A paper copy of the final conference program will be available for pick up at the conference registration desk. A compilation of abstracts is included at the end of the preliminary schedule below.

The Corboy Law Center is at 25 East Pearson Street.

**Friday, June 8**

**Field Trip to the Polanyi Papers in Hyde Park**

7:30 a.m. departure from the Loyola Water Tower Conference Center (26 E. Pearson) for the University of Chicago Library (1100 East 57th Street), to arrive by 8:30 a.m. For the 10 who have signed up to go on the van, coffee and breakfast things as well as lunch is available across the street from the Regenstein Library.

1:30 p.m. The van will arrive back at the Loyola Water Tower Conference Center at approximately this hour.

**2:00-3:30 p.m. Session I with 2 concurrent sections,**

**I. 1 Corboy Law Center 105, Gus Breytspraak**

Phil Mullins, “The Growth of Thought in Society as a Major Motif in Polanyi’s Philosophy.”

Dick Moodey, “Polanyi, Shils, and the Action Frame of Reference.”

**I. 2 Corboy Law Center 106, Chris Mulherin**

Jere Moorman, “Tacit Knowing And The Innovator’s Dilemma.”

Craig Wickstrom, “Exploring Boundaries as Information: Michael Polanyi’s Concept of Dual Control.”

**3:30-4:00 p.m.**

**Break** -- ice water available in Corboy.
4:00-5:30 p.m. Session II with 2 concurrent sections,

II. 1 Corboy Law Center 105, Walt Gulick

Andrew Meszaros, “The Bodily Sense of Embodiment: Neurologic Contributions to Polanyi's "Knowing by Indwelling."

David James Stewart, “Taxonomies of Reductionism and Michael Polanyi’s Approach to the Mind/Body Problem.”

II. 2 Corboy Law Center 106, Wally Mead

Matthew LaPine, “The Value of the Arts in Theological Concept Acquisition.”

Esther Meek, “Knowing for Shalom in Aliquippa: Covenant Epistemology and The Prophetic Imagination.”

5:30-8:00 p.m. Dinner

5:45-7:45 p.m. The Poteat Event Planning Group will meet in Baumhart 1508.

8:00-9:30 p.m. Plenary Session, Baumhart Hall 303-304

Mary Jo Nye, “Michael Polanyi and the Social Construction of Science.”

9:45-10:30 p.m. Baumhart 1508

Social hour

Sat. June 9

7:00-8:15 a.m. Breakfast

8:30-10:00 a.m. Session III with 2 concurrent sections.

III.1 Corboy Law Center 105, Phil Mullins

Ray Wolfe, “Can Polanyi Speak to a Digital Age?”

James van Pelt, “Toward a Polanyian Critique of Technology.”
III.2 Corboy Law Center 106, Jere Moorman


Sietske Dijkstra, “Handling Domestic Violence. The Fragility and Power of Tacit Knowing”

10:00-10:15 a.m. Break -- coffee and tea in Baumhart

10:15-11:45 a.m. Baumhart Hall 303-304

Session IV: Panel on Polanyi and Politics/Political Philosophy

Murray Jardine, “Michael Polanyi’s Response To The Crisis Of Modernity And Its Relation To Recent Developments In Theology.”

Walter Mead, “The Significance of Polanyi's Epistemological/Ontological Concepts for Politics.”

Jon Fennell, “On Authority and Political Destination: Michael Polanyi and the Threshold of Postmodernism.”

Phil Mullins, “Polanyi’s Liberal Vision: Society as a Network of Dynamic Orders Reliant on Public Liberty.”

11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Box Lunch Baumhart Hall 303-304

12:45-2:00 p.m. Baumhart Hall 303-304

Plenary Session: Polanyi’s 1940 film, Unemployment and Money.

Eduardo Beira and Dick Moodey will lead a discussion of the movie.
2:15-3:45 p.m. Session V with 2 concurrent sections

V.1 Corboy Law Center 105, John Apczynski

Richard Gelwick, “From Tacit Knowing To A Theory of Faith”

Ed Payne, “Augustine and Polanyi: A Comparison and Contrast of Their Beliefs with the Application of Conversion to Modern Diversity.”

V.2 Corboy Law Center 106, Esther Meek

Tihamér Margitay, “Toward a Polanyian Theory of Action.”

Trevor Anderson. “The Restoration of Man: C.S. Lewis and Michael Polanyi’s Critique of Naturalism.”

3:45-4:00 p.m. Break -- beverage service in Corboy.

4:00-5:30 p.m. Session VI with 2 parallel sections

VI.1 Corboy Law Center 105, Dale Cannon

Kieran Cashell, “From Ultra-biology to the Biology of Consciousness: Subpersonal Knowledge, Tacit Knowing and the Enactive Approach.”

David W. Long, “Philosophical Sketches: Prolegomena To Any Future Study of Consciousness’

VI.2 Corboy Law Center 106, Andrew Grosso

Matthew Sandwisch, “An Analysis of Actual and Spurious Moral Inversion”


6:00-7:00 p.m. Baumhart 1508

Informal Conversation with Richard Gelwick: Anyone interested is invited to this informal session with Gelwick who worked directly with Polanyi, wrote the first dissertation on Polanyi’s philosophy, and published the first bibliography on Polanyi’s non-scientific writings. Gelwick, also author of the first introduction to Polanyi’s thought, The Way of Discovery: An Introduction to the Thought of Michael Polanyi, has long been at the center of the work of the Polanyi Society.
7:00-9:00 p.m. Baumhart Hall 303-304

Banquet and address by Walter Gulick (followed by questions)

Walter Gulick, "Polanyian Biosemiotics and the From-Via-To Dimensions of Meaning."

9:15 p.m. Baumhart 1508

Social Hour

Sun. June 10

7:00-8:15 a.m. Breakfast

8:30-10:00 a.m. Session VII with 2 concurrent sessions

VII.1 Corboy Law Center 105, Marty Moleski

Iwo Zmysłony, “Polanyi’s Idea of Universals – In Quest of General (a priori?) Knowledge.”

Chris Mulherin, “Michael Polanyi’s Tacit Hermeneutic Philosophy of Science—For the Lay Person!”

VII.2 Corboy Law Center 106, Dick Schmitt

David Rutledge, “Michael Polanyi, Charles Taylor, and ‘Overcoming Epistemology.’”

John Apczynski, “Religious Truth in a Pluralistic, Secular Culture: a Polanyian Meditation”

10:00-10:15 a.m. Break -- coffee and tea in Baumhart
10:15-11:45 a.m. Baumhart Hall 303-304

Session VIII: Panel on Mysticism and the Tacit Dimension

Dale Cannon, “Notes Toward a Polanyian Approach to the Study of Mysticism”

Laura Weed, “Multiple Drafts or Anatman?”

Charles Lowney, “Three Ways of Understanding Mystical Experience: From Speech to Utter Silence.”

Walter Gulick, “A Polanyian Interpretation of Buddhism.”

Abstracts

June 8 Plenary Address

Mary Jo Nye, “Michael Polanyi and the Social Construction of Science”

Scholars in the field of social studies of science are marking the year 2012 as the 50th anniversary of the publication of Thomas S. Kuhn’s The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Kuhn’s book is routinely cited as the beginning of a new intellectual movement that jettisoned logical and empiricist accounts of scientific progress in favor of sociological and psychological explanations of scientific practice. The argument of this paper is that the roots of the social construction of science lie earlier, in the 1930s, in the political milieu, scientific careers, and intellectual debates of a generation in which Michael Polanyi was a central figure. I examine crucial elements in the development of Polanyi’s philosophy of science, with comparisons to J. D Bernal, Karl Mannheim and others of their generation, as well as to the younger Thomas Kuhn.

June 9 Banquet Plenary Address

Walter Gulick, "Polanyian Biosemiotics and the From-Via-To Dimensions of Meaning"

In this presentation, Polanyi's thought is extended to a cosmological context, and the seeming ambiguities of Polanyi's many-valenced notion of meaning are shown to represent different phases in the emergence of life. I claim that meaning emerges in increasingly complex triadic progression as active centers interpret and adjust themselves to the world through protosigns, signals, and, in humans, symbols (language). The semiotics of Peirce and especially the biosemiotics of Jesper Hoffmeyer prove to be especially useful tools for further explaining why the positivism, nihilism, and moral inversion that Polanyi attacked are grounded in totally inadequate notions of the meaningful ways in which life flourishes.
Individual Papers

Trevor Anderson, “The Restoration of Man: C.S. Lewis and Michael Polanyi’s Critique of Naturalism”

Although Polanyi and Lewis use different terminology in addressing the Naturalist/physico-chemical worldview, their arguments against it consist largely in bringing two elements of human knowledge to light that neither Polanyi nor Lewis thinks a Naturalistic worldview can account for: comprehension, the ability of a mind to recognize a whole entity that is composed of parts, and indwelling, the giving of one’s self to a thing in order to attend from it to something else. Both men see these two activities as essential, and inherently personal, features of knowing. Because of this shortcoming of Naturalism, they conclude that there exists a level of reality that transcends the natural order.

This paper examines these two epistemological elements of Lewis and Polanyi’s thought—comprehension and indwelling—as they bear upon Naturalism. Through this investigation it becomes clear that a Naturalistic worldview is both deficient and internally inconsistent in its account of the act of knowing, so that the positing of a “supernatural” level of reality is shown to be necessary in order to speak cogently about human knowledge.

John Apczynski, “Religious Truth in a Pluralistic, Secular Culture: a Polanyian Meditation”

Evidence suggests that religious practice is a vital phenomenon in the contemporary world. Even in the West, with its predominantly secular assumptions, religious life shows little sign of diminution. This has led some commentators to worry about the implications of this trend, which they argue ought to be limited to personal, private preferences. Given the fact that so many expressions of violence and discrimination globally are religiously inspired, their concern is not unwarranted. What they presume here is that religious assumptions, even when individually meaningful and satisfying, are fundamentally authoritarian in nature and inherently non-rational at best. Reflective religious believers, however, hold that religious practice may contribute in helpful ways to human flourishing in our contemporary, secular cultural context. How is it possible to uphold an understanding of religious truth that might provide such considerations without appeals to dogmatic or authoritarian postures?

In this essay, I intend to explore how Michael Polanyi’s understanding of science as a form of embedded practice encouraging individuals to expand the boundaries of that practice in innovative and unexpected ways might serve as a model for interpreting the practice of a concrete religious community as it develops its self-understanding over time. Polanyi’s focus on the practice of the scientific community led to his creative formulation of science as a form of ‘personal knowledge’—which allowed him to overcome the limitations of the empiricism and reductionism dominating Western culture in the middle of the past century. On this basis he was able to offer a preliminary
interpretation of larger cultural issues, including upholding societal goods and religious ideals.

The effort to propose a Polanyian gloss on an appraisal of the ability of religious practice to be guided by intelligent norms requires an accurate account of the way religious communities function today. To this end I rely on the recent work of Charles Taylor, which attempts to provide a coherent story of the shift in Western culture over the past few centuries to a pluralistic, secular outlook. This includes the ways in which the religious communities of the West have contributed to this. Given these cultural ideas, with their religious origins, I believe concrete practices of a religious community can be offered as upholding, challenging, and transforming contemporary ideals with universal intent.

Kieran Cashell, “From Ultra-biology to the Biology of Consciousness: Subpersonal Knowledge, Tacit Knowing and the Enactive Approach”

The enactive approach to perception defends an externalist, dynamically extended and embodied model of consciousness. Alva Noë, one of its key exponents, argues that if a plausible account of consciousness is to be developed then the entrenched idea of perceptual experience as a mental mediation of external reality by means of internal representations must be put in question. Cognitive science is pervaded by the assumption that functionally-defined, neuronally-encoded content (caused by the passive registration of sensory stimuli) exhausts the structure of conscious experience. In contrast Noë develops an account of the exploratory consciousness which emphasises the lived experience of the subject adaptively negotiating its spatio-temporal surroundings, pursuing projects protracted in time and reshaping itself in the process.Parsed in the slogan “to perceive is to do”, the capacity to perceive is informed, according to Noë, by sensorimotor intelligence – a mastery of basic conceptual skills informed by the sentient and kinaesthetic interactions between agent and environment. Successful acts of perception are practical epistemic accomplishments involving ‘sensorimotor bodily skills’ (2004, 11) – skilful agency acquired by ‘mastering’ motor contingencies. The enactive approach is influenced by phenomenology and Merleau-Ponty’s theory of the primacy of perception in particular. More than this, Noë argues that the experimental data of cognitive neuroscience actually supports the phenomenological emphasis on the role of sensory and motor contingencies in the explanation of consciousness. The active body, embedded in (and projected temporally through) its environment, is the criterion of all acts of knowing. In a review for TAD, Dale Cannon has identified key correspondences between the enactive approach and Polanyi’s theory of tacit knowing (2011, 58-60). Specifically, Noë’s view of consciousness as extended through embodied interaction with the world ‘profoundly resonates’ with Polanyi’s discussion of the from-to structure of active intentional consciousness (TD: 10). In this paper, I consolidate parallels with the enactive approach by arguing that Polanyi’s tacit knowing is best regarded as a species of subpersonal knowledge that anticipates the sensorimotor model developed by Noë et al. Polanyi’s insistence on the difficulty of specifying the subsidiary awareness of the particulars relied on for focal acts of intentional consciousness as well as his claim that the proximal elements of tacit awareness are assimilated to the body lend plausibility to
the claim that the kind of knowledge described here is subpersonal in that it subtends yet extends outwards from the phenomenologically transparent body. The body acts as the subsidiary means of focal acts of intentionality: we use it to attend from subpersonal ‘internal processes’ to the properties of the external world when we perceive something (TD: 13-14).

Sietske Dijkstra, “Handling Domestic Violence. The Fragility and Power of Tacit Knowing.”

In social work many acts are taken on the basis of implicit knowledge. Professionals utilize experience even more than formal knowledge to make their decisions. Therefore personal qualities and competences of professionals working in domestic violence (DV) are of crucial importance as are the needs and experiences of clients with seeking help. In our study ‘Hidden treasures’ (Dijkstra & Van Dartel, 2nd print, 2011) we tried to capture this tacit knowing of the work floor, focussing on partner violence and child abuse. The aim of the study was to search how tacit knowing could be addressed and accessed in a questioning approach of a dialogue. The study used three perspectives: study of literature, interviews with professionals and with clients. The focus of this paper will be on a literature study of the relevance of tacit knowledge in social professions. Although tacit knowing is highly personal, it’s common features are described as: a. hidden, sometimes unconscious, b. self evident, and c. embodied without speech. To Polanyi (1969), both indwelling and exteriorization are crucial for tacit knowing. He speaks of two kinds of knowing consist of knowing and not-knowing. In more recent debates of tacit knowing in social professions it has been compared with reflection in action (Schön), practical wisdom (Tsai) and wisdom of the body (Querido). Recently, Collins (2010) explained three types of tacit knowing: relational, somatic and collective.

To illustrate both the fragility and the power of tacit knowing quotations of the in-depth interviews with 9 experts-practitioners will be used these practitioners work in care and welfare, police, education and women’s shelters. The same purpose serve here the interviews with three adult clients (one male) on their experiences with past abuse and the help they and their family members received. Clients mention positive indicators like a personal bond, taking the time needed, being really there. They also reveal negative interaction with social professionals: being indifferent, reasoning short term, using bureaucratic procedures, copying former professionals, stereotyping.

Explicit knowledge is a hollow trunk or a stiff routine without any implicit addition. Tacit knowing is there when both professionals and clients show more than they can tell. To make it work more powerfully as a skill, a focal point or a practice, some exteriorization is needed. Further exploration needs to be done to capture this tacit knowing of social professionals by asking for metaphors, paying attention to non-verbal signs and in reading, training, drawing and writing activities.
**Richard Gelwick, “From Tacit Knowing To A Theory of Faith”**

Polanyi himself and many of his interpreters saw the implications of tacit knowing as restoring the Augustinian principle that faith precedes understanding. Polanyi’s contribution to the rediscovery of the essential role of faith in the achievement of knowledge has, however, had a limited impact in both science, philosophy, and in Christian theology. Polanyi’s epistemological contribution, however, is much more than a restoration and a reformulation of tradition.

This paper is a beginning attempt to propose that tacit knowing provides a theory of faith and why a theory is now needed. Just as process philosophy changes metaphysics, tacit knowing changes epistemology. Just as a change in metaphysics reorients concepts, language, perspective and worldview, tacit knowing affects basic terms and worldview. One of these changes is to provide a new way of discussing the relation between faith as trust or *fides qua creditur* and faith as a set of beliefs or *fides quae creditur* so that faith is replaced by tacit knowing and the tacit dimension. A second change then is to widen the range of faith from a religious framework to the total framework of knowing or epistemology. A third change is to coordinate and integrate the vast contributions of evolutionary biology and neuroscience into the general epistemology of our age. These changes are all nascent in Polanyi’s writing, but waiting for an adequate theoretical development as a theory of faith.


This paper focuses upon the reciprocity between Polanyian notions of truth and freedom. M. Polanyi developed a “post-critical” philosophy in response to what he believed was a defective and destructive objectivist account of human knowing; couched in his theory is a reciprocity between truth and freedom. Polanyi maintained that humans have a capacity, even a mandate, to establish meaningful contact with a coherent reality capable of “indeterminate future manifestations” and that meaningful understanding of that contact with reality could be given faithful symbolic expression through speech acts which others in a community of shared calling could comprehend and discuss. Polanyi sought to draw attention to the personal (and tacit) dimensions involved in extending of our intellectual horizons (human knowing.) However, since the personal aspect in Polanyi’s model of human knowing both rests upon and simultaneously gives grounds for an existent individual sovereignty or freedom, a reciprocity between freedom and truth can be established. Finally, since all knowing is rooted in a tacit dimension whose origins lie in an individual’s context (mind-body being, history, authority, community), then both knowing and freedom are set within a structure in which these become controlling features.

For Polanyi, the distinguishing attribute of humans is the capacity to think. Yet implied in his view of human thought are: (1) Our thought aims (is under obligation) to represent faithfully the coherent reality which has disclosed itself (truth in a non-absolutist sense) and which give meaning to our experience, that is, under the auspices of a universal intent. (2) Yet because thought establishing contact with reality is a personal
achievement, knowing is a creative (imaginative) act of a sovereign individual which both commends and demands respect, hence the respect of freedom. Thus Polanyi’s personal knowledge is grounded upon a belief in transcendent truth and freedom as well as their reciprocity. The corollary political order proceeding from these grounds was for Polanyi exemplified by a modified liberal political order of a society in which belief in a transcendent truth and freedom.

Matthew LaPine, “The Value of the Arts in Theological Concept Acquisition”

This paper will explore the nature of concepts and their acquisition, particularly the role of the arts in forming them. The investigation is motivated by the emphasis in theology of knowing God in a “deep” manner. Using Gottlob Frege’s Sinn and Beteutung, the paper will first examine what concepts are (that is the “sense” of concept words). Second, the paper will draw connections between Frege’s senses and Michael Polanyi’s tacit knowledge, noting how Polanyi’s ideas can be used to critique Frege’s scheme by specifying concepts’ tacit and subsidiary nature. Finally, it will be argued that the literary arts are valuable for forming concepts, which suggests their value to theology.

David W. Long, “Philosophical Sketches: Prolegomena To Any Future Study of Consciousness’

This cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural paper explores and critiques scientific, philosophical, and psychological concepts of consciousness. It embodies many of the ideas I presented at the First International Conference for the Study of Consciousness Within Science in 1990, a gathering of physicists, neuroscientists, psychologists, and philosophers all of whom were trying to come to grips with both the experience and the idea of consciousness in their work.

Tihamér Margitay, “Toward a Polanyian Theory of Action”

Cognition and action are fundamentally different human capacities in the European philosophical tradition. Braking with this, Polanyi “regard[s] knowing as … an action” (PK, vii) and develops a theory of cognitive actions in his theory of personal knowledge. For him, all forms of cognition, from perception to theorizing, are actions. Let us call them cognitive actions. However, it seems that not all actions are cognitive actions. What are the common and the distinctive characteristics of cognitive and non-cognitive actions? Take the following two examples: I recognize my son’s face and I switch on the light. The first is a cognitive action (discussed by Polanyi in detail) while the second does not have a salient cognitive outcome. Both are doings with some aim, requiring both mental and bodily contributions. Both involve some intention and rules of rightness and both are supposed to be based on the integration of particulars into a whole. However, these elements are not the same in the two actions and there is no general and straightforward way how to identify them in the second case on the basis of the first. For example, the integrated whole is the object of my focal awareness, i.e., my son’s face in the first case, but what is my achievement in the second case? Is it my switching, the action itself or is it the light coming out or something else? There are further apparent differences between the two actions. Their results and the goals motivating them seem to
be of different kind. By doing the second, I obviously do numerous other things as well (e.g., I also flip the switch), which is not so obvious in the case of the first action. The two actions may be accompanied by different sets of alternatives, etc.

Pursuing these questions, I will outline a comprehensive Polanyian framework for cognitive and non-cognitive actions by analyzing the similarities and differences between them. It is meant to be a preliminary discussion to a general (and rational) theory of action that Polanyi himself seemed to envision (Cf. the section on Action and Perception in PK).

Esther Meek, “Knowing for Shalom in Aliquippa: Covenant Epistemology and The Prophetic Imagination”

Aliquippa, my hometown, is a small, post-industrial city on the Ohio River north of Pittsburgh. Built to feed the massive Jones and Laughlin Steelworks, a 7-mile-long plant that once employed 15,000, Aliquippa deteriorated into a drug- and violence-ridden ghost town after J&L’s sudden end in the mid-1980s; it remains in that state after thirty-five years. But the drab, dilapidated main street is punctured by a blaze of color and life: the Uncommon Grounds Café, a ‘third-space’ ministry committed to restoration to spiritual wholeness through hospitality and listening. In this paper I want to show how the Café exemplifies covenant epistemology (introduced in my Loving to Know: Introducing Covenant Epistemology (Cascade, 2011), concretely at work in ordinary life. Covenant epistemology is an account of knowing which augments Polanyian epistemology to accredit, and render paradigmatic, pervasive covenantal and interpersonally relational dimensions. It argues that knowing should be understood as transformation rather than mere information, that we must “invite the real,” and that we may “know for shalom.” These and other features may be discerned in the Café’s dynamic effort to hear and heal Aliquippa, as well as in its intentional effort to embody the vision of Walter Breuggemann’s Prophetic Imagination (Fortress, 1978).

Andrew Meszaros, “The Bodily Sense of Embodiment: Neurologic Contributions to Polanyi's "Knowing by Indwelling"

Although embodiment is a secondary aspect to Michael Polanyi's philosophy of tacit knowledge, it is still an essential one. His conceptualization of embodiment appears to be largely based on an understanding of perception. This "awareness through the senses" is thought to serve as a basis for grounding the body as the root of all human knowledge. Polanyi seems to recognize that the senses can be deceived about the environment (phenomenalism; Knowing and Being). But if sensors of internal and external states can be deceived, how can one ever "know" about such deception and rest comfortably within their indwelling? The purpose of this paper is to suggest that Polanyi's concept of "tacit integration" is more central to embodiment than mere "perception", and to demonstrate the neural basis for this integration. Sense data needs to be encoded and processed by the nervous system in such a way that we recognize the source of that data as being internal (self-generated) or external. Specialized circuitry exists throughout regions of the central nervous system whose function is to compare sensorimotor intent (called "tacit"
expectation") with sensorimotor outcome. These "tacit integration" circuits free humans to have the sense of indwelling; that is, the physiologic comparison made between tacit expectation and subsidiary sensing is what affords us the sense of indwelling. But does it necessarily follow that the sense of indwelling coincides with ontological indwelling? The notion of dis-embodiment will also be discussed.

Dick Moodey, “Polanyi, Shils, and the Action Frame of Reference”

Between 1945, the year of the publication of Full Employment and Free Trade, and 1958, the year Personal Knowledge was published, Michael Polanyi appears to have changed the way he thought and wrote about social things. In the 1945 book, he wrote like an economist, but by 1958, he was writing more like a social theorist who, at least in part, embraced the frame of reference defined by two books published in 1951: Toward a General Theory of Action, edited by Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils, and Parsons' The Social System. Letters in the Polanyi archives, beginning in 1947, testify to the growth of a professional friendship between Polanyi and Shils, and to a growing interest in sociology on the part of Polanyi. Polanyi read the manuscript of the part of Toward a General Theory of Action that Parsons and Shils wrote together, and there is internal evidence of Polanyi's influence in that part of the book. Shils read the manuscript of Personal Knowledge, and there is internal evidence there of Polanyi's uses of the Parsons-Shils “action frame of reference.” One example of this is that Polanyi writes of four categories of social institutions – institutions of culture, convivial institutions, the economic system, and systems of public power. These are similar to the four subsystems of the social system in the Parsons-Shils model – the fiduciary system, the societal community, the economy, and the polity. In the index to Personal Knowledge, there are no page listings for “economics,” but there are five for “sociology.” John Maynard Keynes was one of the economists who most influenced Polanyi's thinking, and there six page listings in the index for him, but all six are to his writings on probability rather than economics.

Jere Moorman, “Tacit Knowing And The Innovator’s Dilemma”

Scientist/philosopher Michael Polanyi reconsiders human knowledge by starting from the fact that “we can know more than we can say.” What can this mean to a leader/manager of a business enterprise? In this paper, I search out some reflections on Polanyi's conceptual reform in light of what business author Clayton M Christensen describes as “The Innovator’s Dilemma” (Harper Business). The Innovator’s Dilemma has to do with a question Christensen poses: Why do well managed companies fail? He concludes that they often fail because the very management practices that have allowed them to become “industry leaders also make it extremely difficult for them to develop the disruptive technologies that ultimately steal away their markets.” (“The Innovator’s Dilemma,” p. 263).
Chris Mulherin, “Michael Polanyi’s Tacit Hermeneutic Philosophy of Science—For the Lay Person!”

Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer, the giants of 20th century hermeneutics, offered the tools for an analysis of science that plumbed the hermeneutic depths. But they largely failed to do the spade work of applying the tools to the daily practice of science. The former bequeathed an ambiguous ‘philosophy of science’ and the latter too readily accepted natural science as a distinct discipline governed by ‘method.’

Meanwhile, scientist-turned-philosopher Michael Polanyi offers a view of science-as-practised that is intrinsically hermeneutic in all but name. Polanyi’s concern was driven by what he saw as the dire consequences of a misinformed view of science. While philosophers of science have since come to grips with the social, historical and interpretive aspects of the scientific enterprise, the misinformed view still dominates public understandings of natural science, in part because of a fear of relativism that is a familiar criticism of hermeneutic approaches.

This paper will outline Polanyi’s philosophy of science making explicit the hermeneutic dimensions that Polanyi left unthematised. These dimensions are both ontological (an understanding that science is a practice of human ‘Being-in-the-world’) and derivative or epistemic (as a human practice science always and inevitably involves interpretive judgments.)

The paper will suggest that while philosophers need to do such theorising, that is not the way to communicate a more subtle view of science. If a more nuanced but non-relativist public understanding of science is to be engendered, it will be through distilling Polanyian-style insights that reveal tangible aspects of science as it is practiced, rather than through imparting a theoretical knowledge of philosophical hermeneutics.

Phil Mullins, “The Growth of Thought in Society as a Major Motif in Polanyi’s Philosophy”

Michael Polanyi regards ideas as extraordinarily important for human beings and the growth of thought in society is a major theme running through Polanyi’s philosophical perspective from early to late. The importance of ideas and their growth is a motif that can be used to appreciate the coherence of Polanyi’s thought and a theme that seems often to be underplayed in Polanyi scholarship. This paper offers a brief account of Polanyi’s philosophical development and major publications that lifts up his emphasis upon the importance of ideas and the growth of thought. I spend more time addressing the issue in Polanyi’s early thought, since I believe that Polanyi’s early thought is not as well understood, although it leads seamlessly into his later philosophical perspective.

Ed Payne, “Augustine and Polanyi: A Comparison and Contrast of Their Beliefs with the Application of Conversion to Modern Diversity”

Polanyi’s system, if it may be called that, is one of individual belief embedded in a community which becomes an authority for acceptable knowledge. The great problem
for communities, however, is the acceptance of beliefs that are contrary to their own. Full acceptance can only be achieved by “conversion,” the full identification of personal beliefs with those that were formerly not believed. The conversion of Augustine is well-known historically, having been documented in some detail in his Confessions. In his De Magistro and other writings, he develops a broad theory of epistemology that compares in many way with that of Polanyi: fideistic commitment, the tacit and explicit, a real universe, community (church), predestination, passion, freedom, etc. By contrast, Augustine was concerned with a personal relationship with God, theology (especially the interpretation of Scripture), defense of the Christian faith, a view of God in history (City of God), and salvation for himself and others. Polanyi was concerned about personal knowledge vs. objectivity or scientism and the totalitarianism that it advances. He worked for a freedom in society to allow the advancement of science and other personal pursuits. Finally, I will focus on “conversion,” as understood by Augustine and Polanyi, and its applicability to modern societies that are influenced by rationalist thinking. Finding themselves in large diverse groups, there is a great need to be able to communicate and work together when conversion is just not going to happen. For example, my personal beliefs lie in an evangelical Reformed community that is sometimes seen as narrow and close minded. This position contrasts with the clarion call for “open-mindedness” among other groups. Polanyi’s system with Augustine’s insights could prove to have valuable contributions for such diversities to accept each other without conversion to the other’s point of view. Such acceptance could advance us towards the free society for which both Augustine and Polanyi longed and worked.

Judith Rosenhouse, “The Metaphor in Polányi’s Work and Some Other Studies: A Linguistic Perspective”

Metaphor is one of the topics discussed in Polányi’s writings (e.g., Polányi 1958, 1966, Polányi & Prosch, 1975). Polányi bases his argument on the concept of tacit knowing, separately described in his books. The goal of Meaning (Polányi & Prosch, 1975) is reaching intellectual freedom, as stated on the first page (p. 3), and Polányi thinks that linguistic metaphors provide intellectual freedom, which he examines in various contexts, (e.g., ibid., Ch. 5).

In the literature both before and after Polányi (including analysis of his contributions), metaphors have been studied from many angles; I focus here on some linguistic aspects of these studies. For example, not long after Meaning, Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) Metaphors We Live By appeared. These authors differ from Polanyi in stressing that metaphors in human language are not only poetic (much discussed by Polányi), but extend all over human verbal expressions, are systematic and reveal aspects of the human mind. Like Polányi, these authors relate tacit knowledge to metaphor production and perception. I also mention works by Jackendoff (1997), Nelson (1995/2002), Lakoff (2008), Sperber and Wilson, (2008) and Giora (2008). This discussion focuses mainly on cognitive-linguistic and neuro-linguistic approaches, in the context of metaphor structure, meaning, and the tacit and explicit aspects of communication and their contribution to the freedom of thought. We also suggest that metaphors reflect language development, which is a free intellectual feature of humanity, and thus links us back to Polányi’s work.
**David Rutledge, “Michael Polanyi, Charles Taylor, and ‘Overcoming Epistemology’”**

This proposal is ‘archaeological’ in seeking to clarify Polanyi’s place in the philosophical revolution from traditional theories of epistemology to postmodern or post-critical perspectives. The paper argues this task helps place Polanyi within modern philosophy, and illuminates some of his ideas in a new way. The vehicle for my effort is an oft-cited essay by Charles Taylor entitled “Overcoming Epistemology” (from *Philosophical Arguments*, 1995).

After sketching how traditional epistemology is embedded in larger assumptions about anthropology, Taylor focuses on the contributions made by Kant, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Wittgenstein to overcoming this epistemology, and the paper will begin by briefly recapitulating his argument. The major part of the paper then will ask where Polanyi fits in this task, and how he is different from these philosophers in ‘overcoming’ traditional epistemology.

Most important is that Polanyi re-conceived human knowing from his experience of scientific practice, rather than from within philosophy. As science was the paradigm of knowledge for critical epistemology, Polanyi’s rich resources and approach allow him to undermine the mechanization of thought in positivism in ways unavailable to, and unappreciated by, the other four thinkers. Secondly, Polanyi’s insights into the relation of knowing to morality in science provides an alternative to the separation of knowledge and morality in the radical ‘self-responsibility’ of modern views of the knower. This also connects to Polanyi’s understanding of freedom, the communal nature of which refutes the autonomy and atomism of traditional epistemology. Finally, the theory of tacit knowing advances our understanding of the inarticulable ground of our knowledge of the world beyond the work of even Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty.

In each of these three ways, Polanyian thought overcomes aspects of traditional epistemology as delineated by Taylor, yielding a new assessment of Polanyi’s importance in 20th century philosophy, and of the true significance of his ideas.

**Matthew Sandwisch, “An Analysis of Actual and Spurious Moral Inversion”**

Michael Polanyi is known primarily for his epistemology and philosophy of science, but there is also a strong political and ethical dimension to his work. This paper will explore some of Polanyi’s thought in this area through his conception of moral inversion. Moral inversion, according to Polanyi, is the combination of moral perfectionism with moral skepticism. This paper will begin with an analysis of Polanyi’s understanding of moral inversion and how it gave rise to totalitarianism. It will then seek to differentiate it from the spurious moral inversion that Polanyi said prevented the Anglo-American world from sharing a similar fate. The final section of the paper will attempt to show how moral inversion is still be a useful concept by analyzing how it manifests itself in certain political and ethical discussions.
David James Stewart, “Taxonomies of Reductionism and Michael Polanyi’s Approach to the Mind/Body Problem”

The purpose of this paper is to offer an understanding of how Polanyi’s philosophy of mind can be a resource for those approaching the mind/body problem skeptical of Cartesian dualism and reductive materialism alike by examining one particular difficulty in locating his position in the contemporary landscape. Utilizing Polanyi’s convictions that “the relation between the body and mind [is] an instance of the relation between the subsidiary and the focal in tacit knowledge,” and that “the mind is the meaning of the body” (following F.S. Rothschild) will be valuable to the degree we can locate them amidst the voices currently developing a philosophy of mind in a post-Cartesian, nonreductive framework. I submit that our ability to do this will depend on which taxonomy of reductionism we adopt and how we nuance our related ontological commitments. To demonstrate this, I will compare the taxonomies of reductionism offered by Ian Barbour and Nancey Murphy. What is ultimately at stake here is not whether there is an immaterial aspect of human consciousness (as argued by Philip Rolnick), but whether the immaterial aspects of human existence are added in from the outside or are emergent higher-levels predicated on the existence and function of so-called lower principles and entities. Finally, I will argue that Polanyi’s position should be classified as a form of “duality without dualism” and thus can serve as a resource for those who affirm the reality of a spiritual dimension of humanity yet oppose dualism and reductionism.

James van Pelt, “Toward a Polanyian Critique of Technology”

As a scientist, Michael Polanyi is recognized for having made significant advances in chemistry and economics. From that deep hands-on experience, he derived a powerful critique of prevailing ideas of knowledge and the proper role of science, freed from the limits of positivism, the corruption of utilitarianism, and the dogma of scientism. He demonstrated that to pursue purely explicit and impersonal knowledge by disregarding the personal embodiment of knowing in the tacit dimension results in knowledge that is misleadingly incomplete—in his word, “absurd.”

Logically, that critique of science should be extendable to technology if technology is the practical application of science. The pursuit of depersonalized knowledge in science parallels the quest for dehumanized efficiency through the standardization and programming of technique, which implies the devaluation of embodied skills, institutional memory, and the “feel” for possibilities—all forms of personal knowing that can lead to insightful breakthroughs in technology as well as science.

As technological development continues to accelerate and proliferate unsustainably, the idolizing of inhuman efficiency operates to subsume other values that would tend to constrain such development, raising concerns about the future of discovery, of the
economic and social order, and of the human soul.

Craig Wickstrom, “Exploring Boundaries as Information: Michael Polanyi’s Concept of Dual Control”

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 dramatically affected the work of public administrators at all levels in the United States, yet, none were more dramatically affected than those working the borders of the United States. Not only did the number of rules, regulations, and workers swell, but the borders, themselves, were extended, both physically (to the bodies of individuals) and socially (to interpersonal relations).

A border is the outer boundary of some entity, but boundaries can also divide the same entity into subunits. What defines a boundary is its ability to separate and divide; what distinguishes a border is its frame of reference. Michael Polanyi points out boundary conditions that range from test tubes to DNA. Even theories exist within a set of boundary assumptions and constraints, and boundaries can provide meaning to concepts and define the conditions of a setting. Clearly, borders and boundaries apply to more than the imaginary line dividing two countries.

It is the purpose of this paper to explore the implications for public administration of understanding boundaries as Polanyi did. Polanyi distinguished between test-tube type boundaries, that provide a passive border that encloses the item or items of interest, and machine type boundaries, that become the item of interest. Both types of boundaries exhibit two levels of structure and control, but the focus of attention changes from the contents to the boundary conditions, themselves. As attention is focused on the boundary conditions, one finds new possibilities. Polanyi, himself, describes how machines, strategies, DNA, and language all function as boundary conditions that exhibit new principles of structure and control and, consequently, new information. Can application of Polanyi’s understanding of boundaries be used to break down the economic or racial barriers created to protect a booming “eds, meds, and arts” district in the middle of an economically depressed and racially stressed rust-belt city? Does his understanding of boundaries have implications for other public administration domains? Are Polanyi’s ideas relevant to public administrators today?

Ray Wolfe, “Can Polanyi Speak to a Digital Age?”

For Polanyi, an ideal digital age would offer useful devices and methods of investigation without undue constraints on institutional or personal autonomy. If it favored both science and the polity, he would embrace it. The actual digital age provides wondrous technology, but at great cost with respect to autonomy; he would probably have been among its foremost critics.

Oddly, the actual digital age has now invoked two of his ideas. In their 2011 self-help book, Douglas Thomas and John S. Brown suggest that indwelling and tacit knowing, which he originally presented as approaches to studying the natural world, may prove beneficial to people who find it difficult to cope with the challenges posed by continual,
rapid technological change. Whether their use of Polanyi’s ideas is an instance of naïve eclecticism or an attempt at co-optation or subversion is an open question. Their citation of sources, however, illustrates a pattern that may ultimately distort and impovsher Polanyi’s legacy: Thomas and Brown refer to *The tacit dimension* but do not cite the edifying but more difficult *Personal knowledge*. The recent decline in literacy, in the U.S. at least, implies that accessibility will surpass richness of content as a criterion for selection of sources. Polanyi’s contributions to posterity will be misshapen accordingly, as will those of others.

**Iwo Zmyślony**, “Polanyi’s Idea of Universals – In Quest of General (*a priori*?) Knowledge”

Since Polanyi explicitly rejects the idea of rationalistic (“husserlian”) intuition which ‘grasp’ universals regardless of empirical ‘contact’ with their concretisations [KB: 144], he apparently presumes, that general knowledge is acquired *a posteriori*, with assimilation of ever new data of experience. Such a perspective breeds the following problem: what gives rise to foreknowledge of ‘hidden coherence’ that ‘anchors’ the interplay of imagination and intuition in creation (and continuous modification) of premises? Is it something in the assimilated particles or in ourselves that makes the *a posteriori* recognition of universals possible?

In my paper, I intend to focus on the problem systematically, by inquiring about the Polanyian idea of induction, including notions of ‘foreknowledge’, ‘coherent outline’ and ‘heuristic gap’ in the first place. Then I’ll turn to idea of interplay between ‘intuition’ and ‘imagination’ in creating and modifying the premises. In the third point, I am going to analyse a tripartite relation between (a) universals, (b) tacit premises, understood as dispositions to identify their concretisations (even the most untypical ones), and (c) general notion, conceived as ‘logical’ form that makes different *gestalts* similar.

My general claim is that (1) either – contrary to Polanyi’s own declarations – we ascribe to imagination the power of crossing ‘the edge’ of empirical experience, in the manner rationalistic intuition, or (2) we must acknowledge that (a) generation and modification of premises is the result of pure blind chance, while (b) all general knowledge – including Polanyi’s own claims – is inherently hypothetical and fallible. As the only conceivable alternative to this conclusion I see (3) that our innate cognitive skills are evolved in logical parallel to laws governing universe. This however would have need extensive justification on ground of ontology of epistemic subject, which Polanyi regrettably doesn’t elaborate.
Panel: Mysticism and the Tacit Dimension

The four panelists understand mysticism as a religiously tinged example of Polanyi’s “We know more than we can tell.” To communicate with others about mystical experiences, however, either some non-direct modes of language seem required (indirect discourse, analogy, parables, metaphor, etc.) or a subtle theoretical framework for interpreting religious experience is needed. Three of the panelists opt for Polanyi’s philosophy, with an emphasis on tacit knowing, as such a theoretical vehicle, while, Laura Weed explores other possible theoretical resources.

Dale Cannon, “Notes Toward a Polanyian Approach to the Study of Mysticism”

Adherents to a religious tradition indwell particular sets of symbols which generate acquaintance type knowing that is, arguably, inaccessible to outsiders. This presentation explores a) by what means and to what extent it is possible for outsiders to appreciate another religious tradition and b) whether one can transcend the particularities of one tradition’s understanding of mysticism to find a specific core common to all mystical experiences.

Laura Weed, “Multiple Drafts or Anatman?”

Daniel Dennett claims that human consciousness arises in parallel pandemoniums of memes creating “multiple drafts.” Counter to Dennett, the thought of Jaak Pankseep, Andy Clark, and Francisco Varela plus the work of several Buddhist thinkers are used to set forth a relational notion of background consciousness not confined by cultural memes and a notion of a self that is not the substantial subject of the stories we tell.

Charles Lowney, “Three Ways of Understanding Mystical Experience: From Speech to Utter Silence”

The notions of tacit knowing and emergent being are used to interpret mystical experience via three aspects of Polanyi’s thought: 1) as a “breaking in” to an as yet inarticulate dimension of reality that calls for linguistic interpretation, 2) as a “breaking out” from a too-human set of linguistically defined purposes to a silent appreciation of “things-in-themselves,” and 3) as a “breaking up” of compartmentalized views into an unsustainable ecstatic vision of God as the joint comprehension of logical incompatibles.

Walter Gulick, “A Polanyian Interpretation of Buddhism”

What does Polanyi’s passionate quest for knowledge and support of commitment rooted in personal knowledge have to do with Buddhist warnings against emotional investment, attachments, and the centrality of the person in thought? I will argue that an analysis of Buddhist meditation and mindfulness as means to disempower language, with its illusions of centered control and anxiety about outcomes, not only can be interpreted in Polanyian terms, it can increase our understanding of the dynamics of tacit knowing.
Panel: Polanyi and Politics/Political Philosophy

**Murray Jardine**, “Michael Polanyi’s Response To The Crisis Of Modernity And Its Relation To Recent Developments In Theology”

Michael Polanyi’s theoretical response to the crisis of modernity ultimately leads to a consideration of theological issues, and Polanyi’s attempt to address these issues has been extended by William H. Poteat. I argue that the theological formulations of both Polanyi and Poteat could be strengthened by a consideration of the work of recent theologians such as Henri de Lubac, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Colin Gunton, while simultaneously addressing issues not clearly recognized in the formulations of these theologians. Specifically, I argue that the work of the theologians mentioned above indicates that Polanyi and Poteat employ a somewhat one-dimensional conception of God, while conversely Polanyi’s recognition of the ambiguous nature of modernity and Poteat’s discussion of the speech-act as a central model for Hebraic thought can point toward a more complete theorizing of a dynamic concept of nature in Lubac, a theological aesthetics in von Balthasar, and a theology of the Holy Spirit in Gunton.

**Walter Mead**, “The Significance of Polanyi’s Epistemological/Ontological Concepts for Politics”

I plan to speak about Polanyi’s understanding of autonomous centers of creativity as this relates to the political principle federalism/confederalism and also to relate Polanyi’s respect for the role of tradition in the scientific endeavor to the ordering principle in the political concept of rule by law. However, while this ordering principle in civil society offers some assurance of obviously desirable security by providing an important countervailing force against the frequently occurring socio-political impulse toward radically disruptive change in civil society, the same degree of stability rendered by tradition in civil society, can just as readily disrupt work in the scientific world by, in this instance, inhibiting the less obviously desirable, because audacious, "breaking-out" necessary for the abandoning of old paradigms for new ones and the accomplishment of new scientific discovery. I also intend to address a quite separate point by observing that one could conceivably argue that Polanyi's top->down understanding of emergence comes into a dangerous conflict with (or, at least, represents a limiting principle to) the dynamic he assigned to federalism and the autonomy of disparate centers.

**Jon Fennell**, “On Authority and Political Destination: Michael Polanyi and the Threshold of Postmodernism”

What are the implications for political life of Polanyi’s conception of knowing and being? How do Polanyi’s philosophic foundations situate him in relation to the political dimensions of postmodernism? In examining these questions, let us take as the representative of political postmodernism the neo-pragmatism of Richard Rorty. Assisted by Oakeshott’s portrayal of political life as like a ship at sea, we will discover that while there are important parallels between the political perspectives of Rorty and Polanyi, at a critical juncture their paths diverge and as a result they offer deeply
incompatible visions of the nature and proper aim not only of political activity but of human life generally.

Phil Mullins, “Polanyi’s Liberal Vision: Society as a Network of Dynamic Orders Reliant on Public Liberty”

What is the social/political vision that Polanyi articulates in his writing before Personal Knowledge? It focuses on society as a network of overlapping, relatively independent subcultural systems of order which preserve and cultivate certain ideas and practices. Such systems of dynamic order are not all alike and Polanyi generally distinguishes intellectual systems dependent upon professional opinion from very broad based, preeminently competitive systems like the market. Despite differences among the various orders in society all are stable specialized social niches or domains of social action in which certain niche-specific “public liberties” function. Such liberties are not private freedoms but values and practices that promote the interaction of individuals within the subcultural network. Such liberties also promote a strong sense of vocation and provide for the interaction of persons such that the order itself adapts and changes over time. For Polanyi, the variety of material and intellectual goods important for society are produced by dynamic orders in which persons exercise the public liberty due them. Is this social/political vision, developed in the turmoil of the thirties and forties, in any way relevant to today? I suggest a few possibilities this social vision offers.

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