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1.1 Introduction to the unrefereed papers

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We begin this set of proceedings with a selection of pieces that were not subjected to our usual refereeing processes. They were excluded from this because they are not intended as normal academic papers. We include them here because they help clarify the context of the conference, and some of the richness of the background and of the event: and they are interesting in their own right. They were subject to critical evaluation by the guest editors of this issue, and we decided we wanted to include them. The reader will see immediately that they form a special class of contribution: there is no abstract (except in the last paper, by Carol Wilder), and they are in different styles. They all have a connection with, or can be seen to be concerned with, central issues in Bateson's work and the personal significance of Bateson to the authors.

These contributions are arranged in alphabetical order by author surname.

We start with Humberto Maturana and his colleague Ximena Dávila, who offered an excerpt from the second recursive reflection on "The Tree of Life". Maturana has for many years been a central figure in what we venture to call "The ASC's world view", and has been a constant supporter of our attempts to understand our relationships with each other and our worlds, regularly attending our conferences over the last quarter century. This text can be seen as a manifesto, but also as a sympathetic response to Bateson and his legacy. Maturana and Bateson knew and respected each other. In this short text, he and Dávila argue that humans need to change a condition of our living that seems remarkably similar to one of the three conditions for the survival of man that Bateson indicates – that of "the occidental idea of man".

At the ASC/BIG conference, the ASC's Warren McCulloch Award was presented to Susan Parenti, who has since become a trustee of the society. Parenti, amongst other things a performer of great distinction, responded to the award with a wonderful and especially composed performance. She contributes an excerpt from the script she performed to, with some of the introduction she gave. Including this reminds us not only of the occasion and her controverting thoughts, but of the ASC's long promotion of an association with the arts and with performance in particular. In our recent,

conversational conferences we have extended this involvement to invite all participants to bring an object they have made such as a tie, a standard (flag) and a home made musical instrument. In the magic of her performance she raises Bateson's suggestion that cybernetic explanation occurs through constraints imposed on what does not happen rather than through specification of what does. Her acceptance performance mirrored this position.

Felix Smith gives us a personal account of an encounter with Bateson's thinking (and later with his person) that changed his life. He describes how he was in an unsatisfying therapeutic relationship, and how reading Bateson on what may be his most famous concept, the double bind, brought him the insight and strength to get out of the so-called therapeutic relationship (which was actually damaging him). According to Batesonian interpretation, the relationship was anything but therapeutic: reading on the double bind allowed Smith to see how the therapist was manipulating the therapy to keep him in constant need. Bateson asked Smith, when they met, if he had ever met his former therapist since sacking him. Smith replied the one time they had met the therapist had looked straight through him. Bateson's reply was "Double binders do not like to be told".

One reason we held the ASC/BIG conference at Asilomar was that Bateson himself had enjoyed meetings there. Carol Wilder brings us some informal proceedings of a celebratory conference she organised for Gregory Bateson towards the very end of his life, which had also been held at Asilomar. Wilder brings us a personal account, built from notes she took at the time, of the meetings that lead to the conference, as well as transcripts of the dinner talks given by Bateson's colleagues in tribute. She ends with a personal note of Bateson's death, and particularly his "crossing over" ceremony. This is a particularly multi-faceted contribution and we are very fortunate Wilder chose to share it with us and to publish it along with our conference proceedings[1].

These essays throw particular light on who Bateson was; his effect both as thinker and as person; and how people valued (and still value) him. We are, we are convinced, very fortunate to be able to add this precious material to our conference proceedings – material that might otherwise have remained forever hidden. We are convinced that readers will agree with us and allow us our creation of this corner of the proceedings for unrefereed papers.

The formal proceedings of the Asilomar Bateson-fest are still in print: Wilder, C. and Weakland, J. *Rigor and Imagination: Essays from the Legacy of Gregory Bateson* (Praeger 1982).

Ranulph Glanville, David Griffiths *Guest Editors*