

ALONE TOGETHER AGAIN (ATA): A Second International Pandisciplinary Symposium on Solitude in Community

University of Szczecin – Thursday 17th September - Friday 18th September 2020

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Plenary speakers

Ben Lazare Mijuskovic (California State University, USA)

Theories of Consciousness and Loneliness

Current research claims that loneliness is *passively caused* by external conditions; familial, environmental, cultural, situational, and even chemical imbalances in the brain, and hence transient and avoidable. By contrast, I argue that loneliness is innate and *actively constituted* by the reflexivity of self-consciousness (Kant) and transcendent intentionality (Husserl) and therefore permanent and unavoidable. I use a “history of ideas” and interdisciplinary approach (philosophy, psychology, literature, theology, sociology). I pit materialism, mechanism, determinism, empiricism, phenomenalism, behaviorism, and neuroscience while defending dualism, spontaneity (i.e. freedom), rationalism, idealism, phenomenology, and existentialism. I offer a universal dynamic theory that all human beings are motivated by the twin fear of loneliness and the desire to secure intimacy. I criticize the current theories of psychoanalysis, cognitive behaviorism, and neuroscience (the brain as a “computer”) as *predictive sciences*. I hold that loneliness results from feelings and thoughts of separation: from the womb, the mother, other selves, psychosis, even the self, and death. I enlist Freud, Zilboorg, Fromm-Reichmann, Fromm, Spitz, and Bowlby. I claim that loneliness is a genus concept and under its “umbrella” it includes hostility, anxiety, rejection, abandonment, alienation, estrangement, betrayal, etc. Science deals with facts; loneliness deals with values as does ethics and aesthetics. The alleviation from loneliness is intimacy grounded in empathy: a *mutual* sharing of trust; age-appropriate respect; and affection; a *mutual* sharing of feelings, meanings, and values; a life-long commitment to friends facilitated by continual communication.

References: Ben Mijuskovic, *The Achilles of Rationalist Arguments: The Simplicity, Unity and Identity of Thought and Soul from the Cambridge Platonists to Kant* (1974); *Loneliness in Philosophy, Psychology, and Literature* (2012, 3rd ed.); *Contingent Immaterialism: Meaning, Freedom, Time, and Mind* (1984); *Feeling Lonesome: The Philosophy and Psychology of Loneliness* (2015); and *Consciousness and Loneliness: Theoria and Praxis* (2019).

Julian Stern (Bishop Grosseteste University, UK)

Personhood, Alone and Together

Personhood develops through connection with, and separation from, other people. This presentation suggests that various forms of aloneness must be understood at every life stage, in order to understand personhood. Aloneness is as important for those who see social and communal structures as central to their philosophies, as it is for those who focus on individuals.

This presentation describes and provides some possible definitions of three key ‘aloneness’ terms: solitude, silence, and loneliness. These are set in the context of broader approaches to personhood and community, and of different – academic and artistic – ways of expressing aloneness.



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Jarosław Horowski (Nicolaus Copernicus University , Poland)

The morality and the loneliness

The aim of the analysis is to determine the relationship between loneliness and morality. I distinguish morality from ethics; I understand morality as an aspect of human action, ethics as a reflection on moral good and evil. Ethics is one of the fields of philosophy, but a set of moral norms can be called the ethics of a particular individual. Distinguishing morality from ethics means, therefore, distinguishing the moral aspect of human action from the ethical norms accepted by a given individual. The question about the relationship between morality and loneliness is a question about how the experience of loneliness is one of the elements of human moral action and how this experience can affect decisions made by the individual.

I assume that loneliness is not a goal desired by the subject and is probably an experience that a person wants to avoid. Loneliness can be a means to an end, a consequence of an act, or it can be the condition of decisions made. The analysis will be divided into two parts. In the first one, loneliness as a means of achieving good or evil will be presented. In the second, the theme of striving for the good of the person who is the cause of the experience of loneliness will be taken. The problem of the forgiveness of loneliness will be its crowning.

Considering loneliness in the context of morality means that loneliness is perceived as a means of achieving a moral good or a moral evil, or it becomes a consequence of certain actions. Therefore, it has no autotelic value. Its value is implied by the value of the goal desired by the acting subject. If the goal is good and loneliness serves to achieve it, making a decision about loneliness becomes good. In this way, the loneliness chosen for initiating great undertakings, for example professional or great life missions, can be assessed. The loneliness of an individual who wants to build a mature relationship in their life can also be seen in this way (the individual does not want to deepen their relationship with someone for whom they will not take responsibility – for example the loneliness of a young person who did not meet someone they would like to build a family with). Loneliness can also be a means to evil when it is a way to escape responsibility for another human being, or as a condition for achieving various sensual pleasures.

Taking into account the community dimension of human action, loneliness, or the lack of it, becomes a consequence of consent, or the lack of it, for specific decisions made by the community. Loneliness can be a consequence of opposition to evil, chosen by the community as a common good. A person who does not want to cooperate in the implementation of evil makes a decision about opposition, at the same time being aware that they will be excluded by the group. In a sense, loneliness in this situation also becomes a means to moral good. First of all, the individual deciding on the opposition and accepting loneliness decides what kind of person (in the moral dimension) they become. Secondly, loneliness becomes a kind of sign for people striving for evil, informing about the moral value of their actions and it becomes the means by which the oppositional individual wants to induce members of the community to change their behaviour.

The last part of the presentation will be an attempt to analyse the situation of a moral decision being made by a person who was previously excluded from the community and experienced loneliness. I assume that most of the moral decisions made by an individual refer to people who previously supported or harmed them, so the decisions are not made in neutral conditions. Such a decision is particularly difficult when it refers to a person who previously rejected the individual and was the reason for the latter to experience loneliness. Marital betrayal and divorce can be an example of such



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rejection. In this context, an individual must make a decision to support their spouse for the good of the children or to take revenge, being aware of the consequences of revenge also for the children. I assume that caring for the good of another person (for example, the good of one's own child) is conditioned by the forgiveness of the experience of loneliness.

Speakers in sessions

1. Eva Alerby (Luleå University of Technology, Sweden) *Silence and educational spaces: An intertwined relationship*

In this paper, I will illuminate, elaborate on, and discuss the relationship between silence and educational spaces. The work will be based on different philosophical directions, predominantly the thinking of the French philosophers Maurice Merleau-Ponty (2002) and Gaston Bachelard (1994). Merleau-Ponty (1995) emphasised that there is something that exists beyond what is said, which cannot be communicated verbally and which he terms a silent and implicit language, and Bachelard (1994) declared that to a space to be inhabited it must at the same time holds the spirit of the concept of home. The question is though whether educational spaces, for example a university building, can be considered as a space where silence and stillness is noted and valued. These issues will, throughout the text, be explored and also exemplified by some university students voices of the same (Alerby & Bergmark, 2016). The need for quiet and peaceful places are emphasised by the students, who also stressed the importance of places in the University transmitting a feeling of freedom and security and even a feeling of “being at home” – a feeling of belonging. The concept of educational space and its intertwined relationship with silence will be explored and elaborated on, with the ultimate goal of moving beyond traditional explorations.

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2. Liliya Babakova (Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts, Plovdiv, Bulgaria), Nataliya Alexandrova (International business school, Sofia, Bulgaria), Ognyan Koychev (Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” Plovdiv, Bulgaria), Plamen Tzokov (Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski” Plovdiv, Bulgaria)

Impact on experiences during a pandemic on the experience of loneliness

The rapid and unexpected spread of the coronavirus around the world has had a significant impact on the human psyche. A number of restrictions imposed by many countries to prevent the spread of the disease among the population and social distancing have led to another epidemic: the experience of loneliness. Social isolation in turn leads to a number of serious dangers that can threaten human life no less than the coronavirus. That is why it is important to study people's experiences during a pandemic and to try to create preventive measures against loneliness.



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In the present study, we try to explain how experiences during a pandemic affect loneliness. In the present study, 352 adult participants (20 to 75 years) were studied. They reported three things: pandemic experiences related to material security (work, savings), one's own health and the health of one's loved ones, personal control over the situation and family relationships; loneliness (emotional, romantic and social) and general attitude (optimism / pessimism).

The following statistically significant results were found: the youngest people experienced a high degree of threat to the family relationships during the pandemic, and the lowest - the oldest participants. People who have no income are more socially lonely than those who work or do not work but receive some benefits. However, those who do not work but receive benefits are at risk of emotional loneliness. People living alone are highly exposed to social and emotional loneliness. People who have a pessimistic outlook on life experience a significant amount of pressure from pandemic situation and are at risk of experiencing mostly emotional loneliness and less social loneliness. In turn, optimistic people are less likely to experience social and romantic loneliness.

These results can be a guide in explaining the experience of loneliness during and after a pandemic and, based on this, make recommendations for its management.

3. Enkhbayar Batsaikhan (Otgontenger University, Mongolia)

The study on the interrelations between emotional intelligence and loneliness

In our research, we aimed to uncover the relationship between emotional intelligence and loneliness. Because emotional intelligence is a new topic in study and it is a subject of great potential for detailed study. Briefly, psycho attribute that can predict human life and career success, and It is believed that the failure or deterioration in human life is largely due to the activity of emotional intelligence. But loneliness is one of the pressing psychological issues today. There are many studies that have shown that loneliness is weakening one's activity and reducing our physical activity. This, in turn, is considered a psychological problem. Even so, some researcher have found loneliness to be a useful feeling. An emotional intelligence is influence important when it comes to managing feelings of loneliness. therefore, our research was clarify the relationship between emotional intelligence and its components and loneliness. It is also necessary to clarify which component of emotional intelligence is most commonly associated with loneliness. There may be different correlations with each component of emotional intelligence. In their research, compared to their age and gender using psychological test and observation and interview methods to emotional intelligence and loneliness of university students.

4. Jan Bíba (Charles University, Czech Republic)

So bad, even introverts are here: democratic solitude between participation and apathy

Banners stating that things went so wrong that even introverts decided to participate in protests have recently become part and parcel of many various demonstrations and protest marches fighting for different causes from climate justice to freedom of speech, from Washington to Budapest. These banners suggest a contradictory relationship between essentially collective democracy and individual solitude that introverts crave. However, the banners can also be read in a different way, i.e. as a recognition of the fact that democracy's efficacy demands a form of solitude. The congeniality of democracy and solitude had been formulated first by American transcendentalist (e.g. Emerson) and has been acknowledged by recent democratic theory (e.g. Kateb 1994, Urbinati 2009).



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The acknowledgement of solitude as part and parcel of democratic experience both opens the possibility of processual perfectionist interpretation of democracy (Norval 2007) and allows to deal with the often overlooked issue of inaction, i.e. of citizens who do not do all they might do to support democratic reforms whose necessity and urgency they otherwise agree with and support. (Green 2019) While this form of silent citizenship has usually been understood as hypocritical or bordering on apathy, the present paper using a distinction between solitude and isolation (see e.g. Arendt 1978, Urbinati 2015) differentiates the inaction both from apathy and collective democratic participation. The paper concludes that (not only) democratic theorists should not disdain the inaction but should rather pay attention to its two virtues. Firstly, inaction opens the possibility to conceptualize overlooked democratic practices of spectatorship, listening for and silence. Secondly, the paper claims that democracy's vitality - especially in times of the so-called crisis of democracy and/or democratic backsliding that are destined to cause a disappointment to democrats – presupposes that democratic citizens can without remorse temporarily renounce participation and find solace in their private lives to regain the energy they need to fight for democratic reforms.

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5. Eric Bien (Catholic University of Louvain, Nigeria)

The Desired 'noise' of inner silence

Inner silence seems to be an important mode for meditation, introspection and various kinds of decision making. It is different from external silence, and desired for rest and for depth of thinking. What is often not realised is that silence is not usually silent. Focusing on inner silence, I argue that we do not seek inner silence for the sake of silence but rather for some kind of inspiration coordination. There is no empty or blank silence. Thus, the desire for silence is usually a desire for a specifically coordinated thought process. In this way, the real silence that we crave is always 'noisy'. First, I will study the classification of silence in discourse and conversational analysis. Silence, in this context, is external, but I will argue that it has something in common with inner silence. Then I will focus on inner silence and examine the origins of silence in the monastic practices of the early centuries. I will explore various reasons for silence or introspection today, and identify the connection they share with the early practices of inner silence. Finally, I will present the words for silence in the Rule of St. Benedict (*silere*, *silentium*, and *taciturnitas*) and show that they concern mostly what I have called external silence. I will then argue that blank silence is an ideal that is only mistakenly desired but which is neither real nor needed. Silence has to do with a thought process with a certain focus. The same thought process can be desired at one time and can constitute noise at another. Real silence is therefore a function of a keenly selected goal. This remains relevant for our farreaching resolutions and plans. My study is relevant for philosophy, theology, spirituality and yoga.

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6. Sandra Bosacki (Brock University, Canada)

Multifaceted silences in adolescence: Implications for social cognition and mental health

What does it mean when there is silence in a classroom? What are the experiences of adolescents when they are silent, or exposed to silence in a classroom? What is happening in the hearts and minds of adolescents when they are silent? Why have researchers continued to neglect the experience of silence and socioaffective aspects of adolescent development? What makes adolescents' emotional development and experiences with silence distinct from children and adults? To answer such questions, in this talk I will consider how adolescents make sense of themselves and their social world within the context of silence. As we journey into the 21st century, researchers and educators who work with youth need to remain open to new conceptions of adolescence and silence.

According to Hall (1904) and Erickson (1968), the central task of adolescence includes the development of one's identity within the social context that includes conversations, nonverbal communication, and silences. Thus, the adolescent's main task is to develop a sense of self and identity within their social relationships and experiences of solitude. Accordingly, I plan to build on past, current, and ongoing psychoeducational research and holistic educational philosophies that explore how adolescents experience times of silence.

Overall, in this talk I aim to unite two scholarly areas that in the past have studied adolescent development separately. I will suggest ways in which developmental psychology and education can collaborate and co-create inclusive, social-emotional programs that focus on the importance of silence for mental health, compassion, and mindfulness. My hope is to encourage educators and researchers to engage the two disciplines in an ongoing critical discourse about the significant role silence plays in adolescents' personal and social lives. With an eye toward a new era, I end with recommendations for next steps and underscore the importance of transdisciplinary and transcultural research.

7. Michael T Buchanan (Australian Catholic University, Australia)

Enhancing the Goals of Catholic Education: Solitude Practices

Schools are often referred to as learning communities where people are educated through socio-dialogical interaction with each other. A communal approach to learning aligns with the perception that humans are one of the most social species inhabiting this planet. The human brain has adapted for living in large groups to the extent that feeling socially connected increases a state of happiness whereas feelings of disconnection increases a sense of depression.

Solitude has been described as a state of being alone—either by oneself or, if in the presence of others, without any social interaction. Solitude in the school context has often been associated with disciplinary strategies such as, detention or suspension, which foster negative connotations about



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being alone. Approaches to solitude in learning communities can contribute to students and teachers experiences disconnection but it can also contribute to a sense of connection.

This chapter will examine understandings of solitude both constructive and destructive in the light of the educational goals underpinning Catholic education. Furthermore, an investigation of constructive experiences of solitude from within the Catholic tradition and beyond will be undertaken. Insights from this investigation will be drawn upon to inform recommendations that schools might undertake to enable ongoing opportunities for solitude for students and teachers.

The insights gleaned from this chapter will present solitude as a significant feature of Catholic education or any learning community. Solitude enables individuals to organise their thoughts reflect on past actions as well as future plans and prepare for future social encounters. Catholic schools are concerned with the development of the whole person and constructive opportunities for solitude allow people to further develop themselves intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and creatively.

8. Beata Bugajska (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Loneliness of homosexual older adults - case analyses in biographical perspective

In Poland, homosexual older adults born before 1960 grew up in times when heterosexuality was considered the only right sexual orientation. In the so called pre-liberation era, homosexuality was treated as mental disorder. Homosexual persons were marginalised, discriminated or even invisible in family, professional and social life. During the course of life, they experienced loneliness, isolation, shame, humiliation, disapproval and rejection from family and friends. They were under surveillance (Operation Hyacinth) and forced to enter into heterosexual marriages. Facing homophobia, they hid their sexual orientation, which caused them many sufferings or decided to defend it despite the risk of being stigmatised. As they were trying to find their place in the world, they used different strategies of dealing with difficult situations, some of them constructive (fighting for independence), some negative (addictions, suicides and suicidal thoughts), The goal of the study is to explore life situation of homosexual older people, with particular interest in difficult experiences and strategies adopted to deal with them - from the biographical perspective. A particular focus will be on dealing with own ageing. It is likely that senior homosexuals are more at risk of lonely life, disability, poverty, homelessness, social isolation, depression, alcohol addiction, housing deprivation and premature institutionalisation. They have less developed support network. On the other hand, experiencing discrimination during their lives may prove helpful in dealing with the challenges of ageing. Homophobia, still present in many environments, may place older homosexual persons at risk of double invisibility - due to their age and sexual orientation. Lack of research into the situation of senior homosexuals in the Polish society results in the lack of adequate support systems and relevant education for social assistance staff. The practical objective of the study is to identify daily problems of homosexual older adults and, consequently, to develop solutions to build adequate support system. The study is qualitative, using case study and in-depth interview. Five interviews with homosexual individuals aged 60 and more were analysed.

9. Lawrence Burke (Beaconhouse Group, Pakistan)

A Case for International Mindfulness in Education

If education is to be liberating, then it must begin with liberating the self. Given the evidence on the isolation created through social media, there is a case to be argued for the inclusion and recognition of culture and spirituality in all educational curricula in the 21st century. This paper argues for a



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paradigmatic view of religion rather than a traditional interpretation limited to religions said to have been initiated from the time of the prophet Abraham. Furthermore, it outlines a definition of spirituality in its broadest sense, as the unique ability of individual human beings to transcend the rational and acknowledge the experience and understanding of the non-rational in their lives. These two concepts of knowing and understanding the world of the 'visible and invisible', are inextricably linked, but not limited by, or beholden to the concept of culture. International schools by definition are indivisibly linked to a variety of cultures and intellectual traditions, and are imbued with innate spiritual values, whether opposing (rather ironically) or arguing for their existence. The eminent ethnologist, anthropologist and academic, Clifford Geertz's definition of culture is noteworthy here, because of its reliance on a simple truth that human beings give significance to their actions which in turn creates meaning in their lives. Moreover, these actions become the means through which we understand ourselves and others, and communicate our experiences to one another. Through exploratory and imaginative international curricula with knowledge, skills and sustainable principles, including religious and spiritual values, we can reaffirm our status as 'knowers' in the truest sense of the word, and claim that the reflected life is worth living. This will rekindle hope in a world defined through isolation and loneliness, and revitalize the quest for mindfulness and compassion for current and future generations.

10. Barbara Chojnacka (University of Szczecin, Poland)

The experience of loneliness in the parentification trajectory

The concept of trajectory is based on a metaphor presenting trajectory as if it were a bullet's flight (Glaser, Strauss 1965). It affects human life and turns it into the mad rush of a bullet, strong enough to tear out everything that seemed to be permanent, orderly and familiar, and heading towards the abyss of total re-evaluation (Górecki 2007: 778). G. Riemann i F. Schütze stated that „trajectory processes of suffering convey a sense of fate in the life of the trajectory incumbents; they force them to see themselves as controlled by strange outer forces that cannot be influenced easily or at all.” (Riemann G., F. Schütze F. 1991: 338).

In my presentation I am going to focus on the parentification trajectory (Jurkovic 1997, Chase 2000, Earley, Cushway 2002, Hooper i in. 2011, Schier 2015) as based on the analysis of narratives of parentified individuals. Difficult situations resulting in the necessity of taking over the role of adults by children should be interpreted as new and unexpected situations, resulting in losing control over their own life, where all existing patterns of action are no longer adequate (Kaźmierska 2014). Speaking about parentification involves also speaking about the lonely path of an individual facing difficulties, who is forced to take these difficulties upon his or her own shoulders. Thus the parentification trajectory refers to activities that a lonely parentified child has to carry out for his or her family, as well as to internal struggles experienced individually, such as working on a trajectory, resulting in the development of biographical coping strategies.

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11. Katarzyna Ciarcińska (University of Szczecin, Poland)

A lone voice – a voice not heard. Mechanism of silencing and objectification.

In her essay „Scorekeeping in pornographic language” Rae Langton presents an example of Linda Marchiano – a pornstar who wrote a book *Ordeal* in which she described in detail how she was abducted, beaten and even tortured in order to perform her role in the successful pornographic film *Deep Throat* (Langton, West, 1999). Unfortunately for Marchiano, the book that was intended to be an indictment of the pornography industry was marketed and sold as pornography. Langton writes extensively about this kind of communicative failures, where person's utterances of the word „no” are assuaged and the person is treated as if she lacked capacity to coherent speech. She describes such speech acts as *silencing*. Silencing means both preventing of utterances of the word "no" and other expressions of refusal, as well as not taking them for actual refusal. It clearly leads one to conclusion that the relation and interaction between power and language may lead to certain kind of communicative abuses, that in effect lead to the sense of solitude and loneliness. „If you are powerful, you sometimes have the ability to silence the speech of the powerless. One way might be to stop the powerless from speaking at all. But there is another, less dramatic but equally effective way. Let them speak. Let them say whatever they like to whomever they like, but stop that speech from counting as an action. More precisely, stop it from counting as the action it was intended to be” – says Langton in her essay „Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts” (Langton, 1993).

Silencing any person due to her gender, race, religion, nationality, political or religious views, etc. means that this person is being objectified. Objectification through speech acts can lead to alienation and estrangement, solitude within the multitude, loneliness and rejection that may lead an individual (or a group of people) to suffer severe injustice, harassment and even face destruction. Therefore, we should be aware that sometimes the speaker's audience or situation has more control over what she is able to communicate than the she really does (Beeby, 2011) and act upon preventing such situations (Langton, 2018).

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12. Richard E. Cleveland (Georgia Southern University, USA)

Cultivating Healthy Solitude & Mindfulness in Children

The mantra, “children are to be seen, not heard” arguably characterizes adult expectations for children throughout many generations of Western culture. This perspective may produce quiet children who refrain from speaking, however such muteness differs vastly from silence as a healthy practice. Imposed stillness whether enforced via authority, familial/social expectations, or punishment lacks two critical aspects of healthy silence: dignity and autonomy.

This paper will overview common cultural perspectives on human development and, of relevance, childhood. Next the author will provide a brief synopsis of common definitional aspects of silence. As a majority of children’s daily lived experiences occur in schools, the paper will address silence in the school/classroom setting asserting that healthy silence cannot be practiced in schools where the overall school spirit (or climate) hinders the dignity and autonomy of its children. The paper will then review related research on silence with children. Studies from multiple disciplines will be presented, reviewed through an educational/school lens. Current and previous research by the author will be outlined as representative of potential explorations.

The paper will conclude with a return to common social/cultural expectations of children, specifically in terms of silence. A similar return will be made to the themes of dignity and autonomy. Parallels between solitude and mindfulness will be used to illustrate the argument that healthy silence is a necessary aspect of human development, and not solely reserved for adults.

13. Aleksander Cywiński (University of Szczecin, Poland)

The politics of solitude in markoscala

The politics of solitude in macro-political large-scale explores the solitude and togetherness of these large-scale political units (states) themselves. This approach is an alternative approach to dichotomy structure / agency, in which the agency in this case concerns not individuals, but States. The politics of solitude can be defined as an activities, performed by entity, aimed at isolating itself or other entity from the international community (i.e. with respect to other states or international organizations), and thus creating a distance. Due to the fact that this solitude influences the functioning of individuals (psychological aspect) and communities (sociological aspect), it is not only an issue belonging to political science - understood as researching activities related to the exercise of political power. In particular, we should emphasize the importance of the politics of solitude to the existing educational models in the countries.

14. Piotr Domeracki (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland)

Between Monolectical and Dialectical Philosophy of Solitude and Communitiveness

It is commonly known that maybe less solitude but more loneliness deserves on clear and firm criticism while communitiveness is assessed in a univocally positive way. This, in turn, translates to an unquestionable preference to ideas, feelings, motives and acts which are of community character and use. On the other hand, loneliness is recognized as a reason of our pain, suffering, fears, sadness and horrible despair. It results that our key ambition, need and aim should be avoiding and preventing each form of solitude or loneliness in our private and social life at all costs. But, as it occurs, this causes a lot of further – not only theoretical but unfortunately also practical – problems, which some researchers and ordinary people must face. This kind of unilateral and unambiguous interpretation both



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solitude/loneliness and communitiveness I used to call it „monolectical”. In my presentation I am going to show that ‘monolectics’ of communitiveness or solitude/loneliness is insufficient for possibly objective and complete picture of this two. In consequence I will be arguing that monoseological discourse is able to gain it and to develop itself only by turning to the dialectical method of explaining. The fundamental thesis and belief as well, expressed on the ground of the dialectics of solitude/loneliness and communitiveness, is that solitude/loneliness and communitiveness are not at all isolated but strongly complementary. A practical conclusion arises from this statement according to which each of us should intertwine in his or her life some periods of communitiveness and then some episodes of solitude.

15. Tomasz Donatowicz (Społeczna Szkoła Podstawowa im. Lady Sue Ryder w Niepołomicach, Poland)

Shaping the need for silence in early childhood education students

Shaping the need for silence in early childhood education students is a pedagogical challenge that requires holistic solutions. Infrastructure and organization of work of Społeczna Szkoła Podstawowa im. Lady Sue Ryder in Niepołomice is conducive to raising children in a culture of silence. The facility creates silence zones, the principle of minimalism applies, the child's frequent contact with nature, various activities and projects are organized.

Silence is a kind of internal order and self-discipline that favor learning and shaping socially desirable qualities. The pursuit of it is seen as a pedagogical value. Actions taken at school are accompanied by the conviction that silence is not silence.

The student learns it casually, through the fun and atmosphere in the classroom. By awakening the child's internal motivation in class, situations are created in which they will experience silence and the pleasure that comes from it. However, you should equip your child with a specific body of knowledge about silence and noise itself. Thematic classes, lectures or experiments must be interesting and fully involving the child; the youngest learn through practical activities. Various, popular calming techniques are intertwined in the everyday school reality. Inspiration comes from available sources.

Peace and quiet play a key role in proper development and the functioning of the child. They are necessary to obtain the greatest possible effects of activities undertaken for the benefit of the student at school. Teachers working with the students of the first stage of education create a variety of educational situations that give the child the opportunity to discover, experience and experience silence. The effectiveness of the selected methods depends largely on the involvement of the educator himself and his conviction about the purposefulness of the actions taken.

16. Elżbieta Dubas (University of Lodz, Poland)

Adult Loneliness

Solitude is a universal phenomenon in human life, which has probably accompanied people since the dawn of history, and in some socio-historical periods, among which is the present postmodernity period, it is particularly irksome. Solitude affects people of all ages, at any stage of life, although it is particularly difficult and unacceptable in childhood, when little human beings still lack an elaborate inner world, and in the old age, when this inner world is falling apart; inner world is a protection against experienced difficulties, both external and internal.



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Thus, solitude also concerns adults. Considering the fact that adulthood is a lengthy period in development of people, i.e. from the age of 18 (i.e. from the formal beginning of adulthood) until the end of human life, related to various developmental challenges, numerous changing roles and social tasks of adults, as well as their changing personal needs, expectations and abilities, adulthood must be regarded as a time of experiencing solitude in an extremely complex, diverse and multidimensional way, difficult to define and describe in a simple way. When describing solitude in adulthood, it is necessary to take into account the various stages of adulthood: threshold of adulthood (18 – 25), young adulthood (25 – 40), middle adulthood (40 – 60/65) and late adulthood (60), called old age, bearing in mind that old age is not a uniform developmental period either, but we distinguish between beginning of old age called early old age (60 – 74; young-old), senile age (75 – 89; old-old) and longevity (90 +; oldest old). It is worth looking at the causes of solitude, the situations in which it arises and develops, the consequences and ways to deal with solitude. It is also possible to analyse the intensity with which it is experienced (complete and partial solitude), its types (objective and subjective solitude, bad and good solitude — negative and positive, institutionalized solitude and one outside institutions).

Solitude is most often combined with loneliness, which is the negative side of this human experience. What is particularly interesting for an adult education specialist is the “search” of its positive aspects in solitude — good solitude, creative solitude, solitude conducive to self-realization and the sense of life. In understanding solitude, it is crucial to see its ambivalent nature; solitude itself is neither good nor bad. It is people, also guided by social norms, that can turn it into suffering or into a chance to develop. This aspect of bringing out positive loneliness is particularly related to adulthood, because it is an adult – acting as a subject, engaged, having agency and responsibility for his/her development, who can make an effort to get some value out of loneliness. In a specific learning process taking place mostly outside institutions, in a natural and informal way, in experiencing everyday life and in relation to past biographical experiences, as reflective beings people can transform bad solitude into positive solitude. Life experiences, including difficult existential experiences (death, old age, suffering, loneliness itself), can lead people to expand self-awareness, knowledge of the world and their place in the universe. In the process of dealing with solitude and finding values in it, education and learning, in its broad meaning, play a big role. Linked to values, they are an effective remedy against loneliness. One can talk about learning solitude as an area of lifelong learning of adults and at the same time, their personal maturation.

The study on this topic will include, apart from specialist literature, the results of empirical research conducted by the author starting from the 1990s, and the resulting reflections of the author on pedagogical monoseology.

17. Torgeir Fjeld (Ereignis Center for Philosophy and the Arts, Norway)

After words, silence: interpassivity and trauma in Bergman's middle years

In Dante's Divine Comedy we are given over to a man who, midway in life, is confronted with a forking path. It is as if the bookish auteur film-maker Ingmar Bergman sought to realise these words his own in his middle years: Should his protagonists choose silence or speech? Do they indeed have a choice? And what was it that silenced them in the first place? This paper will discuss these questions in the context of three films from Bergman's production in the 1960s: The Silence (1963), the Academy Award-winning Persona (1966), and The Shame (1968). In these films the silent subjects have different and distinct reasons to be quiet. Key to our understanding is the psychoanalytic notion of interpassivity, a term that first appeared in the work of Robert Pfaller in 1996 and later brought to prominence by Slavoj Žižek in discussions of “canned laughter,” charity, and belief. Interpassivity tries



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to convey how one person's activity in a sense *allows* another to be passive, so that the former can be said to mediate the latter's silence. In Bergman's approach to silence we are presented with two distinct domains of activity and meaning, and a burgeoning sense of a troubled relation between speech and a traumatic kernel of truth. As we will see, when Bergman came to regard *The Shame* as an artistic failure this may be in part due to that he in this instance felt that he had gone "too far" in explicating this traumatic core, closing down, as it were, the associative potentialities that are nurtured in the earlier films. The silent protagonist provided Bergman with a vehicle to explore capacities of implicated meaning, thus sharpening his artistic mastery of the cinema as a site for rich and critical expression.

18. Joanna Flis (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Social phobia and Internet addiction

Social phobia is an anxiety disorder characterised by increased social anxiety, which impedes or sometimes makes it impossible to function normally in interpersonal relationships (Rabe-Jabłońska, 2002). Among its consequences, loneliness and alienation are some of the most frequently cited sources of declared depression in adolescents going to therapy.

According to the assumptions of cognitive-behavioural therapy, in the development of anxiety disorders a particular role is played by the mechanisms and factors that perpetuate it (Popiel, Pragłowska, 2008). One such mechanism is the transferal of one's social activity to cyber-reality which, according to the concept of compensation mechanisms of problematic use of the Internet, may constitute a mechanism that compensates for deficits in interpersonal skills and loneliness. This, in effect, deepens them. All the more so since in the light of research, intense use of the Internet increases the feeling of loneliness and lowers well-being (Kardaras, 2018, Kraut et al, 1998).

According to DSM-IV (1994), Internet addiction is a disorder whose dynamic concerns uncontrollable use of the Internet in a damaging way. The research shows that differences between addicts and non-addicts concern mainly the level of social support experienced as well as a greater sense of threat from other people, lower self-esteem and self-acceptance (Cudo, Dobosz, Jarzabek-Cudo, Basaj, 2016). This constitutes a specific determinant of addiction in people suffering from anxiety disorders. The Internet allows them to create a positive view of their own social lives, despite deficits (Poprawa, 2011).

I shall present the effects of therapy involving digital detox proposed by Dr. Dunckley (2015) in 4 adolescents diagnosed with social phobia and Internet addiction. I will present a conceptualisation of the combined influence of cognitive-behavioural addiction mechanisms and phobias as well as hypotheses concerning the etiology of both disorders. I will try to show how compulsive use of social media can shape mechanisms related to the development of social anxiety and a sense of loneliness. Consequently, it leads to the belief that loneliness is a necessity and not a choice.

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19. Piotr Goniszewski (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Loneliness, solitude and community in the light of John Main's Christian meditation

The purpose of my speech is to show the difference between loneliness and solitude and their relationship with creating an authentic community from the perspective of John Main's teaching on meditation. The first part will show the distinction between loneliness and solitude. The second part will focus on understanding the relationship between solitude and personal development through meditation practice. The third part of the speech will be devoted to showing the positive contribution of meditation and seclusion to building authentic relationships within the community. Spirituality is the area in which solitude and community interact with each other. Therefore, John Main's approach may show the positive dimension of solitude and its implications for building deep interpersonal relations.

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Laurence Freeman, Jesus the Teacher Within, London 2011.

20. Adriana Górka (The Polish University Abroad, UK)

The impact of the development of digital technology and social networking on the Millennials generation

"Millennium generation", or "next generation" or "generation Y", is a generation of people born in the 1980s and 1990s. You can also say about them "digital generation", which says a lot about the specifics of this generation. Born in analogue times, they are the first generation that grew up in a period of massive technological changes beginning in the last years of the 20th century. Although they quickly adopted technological changes that significantly simplified the life of the then society, but also were the first to experience the negative impact of modern technologies on social life. In my speech I will present the results of my research and the research of other scientists regarding the impact of the development of digital technology on the social relations of that generation of Poles.

21. Rafał Iwański (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Loneliness and care of the elderly

The speech will raise the issues related to the loneliness of the elderly, with special attention paid to seniors who need support and help in everyday life. The presentation analyses different aspects and contexts of loneliness (social, psychological, socio-economic), which are particularly significant from the perspective of the elderly. The first part presents a division of the elderly by the degree of dependency. Subsequently, the analysis of social, psychological, and economic determinants, which have an influence on the loneliness of the elderly population, was carried out. The latter part focuses



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on the conditions of loneliness in the place of living. The aspect of family caregivers of elderly dependents was also addressed. The speech will end to provide conclusions and recommendations on limiting the negative aspects of loneliness among the elderly.

22. Gizem Kayahan (Istanbul Technical University, Turkey)

Does freedom lead to loneliness?

This study focuses on the concepts of freedom and loneliness, and answers the question of: does freedom lead to loneliness by mainly claiming quite the opposite: freedom leads loneliness to decrease, because if freedom is high: trust, community involvement, belonging, self-realization, political and social action is high. Meaning that, all the conditions that would lead loneliness to become lower would actualised. As a result, it is possible to say that freedom does not lead to loneliness. On the contrary, with freedom, people tend to feel less lonely. In claiming so, this study will try to discuss three arguments: first, freedom can only be realised within a community and can only be described with one's relationship with others, and with political and social involvement. Second, freedom can only be fully realised under the protection of a government. Without government, there would be a spontaneity and inequality, as a result there would be risk of violation of the freedom, and lack of trust. Third, social isolation, social withdrawal and lack of trust leads to loneliness. In arguing these, this study first defines the term freedom with the distinction of negative vs. positive, and MacCallum's contribution to it: triadic relation. Second, the term loneliness is described with the concepts of social isolation, social withdrawal and lack of trust. Then, the relation between freedom and loneliness is discussed.

23. Abigail Klassen (University of Winnipeg, Canada)

Unaroused, but Seeking Something: Asexuality Revisited

Broadly, the terms 'asexual' or 'ace' refer to persons who do not experience sexual arousal or who, despite sexual arousal, choose not to engage in sexual activity. These people may or may not experience romantic feelings for others. Perhaps best described in the works of Foucault, Western society emphasizes compulsory sexuality – the idea that human beings are “naturally sexual.” Certainly, “normal” bodies are not just “for sex,” but sex is “supposed to be” part of what a “normal” body and those with a “normal” psychology desire. In turn, an asexual person may wonder, “What is my body for?; What am I for?” Of a declared (or taken to be) asexual person, others too may wonder, “What is their body for?” or, more radically, “What is an asexual *for*?”; “What do I do with them?”; “How am I to behave around them?” Wittgensteinian-style games provide social maps through which we unconsciously order even everyday conversations. For instance, while the bluntness and details of apparently innocent questions such as “Are you married?” or “Are you single?” vary depending on location and context, they can be the cause of much discomfort and aloneness for ace folk. Everyday conversations are embedded with assumptions of compulsory sexuality, sometimes producing a feeling on the part of many ace people that they are out of sync with the rest of the sexual world (and, perhaps, for better or worse, they are). Compulsory sexuality coupled with the current trend of sex positivity, at least in the West, as well as the latter's accompanying proliferation of ways to understand or identify one's sexuality (i.e., as “pansexual,” etc.), while considered emancipatory by some, can serve to reinforce the notion that there is something *wrong* with asexual people. Confessing a lack of sexual desire (or a lack of desire to act on sexual desire) could be emancipatory for those who wish to feel free in announcing aspects of their self. However, in spaces where sex positivity is celebrated, asexual people may feel not only loneliness in their inability to “out” who they are, but also anxiety



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and perhaps a need to feign normalcy (i.e., feign sexual desire) in order to be with others, whether comfortably or not. Discussion pertaining to asexuality is of moral importance since constraints and enablements are placed on individuals who are, or who are taken to be, asexual. When ace persons are misunderstood, constraints placed upon them can be not only epistemically unwarranted, but unethical, oppressive, and the cause of much loneliness.

24. Martyna Klimek, Anna Janowicz (Hospice Foundation in Gdansk, WSB University in Gdansk, Poland)

The family carer should not be alone. First steps towards inclusion of lonely family carers of people at the end of life in Poland

In Poland and other East European countries most of family carers still remain 'hidden' and can be called: invisible heroes of daily burden of home care. 'Invisible heroes' became the mottoes of the social campaign organized by the Hospice Foundation in Poland in 2017. We have started to draw attention to the problems of informal care in home care settings. Since then, the three nationwide campaigns have been launched aiming at broadening social awareness and practical support of family caregivers. The attention of the Ombudsman of Poland was drawn to the matter of lonely caregivers, and first funding was obtained for the training for caregivers and the construction of a respite care centres in Poland in 2019. We are at the beginning of the way to include family carers in the integrated care system, and the problem of the ageing population is at an early stage of the social discourse. Workshops and educational meetings for caregivers are needed, the development of local volunteering activities are urgent, as well as new models of support for working caregivers and young and 'sandwich' carers. We need to learn from others. The practical support for informal carers in the UK can be an example for others. From its origins of the family carers' movement in Great Britain from 1960's, through the integration process of different entities into Carers UK, to the practical answers of emerging needs can serve as example for Poland and other countries. With growing numbers of home care patients, and more isolated, lonely and tired informal caregivers without adequate support we need to inform, educate and act in order to help those lonely heroes.

25. Richard Knight (School of Psychological and Social Sciences York St John University, UK)

The wounded healer - a poetic inquiry into isolation and disability

The coronavirus pandemic has underlined and highlighted issues of isolation and loneliness for a wide spectrum of people, which can be challenging and difficult to process. This highly interactive workshop will allow attendees the opportunity to reflect upon their own experience of isolation, in relation to the experiences of others, through the use of poetic/creative inquiry, with the catalyst piece being from the point of view of bedbound disabled clinician. Through grappling with these experiences and issues together, we are able to offer each person a 'You' to their 'I' and find pathways from aloneness to togetherness (Buber, 2011). This material will allow us to touch another (albeit virtually) and to embark on a journey to a shared understanding of what it is to be alone and how we can navigate this together. Poetic inquiry, a qualitative method rooted in phenomenological theory, can be a powerful tool for accessing how we feel and respond to subjects and themes. Each member of the workshop will leave with their own poem, picture, or creative piece based around the theme of how it is to be alone. Instead of simply listening to another person's experience, this will enable attendees to grapple reflexively with the issues in a personal and embodied way.

The workshop will be a supportive space to explore these themes with a researcher and counsellor in the subject area, particularly in relation to isolation, disability, identity, self-care, values, and well-



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being. Attendees will have the opportunity to share and reflect on their experiences if they feel able to do so. Previous attendees of similar workshops have found this to be a powerfully moving experience of a sometimes emotional nature that facilitates professional development.

26. Piotr Krakowiak (Nicolaus Copernicus University, Poland)

Learning from others about reduction of solitude and lonelines in end-of-life care. How British Carers uk model can inspire Polish society and help family caregivers.

How to recognize and empower family caregivers of seriously ill, disabled and old people at their homes in Poland? There is a lot of good advice from the experience of the British Organization *Carers UK*, operating successfully for over 50 years towards inclusion of formal and informal care. How to prepare our community leaders, social workers and local communities to help those lonely home carers to feel more included and supported by professionals of health and social care? We have been able to change attitudes towards patients with cancer and their family carers through hospice movement, creating our own strategies in order to make social education for end-of-life care effective. But how to move further and help all those who feel lonely and helpless in front of massive duties of family carer? We can learn from those, who have already developed tools and created strategies supporting family caregivers. Exploring the educational strategies of the organization *Carers UK* will help to indicate the main solutions to this social & educational challenge in Poland, helping to reduce the loneliness of carers in the home care settings. Most families still feel isolated, while most of our local communities do not support those who care, often for many months and years. Social educators and social workers have to answer to this question of loneliness and isolation of many family caregivers. First steps have been made and first publications issued, but more robust strategies and practical solutions are needed. Newest facts and figures Vision 2021 of *Carers UK* will be presented and discussed with participants and readers. "We are focusing on three priorities to create the world we want for carers. 1. Battling for greater understanding and support for carers in our society. 2 Being there for carers with information and advice, right from the start. 3 Building a network of carer positive employers." (online, carersukvision2021final.pdf)

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27. Joanna Król (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Lonely towards the system: a subculture of beat generation in the Stalinist period in Poland (1948-1956)

The Stalinist period in Poland was a time of radical changes in the political, economic and social area. Symbolic sovietization had specific meaning and aimed at a lasting transformation of the structure and social awareness was of particular importance here. The end result was to create the so-called "a new man" characterized by, among others: scientific view of the world, socialist morality, folk patriotism



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connected with internationalism and collectivism. Project implementation process the new man was total and massive. This meant that the whole of social life was strictly programmed according to one scenario. For this reason, the birth of the subculture of beat generation who were a breach in the monolith and at the same time an expression of the rebellion of the young generation against the system can be considered an absolute phenomenon at this time. Rebellion is usually associated with a sense of solitude, loneliness and rejection. All these feelings can be applied to bikers. Opposition to the current canon of social attitudes, a clear reference to American culture, an alternative lifestyle and clothing made the subculture of bikers become one of the main enemy of the Polish People's Republic and a systematic target of propaganda attacks.

28. Anna Linka (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Culture shock in the counselling process as an experience of migrant's and social service professional's loneliness.

Culture shock includes deterioration of migrant's mental, physical and social functioning and it results from difficulties encountered in the host culture. Culture shock can be described as a state of suspension between host and migrant's culture. Therefore, a person going through this condition experiences deep loneliness. Social services professionals are those who should help migrants in overcoming culture shock. However, in contact with a culturally different client professional also can experience typical of culture shock feelings of helplessness, confusion and loneliness. Basing on the results of own research the author will present examples of relationships in which both, the employee and the client, are experiencing cultural shock and recommendations for dealing with this state.

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29. Elżbieta Magiera (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Teacher's solitude in the history of pedagogical thoughts

The history of education includes pedagogical theory and practice. The aim of my presentation is to show the idea of teacher's solitude in the history of pedagogical thoughts. The educators from different eras discussed teacher's educational backgrounds, the aim of the profession, labour regulations and other. Among this views, the parts about teachers' solitude can be found. The solitude understood not only as a social isolation or rejection but mostly as searching for silence, reflection and inner consciousness of yourself. This idea was presented by Jan Henryk Pestalozzi, Jan Władysław Dawid, Artur Brühlmeier and others. The solitude in teachers profession is crucial to look inside yourself, to know yourself better and to cure yourself in order to be the open-minded teacher ready



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to support the students. Additionally solitude fosters the comprehension of inner sources and derive the energy. Silence and calmness, naturally connected with solitude (in nature, being apart, at home, at church), encourage teachers to have a reflection of their own work, find their needs and help to relax. On the basis of different pedagogical views it is concluded that solitude for the teacher is a teacher to himself.

30. Danuta Anna Michałowska (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland)

Aloneness the context of neoliberalism

The aim of the paper is to present the ethical aspects of neoliberalism that influence the changes of identity of contemporary man, especially aloneness. The neoliberal discourse creates a specific vision of the essence of humanity which is *homo neoliberalis*, defined by *homo oeconomicus* and *homo consumans*. The legitimisation of the neoliberal vision of human being does not promise a positive outcome for a democratic society. Neoliberalism considered in terms of ideology, is present in contemporary social thought and noticeable in everyday social reality, shaping the identity of young people. Criticism of neoliberal implications for young people's identity formation is a turning point in the search for a new vision of contemporary human identity-important in building a democratic society and communarity.

31. Anna Murawska (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Does hope die in loneliness? Multidirectional relationship between hope, loneliness and solitude

Hope is one of a very important phenomenon of individual and social life. Sometimes it is consider as a central characteristic of being human. According to Erik Erikson human life cannot start as well as cannot finish without hope. Hope needs a certain context to grow up. Gabriel Marcel proves that hope demands interpersonal relationship. It exists and develops in "WE", never in lonely "ME". What makes hope immortal is human community. Does it mean that loneliness and solitude are a danger for hope? What I aim to do is discuss multidirectional relationship between this phenomena.

32. Adam Neal (The University of Warwick, UK)

Social Poverty

This paper explores the relationship between material deprivation and our needs as *social* beings. It argues that people who suffer both material and social deprivation do so in two distinct, but sometimes overlapping and compounding ways: 1) in their personal relationships (i.e. in their needs for friendship, human contact and intimacy), and 2) in their community membership through status-driven harms. The paper conceptualises the specific social harms of material deprivation as *social poverty* and argues that any complete account of poverty should include the impact on our social needs and our social position. The paper explores the ways in which each aspect of social poverty can lead to a worsening of our material conditions. These include the social capital we gain from our social relationships, the impact of social poverty on our ability to participate in the job market and the impact on our ability to make and sustain social connections. This impact on our abilities to make and sustain social connections can lead to loneliness, which is both a harm in itself, and has further consequences on our abilities to meet our material needs. The paper contextualises social poverty by discussing studies on the lonely residents of Chicago who died during the 1995 Heat Wave, poverty in inner city areas and low-income pensioners. After assessing different accounts of poverty the paper shows that focusing on low income fails to do justice to the many factors which determine the extent of a person's



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deprivation including her environments, social situation, social norms, friends and family, unemployment and life expectancy. This leads to an assessment of poverty as capability deprivation which the paper argues is more effective in assessing deprivation in respects of our nature as social beings.

33. Karolina Nowak (Poznan University of Economics and Business, Poland)

Between the alienated "math person" and the common "people person". Ethical dimensions of personal alienation and community in the fintech era.

Motivation: Ethical challenges are increasingly emerging as the central issue of contemporary fintech scientific discussions (Lynn, Mooney, Rosati, Cummins, 2019; Dembinski 2017). These discussions mainly concern the implementation of trust after the financial crisis (DeBriun 2015, Ghosh, 2008) and the moral education of financial agents (Kucz 2019). It draws attention to the need to abolish the dichotomy between "math person" (belonging to the tech world) and "people person" (belonging to the social world) and to see the penetration of the problems and needs of the world of technology and the human world (Hao, 2019).

Aim: The purpose of the research is to answer the question of what is the moral content of the relationship between the alienated "math person" and the common "people person". Referring to Abba's (Rocchi 2019) distinction between a first-person (Aristotle) and a third-person (Kant, Bentham, James, Rawls, Dworkin) approach to ethics I construct a second-person approach to ethics (relationship ethics, ethics of concern), combining aspects philosophical arrangements on good life for human beings (and financial agents) with a moral assessment of certain actions (undertaken under fintech). The personal alienation of the fintech community is expressed in the constructed "You" as the recipient of the financial services offered. The philosophical interpretation framework of the relationship here is the ethics of care of T. Kotarbiński. My second-person approach to ethics express a powerful social power of technological imagination, objectively and independent from individuals, to show the alienating nature of technology and social roots of this alienation.

Methods: The studies carried out are philosophical considerations, with critical analysis elements.

Results: The result of the research is to show 3 aspects of the moral content of the relationship between "math" and "people person" in relation to topology of Fintech (Finance and Investment, International Operations and Risk Management, Payments and Infrastructure, Data Security and Monetisation, Customer Interface – Arner, Barbies, Buckley, 2016): 1. kindness - a positive attitude towards another, the fulfillment of the demand to be good, sensitive to someone else's needs, willing to help and have empathy; (2) energy to act and internal discipline – perseverance of the aspirations of the designated route of conduct, control of emotions, effort in "giving in care everything possible", (3) civil courage – as far as possible (we do not always have full" recognition" of the situation) strive for truth (and therefore also to wisdom), to be truthful and righteous.

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34. Marek Nowak (University of Warsaw, Poland)

Religious voluntary loneliness

In my paper, I would like to present three examples of religious voluntary loneliness.

The first example is the figure mentioned in *Rigveda's* hymns - especially in the hymn *Kesin* (Rg 10. 136). This is an extremely mysterious figure. The word *kesin* (lit. long-haired, hairy) means ascetic. He can be interpreted as a shaman - in his form you can see ecstasy techniques combined with the use of psychoactive substances. He is also described as muni - silent. He is the companion of the god Rudra, who can be identified with Siva - the deity patronizing the yogis. Therefore, *kesin* can be considered a predecessor of yogis.

The second character that I would like to present in my speech is the contemplative mystic whose description can be found in Plotinus' *Enneads*. The work of the creator of Neoplatonism ends with the meaningful words *Phyge monou pros monon*, which can be translated as "Escaping a lonely to a Lonely". This escape is, in essence, a return to itself, the discovery of its true identity, a state before degradation. Flowing of beings, emanation is lowering the status of being. The way back to the source is to lead through the ascetic practice of purifying virtues, through contemplation of truth and beauty.

The third character I would like to outline is a hermit. It is significant that the Christian hermit movement was born in the 3rd century in Egypt, that is when Plotinus lived there. The first hermits were the Copts. Gospel texts were the inspiration for those going to the desert. With time, groups of students began to gather around the hermits, that is, the anachorets began to transform into cenobites, and thus the hermits gave rise to monastic life.

35. Michael O'Sullivan (Chinese University of Hong Kong, China)

Cloneliness: on the reproduction of loneliness

This paper argues that recent posthuman philosophies, human-computer interface studies, and technology-inspired biopolitical discourses and practices are reinventing and reimagining loneliness in different communities. The classic studies of loneliness in culture and art such as those by Frank O'Connor, Richard Yates, Moustakas and Riesman et al gave us the "lonely crowd", "existential loneliness", "sentimental loneliness" and the "lonely voice". However, today in an age of social networks, "interconnected loners" and GAFAM we are never alone and yet loneliness is, we are told, at epidemic levels. This paper asks whether newer forms of loneliness, pushed by the algorithms of biopolitical capitalism, result in what this book calls cloneliness. The paper will ask whether this *cloneliness* as an institutional practice of reproduction in society nurtures, normalises, and reproduces loneliness in order to create subjects who are more willing to accept ideologies of competition, "extreme individualism," and the stresses attendant on being "interconnected loners". I will examine cross-cultural and multimedia sources in asking these questions, referencing works by David Foster Wallace, Yiyun Li, Sayaka Murata, Kabi Nagata and Chaboute.

36. Xianghan O'Dea (York Business School, UK) and Julian Stern (Bishop Grosseteste University, UK)

In-group and out-group loneliness: the experiences of Chinese top-up students in a UK university



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Research has shown that international students commonly experience emotional and social loneliness during their study abroad experience. However, most published studies in this area have focused on individuals; little attention has been given to an apparently tight-knit group of international students who share similarities between them, such as age, education background, and previous learning experience. An example of such a group is Chinese top-up students. The number of Chinese top-up students studying in the UK has been on the rise, and these students have some special features that make them very different from other international students, such as receiving pre-departure training and support, and already having an established group of friends when they arrive in Britain. This longitudinal study explores whether a specific group of Chinese top-up students experience social and emotional loneliness while they are studying their top-up programmes in a UK institution. It seeks to fill in a gap and to make a contribution to existing literature on loneliness. It adopts portrait methodology as the methodological foundation and uses semi-structured interviews to collect data at three points during the top-up year. After each interview, written portraits are produced for the participants based on their interview transcripts. The findings suggest that within the group and outside of the group, these Chinese top-up students seem to experience loneliness in distinct forms. This group could be described as feeling lonely together. Within the group, they experience both social and emotional loneliness; outside of the group, they appear to experience only social loneliness. Their 'group loneliness' seems to be caused by factors at both institutional and personal levels. As well as exploring experiences of loneliness, this paper will also consider what the sending and receiving institutions could do to help Chinese top-up students reduce or mitigate loneliness. Suggestions for future research will also be offered.

37. Teresa Olearczyk (Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski Krakow University)

In search of silence

On the basis of psychological, pedagogical and methodological literature in the field of upbringing theory and behavioral culture, I have identified two thematic areas. The first concerns silence in general, and the second silence as a pedagogical principle in school education, conducive to the creativity of students.

Teachers' competences include recognition of learning conditions, course and learning outcomes. This is a very wide field and as diverse as the needs, attitudes and skills of students. It is impossible not to pay attention to silence, whose presence in the process of diagnosis, assessment and upbringing plays an important role.

In an economically, technologically and socially advanced world, noise is a dominant factor, and at the same time influences teaching and learning outcomes, as well as health. It remains for us to count on educators, psychologists and doctors who are able to see both the effects of noise and the need to introduce to the school the principle of silence that was previously present at school. Excessive excitability and mental disorders more often concerning adolescents, as well as children, are largely the result of living in excessive noise, excessive stimuli attacking the immature nervous system of students.

We have learned to clone, walk on the moon and even fly (Zapata), but it is difficult for us to maintain a balance in life between activity and silence, between talkativeness and silence, between aggression and reflection. Contemporary schools should teach everyone how to read, understand and write, as well as logical and independent thinking (reflection, silence), and allow them to realize their abilities.



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Silence, similarly like music, should be part of human life, because it not only stimulates reflection, triggers fantasies, imagination and creative activity. In this deeply humanistic orientation of education, silence takes on a very subjective character. A man with his incredible wealth of internal experiences and conflicts needs silence. The originality of thoughts and experiences requires maturation and peace.

38. Elżbieta Osewska (Higher State Vocational School in Tarnów, Poland)

Loneliness of a Global Child on the Way to God

The transition from one life stage to a new, yet unknown stage, e.g. the transition from the stage of being a small child surrounded by the family to the pre-school or school stage, the transition from the childhood stage to the youthfulness stage, and then from youthfulness to adulthood, is a difficult period in the development of every person. At present, the transition from childhood to youthfulness in the European, postmodern context – is pointed out as a very difficult period, when a child/ teenager is looking for own individuality and identity. This manifests itself in the known phase of rebellion and questioning authority figures, enhanced nowadays by global corporations creating their consumer. A young person not finding understanding in the adults often feels lonely. He/she experiences a double feeling of loneliness – on the one hand he/she often cannot get necessary support from the adults, on the other hand – when his/her attempts of being independent are undermined – the process of building a sense of own identity and value is hindered. Young person's loneliness means both the lack of strong bonds with other persons (also God) and the lack of contact with himself/herself. All phenomena related to pupil's inner chaos, enhanced additionally by external chaos, set very high requirements for Religious Education. The feeling of being lost, desperate and lonely experienced by many children and youngsters may become the starting point or part of the joint road for RE teachers. Religious Education in schools must face the rule of patience, regularity and wise communication to be able to listen raptly to pupils' voices and learn about their life stories, in order to help them on their way to God.

39. Sarah Pawlett Jackson (The Open University and The University of Roehampton, UK)

Alone without you, alone without an us.

Loneliness is not simply characterised by a lack of other people in one's environment or lifeworld, but by a lack of specific forms of relationship, connection or belonging. In this paper I connect the conversation about different types of loneliness with debates happening in the philosophy of intersubjectivity. Philosophers of intersubjectivity tend to characterise experiences of direct *encounter* as having a second-personal 'I-you' quality. By contrast, experiences of *belonging* tend to be characterised by first-person plural 'we' structures. (e.g. Stawarska 2009, Reddy 2010, Zahavi 2014).

In this paper I will compare and contrast the different phenomenological qualities that come with the absence or poverty of these two types of intersubjective structure respectively. I will argue that the first-person plural structure of *belonging* is such that it is harder to locate and articulate the resultant loneliness that comes with its absence, by comparison to the absence of direct encounters.

40. Christophe Perrin (Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium)

Might God have been wrong?

Where does solitude come from? Instead of relying on modern-day sociology, I would rather resort to traditional theology to address the issue. Indeed, solitude does not come from society or from the



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changes of social cohesion brought about ever since Modern Times. This would mean that solitude had never been experienced before the advent of the individual while it had been in existence and Man has been complaining about it ever since Antiquity. Solitude comes from God, whether one believes in an only God, or several or none at all. This inevitably raises the thorny question of the underlying reason(s) for its existence since solitude is the first and most probably only evil referred to in the greco-roman as well as in the judaeo-christian tradition or even in the atheistic culture.

41. Irena Ramik-Mażewska (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Loneliness of women with intellectual disabilities

The issue of adult life of women with intellectual disabilities gains a significant place in scientific literature. Women's personal experiences, way of participating in life and attitude towards one's own disability reveal the subjective location of their individual fate. The post-modern scene of the multitude of discourses in Poland, the need to constantly build identity and the need for permanent choices have become an arena of uncertainty in which women with intellectual disabilities cannot find themselves. Condemned to operate on the outskirts of social and family life, they experience loneliness and are experiencing it more acutely. Treated as representatives of "lost potential", they experience both strong mechanisms of controlling the closest group and separation of the public and private spheres.

42. Ewa Rojewska (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Solitude and loneliness in family life in Jesper Juul conception

The purpose of the article is to point out the essence and significance analysis of solitude and loneliness in family life in Jesper Juul conception. The research problems are: What is the essence and significance of solitude in family life in Jesper Juul conception? What are the spaces of solitude in family life in Jesper Juul conception? What are the threats of loneliness in family life in Jesper Juul conception? The article was prepared using analytical and synthetic method, based on Jesper Juul books.

43. Daley Rosenstreich, Liel Cohen, Or Nahum, Michal Baliakob, and Uzi Levi (Peres Academic Center, Israel)

Loneliness and COVID-19: The typology of loneliness and use of technology to connect with others as revealed by Ecological Momentary Assessments (EMA) during lockdown.

The COVID-19 outbreak commonly characterizes in social distancing, quarantines, and widespread lockdowns in order to reduce the coronavirus reproduction factor. However, it is not clear how COVID-19 related social restrictions impact the wellbeing and social connectedness of people who experience loneliness. To shed light on this matter, 130 participants aged 17-73 volunteered to participate in an Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA) study, which consisted of eight brief assessment waves. EMA has two main advantages over the common single-assessment method: First, it captures participants' emotional state at real time (with less reliance on memory) and second, it enables to investigate changes in participants' emotional state. The study **was conducted over a 12-day period of a most familial Holyday (Passover) during which a total lockdown has been declared.** Using a short on-line questionnaire, each EMA wave assessed loneliness, negative affect, and digital aids usage for work, leisure, and to communicate with friends and family. The analyses revealed three main expressions of loneliness during the lockdown: Stable low levels of loneliness (Resiliency), high starting levels of loneliness that gradually decreased (Adaptation), and low starting levels of loneliness that gradually increased (Maladaptation). It was found that the three expressions groups did not differ in their levels



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of negative affect or in the time allotted to connect with family members. However, compared to adapters and resilient participants, maladapters significantly allotted less time to connect with friends. We further found that concerns regarding COVID-19 moderated the expression of loneliness, such that Loneliness increased as a function of concern among participants who were lonely at the first wave, but not among participants who were not lonely. These findings suggest that development-over-time methodology of loneliness should be considered, and that connecting with friends may play a more important role than connecting with family in reliving loneliness.

44. Eyal Rosenstreich (Peres Academic Center, Israel), Yael Dubinsky (Kinneret Academic College, Israel), Yossi Fixman (Hugz team), Tanja Talmon (Hugz team), and Roy Havshush (Hugz team)

Hugz©: Tackling loneliness with a holistic approach through a digital app

Loneliness has been argued to be a social epidemic, affecting people at all age groups, genders and socioeconomic status, and resulting with severe physical and psychological impacts. In recent years, several interventions have been shown to tackle loneliness rather successfully, as promoting social interactions, increasing the availability of social support, and mindfulness meditation. However, such interventions typically require professional supervision, mostly conducted in the physical space, are time demanding, and may be compromised by social distancing restrictions. Hence, such physical interventions are less accessible and may not be widely employed among people who experience loneliness. Indeed, several academic and commercial attempts have been conducted to tackle loneliness in the virtual space. However, these attempts typically focused on a single technique to reduce loneliness, whereas it has been argued that employing multiple techniques may be more effective. In the current work, we present the conception of Hugz©, an innovative real-time application that proactively activates advanced technological mechanisms to aid people who experience loneliness, with a goal to create an infrastructure that meets the users' unique needs, including privacy and security. Hugz© creates opportunities for social interaction, enhances social support, and changes the users' negative perspectives and maladaptive social cognition. Hugz© includes mechanisms of machine learning and artificial intelligence designed to 1) diagnose and identify user's specific needs, 2) recommend best-suited social connections and activities, 3) provide ongoing feedback for user's behavior, and 4) monitor changes in the user's levels of loneliness using an advanced and innovative algorithm assessing loneliness by combining user's self-report, behavior, and cognitive parameters. We will further discuss the underlying socio-cognitive mechanisms at the bases of Hugz©, its expected implications on users' health and wellbeing, and its potential contribution to the research of loneliness by providing access to its anonymous big-data.

45. Henrieta Anișoara Șerban (Academia Română, Romania)

Estrangement from „the existence in the immediate” (the excessive role of image, consumerism and hyper-morality)

Contemporary world dwells in the immediate via capitalism, consumerism and fashion. Their simple and often manicheistic imagery determine our world. Romanian philosopher Lucian Blaga describes the existence in the immediate in association with safety, specific rather for the animals regardless of their intelligence level; but “man is entrapped by his creative destiny in a marvellous way (...) casting off – even at the risk of self-destruction – the advantages of equilibrium and the joys of safety”. Safety is another governing power of our contemporary world order dwelling in the immediate. Comprehending contemporary forms of estrangement is to understand “the determinants of the immediate” in our globalized world, which is not as heterogeneous as we would like to think, anymore.



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The opposite is the existence in the horizon of mystery and revelatory meanings via revelatory metaphors. Capitalism is correlated with loneliness in a significant manner, as well as with various forms of anxiety and anti-social pathologies in several studies. Capitalism teamed up with consumerism and the excessive role of image brings about reactions to consumerism and capitalism, *a globalizing society of reduced consumerism* that we may envision in the impact of *Die fructarien*, the vegans, the ecologists etc. While such currents are, for a good part, ethical solutions to the dysfunctional realities of our world, they are also fashions. Fashionable received ideas and fashions have the tragic role of sweeping people farther away from the principles of critical thought and tolerance. In vegan (or, ecologist topics, forms of reduced consumerism), one may notice often intransigence, the rise of hyper-morality, which, in turn, aggravate estrangement. Intransigence in sustaining the good and heart-felt debates, along with the complexity of human world, makes it almost impossible for one „to contribute to the good” or to entertain long and functional relations. Loneliness and estrangement hallmark the present.

46. Gill Simpson (York St. John University, UK)

Breaking the loneliness and making meaning: Autoethnography as method in learning religion

Being a researcher and/or educator can be a lonely and isolating business. The research culture in the UK can leave an individual feeling isolated and lonely¹, both from their peers and importantly, from their authentic *selves*, as they scramble to have their research heard in an ever-segregating environment.

Education theory with its roots in Macmurray’s philosophy of ‘self as agent’ in the 1930s, recognizes the need for mutuality and friendship. It develops through Humanistic psychologists who place the ‘I’ central to education practices (Rogers, 1961, 1969), and leads to the recent rise of Critical Reflection as a means of self-development in many fields of study (Schön, 1983, 1987; Brockbank & McGill, 1998; Moon, 2004). This has led to an increase in students’ abilities to be both self-aware in their learning and to identify the need for never-ending improvement (lifelong learning). But it can often leave the individual feeling either disengaged from their holistic self, as personal and academic learning are separated, to a sense of fragmentation between the subject of learning and the meaning for the individual. So, is there another way to approach learning which incorporates both the self and the object of study in a more holistic way?

This paper is a suggestion that one possible answer to this for researchers and religious educators is to develop an autoethnographical approach which allows the individual to engage in their subject material from both outsider and insider perspectives, seeking their own truths in the materials they encounter. The core ideals of autoethnography are to connect “personal (insider) experience, insights and knowledge to larger (relational, cultural, political) conversations, contexts and conventions” in order to create “nuanced, complex, and specific accounts of personal/cultural experience” (Adams, Jones & Ellis, 2015, p.25).

The author will challenge the “canonical ways of doing research”² by exploring the possibility of using autoethnography as a means of cultivating dialogue, both with a learning community and with the self,

¹ Sibai, O., Figueiredo, B., and Ferreira, M.C. 2019 “Overworked and isolated: the rising epidemic of loneliness in academia” <https://theconversation.com/overworked-and-isolated-the-rising-epidemic-of-loneliness-in-academia-110009>, Accessed 12.01.20

² Ellis et al 2011 <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>



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in order to develop a “political, socially-just and socially-conscious act”³. This may allow for a holistic and integrative approach to the individual’s own self-understanding, and bring the possibility of alleviating the loneliness of the researcher by opening up the prospect of developing research that is congruent with core values and ideals.

47. Simon Smith (University of Surrey, UK)

Solitude, Separation, and Absence in the Dialectics of Consciousness

Solitude is a cornerstone of Western rationalist thought. Theologically, it is found in the ontological instability of contingent being; philosophically, Cartesian ego-isolationism is the model. Modern psychology, meanwhile, encodes such configurations into human nature, recasting logical and ontological isolation as abandonment and dispossession. Solitude is natural and, as such, entirely negative, even tragic; from our first day to our last, we face the world alone.

As bleak as this sounds, it is also quite wrong. Radical subjectivism is a metaphysical fantasy: logically and epistemologically incoherent, psychologically stultifying. As Macmurray knew well, persons are essentially relational; there is, Buber concurred, no *I* without *Thou*. Biologically speaking, it takes two to make one; once made, we must be cared for if we are to survive; others teach us to talk and to think and to care; in short, to *be* human.

But still the myth of solitude exercises a powerful fascination for us. The reason is not hard to divine; indeed, the organisers of this symposium have hinted heavily at it: solitude contributes something positive, something constructive, to our self-conceptions. Quite so, but what?

One answer lies in the dialectical development of consciousness as religious consciousness. For Feuerbach, this entails the deconstruction of both the self-in-itself and the God-construct. In this ‘therapeutic atheism’, Absolute Being gives way, not to mere nothingness, but to absence. This presence of absence, as Lacan might say, orients consciousness *through* the ontological disaffiliations of contingency and ego-isolation and towards those higher forms of self-overcoming, which re-empower consciousness in self-conscious relation to others. Like Levinas, then, Feuerbach’s path of development is necessarily one of self-separation, leading us out of our natal sociality and into solitude, before returning us to constructively participate in the dialogue from whence we came.

48. Joanna Sobesto (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

How to embrace the aloneness of a translator: the case of Bolesława Kopelówna.

Being a translator is seen as a particularly lonely vocation; there are many metaphors encompassing his (her) situation: often perceived as a mere messenger, translator is meant to be invisible through the entire process of translation. The most iconic representation of saint Hieronymus – the patron of translators – sitting alone in his cell filled with books seems to be an image many people would likely attribute to a translator. Is that indeed the case? Is translation nowadays a vocation of silence and loneliness, an isolated profession? Translation History devoted to the difficult task of tracing the presence of translators throughout centuries demonstrates that the hopeless and heroic task of listening to the silence translators (especially female ones) left behind is extraordinarily fascinating and deeply needed.

³ *ibid*



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In this vein, I would like to investigate the life and work of Bolesława Kopelówna – Polish translator from English active mostly in the interwar period in Poland. Kopelówna, being a translator of dozens of books from various fields and author herself, seems to be invisible. Apart from brief suggestions made by critics that she was not a very good translator, Kopelówna is forgotten and voiceless. There is no interview, no diary, not even a single letter written by her left. How one can investigate the archive that does not exist? Over re-constructing the non-existing archive of a female translator, I would like to show how community shaped her life, and, also, how methodologies from Translation History can be applied in other disciplines to study aloneness.

60. Olga Szykaruk (University of Szczecin, Poland)

A Microcosm of Solitudes. Individuality, Collectivity and Identity in the BDSM Subculture.

„Hide your desires. Preserve your dreams – and bloodily, like a lacerated flock of birds, your torn sounds will scatter on the wind. What do you see, ladies and gentlemen?” Béla Balázs, libretto for Bluebeard's Castle

While atypical sexual behaviours have long been researched by psychologists and sexologists, the potential of the phenomenon commonly referred to by the umbrella term of BDSM (bondage, discipline, sadism and masochism) as a field of sociological research has until recently remained unexplored. Alone Together Again provides an opportunity to look upon it from a perspective that has been considered rarely, if at all: the phenomena of solitude and loneliness.

The social worlds functioning around the practice of BDSM constitute a unique field of research where loneliness, solitude and togetherness are concerned. More overtly than in other cases, the participants come seeking relationships of various types: from friendships, through various means of sexual fulfilment, to lifetime relationships.

Twenty in-depth interviews have been conducted to obtain glimpses into the respondents' respective searches. While each of their stories is unique, a similarity of certain milestones related to the theme of the conference could be observed. It would appear that a commitment to this search of a community – a task undertaken with the risk of still-present social stigma – results in a journey of three stages. Isolation, wherein the otherness of one's sexuality is noticed; togetherness, wherein a community is found, then solitude, as one's sexual and romantic identity is renegotiated and established as a result of having been experienced in both the contexts of individuality and collectivity.

61. Małgorzata Wałejko (University of Szczecin, Poland)

The Contemplative University. A chance for the revival of the idea of Academia

One of each pedagogue's, each teacher's significant tasks is helping students to restore balance between *ad intra* and *ad extra* tendencies. Education towards solitude takes place (or should take place) on every school-level; my paper regards some innovative ways and methods purposeful solitude can be used (and in fact is being already used) in global higher education system. The pedagogy of solitude implemented here may be a remedy to the crisis of the idea of University, so that students be able to discover it again as a place “where secular context of the spirit of praying should be taught by promoting concentration on what students have in front of them, be it a poem or a leaf under a microscope, to be able to develop selfless concentration on the object” (W. H. Auden, *A Certain World*).

62. Anna Warchlewska (Poznan University of Economics and Business, Poland)



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Financial exclusion of people over 65 years old - loneliness trap

The aim of the study is to identify the conditions of financial exclusion of consumers over 65 years old. Statistical data and reports relating to the ageing of the population and the activity of seniors in the financial services market were analysed. The aim of the article is to answer the question whether the loneliness of people over 65 results from financial isolation conditioned by non-economic factors at earlier stages of life? Research and literature materials to date indicate that financial exclusion of older people is a consequence of their conscious choices or is a result of insufficient financial resources. This text finishes with conclusions for the financial sector highlighting the causes and consequences of financial exclusion of seniors not only in economic terms. The upcoming risks of financial exclusion of seniors resulting from the spread of cashless payments are also presented.

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63. Arkadiusz Wąsiński (University of Lodz, Poland)

Experiencing loneliness as a source of existential suffering in a case of Alzheimer's disease

The content of my speech concerns the analysis of the specificity of the phenomenon of loneliness experienced in the situation of Alzheimer's disease. In my reflections I will refer to the discussion on the issue of solitude and loneliness in the context of the importance of various manifestations of loneliness for the possibility of achieving the existential fulfillment of man. However, I will primarily focus on the category of unaccountable loneliness caused by destructive changes in Alzheimer's disease. The unacknowledged loneliness in connection with Alzheimer's disease interferes with the ability to remember and perceive oneself in relation to one's social environment.

At the conference, I will present an analysis of the complex nature of the unaccountable loneliness experienced by an elderly woman with Alzheimer's disease. The research was carried out in a qualitative approach, an interpretative paradigm, a case study method, techniques of analysis of found documents and direct participatory observation. The research material is composed of the older woman's handwritten entries in her daily notebook concerning the ways of experiencing loneliness as a source of existential suffering. On the basis of the analysis of the research material, I will separate several manifestations of loneliness experienced by this woman. I will draw attention to those manifestations of loneliness which do not correspond to the typical image of loneliness experienced by a man unaffected by a dementia type disease. Moreover, they reveal the subtle nature of existential suffering, which is a reflection of the specificity of this woman's deepening personal degradation caused by Alzheimer's disease.

64. David Weir (York St John University, UK)

Solitude in Leadership Development

Learning how to be alone together requires *attention* to what is meant by "being alone". In relation to Organisational Leadership as a CEO or an organisational leader: while on the one hand the intrinsic value of solitude is increasingly becoming recognised in leadership and management training, it is not generally agreed what it is that can be better learned in solitude than in any other way.



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Superficially, there seem to be many opportunities in current management development for taking time out, escaping from the organizational setting to explore self and others in horse riding, trail finding, even experiencing the wilderness as opportunities to re-establish contact with a lost “real self” and subsequently benefit from this new knowledge in later encounters in the “real world”. But the over-riding outcome paradigm is that of “productive time” in terms of explicit measurable outcomes, that identify, rank and evaluate certain performances.

This is what “management” and “leadership” are supposed to be about. This is what we teach and this is what the post-modern organisation is expected to practise. Everything is time-bound and controlled: and in principle is expected to be quantified. But the central experiences of life, especially university life for both staff and students are in principle non-quantifiable. This emphasis on performatives, measurable outcomes, , misses a central aspect of these experiences for these encounters require nourishment from the power of “latency” . In complex behavioural systems latent power is created and maintained in the uniqueness of solitude,

When teaching Research Methods and introducing the weary distinction between Quantitative and Qualitative, I sometimes ask the class participants if they have ever been in love? Over the past 50 years of this insolence I estimate that approximately 83.7 % respond positively and put up their hands. The follow up question is “How Much?”

65. Kamil Węgorowski (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Love & the Internet – a case study of loneliness modern international relationships

In the era of the global village, it is increasingly easier for us to learn about the world and its secrets, as well as communicate with people for whom our morning is the night. It becomes natural that acquaintances, friendships, relationships and loves arise between people coming from different cultures. In my research, I will try to define loneliness on the basis of data coming from people in love from different continents, living their everyday lives far away from their life partners. For this purpose, I interviewed five student-age people from the PRC, Japan, the USA, Mexico, and Poland, using communication apps. While conducting the research, I used knowledge from many fields: history, education, sociology, theology, cultural studies, and political science. In my conversations, I tried to capture the lives of my interlocutors from getting to know each other to the present day, beautiful and difficult moments, what motivation they had to enter into a relationship with a partner from a different culture, how the relationship changed, what emotions accompanied them and what the perception was of their choices and life paths in their little homelands. My research to date suggests that such people experience a kind of loneliness that differs from the commonly known. In addition, my research showed cultural and personal differences in the perception of loneliness, relationship, love, sexuality, as well as future perspectives. The data from my interlocutors have been supplemented by, and interpreted in the light of, information drawn from the new and the old media: YouTube, TV, podcasts, Twitter, Instagram, TEDx, and online articles.

66. Paulina Wężniejewska (University of Szczecin, Poland)

There are different kinds of solitude (1). Between the desert of seclusion, the garden of solitude, and the palace of mystery.

“I opened more and more doors and walked. I was walking through the palace (...) I didn't know anymore I was really looking for something. It seemed to me that so many rooms, chambers never been here before (...)”(2).



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If we go back in time and ask people living in sundry epoch what “solitude” means to them we may be surprised by the incredible variety of answers. In ancient times – even the gods were not alone. In the IV and V centuries, due to christianity, people fled to the desert to find blessed solitude there. In contrast, the medieval “lonely sheep” should return to the herd as soon as possible (so that the wolf does not kidnap her). The age of enlightenment, which sets itself the goal of universal prosperity – in the seclusion of people will not see the ally. The nineteenth century will free man from the sociability imposed on him by leading him into the stram of a free flowing river – individualism (3). The next era will be called the age of the “lonely crowd” (4) and it is quite close to the present in which we all live. Solitude in the 21st century can be seen as a public enemy – as an ally of misanthropy. However, solitude may be one of the few defenders of this society. We may wonder: “solitude is bad or god? But first off all: it is” (5).

Looking for an ally in it, I would like to talk about good solitude (5). I will try to look at the places of its occurrence, which metaphorically take the name of: desert, garden and palace. These metaphors may seem invisible to the human eye but to be a good observer is to see the invisible.

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67. Paula Wiażewicz-Wójtowicz (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Alone in Art

The subject of the speech is reflection about relationship between solitude and art’s activities. But author’s intention is not the biographical context, like in historical research of the live famous artists in the context of the analysis of their works. The aim of this discuss is to draw attention to the importance of loneliness in the art education and in the process of experiencing art, aesthetic experiences and achieving self-realization in art. The author is convinced that loneliness is an inherent experience related to active participation in culture and experiencing creative activity during school and academic education.

68. Katarzyna Wrońska (Jagiellonian University, Poland)

Solitude and Selflessness as the Challenge and Test of (good) Education

The abilities of being alone as well as overcoming loneliness and isolation need to be learned. Education as a learning-favourable practice should therefore permit the experience of solitude in order to enable its taming and coping with being alone. Independently, education should also prevent isolation and teach how to escape loneliness. In this paper I focus on the first, i.e. solitude, which I consider as a personal value and postulate that it ought to be guaranteed a place in the educational space, both as means to an end and a goal in itself, however as such it requires to be complemented with selflessness. It is only in concert, one witnessing the other, the first as a personal value, the second both as both a personal and a moral value, that they uphold the humanistic dimension of education as well as its position among other social practices. This is especially needed in the age of ubiquitous Internet and in response to the growing threat – not only to children – of addiction to constant online presence.



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I presume the particular value that solitude may have for liberal and religious education, within which a prominent place is also occupied by selflessness. From this point of departure I will attempt to demonstrate the cooperation of the two values.

I will argue that the accessibility and teaching of solitude, combined with selflessness, can help improve the overall quality of education (esp. formal education taking place at school), which today is treated with increasing instrumentality, as a means of acquisition. This now global trend is also changing the assessment of teachers and what is expected of them, treating them as auxiliaries in the service of clients and stakeholders. Such a perspective for instance has been promoted for years by A. MacIntyre, the originator of the concept of practice with its internal goods, who describes teachers as performing a task subordinated to other activities, contributing to their flourishing, but not constituting a separate practice in the school environment.

A renewal of education may proceed from liberal and religious education as long as they do not succumb to this global trend of instrumentalisation, which they can resist by the cultivation of a space for learners' solitude and selflessness.

My two main theoretical frameworks for reflecting upon solitude and selflessness came from Erasmus of Rotterdam's concept of the inner man (for a Christian humanist perspective) and Roman Ingarden's concept of person as the integral, crystallized inner self (for the perspective of phenomenology). Further inspirations were: H. D. Thoreau, H. Arendt, J. Tischner, C. Taylor, C. Winch and J. Gingell, A. MacIntyre, P. Hogan, J. Dunne, C. Higgins, D. Carr, D. DeNicola and J. Stern.

69. Barbara Żakowska (University of Szczecin, Poland)

Being alone or interbeing? Mindfulness for teachers - finding the work balance.

Teaching in modern schools is a very demanding and stressful job. One of the reasons why being a teacher is an extremely emotionally exhausting activity is that pupils these days carry a lot of pain and suffering. The more solitude and sadness experienced by the children, the harder is to teach them. Moreover, the teachers also suffer and try to handle many difficult family issues in their environment (Thick Nhat Hanh 2017). Taking under consideration the reflection on teachers' duties, the example questions can be raised: How to reduce stress and the increasing pressure? How to boost teachers' confidence? How teachers can stop losing their love for teaching? To answer these areas of contemplation it is worth looking at Karl Jasper thoughts (1995) in which he underlines that everyday moments of deep concentration are essential in human life. In search of the answers we should also consider the positive aspect of being alone, the moments of aloneness that can improve self – reflection and communication (Leontiev 2019). This ability to quiet the mind and the body can be also known as mindfulness. The power to improve emotion regulation leads to a better mood and better ability to handle stress (Remers, Topolinski and Koale 2016).



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