
'Fear' Studies, 12 Years Later: Progress and Barriers



R. Michael Fisher

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Technical Paper No. 74

In Search of Fearlessness Research Institute

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'Fear' Studies, 12 Years Later: Progress and Barriers

- R. Michael Fisher,¹ Ph.D.

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Abstract

Fear became an evocative object/subject of the author beginning in late 1989. The massive and mediated (post-9/11) assertion of *Terror(ism)* into humanity's experience and thought has spurred the author's work to the point in 2006 of publishing "Invoking 'Fear' Studies" in the *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*. Much has changed dramatically in the world and in the interest, across disciplines and in the populist communities, in regard to how to negotiate a relationship with fear(ism) and terror(ism). This article is the next-generation 'Fear Studies' invocation for curriculum theorizing in a postmodern and post-traumatic era. The purpose is to validate the growing significance and complexity of the Fear Problem and the many authors who contribute to better understanding it and undermining it.

[Author's note: This article was turned down by the so-called progressive *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* by the one reviewer and the editor because it did not, in their view engage the 'canon' of work that exists in the field regarding emotions, etc. And, my whole argument is that my work is not within the context of emotions, it is rather a meta-context beyond that reductionism, and so all their advice to me to integrate other literature on emotion was totally not what this article is about. As the one reviewer wrote, "while the author's work is quite valuable, I feel that he leaned a bit too much on his own ideas without the complication of those ideas across fields in general or within curriculum studies in specific." Clearly, the reviewer and editor wanted a totally different kind of article and couldn't stand my own work as 'leading-edge' re: 'fear' (not as mere emotion). This is a sad statement on the conformist, clique-like conservatism that has invaded even the progressive wings of educational curriculum in the last 12 years. I now would add this very response of *JCT* as one more "barrier" to the progress of 'Fear' Studies in the future!]²

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² Personal communication, Rob Helfenbein, Mar. 9/18.

Preamble

As a curricularist for over three decades, I am attracted to the most powerful “forces” that shape most everything. Right there with Foucault’s power/knowledge, *fear* has long caught my designer-self’s attention. My preferred unit of curricular analysis is *power/knowledge/fear*. If radical, revisionist, post-colonial, Indigenous, and/or reconceptualist curriculum theorizing is going to be more than about reform—better yet transformation—eventual liberation—then the basic premise of my own curricular agenda is to invoke a co-participative engagement (ideally, conscious dialogue) within and across all disciplines and the populist re: the discourses that centrally locate the globally-enmeshed *Fear Problem*. From there, I invoke a new critical ‘*Fear*’ *Studies* (I coined) with a concomitant improvement in *fear education*, analogous to sex education, for all.

I realize that’s a lot of focus on the topic *fear* with always a danger of ignoring every other substantial force that shapes our world. Power/knowledge/fear (*re*: an ecology of understanding) is a counter to any overly scientific or reductionistic approach (e.g., individual psychologism) that focuses on “fears.” You’ll read little in this article about “fears” or “being afraid of x, y, z.” The topic *fear* however, is deeply fascinating and dangerous, as precarity lurks embedded within the very use/abuse of the word *fear* itself. Nefarious discourses and power-technologies breeding insecurity long ago appropriated the word and phenomena; thus, creating a situation for at least two decades whereby *culture* is now hyper-mediated as “communications” into the darkest representations and productions of what many have called a globalizing and socially normalizing “culture of fear” (e.g., see Jeffries, 2012)—and similarly, what Massumi (1993a) called, in economic-political affective terms, an “organized fear trade” (p. vii–x), what I have called Fear Wars. This all makes for an exciting epistemic and ethical challenge upon a creative postmodern platform to work from as a researcher, designer, educator, activist and artist—becoming a disciplined (sometimes wild) *fearologist*.³

Initial definitions and conceptualizations for all this fear vocabulary are defined in Fisher (2006) and references of my other works herein. I wish not to take up space here to restate those, albeit, context of use below will help somewhat in making sense of them for ‘Fear’ Studies. These fear topics were central to a first major curriculum and fear article published in the field of Education at the time; thanks to the foresight of the editor of *JCT* in the year of 2003-04,¹ as I was integrating my own post-9/11 dissertation in curriculum on the anatomy of “fearless

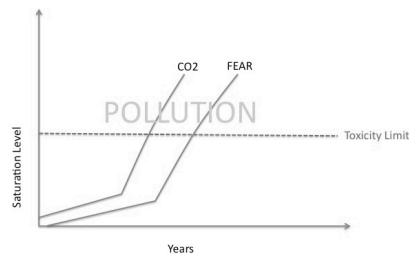
³ “Fearologist- one who self-identifies as a specialist in the systematic [and critical] study of *fearology*; in popular culture the term is a negative label, equivalent to being a fearist involved in fear-mongering.” “Fearology- the transdisciplinary study of the relationship of fear and life (could include other beings including the non-living...)” (Fisher & Subba, 2016, p. 158).

leadership” in the 21st century (Fisher, 2003). How could such (r)evolutionary leadership imaginably (even fictitiously) take hold with positive (and/or negative) impact on curricular and pedagogical discourses, policy, and everything else? The *JCT* 2006 issue was a potential catapult for my agenda (see Fisher, 2006). What has happened to ‘Fear’ Studies since?

The study of fear and its challenges and opportunities continues, just like it always has since the beginning of human history and before that. Living organisms are designed, as Four Arrows argued, to become “connoisseurs of fear” (Jacobs, 1998, p. 156). Sustainable health and sane survival demands at least as much. However, for humans and cultures everywhere today, the unfortunate reality is that such connoisseurship (and conscious fear education) is not of high general value—and, more or less, feared. Therefore, I believe that’s why ‘Fear’ Studies remains currently off-the-radar within educational discourse(s); though, that’s not any different than other disciplines.

Upon reflection over 12 years, what has remained evident to me is the intractable ignore-ance and arrogance *cum* resistance to truly taking *fear* as a serious and ‘special’ topic for higher education, scholars and the general public and its pedagogies. Meanwhile, fear is out-racing its own fear management/education—we are now in fear’s grip! The problem increases its insidious mutations daily, with all its horrific outcomes of violence in every form you want to name. I think it not exaggerative to suggest a co-relation (even if metaphoric) between globally rising (now toxic) CO₂ concentrations in the atmosphere and the Fear concentrations everywhere on/in Mother Earth (Figure 1). That said, this *JCT* article, thanks to the editor,² offers a next-generation reiteration of the 2006 invocation. One main purpose is to validate and articulate the many diverse authors who continue to signal how important it is to analyze multiple-dimensions of the Fear Problem that just won’t go away. It’s becoming clearer that a holistic-integral complex critical ‘Fear’ Studies is being called from many quarters of societies globally, yet, it has not been curricularly-named by them the way I am proposing humanity does so.

Figure 1



Too dystopic sounding? Perhaps. The critical theory behind ‘Fear’ Studies however is realistically optimistic, pragmatic and emancipatory. Avoiding a binary Manichean framework³ in this gathering all the despairing analysis of growing *fear everywhere*, myself like others, and especially Jeffries (2012, 2013, 2015), believe we have to counteract the current hegemonic tendencies of the big fear critics (e.g., Bauman, Castells, Furedi, Glassner, Zizek, etc.) who over-emphasize the global problems with excess fear in hyper-mediated modernity—and, ‘balance’ that analysis with focus on the inherent and dynamic *resistance* of social actors and their social movements within a “society reportedly awash in fear” (Jeffries, 2012, p. 46). ‘Fear’ Studies has, in my configuration at least, always been underwritten in resistance (see below, for e.g., the “Fearlessness Movement”).

More Troubling of an Era: The Global Fear Problem From Where I Stand

All that is certain is that fear itself will continue becoming—the way of life. The grounding and surrounding fear that the system helps develop tends toward an autonomy that makes it an ontogenetic force to be reckoned with. That reckoning must include the irrational, self-propelling mode of fear-based collective individuation we call facism. (Massumi, 2005, p. 47)

Fear is a critical emotion in everyday life as it permeates many of our minor and major decisions. Explicitly or implicitly, fear is one of the emotions that most strongly shape[s] human life. (Starkstein, 2016, p. i)

According to a 2008 study entitled *Fear in the Mega-Cities* conducted by the Rome-based World Social Summit, fear, “is the most useful key to understanding today’s society”....Fear is seen to be one of the defining political emotions of late modernity. Sociologists, artists, philosophers, activists, and pundits see fear everywhere. If fear has become a way of life, the contemporary [global] city is seen to be one of its most prominent and productive social laboratories.

(Jeffries, 2013, p. 333)

Wherever life exists...the main road is fear. It is the greatest road. All other paths of life [and their philosophies] come to join the greatest road. (Subba, 2014, p. 245)

As in Fisher (2006), there remains 12 years later an endless variety of juicy quotes about fear. Indeed, many in the scholarly or populist discourses of a post-9/11 era are concerned with fear, and not merely neuroscientists and psychologists, who have dominated for so long the discourses on fear. In a provocative essay, the well-known UK critic of the “culture of fear,” Furedi (2007a) wrote,

Fear is too often examined in relation to specific issues [e.g., objects of fear, as in psychology or social psychology]; it is rarely considered as a sociological problem in its own right [and consequently and characteristically we suffer *via* the]...under-theorisation of fear” (n.p.)

The studies on fear, becoming rhetoric at times, attempt to convince humans that we ought not ignore, resist or delegitimize the global Fear Problem and the immanent crisis it breeds. As much as I participate this alarm, I question their value. I wonder if such dramatic rhetorics around fear are losing steam. Do they evoke anymore—in a good way? Are they fear-based⁴ themselves and adding to the Fear Problem? The downside of chronic repetition of alarms can lead to numbing out. The upside, if good educative means are applied to the knowledge about fear, may produce a new critical literacy that may guide an awakening with actions that transform the world so infused by fear.

For better or worse, the post-9/11 era has been a meta-context for me to deepen inquiry into the nature of the shaping forces of so-called civilization. Mass media and a variety of fearmongers from the powerful elites to just about anyone have assaulted human sensibilities for intelligence and wisdom like never before in history—or so it seems. That’s a premise I work with. Maybe humanity is getting insanely bored of hearing this stuff over and over like with what is happening with “Global Warming” rhetoric or whatever the next global crisis (great Fear) is looming around the next bend.

Unlike most, I have consciously been strategic since the late 1980s in terms of how to make a life-career from fearology. A little of my autobiography may help others who are or are considering systematic study of fear now and in the future. Any biases and/or distortions I bring to fearology are going to be complicated by my white-male-settler, heterosexual working class life-style and all the channels of trauma of my parents and theirs. The generalizations made herein are necessary to my focus on searching for general, if not universal theories, albeit, my other eye is directed to particularities and social constructions of difference. I was raised and became conscious among the (r)evolutionaries of the 1960s–70s in North America. I am a Canadian, who has lived in the USA with my life-partner (in academia) for the past nine years. We both saw and lived through a lot of big changes economically and politically in that nation.

In my late-teens, as a nature-lover it was instinctual to stick my nose into the cascading systemic troubles our planet faced. Following ecological visionaries, I too envisioned a better way. Eventually, my career shifted from eco things to environmental and critical education. I have been an activist since, fighting for critical thinking and transformation—though unfortunately, learning just how slow people and societies change (in a good direction) even when they have the ever-contested ‘facts.’ For example, it can be at times very disheartening to see rising fascism in many Western countries (especially with Trump’s election) and learn of

American-based “fake news” today with all its fearmongering and effectiveness as a sociopolitical distractor from facing the ‘real.’ It’s disturbing to witness just how numb, dissociated and/or enraged many people are (especially, in America). Rare is anyone truly patient or prudent anymore. For myself, I find true compassion hard to pull up at times; yet, I am thankful I can see through most of the hyper-active and dramatic violent irritations and lies in society, and focus on the increasing wounds and general precarity most all of us experience each day. These are hurtful, anxious, traumatic and often terrifying times, and by most predictions the future will be a lot worse before it gets better—if humanity makes it through the worst.

The other day a sincere and frightened white woman, progressive American young 20s something blogger, wrote enthusiastically to her fans a solution to hate-rage in her country—that is, the fear problem (as she understood it):

There’s a man in my life. His name isn’t important, but when I describe him, you’ll probably think of someone you know like him. He’s white. He’s conservative. He watches FOX News. And when he talks about politics, his face reddens and the blood vessels bulge on the side of his neck and forehead. He sucks all the air out of a room and isn’t interested in anyone else’s views. Anyone who disagrees is an idiot.

Depending on where you are in the political spectrum, your emotional reaction to a man like this falls somewhere between an eye roll and seething fury.

There’s another man in my life. You might know one like him too. He’s also white. He signs all the MoveOn petitions, rails about the corporate influence in politics, and “held his nose” to vote for Hillary. He’s not, he assured me, anti-woman. Just against that particular one. He isn’t curious about other views, he interrupts women when they talk, and anyone who disagrees with him is, well, an idiot.

We are all afraid of something

Now. Before you judge me as anti-man, listen to what I know with all my heart: both of these people are afraid. Their gender isn’t the common denominator. They’re both afraid, and all they want is to be heard... You and I have the ability to help anyone who is afraid feel a little safer. We have the power to de-escalate the tension.

If we are to bring democracy back online, the only way is through love.

Looking back at the last year, we have ample evidence that abuse of power, disrespect, resentment, and deliberately leaving people out is not working. We don't need to continue this experiment. Choosing to love our neighbor is a more radical, democratic, and potentially transformational act.⁵

As much as I can empathize with her passion, without a theory and critical praxis (even of “love”), no democracy of any strength is likely to arrive from her solution—and, for sure, the Fear Problem in all its complexity, likewise, will not be well understood nor abated. In my time, I've cited more than enough of the disaster of the times, yet, despite that evidence, I have always believed deeply in the healing and emancipatory mission to bring a new *cura* and/or *conscientization* (*a la* Freire) to the Love-Fear opposition that diverse sacred and secular world wisdom traditions speak about as so important (Fisher, 2012a, 2015a). We're confronted with a core ethical problem of which way to go—motivated mostly by Love or motivated mostly by Fear? The latter meta-motivational force I simply call *fear-based* (and/or ‘fear’-based) (Fisher, 2013a) in this article.

As part of my own negotiation with ‘Fear’ Studies, I think I can spin this troubled binary human condition and moral conflict in a fresh way by invoking Fearlessness as a trialectic dynamic—as a social consciousness movement—as the “path of progress” *in between* Love and Fear polarities (re: application to critical pedagogy, see Fisher, 2017a). Some critics think this *fearlessness* notion very naive, if not pathological itself. That's another story I have told elsewhere (Fisher, 2010, pp. xxix, 133, 157, 232). Yet, ‘clean’ as those meta-motivational categories of Love and Fear may seem, they are to most discerning readers only (metaphysical) words on a page. In troubling times, we have to look deeper into leaky messy realities of our postmodern (post-9/11) era. For this article, the focus is on Fear and its diverse forms and species (e.g., ‘fear’⁶). There will always be others, like the blogger, who prefer to focus on Love.

For a brief moment or two, I'm going to consciously (even poetically) rant as a small but essential part of my more ‘rational’ fearological praxis. If humanity really cares and truly searches for a curriculum *cura* (*therapia*)⁷ in the postmodern era then *fear*, which the postmodern social philosopher Bauman (2007) called “liquid fear,” has to be radically re-imagined. For Bauman liquid fear is slipping in between easy categories, resisting holdings or static locations of old meanings—and now, is flowing beneath, mist-ifying above—and, projecting itself everywhere—to the extent, so it seems, traces of after-glow of its own ugly self-important overpopulation are detected even on the surface of the moon; if you look hard enough. Perhaps liquid fear is meant to be metaphoric or even tragically poetic—earthly and cosmic in proportion simultaneously. Who knows?

Earth now (well, at least liquid modern society) *is* fear itself. What would a reincarnated F. D. Roosevelt say to that: ‘The only thing we have to fear is modern society itself’(?). Furedi (2007a) quipped: “The only thing we have to fear is the ‘culture of fear’ itself.” Yeah, pretty much! But then what do we do? Where is the

cura in/with a ‘new’ curriculum treatment for such an overwhelming state of affairs? What response can we have(?)—to the cultural critics like the Massumi’s, the Zizek’s and the Wallerstein’s⁸—their indictments—that basically argue: *Post-modern fear is the most pervasive public emotion polluting and constituting the very ambient environment in which a compromised subjectivity (and democracy?) are attempting to fledge themselves as progress or development.*⁹ One dystopian conclusion: Modern and postmodern growth (i.e., self/society/culture?) is one big Fear Cancer!, a ‘Fear’ Matrix! (Fisher, 2003); one big mean and nasty cosmic joke, a social laboratory in hell, a

I have written about this all since late-1989. Why isn’t anyone listening? I wrote about it in the progressive curriculum journal (*JCT*) in Fisher (2006). Why aren’t educators flocking to it, reading it once, then reading it again, and again, then citing it and using its wisdom? Years are slipping by and the planet is going down the tubes fast! But there I have to hesitate.... Slow down. The last thing I want to be contributing to is the ubiquitous pattern identified as “scaring ourselves to death” (e.g., Cohl, 1997). It’s so easy to get trapped into feeding a victim-narrative, even for me. Of course, I’d like everyone to read “Invoking ‘Fear’ Studies” (Fisher, 2006), for in some ways *it says it all*. It guides humanity to resist the worst-side of excess fear. It’s there in those 33 journal pages, which I wrote in 2003-04. It took nearly three years to finally get to press. Then, I awaited responses with heart-beating rapidly. That was a big mistake, a failure.

The *JCT* (Fisher, 2006) article expressed a near-urgent recommendation that societies everywhere end the denial (i.e., fear of fear itself) and begin putting the topic of fear (and ‘fear’) on the table of public negotiations to inform worldviews, perceptions, curricula, designs, policies and actions for a better, healthy, sane and sustainable future. [Figure 2: a much needed aesthetic interruption...]

Figure 2: Me as Fear Doctor (Fear Patient)?



(Slow) *Cura...to Curatorial Statement*

There's no doubt 9/11, 2001 kick-started something new in the world—what Massumi (2005) labeled the “*spectrum of fear*” dynamic (p. 45)—perhaps, never so “clever” as ever it could be in history, thanks to the U.S. government (Bush regime) in a post-9/11 era of the post-traumatic. I search for a “key” question...

So, a key question for our times is this: How to open new spaces for politics in a world awash in fear? A world where violence is the normal response to crisis and where grinding insecurity [precarity] envelopes ever more aspects of economic, social and cultural [and spiritual] life? (Jeffries, 2013, p. 333)

As an artist-educator-researcher (‘curator’) I love creating “open new spaces” for all kinds of critical and creative thought/activities and living curricula that flow from the aesthetical to ethical to political (in that sequence¹⁰)—that flow (ideally) *from fear to fearlessness*. In order to keep an organic aesthetic of open inquiry, interruptions and spiraling, are two fav “Indigenous”¹¹ devices I write and think with/in. Liner-logical types will hate this style (or not). Besides that, I’m really into *slow* everything these days: slow activism, slow birding, slow eating, slow coloring,¹² slow research,¹³ thinking/writing (i.e., contemplation). Hate for slow to just become a trope like everything else. Hate for it all to be subsumed under the latest fad of commodified, apoliticized and homogenized liberal “mindfulness.” This very article you are reading is slow(ly) unfolding.

Yet, everything is ‘surviving’ (apparently) on *fast*—too fast. At age 65 maybe it is not cool but simply ‘normal’ to be disgruntled with speed and its usual consequence: loss of depth of quality. I agree with Bruce Cockburn’s “The trouble with normal, it always gets worse.” And there’s nothing worse than the *normalization of fear*.¹⁴ Besides Cockburn, Irit Rogoff provides some sanctuary for this slow attraction, as she mused with/in the “curatorial turn,”¹⁵ “[T]he ‘curatorial is thought and critical thought at that, that does not rush to embody itself, does not rush to concretise itself” (Rogoff cited in Patel, 2017, p. 153). That’s precisely how I theorize *fear itself* and how best to study it—keep it open-ended and don’t assume anything we know about fear already is fully accurate, precise or complete. In Fisher (2006), I recommended (epistemologically), “‘Fear’ is not what it used to be” (p. 43).

The Introduction above, begins with declarations of *the* Global Fear Problem today, as so easily documented by many. The Introduction is a concretizing problem itself and likely going too fast—slipping and sliding in/with the ecology of a dubious cultural-political-economy of “attention”¹⁶ and its inevitable fearmongering pathology, what Giroux (2003) called the platform of news narrated by elite-power’s conceptualization (quickening) and construction of “emergency time.” I see it too often in media and its mediation of everything. After 28 years exploring the topic of fear *via* a transdisciplinary inquiry, I certainly will complain often,

“we’re moving too slow on this problem.” And in that frustration, I have to take pause in my own habitual (too) assured positioning, even unwarranted exuberance at times, and reflect on my role as critical educator and progressive curricularist, some might call an ideologue. It’s hard to play in/with “crisis” and all the responsibility it demands not to abuse it.

In desiring to tell (at least) a 12-year story of what has been happening to a postmodern historical curricular initiative called ‘Fear’ Studies, I am confronted with significant role conflicts. While excitedly scrambling to collect artifacts and memory for this exhibition, my own situatedness as a long-time fearologist comes into questioning. Will I overly bias the presentation of ‘Fear’ Studies? I am struggling to negotiate difficult boundaries regarding my expertise and my wish to articulate beyond ‘Fear’ Studies to a broader audience. But to be honest I’m looking to find a fresh form of learning and communication that won’t bore me, or my audience.

My practitioner preference is to make *fearwork* (creative work, for e.g., Figures 1–3) and not merely analyze, classify and synthesize knowledge, knowing and wisdom about *fear itself*. Though, I also like to do the latter. Part of me is a fearworker and the other a philosopher, scientist, theorist, historian. Yet, my artist-self arises to surface with great passion—nudging gently off-stage any egocentric potential, turning towards a trans-/curator-self. To tell the 12-year story, it feels I have to find a way to somewhat stand back from my own specific and original fearwork, much like an artist who at some point decides to curate an exhibition of their own art (working), while including art of other artists. It is not an easy mix.

Let me say a little about my fearworking-side before explicating what this exhibition *‘Fear’ Studies, 12 Years Later* is about. While introducing ‘Fear’ Studies to the curriculum field in Fisher (2006) in a scholarly way, my view of ‘Fear’ Studies is deeply influenced by my fearwork as an artist. In that article (endnote 40) I listed three one-person art exhibitions and installations since 1996 that give one a sense of the complex perspectives and actions taken to better understand the Fear Problem in what I think of (in Bourdieu’s words) an “aesthetic disposition” and “naivete of the artistic gaze” so important to knowledge-making, knowing and wisdom, which is simultaneously a “supreme form of sophistication” (cited in Becker, 2009, p. 38).

To make fearwork, I ask: What can the aesthetic and artistic domains bring to the topic of fear? If ‘Fear’ Studies is ideally transdisciplinary, as I envisioned it from the start (see below), then art has a good deal to offer. Since 2006, I have created several more one-person public art exhibitions and installations around the topic fear.¹⁷ What about my curator-self? Upon reflection, most of my art exhibitions are semi-curatorial, as I have typically brought a historical and theoretical perspective, with many references of other people’s studies and views on fear into them.

Yet, it was not until 2011, the same year my fearwork was acknowledged by a postmodern curricular scholar (Slattery, 2013),¹⁸ when being a “curator” was totally conscious. I collaborated with a theology graduate student to create an online virtual “Museum of Fearology.”¹⁹ Although, for various reasons, it was not to last—a “productive failure” (Patel, 2017). The troubled project reinforced my desire for making future exhibitions as practicing—especially on the topic of fear. Another version of the Museum of Fearology is seeding at this very moment. In the Rogoffian sense of the *curatorial* distinction from *curating*, the former speaks to me. I am inspired by Patel (2007), who ensures the Rogoffian curatorial attitude “does not begin and end with the event [or production] itself...” (p. 153) but enters ongoing a practice-based thinking/acting “by *slowing* down the process of meaning-making” (p. 153) [italics added]. I love the shaping *via* practice in the curatorial moment(s) and discoveries. I ask those who visit/read/contemplate this new article on ‘Fear’ Studies to imagine what is being spoken of is often unspeakable, ongoing, never climaxing. Hopefully, this will create (at least) an invitation to meaningful dialogue.

I believe this 2018 *JCT* next-version of the ‘Fear’ Studies project is another seed-exhibition of historical and curricular importance. It needed a curator. I wouldn’t be able to cover everything going on in *Fearworld*²⁰ since 2006. At best, I could select a few exhibitions to profile in the next-version and readers could fill in the gaps if they were really interested; and, most importantly, they might be inspired to read or re-read the original 2006 paper. Enough. I’m ready to move on and let ‘Fear’ Studies ‘speak for itself.’ Perhaps one day others will take up the torch, curate exhibitions, enact research and teach about ‘Fear’ Studies. One day it will have a legitimate home in the academy and populist environments—it may be slow (or not).

Exhibit-1: Brief History of ‘Fear’ Studies

Fisher speaks of fearism—like racism or sexism: invisible, insidious and infectious. (Biddington, 2017)

Readers have not likely heard of ‘Fear’ Studies before. A systematic search in academic research indexes shows no other author than myself (e.g., *JCT*, “Invoking ‘Fear’ Studies,” Fisher, 2006), has taken up this topic and curricular agenda. The term “*fear studies*” is found often, though it refers only to a loose collection of various studies on fear, typically from neurosciences and psychology fields. Curiously the term “fearism” in Fisher (2006, p. 51) has received a fair amount of specific attention in academia. Since the critical emotions educator Zembylas (2009) cited the *JCT* article, to date 13 authors across disciplines (Migration, Ethnic, and Citizenship Studies) have read and/or re-cited it in publications—focusing on fearism and not the larger contextual critical agenda of my work or the need for ‘Fear’ Studies (Fisher, 2017b).

In late 1989²¹ *Fear* became my “evocative object” psychoanalytically (Bollas, 2009) as the “thing” I “think with” (Turkel, 2007). Because I always intuited

fear/fearlessness as a dialectical relation,²² it is more accurate to say I *think with* both. Early on I wanted an upgraded 21st century curriculum on the topic of fear but I had no clear vision of its form and what to call it in order to be recognized with a place in higher education. Interesting: 12 years went by; then everything changed in Fearworld.

Within days after the event and tragedy in the USA labeled 9/11 (2001), I rebooted and reconfigured prior art-making, research, writing and educational activism on “fear” and its culturally-modified *fear*’ viral form. Like a curator in search of a cure (*cura*) for breeding subtle “fearism” *cum* overt terrorism (Fisher, 2006, pp. 44, 51), I put out a *call* to bring diverse and disparate research and initiatives in fear management/education (FME) under a broad umbrella (Fisher, 2001), while collecting a library of new cross-disciplinary scholarship on fear (and ‘fear’). I wanted ‘Fear’ Studies, somewhat like Cultural Studies, African Studies, Media Studies, to be ‘free’ (of fears) to ask its own questions and choose its own methodologies, without any one discipline or authoritative discourse regime over-controlling.

For me, the *integral* meta-theory of philosopher Ken Wilber would provide a generous, open, holistic-integral methodological and epistemological guidance for a new *fear*’ *imaginary* for what would be a transdisciplinary critical studies approach (see Fisher, 2006, pp. 47, 58, 60). I realized this particular guidance, arguably a “fearless standpoint” (Fisher, 2008), may not be what other researchers on fear would approve of necessarily. I did not intend it dogmatically as the only way to create new scholarship on the topic. ‘Fear’ Studies is best to evolve its own unique and diverse forms of methodological pluralism.²³ The future unsettled question remains: What may be (somewhat) universal to ‘Fear’ Studies approaches, as well?

Whatever hat I may put on as I engage this fascinating topic *fear* (and/or ‘fear’), in 2016-17 a small series of breakthroughs appeared in academic circles, where scholars from various disciplines began to seriously acknowledge the value of my life’s work on fear. They’ve labeled me a “Canadian educator and fearologist,” “Canadian philosopher of fear,”²⁴ and, one of the two “eminent fearologists in the world.” Now, let me put my historian hat on for awhile.

Since founding the non-profit In Search of Fearlessness Project in 1989 and In Search of Fearlessness Research Institute in 1991 in Calgary, AB, Canada, my effort is to establish a critical counterhegemonic discourse to existing disciplinary “fear studies.” Equally, this project was/is a resistance to what I labeled the ‘Fear’ Project on this planet. I have attempted to expand the vocabulary, literacy and *conscientization* around the nature and role of fear—while synthesizing the meanings and imaginaries that shape how fear and fearlessness have been perceived. The premise and epistemological doubt beneath my project pivots on what I (and many others) have seen as the growing Fear Problem on this planet.

Activities: What questions arise for you at this point? What curiosity? What critique? What fear(s)? Jot down your own imagination of the Fear Problem and what a 'Fear' Studies curriculum might look like (K to graduate school, and beyond). Do you know any fearologists? If not, why not?; if so, how so? Define "fearism" in your own words and compare it to Fisher's (2006) definition (p. 51) and Fisher and Subba's (2016) revised definition as well as the variant "fearism-t" (p. 157).

Exhibit–2: Flowering Scholarship on the History of Fear

One major difference over the 12 years since the original *JCT* article, has been the number and quality of studies on the "history of fear." Any 'Fear' Studies' curriculum needs to engage this scholarship, even though I find it rather functionalist, male-dominated, 'conservative' (liberal), white-Eurocentric, and archival-type work for the most part, with a few rare exceptions (e.g., Plamper and Lazier, 2010). In Fisher (2006), I cited the couple of good contemporary histories of fear that I knew of at the time: Delumeau (1990) and Robin (2004). In retrospect, it is astounding that humanity (including history scholarship) has not previously (at least in English language) cared enough to study or publish histories specifically on this most powerful of the human emotions (i.e., if we are to concede to modernist privilege and assumptions that "fear is an emotion," as commonly adopted) before the late-20th century.

By far the most exciting (and rare) epistemological turn in contemporary history of fear writing came in 2010, based on an interdisciplinary inquiry guided by astute editors of a journal special issue on Fear. I am referring to the historians Lazier and Plamper (2010), who wrote,

We habitually say that we fear, that we smell it, touch it, breath it. But how, after all is said and done, do we *know* it?" [they asked diverse historians and others to] "reflect on the predispositions they and their disciplines bring to bear on the phenomenon of fear. (p. 1).

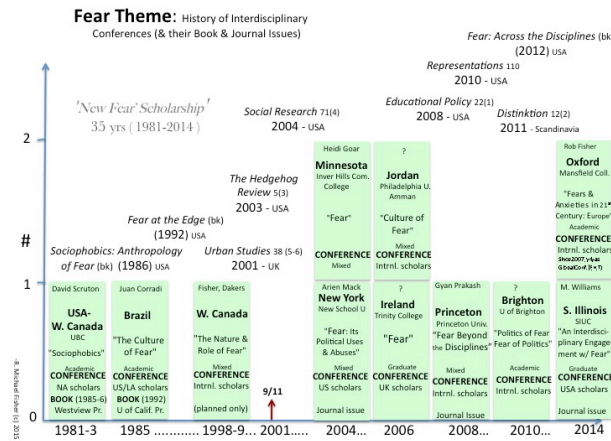
Of course, there have been many more histories of emotion(s),²⁵ but only in the last decade or so have historians focused on *fear itself*, albeit in a generic fashion—of which I would recommend Bourke (2005), Stearns (2006), Laffan and Weiss (2012), Lazier and Plamper (2010), Plamper and Lazier (2012), and less so Henneon and Roper (2016). Interestingly, these macro-histories of fear have been paralleled by a new genre of very specific histories: like horror (e.g., see the field of horrorology and populist fearology), the fear of food (Locher, 2013), and more intimate (family) histories of fear such as Tuszynska (2017). I expect more of the latter histories to be published in the near future as fear becomes a type of 'attractor,' a lens and framing cultural trope for ways to understand phenomena generally and human experience specifically, especially biographies. The weakness of all these is that they characteristically do not take a critical holistic, integral or plural-

istic perspective on fear itself and how we define, make meaning of and/or theorize about fear. Even less, history scholarship mostly ignores ‘fear’ in its socially constructed versions.

What do I make of book titles like, *Brotherhood of Fear: A History of Violent Organizations* (Elliott, 1998)? What do titles like this teach the public? Is this more ‘scaring ourselves to death’ rhetoric? In ‘Fear’ Studies we ought to analyze all “uses” of fear (and ‘fear’). Historians ought to also be cautious in their own attempts to attract attention. I am especially disturbed with titles of artefacts (e.g., books) on the capitalist market place, because publishers get-off on being dramatic in order to sell—that is, get people’s attention by scaring (or pleasuring) with the latest images and words that ‘zing.’ They, like many of their authors, are not interested typically to actually understand their own commission in the insidious attention economy and concomitant spread of the “culture of fear” (see Fisher, 2006, pp. 54–56).

In my failed quest to ‘unite’ the scholars studying fear, including the historians, I became aware that there is not enough convincing historical evidence and theory to give us an empirical sense of the ways humans have attempted to come to understand and manage fear in the best way(s) possible. My strategy to excite scholars and others was two fold: (1) find a way to map out the contemporary wave of new interest (e.g., new postmodern fear scholarship²⁶) in the topic and, (2) create a new consciousness and social movement (e.g., find a label for it) that was ancient and cross-cultural with continuity to contemporary times. My first strategy came from my sensing there is a growing fascination with how to understand and better manage and educate ourselves in relationship to this most powerful emotion (or whatever it is) “fear.” Figure 3 shows “Fear Conferences” over a period of 35 years. This research gives a quick visual scan of the wave of interest on the topic.

Figure 3 Fear Conferences: 35 Yrs.



Books and journals came out of these (mostly interdisciplinary) Fear Conferences, of which 27% occurred prior to 9/11. This is not a surprising finding, as 9/11 shook the world, or most of it and it definitely shook the W. world, by which you can contrast that 88% of the post-9/11 conferences were held in a W. country (USA and UK primarily). Although this data only includes conferences to 2014, I suspect the trend of Fear Conferences is more or less on the same playing field in terms of numbers, though I have not seen so many journal special issues or books come from such supposed Fear Conferences of late. There is always a concern that people will get tired of the topic, or feel so much despair, they will move on to other things. One of the interventions to counter this is to start a legitimate Fearology Training Institute (Fisher, 2017c) as perhaps a step laying ground for a more encompassing ‘Fear’ Studies, and, an eventual annual International Fear Conference.

My second strategy to create a new historical interest in fear began to take shape when I came across a 2011 call for post-doctoral fellowships from Princeton University. The History Department there is well known for quality and in particular good histories of emotions including fear. My fellowship proposal argued that there is no known *history of fearlessness*. I wondered why not and wanted to study that. The application failed. However, the initiative spurred me on to conceptualize a universal global “Fearlessness Movement.” I sensed it was there but no one had yet labeled, theorized or defined it (see Fisher & Subba, 2016, pp. 12–14):

There is no known source or date when the Fearlessness Movement began though some manifestations throughout history have been tracked and label at times by scholars or populist leaders, for example: the *Burma Fearlessness Movement* (a late 20th-century form of the ancient *gift of fearlessness* cultures and their spiritual tradition in the far East, with roots in the worldviews of many Indigenous cultures); *The League for Fearlessness* (early 20th century esoteric form, USA); *A Course in Miracles* (1960–70s) new age form, USA....*Shambhala Warrior Training*...[etc.]. (Fisher & Subba, 2016, p. 13)

I wrote an extensive Wikipedia entry for Fearlessness Movement,²⁷ which after a year or so their wiki-editors removed for no reason. I posted it on my own new blog Fearlessness Movement (started in early 2015), where people could join in community at this ning location.²⁸ There is a very simple way to represent this movement imperative in cognitive terms with an ethical goal: fearlessness movement involves *thinking from fear to fearlessness*. If pressed, I would argue it is a spiritual evolution of consciousness that is at stake. The consequences of defying this ‘direction’ I believe will be the undoing of the best sides of human evolution/development/progress (call it what you will). What drives the “resistance” of the Fearlessness Movement? My basic dictum: *When fear arises, so then does fearlessness*. I’ve called it basic “Defense Intelligence” built-in to living systems for over four billion years—it’s instinctual and primal “fear management”²⁹ by any other name (e.g., Fisher, 2010, pp. 3, 30, 36–37).

Humanity has to ask: Why it has histories of fear and *not* fearlessness to pass on to its future generations? There seems to me an obsessive focus in W. history (and culture?) on the former and not the latter—albeit, there is rising evidence on the historical cultural trend (especially in the USA) to brand “No Fear!,” “fearless” and “fearlessness” (inappropriately with ego-macho-inflation) for just about every kind of commercial product and services, and ‘chic’ urban-attitude you can think of (Fisher, 2016a). Such surface gestures and slogandia however, arguably arises when people are very fearful and are searching for anything that moves assertively (or aggressively) away from that feeling (note: fear management). Perpetrating adrenalin-based violence is also one way to avoid overwhelming fear and oppression (note: fear management). Historically, so my own generic premise goes: *fear (and ‘fear’) has us in its ‘grip.’ Fear is far ahead of our means of managing it well. Historically, we are caught in a ‘gap’ of unprecedented proportion historically.*

Activity: Begin a collection of advertisements and their images which promote “fearless” and make a collage. Utilize any ideas from this exhibition, or article overall (e.g., fearanalysis) and critique what you see going on in these advertisements, and then create your own advertisement(s) and images(s) as to what you would rather see than the current forms and discourses. Write an article on your research project.

Exhibit–3: Scholarship on the Philosophy of Fear

If the history of fear scholarship has led the way to better understanding the nature and role of fear, at least from the humanities perspective (which deserves more attention under the current barrage of neurobiology, cognitive/brain sciences and the psychology of fear), then a complementary field to future progress in ‘Fear’ Studies is philosophy. I think of philosophy as pivotal to the postmodern deconstruction and reconstruction of *fear* and understanding the nature and role of ‘*fear*’ and the way discourses of power/knowledge/fear are constructed and reified without criticality re: fear management/education (of which Cultural, Communications, Media Studies and Arts, Architecture, and less so Sociology, Anthropology, and Political Science, have also been helpful in this re-visionist agenda; see for e.g., Fisher, 2006, pp. 47, 54).

In the first ‘Fear’ Studies *JCT* article there were no references cited to any substantial systematic inquiries by philosophers into the topic of fear (Fisher, 2006). I’m not an academic philosopher nor do I have many of them in my circle of access but searching libraries did not produce articles or books relevant. There were published philosophical discussions on fear by many cited in that article. Yet, where were the philosophers *per se*? For example, I would love if a contemporary philosopher of education were to contribute systematically to the knowledge pool. Henry A. Giroux (e.g., 2003) would qualify in part as he has challenged the ideological roots and dynamics of the current “culture of fear” (especially post-9/11)

but really his approach is not that philosophical (more a cultural political criticism).

However, I have found a few exceptions recently (in no particular order) that make for foundational curricula in 'Fear' Studies: (a) the small rather popular book *Philosophy of Fear* (Svendsen, 2008) by a Norwegian philosopher, (b) my own (Fisher, 2010) curricular treatise on a post-postmodern (i.e., integral) fear management/education, (c) an extensive paper in a prestigious education journal by two Deweyian women Canadian philosophers of education (English and Stengel, 2011), (d) the writing of the Canadian philosopher and cultural critic Massumi (e.g., 2005), (e) discovery of philosophy of fearism from Nepal (e.g., Subba, 2014), (f) a recent dissertation from a Jewish neuropsychiatrist in Australia (Starkstein, 2016) and, (g) an Indigenous eco-philosopher/educator Four Arrows (*aka* Don Trent Jacobs) in Mexico.

Lars Svendsen

I wrote a short book review of Svendsen's (2008) *Philosophy of Fear*:

I applaud it as one of the rare contemporary books by a professional philosopher who takes on the topic of fear (i.e., instead of just anxiety and the tradition of (usually) existential philosophers studying anxiety, from Kierkegaard on). This book, like my own thinking on the topic, is that we are always in the end talking about "Fear" (it just has many forms, cousins, e.g., anxiety, dread, terror). I must say, I am disappointed (not totally surprised) that no one has written a substantive book review here on Amazon.com re: "A Philosophy of Fear" in some eight years since it came out. But, then, "fear" is not a topic most people like to stick their noses into for very long, and if they do, typically they merely want to read a self-help book with prescriptions and over-simplified definitions of fear and how best to manage it... So, how does a professional philosopher, like Lars Svendsen, approach fear differently than the medical doctor, psychiatrist, therapist, psychologist or school teacher? He begins the book with the most important construct (and context) of "Culture of Fear." I so appreciate that, as I am a long-time researcher on this topic... and how it sets the reference of the way we come to a relationship with fear in today's world in a unique post-traumatic century (as many cultural thinkers have argued). Albert Camus, the existential philosopher called the 20th century the "century of fear" and in a post-WWII context, he was asking us to attune to this new context, which in the 21st century arguably is a century of terror... The professional philosopher has to do some other things, unique to a philosophical inquiry, and unfortunately Svendsen doesn't deliver a fully satisfactory

approach. He more muses over various aspects of fear, in culture, the definition issue, the association with risk, the attraction of fear, fear related to trust and so on...but there are many other serious sociologists, anthropologists, and critical thinker who also look at these things and I keep asking myself if Svendsen is really doing a 'new' philosophy of fear? Or, more so, it looks as if he chose to merely apply some philosophy and general critique of society to the topic, keeping the book comfortable for a more popular audience. That's understandable but it is a compromise as well, and he doesn't say so in the book. When you look at the record of writing of Svendsen, he is a philosopher who takes up writing about many popular topics, like boredom and fashion etc. I see a lot of this kind of pop philosophy being written these days.³⁰

I emailed Svendsen to see if he was interested to engage in dialogue on the topic fear further and to do so with an interdisciplinary and/or transdisciplinary lens as well as the philosophical one. However, he was barely mildly interested and never followed-up. That is characteristic for people writing/teaching about fear and especially scholars, who seem little interested in working with others who are outside their discipline or outside the academy (like myself).

Of course, everyone is very busy. But I have discovered another general explanation for why academic philosophers do not seem to specialize in the topic of fear. This insight came when I met a graduate doctoral student in Carbondale, IL (at SIUC) when I was living there recently. He heard about my work and we spoke because he was looking for help in putting on (with his Philosophy department's back-up) an annual graduate conference (2014) entitled: "An Interdisciplinary Engagement With Fear" (see Figure 2). I thought this was marvelous and progressive, and I was curious to see how they would approach the topic. Turned out this fellow never took much of my advice but remained friendly and I attended the conference as a guest. It was quite disappointing. "Fear" was assumed by all of them as an "emotion" as is found in the history of philosophy (W. canon). Even the young graduate students seemed to lack an imaginary for "fear" outside of the discipline, despite the fact this was supposed to be an interdisciplinary engagement. That part was really lacking. Presenter after presenter more or less did a re-hash of the 'old white boys' (canon) of philosophers. However, what I really gained from was the story the conference organizer told me. He approached his supervisors in the Philosophy department because he wanted to study "fear" for his dissertation. They totally jumped on him with critique and said, more or less (paraphrasing) "that's not philosophical material, and if you study anything along that lines it will be on anxiety, for that's philosophical material." What they meant is that "anxiety" is what most philosophers in the W. canon philosophize about.

So, this young graduate student shared with me his fears of the way American society and politics was going in 2014 (before Trump)—a terrifying situation,

where fearmongering was taking over the entire culture (in his view). I agreed with him but felt helpless to turn things around, even though I made a few appointments to talk with some of the philosophy professors to show them a broader approach to 'Fear' Studies that philosophers might be interested in. Those meetings were polite but there was no up-take on their part and the young graduate student completely changed his topic more to align with what his faculty members wanted. This is a much too common story of research in higher education these days (if you want a job).

This story of the exclusion of "fear" from serious (and/or academic) philosophy is troubling but it certainly rings true. If you research dissertations online there are rare few on "fear." To my surprise I found a very interesting one just this week by (Starkstein, 2016) entitled: "Fear: A Conceptual Analysis and Philosophical Therapy." Wow. That is the only dissertation I know of ever (in English) that has "Fear" as *the* title. He is a mature middle-aged man with a career as a neuropsychiatrist, a Jew who lived in South America and suffered with fear and anxiety as part of life, and has a great love for philosophy on the side. He took eight years, studying part time, to complete the dissertation (personal communication, October 27, 2017). He tracked ancient Greek philosophers (Epicurus, Cicero and Seneca) who "considered fear as the main obstacle in achieving peace of mind, and their ethical systems were primarily focused on dealing [managing] this emotion" (Starkstein, 2016, p. i). The dissertation critiques the current trend of reductionism in neurosciences to medicalize fear/anxiety (e.g., DSM-V) etc. He promotes more eclectic philosophical therapies like the ancient Greeks and even Wittgenstein's approach in a more contemporary philosophical vein. I haven't read this dissertation but it does take the traditional analysis of going to the W. (male) canon for understanding and solutions. The only contemporary philosophical dissertation I could find online on "philosophy of anxiety" *per se* was by Daniels (2013), a woman, who draws entirely on the W. (male) canon of existential philosophers (Kierkegaard, Sartre, Heidegger).

Since the *JCT* 2006 article, there's still only this one published book that is specialized re: a philosophy of fear.³¹ Svendsen's work is not nearly contextualized enough for what is required today (and in the future) to philosophize about fear (or 'fear'). He doesn't situate himself; nor his biased approach to philosophy (as lens) and thus, we are left reading about fear without a truly critical self-reflective postmodern or post-/neo-colonial perspective. Of course, there are lots of scholarly philosophical works that analyze and talk about fear throughout human history but most always the fear sections are limited and only additional to the larger philosophy the authors wished to pass on.

Philosophy of Fearlessness

In contrast, as an amateur philosopher, I took on writing a theoretical work on fear management/education (FME) for the 21st century (Fisher, 2010). It summarizes some 25 years of my deep interest in this topic. Using the integral philos-

ophy of Ken Wilber, I was able to put together a unified systems theory of FME³² that ought to be universally (albeit, general) applicable to humanity to unwind its current situation of fear (and ‘fear’) leading us into a state of oblivion. I focus on summarizing the “*world’s fearlessness teachings*,” which includes religions, philosophies, theologies, but also every other kind of discourse I could find around the globe and through time. I present a global *philosophy of fearlessness* (dialectically, with a philosophy of fear).

Within this book I further invoke the need for ‘Fear’ Studies. Although I have had lots of positive responses to the book, most find it overwhelming in complexity. No one has reviewed the book seriously in an academic journal or magazine. I’m pleased that 175 copies are available in public, college and university libraries around the world (see WorldCat Books online). According to one critical curricularist (Mayes, 2010):

What makes this book [Fisher, 2010] especially consequential for the educator is Fisher’s insistence that although this fear [‘fear’] is toxic and often delivered educationally, education can, under his radical re-visioning of it according to his paradigm of fearlessness, be homeopathically transformed from the toxin into an antidote. His pedagogy comes bearing the non-dualistic...Fisher offers a vision of how this can be done educationally. And he wisely insists that because the terrible curriculum of fear has been implanted in us at every level of our being, it must be address in an integral, holistic manner that existentially transforms not only individuals but also their cultures. What Fisher offers us, at both the personal and collective level, are some preliminary theoretical ways and practical means to transcend the matrix of fear and step out (as is our birthright) onto the bright landscape of a teleological optimism—one that lies at the heart of Fisher [evolutionary] profound, and profoundly healing, educational vision. (p. x)

If there is a critical education to fight for in these neo-liberal times of diminishment of criticality in general, I would suggest a most powerful way to begin analyzing “educational” discourses is to inquire into what a few educators have already put forth as the problem of a “hidden curriculum of fear” (e.g., Hargreaves, 2011, p. 5; Nguyen, 2016; Zembylas, 2010, p. 31). Additionally, as a resource for our times, in Fisher (2007/11) I created an annotated bibliography of well over a hundred professional educators who have specifically used the term “culture of fear,” as they pointed to its relevance to curriculum, teaching, learning and the politics of schooling and higher education.

Fearanalysis

The current most useful outcome of the Fisherian unified systems theory for FME is that it offers a context for what I've labeled *fearanalysis* (Fisher, 2012b, in press)—an analogous “technology” (methodology) much like but different from *psychoanalysis*.³³ With limited space herein, suffice it to say that fearanalysis offers a means for analyzing discourses *of* (and *on*³⁴) fear (and ‘fear’). So far no one else I know of has used this technology but in the near future that could change. It has been applied in a critique of the Deweyian philosophers of education (English and Stengel, 2011). These women studied comparatively (once again, old Eurocentric male philosophers) Rousseau, Dewey and Freire to discover what each of those philosophers had to say about *fear and learning*, with implications for pedagogy and curriculum today. As exciting as it was to see “fear” as focus in the title of their article, their biased (undeclared) liberal pragmatic Deweyan lens skews their arguments toward functionalism and away from critical theory. And, that *fear* was unquestioned as an “emotion,” delimited, and de-politicized, their interpretations, creating a reductionistic and individual psychological discourse (Fisher, 2011b). Even though they did cite Fisher (2006) in a footnote, they ignored the epistemic and political problematics that a ‘Fear’ Studies perspective on fear (and ‘fear’) ought to entail. I emailed them to an attempt dialogue, and characteristically, they were not interested. Their article and my fearanalysis critique make good fodder for future ‘Fear’ Studies students.

Desh Subba³⁵

In late 2014, I was contacted *via* email by Desh Subba, a Nepali writer, known in far Eastern literary circles for his often political fiction and poetry (at least since the 1990s). An organic intellectual, he writes/teaches in a populist genre, and is developing himself as a self-described “philosopher” of late. Writing and speaking in English as a second language, he shared with me his discovery of what he labeled “fearism” (later, to be fleshed out as “philosophy of fearism”) (Subba, 2014). He has substantively taken the course that other philosophers (W. and E.) had not taken—that is, to locate fear as central to evolution, human culture and development.

Subba sees “fear” as positive in his philosophical system, yet, he agrees with me and others that fear can be also destructive in excess and when not managed well. His weakest theorizing is in the fields of education and social sciences. The philosophy of fearism has grown into a movement in some literary circles, especially in the far-East where he tours continually talking about this philosophy with the practical aim of guiding people to better manage fear (i.e., upgrade FME). Like myself, Subba (2004) endorses a “fearless stage” and “Fearless Age” as possibility in the future (p. 45). Although he has a broad vocabulary and very creative and expansive conceptualization of fear, I have suggested to him in joining his movement with my own work, that we have to refine the conceptualization he has chosen as well as his notion of fearism. He was open to this and we co-wrote a book outlining philosophy of fearism with an integrative E-W dialogue (Fisher and

Subba, 2016). Critical postmodern pedagogue, McLaren (2016) wrote about this book,

This original work on becoming fearless through the philosophy of fearism is part of a larger philosophy of praxis that critical educators would do well to engage. Capitalism has saturated the structural unconscious of modern nation states, creating new species of fear so penetrating that they sometimes go unnoticed. This new work [philosophy of fearism] will help to challenge this fear and overcome it through the creation of a protagonistic agency powered by hope and struggle. (front matter)

Brian Massumi

In some academic philosophical circles, Brian Massumi has made a significant career and has impacted a good deal of contemporary philosophy (e.g., he's translated Deleuze and Guattari). As far as I can tell he began writing some powerful work on socially and culturally constructed fear (really, 'fear') in the early 1990s in Canada (e.g., Massumi, 1993a, 1993b, including the many authors in this edited book). I cite his work often, and it was included in the *JCT* 2006 article. However, he researches and writes on many other topics. Recently, I discovered his hard to find article (Massumi, 2005) which goes into great depth in analyzing post-9/11 events and organizing frames for controlling the American people's affect (contagion), especially, *via* the color-coded alert "spectrum" technology.

'Fear' Studies would do well to include Massumi's philosophy on fear as core curricula, even though his writing is tough to follow for many, especially if you are not a trained philosopher or up on the latest ways contemporary philosophy and cultural studies folks think and write. I always find his work takes me into ways of conceptualizing the dynamics of fear (and 'fear') in ways I wouldn't normally imagine. It's profound and original fearwork and I can in no way do it justice in a short summary here. Yet, I wish to make a few points. First, I wouldn't classify him as a philosopher of fear, but the few times he has published on it he shows mastery of nuance and depth in the semiotic, phenomenological and existential dimensions. His communications expertise adds a great offering to understanding dynamics that lead analysis that (in summary) suggests a self-reifying cycle whereby "fear" as we know it with a cause and effect (affect) are more or less being constructed in machinic-systems and political regimes of power into self-generating fear not only of objects or subjects, but fear of fear itself. So far, that may not sound too original, as others have also explored this dynamic somewhat. But reading Massumi (2005) is like a voyage into the dark stormy seas, and loosening of all one's rigid and habitual structural understanding of "what fear is." Even though he follows in this article (in part) a William Jamesian view of fear as an emotion, for me, Massumi transcends that definition and imaginary and offers up a fresh original plate of 'fear.' He cleverly articulates in a way I cannot, in terms of just why there needs to be something labelled 'fear' with (') marks. Be-

cause...below even the fear of fear, Massumi (2005) articulates how ‘fear’ is really no longer an emotion or feeling, no longer an irrational abstraction even (e.g., imagined or a memory of fear) but rather enigmatically (he wrote),

Everywhere, fear-double-features: as vaguely and clearly featured; as generic and particular; as ground of existence for itself as a way of life. Fear, in its quasicausal relation to itself, has become redundantly self-sufficient—an autonomous force of existence. It has become *ontogenetic*. This autonomization of fear is a next natural step from its preemption of action in the sign-response short circuit. Its development is conditioned by the independence that preemption enables from actual contexts of fear. When fear itself is frightening, its capacity to self-cause means that it can even trigger in the absence of any of its external signs...fear can now *run away with itself*...Consider that the only way to regain control over one’s possession by fear [‘fear’] once it has become self-propelling is to not feel it...suppress it. We are all taught how as children...To suppress emotion is to produce more thought-signs, in an even tighter short-circuit. Now it is not only actual action but the feeling itself that is bypassed...It [‘fear’] may pass *unfelt*.³⁶ The thought-sign is now intensively coupled with an incalculable qualitative unfeeling on which it has “no rational dependence.” Fear is coming to revolve more and more tightly around the logical vanishing point of an unexperience where matter and quality are one. This vanishing point lies at the very limit of the phenomenal. Fear’s passage to this limit carries its virtualization close to as far as it can go...Fear has *self-abstracted*...It [‘fear’] has become the autonomous thought of itself. It can now boldly go wherever thought can reach. And thought can reach wherever *attention* goes. (pp. 42–43)

It would be so cool to make an animation video of how Massumi has articulated this ‘fear’ dynamic. Text just doesn’t do it justice I think. Art would be the preferred translation platform to help more people “get” what he is describing and theorizing. My quick interpretation is that Massumi is speaking to the transition of *fears* to *fear* itself and to ‘*fear*’ and to *fearism* (and beyond)—a sequence I have prior named essential to understand for an overall postmodern critical literacy of fear. In this thought-movement continuum (or “spectrum”³⁷) fear is being complexified into what McLaren (1995) called a “hyperreal formation of an entirely new species of fear” (p. 148)—and, fear is learning to both (paradoxically and simultaneously) *show* and *hide* itself better and better from detection by any subject, by any institution or by any philosophy (just as Massumi articulated above: “fear-double-features”). The real kicker is when you realize “it” is “I” and “We”—there is no fear out there or in here alone—fear (‘fear’) is “everywhere” in the production of ontological reality—an “unexperience” (*a la* Massumi). Now, just at-

tempt to situate this Massumian perspective with any connected sense of “self-identity” or “identity” generically. Wow. It is kind of mind-blowing. He’s really tapping-in to the radical roots of the Fear Problem today and helping us better investigation and also move beyond the former identification of “when fear itself becomes the problem” (Furedi, 2007b, p. 1).

This type of FME curriculum material is surely not being taught anywhere in courses that I know of. FME in the 21st century must engage these complex troubling notions and phenomena —becoming un-phenomena as Massumi asserts. Any futurist curriculum theorizing that ignores the philosophy of fear is banal if not unethical. Massumi’s ideas are some of the deepest fearanalysis (my word) for contemporary post-9/11 times that I know of. ‘Fear’ Studies curricula ought to include this great Canadian philosopher’s fearwork (my word) as enigmatic if not uncanny that it is. Whether it’s helpful to humanity or not only time will tell. His lack of interest (apparently) in a philosophy of fearlessness is a flaw overall but one that I could apply to just about every poststructural theorist and philosopher I know of (see Fisher, 2015b). It’s an anathema for them to offer solutions (e.g., a *cura* or *therapia*). Though all philosophers are not so inclined, for there is a whole field of practical philosophical therapy (e.g., Starkstein, 2016) to draw upon as well.

I officially invite Dr. Massumi to join the Fearlessness Movement today and continue to contribute works on fear to improve FME in general. I also invite anyone else interested. We don’t have to all agree on everything—only something. And, we don’t even have to agree that what we agree upon is even useful (at the moment). I believe in the value of wildly theoretical *and* down-to-earth practical research. My vision for ‘Fear’ Studies is to re-invigorate and expand our fear-imaginaries³⁸ first and foremost. Fine-tuned useful interventions will flow from our ‘better’ (i.e., creative and more integral) fear-imaginaries.

Activities- What does transdisciplinary mean(?); compare and contrast with interdisciplinary. Create an art piece or found poem out of the text of this Exhibit–3; then contemplate what your creations may mean and/or how they direct you to in the next deepening of your own critical literacy on fear (and ‘fear’).

Exhibit–4: An Indigenous Worldview

The 2006 ‘Fear’ Studies article needs to be critiqued as well. In examining the References I cited there, a distinct bias of presence and absence can be seen. For presence I see a broad spectrum of disciplines included. However, most of the references do not involve the relationship with fear and “identity” politics. Another absence is that there is virtually no representation of women, queer, and people of color and other marginalized groups/authors. Another absence in the references is postcolonial sources (with a few exceptions³⁹). Specifically, there is a growing wave around the world of interest in post-/neo-colonial critiques from Indigenous

Peoples and Indigenous scholars. ‘Fear’ Studies ought to engage this contested site of research, learning, teaching and potential healing.

Four Arrows⁴⁰: Worldview Analysis

Since 2007, my own fearworking focus has been the study of the Indigenous⁴¹ scholarship of Four Arrows (aka Don T. Jacobs). Our independent and yet eventual collaborative paths crossed during various book projects he edited and/or was writing and wanted to share with me. I have just completed an intellectual biography on his life and work (Fisher (with Four Arrows), in press) and concluded he is a foremost eco-philosopher for our times. We both have a long and deep interest in the nature of fear in relationship with courage and fearlessness and how these great motivational forces (if not virtues) can bring us moderns and postmoderns into closer connection with Nature.

Four Arrows, a mixed blood Irish-Cherokee, brings a profound and unique Indigenous-based theory of Fear and Fearlessness (with capital letters⁴²) to the field of ‘Fear’ Studies. In this short space I cannot do his work justice (see Fisher, 2016c, 2016d). However, there are a few pertinent points to emphasize. No critical educator/philosopher I know of brings shamanism, hypnotism and trance-based learning technologies, emergency management technologies and psychology, animal training, performance coaching, and a holistic-Indigenous perspective to Fear and Fearlessness. His metacognitive CAT-FAW/N theory and FME (e.g., Jacobs, 1998, Four Arrows, 2016a) includes a practical (ecological) dynamic management strategy whereby individuals and groups can learn to better recognize when they are being manipulated by *F for Fear*, *A for Authority*, *W for Words*, especially when they are in an altered CAT state, which stands for Concentration Activated Transformation (or trance). His basic premise is that Fear will best be understood accurately through one’s own experience, including dreams/visions and trance, coupled with the study of /N for Nature—where some of the best fear management teachers are the creatures that share this world, the ‘greater-than-human beings’ (*a la* David Abram) on this planet. He asks us all to become “connoisseurs of Fear” (Jacobs, 1998, p. 156).

With Four Arrows’ leadership, Fear and Fearlessness are being recalibrated within what he calls a *worldview* critical analysis framework. From this deep ethical analysis, existing below culture(s) and religion(s), he posits that there is only one *original*, primal, sustainable and sane worldview—the “Indigenous worldview.” Any variant branches from it (going back nine to ten thousand years ago) departed from that worldview *via* dissociation processes largely due to Fear not being managed well. And, now we have a (wounded) hegemonic “dominant worldview” that is largely pathological and infused with an insidious anti-Indigenous ideology that is fear-based and toxic to Life (e.g., Four Arrows, 2016a). Two of the more powerful curricular revisions Four Arrows (with myself and others) has published include: *Teaching Truly: A Curriculum to Indigenize Mainstream Education* (Four Arrows, et al., 2013). In this radicalized curriculum

following the Four Directions of Indigenous ancient teachings, one-quarter of the curriculum he proposed (the South—Spiritual and Emotional Awareness) is labeled “From Fear to Fearlessness.”⁴³ Wow! Wouldn’t it be wonderful to see this implemented in our schools and higher education worldwide. And secondly, Four Arrows and I proposed a revisionist Indigenous-based challenge of Freirean critical pedagogy by “Indigenizing *conscientization*” so as to up-grade and correct itself by integrating Nature, Indigenous principles, Spirit and Fearlessness (Fisher and Four Arrows, in press). We so need new anti-dotes to the Fear Problem and it behooves us to draw from our ancestors, who survived well with ecosystems, in contrast with agricultural, industrial and post-industrial humans. I have learned so much from this Indigenous perspective and it has altered how I conceive of Fear and its management/education. Especially important is Four Arrows’ teachings on how to unravel the humanistic, colonial and anthropocentric views about FME.

Some Concluding Remarks on ‘Fear’ Studies: Progress and Barriers

This ends the tour through the four exhibits. I drop my curator’s hat. And adopt the fearologist’s hat. I speak now as a scholar on the topic of fear (‘fear’). Again, I have to remind readers this is an inadequate overview of only some of the changes that have taken place in ‘Fear’ Studies over the last 12 years. I have had to leave out a good deal due to space limitations. It is hard not to have created more exhibits, especially the exciting growth I have witnessed in the “ecology of fear,” “geography of fear,” and “architecture of fear” research and discourses.

And at least, I wish to convey that just because I did not write much about the “culture of fear” phenomena in this next-generation version for *JCT*, this does not mean it is no longer *the* most significant and pragmatic context from a cultural studies and political perspective. Fear (‘fear’) is not operating in a vacuum but rather in a “culture of fear” dynamic (e.g., Fisher, 2006, pp. 54–56). Any researcher, educator, fearologist etc., who does not give this its due influence and study, is going to, by reductionistic tendencies, horribly skew what we need to learn about fear (and ‘fear’) today and in the future. Massumi’s (2005) phenomenological nuancing of the “spectrum of fear” dynamic (post-9/11) and Jeffries (e.g., 2012) classification and cautioning of the critics of the culture of fear are welcomed additions to my own prior ventures in a similar vein (e.g., Fisher, 2004, 2016e). A good deal more research, thought and theorizing is required to assess this growing literature (across disciplines) and improve its ‘balance’ and value for emancipatory agendas.

Taking this seriously, in 2007 I collected all the articles, books, websites I could find by professional educators that included discussion about “culture of fear” *per se* (Fisher, 2007/11). I created a first and substantial annotated bibliography as a reference for educators. I sent a free copy to nearly 80 such educators cited in the bibliography in an attempt to rally some kind of unified interest—but to no avail. However, it was heartening as a researcher to see how many educators cared about fear in this expanded dynamic sociopolitical context. The eminent

educational philosopher (and Buddhist), David G. Smith (2014) referenced the bibliography and acknowledged this is foundational work in order to find wisdom in education. He argued wisdom is only possible when we move from fear-based motivation and perceptions to the higher ideal (nondual consciousness) of what can be called “fearless” in educational and social visioning (p. 55).

Subba (2014) argues for the possibility of a “Fearless Age” after the Ages of various kinds of Fear dominating (pp. 14, 36, 46). It is not that idealism is being played here over realism but rather it is essential for humans in complex systems to imagine the unimaginable *via* an “aporetic pedagogy” (e.g., Adelman, 2013) and, other unruly maneuvers at times apparently unreasonable. Many would say it is essential for humans to hope. That is, to hope beyond what in the terrible real which seems so devastating, hopeless, dystopic and unstoppable. I have long noticed the popular trend by many authors in the populist communities (including scholars for e.g., Bourke, Four Arrows, Furedi, Jeffries, Robin, and Subba to name a few) to take “fear” out of the negative connotation framing left by history (particularly in the W.) and turn it into a force more positive and transformative—that is, to locate it with opportunity for positive outcomes. Fear management literature has also followed this growing trend.

In Fisher (2006) I have critiqued this “fear-positivism” discourse/tendency (pp. 100–02) and continue to do so for its under-theorizing of ‘fear.’ What we are all likely going to have to face if we haven’t already is that *fear* may be strangely and counter-intuitively *the best* way to bring people of great diversity together in a strong democracy. If conceptualized, theorized and managed well, Fear will do so because of its growing power and universality—a common ground of interest in (at least) survival. I believe that the rise of “terrorism” in discourses around the world (especially since 9/11) is bringing our world together, like “Global Warming”—like never before. And I’m not suggesting this coming together is going to be pretty in its earliest stages. But that’s all hypothesis. The emphasis on Fear in this article and in ‘Fear’ Studies is in itself somewhat following the trend of making “fear” more positive as a global fulcrum for unity-in-diversity (and, unity-in-Love-and-Fear). Yet, fearism-t, the ‘Fear’ Project and ‘Fear’ Matrix as I have conceptualized, are acting in exactly the opposite direction simultaneously. That’s a complex topic for another time and article when notions of “evil” will inevitably be invoked. Curriculum theorists, as far as I know, have not systematically taken up these issues and have typically under-theorized fear (‘fear’) all along. It’s like phobophobia (fear of fear) is embedded in the mainstream discourses and the very notion of “education,” intending (even if unconsciously) to avoid serious engagement with the topic of fearuality (analogous to the general phobia around talking about sexuality). We need a renewed and conscious “fear education” (i.e., FME) for the 21st century not the 18-19th century.

My vision for ‘Fear’ Studies is to re-invigorate and expand our fear-imaginaries first and foremost—and, to do so without a fear-based imaginary controlling the way we know and think about fear. In no way am I suggesting ‘Fear’

Studies is a hope-mongering project. My own philosophy of fearlessness is very critical of hope-constructions of any kind because they often are underwritten by largely unconscious fear-based motivations. Arguably, Fearlessness is the better replacement for hope (e.g., Fisher, 2010, pp. 97, 178, 230, 240). The implications of that theorizing are grounded in the beginning of a postmodern critical *epistemology of fear* (and fearlessness) that I have been most concerned with in any development of fearology, philosophy of fearism and ‘Fear’ Studies (see Fisher and Subba, 2016, chapter Three).

Fine-tuned useful interventions will flow from our better (i.e., creative and more integral) fear-epistemologies and fear-imaginaries. Individually and collectively, there is a pool of great knowledge, knowing and understanding (call it wisdom, if you want) to tap-into. Evolution of Life and consciousness has left us with a great legacy of Defense Intelligence (i.e., how to better manage fear) (Fisher, 2010, p. 231). Evolution and Life, dialectically, has also left us with a great legacy of pathologies, which so far as I see it are most all *fear-based*.

The *JCT* 2006 article was a breakthrough of an integral synthesis on the study of fear (‘fear’). No other document has been created like it. The *JCT* 2018 article is its complement and future platform for ‘Fear’ Studies to truly get the recognition it deserves. There is next to no serious engagement with this project or the Fearlessness Movement in academia today. However, there are signs of progress, as well as barriers, as you have read in this article. I’m delighted each time some young person, while in their undergraduate degree, comes across my fear-work and writes me an email of how much they appreciate someone is synthesizing the knowledge on fear and creating openings for possible new careers—e.g., in fearology. Back in 2001 or so when I started using “fearology” and “fearologist” to self-identify, it was more a performative joke and musing. Some 17 years later, it is no joke and I am convinced, as are these young people who write to me, that the world needs experts in fearology just like any other formal study and/or sub-discipline. They know that fear is the core human problem today and will be even more so in the future.

If ‘Fear’ Studies is a project within the Fearlessness Movement, which I think it is, there will be great barriers—and, resistance (and not of the good kind). There will be distractors of the project and out and out enemies (Fisher, 1997). To ignore or diminish these forces and to neglect giving energy and time to understanding them better would be a great fault-line in the progress of ‘Fear’ Studies. This topic is another article itself. In Fisher (2006) I wrote of fearism (now, fearism-t) and its powerful undermining of “us” getting out of the ‘Fear’ Matrix (p. 51). It’s not a pleasant thought to undertake. The culture of fear dynamic itself is likewise a great barrier. And, most everything Massumi (2005) wrote about equally informs us of what we are up against on this emancipatory mission behind ‘Fear’ Studies—at least, my version of its preliminary conceptualization. I’ll end this article with Four Arrows’ (2016b) poignant observation (and reminder) based on his 40-year career as an educator. He wrote in the Foreword to Fisher and Subba (2016),

What makes this text [*Philosophy of Fearism*] so valuable is not just the author's freewheeling, challenging thoughts that stem from years of contemplating their subject, but the fact that it [i.e., fear] is being discussed at all. Although people in most cultures know about the importance of [fear and] courage, few have had the opportunity to learn how to employ it consistently and effectively.... This book thus offers a unique break from the status-quo avoidance [fear of fear] that surrounds the topic of fear....(p. xiii)

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Notes

¹ Gratitude to the editor, Marla Morris.

² Gratitude to the editor, Rob Helfenbein for considering this proposal.

³ Specifically, according to Jeffries (2012) pessimistic view, the delimiting Manichean framing narrative involves: “only two kinds of social actors those whose critical capacities are paralysed by fear and those who are busy promoting it” (p. 38).

⁴ The concept of “fear-based” (and/or ‘fear’-based) is critical in understanding my own work. Too often this term is used very loosely, without any clinical, theoretical or philosophical rigor, and so in order to improve the way this concept is constructed I suggest you refer to Fisher (2013a). The simple (albeit, not so simple) ‘rule’ I follow in its usage is that *fear-based* refers to any consciousness, behaviors, structures or discourses that are more than 50% motivated by fear (rather than love). Ultimately, any such chronic patterning of fear-based means will be both cause and effect (and affect) of pathologies.

⁵ Retrieved excerpt from <https://jenniferhofmann.com/challenge-do-this-single-radical-democratic-act/>

⁶ The version ‘*fear*’ is central to ‘Fear’ Studies so it is necessary to interrogate the strategy behind why I have added the (‘) marks to connote the term is under deconstruction and reconstruction—but also, that it is a culturally-modified form of *fear* as we usually know it. For more details on this see distinction see for e.g., Fisher (2006, 2009).

⁷ Reconceptualist curricular thinkers may be imaging William Pinar’s *currere*, though I am thinking more broadly of a “*currere* of culture” (e.g., Nicholson-Goodman, 2009) and of the history of “cures” in ancient Indigenous medicine and shamanic practices through to modernity; and, for an implicitly related term *therapia*, I am referring to something more than “therapy” by which a full-integral critical analysis and intervention is required that forefronts the philosophic (*philosophia*) as in Wilber’s (1995) complex evolutionary and developmental articulation of holon transformation *via therapia* (e.g., p. 73). Fearlessness work (and fearworking) is what I see as a *therapia* of emancipation from the ‘Fear’ Matrix and concomitant undermining of its domination.

⁸ See end note 9.

⁹ The first of the ‘great’ contemporary Western philosophers to theorize of the borderless space of *subjectivity* and *fear itself* was Massumi (1993a, 1993b), with others following, and more or less arguing the same thing (e.g., Zizek, 2008) and/or implying indirectly we’re in big trouble because of this tendency (e.g., Wallerstein, 2010).

¹⁰ This developmental sequence has been suggested by other thinkers but most impactful on my work has been the artist-psychoanalyst-activist Bracha L. Ettinger and her “matrixial theory” (e.g., http://mamsie.wikispaces.com/file/view/Bracha+Ettinger+-+Aesthetics_Ethics_Politics.pdf).

¹¹ I use this controversial (post-colonial) term as a critical theorist, not with any intention of romanticization and/or appropriation of Indigenous Peoples but what Gladstone (2015), a Blackfoot scholar, refers to as a “Native mindset” (p. 22), which I am studying and practicing with the guidance of the Irish-Cherokee Indigenous scholar Four Arrows. Like Four Arrows (2016a), I believe there is merit to his view of reclaiming (for everyone) their “Indigenous roots” (p. x) even if for white folks like me it is a strategic move to decolonize myself and privilege (e.g., racialized whiteness). My hypothesis: general fear management/education (and ‘Fear’ Studies) will be much better off with such a critical and complementary “Indigenous” and “Native mindset” orientation/worldview to the “dominant worldview” (*a la* Four Arrows).

¹² E.g., see a video on fusion coloring aesthetic technique I created as “slow” and as “fearlessness” practice: <https://vimeo.com/220708479>

¹³ E.g., Berg & Seeber (2016) on slow academics.

¹⁴ A good deal could be said about this phenomenon of sociocultural and political acceptance as societies of intolerable and destructive levels of fear (toxicity) (e.g., Massumi, 1993a, 1993b). Equally, and related is the problem of *normalization of violence* (e.g., Margold, 1999) where it can reach such chronic proportions and subtlety in the ‘everyday’ that we accept it for the most part as background ‘noise.’

¹⁵ E.g., O’Neill (2007).

¹⁶ There are too many publications in the last decade or so on the power of attention and role of fear to mention, though I particularly like Dr. Diana Boyd’s 2012 presentation <https://vimeo.com/38139635>

¹⁷ In 2008, I worked with a local community library in East Vancouver to create a socially-engaged participative piece called *Dialoguing on ‘Fear’: An Installation*. Britannia Art Gallery, Vancouver, BC. In the same year, I installed a piece confronting the dominant worldview that is fear-based, entitled *Building a Kardboard Kosmology*, Vergette Gallery, Department of Art & Design, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL.

In 2015, I installed a piece focusing on America's security culture and fear, entitled *Error of Judgment*, Vergette Gallery, Department of Art and Design, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, IL.

¹⁸ Not only did Patrick Slattery include a reference and quote from my writing he invited me to write a section on the 'Fear' Matrix concept etc. on the text's (Slattery, 2013) companion website (see Chapter 4, "Additional material") <http://www.routledge.com/cw/slattery-9780415808569/p/supplements/>

¹⁹ I acknowledge my co-curator Trevor Malkinson. See archives on this project (Fearologists, 2012; Malkinson, 2011, 2012).

²⁰ *Fearworld* is relatively new to the vocabulary of 'Fear' Studies, and attempts to convey a sort of total mesh of diversities of experiences, definitions, meanings and discourses (in the Foucauldian sense) that are in some way cooperating and/or competing as they are related to fear (and 'fear'). The parallel earlier conception of *fearuality* was likewise meant to express this globality. "*Fearuality* [coined by Fisher]—the total dynamics, interrelations and development of one's relationship to fear (analogous with sexuality or spirituality)" (Fisher & Subba, 2016, p. 158).

²¹ The In Search of Fearlessness Project, co-founded by R. Michael Fisher and Catherine Sannuto, was born in Calgary, AB. Sannuto left by mid-1990 and Barbara Bickel joined me in co-leadership.

²² The basic dictum: *When fear arises, so then does fearlessness*. The system dynamic is emergent, organic, self-correcting, processual, ongoing—at the base of evolution (and the ecology) of living organisms.

²³ That said, therein comes the tension of my own epistemological stance on how best to do 'Fear' Studies and the reality that people will come from various backgrounds and preferences. I recommend that (at least) any interested serious scholars of 'Fear' Studies read and study the work on "Integral Methodological Pluralism" (see e.g., Wilber, 2006), which includes but transcends simple flatland pluralism (i.e., the worship of equality in difference and diversity, without critical scrutiny about the organization of those differences and diversity). I have linked "integral theory" with "pedagogy of fearlessness" and a critique of critical thinking discourses as well (see Fisher, 2011b).

²⁴ Both quotes from Terry Biddington, UK eco-feminist and practical theologian, professor of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Winchester (<http://terrybiddington.wordpress.com/2017/05/01/sanity-for-todays-world/#comment-695>) and (<http://terrybiddington.wordpress.com/2017/07/11/a-new-book-on-fearlessness/>). The latter quote is from Michalinos Zembylas, Assoc. professor of Educational Theory & Curriculum Studies, Open University of Cyprus (endorsement in front matter, in Fisher & Subba, 2016) and Four Arrows (*aka* Don Trent Jacobs), professor in the School of Educational Leadership and Change, Fielding Graduate School, Sequim, WA (Four Arrows, 2016a), p. xiii.

²⁵ There are too many to name here but I recommend a more critical (theoretical) work like Kagan (2007), and/or, less so, Plamper (2015).

²⁶ See my first summary of this work in Fisher (2006), pp. 44–47.

²⁷ Go to: <https://fearlessnessmovement.ning.com/blog/fearlessness-movement-my-wikipedia-page>

²⁸ All are invited to join the Fearlessness Movement ning @ <http://fearlessnessmovement.ning.com>

²⁹ I am cognizant of the use of "management" here, and do *not* mean *managerialism* (*a la* Foucault), nor do I mean a negative interpretation of "emotional management" as constructed in Boler's (1999) criticism of today's trends to promote emotional education and emotional intelligence, etc.

³⁰ For the whole book review see Fisher (2016b).

³¹ Although, according to Starkstein, his dissertation is currently under review with a book publisher (personal communication, Oct. 27, 2017). Another philosophical *cum* psychological book on fear, by a bright Nigerian undergraduate philosophy and theology student, is also a good beginning contribution to ‘Fear’ Studies (Kalu, 2016).

³² There’s too much in the book (Fisher, 2010) to describe in this article, suffice it to say I lay out 10 fear management systems (FMS) that follow a developmental and evolutionary hierarchy of consciousness (individually and collectively) from “*no fear*,” to “*bravery*” (and *bravado*), to “*courage(ous)*,” to “*fear-less*,” (as first-tier systems), and then there is a gulf/abyss in which the next systems are very rare but essential to liberation from the ‘Fear’ Matrix—they are, second-tier systems: “*fearlessness*,” and “*fearless*.” I proposed and crafted this book and philosophy based on fearlessness (FMS-7) as the lens of inquiry. It is truly a unique work in ‘Fear’ Studies and offerings available on FME.

³³ I’ve attempted to design *fearanalysis* with a critical holistic-integral (fearlessness) lens, with three major components: critical analysis, clinical practice and creative practice (e.g., see Fisher, 2012).

³⁴ This distinction of discourses is explicated with examples in Fisher (2006, pp. 51–53).

³⁵ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desh_Subba

³⁶ Long before I read this piece by Massumi, I had articulated the need for ‘fear’ to complement current definitions of fear (Fisher, 1995a) and suggested a new epistemology of fear (‘fear’) (Fisher, 1995b), and then wrote on how important it is to imagine and theorize “‘fear’ without feelings” (as *cura*) playing off poststructuralist notions of “‘body without organs” (Deleuze & Guattari, etc.) (see Fisher, 2013b).

³⁷ Massumi (2005) takes a very clever poststructuralist maneuver in this ontogenic essay to ‘speak’ for what “The Spectrum Said” (p. 31)—whereby he means the “color-coded terror alert system” (p. 31) (*via* post-9/11 instituted by U.S. Homeland Security). He uses the phrase “*full spectrum of fear*” (p. 45). My own writing on ‘fear’ has also used “*spectrum of ‘fear’*” since the mid-1990s, although I was using a Wilberian integral ontogenic theory—yet, I cannot help think there may be also more in resonance, even if rationally invisible, with Massumi’s use and my own; though, at the moment it is beyond me (btw, I am more a flexible ‘structuralist’ than he, but not only). Massumi, professor at the University of Montreal, as far as I know, has never read my work nor responded to my emails to dialogue on this topic.

³⁸ I defined this somewhat in note 11 in Fisher (2006), p. 60.

³⁹ For e.g., Regnier (1995), Taussig (1984), Welton (2003).

⁴⁰ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Arrows

⁴¹ I (and Four Arrows) realize the term “Indigenous” can be used politically (with contestation) in many different contexts, not all of them compatible. Some other closely related terms could be used, such as “First Nations,” “First Peoples,” “Indians” or “Aboriginal.” I have adopted (so far) Four Arrows’ (2016a) rationale for using “Indigenous” and his “pan-Indian orientation” (p. 3)—which, basically is one that says that there is a set of universally agreed upon characteristics of what can be called an “Indigenous worldview,” according to many (including Indigenous scholars). Four Arrows makes these arguments in the Introduction, with the point: “the Indigenous worldview remains in all of our hearts” (p. xiii).

⁴² Independently over the years, we both have favored capitalizing these terms, as there is something quantitatively ‘larger’ and qualitatively ‘deeper’ than typical human descriptions and realities going on, at least, when we talk about them, experience them and theorize about them.

⁴³ See Chapter 13 and sections written individually by Four Arrows, Ed McGaa (Eagle Man) and R. Michael Fisher (pp. 237–264, 281–82) in Four Arrows et al. (2013).