Voice, Resonance, and the Talking Cure

REMEMBERING IPHIGENIA

Carol Gilligan

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It behooves you to go by another way . . . If you would escape from this wild place.

—Dante, Inferno

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Carol Gilligan

VOICE AND RESONANCE: THE INNER WORLD IN THE OUTER WORLD

Eleven-year-old Nina tells me that she is writing a story about "someone during the Civil War" and making her story "a little bit sad," because when the father goes to war, the girl is "really upset." Nina says, "He talks to her before he goes, about how he feels about leaving and that he is just as worried as she is, or more worried and more scared. . . . And, you know, she feels like he's never going to come back, which is possible, but, you know, it's not a fact yet. So she has a very, urn, a very strange feeling sometimes." I ask Nina about this strange feeling, and she explains, "Before he left, she realized that he was not, um, totally powerful, but she didn't, um, feel angry at him for that, but she felt very, um, very sorry, sort of very sorry for him, and very shocked or surprised, mainly, and still upset that he was leaving. And, um, he was trying to comfort her when he told her about, um, about his own fears of going, but really she was just mainly surprised, and she hadn't realized that he could feel like this too."

I have known Nina for almost a year at the time of this interview conversation. A gifted writer, she is taking part in a study of girls' development and a prevention project designed to strengthen girls' voices and their courage (see Gilligan, Rogers, and Noel, 1992; Gilligan and Rogers, 1993).[1] I ask Nina why the girl in the story didn't know "that her father could feel like this too," and she continues her layered and psychologically nuanced description of the girl, the father, and the flow of realizations and feelings between them: "He had always been there for her, you know. She had been, um, she'd been hurt. . . and she had been humiliated because she was a girl. And he always understood her, and she was very close to him. Her siblings thought it was really brave of him to [enlist] right away, but she knew that he was, he

just, if he waited any longer he wouldn't be able to do it, he wouldn't have enough courage to do it." How did she know that? "She knew because of the way he talked to her, that he was feeling really scared and upset, and he didn't want her to make it any harder or anything. After that, she didn't get so upset, or, she didn't show it." By listening to "the way he talked to her," the girl picks up her father's fear and his upset feelings, and also his need to cover these feelings in order to enlist in the army. Sensing his vulnerability and also his wish that she not make it any harder for him, she also covers her feelings and begins not to feel so upset or at least not to show how upset she is feeling.

The following year when Nina is twelve and we resume our interview conversation, she tells me again of the stories she is writing—stories that are winning prizes in local contests. But now the inner world of the Civil War story is nowhere in evidence. In contrast to her intimate and direct, naturalistic rendering of the human world, Nina writes about how "things would feel" if they "were able to see, like a pen with its cap off." In one story, a girl "is trying to, well, she falls in love with this boy. . . and they have these adventures. It starts when they're at a dance, and then when she has to leave, his car gets stolen, and then they go to the gang. . . . This group has stolen it. . . and he has to fight one of the guys, and then they set off in the car, and there's a storm and the car stalls." Nina says, "It's a really good story. I can tell. It's a lot better than the ones I wrote a couple of years ago anyway." In another story, a queen who is "really a bad queen" is assassinated on the anniversary of her coronation. Three generations later, she becomes "a beautiful, wonderful queen." Sensing with me that something is missing—some understanding or even interest in the process of this transformation—Nina observes by way of explanation, "It's just the way memory covers up the bad things." Attributing the cover-up to an "it"—to memory—Nina signals the onset of dissociation.

An inner world has been sequestered, perhaps as the Civil War story suggests, because voicing that world set off disturbing resonances and emotional vibrations in other people, making it harder for them to live in the outer world. Nina has become aware of the difficulties and dangers of being able to feel and to see, or showing what she is seeing and feeling. She also feels the stirring of new desires: to fall in love, to go on romantic adventures, to win prizes in writing contests, to be good and beautiful rather than bad. As the outer world of civilization dims the inner psychological world, casting a shadow over its illumination, Nina for the moment sees this eclipse as the good covering over the bad.

In a short story called "An Unwritten Novel," Virginia Woolf addresses a buried self. The narrator asks, "When the self speaks to the self, who is speaking?" The answer is, "the entombed soul, the spirit driven in, in, in to the central catacomb; the self that took the veil and left the world—a coward perhaps, yet somehow beautiful as it flits with its lantern restlessly up and down the dark corridors" (Woolf, 1921/1982, p. 24). Like Nina at twelve, the writer of Woolfs "unwritten novel" is keeping her light under cover.

In Edith Wharton's short story "The Fullness of Life," the narrator muses: "I have sometimes thought that a woman's nature is like a great house, full of rooms. There is the hall through which everyone passes going in and out. The drawing room where one receives more formal visits, the sitting room where members of the family come and go as they list; but beyond that, far beyond, are other rooms the handles of whose doors are never turned; no one knows the way to them, no one knows whither they lead, and in the innermost room, the holy of holies, the soul sits alone waiting for a footstep that never comes" (Wharton, quoted in Wolff, 1977, pp. 64-65).

This startling, piercing rendition of what the narrator refers to as "a woman's nature" is shocking in part because through the extended simile comparing a woman's nature to a great house, Wharton has so seamlessly joined nature and culture, women and civilization. It is within the great house of civilization that a woman seeks sanctuary in an innermost room, within her own nature, because her soul, unnoticed in both formal and familial relationships, arouses no interest or curiosity. While the soul sits alone silently listening, nobody comes, no one has followed her.

Wharton finds the voice of this early story troubling. Whiting to her editor, she explains her wish not to include it in her first published collection: "As to the old short stories of which you speak so kindly, I regard them as the excesses of youth. They were all written 'at the top of my voice.'... I may not write any better, but at least I hope that I write in a lower key, and I fear that the voice of those early tales will drown all the others. It is for that reason that I prefer not to publish them" (Wharton, quoted in Wolff, 1977, pp. 63-64). "The Fullness of Life," she says, "is one long shriek."

But this is an old story—this change in voice that signals the suppression of a brilliant young woman. Picked up by research on girls' development, recorded by women writers in the twentieth

century, it was dramatized in antiquity by Euripides in his portrayal of Iphigenia.

REMEMBERING IPHIGENIA

When Agamemnon's ships are becalmed at Aulis, he is under internal and external pressure to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia to the goddess Artemis in order to gain the winds that will carry his army to Troy. He writes to Clytemnestra, his wife, telling her to bring Iphigenia to Aulis, ostensibly for marriage to Achilles. When Iphigenia discovers her father's purpose, her first response is to say he is mad. He has forgotten their relationship, their closeness, the words they said to one another, their love. It is as if he has forgotten himself. Wishing that she had the voice of Orpheus so that she could "charm with song the stones to leap and follow me," or words that could beguile others and work magic, she says, "O my father," appealing to their relationship and reminding him,

> I was the first to call you father,
>
> You to call me child. And of your children
>
> First to sit upon your knees. We kissed
>
> Each other in our love. "O Child,"
>
> You said, "surely one day I shall see you
>
> Happy in your husband's home. And like
>
> A flower blooming for me and in my honor."
>
> Then as I clung to you and wove my fingers
>
> In your beard, I answered, "Father, you,
>
> Old and reverent then, with love I shall
>
> Receive into my home, and so repay you
>
> For the years of trouble and your fostering
>
> Care of me." I have in memory all these words
>
> Of yours and mine. But you, forgetting,

Have willed it in your heart to kill me.

. . . .

Let me win life

From you. I must. To look upon the world

Of light is for all men their greatest joy—

The shadow world below is nothing.

Men are mad, I say, who pray for death;

It is better that we live ever so

Miserably than die in glory.

<div align="right">(Euripides, 405 B.C.E./1958, pp. 359-361)</div>

But Agamemnon is caught in a tragic conflict ("Terrible it is to me, my wife, to dare / This thing. Terrible not to dare it"). In the end he feels compelled to sacrifice Iphigenia; "My compulsion [is] absolute," he explains, it is "beyond all will / Of mine" (p. 361).

When Iphigenia takes in the hopelessness of her situation, she chooses to die nobly rather than ignobly, to align herself with her father's purpose, to separate herself from her mother's grief and anger, to "fix [her] mind." She pleads then with Clytemnestra not to make it any harder for her, but instead to "listen to my words," to "hear me now," to "follow my words and tell me if I speak well," to take in how her death can become not a cause for anger but a good and right thing.

Mother, now listen to my words. I see

Your soul in anger against your husband.

This is a foolish and an evil rage.

Oh, I know when we stand before a helpless

Doom how hard it is to bear.

But hear me now.

. . . .

And now hear me, Mother,

What thing has seized me and I have conceived

In my heart.

I shall die—I am resolved—

And having fixed my mind I want to die

Well and gloriously, putting away

From me whatever is weak and ignoble.

Come close to me, Mother, follow my words

And tell me if I speak well. All Greece turns

Her eyes to me, to me only, great Greece

In her might—for through me is the sailing

Of the fleet, through me the sack and overthrow Of Troy. Because of me, never more will Barbarians wrong and ravish Greek women,

Drag them from happiness and their homes

In Hellas. The penalty will be paid

Fully for the shame and seizure of Helen.

And all

These things, all of them, my death will achieve

And accomplish. I, savior of Greece,

Will win honor and my name shall be blessed.

It is wrong for me to love life too deeply. . . .

To Greece I give this body of mine.

Slay it in sacrifice and conquer Troy.

These things coming to pass, Mother, will be

> My children, my marriage; through the years
>
> My good name and my glory. It is
>
> A right thing that Greeks rule barbarians,
>
> Not barbarians Greeks, (pp. 369-371)

The chorus, composed of women from the neighboring town of Chalcis, praise Iphigenia's ability to weave what have become corrupt words (love, marriage, conception, children—now linked not with life but with death) into a speech of great dignity: "Child, you play your part with nobleness. / The fault is with the goddess and with fate" (p. 371). Locating the fault with Artemis and with fate, the women of the chorus echo Iphigenia's feelings of helplessness and powerlessness. Initially, the chorus doubled the voice of Clytemnestra, amplifying her plea into the plea of "all women" ("Oh, what a power is motherhood, possessing / A potent spell. All women alike / Fight fiercely for a child" [p. 346]). They urged Agamemnon to "yield to her!" and "save the child," saying, "It is good / That you together save the child. No man / Can rightly speak against this word of mine" (p. 3 59).

The chorus's turn then signifies the women's internalization of the shame ethic of the culture of honor which both the men and the women are now enforcing, with the stark exception of Clytemnestra. The desire for life and for love has become shameful, and pride has become the overriding motivation (see J. Gilligan, 1996). Iphigenia makes this change explicit when she says, "My good name and my glory" will be "my children, my marriage." And, following Iphigenia, the chorus names her choices of death and victory over a culturally defined dishonor not as madness but as nobility.

The inner and outer worlds are incompatible, and Iphigenia's turn is radical. Her two speeches— the first, an appeal to relationship that proves ineffective, and the second, a wish to go down in history, to be her father's sacrifice and realize as her own his purpose—define a pattern that young women will repeat across the millennia, conveying the powerful suggestion that the father's sacrifice of his adolescent daughter is woven into the fabric of civilization.

In a startling production entitled *Les Atrides,* Ariane Mnouchkine, the creator of the Theatre du Soleil in Paris, prefaces Aeschylus's *Oresteia* trilogy with Euripides's *Iphigenia in Aulis,* and by doing so radically reframes both the story of the house of Atreus and the birth of Athenian civilization.[2] The

Oresteia, or story of Orestes, begins with Clytemnestra's murder of Agamemnon as he returns triumphantly from Troy. Orestes, their son, then avenges the murder of his father by killing his mother, and he in turn is pursued by the Furies, until Athena comes and organizes a trial. Bringing the family feud into the public space of the city, she replaces private vengeance with the rule of law and the principle of justice. The *Oresteia*, in dramatizing the long working through of the tensions between the claims of the city and the ties of the household, has long been regarded as the foundational drama of Western civilization. As such, it links the birth of the legal system, the establishment of government or the state, and the origin or hegemony of patriarchy to the freeing of Orestes from the Furies. He is released when Athena casts the deciding vote in his favor at the trial.

By insisting that we remember Iphigenia and hear her story before we listen to the saga of Orestes, by beginning with Agamemnon's sacrifice of his daughter rather than with Clytemnestra's killing of her husband, Mnouchkine's production raises a question which otherwise tends not to be voiced or even formulated: Why are Orestes and, even more pointedly, Electra—another daughter of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon—so bent on avenging the murder of the father who has sacrificed their sister? In this light, the final play of Aeschylus's trilogy takes on new meaning. The long drawn-out struggle between Athena and the Furies becomes riveting in its implication that the working through of conflicts among women holds a key to replacing violence with speaking, bringing private feuds into public places, and healing wounds which otherwise fester from generation to generation—in short, to establishing democracy and civilization.

Let me be more specific. The Furies, played as a group of old women who unleash a seemingly boundless and high-spirited energy, will not let go of their anger at what has happened to Clytemnestra and, by implication, Iphigenia as well. Athena, the goddess born from the head of Zeus, the young woman whose mother was swallowed by her father, is, as she says, "wholly of the father" (the patriarchy) and unequivocally committed to realizing his (its) projects. As Athena arrives again and again to work through her struggle with the old women, to tame their wild energy and bring them into the city as the Eumenides (the good spirits), the visual impact of her repeated returning conveys the difficulty and the urgency of this reconciliation.

In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud asks the question: Why have men created a culture in which

they live with such discomfort? Here I raise corollary questions about the relationship between inner and outer worlds: How do maintain a coherent inner world within an outer world that is patriarchal? How can women breathe psychologically within this civilization?

REPEATING, REMEMBERING, AND WORKING THROUGH

At the end of ten years' research into women's psychological development, I remembered the hysterical women of the late nineteenth century, the women Freud called his "teachers" (Appignanesi and Forrester, 1992). I reread Breuer's description of Anna O.:

> She was markedly intelligent, with an astonishingly quick grasp of things and penetrating intuition. She possessed a powerful intellect. . . . She had great poetic and imaginative gifts, which were under the control of a sharp and critical common sense. Owing to this latter quality' she was *completely unsuggestible;* she was only influenced by arguments, never by mere assertions. Her willpower was energetic, tenacious and persistent; sometimes it reached the pitch of an obstinacy which only gave way out of kindness and regard for other people. One of her essential traits was sympathetic kindness. . . . The element of sexuality was astonishingly undeveloped in her. (emphasis in original; Breuer and Freud, 1893-1895/1974, p. 73)

When Anna fell ill at the age of twenty-one, she was not able to speak, losing words, losing language, not able to see or to hear, not able to move, suffering from severe hallucinations and suicidal impulses, and alternating between two states of consciousness which were entirely separate from one another: a melancholy and anxious state in which she was present and seemed normal, and a state of "absence" in which she "lost" time and could not remember. In her states of absence, Anna was "not herself," but wild, naughty, abusive, throwing cushions at people, pulling buttons off her bedclothes and linens, hallucinating, seemingly crazy. Breuer notes,

> she would complain of having "lost" some time and would remark upon the gap in her train of conscious thoughts. . . .At moments when her mind was quite clear she would complain of the profound darkness in her head, of not being able to think, of becoming blind and deaf, of having two selves, a real one and an evil one which forced her to behave badly, and so on.

> In the afternoons, she would fall into a somnolent state which lasted till about an hour after sunset. She would then wake up and complain that something was tormenting her—or rather, she would keep repeating in the impersonal form "tormenting, tormenting." For alongside of the development of the contractures there appeared a deep-going functional disorganization of her speech. . . .In the process of time she became almost completely deprived of words, (pp. 76-77)

Breuer, observing that Anna had felt very much offended by something but had determined not to

speak about it, encouraged her to speak and offered a resonant presence. And when, in this resonant space, Anna discovered that she could enter her absences and speak and see and hear for herself, she had discovered what she called "a talking cure." Given that voice depends on resonance, that speaking depends on listening and being heard, loss of voice was a symptom of loss of relationship. It was a relationship that enabled Anna to regain her voice, and it was the recovery of her voice that set her free.

Freud observed that loss of voice was the most common symptom of hysteria, and, given this observation, hysteria itself becomes a sign of a relational impasse or crisis. The resonances set off by the voices of the hysterical women clearly stirred the men who were treating them. Describing the character of his patient Fraulein Elisabeth von R., Freud notes "the features which one meets with so frequently in hysterical people," citing as typical "her giftedness, her ambition, her moral sensibility, her excessive demand for love which, to begin with, found satisfaction in her family, and the independence of her nature which went beyond the feminine ideal and found expression in a considerable amount of obstinacy, pugnacity and reserve" (Breuer and Freud, 1893-95, p. 231).

When these intelligent, sensitive, stubborn, and mute young women began speaking of incestuous relationships with their fathers, Freud wrote to Fliess that he had arrived at *Caput Nili*—the head of the Nile; he had traced the origins of hysteria to childhood sexual trauma and linked neurosis with the structure of relationships between men and women and children in patriarchy. The difficulty which the women experienced in keeping inner and outer worlds connected, however, now began to affect their physicians. It was not possible to take in the inner worlds of hysterical women, or, in contemporary terms, borderline personalities, and continue to live and function in the same way in the outer world of civilization. Psychoanalysis, as it developed in relationship with women who were teaching Freud to see the close connection between body and psyche and the borders between inner and outer worlds, was a radical inquiry. The talking cure was deceptively simple, given its ability to heal dissociation.

In 1896, the year following the publication of *Studies on Hysteria*, Freud's father dies, and on the night after the funeral, he dreams that he is in a barbershop where a sign on the wall says: "You are requested to close the eyes." Freud writes to Fliess about this dream, saying, "the old man's death has affected me deeply." Shortly thereafter he begins his self-analysis.

The following year, in the letter to Fliess in which Freud explains that he no longer believes in his neurotica (theory of the neuroses), he expresses his "surprise that in all cases, the *father*, not excluding my own, had to be accused of being perverse," adding, "the realization of the unexpected frequency of hysteria, with precisely the same conditions prevailing in each, whereas surely such widespread perversions against children are not very' probable" (p. 264, emphasis in original). His "certain insight" was "that there are no indications of reality in the unconscious, so that one cannot distinguish between truth and fiction that has been cathected with affect." The sexual trauma, which had seemed a reality, might more probably be regarded as a sexual fantasy (p. 264).

Psychoanalysis would predict that once Freud says he will not talk about incest, he will talk about nothing else. And, in fact, in his major theoretical work—*The Interpretation of Dreams (*1900)—he places the Oedipus story', an incest story', as the cornerstone of psychoanalysis. In doing so, however, Freud introduces a radical displacement in narrative voice and perspective. In place of the young woman speaking of an incestuous relationship with her father, Freud inserts the boy fantasizing an incestuous relationship with his mother. The shift in emphasis from reality to fantasy, from outer world to inner world, follows this shift in narration. Replacing the more frequently occurring father-daughter incest with the less common and more taboo incest between mother and son, Freud turns the focus of attention from the voices of hysterical women to the situation of the boy—the young Oedipus—who in time may grow up to be Oedipus Rex, the incestuous father.

The Dora case—"A Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria"— becomes so tumultuous in part because it marks the return of the voice Freud has repressed. Dora comes for analysis in the year that Freud published *The Interpretation of Dreams,* at a time when he was seeking confirmation for his theory of dreams. And Dora, beside herself at the thought that her father did not believe her or take her seriously, speaks to Freud through two dreams.

In the first dream, the house is on fire and Dora's father is standing by her bed and wakes her up. She wants to save her mother's jewel case, but her father insists that they leave the house at once, saying that he cares only for the safety of his children. They hurry downstairs and as soon as she is outside of the house, Dora wakes up. Freud maintains a deaf ear to what seems a thinly encoded incest narrative, or rather insists that this incestuous drama represents Dora's wish, Dora's fantasy.

In response, Dora dreams that her father is dead. She receives a letter from her mother telling her of the death, and begins an arduous journey home, arriving after everyone has left for the cemetery'. Then, climbing the stairs, she "went calmly to her room, and began reading a big book that lay on her writing table" (Freud, 1977/1905, p. 140). Initially Dora forgets this final dream segment—and while Freud focuses on the encyclopedia as signifying Dora's secret pursuit of sexual knowledge, the detail of the writing table suggests that Dora may now have come to the realization that the encyclopedia does not contain her story and that if she wants her story, her sexual experience, to become knowledge, she may have to write it herself. Shortly after this dream, Dora leaves the analysis.

In the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality,* published in 1905—the same year Freud releases the Dora case for publication—Freud writes, "the erotic life of men alone has become accessible to research. That of women—partly owing to the stunting effects of civilized conditions and partly owing to their secretiveness and insincerity—is still veiled in an impenetrable obscurity" (p. 151). Freud has left his hysterical women patients, the women whose voices he had encouraged, up to a point. The stubborn, independent, unsuggestible hysterics who resisted Freud and were his teachers will give way to "Freud's women," as psychoanalysis internalizes the structures of patriarchy. Following the turn of the century, as the focus of psychoanalytic attention increasingly shifts away from adolescence and to early childhood, the seeing and speaking young women became screened or hidden by images of the Madonna mothers and silent infants—the iconography in Western culture of female devotion and compliance.

Discussing the case of Elisabeth von R., Freud (1895) observed that "her love had become separated from her knowledge." This dissociation had entered psychoanalysis. The love of their women patients that is evident in Breuer and Freud's early case histories was connected with momentous discovery', including the psychological causes of physical symptoms, the method of free association, and the power of the talking cure to heal dissociation. But this knowledge depended on relationship. Writing about his treatment of Elisabeth von R., Freud reveals the wellsprings of empathy—his willingness to enter into her feelings: "If we put greater misfortune to one side and enter into a girl's feelings, we cannot refrain from deep human sympathy with Fraulein Elisabeth" (p. 212). It may be that the sexual implications or overtones of such entry overwhelmed the knowledge gained through such connection with women, or perhaps this know ledge was so profoundly upsetting that it readily led to the re-imposition of domination, at times through sexual conquest. In Dora's case, Freud struggles between

entering into a girl's feelings and drawing a girl and her feelings into the framework of history—the framework of the Oedipus story'. Dora's brief analysis plays out the struggle of a young woman's initiation into a patriarchal culture, and Freud, in publishing his fragmentary case history, records the ambivalence and in the end the compulsion of the father in her sacrifice.

But, predictably, the repressed returns. The late nineteenth-century drama between women and psychoanalysis, with its central struggle over the question of truth and reality, has been reenacted at the end of the twentieth century'. Again, women were encouraged to speak and, in resonant relationship, the power of the talking cure became apparent. Again, women's voices exposed a problem of relationship— an incidence of incest between fathers and daughters that seemed so widespread as to appear improbable. And again a radical skepticism set in. The discovery of a profound and troubling connection between inner and outer worlds has again been followed by the claim that Freud makes in the case of Dora: the claim that he knows her inner world better than she does.

A TALKING CURE

The issue is explicit: the cure for not speaking is relationship. Because voice depends on resonance, speaking depends on relationship. The breach between inner and outer worlds or the dissociation from parts of the inner world can be healed through a talking cure.

Normi Noel, a voice teacher who trained with Kristin Linklater, joined the Strengthening Healthy Resistance and Courage in Girls project to observe what happens to girls' voices at the edge of adolescence (see Gilligan, Rogers, and Noel, 1992). Drawing on Linklater's *Freeing the Natural Voice* (1976), Noel makes the following observations: "Linklater defines vibrations as needing surfaces to re-sound or amplify the initial impulse to speak. The body creates its own resonators. We build theaters to amplify the truth of the human voice. Musical instruments require surfaces and enclosed spaces to create more vibration. . . . Linklater's mantra for all young actors studying voice is that 'tension murders vibration,' while 'vibrations thrive on attention'; with attention, the voice grows in power and range to reveal the truth" (Noel, 1995).

In the course of the three-year project with girls, Noel picked up and followed the psychological

dynamics that lead the impulse of the voice to go off sound. She named a series of steps leading from full speaking voice, to half-voice, to breathiness and into silence. In the silence, Noel picked up the almost imperceptible vibration of the impulse to speak, which remained alive, vibrating in what she called an inner "cello world or resonating chamber" (Noel, 1995). Keeping a journal to record her observations, Noel writes about resonance:

> Just as the acoustics for the strengthening of sound require certain physical properties, so too do the voices of the girls depend on a sympathetic "sounding board" or environment. Gilligan warns of the risk to girls around eleven or twelve who enter a patriarchal culture. It is filled with a dissonance that separates intellect from feeling. When there is no longer a "place" or "room" to strengthen their truth or practice speaking directly what they know, the girls then leave the vibrations of their speaking voice and move from breathiness to silence. In this silence, an inner cello world or resonating chamber keeps alive the energy of initial thought/feelings, preserving an integrity that risks everything if taken hack onto the speaking voice in a culture still unable to provide a resonance for such clarity, subtlety and power. (Noel, 1995)

Noel concludes that by keeping alive the initial impulse to speak in an inner "cello world" or "resonating chamber," girls at adolescence create an inner sanctuary for a voice that holds a truth that others do not want to hear—a speaking voice that finds no resonance in the outer world. In this way, girls becoming women find a way "to hold their truth by *not* speaking," and their speaking voice becomes a cover for and at the same time gives off soundings of a "hidden world [that] women have rooted themselves in and survived" the dampening effects of a patriarchal language and culture (Noel, 1995).

Iris is seventeen.[3] A senior at the Laurel School in Cleveland, she has come to Harvard with two classmates to interview Lyn Mikel Brown and myself about our research on women's psychology and girls' development. We have been interviewing girls and going on retreats with women at the school for the past five years, and now that our project is ending, they want to know about the book we are writing, and also about our methods and our findings (see Brown and Gilligan, 1992). As we settle into a formal interview rhythm—the girls ask us questions and we respond—I notice that there is no evidence of a very different conversation about the research that took place in the course of a day-long retreat with their entire class the previous June. Listening to their questions, I find that I have a dizzying sensation—it is as if the intense and impassioned conversation which took place that day had never happened.

Iris's questions were about standards—what standards did we use to measure women's psychological health and girls' development? I look at her questioningly, curious as to why she is

interested in standards, and she explains that she finds standards comforting, that she likes to know where she stands. And by the commonly used measures of psychological health and development, Iris is doing very well. She has been accepted by the competitive college that is her first choice and chosen by her classmates as their representative. She describes her family as loving and as supporting her in her aspirations. Lively, articulate, engaging, and responsive, Iris seems to be flourishing.

At the end of the session, after the girls have turned off their tape recorder, we continue to sit around the table and talk as the light lengthens at the end of the afternoon. The conversation returns to the young girls in the study, and we tell the stories illustrating their outspokenness, their courage in relationships, their willingness to speak their minds and their hearts. Iris suddenly leans forward and says: "If I were to say what I was feeling and thinking, no one would want to be with me—my voice would be too loud." And then, flustered by what she is saying, she adds, by way of explanation: "But you have to have relationships."

I ask Iris: "If you are not saying what you are feeling and thinking, then where are you in these relationships?" Immediately it is clear that she also sees the paradox in what she is saying: she has given up relationship for the sake of having "relationships," muting her voice so that "she" can be with other people. The words *self* and *relationship* lose their meaning and the feeling of impasse becomes palpable as Iris, her face momentarily shadowed, looks into a relational impasse, a psychological blind alley.

The paradoxical sacrifice of relationship for the sake of relationships is the core dynamic of initiation into a patriarchal social order. Resetting the relationship between inner and outer worlds, it marks a definitive turn in psychological development—the internalization of the existing social order. Jean Baker Miller has formulated this paradoxical sacrifice of relationship in a struggle to make and maintain relationships as the core dynamic of what has been called psychopathology—a confusing term because while the suffering is psychological, the pathology' is relationship, stemming from a disconnection between inner and outer worlds that seemingly has to be maintained. Linking women's psychology with empirical studies of girls' development, my colleagues and I have heard girls describe this relational paradox, and we have witnessed the onset of dissociative processes as a response to their experience of impasse. Moved by the girls' resistance, their resilience and courage in fighting to maintain their voices and stay in relationship, we interpreted dissociative processes as a brilliant but costly

solution to what seemed an insoluble problem: how to maintain both voice and relationships. Dissociation was a way of maintaining a coherent inner world within an outer world that for many women was fundamentally incoherent: at odds with what they knew to be true on the basis of their own experience (see Gilligan, Brown, and Rogers, 1990; Gilligan, 1990a, 1990b; Brown and Gilligan, i992;Rogers, 1993; also Gilligan, Rogers, and Noel, 1992; Gilligan and Rogers, 1993; Rogers, Brown, and Tappan, 1994; Taylor, Gilligan, and Sullivan, 1996).

Anne Frank, in what turns out to be her final diary entry, says that she has gained the reputation of being a "little bundle of contradictions." She writes that the description fits her, but then asks, "What does contradiction mean? " observing that, "Like so many words, it can mean two things, contradiction from without and contradiction from within" (p. 697). Giving words to her experience, Anne distinguishes between two forms of relational impasse: one coming from an experience of confrontation and leading her to become known as unpleasant, and one coming from an experience of inner division and leading to shame, confusion, and conflict.

Contradiction from without, although difficult, is familiar; it is "the ordinary' not giving in easily, always knowing best, getting in the last word, enfin, all the unpleasant qualities for which I am renowned" (p. 697).

Contradiction from within, however, is shameful and hidden: "Nobody knows about it; that's my own secret... I have, as it were, a dual personality" (p. 697). Anne describes the two Annes. One is exuberant, cheerful, sensual and insouciant: she does not mind "a kiss, an embrace, a dirty joke" (p. 697). This is the Anne "people find insufferable," the Anne she calls "bad." The other Anne is "better, deeper, purer"; she is the "nice Anne," the "quiet Anne," the "serious Anne," and also the Anne who is silent and frozen. She never appears or speaks in public, because "They'll laugh at me, think I'm ridiculous, sentimental, not take me in earnest. I'm used to not being taken seriously but it's only the lighthearted Anne that's used to it and can bear it; the deeper Anne is too frail for it" (p. 698). In contrast to the vital but seemingly superficial and bad Anne, Anne characterizes the deeper, silent, and frozen Anne as good.

Like Nina's rejection of her vibrant Civil War story in favor of the more conventional and pallid romantic adventure or the clever story about the pen, like Edith Wharton's dismissal of her early short

stories as "quite dreadful," like Iphigenia's abandonment of her appeal for relationship in the realization that it has become hopeless and shameful, Anne Frank is struggling against a vital part of herself, and the question of standards or judgment, like the question of relationship, becomes intensely confusing.

Melanie Klein and the object relations theorists would trace the origins of this splitting into a good and bad self to the preoedipal period of infancy and early childhood—a time seemingly outside civilization. And they would consider the splitting or what Erikson has called the "total- ism" of adolescence—the adolescent's penchant for either/or, all-or- nothing formulations—as a recapitulation of an earlier developmental process, a revisiting of early conflicts around sexuality and relationships and an opportunity' to work them through differently. In the case of young women, however, beginning with the hysterics, adolescence seems to witness the onset of a problem of relationship or to bring a problem of relationship to crisis—a crisis that cannot be worked through on an intrapsychic level. The splitting or dissociation, rather than being a naturally occurring developmental phenomenon, appears instead to be a costly although necessary psychological adaptation to a deeply confusing split in reality—the division between inner and outer worlds, and also within the inner world that is essential to the reproduction of patriarchy.

From somewhere outside the division within herself that Anne Frank describes, a voice speaks in direct first-person about voice, honesty, and the seeming impossibility of becoming herself with other people.

> I never utter my real feelings about anything. If I'm to be quite honest, I must admit that it does hurt me— that I try terribly hard to change myself but that I'm always fighting against a more powerful enemy. A voice sobs within me: "There you are, that's w hat's become of you, you're uncharitable, you look supercilious and peevish, people you meet dislike you and all because you won't listen to the advice given you by your own better half." Oh, I would like to listen, but it doesn't work, if I'm quiet and serious they all think that it's a new comedy and then I have to get out of it by turning it into a joke, not to mention my own family, who are sure to think I'm ill, make me swallow pills for headaches and sedatives and criticize me for being in a bad mood. I can't keep that up, if I'm watched to that extent I start by getting snappy, then unhappy, and finally I twist my heart round so that the bad is on the outside and the good is on the inside and keep on trying to find a way of becoming what I would so like to be and what I could be, if—there weren't any other people living in the world, (p. 699)

As Anne records her efforts to bring her inner world into the outer world, she describes herself as embattled from without and from within.

When I taught with Erik Erikson at Harvard in the late 1960s, he was working on *Gandhi's Truth* and actively exploring the relationship between satyagraha—the force of truth that is at the heart of nonviolent resistance—and the power of truth that leads to psychological healing. Erikson's belief that one cannot understand a life outside of history', that life-history and history are two sides of a coin, led him to search for the creative intersection, the place where life-history and history join. In Erikson's analysis, the young Martin Luther, unable to act effectively against the corruption of authority in his childhood family, took on the corruption of authority that was the central public problem of his time and initiated the Reformation.

For more than a century now, girls have been suffering from a corruption of relationship that they often cannot address within the family. Like the corruption of authority in Luther's time, this corruption is widespread, part of a cultural fabric that is rotten. Joining life and history, women have initiated a transformation of relationships that is comparable in scope to the Reformation. But this is the point where relationship comes into tension with relationships—the point at which women's voices begin to sound too loud.

A THEORETICAL FRAME

Freud conceptualized the tension between civilization and psychological health and development as forcing a "compromise formation"—some accommodation between inner and outer worlds. This compromise formation marked the resolution of the Oedipus complex, the relational crisis of boys' early childhood, and it left a psychological scar that was a seedbed for neurosis. The wound, although it is generally not conceptualized in these terms, came from giving up relationship; it marked the tearing away from or walling off of the most vulnerable parts of the inner world, in a self-defeating and often inchoate attempt to protect the capacity to love.

A substantial body of evidence, gathered over the course of a century, indicates that girls are psychologically stronger and more resilient than boys throughout the childhood years (see Gilligan, 1991, 1996). Clinical, developmental, and epidemiological data also show that girls' resilience is at risk in adolescence. In adolescence there is a sudden high incidence of depression among girls; an outbreak of eating disorders, suicide attempts, and learning problems—all of which suggest difficulty in making or

maintaining the connection between inner and outer worlds.

Girls' resilience at the time of adolescence—their fight to maintain their voice and stay in relationship—provides the grounds for new theory because it renders articulate what otherwise remains inchoate: the psychological break between inner and outer worlds that signifies the internalization of patriarchy. Listening to girls' voices at the time of this dissociation, hearing knowing yield to not knowing, it became possible to see a psychological blind spot in the making and to hear the beginnings of what George Eliot called "the roar on the other side of silence (see Belenky et al., 1986; Gilligan, 1990a, 1990b; Noel, 1995; Rogers, 1995). Then it becomes evident to what extent most theories of human psychology and human development have incorporated into their very formulation the civilization of the Oresteia and the Oedipus tragedy.

Within this cultural framework, a separation of inner from outer world occurs typically for boys in early childhood (between, roughly, the ages of three and five) and constitutes a cultural initiation. It is tied in with male identity and seems essential to the young boy's claim to his manhood—his "symbolic castration" which signifies his willingness to sacrifice his physical and psychological integrity in order to claim his membership in a patriarchal civilization. In short, the separation of inner from outer world in young boys is a culturally mandated separation which becomes psychologically necessary if boys are to be able to make and maintain relationships in the world, at the same time that it creates the most powerful obstacle to their capacity for relationship and intimacy. Symbolically, this separation of boys from an inner world associated with mothers is represented by the freeing of Orestes from the Furies. Psychologically, this separation or walling off of the innermost parts of the inner world makes it possible for a boy to be hurt without feeling hurt, to leave without feeling sadness or loss.

Boys' early childhood separation constitutes a process of initiation that is essential to the structuring and maintenance of a patriarchal social order, and it ensures the continuation of that order, generation after generation. A boy's resistance to this separation in patriarchal cultures leads men, women, and the boy himself to question and doubt his masculinity, making him an object of shame. Men live with discomfort in the civilization they have created because of this disconnection from the inner world. The dissociation of self from relationship leaves, as Freud describes in *Civilization and Its Discontents* and as both self and relational psychologists have substantially elaborated, an unsatisfied

and unsatisfiable yearning for connection, an inner emptiness, a longing for relationship which developmental psychologists have now discovered is grounded in the infant's experience of relationship, but which, following infancy, seems illusory or culturally proscribed as shameful.

Girls' extraordinary love and knowledge of the human world throughout childhood can be understood as reflecting a continuing connection between inner and outer worlds. Otherwise, it is hard to explain how girls know what they know or can sustain their openness and vulnerability. Girls' full initiation into a patriarchal "not knowing" and "invulnerability" tends not to occur until puberty and adolescence, when girls are under intense pressure from without and within to separate the inner world and take in an outer world that changes what they will feel and think and know. The contrast between Iphigenia's two speeches, or Nina's early and later stories, or the two conversations with Iris and her classmates captures this turn—this fixing of one's heart and mind.

The fact that boys, beginning in early childhood, are more at risk than girls for depression, suicide attempts, accidents and injuries, bed-wetting, learning disorders, and various other forms of "out of touch" and "out of control" behavior, all of which suggest a rift between inner and outer worlds, together with the fact that for girls this rift and the attendant signs of psychological distress occur more frequently at adolescence, poses a developmental and clinical puzzle that clarifies a profound intersection of psychology and culture (see Gilligan, 1996).

In adolescence, girls often fight for relationship, and, following a pattern that begins in antiquity, when this appeal finds no resonance and becomes shamefully ineffective, young women in a variety of ways sacrifice or sequester themselves. Discovering the difficulty or seeming impossibility of keeping a vital inner world, young women are likely to bury that part of themselves which they most want and love.

Beginning then with the voice of Iphigenia, as Euripides heard or imagined her, a search for resonance—for relationship—is vital to women coming of age in a patriarchal culture. The same is true for men as well. In the absence of resonance or the possibility of relationship, the hope for relationship dims, and young women, like boys, often becoming hysterical in the process. Or, they seemingly solve the problem of relationship by tuning their voices in the dominant key. A talking cure—a listening cure—is then a deceptively simple and profoundly radical psychological intervention. Relying on the power of

association to free the voice by providing resonance, it beings into the outer world an inner world that has been muted or that has come to sound off-key. The talking cure, relying on voice and resonance, moves through the walls set up by dissociation. In this way, the talking cure has the power to undo the initiation into patriarchy.

Generation after generation of girls becoming young women have paused at the moment of their initiation. Shocked to see an impending loss of relationship, drawn by the allure of relationships, they may hesitate and take their bearings, leaving a psychological map of an intensely volatile political situation. When sexuality—the guide to pleasure that lies in the materiality of the body—and love become confused with violation, girls face a difficult and dangerous passage. But when girls becoming young women and women becoming mothers counterpose their experience of relationship to the patriarchal construction of relationships, they precipitate in the dailiness of their living, whether at home or in the city, a crisis with far-reaching psychological and political implications. Then, if we can remember rather than repeat the past, if we can join rather than repress the resistance, the working through of this crisis holds the potential for love and may create the foundation for a new civilization.

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Notes

1 Nina was one of eighteen girls who took part in a three-year study of girls' development and a prevention project involving the creation of Theater, Writing, and Outing Clubs designed to strengthen girls' voices, girls' courage, and relationships between girls and women. The girls came from families that differed racially, culturally, by social class and family composition. Ten girls attended an urban public school; eight girls, including Nina, were students at an experimental, coeducational independent elementary school at the time the project began. Three women were involved in the project: Dr. Annie Rogers, a clinical and developmental psychologist and a poet; Normi Noel, a theater director, actor, voice teacher, and writer; and myself. For a complete report of the project see Gilligan and Rogers (1993).

2 Ariane Mnouchkine's Les Atrides was performed in New York at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in September 1992, and in Paris at the Theatre du Soleil (Vincennes).

3 To protect confidentiality, I have changed girls' names and identifying details.>