

Such insights were provided by a range of discussions about how the sense of insignificance (smallness) triggered compensatory lusts for power in cultures and individuals from Christopher Columbus, to the settlers exiled from England, to the 'Indian fighters', to the early and contemporary industrialists.

Basically, I agree with a number of Rowan's points – the book does center on awe-based consciousness; I have written extensively about this matter, and I do see it as integral to the depolarization of humanity. However, it is clear that we disagree to some extent about the issue of awe-based consciousness. I don't agree that it is interchangeable with the humanistic notion of 'openness'. Openness is a very general term implying breadth of outlook and inquiry. Awe, on the other hand, specifically embraces the paradoxes of our smallness (humility) and greatness (capacity to wonder and transcend) in the context of the creation. These are two related but distinct sensibilities, and I don't think 'openness' has the intensity and depth of the sense of awe.

But be that as it may, there are also clear differences in our understanding of levels of consciousness and the so-called conflation of the spiritual with the personal. That is a topic which has been explored at length in a

series of debates I had with both Rowan and Wilber (see Schneider, 2012), but suffice it to say here that I believe the picture is much more muddled and intertwining than either Rowan or Wilber presume. It is plausible, in my view, for *both* personal and transcendent (e.g. awe-based) experiences to coexist, and even more, to thrive in optimal combinations, without having to dichotomize the self as either personal or transpersonal. But these are more matters of perception than disagreement.

Lastly, I convey my abiding appreciation to Chalfont, not only because I feel her review really 'grasped' the essence of my book, but because she recognized that the book is really aimed at a mass audience, accompanied by an urgency that optimally, such an audience will heed.

Reference

Schneider, K.J. (2012) 'Existentialism and the transpersonal: a rejoinder', *Existential Analysis*, 23 (1)

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Letters to the Editors

From **Jane Barclay**

Dear Self & Society,

The moment I turned the page and found Susannah Hoare's title 'Boarding School, the Happiest Days of Your Life?', my heart opened. At last, a personal piece underpinned by experience as well as theory, and one that shows, in its perfect 'less is more' way, the essence of life at boarding school (the truth about which I am passionate).

I felt especially moved that only two weeks before, I had met and worked with Susannah – on the workshop I facilitated for therapists in Exeter, on the experience of Boarding School.

This is an article I shall keep and refer to and draw on, if ever I need reminding of the core experiences of every single child in this very particular form of institution.

With thanks,

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