejoy describes as the *great chain of being*. The views are adopted by medieval Christian thinkers because it is consistent with the view that God creates beings in distinct groups, as on the different "days" of creation. It is also the typology used by Linneaus, a famous Swedish botanist and taxonomist, in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

As Plato and Aristotle describe, reason rules the roost so to speak, though not by forcing itself on the will and the appetites, but through the principle of temperance and moderation. Both thinkers describe this process in two very famous and influential images: (1) Plato in his Dialogue, *Phaedrus*, presents a very famous image, in which he compares the soul (psyche) to a charioteer (reason) who controls the two horses, one horse being spirited imagination (also associated with the emotions) and the other as the appetites. (2) Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* describes moral action as comparable to a see-saw in which balance or equilibrium is sought, as the see-saw moves up and down. In trying to attain balance, weight shifts from one side to the other, which creates some temporary imbalance. Too extreme a motion on one side throws the balance off. In time, with practice, one could learn to move the see-saw, moving from one side, or one extreme, to the other. The process of consistently endeavoring to stay in the middle, between extremes, is called by Aristotle, the *Golden Mean*. This is a very famous formulation. *The Golden Mean of Aristotle*, the *Middle Path of the Buddha*, and the *Golden Rule of Jesus* all emphasize temperance and balance in one's life, and in the dealings with other people.

The concept of the Golden Mean, while a concept of moral action, also applies to the relationship among the faculties of the soul (psyche). So, does the person seek balance or temperance in their actions, moving from one extreme to the other, till balance is achieved.

This reflects balancing the three parts of the psyche -- the intellect, will/imagination, and the senses, under the control of the faculty of reason, as we've described. Reason constitutes the rational part of the mind, while the will and the appetites or passions make up the irrational mind.

### *\Should One's Pursuit of Virtuous Acts be a Habit - Introducing the Issue*

Aristotle describes how one could become habituated to doing the right thing, staying in the middle between extremes, and using the energy of veering from one extreme to the other to achieve balance. Hence, he describes *virtue as a habit*.

*Comment:* That virtue is a habit is different from the existentialist position that each moral action must be chosen anew, with one's full commitment. But in both positions, reason is the final arbiter, not emotion or even the desire for personal gain. We also discuss existentialist choice in more detail, shortly.

*Question:* If you pursue virtuous actions, would you want it to be a habit? Give an example of a type of virtuous action that you wish was a habit, and of another type of virtuous act that you would not wish to be a habit. Why not?

### *The Threefold Soul and Eddie*

Aristotle, then, in his ethics, emphasizes the importance of a person seeking balance in situations. Eddie has a strong tendency to return to his center – a basic sense of balance, as we've described. Eddie's rational mind returns to run the show, in his own life, almost all of the time. This too, harkens back very much to philosophical attitudes in Classical Greece.

### *Epicureanism and Hedonism*

*Ataraxia*, (from the Greek, *Atarak*, meaning calmness) is characterized by the calm suspension of judgment about things, or tranquility, and is associated with the ancient *Epicureans*. The Epicureans focus on winding down or suspending the power of the will, (rather than living in accordance with Universal Reason as the Stoics (described below) advocate). The Epicureans believe that it is not things but our attitudes toward things, which causes us to suffer. The popular sense of the word Epicureanism, now, is its association with refined taste and pleasure. This is in *contrast* to Hedonism, another school of Classical Greek philosophy, which focuses on sensory gratification, with the famous statement pushed to its extreme, *eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die.*"

## *Stoicism*

*Apatheia* (from the Greek, *apatheia*, meaning insensibility to suffering) is associated with the classical Greek school of *Stoicism*. Stoicism is based on the faculty of reason, not the will. The Stoics focus on impermanence in the physical world, but consider the Sun as the manifestation of the Logos or Universal Reason (the Logos becomes the Word of God in Christianity). Unlike the Epicureans, the Stoics do believe in an abiding substance, which persists despite change in the world, which is Universal Reason (Logos). The Logos is the creative principle of the universe, but it is not identified with a personal God, as in the monotheistic religions. In that the Logos permeates and sustain living beings, it is an expression of *panentheism* – essentially a combination of *theism* and *pantheism* -- the view that there is a divine, but impersonal force, that permeates nature; ethically, one seeks to align themselves with the universal Reason in things.

Stoicism implies a tranquil acceptance of things – it's not passivity. The ethics or moral philosophy of Stoicism is similar to Epicureanism despite the fact that the Stoics see reason as the principle of change or motion, and the Epicureans regard the will as the source of motion. Both philosophies maintain that suffering is not caused by things, but by our reactions to things.

### *Buddhism: An Eastern Analogue to the Golden Mean, Ataraxia and Apatheia*

In practice these philosophical approaches from Classical Greece are very similar to the Buddhist attitude of being mindful of desires, and watching the fall and fall of the play of desires in the mind, which is the play of the will and the passions. It is not the desires that cause suffering, if we simply watch them rise and fall, in our minds. But if *we cling* to our desires and expectations, and they do not come to pass, despite our best efforts and intentions, then, it we recognize that it the *clinging to particular outcomes, which* did not come to pass, that causes the suffering. Instead of being attached to particular outcomes, one could watch one's own thoughts, with just "bare attention," to the "thatness" of thoughts, not their whatness, or their content. So, one might simply say to oneself, "Oh, I'm feeling pain, and it's pain about a particular thing in the past" and simply note this fact, without pursuing that train of thoughts. Similarly, do the Stoics and Epicureans believe that it is not things that cause us to suffer, but our reactions to things. In the Appendix, we describe Buddhism and its famous Four Noble Truths in more detail.

*Concept for Understanding:* What do you think, is it *clinging* to particular outcomes that causes suffering, or the *lack of the desired results* that causes suffering, in particular situations, and in general? Does happiness remain, even after one has achieved their desired goals? Why or why not?

## Faculty of Reason vs. the Will in Western Philosophy

### *Classical Greek Philosophy Through Kant*

Let's bring ourselves up to speed quickly, with some history of philosophy, so we can better understand Eddie and Chrissy in terms of the faculties of reason and the will.

Aristotle exerts tremendous influence in 13<sup>th</sup> century Europe, particularly on St. Thomas Aquinas, whose writings have basically dominated the theology and philosophy of the Catholic Church through the present time. Aquinas effects the famous *synthesis of reason and faith*, with reason becoming the *handmaid of faith*. He also employs the image of theology as the golden science, and philosophy as the silver science. For Aquinas, God's will is in some sense, subordinated to Universal Reason, and to the laws of the universe (called Natural Law) insofar these permeate the worlds of nature and culture.

Some religious figure after Aquinas, *John Duns Scotus* and *William of Ockham* in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, reject Aquinas' attempt to harmonize reason and faith. Scotus and Ockham maintain that God's will could not be subordinated to any other principle, including reason or any universal principle of the good. This is because of the limited ability of human to conceive of God's power and will. They sever faith from reason, and associate Divine Will with faith. In this philosophical approach, which is a form of *voluntarism*, the will is regarded as independent and not subordinated to reason, as for Plato and Aristotle. (This philosophical school is also known as *nominalism*, from the Latin, *name*. This school maintains that names inhere in objects and not in a disembodied world of Ideas, as Plato postulated.

Philosophically, nominalism is a form of materialism in contrast to the idealism of Plato. For Plato, names inhere in a disembodied World of Forms, or World of Ideas. Thus, for Plato, the color red resides not in the human mind but in a supersensible world of Forms, which includes redness, chairness, humanness, catness, etc. In a certain sense one could say that Forms inhere in the mind of God, but, for Plato, not a personal God, but as eternal and universal Reason.

In nominalism, which emphasizes the will, Aquinas' famous *synthesis of reason and faith* comes under attack. This has enormous philosophical and historical implications. If reason and faith part company, where does Reason go? Reason need no longer be the *handmaid of faith*, but could seek new companions, in science and empirical research. Historically, as the Renaissance develops, and later the Western Enlightenment period, science is able to come into its own, unhindered by religious doctrine. Galileo's infamous forced recanting of what he viewed through his telescope, demanded by the Catholic Church would become a relic of history.

While reason is freed from faith to associate with science, faith and religious will or intention are freed from reason, and a need for justification. When faith is not buttressed with reason, religious irrationalism emerges, as Pascal's famous dictum in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, "the heart has reasons which reason doesn't understand." Pascal, a mathematician and scientist like Descartes, his contemporary, takes the opposite view, seeking to base certainty on faith, rather than on reason.

*Martin Luther*, from whom the Lutheran Church and the Protestantism emerges, acknowledges his debt to *William of Ockham*, and extols the doctrine of salvation through faith, rather than through works. Luther maintains that human reason is inadequate to receive divine truths, which become accessible only through faith. Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac to God provides religious believers with a model for subordinating reason to faith. *Soren Kierkegaard*, a famous 19<sup>th</sup> century Danish existentialist philosopher, later re-affirms what he calls Abraham's *leap of faith*, a phrase which has since become very well-known. Such a position also *echoes the Church Father, Tertullian, who declares, I believe, because it is absurd.*

Thus, on one hand, if faith and reason are separated, Western science could develop independently of religion through the use of reason and observation of nature. This could be progressive and support the development of science, which is the case.. But then, will and faith could also move in the direction of so called blind faith, irrationalism, which is faith not balanced by reason, The thought of Pascal, and Kierkegaard, which we've mentioned, illustrate this.

*Concept for Understanding:* Reason vs. faith, is a very important issue in philosophy, and also in world history, insofar as there has been so much killing in the name of religion. What do *you* think about the relationship between reason and faith?

The Renaissance follows the Middle Ages in Europe, and extends from the 14<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup> century. As we mentioned, Protestantism does emerge in Germany in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, as a new Christian, non-Catholic Church. It emphasizes faith, compared to combination of reason and faith, which was popularized by St. Thomas Aquinas in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Protestantism becomes the religion supported by the rising middle class in Germany – worldliness and accumulation of wealth becomes a sign of reward by God, not something to be shunned as unworldly. Science (and commerce, for that matter) breaks out of the religious restrictions imposed by the (Catholic) Church.

The Age of Reason, in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century occurs, followed by the Enlightenment, in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, during which time, reason and sensation, respectively become the source of truth. This fits in with then increased commercial and scientific character of the age. Empiricism, is the philosophy which seeks truth through the senses (as opposed to religious faith) and scientific experiment.

The great philosopher, *Immanuel Kant*, in Germany, at the very end of 18<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup>, tries to synthesize rationalism and empiricism. He has two profound insights in his theory of knowledge – 1. he would limit rational knowledge to what is supplied to the mind by the senses; 2 -he has the further insight, known as Kant's *Copernican Revolution*, in which he recognizes the role of the mind in structuring our sensory knowledge. We don't simply see what the senses present to us, like food on a plate. We instead recognize how our own perceptual and cultural patterns mediate how we perceive things. For example, an ant perceives the world differently than a human being, and an Eskimo is able to distinguish many more types of snow than could most Westerners, because they have learned to perceive differently, due to the climate. The famous French anthropologist, *Claude Levi-Strauss*, (who turned 100 years of age, in 2008, during the editing of the Study Guide), detailed very complex patterns of behavior and ways of understanding the world, by the various primitive peoples he studied. Indeed, the complexities of their belief systems, in terms of their understanding of the world, were as sophisticated as ours in the modern world, given the differences in technology and terminology. This was one of Levi-Strauss' conclusions.

Kant influences experimental psychology and psychoanalysis which seek to uncover the structure of the mind and of consciousness. Anthropologists start to investigate primitive peoples in terms of how

they perceive, or their structures of patterning, called *structuralism*. In modern times, structuralism is then superseded by *deconstructionism*, in which the imposition of linguistic and social structure is recognized by the mind, and then is negated.

### *Nietzsche*

Human will need not be associated with religious faith, but integrated with reason and sensation in the body . This is the famous insight of Friedrich Nietzsche, a very famous German philosopher of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. He is considered as one of the originators of existentialism. He strongly influences later existentialists, particularly atheistic ones like Sartre and Camus.

He perceives human beings as physical beings in the natural world. As such, his writing fits into the context of the newly emerging science of evolution, which begins in modern times with Charles Darwin's publication *On the Origin of Species* in 1859. . He was apparently familiar with Darwin's work. Nietzsche writes with great passion, on how a doctrine like the *meek shall inherit the earth* corrupts and weakens people's will. He attacks the otherworldliness of religious beliefs because it distracts people from solving their problems in this world. Nietzsche however, respects Jesus and the Hebrew prophets for their commitment to truth and willingness to commit their lives to this. His description of the Superman, the idealized human of the future is "*Roman Caesar with Christ's soul.*" He affirms the power of the human will in context of this world, not a heavenly realm. Hence, his famous concept of the *will to power* is that the *human will* be tempered with reason, and not with religion, or blind will that leads a person to nihilism and destruction . This is borne out by the all too human tragedy of Chrissy and Tim, who, without boundaries, stumble into the abyss of nihilism and madness, as the Nietzsche quote, at the front of *Red Mountain*, illustrates. That quote is reprinted here, shortly

Nietzsche is influenced by *Arthur Schopenhauer*, a German philosopher, who wrote earlier in the century, and who was also concerned with the issue of life energy and the limits of reason. He also writes during the time period that Buddhism was first becoming popular in the West. Schopenhauer believes that what he calls the *will to live*, is the source of suffering, and the solution is the will this down, or negate it in death. This is sometimes described as Schopenhauer's pessimism However, Schopenhauer acknowledges that

the will could express itself constructively through art, a conception which has parallels to Freud's theory of sublimation. Nietzsche transforms the concept of the will to live into the will to power.

The strengthening and affirmation of the will to live, turns it into the will to power, as a kind of evolutionary force, or motor of the natural world. To conceive of Nietzsche in this way, places him in the company of Charles Darwin, Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud. These are among the so-called children of the European Enlightenment, who want to uncover the laws of motion of society, and to free people from the shackles of religion, organized religion, in particular which they believe, misleads people from seeking freedom on earth to freedom in heaven after death (Joe Hill's famous phrase "piece in the sky when you die" comes to mind here).

Nietzsche, Marx and Freud emphasize the importance of the will and the limitations of reason. In Freud's typology of the mind, reason or the ego, sits on top of a kind of cauldron of the unconscious, which exerts enormous pressure on the rational mind through the preconscious mind – as slips of the tongue, jokes, dreams, etc.. Marx emphasizes the importance of the will in the expression of class consciousness. And Nietzsche would redirect people's energy from the heavenly world to this world, and to perfecting themselves in the process of perfecting the world.

*This quotation from Nietzsche opens Red Mountain.*

*Very few people are capable of being independent; it is a privilege of the strong. And whoever tries it, however justified, without having to, proves that he is probably not only strong but bold to the point of complete recklessness. For he walks into a labyrinth; he increases a thousandfold the dangers which are inherent in life anyway. And not the smallest of his dangers is that no one can witness how and where he loses his way, falls into solitude, or is torn to pieces by some troglodytic minotaur of conscience.*

*F. Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil (1886)*

*Question: Do you agree with this, and why, or why not?*

This intense passage from Nietzsche describes how a person might follow a path that leads them from conventional to unconventional behavior, and then to the increasing breakdown of boundaries and

meaning. This is not unlike the loss of a compass while one is traveling in new territory. This puts the person at great risk of losing their way, as Nietzsche writes, and becoming lost, in *nihilism*, which is the rejection of all rules of conduct by individuals. It certainly is an apt description of what happens to Chrissy, and also to Tim.

Chrissy and Tim, in particular, lived life at the extreme, and as described in Nietzsche's quote, were unable to bring themselves back to the center of balance and moderation. Martin Buber, the author of *I and Thou*, a famous philosophical/poetic work in the 1920s, speaks of the fascination of the brink, of living at the extremes. One thinks of figures from other Bohemian periods, like Henry Miller, after WW I. In those days too, there was much experimentation with drugs and sexual excess, and their attendant risks to life and limb. For one to seek the extreme of experience, relates to the ever larger issue of pleasure and role of pleasure in a person's life. ,and, as such, is an expression of romanticism, which we describe in later chapter, in more detail.

*Comment:* One might think of Chrissy's lack of balance and her obsessive-compulsive behavior as a kind of revving up of Nietzsche's will to power, which loses all sense of boundaries, as the quote from *Beyond Good and Evil* indicates. Imbalance veers into nihilism and suicide for Chrissy, and nihilism and madness, for Tim, about which the quotation warns .

However, as Eddie describes, Chrissy, toward the very end of her life, seems to be more peaceful with herself. It seems that she decides to no longer battle her own obsessive-compulsiveness over Anita, nor society's conventions about sexuality. She will let it all go and commit suicide. The *will to power* retreats to bare existence alone, and disappears. Then, Chrissy loses that most basic characteristic of all living beings, which Schopenhauer also calls the *will to live*. So, the movement is from excess, to nihilism, despair and finally suicide. Eddie later infers that Chrissy keeps this all a secret, for she fears that Eddie would try to prevent her committing suicide.

Nietzsche also presents the concept of the *transvaluation of values*. By this he means the rejection of the Christian concept of the acceptance of suffering for the sake of happiness in an afterlife. This is because it rewards the meek at the expense of those who seek strength and vitality in the physical world. Chrissy and Tim extol sensory

gratification to the detriment of their health, about which Nietzsche warns, in the previous quotation – Chrissy and Tim do lose their way – Chrissy, her life, and Tim, his mind.

### *Nietzsche and Western Enlightenment Thought*

It's interesting to consider Schopenhauer's concept of the will to live and Nietzsche's concept of the will to power in terms of a dynamic of energy. The will to live expresses more bare-bone minimal functioning of an organism's life processes, while the will to power expresses the maximizing of the organism's life energy, and, for Nietzsche, would manifest in the next evolved state of humans, the Superman. Yet, the moral dimension of human experience remains, for as we present shortly, Nietzsche also extols the ideal human, or Superman, in terms of the concept of *Roman Caesar with Christ's Soul* (from his *Will to Power*). This puts Nietzsche in the company of other Enlightenment philosophers.

*Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, is a very famous French philosopher of the 18<sup>th</sup> century whose writing helped lead to the French Revolution. Rousseau posits human beings in a so-called state of nature as pure and uncorrupted (the so-called Noble Savage), but corrupted by civilization. *David Hume*, writing in England, around the same time as Rousseau, writes of the *natural sympathy* that humans have for each other, which he sees as providing the basis of morality. Rousseau, Hume and Nietzsche, as Enlightenment figures, do speak then, of an inherently moral dimension of human experience. This puts Nietzsche's thought in the context of both the Western Enlightenment tradition and social Darwinism.

Approaches to the issue of what is human nature are not uniform, however. *Thomas Hobbes*, a famous English philosopher and scientist in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, at the beginning of the Enlightenment, describes the life of human beings in the so-called state of nature as *a war of every man against every man....And the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.* (Leviathan, ch. 13) For Hobbes, there is a hypothetical state of nature, which he maintains, results in the maintenance of order, among the conflicting persons, by a single Leviathan-like figure, preferably a King. He writes during the Civil War in England. John Locke, writes after him, around the time of the final defeat of the Catholics in the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the establishment of Protestantism in England. Locke, who also influenced

the American Founding Fathers, was also concerned with the preservation of individual liberty in the context of a state apparatus that would have enough to power, but not abuse its power.

These Enlightenment writers on political and social philosophy use reason to help a secularized state stay on course, preserving individual liberty while giving the state enough power to rule, without authoritarianism and without recourse to a Deity. They, in a sense, are trying to balance the individual and the state, in the way that Aristotle tries to balance the rational and irrational parts of the soul, and put the latter under the sway of the former. This is a secularized version of the relationship between Eddie and Chrissy, and of Chrissy's attempts to balance her own life.

Could Chrissy have other than what she did? In a later chapter we discuss further the issue of free will and determinism, and also the issue of free will vis a vis mental and physical constraints on it, with reference to existentialism, in particular.

## PHILOSOPHIES OF CHANGE

### Heraclitus and Hegel

Let's examine some philosophies on change, to help us better understand the characters and the story, of Red Mountain. To adopt a philosophy that helps her accept the inevitability of change, might have been very helpful to Chrissy.

Many philosophers have written about change. These thinkers are rationalists, like Plato and Aristotle and the Stoics, whose thought we've briefly examined. Two notable rationalistic philosophers who focused on analyzing change were *Heraclitus* and *Hegel*. Heraclitus is a famous Classical pre-Socratic philosopher who coined the famous phrase, that you can't step in the same river twice; also, he sees an abiding substance of the universe in fire.

*Hegel* (also see Appendix on Hegel) is the famous 19<sup>th</sup> century German philosopher, who writes after Kant. Despite Kant's attempts to philosophically discourage people from constructing speculative metaphysical systems, Hegel develops an important system. It is basically a rational version of Christianity, in which God enters nature and history, seeking to know himself through these, as his other. But Hegel also develops his famous *dialectic* in which conflicting opposites form something new, while preserving elements of the opposition; this

process of conflict and temporary resolution continues, at ever new levels of development.

### *Hegel's Dialectic in Red Mountain*

Hegel's dialectic provides a useful way to understand experience, in its process of change. Quantitative change leads to qualitative change. We find examples of this in our three main characters; Chrissy becomes increasingly possessive toward Anita and she is frustrated that being a lesbian or bisexual is not more socially acceptable, finally committing suicide; Eddie's dissatisfaction at the provincialism and intolerance of the way he was raised at home and in the -surrounding society increases till he enrolls at Crestview. Then, he makes a qualitative leap to a new level of awareness. Tim's obsession with drugs and sex finally passes into schizophrenia. Hegel was an extremely influential thinker, and we write more about his thought in the Appendix on Hegel. .

Heraclitus and Hegel are rationalistic thinkers who regard the principle of change as having a rational or purposive nature, in contrast to the force of nature, so-called blind nature, associated with body and with the faculty of the will.

### PHILOSOPHIES OF THE WILL

Buddhist philosophy (See Appendix of Buddhism) and psychology also focuses on one's awareness of the process of change. and encourages a person to not cling to their particular expectations, for they will fade. Schopenhauer sees the will to live as a primary moving force in nature, but associates it with suffering and death.

Epicureanism, and Buddhism all regard the cause of suffering not in things and events, but in our reactions to these, and our own expectations. Such attitude might have helped Chrissy focus more on the present, and so not repeat mistakes of the past and extend her feeling of loss into the future. The issue of attachment and detachment is really the key issue.

*Comment:* In his writer's view, Eddie is not attached to his expectations about his marriage with Chrissy. He never rejects her because of her unconventional approaches to sex and excessive drug and alcohol use. His basic attitude seems to be one of good-willed acceptance (as opposed to a grudging ill-willed feeling of resignation). As long as Chrissy has room for him and a committed relationship –

which includes the parenting of their daughter -- he will have room for her in his life, or so it seems to this writer.

*Comment:* Perhaps you disagree with the above comment. Do you think that Eddie would have divorced Chrissy if he knew about her sexual activity with other partners -- albeit their friends --outside of their marriage? Why? What are the main issues involved, practical and philosophical?

*Question:* We already considered Nietzsche's attempt to describe the life of people without religion, and who utilizes reason and the senses in service of life, or what he calls the will to power. There is an evolutionary aspect to this philosophy, expressed in his concept of the Superman, as a type of perfected human being, a being whom he also describes as Caesar, with Christ's soul.(from Nietzsche, Will to Power) 107. WP899 [ 1885] speaks of the union of spiritual superiority with well- being and an excess of force". WPI051 [ 1885], more ambiguously, speaks of an imperative "to overcome everything Christian through something over-Christian, and not merely to put it aside.

*Henri Bergson* - Bergson too, is included here, in the section on philosophies of the will. He is a 19<sup>th</sup> century French philosopher, born in 1859, the year of the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*. Bergson wants his philosophy to be in accord with the science of the day, particularly evolutionary theory, but attacks mechanism (mechanical cause and effect relationships) in evolutionary theory, particularly that of Herbert Spencer.

Spencer tried to draw philosophical conclusions from Darwin's work, and it was he (and not Darwin) who uses the phrase survival of the fittest (Darwin rather, uses the term, natural selection). Bergson wants to combat mechanism and the concept of teleology or final cause or the goal or end (telos) of a given process in evolutionary theory. He develops the concept of *élan vital* – vital force as being an animating principle, neither material nor a spiritual force. This philosophy is an example of a philosophical approach known as vitalism, in which the moving force to nature is regarded as irreducible to, and distinct from material substance.

In contrast to the quantifying aspect of science, and the larger sweep of naturalistic or materialistic evolutionary theory, he wants to preserve the interiority and immediacy of experience. Thus, he uses another famous term, *duree*, which is learning something from the inside out,

or the direct flow, as one could never learn swimming by walking but has to be the water. We describe *duree* in more detail, in the section on *Verstehen*, shortly.

### *ESSENTIALISM VS. EXISTENTIALISM*

*Essentialism - Aristotle, Phenomenology with reference to Existentialism* We have generally described Eddie's attitude toward life and lifestyle in terms of Aristotle's Golden Mean and avoidance of extremes. Aristotle is a rationalist. He is also a scientist and naturalistic thinker, who looks to the science of his day for explanations about nature. He does bring in the concept of Deity, not in the sense of a personal God, but an impersonal source of motion. Indeed, he believes that the source of motion is found in the heavens, the famous Seven Heavens, which are a series of concentric spheres, of which the earth is the center. These spheres include the 5 planets, the Sun and the sphere of the fixed stars. Motion is imparted through these spheres to each being in the natural world, which an inborn drive (*horme*) realizes its nature or essence. Each thing will strive to realize its own essence or nature, unless impeded.

Change, then, occurs, when each thing fulfills its nature. This is also called *essentialism* – cats seek to fulfill their essence or essential nature of catness and humans their essential nature of humanness. A person then, seeks to realize their nature as a human being with their own purpose. The person has both the form of humanity, combined with the matter of their own body, which individualizes the form of humanness. An individual cat is the composite of the form of catness and the matter of that particular living being, while the individual human being is composite of the form of humanness and the matter of the particular living being. This is Aristotelian essentialism.

*Question:* Is the essence of a particular person fixed, and is to be fulfilled in the way that an acorn becomes an oak, or are there more factors involved?

*Comment:* This raises questions about fulfilling one's human nature. One gets the feeling about Eddie, that living with his abusive father made him realize what to avoid, in life, while the rest of his childhood gives him a positive sense about human relationships, and for what he might strive, as an adult. Also, his discovery of the world of ideas in college really excited him. Put all this together, and it seems that that throughout *Red Mountain* that Eddie expresses and may even be fulfilling his essence, or actualizing his nature to be Eddie or his

Eddieness (the essence of something being what the medievals called *quiddity*).

This is in contrast to the *existentialist approach* which is that there is no essence of Eddie except his actions, and he determines his essence anew with each new act – hence, Sartre’s famous phrase - existence precedes essence. (more on existentialism shortly).

And what is Chrissy’s nature? Is to live chaotically, willfully and self-destructively?. Or is there something that underlying this, that he draws upon in writing her Diary and in doing the Tristram Shandy writing project, which is part of her essence, but she is not able to actualize it. Is here essence already there, only needing to be uncovered? A rationalistic method called *phenomenology*, attempts to do this, and we discuss phenomenology in the next section. How free are the characters to make choices? How free are we, the readers, of Red Mountain?

Shortly, we contrast the essentialist view of change in a person – that it is the expression of a fixed essence – with Existentialism, the philosophical movement. There is also a later section on Free Will and Determinism.

#### *Phenomenology: A Method To Step Back and Observe*

Another philosophical discipline, Phenomenology would allow a person to reflectively stand back and dispassionately observe the world around them. As developed by the German philosopher, *Edmund Husserl* in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, one methodologically suspends belief or judgment, and then reconstitutes the experience without presuppositions or expectations. One reconstitutes essences or reconstituted objects in a reconstituted realm, the life-world (*lebenswelt*), through their intentionality or their will. This seems to involve both the faculties of reason and the will. However, we break down its structures, phenomenology is a useful methodological tool method by which to step back and observe and then to reconstitute one’s experience.

At one point, Eddie is reading a work of Merleau-Ponty, a phenomenologist. Merleau-Ponty focuses on what the subject brings to the phenomenological process, in terms of the pre-givenness of their body and its field of perception.

Phenomenology raises the issue of what is the essential nature of a person, and how is it to be explored – is it found in terms of examining the totality of their social relations, in isolation from others, or in a Robinson Crusoe type of social isolation or physical incapacity, as when a person is really in a state of deprivation and privation? Is the "real" Chrissy to be found in the extreme mood swings and general acting out, or in her quieter creative moments? Where is the "real" person here? Isolation and privation need not be pathological, and we explore two modern writers on this subject in the

*Comment:* Which is the "real" Chrissy? Is it the Chrissy of extreme mood swings or the creative writer? Note, this is a question about a person's essence rather than their existence. Keep this in mind when we consider existentialism, shortly.

### *AUTONOMY AS THE BALANCE BETWEEN NIHILISM AND HETERONOMY*

Eddie and the other members of the circle of friends pride themselves on thinking for themselves, and on criticizing the behavior of various authority figures. The Civil Rights movement, which influences them, seeks equal rights for all people. It also seeks a breakdown of segregation, which has been promoted by religious and secular authorities in the South, in particular. The movement has roots both in humanism and in religious teachings.

Eddie and the circle of friends seem to have a humanistic rather than religious attitude, and look to govern themselves, rather than be governed or guided by religious or secular authorities. Insofar as they sought to guide themselves, they were antonymous (autonomia - independence) rather than heteronymous (under the domination of another). We introduced those concepts earlier.

Chrissy too was autonomous, more so than the other friends, and Eddie, in fact, but to an extreme. But she couldn't maintain her autonomy without veering off to extremes, to nihilism, as the Nietzsche quote at the beginning of the novel indicates (and which we've already discussed).

### *The Civil Rights Movement & Autonomy and Heteronomy*

The circle of friends, particularly when they were all together at Crestview College, as a group, is optimistic about the future, reflecting

in the larger social context of the world around them, and align themselves with those who seek social justice, and civil rights for all Americans. One could say, in Nietzschean terms, that the movement too, seeks a transvaluation of the "values" of segregation, and seeks to empower the weak through social protest. One might also say that the circle of friends and the Freedom Riders represent the transformational work of Vulcan that is goes on beneath the surface....until it surfaces

*Comment:* There is a mean, or balance, between the two extremes of nihilism and conformity to a social system, particularly if the system includes oppression, as through segregation. . We could, perhaps, consider autonomy (the quality of governing oneself). as the mean between the two extremes of nihilism (having no source of authority) and heteronomy (looking to others as the source of authority). The Civil Rights movement in the US in the 1950's and 1960's has the effect of helping to establish autonomy for individuals and transfer the sense of balance that accompanies autonomy for individuals, to the society at large. So, as the society governs, it governs with justice, so as to preserve the autonomy if its members. Social equality is an expression of people's aspirations for both autonomy and heteronomy. As the artificial constraints of segregation and others types of discrimination are eliminated, individuals become more able to govern themselves and express their freedom.

In a sense, we might say that society becomes the expression of this impulse toward freedom, or will to power, in the Nietzschean sense of self-affirmation, and people's will to establish justice become widespread. However, the Civil Rights movement itself draws sustenance from many philosophical and religious currents of thought – as Enlightenment philosophy of the Founding Fathers and documents as the Declaration of Independence and Constitution, civil disobedience, from Thoreau to Gandhi, famous documents as the famous UN Declaration of Human Rights, religious doctrines, etc. Discussion of this would take us beyond the scope of this study of Red Mountain. Suffice to say here, that the Civil Rights movement provides the background for our characters as they also deal with the issue of balance in their lives.

### *EDDIE AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF*

A key theme for Eddie, which he voices, as a teenager still living at home, is his struggle to find his own authentic voice, in contrast to the conventional attitudes of his family, and the surrounding working class community in Birmingham. When he enters college, his mind

broadens, through the circle of friends. His openness to the Civil Rights movement in general, grows, as the demonstrations and rallies come to Birmingham.

Eddie maintains his sense of balance despite various kinds of political extremism around him, and Chrissy's extreme hedonism and extreme mood swings. He also disagrees strongly with the attitude of tradition for tradition's sake, or religion for its own sake.

At Chrissy's funeral, Eddie does make some concessions to convention and to Dr. Bingham, the pastor who officiates at the funeral. But the narration and dialogue show the independence of Eddie's thinking, and his desire to continue to strengthen his own sense of autonomy.

After the funeral, Eddie decides to return to live, with Andrea, in Birmingham. He takes the job as a teacher in Head Start, then a new government program, despite what he knows will be the opposition of his family. Indeed, his father does demand that he leave the house when he tells them about his new job. The culmination of Eddie's sense of autonomy occurs, in Red Mountain, at the end of the novel – Eddie is living on his own, raising his daughter, and working as a Head Start teacher, a job that is meaningful to him, and socially relevant. And it looks as if he'll be starting to go on dates, again, too.

#### *AUTONOMY AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF*

Eddie seems to retain his sense of autonomy even as he feels part of the larger Civil Rights struggle. Eddie himself, once he leaves home and starts to think for himself, does not regard himself as religious person – he seems to be more of what might be called a secular humanist. The question then arises: Is religious belief consistent with autonomy? Is one's belief in a transcendent Deity who governs the world and the universe, consistent with the belief that each person is responsible for governing themselves?

*Comment:* Whether religious belief is consistent with personal autonomy, really involves the context of religious belief. Religious belief could empower people to govern themselves in a balanced and just manner, or it could be used to manipulate, control and to impose one's own beliefs on others. The young lay minister speaks up for justice at religious meeting in 1960, and he's almost attacked for it, as we've described. It was one of the opening rounds in the fight for desegregation in the South.

So, while Eddie seemed to express respect for that minister, he feels manipulated by Pastor Bingham, and by his own family and that of Chrissy, to accept funeral arrangements that were more religious in tone than he knew Chrissy would have wanted.

Eddie recognizes, early on in his life, that people have been divided from each other along racial, religious and class lines. He describes, how as a boy, he observes that wealthier people, (which he later discovers include Chrissy's family), lived in different parts of town compared to his family, and that black people lived separately, still.

Segregation was institutionalized in pre Civil Rights days, when Eddie was growing up in Birmingham, and the churches, part of the power structure, also promoted it. But there were many religious people in the Civil Rights movement, including, of course, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who see their search for social justice as coming out of the Bible. But white segregationists also used religion and the Bible as ways to support their social and political beliefs.

Having witnessed situations of class vs. class and race vs. race, Eddie instead seeks situations in which his search for autonomy involve helping other people achieve their autonomy. This happens most strikingly toward the end of Red Mountain, when Eddie becomes a Head Start teacher. Chrissy tries to also help promote social justice, when she is a social worker in New York City, but the difficulty of the job, her overwhelming sympathy for her clients, and her relative lack of detachment, just feeds her own depression.

### *EXISTENTIALISM*

*Existentialism* comes to American shores from Europe, after WW II, though as a philosophical movement, it originates with Nietzsche and Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish writer in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century,. As a philosophical attitude, is a reaction to the speculative idealism of Hegel and the German idealists. Existentialism is also a philosophical reaction to tendencies in the new developing sciences -- of sociology, and psychology, and also logic and linguistics --, to reduce human beings to a set of categories, or to analyze away, the distinctive features of individual people. Authenticity, individuality, freedom and the search for truth are key concepts, in existentialism, and we see these concepts expressed with great intensity in Chrissy's diary, which we've considered at length.

Existentialism is influenced by phenomenology, and phenomenology's attempt to understand human knowing descriptively and rationally, without presuppositions or assumptions. Phenomenology is strongly influenced by Descartes, and makes the rational suspension of judgment a key feature of the phenomenological process of questioning and describing experience.

There are atheistic and religious existentialists. *Nietzsche, Sartre and Camus* are famous atheistic existentialists, while *Kierkegaard, Buber, Marcel, Berdyaev* and *Shestov* are famous religious existentialists. Religious existentialists would consider their acts of will in the context of religious choice. (Heidegger inclines more toward Buddhism rather than theism, in this writer's view). We've already mentioned parallels to Buber in sections on Bergson and Dilthey and later on, to Dilthey, in this study guide.

Existentialist philosophers, as a group, then, focus on the nature of concrete, human relations, particularly those between people. Thus, they focus on existence rather than essence. Sartre's famous phrase is that existence precedes essence. People determine their nature through their actions, and there is no predetermined way for them to behave. One could see how such an attitude toward living would be attractive to a person like Eddie, who creates himself as a young adult, through his actions and attitudes, his existence preceding his essence, as it were. Eddie, throughout *Red Mountain*, clearly rejects having any "essentialism" or "essence" from his upbringing that would compel him to act in any particular way. Existentialism also requires freedom as part of the conditions for making moral choices. However, even prisoners have choice, though from among more limited options. We discuss the issue of free will shortly.

### *Existential Freedom, Authenticity and Eddie*

We've spoken of Eddie's love affair with philosophy and education. When he discovers the world of ideas, in college, Eddie discovers his existential freedom, or his freedom to choose how to live his life. This is a new thing to him, having grown up in a repressive society and with a repressive father. .

The concept of existentialist freedom, according to the philosopher *Jean-Paul Sartre* (whom Eddie mentions several times in the book), implies a person's full commitment to their action, holding nothing back. A person's actions become an expression of their freedom, which

becomes their essence - hence Sartre's famous statement, existence precedes essence (from his classic philosophical study, *Being and Nothingness*).

Eddie is fully committed to his study of philosophy and ideas, which he also sees embodied in one's life style and in society. We've already pointed out Eddie's experience of the Philosophy Dept at NYU—the apparent lack of compassion by the chairman at Chrissy's death, and by implication, the remoteness of the department from Eddie's life,. This seems to be one key reason why he doesn't return to NYU to resume graduate studies. The other reason seems to be that he wants to be closer to his families, as he seeks to raise Andrea, without her mother, during the next part of his life. Then, Eddie becomes a Head Start teacher in Alabama. As a result of this, his father tells him that he's no longer welcome to live in his house, which only adds to Eddie's sense of autonomy. He wants to express, and realize his own freedom by helping other people realize their freedom. He wants to help spread social justice in the place of his birth -- where he felt so much repression, growing up, and where he also observes much suppression of black people by whites, and suppression of the white working class itself, by the upper class.

*Comment:* Eddie commits himself fully to his tasks, as his studies, and his teaching, and in a balanced way. So, beside living as a free, autonomous person, which we've considered, Eddie's basic mode of being in the world, or how he sees and presents himself, is through balance.

Philosophically speaking then, Eddie's actions, most of the time, tend to express Aristotelian balance, combined with Sartre's conception of good faith. One acts in good faith when they don't limit another person's freedom or ability to express themselves, while also not hurting other people. In so doing, one lives authentically (or makes decisions that have authenticity, another key existentialist concept.

It is interesting to note that Eddie uses his freedom, his existential freedom, in the context of decisions and actions that are rational. This is in contrast to Chrissy whose actions seem to spring from her unconscious and the will, as we've described, and literally, escape the control of her reason.

### *Existential Freedom and Chrissy*

Chrissy commits herself fully to her tasks too, but she is unbalanced, so she commits herself in an unbalanced manner. Her intensity includes severe depression and taking to her bed for days at a time. Psychologically, she is often not able to function in the world, or make choices freely.

Now, however, let's examine the actions of Eddie vs. Chrissy in terms of their existential freedom, which includes the issue of free will.

Eddie wants Chrissy to see a therapist, but she resists, fearing the therapist would find a label for her dark reality as she writes in her diary, and profane it with a name. Eddie describes her malady in terms of her mood darkening, as if she has deep seated anger about which she wouldn't talk.

*Comment:* Existentialism focuses on individuals rather than groups, and on unique and distinguishing features of individuals. Chrissy's dark reality is indeed a distinguishing feature. But, if she considers a very troublesome part of her personality or psychological makeup, as a distinguishing feature, then this bodes ill for her, for it literally shows her self-absorption with her own suffering, or extreme narcissism.

*Comment:* To express her existential freedom, as described by Sartre, Chrissy would need psychotherapy. She would need to explore her unconscious – to make her unconscious conscious, to use Freud's famous phrase, in order to become free of her past and to be able to make free choices. (We discuss this phrase in more detail in the Appendix on Psychoanalytic concepts)

### *Eddie vs. Chrissy on good faith vs. bad faith*

Two different attitudes emerge, then, for Chrissy and Eddy. Chrissy's attitude is more extreme, less balanced, less conventional. It is life without a net. Indeed, she refers to Eddie as her safety net, which is also how Anita describes that aspect of the relationship between Chrissy and Eddie.

*Concept for Understanding:* Could we say that Eddie or Chrissy is right or wrong in their attitudes toward life? We deal with this issue throughout this *Study Guide*. Indeed, the main purpose of this study is to help people to better understand and to control their own lives, if they so wish, drawing from their understanding of the lives of the characters, the plot, and social background of Red Mountain.

Existential freedom also involves accepting responsibility for one's actions, which implies having a sense of balance, and not blaming situations in the past for one's present actions. The latter is bad faith, in Sartre's sense of the term.

Existential choice implies commitment with the full force of one's being. Chrissy acknowledges this fact. She says to Eddie, when he visits her, after her suicide attempt.

*Eddie, think about it...it's...well, we have been through hell, you and I, but not because we didn't like one another. I mean we are who we are. Perhaps we should never have married, but we've tried to live a real life. We tried to live by our own rules, not ones made up by politicians and preachers. Maybe we didn't always know what we were doing, but we weren't afraid to try and find out what was real and what wasn't...like my mother. Everybody lies, but we tried to know the difference...even when it hurt. Our relationship can't be defined so simply as 'it was good,' or 'it was bad.' We found each other, and we got married. It's what happened. We didn't go to sleep, and I don't accept standards that don't apply.*

*Comment:* Existential freedom is characterized by the exercise of free will. Therefore, from an existentialist perspective, it might be argued that Chrissy's psychological problems, in particular her possessiveness, prevent her from expressing and living out her freedom, i.e. having a relationship with Anita. In the end, it isn't society's rejection of lesbianism that lead Chrissy to suicide, but Chrissy's inability to accept limits to her desires – to live with Anita in a non-obsessive manner. It also seemed to be important to Chrissy that the relationship be socially acceptable -- sadly, this would actually have been the case, in the East Village, in NYC, had she the patience to work through her psychological issues.

*Existential Freedom, the Gaze of the Other,*

*Good Faith, and Hell is Other People*

The question, then, is how is one to utilize their freedom? A view on this is presented by Gary, on whom we've previously talked, a friend of Chrissy, a fellow social worker in NY, whom Eddie meets when he visits Chrissy, after she moves there from Birmingham.

*Gary tells Eddie:*

*A man has to be free before he can meet a woman on an equal basis. He has to not give himself to her, has to keep something back for himself, because a woman always has the advantage. Mothers. Lovers. Friends. Women create the world we men live in—make no mistake about it—and, in the end, a woman can either leave you or die on you, and you can't ever trust 'em not to do one or the other. So you have to be willing to walk away, have to keep your soul, stay your own man, or you're fucked.*

This view of Gary's actually corresponds to an aspect of Sartre's existentialism. In the latter, there is a struggle for dominance of the self over the other, which manifests itself in the gaze of the other. However, Sartre's existentialism also involves basic and absolute respect for the freedom of the other --this is the limit of the individual's own use of their freedom. Using one's existential freedom well is called good faith, as we've described, while using the past as an excuse to not realize one's freedom in the present, is called bad faith. Eddie's basic orientation, in *Red Mountain*, is that of good faith. Chrissy often blames her past, for her problems, which, in Sartrian terms, is bad faith. We'll consider these concepts further in the section on Free Will.

*Comment:* The issue of bad faith also emerges as an issue, insofar as Chrissy was totally not honest with Dr. Williams and Eddie over the extent of her feeling of abandonment and social isolation, and her frustration at being a lesbian or bisexual person in the society at that time. She is also deeply disturbed at being rejected for her possessiveness and obsessive-compulsiveness, by Anita.

*Question:* The concepts of good faith and bad faith are very important concepts in existentialism. In your own life, think of a situation in which you've acted from good faith, and another in which you've acted in bad faith.

*Comment:* The importance of the other --- i.e. the other person -- in determining one's own sense of being and self-worth, is also expressed in another famous phrase of Sartre, Hell is other people, from his famous play, *No Exit*. If people (as subjects) see themselves the way that others see them, they will, in effect, be giving up their freedom to other people (to others as objects) and allow these other people to define them, or to determine their essence or identity (i.e. the identity

of the original subjects). This seems to be what both Sartre and Gary are saying.

*Question:* Gary says, in effect, that you shouldn't completely give yourself to another person, so they could control you, or you will have to bear what they may do to you. What do you think? This question opens to this further issue:

*Concept for Understanding:* Do what extent do you think that your identify -- in the sense of how you view yourself -- should be influenced by other people?

Sartre's concepts of gaze of the other , and hell is other people, express *heteronomy* – that is being governed by another, or having one's essence be determined by an other being (the *other*) outside of themselves (as a *subject*). As we've previously considered, the concept of heteronomy stands in contrast to autonomy , which is the quality of governing oneself.

*Comment:* Without intending this, Gary words --that a man shouldn't give all of himself to a woman, for then she'll control him, and he won't have much left of himself -- really applies to Chrissy. This is simultaneously, her most tragic flaw and greatest strength, namely, that she withholds nothing from her commitments – to other people, and to projects to which she devotes herself. This happens between Chrissy and Anita, and between Chrissy and her social work clients in NYC.

#### *Existential Choice, for Eddie and Chrissy: social activism*

The Civil rights movement helped mobilize Eddie and Chrissy to seek social activist jobs. Chrissy gets a job in NYC, as a caseworker, where she had abruptly moved, to be with Anita. She deals with physically abused women and children, and becomes unable to deal with the brutality of it. And, as we indicated, Eddie eventually becomes a teacher in a Head Start program in Alabama.

#### *Existential Choice vs. Virtue as a Habit*

Let's briefly review our survey of Aristotle's ethics or moral philosophy. He writes, that happiness is an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue (*Nicomachean Ethics*). Earlier, we considered the moral good, or virtue, in terms of balance between extremes. After veering between

extremes, as on a see-saw, one learns to balance oneself, or stay the middle course. To become habituated to seeking balance in general, is what Aristotle calls the Golden Mean.

Insofar as virtue is a habit, it is in contrast to existential choice and action. In existential action, each moral act is affirmed through a unique and individual act of will, that is also unique, to the person and situation. So, for Sartre, no moral system could present general or particular rules of codes of moral conduct, for the individual.

We've already mentioned Sartre's famous existentialist dilemma to illustrate this point: should someone care for their aging mother or join the French Resistance during World War II? His answer is that there is no single answer (essence), but that every situation (existence) is unique for each person. *I have only one answer. You are free, choose yourself, that is, do something. No universal moral code can tell you what to do.* (1978, *Existentialism and Humanism*, an essay by Jean-Paul Sartre)

An example of bad faith would be, in our examples, if the WW II soldier went off, to consider the question of whether he should join the resistance, in a place from which it would be impossible to re-join his comrades. Another example of bad faith would be if the person let his mother get weaker and weaker hoping that her death would free him from making the moral decision of whether to stay with her, or go off to war. Sartre emphasizes the importance of existential freedom. If we respect the ability of other people to make free moral choices, then we are compelled to treat them with civility and respect. I would say that is Sartre's existentialist humanism in a nutshell.

Moral systems have philosophically been based on happiness or virtue, or attempts to combine them. Existentialism would seem to be based on neither happiness or virtue, as such, since it wants to preserve the irreducible and unique, or authentic, character of each moral action. We'll sum up these different systems, below.. However, for more material on Ethics, we also refer the reader to Appendix 5.

### *Putting It All Together -- Reason and the Will in Moral Judgments*

As we've considered, Aristotle, Kant, and Sartre emphasize reason's domination over the will. Reviewing briefly:

*Aristotle* - the human soul (psyche) is composed of reason, the will, and the appetites, with reason dominating the other faculties.

Happiness is an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue. To seek the mean between the extremes is a general moral principle, the so-called golden mean.

*Kant* - the good will, is good without any qualification, and its realization is the basis of his moral system;

*Sartre* - each choice is unique to the person and situation, the only rule being not to limit the freedom of another person. To act in good faith relies on being in the present situation, and not the past, and not restricting the freedom of another person. One lives, then, authentically, in existential freedom.

These thinkers differ in their conceptions of the good: Aristotle identifies the good with happiness; Kant identifies with the good with virtue, or doing what is right, apart from happiness or consequences; for Sartre, the good, however it is conceived, is determined by each person, in each situation. They stand in contrast to the following thinkers who emphasize the importance of the will.

*Freud* – has several typologies of the mind: (1) his earlier division of the psyche in the unconscious, pre-conscious and the conscious mind (see Appendix on Freud); (2)- his later, more well known classification of the psyche in terms of the Ego, Id, and Superego. The purpose of psychoanalysis is *to make the unconscious conscious*, or to put impulses from the will (Id, the unconscious) under the control of reason. This could also be done in activity, and also through sublimation.

*Nietzsche* - the will to power does not so much express the irrational, but man's whole being, when not influenced by the otherworldliness and passivity or organized religion. (See earlier section on Nietzsche)

*Schopenhauer* – a strong influence on Nietzsche, he associates the will to live with desire and suffering, and so seeks to subdue the will, ultimately in death. As we've mentioned, for Schopenhauer, the will could express itself through art, a conception which also influences Freud's theory of sublimation.

*Buddhism* – associates the will with craving and desire and seeks to reduce the power of the will over the mind, through the practice of mindfulness or awareness of craving or desire. (See Appendix on Buddhism for a longer discussion of the main tenets of Buddhism).

Eddie seems to express a view of the will as under the aegis of reason. For Chrissy, however, her will seems uninhibited and unencumbered

### *Chrissy and Existential Freedom*

As she holds nothing back, in what she gives to relationships and her activities, Chrissy experiences what the existentialists would consider as the uniqueness, immediacy and transiency of things, more acutely than other people. She does channel her will into art – as writing in her Diary and doing the Tristram Shandy study. She also pursues playing the guitar, for a while, and seems to derive some happiness from this. But she doesn't fully grasp the importance of her decisions, as an expression of her freedom, in its moral dimension.

Kant and Sartre both make human freedom a condition of moral action. In other words, if someone coerces or forces you to do something, or to make a confession against your will, then, this violates your freedom as a moral being. The resulting act is not a moral act, but an act into which you've been coerced. Still, despite the lack of freedom, Kant maintains that one should try to practice the Categorical Imperative – the Golden Rule in terms of willing the universal, since this is part of human dignity. And Sartre maintains too, that even if one is a prisoner, and one does not have free will, then one still has some freedom of choice, just much more limited ones.

*Comment:* Chrissy's imbalanced mental state does not permit her to retain her freedom to choose. Freedom to choose a more balanced life style and set of attitudes could have provided a way for her, other than suicide, to break the bonds that bound her to the old hurts from her past, particularly her upbringing. Continued artistic expression through her writing could have provided a creative outlet for her, as (1) an expression of freedom to choose (Sartre), (2) as a form of sublimation (Freud), (3) as the harnessing of the power of her will (Nietzsche).

Fixed choices limit one's sense of freedom, as the precondition for moral choice. Thus, Sartre never joins the French Communist Party, which was very strong in France, but which he supports. In a similar spirit of independence, Sartre also refuses the Nobel Prize for Literature (for his autobiography, *Words*) because he didn't want his thought to be institutionalized, but approached openly, by readers, without preconceptions about his work.

*Comment:* Trying to realize Sartre's concept of existential freedom, could have helped Chrissy break the dependency on her pattern of suffering, going all the way back to her childhood

### *Sublimation, the Will, Cathexis, and Reason*

#### 1.

We have presented Aristotle's conception of the three parts of the human soul or psyche – reason, will and appetites in relationship to Eddie, Chrissy and Tim.

We have used Aristotle's conception of the threefold human soul – the reason, will, and the appetites -- as the basis for two philosophical traditions :

-- philosophical traditions based on the will: (Epicureanism, Buddhism, medieval voluntarism, and in modern times, the philosophies of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche)

-- philosophical traditions based on reason: (Aquinas, Descartes, Hegel , phenomenology)

#### 2.

If a person does not practice sublimation, the tendency is that their will would be directed toward more emotional, impulsive, physical, short terms goals, rather than long-term objectives sought by their reason.

Eddie's actions seem to be associated with sublimation, while Chrissy's do not. However, Eddie seems to possess a strong sense of imperturbability in the general sense of the Stoics and Epicureans, early Greek philosophers. He also loves contemplation on philosophy, in the context of his very busy life. These latter attitudes seem to motivate him more than sublimation as a process. It could be argued however, that his resentment toward his father's fits of rage and parochialism was redirected or sublimated into the study of philosophy. However he arrives at the contemplative life, his attitude toward life is very different than Chrissy and Tim – they are hedonistically oriented, and not able to stay balanced, in their lives, with dire consequences, for both.

*Comment:* In sublimation, one tries to redirect the energy of a drive to a different object, which may have more of a rational or imaginative character than its original impulse. For instance, one might channel an

impulse to commit violent acts into sports, or a drive to make a lot of money through crime, into making money legally. In sublimation one re-directs energy, or one's will, in accordance with a purpose, or reason. Thus, sublimation involves reason directing the will.

For Aristotle, if reason makes decisions based on higher level rational activities, but doesn't utilize the energy of the instinctual drives, then one's approach to realizing the Golden Mean wouldn't have the same psychical dynamism as Freud's. However, going from extreme to extreme, and stabilizing at the mean is also a theory of transmission and utilization of energy. There would be a parallel between Freud and Nietzsche however, insofar as Nietzsche wants the person to use their full energy, as expressed in the will to power, while avoiding the extreme of the abyss, or extreme willfulness which could result in self-destruction.

As distinct from the term, sublimation, Freud also uses the term, *cathexis*, which describes an action in terms of a discharge of energy or cathexis. In other words, one cathects their homework assignment, or going to the movies, etc., i.e. charges the activity with psychical energy, or cathects it. It is a mechanical term. Freud is indeed writing during the period of industrialization with engines and motors, and the image of a machine and the mechanical discharge of stored energy, may have influenced his thinking. A cathected activity is not necessarily a sublimated one, but refers instead to the raw energy, as it were, before it is redirected or sublimated to a activity that is sanctioned by the rational mind.

Eddie does express simple awareness of the energetics of balance – e.g. needing to getting enough sleep as to be able to do his two p/t jobs plus a full course load. It is an implicit recognition of utilizing his full psychical energy through sublimation, rather than simply using reason to control the irrational parts of his psyche.

## Chapter 6:

### CLASSICISM AND ROMANTICISM IN RED MOUNTAIN

#### *The Basis in Classical Greek Philosophy*

The faculties of reason and the will are also the basis for Classicism and Romanticism as the two broad approaches to experience, which philosophically, and historically, derive from Aristotle's conception

*Classicism and Romanticism* are two basic attitudes toward experience which cut broad swatches across all the arts – including literature, art, music, poetry and philosophy, moving backward from the present, to the very beginning of Western thought in classical Greece. The distinction could be traced back to the very influential view of the soul (psyche). As we've already discussed, the soul is composed of a rational element, the element of sensation and a physical component. Classicism derives from the emphasis on reason, and balance in one's life; romanticism is based on one's emphasis on the will and/or appetites and emotional part of one's psyche, as an attitude toward experience. Classicism emphasizes reason, while romanticism emphasizes feeling or emotion, as these are expressed in works of art, or in how a person lives their life.

Romanticism, as an artistic movement, includes the element of return to nature, or idealization of qualities or aspects of the past, primitivism, and the importance of the artist's imagination and sensibility, (see Columbia Encyclopedia , 6th ed, 2007). The popular view of romanticism is that one is overcome by infatuation, or desire, and experiences the clouding or diminishing of one's ability to decide.. However, the "higher" aspect of romantic love is courtly love, as in the medieval chivalric tradition. In this, the beloved becomes a symbol of an ideal or idealization, not excluding the idea of perfect love, as symbolic of the union between the human and the divine.

Romanticism, in general, implies a sense of the faculty of reason being overcome by emotion, not just in the momentary sense of swoon, or intoxication, but a kind of disabling of the faculty of reason, a kind of temporary insanity, or what some what consider as divinely inspired madness. It could involve primitive elements or idealization, as we've described. Above all, the romantic attitude expresses the domination of feelings over thinking, in a person's general approach to life.

Gauguin's famous paintings of South Sea natives combines many of the key romantic themes – lush color, free use of line, a return to the primitive or ancient origins of something, a motif of mystery, even supernatural or spiritual mystery, and idealization of nature. Impressionism in general, as an artistic movement, is a romantic movement. Classical art certainly does not exclude the expression of human emotion, but emphasizes balance, form, composition, and line.

A famous example of classicism in art, in sculpture, in particular, is Michelangelo's renowned statue of David. The sculpture emphasize balance, is elegant, is an idealization of the human male form. From painting, Flemish portraiture is certainly classical in its orientation but also conveys emotion through the dramatic of shading or chiaroscuro. Nonetheless, the overall effect of a classically oriented work, of any genre, is that of a balanced composition, certainly in contrast to, let us say, the emotional impact of art from the Impressionist school.

#### *Eddie and Chrissy as Classical and Romantic Heroes*

Eddie is a hero in the classical sense, emphasizing balance and reason, in his life. His life style, as a whole is characterized by balance, as in his holding down two p/t jobs while maintaining a full load at college. Above all, when he becomes off-balance, as when he has two affairs while still married to Chrissy – both alcohol fueled – he ends them fairly quickly and tries to resume his marriage with Chrissy, at least, as much as possible, given Chrissy's unpredictable behavior.

In the context of the Romanticism, Chrissy is the Romantic heroine. Hers is the life of emotions, the senses, the edges of one's personality, and the extremes of experience, including those that involve sex with multiple partners, and drugs, and of course, her love of writing - especially her diary, which is certainly the most personal mode of expression that she could employ. .. While Eddie tends to come back, or return to his center of balance, after an excess of whatever kind, she prefers the edges, and likes to stay there for as long as possible, even when strong positive feelings become strongly negative ones, or develop negative consequences. She is often withdrawn, moody and sullen, and takes to her bed, missing classes or work. Hers is the life of emotions, and of emotional extremes, not unlike a child, in that sense. For example, in her Diary, she fantasizes about a lover one year and a baby the next – expressing these different parts of her personality.

*Eddie as Narrator, and Chrissy as Diary Writer,  
Establish Empathy with the Reader:  
Our Introduction to Verstehen*

To study and reflect on Red Mountain in the context of classicism and romanticism, prepares us for the next part of our discussion. This part of our study will hopefully help us deepen and broaden our understanding of Red Mountain, and philosophy, human nature and society, in general.

*Question:* Why do you think that Red Mountain was written in the form of a novel rather than an essay?

Novels express ideas in the context of the lives of the characters. When we consider the lifestyles of the main characters of Red Mountain and examine their underlying philosophies of living, then we are studying ideas in the context of the lived experiences of the characters. In so doing, we have an opportunity to compare our own experience as readers, through insight and empathy, with the lives of the characters.. The text opens windows into the inner lives of the characters, particularly when the novel is written in first person narrative by one of the main characters, Eddie Andersen.

Eddie speaks about his own life, from the inside out, as it were, in his 1st person narrative. It is important to point out, too, that Chrissy's Diary entries constitute another level of discourse for the reader, and for Eddie too, as he reflects on each entry and its meaning and shares both his thoughts and the diary entry with the readers.

*The Human Sciences and the Natural Sciences*

If there is a science of nature, maybe there should be a science of mankind, a human science, which would have elements in common with the natural sciences, but also able to deal with distinctiveness of human beings, compared to other beings in the natural world

This brings to *Wilhelm Dilthey*, a famous late 19th- early 20th century German philosopher, and a founder of what becomes the discipline of sociology. He also draws a famous and influential distinction between the human sciences and the natural sciences.

## *Verstehen and Erklaren*

Wilhelm Dilthey identifies methods of inquiry or methodologies that are proper to each of these two areas of inquiry --- a methodology distinctive to the natural sciences, and a methodology for the study of human behavior, philosophically and psychologically, which he identifies with the human sciences. The former is *Erklaren* – explanation, associated with reason, and which has a purely objective or scientific connection with its object of study (its object); The latter is *Verstehen* -understanding, associated with empathic or sympathetic understanding of the other, as part of oneself, not separate from oneself, as a separate object ).

Verstehen theory also poses questions about the nature of philosophy itself, what we could call meta-philosophy. These questions include the nature of the human mind, and the nature of philosophy and sociology, as subjects, in the introspective sense in which one might study oneself. By way of contrast, to study these areas of learning as objects of scientific knowledge, would be to see them in framework of *Erklaren*.

For a person to feel a sense of unity and empathy with the other (an object they are considering) would be attitude of *Verstehen*; to analyze things would be the attitude of *Erklaren*, which is also attitude of the scientist.

### *Verstehen and Erklaren and the Threefold Soul of Aristotle*

*Erklaren* and *Verstehen* are, respectively, analytic-rational and synthetic-intuitive, and approaches to experience. *Erklaren* is associated with reason, and therefore with classicism as a literary/artistic/philosophical attitude, and draws from this tradition. *Verstehen* is associated with the whole of the threefold conceptions of the Aristotle's concept of the self, encompasses reason, the will- imagination –sensations-emotions and the appetites. ), rather than just the faculty of reason. *Verstehen* therefore, encompasses both classicism and romanticism as an artistic movement, and attempts to place the subjectivism and irrationalism of romanticism in the context of empathy and sympathetic understanding of another person.

*Verstehen*, as a method of inquiry, is called by Dilthey, the Human Sciences, (*Geisteswissenschaften*, which means spiritual science (i.e. human) sciences *geist-spiritual+wissenschaft*) in contrast to the natural sciences. It includes philosophy, psychology, sociology, and

cultural and artistic studies. Besides the characteristic of empathy, the concept of *Verstehen* includes the historical and social dimensions of consciousness, hence Dilthey's term, the Human Sciences.

*Question:* The artist and the scientist might consider the same object, but differently. What does that mean?

An artist could paint an insect and try to reproduce it exactly, as a photograph, in the way that Audubon painted birds, let us say, in exquisite detail. Or an artist could render the insect impressionistically, through subtle use of colors and shading, etc. A poet or a writer might try to describe the insect's inner life, insofar as it would be accessible to a human, based on empathy and the shared experience of being sentient beings. The insect, for a scientist, would be an object of analysis, rather than a subject with which to empathize. Yet, there are also subtle levels of communication among living beings, on the level of the senses or that of parapsychology, as described by Peter Tompkins in his popular book, *The Secret Life of Plants* (1973). So, the relationship between *Verstehen* and *Erklaren* as different modes of apprehension could be fluid, generally speaking.

*Comment:* *Verstehen* includes reason as well as cultural and artistic sensibility, and as such, embraces both the classicist and romantic attitudes toward experience. Insofar as *Verstehen* includes empathy, it includes subjectivity, or seeing the other from the other's own skin, as it were, and the romantic attitude. To experience empathy does not necessarily exclude reason, or the rational approach to experience that characterizes classicism. In contrast, *Erklaren*, or Explanation, is a more objective, descriptive mode of discourse, akin to the language of science, which approaches the object as an object.

#### *Two Philosophical Analogues to Verstehen : Bergson & Buber*

Earlier, we briefly examined the thought of Henri Bergson (in the section entitled *Philosophies of the Will*), in the context of a non-mechanical vitalistic approach to nature -- nature contains a non-material force, the *elan vital*, the vital force, which animates it. Bergson also presents the concept of *Duree* – this is experience from the inside out – as learning to swim by actually going into water and not just reading about it. (see Bergson's book, *Creative Evolution*). He also employs the example of the distinction between the map and the territory, that is, between seeing the map vs. the walking the territory (Bergson, *Introduction to Metaphysics*). *Verstehen* has an analogue in Henri Bergson's concept of Duration or *Duree*.

Duree could perhaps, be also understood in the context of Martin Buber's I-Thou or I-You relation, from his famous book, *I and Thou* (1923). What Buber calls the I-Thou relation is the experience of the other as part as part of oneself, or experiencing the other through the skin of the other. The and I and the other meet as subject and subject, not subject and object. Buber regards the between as a separate sphere of relational meeting, that surpasses mere empathy, alone. The I-It relation is ordinary knowledge, the subject knowing the other as an object. Putting it another way, in the I-Thou relation, the skins of the two beings connect each to the other; in the I-It relation, the skins of the two beings serve to keep them apart.

Verstehen theory itself, has to maintain its own balance and not veer off into the extreme of *Lebensphilosophie*, (literally, philosophy of life). In *Lebensphilosophie*, rationality is more submerged, relative to emotional expression and such concepts as chauvinism and vitalism is emphasized. The concept belongs more to romanticism than to Verstehen. (As we've mentioned, vitalism expresses life-force energy in non-physical terms as vital spirit, rather than as measurable physical energy)

Bergson's thought with its emphasis on lived experience and empathy fits in with Verstehen. The I-Thou relation of Buber and Verstehen both represent wholistic ways of approaching experience – with body mind and body and with openness toward the other.

### *Verstehen Theory vs. Romanticism*

Living as a romantic heroine, encourages Chrissy's emotionalism, grandiosity and self-obsession. She does realize that art provided a safe way for her to express herself and not act out her fantasies of revenge and self-destruction. The Tristram Shandy episode illustrates this.

As the realm of both the inner -- seeing others as subjects rather than as objects -- yet also perceiving things historically, Verstehen in a methodological sense, corresponds to the realm of freedom or free will. It stands in contrast to Erklären, the latter being the realm of scientific determinism or mechanism.

### *Some Philosophical Help For Chrissy*

To summarize our progress thus far, we presented a number of philosophical approaches to helping Chrissy. There is Aristotle's concept of the Golden Mean, and the mindfulness of desire - without acting out -- in Stoicism, Epicureanism and Buddhism. There is Sartre's concept of existential freedom. Phenomenology, as a rational approach of distancing oneself from a situation and then reconstituting reconstructing it, also provides a person with a space "over" which to reflect on or about a situation.

We've tried to apply the lessons learned from Chrissy's experience. Philosophically, we tried to help Chrissy balance her life, and infuse it with a sense of existential freedom. Possibilities await her if she breaks out of pessimism and a feeling of psychological determinism, which keep her outlook on the world and her own development as a person, frozen.

Verstehen theory, rather than romanticism, as we wrote above, would provide a philosophical approach for Chrissy to temper her extreme romanticism, and obsessive and self-destructive impulses. It is a more inclusive and richer category than either classicism or romanticism. Verstehen includes the social, psychological aspects of a person's life, and the importance of empathy or harmony of their social relations with other people and other beings in the world.

## Part II

### Chapter VII

#### *Issue of Free Will and Determinism*

Through her actions, Chrissy, introduces us to this issue in a most direct way: Could she have acted in ways other than the way she did? Or was it somehow determined or pre-determined that events happen, as they did. The same questions could be asked, regarding Eddie, and Tim.

The wider question is then, why do some people manage to free themselves from an oppressive past, while others do not? This question makes reference to psychological and social issues, which involve the individual and the social world around them.

A few words, first, about determinism and the different types of determinism.

#### *Hard and Soft Determinism*

By determinism we mean that a person is unable to act other than the way they actually do. This usually relates to the matrix of psychological, social, economic, and religious forces which act on a person in any society, and influence their beliefs. Determinism is sometimes thought of in terms of hard determinism and soft determinism, which reflect different degrees of predictability, expressed in terms of necessity, as described below.

When we introduce free will, the issue becomes one of free will vs. determinism, or freedom vs. necessity. We'll examine some situations involving human will, and we'll end the section by considering some of the characters and issues in Red Mountain, in terms of these issues.

By free will we mean that a person could choose from a variety of choices, and also act in a way that may be contrary to their background, their past choices, and their expected course of action.

So, let's consider this issue using four different examples of the issue of free will vs. determinism.. Then, we'll conclude this section with a re-examination of the issue for Chrissy -- could she have done other than what she did, in the major choices of her life?

#### Free Will vs. Determinism – Four Different Examples

1. Let's think of two scientific experiments that are designed to test two chemical reactions. A chemical reaction is usually regarded by people as mechanical and automatic, and is counterposed to acts of human will. Two simple experiments would be to heat water so that it turns into steam; and to chill water sufficiently so that it turns into ice. If we list all the conditions that must be fulfilled for these end results or effects to happen, we would be listing two sets of necessary and sufficient conditions. These two experiments would be examples of scientific mechanism, or scientific laws that supposedly occur automatically, or necessarily, as expressed in what are called laws of nature.

As such, the causal sequence is regarded as a form of hard determinism – if x occurs, then y necessarily follows. Mechanical processes could still be subject to further scrutiny, however, as by Hume, in his famous analysis of causality, to which Eddie refers, in Red Mountain. We'll examine this further, shortly.

Restating the main point, any mechanical process which happens automatically, or in a pre-determined fashion, is regarded by people as examples of hard determinism – if you heat water under such and such conditions, then it will necessarily (in a deterministic fashion) become steam. (ie. necessarily happen), unless the processes are interrupted, as turning off the heat when boiling water, from our example, above.

2. Let's consider another example, children who are raised in criminal surroundings. Some children from this background grow up and become totally honest and law-abiding. However, their brothers and sisters often became involved with crime, in one form or another.

Are there certain factors in the honest person's personality or upbringing, that determine that they will not go into crime, when compared to their brothers and sisters? Could we perform a similar test on each child? Could we make definitive lists of all the factors that influenced each child, and then conclusively say that such and such a child could not have done other than what they actually did?

Factors that influence the children do not have the same level of predictability in the outcome, as when we heat water, in the scientific experiment, described above. A definitive set of necessary and sufficient conditions could not be established to determine which children will be law-abiding. So, the causal factors, in this experiment with children, result in soft determinism, rather than hard determinism. With soft determinism we speak of possibilities, or probabilities, while

with hard determinism, we speak of necessity.

3. In another example of the free-will determinism question, could we set up an experiment and test whether a dog or cat will invariably perform a certain trick on demand?.

4. Let's choose as an example here, one that involves the mind-body interaction. An example is substance abuse. Could we determine whether particular persons will be able to sustain sobriety indefinitely or keep relapsing?

We have, then, four different examples that involve the issue of free will: 1-chemical reactions; 2-human choice of life style; 3- animal choice, and 4- a combination of chemical dependency and individual human will.

### *Some Thoughts on our Examples*

What is the basic distinguishing factor in the these experiments? That factor is the will, of humans, and also of animals in contrast to a mechanical process (as heating or cooling water), or a combination of human will and the chemical aspects of addiction.

In our 1st example of the chemical experiment, we could say that if a set of necessary and sufficient conditions are met, (as the conditions for boiling water), then the event will happen in a mechanical way that is also pre-determined. The reactive agent or the substance being tested doesn't "will" to do or not do the reaction, but if such and such conditions are met, then the action happens. This would also be the verdict of common sense, the "man (or woman) in the street, "and also the attitude of scientific mechanism, or scientific determinism.

### *Our Skeptical Nod From Eddie*

However, common sense or scientific determinism doesn't necessarily have the last word, here. But first, we'll look for a nod from Eddie, to continue, which we predict with a fair amount of certainty, he will give us, since he seems quite absorbed in his reading of David Hume, the most skeptical of the 18<sup>th</sup> century British empiricists.

Hume writes that there is no 100% guarantee that the future will resemble the past, and that the laws of physics will not change in the next moment. Further, there is no causality as such, only temporal sequence of events, their constant conjuncture, and resemblances of phenomena to each other. Only our own habits and expectations make

us believe that causality exists. Hume extends his attitude of philosophical skepticism to the mind. There is no abiding self -- the self is just a bundle of sensations. Eddie says to himself, at one point, the famous empiricist quip about Hume's philosophy, no matter, never mind. It is thoughts like these, so different from what he experienced while growing up at home, that really stimulate Eddie, during the early days of the circle of friends, and in his later studies at Crestview.

Hume, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, philosophically attacks Newton's mechanical materialism, along the lines we've presented, above. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Newtonian model, or paradigm, was superceded by the relativity theory of Einstein, which is, in turn, refined through quantum theory.

So, on the sub-atomic or quantum level, there is randomness or indeterminacy, even in chemical reactions. Thus, there is indeterminacy on the quantum level, , and on the level of a person's everyday experience, --- kettles and test tubes crack, and there are earthquakes, unexpected acts of human violence, etc.

Let's restate the 2nd question, briefly. It is about freedom vs. determinism, for a child, who is raised in criminal circumstances. With what degree of certainty could the honesty of the child be predicted, based on the different factors as heredity, upbringing, and larger social world around them?

A person might deny the existence of free will. They might try to list all the necessary and sufficient conditions which determine that a person does such and such. Advertising, a multi-billion dollar industry, spends the money in the belief that there is a causal connection between people seeing certain ads and buying certain products. A list of necessary and sufficient conditions for each purchase, would have to include demographic data like viewers' psychological background, in relationship to environmental influences. Listing and analyzing these factors constitutes a big part of the world of advertising.

At least some internet advertising is now targeted specifically to individuals online. Targeting consumers as they move about in or near stores was depicted in the movie, *Minority Report* (2002). This was done through the scanning of cards and products that the individual consumers had with them. The movie also raised the issue of implanting chips in people, both for the purchase of facilitating commerce and to track them. Targeted advertising is already the norm on the internet – as one makes purchases in an online store like

amazon.com, ads come up, based on one's past choices, to try to tempt the person with similar choices.

But even in such hi-tech advertising, the questions still remains whether the person will actually make the particular purchase solicited by the advertisers, and in a given situation. The advertisers might have to be satisfied with overall percentages, and probabilities, rather than predictable determinations. – not unlike improbability in physics at the sub-atomic quantum level.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> question involves the issue of free will and determinism with reference to animals, rather than humans. We do need to take into account issues of heredity, psychology and social context of animals and humans involved, in order to explain and try to predict animal behavior. Also, the element of reason would be weaker in animals while element of will would tend to be stronger. Otherwise, we'd have the same problems of prediction for animals, as for people.

The 4<sup>th</sup> question involved the question of free will-determinism with regard to the issue of relapse, in the substance abuse field.

The prevailing view in the field is that substance abuse -- including behaviors as gambling and various forms of compulsivity-- is tied to chemical dependency, and physiological states in the brain and in the body as a whole. The prevailing "disease model" of chemical dependency is that it is a disease, rather than expression of weak will on the part of individual substance abusers.

Nonetheless, individuals make choices, that involve their maintenance of sobriety, which are acts of will, however. People in recovery from substance abuse often have many relapses, before they manage to maintain sobriety, assuming they succeed in this. Let say that a person manages to stay sober for 3 years after their 2<sup>rd</sup> detox. Then, they relapsed and now they are now trying to maintain sobriety "one day at a time." Is it pre-determined, psychologically or physiologically, that they will succeed in maintaining their sobriety after this 2<sup>rd</sup> detox, compared to the first detox and subsequent possible relapse? Or is it pre-determined that they would have a relapse after the 2<sup>nd</sup> detox? The person themselves may or may not be able to offer an answer save that they were "sick and tired of being sick and tired," to use a famous slogan from Alcoholics Anonymous.

Could sets of necessary and sufficient conditions be set up in all of these situations, to determine the factors that cause relapse or

maintenance of sobriety? Could an examination of brain physiology, or social, psychological and environmental conditions give us a conclusive answer, or might we be left with percentages and probabilities, at best, as with targeted advertising?

### *Summary and Conclusion concerning Freedom of Will vs. Determinism*

To summarize, in the 1<sup>st</sup> example, of the scientific experiment, we consider the issue of scientific, or mechanical or mechanistic determinism. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> example, we consider the issue of free will vs. determinism, with reference to human choice and criminal action. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> issue, we raise the issue of free will vs. determinism for animals. The 4<sup>th</sup> question directs the issue of free will vs. determinism to a single, though complex issue which involves, mind, body and social interaction, and substance abuse, in our example.

Our overall conclusion is that none of these examples will yield absolute certainty, not even scientific experiment, or common sense beliefs that the sun will rise tomorrow or that the future will resemble the past. However, scientific predictability is associated with hard determinism – if you heat water to boiling point, combined with necessary and sufficient conditions, it will boil, unless something happens to prevent this. In the other examples of predicting types of human and animal behavior, we can't establish the level of certainty that are attached to scientific experiments. We might at best establish certain associations, of behavior and so have a set of necessary, but not necessary and sufficient conditions, to generate a result. At best this would be soft determinism, not hard determinism, since necessary and sufficient conditions are not involved. So, we may know some of the factors that go into personality formation and recovery from substance abuse, but can't set up an experiment for this in the way that we could set up a scientific experiment. In the scientific experiment, all variables could be accounted for, and analyzed along the lines of necessary and sufficient conditions – so, we could say, the water will boil if such and such conditions are met. However, we cannot say with 100% certainty, but only probability, that the laws of physics will not change, or that the Sun will rise tomorrow.

### *Free Will-Determinism and Chrissy*

Having examined this issue of free will vs. determinism, let's reconsider Chrissy's actions in these terms. Examples 2 and 4 apply to her – the influence of strong psychological factors and strong psycho-physical inclinations toward manic-depression reinforced by at least some substance abuse over varying periods of time. Do these conditions determine or pre-determine whether Chrissy would commit suicide? These factors, or conditions include:

- frustration at her job ( as a case workers she worked with people on welfare in NYC, and their suffering greatly disturbed her).
- frustration that her sexual practices were not socially acceptable, to society as a whole.
- intense mood swings -- depression or manic-depression personality
- extreme possessiveness toward her female lovers, which pushed them away from her, causing great suffering for Chrissy.

One might say then all of these conditions constitute the set of necessary and sufficient conditions which led Chrissy to commit suicide, or were a sub-set, or part of the set that does contain all the necessary and sufficient conditions.

There may have been other factors involved in Chrissy's decision to commit suicide that we don't know. For instance, a memory, or something she saw near the highway, or something she ate in the morning, before going outside may have been contributing factors. There may have been extraneous factors whose importance was exaggerated in her mind due to anxiety or confusion over the fact that she was really going to commit suicide. This could be to introduce elements of indeterminism, or non-predictable factors.

We could find counterexamples of people who overcome backgrounds and temperaments similar to Chrissy, but who don't commit suicide. The factors that influence a person interact with the person's own inclinations. Chrissy and her close friends know about her obsessions and possessiveness. Twenty years later, she might have been on medication or in treatment for bipolar disorder. She tends to reject psychological treatment, as Eddie describes, with Dr. Cantrell and Dr. Williams. She doesn't want therapists trying to pick apart her *dark disorder*, which she identified with her distinctiveness as a person.

Outlets for her intense energy are available for her – literary pursuits – study and writing-- as for Eddie. As we describes earlier, at some length, she does channel her creative talents, obsessiveness and sexual inclinations into her well-received Tristram Shandy essay, and, of course, her Diary.

*Eddie and Chrissy – Free Will and Determinism – Some Final Considerations*

Two final questions then:

1. why does Eddie move off difficulties in his upbringing to bring some balance into his life, while Chrissy is unable or unwilling to do this
2. Could they have done other than what they actually did.

Individuals act, with different degrees of knowledge and intention. The intersecting actions of many people form the matrix of a society. Some people tend to act automatically, or mechanically, in non-reflective ways. Others try to control their own destiny through their actions, in which they either succeed or don't succeed. They may be held back due to lack of money, historical events social forces, or religious or philosophical beliefs. Or, the psychological dynamics within a person's life may hold them back. The ability of Eddie to move off the social contradictions of his upbringing (in his case, racism, and psychological and physical abuse by his father) stands in marked contrast to Chrissy. She is unable or unwilling to overcome her reactions to her mother, which markedly affect actions in her life, as we examined in detail.

Chrissy becomes obsessed with her own *dark disorder* -- which is itself an obsession for Anita + her inability or unwillingness, to move off of her own mood swings. She also seems to regard her psychiatric problems as her *dark disorder* and as a unique, or distinguishing feature of herself, rather than as a personality disorder. Hence, she resists talking to Dr. Cantrell, while still in college, complaining to Eddie that she doesn't want to explore her dark disorder.

Chrissy is aware of the importance of the *choices* that she makes:

---seeing her relationship with Eddie as an attempt, at least in part, to stabilize herself mentally, as Anita also says

-- realizing that she could channel her compulsivity through creative work, as in her well-received Tristram Shandy study;

-- being aware of her obsession for Anita, and continuing behaviors disruptive to her own life and health, and to the lives of Eddie and Andrea

-- regarding her severe mood swings+ obsessive behavior as a distinctive personality feature, a "dark disorder" as she puts it, rather than seeing these as psychological imbalance or personality disorder.

-- not taking the psychological help more seriously, starting with Dr. Cantrell, . feeling at odds with mainstream 1960's American society which did not support homosexuality and lesbianism. Fighting against the current, as it were, seemed to really wear Chrissy out. That fact, repeated rebuffs from Anita, physical fatigue from her own mood swings, difficult social work job in NYC, and recent suicide attempt, gives Chrissy resolve to end her despair through suicide. She seems to give some thought to that event too; it was pre-meditated, though not perhaps for that particular day with the particular details.

We've come full circle through our analysis of free will and determinism – *could Chrissy have done otherwise than what she did. Yes, our answer would be that despite psychological imbalance, she could done therapeutic things that would have prevented it.* Yet, her own lack of mental balance prevents her from having that perspective. In that sense one could say that she doesn't act freely, but from compulsion and moods swings.

Do her conditions also determine that she could be unwilling to get psychological help? She does, during and after several crises. But crisis intervention therapy for suicide prevention obviously needed to be more proactive. The East Village in NYC could would have been a very supportive environment for Chrissy, as a lesbian or bisexual person, even in the period of the 1960's. Dr. Williams tells Eddie that they can't really prevent anyone who really wants to commit suicide from doing so. This becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, in Chrissy's case.

*Questions:* What do you think of Dr. Williams interventions with Chrissy? Could he have prevented her from committing suicide?

*Comments:* And Eddie? Do you think that there are things that he could have done to have prevented Chrissy's suicide? Chrissy certainly does conceal her intentions from him, right up until the act itself--- which indicate that she doesn't want him to intervene and prevent her

from another suicide attempt. Anita tells Eddie, at Chrissy's funeral, that Eddie should not blame himself for he couldn't have prevented Chrissy's suicide.

*Free Will – Determinism and Existential Freedom:*

*Putting It All Together*

*Questions:*

*What are the lessons that you take from Chrissy's life and death?*

Could we conclude that Chrissy could have done other than what she did, with her life, and her death?

What about Tim? Could he have done other than the major choices he made, in *Red Mountain*?

Could Eddie have done other, with his life, than what he did?

Would you say that they have free will, or is there some level of determinism involved, particularly if someone has a strong predisposition toward substance abuse?

Do you believe that the outcomes for Chrissy, Eddie, and Tim, could have been other than what they were?. Would you prefer to speak in terms of probabilities, possibilities or indeterminacies?

And free will? Do these individuals have free will? Do they all have equal *access* to it? If they do, do they not use it, to different degrees?

Are there circumstances which might cause you to say that suicide is justified?

*Comment:* It is only when we compare the actions of living beings to those of mechanical scientific processes, that the issue of free will crops up. Here is something for us to chew on. Will people one day build a machine that has free will? What about a person whose organs are replaced with mechanical ones.

What is the line between saying this is a person with many artificial parts and this a machine with many biological parts, which is a human being?

*Some Sex and Death Issues*

*Questions: Is sexual excess necessarily a "vice" or evil? Does God punish Chrissy and Tim for their sexual excesses? Does God reward and punish people, for their actions, in general?*

*Comment:* A religious person might see the world as a morality play, in which people's actions are rewarded or punished by God. Indeed, religious believers often believe that God is particularly zealous in punishing people guilty of various sins involving lust and so called unnatural sex, as homosexuality and lesbianism. Does God punish Chrissy and Tim for their sexual excesses? So, if we have sexual excess, followed by distress, then, then, does this show God at work, punishing sinners? Indeed, as Eddie writes, this attitude is expressed by some local Birmingham folks toward the end of *Red Mountain*, when Chrissy is laid to rest. So, religious, social and sexual norms often tend to reinforce each other, and are often used by authorities to control people by controlling their basic attitudes – including sexual -- toward themselves.

*Questions: How could a beneficent God inflict pain on living beings, even sinners? Does God commission the Devil to punish people who do sinful things? Is there reincarnation? Or simple extinction of the body at death? Could our experience give us the answers to such questions?*

*Questions:* The human body is mechanical when a person is alive or dead. What distinguishes the body of a living person from a dead person? If some type of animating energy, is it material or less material, in the way that acupuncture works with meridians – which it describes as lines of subtle energy in the body – that are influenced through the insertion of needles. Is there something even less dense that animates the body, that fraction of an ounce lost when the person has just died? Would this be the soul? What happens to that? Extinction and return to the elements? Religious final judgment? Reincarnation? Is this beyond our possible experience, as living beings?

## Chapter VIII

### *Philosophical Tonic for Wellness*

*Drawing from Red Mountain, we offer a Philosophical Tonic, for Chrissy, Eddie, you and me, and for everyone .*

*Try it, maybe you'll like .it. If you don't, then try developing your own recipe. You could use some of the ingredients we've consider in the Study Guide and in the Appendices to this book. What formula of reason and emotion, or what proportion of balance or imbalance..... Remember Nietzsche' warning about veering too much into subjectivism*

*Purpose:* Take in moderate doses if you feel that you are becoming out of balance. If you are not sure, ask someone else in your household, or a friend. If you think that *they* are out of balance, then maybe, you should *all* take the remedy, and in repeat dosages.

*Suggested dosage:* Take daily, when you start your day, and as needed.

Gently stir together the following ingredients

Good Will of Kant

Sense of Balance and Golden Mean of Aristotle

Buddha's Middle Path

Jesus' Golden Rule

Then, shake, and combine above ingredients with:

Existential freedom,

Imagination and Will.

There is no mold that could contain this mixture. Therefore, shaking, not stirring, enables you to break the bonds that hold you to your past, and which keep the ingredients from properly mixing.

### *Additional Suggestions on Taking the Remedy*

To help you move along in your process of growth and transformation, practice Sublimation, or the redirection of your life energies toward your higher goal. Do fully utilize your full creative energies. Practice with persistence. If you feeling that you redirecting obsessive energy, then, try to step back, observe the process, and the play of your own emotions. Realize that you are not your emotions – if you're feeling angry, just watch the anger and don't express it. It's like a dog who barks to get your attention. When he doesn't get it, he just walks away. (from Buddhist mindfulness meditation, Vipassana).

Had Chrissy stayed with therapy, she might have succeeded in observing her past pain without identifying with it, and pulling it into her present life. It would be like reaching a plateau from which to see the unconscious made conscious (Freud) and to practice mindfulness (as in Buddhist Vipassana meditation). In this, as we've described, one watches one's own thoughts, but with just "bare attention," to the "thatness" of thoughts, not their whatness, or their content.

So, one might simply say to oneself, "Oh, I'm feeling pain, and it's pain about the past" and simply note this fact, without pursuing that train of thoughts. Similarly, do the Stoics and Epicureans believe that it is not things that cause us to suffer, but our reactions to things.

Trying to recreate what we cannot have, or clinging to what has gone before, causes suffering. Ignorance of this fact is one of the *Four Noble Truths of Buddhism* (that there is Suffering, caused by craving, caused by ignorance, which is remedied by knowing the truth of impermanence, which is the Middle Path or balanced action (comparable to Aristotle's Golden Mean). Awareness, detachment, equanimity, compassion are really key. And one should never forget to extend compassion to oneself.

Try to moderate the degree of intensity of what you're doing, if it is something that is quantifiable and which could be adjusted. Feel confident that your body-mind-spirit will balance out, over time, and with continued practice. (Aristotle's concept of the Golden Mean) Remember, Aristotle also writes that virtue is a habit. You could make mindfulness meditation (see below) into a habit or use as needed, in times of stress.

Know, that from the struggle of opposites within you, on the levels of both theory and practice, something higher may emerge, which

combines these elements in a new and more developed form (Hegel's dialectical method). This process could continue indefinitely.

If you choose to take this remedy with like-minded persons, this will enable you all to practice seeking suitable *persons, places, things*" together, then, this will help each of you, as it helps all.

Living, as an ongoing process, is undertaken by sentient beings, who are also human beings (Hume). Human beings are necessarily social and historical beings-(Hegel, Marx, Dilthey), who also create history and can change it for the better. Living in space, time and history, people also make moral choices, as living, breathing sensuous beings, to maximize their own happiness and that of others (Aristotle, John Stuart Mill, Nietzsche, Sartre, Martin Luther King). People also aspire to do right even when they know it won't necessarily bring them happiness (Kant, the Golden Rule, and Jesus' teaching of turning the other cheek and the above thinkers too, from the preceding sentence).

*Question: Could a person's background or present situation undermine their moral freedom to make choices, or otherwise coerce them into making choices that they would not have made, had they been free to do otherwise?*

Everything changes and nothing remains the same, including the suffering that one feels about the past. One's choice is not to reject the past as the past, but whether to keep making similar choices in the present, that perpetuate suffering. Or, one could move off of the pain and contradictions of the past, and choose to make more life-affirming choices in one's present and future experience (Sartre - existential choice).

## APPENDICES

I present these appendices to provide the reader with some more background material, and to whet each reader's appetite to continue their studies of Philosophy, and to continue to reflect on their life experience. The instructor will also find in the Appendix additional material for class discussion.

### Appendix 1 - Plato and Aristotle

Plato

The Dialectic,

Allegory of the Cave

Myth of the Chariot

Aristotle

Reviewing briefly our earlier account, Plato, and his student, Aristotle, both emphasize the importance of reason, and temperance or moderation in one's life, (as does Classical Greek philosophy, as a whole). Both thinkers conceive the human soul or psyche as containing rational and irrational components. The faculty of reason is the *rational part of the soul*; the will (and imagination ) along with the appetites (passions) together express the *irrational part* of the soul.

Let's consider some clear and fundamental differences between Plato and Aristotle. Plato focuses on the non-natural world, or super-sensible world (which we would call religious consciousness) while Aristotle, who is a scientist in his own right, focuses on the natural world as the locus, or focal point, of his philosophizing. In short, Plato is a *supernaturalistic* thinker, while Aristotle is a *naturalistic* thinker.

#### *Plato's Dialectic*

Plato regards the physical world as the world of matter, and as the world of Appearance. It is an imperfect copy of the World of Forms, which he calls the Intelligible World. The Intelligible World contains all the possible Forms as redness, chairness, humanness etc. which physical objects, composed of Matter, imitate. *Plato's dialectic* describes the ascent of the soul in the World of Forms through

dreams, recollection and also reason. Its apprehension moves from particular Forms, as redness and chairness, to the increasingly Universal Forms, as Beauty, the Good, the True and the One. Plato does not have the concept or Form of what we would call a personal God.

### *Allegory of the Cave*

Plato regards the ideal or idealized world of Forms as the real world and calls it the Intelligible World, while he calls the physical world the World of Appearance. Plato's extremely famous and influential *Allegory of the Cave* illustrates this. There are chained prisoners in cave, who, Plato says are us. They can only see a stage, in front of them. People, who are some distance away, move objects which are illuminated by a fire, and which cast shadows on the stage. The prisoners identify the real world with the shadows they see parade before them. But, then Plato writes, one of the prisoners is freed, and is able to go out of cave into the sunlight. Shocked and awesome, by the new world, he returns to tell his fellows what he's seen, that what they believe is real is not. He thinks that the new knowledge will free them. But the prisoners don't believe him. Finally, they kill him, for supposedly lying and trying to deceive them.

For Plato, the cave parable expresses an otherworldly attitude, and uses reason to transcend rather than transform the physical world. Plato's writings are extremely influential in the early centuries of the Catholic Church and also in the early centuries of the Middle Ages. Christian theologians who are influenced by Plato tend to be more otherworldly in their orientation, than those who are influenced by Aristotle.

### *Myth of the Chariot*

In a famous image from his book, the *Phaedrus*, Plato presents the *Myth of the Chariot*. The charioteer, who represents the faculty of reason, struggles to control the two horses hitched to the chariot, who respectively represent the *spirit* (which includes the will and the imagination) and the *appetites or passions*. By spirit, Plato doesn't mean an incorporeal soul, but the animating life energy of the body, as in saying "that was a spirited defense." . The appetites or passions form the third component of the human psyche. If the charioteer, or Reason, is not able to rule, then, the horse of the will, or the horse of

the appetites/passions will rule. If either horse dominates the charioteer, there will be disorder. Plato's focus is on reason and its power to govern the life of the person.

### *Aristotle*

Aristotle is a biologist, as well as a philosopher. His scientific orientation extends to his philosophizing as well. He literally brings Plato's supersensible Forms down to earth, and sees objects as a combination of matter and form. For instance, the form of redness exists in the chair that is red, and the object participates in that form – the Redness does not exist in a supersensible, disembodied state, as for Plato. Physical beings are combination of matter and form, and together they form a kind of hierarchy in which the form of one becomes the matter for the next highest level; the whole grouping has been called a Great Chain of Being (the phrase is from Arthur Lovejoy).

## Appendix 2 – Greek mythology and Nietzsche

### *Apollo, Dionysus, and The Oracle of Delphi*

Greek rationalism and irrationalism are both expressed in the mythology which pre-dates the philosophical period of Classical Greece.

There is a bit of Freudian irony, if we could call it that, concerning the Oracle of Delphi. She is the famous prophetess of the Sun god, Apollo. She prophesies after inhaling the vapors coming a crack in the earth, and becomes either intoxicated or divinely inspired. Two of her famous sayings, inscribed on that temple to Apollo, proclaim

*Know Thyself*

*Nothing in excess*

How could this be? Does intoxication stimulate the voice of reason? Myths themselves often contain profound insights into human nature. The Temple of Delphi is sacred to Apollo, and the Oracle of Delphi is Prophetess to both Apollo and Dionysus. Apollo and Dionysus are gods, and they are brothers. Zeus is their father, and they have different human mothers. Apollo is the Sun god, the god of music, and the higher arts, including crafts, his twin sister Artemis is the Moon goddess, and a goddess of the hunt, and agriculture and artifacts. Dionysus is the god of wine, intoxication and rapturous abandon.

Of all the Olympian gods, only Dionysus is "twice born." His human mother, Semele, is impregnated by Zeus. Hera, Zeus' wife, and the Queen of the gods, wants revenge, and so tricks Semele into asking Zeus to reveal himself in his full splendor, so she would know she is carrying the child of a god. He does reveal himself, but then, she must die, as Hera knew she must, because no human could see a god in their full glory and live. But before she dies, Zeus plucks the baby Dionysus from her womb and places it inside his thigh, where he gestates and is born. Zeus gives him to the nymphs of Nysa, who live in a secret valley with the perfect climate – wet and hot - for growing grapes. There, the baby is raised, partly to protect him from Hera. Thus, is Dionysus "twice born." It is interesting to note that Athena, the sister of Dionysus, and the Goddess of Wisdom, is born from Zeus' head – she brings out, fully grown, and wearing full battle armor.

When he grows up, Dionysus wants to introduce the worship of him as a new god, through a cult. Sometimes, people don't recognize his power and deny him, with dire consequences. His own cousin, the son of his mother's sister, is Pentheus, King of Thebes, But he mocks Dionysus, despite several manifestations of power by the god.

Pentheus follows the revelers, who include his mother and her sisters. The people are intoxicated with wine, adoration of Dionysus and the primal power he stirs up in them. In their frenzy, they mistake Pentheus for a mountain lion, and pursue, kill, and dismember him. Dionysus and the Dionysian come to represent the raw primal power of creation, destruction and altered states of consciousness. He could be identified with the Romantic component of art, in contrast to his brother Apollo, who would represent art in its more refined classical mode. . In Greece there were annual festivals where the Greek plays were performed, sacred to Apollo and Dionysus. At the Dionysian festivals, classical Greek drama was performed in honor of the god, and to help bring forth that creative principle in the participants and revelers (for more on this, see Edith Hamilton, *Mythology*).

In the next Appendix entry, we present Nietzsche's thought in more detail, including his famous early work on the distinction between the Apollonian and the Dionysian principles. As we've identified Eddie with classicism and Chrissy with romanticism, we could similarly identify Eddie with the Apollonian and Chrissy with the Dionysian creative principle, generally speaking. A parallel could be drawn to Freud too, identifying Eddie with the power of the conscious mind, and Chrissy with the power of the unconscious mind, speaking in general terms.

### *Nietzsche*

In his famous early work, *The Birth of Tragedy*, (1872) Nietzsche describes Apollonian and Dionysian elements in the classical Greek drama. The plot represents the Apollonian element, and the Chorus, often in distinctive dithyrambic meter, represents the primal power of nature or sometimes the collective will of the people. . Nietzsche writes the work to acknowledge the power of the Dionysian element in Greek drama, but also asserts the complementary nature of the Apollonian and the Dionysian elements in the psyche, and as expressed in art.

Some time after *The Birth of Tragedy* in 1872. Nietzsche's introduces the concept of the Superman (Übermensch) in his book, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, (1883-5). The Superman is cast as Zarathustra, the ancient Persian prophet of cosmic dualism. Zarathustra hails the

coming of the Superman as a powerful and perfected human being who has cast off religion and anticipates the kind of more evolved being, higher than himself, that he'd like to become.

Evolutionary theory, came into the consciousness of the time in 1859, the year of the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species*. (It is also the year of Nietzsche's birth). Herbert Spencer restates Darwin's key principle of natural selection as survival of the fittest. In 1886 Nietzsche publishes *Beyond Good and Evil*, from which the quote that opens *Red Mountain* is taken. In this book, Nietzsche continues to describe the human being who has learned to combine the *will to power* or primal force, with reason, without religion. Such a being is able to express the full potential of human beings, hence his famous phrase, *Roman Caesar with Christ's soul (from his Will to Power)*..

In his life's work, Nietzsche attempts to combine will and reason, while denying an afterlife, to keep people focused on the present and on this world. This continues the theme of his work, the *Birth of Tragedy*, of unifying Dionysian and Apollonian energies. And just as King Pentheus is torn apart by enraptured revelers, do not Chrissy and Tim too, succumb to what Nietzsche warns against in *Beyond Good and Evil* -- if people's will veers too far from reason, and is no longer balanced by reason, then the\_abyss of madness – and death await them.

And, so, we return to the inscriptions for moderation on the Temple at Delphi, *Know Thyself* and *Nothing in excess*, messages too, I would say, apply to *Red Mountain*. Freud was apparently familiar with Nietzsche's thought, and there are similarities between Nietzsche's conception of the distinction between the Dionysian and The Apollonian, and the Will to Power. In Freud's theory of sublimation, one's primitive drives and instinctual energies are utilized in the service of higher goals. Freud himself was a well known collector of mythologically related artifacts, as ritual masks, which represents primitive peoples' attempt to control or direct their unconscious minds. Aristotle's Golden Mean, in which one becomes habituated to staying in the middle between the extremes, also seems to utilize those energies in the process of balancing.

### Appendix 3 - Hegel

Hegel (d. 1831) follows Kant (d. 1804) in the history of Western philosophy.. Despite Kant's famous attempt to limit metaphysical systems from speculation that goes beyond possible experience, Hegel goes on to construct several speculative philosophical systems. What he is most famous for, however, is not his speculative metaphysics, but his *dialectical method*, which influences Karl Marx and the formation of Marxist theory.

Formal logic, from the Greeks through Hegel, was bound by certain principles of logic which includes the law of identity (a thing is equal to itself), the principle of non-contradiction (a thing cannot be and not be, at the same time)), and the law that the whole is equal to the sum of its parts.

Hegel sees God as Absolute Spirit, who negates his self-contained state in order to know himself in the world, and externalizes himself in nature, religion and history. This process involves what Hegel calls the *struggle of the negative* – which gets us into Hegel's method

In *formal logic*, one basic law is that the whole is equal to the sum of its parts. In *dialectical logic*, a law is that the whole may be greater than the sum of its parts. There are contradictions, and quantitative change leads to qualitative change, in nature and history. This struggle of opposites, result in synthesis which is a qualitative leap over the struggle of opposites; this process continues at ever higher levels of development .

Dialectic logic also contains the concept of *internal contradiction*, affirming negation, and incorporating it a new dialectical "moment" in the life of whatever process in nature or history if being studied. Thus, the law of identity, or the principle in formal logic that a thing is equal to itself ( $A=A$ ) is "dialectically negated," that is, affirmed yet rejected at the same time. Also, Hegel believes that he's negated the law of non-contradiction – that a thing cannot be and not be, at the same time. The concept of *internal contradiction* describes such situations. Thus, there might exists a given state of affairs in a society (e.g. increased impoverishment of the middle class), but the prevailing ideology paints a different picture (e.g. that the country is "land of opportunity.") So, the reality and the consciousness of the people would at odds with each other. Because there are leaps that go

beyond Aristotelian formal logic of the law of identity and the principle of non-contradiction, Hegel considers his method as *dialectical logic*, instead of *formal logic*.

Hegel's system based on speculative reason is counterposed to romanticism, which instead emphasizes the will, and the emotions. *Schelling* was his main philosophical rival, in Germany, during Hegel's lifetime. In his metaphysical system, Hegel is a rationalist, and so we'd have to place him in the company of other famous rationalist traditions, as that of Plato, Descartes and a movement that develops in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century philosophy, *phenomenology*, which we discuss shortly in the Appendix section. The rationalism of Plato and Hegel is very speculative, involving the supersensible realm associated with religion. Thus, does Plato posit his supersensible World of Forms as the model for forms on earth – red chairs copy the Form of chairness, and the form of redness. For Hegel, nature and history represents outworking of divine Spirit, developing through the dialectic, and its contradictions. The rationalism of Descartes and Husserl rejects such speculative metaphysics, or speculative idealism. Thus, Descartes deals with mind-body issues, while Husserl writes about intention (intentionality) its object, and consciousness.

Later, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century three schools of thought strongly react against Hegel, *existentialism*, starting with *Nietzsche*, and the tradition of *logical atomism* of *Bertrand Russell* which later develops into logical positivism and subsequent linguistic analysis, and *Marxism*.

To Hegel's speculative reason, the existentialists counterpose experience, and the logical atomists counterpose empirical verification and logic. Also, as we've pointed out, Karl Marx, and later Marxist thought, tries to "correct" Hegel by preserving Hegel's dialectical method while rejecting its speculative content and applying the dialectic to history and political economy. So, Marx writes, for instance, that developments and contradictions in feudalism lead to the development of capitalism, which lead to the development of early capitalism, and later, to monopoly capitalism. Socialism, built on highly developed technology, isn't supposed to happen "mechanically" or through some historic necessary or inevitability, but still involves human will.

Marx and Engels also write about the early development of private property, from communal sharing of land in tribal society (what they call *primitive communism*) due to increased prosperity, and the desires of different individuals or family groupings to take more of the

proceeds than other people( which shows the internal contradiction in society). ( see F.Engels,*Origin of Family,Private Property and the State*, 1884). .

We've gone to some length to describe both formal logic and dialectical logic, insofar, as it seems to us, that *Red Mountain* has elements of both. We see the Civil Rights movement developing through struggle, negation and affirmation, and the main characters in Red Mountain struggling to overcome destructive elements in their minds and in lives, within the larger social matrix which is experiencing its own birth pangs. There is a dialectic too, *between* the individual and their society, as well, which a novel like Red Mountain cannot but describe.

## Appendix 4 - Brief Introduction to Buddhism

The essence of Buddhism is expressed in the *Four Noble Truths*. The first three involve our understanding of the nature of existence, and could be expressed as follows: (1) All composite substances change. (2) If one is attached to things that change, this causes suffering. (3) This suffering is due to one's ignorance of the nature of existence, which is characterized by this continual transformation of all things.

Because they constantly change, Buddhism view things or processes as *phenomena* which are as inherently empty, or have no abiding substance or form. Modern physics, with its particle analysis, describes the physical process of the world in much the same way, particles being broken down into ever smaller atomic particles, with no single "bedrock" substance, or substratum of matter being found.

Existence, then, is characterized by incessant change and our desires to grab onto various objects of desire. We suffer because "we can't always get what we want," and when we do, we either become bored, or these pleasures necessarily fade. Thus, it is the insight of Buddhism that our suffering is not caused by things, but by our reactions to things. This is not unlike the moral teachings of ancient Greek Epicurean and Stoic thinkers, which we've examined here, in the *Study Guide*, to some degree..

The Buddhist mindfulness teaching (Dharma) is seen as a palliative to this suffering. Through simple mindfulness of where one's mind and body "is" at any given time, one becomes aware that holding on to one's conceptions and fixed attitudes causes suffering. Thus, we overcome attachment and desire by simply becoming mindful of it, and then releasing it, in a nonjudgmental way. Mindfulness of the rise and fall of desire, and the movement of one's own judging mind in meditation and in activity, is then, central to the Buddhist attitude.

Awareness, of the world as it is, in the here and now, happens when the cognizing mind is at rest, mindful of the play of desire, and not projecting itself on the world. In one sense, this is Nirvana. Nirvana, in Buddhism, is not necessarily other worldly, like a Heaven. Enlightenment, or Awakening, is the experience of things as they are -- a person's direct knowledge of Reality, without the mediation of the mind or the senses.

However, there are stages of Nirvana. One's awareness of the rise and fall of phenomena, in and out of meditation, could become increasingly subtle. One's perception could shift, and the person could experience "Awakening" or "Enlightenment" and perceive the realm of Nirvana -- as the ceasing of becoming which is "beyond" this realm of phenomena.

The enlightened consciousness becomes aware of the Unconditioned, which exists apart from the world of phenomena, which is characterized by the rising and passing of things. The person would then have the choice of remaining with this personal awareness and attendant state of bliss consciousness, or trying to spread enlightened thinking among other people.

The Wheel of the Dharma contains eight spokes which characterize the pre and post Enlightenment consciousness and life style --right views, right aspiration, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right contemplation. The wheel of the Dharma is also known as the Eightfold Path. It is also the Fourth of the Four Noble Truths. Buddhism is also described as the Middle Path, the middle path between extremes.

We have summarized, then, then the essence of the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism – 1) There is suffering, 2) which is caused by desire. 3) The cause of desire is ignorance of how the mind creates its own suffering by clinging to expectations. 4) Ignorance is alleviated by the eightfold path of mindfulness and natural defusing of desire in meditation and in one's life experience. An Awakened person's life becomes characterized by awareness, detachment, equanimity and compassion.

Suffering, then, leads to desire, and desire -- fulfilled or unfulfilled-- could lead to more suffering, and more desire. But this does not mean that the suffering caused by poverty, disease, and warfare should be dismissed as just other forms of desire and suffering. When people are well fed and housed, and feel secure, with their basic needs satisfied, they could better elevate their sensibilities toward helping their fellows overcome major physical and spiritual deprivation.

The cycle we described earlier of awareness, detachment equanimity and compassion could continue at higher and higher levels, with people overcoming, for instance, material deprivation through correct practice and mindfulness, then overcoming greed for over-abundance of possessions, etc.

In this mode of awareness, people might devote whole lifetimes to practicing different forms of mindfulness, and toward overcoming different forms of suffering, while practicing non-attachment toward gain or loss and extending compassion toward all suffering beings, including ourselves.

## Appendix 5- Some Psychoanalytic Concepts & Philosophical Analogues

Plato and Aristotle recognize the power of human passions and desires to move people, not unlike Sigmund Freud, some 2300 years later. Also, their threefold schema of the human psyche as composed of reason, will and passions parallels Freud's theories, below.

Freud develops several *typologies* or structural representations of the human mind. An early one is that of the unconscious, the preconscious and the conscious. Later, there was the very famous classification of Id, ego, superego.

*Catharsis* is a process of purging of cleansing one's psyche, which includes emotional release by a person .

*Sublimation* This describes a psychological process in which energy from lower drives is transferred to higher drives, as an impulse to physically attack other people is transformed into an interest in sports; In another example, one's feelings of wanting to manipulate others for personal gain might become psychologically transformed or sublimated into writing of detective stories, or chess, or even into scholarship.

### *Making the Unconscious Conscious, or Working Through*

Slips of the tongue, jokes and dreams reveal glimpses of the unconscious, or preconscious, depending on which of Freud's images we use. In the act of speaking, one achieves a certain level – a kind of doorway experience -- to self-awareness or self-consciousness, in which the unconscious become conscious.

When the unconscious drives, which often influence the body by manifesting symptoms, are made conscious, they could be brought under the control of reason. Sounds a bit like the balancing or back and forth motion between extremes, of which Aristotle speaks, in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. Reason, for Aristotle, is also the balancing factor.

Insight is often accompanied by an emotional release or discharge, or de-cathexis, which is the de-investing of the object with libidinal energy. This is the insight or breakthrough process, in psychoanalysis. (Libido, for Freud, is sexual energy, but it also has the character of a life energy (perhaps not unlike Aristotle's concept of *energeia*, which actualizes each composite substance, which is composed of matter and form).

The psychoanalytic process toward insight, is also reminiscent of Hegel's dialectic: struggle of opposites, synthesis at a new level of development, with the process continuing at qualitatively higher levels + catharsis, as we mentioned, above.

Phenomenological inquiry, as described by Husserl, also comes to mind. There is suspension of belief about objects of intention (as thoughts), and then, reconstitution of experience as *essences, in a kind of suspended-from- space and -time hypothetical realm, called the lifeworld (lebenswelt)*. One "reconstitutes" experience as pure possibilities. For Husserl, this is with the use of reason. But there is certainly no reason why this process could not be approached via empathy, as for Bergson and Buber (see ch. 6, the section, Philosophical Analogues to Verstehen, Bergson and Buber).

One could also use the imagination to reconstitute experience through the imagination, which would make it akin to the Freudian technique of free association of ideas. In free association, the person, in the protected environment of the therapy session, says whatever is on their mind, letting the free play of ideas and resultant feelings, lead them along. The surrealist painters in the 1930's use a variation of this for creative purpose in art – "All power to the imagination."

## Appendix 6 – Ethics

We're going to compare and contrast two different types of moral systems, one based on happiness and the other based on virtue.

### ETHICS BASED ON HAPPINESS

#### *Aristotle and the Utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill*

Aristotle is concerned with actions insofar as they promote happiness, though he believes this is inherently tied up with virtue – 'Happiness is an activity of the soul in accordance with virtue' he writes in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. This is called *eudaemonism*, with reference to the basic conditions necessary for happiness (the Greek word, *eudaemonia*, is the root of the word, *happiness*). Aristotle's ethics strongly influences the development of *Utilitarianism*, or the *Principle of Utility* by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, who are famous 19<sup>th</sup> century British philosophers. Mill promotes a doctrine of the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people, while distinguishing between types of happiness. He refines what Bentham calls his *hedonistic calculus*. In a famous quote he writes that *the life of a human being dissatisfied is a better, happier life, than that of a pig satisfied (and that) the life of Socrates dissatisfied is better than that of a fool satisfied* (from Mill's *Utilitarianism*).

In distinguishing between types of happiness, for different kinds of beings, Mill incorporates reason into his moral philosophy. This follows Aristotle, who asserts that the principle of reason should be a key part of ethics, since rationality is the distinguishing feature of human nature, in contrast to non-human beings. While the pursuit of virtue is part of Aristotle's definition of happiness, the attainment of happiness and peace of mind is key, for Aristotle. Indeed, he considers the *contemplative life* as the life most befitting human beings, and ascribes this to the very highest level of being. *He ascribes Thought thinking thought* to the *Prime Mover*, the impersonal creative force of the universe.

### ETHICS BASED ON VIRTUE

#### *Kant- The Good Will*

Kant would seek the good for its own sake, as opposed to seeking it for an end, such as happiness. Similarly, does Kant's treat the good, as sought by the person as an end itself rather than as a means to an

end. What is the good, according to Kant? In contrast to utilitarianism which views the good in terms of happiness, Kant seeks the basis of morality in the *good will*, or the pursuit of virtue for its own sake. He writes that nothing is good without qualification, except the good will (*Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals*, Sec 1). This good will is unconditionally, absolutely free, and as such, provides no particular rules or precepts for moral conduct for people. The good will is the bedrock of morality, for Kant. The good will is also the expression of practical reason, as expressed in the moral sphere of human life.

Kant develops universal precepts based on man's nature as a rational being who is capable of acting according to highest good, the good will. One of these basic principles is his famous *categorical imperative*. It is basically a restatement of the Golden Rule in two aspects—that one not do to others what one would not want done to oneself; and what one wills for oneself, should be willed as the universal, i.e. for all people, in all situations. This concept is based on what is right, rather than what promotes happiness.

If, for instance, not stealing is a categorical imperative, then stealing even to save a life of an innocent person is not acceptable, for it would break the precept of not stealing. A system of moral duties, or moral imperatives, is to constitute the basis of our moral system, based on the good will, and the categorical imperative, as described above.

*Fundamental points in his ethics, then, are that Kant seeks to base moral actions on good will and the categorical imperative rather than on happiness.* Nonetheless, the fact is that people could act out of good will and the categorical imperative, and nonetheless, suffer, in this life. This disturbs Kant's sense of justice. He feels that right action by the doer *ought* be received or rewarded with happiness in one's earthly life.

So, if can't use reason or the senses to posit the afterlife, he'll do so via faith. His sense of justice leads him to posit an afterlife, where happiness and virtue are co-joined, which he posits on the basis of faith (Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, 1793).

The good will is also practical reason, and Kant associates it with the realm of freedom, rather than the realm of necessity or determinism.

### *The Good Will and Noumenal Freedom*

As we wrote earlier, concerning Kant: The *good will* is also *practical reason*, and Kant associates it with the *realm of freedom*, rather than the realm of necessity or determinism. He associates the realm of moral freedom with what he calls *noumenal freedom*, or reality which is beyond the senses. Nonetheless, this unknowable "something" also provides the basis for sensory knowledge, combating Hume's skepticism about the existence of matter apart from perceiving minds; the noumenal realm is also the basis of our moral world as well.

To restate the above, the noumenal realm, the realm of moral freedom, is also the limit of our knowledge. It is the last town on the road of Philosophy until one enters the road of Religion. The Noumenal realm underlies, and is the basis of the phenomenal world, the world of the senses. We perceive the tree with our senses in the phenomenal world. Kant wants to refute the skepticism of Hume that the object is only a bundle of sensations. The tree is something more, but we don't know what. We are always bound and limited by our senses, no matter how far we go or how small, into the universe. And the noumenal realm underlies the structure of our moral world too. And in it, we could perceive through faith, not sense knowledge, that happiness and virtue are reconciled.

The noumenal realm is also that "place" where such issues as the existence of God, whether there is freedom or necessity in human actions, immortality of the soul (or the question of an afterlife) or the nature of composition of the universe could be known. Kant calls those questions the *antinomies* – the unsolvable problems of philosophy that are unknowable in this life, either through the senses or by reason, alone.

If virtuous action does not result in happiness for an individual in this phenomenal world, life, then this could happen in the noumenal world, the world of freedom. This is also the realm of religious faith.

*In other words, the realm of freedom underlies both our perception of physical world and the world of morality or moral judgments. It represents the limit of our sensory knowledge and the world with which we interact on the level of moral action.*

The noumenal realm is also the realm of freedom, which is outside of human knowledge and history. With Kant, then, we wind up with *dualism* between the natural world and the realm of freedom, a realm of possibilities that are speculative only and knowable through the senses or experience.

### *Kant vs. Hegel*

It is interesting to contrast Kant with Hegel over this issue of the natural world, or the *world of determinism or necessity*, compared to the *world of freedom*. Hegel's famous statement is that *freedom is the recognition of necessity*. Hegel does not make the realm of freedom in a separate realm and separate it from the physical world. Rather, freedom seeks to realize itself in nature and in history. Therefore, God, as the expression of absolute freedom, seeks to know Himself through nature, history, the history of religion, with God achieving the self-awareness or self-consciousness in Christianity, in pictorial form, and knowing himself as Absolute Spirit, at the end of the odyssey of history of humankind and the universe, according to Hegel.

### Idealism, Materialism, History

#### *Hegel and Marx*

For Hegel, then, God's unfolding through history is through the dialectical process of struggle of opposites and production of a new synthesis, at ever higher levels of development. Karl Marx applies to this idealist dialectic to history and gets *dialectical materialism*, instead of Hegel's absolute idealism – history is not God's realization of his freedom through overcome negativity, but through evolving human societies. These societies realize their freedom through overcoming contradictions and developing new forms, in areas, as social equity, economics, world fuel shortage, global warming, and world poverty.

### Choices and Rules in Ethics:

#### Aristotle, Kant & Sartre

Because Sartre rejects a single universal moral code, he rejects Aristotle's Golden Mean, and its restatement as the Golden Rule in the Bible. This also includes Kant's system of morality that is based on duty, prescription, or what one "ought" to do. This includes Kant's categorical imperative – which is the Golden Rule restated in negative terms: don't do to others, what you would not have them do to you.

Existentialism would also reject as rule, Kant's concepts of treating a person as an end itself rather than as a means to an end, and willing the universal, which would exclude telling a lie under any circumstances, even to save a life. Sartre does affirm that one's freedom of choice should not be infringed upon by others. But while the choice itself is made freely, existential choice is such that a particular choice need not result in happiness or fulfillment of duty. So, there are no rules for conduct as long as the freedom of the other person is not impinged upon. We mentioned this fact in the text, but it's worth repeating here – Sartre's refuses the Nobel Prize for literature, because he doesn't want his thought "institutionalized" -- which he presumably thinks would be the case if he becomes an insider by accepting the award– rather than remaining as an outsider.

## BIOS

Paul Dolinsky

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Paul Dolinsky is a poet, philosopher, philosopher-poet, teacher and healer. He holds a doctorate in Philosophy from the University at Buffalo (his dissertation was a study of Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue). He has taught both Western and Eastern philosophy for nine years at various colleges, including the New School, in NYC. He also teaches and tutors philosophy online (including 5 years that he taught at [universalclass.com](http://universalclass.com)). Living in NYC, he became concerned with the plight of homeless persons, substance abusers, and persons with Aids, and worked as a counselor and substance abuse counselor for several years. He has also studied psychoanalysis, and the healing arts of holistic nutrition – food as medicine. To these, he also adds Buddhism, as a life-form of thinking and being, which heals people by helping them be mindful of their own attitudes toward themselves and the world.

For the last 15 years, Paul has lived in a quiet rural area in upstate NY, with his wife, Elise, a talented professional astrologer and Reiki healer. He has written three books of poems based on Buddhist philosophy, and a handbook of poems on the history of Western philosophy. More recently, he wrote the *Philosophy Study Guide to Red Mountain, the novel, by Charles Entekin*. He is also Editor of [TheGoldenLantern.com](http://TheGoldenLantern.com), a poetry submission site for poems on East-West themes. Paul's websites include [HistoryofPhilosophy.org](http://HistoryofPhilosophy.org), [BuddhistPoems.com](http://BuddhistPoems.com) and [SearingSunPress.com](http://SearingSunPress.com). A listing of suggested books on Philosophy could be found right at the top of [historyofphilosophy.org](http://historyofphilosophy.org)

Elise's website is [AstrologyReadings.org](http://AstrologyReadings.org).

Paul welcomes readers' suggestions and student inquiries. He would also appreciate feedback on this *Philosophy Study Guide to Red Mountain*, from readers and any intrepid instructors or students who use or are thinking of using this Study Guide, along with its companion work, *Red Mountain*, a novel, by Charles Entekin, as text books in their courses.

## Charles Entrekin

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### Literary Bio

Charles Entrekin was born in 1941 in Birmingham, Alabama,. He took his BA in English from Birmingham Southern College, in 1964. He left Birmingham in 1965 and lived in various states (New York , Tennessee, Alabama, and Montana) while pursuing advanced degrees in philosophy and creative writing. Arriving in California in 1969, he fell in love with the West Coast scene and the Hotel California experience. He now lives in Berkeley with his wife, poet, Gail Rudd Entrekin.

Charles has taught at almost every educational level. He taught pre-school language skills to six-year-olds with he Head Start program in Birmingham, Alabama; taught introduction to set theory to disadvantaged high school graduates with the Upward Bound Program in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; taught composition, English literature, creative writing, philosophy at the college level, and was the founder of the Creative Writing Program at John F. Kennedy University's Orinda, California campus.