Honored leaders, dear colleagues, and welcome guests:

Thank you for this kind reception, for choosing me to deliver this address, and, Steve [Steven A. Maybell, PhD], for your generous words of introduction. I also join these personal thanks to the thanks of this Society for the endowment of this annual lecture in honor of the memory of Heinz and Rowena Ansbacher, made by their sons. Our salute to the four Ansbacher brothers on this present occasion must include, in part, a solemn remembrance of one of the four, Charles, departed this life since the time of our annual meeting one year ago. Beloved in his family, highly honored in his profession, and widely respected for his work as an orchestral conductor, he was as well a teacher, mentor, and encourager to others entering or aspiring to enter upon careers in this demanding field.

In the early days of our Adlerian Society, it was our custom to devote a moment of silence at the start of our annual proceedings in commemoration of all those who had contributed to our life and work, and who had died during the preceding year. This seems an apt time to revive this custom, in gratitude for the legacy we have received from those who went before us and made a way for us to follow in. If you agree, please stand and allow the devotion of a silent moment now. As we hope for ourselves, we wish for them a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace, at the last.

My name is Bob, and I’m an Adlerian. My last address to an annual meeting of the Society was quite a few years ago, and I don’t expect this occasion to get me started in the habit again. First of all, this is a singular and endowed honor, unlikely to be conferred a second time on the same person. Not alone that, but whatever kindly people are wont to say about 80 being the new 60, one is not fooled. The distance from here to the exit is not as extended as that which has stretched from the entrance to this present moment. My personal entrance upon life, by the way, is worth noting
here, having occurred in Buffalo, New York, also on the US–Canada border, though more toward the eastern end than my present residence in Port Townsend, toward the western end, just across the water of the Juan de Fuca Strait from here. But I never picked up a Canadian accent? Eh? Should have? Maybe a little?

The phrase “swan song” comes to mind. As you know, it borrows from a very old superstition, mentioned as long ago as in the writings of Plato. The conceit is that the swan, mute through the course of her life, sings out one lovely song just before her demise. It’s a pretty concept, although now I’ve brought it up I can’t say I know how to make it fit, not being someone who is ever described as never having anything to say, much less as mute. In any case, whatever self-flattery this image may be made to yield can be dispelled by invoking a few lines from Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who said: “Swans sing before they die; t’were no bad thing / Did certain persons die before they sing.” I hope not to be one of those persons, and so I hurry on to a talk I titled “One Hundred Years in the Shade.” You will recognize in this an effort at artful reference to the history of Adler and Adlerian thought and practice from 1911 until our present time in 2011.

As most of you will remember, 1911 was the year in which tensions and differences disturbed the congenial proceedings of the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society, leading to an open break between Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler and their respective followers. To those of you who just got here, I must add at once that this is already a description of the events to which it refers that few of those involved in the events themselves would have been likely to put forward. Some of them might have been content to be described as “followers,” but not many. Most would more likely want to be thought of as among the “like-minded” supporters of one man or the other, Freud or Adler. These were, after all, professionals, forward-looking men of distinction (no women so far), expecting to be leaders of the new thought of the time. Shortcomings aplenty might be noticed, even admitted, among them, but there was certainly no shortage of vanity.

Now there were two groups. Freud and his associates continued under the name of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. Adler and his fellows first contrived a name for themselves as the Society for Free Psychoanalytic Research. No one, least of all Freud, failed to see in this the implied accusation of unfreedom, even despotism, directed against him and all his works and all his ways. A few peacemakers tried for a time to continue membership in both groups, but to no avail. Freud forbade it for members of his group, and the rest, as it is said, is history. Unhappily, this includes the emergence of the name Individual Psychology, with the attendant impossibility of conveying its original German meaning in simple and direct English translation.
As we know, the history of anything is written in line with the attitude of the historian, and the two narratives of this historic division, Freudian and Adlerian, are so separately scrolled as sometimes to be read as if describing two different events, perhaps located in parallel universes, or at least separate universes of discourse.

On the Freudian side of the divide there is the emphasis on Adler’s supposedly having asked, “Do you think I can be content to continue forever in your shadow?” There the story is told as of a petulant complaint, by the departing disciple against the no longer recognized master, on leaving to establish his own enterprise, his own circle, his own sphere in which to shine, all in imitation of the original. This is the narrative that has dominated and is regarded almost everywhere as the “received” and traditional truth of the matter.

The Adlerian side of the story is nowhere near as concise and dramatic. The facts, as is always the case with facts, are plain—and possibly dull. Start with the fact that Adler was the first president of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society and that he was in the chair when the challenge to his way of understanding things was called into question. Go on to note that Adler was then, with Freud, coeditor of the first *Journal of the Vienna Society*. Carry the story forward with the fact that Freud recorded his dreams and confided them in writing to Adler for interpretation.

None of this matters. For a fact, little of these things are known, and you are forgiven if this is your first time hearing them. Adler remained, and remains, in Freud’s shadow, and we are left to make what we can of it. What does matter is what does not invite notice, what was and is the crux of the difference between them, and the legacy of that difference as it continues in an unexamined undertone of our culture and our society.

Adler was first and always a physician. His thinking was shaped by his encounters with his patients, not least those who were acrobats and other performers in Vienna’s Prater—that incomparable part park, part carnival, and altogether remarkable public space—on the edge of which he first established his practice. His medical studies had emphasized neurology; his practice specialty was opthalmology. With tumblers and aerialists among his patients, Adler was drawn to consider and study many variations of his own life story and to extend his understanding of the ways in which bodily handicaps may be overcome by the courage expressed in compensatory striving. It was only a few short steps from these observations, that is, from his study of “organ inferiority and its psychical compensations” (the title of his classic and still basic text in the study of psychosomatic medicine) to a novel, daring, and giant step toward a consideration of *inferiority feelings*—that is, the evaluations of circumstances expressed in opinions and the various personal compensations worked out to overcome or deny them.
It is impossible in a short lecture to convey the dramatic, even revolutionary movement in this fresh way of thinking, considering the era. It represented a radical departure from the 17th-century models of scientific thought and method still dominant in Adler’s time and not without a continuing and overarching authority today. That Adler would have made some heroic efforts to pour the new thoughts into old bottles should be understandable in this light. The prime example is his invention of an aggression drive, which he saw as drawing together the other so-called drives, or instincts of the organism, turning them into a direction away from the feelings of incompleteness (as postulated by Pierre Janet) and toward the goal of perfected development. It was a nice try, but not good enough. Finally, drive theory and its speculations regarding the consequences of organic processes, evolutionary inheritance, and individual recapitulation of species history had to be cast aside as tangential, if not useless, to psychology. Finally, and even more daring than the rest, Adler moved psychological studies out of the head and into the open conflicts of artificial social differences. He turned his professional medical attention to the intolerable feelings of intractable inferiority experienced by girls and women in their responses to being assigned to an inferior status. He brought a physician’s authority to bear on the treatment and cure of those damaged by these assignments, as they were presumed to be based in prior psychic and physical structures, and only therefore experienced as social.

Freud was not amused. This amounted to an attack on the whole structure of drive theory, with its fictions of the conflicts he had postulated as occurring inside people to account for their psychic disturbances and suffering. Adler took seriously what was happening outside the compass of bodily enclosure, including the so-called masculine protest (another German phrase impossible to render in English translation). In brief, this expressed the assertion girls and women made that they were worthy of, and deserve to have, a dignity unmarked by conventional assumptions of their being of less value than their brothers or husbands. “Treat me like a man” was a claim easily burlesqued by those who didn’t like it (and even by the girls and women who thought it could be achieved if they were to adopt stiff collars and neckties). But the point of the demand was not to mistake me for a boy or a man; it was to extend the same courtesy and respect to me that men expect from each other. Freud didn’t get it. Reasoning from the premise that “anatomy is destiny,” he answered the protest with a contrived notion of “penis envy.” In an era in which transgendering could not be so much as envisioned as an option, he could have felt confident that his grotesque invention expressed an unarguable understanding of the suffering entailed in a woman’s envy of the status reserved for men.

So far, then, we have a brief review of the initiation of a distinctive Adlerian history, at the beginning of the hundred years between 1911 and
2011. In preparing for this lecture, however, I was moved to turn further back in cultural memory to the story of the Battle of Thermopylae and the Spartan guard of 300 warriors who stood against the great horde that was the army of the Persians under the great king Xerxes. It is a foundation story of Western history, from the year 480 BCE. Even as I refer to the story now, I confess to feeling an old stirring, a remnant of the thrill I felt as a schoolboy when I first heard it.

Here comes Hydarnes, emissary of the great king, to meet with Leonidas, a small king of Sparta, in a parley before the battle, with an offer of peace in exchange for surrender. Leonidas refuses, and Hydarnes invites him to consider his obstinacy as futile: "When we loose our arrows they will darken the sun." To which Leonidas replies, "Then we will fight in the shade."

What a great story of independence! What a neat story of defiance, of refusal to cave in to the bully! We will fight in the shade! There is a motto for us! We will fight in the shade! For 100 years we have been fighting in the shade, and that is where we are, still. Heroes of Adler, salute the heroes of Sparta!

Never mind that all 300 of those good and loyal men of the Spartan guard of Leonidas died in the battle, that Xerxes and his horde rolled over them. They were still celebrated for having slowed the Persian advance, for having stood fast until a traitor revealed a secret way through the hills around them, and the Persians attacked from their rear. They were and are still honored for having wounded and slowed the Persian advance until, at the naval battle at Salamis, the Persians were defeated, and their ambition to add Greece to their empire thwarted.

I do hope the story may today be taught to schoolchildren with a diminished emphasis of the Greco-European triumphalism that we were given when I was a boy. I can say that as I grew to be a man, I allowed myself to wonder about the "great turning points" of history motif with which I first received this story and others like it. Were we really so fortunate, and would it really have been so bad if we had developed a differently nuanced and more flowery tradition of poetry, and maybe a taste for mint-flavored yogurt?

In any case we had better pause for a moment. There may be some uneasiness being felt here as to what any of this crushed heroism has to do with any of us, here in the bright City of Victoria. Well, hang on, because there is more. The year 1911 does not only mark the Adler–Freud divorce; on March 19 of 1911, the International Women's Day was first declared. Over a million men and women took to the streets in rallies in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland, demanding the right of women to vote, to hold public office, to seek employment, and to see an end to discrimination on the job. Less than a week later, March 25, 1911, a tragic fire broke out at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in New York City. Managers had chained exit doors shut, and more than 140 Jewish and Italian immigrant young women
lost their lives. The Women’s Trade Union League and the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union led a series of protests against this avoidable tragedy, including a silent funeral march of over 100,000 people. In the next few years, in Russia and other countries, International Women’s Day rallied thousands more to oppose the manic rush to war, which was to consume the lives of 2 million Russian soldiers, with millions of others lost in Europe, Africa, and elsewhere.

We must not despise the day of small things, even as we may sense the pattern of Thermopylae imposed on this picture of the great and suffering world. The courage of those who in those times opposed the delirium of war and the injustices of economic exploitation must not be dismissed as without effect, least of all now as we witness the astonishing uprisings of protest in what has been called the Arab Spring. Those who have engaged in struggles for justice, especially the struggles marked here as arising since 1911, and least of all now, may in conscience despise any day of even the smallest sense of progress, as we witness the astonishing uprisings of revolutionary protest in the Arab Spring.

As Adlerians we can count ourselves as being part of this general movement away from militarism and the other hallmarks of arrogant masculinism. We have the record of an early international movement of Adlerians that was impressive for its time and that, at least in terms of numbers and the variety of its serious participants, has not been exceeded since.

You will have heard of Kurt Lewin, a major light in the field of sociology in North America. He was a pathfinding researcher in the effects of differing styles of leadership: laissez-faire, autocratic, and democratic. In 1930 he was a participant in the Fifth International Congress of Individual Psychology, in Berlin, at which at least 1,000 (and by one account as many as 2,000) registrants took part. Kurt Goldstein was also at this meeting. His later research on the brain-injured veterans of war, *The Organism*, was and still can be regarded as a seminal study in neurology and holistic understanding. Like Lewin, his escape to America saved him for his important contributions.

A detail of the story is this: At the time of the IP Fifth International in 1930 Kurt Lewin went by the name Kurt Levine. That he changed his name in the succeeding years is a small sign of what happened to him, and to the world, in those times.

The rise of Hitler gave focus to a feverish solidarity of right-wing resentments in Europe by claiming to lead the restoration of an ancient imperial order of social living under military rule. Hitler’s hypnotic vision promised the recovery of self-respect to a people crushed by World War I and the punitive economic depression that followed. Opposed to the Nazi cult was the call of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia. Appealing to socialists, progressives, and humanists everywhere to enlist under its banner, it promised and
provided the feeling of a passionate pursuit of justice and equity in a world no longer grounded in religious depth or aristocratic structure.

Fascism and Stalinism, two great claims to unity, divided the loyalties of humankind. They almost eradicated the optimistic and reformist agenda of which Individual Psychology was a part. Adler's family suffered for it. Long after Adler made the move to establish residence in the United States, his wife, Raissa—who remained a devotee of Trotsky and the resistance to Stalin—anchored her hopes in an intransigent allegiance to this lost cause and in a reluctance to abandon Europe.

Adler's firstborn daughter, Valentina, closest (and possibly most dear) of his children, went with her husband to live and offer the services of their enthusiasm to the creation of the “new humanity” promised by the Soviet Union. They disappeared—as did many, many other European idealists—into the Gulag Archipelago. Mail was returned marked “Not at this address.”

We now know what could only be guessed then. Heartbreak is not just a figure of speech. Alexandra, Adler's second child who followed him in the study of medicine, told me, “My father could never tolerate the thought of people doing harm to a child. Now, his own child was outside the reach of his protection, and this brought about his death.”

In the spring of 1937, after months of anguish and effort to find help (“I don't know how much longer I can bear this,” he confessed in one of his last letters), and at the end of a week of lectures to the medical faculty of the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, he set off on an early morning walk from his hotel, and his loving heart gave out. A distinguished group of faculty and clergy (including an Anglican bishop) conducted a memorial service for his family and others in the university church.

There is much more to this story, as Jane and I could tell you if we had time to report on our researches into the relationship Adler had established with William Temple, then the bishop of York and archbishop of England (later archbishop of Canterbury), and a leading churchman of the time. But what we would tell you would be only the remnants of a story, most of which is still undocumented and so, so far lost.

In the years following Adler’s death, the German people, blinded by anti-Semitism and fanatic idealism, entered the beginning chapter of their victorious marches toward their nation's own doom and destruction. You all know the story. Europe was shattered in ways that Europeans are now still struggling to repair. Christendom came to appear as a pretense in the murderous wars between baptized peoples. Whether consecrated in Eastern or in Western rites, they gave themselves over to being set upon each other, as if against scourges, having practiced (whether actively or not) this savagery first in their destruction of the Jewish people, their co-inheritors of ancient and sacred promises.
This is the context of the near extinction of the Individual Psychology movement. Again, a story given to us by Alexandra Adler: She told us of one morning in 1938, going to the Child Guidance Center in Vienna, where she was still working. There stood a young tough in Nazi uniform, with the door behind him locked, and her access forbidden. When she asked why, he informed her “We have no need of this Center. We have other methods.”

At this point there may be some relief wanted from the sad stories of the fall of Western civilization, and of us with it. For this you must allow me to call up an image of Alexandra Adler, a person of small physical stature. “How tall are you, Ali,” I was once careless enough to ask her. “I am not tall. I am short,” was her unhesitating reply. So, now, picture little Ali going up against the Nazi. Of course, we know that she did not prevail, that she could not have prevailed. That’s not the point. What we have is a picture of this tiny woman, in her courage, confronting a pasteboard imitation of power in the person of a uniformed thug. Be inspired.

Neither did the thugs prevail. Ali Adler, her brother Kurt, and many of Adler’s colleagues left Europe, most coming to North America: Rudolf Dreikurs to Chicago, Lydiaicher to Southern California, Sophia de Vries and Anthony Bruck to Northern California.

Here, by way of incidental comment, I can report that Dreikurs once told me that he would rather have had it that the others had chosen Chicago and that he had settled in California. Those who benefited by the actual arrangement are free of this regret.

Those of us whose lives intersected with Dreikurs in Chicago enjoyed the privilege of participating, together with the psychiatric leadership of Dr. Bernard Shulman and the clinical psychology leadership of Dr. Harold Mosak, in the development of recognized, degree-granting, academic centers of Adlerian studies that Dreikurs took the lead in creating. The Adler School of Professional Psychology in Chicago continues to have an incomparable impact through its application of psychological services to the mitigation of social injustice in an unfolding and transforming success under the leadership of its president, Raymond Crossman, and a cohort of outstanding and committed faculty. In the Adler Graduate School in Minnesota (another offspring of the Dreikurs vision) a bold innovation of online Internet support of graduate programs is opening unprecedented advances in Adlerian studies.

You know what is happening here in Canada, and in British Columbia, where we now find ourselves as guests. None of this would have been likely had it not been for the relentless and energetic refusal of Dreikurs to “listen to reason” in the arguments of the hesitating and the naysaying. The same should be said for Dreikurs’s leadership in the creation of the International Committee of Adlerian Summer Schools and Institutes, ICASSI. This initiative
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has not only fostered a context for the reconciliation of estranged nationalities but has also led to a renewed study of Adler and IP in Eastern Europe. And let us not neglect: the immeasurable effect of Dreikurs's book *Children: The Challenge*; nor the Child Guidance and Parent Education movement that grew out of it, helped by the design and publication of the Systematic Training for Effective Parenting program by the late Don Dinkmeyer and his son, Don Junior, and their still active colleague, Gary McKay; nor the innovative additions of Michael Popkin's Active Parenting and Jane Nelson's Positive Discipline to the list, together with our own past president Steve Stein, who—with the Parent Encouragement Program of the Maryland Society of IP—continues in this work as a tribute to the late Hal McAbee. All these are monuments to Adler's founding hope that new methods of education would contribute to the present struggles of humankind toward a better future, serving as a present boon to many and as forums for the enlistment of fresh Adlerian enthusiasm.

Other local societies carry Adler's understanding forward in uncounted ways. Frank [X. Walton] and Cathy Walton's work in early childhood and parent education inspired the creation of the South Carolina Society of Adlerian Psychology, and their work is now carried forward by their daughters, Cindy (with child care) and Patricia (with corrective intervention for prevention and elimination of bullying). The annual South Carolina Adlerian conference now draws as many participants as does NASAP's annual conference. Tim Evans and his coworkers in the Florida Adlerian Society are on track to drawing, and may already be drawing, the same numbers to their annual meetings in the Tampa area.

Steven A. Maybell, who introduced me at the beginning of this lecture, has been as devoted to the furthering of Adlerian studies as he has been to Jane and me personally. In addition to his leadership position as the director of counseling services at Seattle Pacific University, Steve has made an incomparable contribution to the State of Idaho in continuing Adlerian education, primarily of social workers, but including other human services professionals as well. Henry Stein, of Bellingham, Washington, with the assistance and steadying hand of his wife and partner, Laurie, has presided over the recovery and publication of early Adlerian writings. Without the rather rare devotion of Henry and Laurie and their students, these things would very likely have been lost to the ravages of time. Ann Skutt, with the inducement of a monthly income that may average out to as much as 35 cents an hour, serves as coordinator of the Puget Sound Adlerian Society, which supports a form of the Saturday circus that Ray Lowe started at the University of Oregon many years ago, now going by the name Sanity Circus. PSAS sponsors a four-course program for professionals in Adlerian continuing education that Jane Griffith and I designed 30 years ago and still offer—for which we were
the first Adlerian entity to win the approval of the American Psychological Association. PSAS also publishes a community calendar of family and parent education resources that is without parallel in any other venue. Whatever else is true, the study and practice of Adlerian wisdom is not—repeat, not—of treasured memory or of limited interest only to historians.

Now we are drawing near to one of those words attendees at lectures most long to hear. They are “finally” and “in conclusion.” As you know, however, there are first those compelling imperatives that say, “But wait! There’s more!” As we enter upon this “more,” I go back again to 1911, and the split that put us to work in the shade. Not shady work. On the contrary, as we have noted, it has been important work, and valuable work, to many people. Like the Spartan 300, however, although we may have stalled the advance of Xerxes, we have so far lost the larger battle. Xerxes here is understood as a figure to illustrate power, domination, supremacy, order, and the other images that are thought to be “above” along a horizontal line. Weakness, submission, subordination, art, and their related images are on the same line, parallel to the former list, and regarded as “below.” And by now you have noticed that I failed to mention the most important of the images, above and below, and that these are masculine and feminine.

“Man above, woman below” is a description of the destiny that in 1911 was believed to be dictated by anatomy. Refusal or failure to incorporate recognition and acceptance of that destiny in the psychosexual development of every individual was thought to lie at the base of all psychological disturbances. This came to be one aspect of psychoanalytic theory. In 1911 Adler challenged this whole schema, together with the related notion that civilization is a burden to the instinctual and natural life, and is the tragic cause of our discontent with social living. To pampered children, yes, of course it is a burden to be told that freedom to do as you please is not a feature of sanity and a happy life. To pampered children, note well, and not to all, and least to those whose preparations for life included encouragement toward the practice of self-confidence and cooperation in striving toward the solving of common problems for the common good. The warmth and comfort of the nursing mother, and the enabling encouragement of loving parents, yes, these things are beyond all value at the start. They establish the possibility in which genuine education subsequently occurs—that is, a foundation of love, out of which can grow all other love of life, and of learning, in love of the teacher.

This is not, as the Freudian picture came to see it, the greedy origin of self-enclosed cannibalism, of the infant attempting to ingest and incorporate the other for itself in a primary effort at conquest and satisfaction. Instead, it is the infant’s first exercise in cooperation, the happy discovery of the sweet taste of life that in turn stimulates the breast to bring the nurturing milk of
human kindness into the sustenance of the one for the sake of the joy of both. *Both.* That is a beginner’s word for the common life, a starting point for the love of the other that is the secret, the open secret, of social living.

“Love the other,” said Confucius in *Kung Fu Tse.* At the same time, on the other side of the high mountains, the Enlightened One, the Buddha, showed compassion to be the key to such love, in the practice of feeling with the feeling of all sentient being. We know this as inherent in the feeling Adler felt of the community we sense we are making by the way we take part in it (*Gemeinschaftsgefühl*). And yes, oh yes, we don’t forget that Adler was not shy about relating all of this to the prophets of Israel and the rabbi from Nazareth, in arguing for “love your neighbor as yourself” as the heart of worship and as the sine qua non of ultimately successful striving.

And who is my neighbor? That is the lawyer’s question. Well, remember, our focus is on 1911, the year of Individual Psychology’s beginning and the year of the first International Women’s Day. As members of the North American Society of Adlerian Psychology we are witnesses to the continuing vitality of the Adlerian movement that began 100 years ago. As citizens of a world in turmoil, of challenges to the assumptions of masculine superiority and domination everywhere, we recognize and must be prepared to address the deformity of our common humanity in the sexual abuse of women and children. We must make explicit what we can say about the power madness, especially as it enters into relations between men and women, adults and children. Individual remedies and corrections are not enough. We must bring our voices to bear on these issues as pathologies of a culture which, however various the forms, is at base close to universal. To change it for the better, and to heal it, we must see ourselves as part of it and responsible for shaping its future. This requires what Adler called “the miracle of social feeling,” a miracle that we must perform.

There is a present challenge in this that stands before Adlerians everywhere. We claim a leadership in parent education, and so we must address the failures of our present parenting and the consequences of these failures. Something is wrong with the way we educate our sons. Too many of them, here and all around the world, are growing up to be men who are afraid of women. Paranoid men, in too many numbers, regard female attractiveness as if it were an alien and undermining power. Feminine beauty is experienced as if it were a challenge to masculine efforts to maintain the postures of superiority. These are the postures that claim a status above others. The loss of this status is seen as spelling the doom of personal value. Murderous rage becomes an all-too-common feature of the carriers of these distorted values. Whole cultures are infected with ideas of the danger of female sexuality and seductiveness, whose appeal is defined as a threat to the superiority and independence of men.
Homophobia is a term with which we have become familiar. I think there is reason to see this phobia as a subset of “femme-a-phobia,” to attempt to coin a new term to describe a man’s fear of submitting to the spell of a woman. Effeminate is an old term of opprobrium for a man who acts as if playing a woman’s part, and who thereby may provoke homophobia as a carrier of this fearful spellbinding. Something is wrong with the way we are raising our sons. Perhaps it has to do with the mores of a warrior culture.

Something is wrong with the way we educate our daughters. A recent 12-page report of the American Psychological Association Task Force on the Sexualization of girls warns us of it. You already know about the bathing suits for 8-year-old girls with push-up bras included in their design. You know about the advertising and promotion of clothing for preadolescent girls promising to enhance their sexuality. You can make the connections to what you also know about the sometimes murderous rivalry among girls competing for the sexual attentions of boys. Perhaps this also has to do with a warrior culture and a cultivated sense of all social living as a contest between winners and losers, the hot and the not so hot.

It is not enough to have parent education without addressing these things. We may encounter the challenge of a corrupted culture one family at a time. The challenge is still the challenge of a corrupted culture, and we are called to address that challenge. We have an important contribution to make by furthering the study of Adlerian Psychology.

In 1970, the centennial year of Adler’s birth, the honored speaker at our annual conference was Dr. Kenneth Clark, the first African American president of the American Psychological Association. In 1954 Dr. Clark had contributed to the brief presented to the Supreme Court of the United States, arguing for the overthrow of a previous legal doctrine that had allowed the establishment of so-called separate-but-equal public schools for children designated as of African American parentage. As Dr. Clark described it, his argument rested on an understanding he had gained by his study of Alfred Adler and Individual Psychology, namely that “separate” was inherently “unequal” because it imputed an inferiority to African American children that was congenital and inescapable, and therefore that no amount of striving and struggle could overcome. It was as destructive of individual life, and of social living, as the notion of the inherent inferiority of women had been when Adler first addressed it. It was, in short, a new form of the “anatomy is destiny” bias.

Not all of you can remember the events of 1954, but some of us can. We were there to witness Thurgood Marshall, an African American attorney, offspring of a despised, enslaved, and powerless people, arguing the case of these people before the most powerful tribunal of the most powerful nation in the history of the world. In effect he said, “You are wrong on
this question.” Thurgood Marshall said, “You are wrong. The previous legal
doctrine of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, of ‘separate but equal,’ is wrong, and you are
wrong to uphold it.”

Weakness spoke that day to power. Weakness spoke Truth to Power. Weakness said, “You are wrong.” And in reply, a historic judgment came
down from this highest court, a unanimous judgment, as Power bent before
Truth, and Power confessed, “You are right; we have been wrong.” I submit
to you this evening that nothing like this had ever happened in the history of
the world before that day. Remember, this was a time in which most of the
world seemed in thrall to Chairman Mao Tse-tung and to his dictum that all
political power comes out of the barrel of a gun.

In 1970 when Dr. Clark spoke to us he said the triumph of Thurgood
Marshall before the High Court that day was a triumph of the understanding
of Alfred Adler and his Individual Psychology. He marked it as a contribu­
tion of Alfred Adler to the history of our time.

We may remain in the shade. You and others may go on believing that
anatomy is destiny. You may believe that gender and race determine status
and value, but you will be wrong. The spread of social feeling and inclusion,
the miracle that we must perform, requires that every pretense to superiori­
ity must bend before Truth and confess to its challengers, “You are right;
we want no longer to be wrong.” We may be fighting in the shade, but we
are not overshadowed. We know that what is wanted for the world today
is a miracle, and we know it to be a miracle that we must perform. Thank
you for letting me rehearse these important and unfinished matters with you
here tonight.

Robert L. Powers (1929–2013) was Distinguished Service Professor Emeri­
tus of the Adler School of Professional Psychology in Chicago, an Episcopal
priest, a licensed clinical psychologist, and a past president of the North
American Society of Adlerian Psychology (NASAP) and of the Chicago
Psychological Association. He was a popular invited lecturer and the author
and coauthor of Adlerian publications. In 2011, jointly with his wife, Jane
Griffith, he was presented with NASAP’s Lifetime Achievement Award.